

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Commission

SUBJECT: Splashpad and Inclusive Playground Feasibility Study

DATE: September 26, 2022

On September 26, 2022, the Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Commission voted unanimously in support of four motions regarding the Splashpad and Inclusive Playground Feasibility Study being presented to council in October 2022 resulting from a [2021 petition from community members](#). The four motions are:

1. The Commission gives its full support to both an inclusive playground and a splashpad in our community and will continue to place both projects on the Commission's list of priorities.
2. The Commission is open to separating the inclusive playground and splashpad into two separate projects. Additionally, the Commission desires to see more inclusive play options throughout the park system which may include retrofitting existing play structures. We are open to the option of adding more inclusive features to various playgrounds throughout the park system instead of building a separate inclusive playground if that option is more feasible.
3. The Commission is supportive of utilizing recirculating treated water systems to fulfill the Town's environmental goals and to control long-term costs associated with the project.
4. That although the Commission has not resolved the matter of *where* a splashpad might be built, the Commission urges the Town to use criteria that elevates historically marginalized communities in an effort to address a history of underinvestment in certain areas of our town. This also includes taking into account the accessibility of such facilities to community members who will travel on foot or using public transportation.

The Commission also wants to make the Council aware of a lengthy discussion regarding the type and number of splashpad facilities to be built. The Commission highlighted that the Town should not pursue a strategy that builds several pocket splashpad facilities that are so small that they are unable to adequately serve the community nor does the Commission advocate for building one facility that is as large as possible. Instead, the Commission's discussion centered around building more than one facility such that they are accessible to households throughout our community, facilities that are becoming of our community, and are amenities that Chapel Hill can be proud of.

The Commission expressed its support for the work completed thus far in the Splashpad and Inclusive Playground Feasibility Study. The Commission looks forward to the public/community input phase of the study and wishes for one or more projects to be fully funded and moved forward quickly.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tyler Steelman, Chair
Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Commission

Members Present: Tyler Steelman (Chair), Leah Boucher (Vice Chair), Alice Armstrong (Orange County Representative), Shane Brogan, Hallie Cherry, Renuka Soll, Marcella Trumbower, and Chris Worrell.