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News Release

"We work together to build and maintain a community of the highest quality for present and future generations."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Grand Opening of Kirby Lake Nature Play Area

ABILENE, Texas - The City of Abilene would like to invite you to join us for the grand opening of Kirby Lake Nature Play Area on Friday, August 10 at 10:30 a.m. near the pavilion.

Kirby Lake Nature Play Area is located at Lake Kirby Park, 5650 Maple Street. The Nature Play Area is free to the public.

In 2017 the City of Abilene was approached by representatives from Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas with a funding opportunity of \$200,000 to create a nature play area in an existing park for children ages seven and younger. It was determined that Kirby Lake would be the best location for this type of project. Vista Planning and Design was contracted to develop a multi-phase master plan that would focus on the initial phase of developing the nature play area.

In the winter of this same year a community wide survey was released to gather community interest in developing the Kirby Lake area itself. Stakeholder group meetings were also conducted to allow for community interests and input on development of the master plan. Strong support of such endeavors was outlined in the results of the survey as well as in the stakeholder meetings.

In the spring of 2018, an educational training series was offered for up to 100 participants via the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife youth education program known as "Growing Up Wild". This training offered early childhood educators the opportunity incorporate nature education activities into their programs.

On March 22, 2018 a Kirby Lake Nature Play Area Plan was presented to Abilene City Council for approval. The plan was approved by council and construction bids were submitted to begin work on Phase 1. The phase 1 features include a boardwalk, trail development, educational group areas, and various natural landscaped climbing and play structures. Contributors to Phase 1 include Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas, City of Abilene, Bontke Brothers Construction, Friends of Kirby Lake, Dyess We Care Team, Alon, Keep Abilene Beautiful.

On July 26, 2018 a draft Kirby Lake Master Plan was presented to Abilene City Council for approval. The Abilene City Council unanimously approved the Kirby Lake Master Plan.

For more information, please call 325-676-6217 or visit www.abilenetx.com/parksandrec.

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