



BREAKING

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Village Green playground: City wants it to be a gathering place for families

Improvements coming to public space in Fairfield.



Credit: Nick Graham

NEWS

By **Michael D. Pitman**

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City Manager Scott Timmer said if it's finished by Oct. 31, he "will happily go down the slide" in a Halloween costume.

"I wanted to give them a nice goal," he said. "They can embarrass me if they get it done a little bit early."

The project calls for the removal of all old equipment, including the underused gazebos, and removal of trees in order to triple the size of the current playground footprint.

The city earmarked \$750,000 of its American Rescue Plan Act funds for park projects, and Timmer said \$500,000 of that money would pay for the Village Green playground renovations. The total project cost is nearly \$627,500.

Trees that need to be vacated will be removed by city staff this spring or summer, said acting Parks Director Mandi Brock. The playground equipment will be purchased from Landscape Structures, and construction will begin by September with a target completion date of Nov. 15. Summer park programming at Village Green ends in August.

The playground will transition from one side that is targeted for 2-year-olds to 5-year-olds to the opposite end designed for 5-year-olds to 12-year-olds. Features will include a whirl, tower and slide, an interactive bridge, and an inclusive net play climber known as a Crab Trap.

The playground area will be on top of artificial turf.

Timmer said he believes the upgraded playground and associated amenities, such as benches with umbrellas, will engage parents and the community "in a way where, even when we don't have something programmed, they're gonna want to come down, maybe sample a beer from Berd's, a margarita from La Piñata, end the night with some Flub's ice cream. This is a way to bring those people down and then get them to come back time and time again."

The city had put in place the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area district "to help engage this area and bring some vibrancy to some of the businesses, as well as the park area," said Timmer. "And we're looking to add this feature to engage the park in opportunities (for families)."



“We just need to make it more of a destination playground, a place you want to take your kids,” she said. “Right now, it’s kind of just outdated. It’s past its life.”

Brock also said they plan to have interactive windchimes along the path in the park, so “you’ll have musical interaction.”

“It’ll be different ways to just engage with the area,” Timmer said of the playground project, “where you can get a lot of kids playing, all at the same time, and they’re not really going to get bored almost immediately.”

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About the Author



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Michael D. Pitman has been a reporter in southwest Ohio since 1999. He's covered local governments in Warren and Butler counties, as well as state and national issues. He currently covers the cities of Fairfield and Hamilton.



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