## PRESS RELEASE





## CONSTRUCTION OF ONE-OF-A-KIND SIGNATURE PLAYGROUND UNDERWAY IN CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH

The 18,000-square foot playground is slated to open in Fall 2023

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**FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS (June 26, 2023)** – The City of Farmers Branch announced construction has started for the city's one-of-a-kind signature playground – Joya at Oran Good Park – expected to be completed Fall 2023.

Joya will be the first-of-its-kind, all-accessible, glow-in-the-dark playground in the United States. The 18,000 square-foot play space will include a main playground area and a fenced-in tot play area. The playground will feature a 27-foot futuristic sphere where children can climb inside, a zip line, a spin zone, glow seating, swings, and an obstacle course - all lit with colorful LED lighting. While fun in the daytime, Joya will come alive at night with interactive features that glow, allowing for play during the day and evening.

The visionary behind the project is Deputy City Manager Mike Mashburn. Gaining inspiration from an article about a public space in China with interesting lighting, along with multiple family trips to Disney theme parks, Mashburn set out to create something unique that would be special for the local community as well as be a destination for Dallas-Fort Worth families and beyond.

The process began nearly three and half years ago, and after a year of ideating and revisions, the concept and design for Joya was validated through focus groups with the true 'fun experts', the kids.

"It is so exciting to begin construction on a first-class, all-accessible playground like Joya at Oran Good Park, a public space that kids and families of all ages and abilities will enjoy year-round," Mashburn said. "We are looking forward to the grand opening of Joya, our City's crown jewel, bringing to life the fun and joy that comes from a one-of-a-kind facility like this."

Translated as "Jewel" in Spanish, Joya will be the crown jewel of playgrounds in Farmers Branch and the region. The name Joya was chosen specifically to pay homage to the Hispanic and Latino residents in Farmers Branch. According to the 2021 census, 45 percent of Farmers Branch residents have Hispanic or Latino heritage.

Alongside the main playground will be a tot playground, specifically designed for kids aged two to five. The younger kids will have more than 7,000 square feet inside a fenced area that includes a natural sensory play area, an LED lit spin zone, and ground-level and ramp-structured playgrounds.

The design and construction of the signature playground have been primarily funded with federal and state grant dollars, with \$750,000 coming from the State of Texas Parks & Wildlife Grant and \$4 million from the Federal American Rescue Plan Act.

A full study on light pollution was completed by the city before fully designing the Joya project. All specifications meet International Dark Sky Association (IDA) guidelines. Additionally, the IDA has recently partnered with the National Audubon Society on their recommendations, allowing the city to be in compliance with both entities. A riparian buffer

will be planted around the creek to help with runoff, pollutants, and erosion, and will invite wildlife.

Joya will be located at the corner of Tom Field Road and Valley View Lane. Additionally, Farmers Branch Parks & Recreation will host various programs, events, and food trucks throughout the year. With construction now underway, City leaders expect an opening date in the late fall. For more on Joya at Oran Good Park visit <a href="www.playatjoya.com">www.playatjoya.com</a>.

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## **About Farmers Branch:**

Nestled in the heart of Dallas County, the City of Farmers Branch, Texas, offers a vibrant and progressive community that seamlessly combines small-town charm with urban amenities. Renowned for its strong sense of community, exceptional quality of life, and strategic location attracting national and international corporations, Farmers Branch thrives as a small but mighty first-ring suburb of Dallas. With a population of over 38,000 in about 12 square miles, the city remains dedicated to preserving its unique character while embracing progress and innovation. Supported by a strong community spirit, a focus on economic development, and a commitment to exceptional services, Farmers Branch is the ideal place for individuals, families, and businesses to flourish. For more, visit Farmersbranchtx.gov.

## Contact:

Jonathan Deutsch | Tony Fay PR | 469.534.8525 | jonathan@tonyfaypr.com Tami Howard Carr | Tony Fay PR | 469.525.8850 | tami@tonyfaypr.com





Tony Fay PR | 2626 Cole Ave, Ste 300, Dallas, TX 75074

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