TEXAS COMMERCIAL RECREATION · PLANNING & GRANT PACKET

From Empty Lot to Opening Day: Park Planning & Grant Packet

A practical, board-ready workbook for Texas cities, counties, school districts (ISDs), HOAs, and community organizations planning commercial playgrounds, shade structures, splash pads, safety surfacing, and turnkey park spaces.

PROJECT / PARK NAME	CITY / ISD / ORGANIZATION	TARGET OPENING WINDOW	TARGET BUDGET / GRANT TRACK

HOW THIS PACKET WORKS

Four Stages to a Funded, Built, and Sustainable Park

01 · PLAN
Scope & Site Audit
Size your use zones, age separation (2–5 & 5–12), ADA accessible routes, drainage, and shade before picking SKUs.

02 · FUND
True Turnkey Budget
Budget all 6 project lines—not just equipment—and stack state grants, BuyBoard/TIPS co-ops, and local match.

03 · BUILD
Turnkey Delivery
Single-contract site prep, slab/piers, certified CPSI installation, safety surfacing, and closeout audit.

04 · PLAY
15-Year Care Plan
Keep the park open and safe with routine visual checks, monthly hardware logs, and annual CPSI inspections.

What Play RGV Prepares for Your Board or Grant Packet (No Charge)

- **On-Site Walk-Through & Measurements:** Utilities, access path, grading, and fall-zone verification anywhere in Texas.
- **2D CAD Layout & 3D Color Renderings:** Ready for city council packets, school board presentations, and public hearings.
- **Itemized 6-Line Turnkey Estimate:** Equipment, surfacing, shade, freight, civil prep, and CPSI installation.
- **Co-Op / Grant Compliance Documentation:** IPEMA/ASTM certificates, Texas HUB documentation, and BuyBoard/TIPS contract quotes.

Why Texas Public Agencies Partner with Play RGV

- **Certified Texas HUB Vendor:** Every dollar counts toward Historically Underutilized Business purchasing goals.
- **BuyBoard & TIPS Cooperative Contracts:** Pre-competed contracts satisfy Texas municipal & ISD bid laws.
- **CPSI-Certified Turnkey Crews:** In-house project management from excavation to post-installation safety audit.
- **RGV Headquarters · Statewide Reach:** Based in La Joya, TX, serving the Rio Grande Valley, South/Central TX, and statewide.

✓ BUYBOARD & TIPS CO-OP | ✓ TEXAS HUB CERTIFIED | ✓ IPEMA & ASTM F1487 | ✓ CPSC #325 COMPLIANT | ✓ CPSI CERTIFIED INSPECTORS

STEP 01 · PLAN YOUR SITE

Site Evaluation & Space Sizing Worksheet

Before selecting structures, confirm your available footprint (including required ASTM 6-foot safety use zones around all equipment), site access for delivery trucks, drainage slope, and sun exposure.

SPACE / ZONE TYPE	TARGET USERS	RECOMMENDED FOOTPRINT (W/ USE ZONE)	KEY TEXAS PLANNING REQUIREMENT
Early Childhood Tot Lot	Ages 2–5 years	25' × 30' to 35' × 45' (750–1,600 sq ft)	Separate from 5–12 area; low deck heights (≤48"); full integrated or hip shade recommended.
School-Age Play Structure	Ages 5–12 years	40' × 50' to 60' × 80' (2,000–4,800 sq ft)	Requires 6' clear use zone on all sides (slides up to 8' at exit); match fall height to surfacing depth.
2-Bay / 3-Bay Commercial Swings	Ages 2–5 & 5–12	32' × 24' to 45' × 32' (770–1,440 sq ft)	Front/rear use zone is 2× pivot height (typically 32' total front-to-back); never overlap structure zones.
All-Abilities Inclusive Park	All Ages & Mobility	50' × 70' to 80' × 100'+ (3,500–8,000 sq ft)	Requires unitary surfacing (PIP rubber or flush turf), double-wide ramps, ground-level sensory & transfer events.
Commercial Splash Pad	All Ages (Zero-Depth)	30' × 40' to 60' × 80' (+ 5' dry deck perimeter)	Choose Flow-Through (potable to drain/irrigation) vs. Recirculation (tank, filtration & chemical controller).
Dog Park (Small + Large Dog)	Community Pet Owners	10,000–25,000+ sq ft fenced (or 40' × 80' HOA pocket)	Double-gated entry airlock, separate small/large enclosures, bi-level pet fountain, shade & K9 turf/drainage.

Physical Site Audit Checklist (Walk the Lot)

- ☐ **Dimensions & Boundaries:** Measure total length × width clear of easements, property lines, and tree root zones.
- ☐ **Overhead & Underground Utilities:** Check overhead power lines (≥25' clearance) and call Texas 811 for buried fiber/water/gas.
- ☐ **Drainage & Slope:** Target 1%–2% finished slope; identify low spots that hold standing water after heavy rain.
- ☐ **Construction Access:** Confirm a 10'–12' wide clear gate/path for Bobcat skid-steer, concrete truck, and 48' flatbed staging.
- ☐ **ADA Accessible Route:** Plan a compliant concrete sidewalk (≤1:20 running slope) from parking/building to the play border ramp.

Texas Heat, UV & Comfort Checklist

- ☐ **Afternoon Sun Orientation:** Orient slide chutes North or East whenever possible to reduce afternoon solar heat gain.
- ☐ **Shade Strategy:** Specify integrated post-mounted fabric shade or free-standing hip/cantilever shade (blocks up to 96% UV & cools decks 20°F+).
- ☐ **Surfacing Color Selection:** Choose lighter EPDM rubber blends (tan, blue, bright green, grey) over black to minimize surface heat.
- ☐ **Caregiver Seating & Hydration:** Include shaded park benches with backs/armrests, trash receptacles, and bottle-filler fountains.

MEASURED SITE LENGTH × WIDTH (FT)	EXISTING SURFACE (GRASS / CONCRETE / OLD MULCH)	NEAREST WATER / ELECTRICAL / ADA SIDEWALK

STEP 02 · BUILD A REALISTIC BUDGET

The 6-Line Turnkey Park Budget Model

Play equipment typically represents only **35% to 40%** of a finished park's total cost. Presenting all six cost categories upfront protects your project from mid-construction funding shortfalls and council change orders.

LINE # & COST CATEGORY	TYPICAL SHARE	WHAT BELONGS IN THIS LINE ITEM	YOUR ESTIMATED $	PLAY RGV QUOTED $
1. Play Equipment & Shade	35% – 40%	Play structures, swings, freestanding events, fabric shade canopy, benches, tables, trash receptacles.	$_____	$_____
2. Safety Surfacing System	25% – 30%	Poured-in-Place (PIP) rubber, Synthetic Turf w/ pad, Bonded Rubber, or Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) + borders/ramps.	$_____	$_____
3. Site Work, Sub-Base & Drainage	15% – 20%	Demo/removal, excavation, laser grading, crushed limestone/concrete sub-base, French drains, ADA sidewalk tie-in.	$_____	$_____
4. Certified Installation Labor	10% – 15%	Pier augering, concrete footings, structural assembly, shade erection, equipment rental, site security fencing.	$_____	$_____
5. Factory Freight & Offloading	4% – 6%	Direct flatbed/LTL freight from manufacturer plants to Texas job site, liftgate/telehandler offloading.	$_____	$_____
6. Contingency & CPSI Closeout	5% – 10%	Unforeseen utility/rock allowance, municipal permits, windstorm engineering seals (if required), CPSI audit.	$_____	$_____
TOTAL TURNKEY PROJECT BUDGET	**100%**	**Take this complete turnkey number to City Council, School Board, or Grant Committee**	**$_____**	**$_____**

TEXAS TURNKEY BENCHMARK RANGES (2026 PLANNING ESTIMATES)

TIER A · $45,000 – $95,000

Pocket Park / Campus Refresh

- Quick-Ship or modular structure (15–30 kids)
- 2-bay commercial swing set + border timbers
- Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) + ADA ramp
- Turnkey installation & freight included

TIER B · $100,000 – $250,000

Shaded School / City Park

- 2–5 & 5–12 commercial structures + swings
- Full hip shade structure (30'×40'+)
- Unitary PIP rubber or turf surfacing
- Benches, picnic tables & turnkey civil/install

TIER C · $250,000 – $650,000+

Destination Park / Splash Pad

- Signature inclusive tower or custom splash pad
- 100% poured-in-place rubber w/ custom graphics
- Steel pavilion, outdoor fitness, or dog park
- Full civil grading, drainage, concrete & sidewalks

PROCURING THROUGH BUYBOARD OR TIPS?

Play RGV quotes can be issued directly under cooperative purchasing contracts—eliminating the 60-to-90-day formal sealed bid cycle while giving your board pre-competed, auditable line-item pricing.

STEP 03 · GRANT READINESS & COOPERATIVE PURCHASING

Grant Application Packet & Fast-Track Procurement

Whether you are applying for a TPWD Local Park Grant, allocating CDBG/bond dollars, or purchasing via BuyBoard/TIPS, gathering these documents early prevents administrative delays.

Grant-Ready Application Binder Checklist

- ☐ **1. Governing Body Resolution:** City Council, County, or ISD Board resolution authorizing application & matching funds.
- ☐ **2. Proof of Site Control / Deed:** Dedicated parkland deed or 25+ year joint-use agreement (e.g., City + ISD shared park).
- ☐ **3. Scaled Site Plan & 3D Concept:** Provided by Play RGV showing play zones, ADA accessible routes, shade, and amenities.
- ☐ **4. Itemized Cost Estimate (6-Line):** Signed budgetary quote matching grant budget categories (construction vs. equipment).
- ☐ **5. Community Input Evidence:** Survey results, public meeting sign-in sheets, or Parks Master Plan excerpt.
- ☐ **6. Letters of Support & Match Commitments:** Letters from schools, civic clubs, disability advocates, and in-kind donors.

4-Step Cooperative Purchasing Workflow (BuyBoard / TIPS)

Step 1 — Site Walk & Scope Freeze: Play RGV meets your team on-site, finalizes the 3D design, and confirms surfacing, shade, and civil scope.

Step 2 — Co-Op Contract Proposal: We issue an official quote referencing the active **BuyBoard** or **TIPS** contract number and our **Texas HUB** certification.

Step 3 — Purchasing Office Verification: Your Purchasing Agent verifies the co-op contract under *Texas Local Gov't Code Ch. 271* or *Texas Education Code §44.031* (no separate RFP required).

Step 4 — PO Issuance & Production Lock: Issue the Purchase Order per contract instructions; Play RGV locks factory production slots and schedules your turnkey installation crew.

SAFETY SURFACING OPTION	INITIAL COST INDEX	10-YEAR MAINTENANCE	ADA WHEELCHAIR ACCESS	BEST FIT FOR
Poured-in-Place (PIP) Rubber	$$$ (Higher upfront)	Very Low (periodic roll-coat)	★★★★★ (Best seamless access)	Inclusive city parks, high-traffic ISDs, zero daily raking.
Commercial Synthetic Turf + Pad	$$$ (Higher upfront)	Low (brushing / sanitizing)	★★★★☆ (Flush & natural look)	Schoolyards, early childhood centers, dog parks, nature themes.
Bonded Rubber Mulch (Unitary)	$$ (Moderate)	Low–Moderate	★★★★☆ (Unitary firm surface)	Nature play trails, tree groves, mid-budget inclusive upgrades.
Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF)	$ (Lowest upfront)	High (raking + top-off every 2–3 yrs)	★★★☆☆ (Requires compaction)	Budget-conscious new builds with active maintenance staff.

TEXAS COASTAL & WINDSTORM ENGINEERING NOTE (RGV & GULF COAST)

Projects in Cameron, Willacy, Hidalgo, Nueces, and coastal Texas counties often require 130–150+ MPH wind-load engineering and TDI/PE stamped drawings for shade structures and pavilions. Play RGV includes engineered footing specs upfront so permits never stall.

STEP 04 · TURNKEY CONSTRUCTION & SAFETY COMPLIANCE

Pre-Groundbreaking & CPSI Closeout Checklist

Every commercial park built by Play RGV is engineered and installed to pass third-party **Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI)** and ADA audits on opening day.

GOVERNING STANDARD	SCOPE OF STANDARD	CRITICAL COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION POINTS
ASTM F1487	Public Playground Equipment Safety	Head/neck entrapment (<3.5" or >9"), crush/shear points, protrusion gauges, guardrail/barrier heights, age-appropriate signage.
ASTM F1292	Surfacing Impact Attenuation (G-Max / HIC)	Surfacing critical fall height rating must meet or exceed the highest designated play surface (deck/climber top) in the use zone.
ASTM F1951 & 2010 ADA	Accessibility of Surface Systems & Play Components	Compliant accessible route to border, transfer system or ramp access to ≥50% of elevated play components, required ground-level types.
CPSC Pub. #325	Public Playground Safety Handbook	6-foot minimum use zone clearance, non-overlapping swing zones, sun/thermal hazard mitigation, hardware lock-nut security.

Pre-Groundbreaking Site Readiness Checklist

- ☐ **Texas 811 Locate Ticket Active:** All public & private irrigation/electrical lines marked on the ground 48+ hours before augering.
- ☐ **Submittals & Color Palette Signed:** Final 2D layout, post/plastic/fabric colors, and footing drawings approved in writing.
- ☐ **Staging & Perimeter Fencing:** Temporary 6' chain-link security fencing and concrete washout/spoils area designated.
- ☐ **Freight Receiving & Inventory Check:** Bill of Lading inspected upon offloading; all crates verified against packing list.
- ☐ **Concrete Cure Window Protected:** Footings cured prior to unitary PIP rubber pour or open public access.

Closeout Binder Deliverables (Handed to Owner)

- ☐ **As-Built Layout & Assembly Manuals:** Complete manufacturer installation drawings and part numbers for every SKU.
- ☐ **IPEMA & ASTM Certificates:** Official certificates of compliance for structures, freestanding events, and surfacing.
- ☐ **Warranty Certificates:** Structural post, rotational plastic, shade fabric, and surfacing warranty coverage documentation.
- ☐ **Post-Installation CPSI Punch Walk:** Final safety inspection sign-off before security fencing is removed.
- ☐ **Touch-Up Paint & Custom Bit Kit:** Tamper-resistant torx/pin-hex bits and factory touch-up paint handed to maintenance supervisor.

SINGLE-POINT TURNKEY ACCOUNTABILITY

When one partner handles equipment, shade, sub-base, installation, and surfacing, there is never finger-pointing between the concrete crew, the playground installer, and the surfacing team.

STEP 05 · SUSTAINABILITY, MAINTENANCE & NEXT STEPS

15-Year Maintenance Rhythm & Project Kickoff Form

Opening day is the start of your park's life. Establishing a simple 3-tier inspection schedule protects children, preserves manufacturer warranties, and shields your organization from liability.

INSPECTION CADENCE	PERFORMED BY	TIME REQUIRED	WHAT TO CHECK & LOG
Weekly / High-Frequency	Campus / Park Custodial Staff	15 mins	Broken glass/trash, vandalism, hornets/fire ants, displaced EWF mulch under swing seats & slide exits, standing water.
Monthly Operational Check	Maintenance Technician	45 mins	Swing clevis/shackle wear, S-hook gap (≤0.04"), loose tamper-resistant bolts, shade cable tension, gate latches, PIP seam edges.
Annual Comprehensive Audit	Certified CPSI (Play RGV or Staff)	2–3 hours	Full ASTM F1487 probe/gauge audit, structural corrosion check, surfacing compaction/depth audit, prioritized repair report.

READY TO START? COMPLETE & EMAIL TO PARTNERS@PLAYRGV.US OR CALL 956-321-3151

Request Your Free On-Site Walk-Through, 3D Concept & Turnkey Estimate

YOUR NAME & TITLE _____

ORGANIZATION / CITY / SCHOOL DISTRICT _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

PARK / CAMPUS ADDRESS & CITY _____

APPROXIMATE FOOTPRINT & BUDGET RANGE _____

WHAT SHOULD WE INCLUDE IN YOUR CONCEPT PACKET? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ Play Structure (Ages 2–5 / 5–12)
- ☐ Inclusive / All-Abilities Play
- ☐ Commercial Swings & Motion
- ☐ PIP Rubber / Turf / EWF Surfacing
- ☐ Shade Structures / Pavilions
- ☐ Splash Pad / Aquatic Features
- ☐ Dog Park Course & Amenities
- ☐ Benches, Tables & Site Furnishings
- ☐ BuyBoard / TIPS / Grant Pricing

Play RGV LLC — Commercial Playgrounds, Shade, Surfacing & Splash Pads
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