

For Immediate Release



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Toyota of Tri-Cities Rebuilding the Dream

[Kennewick, Wash] – Officials broke ground today on the second phase of the Toyota of Tri-Cities Playground of Dreams rebuild in Columbia Park, which will more than double the size of the partial structure that was constructed last year. The Tri-Cities landmark attraction is temporarily closed while crews install inclusive toys and surfacing that will enable kids of various abilities to play side-by-side with their peers. This second phase, largely funded by a title sponsorship from Toyota of Tri-Cities, is expected to be complete and the playground open before school gets out for summer.

Kennewick Mayor Don Britain said the rebuild ensures the legacy of the Playground of Dreams continues for future generations. The modern structure is constructed of durable materials that resist heat and splinters, includes custom elements iconic of the Tri-Cities, and features an inclusive design to accommodate a broad range of users with various abilities.

“The Playground of Dreams is an asset that will continue to speak to the investment we make now for the future, and we are grateful for the participation of our citizens and partnership of donors that contribute to the success of this project,” Britain said.

In addition to Toyota of Tri-Cities, the \$1 million rebuild has been financially supported by the Tri-City Water Follies, Columbia Center Rotary, Port of Kennewick, Laborers Union Local #348, KVEW TV, Conover Insurance, the Permobil Foundation, a donation fund balance from the original Playground of Dreams construction, and \$325,000 from the city budget.

Final completion of the playground is contingent upon sponsorship funds secured, said Parks and Recreation Commission Chair Ken Hahn. About \$100,000 is needed to purchase and install the zip line and an advanced climbing feature, which will officially complete the 1600 square foot inclusive playground as the community had envisioned.

The original wood playground that endured 19 years of weather and heavy use deteriorated, prompting its replacement. To remain compliant with safety standards and reduce risks of injury, the wood playground was removed last fall to make way for features the community identified during public input events, including an inclusive design, custom toys and sustainable materials. City of Kennewick Parks and Recreation Director Emily Estes-Cross reported while parts of the wood above ground looked to be healthy after years of resealing, during demolition it was discovered sections of the structure foundation were rotting.

Inscribed pickets purchased by donors that made up the fenceline of the original playground are available for pickup at the Southridge Sports and Events Complex during business hours. More information and a link to donate to the rebuild is available at Go2Kennewick.com/PlaygroundOfDreams.

For more information, please contact Emily Estes-Cross at (509) 585-4258 or emily.estes-cross@ci.kennewick.wa.us.

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