



BURLESON

INCLUSIVE & ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMMING – WORK SESSION

JOINT WORK SESSION – JUNE 18, 2026

PARK BOARD | PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES COMMITTEE | SPECIAL NEEDS COHORT

ALLISON SMITH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF RECREATION

Purpose of Tonight's Discussion

Objectives

- Review current inclusive and accessible recreation efforts
- Share recommendations developed through the Special Needs Cohort
- Identify priorities for future implementation
- Gather feedback from community stakeholders
- Develop recommendations for City Council

Desired Outcome

A shared roadmap for advancing inclusive recreation opportunities in Burleson.



Introductions & Goals

Recreation Should Be For Everyone

Who is at the table:

- Park Board
- People with Disabilities Committee
- Special Needs Cohort
- Burleson Parks and Recreation

Our goals are to:

- Reduce participation barriers
- Improve accessibility and awareness
- Increase community belonging
- Support individuals of all abilities
- Create opportunities for unified participation

Discussion Question

What does success look like for Burleson in five years?



Current Programs & Accommodations

Existing Efforts

- ✓ Special Needs Egg Hunt
- ✓ Sensory-Friendly Boo Bash Accommodations
- ✓ Center for ASD Partnerships
- ✓ Sensory Hours at Splash Pad
- ✓ Programs for Individuals with Different Abilities
- ✓ Sensory-Friendly Family Nights
- ✓ Adult Transition Program Partnership
- ✓ Sensory Aqua Egg Hunt
- ✓ Sensory-Friendly Carnival Hours

Discussion Question

Which current efforts have had the greatest impact?

Listening & Adapting

Changes Made Based on Community Feedback

- Sensory Time added to Aqua Egg Hunt
- Sensory-Friendly Carnival Hours
- Increased communication about accommodations
- Improved accessibility messaging

Guiding Principle

Listen → Adapt → Improve



Special Needs Cohort



Purpose

The cohort was established to:

Align community partners

Identify service gaps

Explore collaboration opportunities

Improve communication

Advance accessible recreation



Current Partners

Parks & Recreation

Center for ASD

BISD Special Education

People with Disabilities Committee Member

Human Resources

Community Organizations

Terminology

Moving Toward Unified Recreation

The cohort emphasized:

Prefer use of the term "Unified" over "Inclusive"

Whenever possible, create opportunities for individuals of all abilities to participate together.

WORDS HAVE POWER

Discussion Questions

What does "Unified Recreation" look like in Burleson?
Is there other terminology we should discuss?

Focus Area 1: BRiCk (Fitness & Wellness)

Recommendations

- Accessibility anchor charts
- Equipment accessibility guide
- Staff assistance promotion
- Fitness floor orientation
- Adaptive group fitness classes
- Fit at the BRiCk partnership
- Staff Training Partnerships

Discussion

Which of these initiatives should be prioritized first?

How can we create adaptive fitness opportunities that are inclusive and meaningful while recognizing that no single program may meet the needs of every individual?

Focus Area 2: Programming

Opportunities

- Unified Adult Basketball League
- Summer Camp Accommodations
- Partner with Special Olympics
- Unified Teen Movie Night
- Buddy Volunteer Program



Discussion

Which opportunities appear most achievable in the next 12 months?

Focus Area 3: Events

Recommendations

- Adult Adaptive Aqua Egg Hunt
- Expanded sensory hours
- Sensory and cool-down spaces
- Improved accommodation communication
- Earlier Bunny Daze adaptive hunt timeslot

Discussion

What accommodations should become standard practice at all city events?

Focus Area 4: Russell Farm Art Center

Opportunities

- Sensory-Friendly Fall Fest
- Sensory-Friendly Santa Experience
- Art Therapy Programs
- Parent Support Workshops
- Sensory-Friendly Farm Fun



Discussion

Russell Farm has known physical accessibility limitations. What opportunities exist to create meaningful and inclusive experiences for individuals with disabilities despite those challenges?

Focus Area 5: Communication & Outreach

Recommendations

- Dedicated Special Needs webpage
- Email notification list
- Enhanced promotion through BISD and Center for ASD partners
- Presence at BISD Special Needs Expo

Discussion

What communication barriers currently exist?

Focus Area 6: Accessibility, Parking, & Transportation

Recommendations

- Better handicap parking visibility
- Event transportation/shuttle opportunities
- Centennial Park sidewalk connection
- Improved accessibility communication



MAY 21-24
Old Town Burleson

HANDICAP PARKING	PARKING	STREET CLOSURE
CARNIVAL RIDES	FOOD	BTX STAFF
BTX VENDORS (SATURDAY ONLY)	GAMES	BPD

Discussion

What physical accessibility improvements should be prioritized?

Prioritization Exercise

Activity

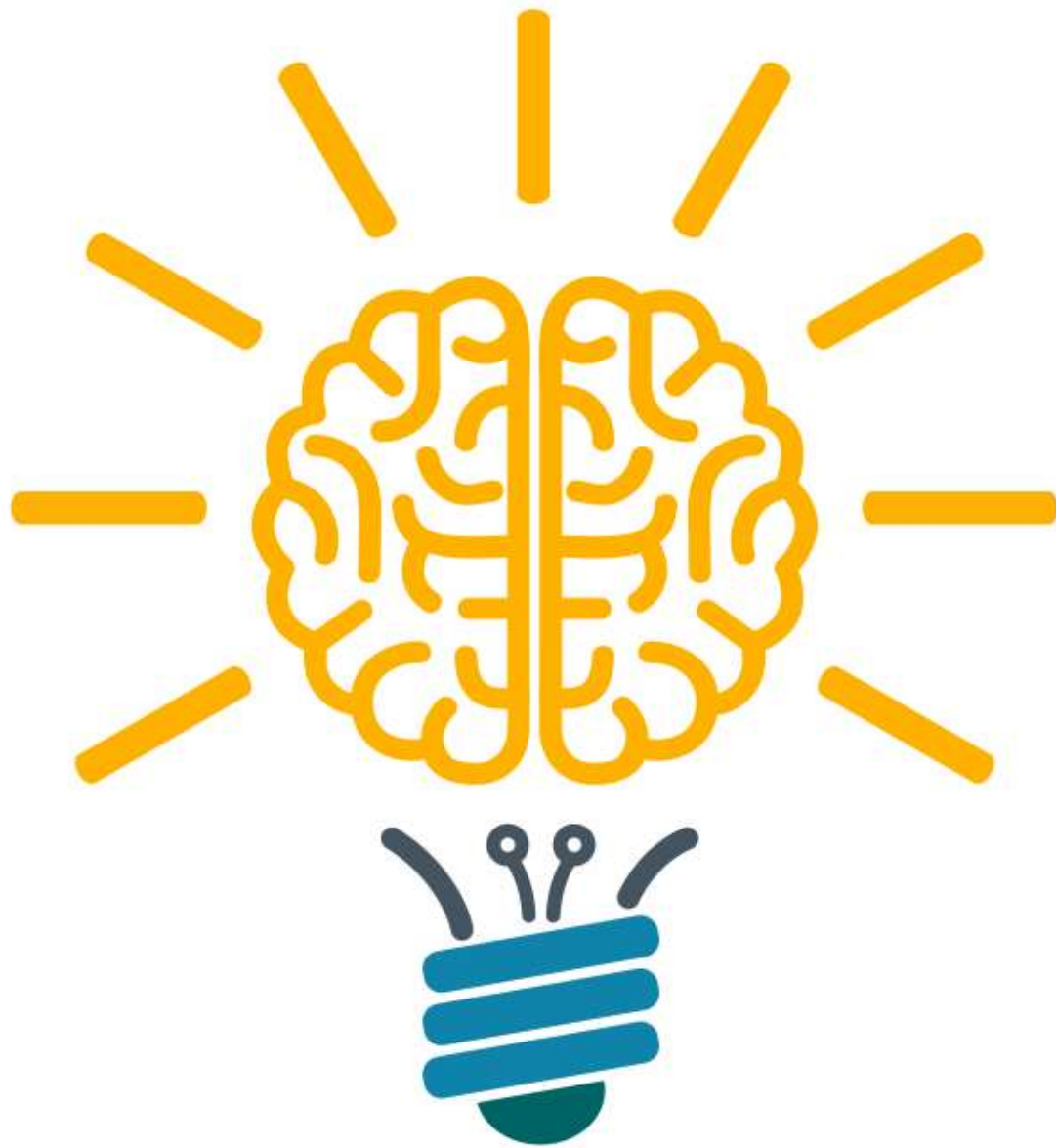
Each participant receives:

- 2 Priority votes in each category
- Vote for the initiatives you believe should be implemented first.

Evaluation Criteria

- Community Impact
- Cost
- Ease of Implementation
- Sustainability
- Number of People Served

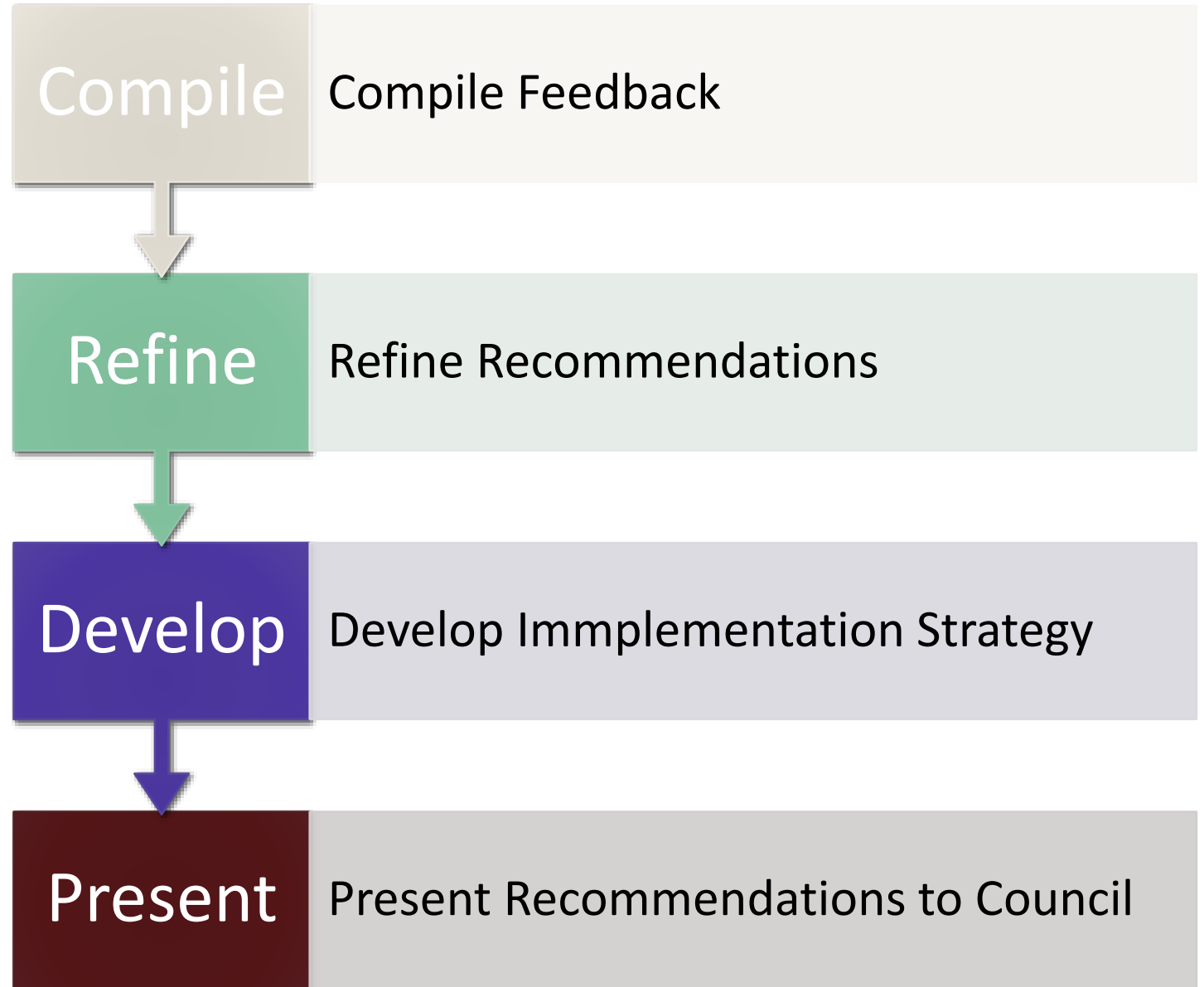




Top Priorities Discussion

1. What rose to the top?
2. Are any priorities missing?
3. What partnerships are needed?
4. What barriers should be addressed?

Next Steps



THANK YOU
