

Editorial: City is moving quickly to rebuild Romain playground

By The Editorial Board

UPDATE: City Hall spokesman told the Editorial Board on Tuesday night that the funding is in place and City Manager Bruce Rudd “has directed staff to expedite the replacement of the tot lot and shade structure at Romain.”

An arsonist or someone who was careless started a fire that burned down the Romain Park playground in southeast Fresno on the afternoon of Sept. 20.

We hope police find the culprit quickly, there’s a conviction and the sentence includes many hours of cleaning up Fresno parks.

While the police go about their work, there’s something the Fresno City Council can do: Approve the ordering of new equipment at Thursday’s meeting and make it clear to City Manager Bruce Rudd that rebuilding the playground is a priority.

City Hall spokesman Mark Standriff told the Editorial Board on Tuesday that Rudd is moving at full speed on the project, which we were glad to hear. In addition, Standriff said there’s a possibility that the replacement equipment, estimated to cost \$100,000, could be paid for with insurance money.

Romain provides a safe area for neighborhood children to play. In addition, south Fresno has less park space than other parts of our city. By acting quickly to rebuild the playground, city leaders will send a strong message to Romain-area residents that their children’s recreational opportunities are important.

Finally, as Mayor Ashley Swearengin puts together her final budget in 2016, she should consider installing security video systems in at least some parks. Cameras help identify lawbreakers and deter vandalism.