



Metro Parks' Capital Spending Plan, approved by Metro Council on July 17, includes \$14.5 million in enhancements to the system, \$2.7 million for deferred maintenance and \$8 million for the first phase of the city's Riverfront Development Plan.

This year's capital spending projects are focused primarily on improvements to playgrounds, sports fields, and greenways. The projects are consistent with recommendations in the Master Plan for Parks and Greenways, and do not create significant burdens on future operating budgets. The park playgrounds proposed for FY08 include: Buena Vista, Coleman, Oakwood, Tony Rose, Shelby, Caldwell and Una. School playgrounds scheduled for replacement this fiscal year include: Granberry, Chadwell, Pennington, Percy Priest, Haywood, and Alex Green.

The Riverfront Development Plan was developed with the input of thousands of citizens and in six public meetings over the course of a year forming the basis for a master plan that was created by a professional design team. The plan emphasizes the importance of the river as an environmental, recreational and economic development asset and is designed to provide new attractions and parkland giving locals and tourists a reason to come and enjoy both sides of the riverfront.

The Riverfront Plan would double the size of current area to 120 acres and includes features such as: boardwalks, overlooks, piers, performance spaces, wetlands, plazas, new docking facilities and open play space.

In 2001, the city's park system celebrated its 100 year anniversary. To commemorate the event, Mayor Bill Purcell initiated the development of a Master Plan for the city's parks and greenways. The plan, which comprehensively documented existing park and recreational resources and facilities, is not only the roadmap for future development of the parks system, but the main catalyst for protecting important natural resources and valuable open space throughout the county. Comprehensive in its approach, the Master Plan documented and accessed existing park and recreational resources, identified under-served areas, and aggressively solicited input and involvement from the entire city, which resulted in more than a dozen public meetings and over 1,000 comments from residents.

The Master Plan proposed acquisition of nearly 2,000 acres of new parklands, expansion of cultural programs, new regional facilities, and improvements that will impact every Metro park within Nashville/Davidson County. A major goal of the plan is to make sure the majority of the population is within one-half mile of a park and for all residents to be within two miles of a greenway. Additional highlights of the plan included: building a skate park; constructing new regional community centers at Hadley, East, Richland, Coleman, Sevier Parks; revitalizing the partnership with Metro Schools by providing

playgrounds at all elementary schools and creating adjacent “community campuses” to increase public recreation space; expanding environmental, teen, and cultural programming; building nearly 200 miles of greenway trails to link parks, neighborhoods and schools; and making significant enhancement to Wave Country, the city’s popular wave-action pool.

In 2002, Mayor Purcell recommended and Council approved funding of \$34 million to improve and add new parks and facilities to our system. It was the largest appropriation in the history of the department and an important step in building a world-class park system.

The cost estimate for improvements to the park system are divided into two categories - Deferred Maintenance and Recommended Enhancements. The Deferred Maintenance costs are for improvements that are needed to keep existing parks and facilities in a condition where they can fulfill a useful life cycle, maintain recreational viability, and repair facilities as needed to ensure public safety and accessibility.

Recommended Enhancements are for new and significantly enhanced community centers, recreational facilities, substantial general accessibility improvements, an expanded greenways system, parkland acquisition, and a variety of other regional and community projects will provide needed facilities to meet the demands of the population as it grows over the next 20 years.

The projected population and commercial growth of Nashville over the next 20 years will challenge the city to provide adequate recreational opportunities and park facilities for its citizens. The Master Plan provides the community with a guide to meet future recreational needs.

The population growth and the accompanying land development will continue to reduce options available to Metro regarding additions and improvements to the parks and greenways system. Therefore, it is an important time to consider and assess the current state of Metro’s parks, and to map out a guide to preserving and adequately maintaining the city’s land and facilities and providing for the future parks and facilities. Ultimately, the quality of life for all citizens in 2020 will reflect the early, aggressive actions taken to implement Mayor Bill Purcell’s Master Plan for Parks and Greenways.