



**City of Nicholasville Mayor's Office  
Jessamine County Judge/Executive Office**

**May 8, 2025**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***A Parks Renaissance in the Bluegrass  
Nicholasville & Jessamine County Unite for Unprecedented Investment  
Community Recreation Center to be the Crown Jewel: Groundbreaking May 8 at 1 p.m.***

**NICHOLASVILLE, Ky.**— In a powerful show of unity and vision, Nicholasville and Jessamine County have sparked a full-fledged *parks renaissance* — transforming local green spaces into dynamic, community-defining assets. Over the past two years, this rapidly growing Central Kentucky region has seen its park system expand not only in size but also in quality, scope, and vision.

“In the 10 years I’ve been Judge/Executive, the city and county have worked hard to support each other and take positive steps forward together,” said Jessamine County Judge/Executive David West. “This collaboration shows what’s possible when we focus on what truly matters — the people we serve.”

**Big Dreams, Bigger Parks**

The partnership has led to landmark acquisitions and enhancements:

- The City of Nicholasville purchased the former Lone Oak Country Club, adding an additional public swimming pool and former 18-hole golf course to its properties.
- Jessamine County acquired land adjacent to the existing John Preece Park, expanding the park's footprint and setting the stage for even more amenities.

Together, these investments added 216 acres to the local park system, which now spans 466 acres across the county — a 150% increase in public recreation space.

“Parks shape how people experience where they live. They bring families together, encourage wellness, and build a stronger sense of community,” said Nicholasville Mayor Alex Carter. “Thanks to these federal funds and our shared vision, we’ve been able to dream bigger — and deliver on it.”

## **From Pickleball to a Premier Rec Center**

Enhancements are already visible across the system: a new splash pad, restrooms, pickleball courts, and a donated turf field — originally used at the Caesars Superdome by the New Orleans Saints — which is now a regional draw for athletic events and community use.

Plans for the former golf course are in development. However, a new driving range will open in the city's newest park, located at the end of Lone Oak Drive, in May, accompanied by a ribbon-cutting ceremony and a "Long Drive Contest."

And the centerpiece of this renaissance is coming soon. The John Preece Park Recreation Center, a joint \$11 million construction project shared equally between the city and county. The 59,000-square-foot facility will feature four full-size basketball courts, meeting rooms, and event spaces — anchoring what will become a more than 100-acre sports and recreation complex. The groundbreaking is planned for May 8 at 1 p.m.

"The Recreation Center is more than a building — it's a symbol of what's possible when we invest in people's well-being," said Mayor Carter.

Multi-purpose paths have been added along the recently extended Eastern Bypass and are under development along KY 29 between West Jessamine High and Middle Schools, making many of the parks more accessible. The community has miles of walking/biking paths completed or underway.

## **People Powering the Vision**

Behind the bricks and blueprints lies a team dedicated to creating parks that are inclusive, accessible, and vibrant with activity.

That includes director Anessa Snowden, who joined the Nicholasville-Jessamine County Parks and Recreation Department last year. A certified recreation therapist and ECU alum, Snowden brings a wealth of experience in park and event management honed in multiple states.

"We want to create more recreation and leisure opportunities for our younger kids to our active aging population along with providing beautiful parks for the community to enjoy. There can be something for everyone!" Snowden said. "With the addition of the new community recreation center, we will soon be adding more recreation programming for all ages and abilities. We will have opportunities for active and passive recreation. It's great to

see the community and its leadership on fire for parks and to be a part of something spectacular - our Parks and Recreation Department.”

There is much work to be done to bring the parks up to the level that Snowden and community leaders aspire to. Well-manicured, attractive, and engaging parks require sustained support, which is a commitment that elected leaders have made for the community.

In the meantime, Snowden invites everyone in the region to join in the many options for lifetime activities in Nicholasville, which include family fun days and community foot races held throughout the year.

Residents and visitors are also invited to enjoy the recently renovated Aquatic Center, which offers updated amenities and seasonal programming for all ages.

To learn more, view upcoming events, or get involved, visit <https://njcpr.org>. And for local government information, visit [nicholasville.org](https://nicholasville.org) and [jessamineky.gov](https://jessamineky.gov)

### **Comprehensive List of Improvements:**

#### **John Preece Park:**

Construction of Multi-Purpose turf field  
Currently planning for construction of  
concession and restroom facilities

#### **Riney B Park:**

Riney B Aquatics Center pool renovations  
Performance Stage

#### **Lake Mingo Park:**

New Splash Pad  
Updated walking trail with new asphalt  
New public bathrooms  
New parking lot to increase parking  
Accessible fishing pier

#### **City County Park:**

Blacktop resurfacing and parking area  
expansion  
New border fencing  
New pickleball court construction

#### **Lone Oak:**

Purchase Lone Oak Golf Course and Pool  
Pool construction project  
New pickleball courts  
Golf driving range

#### **Rock Fence Park:**

Performance Stage