

June 29, 2009 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



County Commission Aims to Inform Citizens about Upcoming Parks Vote *Renewal Referendum on August 4th Ballot*

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Seeking to inform voters in Platte County about the upcoming referendum on the parks tax renewal, Platte County Presiding Commissioner Betty Knight presented the newly adopted Parks Plan to the KC/Platte County Park Partners group on Thursday, June 25th. "I think it is important that the citizens of Platte County have this opportunity to decide the future of our parks program" commented Commissioner Knight, "informed voters make good decisions".

The recently adopted Parks Plan sets out priorities for the county-wide system of parks, trails, and community centers and how they will be maintained. If approved by county voters August 4th, improvements would include:

- new walking and biking trails in the county, including connecting the Missouri Riverfront Trail to new trails along Brush Creek and Line Creek
- expanded community centers with more space for fitness equipment and larger swimming pools
- improvements to parks including more playgrounds, walking paths, natural areas and fields for kids to play on

The highest priority of the new parks plan according to Commissioner Knight is to continue to provide parks that are well maintained and safe. "We need to take care of what has been built" Knight noted,

“this new plan balances maintenance with new improvements that the citizens told us were at the top of their list”.

Funding from the original parks tax, approved by voters in 2000, has gone to protecting over 800 acres of open space, five new parks, fifteen miles of trails, and two community centers. Funding has also been provided through the Parks and Recreation Outreach Grant Program to cities, schools, and athletic associations in Platte County.

Continuing to leverage sales funds through partnerships is a big part of the new plan. Since 2001 over \$17 Million has been leveraged through donations from partners such as the City of Kansas City for the Springs Aquatic Center, and other state and federal park grants received by the County.

On May 21st the County Commission unanimously passed an Ordinance placing the issue before the voters. The public vote is scheduled to be held on August 4th, 2009. The question on the ballot will decide whether or not to renew and continue the dedicated half-cent (1/2) sales tax to fund maintenance and improvement of the County parks system. The renewed tax would sunset in ten years.

For more information on the new Park System Master Plan, including a summary of where funds from the renewed tax would be allocated if approved by voters, visit www.platteparks.com or contact the County Commissioners at 816.853.3335.

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