



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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County, West Platte Break Ground on Benner Park
-new baseball/softball fields on schedule for 2009

Platte County and West Platte R-II School District officials formally broke ground for the Benner Park project on Tuesday, July 22nd. "I'm just so happy to get this park going and so thankful for the fantastic partnership we have with West Platte" commented Jim Plunkett, Platte County Commissioner for the Weston area. "The new ballfields will fill a need we've had in Weston for a long time, and will be a nice compliment to the existing high school field and soccer field." In addition to the two youth fields, other improvements including a walking trail, playground, and a future concession/restroom facility.

Funding for Benner Park comes from the County's dedicated parks and recreation sales tax fund. Additional funds are being provided by the School and grants from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the Kansas City Power and Light Company. Construction of the park includes remodeling of the parking areas and a new entrance to the park off of Washington Street. The park was named for the family of Mr. Earl Benner of Weston, who donated the land that the new fields are located upon adjacent to the school campus.

The master plan for the park was jointly developed by Platte County Parks and Recreation, the School District, and a committee of Weston area residents. The park will be maintained by the School and utilized for physical education classes and the Weston Sports Association for youth baseball and softball programs.

In addition to the start of Benner Park, the County will also open the first leg of the Missouri Riverfront Trail in August, a 3.5 mile hiking and biking path between Riverside and Parkville.

Platte County is in its eighth year of implementing the *Parks System Master Plan* for new recreational amenities in all areas of the County. Approved by the voters in August of 2000, over 50 million dollars in improvements have been made from the dedicated parks tax. In 2004 and 2005 the County opened the Platte County Community Centers, the Prairie Creek Greenway Trail, Platte Purchase Park and Platte Ridge Park. The Parks Department is now updating the master plan to look at future needs of the community. More information on the parks in Platte County and the plan update are available at www.platteparks.com.



Standing at the actual site of home plate for the new baseball field, officials turn the first ceremonial shovels of dirt for Benner Park

Pictured left to right are Zim Hull, Jim Plunkett, Betty Knight, Earl Benner, Clark Benner, Quint Shaffer, Janet Waddell, Laurie Burgess, and Paul Norman

Two new baseball/softball fields, a walking trail and new playground are included in the Benner Park Master Plan in Weston, Missouri.

