

SUBURBS

What will Millington's new park project include? Amphitheater, soccer fields and much more



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Ground has been broken on a \$9 million recreational project that will bring sports fields, disc golf, an amphitheater and more to Millington.

In partnership with Shelby County, the \$40 million [Big Creek Resilience Project](#) in Millington will cover more than 1,200 acres of land, including a park area that city officials said will provide community benefits through connectivity of greenway trails, walking paths, ball fields and other recreational amenities.

The park will be located off Armitage Drive near the intersection of U.S. 51 and Tennessee 385, just southwest of Millington's youth baseball complex along Jack Huffman Boulevard. It will double as a floodway that will redirect and retain flood waters, protecting the Naval Support Activity Mid-South base and surrounding community from inundation.

The park project is planned to include a playground, four multipurpose soccer fields, an amphitheater stage, 18-hole disc golf course, a boardwalk, several walking trails, pedestrian bridge and pedestrian underpass and parking lot areas. [Millington's City Manager Frankie Dakin](#) said the amphitheater is planned to be around a 500-seat facility.



Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris, left, and Millington City Manager Frankie Dakin visits the site of a major recreational project in Millington. The future park area is part of the Big Creek Resilience Project. *Stu Boyd II-The Commercial Appeal*

He noted the overall plan of the park has been in the works since 2016. However, it was slowed both by the flooding that significantly impacted Millington in 2010 and 2011, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic. Ground was officially broken on May 4.

Dakin said once the county finishes construction of the park — expected in May 2026 — it will turn over the "keys" to Millington to do maintenance and run the park. Shelby County is involved in the Big Creek Resilience Project because the funds were awarded to the Shelby County Division of Planning and Development, according to county officials.

Dakin said it's important for the park to be an area for all of Shelby County to enjoy.

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"We're already making investment to be able to run this park efficiently," he said. "Most people in our area don't understand how amazing this park is going to be. Nobody gets the minor details of like an amphitheater is coming, which is going to be really beneficial for this park. It's (the park) a prime location at the gateway to our city with easy access for all Shelby County residents to have a new hub for outdoor recreation and community events."

What impact could park project have on Millington?

Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris recently toured the area where the park will be developed. The tour included a drone presentation showing the layout of the park. Harris said the park has a chance to be another Shelby Farms in Memphis because of all the trails and the outdoor acreage.

Harris said the county constantly hears from residents about the dearth of soccer fields in Memphis and Shelby County.

"We always need more of those (soccer fields), and we're going to find users for that," Harris said. "With this park, we know the families are going to get out here and enjoy the weather. It's something special about living in the South, but there's something even more special about being able to go outside and watch your kid kick the soccer ball and enjoy a day outdoors."

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The Big Creek Resilience Project includes a planned \$9 million recreational area in Millington. Ground was broken on the park project on May 4. *Stu Boyd II-The Commercial Appeal*

Harris said the park, along with its amenities, is another feather in the cap to attract people to move to Millington. The Shelby County suburb also is known for having a strong concentration of military personnel in the area. The Naval Support Activity Mid-South base — [Millington's largest employer](#) — employs roughly 6,500 military, civilian and contract personnel. The \$25 million, 45,000-square-foot [Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic](#) that is expected to be completed by late December is projected to employ 120 people once constructed.

“I think this is the kind of stuff to attract young families,” Harris said. “I think Millington is trying to frame themselves as attractive to families and attractive to retirees and those that have a military background. So, they’re trying to take advantage of their strengths and they’re trying to expand on those strengths.”

What is the purpose of the Big Creek Resilience Project?

The Big Creek Resilience Project was in response to the devastating flooding that took place in Millington in 2010 and 2011. Dakin noted about \$30 million has been invested in a flood resiliency project constructed along Big Creek between U.S. 51 and Raleigh-Millington Road. He added that portions of the Big Creek levee have been raised to increase flood capacity, while large flood pumps have been installed to move excess water over the levee during high-water events.

Additionally, heavy stormwater infrastructure improvements have been made to the Big Creek and Royster Creek channels. The Millington Fire Department also has invested more than \$250,000 in training and equipment for water rescue operations, according to Dakin.

“While future flooding cannot be completely ruled out, the City (of Millington), alongside federal, state and county partners has made substantial investments to increase community resilience,” Dakin said.

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The Big Creek Resilience Project includes a planned \$9 million recreational area in Millington. It will include sports fields, an amphitheater, walking trails and more. *City Of Millington*