

Lamar County is putting money awarded from an MDOT grant toward building a high quality park on Hegwood Road adjacent to Optimist Baseball Park.

Lamar County is putting money from an MDOT grant to good use.

MDOT awarded Lamar County with a \$300,000 grant which required a \$100,000 match from the county.

District 4 Supervisor Phillip Carlisle said he is grateful to Tom King from MDOT. He is using the money to build a high quality park on Hegwood Road adjacent to Optimist Baseball Park.

"The kids that play usually have little brothers and sisters who haven't had anything to do in the past," Carlisle said.

He says this location, although not geographically in the center of the county, it is in the middle of the heaviest populated area.

"We're a county that's probably doubled in size in 15-20 years, and it's just my opinion that we've got work to do in parks and recreation, and I think this is a good start," Carlisle said. "I'm interested in increasing parks from Sumrall all the way down to Lumberton."

Lamar County resident, Ashley Norton agrees that the county needs parks.

"I'm a mother of two small children, and right now I really don't have a lot of options within Lamar county to take my children for a playground here, so it'll be great for our community for the health of citizens to get people out and exercising and playing is great, and I think it creates a sense of community, too, to be able to meet up with others in your community and play together," Norton said.

She is heading up an organization called Lamar County Park Partners to raise funds for playground equipment. She says right now they're still in the planning stage.

"We're just trying to get input from lots of different people in the community for what specifically they'd like to see on the site as we move forward," Norton said.

She said the group would like to invite anyone who would like to help in any capacity to visit their Facebook page - park partners - or E-mail lamarcountyparkpartners@gmail.com .

Carlisle said in addition to the two playground areas, the park will have an 8-foot wide, 1/3 mile long walking track.

The building contract was awarded to Neil Shafer of Hattiesburg, and Carlisle said the park should be finished by this time next year.

WHLT22 (2013). Lamar County makes plans for new park. Retrieved 10 August 2013 from WHLT22: <http://www.whlt.com/story/23097440/lamar-county-makes-plans-for-new-park>