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NEWS RELEASE

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BETHESDA PARK GETTING POOL, FOOTBALL FACILITIES

(Lawrenceville, Ga., June 21, 2005) – Major improvements are coming soon to Gwinnett County's Bethesda Park, located on Bethesda Church Road at Ronald Reagan Parkway between Lilburn and Lawrenceville.

An indoor aquatic center with a separate warm water pool, a new football complex and picnic area are included in the \$10.4 million contract approved Tuesday by the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners. Low bidder Cooper & Company General Contractors, Inc. will build the new facilities.

The pool facilities will have water play structures similar to the indoor pool at Bogan Park in the Hamilton Mill area according to Phil Hoskins, director of Community Services. The indoor leisure pool will feature a 100-foot long water slide, lazy river, and water play structures. In addition, an instructional pool will provide for hydro-aerobic classes and swimming instruction.

The new football complex will include a lighted youth football field with additional space for cheerleading and a lighted walking track around the football field.

District 4 Commissioner Kevin Kenerly said, "As a long-time youth football coach, I'm especially pleased to see the football complex happening, although I know the aquatic center will be very popular as well."

Board Chairman Charles Bannister pointed out that "it's another example of investing in the older areas of the county to help keep them attractive and dynamic."

The park loop road will be completed, along with adequate parking for all of the planned improvements. Funding for the park improvements comes from the voter-approved special purpose local option sales tax, or SPLOST. Gwinnett officials will host a groundbreaking ceremony for the Bethesda Park expansion at the park on Monday, June 27 at 2:30 p.m.

Bethesda Park already features more than a dozen baseball, softball, and soccer fields, the Gwinnett Senior Center, two playgrounds plus a 1.5-mile trail around a lake on its 159 acres.

The mission of Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation (GCPR) is to provide quality parks and leisure activities to the citizens of Gwinnett County. GCPR manages 30 park sites, with 16 more scheduled for future development. The park system totals nearly 7,800 acres.

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