

City of Lewiston Receives \$30,000 Walt Disney “Meet Me at the Park” Grant for First-in-Maine Universally Accessible Playground



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LEWISTON: The City of Lewiston has been selected to receive a \$30,000 play space grant from The Walt Disney Company in support of the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) and Disney’s combined goal of providing one million kids and families with greater access to play. The funds will be utilized towards the first-in-Maine universally accessible playground at Marcotte Park, Lewiston, which is slated to be *“in the ground”* by fall 2018. The City of Lewiston is 1 of 25 cities and parks & recreation agencies selected nationwide!

Maine Senator Nate Libby, who has championed the project, notes, ***“This project has been years in the making so on behalf of Lewiston area kids, we are so very thankful for this generous contribution and look forward to opening our playground later this year.”***

Lewiston’s Community Relations Coordinator Dottie Perham-Whittier, who has worked closely with Libby on the project, adds, ***“At this playground, no one needs to watch from the sidelines, as all children—regardless of ability—can play side by side. We are also very proud that Lewiston will be the first city in Maine to have a universally accessible playground.”***

As part of the national Meet Me at the Park Program, park and recreation agencies across the country were invited to share their best ideas on increasing access to play spaces for children and families in their communities. Agencies with the most innovative and impactful project ideas were chosen to receive \$30,000 grants to build their projects.

“NRPA is proud to collaborate with The Walt Disney Company to help more children and families experience the benefits of play,” said Kellie May, NRPA Director of Health and Wellness. ***“By increasing access to play spaces, this program will also provide unique activities tailored to the local community that support healthy lifestyles.”***

Other places that received a grant were: Birmingham, Alabama; Pine Bluff, Arkansas; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Broward County, Florida; Augusta, Georgia; Des Moines, Iowa; Vinton, Iowa; Highland, Illinois; Marion Park District, Illinois; Unified Government of Wyandotte County, Kansas; Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, Minnesota; Greensboro, North Carolina; Mount Airy, North Carolina; Columbus, Ohio; Toledo, Ohio; Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma; Coatesville, Pennsylvania; Central Falls, Rhode Island; Florence, South Carolina; Hidalgo County, Texas; Burlington, Vermont; Bremerton, Washington; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Greater Huntington, West Virginia.

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all Americans have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation, and social equity. Through its network of over 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org, and to learn more about the Meet Me at the Park Program, please visit: www.nrpa.org/disney.

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