

A Park for All: The City of Natchez Celebrates the Reopening of the North Natchez Youth Center

The Historic City of Natchez proudly announces the grand reopening of the North Natchez Youth Center on Thursday, August 3, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

NATCHEZ, MS, UNITED STATES, July 28, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Get ready to pack your picnic baskets and grab your tennis rackets and basketballs! The Historic [City of Natchez](#) proudly announces the grand reopening of the North Natchez Youth Center on Thursday, August 3, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. The event is free and open to the public and all are invited to attend. The Youth Center is located at 8 Triumph Lane in Natchez—directly behind Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church on North Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.



Alderwoman Valencia Hall, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee, in front of the Restored North Natchez Youth Center she helped make a reality.

“

This project celebrates the essence of community—this is truly a park for us all.”

*Valencia Hall, Natchez
Alderwomen, Ward 1*

“After many years as a boarded up building, the North Natchez Youth Center is poised to be a beacon of hope and renewal for the citizen of Natchez,” said Mayor Dan M. Gibson. “Our aim is to provide a much-needed community center while empowering our youth to explore their talents and reach their full potential.”

With a focus on fostering creativity, education, and a spirit of camaraderie, the center will offer an array of dynamic programs and activities led by the City's [Parks and](#)

[Recreation Department](#).

Alderwoman Valencia Hall, who chairs the city's Parks and Recreation Committee, is ecstatic, as the ribbon-cutting holds particular importance to her. “I remember when I was a Girl Scout

Brownie. Our little troop met at the Youth Center," recalls Hall. "Many memories of fun and friendship, like learning to play tennis with my sisters, happened here."

The park site was originally part of Anchorage Plantation then sold as a farm to Melchior Roch Beltzhoover. Over the years, by 1959, it became property of the Natchez Adams School Board. In 1974, the property was divided, giving the city control of the property and youth center building with the school board maintaining control over the school and baseball field. During segregation, the park served as a haven for the black community. The building dates back to 1917, and over time it fell into disrepair. Hall is passionate about bringing joy back to this park. "This project celebrates the essence of community—this is truly a park for us all."

Together, Hall, the Natchez Mayor and Board of Aldermen, and Carter Burns, Executive Director of the [Historic Natchez Foundation](#), worked successfully with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History to place the Youth Center building on the Mississippi Historic Landmark list for pending approval.

Burns commends Hall for her leadership. "Having served on the Historic Natchez Foundation Board of Directors, the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and The Preservation Commission, there was no one more suited to mentor this project than Valencia," says Burns. "Her attention to preservation detail was rigorous."



The official seal of the Historic City of Natchez



The renovation is a milestone in the almost \$3 Million dollar overall renovation of the six Natchez city parks, part of the city's "Natchez Renewal". Park improvements include all new playground equipment, signage, renovated bathrooms, and grounds improvements. Youth Center renovation costs totaled \$959,406, with \$445,300 coming from a 2021 Recreation Bond and \$514,106 from a Capital Improvement General Obligation Bond.

Fittingly, Pastor Melvin White, Senior Pastor of Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church, will offer the event invocation. Remarks and acknowledgments will follow by Mayor Dan Gibson and Alderwoman Valencia Hall. Participants in the ribbon cutting will also include the Natchez Board of Aldermen, Director of Community Development James Johnston, Interim Director of the Parks and Recreation Ryan Porter, Architect Johnny Waycaster, Contractor Chris Smith, and others. A tour of the facility will follow.

The North Natchez Park amenities include a new playground, tennis and basketball courts, a large pavilion for gatherings and cook-outs, and a now beautifully and historically renovated Youth Center, which will house a kitchen, and offices, one of which will be the Department of Parks and Recreation office. The Youth Center is open with reservations only through the Natchez Parks and Recreation Department or by calling the Mayor's Office.

Ryan Porter, Interim Director
Natchez Parks and Recreation Department
+1 601-446-2580

rporter@natchez.ms.us

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Other](#)



A view of the new playground equipment at the city's North Natchez Park, located Wilson Road and Triumph Lane.

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/646961700>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.