



National Fitness Campaign To Unveil Jerseyville's New Fitness Court At Lions Club Park

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JERSEYVILLE – Later this spring, the City of Jerseyville, in partnership with local community donors and the national consulting organization known as the National Fitness Campaign (NFC), will be unveiling the city's new Fitness Court® at Jerseyville's Lions Club Park.

The construction of this recreational innovation is already underway at the corner of North Jefferson and East Spruce streets and will offer locals and visitors alike with a

free-of-charge community resource featuring seven functional training zones as well as a supporting mobile app. The free app, “Fitness Court,” is available for both iOS and Android and affords users with a coach-in-your-pocket style platform adaptable for all fitness levels.

When the COVID-19 crisis emerged, communities responded by making local health a top priority, which positively impacted the NFC’s goal to partner with 10,000 communities across the globe by 2030. Jerseyville city leaders were already seeking to improve quality of life through investment in parks and public spaces, so when City Councilman Kevin Stork was made aware of the opportunity, he began his efforts to bring the Fitness Court® to Jerseyville.

“We’re trying to transform Lions Club Park,” Kevin Stork, Commissioner of Accounts and Finance, said. “In coming out of COVID, we’re also trying to find ways to engage the community in outdoor activities as a means to further that transformation while promoting public wellness.”

Councilman Stork engaged with Zach Crawford, Commissioner of Public Property, in taking the next steps. They found that only a handful of Illinois communities were home to a Fitness Court®, so they soon realized that this facility would help give Jerseyville a cutting edge on community wellness.

In 2021, Jerseyville was one of several dozen select recipients from around the country that were awarded a \$25,000 competitive grant from the NFC and the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association to bring the Fitness Court® to Jerseyville. In addition to grant dollars, additional funding for the project was made possible through a public-private partnership of city funds as well as numerous local private sponsors, who will be recognized on the primary wall of the fitness facility. Private fundraising was completed through the efforts of Tyler Hermens, Jerseyville Parks and Recreation Director, in order to make the project possible, with JCH Healthcare serving as the primary corporate donor.

“The Jerseyville Parks and Recreation Department is excited to bring this innovative project to Jerseyville,” Councilman Crawford said. “We remain committed to being proactive and progressive in making quality of life improvements with both our parks and city-wide, and this project is a great launching point for our long-term plans.”

Those long-term plans consist of a multiple-phase project to transform both the Lions Club Park and the adjoining Wittman Park into a complex supporting not only health and wellness, but arts and entertainment as well. As part of the city’s long-term Capital Improvement Plan, increased recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages are a key priority. With the park complex being centrally located in the city and in

close proximity to the downtown corridor, the city is envisioning a complete transformation of this park space in the coming years. In addition to the NFC outdoor fitness court, the planned project scope includes new pickleball courts, rehab of basketball courts, sand volleyball, ADA-compliant playset, new restroom facilities, splash pad, outdoor amphitheater with hillside seating and improvements to the Feyerabend Building.

“I think this is a great investment for the health and wellness of our community,” Crawford said.

These improvements to the Lions Club and Wittman Parks will serve to strengthen the amenities offered in and around the Historic City Center Park in Downtown Jerseyville by not only buttressing the city’s commitment to public health, but by also strengthening the tie between local cultural sites, parks and recreation facilities and downtown businesses. Residents are invited to attend an opening day launch event in May, with more details on that date forthcoming. The community will be able to try the Fitness Court® and learn about upcoming community wellness events and programming. Local ambassadors from Jerseyville Parks & Rec, and our partners from the JCH Wellness Center and Jersey Community High School will be available for assistance with utilizing the outdoor equipment, as well as the app. For more information contact the Jerseyville Parks and Recreation Department at 618-498-2222 option 5.

ABOUT NFC:

National Fitness Campaign (NFC) is a social enterprise – founded in San Francisco, California in 1979 – that specializes in funding, activating, and promoting healthy infrastructure through partnerships with cities and schools. Now operating in over 150 cities, NFC's unique program delivers consulting services and an integrated wellness initiative to communities, centered on the world’s best outdoor gym: The Fitness Court®. Our mission is to design healthy infrastructure for cities to improve the quality of life for people. Learn more about NFC at NationalFitnessCampaign.com and follow us on social @NatFitCampaign.