
NEWS

Bathrooms hold up hoops at park Residents abuzz about opening

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The courts have been paved. The goals are standing. The backboards are ready.

They all have been ready for months.

But the park can't open until the facilities are approved. That's right: the bathrooms.

The new Cleveland Park area basketball courts would have opened months ago, according to Spartanburg County Parks and Recreation director Jeff Caton. But bathrooms the county purchased through a federal government program that contracts with an approved list of builders have yet to gain approval from inspectors with the city of Spartanburg, Caton said. So while the weather warms up, the Northside community, which saw the basketball courts taken out of plans for the new Cleveland Park, waits. "We're thinking let's fix the toilets and get it up. It's almost into the summer," said Sheila Dogan, a community activist with Stop the Violence. Dogan and her organization helped find a location for the new courts after plans for Cleveland Park were unveiled. The courts are near the Spartanburg County Fairgrounds. According to Caton, they should open within the next two weeks after the restrooms are upgraded and approved. "We know people are ready to use the facility," he said. Caton said his department considered using portable toilets but decided they would promote the wrong image. Caton said he is working with Dogan and other community leaders to set up a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the courts. Meanwhile, neighborhood residents -- and folks countywide -- are awaiting the completion of renovations to Cleveland Park. The park will feature a

reconstructed lake, new playground equipment and an events center. Caton explained that some of the site work -- especially soil where the lake has been reconfigured -- took longer than expected. He now believes the park will open no earlier than late June. Residents are eager for the park to open, and Dogan said progress on the renovations has people buzzing. "They are excited," she said. "To see it come along ... the excitement is building every month."

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