

“Are you excited?”

This is the number one question I get asked these days, and it's usually in reference to the construction of Madison Avenue Central Park. My answer is always, “Yes!” I am very excited to see the community vision of a central park come to life. From concept to design and now to steel and stone, it is an incredible addition to Derby.

That's not the only reason I am excited about Derby parks. I am excited each day as I visit our public spaces and see people of all ages enjoying activities, walking their dogs or biking along our path system. It is a reminder that Derby is an active and engaged community. Our parks are used and enjoyed by many, and we must be vigilant in their care, maintenance and redevelopment. Parks grow and develop over time, and many projects are happening to keep our parks fresh.

Garrett Park has become more than a baseball complex as the Walk of Freedom veterans' memorial developed. As this park grows into its new identity, we are working to redevelop the ballfield and spectator areas to continue the patriotic theme and offer better amenities. This summer we will install shade structures over spectator seating for field #2, re-work concession and bathroom areas, and replace light poles on fields #1 and #2 to make sure we continue to meet the needs of people who use Garrett Park.

Seven new soccer fields will open this fall at High Park, meeting the goal of providing a competition-quality soccer complex in Derby. The northeast area of the High Park recently underwent a turf and irrigation transformation.

Another focus in our Parks Department is landscape management and water conservation planning. Landscapes have lifespans and require care as they age. Water conservation guides our decisions as we review planter areas and redevelop them to incorporate drought-tolerant plant species. We want to demonstrate that quality landscaping, that conserves water and protects the environment, is a beautiful option for residents.

I hope you share my excitement about Derby parks. If it is has been awhile since you have experienced a park or taken a ride on a bike path, then I invite you to come out and play!

Robert Mendoza
Director of Public Works