



News Release

County Commission:
Susan Brager, Chair
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Larry Brown
Tom Collins
Chris Giunchigliani
Mary Beth Scow
Lawrence Weekly

Don Burnette, County Manager

Office of Public Communications • (702) 455-3546 • FAX (702) 455-3558 • www.ClarkCountyNV.gov

Contact: Erik Pappa
Director of Public Communications

Phone: (702) 455-3548
Cell: (702) 378-8970
E-mail: EPappa@ClarkCountyNV.gov

For Immediate Release

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Construction Starts at Sunset Park

Public Advised of Road Closures, Many Areas of Park to Remain Open

Some roads providing access to Sunset Park are being closed today in preparation for the start of construction on improvements to 75 of Sunset Park's 325 acres.

During this first construction period through Sept. 15, access to Sunset Park is being restricted at the northern-most entrance on Eastern Avenue and at the Pecos McLeod entrance. Other park entrances will remain open until further notice.

Signage has been posted at Sunset Park to direct the public regarding access and area availability. Many areas of the park are expected to remain open during construction, which is expected to last through late 2012. Access changes and park construction updates will be announced periodically.

More information about construction and park availability may be obtained by contacting Clark County Parks and Recreation at (702) 455-8200 or through the County website at www.ClarkCountyNV.gov.

The improvements at the popular regional park include a new lake edge treatment with lighting, fishing and wildlife-viewing amenities, large areas of new turf and tree and shrub plantings while salvaging and relocating existing trees, new interactive playground equipment with custom shade structures, shade ramadas and seating areas, new large- and small-group picnic areas, a new water spray pad area and the relocation of existing playground equipment, new bike, jogging and walking paths and three new restrooms.

Also, the north entry off Eastern Avenue will be realigned. There will be new parking areas and roadway circulation throughout the park; new bike, jogging and walking paths and an upgraded irrigation control system and pumps. Additionally, a bus turnout is being created on Sunset Road, which is expected to improve traffic flow.

The \$11.7 million project is funded by the sale of federal lands as outlined by the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act.

"This is one of Las Vegas' most popular and heavily used regional parks and this particular facelift is a long time in coming," said Commission Vice Chair Steve Sisolak, who represents the area where the park is located. "I think our residents are going to be very pleased when the work is complete."

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Parks and Recreation officials have prepared for construction and the issues that come with it, conferring with an environmentalist to ensure the many species of waterfowl that make Sunset Park their home will not be negatively impacted during construction. An arborist was also consulted to preserve as many trees as possible surrounding Sunset Lake.

Construction will minimally affect the use of the ball fields, basketball courts and disc golf course. Closure of the parking lots will be scheduled around the Little League baseball season.

Sunset Park is home to the Age of Chivalry Renaissance Festival each year, which draws more than 40,000 people. During construction, the festival, now in its 18th year, will move to Silver Bowl Park, located at 6800 E. Russell Rd. This year's event is set for Friday, Oct. 7 through Sunday, Oct. 9.

The 325-acre regional park is the most popular public park in Southern Nevada. It has been the perennial "Best of Las Vegas" Review-Journal pick for the past five years and was selected "Best Park" by Vegas Seven magazine and Yelp.com in 2010.

The land for Sunset Park was acquired in 1967 and contains the last remaining dunes of what once covered most of Paradise Valley. Trails surround the dunes, and a railroad line is visible. More than 200 plant species in the Mojave Desert are found nowhere else on the planet and many of them are preserved at Sunset. The park is also home to abundant wildlife. It is one of the last habitats for Phainopopla, a tiny black-crested bird with red eyes that lives among the mesquite trees.

Phase I improvements to a 160-acre area of the park in December 2010 provided a new 3.5-acre dog park that is three times the size of the previous dog park (being removed in this phase), 2.5 miles of multiple-use trails with signage describing the site's history, native and drought-tolerant landscaped areas, children's play areas, multiple shade structures for picnics, pedestrian bridges, and new access from Sunset Road along with an interior roadway. The Phase I improvements cost \$11.1 million and was funded from the sale of federal lands as outlined by the SNPLMA. Another \$65,000 came from Regional Transportation Commission funds.

The County made a concerted effort in Phase 1 to not only improve the site but to preserve and highlight its historical importance. It contains trails with signage pointing out some of this history. Sunset Park was once home to early ranchers and Paiutes inhabited the site a thousand years ago and greeted visitors who sought to trade seeds, nuts and turquoise. Water continues to flow under the park and surfaces to provide irrigation to the entire west end of Sunset.

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Clark County is a dynamic and innovative organization dedicated to providing top-quality service with integrity, respect and accountability. With jurisdiction over the world-famous Las Vegas Strip and covering an area the size of New Jersey, Clark is the nation's 14th-largest county and provides extensive regional services to more than 2 million citizens and 40 million visitors a year. Included are the nation's 8th-busiest airport, air quality compliance, social services and the state's largest public hospital, University Medical Center. The county also provides municipal services that are traditionally provided by cities to almost 900,000 residents in the unincorporated area. Those include fire protection, roads and other public works, parks and recreation, and planning and development.