

For Release September 27, 2017

## **Concord Neighborhood to Celebrate Two New Playgrounds** *City Council allocated \$1.1 million for parks after parents sought improvements*

### **WHAT:**

Two disadvantaged neighborhoods in Concord are celebrating new playgrounds with a parade and ribbon cuttings after a parents group urged the city council to improve parks in their community.

The effort began in 2013 when members of the Central County Regional Group, a parent advocacy group First 5 Contra Costa sponsors, and partners assessed conditions at parks in the Monument neighborhood of Concord. Two parks, Ellis Lake and Meadow Homes, needed the most improvement, lacked bathrooms, and had more crime and safety issues.

After the parents presented their concerns at several city council meetings, council members agreed to allocate \$1.1 million to renovate the two parks.

At Ellis Lake Park, the city expanded the playground by 2,900 square feet, and installed benches, lighting, drinking fountains, a safety barrier near a small lake, and new public restrooms which include a tot-sized toilet and sink rarely found in city parks. Meadow Homes Park received a 4,900-square-foot playground with structures for older and younger children.

The parents group is also tackling crime and safety issues by sponsoring community meetings with police and forming neighborhood watch programs. First 5 Contra Costa and the First 5 Center program adjacent to Ellis Lake Park, will also provide free sports classes and other children's activities to keep the parks filled with families and deter crime.

The celebration events will start at Meadow Homes Park, followed by a community parade to Ellis Lake Park. After a second ribbon cutting, families will enjoy face painting, arts and crafts, a bike rodeo, and more.

### **WHEN/WHERE:**

#### **Saturday, October 7, 2017**

- 10:00 a.m.: Ribbon cutting at Meadow Homes Park (1351 Detroit Ave, Concord)
- 10:40 a.m.: Parade to Ellis Lake Park (1736 Clayton Rd, Concord)
- 11:15 a.m.: Ribbon cutting at Ellis Lake Park and community celebration

### **WHO:**

The new playground projects were funded by the City of Concord in response to the Monument Parks Assessment conducted by the Central County Regional Group, First 5 Contra Costa, Monument Impact, and Contra Costa Health Services.

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

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**WHY:**

Physical outdoor play is important for children's health and development. First 5 Contra Costa and the three parent advocacy groups it sponsors have partnered with city officials to refurbish eight neglected parks in low-income communities throughout the county. Learn more: [www.first5coco.org](http://www.first5coco.org).

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