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Renovations set to begin at city's parks and recreation center

Stonecrest, GA – City staff will begin managing renovations at Browns Mill Recreation Center tomorrow. The center will be closed during renovations and will reopen on Monday, August 12, 2019. Renovations include:

- A new heating and air conditioning unit and upgrades to two existing units
- Plumbing and sewer upgrades to correct a backflow problem
- Roof leak repairs and the replacement of insulation
- Upgrading the fire panel which controls the fire suppressant system
- The installation of fire safety lights
- Repairs of two non-working water fountains.

An overall cleaning and landscaping will follow, according to Sean DePalma, the city's parks and recreation director. DePalma said that these repairs are required for the city to obtain necessary licensing from Bright from the Start, a state afterschool program licensing agency. Browns Mill's afterschool program has been moved to the South DeKalb YMCA. DePalma said that he met with all Browns Mill instructors and vendors earlier this month to inform them of the temporary closure and the city's new vendor processes.

The city will purchase eight parks from DeKalb County this week. In addition to the Browns Mill renovations, DePalma said his first order of business is to remove unsafe playground equipment from Salem and Gregory Mosley parks. The playground equipment at all the city's parks was inspected by both an in-house certified inspector as well as an outside inspector with the same federal credentials. DePalma said that Mosley and Salem parks contain equipment that has outlived its manufacturer's lifespan. "In addition, over the years, the county has modified the playground equipment beyond the manufacturer's design; therefore, it is in the city's best interest to remove the equipment for safety and liability reasons," DePalma said.

Mayor Jason Lary said that he is confident in his appointee's assessment. "I believe that Sean DePalma and our entire parks and recreation staff share my vision for a parks system that is safe and adds to the quality of life for our residents, especially our children. We will upgrade our recreation center and replace the worn-out equipment with quality playground equipment that is enjoyable and, most of all, safe," the mayor said.

DePalma said a Parks Masterplan will be conducted by an independent firm later this year. The plan will assess the needs and make recommendations for new playground equipment in all the city's parks as well as assess the community's desires for future facilities and activities.

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