



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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Contact: Brent Wasko
412-350-2451 (office)
412-577-6175 (cell)
brent.wasko@alleghenycounty.us

Fitzgerald, Officials Break Ground on Permeable Parking Lot in South Park

PITTSBURGH – County Executive Rich Fitzgerald was joined today by Senator Devlin Robinson, Rep. Mike Puskaric, Rep. Nick Pisciotano, Council Members Tom Duerr and John Palmieri, Caren Glotfelty of the Allegheny County Parks Foundation as well as Parks and Public Works department staff for a ceremonial groundbreaking to kick off the construction of a 2.5-acre permeable parking lot in South Park. Demolition work to replace the deteriorated asphalt parking lot above the old fairgrounds site near the intersection of Brownsville Road and Corrigan Drive began on June 22.

“The 12,000 acres of county parks are a tremendous asset to our communities, and it’s critical that we make investments like this one to maintain and improve the infrastructure within them,” said Fitzgerald. “This project will turn a prominent location in disrepair into a much more beautiful area and place to congregate that will significantly benefit park visitors and the environment. It will provide a gateway to South Park in which we can all be proud.”

The new parking lot will accommodate 125 vehicles and include five ADA-accessible spaces. It will be constructed of concrete pavers, often referred to as paving stones. Stormwater will flow into open joints between each paver and into gravel beds below the parking lot that can hold 89,000 gallons of water at any given time. The stormwater will then be slowly absorbed into the ground. On the existing parking lot, stormwater drains into inlets and ends up in nearby Catfish Run.

The parking lot is anticipated to capture 95% of all rain that falls on it or about 2.5 million gallons of stormwater annually. That’s enough water to fill 35,714 bathtubs.

Stormwater is expected to leave the parking lot only during intense storms. For example, in 2019, the area received nearly 53 inches of rain – the third most ever recorded. If the new parking lot had existed then, modeling suggests only two rainfalls would have resulted in stormwater leaving the site, and the parking lot would have captured 70% of the stormwater produced by those weather events.

“Stormwater runoff is one of the primary causes of water pollution, destruction of wildlife habitat, erosion, infrastructure damage, and flooding,” said Fitzgerald. “Responsibly managing it requires that we all work together. The strategic use of resources, including for projects such as this one, helps protect valuable assets and ensures that our streams and rivers are clean and safe for fishing, boating, and swimming. Ultimately, that enhances our quality of life.”

The project also includes the planting of nearly 100 trees at the site as well as the installation of perimeter garden beds and two large rain gardens containing native plants, boardwalks, and benches. The parking lot is expected to reopen to the public in December 2021, and most of the vegetation will be planted during spring 2022.

The project is being done by Michael Facchiano Contracting, Inc., of Mt. Lebanon. The \$2.4 million cost of construction is being partially paid for by the Health Department Landfill Trust Fund. The \$125,639 cost of design, which was done by Ethos Collaborative of Pittsburgh, was partially paid for by the Allegheny County Parks Foundation, which received a Growing Greener Grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

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Stephen G. Shanley, PE, Director

Department of Public Works

501 County Office Building | 542 Forbes Avenue | Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Phone: 412-350-4005 | Fax: 412-350-5386

www.alleghenycounty.us



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