

The History of Lake Madison Park

The Lake Madison Park concept was approved in June of 1969. It comprised a total of 246.8 acres of land that was secured through the efforts of the County of Madison, the City of Madisonville, and the Soil Conservation Service. Located within the park boundary is the 75 acre Lake Madison. Both the County and the City were responsible for one-fourth of the total land charges while federal funds, secured through the Soil Conservation Service, was responsible for one-half.

As the Soil Conservation Service assessed the potential of the Lake Madison Park, the Big 8 Resource Conservation and Development project was implemented to do comprehensive studies of the resource capabilities, soils information, economic evaluation the benefits and effect of such a project on the community. Planning objectives and recreation site designations were also developed at this time for the entire 246.8 acre park. Funding for the project was cost shared on a 50-50 basis with the Soil Conservation Service and the City of Madisonville and Madison County. The partnership was formed during the period of time where recreational facilities were the primary focus of the RC&D organization. As designated by the plan, the following recreation facilities were placed in the park in 1969: a community meeting facility, roads, parking areas, restroom, picnic area, playground, two baseball fields and a boat ramp. Utilities and security lights were also added at this time. The lake was stocked with bass, channel catfish, and sunfish in 1970-71. A dedication service was held in 1972 for the Lake Madison Park. At a later date the Resource Conservation and Development project had an organizational shift of emphasis from recreation to erosion control. Other funding resources were reviewed at this time so that the original plan could be completed.

In 1975, additional facilities were installed under a grant from the Economic Development Administration. These facilities were a tennis court, two baseball fields, a baseball practice field, 1 T-Ball field, a restroom and a wooden fishing pier.

Next, the County Funds were used to construct a softball field and an additional T-Ball field at a cost of approximately \$10,000.00. A desire to see movement on the worthwhile project and donated labor and donated labor and supplies saw this phase of the park completed with much community pride.

In 1989, Madison County along with the assistance of the City of Madisonville installed a Soft Ball field at an approximately cost of \$16,000.00. In 1990, two additional

Restrooms were built. One was installed near the Clubhouse and the other on the north side of the lake. The costs for these two restrooms were an estimated cost of \$10,000.00. Also, during the late 1990 and early 1991, a soccer field was built with help from the public, the County and City. The project was estimated to be around \$6,000.00.

In 1995, the Little League Association solicited donations from the City and County and along with donated funds built a Concession Stand for an estimated cost of \$5,000.00. This will be used for the many baseball games that are played at the Lake Madison Park.

Also in 1995, the City of Madison purchased a Jungle Gym for the younger generation to enjoy. This was a purchase price of \$2,400.00.

During the years the City of Madisonville, Madison County has been upgrading the park. This would not have been possible had it not been for the donations of cash, labor, equipment and materials.

On June 12, 1995 the Commissioners Court of Madison County met and accepted the request by the City of Madisonville to relinquish the responsibilities of Lake Madison Park to the City of Madisonville. These minutes are recorded in Volume L, Page 253 of the minutes of the Commissioners Court of Madison County.

The City of Madisonville resumed all responsibilities of the Lake Madison Park on July 1, 1995. In 1996, the City of Madisonville applied for a \$500,000.00 matching grant for local park grant assistance with the Parks and Wildlife Commission. On August 28, 1997 the Parks and Wildlife Commission approved the application for local park grant assistance.

From 1997 to the present time, Phase I of the grant has given the City of Madisonville a new look by adding the following to the park: Three new playscapes, renovated 12 bleachers, 15 new cooking grills, a floating pier, renovate 5 picnic shelters, add new restroom/concession stand, renovated two restrooms, a 50 sq. ft. covered pavilion, 3 flag poles, 1 baseball field lighted, 3 new softball fields, 2 renovated T-ball fields, 3 scoreboards, 2 half court basketball courts, new blacktop road, and parking lots, new entrance sign, irrigation system for softball complex, underground electric, 11 metal street lights, landscaping, nature trails and the Lake Madison Clubhouse has been completed renovated.

Approximately 560 kids are participating in the softball, baseball, and T-ball leagues. Softball teams from all over the state are coming to the tournaments that are being held at the Lake Madison softball complex. More people are using

the park to jog, go fishing and just bring their children to enjoy the playscapes and basketball courts. The Pavilion has been widely used for birthday parties, reunions, weddings and receptions.