



# CITY OF DOTHAN

## Public Information Office

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CITY COMMISSION APPROVES NAMING OF THE NEW SOUTHWEST PARK IN HONOR OF JIM OATES

The City of Dothan's new Southwest Park will formally be named "JAMES O. OATES PARK", honoring former Leisure Services Director, Jim Oates. On Tuesday, May 6, 2008 the City Commission voted to approve this naming recommendation brought forth by the Dothan Recreation Board. "Mr. Oates served 36 successful years in Parks and Recreation," said Anne Rumble, Director of Leisure Services, "It is our privilege to bestow him with this honor."

After a successful recreation career in Georgia, Mr. Oates moved to Dothan and served the City as the Director of Leisure Services from 1977 until his retirement in 1998. One of Mr. Oates' most notable accomplishments while in Dothan includes overseeing the development of projects at Westgate Park (Water World, Westgate Softball Complex, Marvin Lewis Dixie Youth Complex, James Grant Recreation Center, and Northcutt Athletic Complex). He also spearheaded the drive for construction of the Westgate Tennis Center. Eastgate Park was purchased and Lowell Rountree Dixie Youth Complex was developed under Mr. Oates' watchful eye. Two other notable accomplishments during his tenure was the building of Wiregrass Recreation Center in the 80's and building Walton Recreation Center in the 90's.

However, Mr. Oates was not just known for all of the facilities he brought to Dothan. He also brought a lot of "firsts" in the area of programming. He started Dothan's first full-time Senior Citizen program and the first full-time program for children with special needs. He began the youth soccer program in Dothan in 1979 and in 1981 he took possession of the Rose Hill Elementary School and converted it into a Senior Adult Center.

Jim Oates changed the face of Recreation in Dothan and in the State of Alabama. He served as the President of the Alabama Recreation and Parks Association, was named Alabama's Professional of the Year in 1987, and was voted into the Georgia Recreation and Parks Association's Hall of Fame in 2000.

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