

Swope Park Soccer Village Championship Field is Ready for Action

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The Swope Park Soccer Village championship field opened Tuesday not with a ribbon-cutting, but with a ball-kicking. Mayor Pro Tem Cindy Circo and Mayor Sly James gave soccer balls a solid boot.

With any luck, by midday Wednesday it will look decidedly more scuffed. That's a good thing because the Swope Park Soccer Village championship field plays host Wednesday through Sunday to the Women's Big 12 Soccer Championship.



Shane Keyser | The Kansas City Star

“This is our newest jewel,” Mayor Sly James said Tuesday as a crowd gathered for the \$2.3 million field’s ceremonial opening. The event marked the first phase of a \$13.4 million project that by next fall should have five more youth soccer fields and other amenities in Swope Park.

Swope Park Soccer Village will expand a relatively modest, three-field soccer facility near East 63rd Street Trafficway and Lewis Road into a destination amateur complex rivaling any in the region. The project is being paid for with city and county tax increment financing money.

“We’re really excited,” said Peter Sloan, past president of the Brookside Soccer Club, which serves 2,200 kids ages 4 through 18, many from the central city. “This will be our home.”

Councilwoman and mayor pro tem Cindy Circo said the project fulfills a dream to serve urban youths with quality athletic fields, and she commended Sporting Kansas City for stepping up as a major corporate partner. She praised Olsson Associates, Land3 Studio, Wellner Architects and Grand Construction for completing the design and construction within 120 days.

Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby admitted he had been a bit worried that the field wouldn’t be done in time, but he marveled at its perfect appearance Tuesday.

“This is a world-class field,” he told the crowd.