

Heroes Park will serve community

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COURTESY PHOTO

THIS IS AN artist's illustration of the proposed Heroes Park to be located behind the Norfolk Veterans Home on Benjamin Avenue.

When completed, the Heroes Park behind the Norfolk Veterans Home will serve the community in a variety of ways.

Veterans and their visitors will be able to enjoy lunch or supper in one of the picnic areas, stroll along the walking path or visit the flag plaza, which will have a fountain and flags representing all of the branches of the service.

They will be able to play basketball, shuffleboard and horseshoes or even practice their swing on the driving range.

Members and guests will be able to gather in the year-round pavilion that will seat 400 people and will seat more than 400 people.

The pavilion will be especially useful for ceremonies, reunions and other gatherings.

The campaign to raise the \$3.4 million needed for the project began around a year ago. While not all of the money needed for the project has been raised, organizers hope to break ground on the first phase of the project this spring, said Jenny Last, the Veterans Home's volunteer coordinator.

The first phase will include **construction** of a flag plaza, some of the grading, paving and electrical work, Last said.

While some people may question the need for such an elaborate park behind the Veterans Home, Last said all veterans deserve such a place.

"The Norfolk Veterans Home is a beautiful place. Unfortunately when they built it, they didn't give our veterans the same great outdoor amenities. Now we have to use our parking lots for fair weather activities. That is where veterans and their families go when they want to spend time outside. Our veterans have done so much for us. The park is a way for us to thank them."