

YMCA PROPOSES TO INVEST \$3 MILLION IN SUMMER CAMP

details

The plan includes a 30,000-square-foot outdoor pool area and a new 25,000-square-foot equestrian area on 20 acres of the 763-acre park, documents show.

By Mike Saewitz

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CHESAPEAKE

The YMCA of South Hampton Roads wants to invest \$3 million to build a summer camp in Northwest River Park.

The camp is one of three that the YMCA would like to open by 2010. The other sites are on the Virginia Wesleyan College campus and Camp E.W. Young, which is in Chesapeake but owned by the city of Norfolk.

The Chesapeake City Council was briefed about the Northwest River Park plans Tuesday.

"Everybody's going to get so excited about this all over Chesapeake," said Councilwoman Patricia Willis.

The YMCA and the city have been discussing the project for more than a year. The city still must open the project up to other developers, and bids will be accepted until Oct. 14. The park will need to be rezoned before the camp is established.

The plan includes a 30,000-square-foot outdoor pool area and a new 25,000-square-foot equestrian area on 20 acres of the 763-acre park, documents show. The plan could also include an amphitheater and climbing tower.

The project would not require any city money, officials say. City officials hope a swimming pool will increase campground reservations and revenue generated by the park.

Chuck Harris, president and chief executive officer of the YMCA of South Hampton Roads, said he hopes the 10-week Northwest River Park camp could be open to more than 300 children.

Harris said that some donors have expressed interest in contributing money toward the camp, but he would not reveal any names.

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