

Matt Ritter: Make Batterson Park a summer destination again



Daniel Shular / Hartford Courant

By [Matt Ritter](#)

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A couple of months ago, recognizing that the city's sole ownership of the property is not the path forward, a group of legislators and mayors gathered to discuss the possibility of a new state park at [Hartford's Batterson Park, located in Farmington and New Britain.](#)

The park is in rough shape. In fact, it is dangerous in its present state. Batterson has been closed to the public since 2015, and it has deteriorated from its glory days in the 1960s to an eyesore today. The buildings have decayed, the grounds are overgrown and the roads have crumbled.\

Although we have \$10 million at the ready and can envision the park's renaissance, it will take more time and planning.

In the short term that means Batterson Park will remain Hartford property (although located in Farmington and New Britain), but we still have plans, and the General Assembly has approved legislation to ensure the public has a strong voice in Batterson Park's future.

We will study passive and active recreation options, redevelopment options and even the feasibility of public-private partnerships. We will also investigate the water quality and the steps necessary to support swimming in the lake, new infrastructure, fixing potential maintenance issues and operational costs.

And we will hear from you.

The state [Department of Energy and Environmental Protection](#) will hold public hearings in Hartford, Farmington and New Britain this summer and report back to the legislature's Environment Committee with findings and recommendations.

It is the right way to move forward. Study all the angles. Hear all the voices. Consider all the information. Then act.

Batterson Park is a bit of a mystery to many people in central Connecticut — a Hartford city park in Farmington and New Britain? The lake originally was used as a reservoir before the Hartford Water Department donated the tract to the [Hartford Parks Department](#) in 1928. Voila! A Hartford park located miles outside the city limits.

Batterson Park was once a popular summer destination for thousands of families every year, and it has the potential to be great once again. Though its future is delayed, our goal is to come back during the 2024 legislative session with a new plan for the park's renaissance.

Matt Ritter is speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives. He serves the 1st Assembly District in Hartford.



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