

Travel & Tourism

## Origin Park named among best city parks in US



origin park  
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Apr 16, 2026

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### Story Highlights

- USA Today ranked Origin Park in Clarksville as the fourth-best city park.
- River Heritage Conservancy owns 340 acres of the planned 430-acre park.
- The Vista at Origin Park event center will host its first event in May.

A massive Southern Indiana park has garnered national attention.

Origin Park, an envisioned 430-acre park in Clarksville, was ranked No. 4 in best city parks in the United States by USA Today. According to the rankings, a panel of experts nominated parks across the country before readers voted to determine the winners.

“It tells us that people living and working in and around the region recognize the importance of the project for future generations and second, that those living and working in and around the cities and counties also support the project and recognize this is a legacy project and one that will have a major impact for generations to come,” Dennis Schnurbusch, CEO of River Heritage Conservancy, said in a news release.

River Heritage Conservancy, the nonprofit tasked with developing Origin Park, [currently has 80%, or 340 acres](#), of the park’s planned footprint.

In order to acquire the remaining 90 acres, the conservancy has been getting creative with land deals. I reported in February that [the conservancy acquired the Kentuckiana Trucking Co.’s land at 380 Emery Xing Road for \\$3.5 million](#).

Once completed, Origin Park is projected to have a major impact on Southern Indiana’s tourism industry – [potentially becoming one of the most-visited attractions and one of the largest parks in the Louisville area](#) – while fueling economic, environmental and community revitalization across the region.

The park is estimated to attract 1.5 million visitors each year, which could make it the third-most-visited park in the area compared to The Parklands at Floyds Fork, which saw 3.9 million visitors in 2024, and Waterfront Park, which had 2.4 million visitors, according to LBF’s research.

The vision for the park includes 103 acres of wetlands, a whitewater facility and an event center spanning more than 400 acres.

[The Vista at Origin Park, the 14,000-square-foot event center, is nearing completion with the first event](#) – Clarksville High School Prom – scheduled for mid-May. The project cost \$20 million.

The whitewater attraction, also known as [Wildwater at Origin Park](#), is still in its early planning stages. The facility is planned to be built on two capped landfills.

The whitewater course will feature two channels, according to a news release. One channel will span 1,700 feet for competitive users. The second, a 2,500-foot channel, will be used for recreational whitewater rafting.

### **More on the USA Today rankings**

Ahead of Origin Park, the list included parks in St. Louis, Missouri; Lakeland, Florida; and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

On the other side of the Ohio River, Waterfront Park was named the third-best riverwalk in the U.S. The 85-acre frontage along the Ohio River has been revitalized with an expanse of picnic areas, walking paths and green spaces. Waterfront Park has made it on USA Today's best riverwalk list every year since 2021.