

At Least \$150,000 For Recreation Promised City After Earlier Refusal

The state commissioner of conservation yesterday said Memphis will get at least half of its \$300,000 request for federal matching funds after earlier saying the city would receive no money this fiscal year.

Commissioner B. R. Allison said Nat Baxter, executive director of the Memphis Park Commission, and other local officials will not be officially notified until next month of receipt of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation funds.

He said the decision was made Thursday night after meeting in Nashville with Baxter, state Sen. John Ford and Lt. Gov. John Wilder.

The meeting was requested after Memphis was denied any of the \$2.3 million allotted to the state for the fiscal year 1976-77 which began in July.

Allison said Memphis will be allotted at least \$150,000, but no more than \$200,000, which is the maximum amount awarded to any local government. He said the money will not come from the \$2.3-million federal grant but from funds left over from last year.

"I hope he can come up with the \$200,000 maximum," Baxter said when told of the decision by a newspaper reporter. "We desperately needed the whole \$300,000, but we can understand the \$200,000 limit."

He said if the city receives \$200,000 in matching funds, the money will be used to develop the Rodney Baber baseball complex and the Whitehaven ball complex.

At a park commission meeting before he learned of the recent decision, Baxter said the city would be asked "to take every means possible to bring pressure to get the funds."

Allison said Bartlett was granted \$129,

000, and several cities, including Nashville, were granted the maximum \$200,000. He said Knoxville did not get any funds.

During the park commission board meeting at Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium yesterday, Baxter said the city will be able to "assume possession" of the 15-acre present site of the Tennessee National Guard Armory at Hollywood and Central by 1980.

He said National Guard officials have informed the city that the first bid on their new facilities will be let in July, 1977, with completion projected before 1980.

The National Guard will relocate the armory on 30 acres of land near Oakville Memorial Hospital in Southeast Memphis.

The current location will be used to build a parking facility to service the fairgrounds complex.

The park commission also adopted a resolution in support of completion of I-40 through Overton Park. "It is the park commission's conviction that damage to trees and vegetation can be repaired and improved within a reasonable period of time," the resolution says.

E. R. 'Bert' Ferguson, chairman of the park commission board, will present the resolution at public hearings on the expressway controversy Wednesday and Thursday, beginning at 9 a.m. each day in the City Council chambers. The hearings are the final input into the debate before the issue is turned over to Transportation Secretary William Coleman for a final decision.

HOWEVER, IN DETROIT FRIDAY, THE FOUR U.S. AUTOMAKERS REPORTED THAT EARLY AUGUST NEW CAR SALES WERE 48 PER CENT ABOVE A YEAR AGO AND THE HIGHEST FOR THE PERIOD IN HISTORY.

Manufacturing sales dropped slightly Friday.

ed in May, the Commerce Department more than the \$1.9-billion increase record