

JOHNSON COUNTY SOCCER FEASIBILITY STUDY REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT
DECEMBER 30, 2005

Johnson County Commission Chairwoman Annabeth Surbaugh announced the formation of several Future Focused Task Forces to address the many important issues facing our community. Third District Commissioner Dave Lindstrom was appointed to facilitate Sports and Recreation issues.

BACKGROUND

December 2004: Lamar and Clark Hunt announced that Hunt Sports Group, owners of the KC Wizards, would begin the process of selling their Major League Soccer (MLS) franchise in Kansas City.

June 2005: Johnson County community leaders ordered a comprehensive feasibility study to develop a soccer complex/development which included: a 22,000-seat, soccer-specific stadium, up to 30 youth fields, supporting retail, as well as the first major league sports franchise to Johnson County and the State of Kansas.

October 2005: the Feasibility Study was submitted to Johnson County by Convention Sports & Leisure (CSL).

November 2005: a review committee was formed with the purpose of advising Johnson County on the intricacies of a proposal to bring a soccer complex/development. The committee was comprised of committed civic volunteers representing broad-based skill sets and a diverse experience in Johnson County and the region.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The committee conducted four official meetings in 2005:

Meeting I was conducted on November 7 at the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce board room. Kevin Gray addressed the committee regarding a community overview of the process to-date, along with a history from the first Johnson County Task Force Study conducted in 2002. CSL presented its process and findings (Bill Rhoda and Craig Skiem presenting).

Meeting II was conducted on November 21 at Olathe Medical Center and the discussion featured a presentation by Michael Meadors, Director of Johnson County Parks and Recreation. Mr. Meadors discussed the great need for additional youth soccer fields and such a facility as being proposed. He encouraged the group to think big in terms of creating something very special for the State of Kansas. A lengthy discussion followed including next steps.

Meeting III was conducted on December 22 the Lenexa Chamber of Commerce board room and included an in-depth, roundtable discussion regarding prior presentations, the current situation and the charge of this committee. A draft recommendation was reviewed and discussed. The committee agreed in principal to the benefit and worth of a destination soccer complex and that a final recommendation based on committee members' input be developed for consideration.

Meeting IV was conducted on December 30 at the Johnson County Parks and Recreation District administrative headquarters in Shawnee Mission Park. The committee reviewed and finalized its recommendation; discussed the presentation of its recommendation to project stakeholders and the community at-large; and formally adopted this report and recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

The committee has unanimously concluded that both Johnson County and the State of Kansas will significantly benefit on a variety of fronts from the development of a destination soccer complex that is attractive to all levels of the sport. Such a complex would be expected to feature both a youth soccer complex and a soccer-specific stadium capable of serving as the home field for a Major League Soccer (MLS) team as well as a variety of high school, intercollegiate and entertainment events. The long-term economic benefits, positive impact on quality of life and resulting stature from having a professional sports franchise are real and significant.

The committee has arrived at this conclusion based on research and information as presented and reviewed. The recommendation to pursue the development of a soccer complex that includes both recreation soccer fields and a soccer-specific stadium is based on the following considerations:

- There is tremendous demand for quality youth soccer fields in Johnson County and the metropolitan area. A complex featuring as many as 30 fields with a combination of natural grass and artificial turf playing surfaces will serve both as a facility for regular league play and also to attract local, state, regional and national tournament play.
- The inclusion of a first-class, soccer-specific stadium with seating capacity of approximately 18,000 to 22,000 is critical in this project becoming a noteworthy destination point in the Midwest and in attracting commercial development and national recognition.
- While a soccer-specific stadium will be capable of serving as home field for a MLS team, it will also fulfill a need in the Midwest for a quality venue for high school and intercollegiate competition. It would be expected a venue of this capacity will be able to host a variety of emerging sports (e.g., rugby, lacrosse, and field hockey) and entertainment events.
- Development of such a complex will require a combination of public and private sponsorship. The committee makes a general assumption that any appropriate public-private partnership will include a properly structured lease and operating agreement. It is further anticipated that any significant public financing would be submitted to the voters of the sponsoring public entity. Determination as to whether this would be submitted as a single referendum or submitted as two separate issues (amateur fields and/or a professional stadium) is unresolved.

Based on the viability of the project, the committee recommends the MLS – including ownership of the Wizards – submit to Johnson County Government specific terms of an official request for information (RFI). The committee also recommends that the Johnson County Manager forward the RFI to all potential stakeholders (including, but not limited to, the Johnson County Board of Commissioners, Johnson County Park & Recreation District, Olathe, Lenexa, Shawnee, Overland Park, Gardner, De Soto, and Leawood).

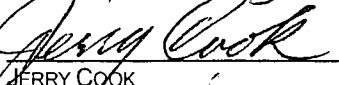
The committee does not endorse a specific site and recognizes it is difficult under these circumstances to pinpoint costs relating to unknown site conditions, site utilities, and transportation improvements. However, the range appears to be well supported as to estimates that would be incurred in constructing the stadium and complex.


This report and recommendation are hereby respectfully submitted,

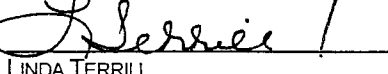
Committee Members:

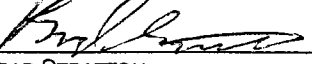

 BEN CRAIG
 Chairman, Metcalf Bank

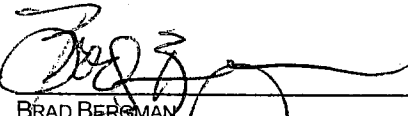

 STU LANG
 President, 1st National Bank of Kansas

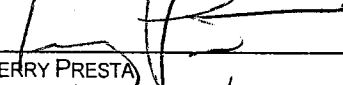

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 Ed Honesty
 President, Best Harvest Bakeries

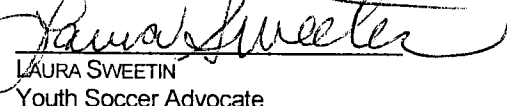

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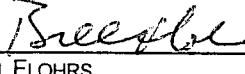

 BRAD STRATTON
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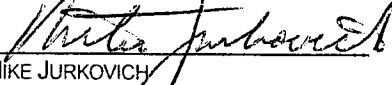

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