



Sports Complex Task Force Meeting August 14, 2024

- Introductions were done.
- Andrew Schmidt went over the history of the Sports Commission and the reason the task force was put together.
- Andrew Schmidt went over sports tourism and the sports market, which is the best market for revenue. Attendees spend money at tournament, businesses, restaurants, etc.
- Three pillars of sports tourism: Economic, Exposure, Partner Benefits
- Andrew Schmidt went over the purpose and goals as well as discussion.
 - Engage community, seek interest in partners, engage interest to expand existing, vet locations, potential funding, opportunity for bond, working with local businesses for naming rights.
- Brian Connolly explained how we got here.
 - Victus was hired for sports tourism feasibility study and did a profile for the opportunities for Greenville/Pitt County.
 - SWOT analysis for the area:
 - Strengths - location, hospitality, reputation, brand.
 - Weakness - the lack of sports tourism caliber facilities across most sports.
 - Opportunities - regional market, interest from sports event organizers, goals of City and County.
 - Threats - regional competition and where to focus limited resources to maximize potential.
 - Recommendations:
 - Victus looked at all sports and top for local and regional was the following:
 1. Baseball & Softball: 8-12 fields
 2. Indoor Courts (basketball and volleyball): 8-12 courts
 3. Outdoor Rectangular Fields (soccer and lacrosse): at least 8 fields
 4. Aquatics: 50-meter pool
 - Daniel Van Liere asked if the issue is that the baseball/softball fields are spread across the city.
 - Brian Connolly confirmed and explained that tournament organizers want everything in one location.
 - Victus recommended at least 12 baseball turf fields, which do not need to rest after high usage, and lights to reduce risk to cancel a tournament.
 - Brian Connolly explained that Greenville is looking at 40 weekends of tournaments if a complex is built. This would increase hotel usage to an estimated 75,000 rooms a year.
 - Visitor Impact Analysis:
 - 523k visits (Person can count more than one)
 - Weekday is local market
 - Weekend model flips with more than 80% out of county visitors
 - 30+ years economic impact = \$954,199,000
 - Hotel impacts:
 - Current rooms for FY23-FY24 = 11,160
 - Estimating 75,000 annually

- John Van Coutren asked Andrew how many hotel rooms Pitt County has.
 - Andrew Schmidt said there are 2,300 rooms, but realistically 1,700 due to factors.
- Meeting schedule:
 - August 15th: Kickoff, overview, and planning
 - September 17: Configuration and usage
 - October 17: Site
 - November 21: Funding
 - December 19: Communications and outreach strategy
 - January 16: Wrap-up and Summarize
- Any questions?
 - Rich Ballot is wondering if estimated cost and ROI compared to each budget.
 - Andrew Schmidt explained that City Council determines the job and scope of the project.
 - Kevon Faison explained that we should look at the bigger picture to expand offerings such as an indoor facility.
 - Brian Connolly explained the cost difference of baseball/softball = 30 million and an indoor facility = 80 million.
 - John Van Coutren echoed Kevon and said year-round indoor sports can maximize revenue.
 - Brian Connolly explained that it is harder to complete a project if it a large scope compared to phases.
 - Michael Cowin explained that the goal is to look at the data and take feedback from the group.
 - Celie Edwards asked if we could look at other sports data and asked who was polled for this study.
 - Brian Connolly explained that the study polled national event staff and tournament planners.
 - Michael Cowin let the task force know that the study will be sent to this group and the data can be reviewed at the next meeting.
 - Rob Maloney inquired about volleyball due to its large presence in the community.
 - Brian Connolly said all sports are needed, but we need to start with the top data.
 - Josh Lewis asked if there is a monetary cap
 - Michael Cowin said it is hard to say due to various opportunity for funding.
 - Rich Ballot asked why configuration and funding is separate for the meeting schedule.
 - Michael Cowin explained that the task force will look at different configurations then cost.
 - Josh Lewis asked if the task force is responsible for a recommendation to City Council.
 - Michael Cowin confirmed.
 - Kevon Faison asked how involved ECU is and plans to be.
 - ECU said it will depend on the plan.
- Next steps:
 - Andrew Schmidt will create a webpage and email address.
 - The study will be placed on the webpage and the Task Force can review the data prior to the next meeting.
 - Next meeting: September 17th 3pm-5pm at City Hall 3rd Floor Gallery