

City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201



Agenda Item Number: REP 105-14

Department Source: Convention and Visitors Bureau

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: November 3, 2014

Re: Report - Final Recommendations of Sports Feasibility Study

Documents Included With This Agenda Item

Council memo

Supporting documentation includes: None

Executive Summary

In March, 2014, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department, contracted with consultants from Aquarius Sports and Entertainment and Victus Advisors to conduct a Sports Community Assessment. The consultants were tasked with studying Columbia's existing sports tourism market and providing recommendations for a realistic road map that would make Columbia a leading adult and youth sports destination in the region, as well as nationally.

Discussion

Aquarius Sports Entertainment and Victus Advisors began their study by touring some of Columbia's facilities and spoke with key city staff from the CVB and Parks & Recreation.

Two focus groups were then conducted with more than 18 total participants, representing a wide variety of sports and hospitality organizations.

One on one interviews were conducted with 13 hospitality leaders, sports organizers and business & civic organization executives. Interview groups were held to gather opinions on Columbia's sports facilities, local support of amateur sports, what competitive markets exist, awareness & interest of a Sports Advisory Board and the overall view of Columbia as an amateur sports community.

Online surveys were also distributed via e-mail to leaders of the Columbia sports community and members of their organizations producing 1,109 responses.

Comparative analysis was conducted with chosen similar markets, i.e. Ames, Iowa; Lawrence, Kansas; Bloomington, Indiana; Athens, Georgia; Champaign, Illinois; Jefferson City, Missouri; and Joplin, Missouri. The data was analyzed and the consultants have provided the following recommendations:

- Construct a City/County competitive baseball/soccer sports complex; a multi-sport indoor fieldhouse; and an aquatic facility. There is a one-time economic impact during construction

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period of facilities, with an on-going annual economic impact of events coming to Columbia. Recognizing the limited resources of the park sales tax, the consultants recommended that potential funding for these projects could come from an increased lodging tax.

- A Sports Commission was recommended to be housed within the Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau. The commission would serve as the chief advocate for the sports community by:
 - 1) Organizing and promoting investments in new facilities.
 - 2) Attracting facility operators to invest in Columbia.
 - 3) Attracting and creating new sports tourism events to Columbia.
 - 4) Maintaining and supporting existing sports tourism events.
 - 5) Representing the sports community at trade shows and industry events.
 - 6) Serving as the central point of contact for sports organizations both inside and outside of Columbia.
 - 7) Conducting community fundraising.

Initially, the Sports Commission would have an Executive Director who reports to the CVB Director. It is recommended the Sports Commission have a 12-15 member board of directors, completely separate from the existing CVB Advisory Board.

The benefits of amateur sports development shows an increased quality of life, community pride and health benefits of an active community. There is a more attractive environment for businesses and their employees with young families. It will also increase awareness and improve regional reputation of Columbia as a tourism destination.

The Convention and Visitors Bureau, in partnership with Parks and Recreation, will evaluate the recommendations as set out above and work together to create an action plan of next steps that will be presented to Council in the near future.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: None at this time.

Long-Term Impact: Not known at this time.

Vision, Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

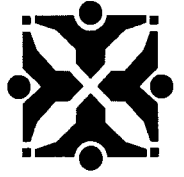
Vision Impact: Economic Development, Parks, Recreation and Greenways

Strategic Plan Impact: Economic Development, Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Comprehensive Plan Impact: Inter-Governmental Cooperation

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Suggested Council Action

No council action is requested at this time. This is an informational report only.

Legislative History

On March 17, 2014, City Council approved the authorization of an agreement for a Sports Feasibility Study and the appropriation of funds.



Department Approved



City Manager Approved