



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Kimberly A. McNeeley, CPRP, Acting Director   
Austin Parks and Recreation Department

**DATE:** December 14, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Council Resolution No. 20171109-046 Explore Potential Major League Soccer Sites

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The Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) was assigned to lead the process of exploring potential city-owned properties in the full purpose jurisdiction (including the Travis County Exposition Center). In addition PAR was asked to look at underutilized parkland that might be appropriate for a soccer stadium as well as sites outside the urban core where practice fields and ancillary uses could serve a Major League Soccer (MLS) team and surrounding community. This preliminary exploration was conducted by several City departments. Special coordination was conducted with the Acting City's Chief Financial Officer, Austin Transportation Department, and the Office of Real Estate Services. To the extent possible, given the time constraints, the Parks and Recreation Department engaged a number of Resolution specific named stakeholders. However, a more comprehensive stakeholder process is needed and will take more time to complete.

The full preliminary report is attached. The suggested properties listed (in no particular order) for additional exploration, analysis, and engagement include:

- St. John's Home Depot/Chrysler 7211 N IH35, Austin 78752
- McKalla Property 10414 McKalla Place, Austin, TX 78758
- Toomey Ballfields- 1501 Toomey Rd, Austin, TX 78704
- Travis County Exposition Center- 7311 Decker Ln, Austin, TX 78724
- Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Metro Park - 400 Grove Blvd, Austin, TX 78741
- Walnut Creek Sports Complex- 7800 Johnny Morris Rd, Austin, TX 78724
- Bolm Road District Park- 6700 Bolm Rd, Austin, TX 78725
- Tony Burger Activity Center and Stadium- 3200 Jones Rd, Austin, TX 78745\*

It is important to note, Tony Burger Activity Center and Stadium is not a City of Austin owned property; however, in the very preliminary engagement with Austin ISD (AISD), AISD agreed this property is appropriate for discussion.

It is important for the City of Austin to continue the property analysis in order to provide City Council with quality information. While the attached preliminary report provides valuable information, staff plan to continue exploration and have a more comprehensive analysis for Council consideration on or before the February 15, 2018, Council Meeting.

Should you have any questions, please contact my office at (512) 974-6722.

Cc: Elaine Hart, Interim City Manager  
Sara Hensley, CPRP, Interim Assistant City Manager  
Greg Canally, Chief Financial Officer  
Lauraine Rizer, Director, Office of Real Estate Services  
Rob Spillar, Director, Austin Transportation Department

# Exploration of City of Austin Owned Property for Major League Soccer

## Directed by Council Resolution 20171109-046

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### Executive Summary

The Austin City Council passed Resolution 20171109-046 which directs the City Manager to identify City-owned sites in the full purpose jurisdiction (including the Travis County Expo Center), as well as potentially including underutilized parkland that might be appropriate for a soccer stadium. Additionally, the resolution directed consideration of sites outside the urban core where practice fields and ancillary uses could serve a Major League Soccer (MLS) team and the surrounding community. The resolution outlines the analysis to include traffic and other potential impacts, displacement of city programs and services, new programs and community benefits, direct and indirect economic benefits of having an MLS Team in Austin, and processes for engaging the public.

As a part of the analysis, although not included as a resolution directive, the Major League Soccer Organization was engaged to clearly explain the opportunities associated with Major League Soccer to establish a team in Austin. The Office of the Major League Soccer Commissioner has communicated to the City of Austin that the circumstances surrounding the opportunity for Major League Soccer to move to Austin ***is unique to Precourt Sports Ventures relocating the now Columbus Crew Soccer Club from Columbus, Ohio, to Austin, Texas.*** While Major League Soccer intends to expand from the existing 22 teams and has announced 12 cities competing for expansion rights via an established expansion application process, Austin, Texas, is not under consideration for an expansion team. Major League Soccer has indicated to the City that as long as Precourt Sports Ventures is exploring moving its franchise (Columbus Crew), the league will not be facilitating or authorizing any other existing or prospective ownership groups to locate an MLS team in Austin.

Based upon a very simple stakeholder engagement (both specific to the named resolution stakeholders and anecdotal informal conversations) and a preliminary review of potential properties that seemingly meet the basic criteria for either a stadium or practice field complex, the following properties have been identified as appropriate for additional exploration, analysis, and engagement:

- St. John's Home Depot/Chrysler 7211 N IH35, Austin 78752
- McKalla Property 10414 McKalla Place, Austin, TX 78758
- Toomey Ballfields- 1501 Toomey Rd, Austin, TX 78704
- Travis County Exposition Center- 7311 Decker Ln, Austin, TX 78724
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The full report serves as a preliminary examination of the opportunities and challenges associated with each property to include general economic benefits, community benefits, community engagement process and specific basic information with regards to community stakeholders, program displacement, and traffic analysis.

The full report does not in any manner outline the mechanisms by which the City, should it choose to do so, facilitate the use of City owned property or under-utilized parkland for a stadium or practice field complex. A more in-depth analysis to include a legal review is necessary to determine the appropriate course of action.

With additional time, City of Austin staff is prepared to more deeply explore and analyze the property options to include a robust community engagement. Additionally, should it be determined that parkland is to be used for a stadium and/or practices fields, it is both appropriate and necessary to determine the most applicable partnership mechanism for land usage. It is important to note, the associated deadline for a decisive recommendation may necessitate recruitment of multiple departments to provide expertise and resources to the project. While the Parks and Recreation Department may serve as the lead department, additional City of Austin resources are needed to comprehensively complete the project.

### Summary of Major League Soccer Organizational Structure

Major League Soccer (MLS) is a men's professional soccer league, sanctioned by U.S. Soccer (a member of the *Federation Internationale de Football Association*-FIFA), that represents the sport's highest level in both the United States and Canada. The MLS regular season runs from March to October, with each team playing 34 games. The postseason includes twelve teams competing in the MLS Cup Playoffs through November and December, culminating in the championship game, the MLS Cup. MLS teams also play in other domestic competitions against teams from other divisions in the U.S. Open Cup and in the Canadian Championship. MLS teams also compete against continental rivals in the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football Champions League, which is a division of FIFA over North America, Central America, and the Caribbean region. Major League Soccer was founded in 1993 as part of the United States' successful bid to host the 1994 FIFA World Cup.

Professional soccer leagues in the United States, as defined by U.S. Soccer include:

- Major League Soccer (MLS) – 1<sup>st</sup> Division, MLS holds contracts on individual players
- North American Soccer League (NASL) – 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, players contracted by individual teams
- United Soccer League (USL)- 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, a collection of 5 lower division leagues to include men's soccer, women's soccer, and youth soccer
- USL Premier Development League- 4<sup>th</sup> Division, amateur status teams
- United States Adult Soccer Association- 5<sup>th</sup> Division, amateur status teams

Columbus Crew is an official MLS team (1<sup>st</sup> Division). The City of Austin has a historical relationship with a USL team (3<sup>rd</sup> Division) franchise called the Austin Aztec Soccer Club. This club has suspended play because there is no suitable stadium venue in Austin.

### Select Major League Soccer Operations Overview

Major League Soccer has 22 teams in 22 stadiums as of the 2017 season: 19 in the United States and 3 in Canada. At the time of the league's inauguration in 1996, many MLS teams used multi-purpose stadiums, often shared with National Football League (NFL) or college football teams. In 1999 with the Columbus Crew's construction of Mapfre Stadium, the league has constructed soccer-specific stadiums, tailor-made for soccer with a smaller seating capacity, in various cities. Today, the majority of MLS stadiums are soccer-specific stadiums.

## MLS Stadiums in Texas:

**Toyota Stadium (Frisco, TX):** Opened in 2005, Toyota Stadium Complex features 17 regulation-size, stadium-quality soccer fields known as the Toyota Soccer Center, taking up 145 acres. The playing surface of the main playing field is just over 2 acres. This stadium is set about 30 miles north of Dallas city center, in the suburb of Frisco. Within the 145 acres of this complex, they have *5 surface parking lots*. It's currently under a \$40 million renovation to include a National Soccer Hall of Fame as a public-private partnership between FC Dallas, the City of Frisco, Frisco Independent School District and U.S. Soccer Federation.

**BBVA Compass Stadium (Houston, TX):** Opened in 2012, this stadium is located close to downtown. The field itself is also just over 2 acres, the building is about 7.8 acres, and the total site size is 12 acres. *Not included in this site are surface parking lots (no substantial parking)*, but free shuttles from a parking garage close by transport patrons to stadium for specific events. The site is close to a Metro rail station and a few blocks from Houston's convention center. A public-private partnership between Houston Dynamo (\$60 million on construction costs), Harris County and the City of Houston (which contributed \$35 million for land and infrastructure upgrades), and BBVA Compass, who purchased naming rights for 10 years (\$20 million), successfully constructed this stadium.

## MLS Stadium Sampling within the U.S.:

**Avaya Stadium (San Jose, CA):** Opened in 2015, this stadium is located right next to the San Jose International Airport, and only 3 miles to the city center. The building itself is about 3 acres large and it sits on a lot that is 15 acres large. The team purchased the land from the city and financed the building privately (\$100 million). This site *includes 3 surface parking lots*. The team is currently looking to create a public-private partnership to buy a 44 acre parcel of land to create both public and private soccer fields, an overflow parking lot, and a 7 acre public park.

**Children's Mercy Park Stadium (Kansas City, KS):** This stadium opened in 2011, and the stadium size is roughly 7.8 acres, and it's roughly 15 miles from the downtown city center of Kansas City, KS. There are *6 total surface lots used for this stadium, 3 of which provide shuttles to the stadium for games*. This park was privately funded and the development included a 15 acre office complex for a private corporation.

**Orlando City Stadium (Orlando, FL):** This stadium opened in 2017, on 12.5 acres of land right in the heart of downtown Orlando (1mi from City Hall). In 2013, the City of Orlando purchased a section of land downtown with the intention of using this land for the construction of a soccer stadium. In 2015, the team announced it would pay for its own stadium and forego public funding. In 2016, the Orlando City Soccer Club purchased the land from the city and privately financed the construction of the \$155M stadium. This stadium offers *no public parking* on an event day. The parking on stadium grounds is available only to suite holders. Event-goers are encouraged to search for public parking lots and garages elsewhere in the city.

**Mercedes-Benz Stadium (Atlanta, GA):** This stadium, used by the Atlanta United FC, is a multi-purpose stadium, so unlike other MLS soccer stadiums, it is built larger to accommodate National Football League (NFL) games as well. The stadium opened in 2017, and features a 42,500 seat soccer configuration that can be expanded up to 70,000 seats. The stadium is located on a 45 acre site in the heart of downtown Atlanta. There is a *total of 21,000 parking spots in garages and surface lots around the stadium, in addition to the city-wide rail and bus system which provide two stops for the stadium*. This stadium was partially funded with city hotel-motel taxes, contributing \$200 million towards construction costs, but with additional tax revenues and the State of Georgia contributing funds for parking expansion, public

spending is expected to reach \$600 million. The remainder was privately funded for a total of \$1.5 billion spent on the construction of this stadium.

**Providence Park Stadium (Portland, OR):** The original stadium in this location was Multnomah Stadium built in 1926, and this stadium location is in the heart of downtown Portland. In 1966, the city purchased the stadium, and renamed it Civic Stadium, and it has been in city possession since then. The stadium was renamed Providence Park in 2014, and is currently managed and leased by Peregrine Sports LLC, the entity that owns the Portland Timbers soccer team. In the 2010 renovations, a state-of-the-art sports medicine and orthopedic clinic center was opened at the stadium site, as part of the partnership with Providence Health & Services. The 2010 renovation was a partially publicly funded venture, and the Timbers had an agreement with the City to reimburse them through increased rent payments and a 7 percent tax on each ticket sold. Both of these agreement terms terminate in 2018 once the debt has been paid. This year, a \$50 million renovation is planned to be privately financed by the Timbers. While major approvals with the City of Portland have been granted, the Timbers must still come to an agreement with the City regarding operations, and they must complete a certified traffic mitigation plan. This renovation would take close to two years to complete, however, the existing stadium will still be in use during the construction. *Parking is currently limited as the location is so close to downtown. Patrons are encouraged to use a park-and-ride option called SmartPark, to park at private parking lots around the facility, to use Portland's light rail, or to use Portland's TriMet express bus between the stadium and major downtown spots.*

**CenturyLink Field (Seattle, WA):** This stadium, used by the Seattle Sounders FC, is a multi-purpose stadium, so unlike other MLS soccer stadiums, this one is built larger to accommodate National Football League (NFL) games as well. The facility is not only home to the Seahawks and Sounders FC, but accommodates many levels of soccer competition, including Major League Soccer, amateur, international, World Cup and collegiate soccer. CenturyLink Field is located within a mile of downtown Seattle, and takes up roughly 35 acres with a 69,000 seat capacity, *2,000-space parking garage, and 8,400 surface lot parking spaces.* The \$430 million facility is owned by the public and was funded by a private-public partnership. Private contributions totaled at least \$130 million, while the public contributed up to \$300 million through a lottery and a variety of taxes generated by events in the stadium/exhibition center. In addition to parking spots listed, commuter trains run nearby the stadium, and the County's metro bus service offers express routes from several park-and-ride lots for games.

#### **MLS Practice Facility Sampling within the U.S.:**

**Orlando, FL:** Practice fields for the Orlando City Soccer Club are located in Sanford, FL, about 20 miles north of Orlando. Sylvan Lake Park features 6 professional quality fields and a recently renovated training facility. The agreement with Seminole County lets OCSC use 2 fields and the training facility exclusively, while the other 4 fields are open to the public. In addition, OCSC organizes soccer clinics and educational programs for area children.

**Atlanta, GA:** Practice fields for the Atlanta United FC are located in Marietta, GA, 20 miles north of Atlanta. The 33 acre site was made available due to a \$68 million voter-approved redevelopment bond, which directed the City of Marietta to purchase aging apartment complexes to clear the land for developers. Atlanta United is leasing the 33 acres from the city in a long-term 20-year lease. The site features a 30,000 square foot training facility and 6 soccer fields that will also be used for the team's soccer academy for children and teenagers.

**Portland, OR:** Practice facilities are located in Beaverton, OR, which is just 8 miles outside of Portland. This 8,600 square foot facility is the result of a partnership between the Timbers and the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District. As part of the partnership, the Timbers make annual donations to the Tualatin Hills Park Foundation and conduct annual youth soccer camps and coaches' clinics at the training center. Also, of the 2 full-size soccer fields, one grass field is for exclusive use by the Timbers, and the other artificial-turf field is used for the public.

**Seattle, WA:** The Starfire Sports Complex is the official training facility of the Sounders FC, and sits on a 54 acre site located in Tukwila, WA, just 10 miles south of Seattle. The complex is the result of a 40-year public-private partnership concession agreement with the City of Tukwila, King County, and Starfire Sports. Starfire Sports assumed 100% of the operational and maintenance costs of the facilities, included the new construction and renovations that began in 2003. The complex contains 5 grass soccer fields, 8 artificial-turf soccer fields, and two indoor soccer fields. The site also features restaurants, retail and meeting space. For community benefits, the facility offers several youth camps and trainings. In the heart of the complex is still a small city-maintained park named Fort Dent Park, which offers a playground and picnic area.

### **Economic Impact of MLS in Austin: Preliminary Considerations**

There are several ways that the presence of professional sports teams can influence the local economy. Community-wide, team operations create an annual impact, although the analysis should focus on the impact of revenue from non-local sources. Construction of a facility also has economic implications, which end when the construction project is complete. Finally, there is value to the overall community associated with the consumer surplus created by the team and its activities, as well as the branding/marketing of Austin that could occur outside the area based on media coverage of the team. Within the community, the impact of existing professional facilities on the neighborhood where located is mixed, with literature suggesting factors such as location, design, and integration with existing urban fabric can be the primary determinants.

### **Ongoing Operational Impacts**

For MLS teams, the main sources of revenue are ticket sales and advertising/sponsorship/jersey rights, which account for just over half of total team revenue. Luxury seating, stadium naming rights, and concessions account an additional 30% or so, with the balance coming from a range of activities around youth, tournament, and international soccer and merchandise royalties. The following table delineates projections (based on preliminary estimates using ranges provided by the team) of revenue by broad source, along with the percentage from local and non-local sources.

| <b>GROSS REVENUE</b>                     | <b>Total Revenue %</b> | <b>Local Revenue %</b> | <b>Non-Local Revenue %</b> |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ticket Sales - MLS Season                | 27%                    | 80%                    | 20%                        |
| Exhibition/International Soccer Matches  | 2%                     | 80%                    | 20%                        |
| Non-National Broadcasting                | 1%                     | 100%                   | NA                         |
| Advertising/Sponsorship/Jersey Rights    | 27%                    | 50%                    | 50%                        |
| Stadium Naming Rights                    | 9%                     | 100%                   | NA                         |
| Royalties - Merchandise                  | 4%                     | 80%                    | 20%                        |
| Luxury Seating                           | 10%                    | 90%                    | 10%                        |
| Parking                                  | 1%                     | 80%                    | 20%                        |
| Concessions                              | 12%                    | 80%                    | 20%                        |
| Programming & Development (Youth System) | 4%                     | 95%                    | 5%                         |
| Other Events                             | 3%                     | 25%                    | 75%                        |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                            | <b>100%</b>            | <b>74%</b>             | <b>26%</b>                 |

Historically, many studies of the economic impact of professional sports activity such as MLS have tended to overstate the extent to which the team is responsible for gains in local economic activity and income. This overstatement typically is based on exaggerating the direct benefits. Attendance is a good example; local residents coming to the match and spending money yields no net change in economic activity, since local disposable income is simply being reallocated within the community (although it could be argued that some fraction of local attendee spending might have otherwise leaked out of Austin but for the MLS team). On the non-resident side, some attendees will come to Austin specifically to see a match, while others may be visitors to the community here for a variety of additional reasons (perhaps attending a conference, visiting friends, etc.) that take advantage of being in town to see the team play. If the other motivations of tourists are offset by the potential leakage of local resident dollars, then the translation is that non-resident attendance is the basis of estimating this portion of the direct economic effects. For community-wide economic impact analysis, the level of revenue derived from non-local sources is the appropriate input into the process.

### **Construction Impacts**

There will also be an economic impact associated with construction of the facility, though that impact ends once the project has been completed. A construction budget is not currently available, but, based on comparable facilities elsewhere, the cost is likely to be somewhere between \$150-200 million. This figure would be the input into the model to determine the total impact of MLS facility construction on the Austin area.

### **Other Community-Wide Benefits**

In the economics of cost-benefit analysis, the worth or value of a commodity to an individual is determined by what that person is willing to pay for it. If an individual is prepared to pay up to \$30 for a soccer ball, economists assume that it is worth no less than \$30 to that individual. If the soccer ball is priced at \$20, the buyer enjoys a consumer surplus of \$10 over the \$20 actually paid. This concept of consumer surplus is one of the cornerstones of the economics of cost-benefit analysis. Economists measure the social benefit of providing a good or service by estimating the consumer surplus, summed over all consumers. Shifting the market supply of good downward or upward (or changing the price of the good) causes the consumer surplus to expand or shrink accordingly. The net change in consumer

surplus is the classical measure of the net social benefits (positive or negative) associated with the shift in supply or price.

As part of analysis done on the Spurs impact on San Antonio almost 20 years ago, TXP estimated that Spurs fans likely would have been willing to pay a total of \$23.5 million more than was actually charged to attend Spurs' games in 1999, a figure that inevitably has grown over time. In that vein, a MLS match is a newsworthy event that would be heavily covered by media across platforms, and sports coverage is significant to local media outlets. The fact that local media devote so much attention to sports and place much stronger emphasis on local teams than others implies that their customers are interested in the local team. These sports fans will consume coverage of the Austin MLS team, and the media will provide reporting around the games and other team activities, without providing compensation to the team. Similarly, MLS is covered by media in other markets across the world, and a local team likely would enhance Brand Austin. For these reasons, a MLS franchise creates a classic externality, a benefit that accrues to people who are neither buyers nor sellers of the production of the match, and the ensuing impact community and civic impacts should also be considered.

### **Impacts Within the Community**

Some stadium facility development projects appear to generate substantial benefits within the community and/or induce urban revitalization, while some other projects do not, as suggested by mixed outcomes in the literature on the effects of stadium development. Work by Charles Corwin (*Impacts of Professional Sports Stadium Development Projects on Urban Areas, 2011*) suggests that the location of the project within the community and its overall design and integration with the existing urban fabric are among the key determinants of benefit within the community. His thoughts on each are summarized below.

#### **Location**

Location of the facility can support and allow for convenience to the Central Business District (CBD), enhance accessibility, promote synergies, and overcome natural and physical barriers between the stadium and its patrons. It appears that the CBD, or another appropriate site in central cities, can generally be a good option, particularly when downtown revitalization is strongly pursued. As Nelson (2001) indicates, "A stadium located in the suburbs or outside the CBD, although land costs may be much less, could result in a higher loss of MSA share of regional wealth, whereas the CBD option will likely generate greater economic benefits." More importantly, in locating the stadium, coordination of the project with other infrastructure is critical. For instance, locating the sporting venue next to public transportation and major transit routes allows for greater accessibility and more efficient travel. As mentioned by Nelson pedestrian corridors or light rail transit, from the venue to the CBD, in conjunction with integrated shopping, dining, and hotel opportunities, allows residents and visitors to have greater connection from downtown to the stadium, promoting additional business. In addition to the locational benefits outlined here, the option to place training facilities in other parts of Austin away from the stadium could help extend the geographic reach of MLS-related benefits within the community.

#### **Design/Integration**

Design is another important factor to be considered in the process of stadium development. A number of issues arise when considering design of a stadium. Not only aesthetic appeal, but also the position of the stadium on the site and ancillary development surrounding the site, must be considered within the context of the city. Stadiums need to be designed with consideration of interaction with existing structures and businesses. For example, Wrigley Field in Chicago features narrow concourses and walkways, which significantly lowers the number of vendors selling merchandise and food in the

stadium, due to the lack of space, while promoting spending outside the stadium. Also important is the creation of an aesthetic connection between the stadium district and the downtown district, by understanding the aesthetic context of stadium placement. Ahlfeldt and Maennig (2010) suggested that sports stadiums can either be iconic forms of architecture or be incorporated into the urban fabric. In any design, a sports stadium should be a showcase to the cityscape.

An MLS team could be an exciting prospect for Austin, as a mixture of economic and community benefits likely will occur. However, the range, scope, and magnitude of these benefits will be influenced, at least to some degree, by the ultimate site chosen. Moreover, the cost side of the equation also will vary to some degree by site, especially as it relates to the City's opportunity costs (i.e., what else could a possible site be used for and/or what is being foregone by changing uses of that site). If the process moves forward, it is likely that more detailed enumeration of the benefits and costs associated with each site will be useful in determining the Project's viability, and overall net benefit to the community.

### Community Engagement Outline

Resolution 20171109-046 directed the following preliminary engagement:

- Neighborhood groups;
- Precourt Sports Ventures;
- Austin Sports and Entertainment;
- Any other MLS teams;
- Area Colleges and Universities;
- Independent School Districts within Austin City Limits;
- Travis County;
- Central Health; and,
- Other potential stakeholders

The resolution deadline challenged the Parks and Recreation Department's ability to comprehensively engage all groups. At the time of this report, the Parks and Recreation Department has been able to engage the stated groups as follows:

- **Neighborhood groups:** Through the course of regular business, discussed the resolution briefly and received initial thoughts regarding specific properties. The interactions cannot be characterized as comprehensive.
- **Precourt Sports Ventures:** One hour meeting with Precourt Sports Ventures representatives December 1, 2017. The communications can be characterized as preliminary.
- **Austin Sports & Entertainment:** One hour meeting with Austin Sports & Entertainment representative December 1, 2017. The communications can be characterized as preliminary.
- **Any other MLS teams:** The Acting Chief Financial Officer participated in a phone conversation with representatives from the Major League Soccer Organization. The communications can be characterized as basic research.
- **Area Colleges and Universities:** To date, the Parks and Recreation Department has communicated via phone or email requesting feedback regarding opportunities for partnership with the University of Texas (UT), Austin Community College, and Huston-Tillotson. While interest has been expressed, conversations can be characterized as preliminary and inconclusive as to the type of partnership that may be considered. Huston-Tillotson representatives communicated the College is interested in discussing how to leverage resources in partnership

with MLS. The University of Texas communicated that, at this time, UT is not pursuing offering property for consideration either through sale or ground lease as a site for the proposed MLS stadium. Additionally, the preliminary response with regards to shared space partnerships has been that UT's first priority is its students, but the University is open to discussions.

- **Independent School Districts:** To date, the Parks and Recreation Department has communicated via phone or email requesting feedback regarding opportunities for partnership with Austin ISD, Round Rock ISD and Del Valle ISD. Both Del Valle and Austin ISD confirm interest in exploring opportunities (specifically Burger Stadium for Austin ISD). Round Rock ISD has not yet responded to the inquiry.
- **Travis County:** There have been email communications expressing interest in exploring opportunities to include/consider the Travis County Exposition Center operations.
- **Central Health:** A basic phone conversation regarding the best individual(s) to discuss partnership opportunities occurred, but no conclusive information or commitment has resulted to date.
- **Other potential stakeholders:** Through the course of regular business, the resolution was discussed with the Trail Foundation, the Austin Parks Foundation, the YMCA, the West Austin Youth Association, and various community members. The interactions cannot be characterized as comprehensive.

In consideration of seriously analyzing a specific site, and in accordance with the City of Austin and Austin Parks and Recreation Department's established community engagement process, it is recommended that the following standard protocol be utilized as a general guideline for engagement. For each potential development site, it is recommended a set of specific stakeholders be added to the named stakeholders in the original resolution. Identified properties, listed beginning on page 12, individually include a list of site specific stakeholders.

### **Standard Engagement Recommendations**

Establish a **Technical Advisory Group** of core internal City stakeholders who specifically have knowledge or interest in site development and the logistics of Major League Soccer operating in Austin. This group may include but is not limited to the Transportation Department, Development Services Department, Austin Sports Commission, Economic Development Department and Public Works. This group would likely be used to gather input with regard to the prioritization of sites based upon the logistical and operational aspects of Major League Soccer.

Establish a **Community Advisory Group** of core stakeholders who specifically have knowledge or interest in soccer. This group may include community stakeholders like the YMCA, Independent School Districts, Universities/Colleges, Austin soccer leagues, Austin Sports Commission and an MLS representative. This group would likely be used to gather input with regard to the prioritization of sites based on the operational and business aspects of Major League Soccer.

**Small Group Stakeholder Engagement Activities** should include 6 to 10 stakeholders meetings with individuals affected within a one-mile radius of proposed sites and would likely be used to gather input regarding the prioritization of community goals for the development of an MLS stadium.

Establish a **SpeakUp Austin Online Engagement** site to allow for general feedback and mapping comments to determine segments of the populations that may not be fully represented and other populations that may benefit from additional outreach.

**Open House opportunities** provided in a minimum of three regional locations to gather input regarding the community goals.

### **Community Benefits Overview**

Basic research regarding the relationship between MLS organizations and the cities in which the organization resides, indicates the community benefits are tailored to each individual city's need and are done in partnership with multiple community partners and benefactors. Notably demonstrated community benefits include those highlighted below; however, this list is by no means all-inclusive or exhaustive. Identified specific sites will have unique community benefits, some of which will be outlined later in the report. Other possible community benefits will likely come to light during a site-specific community engagement process.

**Grants** are made to nonprofit organizations that show promise for extending soccer programs and participation to children and adults who would not otherwise get to participate. In some cases, grants are made for programs that place special emphasis on projects serving high-need groups, removing barriers to access/participation, and strengthening communities.

Some organizations, as a major funding source for the local "community foundation," support other charitable non-profit organizations that are registered as a 501(c)(3) with tax-exempt status from the IRS. These organizations are located within one of the four surrounding counties, and specifically address youth education, health and wellness programming, inclusive soccer programming, and environmental awareness. In some cases, organizations provide equipment donations and/or capital grants to construct or enhance soccer facilities and surfaces, which will expand access and participation for individuals who would not otherwise get to play soccer.

**Donations** are made to local hospitals and/or research organizations making advancements in pediatric cancer research and care for children who are suffering with cancer or terminal illness.

**Youth Soccer Programming** (leagues, camps, clinics, etc.) is offered, in some cases for free, specifically in underserved areas of the community.

**Community Investments** to further healthy food choices include funding urban/community garden spaces, and furthering opportunities for access to healthy food choices in areas where healthy food access is limited.

**Community Investments** to further elementary education, youth activity, art appreciation, and wellness, as specific non-profit organizations and/or local school districts are the beneficiaries of partnership program dollars, or in-kind support for programs that promote the soccer organization's philanthropic mission.

**Stadium rentals** for private parties, weddings, receptions, and company functions.

**All stadium sites have the opportunity to implement a ticket assessment**, for example \$1.00 per ticket, to be collected and deposited into a special revenue fund associated with general or specific park maintenance or programming. The specific criteria of this fund can be determined as part of a policy

discussion. Examples of this criteria may be to fund master plans, maintenance of specified parks, increase after-school programming, etc.

### City-Owned Property Recommendations or Consideration

The following outlined properties presented for consideration are properties that the City of Austin has vetted with the Office of Real Estate Services, City Department Directors, Austin Sports and Entertainment, Precourt Sports Ventures, and other various stakeholders. It is important to note, the time constraints associated with producing this report did not allow for a comprehensive community engagement process; however, basic community sentiments are included. It will be necessary and appropriate to further engage the community with regards to the specific site to truly measure the community sentiment.

City-owned property and underutilized parkland options were considered. For the purpose of this report, the underutilized parkland is defined as follows:

**Tier 1- Undeveloped:** The parkland is completely undeveloped and does not have a completed master plan or other guiding document associated with the space. No current uses exist for the parkland.

**Tier 2- Partially Developed/Partially Utilized:** The parkland may have some development; however, significant portions of the parkland are yet to be developed. A guiding document for development may exist; however, the build-out phases are incomplete. Additionally, significant portions of the used spaces of the parkland are single or seasonal use, meaning the space marginally serves only a segment of the population.

**Tier 3- Seasonal/Single Use:** The parkland may have an established use; however, the use is a single sport or a seasonal use, meaning the space marginally serves only a segment of the population.

The following chart provides an at-a-glance perspective of the City-owned land analyzed for consideration. Attachment B maps the potential locations.

| Property Reference Name                 | Address                      | Stadium | Practice Site | Acreage |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| St. John's                              | 7211 N IH35, Austin 78752    | X       |               | 19      |
| McKalla Place                           | 10414 McKalla Place, 78758   | X       |               | 24      |
| Toomey Road                             | 1501 Toomey Rd., 78704       | X       |               | 16      |
| Exposition Center                       | 7311 Decker Ln, 78724        | X       | X             | 127     |
| Roy G. Guerrero Metro Park              | 400 Grove Blvd, 78741        | X       | X             | 399     |
| Bolm Road District Park                 | 6700 Bolm Rd, 78725          |         | X             | 68      |
| Walnut Creek Sports Complex             | 7800 Johnny Morris Rd, 78724 |         | X             | 228     |
|                                         |                              |         |               |         |
| Tony Burger Activity Center and Stadium | 3200 Jones Rd, 78745         |         | X             | 57      |

Each piece of property is individually outlined in accordance with the criteria taken from Resolution 20171109-046. It is important to note, the information offered is preliminary and is not to be considered comprehensive, but instead a base-level analysis.

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### **St. John's (Home Depot/Chrysler) Property**

|         |                                |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| Owner   | Office of Real Estate Services |
| Address | 7211 N IH35 Austin, TX 78752   |
| Acreage | 19 acres                       |

This site has been the subject of media and public interest regarding future usage inquiries. A separate effort to determine appropriate potential uses for this site is being investigated by other City staff as directed by a separate Council Resolution, passed at the December 7, 2017, Council Meeting. Should this site be selected for further exploration, it is important to be sensitive to directives associated with the recently passed resolution.

#### **➤ Traffic**

- This site is directly accessible from regional freeway IH 35, and secondarily from US 290 and US 183, which allow connection to various areas inside and outside of Austin.
- The site acreage has the potential to provide on-site parking opportunities. A transportation analysis would be needed to assess impacts to the adjacent transportation network from traffic generated by events, including arterial streets that provide access to these freeways.
- The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is planning to complete reconstruction of the IH 35 St. Johns Avenue Bridge in 2021. Other area improvements include adding frontage road U-turns on both sides of the bridge, constructing collector-distributor roads under St. Johns Avenue in both directions, and adding auxiliary lanes, ramp, and shoulder improvements.

#### **➤ Opportunities**

- All general community benefits listed on pages 10 and 11 apply to this site.
- The St. John's community, through the Aquatics Master Plan process, has expressed a desire for a swimming pool to be re-established in the park space adjacent to the Home Depot site. If deemed appropriate, an opportunity exists to consider the private development of a neighborhood aquatic facility to be utilized by the public via specific negotiated terms.
- This location may have the opportunity to increase employment opportunities for community members within walking distance to the facility in an area where the unemployment rate is approximately 8.5% as reported in 2013.

- Selection and utilization of this specific site will allow the City of Austin to advance strategic goals associated with the Eastern Crescent Initiative (i.e. create economic opportunities, create employment opportunities, and activate a historically underserved area).
- If this were a mutually agreed upon development site, a stadium on this property may relieve concerns related to traffic and over-usage of downtown park spaces for events, as outlined in the Special Events Task Force recommendations. Each individual event promoter/stakeholder will need to be individually engaged with regards to consideration of relocation to this space.
- This property will not displace any existing public parks and recreation department programming and has the opportunity to plan/schedule public event opportunities.

➤ **Challenges**

- This site was purchased with 2006 Proposition Public Safety Bond funds, with the intention of building facilities associated with public safety. Should this be the selected site, the City will need to explore any regulations associated with construction of a stadium on a site purchased with 2006 Proposition Public Safety Bonds funds.
- This location does have neighborhood/residential housing to the east. While the western, southern, and northern edge of the property is utilized for commercial operations, its proximity to neighborhoods on the east side will require special consideration with regards to impacts and associated mitigation measures for conditions related to noise levels/noise pollution and light pollution. Light and noise has the potential of disrupting the perceived/actual peace and comfort of neighborhoods. Many tools and technologies exist to mitigate the possible disturbances; specifics will need exploration to ensure concerns are addressed.

➤ **Specific Community Stakeholder Group Engagement Considerations**

- The following list includes (but is not limited to) potential stakeholders specific to St. John's (Home Depot/Chrysler Land) I-35 7211 N IH35 Austin, TX 78752:
  - Coronado Hills Housing Authority Property
  - Coronado Hills Neighborhood Plan Contact Team- 1,467 Households
  - Coronado Hills/ Creekside Neighborhood Association- 325 Households
  - Highland Neighborhood Association- 1,200 Households
  - Highland/Skyview Neighborhood Plan Contact Team- 1,200 Households
  - Old Town Homeowners Association- 183 Households
  - Skyview Neighborhood Association- 206 Households
  - St. John Contact Team
  - St. John Neighborhood Association- 20,000 Households
  - Midtown Neighborhood Association- 1,500 Households
  - Austin Parks Foundation

- o Six Square
- o East Austin Youth Association
- o African American Resource Advisory Commission
- o Austin Coed Soccer
- o Austin Men's Soccer Association
- o Austin Sports and Social Club: Adult Coed Sports
- o Austin Women's Soccer League
- o Lonestar Soccer Club
- o North Austin Soccer Alliance
- o Soccer Zone

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### McKalla Lane Property

Owner Austin Water Utility  
 Address 10414 McKalla Lane Austin, Texas 78758  
 Acreage 24 acres

The McKalla property was originally purchased by Austin Water to be used as a service center. The site had significant environmental issues that were discovered during the construction process of the service center, and work was stopped on the project. The property has been cleaned up and is currently being used for materials storage by Austin Water, Austin Resource Recovery, and Public Works. While it could still function as a potential service center location, the property has been identified as a prime location for affordable housing, and a site for the relocation of the train station in this area.

#### ➤ Traffic

- This site is accessible from regional freeways IH 35, US 183, and Loop 1 (MoPac), which allow connection to various areas inside and outside of Austin. Also, Capital Metro's Kramer MetroRail Station is within a half-mile of the site.
- The site acreage has the potential to provide on-site parking opportunities. A transportation analysis would be needed to assess impacts to the adjacent transportation network from traffic generated by events, including arterial streets that provide access to these freeways.

#### ➤ Opportunities

- All general community benefits listed on pages 10 and 11 apply to this site.
- The surrounding area has built out commercial activity, including but not limited to retail, restaurants, and limited medical or health-related business, that may provide increased economic activity and/or benefit from partnership opportunities for expanded services.
- Because this site is not located in close proximity to neighborhoods or residential spaces, the light and noise pollution considerations or mitigation measures will be

less of a concern. However, exploration of standard mitigation considerations associated with best building practices are recommended.

- This location may have the opportunity to increase employment opportunities for community members within walking and biking distance to the facility in an area where the unemployment rate is approximately 9.6%.
- If this were a mutually agreed upon development site, a stadium on this property may relieve concerns related to traffic and over-usage of downtown park spaces for events, as outlined in the Special Events Task Force recommendations. Each individual event promoter/stakeholder will need to be individually engaged with regards to consideration of relocation to this space.
- This property will not displace any existing public parks and recreation department programming and has the opportunity to plan/schedule public event opportunities.

➤ **Challenges**

- Austin Water Utility, the current department owner, still has debt outstanding on the purchase. The cleanup of this property and any repurpose or sale of the site would require the City to address the debt outstanding, per our bond requirements.

➤ **Specific Community Stakeholder Group Engagement Considerations**

- The following list includes (but is not limited to) potential stakeholders specific to 10414 McKalla Place, Austin, TX 78758:
  - GracyWoods Neighborhood Association- 1,506 Households
  - North Austin Civic Association Plan Contact Team- 3,500 Households
  - North Park Estates Neighborhood Association- 175 Households
  - Northgate Neighborhood Association
  - Quail Hollow Neighborhood Association- 100 Households
  - River Oaks Lakes Estates Neighborhood- 220 Households
  - River Oaks Neighborhood Association- 250 Households
  - Thurmond Heights Neighborhood Association
  - Pflugerville Independent School District- 20,000 Households
  - North Growth Corridor Alliance
  - North Austin Civic Association- 29,000 Households
  - Austin Coed Soccer
  - Austin Men's Soccer Association
  - Austin Sports and Social Club: Adult Coed Sports
  - Austin Women's Soccer League
  - Lonestar Soccer Club
  - North Austin Soccer Alliance
  - Soccer Zone

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## Toomey Road and Lamar Property

|             |                                        |
|-------------|----------------------------------------|
| Owner       | Austin Parks and Recreation Department |
| Address     | 1501 Toomey Rd, Austin, TX 78704       |
| Acreage     | 16 acres                               |
| Utilization | Tier 3                                 |

This site encompasses many of the elements that other successful MLS organizations identified as key to the success of the stadium's operations. Media reports have independently outlined opportunities and challenges associated with the site.

### ➤ **Traffic**

- Based upon the preliminary review of the likely traffic and parking patterns (based upon practical experience with events held at nearby park locations and standard analysis), it is predicted that this site may demonstrate traffic issues.
- Existing regular operations in the area contribute to traffic congestion.
- Existing special events held near this site experience challenges accommodating traffic generated by events, and a stadium will likely experience the same.
- This site would require a plan for mitigating impacts, including shuttling patrons to and from an off-site location, encouraging use of alternative modes of transportation (walking, biking, public transportation, rideshare, etc.), and establishing a program to manage patrons parking (who sometimes park illegally) in nearby neighborhoods to access the site.
- A transportation analysis would be needed to assess impacts and develop these mitigation measures.

### ➤ **Opportunities**

- All general community benefits listed on pages 10 and 11 apply to this site.
- The Parks and Recreation Department Administrative Offices are located at this site and the building is aging. Should this site be deemed an appropriate development site, the stadium may have the capacity to house a substantial number of Parks and Recreation administrative staff. This would reduce an expense to the Austin tax payer to replace or continuously repair the existing Parks and Recreation Department administrative building.
- A stadium has the opportunity to serve as a venue for the events that are currently held at Auditorium Shores. Increasing year-round public access to Auditorium Shores through event relocation is consistent with the Special Events Task Force Recommendations.

- The surrounding area has built out commercial activity, including but not limited to retail, restaurants, and limited medical or health-related business, that may provide increased economic activity and/or benefit from partnership opportunities for expanded services.

#### ➤ **Challenges**

- This site had previously been identified as a location for the rebuilding of the Dougherty Arts Center. This consideration was made public and community engagement has taken place with regards to the possible opportunity. Admittedly, the relocation is contingent upon inclusion in and approval of the proposed 2018 Bond and additional stakeholder work is both necessary and appropriate with regards to this proposal.
- Should this location be the selected site, it will displace programming offered by Austin Independent School District, Austin Girls Fast Pitch, and the South Austin Little League (SALL), which currently serves 500 kids annually and began operations in 1950. In order to allow for continuous program delivery and to mitigate the displacement, it will be necessary and appropriate to re-establish the programming at an alternative near-by location at no expense to the public or the league. Alternative land will need to be identified to accommodate the built environment needs associated with youth sports programming. Relocation of sports fields will require negotiations with the developing organization for the built environment.
- Selection of this location, with the goal of encouraging pedestrian usage and biking as alternatives to vehicle based transportation, may place undue burden on the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail at Lady Bird Lake. The increase in traffic will contribute to accelerated deterioration of the trail. A nighttime game schedule has the potential to promote pedestrians utilizing an unlit space, which may attract undesirable behaviors. It is appropriate to consider mitigation measures to ensure trail maintenance can accommodate the increased capacity, and to ensure that temporary lighting is utilized for safe travel during nighttime games.
- This location does have neighborhoods and residential housing to the south. The eastern edge has commercial development, and the northern and western edge of the property is natural space. Its proximity to neighborhoods and nature will require special consideration with regards to impacts and associated mitigation measures for conditions related to with noise levels/noise pollution and light pollution. Light and noise has the potential of disrupting the perceived/actual peace and comfort of neighborhoods, and disrupts the normalcy of typical environmental conditions. Many tools and technologies exist to mitigate the possible disturbances; specifics will need exploration to ensure concerns are addressed.

#### ➤ **Specific Community Stakeholder Group Engagement Considerations**

- The following list includes (but is not limited to) potential stakeholders specific to 1501 Toomey Rd, Austin, TX 78704 (Toomey Ballfields):
  - Barton Oaks Neighborhood Association- 110 Households

- o Barton Hills Neighborhood Association
- o Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association- 2,000 Households
- o Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Planning Team
- o Bouldin Oaks Housing Authority Property
- o Dawson Neighborhood Association- 2,000 Households
- o Dawson Neighborhood Plan Contact Team- 3,800 Households
- o Friends of Blue Bonnet Hills- 115 Households
- o Friends of Zilker
- o Galindo Area Patriotic Porch Party (GAPPP)
- o Galindo Elementary Neighborhood Association
- o Goodrich Place Neighborhood Association
- o Greater South River City Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
- o Manchaca Village Neighborhood Association
- o Meadowbrook Neighborhood Association
- o Perry Grid 614
- o Skyway Austin Homeowners Association Inc.- 56 Households
- o South Austin Commercial Alliance
- o South Central Coalition
- o South First IBIZ District
- o South Lamar IBIZ District
- o South Lamar Neighborhood Association- 5,000 Households
- o South River City Citizens Association- 4,600 Households
- o The Village at Kinney Court- 57 Households
- o Villas of Lost Canyon- 30 Households
- o Zilker Neighborhood Association-
- o Zoning Committee of South River City Citizens
- o Friends of the Emma Barrientos MACC
- o Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center Advisory Board
- o Save Barton Creek Association- 3,000 Households
- o Save Our Springs Alliance
- o Austin Parks Foundation
- o Barton Springs Conservancy
- o Downtown Austin Alliance
- o Friends of Barton Springs Pool
- o Friends of Deep Eddy Pool
- o Hill Country Conservancy
- o Pease Park Conservancy
- o Shoal Creek Conservancy
- o Six Square
- o The Trail Foundation
- o Waller Creek Conservancy
- o Austin Independent School District

- Austin Girls Fast Pitch
  - South Austin Little League
- 

### **Exposition Center Property**

|             |                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| Owner       | Travis County/City of Austin     |
| Address     | 7311 Decker Ln, Austin, TX 78724 |
| Acreage     | 127 acres                        |
| Utilization | Tier 2                           |

In July, 2016, the City of Austin and Travis County engaged Hunden Strategic Partners to conduct a market, financial impact, and planning study to determine the need for and sustainability of the renovation and/or expansion of the Travis County Exposition Center. In summary, the report recommended renovations and expansion plans specific to “ag-related shows and other events that typically use such facilities”. It also stated development at the Exposition Center may take some of the burden of the oversubscribed downtown venues. It is unclear as to the compatibility of a Major League Sports stadium and ag-related events; however, additional exploration may provide clarity.

Austin Sports and Entertainment has expressed interest in raising the capital necessary to build an extensive entertainment complex to accommodate both Major League Soccer, Rodeo Austin, and other public event/entertainment opportunities.

#### **➤ Traffic**

- This site is accessible from regional freeways US 183, US 290, and SH 130, which allow connection to various areas inside and outside of Austin.
- The site acreage has the potential to provide on-site parking opportunities. A transportation analysis would be needed to assess impacts to the adjacent transportation network from traffic generated by events, including arterial streets that provide access to these freeways.

#### **➤ Opportunities**

- All general community benefits listed on pages 10 and 11 apply to this site.
- Selection and utilization of this specific site will allow the City of Austin to advance strategic goals associated with the Eastern Crescent Initiative (i.e. create economic opportunities, create employment opportunities, and activate a historically underserved area).
- This location has the potential to increase employment opportunities for community members within walking and biking distance to the facility in an area where the unemployment rate is approximately 8.4%.
- Because this site is not located in close proximity to neighborhoods or residential spaces, the light and noise pollution considerations or mitigation measures will be

less of a concern. However, exploration of standard mitigation considerations associated with best building practices are recommended.

- Fully developed multipurpose fields, with an appropriately negotiated agreement, will allow for enhanced access to well-maintained multipurpose fields for inter-scholastic activities, soccer tournament activity, and usage by the general public. The Parks and Recreation Department currently has more requests for use of soccer fields than resources to meet the demand. Public availability of well-maintained multipurpose fields will fill an existing service gap.
- If this were a mutually agreed upon development site, a stadium on this property may relieve concerns related to traffic and over usage of downtown park spaces for events, as outlined in the Special Events Task Force recommendations. Each individual event promoter/stakeholder will need to be individually engaged with regards to consideration of relocation to this space.
- Travis County has expressed interest in exploring opportunities for improvements to the Travis County Exposition Center as it relates to the design vision created and promoted by Austin Sports and Entertainment.

➤ **Challenges**

- While the future vision for an entertainment complex is appealing, this site and the surrounding underdeveloped space is not currently consistent with successfully operating Major League Soccer Stadiums across the country and in Canada.
- In a very limited stakeholder discussion, some community members have expressed opposition to a Major League Soccer stadium citing its inconsistency with the recommendation of the Hunden report and the perception that baseball facilities are more consistent with the perceived need and expressed desire of the community.
- The timing associated with the completion of the Walter E. Long Park Master Planning process, which includes a commercial and economic overlay, will conflict with the opportunity to consider a holistic decision regarding Walter E. Long Park and the Travis County Exposition Center complementary proposed uses.

➤ **Community Stakeholder Group Engagement Considerations**

- The following list includes (but is not limited to) potential stakeholders specific to Travis County Exposition Center 7311 Decker Ln, Austin, TX 78724:
  - Agave Neighborhood Association
  - Cavalier Park Neighborhood Association- 200 Households
  - Colony Park Neighborhood Association
  - Imperial Valley Neighborhood Association- 190 Households
  - Scenic Point Home Owners Association
  - Friends of Northeast Austin

- o L.B.J. Neighborhood Association- 450 Households
- o African American Resource Advisory Commission
- o Six Square
- o Austin Coed Soccer
- o Austin Men's Soccer Association
- o Austin Sports and Social Club: Adult Coed Sports
- o Austin Women's Soccer League
- o Lonestar Soccer Club
- o North Austin Soccer Alliance
- o Soccer Zone

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### **Tony Burger Activity Center and Stadium**

Owner            Austin Independent School District  
 Address        3200 Jones Rd, Austin, TX 78745  
 Acreage        57 acres

This site is under consideration for a practice complex/auxiliary site. The Austin Independent School District (AISD) has expressed interest in exploring a partnership/relationship with a Major League Soccer organization with regards to practice fields. However, further input from AISD is required for site consideration.

#### **➤ Traffic**

- This site is directly accessible from regional freeway US 290, and secondarily from Loop 1 (MoPac), which allow connection to various areas inside and outside of Austin.
- Though this site currently accommodates larger sports, a transportation analysis would be needed to assess impacts to the adjacent transportation network from traffic generated by events, including arterial streets that provide access to these freeways. The site and adjacent streets are within the City of Sunset Valley.

#### **➤ Opportunities**

- All general community benefits listed on pages 10 and 11 apply to this site.
- Fully developed multipurpose fields, with an appropriately negotiated agreement, will allow for enhanced access to well-maintained multipurpose fields for inter-scholastic activities, soccer tournament activity, and usage by the general public. The Parks and Recreation Department currently has more requests for use of soccer fields than resources to meet the demand. Public availability of well-maintained multipurpose fields will fill an existing service gap.
- Because this site is not located in close proximity to neighborhoods or residential spaces, the light and noise pollution considerations or mitigation measures will be

less of a concern. However, exploration of standard mitigation considerations associated with best building practices are recommended.

- The surrounding area has built out commercial activity, including but not limited to retail, restaurants, and limited medical or health-related business, that may provide increased economic activity and/or benefit from partnership opportunities for expanded services.

➤ **Challenges**

- Allowable development on school district land may limit opportunities for complementary commercial development, such as sports or health clinics, a comprehensive wellness complex, etc.
- Where existing programming is being displaced for the purpose of Major League Soccer practice operations, it is important to determine appropriate funding and development processes to effectively and efficiently relocate the displaced built environment to allow the continuation of community based programs. This relocation would ideally be funded via non-public funds.

➤ **Community Stakeholder Group Engagement Considerations**

- The following list includes (but is not limited to) potential stakeholders specific to Tony Burger Activity Center and Stadium- 3200 Jones Rd, Austin, TX 78745:
  - o Austin Independent School District School Board
  - o Armadillo Park Neighborhood Association
  - o Battle Bend Springs Homeowners Association- 203 Households
  - o Brodie Lane Homeowners Association
  - o Cherry Creek Central Zoning Committee
  - o Cherry Creek Southwest Neighborhood Association- 1,000 Households
  - o Cherry Creek Village Neighborhood Association- 200 Households
  - o Circle S. Ridge Neighborhood Association- 25 Households
  - o Go!Austin/Vamos!Austin (GAVA)
  - o Grand Oaks Owners Association- 323 Households
  - o Greenwood Hills-Colonial Park Neighborhood Association- 450 Households
  - o Matthews Lane Neighborhood Association- 350 Households
  - o Perry Grid 644
  - o Shadow Bend Neighborhood Association
  - o Shiloh Oaks Neighborhood Association- 400 Households
  - o South Boggy Creek Environmental Association-342 Households
  - o South Boggy Creek Neighborhood Association
  - o South Congress Combined Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
  - o South Manchaca Contact Team- 2,000 Households
  - o Southwood Neighborhood Association- 2,300 Households
  - o Woodhue Community Neighborhood Watch- 150 Households

- o Austin Coed Soccer
- o Austin Men's Soccer Association
- o Austin Sports and Social Club: Adult Coed Sports
- o Austin Women's Soccer League
- o Lonestar Soccer Club
- o North Austin Soccer Alliance
- o Soccer Zone

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## Walnut Creek Sports Complex

Owner Austin Parks and Recreation Department  
 Address 7800 Johnny Morris Rd, Austin, TX 78724  
 Acreage 228 acres  
 Utilization Tier 2

This site is under consideration for a practice complex/auxiliary site.

### ➤ Traffic

- This site is accessible from regional freeways US 183, US 290, and SH 130, which allow connection to various areas inside and outside of Austin.
- The site acreage has the potential to provide on-site parking opportunities. A transportation analysis would be needed to assess impacts to the adjacent transportation network from traffic generated by events, including arterial streets that provide access to these freeways.

### ➤ Opportunities

- All general community benefits listed on pages 10 and 11 apply to this site.
- This location may have the opportunity to increase employment opportunities for community members within walking and biking distance to the facility in an area where the unemployment rate is approximately 8.4%.
- Selection and utilization of this specific site will allow the City of Austin to advance strategic goals associated with the Eastern Crescent Initiative (i.e. create economic opportunities, create employment opportunities, and activate a historically underserved area).
- This complex has existing tennis courts and has been identified as an appropriate space for a sports complex. There are multiple stakeholders who have expressed interest in a development and use partnership.
- This location does have neighborhoods and residential housing in proximity to the southern side of the park. Its proximity to neighborhoods will require special consideration with regards to impacts and associated mitigation measures for

conditions related to noise levels/noise pollution and light pollution. Light and noise has the potential of disrupting the perceived/actual peace and comfort of neighborhoods. Many tools and technologies exist to mitigate the possible disturbances; specifics will need exploration to ensure concerns are addressed.

- Fully developed multipurpose fields, with an appropriately negotiated agreement, will allow for enhanced access to well-maintained multipurpose fields for inter-scholastic activities, soccer tournament activity and usage by the general public. The Parks and Recreation Department currently has more requests for use of soccer fields than resources to meet the demand. Public availability of well-maintained multipurpose fields will fill an existing service gap.
- Surrounding privately owned land allows for possible complimentary commercial development (hotel, restaurant, retail, health/medical clinic, etc.)

➤ **Challenges**

- Allowable development on parkland may limit opportunities for complementary commercial development, such as sports or health clinics, a comprehensive wellness complex, etc.
- Because this space is virtually undeveloped, it has been identified as appropriate for a sports complex and there has been an expressed interest in development. There are few significant challenges other than that which is listed above.

➤ **Community Stakeholder Group Engagement Considerations**

- The following list includes (but is not limited to) potential stakeholders specific to Walnut Creek Sports Complex- 7800 Johnny Morris Rd, Austin, TX 78724:
  - Agave Neighborhood Association
  - Cavalier Park Neighborhood Association- 200 Households
  - Colony Park Neighborhood Association
  - Imperial Valley Neighborhood Association- 190 Households
  - Scenic Point Home Owners Association
  - Friends of Northeast Austin
  - L.B.J. Neighborhood Association- 450 Households
  - Six Square
  - African American Resources Advisory Commission
  - Austin Coed Soccer
  - Austin Men's Soccer Association
  - Austin Sports and Social Club: Adult Coed Sports
  - Austin Women's Soccer League
  - Lonestar Soccer Club
  - North Austin Soccer Alliance
  - Soccer Zone

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## **Bolm Road Property**

|             |                                        |
|-------------|----------------------------------------|
| Owner       | Austin Parks and Recreation Department |
| Address     | 6700 Bolm Rd, Austin, TX 78725         |
| Acreage     | 68 acres                               |
| Utilization | Tier 1                                 |

This site is under consideration for a practice complex/auxiliary site.

### **➤ Traffic**

- This site is directly accessible from regional freeway US 183, and secondarily from SH 71 and IH 35, which allow connection to various areas inside and outside of Austin.
- A transportation analysis would be needed to assess impacts to the adjacent transportation network from traffic generated by events, including arterial streets that provide access to these freeways.
- The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA) is reconstructing US 183 to provide a new tolled expressway for eight miles between US 290 and SH 71. The project will also upgrade non-tolled lanes and provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities to be completed in 2020. Approved project design schematics remove the existing grade-separated bridge and intersections with Bolm Road with US 183. Motor vehicles accessing the site would be required to use the one-way northbound US 183 general lanes and use downstream crossovers to reverse direction of travel. A pedestrian bridge crossing over US 183 is proposed at Bolm Road.

### **➤ Opportunities**

- All general community benefits listed on pages 10 and 11 apply to this site.
- This parkland is completely undeveloped.
- This location may have the opportunity to increase employment opportunities for community members within walking and biking distance to the facility in an area where the unemployment rate is approximately 6.1%.
- Selection and utilization of this specific site will allow the City of Austin to advance strategic goals associated with the Eastern Crescent Initiative (i.e. create economic opportunities, create employment opportunities, and activate a historically underserved area).
- Fully developed multipurpose fields, with an appropriately negotiated agreement, will allow for enhanced access to well-maintained multipurpose fields for inter-scholastic activities, soccer tournament activity, and usage by the general public.

The Parks and Recreation Department currently has more requests for use of soccer fields than resources to meet the demand. Public availability of well-maintained multipurpose fields will fill an existing service gap.

- Surrounding privately owned land allows for possible complimentary commercial development (hotel, restaurant, retail, health/medical clinic, etc.)

➤ **Challenges**

- This location does have neighborhoods and residential housing to the north. While there is also neighborhoods and residential housing to the west, it is buffered by Highway 183. Special consideration with regards to impacts and associated mitigation measures for conditions related to noise levels/noise pollution and light pollution may be considered. Light and noise has the potential of disrupting the perceived/actual peace and comfort of neighborhoods. Many tools and technologies exist to mitigate the possible disturbances; specifics will need exploration to ensure concerns are addressed.
- Allowable development on parkland may limit opportunities for complementary commercial development, such as sports or health clinics, a comprehensive wellness complex, etc.
- Because this space is undeveloped, there are few significant challenges aside from the exceptions above. One additional consideration, the Council-appointed Parks and Recreation Board has identified and issued a resolution to Council to consider a Request for Information (RFI) for this parkland specific to a music amphitheater.

➤ **Community Stakeholder Group Engagement Considerations**

- The following list includes (but is not limited to) potential stakeholders specific to Bolm Road District Park- 6700 Bolm Rd, Austin, TX 78725:
  - Lower Boggy Creek Neighborhood Association- 13 Households
  - Knollwood on the Colorado Neighborhood Association- 179 Households
  - Austin InnerCity Alliance
  - Austin's Colony HOA Inc.- 687 Households
  - PODER
  - Hispanic Quality of Life Commission
  - Austin Coed Soccer
  - Austin Men's Soccer Association
  - Austin Sports and Social Club: Adult Coed Sports
  - Austin Women's Soccer League
  - Lonestar Soccer Club
  - North Austin Soccer Alliance
  - Soccer Zone

## Roy G. Guerrero Park

|             |                                        |
|-------------|----------------------------------------|
| Owner       | Austin Parks and Recreation Department |
| Address     | 400 Grove Blvd, Austin, TX 78741       |
| Acreage     | 339 acres                              |
| Utilization | Tier 2                                 |

This site is may be considered for either development of a stadium or practice/auxiliary field site.

### ➤ Traffic

- This site is accessible from regional freeways US 183, SH 71, and IH 35, which allow connection to various areas inside and outside of Austin.
- The potential to provide on-site parking will need further exploration. A transportation analysis would be needed to assess impacts to the adjacent transportation network from traffic generated by events, including arterial streets that provide access to these freeways.
- The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA) is reconstructing US 183 to provide a new tolled expressway for eight miles between US 290 and SH 71. The project will also upgrade non-tolled lanes and provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities to be completed in 2020. Approved project design schematics include a reconfigured intersection with Montopolis Drive, but not an extension of Grove Boulevard through the park that would provide direct access to US 183.

### ➤ Opportunities

- All general community benefits listed on pages 10 and 11 apply to this site.
- Fully developed multipurpose fields, with an appropriately negotiated agreement, will allow for enhanced access to well-maintained multipurpose fields for inter-scholastic activities, soccer tournament activity, and usage by the general public. The Parks and Recreation Department currently has more requests for use of soccer fields than resources to meet the demand. Public availability of well-maintained multipurpose fields will fill an existing service gap.
- This location has the potential to increase employment opportunities for community members within walking and biking distance to the facility in an area where the unemployment rate is approximately 9.9%.
- Selection and utilization of this specific site will allow the City of Austin to advance strategic goals associated with the Eastern Crescent Initiative (i.e. create economic opportunities, create employment opportunities, and activate a historically underserved area).

- There may be opportunities in the Montopolis neighborhood to allow for very carefully planned commercial development and increased employment opportunities
- If this were a mutually agreed upon development site, a stadium on this property may relieve concerns related to traffic and over-usage of downtown park spaces for events, as outlined in the Special Events Task Force recommendations. Each individual event promoter/stakeholder will need to be individually engaged with regards to consideration of relocation to this space.

#### ➤ **Challenges**

- Allowable development on parkland may limit opportunities for complementary commercial development, such as sports or health clinics, a comprehensive wellness complex, etc.
- Should this location be the selected site, it will displace programming offered by the Montopolis Little League and IME Soccer youth sports organization partners, which currently collectively serves 248 kids annually. In order to allow for continuous program delivery and to mitigate the displacement, it will be necessary and appropriate to re-establish the programming at an alternative near-by location at no expense to the public or the league. Alternative land will need to be identified to accommodate the built environment needs associated with youth sports programming. Relocation of sports fields will require negotiations with the developing organization for the built environment.
- This location does have neighborhoods and residential housing in proximity to the park. The northern edge of the property is natural space. Its proximity to neighborhoods and nature will require special consideration with regards to impacts and associated mitigation measures for conditions related to noise levels/noise pollution and light pollution. Light and noise has the potential of disrupting the perceived/actual peace and comfort of neighborhoods and disrupts the normalcy of typical environmental conditions. Many tools and technologies exist to mitigate the possible disturbances; specifics will need exploration to ensure concerns are addressed.
- Selection of this location, with the goal of encouraging pedestrian usage and biking as alternatives to vehicle based transportation, may place undue burden on the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail at Lady Bird Lake. The increase in traffic will contribute to accelerated deterioration of the trail. A nighttime game schedule has the potential to promote pedestrians utilizing an unlit space, which may attract undesirable behaviors. It is appropriate to consider mitigation measures to ensure trail maintenance can accommodate the increased capacity, and to ensure that temporary lighting is utilized for safe travel during nighttime games.

#### ➤ **Community Stakeholder Group Engagement Considerations**

- The following list includes (but is not limited to) potential stakeholders specific to Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Metro Park - 400 Grove Blvd, Austin, TX 78741:

- o Burleson Road Heights Neighborhood Association- 90 Households
  - o Carson Ridge Neighborhood Association
  - o Crossing Gardenhome Owners Association- 96 Households
  - o East Riverside / Oltorf Neighborhood Plan Contact Team- 15,718 Households
  - o Edgewick Homeowners Association- 300 Households
  - o Friends of Riverside Neighborhood Association
  - o Larch Terrace Neighborhood Association
  - o Montopolis Community Alliance- 26 Households
  - o Montopolis Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
  - o Pleasant Valley Homeowners Association- 96 Households
  - o Riverside Farms Road Neighborhood Association- 35 Households
  - o Riverside Meadows Homeowners Association- 283 Households
  - o South Lakeshore Neighborhood Association
  - o Southeast Austin Neighborhood Alliance
  - o Sunridge Homeowners Association- 90 Households
  - o Vargas Neighborhood Association- 25 Households
  - o Vasquez Fields Neighborhood Association- 100 Households
  - o Waterfront Condominium Homeowners Association- 48 Households
  - o El Concilio Mexican-American Neighborhoods- 15,000 Households
  - o East Austin Conservancy
  - o River Bluff Neighborhood Association- 25 Households
  - o PODER
  - o Hispanic Quality of Life Commission
  - o Montopolis Little League
  - o IME Soccer
  - o Austin Coed Soccer
  - o Austin Men's Soccer Association
  - o Austin Sports and Social Club: Adult Coed Sports
  - o Austin Women's Soccer League
  - o Lonestar Soccer Club
  - o North Austin Soccer Alliance
  - o Soccer Zone
  - o The Trail Foundation
-

**RESOLUTION NO. 20171109-046**

**WHEREAS**, the Major League Soccer (MLS) organization is a premiere professional soccer league in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, soccer is a beloved sport in the Central Texas region and throughout the State by individuals regardless of age; and

**WHEREAS**, Austin is one of the largest cities in the United States without a professional sports team; and

**WHEREAS**, Resolution No. 20140306-022 directed the City Manager to work with MLS, neighborhood groups, The University of Texas, and other stakeholders to explore the feasibility of an MLS franchise in Austin and “to identify potential sites that take into account the traffic impact on surrounding neighborhoods”; and

**WHEREAS**, Precourt Sports Ventures has expressed an interest in potentially moving the MLS team, Columbus Crew Soccer Club (Columbus Crew), to Austin; and

**WHEREAS**, for a relocation to Austin to occur, Precourt Sport Ventures has indicated that a mutually agreeable location for a stadium would need to be explored and solidified; and

**WHEREAS**, Precourt Sport Ventures has confirmed that it would pay all construction and operating costs associated with a world class soccer park and practice fields; and

**WHEREAS**, the most successful soccer venues in the United States are located in or close to the urban core of the city; and

**WHEREAS**, while other cities are competing for an MLS expansion team, Austin has been offered the opportunity to be home to an existing team; and

**WHEREAS**, a professional soccer team could benefit Austin by promoting civic pride and providing financial benefits to the City and its recreational facilities;

**NOW, THEREFORE:**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL:**

The City Manager is directed to identify City-owned sites in the full purpose jurisdiction (including the Travis County Expo Center) as well as potentially including underutilized parkland, that might be appropriate for a soccer stadium, as well as sites outside the urban core where practice fields and ancillary uses could serve an MLS team and the surrounding community.

This analysis should also consider:

- Traffic and other potential impacts on businesses, places of worship, public facilities, residential neighborhoods, and schools adjacent to identified sites;
- Displacement of City programs or services as a result of a conversion in use;

- New programs serving Austin residents, including community benefits that could result from the construction of a stadium and practice fields;
- Direct and indirect economic benefits of having an MLS team in Austin;
- Processes for engaging the public in consideration of these options.

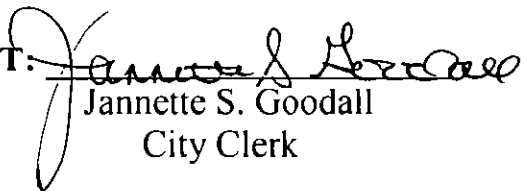
The above analysis should include engagement with neighborhood groups, Precourt Sports Ventures, Austin Sports and Entertainment, any other MLS teams, area colleges and universities, Independent School Districts within Austin city limits, and other potential stakeholders.

The City Manager is further directed to consult with Travis County, area colleges and universities, Central Health, and other relevant entities in consideration of potential sites.

The City Manager is directed to bring an initial report and recommendations to Council by December 14, 2017.

**ADOPTED:** November 9, 2017

**ATTEST:**

  
Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk



## Potential MLS Locations

- Stadium, COA Parkland
- Practice Field, COA Parkland
- Stadium, COA Non-Parkland
- Practice Field, COA Non-Parkland
- Practice Field, AISD Property

## Map Legend

- City of Austin Park
- MetroRail
- Urban Core
- Austin Full Purpose
- Austin Limited Purpose
- Austin ETJ
- Austin ETJ Agmt

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