

City of Austin Council Message Board

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B.3

soccer stadium discussion, June 12 work session

<http://austincouncilforum.org/viewtopic.php?f=2&t=1057>

soccer stadium discussion, June 12 work session

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by **Leslie Pool**Posted: **Mon Jun 11, 2018 4:18 pm**

Colleagues,

I am looking forward to having a discussion on the site analysis and economic impact analysis related to the city-owned McKalla Place property.

I appreciate the hard work that our city staff have done to compile information on the site, certain infrastructure costs, and a high-level discussion of opportunity costs in a relatively short period of time.

I do have some concerns about the economic impact analysis submitted by a third-party consultant, B&D Venues. My office has spent the past week reviewing the assumptions and estimates related to this analysis and have identified a number of issues that appear to overstate the economic impact potential of a stadium.

My staff have drafted one document outlining our concerns and another document reviewing the relevant academic literature on the economic impact of sports stadiums. I will provide links to these documents as soon as they are finalized.

In the meantime, I am providing a non-comprehensive list of key questions related to the staff memo and the economic impact analysis. These questions are available here:
[http://assets.austintexas.gov/austincou ... 160801.pdf](http://assets.austintexas.gov/austincou...160801.pdf)

I believe that we need robust information on the costs and benefits of any specific proposal for the McKalla Place site in order to make an informed decision.

As the Mayor has noted, economic impacts are not the only impacts we will be looking at as a Council. We will also be looking at any cultural or other intangible benefits that having a soccer stadium at this location might provide, and that is an important conversation. But even these intangible benefits have a cost, and we need to know what that cost is before we can decide whether we can afford it.

I look forward to discussing how we can obtain all of the information we need on realistic economic impact estimates, city costs, and opportunity costs so that we can weigh all of the considerations at hand and make an informed decision.

Finally, I want to share a segment from John Oliver's Last Week Tonight show where he discusses public funding of private, for-profit stadiums.

Here it is: <https://youtu.be/xcwJt4bcnXs> "Cities spend massive amounts of public money on privately-owned stadiums. Cities issue tax-exempt municipal bonds that – wait, don't fall asleep!"

Leslie

