

Cactus League "Ballpark Village" becomes a reality for the Cleveland Indians

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GOODYEAR, Ariz. -- The Cleveland Indians took a major step forward in its move to new Spring Training facilities in Arizona's Cactus League yesterday. The City of Goodyear approved seven key agreements that will pave the way for the Indians' opening day in Spring 2009 and for the development of a "ballpark village" surrounding the planned Spring Training complex on the 242-acre site.

A private consortium that includes Goodyear-based developer Rose Properties Southwest, LLC; the Wood family, fourth-generation owners of the underlying property; and San Diego-based JMI Sports LLC; received the green light to advance the design and construction of the Spring Training complex and surrounding private development. The City also authorized the issuance of up to \$10 million in bonds for ballpark development and approved a special use agreement with the Indians for 14 games to be played each season through 2029.

"Last night we rounded second base as we head for our new Spring Training home in Goodyear, Arizona. More than that, the private development around the ballpark can proceed, creating a destination that Indians fans will be able to enjoy year-round," said Paul Dolan, president of the Cleveland Indians.

Rose Properties Southwest's Ballpark Village will be a first of its kind mixed-use development anchored by the 10,000-seat ballpark and practice facilities for the Cleveland Indians and, potentially, a second Major League Baseball team. The first phase of the project will be the construction of the Spring Training ballpark and practice facilities. Subsequent phases will be private, mixed-use development including residential, retail, hotel and conference facilities, and Class A office serving Phoenix area residents and visitors.

"Tonight's Council action allows us to move ahead in planning the private development that will be integrated into and around the Indians' ballpark and practice fields," said John Ruggieri, president of Rose Properties Southwest. "We are proud to partner with the Wood family, City of Goodyear, the Cleveland Indians and JMI Sports to make it a reality," added Ruggieri.

During the City Council meeting, Rose Properties outlined the positive fiscal impact from the development. Over the next 20 years, the project is projected to produce \$172 million in economic benefit to the City of Goodyear in the form of increased sales and privilege tax revenues; development impact and fees; property, hotel, and rental taxes; and an increased bonding capacity. The development could also generate an estimated 5000 jobs. According to Ruggieri, these revenues are in addition to those that will be generated by baseball games and other revenue-producing events held in the ballpark.

In addition to the projected revenues, Goodyear Mayor Jim Cavanaugh said the city will welcome the vitality the project will create near its planned City Center complex.

"This is a historic public/private partnership for the City of Goodyear that will result in the development of more than a ballpark. Ballpark Village will be a premier sports, entertainment and lifestyle destination in the Southwest," said Goodyear Mayor Jim Cavanaugh.

The innovative project will honor the agricultural history of the Wood family, who have farmed on the property for generations. Fifty-seven acres in the north of the development is planned for mixed-use development (office, restaurant, retail, hotel, conference center, residential) and a 10,000-seat major league ballpark for the Cleveland Indians. The south site, consisting of 185 acres is planned for a variety of uses including Spring Training practice fields and clubhouses, office/flex-use/business campus, and community-serving retail.

The development team for Ballpark Village is a venture between the Wood family and Rose Properties Southwest, with Rose as the development manager. Rose brought on board San Diego-based JMI Sports LLC to assist in securing Major League Baseball interests and to provide development management for the ballpark and Spring Training facilities, which are solely owned by the City of Goodyear.

The mixed-use Ballpark Village concept was created by Ruggieri of Rose Properties Southwest and Erik Judson, principal of JMI Sports, a company that grew out of the successful development of PETCO Park in San Diego, California. According to Judson, the project will be unique among Spring Training complexes nationally.

"This will be a Spring Training complex like no other in the country in the way that it integrates the private development with the baseball facilities," said Judson, adding, "We're building on successful models like PETCO Park and other new Major League ballpark developments,

blending baseball with housing, offices, restaurants, shops and hotels. It's a very exciting project."
