

May 18 2017

Mr. Chair

Members of the committee, thank you for the time

My name is Derek Johnson. I represent Eugene Civic Alliance. Non-profit organization whose mission is to re-develop 10 acres of vacant land 10 blocks from Eugene's city center into a community sports and recreation facility for the children and youth of our community.

Some of you will remember that that site was once home to a wooden stadium and playing field built in 1937 with private and public funds.

Leaders of the community saw a need for a resource that everyone in the community could enjoy and they made it happen.

Eugene Civic Alliance has partnered with Emerald Kidsports to raise the money for a multi-use indoor facility big enough for four basketball courts, a synthetic turf field, and a 2,500 seat stadium to host local sports teams and community events.

The need is obvious. The State of Oregon has determined that this community is six fields short of what is needed for a community of this size, there is a scarcity of indoor recreational space and there is a physical education gap in our schools that this facility will allow Kidsports to begin to fill.

Bev Smith, former coach for the U of O's women's basketball team and

a current coach for the Canadian National team is the Kidsports Executive Director. Kidsports serves 14,000 kids from the Eugene Springfield and outlying areas. 40% receive scholarships. She runs all of her indoor programs in the neighborhood schools, with 1300 volunteer coaches fighting for diminishing practice facilities . Every time a school closes the kids in the community lose a gym. Since the 1970s Eugene alone has suffered a net loss of 8 schools.

This project is a step in the right direction for the health of the children in our community – it will allow little kids access to gyms throughout

the day. Kidsports can expand its efforts to teach coaches age appropriate techniques and can partner with the U of O to teach ed students how to teach physical education.

It will be an economic driver in the immediate neighborhood, taking a vacant lot and turning it into a vibrant community park, providing space for tournaments, high school football and soccer games and playoffs, creating 142 construction jobs building the project.

Best of all we see this as a model that is replicable throughout the state.

A model of how a non-profit can partner with schools to meet the state

PE mandate, A model for providing more positive after school activities,

teaching children physical activity that will serve them throughout their lives, and an example of how private efforts, with public assistance can create spaces where diverse members of a community can gather to do what is best for the kids.

That is why we are asking for \$6m in lottery backed bond funds. We have support for this specific ask from the Mayor of Springfield, the Eugene City Council, the Lane County Board of Commissioners, all three local school districts, The Eugene Chamber of Commerce, the President of Lane Community College, Travel Lane County and the Oregon Sports Authority.

Thank you for your support of this unique and exciting project.,