

# DC Sports Review Study Community Meeting Presentation



Windsor Athletics Consulting  
July 20, 2022 and July 27, 2022

# Project Background and Purpose

**Commissioned by:** The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education

## Goal

- Identify opportunities to establish Washington, DC as a nationally recognized locale for competitive high school sports

## Process

- Assess current state of high school sports facilities, programming, and coaching development
- Create recommendations to improve the level of, and access to, competitive high school sports

# Focus and Purpose of the Study

1. How do we improve the athletic experience, with a focus on equity and access to **facilities, programming, and coaching development** in the District so that our best athletes stay in the city to practice and compete?
2. How can spaces like the RFK campus, Kenilworth North Park, and others throughout the District be utilized to enhance the experience of Washington, DC athletes and community?

# Assessment and Landscape Analysis

## Facilities

- Quantity
- Access
- Quality

## Programming

- Leagues
- Competition
- Access

## Coaching Development

- Hiring
- Compensation
- Professional Development

---

## Data Collection Methods

- Research of publicly available data on facilities, programming, and coaching
- Interviews with Washington, DC high school athletics stakeholders
- Interviews with regional high school athletics and parks and recreation stakeholders

# Facilities

# Facilities: Key Findings and Trends

- **Seven Primary Stakeholders**
  - Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
  - National Parks Service (NPS)
  - District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
  - District of Columbia Public Charter Schools
  - District Independent and Parochial Schools
  - District Colleges and Universities
  - Events DC
- **Adequate facilities for** basketball, football, volleyball, Ultimate Frisbee and tennis
- **Acute facilities needs:**
  - Track and field (indoor and outdoor)
  - Regulation size soccer pitches
  - 90-foot baseball fields
  - Competitive venues with space for spectators
- Recently improved permitting process through reservations software. Some community members report inconsistent and confusing permitting process and costs.

# Facilities: Draft Recommendations (1 of 3)

## Needs

- The District lacks the soccer, track, and baseball facilities to accommodate expanded athletic programming at the high school level
- The District lacks an indoor track for its athletes to practice and compete in. It is the only DCSAA championship contested outside of the District.
- Access to 400 meter 8-lane outdoor tracks is limited

## Solutions

- Build a facility at RFK and/or Kenilworth North that could house
  - Multipurpose natural grass and turf fields
  - Indoor and outdoor track
- Renovate the DC Armory to accommodate an indoor track

### *Examples:*

- Randall's Island (New York City, NY)
- Ocean Breeze (New York City, NY)
- Sports Center (Virginia Beach, VA)
- Gately (Chicago, IL)

## Benefits

- Creates state of the art facilities that rival surrounding areas
- Anchors cost-accessible youth programming in Washington, DC that keeps kids here
- Creates sustainable jobs for coaching professionals since more youth will continue to compete in DC
- Allows the District to host state championships in the city

# Facilities: Draft Recommendations (2 of 3)

## Needs

- Many DPR facilities lack adequate spectator space for competitive athletics
- Some DPR facilities could be upgraded to better accommodate high school teams
- Inadequate number of 90-foot basepath baseball fields for the District's high schools (acute in Wards 3 and 4)
- Inadequate space for soccer since there is competition for space with football during the same season

## Solutions

- Add spectator infrastructure to select locations (Barry Farm, Ridge Road, Poplar Point, Fort Reno, Anacostia)
- Upgrade specific DPR facilities to meet the needs of high school programming
- Work with NPS to rebuild existing baseball and soccer fields at Carter Barron
- Include natural grass soccer pitch inside an outdoor track built at RFK or Kenilworth North campus

## Benefits

- Allow city residents and families to engage with the high level of athletics the city has to offer
- Provides city athletes the ability to be recognized and recruited, providing pathways beyond high school
- Washington, DC would better meet the needs of its existing baseball programming



# Facilities: Draft Recommendations (3 of 3)

## Needs

- A consistent and transparent permitting process for renting or using DPR, DCPS, or other District agency facilities. All public facilities should have the same permitting processes.
- Enforcement and regulation of permit use across the District (ensuring groups are using spaces they permit, and groups are not encroaching on spaces)

## Solutions

- Create a centralized permitting system through modern reservations software with transparent costs (opt in for private institutions)
- Expand DPR Rangers and create central site (Ambassador) programming

## Benefits

- Youth developmental programming and high school athletics make use of existing facilities with greater ease
- Provide greater access to schools with limited facilities
- Ensure that when permits are issued, they are being used and the permit holder doesn't have to worry about conflicting groups at the space

# Programming

# Athletic Programming: Key Findings and Trends

- Robust, organized, athletic programming
- Increased level of competition over the past decade
- District athletes compete on a local, regional, and national level
- Leadership of city leagues is professionalizing
  - Over 50% of leagues have hired individuals to implement programming
- DCSAA
  - Cohesion in championship programming
  - Increasing value and pride in DC State Championship titles

# Athletic Programming: Key Findings and Trends cont'd

- Enthusiasm for improving and adding programming
  - Lack of competitive facilities cited as a barrier
- High-level high school programming relies on youth programming
  - Increase equity and access to youth programming with high quality coaching
- District youth athletics programming
  - Significant portion is pay-to-play
  - Costs are rising
- Increasing access to girls sports
  - Fewer girls participate in high school athletics than boys

# Athletic Programming: Draft Recommendations

## Need

- High quality youth athletic programming that is affordable for all District residents
- Youth athletic programming that builds foundational skills to be used at the high school level

## Solution

- Create more opportunities for low-cost development programs to feed high school sports through partnerships with DPR and support from professional sports teams to provide funding for coaching and programmatic development
- Implement the FY 23 investments in Recreation for A.L.L. that support girls volleyball, softball, wrestling, soccer, and gymnastics

## Benefits

- Increased access to high quality youth athletic programming for all District residents
- Foundational youth programming feeds high quality high school athletics
- Partnerships with professional teams drives youth interest

# Coaching Development

# Coaching Development: Key Findings and Trends

- Improved coaching development in the District
  - DCSAA, DCIAA, and others have implemented specific guidelines and requirements for certification to coach at the high school level
- Better coaching
  - Certification leads to more qualified coaches
  - Coaches are able to respond to athlete health-related emergencies
- Athletic Directors (AD) oversee professional development and hiring → key to high quality coaching
  - ADs are struggling to find qualified coaches
- Model of teacher/coach is increasingly difficult
  - Increased demands in the classroom
- Increased parent/athlete expectations of coaches

# Coaching Development: Key Findings and Trends cont'd

- Coaching compensation
  - Varies significantly across the District between schools (public and independent), independent leagues and sports
  - Range: \$0 (volunteer) → \$100,000+
  - Median compensation range \$1,000 → \$7,500 per season
  - Athletically competitive independent schools compensate coaches more than DCPS and public charter schools
- Regional comparisons
  - DCPS stipends are lower than surrounding counties and regional metropolitan areas



# Coaching Development: Draft Recommendations (1 of 2)

## Need

- A new model for hiring qualified coaches that is not dependent on coaches also being teachers
- Athletic Directors lack a central place to post for coaching positions and therefore struggle to find and attract qualified talent

## Solution

- Partner with professional sports teams in the area to create coaching scholarships
- Name scholarships after influential DC athletic figures
- Add a position at the DCSAA, which oversees a central database and job board for schools looking for coaches and coaches looking for jobs

## Benefits

- Provide full-time coaching positions to build high quality youth programming in the city, which can also allow time to coach varsity-level programming at public and charter schools
- Attract and retain high quality coaches

# Coaching Development: Draft Recommendations (2 of 2)

## Need

- Competitive compensation for DCPS and public charter school coaches
- Support for public charter school Athletic Directors who must also run their league in addition to their athletic programs

## Solution

- Increase stipend pay for coaches in the public school system provided by a fund overseen by DCIAA or DCSAA in order to align compensation with Arlington, Fairfax, and Montgomery County coaches
- Create a permanent paid position to run the PCSAA. This position would allow for stability, league growth and support overburdened athletic directors.

## Benefit

- Retain high quality coaches in the District

# Feedback

- Are there facilities modifications/additions that we're missing that could enhance your programming?
- What enhanced youth programming could bolster high school sports participation and the level of play?
- What other ways can coaches be recruited and compensated in order to retain high-quality individuals?
- Any feedback on the recommendations presented today?

# Next Steps

- Use the Google Form to respond to specific elements of this presentation:
  - We will use submitted community feedback to adjust and reinforce our draft landscape analysis and recommendations
- Reach out to Windsor Athletics Consulting if you have questions about the project
- This presentation, Google Form, and recording will be posted on the DME website
- The final report, with recommendations, will be published by fall of 2022
- Contacts:
  - DME - Jennifer Comey - [jennifer.comey@dc.gov](mailto:jennifer.comey@dc.gov)
  - Windsor Athletics - Jesse Gaylord - [windsorathleticsconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:windsorathleticsconsulting@gmail.com)