



Department Source: Convention and Visitors Bureau

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: May 20, 2019

Re: Report to Recommend Establishing a Sports Commission

## Executive Summary

The Convention & Visitors Bureau is proposing to establish a sports commission. This report provides information on sports tourism and the purpose and structure of a proposed commission within the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB).

## Discussion

Sports tourism is a multi-billion dollar market with amateur sporting tournaments generating \$11.6 billion in economic impact all across the country in 2016, according to the National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC). Cities and counties are creating sports commissions to take advantage of the financial opportunity this growing industry presents.

A sports commission's mission is to recruit, retain, and organize state, regional, and national sporting events, as well as promote its local amateur or professional sporting teams and local college venues and club teams. There are approximately 134 sports commissions across the United States. The state of Missouri has four sports commissions: St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield and Joplin. Two of these cities listed are Columbia's direct sports tourism competitors.

Columbia saw an 8-9% decrease in hotel occupancy from May 2017-March 2018, with a 49% occupancy rate in 2018. Our overall occupancy rate for 2018 was lower than our competitors but we are seeing a steady upward growth in occupancy for 2019. The sports market is a very strong tourism market segment that continues to stay strong regardless of any downturn in tourism or the overall economy. A sports commission would greatly assist the CVB in expanding the Columbia sports market and open avenues to pursue more and bigger sporting events that will positively attribute to Columbia's occupancy rate and generate economic growth. It would also positively impact our ability to recruit new events, as most rights-holders (sports planners/national governing bodies) are used to working closely with sports commissions. It is also a unique time in Columbia with multiple state of the art venues coming online that will provide the city an opportunity to host national level events that we were previously unable to pursue.

In 2014 the CVB hired *Victus Advisors* to create a sports community assessment report and to determine the feasibility of a sports commission in Columbia. Their recommendation was that the city should pursue a sports commission affiliated with the Convention and Visitors Bureau.



# City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Sports commissions are traditionally set up in one of two ways; either as a division of the CVB or as an independent agency, with a membership based dues structure (typically done by CVBs that are not part of their local city government). The CVB is recommending the Columbia Sports Commission be established under the CVB Department effective October 1, 2019 and consist of at least 10-12 members appointed by the City Council. Commission members would consist of representatives from: two (2) sports clubs/venues; two (2) business community; two (2) hotels; one (1) University of Missouri; one (1) Columbia College; one (1) Columbia Public Schools; and one (1) Show Me State Games. There would also be one (1) staff liaison from both the CVB and Parks & Recreation, as well as a representative from the CVB Advisory Board.

The CVB Advisory Board oversees the use of tourism development funds for sporting events. The sports commission would make funding recommendations to the CVB Board and the process they currently follow would remain the same with the City Council making the final approval. Additionally creating a sports commission under the umbrella of the CVB has the lowest fiscal impact, as most of the necessary resources already exist. The only initial cost is for marketing and promotion which is included in the proposed FY2020 budget. We feel this structure has the greatest potential for success.

### Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: \$15,000 (marketing)  
Long-Term Impact: unknown

### Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

#### Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Economy, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

#### Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Economic Development, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

### Legislative History

Date	Action
11/03/2014	REP 105-14 Final Recommendations of Sports Feasibility Study <a href="http://www.como.gov/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=15724">http://www.como.gov/Council/Commissions/downloadfile.php?id=15724</a>

### Suggested Council Action

Authorization to proceed with drafting a formal resolution to establish a sports commission.