



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

First Reading for the City Council Meeting of November 19, 2024
Second Reading for the City Council Meeting of December 3, 2024

DATE: October 29, 2024

TO: Peter Zaroni, City Manager

FROM: Arturo Marquez, CECD, Ms. Econ, Director of Economic Development
Arturom3@cctexas.com
361-826-3885

Whataburger Field Capital Improvement Project
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CAPTION:

Ordinance approving Addendum No. 1 to Lease Agreement with Corpus Christi Baseball Club, L.P., providing for Type A funding in an amount not to exceed \$137,260.00 on a reimbursement basis to make certain capital improvements to the Whataburger Field property in accordance with Major League Baseball Requirements, as approved by the Type A Board on October 21, 2024.

SUMMARY:

The purpose of this item is to approve an addendum to the Lease Agreement for Whataburger Field which provides for \$137,260 in Type A funding for improvements to the stadium property for netting extension for Player Development League (PDL) compliance, pedestrian concrete remediation, steel support remediation, concourse concrete remediation, and seat replacements.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

Since October 2020, the Corpus Christi Baseball Club, L.P. has invested more than \$2.6 million in upgrades and improvements into the city owned Whataburger Field facility. Additionally, more investment is planned in 2025 including removing and replacing the 1,781 stadium bowl seats, replacing 3-5 HVAC units, flooring and pool projects, and replacing permanent asset concession equipment.

Beginning in 2021 season, Major League Baseball (MLB) has assumed the role of governing body overseeing minor league baseball, also known as the Player Development League (PDL). Under the previous governance of the National Association of Baseball, there were no facility standards in place. With this shift, MLB has introduced new standards for minor league baseball facilities to improve operations and consistency across teams.

All 120 license holders, including the Corpus Christi Hooks, are required to adhere to these enhanced standards to foster a more uniform workplace environment throughout the minor leagues. This standardization is expected to promote longer-term commitments from MLB teams, minimize the risk of team relocations, and secure the long-term presence of professional baseball in communities, generating lasting local impact.

MLB has implemented a tiered grading system to assess facility compliance, requiring facilities to meet specific scoring thresholds over a three-year period:

2023: 30 points or fewer

2024: 20 points or fewer

2025 and beyond: 10 points or fewer

Recent renovations, funded by Type A funding, have helped Whataburger Field meet some of the baseline requirements of this new grading system.

To maintain compliance and uphold standards, several new projects have been identified for Whataburger Field. These projects include the extension of protective netting as required by the PDL amendment, which mandates netting beyond the current area down each of the foul lines. Additional work includes steel support remediation for the videoboard, replacing eroded steel supports for both the videoboard and signage cabinet. Pedestrian safety is also a focus, with planned concrete remediation in high-traffic areas to prevent tripping hazards. Furthermore, 11 locations within the seating bowl have been identified for concourse concrete remediation due to deterioration.

Any remaining funds after these projects will be allocated toward a Hooks-funded project to replace 1,751 seats across seven sections of the stadium. These sections contain the last of the original seats, which are prone to breakage due to a flawed design. As the manufacturer is no longer in business, replacement stock is unavailable.

The new seats will match the design and model of the other sections in the stadium, ensuring consistency in seat inventory and appearance across the ballpark.

The Type A Board made a motion to approve the project in an amount not to exceed \$137,260 for improvements to Whataburger Field on October 21, 2024. This item amends the lease between the City of Corpus Christi and the Corpus Christi Baseball Club to provide funding for certain capital improvements at Whataburger Field.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could choose not to approve these projects or to make recommendations.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funding for this project will be from the Type A Fund - Fund 1140 Business and Job Development Fund.

Funding Detail:

Fund:	1140
Organization/Activity:	15010

Mission Element:	707
Project # (CIP Only):	N/A
Account:	530000

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approving the ordinance to approve \$137,260.00 for capital improvements to Whataburger Field.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Ordinance

Addendum No. 1 to Lease Agreement

PowerPoint – Scope of Work