

**Detroit PAL**  
**Old Tiger Stadium Talking Points**  
**October 28, 2015**

**What Is Detroit PAL?**

Detroit PAL is a non-profit organization positively impacting the lives of more than 13,000 children each year. In partnership with the Detroit Police Department and community volunteers, Detroit PAL builds character in young people through athletic, academic and leadership development programs. With roots dating back to 1969, Detroit PAL works to create safe and supportive places for kids to play. We also train and certify more than 1,500 volunteers each year to become encouraging coaches and mentors to the City's youth.

We strive to achieve three important goals for our kids:

- Young people with high character
- Young people who lead active and healthy lifestyles
- Young people who give back in their community

**What Is The “Kids At The Corner” Campaign?**

The “Kids At The Corner” Campaign is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to positively impact the lives of tens of thousands of Detroit youth. Detroit PAL's vision is to leverage the historic significance of the Old Tiger Stadium site, to provide a unique programming opportunity for Detroit PAL participants and their families, and to enhance commerce in the Corktown Community.



With this vision in mind, Detroit PAL's plan is to redevelop the historic field into a premier multi-sport facility to give fans both young and old the chance to visit and play at the Old Tiger Stadium site. The plan envisions restoring the field to its historic dimensions and includes an entry plaza, gated entryway, concourse, grandstand, seating for up to 2,500 spectators, pavilion, concessions, locker rooms, home-run fence, lights and a scoreboard. The gated entryway will be on the corner of

Michigan and Cochrane behind home plate. The plan also includes constructing a permanent headquarters for Detroit PAL adjoining the field on the Cochrane-side with a banquet facility on the second floor overlooking the field. The banquet facility will be equipped with a warming kitchen. Detroit PAL also has a plan to create a nostalgic and educational experience for those who visit the site by incorporating historic memorabilia and honoring individuals of high character who graced Old Tiger Stadium.



Detroit PAL is working in conjunction with the Old Tiger Stadium Conservancy and other community partners to execute the “Kids at the Corner” Campaign. The overall fundraising goal of the “Kids at the Corner” Campaign is approximately \$15.43M, which includes \$11M to restore the field and construct the headquarters, plus \$4.43M for long-term sustainability.

With the approval of the OTSC and the Detroit PAL Board of Directors, a plan for the redevelopment of the Old Tiger Stadium site was formally approved by the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation in December of 2014.

### **What Is Detroit PAL’s Programming Plan For The Site?**

The specific programming cadence for the site will be developed over time with the following principles in mind. With its mission of “building character in young people”, Detroit PAL intends to use this premier facility primarily, though not exclusively, for Detroit PAL programming. Detroit PAL also intends to provide public access to the field during designated hours, to rent the facility for private functions, and to partner with select community groups to host showcase diamond sports events.

#### **Detroit PAL Diamond Sports**

Detroit PAL serves 1,500 girls and boys annually in its diamond sports programs, which include t-ball, baseball and softball. One of the objectives of the new facility will be to give every Detroit PAL participant in diamond sports the chance to play at the Old Tiger Stadium site. The diamond sports activities at the new facility are intended to be enhancements to, and not substitutions for, Detroit PAL’s existing

diamond sports programs. That is, diamond sports activities at the new facility will not detract from diamond sports programs that Detroit PAL runs at other facilities across the City. Detroit PAL will continue to program diamond sports at other facilities in neighborhoods around the City, just as it has for many years.



### **Detroit PAL Non-Diamond Sports Programs**

Detroit PAL serves 13,000 girls and boys annually in its various programs. To include more of the young athletes in the Old Tiger Stadium experience, Detroit PAL intends to expand programming activities at the new facility beyond diamond sports. The outfield of the new facility will provide enough space for soccer, football, summer camps, clinics and cheerleading, among other programs. As with diamond sports, non-diamond sports activities at the new facility will not detract from non-diamond sports programs that Detroit PAL runs at other facilities across the City. Detroit PAL will continue to program non-diamond sports at other facilities in neighborhoods around the City, just as it has for many years.

### **Community Access**

In addition to walking the concourse to enrich visitors' experience, Detroit PAL will designate hours each week of the operating season to give members of the community time to venture onto the field. While on the field, visitors can play catch, take batting practice, shag fly balls, run the base path, or simply enjoy the facility.

### **Showcase Diamond Sports Events**

Due to the profile and quality of the facility, Detroit PAL anticipates interest from local high schools and colleges for showcase diamond sports. The premier park will be a one-of-a-kind venue for City Championships, all-star games, tournaments, and college games. In turn, the site will attract a new fan base to the Corktown business community. Local high schools will be able to host games against their suburban and out-of-state opponents, drawing additional traffic and commerce to Corktown and Detroit at-large. The funding for this type of programming will be generated through entrance fees by spectators and rental fees from the host organization. In setting the fee structure, Detroit PAL recognizes the need to balance the desire for community accessibility against its own need to cover operating costs for each event.

### **Special Events**

Detroit PAL will pursue special events when the programming has reached its cadence, as programming for girls and boys in the community will remain a priority. Detroit PAL anticipates that there will be significant demand for renting the facility to host special events. The warming kitchen, pavilion, banquet facility and field provide a unique venue for hosting corporate outings, reunions, charity fundraisers, weddings, and more.

### **What Is The Potential Economic Impact For The Corktown Community?**

As outlined above, Detroit PAL intends to have the site buzzing with a variety of activities, both large and small. Detroit PAL expects that these activities will create foot traffic which will have a positive impact on Corktown restaurants and other nearby businesses. For larger events, Detroit PAL intends to partner with Corktown businesses to provide catering and other services. In addition, the banquet facility and field could be an ideal venue to host Corktown community events.

### **What Type Of Surface Will Detroit PAL Select For The Field?**

Detroit PAL has researched the use of natural and artificial surfaces for multi-sport and multi-use facilities, like the one planned for the Old Tiger Stadium site. A final decision has not been made, and our research is continuing. Detroit PAL's decision will be fact-based and research-driven. It will involve balancing a variety of factors, including but not limited to safety, quality of play, durability, versatility, maintenance, economics, and aesthetics. Below are some of the key results of Detroit PAL's research to date:

- One of Detroit PAL's objectives is to keep the field in near-pristine condition throughout the year. Detroit PAL's research indicates that the use of a natural surface will limit programming on the field to approximately 20 hours per week, subject to heavy maintenance and weather restrictions. Programming on a natural surface beyond 20 hours per week will cause the condition of the field to deteriorate.



(Football field with deteriorated natural grass)

- Detroit PAL’s research shows that maintaining a natural surface in near-pristine condition not only requires limited hours of use and extensive maintenance, but also can require extended periods of non-use. For example, programming in wet conditions can cause the natural surface to deteriorate more quickly. Extended periods of non-use (days or weeks) can be required following games played in wet conditions so the field can be repaired and recover.



(Football game played on wet natural grass)

- Another of Detroit PAL’s objectives is to maintain an aesthetically appealing facility. The current generation of artificial surface has a natural appearance and will be “green” throughout the year. Heavy use on a natural surface, particularly during wet conditions, deteriorates the “green” appearance of a natural surface, resulting in a mud-bowl or dust-bowl as the year progresses.



(Football field after wet conditions)

- Through its research, Detroit PAL identified a natural-artificial hybrid surface. The hybrid surface also is limited to 900 hours of use per year, or less than 23 hours per week (assuming 40 weeks of use), subject to the same general limitations and required maintenance outlined above.
- Detroit PAL cannot support the programming outlined above, including public access and special events, if programming on the field is limited to 20-23 hours per week. An artificial surface will allow for heavier programming with less maintenance, more durability, more versatility, and less weather restrictions.



(Multi-sport complex with artificial turf)

- Another of Detroit PAL's objectives is to provide clean and safe fields for its participants. Detroit PAL's research shows that the quality of artificial surfaces has improved dramatically over the last few decades. Multiple studies have found that there is not an increased risk of injury on the current generation of artificial surfaces versus natural surfaces.



(Baseball field with artificial turf)

- Detroit PAL's research also indicates that the current generation of artificial surfaces provides a more even and consistent playing surface, which can actually decrease the risk of injury in some respects and improve the quality of play. Programming on a natural surface during wet conditions not only destroys the grass; it deteriorates the evenness of the surface, increasing the risk of injury and negatively impacting the quality of play.



(Soccer field with artificial turf)

- Detroit PAL also is committed to giving visitors in wheelchairs the opportunity to experience the magic of the Old Tiger Stadium site. An artificial surface will help facilitate wheelchair access to the field.
- Tests and standards exist and have been applied to artificial surfaces to measure such factors as shock absorption, friction and traction, rotational resistance, skin abrasion/friction, surface stability, rebound, pace, roll, durability, etc.



(Multi-sport field with artificial turf)

- There have been anecdotal safety and environmental concerns reported in the press regarding the use of crumb rubber (e.g., grinded tires) infill on artificial surfaces. Detroit PAL's research to date shows that these anecdotal concerns have not been supported by scientific research. In addition, there are a variety of infill solutions available that do not include crumb rubber. Alternatives to crumb rubber include EPDM, TPE, organics, silica sand, coated silica sand, coated rubber, and hybrids.
- Detroit PAL is consulting with some of the leading experts in the field of turf management, including Dr. John N. Rogers III from the School of Turf

Management at Michigan State University: “*In order to serve the Detroit kids in the intended manner and to achieve maximum usage, I do believe synthetic turf, (covering the whole playing surface) is the best option. It will allow for utility in the early spring and late fall, and will provide a surface for continuous use.*”

### **Excerpts from Select Research**

- “The game does not change significantly between natural and Football Turf [artificial] surfaces.” *FIFA Research on Football Turf*, 6, March 2012, p. 8
- “No significant difference in number and type of injuries.” *FIFA Research on Football Turf*, 6, March 2012, p. 14
- “No evidence that playing surface increases physiological stresses.” *FIFA Research on Football Turf*, 6, March 2012, p. 23
- No significant differences were detected in injury rate or pattern between third generation artificial turf and natural grass in Norwegian male professional football. *Risk of Injury on Third Generation Artificial Turf in Norwegian Professional Football*, Bjørneboe J, Bahr R, Andersen TE, 2010 *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 44: 794-798.
- There were no significant differences in the nature of overuse injuries recorded on artificial turf and grass for either men or women. The incidence (injuries/1000 player-hours) of acute (traumatic) injuries did not differ significantly between artificial turf and grass, for men or women. *Comparison of Injuries Sustained on Artificial Turf and Grass by Male and Female Elite Football Players*, Ekstrand J, Hägglund M, Fuller CW, 2010, *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Science in Sports*
- “In the present study among young female football [soccer] players, the overall risk of acute injury was similar between artificial turf and natural grass.” *Risk of Injury on Artificial Turf and Natural Grass in Young Female Football [Soccer] Players* Kathrin Steffen, Thor Einar Andersen, Roald Bahr, *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 2007; 41:i33-i37
- There were no major differences in the incidence, severity, nature or cause of match injuries or training injuries sustained on new generation artificial turf and grass by either male or female players. *Comparison of the Incidence, Nature and Cause of Injuries Sustained on Grass and New Generation Artificial Turf by Male and Female Football Players*, Colin W Fuller, Randall W Dick, Jill Corlette, Rosemary Schmalz, *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 2007; 41 Supplement 1):i20-i26 (Part 1: match injuries), *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 2007; 41 (Supplement 1):i27-i32 (Part 2: training injuries)

- “[A] review of available studies concludes that adverse health effects are not likely for children or athletes exposed to recycled tire materials found at playgrounds or athletic fields. Similarly, no adverse ecological or environmental outcomes from field leachate are likely.” *Review of the Human Health & Ecological Safety of Exposure to Recycled Tire Rubber found at Playgrounds and Synthetic Turf Fields*, Carb ChemRisk, 1 August 2013, p. i