



Estimated Economic Impact of the DeKalb County Soccer Facility and the Atlanta Sports Complex Operations



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Executive Summary

The Atlanta Sports Complex (ASC) is a proposed multisport facility in DeKalb County that includes 25 fields appropriate for soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, and a variety of other sports; a 15,000-seat stadium for field sports; an indoor sports complex; an alternative sports facility; and a variety of other services ranging from event hosting to sports rehabilitation and training. The business plan provided to the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government by Discover DeKalb and ASC calls for 361 full time equivalent (FTE) staff in seven major business lines. The primary activity of the sports field complex will be hosting tournament events for the youth, high school, collegiate, and adult levels of play. In addition to serving as a venue for championship matches for these events, the stadium facility is intended to be used for practices and home games of two professional soccer teams.

This report presents an economic impact analysis of the business plan provided by Discover DeKalb and ASC. The analysis was produced using IMPLAN, an input-output economic model of the United States. The inputs for the model include the following: 1) the 361 FTE, 2) estimated spending by visitors to DeKalb County while attending events at the facility, and 3) spending by persons attending the home games of the two proposed professional teams.

Major Findings:

- The proposed facility will support an estimated 1,833 jobs in DeKalb County with a total labor income of more than \$67 million.
- The facility will contribute an estimated \$105 million to DeKalb's economy and produce nearly \$180 million in total economic output in the county.
- The facility is estimated to support an additional 104 jobs elsewhere in the state, for a total of 1,937 jobs.
- The economic impact of the facility elsewhere in the state is estimated to be \$17.4 million, for a total impact in Georgia of \$197 million in economic output.
- The value added elsewhere in the state is estimated to be \$9 million, for a total of \$114 million in value added to the state's economy.
- Visitors to the complex for tournament events will create nearly \$80 million in new demand in DeKalb County for lodging, food, and other items.



Introduction

Discover DeKalb contracted with the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government to estimate the economic impact of a proposed 25-field sports complex that would be used primarily to host youth and adult soccer tournaments as well as flag football, lacrosse, field hockey, rugby, and other field sports at the youth, adult, and collegiate levels. In addition to these tournament events, the complex is the proposed home of expansion teams in both the North American Soccer League (NASL) and the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL). The professional teams would use the facility for practices and would host a combined total of 25 annual home games there. Georgia Soccer, the authorized affiliate of the United States Adult Soccer Association and the United States Youth Soccer Association, estimates that the facility would be in use 40 weekends each year with two-day or three-day tournaments, plus some weekday activities.

This analysis includes the Atlanta Sports Complex (ASC), which is adjacent to the soccer complex; both facilities will be managed and staffed as a single operation. The ASC facility includes four full-size baseball fields, three tennis courts, an alternative sports environment (zip lines, ropes course, climbing wall, and assault course), four professional-size indoor basketball courts, and an indoor practice field. This facility will also provide a number of other services including meeting space, food service, training programs, health and wellness training, and sports rehabilitation services.

Over the last 20 to 30 years, the way that youth participate in sports has changed. Unlike their parents and grandparents who likely played pick-up games more often than organized league games, today's youth participate in sports leagues that have multiple seasons. US Youth Soccer reports that from 1996 to 2014, its annual player registrations increased 27.9 percent, from 2,388,719 to 3,100,148.¹

Tournament play has become a major activity for youth teams in many sports. Rather than playing a tournament following a regular season in a local league, many travel teams in sports like soccer and baseball participate almost exclusively in tournament settings. Two- and three-day tournaments in these sports attract teams from large regions of a single state and often from multiple states.

Major venues for youth sports similar to the proposed facility exist across the country. The Swope Soccer Village in Kansas City with nine full-size fields has recently hosted several events, including tournaments for local youth and adult leagues, the Missouri high school championships, multiple NCAA Division II and Division III championships, the Big 12 Women's Soccer Championships, and other regional or statewide tournaments. A second complex in the Kansas City area, the Overland Park Soccer Complex, operates 12 fields and hosts 20 or more youth tournaments each year. A 19-field complex in Boyds, Maryland, 45 minutes north of Washington DC, is the home of the Washington Spirit, a National Women's Soccer League team. The complex has hosted many high-profile events, including the ACC Men's Championship, Lamar Hunt US Open Cup matches, the Discovery Cup, and several visiting international teams.

¹ www.usyouthsoccer.org/media_kit/keystatistics, accessed April 8, 2016.



In the Atlanta area, the LakePoint sports complex has a strong emphasis on baseball but also hosts training programs and tournaments in football, lacrosse, rugby, and softball as well as a number of indoor sports. LakePoint's website promotes the facility as a "premier sports vacation destination, catering to the travel sports family lifestyle."² The *Atlanta Business Chronicle* reports that LakePoint received 1.5 million visitors in its first two years of operations and has expanded to cover 1,300 acres.³

With the growth of tournament-style play, Georgia Soccer indicates that the Atlanta metropolitan area needs a facility large enough to handle events that draw teams from across the state and the Southeast. The 2013 Atlanta Cup soccer tournament included 8,600 participants from 300 teams in Georgia and another 134 from outside the state, producing an estimated \$4.6 million in economic impact over three days from spending for lodging, food, and other items.⁴

Large tournaments present logistical issues for organizers and the teams that participate. Georgia Soccer uses multiple sites in the Atlanta area to conduct an event like the Atlanta Cup. Even with 25 fields, the new complex would be able to host only about 4,800 participants, or a little more than half of the teams in the tournament, for a two- or three-day event. The sites currently in use provide anywhere from about six to 14 fields, meaning that teams may play one or two opening rounds in one place, a second or third round elsewhere, and their final rounds at yet another facility. This creates logistical issues for both tournament organizers, players and families, and officials who referee the matches. The size of the proposed complex would simplify a number of these issues and provide a venue that is sufficient for the entirety of many tournaments and the championship rounds of larger tournaments like the Atlanta Cup.

In addition to soccer tournaments of varying sizes, Discover DeKalb reports that the intent of the developer is to attract lacrosse, field hockey, rugby, kickball, and Ultimate Frisbee® events at the youth, high school, and collegiate levels, plus a variety of other sporting events.

Economic Impact Modeling

Economic impact modeling is a technique used to estimate how a new firm, facility, or policy change will affect the local economy. Such estimates are often produced using an input-output model that first calculates a baseline forecast of economic activity for a geographic region and then estimates how shocks (inputs) to the economy alter economic activity (output). In this report, the shocks to the economy are in the form of the operation of the new sports complex and the estimated demand for goods and services from visitors.

Researchers at the Carl Vinson Institute of Government use IMPLAN, a widely used and accepted county-level economic model of the United States to estimate the economic impacts of projects and

² www.lakepointports.com accessed April 7, 2016.

³ www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/print-edition/2016/03/25/expansions-make-lakepoint-a-year-round-attraction.html, accessed April 7, 2016.

⁴ Data provided by Georgia Soccer. See www.georgiasoccer.org.



changes to public policy.⁵ This system produces a baseline economic forecast using data from the US Census Bureau, the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) as well as other data from the US Department of Commerce.

An input, or change to the economy, is added to the model. Inputs can be new jobs, increased demand for goods and services, or a variety of policy changes. The impacts to the local economy are measured in terms of jobs supported, the personal income associated with those jobs, the value added to the local economy, and total economic output. IMPLAN produces estimates of direct employment jobs, indirect jobs, and induced jobs. Value added to the community is the sum of labor income (salaries and wages), business profits, and taxes (sales taxes, excise taxes, hotel-motel taxes, and others) collected on behalf of government. Economic output is a measure of the value of goods and services produced in the region, and is similar to gross national product at the national level.

When measuring the impacts of a new firm, direct employment jobs are those at the firm itself and are typically the input to the model. As an example, if a new automobile parts or subassembly manufacturing plant were opening and planning to employ 100 workers, the inputs to the model would be 100 jobs in that industry sector. IMPLAN estimates the economic output for those jobs and the personal income based on regional averages for manufacturing sectors. The model also estimates indirect jobs associated with the firm's production including its suppliers, the transportation sectors that deliver raw materials and transport finished goods, and in the markets for the finished goods. Induced employment is those jobs supported when workers in the direct and indirect categories spend their salaries and wages. These include jobs at retail stores, grocery stores, restaurants, dry cleaners, barber shops, and landscaping businesses. The category also includes professional trades such as physicians, accountants, and attorneys. A second type of input that can be used is an increase in demand for a good or service. This analysis estimates the increased demand for lodging, food, and other items created when visitors come to the area to participate in tournament activity.

Model Inputs and Estimated Economic Impacts

Two categories of economic impacts are associated with the operation of the new facilities. The first is from the operation of the facility itself. The second set of impacts results from spending off the property by nonresident visitors to the area for tournaments and for the home matches of the two proposed professional teams.

Facility Operation

The combined operations of the soccer complex and the ASC will entail a number of distinct business lines: adult and youth recreational sports, alternative sports, corporate services and event production, health and wellness services, and sports training and rehabilitation. As discussed in the introduction, the recreational sports operation will focus on soccer, baseball, lacrosse, field hockey,

⁵ For more information on IMPLAN, see Day, Frances, "Principles of Impact Analysis & IMPLAN Applications," IMPLAN Group LLC, 16905 Northcross Dr., Suite 120, Huntersville, NC 28078 www.IMPLAN.com.



rugby, football, and other field sports as well as indoor sports including basketball, volleyball, and futsal (indoor soccer on a hard surface).

Researchers at the Institute of Government constructed a model for DeKalb County and a separate one for the remainder of Georgia using IMPLAN. By linking the two models, the researchers obtained estimates of the economic impacts in the remainder of the state from inputs in DeKalb County. The ASC provided a full-time equivalent (FTE) staffing plan for each major business line shown in Table 1. The FTE data were used as inputs to IMPLAN in the appropriate categories following the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), as shown. IMPLAN estimates the payroll for a firm of the size indicated in each category and the value of the output that would be expected from the firm. Note that IMPLAN does not determine the market feasibility of adding a new firm to the economy. Rather, it estimates the economic value of adding a firm of the indicated size using trade flows for typical firms in the sector. Trade flows are estimates of the demand for goods and services created by the new firm. The model estimates the proportion of that new demand that will be met by local firms and the proportion that will be purchased from firms outside the local economy. In this case, the estimates will be for DeKalb County, the remainder of Georgia, and the remainder of the United States. The jobs at firms supplying the facility are supported indirectly by the economic transactions taking place at the new facility. When employees at the facility and at the suppliers spend their salaries and wages, additional jobs are supported through the induced effect described earlier.

Table 1. Staffing Plan for Atlanta Sports Complex and DeKalb Soccer Facility

Business Area	NAICS	FTE
Management and Human Resources	551114	41
Sales, Marketing Including Fitness Center Manager and Customer Service	713940	52
Restaurant and On-Site Food Service	722511	31
Athletic Program Staff (Directors, Assistants, Officials)	611620	210
Integrative Medicine	621498	12
Urgent Care Center	621111	8
Physical Therapy	621111	7
TOTAL	-----	361

Data Source: Atlanta Sports Complex

Table 2 contains the estimated impacts from the new facility's operations. In addition to the 361 direct employees in the ASC business plan, the facility will support an additional 82 jobs in DeKalb County indirectly and 149 through the induced effect, for a total of nearly 600 jobs in the county. IMPLAN estimates the total labor income at just over \$28 million for these jobs, with more than \$36 million added value for the county's economy. Value added is labor income, business profit, and indirect taxes collected on behalf of government entities. Total economic output is the value of goods and services produced as a result of the facility's operations (akin to gross national product nationally) and is just over \$61 million. With the additional impact in Georgia outside of DeKalb



County, about 624 total jobs are supported, with labor income at about \$30 million, and nearly \$67 million in economic output added.



Table 2. Estimated Economic Impact from Facility Operation

DeKalb County				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect	361	18,344,014	19,650,756	31,640,338
Indirect Effect	82	3,777,761	6,521,151	11,437,771
Induced Effect	149	6,223,964	10,618,668	18,435,315
Total Effect	592	28,345,739	36,790,575	61,513,424
Rest of Georgia				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect	0	0	0	0
Indirect Effect	15	936,631	1,395,202	2,688,986
Induced Effect	17	897,035	1,430,008	2,666,862
Total Effect	32	1,833,666	2,825,210	5,355,848
TOTAL				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect	361	18,344,014	19,650,756	31,640,338
Indirect Effect	97	4,714,392	7,916,352	14,126,757
Induced Effect	166	7,120,999	12,048,676	21,102,177
Total Effect	624	30,179,405	39,615,785	66,869,272

Source: IMPLAN, Carl Vinson Institute of Government



Visitor Spending - Tournament Activity

Another segment of the sports facility's impact flows from spending in the local economy by nonresident visitors to the facility. Estimating that demand requires forecasting the number of people coming into DeKalb County and their consumption of goods and services as a result of the new sports complex. Georgia Soccer and Discover DeKalb provided a list of events likely to be hosted at the complex along with estimates for the duration (number of days) of each and the number of participants. This analysis uses comparative data from similar venues. A number of facilities around the country currently host events that are essentially identical to those projected for the soccer facility. Surveys of visitors to comparable facilities have produced figures for average family spending while attending tournament events.

The Scheels Overland Park Soccer Complex in Overland Park, Kansas is a 96-acre facility with 12 lighted regulation-size synthetic turf fields. Notes from the Community Development Committee meeting from March 5, 2014 indicate that the facility hosted 19 tournament events and 14 weekends of league play in 2013 with an average of 4,745 players per weekend, for a total of 175,592 participants annually. The staff at the facility estimate that four spectators per player, or 702,368 total, attended those events. The business plan at the complex estimates that 40 percent of families attending tournament events stay at area hotels for the nights they are in town.

The Maryland SoccerPlex is a 22-field facility in Germantown (Montgomery County), Maryland, just outside of Washington DC. Nineteen of the fields are natural grass, and three are artificial turf, all of which are lit. A 2013 survey of visitors to the complex suggests that a typical weekend tournament attracts 4,290 participants and an average of 2.12 additional persons per participant, for a total of about 13,400 persons. The survey data suggest further that 60 percent of participants' families traveled from outside the immediate area. On a typical tournament weekend, the facility estimates it hosted more than 8,000 persons from outside of Montgomery County.

At three events in 2012, researchers at the George Washington University surveyed visitors at the Maryland SoccerPlex to collect information on their spending while in the Montgomery County area. The survey instrument asked visitors to report the number of nights they stayed at area hotels and how much they spent daily for lodging, dining, entertainment, car rental, and general merchandise. The survey also asked for amounts spent on tournament merchandise and fuel for personal automobiles over the course of their visit.

The results were remarkably similar at all three events, as shown in Table 3. The surveys determined that nearly 80 percent of visitors spent one or more nights in area hotels. Most (52.4 percent) spent two nights, while 14 percent spent one night, and 12 percent spent three nights. Using the survey data, the research team at George Washington University determined that out-of-town visitors who attended one day of the event with no overnight stay spent about \$390 total, while those who stayed at an area hotel at least one night and were at the event for two days spent about \$800 during their visit. Visitors who spent three nights at an area hotel and three days at the tournament spent more than \$1,300 during their visit.



Table 3. Visitor Spending Estimates at Maryland SoccerPlex

Category	Club National Championship, Girls Lacrosse	Discovery Cup Tournament	Bethesda Boys Thanksgiving Tournament	Average
Daily Spending				
Lodging	149.80	147.07	143.51	146.79
Food and Beverage	76.97	77.39	85.18	79.85
Local Entertainment	42.94	45.93	37.96	42.28
Car Rental and Local Transportation	62.83	90.00	73.11	75.31
General Merchandise	63.43	62.82	71.25	65.83
Spending During Entire Stay				
Tournament Merchandise	53.56	48.35	77.81	59.91
Gasoline	67.20	65.35	63.87	65.47

Data source: George Washington University

Discover DeKalb estimates that the complex will support up to 4,800 participants on a typical tournament weekend. To be conservative, Institute researchers based the model inputs on an average participant figure of 4,500, which is closer to the 4,290 reported by the Community Development Committee at the complex in Overland Park, Kansas, a facility with 22 fields.

Using the out-of-town visitor estimate of 60 percent from the Maryland SoccerPlex survey, researchers at the Carl Vinson Institute of Government estimate that 2,700 of the 4,500 participants' families will be from outside the immediate area and will drive in as day visitors or overnight guests.

This assumption means that 40 percent of participants are excluded from the economic impact of the facility even though those participants and their families will spend money at the tournaments and in area restaurants. In determining economic impact of entertainment and recreation venues, there can be a substitution effect. In other words, if a new recreation opportunity is made available, local residents may choose that activity over some other activity. Thus, the overall economy is no better off because dollars are simply spent for the new activity rather than the existing one. This phenomenon is often seen in a community when a new restaurant opens and draws patrons away from existing ones. However, it is less likely that participation in a soccer tournament would have a local substitution effect because teams would likely participate in a tournament at a location outside the community. Thus, the facility will likely keep some residents' spending at home that would go elsewhere if the facility did not exist. Still, excluding the 40 percent who are local residents helps ensure that this analysis is considering only the new financial resources that are being drawn into the community.

Tables 4 and 5 contain estimates of visitor spending for two-day and three-day events, respectively. Although the spending figures shown in Table 3 from the survey of visitors to the Maryland SoccerPlex are averages and would have been affected (lowered) by people reporting zero spending in a given category, to be conservative in these estimates, spending amounts for lodging, car rental, and gasoline are not included for those who attend a tournament only a single day. The data in



Table 4, for a two-day event, assume that families spending one or two nights in a hotel will attend both days of tournament activity. Similarly, the data in Table 5 assume that people who report spending one night in a hotel will attend two days of tournament play, and those spending two or three nights will attend all three days of tournament play. Visitor spending for the estimated 60 percent of participants that are nonresidents ranges from about \$1.8 million for a two-day tournament to \$2.6 million for a three-day event.

Table 4. Estimated Out-of-Town Visitor Spending per Tournament, Two-Day Event

	Day Trip: One Day at Tournament	One Night: Two Days at Tournament	Two Nights: Two Days at Tournament	Total
Number of Visitors	810	1,350	540	2,700
Nights Hotel Stay per Family	0	1	2	2,430
Lodging (Daily)	0	198,171	158,537	356,708
Food and Beverage (Daily)	64,676	215,586	86,234	366,496
Local Entertainment (Daily)	34,244	114,147	45,659	194,050
Car Rental and Local Transportation (Daily)	0	203,346	81,338	284,684
General Merchandise (Daily)	53,325	177,750	71,100	302,175
Tournament Merchandise (Entire Stay)	48,5240	80,874	32,350	161,748
Gasoline (Entire Stay)	0	88,389	35,356	123,745
TOTAL	314,807	1,078,263	510,574	1,789,606

Data Source: Calculated by Carl Vinson Institute of Government



Table 5. Estimated Out-of-Town Visitor Spending per Tournament, Three-Day Event

	Day Trip: One Day at Tournament	One Night: Two Days at Tournament	Two Nights: Three Days at Tournament	Three Nights: Three Days at Tournament	Total
Number of Visitors	578	375	1,415	332	2700
Nights Hotel Stay per Family	0	1	2	3	4,200
Lodging (Daily)	0	55,092	415,366	146,250	616,708
Food and Beverage (Daily)	46,135	59,933	338,901	79,551	524,520
Local Entertainment (Daily)	24,427	31,733	179,439	42,120	277,719
Car Rental and Local Transportation (Daily)	0	56,530	319,660	75,035	451,225
General Merchandise (Daily)	38,039	49,415	279,423	65,590	432,467
Tournament Merchandise (Entire Stay)	34,614	22,483	84,756	19,895	161,748
Gasoline (Entire Stay)	0	24,572	92,632	21,744	138,948
TOTAL	224,562	299,757	1,710,177	450,185	2,603,335

Data Source: Calculated by Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Discover DeKalb and ASC report that the business plan calls for the soccer facility to be used for tournament play on at least 40 weekends per year. Officials at Georgia Soccer provided a list of 21 events (see Table 6) that are typical of the kinds of tournaments that could be held at the proposed facility. Georgia Soccer reports that these and many other tournaments could be attracted to the facility due to the capacity it would offer. Many of these and similar tournaments currently take place at facilities outside the Atlanta area and often require several facilities because no single facility is large enough to handle the number of matches played, especially in the early tournament rounds. Georgia Soccer estimates that the facility would host 10 three-day events and 30 two-day events annually.



Table 6. Prospective Tournament Events

Tournament	Dates	Days
January		
Atlanta College Showcase	Jan. 16 & 17	2
Adidas Women's Elite Showcase	Jan. 29 - 31	3
February		
Adidas Men's Elite Showcase	Feb. 5-7	3
SSA Spring Classic	Feb. 13 & 14	2
Concorde Fire Challenge Cup - Girls	Feb. 20 & 21	2
Concorde Fire Challenge Cup - Boys	Feb. 27 & 28	2
April		
CGSA Academy Classic	Apr. 23 & 24	2
All-In Fc Academy Classic	Apr. 30-May 1	2
May		
AFU Academy Elite Cup	May 7 & 8	2
Academy Cup	May 14 & 15	2
NASA Friendship Cup & Showcase	May 21 & 22	2
Georgia State Cup		
<i>Round Robin</i>	May 28 - 30	3
<i>U18 Round Robin</i>	May 31-June 2	3
<i>Final Four</i>	Jun. 4 & 5	2
August		
Adi Elite Cup	Aug. 6 & 7	2
NASA Classic- Girls	Aug. 20 & 21	2
NASA Classic- Boys	Aug. 27 & 28	2
September		
Publix Atlanta Cup	Sept. 3-5	3
November		
D2 & D3 Championships	Nov. 12 & 13	2
UFA Fall Classic	Nov. 19 & 20	2
December		
Generation Adidas Norcross Cup	Dec. 3 & 4	2

Source: Georgia Youth Soccer Association



Using the visitor spending estimates from the Maryland SoccerPlex survey and Georgia Soccer's proposed schedule of 40 events, Institute researchers calculated the total demand for goods and services that would be created by people driving in from outside of DeKalb County. Again, the demand figures are based on just the estimated 60 percent of participants' families that are not residents of DeKalb County or the immediate area. Local resident spending at the facility is treated as a substitute for spending at other local recreation and entertainment activities and is not included in the impact analysis. This calculation will underestimate the impact to the extent that DeKalb residents would attend a similar event outside the county rather than spending money on other activities in the county.

Table 7 presents the total inputs for IMPLAN. These figures are calculated by multiplying the demand per two-day event in Table 2 by 30 and the demand per three-day event in Table 3 by 10, then summing. Together, these events would produce nearly \$80 million in total demand for hotels, restaurants, and other spending. Table 7 also shows the NAICS industry codes used in the economic model.

Table 7. Total Inputs from 40 Weekend Tournament Events

NAICS	Sector	Total
72111	Lodging (114,900 Room Nights)	\$16,868,314
72251	Food and Beverage	16,240,096
51213	Local Entertainment	8,598,697
53211	Car Rental and Local Transportation	6,526,391
45291	General Merchandise	13,389,910
71131	Tournament Merchandise	6,469,920
44711	Gasoline	5,101,818
TOTAL		\$79,721,527

*The car rental and local transportation figure of \$13,052,782 was reduced by 50 percent because the majority of rental transactions would originate outside the local area.

Data Source: Calculated by Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Table 8 presents the impacts of visitor spending. Nearly 700 jobs in the hotel, restaurant, and other sectors listed in Table 7 are supported by the increased demand for goods and services resulting from visitors to the sports complex. An estimated 167 jobs in DeKalb County are supported indirectly as a result of the increased economic activity, along with another 37 elsewhere in the state. These are jobs at businesses that provide the goods and services needed by the hotels, restaurants, and other businesses, such as building service companies, food wholesalers, and general merchandise wholesalers. Indirect employment also includes jobs in the transportation sector at firms that deliver raw materials and supplies. As the people employed in these direct and indirect positions spend their salaries and wages, there is an induced effect. These jobs are primarily in service sectors (barbers, dry cleaners, landscapers, etc.), professional occupations (attorneys, accountants, physicians, and dentists), and the retail sectors. The induced effect resulting from the direct and indirect employment supports another 175 workers in DeKalb County and 26 elsewhere in the state. The total number of jobs supported rises to nearly 1,100 in the state when the induced employment



impact is added. The labor income associated with the direct, indirect, and induced employment is more than \$33 million in DeKalb County and another \$3.4 million in the state. To a certain extent, some of the impact that IMPLAN assigns to DeKalb County will be realized outside the county, depending on hotel availability, visitor preferences for lodging and meals, and a variety of other factors.



Table 8. Estimated Annual Economic Impact from Visitor Spending Associated with Tournament Events

DeKalb County				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect	681	18,812,021	35,019,778	58,775,961
Indirect Effect	167	7,170,450	12,445,779	22,812,206
Induced Effect	175	7,293,781	12,437,063	21,594,520
Total Effect	1,023	33,276,252	59,902,619	103,182,687
Rest of Georgia				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect	0	0	0	0
Indirect Effect	37	2,076,927	3,155,697	6,483,409
Induced Effect	26	1,314,061	2,128,907	3,913,360
Total Effect	63	3,390,988	5,284,604	10,396,769
TOTAL				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect	681	18,812,021	35,019,778	58,775,961
Indirect Effect	204	9,247,377	15,601,476	29,295,615
Induced Effect	201	8,607,842	14,565,970	25,507,880
Total Effect	1,086	36,667,240	65,187,223	113,579,456

Source: IMPLAN, Carl Vinson Institute of Government



Professional Clubs

The soccer facility includes a 15,000-seat stadium suitable for a variety of events including a 10 home game season for a professional team in the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) and a 15 home game season in the (men's) North American Soccer League (NASL). The current proposal is for an expansion team in each league that would use the facility for practices and lease the stadium for home games. When not in use by the professional teams, the stadium would be used for championship matches in other tournament events, especially those associated with the adult, high school, and collegiate levels of play.

The business arrangement between the soccer facility and the two professional teams calls for the teams to lease the stadium for \$3,500 per home match; the teams would sell tickets for those home matches and retain that revenue. The soccer facility would provide concessions and receive fees for parking. To estimate the additional economic activity resulting from the presence of a professional team, Bill Lynch with the Washington DC NWSL franchise, the Washington Spirit, provided estimates of spending by persons attending Spirit home games. The Washington team reports that beyond ticket sales, the average person attending one of its home matches spends an additional \$28 on parking, food, and other items.

Assuming that all tickets are sold for each of the 25 home games provides an upper limit estimate of potential attendance of 375,000. If spending at the Atlanta teams' games is similar to that reported by the Washington team, the total nonticket revenue that would flow to the soccer facility would be \$10.5 million.⁶ For purposes of estimating the impact from this spending, the total was divided across three categories of spending: 20 percent for parking, 40 percent for food, and 40 percent for general merchandise (souvenirs).

Table 9 shows the impacts from the facility revenue derived from the 25 professional games. While the employment impacts are shown in FTE figures, most of the staffing for the facility during the season would be a combination of part-time employees. Using the stadium for these games would add about \$6.1 million in labor income, \$9.4 million in economic value, and \$16.8 million in total economic output. These estimates do not include the economic impact produced by the two professional teams. Those impacts would result from the ticket sales and other revenue streams flowing to the teams. The economic impact the teams would provide to the Atlanta area would be facilitated, however, by the soccer facility.

⁶ 25 home games X 15,000 tickets = 375,000 attendees. 375,000 X \$28 = \$10,500,000.



Table 9. Estimated Annual Economic Impact from Visitor Spending Associated with Professional Team Home Games

DeKalb County				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect	166	3,359,162	4,679,201	8,206,800
Indirect Effect	23	1,002,980	1,907,133	3,342,132
Induced Effect	29	1,220,230	2,079,226	3,610,456
Total Effect	218	5,582,372	8,665,561	15,159,388
Rest of Georgia				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect	0	0	0	0
Indirect Effect	5	309,604	490,507	1,036,468
Induced Effect	4	209,745	338,642	624,286
Total Effect	9	519,349	829,149	1,660,754
TOTAL				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect	166	3,359,162	4,679,201	8,206,800
Indirect Effect	28	1,312,584	2,397,640	4,378,600
Induced Effect	33	1,429,975	2,417,869	4,234,742
Total Effect	227	6,101,721	9,494,710	16,820,142

Source: IMPLAN, Carl Vinson Institute of Government



Total Estimated Economic Impacts

The total economic impact presented in this analysis is derived from three components. The first is operation of the facility itself, which will directly employ 361 FTE in the business lines shown in - Table 1. The second component is visitor spending on lodging, meals, and other items while attending tournament events at the soccer facility. The third component is visitor spending while attending a home match of the two proposed professional teams that would play home games in the 15,000-seat stadium at the soccer facility. The estimates for each component were described in detail in the earlier sections.

The facility's presence would support more than 1,800 jobs in DeKalb County and another 104 elsewhere in the state through direct and indirect employment and the induced effect from the additional payroll realized in the region. The total labor income for those jobs is estimated to be about \$73 million, with \$67 million in DeKalb County. The facility would add an estimated \$114 million to the local economy and produce nearly \$200 million in economic output. As indicated earlier, the "value-added" figures in the economic impact estimates represent the sum of labor income (also presented separately), business income, and indirect taxes collected on behalf of government, including sales and excise taxes, hotel-motel occupancy taxes, and income tax withholding.

IMPLAN estimates that the economic activity associated with the facility would produce significant revenue for state and local government. State and local sales taxes would increase by around \$4 million, while income taxes would add \$1.4 million, and hotel-motel tax revenue would increase by \$1 million. Smaller increases in other revenue sources bring the total expected revenue increase to state and local government to \$6.8 million. This figure does not include any increase to local property taxes from the facility itself because the development's tax status is not clear at this time.



Table 10. Estimated Total Annual Economic Impact from the DeKalb Soccer Facility and the Atlanta Sports Complex

DeKalb County				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect*	1,208	40,515,197	59,349,735	98,623,099
Indirect Effect	272	11,951,191	20,874,063	37,592,109
Induced Effect	353	14,737,975	25,134,957	43,640,291
Total Effect	1,833	67,204,363	105,358,755	179,855,499
Rest of Georgia				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect*	0	0	0	0
Indirect Effect	57	3,323,162	5,041,406	10,208,863
Induced Effect	47	2,420,841	3,897,557	7,204,508
Total Effect	104	5,744,003	8,938,963	17,413,371
TOTAL				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Total Value Added	Total Economic Output
Direct Effect*	1,208	40,515,197	59,349,735	98,623,099
Indirect Effect	329	15,274,353	25,915,468	47,800,972
Induced Effect	400	17,158,816	29,032,515	50,844,799
Total Effect	1,937	72,948,366	114,297,718	197,268,870

*In this table, the direct effect includes FTEs at the complex and direct employment at firms meeting increased demand for other goods and services resulting from visitor spending.

Source: IMPLAN, Carl Vinson Institute of Government



Conclusion

The economic impact of the proposed DeKalb County soccer facility and the Atlanta Sports Complex are significant, with nearly \$200 million dollars added in economic output in Georgia resulting in about \$114 million in added value. In addition to the economic impacts, the facility would increase convenience for families in the Atlanta area whose children participate in soccer tournaments and other sports programs that will use the facility. Tournament organizers that currently use multiple facilities will be able to conduct more rounds of tournaments at a single facility, simplifying the logistics of tournament operations. The health, wellness, and sports rehabilitation services as well as the presence of two professional teams at the facility will likely increase its prestige for youth, adult, high school, and collegiate events. Similar soccer facilities in Overland Park and Kansas City, Kansas and Boyds, Maryland have attracted a variety of high-profile events. These include state high school championship rounds; adult amateur league tournaments; NCAA Big 12 Championships; the 2016 and 2017 Men's and Women's NCAA Division II Soccer Championships; the 2014 and 2015 Men's and Women's NCAA Division III Championships; and professional regional events such as the 2014 Central Region MLS Generation Adidas Cup played at the Swope Soccer Village in Kansas City. Hosting events such as these increases the prestige of these facilities and their ability to draw youth tournament events.

The increase in visitors to DeKalb County for the youth tournaments included in the analysis would contribute more than half (\$65 million of \$114 million) of the added value to the local economy. The total of \$114 million in added value comes from facility operations, visitor spending at tournaments, and spending at the professional matches. The number and scale of the events included in this analysis are limited to the soccer tournaments whose organizers Georgia Soccer indicated would find the new facility attractive. The facility is likely to spur growth in youth and adult soccer programs.

In addition to the tournament events included in this analysis, other events are likely to be held at the facility. At the time of publication, a plan was in the final stages to bring teams from United Soccer Africa to Atlanta, beginning with the Nigerian National Soccer Team ahead of the 2016 Olympic Games. Bunmi Jinadu, CEO of United Soccer Africa, indicated that the proposed venue could host a number of teams from United Soccer Africa as part of their preparation for international events such as the World Cup and future Olympic Games.⁷ Also anticipated for the facility are at least nine additional two-day and three-day events in youth and adult flag football, youth tackle football, basketball, and volleyball.⁸ Each of these events attracts between 900 and 1,800 participants and their families.

While the future is hard to forecast, the growth of programs at the LakePoint sports complex in the first two years of its operation suggests that many families have embraced the sports vacation lifestyle. At the time that LakePoint opened in 2014, New York University's Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism and Sports reported that sports tourism was the fastest growing segment of the

⁷ Personal communication, June 6, 2016.

⁸ Vaughn Irons (CEO of ASC), personal communication, July 6, 2016.



travel industry.⁹ The data from the two Kansas City area facilities and the one in Boyds, Maryland indicate that facilities like the one proposed in DeKalb County can be successful and contribute significantly to the local economy.

⁹ <http://www.cnbc.com/2014/01/13/> accessed June 3, 2016.

