



City and Mandalay Officials Announce Ballpark District Plans

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Officials from the City of Dayton and Ballpark Consultants (Mandalay Baseball Properties) today announced they are moving ahead with identifying a new development partner to collaborate in making the Ballpark District project a reality.

City Manager Rashad Young announced that after lengthy discussions between the City and Bear Creek Capital, Bear Creek has agreed to step aside from this development effort. This decision will allow the City of Dayton and Mandalay to pursue another developer to redevelop approximately 72-acres along the Great Miami River near Fifth Third Field and Deeds Point.

Young said the mutual decision by the City of Dayton, Mandalay and Bear Creek to conclude discussions with Bear Creek will allow the City of Dayton and Mandalay to affiliate with a new development partner that can help implement this important project for the region.

Near the close of 2006, the City Commission adopted a Preliminary Development Agreement with Bear Creek Capital and Mandalay Baseball Properties, which is the lead principal of the Dayton Dragons baseball team.

The proposed \$230 million project was conceived as a mixture of housing, retail, commercial and entertainment venues along Dayton's downtown waterfront. Of the estimated total investment, \$197 million is planned for development activity and the remainder for utility and infrastructure improvements. Only minimal General Fund tax dollars are expected as part of the financing package.

"At this point we believe it is in the best interest of the City of Dayton, the Dayton community and the development team itself to modify our direction slightly," Young said. "We are confident that the work we have been able to accomplish on the project over the past several months will enable us to attract a new partner quickly so we can continue to move forward. We certainly appreciate Bear Creek's involvement to this point, and believe the contributions they have made will enable us to move forward without missing a beat."

"Mandalay fully concurs with the need to identify a new development partner at this stage of the process," Richard Neumann, President of Baseball Development for Mandalay Baseball Properties, said. "We never said a project of this magnitude, with these complexities, under these economic conditions would be easy. They never are. Sometimes new perspective and new ideas are necessary to spur a project onward. We believe that is the case today. Mandalay Baseball Properties remains 100 percent committed to the City of Dayton and the Dayton community, and we remain 100 percent committed to seeing the Ballpark District emerge downtown as it was originally envisioned."

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Young said much of the work outlined for Phase One of the project has been completed, including property acquisition, environmental assessments and development of a financing structure.

“We feel good about where we are in terms of acquiring the necessary properties and laying the foundation for the project,” Young said. “We have reached agreement with the Miami Conservancy District and the Dayton Public Schools for these individual properties, and we have identified a way to accommodate the existing Woolpert building into the final design of the project. From that standpoint, the majority of our pre-development activities for the project have been accomplished.”

“The economic conditions today certainly make the financing piece challenging,” Young said. “However, we believe there is a way to put together a financial package that protects taxpayer dollars without placing undue risk on our development partners or financing agents. We are excited about the potential that the Ballpark District holds for downtown and we remain committed to making it happen.

Young said the City of Dayton, Mandalay and the other project partners will be diligent in their efforts to contact potential new developers with experience in mixed-use development projects. Bear Creek Capital has offered to assist in ensuring a smooth transition with the new development partner.

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