

Challenger / Lake Air Relocation Project

City-Owned Ballfields

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Presentation Overview

- Impact of Youth Sports
- Relocation of Lake Air and Challenger Complex
- Inventory of Ballfields
- Field Accessibility and Participation Numbers
- Field Examples
- Improvements and Challenges
- Next Steps



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City of Champions

- According to the National Recreation and Parks Association, when children play sports, they increase their chances to grow up healthy, feel good about themselves, build friendships, develop skills like teamwork and respect, and are more likely to succeed in school and in their future careers.
- Team Waco track, Youth Basketball and Futsal/Soccer Leagues
- Waco is home to the Little League Southwest Region headquarters and state championships



Purpose for Relocation

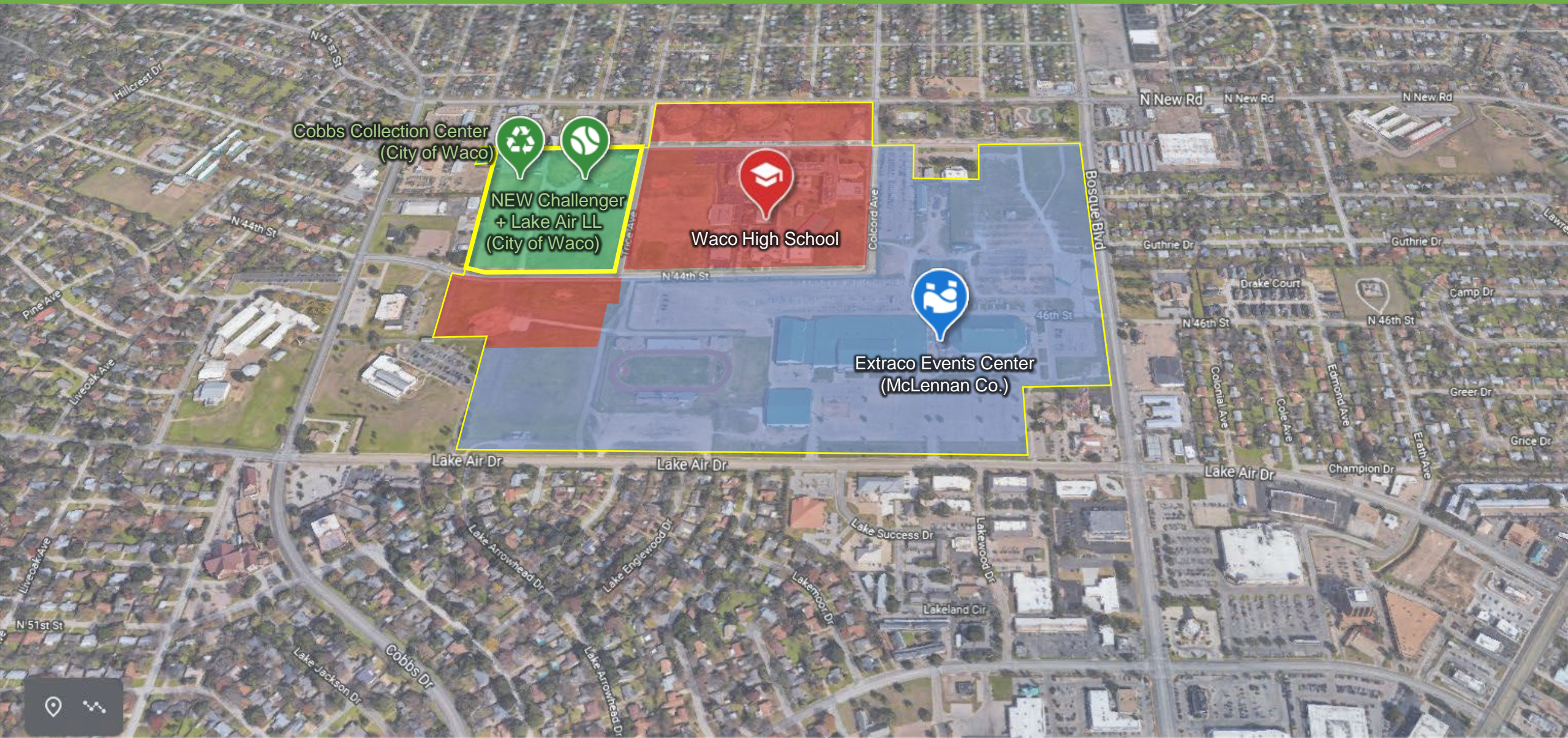
- Part of the **Venue Project** that dates back to 2015 addressing strategic coordination for community benefit
- Interlocal agreement, funding plan and land transfers between County, Waco ISD and City of Waco
- Little League site to be transferred to Waco ISD in August, resulting in the need for a new design and location for the baseball/softball complex



Venue Project Overview – Current Configuration

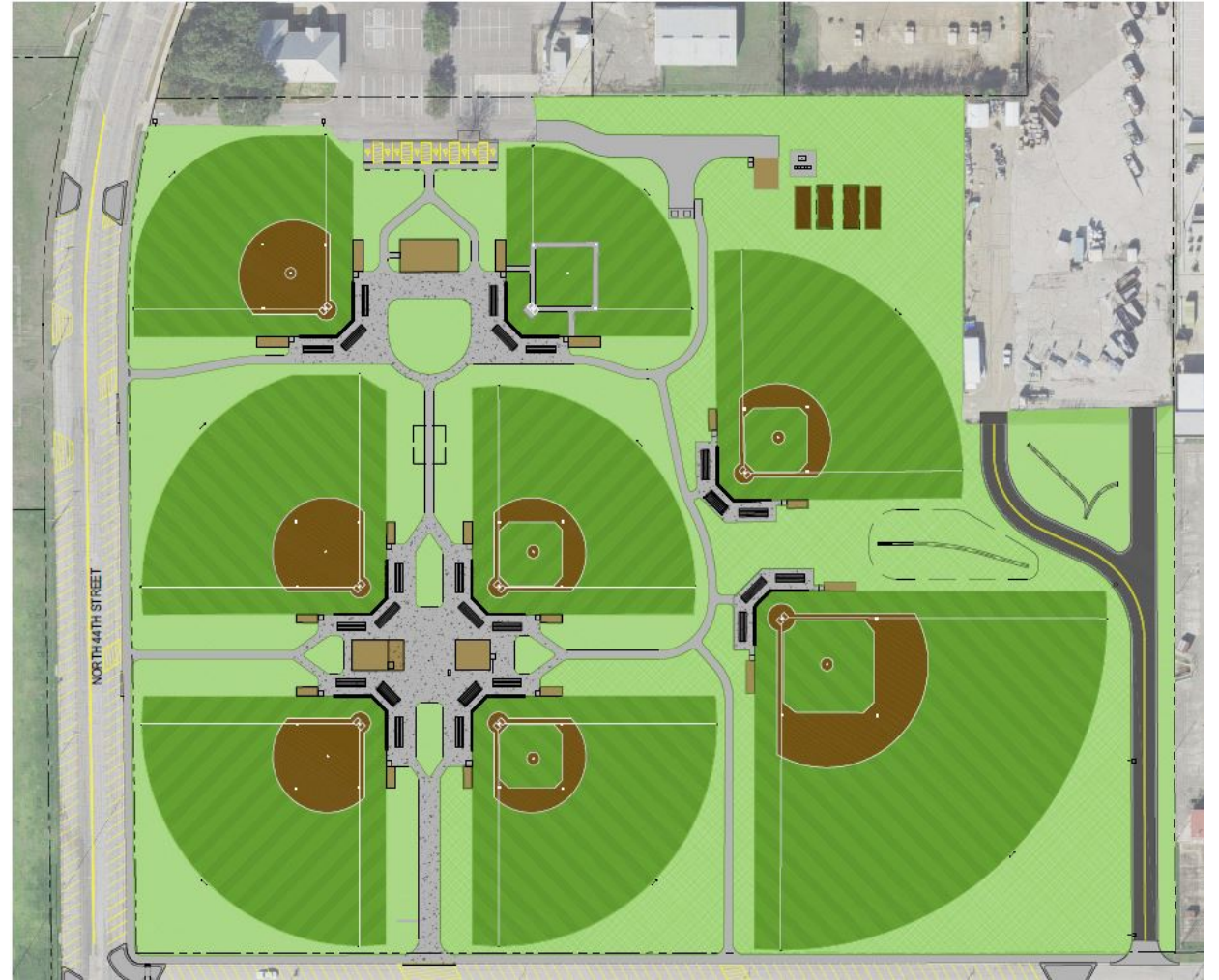


Venue Project Overview – Final Configuration



Challenger and Lake Air Relocation Project

- Complex currently has 7 fields:
 - 4 baseball
 - 2 softball
 - 1 Challenger field
- Proposed design has 8 fields:
 - 4 baseball
 - 2 softball
 - 2 Challenger fields
- Concessions building, restrooms, bleachers and storage
- Entrance to Cobbs Collection Center

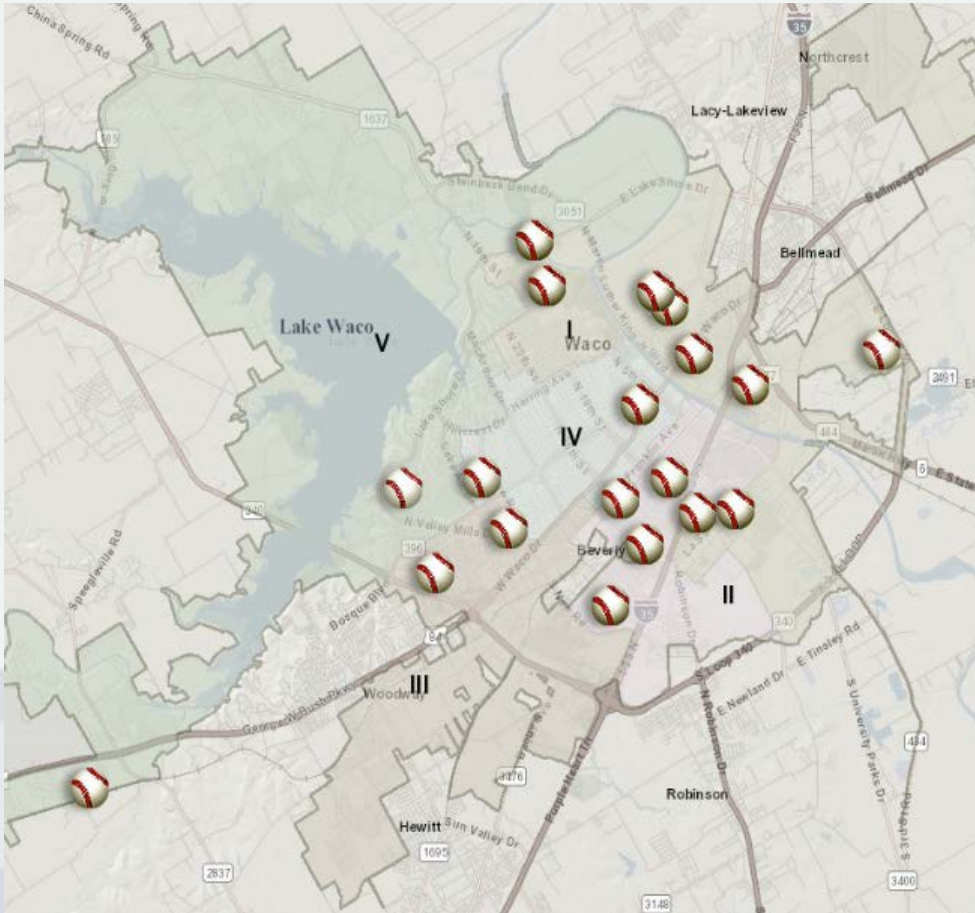




Funding Update

- Bids opened on Feb. 15 with a 90-day window to award:
 - Original Estimate: \$5,815,000
 - Base Bid: \$7,609,000
 - Final Bid Amount: \$8,964,000
- Resolution on today's agenda to award bid. Includes add alternates 1-5 for field lighting, which is a standard amenity other little league sites.
- The additional funding of \$2.9M above current funding levels will come from the Special Projects Reserve Fund; however, the resolution to approve the contract will include language to reimburse the funds from a future bond sale.
- Staff to continue to evaluate amenities and ability for value engineering
- If awarded, project to commence with intent to complete for 2023 season

Overview of Waco Ballfields



- 40 City-owned park areas for baseball / softball
 - 11 Practice Backstops
 - 7 Practice Fields
 - 14 League and Game Fields
 - 8 Tournament Fields at Riverbend Park
- Approximately 35 additional areas on private, community-owned land in Greater Waco area
 - Ex. School district property, community little leagues



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Field Availability

- Backstop, practice areas available on first-come, first-serve basis
- Practice and game field rentals
- Use Agreements Issued Annually
- Eastern Little League, Lake Air Little League, Challenger League
- Select Organizations: Waco Heat, Buzz Lightning and Waco Rampage
- No charge for field usage, but certain maintenance responsibilities covered by organizations
- Agreement requirements





Riverbend Park Status

- 550 practice rentals in 2021-2022
- Average 50-75 teams in seasonal adult softball leagues
- Weekend Tournaments
- Currently hosting softball and Challenger games, adult soccer

Participation Numbers

<u>Leagues and Teams</u>	<u>2019 Participants</u>	<u>2019 Teams</u>	<u>2022 Participants</u>	<u>2022 Teams</u>
Challenger Little League	202	14	187	14
Eastern Little League	140	12	126	9
Lake Air Little League	511	45	367	30
Southern Little League	NA	NA	156	13
BLBA Baseball	120	10	150	10
Waco Heat	175	15	150	12
Waco Rampage	100	6	TBD	TBD
Totals	1248	102	1136	88

- COVID impact on participation in 2020 and 2021
- Inter-league play among Waco-area Little League teams
- Rise of Select baseball
- Spring vs. Fall Schedules

Little League Fields



Lake Air Little League

- Youth baseball and softball
 - Select Teams
- 6 fields, lights, restrooms, concessions
 - Softball currently at Riverbend



Challenger League

- Youth and adult participants
- One field. Also share a field with Lake Air softball
 - Currently at Riverbend



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Little League Fields



Eastern Little League

- Youth baseball and softball
- 2 fields, one practice infield
- Lights, restrooms, concessions, parking
- City and Waco ISD property



Southern Little League

- Youth baseball and softball
- 4 fields, lights, restrooms, concessions
 - Waco ISD property



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Additional Fields – Select Teams



Northern Gateway

- Waco Heat softball
- 1 field (also use Lake Air)
- Lights, park restrooms, parking
 - Within Cameron Park



Cotton Palace

- Waco Rampage
- 2 fields (baseball, softball)
- Lights, restrooms, parking



Jaycee Park

- Buzz Lightning Baseball
 - 1 field
- Lights, restrooms

Improvements and Future Challenges

- Maintenance Matrix – Organization Support
- Field Preparation, Irrigation, Care, Infrastructure
- 2021 Improvements
 - Backstops Trailblazer Park and Kendrick Park
 - Eastern Little League
 - Restrooms, Parking, Practice Field, Scoreboard Installation
- Challenges
 - Aging Infrastructure
 - Maintenance Standards and Workload Capacity
 - Public use and year-round activation
 - Use Agreement vs. Rental Policies
- Plan to return Council for future updates





Next Step

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