



Glendale sells land near proposed ballpark for \$9M

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A developer will pay the City of Glendale almost \$9 million for 85 acres near the proposed spring training ballpark and close to \$75,000 annually to lease 52 acres at the city airport.

The City Council on Tuesday unanimously approved the transaction.

Rightpath Limited, a Phoenix-based development company, has partnered with the city on its spring training plan, which hinges on constructing new commercial development to pay off the city's portion of the \$80.7 million stadium debt.

The Arizona Sports and Tourism Authority would provide the biggest portion of funding. The board approved the agreement to provide two-thirds of the funding today.

Ground should break in October. By 2009 fans should hear the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Chicago White Sox crack the bat at the proposed park near Camelback Road and 107th Avenue.

Rightpath is expected to launch commercial development on the two sites purchased or leased from the city. And, the company has already purchased land from private owners for a 166-acre development called Main Street, north of the spring training site.

In addition to the sale and lease price, the agreement requires Rightpath to share a portion of its revenues until the spring training stadium is paid off.

The agreements dictate that Rightpath share 6 percent of the revenues created on the 85 acres next to the ballpark and 3 percent, eventually accelerated to 4 percent, of revenue generated from developments at the airport.

Rightpath developer Rick Burton said he plans to build as much as 1.5 million square-feet of hangars for private jets and other aircraft. The hangars would be leased or sold. Along with the 52 acres leased to Rightpath for 99 years, the company has purchased another 17 acres east of the runway. The city will require that Rightpath consult with nearby Luke Air Force Base on those plans.

Near the stadium, Rightpath wants to create a mixed-use development. More details should be available in the next few months as the project is submitted for municipal planning review, Burton said.

Previously, Burton told residents near the stadium that the development would be complementary to baseball and the fan experience.

That development will go through the Phoenix planning process since the ballpark and the 85 acres that Glendale sold to Rightpath are south of Glendale's border in West Phoenix.

Glendale purchased the 236 acres in the 1990s to ensure development was compatible with its nearby municipal airport.

Officials in Glendale had developed a working relationship with Rightpath in planning Zanjero, a development near University of Phoenix Stadium. The Zanjero project has brought in Cabela's, two luxury apartment complexes, restaurants, hotels and corporate office space now under construction.

Reach the reporter at (602) 444-6934 .

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