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## Downtown Business Opportunities Summary

### **1. ECONOMIC GROWTH**

While statistics on rent and revenue increase couldn't be specifically defined by all, the teams gave positive statements to the growth based on observation of the businesses within walking distance of the ballpark. These businesses were primarily restaurant and retail type businesses with specialty type businesses sprinkled in such as those related to entertainment and the arts. i.e. museum, batting cage, canvas painting. Businesses in the immediate area are local, not chain with the exception of a Starbucks being mentioned.

Businesses adjusted operating hours to benefit from event traffic. Heavier traffic is seen before and after events, however, it was noted that depending on the type of event, people may come later or leave earlier adding to the already existing customer base. Another addition to a business' regular customers has come from the diverse crowds brought to the stadium for its diverse events.

All of the parks take advantage of their stadiums to host events beyond their teams' seasons. For example, DBAP has hosted eight ACC Baseball Tournaments; the 2016 tournament brought in \$5.2 million into their community and the 2018 tournament brought in over \$9.6 million. These tournaments help to spawn the Durham Sports Commission, designed to not only attract and promote athletic events at DBAP but in all of Durham.

### **2. PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

There were no special programs designed specifically for small businesses. All local businesses have opportunities to partner with the teams through advertisement, sponsorships, and as vendors. Examples given:

- While most ballparks have a contracted concessionaire, the Nashville Sounds has an agreement with a local business to be the only BBQ provider to the park.
- Some clubs have taken to having a designated area of the park that the concessionaire will use local vendors, i.e. the Greenville Drive have the "Ballpark Bash" where they conduct raffles/give-aways from local businesses
- Dedicated game nights business, industry or community driven

There is no distinction given to businesses based on proximity to the stadium. Every business is equal in opportunity.

### **3. RETAIL DRIVING INITIATIVES**

Teams use various retail driving initiatives within the game itself. Example: Every ticket holder in a specific section wins a (local business coupon/item) for the first homerun hit; discount off for every base stolen; bring your ticket to (local business) for (discount/free) item.

The positive impact on business can be seen by the teams through the repetition of use by the businesses involved. Without seeing a return on their investment, businesses would be less likely to continue their promotions through the club.

#### **4. PARKING**

Parking is specific to each location; some have struggled and some have not but all have not suffered because of it. Walking a four to six block distance is considered an acceptable distance by most people. In a couple of instances, one city has set up a trolley system to help with transportation beyond a quarter of a mile and another city has a free bus line dedicated to stadium transportation. Interesting note: parking issues have seen a decline because of ride-sharing services like Lyft and Uber.

#### **5. VENDORS**

All food and beverage vendor bids are processed through the contracted concessionaire, where there is one. Where there is not a dedicated concessionaire, bids are received through the club's administration. Merchandise within the park is limited to club merchandise.

#### **6. RESTAURANTS**

Before and after games/events, restaurants experience a higher volume of traffic than days without events. The Appalachian Power Park has a full restaurant owned and operated by a private vendor with no ties to its team.

#### **7. LODGING**

The Appalachian Power Park is flanked by renovated loft apartments and sports bars with Charleston's Clay Center for Arts and Sciences only two blocks away. Renovation to the Lugnut's stadium includes apartments and a restaurant. All 84 units are rented.

#### **8. BARRIERS TO SUCCESS**

Parking was listed as a top priority in the development of the parks contacted but none saw it as a challenge. Every park takes advantage of existing City parking. With the implementation of the use of a trolley, bus system, city/state parking available and easy walkability, parking has not been viewed as a barrier. Clear signage is used to designate stadium parking specifically where possible and everything else is open.

Each ballpark polices their own area to a "like new" appearance. None are aware of an impact of additional or problematic trash locally.

None had to manage a public safety perception. Their respective cities did provide police for traffic and crowd control if needed. Because the entrance to one stadium is on a main road, the Nashville Sounds have a "road closure permit" which closes the road in front of the stadium an hour before game time allowing lines to flow into the street. Barricades and traffic direction are provided by the city of Nashville.

## 9. SPECIAL NOTES OF INTEREST

The Greenville Drive moved its stadium from a more remote area to its local downtown area 13 years ago. In that time Greenville has seen 500+ new businesses open up within a mile radius of the stadium with an estimated over \$3 billion in sales growth.

Greenville conducted a downtown design study in May of 2017

The Nashville Sound built its stadium in an unused section of Nashville about six blocks away from downtown and 4 blocks away from Germantown, another robust area. The stadium has provided enough business growth in the area to connect the two destination locations.

The West Virginia Power is used by the University of Charleston and Marshall University for their baseball programs. Though it considers itself “east end” of Charleston, the App Power Park is more east middle.

An interesting, and worthwhile, observation from all of the teams contacted is that they were built in mainly older, yet near center-ish sections of their towns. But once built, renovations in those sections flourished, bringing growth and revitalization.

### **Teams contacted:**

Nashville Sound

Greenville Drive

West Virginia Power

Durham Bulls

Lansing Lugnuts