



Agenda Item Report

Legislative Board: City Council
Date: April 21, 2026
Contact: Lysa Gonzales, Tourism Director
Agenda Item ID / Number: 2026-353- / K.1

ITEM TITLE: Presentation and possible action regarding updates to the Buda Sportsplex, including construction progress, programming, tourism impact, marketing strategy, and consideration of the facility name (Lysa Gonzalez, Director of Community Relations and Destination Services and Parks Director Tony Host) [PUBLIC TESTIMONY]

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This item provides an update on the construction progress of the Buda Sportsplex, outlines a proposed strategic marketing and sales initiative to position the facility as a competitive destination for youth and amateur sports tournaments, and presents the opportunity to consider rebranding the facility as “Buda Championship Park.”

The proposed marketing initiative focuses on targeted outreach to regional and multi-state tournament organizers, development of a dedicated sales and marketing platform, and implementation of incentives designed to attract tournament play.

Collectively, these efforts are intended to increase hotel occupancy, generate economic impact, and establish Buda as a preferred Central Texas location for tournament organizers seeking a high-quality, accessible, and well-supported venue.

2. BACKGROUND/HISTORY

In 2021, Buda City Council identified the expansion of sports tourism as a strategic priority and supported improvements and repairs to the Buda Sportsplex as part of that initiative. These efforts were intended to enhance the facility’s functionality and position it as a viable venue for tournament play and regional sporting events.

Previously, promotion of the Buda Sportsplex for tournament activities has been limited, largely due to the facility's existing capabilities and condition. Without the infrastructure and amenities necessary to host larger-scale tournaments competitively, marketing efforts have remained minimal and primarily passive.

With reconstruction and facility improvements underway in 2026, the City now has the opportunity to reposition the Sportsplex in the sports tourism market. Staff is developing a comprehensive and proactive marketing and sales strategy in parallel with these improvements to ensure the facility is

effectively launched and promoted upon completion, the first being the recruitment of the 2026 and 2027 PONY Softball World Series to Buda.

3. ANALYSIS

Not applicable.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

Construction Update:

Work is currently underway to develop and improve the eight playing fields, as well as enhancements to the parking lot and concession facilities. Based on the current construction pace, Phase I of the complex is anticipated to be completed in the summer of 2026.

Sportsplex Marketing:

The sports tourism industry is highly competitive and driven by direct relationships with tournament organizers, ease of event execution, and the overall participant experience. Communities that successfully attract tournaments typically employ a combination of targeted sales outreach, strategic incentives, and strong destination branding.

The proposed approach for the Buda Sportsplex includes the following key components:

- **Targeted Outreach:** Identification and direct engagement with tournament organizations across baseball, softball, soccer, flag football, lacrosse, and multi-sport events operating within Texas and the southern United States.
- **Sales & Marketing Materials:** Development of a professional sales kit, including facility specifications, hotel inventory, and tournament hosting capabilities.
- **Website & Digital Presence:** Creation of a dedicated Sportsplex web presence designed to provide tournament organizers with clear, actionable information and a streamlined inquiry process.
- **Incentive Program:** Establishment of a tournament partnership package that may include fee assistance, hotel partnerships, and on-site operational support.
- **Industry Engagement:** Participation in trade shows, networking events, and industry associations to increase visibility and build relationships.
- **Content & Promotion:** Strategic use of social media, video content, and public relations to showcase the Sportsplex and highlight successful events.

Buda's competitive advantage lies in its ability to offer a more personalized and accessible experience compared to larger markets, while still benefiting from proximity to the Austin metropolitan area. By emphasizing ease of logistics, quality facilities, and strong customer service, the City can position the Sportsplex as an attractive alternative to more congested tournament destinations.

Facility Rebranding:

Staff is proposing a potential name change for the facility from Buda Sportsplex to **Buda Championship Park** as part of the broader effort to position the complex as a premier destination for tournament play. The proposed name is intended to convey boldness, athleticism, and competitive excellence. The use of the word "championship" signals the caliber and quality of the facilities and serves as a built-in marketing message that reinforces the types of events the City aims to attract. From a branding perspective, the name creates a strong, aspirational identity that aligns with tournament organizers' goals of hosting high-level competitions and enhances the marketability

of the complex in a competitive sports tourism environment. Additionally, the name distinguishes the facility from more generic “sportsplex” branding, helping Buda stand out regionally and positioning the complex as a destination for premier events.

5. STRATEGIC PLAN/GOALS

FUN EXPERIENCES FOR ALL

6. STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

Sports tourism

7. PROS AND CONS

Pros

- Positions Buda Sportsplex as a regional competitor in the growing sports tourism market
- Increases hotel occupancy and associated Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) revenues
- Generates economic activity for local restaurants, retail, and service businesses
- Establishes long-term relationships with tournament organizers, leading to repeat events
- Enhances the City’s brand as a destination for sports, events, and tourism

Cons

- Requires upfront investment in marketing, staffing, and potential incentives
- Competitive landscape includes well-established destinations with significant resources
- Success is dependent on building relationships, which may take time to yield results
- Operational demands increase with tournament activity (staffing, logistics, coordination)

8. ALTERNATIVES

9. REQUESTED ACTION / SUGGESTED MOTION / RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends formally changing the name of the sportsplex facility from Buda Sportsplex to Buda Championship Park.

Attachments:

[Buda Sportsplex Marketing_One Sheet and Pony Social .pdf](#)