

AGENDA REPORT

DATE September 2, 2003

ITEM Resolution No. 9343 Submitting to the Electors The Soccer Park Project

INITIATED BY Great Falls Soccer Foundation

ACTION REQUESTED Approve Resolution

PRESENTED BY Coleen Balzarini, Fiscal Services Director

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the City Commission approve the following motion:

**MOTION:**

I move the City Commission approve Resolution No. 9343.

**SYNOPSIS:** Resolution No. 9343 would authorize submitting to the electors of the City of Great Falls a ballot question on November 4, 2003, in conjunction with the general election. The election would determine whether or not to issue \$2.5 million of General Obligation Bond financing over a term of twenty years for a \$3.4 million Soccer Park project.

The estimated tax increase for residential property with assessed value of \$75,000 would be \$5.60 per year.

The estimated tax increase for residential property with an assessed value of \$100,000 would be \$7.51 per year.

The estimated tax increase for residential property with an assessed value of \$150,000 would be \$11.20 per year.

**BACKGROUND:** Members of the community representing the Great Falls Soccer Foundation have been working diligently over the last two years to develop a plan to construct and operate a Soccer Park that would be owned by the City of Great Falls. The "project" would involve acquiring 35+ acres of land on the east end of the city across the street from Loy School on 57<sup>th</sup> Street. And, constructing and equipping the following improvements to be known as The Electric City Soccer Park: Playing fields, pavilion with picnic and concession facilities; restrooms; and parking. The facilities would be owned by the City but operated and maintained through a lease by the Great Falls Soccer Foundation. Funding the operations and maintenance of the project would not be an ongoing responsibility of the City but would be paid from an endowment fund and/or revenues collected from use of the facilities.

The "project" is estimated to cost \$3.4 million. General Obligation Bond financing in the amount of \$2.5 million for a twenty -year term would be put to voter approval, in conjunction with the general election on November 4, 2003, if the City Commission approves this resolution. The remaining

\$900,000 is proposed to be generated through donations. Bonds would not be sold until all other necessary funding has been raised.

Section 7-16-4104, M.C.A. authorizes cities or towns to incur indebtedness upon the credit of the city for procuring various cultural, social or recreational improvements provided the indebtedness does not exceed limits established by law. The City of Great Falls currently has no general obligation indebtedness. This project would not cause the City to exceed its general statutory indebtedness limitation which is currently calculated at more than \$28.9 million or its debt limitation for recreational facilities which is currently at more than \$17.2 million.

The City Commission directed staff to review the proposal from The Youth Sports Park Committee. The staff response to the Commission's questions follow:

1. The Great Falls Soccer Foundation Steering Committee has reviewed and refined construction expenses with the assistance of local engineering consultants, construction firms, and landscape and irrigation specialists. Annual operating costs are generously estimated at \$85,000/year. Industry standards indicate between \$5,000 and \$8,500/year/field.
2. Information on the Electric City Soccer Park project was formally presented at the City Commission work session on August 19, 2003. Great Falls Soccer Foundation representatives will be making presentations to civic groups, interested neighborhood councils and others between now and the election. The Tribune had a follow-up news story on the project including a favorable editorial in the Great Falls Tribune.