The State of Sports in Nashville

Vanderbilt Center for Nashville Studies

Vanderbilt University

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Fall 2010
I. Introduction

The state of sports in Nashville is strong. Home to 2 major professional sports franchises, the Tennessee Titans of the National Football League (NFL) and the Nashville Predators of the National Hockey League (NHL), 6 universities including 4 NCAA Division 1 universities: Vanderbilt University (Southeastern Conference), Belmont University and David Lipscomb University (Atlantic Sun), and Tennessee State University (Ohio Valley Conference), as well as annual events such as the Country Music Marathon and Half Marathon, the Jack Daniel’s Invitation of the Professional Bull Riders tour (PBR), and the Franklin American Mortgage Music City Bowl, Nashville can aptly be described as a “sports town.” Even beyond these sports “staples,” Nashville regularly hosts major athletic events, most notably, the 1st and 2nd rounds of the Men’s NCAA Basketball Tournament, the Men’s and Women’s Basketball Tournaments for the Southeastern Conference, the Atlantic Sun, and the Ohio Valley Conference. In 2014, Nashville will host the NCAA Women’s Final Four for the first time in the city’s history.

With that said, the question as to whether Nashville is maximizing its potential when it comes to sports must constantly be asked and reevaluated.

This report seeks to provide benchmark information to allow the city’s leaders to better answer this question. Given the link between athletic events, tourism and broader economic development, and overall quality of life, sports has a vital role to play in Nashville. As such, it behooves the city to maximize the way sports is utilized to promote the city and improve the quality of life for Nashvillians. To provide a better picture, Nashville may look to see what other similarly situated cities are doing in the world of sports to evaluate its performance. The question is whether, when judged against comparable cities, Nashville is doing all it can. This report, prepared by the Vanderbilt Center for Nashville Studies, is a situational analysis of where
Nashville stands in the world of sports. The Vanderbilt Center for Nashville Studies facilitates research on community-identified issues and needs and provides timely information on policy-level solutions and actions. The center is at the intersection of Nashville's need for policy-level data and information and Vanderbilt's desire to apply its research expertise to issues of importance to the city it proudly calls home. With the information contained herein, this city’s leaders should be better equipped to lay out a strategic blueprint for the city going forward as it seeks to take full advantage of its potential in regard to sports.

The report first describes sports in Nashville, specifically, the franchises and institutions that call Music City home. This section provides an inventory of the facilities in Nashville, as well as a list of events the city has hosted in the past 10 years. Additionally, this section will look at the operational infrastructure of sports in Nashville; specifically, the organizations and governing bodies working to promote, manage, and facilitate sports in this community. In short, this section attempts to sketch the landscape of Nashville as a sports city.

Next, the report looks at “comparable cities” to try and see how peer cities are utilizing sports in their communities. The cities chosen: Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, Indianapolis, St. Louis, Tampa, and Memphis were selected based on their population size, certain intangible characteristics similar to Nashville, and the simple fact that many had been used as comparison cities in the past. This section will look at what these cities have by the way of teams, facilities, events, and governance and infrastructure.

After analyzing what Nashville has, especially as compared to other similarly situated cities, this report concludes with observations and determinations can be made about what Nashville’s strengths and weaknesses are with respect to cities that are often in direct competition with Music City for sporting events. This section purposefully does not analyze
these strengths and weaknesses, although it hopes to focus attention as to how Nashville might think through ways to expand the presence of sports in the community.

II. Sports in Nashville

a. Teams

i. Collegiate

There are 6 universities that call Nashville-Davidson County home, 5 of whom compete at either the NCAA or NAIA level. While the facilities these schools boast will be discussed in greater detail below, the mere presence of these institutions is a constant and a driving force of sports in Nashville. The 5 institutions that participate in inter-collegiate athletics compete in 19 different men’s and women’s sports, bring a divergent set of fans, students, and athletes to Nashville throughout the fall, winter, and spring, to say nothing of national recognition and media exposure.

1. Vanderbilt University

As a member of the Southeastern Conference (SEC), Vanderbilt University’s athletic program is the biggest in Nashville. The Commodores compete in 15 men’s and women’s sports, and, with the exception of the golf teams, play all their home contents in Nashville (the golf teams’ home course is in Franklin, Tennessee, at the Vanderbilt Legends Golf Course). As a founding member of the SEC, Vanderbilt teams provide great exposure to the City of Nashville whenever their games are televised, whether regionally, nationally, win or lose. When looking just at football, and both men’s and women’s basketball, Vanderbilt teams appeared on television 67 times during the 2009-2010 academic year, 38 of which were available nationally in some form or another.
2. Belmont University

Named one of two “Schools to Watch” in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*, Belmont University continues to be a vibrant member of the Nashville community. From the prospective of athletics, the Belmont Bruins are competitive on a national and regional level. Members of the Atlantic Sun Conference (A-Sun), Belmont competes in 16 men’s and women’s sports, all of whom play their home contents in Nashville. Belmont’s men’s and women’s basketball teams appeared on television 7 times, including 6 regional and 1 national broadcasts.

3. Lipscomb University

Lipscomb University, “cross-town rival” of the Bruins, is another important part of sports in Nashville. Members of Atlantic Sun Conference, the Bisons compete in 16 men’s and women’s sports, all of who play their home contents in Nashville. Lipscomb’s men’s and women’s basketball teams appeared on television 7 times, including 4 regional and 3 national broadcasts.

4. Tennessee State University

Tennessee State, one of two historically black colleges in Nashville, and the only one funded by the state, is a member of Ohio Valley Conference (OVC). The TSU Tigers compete in 13 men’s and women’s sports, with their most notable athletic event of the year being the John Merritt Classic. First played in 1999, the Classic honors John A. Merritt, the legendary TSU football coach who led the Tigers from 1963 – 1983. The John A. Merritt Classic, played at LP Field, is one of only two football Classics solely hosted by a single NCAA FCS institution, and is intended to allow Tennessee State to raise funds for scholarships and other related needs for TSU students.
5. Trevecca Nazarene University

Trevecca is the only member of National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics in Nashville. While smaller than the NCAA, both in terms of membership and size, the NAIA has 290 members and over 45,000 student athletes. Trevecca competes in 9 men’s and women’s sports.

ii. Professional

1. The Tennessee Titans

Nashville is one of just 31 United States cities that can call an NFL Franchise its own. The Tennessee Titans, since coming to Music City in 1998, have been a staple of Nashville as a sports town. While the cache and notoriety that comes with being an NFL city is difficult to quantify, there is little doubt that the Titans are an integral part of the Nashville community. The Titans have reached the playoffs 4 times since moving to Nashville, including a 23-16 loss in Super Bowl XXXIV. The “Music City Miracle,” considered one of the most famous plays in NFL history, propelled the Titans Super Bowl run in 2000.

2. The Nashville Predators

The NHL’s decision to expand brought the Predators to Nashville in 1998. Since coming to Music City, the Predators have been a major attraction and an integral part of the Nashville community. The Predators have reached the playoffs 5 times since 2004, although as of yet, have failed to advance past the first round. While the Predators are popular, they have had some difficulty in attracting fans to the arena, ranking 26th out of 30 NHL teams in total attendance. Bridgestone Arena, home of the Predators, has a seating capacity of 17,113 for hockey. During the 2009-2010 season, the Predators averaged 14,979 fans, yielding an attendance of approximately 87.5% venue capacity, 22nd best in the NHL.
3. The Nashville Sounds

The Sounds are a minor league franchise that compete in the Pacific Coast League. The team is currently the Triple-AAA affiliate for the Milwaukee Brewers, and plays 71 games over the course of their season.

b. Facilities

i. Overview

As home to so many professional and collegiate teams, Nashville features a diverse set of athletic facilities. A major part of the research involved in this project included taking an inventory of the facilities in Nashville. LP Field (home of the Titans, the TSU Tigers, and the Music City Bowl), Bridgestone Arena (home of the Predators and host of the 2014 NCAA Women’s Final Four), Nashville Municipal Auditorium, Vanderbilt Stadium (home of the Commodores football team), Memorial Gym (home of the Commodores men’s and women’s basketball teams), the Curb Event Center, (home of the Belmont Bruins men’s and women’s basketball teams and host of a Presidential Debate in 2008), and Lipscomb University’s Allen Arena are probably the best-known venues in town.

Looking beyond these more well known and established venues, the city has a wealth of other facilities. The analysis and evaluation of the athletics facilities in Nashville every professional, collegiate, and municipal venue, as well as every public and private high school in Davidson County. Because describing every facility contained in Davidson County is impractical, this section is divided into 4 sub-parts to paint a vivid picture of the city’s venues: “major venues,” “mid-size venues,” “small-venues,” and a complete inventory of Nashville’s facilities.
ii. Major Venues

For the purposes of this report, a major venue will be classified as anything with a seating capacity of 10,000 or greater. There are 5 such facilities in Nashville: LP Field (capacity 69,798), Bridgestone Arena (capacity 17,113 for hockey, approximate 18,000 for basketball), Vanderbilt Stadium (capacity 39,720), Vanderbilt’s Memorial Gym (capacity 14,158), Greer Stadium (capacity 10,052), and the Howard Gentry Complex (capacity 10,500) at Tennessee State.

LP Field is the home of the Titans, the TSU Tigers, and the Music City Bowl. LP Field has hosted several major regular season college football games between the University of Tennessee and the University of Wyoming, as well as a match-up between Middle Tennessee State University and the University of Louisville, both of which were nationally televised. In addition, LP Field has been the venue for professional and international soccer matches, as well as being the primary venue for the Country Music Association’s annual CMA Fest. LP Field has 143 luxury boxes, and 11,492 Club Level seats. The facility was built in 1999, and is the 17th largest in the NFL. Since LP Field was constructed, 13 new stadiums have been built.

Bridgestone Arena is an all-purpose venue that has the ability to host several different types of athletic events. Completed in 1996, the Arena’s first major event was the 1997 US Figure Skating Championships. Home of the Predators, Bridgestone is scheduled to host the 2014 Women’s Final Four, and since 2000, has been the site for the first 2 rounds of the NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament three times (2000, 2003, and 2005; Nashville will host again in 2012), the venue for the SEC Men’s Basketball Championships three times (2001, 2006, and 2010; Nashville will host again in 2013), and the SEC Women’s Basketball Championships three times (2002, 2004 and 2008; Nashville will host again in 2011 and 2012). Bridgestone Arena annually hosts an event for the Professional Bullriders “Built Ford Tough” Tour. In the past,
Bridgestone Arena has hosted the NHL Draft (2003), the U.S. Gymnastics Championships (2004), and countless other college basketball events. The arena has 72 luxury suites, and continues to be an attractive venue for sports of all kinds, both at the professional and amateur level.

The next two venues, Vanderbilt Stadium and Memorial Gym, will be looked at in tandem both because of their proximity and the fact that both are on Vanderbilt’s campus. Vanderbilt Stadium is home to the Commodores football team and has the capability to host other athletic events. The stadium includes locker room space totaling 10,000 square feet and a 17,000 square foot press box. Beyond its seating capacity, Memorial Gym has 4 locker rooms measuring 7,367 square feet, 5 suites, and a practice facility within the complex that includes 3 additional full-length basketball courts.

The Howard Gentry Complex at Tennessee State University is another dynamic facility that calls Nashville home. Beyond the building’s 10,500-seat basketball and convocation arena, the complex also includes a 220-yard indoor track, and a thirty-five meter 8 lane swimming pool (one of the few swimming facilities in Nashville).

Finally, the Herchel Greer Stadium is home of the Nashville Sounds and the Belmont Bruins. Opened in 1978, it is one of the oldest stadiums used by a Triple-A team (the 3rd oldest in the Pacific Coast League). The stadium can seat 10,139 and includes 18 skyboxes.

iii. Mid-Size Venues

For the purposes of this report, a mid-size venue will be classified as anything with a seating capacity between 2,500 and 10,000. Based on the research conducted, Nashville boasts 12 facilities that meet this criterion, 8 of which belong to local high schools.
The Curb Event Center, completed in 2003, is a state-of-the-art facility on the edge of Belmont’s campus. The arena has a seating capacity of approximately 5,000 and hosted one of the three 2008 Presidential Debates. The facility includes 8 suites that overlook the arena, as well as a complete TV control room, several permanent camera platforms, and a media/green room equipped with phones, fax lines, and high-speed Internet capabilities. The Curb Event Center is home to the Belmont Bruins men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball teams. In addition, Curb hosted the Atlantic Sun’s Men’s Basketball Tournament (2004 and 2005), as well as preliminary rounds for the U.S. Gymnastics Championships in June of 2004.

Hawkins Field, home of the Vanderbilt Commodores baseball team, as well as the new Prospect League’s Nashville Outlaws, is a 3,500-seat baseball stadium. Hawkins Field has undergone much renovation and improvements over the last 5 years, adding additional seating capacity, constructing a two-story complex along the third baseline that includes locker rooms, a weight room, coaches' offices and a Hall of Fame, a state-of-the-art press box, and a mini “Green Monster” in left field. The facility also has a new pitcher's area enclosed in the football stadium next door, as well as a new indoor batting cage inside Memorial Gym. A new trainer's room has been created along with renovated dugouts. Hawkins Field hosted an NCAA Regional in 2007.

The Nashville Municipal Auditorium is another facility that has the capacity to host athletic events in Music City. With a seating capacity of 9,654 (approximately 8,000 for basketball and hockey), the Nashville Auditorium is currently hosting the Grand Ole Opry, which was displaced by the historic flooding in May of 2010. Built in 1967, this is a multi-purpose facility that has hosted such events as the OVC Men’s and Women’s Basketball Tournament in 2008, and is scheduled to host the tournament again from 2011-2015. The
Auditorium has also hosted local college and high school basketball games, minor league hockey and basketball games, and professional wrestling.

Allen Arena, home of the Lipscomb men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball teams is another mid-size venue well-suited to host athletic events in Nashville. Built in 2001, Allen Arena has a seating capacity of between 4,000 and 5,028 depending on the event. Allen Arena hosted the 2008 and 2009 Atlantic Sun Men’s Basketball Tournaments, as well as AAU Girl’s Basketball Championships in 2002, and from 2004 and 2007, and AAU Boy’s Wrestling.

Without going into as much detail, it is certainly noteworthy that many Nashville high schools have facilities with seating capacities between 2,500 and 10,000. To provide a complete picture, below is a chart with all the athletic facilities at local high schools, including the name of the school, the name of, and seating capacity of the venue, as well as any other noteworthy information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>Name of Venue (Capacity)</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery Bell Academy</td>
<td>Tommy Owen Stadium (4,500)</td>
<td>Artificial turf field, surrounded by a 8-lane track; has press-box, and concession stands. Locker rooms are currently unattached. Planning to break ground on new facility in 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McGavock High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (3,750)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field surrounded by a 9 lane track; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overton High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (3,700)</td>
<td>Fescue grass, lighted football field, surrounded by a 6 lane track; has press box, concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodpasture Christian School</td>
<td>Cougar Stadium (3,600)</td>
<td>Grass, lighted football field; has press box, concession stands. Locker rooms in field house across from stadium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maplewood High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (3,500)</td>
<td>Fescue grass, lighted football field, surrounded by a 6 lane track; has press box, concession stands, and attached home locker room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glencliff High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (3,000)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field surrounded; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites Creek High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (3,000)</td>
<td>Fescue grass, lighted football field, surrounded by a 6 lane track; has press box, concession stands, and attached home locker room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Stadium Capacity</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter’s Lane High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (2,800)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field surrounded by an 6 lane track; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensworth School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (2,500)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field; has Press box with wireless and internet capability, and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cane Ridge High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (2,500)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field surrounded by an 8 lane track; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iv. Small Venues

For the purposes of this report, a small venue will be classified as anything with a seating capacity between 1,000 and 2,500. Not surprisingly, there are a tremendous number of facilities that fall within this range. As such, this section will look primarily at facilities not owned and operated by high schools. With that said, as was the case in the section above, information about facilities falling within this range will be provided. In addition, some of the facilities discussed below have a capacity of less than 1,000; all these facilities are limited to those not owned and operated by high schools.

One of the most dynamic facilities in Nashville is the Dr. Thomas F. Frist Centennial Sportsplex. The Sportsplex houses 2 NHL size ice rinks (85 ft. x 200 ft.), includes 19 lighted tennis court (4 indoor, 15 outdoor), and 2 pools, including a 50 meter x. 25 yard Olympic competition pool. The seating capacity at the Sportsplex varies based on the facility being used. The capacity surrounding the rinks is between 500 and 600, while the pools have a seating capacity of 1,550. This facility is owned and operated by the Metropolitan Sports Authority.

Vanderbilt University, beyond Vanderbilt Stadium, Memorial Gym, and Hawkins Field, maintains several athletic facilities more intimate in nature. Vanderbilt’s Lacrosse and Soccer Complex is a facility with a seating capacity of 2,400. Completed in 2002, the complex includes a lighted, grass field, public restrooms, concession stands, and locker rooms underneath the grandstand. Since first being constructed, the facility has added two-level player benches on the
sidelines for both the home and visiting teams as well as a new scorers' table separating the two. Beyond the soccer complex, Vanderbilt is also home to the Brownlee O. Currey Jr. Tennis Center, an indoor/outdoor facility that includes 5 indoor, and 9 outdoor hard courts. The Currey Center has a seating capacity of over 1,000, electronic scoreboard for both the indoor and outdoor courts, and 4 separate locker room areas. Vanderbilt’s track and field facilities are also noteworthy. The state-of-the-art complex, built in 2003, the newest in the SEC, features a Mondo synthetic track and jump surface, similar to the last four Olympic venues. It is one of two Mondo track surfaces in the SEC. The venue also includes a Mondo D-Curve for the javelin and high jump, two containment areas for the discus and hammer throws, and a water element for the steeplechase. The eight-lane track also features a thick, cushioned subsurface ideal for training. While there are no fixed grandstands currently in place, depending on the event, the facility’s capacity could be as high as 3,000.

Lipscomb University has 3 facilities falling within this category that are similarly impressive. The soccer complex includes a lighted field with covered benches, and a seating capacity of approximately 2,000 (note: there are no “fixed seats,” instead there is berm seating on grass that surrounds the field). Dugan Field at Marsh Stadium is a 1,500-seat baseball stadium that hosted the Atlantic Sun’s 2010 Championship Tournament. Draper Diamond is the school’s softball facility, has a seating capacity of 500, and includes concession stands. Finally, Lipscomb recently opened a new tennis facility that has 8 courts, including 2 “championship courts” with a total seating capacity of 300.

Trevecca Nazarene University also has several facilities that fit within this range. Moore Gym is a 1,500-seat basketball and volleyball venue. Moore houses all the locker rooms for the other Treveca teams. Trevecca also has a 1,000-seat soccer complex that includes a lighted,
grass field, and Jackson Field, a 500-seat baseball facility that currently does not include lights. According to officials at Trevecca, the university is hoping to build a press box for the soccer complex and to add light to the baseball field in the next year or two.

As was done above in the mid-size facilities section, below is a chart with all the athletic facilities at local high schools with seating capacities between 500 and 2,500.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>Name of Venue (Capacity)</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father Ryan High School</td>
<td>Giasoca Stadium (2,376)</td>
<td>Artificial turf, lighted football field surrounded by an 9 lane track; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Note: Oak Hill approval required for an event with over 1,000 people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsboro High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (2,300)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field surrounded by an 6 lane track; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter’s Lane High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,300)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearl-Cohn High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,300)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field surrounded by an 6 lane track; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antioch High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,200)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cane Ridge High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,200)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility not equipped with air conditioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Lipscomb High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (2,200)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillwood High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (2,200)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field surrounded by an 6 lane track; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maplewood High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,200)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearl-Cohn High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,200)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites Creek High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,220)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is equipped with air conditioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glencliff High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,100)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antioch High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (2,000)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Name</td>
<td>Facility</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Road Academy</td>
<td>George A. Volkert Athletic Complex (2,000)</td>
<td>Grass, lighted football field has press box and concession stands. Facility also includes softball field (500) and 8-lane track (250)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsboro High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,000)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overton High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (2,000)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezell-Harding Christian School</td>
<td>Football Field (2,000)</td>
<td>Grass, lighted football field surrounded by an 6 lane track; has press box, concession stands, and attached home locker room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratford High School</td>
<td>Football Stadium (2,000)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McGavock High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,706)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Ryan High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,700)</td>
<td>Facility has 3 courts with no divider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillwood High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,700)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Literature Magnet School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,643)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodpasture Christian School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,600)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Magnet School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,507)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donelson Christian Academy</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,500)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Lipscomb High School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,350)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezell-Harding Christian School</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,500)</td>
<td>Attached locker room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville School of the Arts</td>
<td>Gymnasium (1,500)</td>
<td>Attached locker room and concession stands. Facility is not currently equipped with air conditioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville School of the Arts</td>
<td>Football Field (1,000)</td>
<td>Bermuda grass, lighted football field surrounded by an 8 lane track; has press box and concession stands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
v. Nashville’s Facilities by the Numbers

Having explored the “venues” in Nashville above, this section seeks to provide a complete inventory of all the athletic facilities in town, regardless of the seating capacity. The information provided includes all the facilities owned and operated by the City of Nashville, as well as the area universities, colleges, and high schools. Included in this inventory are all the fields and facilities owned and operated by Metro Nashville’s Parks and Recreation Department. The information is catalogued by “sport,” and includes not only the number of fields or courts each sport has, but also any other additional information that might further illuminate what Nashville has to offer. This represents the most accurate information available as of June 30, 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Number of Fields/Courts</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>75 Diamonds</td>
<td>- 38 of these fields are equipped with lights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 5 fields have a capacity of 500 or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>75 Indoor Courts</td>
<td>- 30 of these courts have a capacity of 1,000 or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling</td>
<td>8 Bowling Alleys</td>
<td>- 218 bowling lanes in Davidson County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>35 Fields</td>
<td>- 12 of these facilities have a capacity of 3,000 or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 10 of these fields are practice fields only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 4 fields are artificial turf fields (2 of which are practice fields)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf *</td>
<td>40 Golf Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hockey/Skating</td>
<td>4 Rinks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>111 Fields</td>
<td>- 24 of these fields are equipped with lights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 70 of these fields are owned by the Metro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 55 of the Metro owned fields are leased to private soccer associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>59 Diamonds</td>
<td>- 33 of these fields are equipped with lights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Metro owns 4 “complexes” that house 3 separate diamonds, all of which have lights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis +</td>
<td>77 Courts</td>
<td>- 40 of these courts are equipped with lights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Golf courses include all facilities within the “615” area-code. This information was compiled by the Nashville Sports Council.

+ This figure does not include private tennis clubs
c. Events

As discussed in the section about Nashville’s facilities, the city has played and will continue to play host to several high-profile events. This section highlights some of the events that have taken place and are scheduled to take place in the next few years. Included in this description is the process that surrounds acquiring, hosting and staging these events, as well as the impact they have on the city.

i. Annual Events

1. Franklin American Mortgage Music City Bowl\textsuperscript{13}

Since 1998, the Music City Bowl has called Nashville home. This game is usually played between December 27\textsuperscript{th} through the 31\textsuperscript{st}, and currently includes teams from the ACC and the SEC, and is broadcast nationally on ESPN. The title sponsor of the Music City Bowl is Franklin American Mortgage Company, who recently agreed to sponsor the game starting in 2010. The Music City Bowl is managed by a Board of Directors and is a 501(c)3 organization.\textsuperscript{14} The Bowl and Nashville Sports Council (NSC) share a staff and office space and are each led by Scott Ramsey, President & CEO. The staff and board are responsible for coordinating all marketing, operations, and fundraising to stage and host the event. According to its website, the Bowl is responsible for more than $165 million in economic impact for the Nashville community in its first 12 years and turned Music City’s slowest tourism week into one of the busiest.\textsuperscript{15} The Bowl averages more than 34,000 visitors per year.\textsuperscript{16} According to NSC’s “Scorecard,” (the “Scorecard” is discussed in greater detail below), The 2009 game between the University of Kentucky and Clemson University produced a $12.6 million impact on the local economy.\textsuperscript{17}
2. Country Music Marathon & Half-Marathon\textsuperscript{18}

Country Music Marathon, first run in 2000, has become another staple of the Nashville sports world. In 2002, a half-marathon was added, and the event continues to grow every year. In 2010, the event had over 35,000 participants making it the 2\textsuperscript{nd} largest combined full and half marathon in the country. The event is a qualifier for the Boson Marathon, and is owned and operated by the Competitor Group, an organization out of California, in conjunction with the NSC.

ii. Semi-Regular Events

1. SEC Men’s and Women’s Basketball Tournaments

Nashville has hosted 6 SEC Men’s and Women’s Basketball Tournaments since 2001, and will host 3 more times between 2011 and 2013. The SEC makes site selections every 3 years for the men’s tournament, and every 3 years for the women, and has selected conference tournament sites for both through 2014. According to NSC’s “Scorecard,” the 2010 SEC Men’s Tournament produced $18.4 million dollars of economic impact for the Nashville area.\textsuperscript{19}

2. NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament (Rounds 1 and 2)

Nashville has hosted the first 2 rounds of the NCAA Men’s Tournament 3 times since 2000, and will again host in 2012. The OVC is the official host of the tournament, along with the NSC, who is responsible not only for bidding on the event, but also for ensuring it is a success. The NCAA announces site locations 4 years at a time, and has selected sights through 2014.\textsuperscript{20}

iii. Events Coming to Nashville

1. 2014 NCAA Women’s Final Four\textsuperscript{21}

The OVC and the NSC will host the 2014 NCAA Women’s Final Four. Securing the Tournament was the result of a long process that included an initial meeting of the Music City
Bid Committee, comprised of over 50 local community and business leaders, and co-chaired by then Vice-Mayor Diane Neighbors and attorney Margaret Behm. The OVC and Nashville Sports Council submitted an official bid to the NCAA in June 2008 and were announced as one of the eight finalists in August of that year. The NCAA Division I Women’s Basketball Committee and NCAA staff made a two-day visit to Nashville in mid-October and Nashville’s local bid committee made a final presentation to the NCAA in Indianapolis on Nov. 12. The announcement was made shortly thereafter. In addition to the Women’s Final Four, Nashville will also host the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) National Convention. The WBCA is the national association of approximately 5,000 basketball coaches representing all levels of the game, including junior high, AAU, high school, college and professional. The NCAA has announced Women’s Final Four sites through 2016.

2. 2018/2022 FIFA World Cup

The United States is currently in the process of bidding to host either the 2018 or the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Nashville is one of 18 cities included in the US’ bid, a field that was whittled down from 37 who originally sought to be included. LP Field is the venue under consideration for Nashville’s bid, and has hosted several international soccer matches since 2000. If the United States were selected as the host country, Nashville would still have to be selected as one of the 14 final host cities. Should Nashville be selected, it would likely host five matches, including one in the elimination round. Nashville is one of the smallest cities remaining, with only Kansas City and Tampa having populations less than Music City. The Nashville Convention & Visitor’s Bureau (NCVB) is heading up Nashville’s bid.

Nashville has hosted international matches in the past. LP Field hosted an exhibition game between the Los Angeles Galaxy of Major League Soccer (MLS) Tecos UAG of the
Mexican Primera División. In 2005, Tecos UAG played F.C. Atlas in a league match. The U.S. national team played Morocco in its final warm-up series before the World Cup in May of 2006. The stadium hosted the CONCACAF men's qualifying tournament finals for the 2008 Summer Olympics with the winners securing tournament berths in Beijing. In April of 2009, LP Field hosted a World Cup qualifier between the United States and Trinidad and Tobago that attracted 27,959 spectators – a record for a soccer match in the State of Tennessee.26

iv. “Lost” Events

Nashville used to host two professional golf events, the Senior PGA Tour’s Bell South Senior Classic and the LPGA Tour’s LPGA Sara Lee Classic. The Senior event was held at the Hermitage Golf Course, while the Sara Lee Classic was played at what is now the Vanderbilt Legend’s Golf Course in Franklin. These events were lost after the title sponsors opted to no longer support these tournaments.

d. Infrastructure, Governance, and “Intangibles”27

Sports in Nashville are governed by two different organizations, the Nashville Sports Council (NSC) and the Sports Authority of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County (the Sports Authority), each of which has distinct responsibilities. The Nashville Sports Council, established in 1992, is a private, 501 (c) 6 non-profit membership-based organization, with the mission to positively impact the economy and quality of life of the Greater Nashville Area by attracting and promoting professional and amateur sporting events.28 NSC has a staff of eight employees, and is assisted and managed by a volunteer Board of Directors.29

As discussed above, the NSC has two primary responsibilities: attracting and promoting events in Nashville, and managing and staging events once they are secured. To fully understand
what the NSC does, however, a more thorough analysis of these two responsibilities and what they entail is in order. The process of bringing sporting events to Nashville has various stages. First, a determination must be made as to whether an event is worth pursuing. This process is the same whether the NSC is soliciting or bidding on an event or the NSC was approached about hosting the event by the event’s rights-holder. This analysis is multi-faceted and requires asking several preliminary questions: Will the event fit well in Nashville? Does it have the potential for positive economic impact or improve the quality of life for Nashvillians? Due to funding and staffing constraints discussed in great detail below, the NSC must be strategic in the events pursued. The reality is that not every event is poised to succeed in Nashville, and it is the responsibility of the NSC to make sure time and resources are devoted to the right events.

Another preliminary inquiry is whether the timing works for the city. Specifically, whether the NSC, the city, or the venue (or venues) have the ability to host the potential event. This query is not as easy as it might appear as many events are scheduled up to 4 or 5 years in advance. The venue/facility inquiry also includes the availability not only of the competition venue/site, but also the ancillary practice sites and necessary housing that go along with the competition for both participants and fans.

In order for the NSC to pursue an event, several financial considerations have to be taken into account. As a private, 501(c) 6 organization, the NSC’s financial wherewithal is somewhat limited. As such, the NSC must ask the following questions: 1) how does the event get paid for, 2) who is responsible for taking the financial risk, 3) how much risk is involved, 4) what are the expense line items, and 5) what are the revenue streams to support those expenses? While each event’s finances are completely different from another’s, a complete financial review must be done. If the cost and/or risk is greater than the NSC can absorb on its own, outside financial
support must be found and committed prior to bidding. Absent that support, the NSC cannot pursue the event further. Finally, prior to submitting a bid, a review of human capital must be done. The NSC must determine whether they have enough staffing, volunteers, city services, and the like, to manage the event.

Following staff review, and a determination as to whether the NSC should bid on the event, the proposal is submitted NSC Events Committee, the NSC Executive Committee and ultimately the Board of Directors. If the event review is positive, a bid is submitted to the event rights-holder. Follow-up discussions, site visits, contract negotiations take place post submission.

If the bid meets the expectations of the rights-holder and the city is selected, then the next phase begins: the hosting. This work requires the NSC to formulate and ultimately implement the strategy to make the event a success. The parties, specifically the event rights-holder and the NSC, have to reach an agreement outlining what each of the parties promise to do related to the event including: dates, participants, finances, sponsorship opportunities, housing and accommodations, hospitality, transportation, television rights, communications, staffing and volunteer acquisition, marketing, merchandizing, ticket sales obligations, media services, necessary city services, facility agreement and venue operational plan, security, insurance, and any other areas related to the events.

It should be noted that all of this is occurring years prior to the event actually taking place. Constant communication between the NSC staff and the event rights-holder staff must be maintained during the time prior to the event and especially during the time the event is in town. Changes are constant and immediate response to those changes is critical for the success of the event. A very detailed timing document must be created between the two parties, so that time sensitive duties are all determined and carried out. Every aspect of the event, in and out of the
competition arena, must be planned, agreed to, coordinated and executed. In addition, no event occurs in a vacuum. The process described is going on simultaneously for multiple events, both in the planning and the bidding stages.

To analyze past events and plan future ones, the NSC has created a “Scorecard.” Created in 2001, the Scorecard is a model endorsed by the National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC), and is considered the pacesetter for the sports commission industry.\(^{30}\) The Scorecard measures 5 things: economic impact, involvement, media exposure, performance rating, and financials, each of which is further divided into subparts. Economic impact is based on several factors: first, the number of hotel nights, based on surveys and statistics from the Nashville Convention and Visitor’s Bureau (CVB) related to room “pick up,” calculated by total nights stayed and the average room cost per night. Economic impact also includes visitor and operational spending to its final figures. Next, the Scorecard looks at “involvement” based on the number of participants, spectators, volunteers, and finally the number of total credentialed media members at each event. The Scorecard then analyzes media exposure based on: 1) television, a total figure calculated by compiling time of national, regional, and/or local broadcast time; 2) newspapers, determined by adding column inches of all print coverage, leading up to, and then after, the event; 3) radio, based on the total number of hours that each event is broadcast; and finally 4) internet, calculated by the total number of hits or page views on the NSC, Bowl, and or a rights-holder’s website regarding the event.

Additionally, the Scorecard includes a performance rating with respect to how the NSC did in executing the event. To calculate the performance rating, the spectators, teams, media, and volunteers are surveyed during and/or after the event, and rate their answers on a 1-5 scale (5 being “excellent”; 1 being “poor”). Data collection to support the Scorecard is provided in a
partnership with Belmont University’s Sports Management, On-site random sampling (questionnaires) of event attendees, as well as surveying spectators, participants, volunteers, media, and sponsors after the event has concluded. The Scorecard is the compiled and provided as a yearly report. The NSC’s 2009-2010 Scorecard is included in Appendix A.

Beyond the NSC, the Sports Authority is the other group primarily responsible for sports in Nashville. The Sports Authority is an agency within Metropolitan Nashville’s government that serves as a financier for, and the landlord of, Nashville's two pro-sport venues, the Bridgestone Arena and LP Field. A significant part of what the Sports Authority does is to oversee and manage the primary lease agreements between the City, the Predators, and the Titans. Formed in 1996, the Sports Authority is authorized under Tennessee Law to implement a ticket surcharge and collect state and local sales tax generated by ticket, concession and merchandise sales in the two facilities they operate. The revenues generated are used to pay Metro and the Sports Authority bond obligations on the two facilities. Board members of the Sports Authority are appointed by the Mayor for terms of four to six years. As the description above makes clear, the NSC and the Sports Authority do dramatically different things, and have decidedly different charges, responsibilities, and objectives. With that said, it is incumbent upon both groups to work closely together as one cannot fully succeed without the other.

III. Comparable Cities

Analyzing the sports landscape in Nashville requires situating Music City with comparable American cities. From a population standpoint, Nashville is the 26th most populace city in America, and is part of the 38th largest metropolitan statistical area as defined by the Office of Budget and Management. It should be stated up front, that this comparison is inexact. Every city has different dynamics that affect their ability to attract, host, and support sporting
events and local teams. While acknowledging the comparisons are inexact, this report will use Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, Indianapolis, and Tampa. In addition, based on proximity, the report will also look at Memphis.

a. Atlanta

Of all the cities analyzed, Atlanta is definitely the most “established” as a sports town. While Atlanta “proper” is only the 33rd most populous city in America,34 it is the 9th largest metropolitan statistical area as defined by the Office of Budget and Management.35 Atlanta is home to the Jackson-Hartsfield International Airport, the busiest airport in the world, both in terms of passengers and numbers of flights.36 In addition, the Atlanta metropolitan area is the international corporate headquarters for Coca Cola, Home Depot, Chick-fil-a, Georgia-Pacific, AT&T Mobility, CNN, Delta Air Lines, UPS, Newell Rubbermaid, and Turner Broadcasting.

On the Atlanta Sport Council’s website, the city is referred to as “The Sports Capital of the World” – perhaps with good reason.37 Atlanta has a franchise in every major league sport (Atlanta Falcons of the NFL; Atlanta Braves of Major League Baseball; Atlanta Hawks of the National Basketball Association; and the Atlanta Thrashers of the NHL), and several universities: Georgia Institute of Technology (ACC), Georgia State (Colonial Athletic Association), Kennesaw State (A-Sun), Morehouse College (Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference), Clark Atlanta University (SIAC), Emory University (NCAA, Division III), Oglethorpe University (NCAA, Division III), and the University of West Georgia (NCAA, Division II). The University of Georgia (SEC) is located approximately 70 miles from Atlanta.

Atlanta’s success as a sports town has much to do with the plethora of facilities the city boasts. While this section will not go into detail similar to the analysis of Nashville’s facilities, there are several venues that should be highlighted. The Georgia Dome, built in 1992 and
renovated in 2006, is located in the heart of downtown Atlanta. It is a multi-use facility with a seating capacity of 71,228 for football, and approximately 26,000 for basketball (although that number can be expanded). The Georgia Dome has hosted the SEC Championship Game in football since 1994, is home to the Chick-Fil-A Bowl and Chick-Fil-A Kick-Off Game, as well as the Georgia High School Football Championships for all classifications. The Georgia Dome has hosted Super Bowls in 1994 and 2000, the NCAA Men’s Regional Basketball Championships in 2001, 2004 and 2006, the Women’s Final Four in 2003, and the Men’s Final Four in 2002, 2007. The Georgia Dome was also a venue for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. The NCAA Men’s Basketball Regional Finals will return in 2012, while the NCAA Men’s Final Four will be played here in 2013. In addition, the Georgia Dome is being considered as a possible site for the World Cup when it returns to the United States.

Turner Field is a 50,096-seat baseball stadium that is home to the Atlanta Braves. The stadium was originally built as the Centennial Olympic Stadium for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games with an eye towards later converting it after the Games. Turner Field hosted the 2000 Major League Baseball All-Star Game, has been the site of the rivalry series between Georgia and Georgia Tech since 2003, and underwent renovations in 2005.

Phillips Arena is another multi-purpose facility that is home to Atlanta’s NBA and NHL franchises. Built in 1999, the seating capacity is 18,729 for basketball and 18,545 for hockey. The facility includes 96 luxury suites and 2,893 club seats. Phillips hosted the 2003 NBA All-Star Game, the 2004 U.S. Figure Skating Championships, and the 2008 NHL All-Star Game.

Atlanta generally, and Georgia Tech more specifically, has been the beneficiary of infrastructure built for the Olympics. Perhaps the best example is the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center, swimming, synchronized swimming, diving, and water polo venue for during the 1996...
Games. Recently, the Aquatic Center played host to the 2005 Men's and Women's Atlantic Coast Conference Swimming and Diving Championships, the 2005 NCAA Zone Diving Championships, and the 2006 Men’s Swimming and Diving Championships. Currently, the facility has a 1,900-seat main stadium containing a competition pool and dive pool. Georgia Tech’s additional facilities, combined with those of the other universities and colleges in Atlanta, means there is no shortage of facilities at the city’s disposal.43

Atlanta is also home to the PGA Tour Championship at East Lake Golf Club, and the Atlanta Motor Speedway, a 125,000-seat track, that currently hosts 2 NASCAR Sprint Cup races annually.44

Similar to Nashville, there are multiple organizations tasked with overseeing sports in Atlanta. Atlanta has a sports council that facilitates the growth and development of sports and their impact on metro Atlanta. The Atlanta Sports Council, a subdivision of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, acts as an event recruiter, creator and marketer for sporting events designed to drive economic growth, enhance visibility, and showcase the city’s collaborative resources through the hosting of sporting events. Additionally, the Chick-Fil-A Bowl Committee is a separate organization responsible for, among other things, the Chick-Fil-A Kick-Off Game and the Chick-Fil-A Bowl. With respect to “public” involvement in sports, the City of Atlanta and Fulton County Recreation Authority (AFCRA) are responsible for, and authorized to: obtain, construct, equip, maintain, and operate sports and recreation facilities; issue revenue bonds or obligations; acquire property, lease, sell and operate facilities. Specifically, the AFCRA is responsible for maintaining and operating Turner Field, the Olympic Cauldron, and Philips Arena.45 AFCRA is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors, six whom are appointed by the Mayor and the City of Atlanta and three of whom are appointed by the Fulton County
Commission. Additional, the Authority employs an Executive Director and staff who are responsible for carrying out its policy. There are two ex-officio members of the Board - one senior official of the City of Atlanta and one senior official of the Fulton County Commission. The Georgia World Congress Center Authority operates the Georgia Dome, as well as the 21-acre Centennial Olympic Park and Georgia World Congress Center. Finally, private institutions like Georgia Tech and others operate and manage other facilities in Atlanta.

b. Austin

Nashville and Austin are similar cities in many respects. Both are state capitols, and both have a national and international reputation as “music” cities. Austin is 15th most populous city in America, but only the 36th largest metropolitan statistical area as defined by OMB. Thus, at least from the standpoint of the size and population of the surrounding areas, Austin and Nashville are very comparable. Austin-Bergstrom International Airport is, according to the FAA’s most recent data, the 44th busiest airport in the country based on the number of passengers boarded. The main campus of the University of Texas is located in Austin, as are the international corporate headquarters for Whole Foods Market, Dell Computers, Freescale Semiconductor, and Forester Group.

Sports in Austin are driven almost entirely by collegiate athletics. In fact, Austin is the largest city in America without a franchise in any of the 4 major professional sports leagues. The University of Texas’ teams more than fill any sports gap that may or may exist in the absence of a major professional franchise. Additionally, Texas’ commitment to athletic excellence is not limited to revenue generating sports like football, basketball, and baseball, as the Longhorns’ compete in 18 men’s and women’s sports. Perhaps the best example of this commitment comes from Texas’ continued contention for the Director’s Cup, an award given to the colleges and
universities with the most success in collegiate athletics.\textsuperscript{50} Points for the NACDA Directors' Cup are based on order of finish in various NCAA sponsored championships or, in the case of Division I football, media-based polls. The award was first given in 1993, and since then Texas has finished 2\textsuperscript{nd} three times (2001-02, 2002-03, 2004-05), 3\textsuperscript{rd} once (2005-06), 4\textsuperscript{th} once (1995-96), and 5\textsuperscript{th} once (2007-08).\textsuperscript{51} Texas has only finished outside the top 10 in the Director’s Cup 3 times since it’s inception.

The University of Texas’ facilities comprise most of the major venues in Austin.\textsuperscript{52} Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium is the 5\textsuperscript{th} largest football stadium in America, with a seating capacity of 100,119. Originally built in 1924, the stadium has undergone constant renovations between now and then, most recently in 2009, where the venue’s size was increased to its current capacity. Inside the facility is the nation's largest high-definition video display board, measuring 55 feet high by 134 feet wide. The stadium includes 62 luxury suites.\textsuperscript{53}

There are additionally impressive facilities on Texas’ campus. The Frank Erwin Center has been home to the Texas Men's and Women's Basketball teams since the 1977. With a capacity of 16,734, including 28 luxury suites, the Erwin Center hosts the boys and girls Texas University Interscholastic League (UIL) Basketball Tournament in March.\textsuperscript{54} Additionally, the Erwin Center will host first 2 rounds of the NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament in 2013.\textsuperscript{55} The Texas baseball team competes at UFCU Disch-Falk Field, another state-of-the-art facility that was renovated as recently as 2006. UFCU Disch-Falk Field has a capacity of 6,649, including luxury suites, and has hosted many NCAA Baseball Regionals and Super Regionals.\textsuperscript{56}

Other facilities on Texas’ campus include Mike A. Myers Track & Soccer Stadium, Red & Charline McCombs Field, Gregory Gymnasium, Lee and Joe Jamali Texas Swimming Center, and Pennick-Allison Tennis Center. The dual-purpose track & soccer stadium has a seating
capacity of 20,000, and contains two separate scoreboards for track and soccer, among other amenities.  The 1,252-seat McCombs Field is where the softball team competes, and includes the unique feature of the home and visiting locker rooms that are able to directly access to the dugouts. Gregory Gym is a 4,000-seat venue, where the volleyball teams play. The facility is also home to the University of Texas’ recreational center for students. The Texas Swimming Center is another noteworthy facility that includes seating for 2,400. The Center will host the 2011 NCAA Women’s Swimming & Diving Championships. 2011 will be the sixth time Austin and this facility have hosted this particular event. Finally, the Penick-Allison Tennis Center, voted the Most Outstanding Tennis Facility in the Nation by the United States Tennis Association in 1988, includes 12 courts with lighting for night play and more than 1,800 stadium seats. The facility houses both the men's and women's varsity teams and includes four fully equipped locker rooms, among other amenities.

Beyond the facilities on Texas’ campus, Austin has other facilities often used for sporting events. In a piece promoting Austin as a sports destination, the Austin Sports Commission references the Austin Convention Center, the Palmer Events Center, Travis Exposition Center, Krieg Fields, and the South Austin Tennis Center. The Austin Convention Center is an approximately one-million square foot facility that hosted the USA Junior Olympic Boys’ Volleyball Championships in 2010. The Palmer Events Center is a 131,000-square-foot multi-use center with convenient downtown location, beautiful park setting alongside Lady Bird Lake. The Travis Exposition Center is home to Rodeo Austin every March. Krieg Fields is a softball complex with 11 regulation fields, while the South Austin Tennis Center is a 10-court venue.

Additionally, Austin is currently in the process of building a racetrack to host the Formula One Racing United States Grand Prix, which is under contract to be in the unnamed
facility from 2012 until at least 2021. Dell Diamond, completed in 2001, is close to Austin and home to Metropolitan Austin’s Minor League baseball team, the Round Rocket Express of the Pacific Coast League (same division as the Nashville Sounds). Dell Diamond has 30 private suites and 8,688 fixed seats with room for almost 3,000 additional fans on an outfield berm grass area. The city of Round Rock contributed $7.35 million to the overall cost of the approximately 25 million-dollar project. The facility is owned by the city of Round Rock, with the Express currently under a 38-year lease agreement to remain there. Finally, the City of Austin also hosts the Austin Marathon in February of each year.

Unlike Nashville, there does not appear to be a governmental agency responsible for athletic venues in Austin. Part of that is a result of the large role the University of Texas’ facilities play in hosting events in Austin. Like Nashville, Austin has a sports commission whose mission is to recruit, retain and grow professional, collegiate and amateur sporting events. The sports commission is part of the Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau.

c. Charlotte

Charlotte, as a city, is larger than Nashville, but in terms of metropolitan area, is only slightly bigger than Nashville’s. Charlotte is the 18th largest city in America, while the 33rd largest metropolitan statistical area as defined by the Office of Budget and Management. Charlotte’s Douglas International Airport is the 8th busiest airport in the United States according to the FAA. Charlotte has a reputation as the banking center for the South. Specifically, Charlotte is the international corporate headquarters to Bank of America, and was home to Wachovia, which was purchased by Wells Fargo in 2008. Fortune 500 companies Lowe’s, Nucor, Duke Energy, Sonic Automotive, Family Dollar, Goodrich Corporation, and SPX Corporation are also located in the Charlotte Metropolitan area.
The Charlotte area has the same number of professional sports franchises as Nashville (2), but a smaller contingent of universities and colleges. Charlotte’s two major professional sports teams are the Carolina Panthers (NFL) and the Charlotte Bobcats (NBA); the NHL’s Carolina Hurricanes play their games in Raleigh, North Carolina. The Charlotte metropolitan area is also home to the University North Carolina-Charlotte (Conference USA) and Queens University of Charlotte (Division II). The Charlotte Sports Council’s website also lists Davidson University (Southern Conference), Wingate University (South Atlantic Conference), and Winthrop University (Big South Conference), although these schools are all outside Charlotte-Mecklenburg County.

Bank of America Stadium is the second largest athletic facility in the Charlotte area (the largest is the Charlotte Motor Speedway discussed below). Home to the Carolina Panthers, the ACC Championship Game in 2010 and 2011, and the Meineke Car Care Bowl, Bank of America Stadium is a 72,500-seat venue, built in 1996, and was specifically designed for football. Located in uptown Charlotte, the venue has 27,000 existing parking spaces and is easily accessible to over 4,500 hotel rooms. The stadium includes 137 luxury suites and over 10,900 club seats, and every seat possesses excellent sight lines for viewing.

Time Warner Cable Arena is an all-purpose venue built by the City of Charlotte in 2005. The arena is home to the Charlotte Bobcats and the city’s minor league hockey team. The venue’s capacity depends on the event: for NBA games, the capacity is 19,026; for Triple-A hockey games, the capacity is 14,100; and for college basketball games, the capacity is a maximum of 20,200. The arena, also known as “TWC Arena” and “The Cable Box,” the venue hosted the ACC Men’s Basketball Tournament in 2008 and the Southern Conference’s Men’s Basketball Tournament in 2010, and will host the first 2 rounds of the NCAA Men’s Basketball
Tournament in 2011. The arena's center-hung Daktronics video screens measure 16 feet by 28 feet, making them the largest of any indoor arena.\textsuperscript{70}

UNC-Charlotte also has several facilities that can be used to host major events.\textsuperscript{71} Phillips Field is the baseball stadium with seats for 680, and an additional inclined grass seating area that can accommodate over 1,000. Belk Gym is 2,300-seat venue that typically hosts basketball games and volleyball matches. The complex includes 3 full-size basketball courts (which can also house three regulation size volleyball courts and six regulation size badminton courts), six racquetball courts, a weight room and five locker rooms (three men's and two women's). The Belk Regional Track and Field Complex hosts track and field as well soccer events. The field inside the track is an international full-size soccer pitch. There is a seating capacity of 5,000, with temporary capacity of 10,000. The complex includes a field house that has four locker rooms, concessions, public rest rooms, ticket booth and training rooms. The track itself conforms to IAAF and NCAA regulations. D.L. Phillips Complex is another soccer facility that is home the UNC-Charlotte soccer teams. There are 1,000 seats available with room for an additional 2,000 seats on an inclined grass area. The field is lighted and there is a 12-person press box. UNC-Charlotte’s Softball Field Collegiate includes two fenced-in dugouts and can seat up to 150.

Located 28 miles from Charlotte, Davidson College’s facilities should also be included in evaluating what venues the city has to offer. The Wildcats compete in 19 intercollegiate sports. The following are the facilities worth highlights: Belk Arena, home to the Davidson Wildcats, is a 6,000-seat arena; Lake Norman, a man-made lake measuring 20 miles x 3 miles that is suitable for collegiate level rowing and canoeing competitions and includes storage and docking facilities; Richardson Field, home to the Davidson football and track teams, has a capacity of
6,000; and Alumni Soccer Stadium, a 2,000-seat venue built in 2004, features a state-of-the-art field, a brick clubhouse that includes men's and women's locker rooms, a scoreboard, lights, and another brick structure with restrooms, concessions, and a ticket booth. Additional venues in Charlotte include the Bojangles’ Coliseum, a 10,500-seat venue that will continue to be used for events not suited for Time Warner Cable Arena, specifically high school and some college sporting events. In 2010, the Southern Conference played the first two rounds of their basketball tournaments in 2010 at Bojangles Coliseum, and then played semifinals and finals at Time Warner Cable Arena.

Charlotte Motor Speedway is a 120,000 capacity venue. This one and one-half mile oval hosts a number of races, including the NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race, Coca-Cola 600 and Bank of America 500. The Coca-Cola 600 is the second largest single day sporting event in the world. Knights Stadium, home to the Triple-A Charlotte Knights, has 10,000 seats, 21 skyboxes and overflow grass seating for up to 5,000. Located on the North Carolina/South Carolina border approximately 16 miles from Uptown Charlotte, there has been a movement to build a new stadium nearer to the city, although construction has not begun, and there are a myriad of political issues associated with project.

There are two distinct organizations responsible for sports in Charlotte, the Charlotte Regional Sports Commission (CRSC) and the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority (CRVA). The CRSC is a non-profit organization founded and formed in 1994 by then Mayor Richard Vinroot. The Commission's purpose is to bring sporting events to Charlotte that benefit the region in terms of economic impact and quality of life. Specifically, the CRSC creates sporting events, and helps attract conferences, sports organizations and teams to the Charlotte market. The CRVA both promotes Charlotte and manages many of the areas facilities including Bojangles'
Coliseum, the NASCAR Hall of Fame, and Time Warner Cable Arena.\textsuperscript{77} According to their website, the CRVA manages city-owned assets whose value exceeds $500 million, employs over 190 fulltime employees and a variety of temporary positions, and has an annual operating budget that exceeds $30 million. On an annual basis, the CRVA facilities host over 600 events attended by approximately 2 million residents and visitors.

d. Indianapolis

Like Charlotte, Indianapolis “proper” is larger than Nashville, but only slightly bigger in terms of metropolitan area. Indianapolis, also like Nashville, is the state capital. It is the 14\textsuperscript{th} largest city in America,\textsuperscript{78} and the 34th largest metropolitan statistical area as defined by the Office of Budget and Management.\textsuperscript{79} Indianapolis International Airport 46\textsuperscript{th} is the busiest airport in the United States according to the FAA.\textsuperscript{80} 4 major interstates (I-65, I-69, I-70, and I-74) flow through and connect Indianapolis to the rest of the country. Pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly and Company has its international headquarters in Indianapolis and has made a major commitment to the city. Beyond Eli Lilly, Brightpoint and Wellpoint, are also headquartered in Indianapolis.

Indianapolis bills itself as the “Amateur Sports Capital.”\textsuperscript{81} The NCAA is headquartered in Indianapolis, where it has been since 1999. Beyond the NCAA, the National Federation of State High School Associations, USA Gymnastics, USA Diving, USA Synchronized Swimming, USA Track & Field, the Horizon League, the Great Lakes Valley Conference, and the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference are also based in Indianapolis. Indianapolis is also home to Butler University, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), and the University of Indianapolis. Indianapolis was recently selected as one of 6 NCAA “Championship Cities” (Cary, NC; Cleveland, OH, St. Louis, MO, San Antonio, TX, and San Diego, CA, are the other five).\textsuperscript{82} The pilot program features multiple host opportunities of NCAA Division I, II and III
men’s and women’s championships through 2012. The centerpiece of the Championship City pilot program is a long-term agreement between the NCAA and each host city to bring a wide array of championships and ancillary events to the six geographical areas over the course of several years. Beyond this program, the NCAA and Indiana Sports Corporation recently entered into a separate Memorandum of Understanding that will pave the way for the NCAA to bring its signature events to Indianapolis. The events are to be scheduled on a regular basis, and include the following: NCAA Division I Men’s and Women’s Basketball Championship events, including the Final Four, as well as the NCAA Convention. The cycle will begin in 2011 with the NCAA Women’s Final Four and continue through the term of the NCAA’s lease for its national office building in Indianapolis through 2039. Beyond Indianapolis’ focus on amateur athletics, the city also has two major professional sports franchises: the Indianapolis Colts (NFL) and the Indianapolis Pacers (NBA). Indianapolis is also home the WNBA’s Fever, and the Triple-A Indians of the International League.

Undoubtedly, the centerpiece of athletics in Indianapolis is Lucas Oil Stadium. Lucas Oil was built to replace the RCA Dome, which was completed in 1984. The facility opened in 2008 and is a truly state-of-the-art facility that includes a retractable roof. Lucas Oil Stadium has seat 63,000 for football (expandable to over 70,000), and over 70,000 in basketball. The venue includes 137 luxury suites, including 8 field suites that offer a unique opportunity to see the game up close and personal, as well as 12 “super suites.” Lucas Oil has already hosted the 2010 NCAA Men’s Final Four, and the 2009 NCAA Men’s Regional Finals. Additionally, Lucas Oil Stadium will host the NCAA Men’s Regional Finals in 2013, the NCAA Men’s Final Four again in 2015, the Women’s Final Four in 2016, and Super Bowl XLVI in 2012. Lucas Oil Stadium has also been submitted as part of the United State’s bid for a FIFA World Cup in either 2018 or
The Indiana High School Athletic Association’s Football Championships is played annually at Lucas Oil Stadium. Additionally, the NFL Combine is held there.\textsuperscript{84}

Conseco Fieldhouse, home to the Indiana Pacers and Fever, is an 18,345-seat multipurpose venue, considered to be one of the best facilities in the country. Conseco replaced Market Square Arena, a facility completed in 1974, and closed in 1999. The Fieldhouse began hosting the Big Ten Men’s Basketball Tournament in even years starting in 2002; in 2008, it became the permanent home of the Big Ten Men’s Tournament, which will remain there until at least 2012. The Big Ten Women’s Tournament has been played at Conseco since 2002, and will remain there until at least 2012. The 2011 Women’s Final Four will be here as well.\textsuperscript{85}

One of the most famous venues in Indianapolis is the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, home to the Indianapolis 500 and the Brickyard 400. The Speedway has a capacity of 257,325.\textsuperscript{86}

Victory Field, home to the Indianapolis Indians AAA baseball team, is considered one of the nicest minor league stadiums in the country. The stadium is in close proximity to the Indiana Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium. Victory Field seats approximately 14,500 people, which includes an open-air stadium seating area and grassy berms in the outfield areas, which can accommodate up to 2,000 people. The ballpark includes 29 luxury suites.\textsuperscript{87}

Indianapolis certainly has made a commitment to sports. While there are many entities responsible, a driving force is the Indiana Sports Commission (ISC). Founded in 1979 as the nation’s first sports commission, the ISC’s focus is amateur sports. The ISC is aided by a governmental structure dedicated to promoting sports.\textsuperscript{88} The Indianapolis Stadium and Convention Building Authority owns Lucas Field, which is managed and operated by the Capital Improvement Board of Managers (CIB) of Marion County, a governmental agency created by the Indiana Legislature.\textsuperscript{89} The CIB is also responsible for Concosco Fieldhouse and Victory
Field. The CIB consists of a 9-member board, with 6 members appointed by the Mayor of the City of Indianapolis, and 1 member each appointed by the Marion County Board of Commissioners, the City-County Council of the Consolidated City of Indianapolis-Marion County, and another by a majority vote of body consisting of county commissioners of counties specified under Indiana law. The CIB is authorized under statute to “finance, construct, equip, operate and maintain any capital facilities or improvements of general public benefit or welfare . . . ,” specifically, athletic facilities in Indianapolis. The CIB’s operating model sees “the CIB’s public purposes . . . achieved by operating capital facilities, which are an important driver to underlying the economic vitality of historically strong and growing convention, cultural, entertainment and recreational businesses (public and private) serving the public and civic interests and well-being of the State of Indiana and particularly the central Indiana region.” CIB specifically highlights the importance of private sector cooperation.

e. St. Louis

St. Louis, as a city, has approximately 250,000 fewer people than Nashville, and is the 52nd largest city in America. However, St. Louis is a larger metropolitan area than Nashville, and is the 18th largest metropolitan statistical area as defined by the Office of Budget and Management. While the St. Louis metropolitan area has three airports, for the purposes of this analysis, only Lambert-St. Louis International Airport need be discussed. Lambert is the 31st busiest airport in the United States according to the FAA. 4 major interstates (I-70, I-55, I-64, I-44) flow through and connect St. Louis to the rest of the country. Anheuser-Busch is headquartered in St. Louis where their operations remain, even after being acquired by Belgium’s Inbev. Nine Fortune 500 companies have headquarters in the metropolitan St. Louis Area (96 -Express Scripts, 117 – Emerson, 197 – Monsanto, 320 – Ameren, 321 - Reinsurance
as does the rental car company Enterprise Holdings, the fast-food chain Hardee’s, and Edward Jones Financial.

St. Louis is home to 3 major professional sports franchises (the NFL’s Rams, the NHL’s Blues, and Major League Baseball’s Cardinals), 2 universities (St. Louis University of the Atlantic 10, and Washington University a NCAA Division III school), and 1 major conference (the Missouri Valley Conference). Additionally, St. Louis is one of 6 NCAA “Championship Cities” (Cary, NC; Cleveland, OH, San Antonio, TX, and San Diego, CA are the other four, including Indianapolis discussed above). The pilot program features multiple host opportunities of NCAA Division I, II and III men’s and women’s championships through 2012. The centerpiece of the Championship City pilot program is a long-term agreement between the NCAA and each host city to bring a wide array of championships and ancillary events to the six geographical areas over the course of several years.

Edward Jones Dome is the largest venue in St. Louis, with a capacity of 66,965. The venue opened in 1995, and includes 122 luxury boxes and 6,537 club seats. The Dome is where the Rams play their home games, and has also hosted the “Arch Rivalry” game between the University of Illinois and the University of Missouri in 2003, 2004, 2007, 2008, and 2009, and will again host in 2010 before the series goes on hiatus for an indefinite period of time. Edward Jones has also hosted the NCAA Men’s Final Four in 2005, Big 12 Football Champion in 1995 and 1996, and the NCAA Men’s Regional Finals in 1998, 2004, and 2007, and will host another Regional Final in 2012.

The Scottrade Center is a multi-purpose venue that hosts a tremendous number of sporting events in St. Louis. Home to the St. Louis Blues, the Scottrade Center has a capacity of
19,150 for hockey, and 22,000 for basketball. The venue has 91 luxury suites, and 1,726 club seats. The arena hosted the NCAA Frozen Four Hockey Championships in April 2007, the NCAA Women’s Final Four Basketball Championships in 2009, and the NCAA Wrestling Championships in 2000, 2004, 2005, 2008, and 2009. It will host the NCAA Wrestling Championship again in 2012. Additionally, the Scottrade Center will host the 2010 and 2011 College Hockey Ice Breaker Tournament, a 4-team season opening tournament between some of the nation’s top programs, as well as the 2011 Regional Finals of the NCAA Men’s Hockey Tournament. Since 1995, the venue has hosted the Missouri Valley Conference’s Men’s Basketball Tournament. In 1996, the venue (while it was still the Savvis Center) hosted the U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

Busch Stadium, home of the St. Louis Cardinals, is a must-see venue for baseball fans. The “new” Busch Stadium, completed in 2006, is a 46,861-seat facility that includes 3,706 club seats, and 61 luxury boxes. In 2009, Busch Stadium hosted the Major League All-Star game.

St. Louis University has two facilities specifically worth highlighting. Chaifetz Arena, completed in 2006, is an on-campus, multi-purpose venue, that is home to the Bilinkins men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball teams. With a capacity of 10,600, the venue includes 16 suites. Robert. R. Hermann Stadium is a 6,050-seat soccer facility completed in 1999. Between the both men’s and women’s soccer teams, Hermann Stadium has hosted 6 conference tournaments and has been an NCAA Tournament venue in 7 of the 9 years since the renovation. In 2006, the NCAA Men's Soccer College Cup was played at Hermann.

Additionally, the St. Louis area is home to Gateway International Raceway, 60,000-seat all-purpose racing facility. Gateway hosts the NHRA O'Reilly Midwest Nationals on its 1/4-
mile drag strip and the NASCAR Nationwide Series and the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series on its 1.25-mile oval. Gateway is the site of more than 250 racing events throughout the season.

Other noteworthy venues in the St. Louis area include Washington University’s Field House and the Family Arena. The Field House is slated to host Women’s NCAA Division III Championship in both 2010 and 2011. Home to Washington University’s men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball teams, the facility has a seating capacity of 3,000, and is considered one of the finest small college facilities in the nation. Located approximately 22 miles from St. Louis, the Family Arena is a multi-purpose facility with a capacity ranging from 10,467 for basketball, 9,755 for arena football, and 9,643 for hockey.

Two tennis facilities worth mentioning are the Tao Tennis Center at Washington University and the Dwight Davis Tennis Center in Forest Hills, MO. The Tao Tennis Center is a six court facility that served as the host facility for the 2008 NCAA Division III Men's Tennis Central Regional and the practice facility for the 2007 NCAA Division III Men’s Tennis Championships, hosted by Washington University at the Dwight Davis Tennis Center. The Dwight Davis Tennis Center is an 18-lighted court venue that includes a stadium court with a capacity of 1,700.

Like most cities, there are multiple and interrelated entities involved in sports in St. Louis. The St. Louis Sports Commission, an independent, privately funded nonprofit organization, is responsible for attracting, creating and managing major sporting events for the St. Louis region. The St. Louis Regional Convention and Sports Complex Authority, a governmental body created by the Missouri Legislature in 1989 (essentially to bring football back to St. Louis) owns the Edward Jones Dome, a project that was financed through bond offerings issued in cooperation between the Authority, the City of St. Louis, and St. Louis
By statute, the Authority is bipartisan and consists of up to eleven commissioners who shall be qualified voters of the state of Missouri and residents of either the city or the county. Up to five commissioners, one of whom shall be the chairman, are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. In addition, up to three commissioners are appointed by the County Executive of St. Louis County with the advice and consent of the County Council. The commissioners serve staggered terms of six years and hold office until successors have been appointed and qualified. The commissioners serve without compensation. The Authority’s purview is basically limited to the Edward Jones Dome. While the Authority owns the dome, the St. Louis Convention and Visitors Commission (CVC), another private organization, manages and runs the day-to-day operation of the facility. The Scottrade Center, owned by the City of St. Louis, is leased and privately operated by Sports Capital Partners (who own the Blues) under a long-term lease agreement with the city.

f. Tampa Bay Area

“Tampa Bay” is actually not a municipality, but rather a body of water off of Florida’s west coast. Instead, “Tampa Bay” really connotes the Tampa-St. Petersburg metropolitan area, the 19th largest metropolitan statistical area as defined by the Office of Budget and Management. Tampa is the 53rd largest city in America, while St. Petersburg is the 77th largest. Tampa International Airport is 27th and Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport is the 99th busiest airport in the United States according to the FAA. The Tampa area is the headquarters to Raymond James Financial, TECO Energy, Walter Energy, and Well Care Health Plans, Inc. Additionally, the area is the regional headquarters for many large banks and telecommunications companies.
The Tampa Bay is a city with many “sports” options. The area is home to 3 major professional sports franchises (Tampa Bay Buccaneers of the NFL; Tampa Bay Rays of Major League Baseball; and Tampa Bay Lightning of the NHL), 2 universities (University of South Florida of the Big East, and NCAA Division II University of Tampa), and several Major League spring training facilities (the New York Yankees, Philadelphia Phillies, Toronto Blue Jays, Detroit Tigers, Pittsburgh Pirates, and Baltimore Orioles all train in the area). Additionally, the Outback Bowl is played annually on New Years Day.

Raymond James Stadium is the largest venue in the Tampa Bay area, although it is used primarily as a football stadium. Completed in 1998, the 65,875-seat venue is home to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Big East Conference’s South Florida Bulls, and has already hosted 2 Super Bowls in 2001 and 2009. The facility, replete with a 103-foot replica pirate ship, includes 12,000 club seats, and 195 luxury suites. Beyond Buccaneers and Bulls games, and the Outback Bowl, Raymond James Stadium also hosted the ACC Football Championship Game in 2008 and 2009.\textsuperscript{114}

Tropicana Field is an unusual multi-purpose venue, in that it was the permanent home of both an NHL and a Major League Baseball franchise in its history. Opened in 1990, “The Trop” is currently home to the Tampa Bay Rays. The 39,973-seat venue includes 70 luxury boxes, and 2,776 club seats. Additionally, the venue annually hosts the St. Petersburg Bowl, and hosted the 1998 NCAA Men’s Regional Finals, and the 1999 Men’s Final Four.\textsuperscript{115}

Another multi-purpose venue serving the Tampa Bay area is the St. Pete Times Forum.\textsuperscript{116} Home to the NHL’s Tampa Bay Lightning, the facility’s capacity varies depending on the event: for hockey 19,758, for basketball 20,500, and 19,500 for arena football, but has 80 luxury suites available regardless of the event. The St. Pete Times Forum opened in 1996, and hosted the NHL
All-Star Game in 1999, the first 2 rounds of the NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament in 2003 and 2008, the 2007 ACC Men’s Basketball Tournament, the 2009 SEC Men’s Basketball Tournament, the 2009 NCAA Women’s Volleyball Championships, and the 2008 NCAA Women’s Final Four. Additionally, the venue will host the first 2 rounds of the 2011 NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament, 2012 NCAA Frozen Four, the 2015 NCAA Women’s Final Four, and the 2012 Republican National Convention.

The University of South Florida also has some noteworthy facilities worth highlighting. While not on campus, the Sun Dome is a multi-purpose sports and entertainment facility with a capacity of 11,324. Home to the South Florida Men’s and Women’s basketball teams, the venue has hosted a wide variety of events, including basketball games, boxing matches, bull riding, tennis, and professional wrestling. Next, the is USF Soccer and Track & Field Stadium, home to the men's and women's soccer teams and the men's and women's track & field teams. The stadium has a seating capacity of 4,000, and includes new lighting and a 400-meter track that was remodeled in the fall of 2008 to include a new state-of-the-art Mondo surface, the same surface used at the most recent Olympic Games.

The Tampa Bay area includes several other facilities, most notable are the Ed Radice Sports Complex and the Plant City Stadium and Randy L. Larson Four-Plex. First, the Radice Sports Complex, 138 acres multi-sport facilities that houses five baseball, five softball and nine soccer fields (all of which are lighted with the exception of 1 soccer field). The Complex has hosted AAU Winter Baseball Nationals, as well as Florida State High School cross country, soccer, and softball championships. Next are the Plant City Stadium and Randy L. Larson Four-Plex. A well-known facility throughout the softball world, this venue serves as the home of the International Softball Federation (softball's world-wide governing body), and it will soon be the
future home of the Softball Hall of Fame. The Plant City Stadium is a 310 foot lighted stadium with 6,700 seats, and the Randy L. Larson Four-Plex houses four 310 foot lighted softball fields with bleachers at each field. In 2003, this facility played host to the SEC Championships and the International Softball Federation (ISF) World Cup.

The Tampa Bay area, like many other metropolitan areas analyzed, has multiple and interrelated entities involved in “sports.” The Tampa Sports Authority is a governmental entity created by the Florida legislature in 1965. Under the law, the TSA is entrusted to “plan, develop and maintain a comprehensive complex of sports and recreational facilities.” While the core responsibility of the TSA is to manage Raymond James Stadium and three city golf courses, the group has played a vital role in the expansion of sports in the Tampa area. After being awarded an NHL franchise, the TSA played an important role in facilitating the construction of this arena by serving as a conduit for the public financing portion of the facility. The Tampa Sports Authority owned the St. Pete Times Forum until Dec. 30, 2004, when it conveyed ownership to Hillsborough County. Currently, the Tampa Bay Lightning franchise manage and operate the facility. Indeed, the TSA was even instrumental in creating other sports entity in town: the Tampa Bay Sports Commission (TBSC). The TBSC is a private, non-profit, 501(c)3, charitable corporation that serves the Tampa Bay area as the lead organization for bidding on, and hosting major amateur sporting events. The TBSC’s mission is to attract, promote and/or organize major amateur sporting events, and grassroots youth sports programs, that foster the ongoing development and quality of life for the entire Tampa Bay area.

g. Memphis

Analysis comparing Nashville to other cities does not often include our neighbor to the west. However, given both proximity and relative size, an evaluation of Memphis’ facilities and
structure seems beneficial for this research. While this discussion will not be as detailed as that of the other cities evaluated, Memphis has made certain investments in sports that are noteworthy. As a city, Memphis is larger than Nashville, even though the relative size of the greater metropolitan areas favors Music City. Memphis is the 19th largest city in America, and has the 41st largest metropolitan statistical area as defined by the Office of Budget and Management. Memphis is the headquarters of FedEx, AutoZone, and International Paper, all Fortune 500 companies.

Memphis has 1 major professional team (the NBA’s Grizzlies), and 2 universities that compete in sports (University of Memphis of the C-USA, and NCAA Division III Rhodes College). The city’s venues include: FedEx Forum, a multi-use facility with a capacity of 18,500, completed in 2004; Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, a 62,500-seat football stadium, built in 1965; and AutoZone Baseball Park. Opened in 2000 and located in the heart of downtown Memphis, the AutoZone Baseball Park seats 11,384 (including 48 suites), is home to the Triple-A Memphis Redbirds of the Pacific Coast League. Memphis is one of three cities that have submitted a bid to host the SEC Baseball Tournament starting in 2012, after the conference announced they were open to relocating the event from Hoover, Alabama. Memphis is also home to the PGA Tour’s St. Jude Classic, hosted at TPC Sandwood every June, and the Regions Morgan Keegan Tennis Championships at the Memphis Racquet Club.

The Memphis Sports Council (MSC) oversees the promotion of sports in Memphis. The MSC is a private, not-for-profit sports marketing organization dedicated to attract, retain, and promote professional and amateur sporting events and conventions for the purpose of generating tourism, economic development, and positive media exposure for Memphis and Shelby County. The Memphis and Shelby County Sports Authority is a municipal entity actively
involved in sports promotion, charted in 1997, under the Sports Authority Act of 1993, as enacted by the Tennessee Legislature.\textsuperscript{133} Their charge is to “develop a master-plan for sports for Memphis and Shelby County and to serve as the vehicle to accept the state sales tax rebate for professional sports.” The 11-member board is comprised of 5 members appointed by each the city and county mayor, and approved by their respective city council and county commission. The final member is jointly appointed by both mayors, and subjected to a confirmation vote by both legislative bodies.

h. Nashville Considered

Having analyzed cities comparable to Nashville, this next section attempts to analyze, in very general terms, Nashville’s strengths and weaknesses as a sports city. These strengths and weaknesses are discussed, in list form, below.

i. Nashville’s Strengths

- \textit{Nashville is a tourist destination}. “Music City” is an established brand that makes Nashville extremely attractive for events.
- \textit{Downtown Nashville}. The City’s downtown layout offers visitors a “car-free” experience. Hotels, venues, restaurants, and Nashville’s famous “honky-tonks” are all easily accessible to one another.
- \textit{The NSC Team}. The Nashville Sports Council has an exceptional team at their disposal and have tremendous influence throughout the country. President and CEO Scott Ramsey chaired the Football Bowl Association in 2007-08, while Senior Vice President and COO Gary Alexander is the current Vice Chair of the National Association of Sports Commissions. Nationally, the NSC has a very positive reputation as a staff and an organization.
• **Community Synergy.** Between the NSC, the NCVB, the Sports Authority, the local government, and area universities, the Nashville area has many organizations working together to ensure an optimal event experience.

• **Facility Flexibility.** Because Nashville has a diverse set of teams, they necessarily have a diverse set of facilities. This gives Nashville an opportunity to host a wide variety of events successfully.

• **Volunteer Base.** In post-event surveys, event participants and rights-holders highly rate Nashville volunteers and their efforts.

• **Geography.** Nashville is centrally located to a significant percentage of the population. As such, Nashville is “driving distance” away for many would-be spectators.

  ii. Nashville’s Weaknesses

• **Revenue Sources and Underwriting.** Public/private funding mechanisms in place are lacking. Given that events often require financial guarantees months or years in advance, opportunities are limited because there is simply not enough money to pursue all events Nashville might otherwise seek.

• **Corporate Support.** A few corporations are overly relied upon to substantially support sports and the necessary sponsorships in the city.

• **Major Private Revenue Source.** Private foundations, similar to those in some benchmark cities, do not exist in Nashville.

• **Governmental Support.** Peer cities have greater definition of public/private support structures for recruiting and facilitating events.
• **Facilities Availability.** As is the case in every city, facilities are often unavailable due to existing teams and event schedules. This can limit the city’s ability to recruit and host certain events.

IV. Conclusion

There is little doubt that Nashville has established itself as a destination for sports. Given the diverse set of teams, facilities, and events that call Music City home, the city has a strong foundation from which to grow in the world of sports.

The question is how?

The objective of this report is to establish the “base-line” of sports in Nashville. The goal of this report is to provide city leaders with enough information to determine the best ways to expand and develop further. What that growth might look like is beyond the purview of this report.

Perhaps the most instructive component of this report, in terms of developing a plan for moving forward, comes from the comparable cities section, and the things those cities have done to attract, build, and maintain sports. The research indicates these peer cities have at least one thing in common: a solid public/private partnership dedicated to supporting and sustaining sports within that community. While a committed public/private relationship is central, the form that partnership takes varies widely. Simply put, there is not one “successful” model. As such, Nashville’s leaders have the ability to devise a plan and structure that works best for Nashville.

As a city, Nashville has many characteristics that make it incredibly appealing as a host for future sporting events. The city is readily accessible to much of the country, has a recognizable “brand” in the form of “Music City,” is home to vibrant and pedestrian-friendly
downtown, features a diverse set of facilities, and boasts of fans who have shown a willingness to support sports in the past. With that said, there are also qualities that put Nashville at a strategic disadvantage as compared to other cities, including revenue sources and underwriting, corporate support, major private revenue sources, governmental support and facilities availability. Going forward, Nashville must take advantage of its strengths, while at the same time addressing and down-playing its weaknesses.

Ultimately, Nashville’s community leaders must determine how the city wants to use sports as a mechanism both for economic development and quality of life purposes. This report is designed to be the jumping-off point for that discussion.
Endnotes:

14 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
Information contained in this section is based in large part on conversations and discussions with civic leaders. Specifically, Scott Ramsey, President and CEO of the Nashville Sports Council, and his staff provided the information about the NSC. Much of this information was supplied during three meetings that took place 10 June 2010, 15 June 2010, 29 June 2010, as well as based on e-mail correspondence.


Ibid.


Ibid.


Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Ibid.


Appendix A:

2009-10 NSC Scorecard