

# Summary

## Sanford Family Sports and Wellness Complex

### ***Background:***

- Sanford Health has offered a \$10 million gift to the Bemidji community to be used for a project that will (1) support community wellness, and (2) drive economic development
- A community assessment completed by Sanford Health found three community needs:
  - A wellness center with a strong aquatics component
  - A multi-purpose field house-type facility
  - A two-sheet ice plex
- Six months ago, Sanford Health asked Greater Bemidji to investigate whether their \$10 million gift can be leveraged to support the needs identified
- After extensive review, we believe there is a feasible, sustainable model to meet community wellness needs while positioning Bemidji as an epicenter for youth and amateur sports.

### ***Key Activities to Date:***

- Created a task force of community leaders to guide the process
- Held discussions with youth and school sports organizations and coaches
- Visited 14 different facilities in upper midwest, learning what works and doesn't work
- Collected financial expense and revenue data on visited facilities
- Gauged the economic impact information on the proposed facility
- Sought input from Inn-keepers, Chamber of Commerce, Visit Bemidji, and other stakeholders

### ***Task Force Recommendations:***

- Pursue the development of a facility that includes a family wellness center (including a robust aquatics center), a multi-purpose "bubble" and a two sheet of ice complex
- Look to raise \$10 million in donations toward construction to match the Sanford Health gift
- Create an Amateur Sports Commission to promote the region for sports tourism, lease and operate the ice plex and bubble, and host tournaments and events
- Impose a 2% hospitality tax with two thirds of the proceeds used to fund the Amateur Sports Commission (which will indirectly support the Sanford Family Sports and Wellness Complex through a lease), and one third to support the operating deficit at the Sanford Center
- Create a partnership between Greater Bemidji and Sanford Health (two non-profit organizations) to own the asset, not putting the city at risk for the success of the facility

### ***Latest Activities:***

- Selected an architectural consultant
- Recently began raising funds toward construction—have raised roughly \$4.5 million to date

- Working closely with Inn-Keepers, Food and Beverage Assoc., Visit Bemidji and the Chamber of Commerce in supporting the 2% Hospitality Tax proposal- with a goal to ensure we have full buy-in from key stakeholders prior to council consideration

***Opportunities for Community Input:***

- Discuss with Bemidji City Council in November, December and January prior to decision
- Discuss with Beltrami County Board in December
- Host three listening session—one in November, two in December
- Continue to keep Inn-Keepers, Chamber, Visit Bemidji and Food and Beverage Association up to date

***City's Benefits:***

- There is no financial risk to the city– the sustainability of the center will be at the responsibility of Sanford Health and Greater Bemidji
- City residents will no longer be asked to cover the operating deficit of the Sanford Center- a regional facility that will now have a regional revenue source.
- The city have the flexibility to address the challenges with the City Arena
- Our community will have one of Minnesota's nicest family sports and wellness facilities in the Upper Midwest
- The community will have an "Amateur Sports Commission" which will help drive additional sports tourism in the region. The Hospitality Tax would fund the Amateur Sports Commission similar to the Visit Bemidji model