



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PROPOSED SPORTS AND FITNESS COMPLEX TO HOUSE IOWA'S LARGEST INDOOR TRACK AND A FULL-SIZE SOCCER FIELD

JOHNSTON, Iowa – Ignit Sports and Fitness and the City of Johnston are working towards a Public-Private partnership for an expansive recreation project in the Johnston Gateway, just north of I-35/80 on Merle Hay Road. The proposed project includes private construction of a 189,000 square foot privately owned recreation complex that is expected to house Iowa's largest indoor track and soccer field in addition to indoor training facilities and a multi-purpose eight court facility. Ignit also plans to construct outdoor volleyball courts, baseball fields and a high-end soccer field.

"New recreational opportunities in the Gateway have been under discussion since the City of Johnston's Master Planning efforts for the area in 2014," said Mayor Paula Dierenfeld. "The proposed collaboration with Ignit greatly expands upon our original vision and provides the added benefit of creating a significant commercial taxpaying business that will be a regional destination and encourage redevelopment of the surrounding area. This is a project that everyone can get excited about."

The City of Johnston will begin the planning process for a playground, and public outdoor field space on the southern portion of the project site that is expected to include the metro's first cricket field. Trail improvements and public parking will also serve visitors of nearby Terra Park.

Discussions with Ignit owners Chad and Brian O'Meara on the project have been ongoing for the past two years, and the brother's comment, "We are very excited about the relationship and the deal with the city of Johnston is moving into a new phase. The project will be fantastic for our business and the community of Johnston. The level of facilities, amenities and programs will prove to be a game-changer for central Iowa. The vision the city has for this stretch of Merle Hey is outstanding and we are proud to be part of it."

Final development plans are anticipated to be complete by summer 2020. "This partnership is an opportunity to begin implementation of the City's Recreation Programming Plan for all ages, which includes utilization of the Ignit facility and City Park space," said Parks and Recreation Director John Schmitz.

The redevelopment effort entails significant site improvements and encompasses six properties, including property recently leased to the City of Johnston by the City of Urbandale. "This project

is a result of efforts by a large group of players, and while there remains several details to sort out, the major project components are in place, and the City expects the project to move forward and make a significant positive impact on Johnston's southern Merle Hay Road corridor," City Economic Development Manager Adam Plagge said.

[View](#) the current project concept, which is expected to undergo continued refinement as site planning continues. "This project is an opportunity to undertake significant improvements to the area's transportation network and expand the Beaver Creek Recreation Corridor, which will include the replacement of the Trestle to Trestle Trail Bridge and two additional kayak/canoe launches in the near future as part of the Beaver Creek Water Trail network," said Community Development Director David Wilwerding.

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