

## Baseball Heaven Grant Proposal

**Recipient:** Love's Grant Committee

**Date:** [Insert Date]

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### Executive Summary

The **Brian Crawford Memorial Baseball Heaven Campus** is a transformative youth sports facility designed to drive **youth development, community engagement, and economic growth** in **Shawnee, Oklahoma**. This proposal seeks an initial **Phase I funding request of \$10,000,000**, structured as a **20-year note** with monthly payments of **\$92,000**, backed by **\$1.5M in guaranteed financial assets** through **facility lease agreements, banking partnerships, or reoccurring grants**.

Baseball Heaven's service area will expand from **5,000 students** under the City of Shawnee to **49,307 students** within the **Pottawatomie County Little League**, positioning it as a hub for regional sports. The project is expected to generate over **\$137.3M in economic impact** by 2030, making it a critical driver for youth engagement and economic revitalization.

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### 1. Cover Letter/Introduction

Baseball Heaven is an entirely new sports complex designed to meet the growing needs of **Pottawatomie County's youth** and to replace outdated infrastructure. The project builds on the success of the **Brian Crawford Memorial Sports Complex** and reflects a new direction, focusing on transparency, expanded access, and sustainable operations.

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### 2. Project Overview

**Baseball Heaven** will feature **baseball fields, softball fields, pickleball courts, and indoor training centers** to host regional and national tournaments, offering state-of-the-art facilities for youth development and community sports engagement.

- **Purpose:** Address unmet community demand for high-quality youth sports facilities.
- **Impact:** Increased youth engagement, economic growth through sports tourism, and partnerships with local sports leagues, schools, and regional organizations.

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Baseball Heaven is supported by partnerships with the **Avedis Foundation, Shawnee Public Schools**, and local businesses, all of which are deeply invested in the community's well-being and growth.

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### 3. Planning & Design

#### Current Planning Stage:

- **Land acquisition** is underway, with potential donation or purchase agreements with **St. Gregory's Abbey**.
- **Zoning approvals** are in progress, and initial environmental impact assessments show the project's viability for the selected location.

#### Milestones:

- **Q4 2024:** Land preparation and utility installation.
- **Q1 2025:** Begin Phase I construction.
- **Q2 2025:** Facility completion and event hosting.

Community input has been gathered through forums and discussions to ensure that the design reflects local needs and provides maximum benefits to youth and families.

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### 4. Financial Overview

**Total Project Cost:** \$35,000,000

**Phase I Request:** \$10,000,000 (to fund initial construction and operational setup).

#### Additional Funding Sources:

- Sponsorships from local businesses and corporate partners (e.g., Love's Travel Stops).
- Potential contributions from **MLB-MLBPA grants** or similar youth sports funding programs.

**Financial Projections:** Baseball Heaven's financial model projects total revenue of **\$22M by 2029**, with significant income generated from:

- Event entry fees,
- Field rentals,
- Concessions, and
- Corporate sponsorships.

The need for this grant is paramount to initiate construction, with projected long-term profitability ensuring continued operations and maintenance.

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### 5. Community & Economic Impact

**Community Benefits:**

- **Youth Engagement:** Baseball Heaven will serve **49,307 students** across **Pottawatomie County**, offering accessible sports programs and scholarships for low-income families.
- **Health and Wellness:** Organized sports programs will promote physical fitness, mental health, and personal development among youth.

**Economic Growth:**

- Projected to generate **\$137.3M in economic impact** by 2030 through increased sports tourism, job creation, and business engagement.
- **Local business impact:** Boost to restaurants, hotels, and retail outlets from regional and national tournaments.

**Long-Term Sustainability:**

- Revenue from field rentals, sponsorships, and tournament hosting will provide ongoing financial support, ensuring that the facility remains operational and sustainable.
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## 6. Vendor & Contractor Overview

**Potential Vendors and Contractors:**

- **Architectural firms:** Working with experienced firms that have a track record of designing community sports complexes.
- **General contractors:** Vendors with experience in sports facility construction will be selected based on competitive bids, ensuring cost efficiency and high-quality results.

**Vendor Selection Process:**

- A transparent **bid process** will be used to evaluate vendors based on experience, cost-effectiveness, and past performance on similar projects.
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## 7. Construction Timeline & Milestones

**Phase 1:** Site preparation, land clearing, utility installation (Q4 2024).

**Phase 2:** Field construction, building amenities like restrooms, snack bars, and seating (Q1 2025).

**Phase 3:** Equipment installation, turf, lighting, final touches (Q2 2025).

**Phase 4:** Grand opening and operational phase (Q2 2025).

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## 8. Grant Funding Allocation

*Integrity of the Game vs Economic Impact (Politics), The Oklahoma Business Plan*

The \$10,000,000 grant will be allocated as follows:

- **Site Preparation:** \$2,500,000
  - **Field Construction:** \$4,000,000
  - **Indoor Facilities:** \$1,500,000
  - **Concessions and Amenities:** \$1,000,000
  - **Equipment and Turf Installation:** \$1,000,000
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## 9. Additional Documentation

- **Vendor estimates** and bids (included in the appendices).
  - **Architectural designs** for the complex (included).
  - **Community letters of support** from **local officials** and **organizations**.
  - **Economic feasibility studies** to demonstrate the projected impact on the local economy.
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## 10. Challenges and Solutions: USSSA Monopoly and Florida Case Study

**Oklahoma's youth sports landscape** faces challenges due to the monopolized USSSA operations, which have limited access to affordable youth baseball and softball programs. These operations have increased costs for families, weakened community-based leagues, and restricted opportunities for competition.

**Florida Case Study:** In Florida, similar monopolization issues were met with a **community-focused solution**. By transitioning to local governance, leagues restored transparency and offered more affordable programs.

**Baseball Heaven** aims to implement a similar approach by:

- **Fostering a community-driven model** under **Pottawatomie County Little League** to ensure long-term sustainability.
  - **Breaking away from monopolized operations**, offering local families affordable, accessible sports programs.
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## 11. Umpire Compensation: Salary vs. Cash Payments

Moving from a **cash-based compensation system** to a **salary-based model** for umpires is a critical aspect of Baseball Heaven's mission. Cash payments have historically led to financial inconsistencies, legal complications, and a lack of transparency in many youth sports leagues.

**Salary-Based Model:**

- **Financial Stability:** Offering umpires consistent pay and benefits.
  - **Professional Growth:** Ensuring that officiating standards are elevated through structured compensation.
  - **Alignment with Best Practices:** Adopting this model will align Baseball Heaven with national standards for transparency and integrity in youth sports.
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## 12. Conclusion & Call to Action

**Baseball Heaven** is poised to become a transformative project for youth sports in **Pottawatomie County**, providing regional and national tournament opportunities while driving community engagement and economic growth. The requested grant funding of **\$10,000,000** is essential to initiating construction and unlocking additional funding from other sources.

By supporting this project, Love's Travel Stops will play a pivotal role in fostering the next generation of athletes and helping Shawnee realize its potential as a hub for sports tourism.

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## Contact Information

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