

LEHIGH COUNTY SPORTS FIELDS ASSOCIATION

The Lehigh County Sports Fields Association (LCSFA) was established in 1993 to oversee the development and operation of a sports complex, primarily geared for soccer, to support local athletic organizations and promote the Lehigh Valley region. The outcome is a first-class, family oriented facility with a total of nine playing areas (3 equipped with lights), a picnic pavilion, parking space for players and spectators, and a walking/running track. Thousands of players, from under 6 to over (way over) 40 years old, utilize the complex each year.

This significant investment also provides facilities for soccer tournaments drawing from the Mid-Atlantic and Eastern states areas. The site currently hosts three tournaments each year bringing families into Lehigh County, which utilize local hotels, restaurants, and various shopping centers. The complex's positive impact on business and regional recognition to Lehigh County are important community contributions.

In addition to offering a family friendly athletic environment, the LCSFA is focused on offering soccer activities to inner-city youth of Allentown.



The outreach soccer program began about five years ago and provides two 7-week instructional leagues per year to children from the City of Allentown. The children come from many organizations including the Boys and Girls Club, Sheridan Elementary School, and the Salvation Army. The program has been extremely popular and has grown to include almost 250 children and 50 volunteer coaches per year. Also, there have been a growing number of family members getting involved; this is a sure sign that soccer is becoming a more popular sport among these youth and that their families are supporting them. An indicator of the program's success is the fact that the outreach activities have led to the establishment of a separate outreach oriented organization, the Allentown Youth Soccer Club.

Site Investment

Over three million dollars has been invested in the complex including our recently completed \$450,000 lighting project. This project allows for more field use and provides community organizations and individuals with greater flexibility in scheduling practices and games. In addition, it further established the fields as one of the premier soccer facilities in Lehigh County and beyond. The table below shows a summary of the work completed to-date as well as expected future spending.

<u>Current Spending</u>	<u>Amount</u>	
Earthmoving, Leveling, Roads, Parking	\$2,250,000	
Lighting	\$450,000	
Picnic Pavilion	\$40,000	
Landscaping	\$350,000	
Seating	\$5,000	
Field Equipment (Goals, Nets, Etc.)	\$15,000	
TOTAL SITE TO-DATE	\$3,110,000	
<u>Future Spending</u>		
Multi-Purpose Building	\$500,000	
Other	\$390,000	(add'l seating, field development)
TOTAL ESTIMATED SITE SPENDING	\$4,000,000	



Monies and in-kind contributions have been provided from a variety of sources including the Trexler Trust, local companies, The United Way, the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), local soccer organizations, and user fees.

It's obvious that a lot has been achieved at the fields during the past ten plus years; however, there is more work to be done. The addition of a multi-purpose building will take the complex to "the next level."

The Next Step - A Multi-purpose Facility

As the popularity and use of the complex grows, it is recognized that the facility's infrastructure must continue to be developed. A major step to meet this need will be constructing a multi-purpose building. This building will provide restrooms, water fountains, concessions, shelter, and more secure storage space for equipment. Each will help provide users with convenience not currently available on-site. Also, such an addition will better enable the complex to attract higher profile athletic events such as regional playoff matches or professional soccer exhibition matches.

The concession stand will offer the LCSFA and other community organizations the opportunity to raise money during events at the fields. This additional revenue will help to offset field usage fees and maintenance costs and/or help fund future capital improvements.

Long-Term Investment

The sports fields are a long-term investment for Lehigh County. Possible future capital projects include expanded seating for the premier field and development of additional field space.

The Sports Fields of Lehigh County has been and will continue to be a significant investment for the Lehigh Valley.