

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
ORDINANCE NO.: 550-2021**

Project: Greater Cleveland Sports Commission 2021 Operating Grant

Project Location: Citywide

Project Manager: Matthew Keri

Ward/Councilperson: Citywide

Grant Amount: \$250,000

Purpose of Financial Assistance

The purpose of this \$250,000 UDAG grant contract is to fund the general operating expenses associated with Greater Cleveland Sports Commission’s programming marketing Cleveland as a prime location for large-scale sporting events and to actively market the Public Auditorium as a premier site for the hosting of major events. The agreement will assist with operating expenses between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

Background

Since 2000, Greater Cleveland Sports Commission (GCSC) has directly attracted or created 193 sporting events resulting in an estimated economic impact of more than \$664 million to the City by bringing high profile sporting events. GCSC oversees sports development, marketing, communications, fundraising, and events management for these events. The GCSC has become a national leader in its field by utilizing targeted and meaningful marketing, developing proven entrepreneurial events, and offering more services to event rights holders than any other city in the country.

Project Description

The GCSC is looking to the City of Cleveland for financial assistance to continue their provision of these services and activities into the year 2022. The current contract between the City and the Greater Cleveland Sports Commission is for the period from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

Economic Impact

Even during the pandemic, GCSC advanced its mission to measurably improve the economy of Greater Cleveland and enrich the community by attracting, creating, managing, and enhancing significant sporting and competitive events. The City of

Cleveland's support of the Sports Commission continues to provide significant return on investment.

In 2021, GCSC and their partners welcomed the NFL Draft to the city, which brought thousands of fans, tens of millions of dollars, and worldwide attention to Cleveland. Under tightly monitored health and safety protocols, the NFL Draft signaled the next phase of Cleveland's recovery as the pandemic begins to wane.

The commission has also attracted other major events in Cleveland continues including the 2022 NBA All-Star Game, 2024 NCAA Women's Final Four, 2025 NCAA Men's Basketball 1st/2nd Rounds, and 2026 NCAA Men's DI Wrestling Championship. Continuing to track toward their goal of reaching \$850M in total economic impact by 2022, GCSC was recently awarded the 2024 Pan-American Masters Games, an international event that will bring upward of 7,500 athletes from 50 countries to Northeast Ohio to compete in 20 sports over a 6-day period, resulting in \$19M in economic impact. Additionally, in the last year, 8 future NCAA Championships and numerous other smaller events were secured.

Greater Cleveland Sports Commission was awarded the Sports Events and Tourism Association "2019 Sports Commission of the Year" for their work surrounding the 2019 MLB All-Star Game and associated community activities, having had an impactful year hosting events (\$87.8M) and winning bids for future events (\$117M). GCSC also administers the Youth Empowerment through Sports (YES) program, regularly providing unique and empowering opportunities to local young people with their hosted events via city recreation centers.

GCSC's board and staff developed a task force to evaluate their diversity and inclusion status and identify areas of improvement. An Equity Task Force playbook has been created to express, direct, and evaluate the commission's commitment and actions so that the organization can more equitably reflect and serve its community.