



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Lee Wilcox

SUBJECT: San Jose Sports Authority
Agreement

DATE: August 4, 2025

Approved

Date:

8/12/25

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager or her designee to:

- (a) Negotiate and execute an agreement with the San Jose Sports Authority to promote San José as a location for high profile sporting events and implement a comprehensive campaign of promotions and activations for the City of San José related to the Super Bowl LX (60), the 2026 NCAA Men's West Regional basketball tournament, the 2026 FIFA World Cup and other major Bay Area sporting events through July 31, 2026 for an amount not to exceed \$1,720,213; and
- (b) Negotiate and execute up to five additional one-year amendments to extend the agreement through June 30, 2031 to provide ongoing operational support for an estimated annual cost of \$484,319 in Year 1, \$498,848 in Year 2, \$513,813 in Year 3, \$529,227 in Year 4, and \$545,104 in Year 5, subject to the appropriation of funds.

SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

Approval of the recommendations stated above by the City Council will result in the execution of an agreement with the San Jose Sports Authority (Sports Authority) to continue to promote San José as a premier destination for high profile national and international sporting events, to implement a coherent brand and fan experience in San José related to Super Bowl LX (60), 2026 NCAA Men's West Regional Basketball Tournament, and 2026 FIFA World Cup, and to develop and support local sporting events and organizations through July 31, 2026, with the opportunity to extend the agreement through June 30, 2031. The scope of services for this agreement specifically supports two of the five objectives in the City Manager's Office of Economic

Development and Cultural Affairs' current City Council-approved Work Plan¹, to accelerate a thriving downtown and to activate San José as the South Bay's hub for sports, arts, and entertainment.

BACKGROUND

The Sports Authority is a nonprofit corporation formed in 1991 whose mission is to increase San José's economic development, visibility, and civic pride through sports. The Sports Authority promotes San José as a location for marquee regional, national, and international sporting events. It develops and supports existing sporting events and organizations in San José and the Bay Area.

Under contract with the City, the Sports Authority engages in the following activities:

- Contacts national governing bodies, institutions, and professional organizations, and domestic and international sports organizations to solicit high-profile sporting events for San José;
- Conducts fundraising activities to support the organization and to underwrite and promote events and activations surrounding major sporting events;
- Informs residents and local businesses on sports activities and events taking place in the community;
- Markets San José as a premier host city for sporting events;
- Coordinates Sports Authority-sponsored or sanctioned events with relevant City departments; and
- Facilitates opportunities to connect residents, local businesses, and organizations with high-profile sporting events.

Examples of events the Sports Authority secured over the past five years include the NCAA Women's Soccer College Cup ('19,'21), Rock & Roll Half Marathon ('19,'21-'25), WTA Mubadala Silicon Valley Classic ('19,'21,'22), USA Fencing North America Cup ('22,'23,'24), USA Water Polo Junior Olympics ('22,'24,'25), U.S. Gymnastics National Championships and National Congress ('23), OneHockey Youth Tournament ('23), Perfect Game Travel Baseball Tournament ('23,'24), U.S. Figure Skating National Championship/Showcase ('23,'24,'25), American Hockey League All-Star Game ('24), USA Judo ('22,'25), USA Women's Hockey v Canada ('25), Slam José 3-3 Basketball Tournament ('25), and the National Women's Soccer League Championship ('25).

Major spectator and participatory sporting events secured by the Sports Authority between July 2019 and June 2024 resulted in approximately \$90 million in direct visitor/event spending in the City, despite the significant impediment of COVID-19 on large sporting events in 2020 and 2021. For every \$1 of investment provided to the

¹ <https://sanjose.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=13916375&GUID=B59F8592-5F09-46FB-AACA-45B8DCA5B47C>

Sports Authority by the City's General Fund over the past five years, the City received an average of \$45 in return in economic impact. The 2025 economic impact of the events secured by the organization has not yet been finalized, as its analysis is determined based on a calendar year.

In addition to driving economic development through sporting events, the Sports Authority champions two major community initiatives annually – the REACH Youth Scholarship Program and the San Jose Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, raising over \$500,000 in private sponsorships for these events. The REACH Youth Scholarship Program is a college scholarship for high school seniors who have overcome significant adversity through participation in sports. Over the past five years, the program has distributed over \$500,000 in scholarships to 203 local student athletes. The San Jose Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony honors legends who have made extraordinary contributions to the San José community through sports-related programs or projects, attracting 500 to 600 guests to the event and serving as the organization's signature annual fundraiser.

The Sports Authority Board of Directors includes the City Manager or her designee, and two other members appointed by the Mayor.

ANALYSIS

Shared objectives between the City and the Sports Authority include growing the City's economy, building civic pride through sporting events, and establishing Downtown San José as the South Bay's hub for sports and sports-related activations. The proposed new agreement is a continuation of the scope of work of prior agreements with the Sports Authority as well as the addition of specific services associated with the implementation of a coherent branding, promotions, and activation campaign associated with the major 2026 Bay Area sporting events – Super Bowl LX in February, NCAA Men's Basketball West Regional tournament in March and the 2026 FIFA World Cup in June and July. The scope of services for this agreement supports two of the five objectives in the City Manager's Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs' City Council-approved work plan - to accelerate a thriving downtown and to activate San José as the South Bay's hub for sports, arts, and entertainment.

The term of the proposed agreement is through July 31, 2026, with the City Manager's, or her designee's, ability to negotiate and execute up to five additional one-year options to extend the agreement and add additional services as necessary through June 30, 2031. An annual three percent cost-of-living adjustment has been incorporated into the proposed contract compensation from Fiscal Year 2026-2027 to Fiscal Year 2030-2031.

Under the terms of this agreement, the organization will continue to promote San José as a site for high-profile state, national, and international sporting events as well as

support existing events and organizations. The agreement requires the Sports Authority to:

- Continue to serve as the City's primary outside organization for contacting national governing bodies, institutions, professional organizations, and domestic and international sports organizations to solicit high-profile sporting events for the City;
- Solicit private sector funds to support the organization and to underwrite events;
- Inform residents and local businesses of sports activities taking place in the community, create a more positive attitude among residents toward sporting events, and, in general, serve as a coordinating agency with other sports and community service groups that would benefit from involvement in sports;
- Maintain relationships and keep abreast of new marketing trends in sports entertainment, which will improve San José's position as a host city;
- Explore local, regional, national, and international publications for publicity opportunities describing San José and the surrounding area as a sporting event venue;
- Maintain current active membership in national and state events and sports associations;
- Design, purchase, provide, and distribute marketing collateral and other promotional literature and materials as may be necessary to effectuate and implement promotion of the city, including a professional website and social media presence; and
- Maintain a close working relationship with the City staff most closely involved in the production and permitting of outdoor special events and operators of City-owned facilities such as Team San Jose.

The Sports Authority has agreed to the following contract deliverables.

- For Fiscal Year 2025-2026:
 - Launch an event-based microsite with the ability for individuals to create personalized itineraries around each of the major 2026 events.
 - Implement at least six large-scale outdoor watch parties during either Super Bowl LX, NCAA Men's West Regional Basketball Tournament, or the World Cup, plus promotional, marketing, and branding support for other indoor watch parties held citywide (anticipated to be 100+).
 - Produce at least six drone shows or a similar evening attraction correlated with Super Bowl LX, the NCAA Men's West Regional Basketball Tournament, and the World Cup.
 - Produce at least six outdoor concerts during either Super Bowl LX, the NCAA Men's West Regional Basketball Tournament, or the World Cup.
 - Develop and implement a downtown wayfinding program in coordination with the City that provides both immediate benefits to San José around the major 2026 sporting events, as well as in the long term.

- Secure \$3 million to \$4 million in private sponsorships to supplement production expenses for the aforementioned activations as well as others, including the implementation of the SJ House, a hospitality and business showcase, and a SJ26 Sports Merchandise and Visitor Center serving as a centralized hub for 2026-related information and event schedules and selling unique San José-branded merchandise and local sporting team apparel.
- During the agreement period, Fiscal Years 2026-2031:
 - Secure four major spectator sporting events. A major sporting event is defined as one with an economic impact of at least \$3.5 million and is broadcast on national television.
 - Secure four spectator sporting events with an economic impact of a minimum of \$250,000 per event.
 - Secure five participatory events with a minimum economic impact of \$500,000 per event.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Staff from the City Manager's Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs will evaluate the agreement and Sports Authority performance over the next year to develop recommendations for any adjustments to the scope of services in the Year 1 amendment under this agreement. Staff will continue to monitor the performance measures and goals and update the Community and Economic Development Committee as appropriate. The Sports Authority's bi-annual reports will be available through the City Manager's Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs.

Staff will seek City Council approval for any one-time funding to the Sports Authority, over and above the organization's proposed base funding, on an annual basis and as appropriate.

BUDGET REFERENCE

The table below identifies the sources proposed to fund the agreement recommended in this memorandum.

Fund #	Appn #	Appn Name	Current Total Appn	Rec. Budget Action	2025-2026 Proposed Budget Page*	Last Budget Action (Date, Ord. No.)
001	2181	Sports Authority	\$470,213	\$470,213	807	6/17/2025 31230
001	231T	2026 Sporting Events	\$1,500,000	\$1,250,000	800	6/17/2025 31230

**The 2025-2026 Adopted Operating Budget was approved on June 10, 2025 and adopted on June 17, 2025 by the City Council.*

COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, the City Manager's Budget Office, and the San Jose Sports Authority.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the August 26, 2025 City Council meeting.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND INPUT

No commission recommendation is associated with this action.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17-003, Agreements/Contracts (New or Amended) resulting in no physical changes to the environment.

Not a Project, File No. PP17-011, Temporary Special Events resulting in no changes to the physical environment.

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PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.



Lee Wilcox
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Acting Director, City Manager's Office of
Economic Development and Cultural Affairs

For questions, please contact Blage Zelalich, Deputy Director of the City Manager's Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs, at email blage.zelalich@sanjoseca.gov or (408) 535-8172.