

**Council President Arnie Fielkow
Leads Successful Site Visit to Dallas**

News Release

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New Orleans
City Council

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New Orleans, LA - August 11, 2009 - Council President Arnie Fielkow says his and other New Orleans delegates' Saturday site visit to Big League Dreams Park and Hawaiian Falls Water Park Complex near Dallas returned great opportunities and inspiration for a similar development in New Orleans. Council President Fielkow, a cadre of Louisiana elected officials and eastern New Orleans economic development leaders traveled to the sports complex and water park in Mansfield, Texas as a proactive effort to explore viable opportunities to return the

currently-defunct Six Flags property in eastern New Orleans back to commerce.

Council President Fielkow led a delegation of approximately 25 elected officials and local economic development leaders on a five-hour tour of the two facilities with the hope of garnering interest in a similar potential development for the East. After visiting the facility first hand and witnessing both the direct and indirect economic impact the development provides for the area in Mansfield, Council President Fielkow feels confident it would be a good investment for the city of New Orleans to make, particularly for the Six Flags site in the East, though he remains open-minded to other viable proposals.

"I have always been open-minded to a sports complex, water park, theme park or other comparable development for the old Six Flags site and I don't believe we should lock ourselves into any single

project," said Fielkow. "My primary concerns for any facility that would replace Six Flags are that the proposal be a catalyst for the area's growth, that it be successful and sustainable for the long term, that it be affordable and that it contributes to a first-rate quality of life for the surrounding community. After seeing the Big League Dreams Park for myself, and witnessing the real economic impact synergies that exist of both a direct and indirect nature, I have real optimism for a similar investment in New Orleans. These are very family-friendly, professionally-run and safe facilities."

Louisiana legislators joining Council President Fielkow for the site tour included U.S. Congressman Anh "Joseph" Cao, State Senators Ann Duplessis and Edwin Murray, State Representatives Austin Badon and Cedric Richmond and members of the Eastern New Orleans Neighborhood Advisory Commission (ENONAC).

Big League Dreams maintains nine facilities around the nation and the business model for Big League Dreams is an intriguing and viable one for New Orleans. Municipalities pay for the cost of building the sports complex. City government and Big League Dreams then execute a 30-year lease and revenue-sharing agreement. Once construction is complete, the Big League Dreams company is 100-percent responsible for maintaining, operating and booking all sports events. During the day, Monday through Thursday, the entire complex is open free of charge to the public. In the evening Monday through Thursday, the facility is available for local sports leagues and school teams. During the weekend, the complex is used for regional tournament play, which brings in significant economic impact to the community. Given New Orleans' popularity, it is expected that such tournaments would draw from a regional and perhaps national base.

Several attendees had these words about the visit:

ENONAC Executive Board Member Tangee Wall--

"The trip to Big League Dreams and Hawaiian Falls was fabulous," said Wall. "This proposed project represents true economic development for eastern New Orleans, as well as the city. This project has unlimited potential to create an environment that presents a unique facet of tourism for the city. Big League Dreams and Hawaiian Falls is just what the city needs. It brings a safe family atmosphere, first-class sports entertainment and a fun tropical theme water park. A combination Big League Dreams and Hawaiian Falls development is a major anchor and a viable catalyst for economic development in the city."

U.S. Congressman Anh "Joseph" Cao, District 2--

"I was pleased to join Councilman Fielkow and the other leaders of

our district in opening up dialogue on this issue," said Congressman Cao. "The commerce, jobs and opportunity that can potentially develop from this project are enormous and I look forward to receiving more details about how we can move forward for the best benefit to our district."

State Senator Ann Duplessis, District 2--

"It was a very enlightening trip", said Duplessis. "I am excited and encouraged about the opportunity to develop a park in eastern New Orleans. This will not only have a positive impact for the city of New Orleans but to the citizens of this entire region."

Councilman Fielkow coordinated the trip as a fact-finding mission for bringing a similar development to New Orleans. The Dallas trip also provided invaluable discussions with two top executives for the companies including Pat Kight, a park development consultant for Big League Dreams and Steve Mayers, Vice President Special Projects for Hawaiian Falls Water Park.

"I want to personally thank our delegation of local elected officials and the numerous community and business leaders of eastern New Orleans who joined us on this valuable discovery of potential options for the Six Flags site," said Council President Fielkow. "The exploration of potentially viable developments for the now defunct park demonstrates great leadership for the ultimate goals of returning that extensive piece of property back into commerce and revitalizing eastern New Orleans."

The Eastern New Orleans Neighborhood Advisory Commission will hold a presentation on the trip on Tuesday, August 25 at 6 p.m., at St. Maria Goretti Church Center (click [here](#) for a map).

New Orleans City Council

The New Orleans City Council is the legislative branch of New Orleans city government. The Council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The Council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the City, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The City Council is also the regulatory body for public utilities. It also reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the City. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the Council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes, and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Other responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the operation of the public access television in Orleans Parish.

The City Council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; Council Vice President and Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.