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### ***Mesa unveils new developments in its efforts to keep Cubs***

The City of Mesa announced today an initiative that will provide financial certainty for the construction of a Chicago Cubs Spring Training facility in the City. The initiative involves the use of funds and assets from the City's enterprise fund, and will enable the stadium to be built with no increases in property taxes, no increases in sales taxes and no impact to the City's general fund.

Since signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Cubs in January, Mesa has been working with the Arizona Legislature in the pursuit of assured stadium funding. The financing became uncertain when the legislature adjourned in April without taking final action on a bill. The City's commitment today to fund the stadium regardless of the legislature's inaction removes that uncertainty.

"The economic activity and jobs that are created by spring training are simply too important to leave to chance," Mesa Mayor Scott Smith said. "By stepping up to the plate at this time, the City of Mesa is reaffirming its commitment to the Cactus League, the Chicago Cubs Spring Training and all that those mean to this City and its residents."

The City of Mesa has built three spring training facilities over the past 60 years, and the City's use of enterprise funds is not without precedence. The enterprise fund consists of resources related to activities such as golf courses, waste management, water resources, utilities, and existing spring training facilities and operations. Part of the City's plan includes selling its inventory of undeveloped farmland in Pinal County and utilizing sales proceeds to help finance the new facilities. The land will be sold in an orderly, market-driven fashion over the next 25 years.

In addition to the City's announcement, the Mesa Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) announced that its board of directors recently approved a proposal to increase the City bed tax from the current three percent to five percent, and asked the Mesa City Council to put the bed tax

increase on the November ballot for a public vote. If approved by voters, this increase will match increases passed by both Tempe and Scottsdale voters in March.

“Our members recognize the importance of having Cubs Spring Training in Mesa,” CVB President and CEO Robert Brinton said. “A slight increase in the bed tax is a small price to pay for keeping this vital economic resource in our community.”

While the Mesa plan provides the Cubs with financing needed to build a new stadium, Mayor Smith reiterated that the Cactus League is still at risk and needs state lawmakers to act on a solution for the entire league.

“Today’s commitment by the City of Mesa gets us over a hump, but it does not solve the Cactus League problem. We still need state lawmakers and Major League Baseball to agree on a plan to help preserve the Cactus League,” Smith said. “The City of Mesa will continue to work with all parties to develop and implement a plan that will benefit all Cactus League teams and cities. Mesa is acting now because with the clock ticking toward a July deadline, we needed to move quickly to guarantee the Cubs do not leave Arizona.”

Now that a funding mechanism has been established, the next steps toward a new Chicago Cubs Spring Training facility are site selection and a vote of Mesa residents in November. The November vote is not related to the financing commitment, but is required by Mesa’s city charter, which requires approval from citizens for City expenditures on sports and entertainment facilities in excess of \$1.5 million.

For the latest information on Arizona’s efforts to keep the Cubs, visit [www.CubsWinInAZ.com](http://www.CubsWinInAZ.com)

*The City of Mesa’s estimated population is over 460,000 within an incorporated area of approximately 133 square miles. Total land area encompasses 182 square miles. The City ranks as the 38th most populous city in the United States, larger than the cities of Kansas City, Miami, St. Louis and Pittsburgh. Mesa is a favorite destination to thousands of visitors with more than 300 sun-filled days a year and average temperature of 72.6 degrees. The area’s economy is driven by four major industries healthcare, education, aerospace, and tourism. Mesa is home to two award-winning airports, Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport and Falcon Field Airport. For more information about the City of Mesa go to [mesaaz.gov](http://mesaaz.gov).*