



City Council backs bid for All-Star Game

By **DEAN CALBREATH**, The Daily Transcript
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The San Diego City Council unanimously voted to support the Padres' bid to bring Major League Baseball's All-Star Game to Petco Park in 2016 and spend up to \$1.5 million for police and fire services in an effort to lure the game to the city for only the third time since in its history.

The city hopes to recoup any money it spends through hotel and retail taxes in addition to donations to local charities from Major League Baseball.

"What we're talking about is \$3.7 million in direct benefits versus \$1.5 million in costs," said Councilmember Mark Kersey, who proposed the measure. "If we don't do this, the game won't be here and we won't get this money, so it sounds like a good return on investment. I'm very excited about this."

But even though the Padres are officially bidding for the 2016 All-Star Game, it's likely that the earliest the game would come to San Diego would be 2017, due to a tradition of alternating between American League and National League cities.

Under that seldom-broken tradition, National League teams such as the Padres now host the All-Star Game in odd-numbered years while American League teams get it in even-numbered years.

"Putting a bid in now could help them get it the next time the National League comes up," said Scott Minto, who heads the sports MBA program at San Diego State University. "But it's something that San Diego deserves. We've been waiting for it for a very long time."

Outgoing Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig said he hopes to name the sites of both the 2016 and 2017 All-Star games before he retires next month.

When Selig visited Petco Park in August, the Padres named a plaza in his honor, in what was widely seen as an attempt to gain his support for an All-Star Game. Selig told reporters at the time that he was working on finding a site for the game, adding that "I like [the Padres'] chances."

Since its creation in 1933, the All-Stars Game has been played only twice in San Diego: in 1992 and 1978. In comparison, it has been played five times each in San Francisco, Cleveland, Minnesota, Pittsburgh and, as of next July, in Cincinnati. This is the first time the Padres have bid for the All-Star Game since moving to Petco Park a decade ago.

A report by the city's Independent Budget Analyst estimates that the five-day series of events surrounding the All-Star Game will result in fire and police costs ranging from \$600,000 to \$1.5 million, which the city has now agreed to pay.

The analyst's team estimated that the game will draw up to 60,000 out-of-town visitors, resulting in \$11.4 million in hotel revenues that would generate \$1.2 million in transit occupancy taxes. The analyst estimated visitors would generate \$1 million in retail taxes as well.

In addition, Major League Baseball has historically given local charities roughly a third of the revenues from its All-Star Workout Day, a popular event preceding the game. The analyst suggested that such contributions would total between \$1.5 million and \$2 million. The Padres have promised that if they win the bid for the game, they will seek the City Council's advice on which charities to donate to.

"The attention, excitement and pride that this will give our city far outweighs what we will spend," said City Councilmember Cheryl Cole.

Joe Terzi, who heads the San Diego Tourism Authority, added that the game — which has an estimated audience of more than 42 million people — would also help promote the city as a vacation destination, hitting a much broader audience than the local tourism industry could reach on its own.