



Consultants say Double-A team could succeed in Amarillo

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AMARILLO, TX (KFDA) - A Double-A baseball team in Amarillo would most likely be successful, according to new information released Wednesday.

Two months ago, the Amarillo Local Government Corporation (LGC) asked consulting firm Brailsford and Dunlavey to find out if the city could support Affiliated Baseball. Wednesday afternoon, the firm said based on comparable Double-A markets, the answer is yes.

A successful baseball market needs four things: a decent population, people who have money to spend on games, a demographic of people who want to watch baseball, and a strong corporate business community.

Brailsford and Dunlavey's report found Amarillo has all these things. The firm compared Amarillo to Midland. The consultants said Midland's Double-A team has been successful in recent years, which is a good sign for Amarillo.

"It's coming out very positive that we have the number of people, we have the right kind of people, we have people who enjoy baseball, and therefore, there is a good possibility of having the right people here in Amarillo to support this operation," said John Lutz, a member of the LGC.

Even though Amarillo's market size is smaller than most other Double-A team cities, the consultants said average household wealth, limited competition of other games in town and the city's strong corporate base make the city attractive.

"I think we look much more appealing after seeing those numbers to a potential owner wanting to come in here," said councilman Randy Burkett. "He's got to take a serious look at it because of the condition we are in. It looks really good to me."

The ballpark project will have to be bigger than originally planned if the city does pursue a double-A team.

Instead of 4,500 fixed seats, the consultants said there need to be 6,000. They suggest including club and grass seating, 14 suites and a group area in the final design. The cost of the additions will be presented at a meeting in March.

"Next, they are going to come back with some hard numbers in the second part," said Burkett. "It's a three-part report they are going to give us. We're going to get into more numbers next time, cost and things like that."

The consultants believe the city can fill an average of 3,900 seats per game.

The third part of Brailsford and Dunlavey's report will advise the city how it can attract a Double-A team to play in Amarillo.

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