



American Youth Soccer Organization

AYSOregion1370.com

Home of the Boynton Knights F.C.

4077 Alpinia Court South Boynton Beach, FL 33436

561-738-5401



February, 2009

To: Sponsors, Donors, Funding Sources, and Other Interested Parties
Re: **Development of a 31-Acre Soccer Park in Palm Beach County, Florida**

Dear Friends and Advocates and to Whom it May Hold Interest:

Region 1370 of the **American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO)** is located in the western areas of Boynton Beach in Palm Beach County, Florida, and serves the children and their families from the surrounding neighborhoods, including Lake Worth, Lantana, Greenacres, Golf, Wellington, and the western unincorporated areas of Palm Beach County.

We are seeking sources of funding to develop and maintain a soccer park in our service area to meet the growing needs of this successful program and to better serve the children and families who would seek to participate. The following is a description of who we are, what our role is in the community, and what our goals are for the future.

AYSO – Our History and Philosophy

The **American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO)** was established in the Los Angeles area in 1964 with nine teams. It was the dream of a group of devoted soccer enthusiasts who started the organization in a garage. Today, AYSO has more than 50,000 teams and more than 650,000 players.

AYSO is a nationwide non-profit organization that develops and delivers quality youth soccer programs in a fun, family environment based on AYSO's Five Philosophies:

- **Everyone Plays:** Our program's goal is for kids to play soccer. So we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.
- **Balanced Teams:** Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible, because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.
- **Open Registration:** Our program is open to all children between 4 and 19 years of age who want to play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.
- **Positive Coaching:** Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.
- **Good Sportsmanship:** We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.





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Over the years, AYSO has created many valuable programs and concepts. Most notably, AYSO revolutionized youth sports with its "Everyone Plays" and "Balanced Teams" philosophies explained above.



Since its establishment, AYSO has continued to grow and offer its membership relevant programs. In 1971, AYSO's first girls program was developed. Currently, 40 percent of AYSO's players are girls.

In the mid 70s, an AYSO coach chartered new territory as he welcomed the organization's first player with Down Syndrome. As a result of this landmark union, soccer was introduced into the Special Olympics. Today, AYSO offers its membership the Very Important Player (VIP) program for kids with special needs. VIP boasts 75 programs and 1,500 players.

In 1995, the first AYSO program was established in Moscow. Today, AYSO programs exist in several different countries around the globe, and interest continues from Americans abroad looking to bring the values and philosophies of AYSO to expatriates and local communities alike.

AYSO is supported by more than 250,000 volunteers. Parents donate their time as coaches, referees, team parents, administrators or sponsors. In 1998, AYSO unveiled its new Coach Certification and Safe Haven programs. Each was designed to strengthen the organization's role in child protection. Although AYSO is primarily a youth sports organization, it realizes the importance of providing a safe and healthy atmosphere for children. AYSO is continually working to improve the education of its volunteers in the fields of child development, human behavior, and sports psychology. A strong emphasis is placed on ethics and sportsmanship and the development of the whole child.

AYSO is a National Association of the United States Soccer Federation. Through the years, the organization has also maintained relations with organizations such as the National Council of Youth Sports, Girls Scouts USA, the National Association for Sports and Physical Education, People to People, Optimists International, Police Athletic Leagues, the National Alliance for Youth Sports, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, YMCA, the United States Soccer Federation, and the Character Counts program.

AYSO has been the leader in establishing groundbreaking youth soccer programs in the United States. The organization is proud to have paved the road for youth soccer and looks forward to meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

Please visit the AYSO website for more information: www.soccer.org

Our Local Region 1370 – A Success Story

Starting in 2001 with two volunteers and a dozen or so children, our local interest in soccer became Region 1370 of AYSO. Parents volunteered and learned the AYSO philosophies and provided an outlet for learning skills, emotional and physical development, and good sportsmanship to our community children through the game of soccer.





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In a few short years, our region catapulted itself into a regional contender as our younger players grew and developed into talented young athletes. With enrollment in our program brimming over 500 children, we launched our all-star, travel league to further challenge and develop some of our older, talented youth. This league, the **Boynton Knights**, took on a more competitive edge as they traveled statewide challenging other AYSO regions in tournaments.

Today, just eight years from inception, enrollment is over 1,100 children from our local community, with hundreds more waiting to register. Our Boynton Knights have won state and regional championships over the past few years and we have, just this year, joined the **Florida Youth Soccer Association (FYSA)**. FYSA is a non-profit and educational organization dedicated to fostering the physical, mental and emotional growth and development of Florida's youth through the sport of soccer at all levels of age and competition. Our job is also to make it fun and instill a lifelong passion for the sport in young players. (www.FYSA.com)



The number of children now enrolled in AYSO Region 1370 surpasses both baseball and football registration in the area. With the Boynton Knights travel league and the FYSA competitions, we have a year-round program that continues to grow in numbers and in strength.



Our volunteerism is at its highest level ever. We have attracted everyone from first-time soccer dads and moms, retired soccer enthusiasts, professionals, and international players and trainers. We have developed training for referees and coaches, as well as Kids Zone and Safe Haven instruction for the parents.

We are proud and humbled by where we are as a region today and the success of our program. We strive every day to improve and develop a better program for each coming day and new season.

To learn more about our local region, visit our website: www.aysoregion1370.com

Identifying Our Needs

What began in one person's backyard and graduated to a field behind a local homeowner's association clubhouse in 2001, has expanded to fields at West Boynton Park in Boynton Beach, Buttonwood Park in Lantana, and Caloosa Park near Delray Beach. This year we have even had to call Sandalfoot Park in Boca Raton our "home field" for some of our games.





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Unlike baseball fields, which are a staple of almost every park and are exclusive-use fields, the general purpose fields we use are shared by other adult soccer groups, tackle football and flag football clubs, field hockey, lacrosse, and other sports clubs, and are training fields for the local high school sports programs.

West Boynton Park, for example, has six baseball fields and two general use fields that are shared by all the other sports. Our soccer program alone has more enrollment than any other sport, including baseball and football. So many of the baseball fields, with their top-rate facilities go unused, while our program and countless others compete for field space.

This overuse of the fields has caused severe damage to the fields, strains on the facilities, and lack of adequate parking, forcing field closures. These detriments become compounded with time and cause numerous related issues that are stifling to our progress and success.

- Fields become damaged and can be hazardous to play on. Holes and depressions can snare a child's foot and twist or sprain an ankle.
- Field space becomes limited, cramping practices sessions into small spaces. Training and development is stunted with spaces too small for short-sided games.
- Field time decreases and the season is cut short forcing practices later into the evening, week-night games on school days, and back-to-back games in the heat of summer.
- Limited facilities and parking for our thousand-plus strong region puts a strain on our group, as well as other sports programs competing for use of these facilities and fields.

However, the number one concern for our AYSO Region 1370 program is the children who want to register, but are turned away. We have now closed our doors to hundreds of children who want to play soccer and benefit from the physical and mental development our program offers.



Even with two parks, parents may be forced to drop off their child at one park, then drive to the second park for the other child's age group. This splits families apart from an activity designed to bring families and the community together.





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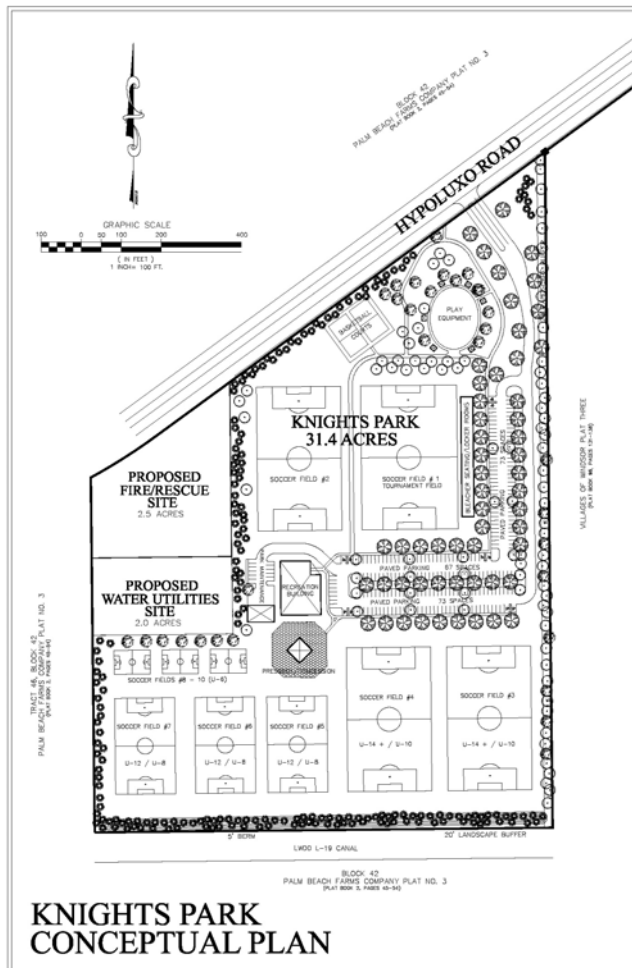
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We are well over the capacity to provide for any more children, and it pains us to turn families away. Our program has reached a point where we must invest in our community and provide a facility that can accommodate the growing needs of our children. It is time to provide a safe, convenient and program-specific location to further the philosophies of AYSO and continue to grow and develop as a region.

The Proposal for Development

Over the past year, we have explored concepts and contemplated ideas for new soccer fields. The challenge has been to find a location that is convenient, available and adequate for the needs that we have demonstrated. This has been a difficult task, considering the density of residential communities in our area, thereby limiting the available and useable space, which further demonstrates that the base for and success of our region is the population of families with children in our neighborhoods and region.



With the assistance of Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation, we have found a few sites that would meet all of our current needs and anticipate the requirements we will face with future growth. Of these locations, one in particular is ideal in its location and size.

Called Windsor Park by Palm Beach County, a 31-acre parcel of land just west of the Florida Turnpike on the south side of Hypoluxo Road sits with utilities in place, excellent drainage, and ample access. Palm Beach County does not have a budget to develop this park for many years. So it would remain an unimproved, future park site until an unforeseen future date.

With an anticipated agreement between Palm Beach County and AYSO Region 1370, we could develop this park, or an alternate site, into a soccer facility, with practice fields, tournament fields, recreational and training facilities, and concessions, along with jogging trails, playgrounds, picnic pavilions, and other standard park amenities.

We would develop and build this park, then maintain it for a specified lease period, after which time the property would be turned back over to Palm Beach County, or the lease renewed. All this would need to be approved by Palm Beach County. Their concerns are our ability to raise the funds needed for this project, and the level of commitment that would be extended over County land. We are actively exploring this concept and other alternatives, both in location and in agreement structure.





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We would also reach out to the surrounding areas, which provide the base for our current thousand-plus child enrollment, for support in this endeavor. We will partner with and seek advise from the Coalition of Boynton West Residential Associations (COBWRA), as well as garner support from our Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners.

It is our goal to develop a soccer park, ready for initial use within two years. With community support, assistance from Palm Beach County, and the hard work of our volunteers, we can do it.

Looking to the Future

The AYSO Region 1370 is a strong, successful program with enrollment over 1,100 children and several hundred more waiting to get involved. With the new soccer park, we will not have to turn away another child.



With the new park, we can develop our program further to include advanced training of coaches and referees, as well as provide developmental programs for all ages and all skill levels. We can expand our training and development activities to also include health and sports nutrition, emotional and team development classes, and competitive advancement with a positive approach.

Teens will be able to perform community service through volunteerism in several of our programs. Parents will be able to participate and learn more about soccer and the philosophies that make our AYSO program so unique and positive.

With tournament fields, we will be able to host state and regional tournaments that will bring small surges to our local economy and foster relationships with other soccer programs, including high schools and colleges.

With increased participation and the expansion of our programs and activities, we will initiate a scholarship program to encourage our young athletes to remain with our program and develop their abilities to the highest skill levels they can achieve, and promote advanced education after high school through these scholarships.

We are at an impasse today, but tomorrow holds a bright future for our children and our community.



How You Can Help

Your heart-felt support and encouragement for our AYSO Region 1370 is greatly appreciated, and every one of our volunteers and youth athletes thanks you.

We are now tasked with the expense of the development and construction of a new soccer park, and the continuing expense of maintaining this park. The estimated cost to develop and build this park is over \$5 million, with another \$300 thousand each year in maintenance and utilities.





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The immediate need is construction funding. There are several ways we can raise this capital.

- **Naming rights:** The tournament field and the recreation center can be named after our highest-level donors. We can also extend naming rights to the other fields, scaled appropriately between the contribution amounts and the field importance / visibility levels. We anticipate this to be our primary source of construction funding.
- **Sponsorships:** AYSO, FYSA and other sports affiliations may provide some financial assistance through equipment donations, grants, and corporate sponsorships.
- **Grants:** Organizations, such as the United Way, Children's Service Council, and Quantum, to name a few, may have grant monies available. Palm Beach County and the local municipalities may even be able to allocate some budgetary funds.
- **Individual Donations:** Local businesses, civic groups, estate trusts, and families can contribute towards our goal. We will have stone pavers etched with the names of individual donors to be placed in the concessions area. We will also thank donors of varying levels with recognition plaques in the recreation center and the tournament field.
- **Philanthropy:** Always unexpected, these types of gifts are genuinely given by those with a true love for mankind and the betterment of society. A donor of this type will be granted anonymity, as is generally requested, but will always be in our hearts.

AYSO is a non-profit organization, so all donations and sponsorships are tax deductible.

The second financial requirement for this endeavor is the continued maintenance of the park. We will accomplish the funding requirements for this process in several ways.

- **Registration Fees:** A small percentage of each child's registration will be allocated for field and facility maintenance.
- **Service Donations:** With an enrollment of over 1,100 children and rising, we have an unmatched force of skills – from carpenters and electricians, to groundskeepers and landscapers. We will tap into our extensive volunteer base and have many services and maintenance needs donated or the costs significantly reduced.
- **Technology:** We will construct this park with new, energy-saving technology and green solutions to reduce overall energy and maintenance costs.
- **Concession and Soccer Store:** Revenues from sales will be directly used toward field maintenance and operating costs.
- **Recreation Center:** Rooms will be available for rent by community groups, associations, and families for meetings, training, parties, and other events.
- **Tournament Field:** Our region will be able to host state and regional tournaments, as well as provide these facilities to other soccer organizations, such as high schools and colleges, which will provide another source of revenue generated by the field usage.
- **Advertising:** Signs around the perimeter fence of the tournament field and on the bleachers will be leased to local businesses and other sponsors on a monthly and yearly basis. Advertising may also be available in a local soccer publication that may be initiated with the new park and the increased services it will provide.





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Our Region 1370 of AYSO has developed and grown at an exponential rate, just now to reach a roadblock before it could fully mature. We have this opportunity to remove these binds and create an exceptional park for an exceptional program, and develop our region into an even greater success story.

The children of our communities have expressed their love for the game, and we must answer them with a safe, healthy, educational, and fun place to develop and play. We must answer this call while we can and turn over 1,000 dreams into a reality.



For more information or to discuss how you can help, please check out our website (www.aysoregion1370.com), come and enjoy a game, or speak to a Board member.

You can also contact the AYSO Region 1370 Field Acquisition and Development Chairman, Dan Moss, at (561) 662-0819 or email to: mossdevelopment@comcast.net.

