

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****September 15, 2020**

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SUBJECT: 2020 NATIONAL FINALS RODEO AND ANCILLARY EVENTS

The purpose of this Informal Report is to provide the City Council information on a collaborative effort with the City of Arlington to bring the 2020 National Finals Rodeo and ancillary events to the two communities.

The National Finals Rodeo (NFR) is one of the pre-eminent rodeo events held on an annual basis in the United States. Traditionally held in Las Vegas, Nevada, the NFR and its ancillary events attract over 150,000 visitors and generate hundreds of millions of dollars in economic impact on an annual basis.

Because of the highly restrictive pandemic regulations in place in Nevada concerning mass gatherings, the PRCA is seeking a new location for the 2020 NFR. After a highly competitive selection process that included consideration of locations outside of the State of Texas, Fort Worth and Arlington have been selected as the site-of-choice for the event because of the following:

- Attractive and functional Venues / Hotels / Attractions
- Communities that embrace rodeo culture
- Local and State pandemic regulations that are rodeo-friendly
- Access to Major Events Reimbursement Program (MERP)

The effort to secure and host the NFR is a collaboration between the cities of Fort Worth and Arlington, the Texas Rangers (as operator of Globe Life Field), State of Texas, and the sports commissions and convention and visitors' bureaus of both communities.

The NFR is scheduled for December 3-12, 2020. The premier rodeo events would be held at Globe Life Field. Ancillary events, like smaller rodeo events, the PRCA Annual Convention and "Cowboy Christmas" (a retail exhibition), will be held in Fort Worth. Additionally, both communities will benefit from hosting unofficial events that are held in conjunction with the NFR each year.

The anticipated benefits of hosting NFR are as follows:

- 61,570 Unique Visitors
- 315,250 Visitor Days
- \$72,739,334 Expenditures Subject to Eligible Texas Taxes (Estimated)
- \$6,189,774 Eligible State Taxes (Estimated)

Additionally, the NFR is televised nationally, generating exposure for the Fort Worth and Arlington communities.

The City will utilize the Major Events Reimbursement Program (MERP) Program to help offset the costs of the Event, including those obligations set forth above. State law authorizes the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts to establish a Major Events Reimbursement Program to assist Texas communities with paying costs related to preparing for and conducting an event by depositing projected gains in various local and state taxes generated from an event in a dedicated, event-specific trust fund to cover allowable expenses. All sums deposited into the MERP are available to reimburse for costs incurred as a result of the Event, including those incurred by the Fort Worth, Arlington, and PRCA.

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In partnership with Arlington, the City has submitted an application to the State to establish a MERP for this Event. Regardless of whether the City receives full reimbursement, the obligation of the City to host the Event, as set forth above, furthers the public purposes of providing invaluable public visibility throughout the nation for Fort Worth; encouraging and providing major economic benefits to Fort Worth; and providing opportunities for the creation of jobs by local and Texas businesses. Adequate controls will be in place to ensure that the public purposes will be carried out.

If you have any questions or concerns related to this effort, please contact Michael Crum, Director of Public Events, at 817-392-2501.

David Cooke
City Manager