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The Cooper Creek Tennis Center opened in 1972 as a public-private partnership between the Columbus Regional Tennis Association (CORTA) and the City of Columbus. The tennis center, which began with only 12 clay (rubico) courts, currently consists of 30 courts, one of the largest clay court facilities in the country. In 2001, Cooper Creek was named by the US Tennis Association (USTA) as one of the top tennis facilities in the US. Each year, Cooper Creek hosts several USTA sanctioned junior, adult, and senior tennis tournaments, as well as many other local tournaments.

Since 1988, CORTA has seen the total number of league and program participants grow from 326 to 12,920 in 2013, a 38-fold increase. As a result of this increasing popularity an expansion of the current facilities at Cooper Creek has been proposed. The proposed expansion will be a public-private partnership between CORTA, the City of Columbus, and Columbus State University (CSU). The \$5.5 million expansion will add 10 new clay courts, 12 hard courts, a planned 8,000 square foot club house and locker room, additional parking spaces and the potential for 4 sixty-foot QuickStart courts. CSU will be the prime tenant for the 12 new hard courts and will move their locker room and coaching staff to the expanded facility. After the expansion, Cooper Creek will be the largest public clay court facility in the US. These expanded facilities will allow CORTA to attract additional tournaments and larger tournaments to the Columbus area.

Proposed \$5.5 Million Expansion

- 10 new clay courts
- 12 hard courts
- 8,000 square foot club house and locker room
- 4 60-foot QuickStart courts

**CORTA Will Become the Largest
Public Clay Court Facility in the US!**

The Butler Center for Business and Economic Research at Columbus State University was asked to estimate the economic impact of the current facilities at the Cooper Creek Tennis Complex and to estimate the impact of the proposed expansion. These impacts depend critically on the number of out-of-town visitors attracted by the facilities, the number of days they stay in the Columbus area, and their expenditures.



By attracting visitors to our area, either as players, coaches, or spectators, the Cooper Creek Tennis Center serves as an economic driver for our area. The expenditures by visitors to Columbus, whether on lodging, food, or retail items, is an influx of *new* dollars into our region. Each visitor's *direct* expenditures generate *additional* economic activity *indirectly* through the purchases of intermediate goods and services by local businesses from other local businesses along the supply chain. In addition, as employees and business owners earn income as a result of this economic activity, they will spend a portion of their income locally which *induces* another series of economic chain reactions through the Columbus economy.

The total economic impact is the sum of these effects and can be expressed in terms of changes in total output, labor income, employment, and changes in sales tax revenue.

Using data provided by CORTA and the USTA, we estimated that the 3,533 visitors to the 14 tournaments hosted in 2013 spent a total of 10,774 “VisitorDays” in Columbus and spent over \$1.8 million locally. These expenditures associated with the existing facilities generated the following economic impacts.



Employment Impact	26.9
Labor Income Impact	\$757,357
Output Impact	\$2,335,323
Local 3% Sales Tax Impact	\$65,739

In 2013, over \$1.8 million in spending by visitors to the existing tennis facilities supported nearly 27 jobs, generated over \$750,000 of labor income, and lead to over \$65,000 in local sales tax revenue. The Complex generated over \$2.3 million in gross sales with over \$1.3 million of that flowing to businesses and households within Muscogee County.

The \$5.5 million in expenditures associated with the construction of the proposed facilities will lead to a one-time increase in economic activity as described below.



The One-Time Economic Impacts of the Construction Expenditures (2014 \$)

Employment Impact	78.6
Labor Income Impact	\$3,342,550
Output Impact	\$8,326,219
Local 3% Sales Tax Impact	\$48,233

**All of the \$5.5 million construction expenditures are assumed to be made in 2015.*

The construction expenditures will support almost 79 jobs in Columbus and increase labor income by over \$3.3 million. The project will generate \$8.3 million in gross sales. The construction phase is expected to generate a one-time increase in local sales tax revenue of over \$48,000. The new facilities can be used to host additional and larger tournaments which will increase the number of visitors to Columbus. An increase in the number of visitors will result in additional recurring economic impacts. The table below describes the economic impact of the expanded facility assuming either a 50% or 100% increase in visitors.



Recurring Annual Economic Impacts of the Expanded Cooper Creek Tennis Facilities, 2016 and Beyond (2014 \$)

	50% Increase in Visitors	100% Increase in Visitors
Employment Impact	40.4	53.8
Labor Income Impact	\$1,136,036	\$1,514,715
Output Impact	\$3,502,985	\$4,670,647
Local 3% Sales Tax Impact	\$98,608	\$131,478

A 50% increase in visitors will result in expenditures that support a total of 40.4 jobs annually, nearly 13 more jobs than are supported by the existing facilities and generate nearly \$100,000 in local sales taxes. A 50% increase in visitors would be akin to hosting two additional tournaments similar in size to the USTA Georgia 40&Over League State Championship hosted by CORTA in 2013.

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