

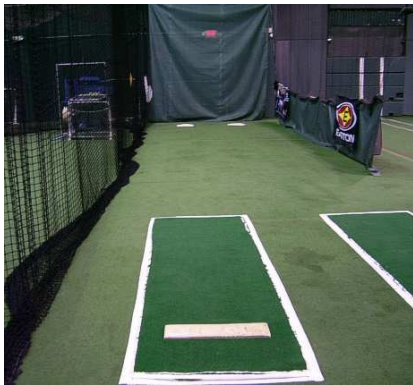


*Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall . . . .*

# Let's Play Ball!

## Proposal for Public Indoor Baseball Facility

Stewart Park  
Billings, Montana



*Proposal Prepared by*  
Billings American Legion Baseball

*Anticipated Construction*  
2010

This document 1) states the need for a public indoor baseball facility in Billings, Montana, 2) proposes a location and state-of-the-art structure to meet the need, 3) discusses how the proposed structure will be built, used, operated, and maintained, and 4) defines project benefits to the Billings community.

The information has been prepared by Post #4 Billings American Legion Baseball, a nonprofit organization that has served youth in the Billings area for more than 60 years. Nationally, American Legion Baseball has helped develop millions of young players through a focus on skill development, personal fitness, fun, leadership, and good sportsmanship.

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# PROJECT NEED & BENEFITS

## Practical Need

Baseball is increasingly a year-round sport. In warmer climates around the nation, youth baseball programs sponsor outdoor leagues with games and practices in all four seasons. In colder climates (and in some warmer climates as well), many cities and their suburbs now have indoor baseball practice facilities for use in inclement weather and for specialized training in pitching, batting, fielding, and physical conditioning.



The lack of a year-round workout facility puts Billings baseball programs, including American Legion Baseball and Little League baseball and softball, at a significant disadvantage in regional and national athletic competitions, and puts individual athletes at a disadvantage in the competition for sports scholarships.

## Community Benefits

An indoor baseball facility for practice and training in Billings will benefit not only baseball players and program but also the larger community. Specifically, the facility will:

- Allow thousands of area residents involved in baseball, softball, and other sports (from entry level up) to develop their skills year-round – making teams more competitive in regional and national play and individuals more competitive for athletic scholarships

In invitational tournaments and at Legion regionals and nationals, Billings American Legion Baseball teams compete against teams from around the nation. In recent years, our teams have played in Minnesota, Arizona, Washington, California, Idaho, Colorado, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Texas, and New York. State Little League winners play at regionals in San Bernadino, California and can advance to the International Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Local traveling teams compete throughout the western United States, from Las Vegas to Phoenix to Denver.

- Add a new element to winter recreation in the Billings area, strengthening Billings' reputation as a family-friendly, progressive community.
- Combine with Pirtz Field in Stewart Park to create an attractive and highly functional indoor/outdoor “baseball academy,” and enhance Stewart Park as a local sports center

Pirtz Field is the home field for Billings' four American Legion Baseball teams and MSU-Billings' baseball team. In 2008, these five teams will play more than 80 games at the field and will practice there for countless hours. After 2008, the two Legion AA teams (Royals and Scarlets) and the MSU-B team will play most of their games at the new downtown ballpark. However, Pirtz Field will remain the primary practice field for all five teams and the primary game field for the Legion A teams (Cardinals and Bluejays). The proposed facility's proximity to Pirtz will allow teams to combine indoor and outdoor team and individual workouts at a single location, and will prevent training interruptions due to bad weather.

- Build on important recent developments in the Billings baseball community, including construction of the new baseball stadium and the return of college baseball to MSU-Billings.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Facility Location

The proposed facility location is Stewart Park in southwest Billings, immediately west of Rimrock Mall. The structure will complement the site's existing outdoor sports facilities, which include baseball, softball, and football fields and storage sheds.

As shown on the "Conceptual Site Layout: Proposed Public Indoor Baseball Facility" (p. 3, the building will abut the west side of Pirtz Field in the park and extend west onto currently open space northwest of the park playground.

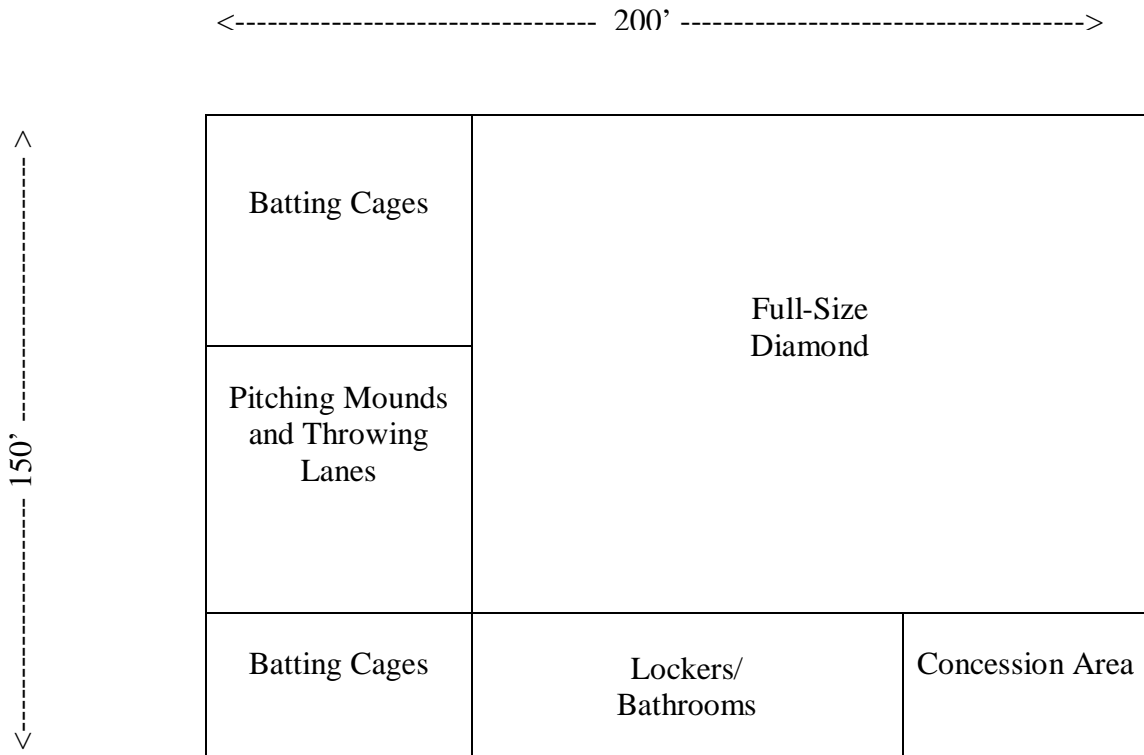
### Facility Features

As currently envisioned, the structure will be a prefabricated steel building with approximately 30,000 square feet (150' X 200') of interior space. Basic interior features, shown in a possible configuration on the "Conceptual Building Interior: Proposed Public Indoor baseball Facility" (p. 4) are a full-size infield for full-team workouts, areas designated for pitching, catching, and batting practice, a concession area, and a locker/bathroom area.



**Conceptual Site  
Layout:  
Proposed Public  
Indoor Baseball  
Facility**





**Conceptual Building Interior:**  
**Proposed Public Indoor Baseball Facility**

The bathroom/locker rooms and concession area will not only serve users of the indoor facility but will also serve teams and fans using Pirtz Field during the outdoor baseball season. The locker rooms will be used by American Legion teams for year-round equipment storage and by participants in Legion-sponsored training camps.

## Training Equipment

The facility interior will be fully equipped for team and individual practice and training. Basic equipment including batting cages, pitching machines, and throwing lanes will be supplemented with accessories such as cage nets, pitching mats, pitching mounds, dividing screens, and batting tees. All equipment and accessories will be portable, allowing maximum flexibility for interior reconfiguration to meet a wide range of user needs.

A key piece of equipment will be the ProBatter Synchronized Video Display Batting Cage. This state-of-the-art, computerized system improves batter timing with “live” pitcher simulation. Batters face a video screen showing life-size images of actual pitchers throwing realistic pitches. The pitched ball comes through the screen from a machine perfectly synchronized with the video image. To simulate game conditions, the cage can be set for a variety of pitches, ball locations, and pitch sequences, and for right-handed or left-handed pitchers throwing from wind-up or the stretch. Nine pre-set user levels are available (Little League to advanced adult) based on age and skill level.



This installation will be the only ProBatter system in Montana and the surrounding states, contributing to Billings’ image as a regional baseball center.

## Intended Users

The facility is intended for use by Billings American Legion Baseball and athletes from the Billings area and throughout southeastern Montana. Members of the public will be able to access the facility as individuals and as members of organized teams. Primary users of the facility are expected to be:

**American Legion Baseball.** As explained under “Community Benefits,” the proposed training and practice facility will serve as off-season training and practice headquarters for the four Billings American Legion Baseball teams: the AA Billings Royals and Billings Scarlets and the A-level Billings Blue Jays and Billings Cardinals. Together, these teams serve approximately 100 teen boys ages 13-19.

**MSU-Billings Baseball.** Yellowjacket baseball needs an indoor facility in order to guarantee quality practice time for favorable competition with southern schools. Currently they rely on current gym space on campus or decent weather to get outside at Pirtz for winter training.

### INTENDED USERS

American Legion Baseball  
MSU-Billings Baseball  
Little League and traveling youth baseball/softball teams  
Individual athletes  
Volleyball, soccer, and football teams

**Youth Baseball and Softball Teams.** Montana Region 1 Little League — encompassing Billings, Columbus, Shepherd, Hardin, Huntley Project, Laurel, Fromberg, Bridger, Red Lodge, and Absarokee — serves 5,000+ boys and girls ages 5-8. The League fields approximately 450 baseball and softball teams annually. In addition, Billings has 10-15 independent traveling baseball and fast pitch softball teams.

**Other Sports Participants.** With appropriate equipment additions, the facility can be made suitable for volleyball and soccer practice on the infield and for limited football workouts.

## CONSTRUCTION & OPERATION

### Ownership and Responsible Parties

The proposed facility will be a partnership between the City of Billings and Billings American Legion Baseball. Billings American Legion Baseball will take financial and management responsibility for facility design, construction, operation, and maintenance, working closely with the City of Billings to coordinate field work and matters for consistency with city plans, goals, and requirements.

Legion's operating responsibilities will be comprehensive, ranging from purchasing, scheduling, and revenue development to marketing and advertising, instruction, and clinic development. Operating costs to the City of Billings will be zero.

### Operating Plan

**Year-Round Operation.** The facility will be open year-round for public use.

**Staffing.** The facility will initially be managed by a full-time staff person, and lessons will be provided by qualified baseball coaches on a contract or hourly basis. Additional part-time and full-time may be eventually be hired as justified by revenues and need.

**User Fees.** Members of the public will pay for use of the facility on a fee basis. Individual training by contract personnel will be charged out on an hourly basis. Fees will vary based upon the scope and type of use. Long-term use agreements will be negotiated with teams and local sports organizations upon request, and a fee schedule will also be established for single or occasional use by individuals.



### Estimated Capital Costs

The estimated capital cost of building and equipping the indoor facility is \$1,125,300. The total is itemized in the table “Estimated Costs for Proposed Public Indoor Baseball Facility” (p. 7).

**Estimated Capital Costs:  
Proposed Public Indoor Baseball Facility**

<b>Item</b>		<b>Estimated Cost (\$)*</b>
<b>Structure and Basic Features</b>	150 x 200 x 30 Steel Frame Building (Delivered)	\$366,400
	Foundation, Concrete, Insulation, Erection, Heating and Lighting	\$550,000
	Artificial turf @ \$3/sf	\$90,000
	Locker Rooms / Bathrooms	\$30,000
	Concession Area	\$20,000
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,056,400</b>
<b>Equipment and Supplies</b>	ProBatter Synchronized Video Display Batting Cage	\$30,000
	6- 55' Cage Nets @ 300/ea	\$1,800
	5- 70' Cage Nets @ \$440/ea	\$2,200
	6- Iron Mike MP-4 Coin Operated Machines @ \$3200/ea	\$19,200
	6- 7x12 Spike Proof Hitting Mats @ \$500/ea	\$3,000
	6- 4x6 Pitching Mats @ \$150/ea	\$900
	3- Portable Mounds @\$1500/ea	\$4,500
	3- 10 x 10 Dividing Screens @ \$800/ea	\$2,400
	6- L Screens @ \$350/ea	\$2,100
	10- Batting Tees @ \$30/ea	\$300
	50- Dozen Baseballs @ 50/doz	\$2,500
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$68,900</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,125,300</b>

\* Estimates for purchase, delivery, and erection of steel frame building provided by Discount Steel Buildings, Denver, Colorado. Estimates for equipment, supplies, and artificial turf based on price information on vendor web sites.

## **Revenue Sources**

Revenue sources for operation and maintenance of the facility will be:

- General user fees
- Pro shop net income
- Concession net income from games at Pirtz Field
- Fees for individual training/lessons
- Fees for team training/lessons
- Fees for skills clinics for players and coaches involved in baseball and other sports

## **Construction Timeline**

Construction will begin in fall 2008. The facility will open for public use in late spring 2009.

## **FUNDRAISING**

***Capital Campaign.*** Billings American Legion has begun fundraising for facility construction and startup with a goal of raising \$2 million over 10 years. To date, informal commitments have been secured for \$250,000 for construction. Additional contacts are being made within the baseball community. Donors can make a one-time donation or pledge a series of donations over several years. Any funds raised in excess of the construction cost will be used for startup operations.

All donations will be tax-deductible due to Legion's status as a 501(c)3 organization.

***Donor Recognition.*** A plan is being developed to recognize project donors by means of news releases, facility plaques, and possible naming rights.

***Pledge Agreement.*** Commitments for donations will be made on the attached "Pledge Agreement" (p. 9).

## PLEDGE AGREEMENT

**THIS PLEDGE AGREEMENT** ("Pledge") is made as of the Effective Date noted below, by and between the undersigned "Donor" and the Billings American Legion Baseball Program ("BALB"), a Montana nonprofit corporation exempt from federal income tax as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Pledge promises a charitable contribution to BALB pursuant to the terms herein.

In consideration of the mutual promises and obligations contained herein, and for other good and valuable consideration, the Donor and BALB agree as follows:

1. Donor hereby pledges to BALB the total sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_, to be paid in equal annual installments of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ each over \_\_\_\_\_ years, starting on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.
2. Donor's obligation to make payments to fulfill the Pledge or to pay any annual installment of the pledge is not conditioned on or affected by whether the payment is deductible by the Donor or any other payor for federal income tax purposes or federal gift tax purposes.
3. Pledge monies received from Donor by BALB shall be the property of BALB and shall not be deemed a separate trust fund held by BALB in a trustee capacity. BALB agrees that it will apply such monies from Donor hereunder in furtherance of its tax-exempt purposes and will enter Donor's name on the BALB contributor's list. Donor considers the entry of Donor's name on such list a valuable benefit.
4. Distributions and use by BALB of income or principal or both derived from Donor Pledge shall be made at such times, in such amounts, in such ways and, subject to the preceding paragraphs, for such purposes as BALB shall determine in its sole discretion.
5. Donor acknowledges that BALB may incur obligations and engage in ongoing and continuous efforts to establish programs and undertake financial commitments to third parties for the purposes described in this Agreement, which it would not undertake but for Donor's Pledge as provided herein. It is Donor's intent in entering into this Pledge that BALB rely on this Pledge for its budgeting, planning, and other related activities.
6. This Agreement is binding upon Donor and Donor's estate, successors and assigns, for the benefit of, and is enforceable by, BALB.
7. This Agreement shall be governed by and construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Montana.

### **END OF PLEDGE**

DATED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ (the "Effective Date").

<p><b>PLEDGED BY DONOR:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>Signature</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Print Name</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Print Address</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><b>ACCEPTED BY BALB:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>Jeff Ballard Chairman of the Board Billings American Legion Baseball</p>
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