

SHAWNEE REGIONAL SPORTS PARK

Promise vs. Actual Outcome

Revised In-Depth Retrospective Case Study | 2000-2026

This revision incorporates the recovered December 2011 Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service report, *Economic Impact of a Regional Sports Complex in Shawnee, Oklahoma*, by Dave Shideler and Joe Benton.

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Hidden Valley - Integrity of the Game

Core research question: What institutional, facility, governance, public-finance, management, marketing, and market conditions determine whether projected sports-tourism demand becomes sustained facility-level activity?

Executive Summary

The recovered OSU report materially improves the evidentiary foundation of this case study. OSU did **not** conduct a feasibility study and did **not** promise that Shawnee would attract a specified number of tournaments. It modeled economic effects that could follow if a suitable complex attracted tournament visitors. OSU states that the validity of this assumption depended on suitable facilities, appropriate maintenance, and effective marketing, and expressly says the report is not a benefit-cost analysis.

1. Methodology and Evidence Architecture

This study preserves the 2011 OSU model as a fixed historical benchmark, then compares municipal records and later Hidden Valley event data without rewriting the original model with hindsight. USSSA is only one sanctioning ecosystem; municipality fields are not economic catchment areas; and calculated team-entry fees are analytical measures, not proof of actual collections, profit, municipal revenue, or disposition of funds.

2. Municipal Development Path

The Regional Park concept appeared by 2000 and evolved through site changes, advisory committees, grants, leases, professional planning, dedicated financing, and competing capital priorities. By 2009 the City had acquired approximately 160 acres for roughly \$800,000. Jacobs Engineering later developed a master plan whose construction estimate reached \$19,535,167. Lions Club Ballfields remained existing community infrastructure throughout this period.

3. What OSU Actually Studied

The December 2011 report by Dave Shideler and Joe Benton assessed anticipated economic impact using City/Jacobs assumptions, peer-community participation information, Oklahoma tourism data, federal travel reimbursement rates, and IMPLAN multipliers. OSU explicitly states that the report does not address feasibility, assumes tournament visitors will come if the park is built, and says that assumption depends on suitable facilities, maintenance, and effective marketing. It also states that the report is not a benefit-cost analysis.

4. Impact vs. Contribution

OSU treated out-of-town visitor spending as the true economic impact because it represented new money entering the local economy. Construction, operations and maintenance, equipment purchases, and local-team spending were treated as contributions or reallocations of existing resources rather than new external income.

5. Jacobs Facility and Operating Assumptions

Measure	OSU/Jacobs value
Youth baseball fields	12
Youth soccer fields	8
Multi-use fields	3
Construction estimate	\$19,535,167
One-time equipment	\$188,000
Annual operating expense	\$80,000
Annual payroll + benefits	\$231,984
Annual maintenance & operations	\$311,984
Staffing	6 FTE

6. Peer Communities: Source of the 13 and 35 Benchmarks

The City supplied OSU contacts for Ardmore, Bixby, Broken Arrow, Chickasha, and Muskogee. OSU calculated an average of 13 baseball tournaments per year, 35 teams per tournament, 12 players per team, and approximately 16.62 out-of-town teams per tournament.

Peer	Tournaments	Avg. teams/tournament
Ardmore	13	25
Bixby	17	38
Broken Arrow	7	60
Chickasha	10	36
Muskogee	17	28
OSU average	13	35

Interpretive correction: 13 tournaments and 35 teams are peer-community averages, not OSU guarantees for Shawnee.

7. The 7 / 13 / 17 Scenarios

OSU used 7, 13, and 17 baseball tournaments because those values represented the minimum, average, and maximum in the five-community sample. It paired those with one or two soccer tournaments. The report describes 17 as the maximum a community could host given the limited weekends in the usual summer travel-baseball season. The municipal discussion of potentially 30 tournaments therefore exceeded OSU's modeled baseball scenarios and should not be attributed to OSU.

8. Visitor-Spending Models

Method	Baseball/tournament	Soccer/tournament
Community-based	\$51,317	\$233,297
State travel data	\$72,366	\$328,987
Federal reimbursement	\$116,224	\$528,373

After indirect and induced effects, modeled total output per baseball tournament ranged from \$68,490 to \$155,118; soccer ranged from \$311,369 to \$705,192. OSU's implied output multiplier was 1.33.

9. Annual Economic-Output Scenarios

Event schedule	Community	State data	Federal rate
7 BB + 1 soccer	\$790,800	\$1,115,164	\$1,791,018
13 BB + 1 soccer	\$1,201,741	\$1,694,662	\$2,721,727
17 BB + 2 soccer	\$1,787,071	\$2,520,076	\$4,047,391

For the 17-baseball/2-soccer scenario, modeled employment ranged from 22.3 to 61.1 and labor income from \$637,394 to \$1,377,998. These are conditional economic-output estimates, not municipal receipts.

10. Economic Impact vs. Municipal Revenue

Scenario	Total modeled output	Shawnee retail sales tax
7 BB + 1 soccer	\$790,800-\$1,791,018	\$18,545-\$42,002
13 BB + 1 soccer	\$1,201,741-\$2,721,727	\$28,182-\$63,828
17 BB + 2 soccer	\$1,787,071-\$4,047,391	\$41,909-\$94,917

At the high event-volume/high spending scenario, roughly **\$4.05 million in modeled economic output** corresponded to approximately **\$94,917 in modeled Shawnee retail sales-tax collections**. OSU also used \$311,984 in annual maintenance and operations. This comparison illustrates why economic impact and municipal cash flow are different measures, but it is not a completed fiscal-feasibility calculation.

11. Lodging Assumptions and Uncertainty

OSU estimated 199 hotel rooms per baseball tournament, approximately \$26,383 in lodging revenue over two nights, and about \$1,319 in lodging tax. For soccer, estimated room demand exceeded local availability; the model used 232 available rooms, producing \$30,759 in lodging revenue and \$1,538 in lodging tax. OSU cautioned that soccer lodging could be overstated because some Oklahoma City-area visitors might not stay overnight in Shawnee or might lodge closer to Oklahoma City.

12. Municipal Decision Tool and Fiscal Questions

City staff distributed the completed OSU study and a separate one-page summary at the December 19, 2011 Commission meeting. The OSU economist was not present. Staff said questions could be routed to the researcher and that the study would be posted online. In February 2012, a citizen challenged assumptions involving debt service, out-of-town participation, overnight stays, and an asserted annual cash deficit. The exchange illustrates the boundary now made explicit by the recovered report: economic-output modeling is not the same as project feasibility, municipal revenue, or benefit-cost analysis.

13. Open Records Request 26-99

The 2026 records request sought the study, summary, supporting data, contract and payment records, communications, visitor-spending support, tax projections, Jacobs operating material, and later reliance records. The City reported that an extensive review found no responsive documents. The 2011 audiovisual record nevertheless establishes that City staff possessed and distributed the report and summary. Independent recovery of the OSU publication resolves the central documentary gap but does not explain when or why City copies became unavailable.

14. 2016 Outcome Checkpoint

By March 2016, discussion had shifted from building the Regional Park to whether the City should sell all, sell part, or retain the 160-acre property. Records identify access, utilities, and improvement costs as barriers. This supports treating implementation conditions, not merely the existence of a tournament market, as central to the actual outcome.

15. Hidden Valley Retrospective

Community	2011+ USSSA events	Events/active year	Teams/event
Ardmore	47	2.9	52.3
Bixby	260	20.0	44.7
Broken Arrow	229	15.3	39.3
Chickasha	39	4.3	29.4
Muskogee	30	6.0	24.1

This is not a replication of OSU's survey. Hidden Valley observes public USSSA records; OSU used community-reported participation. OSU's 35-team average lies within the later observed peer range.

16. Shawnee, Lions Club, and FireLake

Measure	Observed value
Shawnee municipality, 2011+ USSSA baseball Event URLs	0
Lions Club Ballfields	41 Event URLs 869 teams \$98,842 calculated entry fees
Direct FireLake	182 Event URLs 4,588 teams \$1,432,005 calculated entry fees
All records containing FireLake	202 Event URLs 6,117 teams \$2,357,590 calculated entry fees

The zero Shawnee municipality count is a bounded USSSA-dataset finding, not proof that no other tournaments occurred. FireLake's later activity demonstrates substantial regional tournament capture, while Lions Club provides an earlier local baseline.

17. Revised Integrated Findings

1. OSU modeled conditional economic effects; it did not establish feasibility or captured demand.
2. The 13-tournament and 35-team figures are peer averages; 17 is a high scenario; 30 was municipal discussion.
3. OSU itself distinguishes economic impact from local contribution, and its sales-tax analysis distinguishes economic output from municipal revenue.
4. Later records support the existence of a regional tournament market but show heterogeneous outcomes.
5. Municipal Shawnee does not show a comparable post-2010 USSSA baseball footprint, while FireLake records substantial activity.
6. Access, utilities, improvement costs, management, marketing, and capital priorities are therefore central variables for explaining the actual outcome.

18. Doctoral Significance and Next Research Phase

A potential methodological contribution is to preserve historical economic-impact studies as fixed prospective benchmarks, distinguish academic modeling from municipal expectations, and then test subsequent facility-level outcomes with administrative records and event data. Next research should seek the OSU one-page summary, working spreadsheets, peer survey responses and correspondence; reconstruct post-2011 capital and operating records; trace the 160-acre parcel; add other sanctioning bodies; and build a formal OSU-to-Hidden-Valley variable crosswalk.

Conclusion

The recovered 2011 OSU report sharpens rather than overturns the case study. OSU did not promise that a Shawnee Regional Sports Park would succeed. It modeled what economic effects could follow if a suitable, maintained, and effectively marketed complex attracted tournament visitors. Fifteen years later, the relevant research question is therefore not whether OSU was 'right' or 'wrong,' but what conditions converted - or failed to convert - modeled sports-tourism opportunity into sustained facility-level activity. The later record indicates that the regional tournament market existed, but its capture was uneven: municipal Shawnee shows no comparable post-2010 USSSA baseball footprint in the bounded dataset, while FireLake documents substantial regional activity.

Primary Sources

Shideler, Dave, and Joe Benton. *Economic Impact of a Regional Sports Complex in Shawnee, Oklahoma*. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, December 2011. City of Shawnee municipal minutes research dataset and archived December 19, 2011 Commission livestream. Jacobs Engineering Regional Park planning materials. Open Records Request 26-99. AIUSSSA - HVI0G 9-10-2026.csv.