

To: Mayor Dyer

From: Allen Johnson

Date: March 4, 2015

Subject: **Tinker Field**

In response to questions regarding the history and status of Tinker Field, below is an overview.

As the design of the Citrus Bowl was finalized, the footprint of the stadium expanded beyond the original footprint of the Citrus Bowl and into the outfield of Tinker Field. As that became apparent, staff had to consider the future of Tinker Field, a city-owned and operated venue. City staff undertook a due diligence process to identify options for the future of Tinker Field. This process resulted in the following key findings:

- Baseball was no longer the primary use of Tinker Field, in fact there has not been a revenue-generating baseball team since 1999. The major revenue-generating events at Tinker Field are now concerts and festivals.
- The 80-year-old facility needs significant work in order to meet current building codes and life-safety standards. The City of Orlando engaged Walter P. Moore and Associates, Inc. to conduct a structural condition assessment of Tinker Field grandstands. The assessment's diagnostic engineer found that "the overall structural integrity of the grandstand has been compromised due to extensive corrosion of the steel superstructure." The work necessary to repair the grandstands, bring site utilities up to current code (including some sanitary sewer lines dating to the 1930s), provide stormwater drainage and otherwise provide a code-compliant structure, would cost approximately \$10 million.
- There were a number of significant events that occurred at Tinker Field in the last 80 years that should be commemorated.

Given these findings, City staff recommends that Tinker Field be designated as an Orlando Historical Landmark. With the designation, the City of Orlando would remove the grandstands and repurpose Tinker Field (infield and outfield) to maintain the historic field but allow the space to be used for festivals and other community events.

Additionally, the City is engaging the Wells' Built Museum and former Executive Director of the Orange County Regional History Center Sara Van Arsdel to research and identify the historic events and activities that took place at Tinker Field. Once identified, they will work with District 5 City Commissioner Regina Hill and the rest of the Orlando City Council to develop a historic marker and/or a display for the site that recognizes these significant events. A timetable for this activity has not yet been finalized.

The Ripken Foundation had reached out to the City regarding their program but then decided to implement their program in another city.

This staff recommendation will go to the Orlando City Council on Monday, March 9, which will be a public meeting.