

Raiders' Vegas stadium community benefits outline unveiled

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LAS VEGAS - The public got its first glimpse Thursday at an Oakland Raiders stadium document designed to ensure the participation of minorities, small businesses and others in the planned project.

The outline of the community benefits plan unveiled during a meeting of the public board that oversees the proposed project includes targets for small business participation and calls on the team to carry out community outreach programs. The plan, required by state law, is meant to ensure the greatest possible participation by the local community in the design, construction and operation of the \$1.9 billion project.

"I think that the benefit that the stadium can provide to the entire community is important to everybody here," Las Vegas Stadium Authority chairman Steve Hill said after the meeting. "One of the reasons why it is a hot-button issue now ... is that it is the most timely agreement that we need to get done. They are going to start the construction process."

The outline listed the state-mandated 15 percent participation of local small businesses, but it did not include a hiring target of minority workers, an issue that has dominated the public's comments during the board's meetings. Board consultant Jeremy Aguero said staff is using U.S. Census Bureau data to create a matrix to determine the appropriate hiring targets, which will be included in the final draft.

The team wants to kick off the 2020 season at a 65,000-seat stadium near the Las Vegas Strip. Guests of hotels and other lodging facilities in the Las Vegas area are contributing \$750 million to the project.

Similar documents used in other stadium deals have included hiring guidelines. In Minnesota, the state set a goal in 2012 for 32 percent of construction workers at U.S. Bank Stadium to be minorities and 6 percent women. The Vikings' project surpassed the goal with 37 percent minority hiring and 9 percent women.

In Inglewood, California, the City Council in 2015 approved an agreement for the construction of the Rams and Chargers stadium requiring that no less than 18 percent of the funds awarded for construction-related contracts and subcontracts go to minority and disadvantaged businesses.

The board also authorized a six-month deadline extension Thursday to allow the team and its construction and design contractors to determine the project's guaranteed maximum price, which is needed for approval of the development agreement. The stadium design process needs to be about 65 percent completed before a reliable price can be determined.

The deadline change means the team's contractors will be able to do preliminary work at the 62-acre site west of the Mandalay Bay casino-resort, but it leaves the Raiders on the hook for covering the costs of that work should the project fall apart.

"It is obviously critical that they be able to continue to do what they need to do while we are working through these agreements," Hill said, adding that otherwise, the project would probably be delayed by a year.