

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Youth & Civic Center Study Released in Salisbury**

**Salisbury, MD** - Wicomico County's Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism, who oversee operation of the Wicomico Youth and Civic Center, today, released the market and economic analysis study prepared by the Maryland Stadium Authority to determine whether the facility should be renovated, expanded, or rebuilt to best serve county residents and visitors.

The study was completed by Crossroads Consulting Services. It evaluated the existing facility, its uses and potential. In addition to the findings, the report contains a number of recommendations for facility modifications.

The study determined the management of the Youth and Civic Center, as well as its multi-purpose focus have served Wicomico County well. The facility remains competitive in the event market and its versatility has allowed it to attract room-night generating events in recent years.

However, the aging of the building and its amenities are beginning to erode its market, which will worsen if steps are not taken to update it. The study contends "remaining status quo will result in a continual decline in both event activity and competitive position over the long-term."

Of the options studied, the most economically feasible with least financial risk was determined to be an upgrade of the existing facility. Expanding the existing space would maintain the existing market share while allowing it to grow, increase revenues, and enhance the overall impact to the local economy.

Some of the recommendations include:

- Replace seats and redesign the seating bowl to offer closer experience and better sight lines
- Add a mechanical curtain system that allows arena to be partitioned for smaller events
- Build a divisible ballroom, meeting rooms and exhibit space outside Normandy arena
- Reconfigure the overall layout to accommodate simultaneous events
- Improve traffic and parking to support activities at a larger facility

This approach is preferable to building a new facility, which would necessitate a far greater financial commitment. It also achieves the goals expressed by stakeholders to book more events and offer greater variety of attractions to the regional audience.

The study concludes it is in the County's best interest to improve its ability to operate as the best multi-purpose civic center possible and capitalize upon its existing market, excellent customer service reputation, affordability and growing sports visitor industry.

"The Maryland Stadium Authority is pleased to assist Wicomico County in evaluating the Youth and Civic Center and recommending options to improve the facility," said Chairman John Morton III.

"The preliminary study provides decision makers with information which allows them to make an informed decision about the most productive and cost effective means to achieve their goals."

With the completion of the study, the governing Civic Center Commission will process the study's findings and present the County Executive with a recommendation to move forward with Phase II of the study. If accepted by the Executive, Phase II entails working with the Stadium Authority in developing architectural engineering drawings and estimates so costs can be estimated to carry out the steps outlined by Crossroads Consulting.

"We are extremely grateful for the Maryland Stadium Authority's support in conducting this study," said Wicomico County Executive Rick Pollitt. "The Wicomico Youth and Civic Center is one of this County's many treasures. Not only does it improve our quality of life, but the events held there such as the Annual Poodle Club of America's National Specialty Show and multiple sports marketing tournaments such as wrestling result in a positive economic impact for our community."

"The report prepared by Crossroads Consulting, LLC. confirms that modernizing and expanding the venue is a viable investment if we are to continue to grow," the County Executive added.

Ed Urban, Chairman of the Civic Center Commission, gave his thoughts.

"The commission had a long-term vision and plan for the future of the Civic Center," he noted. "This report substantiates that vision, and we're excited to now embark on the next chapter. It is imperative that we as citizens of Wicomico County continue the work begun here if we are to retain and grow business in a competitive marketplace."

The complete study may be viewed online at:  
<http://www.mdstad.com/content/view/100/135/>

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[www.WicomicoCivicCenter.org](http://www.WicomicoCivicCenter.org)

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