



Perris Press Release

Contact: Joe Vargo, Perris Public Information Officer
Phone: 951-956-2120
jvargo@cityofperris.org

Big League Dreams Perris Valley Has the "Wow"Factor

Kevin Flora calls it "the wow factor."

That's the first impression that visitors to Big League Dreams Perris Valley sports complex usually get when they walk through the \$25 million facility on Trumble Road east of Downtown. There's plenty to be wowed about.

The 35-acre complex features four replica baseball stadiums—Yankee Stadium, Fenway Park, Dodger Stadium and the Big A in Anaheim.

There's also two covered indoor soccer fields, a sit-down restaurant where patrons can view all four baseball diamonds, a snack-bar, gift shop and batting cages. About 600 parking spaces can accommodate the expected crowds.

Step onto the field and Flora says the attention to detail will make players and fans believe they are really experiencing a game at those historic diamonds. Fenway Park at Big League Dreams in Perris boasts its own version of the Green Monster. Yankee Stadium has its own set of monuments to Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Mickey Mantle and Phil Rizzuto.

The Big A sports its own rock waterfall. The scoreboard at Dodgers Stadium reflects the situation right before Kirk Gibson's still-talked about pinch-hit homer to end Game 1 of the 1988 World Series, which LA went on to win.

There are two minor league replica fields as well, Durham and Pawtucket. All the fields are scaled to about 80 percent size of their real-life counterparts. Center field is about 296-feet deep in all parks, and the foul poles are about 260-feet from home plate.

Flora expects the covered soccer fields to play hosts to teams seven days a week, eventually drawing 100 youth and 100 adult soccer squads. They'll play on artificial turf made to resemble and feel like the finest natural lawns.

Flora said the venue already is booked completely in 2012, with tournaments lined up for 50 weekends. He predicted the complex will attract 200,000 visitors to Perris and bring in at least \$1 million to local coffers.

Workers are scrambling to complete last-minute fixes at Big League Dreams Perris Valley before the 3 p.m. Jan. 14 official unveiling. It's mostly little things, like minor electrical fixes, installing sprinklers, putting up drywall, resealing windows.

"This is an exciting time," Flora said.

Big League Dreams Perris Valley is the largest redevelopment project in Riverside County and City officials expressed their gratitude and thankfulness to the county's Economic Development Agency, which is funding the project. County Supervisor Marion Ashley, who represents Perris at the county level, took a personal interest in Big League Dreams and said it is a project that all Perris Valley residents can take pride in.

About 350 construction jobs were created while the complex was taking shape. About 50 full and part-time permanent jobs will be created to operate the facility.

Ashley, a Perris resident, called the Big League Dreams complex a "great facility" that will serve youth and adult sports enthusiasts for 30-miles in each direction. The new complex, along with a planned aquatics center, a Wyndham hotel and development of the nearby Perris Crossroads shopping center and commercial and residential construction along Ethanac Road mean South Perris is primed to become a major economic engine. The City of Perris is providing extra police patrols in the area to ensure that visitors to the Big League Dreams complex and the surrounding businesses, Ashley said.

"This is our most ambitious project," Ashley said. "It's fabulous. It's so good people will not believe it until they see it."

Busch toured the sports park recently and said the finished product will exceed expectations.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch said the sports complex and planned future development in the same vicinity create a potential economic goldmine for the entire Perris Valley.

Busch toured the sports park recently and said the finished product will exceed expectations.

"This is everything they promised and a little more," he said. "It is really great. Our main objective is to serve the youth in our community. Anything we can do to give them the opportunity to become better citizens makes the City of Perris a better place."

The Mayor said the sports complex will "raise the profile of the entire Perris Valley by attracting tournaments from Los Angeles, San Diego, Northern California and even out of state. He said visitors to Perris will get a chance to skydive at the Perris Valley Airport, boat at the Lake Perris State Recreation Area, ride the rails at the Orange Empire Railway Museum and watch auto racing at the Perris Auto Speedway.

"We've got a lot of venues that offer quality entertainment," he said.

Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Al Landers, who serves on the City Council's Parks and Recreation Community, said he first spoke to representatives of Big League Dreams 15 years ago.

The company, which is based in Chino Hills, operates 11 sports complexes around the country, including locations in Riverside and Cathedral City. Landers said he visited several complexes and said they have nothing on the one that opens soon in Perris.

"Can you imagine what kind of opportunities this gives to our youth?" he said. "It's a great, great attraction which the City of Perris truly deserves. It's wonderful for our kids, our people, our City."

Landers noted that Perris officials recently reopened Bob Long Memorial Park after a \$1.88 million renovation. With Big League Dreams Perris Valley about to open, Landers said the City's parks "are second to none."

He predicted the location around Big League Dreams Perris Valley "will blossom and bloom" with more development and venues.

Perris City Councilwoman Joanne Evans said that before Big League Dreams Perris Valley became a reality, the area around the sports complex needed a lot of tender loving care. That's all changed, and when a new hotel and other businesses arrive, the area will look top-notch. She said she is particularly proud that the City of Perris, working with private enterprise and Riverside County, was able to bring the sports complex to reality in a difficult economy. Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley, a Perris native and resident, was instrumental in helping Big League Dreams Perris Valley become a reality.

"It's like Walt Disney World came to Perris," she said. "It's going to open up a world of opportunities for our youth sports programs. I think it's one of the best things that has ever happened to our City."

Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers called Big League Dreams Perris Valley a "win-win-win proposition" because it will bring many new people to the City, increase sports opportunities for local youth and adults and add tax dollars to municipal coffers.

"It's a great success for our City," Rogers said. "But we could not achieve this without our partnerships with business and with Riverside County. Because of this, we have been able to achieve this great success."

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough said he was impressed with the attention to detail and high-quality of the construction.

"Once again we are sending the message to our City and community that we take parks and recreation very seriously. The City of Perris is all about building partnerships and making things happen. I am blown away by this. This is unbelievable."

Yarbrough said City staff should be congratulated for their "professional, proactive and aggressive" attitude that makes big projects possible in Perris. The staff, combined with a cohesive and united City Council, promises to lead Perris to new heights once the economy regains lost momentum.

"We're about making things happen," Yarbrough said. "I am very happy with the results I see."



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch stands in front of the famed monuments in the Yankee Stadium replica at the Perris Valley Big League Dreams sports complex. The facility will "raise the profile of the entire Perris Valley."



Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Al Landers said the Big League Dreams complex culminates 15 years of efforts by City officials to bring top-notch recreational facilities to Perris.



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough in the outfield at the Dodger Stadium replica. Yarbrough says the complex came about because of the City's ability to partner with other government agencies and private enterprises.



Perris City Councilwoman Joanne Evans: Big League Dreams is like "Walt Disney World came to Perris."