



MEMORANDUM

Date: June 6, 2017

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **Major League Soccer's Room Night and Marketing Performance 2017**

Please see the attached report from Visit Tucson regarding the participation by various professional soccer teams in Preseason Major League Soccer (MLS) Spring Training, most of which occurred at the Kino Sports Complex.

The analysis is straightforward. Our contribution, which was capped at \$130,000 annually, will be made at the rate of \$80,000 as determined by the number of teams and length of stay in hotels in the unincorporated area of the County. In total, 1,803 room nights were purchased for teams staying in unincorporated County hotels and resorts; 2,138 room nights occurred from teams lodging in hotels and resorts within the City of Tucson; and 702 room nights occurred in Oro Valley area hotels and resorts.

Our investment to accelerate and increase Preseason MLS Spring Training started with our investment four years ago. At that time, our investment was \$190,376 for 3,008 room nights. The 2017 decrease in room nights does not reflect a drop Preseason MLS; it means the teams are now participating with other jurisdictions. In total, 4,643 room nights occurred in 2017.

The scope and economic impact of MLS Preseason has been increasing each year, while our investment has been decreasing. Our partners in this venture, FC Tucson and Visit Tucson, have been extraordinarily cooperative in ensuring Preseason MLS Spring Training is successful.

I have authorized a payment to Visit Tucson in the amount of \$80,000 pursuant to our agreement entered into on January 17, 2017.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Tom Burke, Deputy County Administrator for Administration
Diane Frisch, Director, Attractions and Tourism



TO: Mr. Chuck Huckelberry, County Administrator, Pima County

CC: Ms. Jan Leshar, Deputy County Administrator, Pima County
 Ms. Diane Frisch, Director of Attractions & Tourism, Pima County
 Ms. Reenie Ochoa, Director, Pima County Stadium District
 Mr. Greg Foster, Managing Partner, FC Tucson

FROM: Brent DeRaad, Visit Tucson

RE: Major League Soccer's Room-Night & Marketing Performance

DATE: June 2, 2017

2017 Agreement

On Jan. 17, 2017, the Pima County Board of Supervisors approved a three-year agreement, renewable annually, to reimburse Visit Tucson up to, but not to exceed, \$130,000 annually for Major League Soccer (MLS) teams' participation in MLS Preseason in Tucson.

Visit Tucson will write a check in June 2017 to MLS for the entire amount (\$246,675) due to its teams for participation in the 2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson. Of that amount, Visit Tucson is seeking reimbursement of \$80,000 from Pima County as outlined in this memo.

Parties to this agreement include: Pima County; Pima County Stadium District; City of Tucson; Major League Soccer; FC Tucson Events; and Visit Tucson. The agreement covers MLS Preseason in Tucson activities from late January through February from 2017 through 2019.

For the 2017 event, Pima County agreed to pay MLS up to \$20,000 per team based on: 1) teams staying 12 or more nights in hotels or resorts within unincorporated Pima County; and 2) marketing done by MLS teams to their fans encouraging them to travel to Tucson for MLS Preseason in Tucson. Teams staying less than 12 nights are eligible to receive \$1,667 per night. In all cases, the value of the teams' marketing of MLS Preseason in Tucson to their fans must equal or exceed the payment amount.

Lodging—Unincorporated Pima County Properties

<u>Team</u>	<u>Resort/Hotel</u>	<u>Stay</u>	<u>Room Nights</u>	<u>Total Expenditures</u>
Sporting Kansas City	Westin LaPaloma	30 nights (1/27-2/26)	1,020	\$284,634
Houston Dynamo	Loews Ventana Canyon	13 nights (2/13-2/26)	379	\$115,111
New England Revolution	Westin LaPaloma	13 nights (2/13-2/26)	404	<u>\$177,792</u>
Totals—Properties in Unincorporated Pima County			1,803	\$577,537

Source: FC Tucson, May 31, 2017

The other seven teams that participated in MLS preseason training activities, but stayed in Tucson and Oro Valley hotels and resorts were: Colorado Rapids; New York City Football Club; New York Red Bulls; Portland Timbers; Real Salt Lake; San Jose Earthquakes; and Seattle Sounders.

Recap—2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson

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*Lodging—Tucson Properties

<u>Team</u>	<u>Resort/Hotel</u>	<u>Stay</u>	<u>Room Nights</u>	<u>Total Expenditures</u>
Colorado Rapids	Marriott University	13 nights (2/13-26)	352	\$87,849
NYC Football Club	JW Starr Pass	13 nights (2/13-16)	648	\$185,449
Portland Timbers	JW Starr Pass	14 nights (1/22-2/5)	378	\$152,058
Real Salt Lake	Marriott University	6 nights (1/28-2/3)	211	\$54,540
San Jose Earthquakes	JW Starr Pass	8 nights (1/30-2/7)	306	\$61,556
Seattle Sounders	JW Starr Pass	9 nights (1/28-2/6)	<u>243</u>	<u>\$107,734</u>
Total—Tucson Properties			2,138	\$649,186

*Source: FC Tucson, May 31, 2017

*Lodging—Oro Valley Properties

<u>Team</u>	<u>Resort/Hotel</u>	<u>Stay</u>	<u>Room Nights</u>	<u>Total Expenditures</u>
New York Red Bulls	Hilton El Con	13 nights (1/23-2/4)	351	\$152,894
New York Red Bulls	Hilton El Con	13 nights (2/13-26)	<u>351</u>	<u>\$174,004</u>
Total—Oro Valley Properties			702	\$326,898
Total—2017 MLS Preseason in metro Tucson			4,643	\$1,553,621

*Source: FC Tucson, May 31, 2017

Team Expenditures

Based on information in Visit Tucson's May 2014-16 MLS recaps to Pima County, here is a comparison of reported expenditures for teams that stayed in hotels/resorts in unincorporated Pima County in 2014-17, along with Pima County's investment.

	<u>Room Nights</u>	<u>Total Expenditures</u>	<u>Pima County's Investment</u>
2017	1,803	\$577,537	\$80,000
*2016	2,610	\$724,192	\$130,000
2015	2,822	\$739,550	\$185,000
2014	3,008	\$1,327,928	\$190,376

* 2016 figures include Pima County and JW Marriott Starr Pass room nights & expenditures. Pima County's figures without Starr Pass were 1,963 room nights & \$517,700 in total expenditures. Pima County's 2016 payment factored in that JW Marriott Tucson Starr Pass pays Pima County a 2% fee on all hotel revenues. The City of Tucson is reimbursing Visit Tucson in 2017 for MLS team stays at Starr Pass and other Tucson properties.

Overview

Only 39% of the MLS room nights (1,803 of 4,643) were consumed in Pima County properties. Part of the issue is that county properties were booked with meetings and other business during the first two weeks of February, which is our busiest tourism timeframe due to the Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase. Metro Tucson hotel/resort revenue per available room (RevPAR) was up 12% and 8.8%, respectively, year over year, in January and February 2017.

Following are notes from FC Tucson's Greg Foster, which provide a comprehensive event overview:

The 2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson was a tremendous success. Pima County, Tucson and Oro Valley hosted 10 MLS teams over the course of six weeks. Metro Tucson was the site for 23 MLS preseason games. A handful of other locations in America also hosted games. The next highest number of games hosted by any site was six. Tucson is now the preeminent site for MLS preseason.

Recap—2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson

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Overview (continued)

Kino Sports Complex hosted eight teams and operated at full capacity. Kino added two fields and made available additional locker room space to accommodate New York City Football Club. Naranja Park in Oro Valley provided two additional training fields to meet the needs of the New York Red Bulls and the University of Arizona provided field space for the Seattle Sounders. Kino was also the site of 22 games. Naranja Park hosted one game.

2017 attendance was strong. The previous attendance record for Kino North Stadium was broken twice in February.

Exposure for Pima County, Tucson and Oro Valley was excellent. The live stream game broadcasts (paid for and produced by MLS) resulted in 300,000 views. Two games were also broadcast on the New York-based Yes Network, the nation's largest regional television network.

Global stars trained and played in the 2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson. David Villa, Andrea Pirlo and Tim Howard, collectively, boast nearly 44 million social media followers. Social and digital media generated by the MLS teams and players while they were in Tucson generated over 4.6 million engagements.

The Pima County, City of Tucson, Town of Oro Valley and Visit Tucson sponsorship remains vital to development of our community as a hub for Major League Soccer preseason and associated sports tourism.

- Total hotel room nights purchased by visiting clubs was 4,643 in 2017.
- Total hotel expenditures by visiting clubs grew from \$1,170,550 in 2016 to an estimated \$1,553,621 in 2017. While the number of room nights consumed was the same, the teams paid higher room rates and spent more on hotel/resort food and beverages.
- Total number of tickets sold to fans with out-of-state mailing addresses: 858.
- Total number of tickets sold to fans with mailing addresses in Arizona, but outside of Pima County: 1,763. This is up from 1,119 in 2016.
- Most of the games were live streamed with the production cost entirely borne by MLS. An example of the live stream can be found here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEJE0iQzm1Y>

Pima County Bed-Tax Revenue

Per invoices supplied by Westin La Paloma and Loews Ventana Canyon, the teams that stayed in these properties paid the following amounts of transient occupancy (bed) tax:

\$21,841 – Sporting Kansas City (Westin La Paloma Resort)

\$7,955 – New England (Westin La Paloma Resort)

\$7,675 – Houston (Loews Ventana Canyon Resort)

\$37,471 – Total 2017 Bed Tax Paid by MLS teams at Properties in Unincorporated Pima County

Of the \$37,471 (12.05%) in estimated resort/hotel taxes collected above, \$18,886 (6.05%) went to the State of Arizona and \$18,585 (6%) went to Pima County.

With Pima County also receiving 2% of all expenditures at JW Marriott Starr Pass Resort, that total equals \$7,981 (\$399,063 x 2%).

Recap—2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson

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MLS & MLS Team Marketing

The quality, quantity and value of MLS Preseason in Tucson marketing delivered by the participating teams in 2017 far exceeds what has been produced in previous years.

FC Tucson did an outstanding job this year of ensuring participating teams promote the event to their fans through a variety of platforms from late December through the event. MLS Preseason in Tucson was promoted through the teams' websites, social media channels and via email to fans and season ticket holders.

FC Tucson has made enhancements to the teams' marketing and to the overall operation of the event in each year that it has staged the MLS Preseason in Tucson.

It's important to note that FC Tucson negotiates directly with the teams to secure their participation annually in MLS Preseason in Tucson. We at Visit Tucson were thrilled that FC Tucson brought in both New York teams, while also attracting Seattle and Portland, which both deliver fans to Tucson due to non-stop air service on Alaska Airlines. Delta provides seasonal non-stop service between Tucson and Seattle, as well.

Sporting Kansas City has been coming in for an entire month in recent years, and, along with the New York City Football Club, delivered an incredible amount of marketing value to Tucson and the event this year.

2016 Team Marketing Overview

Colorado

- **Digital:** The Rapids provided MLS Preseason in Tucson with three run-of-site ads on www.coloradorapids.com in January and February 2017. These ads helped generate 616 page views with an average time on page of one minute and 34 seconds.
- **Social Media:** Colorado implemented a "Photo of the Day" contest on Instagram on three days—Feb. 17, 22 and 26, 2017—which showcased metro Tucson to Colorado Rapids' fans. Actions for the three posts totaled 2,486.
- **Email:** MLS Preseason in Tucson was included in an email blast to fans and in a blast to season ticket holders. The emails were sent to 16,168 email addresses and 2,420 opens were recorded. These emails were responsible for 90 clicks to FC Tucson's website for MLS Preseason in Tucson tickets and information.

Houston

- **Digital:** The Dynamo provided eight weeks (January-February 2017) of banner ad exposure on www.HoustonDynamo.com (desktop and mobile) promoting MLS Preseason in Tucson. The campaign delivered 171,000 impressions.
- **Social Media:** The Dynamo ran a Facebook post about MLS Preseason in Tucson on Feb. 24, 2017 that generated six shares and 140 likes, and a Twitter post on Feb. 25, 2017 that was retweeted 89 times and had 217 likes. Instagram posts about the event on Feb. 25 and 26 generated a total of 2,100 likes.

Recap—2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson

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2016 Team Marketing Overview (continued)

Houston (continued)

- **Email:** MLS Preseason in Tucson was included in the January Dynamo member newsletter, which is sent to all season-ticket holders and in its January e-newsletter that goes to its entire database of 60,000 email addresses.

New England

- **Digital:** The Revolution ran three run-of-site ads on www.revolutionsoccer.net in January and February 2017, which generated 326,000 impressions. On the schedule page, each MLS Preseason in Tucson game included a “Buy Tickets” link. The schedule page had 33,000 page views during preseason.
- **Social Media:** FC Tucson took Revolution players out for a Go-Cart race, which the Revolution recorded. Video of the excursion was shared on the Revolution’s web site and on Facebook (3,500 views), Twitter (2,000 views) and on the Revolution’s YouTube channel (250 views).

New York City Football Club

NYCFC delivered one of the more impressive advertising packages we’ve seen in the past four years.

- **Digital:** Five social media posts were delivered from December 2016 through February 2017.
- **Website:** Throughout January and February 2017, a page was dedicated to MLS Preseason in Tucson on the club’s website – www.nycfc.com, which included a run-of-site ad package. Links to purchase tickets were included and NYCFC offered a special preseason ticket package on its site.
- **Email:** One unique email blast was sent in January 2017 to NYCFC season-ticket holders and one was sent to NYCFC’s general database. MLS Preseason in Tucson was included in six additional customer emails.
- **Broadcast:** Four NYCFC Tucson matches were streamed—two on its website and two on Fox Sports Go, while two matches were also promoted and broadcast on the national YES Network.

New York Red Bulls

- **Digital:** MLS Preseason in Tucson received a rotating banner ad on the home page of www.newyorkredbulls.com. The Red Bulls also ran a digital ad campaign promoting fan travel to Tucson and the tournament, including a special Tucson fan package. The digital campaign generated 750,122 impressions and 1,228 clicks.
- **Social Media:** The Red Bulls ran a social media campaign (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) in January and February 2017 about MLS Preseason in Tucson. These campaigns generated 1.3 million impressions.
- **Email:** The Red Bulls sent a MLS Preseason in Tucson email to 3,800 members and to 12,600 opt-in customers on Jan. 23, 2017. More than 8,900 recipients opened the email and 524 clicked the “book trip” to button. The trip included access to an open training session, Feb. 12, 2017, at Naranja Park in Oro Valley, plus a post-practice meet-and-greet session and player autographs and photos.

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2016 Team Marketing Overview (continued)

Portland

- **Website – www.timbers.com:** Pre-season matches were listed on the schedule page with ticket links, plus the “Preseason Tucson ‘17” logo was included on multiple pages. Timbers.com posted stories throughout preseason, including a story on places to visit, such as Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and Pima Air & Space Museum. Videos were posted documenting the Timbers’ trip to Tucson, including a desert hike. Banner ads promoting MLS Preseason in Tucson were posted on Timbers.com, which generated 265,839 impressions and 314 clicks.
- **Live Streaming:** The Timbers’ Jan. 27, 2017 match vs. the New York Red Bulls and Feb. 4, 2017 match vs. the Seattle Sounders were live streamed on Timbers.com.
- **Social Media:** The Timbers posted multiple Tucson images and videos on their Facebook (303,000 followers) and Twitter (285,000 followers) pages during their stay.

Real Salt Lake

- **Social Media:** MLS Preseason in Tucson posts on Twitter on Jan. 27, 28 and 29, created 18,399 impressions.
- **Website:** Banner ads promoting MLS Preseason in Tucson on www.rsl.com created more than 34,000 impressions and nearly 100 clicks.
- **Email:** Email blasts sent on Jan. 31, 2017, which included a banner ad for MLS Preseason in Tucson, had more than 19,000 opens.

San Jose

- **Contest:** Created an enter-to-win contest for their fans to win VIP tickets to a preseason match in Tucson. Supported it with Twitter and Instagram posts (1,425 likes) and promoted the contest on the preseason landing page on its website – www.sjearthquakes.com.
- **Website:** Created a preseason landing page dedicated to their Tucson contest and ticket purchasing for MLS Preseason in Tucson matches. Page had 382 visits, 123 contest entries and time on site averaged one minute and 23 seconds. MLS Preseason in Tucson was promoted on the footer of the main page of the website and banner and mobile ads for preseason ran, as well.

Seattle

- **Digital Media:** MLS Preseason in Tucson was included on the [www.SoundersFC.com](http://www.soundersfc.com) preseason landing page from Dec. 30, 2016 through Feb. 4, 2017 with promotion of 2017 travel packages and upcoming Tucson events for fans. Impressions: 6,787. Average time on page: 3 minutes, 9 seconds.
- **Digital Ads:** Digital ads ran run-of-site on the website from Dec. 30, 2016 through Feb. 4, 2017 promoting ticket sales and fan events. Impressions: 411,635.
- **Email:** An exclusive contest and promotions email featuring the MLS Preseason in Tucson fan travel package was sent Jan. 24, 2017 to Sounders fans. Impressions: 20,499.
- **Mobile App:** The Sounders FC mobile app featured a MLS Preseason in Tucson ad from Dec. 30, 2016 through Feb. 4, 2017 linking to FC Tucson’s preseason ticket page. Impressions: 21,364.

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2016 Team Marketing Overview (continued)

Seattle (continued)

- **Social Media:** The Sounders promoted MLS Preseason in Tucson travel packages on their Facebook and Twitter pages from Dec. 30, 2016 through Feb. 4, 2017. Facebook impressions: 103,582. Twitter impressions: 96,600.
- **Pub Night at Pueblo Vida Brewing:** For the second consecutive year, the Sounders agreed to stage a pub night (Feb. 3, 2017) at Pueblo Vida Brewing to sign autographs and take photos with fans. This event grew nicely in 2017.

Sporting KC

- **Social Media-Twitter:** Four Twitter posts promoting MLS Preseason in Tucson were delivered on Dec. 22, 2016, Dec. 29, 2016, Jan. 11, 2017 and Jan. 19, 2017. They received an average of 15,130 impressions, 6 retweets and 31 likes. Sporting Kansas City ran “Photo of the Day” posts daily from Feb. 15-19. Those five posts received an average of 20,201 impressions, 8 retweets and 85 likes. Sporting Kansas City also delivered an additional 12 tweets between Jan. 20 and Feb. 12, 2017 promoting the event. Those additional tweets generated 200,000 impressions.
- **Social Media-Facebook:** Three Facebook posts promoting MLS Preseason in Tucson were delivered on Dec. 22, 2016, Dec. 29, 2016 and Jan. 11, 2017. They received an average of 39,776 impressions and 526 engagements. “Photo of the Day” posts ran on Feb. 17 and 19. They received an average of 12,532 impressions and 124 engagements.
- **Social Media-Instagram:** Two Instagram posts promoting MLS Preseason in Tucson were delivered on Dec. 29, 2016 and Jan. 11, 2017. They received an average of 22,362 impressions and 1,444 engagements. “Photo of the Day” posts ran daily from Feb. 15-18, 2017. They received an average of 20,740 impressions and 1,286 engagements as added value.
- **Digital Media:** Banner ads ran on www.sportingkc.com from Dec. 30, 2016 through Feb. 27, 2017 generating 296,509 impressions and 355 clicks.
- **Email:** MLS Preseason in Tucson was included in an email to Sporting Kansas City’s fan database (85,000 email addresses with a 16% open rate) on Jan. 27, 2017 promoting preseason travel to Tucson and game tickets. MLS Preseason in Tucson was included in an email to Sporting Kansas City’s season ticket holders (3,639 email addresses with a 39% open rate) on Feb. 7, 2017 promoting preseason travel to Tucson and game tickets.
- **Website:** Sporting Kansas City’s preseason web page was dedicated to MLS Preseason in Tucson with hotel and ticket links and information about open training sessions for fans. This page received 2,000 views from Jan. 15-Feb. 28, 2017. FCTucson.com received 2,056 clicks from Sporting Kansas City’s promotions for game tickets, Tucson attractions and hotel packages.

Value to Pima County

Marketing

Last year, we valued the teams’ marketing efforts to their fans at roughly \$350,000 based on the digital and social media delivered, along with limited game streaming. Due to FC Tucson’s ability to push forth marketing guidelines to the teams this year, we received far more value, along with two games being aired on YES Network. Due to the difficulty in quantifying specific marketing values, we are conservatively estimating that the marketing value supplied by the teams increased by 5% to \$367,500.

2017 Marketing Value: \$367,500

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Direct Spending

Pima County’s sponsorship agreement with MLS generated 1,803 room nights in January/February 2017 in resorts within unincorporated Pima County, along with team spending of \$577,537. Of that total, an estimated \$18,585 in bed-tax revenue went to Pima County.

Additionally, Pima County received 2% of New York City Football Club’s, Portland Timbers’ and San Jose Earthquakes’ expenditures at JW Marriott Starr Pass Resort, which equates to \$7,981.

This spending does not include MLS or visiting fans’ expenditures. An unknown number of MLS officials, team sponsors and fans stayed in hotels and resorts within unincorporated Pima County.

2017 Total—Pima County + JW Marriott Revenue to County: \$585,518

MLS Preseason in Tucson Revenue to Pima County

FC Tucson will pay Pima County \$40,589 for revenue share, rent and services provided related to the 2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson. Additionally, the Pima County Stadium District received approximately \$10,990 in revenue share from concession sales during the event. The combined payments equal \$51,579.

2017 MLS Preseason Revenue to Pima County: \$51,579

Total Value: \$637,097

Recommended Payment

Based on a review of the teams’ length of stay in metro Tucson, whether they stayed in resorts or hotels within unincorporated Pima County, and marketing performance, it is recommended that Visit Tucson, with full reimbursement from Pima County, pay Major League Soccer \$80,000, per the contract among Pima County, Pima County Stadium District, City of Tucson, MLS, FC Tucson and Visit Tucson. Details follow:

<u>Team</u>	<u>2 Weeks PC Resort/Hotel</u>	<u>Preseason Tucson Marketing</u>	<u>Recommended Payment by FC Tucson</u>
Sporting Kansas City (Westin)	30 nights	yes	\$40,000
Houston Dynamo (Loews Ventana)	13 nights	yes	\$20,000
New England Revolution (Westin)	13 nights	yes	\$20,000
Total:			\$80,000

2017 Proposed Payments

\$80,000 – Pima County

\$101,675 – City of Tucson

\$55,000 – Visit Tucson

\$10,000 – Oro Valley

\$246,675 – 2017 Total Payment to MLS Teams

Return on Investment

Pima County is being asked to invest \$80,000 in 2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson, down from \$130,000 in 2016 and \$185,000 in 2015.

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2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson Return on Investment to Pima County

\$577,537 – 2017 direct hotel spending by 3 MLS teams staying in resorts in unincorporated Pima County

+\$7,981 – 2% of direct hotel spending by 3 MLS teams that stayed at JW Starr Pass in 2017

+\$51,579 – FC Tucson’s 2017 MLS-related payments and revenue share to Pima County

\$637,097 – Total 2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson revenue to Pima County

/\$80,000 – 2017 requested reimbursement of MLS-related expenses from Pima County

\$7.96 – **Pima County’s 2017 return on investment in MLS Preseason in Tucson**

2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson Total Cash Return on Investment

\$1,553,621 – 2017 direct spending by 10 MLS teams in metro Tucson

/\$246,675 – Total 2017 investment by Pima County/Tucson/Oro Valley/Visit Tucson

\$6.30 – **2017 regional cash return on investment from MLS Preseason in Tucson**

2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson Total Cash + Marketing Return on Investment

\$1,553,621 – 2017 direct spending by 10 MLS teams in metro Tucson

+\$367,500 – 2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson marketing value from participating teams

\$1,921,121 – Total 2017 MLS Preseason in Tucson revenue + marketing

/\$246,675 – Total 2017 investment by Pima County/Tucson/Oro Valley/Visit Tucson

\$7.79 – **2017 regional cash + marketing return on investment from MLS Preseason in Tucson**

Return on Investment

The numbers cited don’t include off-site meals, local transportation, entertainment, shopping or other local team/player expenditures, while in metro Tucson. They also don’t include air fare to get to and from Tucson.

Summary

Pima County’s vision four years ago to step up and reimburse some costs associated with Major League Soccer teams’ travel to Tucson for preseason training is directly responsible for Tucson being the unquestioned leader in this realm.

Each year, FC Tucson and Pima County have grown the scope and economic impact of MLS Preseason in Tucson, while lowering Pima County’s investment. The model created by Pima County and FC Tucson is being replicated throughout the nation as cities attempt to lure teams from Tucson to take part in their preseason tournaments.

FC Tucson does an outstanding job of annually improving MLS Preseason in Tucson. FC Tucson recruits the teams, aids them with accommodations, practice sites, activities they can enjoy during down times, and much more. FC Tucson’s customer service to these teams is a major reason why they return to Tucson annually despite, in some cases, receiving larger financial offers from other cities.

We at Visit Tucson thank Pima County for investing in MLS Preseason in Tucson. Without the County’s leadership, this event would not have come to fruition in our region.