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NEWS RELEASE

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Five Flags Center Study Nearing Completion

Public Presentations and Public Input Session Scheduled

DUBUQUE, Iowa -- Conventions, Sports and Leisure International (CSL), a consultant hired by the City of Dubuque, will present information related to the Five Flags Civic Center Assessment and Study to the Five Flags Civic Center Commission on Wednesday, May 2, at 3:30 p.m. in the Majestic Room of Five Flags Civic Center.

The Dubuque City Council identified a Five Flags Civic Center Assessment and Study as one of its high priorities for 2016-2018 and the issue remained on the high priority list for 2017-2019. The Five Flags Civic Center has long served as an important community asset for Dubuque and its residents. Significant changes have occurred within the event facility industry nationwide and the City of Dubuque was interested in determining the most appropriate path forward as it relates to the Five Flags Civic Center and its ongoing role in Dubuque. To assist in this process, the City hired CSL to conduct a comprehensive study and assessment.

The contract between the City and CSL called for the consulting firm to perform a status assessment of Five Flags Civic Center, perform an expansion study and assessment, analyze naming rights and/or sponsorship opportunities, and develop scenarios and associated costs.

Phase I was to assess the status. As proposed by the consultant, this was to be done in six steps including: study kickoff and initial project planning, local market conditions and visitor industry assessment, analysis of existing Five Flags Civic Center operations, industry trends review, competitive/comparable facility analysis, and market surveys.

The consultant's work began with a series of meetings in the community. As a part of Phase I of the study, a steering committee was established and met with the consultant twice during the kickoff. The consultant also met with a variety of organizations including but not limited to Travel Dubuque, Dubuque Main Street, Greater Dubuque Development Corporation, the Five Flags Civic Center Commission, and more. An initial public meeting was held for citizens to give input as well as share their thoughts and ideas related to Five Flags.

Public input was very important to the study process and was a priority. An online survey was made available to allow for the community to give input regarding the future of the Five Flags Civic Center. Nearly 1,100 responses were received. Bill Krueger, Principal of CSL, reported that in other studies they have performed throughout the US in similar markets, the typical response rate to a survey is 500-700. He indicated this was one of the strongest response rates they have seen for a survey of this type. The survey was a means for input from the citizens of the community into the study. The survey was widely promoted by the City, Chamber, Travel Dubuque, Greater Dubuque Development Corporation, Five Flags, and other organizations. (A summary of responses to the online survey is available at <https://tinyurl.com/yca9lcfk>.)

In Phase I of the Study and Assessment, CSL reviewed data regarding the current and historical operations and activities of Five Flags. They contacted promoters and event planners and performed benchmarking comparisons of Five Flags to others in the community and throughout the region and country. This phase was based on data collection, primary research, review of industry trends, and the survey efforts.

Phase II was an expansion study and assessment. Components included: a market supportable program analysis, event/use levels analysis, conceptual renderings and design charrette, preliminary construction cost analysis, financial operations analysis, and economic impact analysis.

Phase III analyzed naming rights and/or sponsorship opportunities. Phase IV was developed and analyzed scenarios and costs related to each. The RFP identified the following potential scenarios for the consultants; however, as the consultant moved through Phase I and II, these may have been changed or refined to better reflect the research and input received.

1. Demolish Five Flags Civic Center, except for the historic theater, to allow for redevelopment of site.
2. Redevelopment/leasing of Five Flags Civic Center, except for historic theater, for private tenancy or ownership.
3. Renovation of current footprint of Five Flags Civic Center buildings.
4. Renovation of the existing buildings with expansion of square footage either current or expanded footprint.
5. Relocation of existing Five Flags Civic Center to another location fitting with current sustainability and growth plans for the city of Dubuque.

The purpose of the presentation to the Civic Center Commission will be to share CSL's findings related to each phase. The same presentation will be made to the Dubuque City Council at a special work session on Monday, May 14, 2018, at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers in the Historic Federal Building at 350 W. Sixth St.

The Five Flags Civic Center Commission will host an input session for the community related to the study findings on Wednesday, May 16, 2018, at 6:30 in the Majestic Room of the Five Flags Civic Center.

For additional information, please contact the City of Dubuque Leisure Services Department at 563.589.4263.

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