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## The “1 to 100 Legacy Project” Mickey Stevens Sports Complex - by mayor Joseph Solomon

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I recently announced the “1 to 100 Legacy Project,” a comprehensive plan to revitalize the Mickey Stevens Sports Complex, which was constructed well over 40 years ago. This project, which will benefit residents of all ages for generations to come, has already been enthusiastically received by many in our community.

Development of this plan began when I took office two years ago and immediately re-established the Parks and Recreation Department as its own entity so we could reinvigorate our programming and improve our facilities. Once the department was re-established, we conducted a comprehensive analysis of Mickey Stevens’ current and future needs and used that to develop a master plan.

Joseph Solomon

The “1 to 100 Legacy Project” envisions a state-of-the-art facility that will include a tournament-level track and field sports stadium; combination baseball, soccer and lacrosse fields; futsal, tennis, and basketball courts; a playground with splash pad; and other supporting facilities that everyone, including our student-athletes, can enjoy. There will also be environmentally-friendly and sustainable components, such as solar carports, LED lighting, and the use of recycled materials. Due to the size and scope of this project, the work will take place in stages. A \$7 million general obligation bond approved by voters in 2006 will be applied toward the first phase, and the city is also actively seeking grants and exploring public/private partnerships for additional phases.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has put a temporary damper on activity, tourism and related sporting events play a significant role in Rhode Island’s economy. The “1 to 100 Legacy Project” will enhance our already robust efforts to attract regional and national tournaments and championship competitions to our community. In FY19 alone, future sporting events booked by the Rhode Island Sports Commission and the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau had been expected to result in \$32.6 million in direct spending for the state. Fees associated with tournaments, special events, and local athletic leagues also bring revenue directly to the city.

Reinvesting in the Mickey Stevens facility will broaden recreational opportunities for our city,

enhance our quality of life, and support efforts to reinvigorate our tourism and hospitality industries, which have been hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. We're looking forward to beginning public master plan workshops to gain additional input from community members and other stakeholders as we work to make this vision a reality.

Joseph Solomon is the mayor of the city of Warwick, R.I.

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