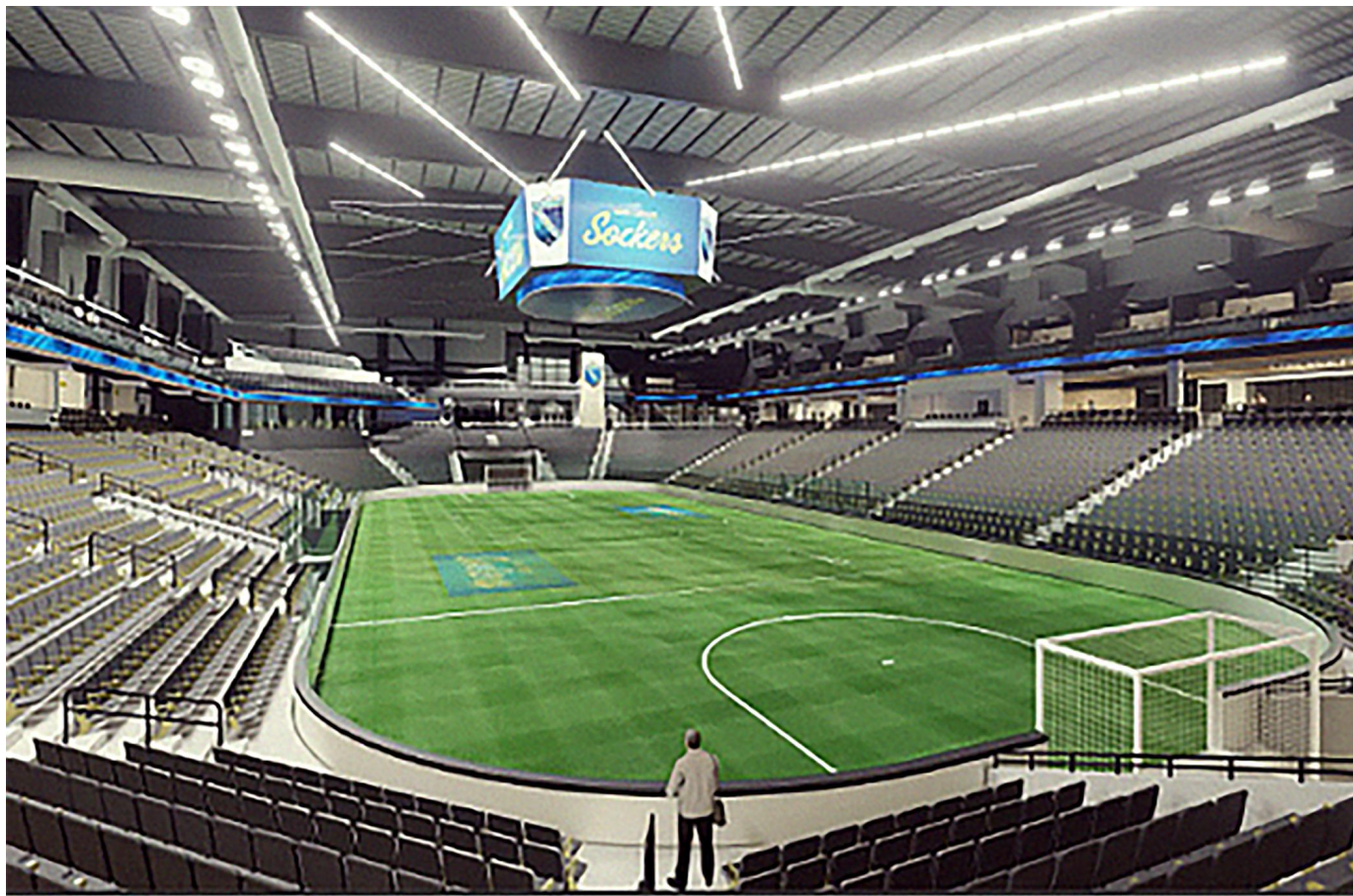




Soccer Arena Could Kick Up New Commercial Demand in San Diego Coastal Suburb

San Diego Sockers Plan Indoor Sports, Concert Venue in Oceanside



Oceanside officials have approved plans for a new indoor venue that would seat up to 6,300 for sporting events and 7,900 for concerts. (City of Oceanside)

By [Lou Hirsh](#)
CoStar News

March 30, 2021 | 3:12 P.M.

The city of [Oceanside, California](#), has approved plans for a new indoor arena by the San Diego Sockers, a professional soccer franchise, and it has the potential to score new hotel and other commercial demand in San Diego's North County region.

Filings with the coastal city show the Sockers, a franchise in the Major Arena Soccer League, are planning to build a multipurpose sports arena and event facility on a 7.2-acre site in the city's El Corazon neighborhood on undeveloped land that it plans to purchase or lease from San Diego developer Sudberry Properties.

The project calls for an indoor arena spanning 171,000 square feet, with configurations ranging from approximately 6,300 seats for sporting events to 7,900 seats for concerts. There would also be a 36,000-square-foot outdoor plaza at the southwest corner of the site with 618 parking spaces.



The San Diego Sockers are looking to build a 171,000-square-foot arena with a 36,000-square-foot public outdoor plaza. (City of Oceanside)

Jonathan Borrego, the city's development service director, said Oceanside officials are in the process of completing a long-range economic benefit analysis on the arena project and potential future adjacent development. Tourism officials in the San Diego region's third-most populous city are anticipating significant new visitor traffic once the arena is up and running.

"Sports tourism has been a critical market for our industry, driving business in the off-season," Leslee Gaul, CEO of the tourism agency Visit Oceanside, told CoStar News.

"We are typically home to over 40 sporting events annually including Ironman 70.3 Oceanside, Race Across America and Bike-the-Coast," Gaul said, noting those events help spur significant spending in local hotels and restaurants. "This will add to the diversity of our sports tourism offerings that provide tremendous economic impact."

Team officials told the city that the arena has been designed to host soccer, hockey, basketball, volleyball and other indoor sporting events. The team is looking to complete a purchase or lease agreement for the site, located near the intersection of El Corazon Drive and Village Commercial Drive, by this May. Construction tentatively is set to begin this summer and last 18 months.

The team has also reached agreements with the city to build out planned adjacent community parks and recreation fields, and also plans to use some adjacent land to build out new administrative and practice facilities. Sockers representatives did not immediately respond to CoStar News' requests for comment.

According to an Oceanside city staff report, surrounding land uses near the planned new arena include an approved but not constructed visitor-serving hotel to the northeast, a mixed-use zone with a combination of permitted retail and residential uses to the east, and an existing city senior and aquatics center to the south.

There is also an existing privately run recycling facility to the west of the arena site, and the facility's operators plan to relocate farther west in the future.

The Sockers currently play about 38 miles south of Oceanside at San Diego Sports Arena, where developer Brookfield Properties is spearheading an [upcoming redevelopment](#) of the aging venue and surrounding city-owned land, after being selected last year by the city of San Diego.

Several developers locally and nationally have sought to establish sports venues as year-round, mixed-use generators of revenue and social activity where it didn't previously exist, though the coronavirus pandemic put many of those projects on pause. The Oceanside arena project has been in planning for the past two years.

Luke Holler, principal in commercial brokerage Urban Property Group, said Oceanside's status as "one of the last affordable coastal cities in California" has already attracted high-profile projects in recent years, and the soccer arena project is likely to draw in retail, hospitality and other developers.

Elsewhere in Oceanside, developer S.D. Malkin is set to open a new dual-hotel project in the downtown area with [elements of the "Top Gun" movie franchise](#) this summer. Also, developer Toll Brothers and the North County Transit District are planning a 92-acre mixed-use redevelopment of a former drive-in movie theater.

"The ever-growing list of projects slated for Oceanside has already elevated the retail and hotel sectors," said Holler, who is not involved in the soccer arena project.