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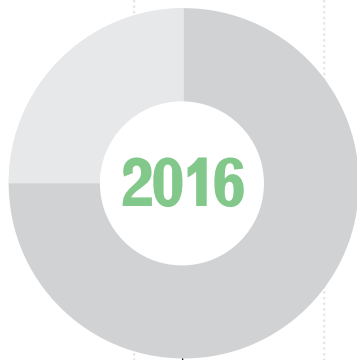
## The Future of Pawtucket's McCoy Stadium

BY

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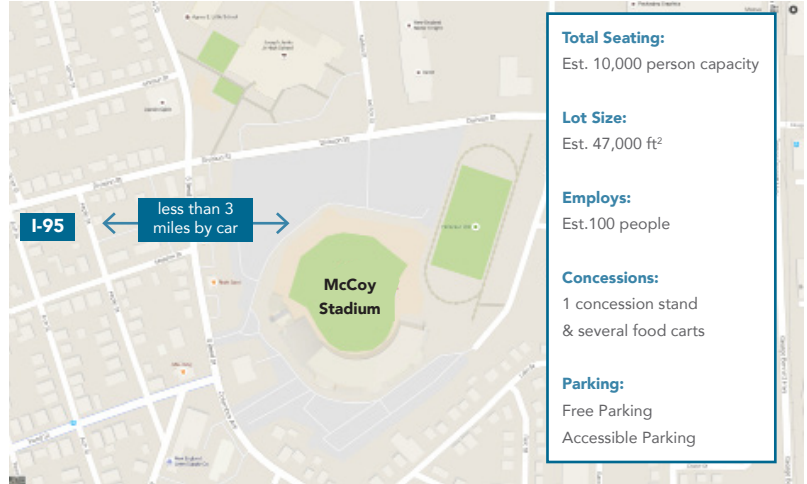
# What should Pawtucket do with McCoy Stadium if the Pawtucket Red Sox leave?

## McCoy Stadium

McCoy Stadium was built in 1942 and has been home to a Boston Red Sox farm league, the Pawtucket Red Sox, since 1970. The stadium is surrounded by a mixed-use neighborhood with houses, a business park, restaurants, a middle school, and several lots of state-owned land.

### Financials:

- Owned by the city of Pawtucket
- Valued at approximately \$13 million
- Comparable minor league stadiums cost approximately \$1.3 million per year to operate
- PawSox ticket sales bring in approximately \$5.7 million annually



## Options for Reuse

There are a variety of options for cities looking to repurpose a vacant stadium property.

Option	<b>Repurpose McCoy Stadium for a New Use (Adaptive Reuse):</b> Recommendations include a specialized sports school or mixed income housing	<b>Renovate McCoy Stadium into a Public Park</b>
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would preserve some of the character and function of a historic landmark while allowing it to serve a new purpose.</li> <li>• Would contribute to the community and local economy as mixed income housing or a school for student athletes.</li> <li>• There are a number of government and private funding streams available to support adaptive reuse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would preserve public access to the stadium and provide playing space for local school and youth baseball programs.</li> <li>• Could maintain Pawtucket’s role in promoting baseball through a visitor’s center or museum.</li> </ul>
<b>Drawbacks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptive reuse can be costly because old buildings often require extensive renovations to meet modern building standards and their new purposes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pawtucket infrastructure might need to be renovated and at least partially demolished.</li> <li>• Might not contribute enough to the local economy to make up for the renovation costs and economic loss of the PawSox.</li> <li>• Stadium is already home to 12 baseball diamonds in three parks.</li> </ul>
<b>Examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2008, Bush Stadium in Indianapolis was redeveloped into modern loft apartments known as The Stadium Lofts. The project preserved the baseball field and the façade of the stadium.</li> <li>• There are a number of specialized high schools for talented student athletes, such as IMG Academy in Florida and YSC Academy in Pennsylvania, that could serve as models for a new school located in an adapted stadium.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After being abandoned and partially demolished, Cleveland’s League Park was renovated and reopened in 2014 as a baseball museum, public park, and playing field for local youth baseball and softball programs.</li> </ul>

# RESEARCH IN BRIEF

Full article, author bios, endnotes, and appendices can be found at the link above



The PawSox have been a local institution since 1970, but they may leave Pawtucket and McCoy Stadium after 2021.

## CHALLENGE

McCoy Stadium has been home to the Pawtucket Red Sox (or PawSox), a Boston Red Sox farm league, since 1970.

The new owners may move the team away from Pawtucket after 2021. An empty stadium could lead to a decline in property values and thus property tax revenues for the city.<sup>4</sup> It could also present a public safety hazard, since abandoned buildings can be a risk for crime and fire.<sup>5,6,7</sup>

## RESEARCH

This study examines the history and current status of McCoy Stadium, explores what the consequences might be if it is vacated, and analyzes a full range of options that cities have employed for repurposing unused stadium properties.

## FINDINGS

Cities around the country have experimented with a number of options for giving vacant stadiums a second life, from repurposing them for public use to selling them to third parties for redevelopment to simply demolishing them. If the PawSox leave McCoy Stadium, Pawtucket would have several choices about what to do with the stadium and surrounding lands.

## INSIGHTS

Going forward, Rhode Island and Pawtucket may be faced with the decision of how to transition McCoy Stadium so it continues to be an asset to the community. While demolition is a common resolution for abandoned stadiums, there are a number of innovative options for giving McCoy a second life. Many types of redevelopment could offer McCoy Stadium a bright future even if the PawSox leave.

Convert McCoy to a Stadium for a Different Sport or for a College Team	Demolish McCoy Stadium and Sell the Land	Sell McCoy Stadium "As Is" to a Private Investor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would preserve McCoy's use as a sports stadium.</li> <li>• Could continue to be used for baseball (and possibly other sports) without major renovations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City would avoid maintenance costs and lost property tax revenue from a vacant property.</li> <li>• Opens the property for redevelopment unencumbered by the existing structure.</li> <li>• Demolition is often cheaper and easier than redevelopment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absolves the city of legal and financial responsibility for the property.</li> <li>• Opens the property to a wide range of private sector redevelopment opportunities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most colleges in Rhode Island with baseball teams have their own facilities or are located too far from McCoy.</li> <li>• Stadiums that transition completely to a new sport often have to undergo extensive, expensive renovations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could meet with community resistance given the stadium's long history.</li> <li>• Pawtucket is currently home to 14 vacant, state-owned properties, which may spread out potential investor interest in purchasing the land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk that the new owner will choose not to redevelop the property if funding dries up.</li> <li>• Adverse tax incentives can encourage a struggling developer to hold onto a deteriorating property without improving it.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2014, Arizona State University signed a 25-year lease to use Phoenix Municipal Stadium for its baseball team, and undertook a \$3 million renovation effort.</li> <li>• Atlanta's Turner Field baseball stadium will be almost entirely demolished to make way for a new football, soccer, and track and field stadium.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baltimore's Memorial Stadium was demolished in 2001. The stadium's 30 acres of land were sold to a non-profit developer, which undertook a publically and privately funded \$50 million redevelopment effort featuring a senior housing community, playgrounds, retail shops, and a public park.</li> </ul>	

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