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EAST POINT

City groundbreaking at Georgia Sports Park

A new facility promoting educational programs and a safe environment for visitors and youth to play soccer and ultimate frisbee is coming to East Point.

The Georgia Soccer Development Foundation has teamed up with the city of East Point to host a groundbreaking ceremony 3 p.m. Friday, March 22, for the new pavilion and classroom building at the Georgia Sports Park.

A Microsoft Office 365 advertisement. It features a smartphone on the left and a laptop on the right, both displaying a grid of photos. A blue cloud icon is positioned above the devices. The text 'Microsoft Office 365' is in the top left, 'Kickstart your 365' is in blue in the top right, and 'Your favorite memories organized and accessible with 1 TB of OneDrive cloud storage' is in the middle left. A blue 'BUY NOW →' button is in the bottom left.

The Georgia Soccer Development Foundation will develop the 6,000-square-foot sustainable pavilion to include a classroom, restrooms, shower facilities,

a concession stand, office space and storage.

Additional fields will help meet the increased demand for recreational green space.

The new classroom will provide a safe facility for after-school programs.

GSP has provided fields for several non-profit organizations, such as Soccer in the Streets, the Fugees and several local recreation programs. They have also established a partnership with the Andrew and Walter Young YMCA to use the classroom and fields year-round for middle and high school students to focus on sports, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math), learning activities and leadership.

GSP received a \$100,000 grant from the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta's Grants to Green funding program to include a solar photovoltaic power system, geothermal heating and cooling system, energy efficient lighting and rain harvesting.

The City of East Point has committed \$500,000 to GSP to develop the facility which will host regional and state soccer competitions and help boost tourism.

GSP also received \$400,000 from Concorde Fire Soccer Club, as well as individual contributions.

GSP board members pledged over \$150,000. Additionally, Gaultney Development Co., Lord Aeck Sargent Architects and others donated in-kind services.

PAMELA MILLER FOR THE AJC