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Roger Goodell
345 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10154

Dear Mr. Goodell:

In reviewing the St Louis Rams' submission for relocation, I was struck by multiple inaccuracies and misrepresentations of St. Louis and our community's relationship with the Rams. A number of them require my response.

First, the notion that the Rams put forth consistent efforts to negotiate a solution to their stadium situation dating back to 2002 was most disturbing. I have been Mayor of St. Louis since then and I – to this day – cannot ever remember meeting Stan Kroenke, much less engaging with him in any conversations about the future of NFL football in St. Louis. It's not for lack of trying. As mayor, I've attended Rams games, civic functions, and regional events. It contrasts with my warm relationship with Georgia Frontiere, with whom I had a very strong professional relationship. I could pick up the phone and call her and she could call me. I have a relationship with the CEOs of our City's large, mid-sized and even many small businesses. I have tried, as has the governor and others in St. Louis, to engage the Rams without success.

I share this because my relationships with both the Cardinals and Blues ownership and management teams are strong, and have been strong throughout my entire time as mayor. This is why the City was able to work successfully with the Cardinals and Blues to negotiate public/private partnerships that resulted in a beautiful, new baseball stadium and a beautifully-renovated opera house. I would highly value a similar relationship with the Rams. I know that most NFL owners enjoy excellent relationships with their mayors and other public officials. In fact, the entire St. Louis community used to have a strong bond with the Rams that is sorely, and obviously missing. But, we'd love to recapture it.

As for St Louis' viability as a market, greater St. Louis is one of the largest economies in the country, hosting the headquarters of six of America's largest private companies, 19 Fortune 1000 headquarters and ranking as the 20th largest U.S. metro area for both total employment and total personal income. It is no coincidence that we also rank 20th out of the 32 NFL markets in these categories, and we rank similarly in the size of our media market, and are well below the NFL average in terms of cost of living, which increases our market's purchasing power.

Far from being "struggling" compared to all other U.S. cities, St. Louis is experiencing an entrepreneurial renaissance, ranking first in the world for growth in tech venture capital investment between 2013 and 2014 and being named #1 out of 14 Best Startup Cities in America by Popular Mechanics in 2015.

In important demographic categories, St. Louis compares favorably to Denver, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Tampa Bay— all cities that support three professional teams.

Of course, I do not have to remind you that one of our best corporate citizens has already stepped forward to buy the naming rights to the proposed stadium. But, what you may not know is that our corporate community generously donated well more than $200 million to renovate the grounds around and near the Gateway Arch when the federal government could not come up with the money, and that we have one of the country's best symphonies and best art museums.

As for our fans, they are the best— for baseball, hockey and football. If a professional team tries hard to succeed, wins more than it loses, and treats its fan base and community with respect, they will go to the games. The Cardinals, Blues and at times the Rams have demonstrated that.

As a lifelong St. Louis resident and 30-year public servant, I can assure you that St. Louis is a nationally-recognized sports town. Our business community is strong and bright, and I always stand ready to engage with the leadership of any business or venture to ensure that they can prosper and take full advantage of everything our market has to offer. To that point, I have been and will always be ready and willing to engage with Stan Kroenke to forge the best possible future for the Rams and the NFL here in St. Louis.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter in more detail. While I remain extremely unhappy at the portrayal of St. Louis in the Rams' relocation submission, I am hopeful – if not confident – that the NFL will do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Francis G. Slay
Mayor - City of St. Louis