



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Jeff Berding's statement in response to Hamilton County's media briefing

"We are pleased that the County Commission today acknowledged the importance of winning an MLS bid, and the appropriate role of government to fund project infrastructure. Whether it is on the Banks with building parking garages, supporting the GE Global Operations Center or countless other examples, governments traditionally fund project infrastructure. Here, our ownership will cover the cost of the stadium, and we are asking governments to fund parking garages, streets and road improvements, utilities and the like.

It was good to see the County Commission come to the table, offering non-general fund resources to help cover the necessary infrastructure costs.

At this time, we have not had a single conversation with Hamilton County officials today, despite efforts. We heard their public statements today. The next step is to talk further with the County officials and Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley to see whether, after today's initial offer to build a parking garage, we can get there on needed infrastructure. Our owners and FC Cincinnati will fund the stadium but will not be funding public infrastructure routinely covered by governments.

Part of the conversation with the Mayor and County will be to ensure the County is clear on needed infrastructure costs. In today's presentation, the numbers did not add up, but we can clarify in person.

As it relates to the need for a soccer specific stadium, the MLS sets its requirements in the best interest of the League. Respectively, they know the business of soccer and the League the best. The financial data that we transparently shared with the County proves that Paul Brown Stadium would not support an MLS team, and any suggestion to the contrary is wrong. Therefore, Paul Brown Stadium simply does not work and does not result in a winning bid. It means a losing bid.

Winning MLS expansion gives us a third pro franchise and promotion in the global game of soccer. With the city's support, led by Mayor John Cranley, our ownership group is playing to win the bid and not to stand by and see Greater Cincinnati lose out.

I am currently in Houston presenting the Cincinnati region to the US Soccer Federation for the opportunity to win a Host City award for the 2026 World Cup. FC Cincinnati's success over the last two years is an enormous attraction towards our efforts.



Once I return late tonight, we will be back at it working with elected officials to see if all the public funding is in place to cover public infrastructure to support a privately financed stadium at one of our sites.”