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Intraregional Stadium Location: Theories and Cases

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Much scholarship has addressed sports stadia in regard to financing and economic impact, but there is room for further inquiry into the history and current implications of intra-metropolitan stadium location strategy as a planning subject. Through the lens of urban planning trends and movements, this paper will examine how patterns of stadium location have moved in tandem with the prevailing zeitgeist of urban planning eras throughout the 20th century.

Since the theory behind stadium location has warranted no specific label from the academic field, it is necessary to apply more casually referenced demographic and planning trends to the analysis of stadium projects ("white flight," "urban revitalization," and "new urbanism/transit-oriented development," in each of which there are opportunities to examine stadium location). These three have been chosen because they offer an opportunity to study the most important planning movements of the century from a unique angle. Issues examined will not only include public-private partnership models in stadium development and its impact on location, but also the extent to which stadia are used as vehicles to jump-start planning initiatives in underdeveloped neighborhoods. Stadium location dynamics can reflect the fluidity of market forces, and by extension the prevailing societal mores, in determining planning projects, and this issue will be explored. Although such a study is incomplete without considering political forces, they are more difficult to quantify and analyze and parsimony dictates that they be left outside the scope of this investigation; important conclusions can still be drawn based on the proposed methodology.

The paper will begin with a brief literature review of traditional, mid-century location theory, economic geography and agglomeration theory, followed briefly by an examination of modern, sociology-focused research concerning regional imbalances in economic development. These theories will then be grafted onto existing theories of stadium location. Following that will be examples of stadium projects that reflect the salient planning movements of the 20th century, and conclusions about their value as accurate predictors of planning movement outcomes. The paper will conclude with lessons to apply for the future.

Location Theory and its Implications for Stadium Location

Importing traditional location theory into stadium location presents complicated obstacles. Traditional location theorists worked from an industrial production perspective, in which firms act as conversion agents for products that at one end of the value chain are extracted as crude materials and at the other are sold as converted goods. This physical unit product approach fails to align perfectly with

the business ecology of the sports and entertainment industry. The former considers plant location as a function of both factor inputs and market location, while the location of the latter is almost exclusively a function of market conditions, since factor inputs are more perfectly mobile (players, staff, stadium deals). However, competitive dynamics are common across all industries, and the contributions of location theory and economic geography can yield a more informed notion of stadium location that will both shed light on previous cases and help guide the prudent consideration of new ones.

As an important early researcher of location theory, William Alonso introduced the notion of space into traditional economic theory through the consideration of transport costs. With the consumer market being an area rather than a point, the profit maximizing strategy of businesses includes not only factor inputs and extraction points, but also transport costs to multiple finished-goods delivery points (Alonso 38). Weberian cost-minimizing behavior compels companies to locate based on their productive orientation (labor, materials or energy). On the other hand, "footloose" companies are free of locational constraints in an environment of perfect factor mobility, and are likely to base location decisions exclusively on market conditions. The concerns of workers and management play a factor as well, and this drives later theories of regional growth that are associated with lifestyle amenities and other cultural factors (Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Annalee Saxenian's *Regional Advantage: Culture and Competition in Silicon Valley and Route 128*, and John Montgomery's *The New Wealth of Cities*).

Factor mobility has allowed sports franchises to be among the most footloose industries, as a team needs no extractive material base and requires only sports facilities, a commodity that exists in nearly every major American city. Its input factors, such as players and personnel, are theoretically perfectly mobile. Therefore, the focus on team and stadium location becomes its physical relationship to a consumer market. This is a critical factor, as the placement of stadia in suburban areas during the white flight movement, when the largely wealthy, upper-class population became uncomfortable driving into core center cities or urban neighborhoods. From 1950 to 1970, ten of sixteen Major League Baseball teams moved from one stadium to another, with the presumed reason being a shift in the local neighborhood from white to black (Lipsyte 1993). For the period of the study, teams that did not move were located in neighborhoods that were 17.6% black, but teams that did move were located in neighborhoods that were 44.1% black (Lipsyte 1993). The loss of businesses, dilapidated infrastructure, and the perceived threat of crime, worsened by news coverage of race riots and general social unrest, discouraged white families with children from traveling to the city for leisure and entertainment,

especially as more games were being held at night due to increases in stadium lighting systems and "prime time" television broadcasting opportunities (Lipsyte 1993). Since many old, historic stadia were located in these areas, which once were outlying areas but over many decades had been surrounded by urban growth and eventually "blight," team owners were faced with the realization that they must locate in the suburban periphery in order to capture a wealthy customer base. In Detroit, Cleveland and Minneapolis, major league franchises located to suburban areas where parking was plentiful, infrastructure made car access convenient, and families perceived a smaller threat of crime. Detroit and Cleveland were battling a national perception of lawless chaos in the wake of urban unrest, and stadium location followed the way of outward population movement, corporate headquarter relocation, suburban shopping center development and infrastructure investment. The relocation of franchises in this footloose industry required only the approval of financing and land acquisition, insignificant challenges due to the boosterish opportunism of marginalized suburbs such as Auburn Hills, Michigan; the lure of major league status compels cities and suburbs to host major league teams. It is evident that an importation of Weberian-Alonsonian location theory is troublesome as an *in-toto* explanation for stadium location, as it only explores half of the factor-market matrix. However, it does shed light on a very early consideration of firm location as driven by market forces, on which stadium tenants are almost entirely dependent.

Introducing transport costs into the equation, August Lösch adds to location theory the notion of "central place theory," in which the revenue-maximizing location, in commoditized industries, is in an area of well-developed infrastructure (Lösch 17). Goods with the largest non-overlapping market area will typically be produced in the largest city. "Central places" exist for each market area, in each industry, presenting a commercial landscape pock-marked with production centers each serving its own territory (Lösch 50). Regional towns become focal points and distribution hubs, creating an urban hierarchy in the pantheon of urban places. For industries of focused specialty, in which there are few competitors and a large national market territory, firms are likely to locate in the largest city. New York City has many companies that are the only firms producing what they sell. Chinitz argues that it is the spillover effect of access to public infrastructure that allows such companies to produce at minimal cost, in an agglomeration-style economy whose externalities serve resident firms (Chinitz 281). In the end, Lösch's theory exhibits the critical trade-off between economies of scale and transport costs, the successful combination of which yields a revenue-maximizing location. As with Weberian-Alonsonian location theory, Lösch focuses on the supply-side of the location question, but also considers market areas as a factor exerting due influence on location decisions. The expansion of market areas is the goal

of a company seeking to maximize owner wealth, and this notion has important implications for the examination of stadium location strategies.

Lösch's theory applies well to stadium location dynamics. The period of the 1960's saw many sports franchises relocate from one city to the other, in an era when a team owner would play one city's stadium deal against another's. This urban competitiveness is more the domain of "inter" rather than "intra" regional economic theory, and outside this paper's scope of investigation. However, team relocation within the same metropolitan area makes certain critical assumptions about market area size. In each industry where access to productive inputs is less critical than access to the consumer market, a firm will locate centrally within its own market area, presumably a territory that has no crossover with the market area of a competitor. Despite several notable exceptions, professional sports teams tend to have regional, rather than local, market areas. In the largest U.S. cities, some professional sports have more than one franchise (there are three NHL teams in the New York metropolitan area), but this is often a result of either sheer population size or history (for instance, MLB is unlikely to let the Chicago Cubs move to Albuquerque simply because there is a better stadium deal). Non-compete clauses are common in major professional sports, an effort to keep attendance, revenues and television interest as high as possible. The conclusion of this logic sequence is that the regional market area of sports franchises allows them to move within an area and not sacrifice market opportunities. The notion of loyalty transcends the jurisdictional boundaries of the cities teams represent; New York NFL teams play in New Jersey, Washington DC's NFL team plays in Maryland, and a host of other major league sports teams play outside the cities they represent (Miami Dolphins, Dallas Cowboys, Detroit Pistons, Buffalo Bills). Other teams with regional names, such as New England (Patriots), Golden State (Warriors), Texas (Rangers) and Florida (Panthers) have even fewer perceived obstacles to moving within a region, because there is no supposed loyalty to a specific city within the region. Therefore, market area is an important justification behind owners' decisions to move out of core cities and into suburban towns. In many instances, there are few opportunity costs of lost fan support due to closer location to a suburban fan base that is more likely to have enough disposable income to purchase leisure activities. The size, significance and national appeal of professional sports solidifies its position as an industry whose producers command an exclusive regional market space.

Other stadium location strategies, such as those of 1920's Vienna, also reflected the notion of market space and overlap avoidance. Soccer stadia were built in the Vienna suburbs first because there was land, but more importantly because sport was at the time a working-class pursuit, and the working

class in Vienna, as with so many other European cities, lived in the suburban fringe. This is a contrast to the American market, where suburban stadium location places teams closer to their wealthy base. In Vienna, multiple stadia and sports teams were supported in the suburbs because the facilities were located in the center of each team's market area, their fan base (Horak 81). This "appropriation of urban areas by common people" for the purpose of "new mass entertainments" developed concurrently with suburban industrialization, worker housing programs, and the development of "grey block" public spaces that sought to mollify the tendency of the restless masses to engage in "socially subversive" activities (Horak 82). As in many other European cities, Vienna experienced stadium development as a purely suburban phenomenon, a reaction to the market demands of a populace that sought diversion. Additionally, the physical constraints of the core districts of European cities made them a suboptimal place for stadium development in comparison to American cities, due to the exceptionally dense nature of the built environment and movements to preserve historic buildings. Exceptions include the Athens Olympic facilities of 2004, where the urban facilities were already located where there were previously developed sports stadia.

Raymond Vernon introduces the notion of external economies as an explanation for the geographic imbalance of economic development, with value accruing to collocated industries that results from efficiency advantages gained from the shared use of public resources, infrastructure, production factors and more informal structures such as business networks (Vernon 106). This is especially advantageous to smaller firms in industries of fluctuating, unpredictable demand; as productive output is more closely tied to market demands, access to other firms that produce the same goods allows for greater capacity flexibility (Vernon 101). Although New York is not optimally situated in the Alonsonian location theory context, namely its distance from raw material extraction points and lack of competitive labor cost position, the history of the city as an urbanization economy has allowed small firms in very specific industries with national market areas to thrive and build off of the flexible capacity of firms within their productive networks.

Benjamin Chinitz eschews classical location theory, which says nothing about how successful regions evolve from one industry to the other (New York), and central place theory, which is focused on expanding markets. Instead, he focuses on the success of cities with external economies, in which there is interdependence among firms for supply, but adds that these external economies are inter-industry; the characteristics of urbanization economies that benefit firms within the same industry also benefit multiple industries regardless of their orientation (Chinitz 283). This is in contrast to purely localization

economies, in which the critical advantages of a specific city benefit only one type of industry. Chinitz's cites Pittsburgh, in which external economies have evolved in a way that supports the production of steel, but little else. City size has little ability to determine whether an urbanization or localization economy develops. New York is not an urbanization economy and Pittsburgh a localization economy just because New York is bigger. Cleveland, no larger than Pittsburgh, has an economic diversity that more resembles New York than Pittsburgh, because its base industries are spread more evenly across different product lines, and they all take advantage of certain "inter-industry" external economies (Chinitz 283). These Chinitzian underlying factors of production become the basis for future growth, whether in existing or new industries. New York has a critical portfolio of economic benefits that exist for multiple industries; when one sector fails, others continue because the urbanization economy is not affected by the success of a single company. These factors can include land, labor, other intermediate industries or capital access, but also less tangible elements like entrepreneurial and intellectual capacity.

External economies of the sort explored by Chinitz and Vernon are at the heart of the modern stadium location dynamic. With sports facilities often seen as the anchor amenity in many urban redevelopment schemes, consideration of surrounding economic circumstances is a key factor in the decision where to locate a stadium. In Chinitz's Pittsburgh, external economies had historically evolved to serve the steel industry, but produced a factor environment (capital access, labor cost and unions, lack of small-firm entrepreneurial spirit) that provided more of an obstacle than an enticement for firms outside the steel industry. Chinitz's New York, on the other hand, is a dynamic combination of external economies that have the versatility to serve multiple industries. It is useful to think of stadium location in these terms. As stadia are increasingly expensive investments of public money, more investigation is being placed into the effect they have on neighboring areas. No longer is a stadium development project looked at in a locational vacuum. First, the classic example of external economies vis à vis stadium location is infrastructure. An owner is likely to place a stadium in an area where there is easy car access and parking; either he will place it where these things already exist for other types of industries, or will negotiate with the host city for infrastructure upgrades as part of the agreement. For example, in Arlington, TX, the new Cowboys stadium has required a significant overhaul of freeway access ramps.

The second factor that can influence stadium location is the existence of other entertainment and a well-developed amenity infrastructure. In the business-driven effort to make the gameday experience as value-added as possible, owners want people not only to attend games, but to stay and spend money. The old model of suburban stadium location, a facility surrounded by parking lots, ignores

this opportunity. New stadia in economically depressed areas have been used to spur development of such amenities, but more often owners like to move into areas where these amenities already exist (Giuliani's West Side plan, referenced below), or build as part of a concurrent urban development project. These external economies benefit team owners because people are more likely to come when there are other things to do. Restaurants and bars near stadia thrive, if only on gameday, but even this strictly seasonal business provides some degree of economic stimulus. In Memphis, Beale Street was already a tourist attraction for its Blues halls, dive bars and barbeque restaurants. It is an area with a rich history and loyal tourist base. Memphis' 1991 stadium project, a pyramid-shaped basketball arena which was designed to lure an NBA franchise, was located on the other side of downtown, close to a major highway interchange and transit hub, but several miles away from Beale Street and the parts of Memphis that drew regular tourist visitation (Barry 2008). This exhibits the importance not only of external economies, but also their type. Ultimately, the Pyramid failed to produce the promised effects. City leaders recognized this failure of oversight and proposed another stadium project, completed in 2004, to be located one block from Beale Street. Subsequently, Memphis now hosts a relocated NBA team and many more stadium-scale events and conventions than it had previously been able to attract (Barry 2008). It is difficult to determine whether this is because of the existence of a new, improved facility, or the proximity of Beale Street. However, the external economies of the surrounding historic district have added to the gameday consumer product portfolio, and generated local interest and fan support that the previous poorly-located facility was unable to do.

Third, external economies of labor allow a stadium to operate more efficiently. From the owner perspective, this is an attractive reason to locate to a neighborhood that has a higher supply of people willing to take jobs related to the support of stadium activities (ticketing, maintenance, physical services, management, et al.) However, skeptics of stadium models of economic development insist that the types of jobs created are only low-paying, and do little to create wealth spillover that might benefit the greater economy (Schimmel 146). Finally, there are less tangible external economies which can be a critical factor not only in stadium location, but also the successful development of surrounding neighborhoods. Real estate investors are more likely to increase development in an area that is perceived to be economically progressive. If a stadium has the desired effect of generating interest, improved infrastructure, commercial development and a general economic buzz, property values are likely to increase. This will attract other investments and create not only an environment that is attractive to outside residents who attend events, but also a localized market of new residents who might attend stadium events. However, as with any market good, false expectations and irrational

exuberance often artificially inflate prices, creating a false gap between the market and intrinsic values of property.

Other Theories of Stadium Location

Later, more stadium-focused research explored the urban spatial dimensions of sports facilities. One of the greatest spatial impacts of stadium development is the disruption of the multi-functional fabric of a neighborhood, turning the urban landscape into a "patchwork of mono-functional locations specialized to handle certain tasks" (Nielsen 22). This is evident in both urban and suburban stadium sites, but has different ramifications. One of the attractive features of a suburban location is space for parking, and often stadium sites are built in areas where there was no preceding built environment. As space is plentiful, the infrastructure of the stadium tends to be spacious enough to handle thousands of parked cars. However, the site planning of a suburban stadium, in a similar vein as shopping malls, creates an event facility surrounded on all sides and for a significant distance by paved parking. This shuts out the organic growth of other amenities and the sort of external economies that might attract more spectators to walkable environments: restaurants, bars, music cafes, shops, etc. The area becomes a vast expanse of space that is usable for only one relatively infrequent, seasonal purpose. From the urban stadium perspective, a new stadium might be a license for planners to eliminate a whole neighborhood, especially with the eminent domain granted through the declaration of "blight." This can affect large areas as space is cleared not only for the stadium structure but for parking and improved access (highway access ramps and transit stations). Where the physical environment is not directly altered because of a stadium, the effects can still be felt. Traffic, parking, trash, crime, and the various other by-products of stadium events create a micro-environment that revolves entirely around stadium events (Collins/Grineski 42). Furthermore, the economically beneficial effects of a successful stadium development project can actually have considerable social costs. As inner city areas gentrify due to increased real estate investment, existing populations, often economically disenfranchised minorities, are displaced (Schimmel 149).

Another undocumented cost of stadium location, both urban and suburban, is the casualty of urban design that results from the standardization of civic infrastructure (Nielsen 23). Describing the stadium as an "isotropic" landscape of "placelessness," Nielsen laments the loss of civic uniqueness in stadium design; the commoditization of the urban landscape has created uniform environments that resemble each other across state and national boundaries, to the extent that a suburban dweller might

actually have more in common with another suburban dweller thousands of miles away than a rural dweller ten miles away (Nielsen 24). This placelessness (civic stadium architecture, apartment blocks, public buildings, parking lots, access infrastructure, all the "epitome of modern city configuration") creates uniformity of environment that normalizes human outlook and behavior as the regime of local custom falls victim to the tide of "global commercial imagery" (Nielsen 24). The urban environment is vibrant for its duality of order and disorder, and while modern urban planning endeavors to design-in the grit of an organically developed neighborhood of diverse function catalyzed by time, the modern city, and its constituent redevelopment projects such as those including stadia, lacks this crucial element. Nielsen's "topophilia," the familiar connection an inhabitant has with his surrounding physical environment, is a tie between emotion and space; stadium development often lacks the type of dynamism that creates this (Nielsen 27).

Also of common criticism for stadium projects on the surrounding environment is their detachment (Thornley 816). Not only is the detachment physical (a suburban stadium surrounded by a moat of parking and access ramps), but also economically detached. In both urban and suburban locations, people often come only for the game. In the suburbs, there are economic externalities around a stadium, but they are often not within walking distance. Therefore, people who are driving to and from the game are less likely to stop and patronize these areas because the traffic situation often compels people to "get in and get out" as quickly as possible. Suburban leaders have even been opposed to stadium developments on the grounds that they lead to economic inactivity and localized "blight" (Nelson 256). In urban environments, especially for stadia that are in old areas, people often drive in for the event and leave quickly, doing their extra spending (shopping, eating, drinking) in suburban areas closer to their places of residence, or other parts of the city that lack the temporary congestion of the game environment. This is the central observation of the urban regeneration and new urbanist approach to stadium development, in which all stadium plans are part of a comprehensive neighborhood improvement strategy that includes these externalities, but also makes them physically and logically accessible to people who are attending events. Rather than create infrastructure that channels people in and out of a facility as quickly as possible, parking in these new developments is often at the peripheries, which avoids the fragmenting of the built environment with awkward interruptions of parking lots, but also forces people to walk to the destination facility through commercial development. People on foot are more likely to stop and patronize an establishment than they are if they are in their cars looking for the fastest way to leave the neighborhood after a game.

There is an increasing body of literature that is vocally critical about the use of stadium location as an engine of economic benefit through ancillary development (Baade/Dye 273). These researchers have challenged the traditional assumptions that a stadium generates positive economic benefits that accrue to the surrounding neighborhoods (Collins/Grineski 42). The argument in favor of stadium location has been used aggressively by civic leaders who have a motivation to attract professional sports teams to their cities. Driven often times more by a megalomaniacal desire to be remembered for bringing a sports team to their cities than by a desire to truly improve their communities, these leaders sell city councils and the public on false promises of economic spillovers. Meantime, the political machine benefits in many indirect ways when a stadium project is improved. Many hopes are placed on stadium projects: improvement in social equality, decrease in crime, physical regeneration of declining areas, and intangible benefits such as a boost in civic pride (Davies 269). This is advertised to be achieved through increased property taxes, and the multiplier effect of spending (namely, increased business generates wealth and demand for more products). Another argument made to defend stadium location is the property values will increase, as bonds are sold for development based on the promise of future property tax revenues. This has been shown to happen in a few circumstances. In Manchester, England and Cardiff, Wales, new stadium projects were statistically linked with a stabilization or marginal increase in the values of property immediately surrounding the development projects (Davies 271). However, the researcher herself admitted the difficulty in isolating the stadium itself as an influencing factor in the property value increase (Davies 271). Nevertheless, this increase in values compelled developers to invest in the area, which in turn further increased property values.

Although commercial agglomerations around stadium developments are common, residential development is less common. In some instances, real estate development speculation is entirely focused on the economic spillover effects of stadium events. In Tuscaloosa, Alabama, developers built condominiums across the street from the University of Alabama football stadium, with the expectation that people would rather live next to the stadium than drive in and park. The significance of this story is that the real estate market, like the stock market, is often driven more by irrationality than by fundamentals; where there is perceived to be a trend, flow of capital, or overall interest in investment, financial and property development arbitrageurs will attempt to make an early play on the market by capturing the initial economic rush that often accompanies the excitement following a stadium development announcement. Even in a neighborhood that is unlikely to provide any real estate investment gains based solely on its fundamentals (location, history, economic base, et al), any perceived movement in property values will engender an investment mania that will ultimately be a self-

fulfilling prophecy. Additionally, when people travel from other parts of the city to attend events at the neighborhood's stadium, they might see the area changing into a place of progress and development, and consider moving there (Davies 273). The irrationality of market forces work so intricately to affect property value dynamics that it is difficult to say whether stadium development has an effect on property values. As an intrinsic entity, it may not. However, perception governs investment and where development is concerned, decisions are made more on emotion than fundamentals. In the example of old stadia in downtown areas being abandoned for newer suburban ballparks during the 1960's and 1970's, the existence of the stadium and team had done little to keep property values afloat; however, newer developers believe that the model is sustainable if it is part of a comprehensive plan that diversifies use: retail, housing and entertainment. Overall, the body of scholarship has generally concluded not only that a stadium does not eventually pay for itself (financial analysis of stadium construction has been intentionally omitted from this study in the interest of brevity), but that stadia never actually produce the extra benefits promised by their civic champions, corporate boosters and team owners. The generated economic gains often float to the top of the class regime, leaving the economically forgotten citizens of the city scrambling to fight over a small supply of poor jobs.

As far back as the 1950's, cities were looking to sports stadia as a way to regenerate depressed downtown areas. New Orleans residents fought over the location of the new Superdome, whose impact was intended to be so great that any area that was chosen was expected to see a marked economic improvement. In keeping with a general masterplan for downtown New Orleans that included the refurbishment of city hall and development of tourist amenity infrastructure such as the French Quarter, New Orleans voted to place the Superdome downtown rather than in the suburbs (Kingsley 721). This was a marked shift in the stadium location zeitgeist of the day, in which teams, like white families, were fleeing the decaying inner city core for the suburban fringe. Despite the wild success of the Superdome as a host facility for multiple NFL Super Bowls, a yearly college football bowl game, multiple other NCAA sports tournaments, and non-sports-related conventions and events, the physical environment around the Superdome is likely unaccountable for such success; located at the confluence of two major highways and surrounded by a wasteland of poorly-maintained parking lots and chain-linked fences, the Superdome is not the urban development envisioned by 21st century urban designers in new urbanist regime. Although the stadium is close enough to New Orleans' other tourist attractions to be reached without car, the Superdome is itself not well-integrated into the fabric and grit of New Orleans' downtown built environment. It has since been retrofitted to a certain degree; the New Orleans Arena opened in 1999 and now hosts an NBA team. The situation is complicated and difficult to compare,

however, because of the unique effects of Hurricane Katrina, which engendered a precipitate decrease in population. However, many of the events in the Superdome are national, and primarily draw out-of-town visitors. Not only does it host events of national significance, mainly in the area of sports, but it has also become its own tourist attraction, a phenomenon that is also common in other areas of the world, such as Camp Nou Stadium in Barcelona, and Wembley Stadium in London (Thornley 814). As long as it draws revenue as a "base" or "export" economy might, the Superdome will continue to be the success it has been. However, determining whether three decades of economic spillovers has helped the disadvantaged populations of central New Orleans is a more difficult matter to prove.

Other researchers break down stadium location options more specifically. Arthur Nelson references four different types of areas in which stadia have been located: the central business district, in which stadia take advantage of existing transportation infrastructure; the "edge of city location," close to downtown but not in the center; the inner city area that is not necessarily central but includes brownfield areas (often former industrial sites close to railroad or water port infrastructure that is no longer used and whose land can be used to generate revenue for the city that owns the property); and suburban locations (Nelson 255). Nelson's distinction among the various non-suburban locations is important. Often, leaders will speak of an urban location for sports stadia, but the urban landscape is a diverse one. Location in the heart of a central business district is quite different than even location a few blocks out of it, but still in the "downtown area." One example is Minneapolis, whose downtown hosts two major sports facilities. One is the Target Center, a basketball arena home to the NBA Timberwolves. Located next to the Nicollet Mall shopping district, it produces a considerable amount of spillover purchasing done by fans who exit after a game. The Metrodome, on the other hand, is located several blocks to the south, amidst parking lots and freeway access ramps. People attending events are a brisk walk from the attractions of downtown Minneapolis, and either provide their own services through tailgates, purchase goods inside the stadium, or simply treat the Metrodome as a come-and-go facility. It is evident from these cases that all "downtown locations" should not be treated equally.

All four professional sports leagues limit the number of franchises, in an effort both to avoid diluting the athletic talent pool, but also to forestall significant regional competition and overlapping markets. Since the demand for franchises exceeds supply, cities must compete on the basis of stadium financing deals and other enticements meant to lure owners who are driven ultimately by profit potential. In an extreme example, the city of Seattle gave the MLB mariners two years of free rent for their use of the Kingdome, and also assumed the burden of gameday operation costs (Baade/Dye 2).

Since the 1950's, stadium ownership structures have evolved from almost a purely publicly-held model, "municipal" stadia owned and operated by the city, to a hybrid model of co-ownership in which the actors are both the host cities and team owners. Increasingly, owners bear more of the burden of financing, although the stadium "arms race" has driven up the cost of facilities, making the burden of even partially financing a stadium an impractical and onerous endeavor. Baade and Dye have proposed a Gresham's Law of stadium ownership, in which teams that occupy rented facilities have an advantage because they are not responsible for significant capital outlays to finance construction (Baade/Dye 3). However, the micro-environment of stadia themselves has changed significantly in the last ten years, in which owners now look at stadia in terms of "economic obsolescence," as adjudicated by financial metrics such as revenue per seat (Baade/Dye 5). Many teams have relocated into stadia that have less capacity but more revenue due to the sale of skyboxes, club seats, and a stadium amenity infrastructure that justifies higher ticket prices. Soldier Field, home of the Chicago Bears, had a pre-renovation capacity of 74,000, but was renovated to seat 13,000 fewer with an increase in box seats (Munsey and Suppes 2008). For this purpose, owners see a positive net present value in their investment in stadium facilities. Meanwhile, the city, for its part in financing the stadium, is left with financial residuals that include, depending on the contractual arrangement, property taxes and a percentage of concession revenues and gate receipts. Therefore, cities justify the use of taxpayer money for new sports facilities by citing the often specious economic multiplier effects of spillover consumption outside the stadium.

Stadium Case Studies

Metropolitan Stadium, Bloomington MN: Starting in the Suburbs and ending Downtown

In the post-WWII era, the balance of economic power was gradually shifting away from the core manufacturing regions and towards the West and Sunbelt (Watkins/Perry 19). In the Upper Midwest, the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan region was seeing a similar economic boom. By the early 1950's, the regional population exceeded 1 million, and the urban structure of the Twin Cities metropolitan area resembled that of many other boomtowns: rapid suburban expansion characterized by housing developments, shopping centers and corporate campuses, all interlinked by an ever-expanding network of freeways. While St. Paul, the older, established region of the area, stagnated in growth, Minneapolis, an enterprising, corporate-minded boomtown nine miles to the west was quickly progressing through urban growth stages that many older cities had taken decades to accomplish. With this growth came the customary setbacks, however. Commercial and corporate life decentralized. Large corporations such as

3M, General Mills and Prudential moved to the suburbs (Weiner 2000). Towns like Edina, Wayzata and Bloomington, previously quiet farm towns to the south and southwest of the urban core, were now at the heart of a burgeoning suburban landscape.

In this same period, the city leaders of Minneapolis, in an ever-aspirational mission to secure the city as a major national player, saw professional sports as a quick way to boost civic pride and propel the city into the company of other "major league" cities. Geographers of the time had designated a handful of American cities as "high order urban centers," each with major corporate headquarters, a well-established infrastructure of professional services, cultural organizations and professional sports teams (Weiner 2000). Minneapolis had nearly all the pieces in place. Envious of its older, slowly-growing eastern neighbor Milwaukee, which had recently completed a municipal stadium that had lured Major League Baseball's Braves, Minneapolis saw baseball as a way to legitimize its image, and building a stadium was the only way to lure a team. In the early 1950's, baseball was the major professional sport. The NFL in its infancy was still organizing itself, the NHL had only six teams, and NBA drew only a fraction of the interest that it does today (Weiner 2000). Further, baseball franchises were proving themselves willing to relocate to cities that provided attractive stadium deals. The Philadelphia Athletics had recently moved to Kansas City and the St. Louis Browns to Baltimore, both because of stadium deals. Other teams were shopping the field; the New York Giants had for years considered moving to Minneapolis. There was talk of relocating the Cleveland Indians to Minneapolis. Not originally recognizing that it could fall into the trap of being a mere leverage point for other teams to secure better stadium deals elsewhere, Minneapolis enthusiastically courted these teams (Weiner 2000).

However, no permanent deal could be reached until the city built a facility. At the time, the Twin Cities had two minor league baseball teams, one in each of the areas two major cities. As initial talks commenced about stadium location, St. Paul was adamant that Minneapolis not hijack the process and force through a stadium deal that left it on the outside. St. Paul proposed a location at the midway district, 4 ½ miles from each downtown, on 90 acres with room for nearly 9,000 parking spaces and easy access to bus transportation. A counter proposal was proposed by civic leaders in Minneapolis, who were interested in locations outside of the urban center. After first considering a location near the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport that was suboptimal for housing on account of noise pollution, leaders explored Bloomington, a farm town exurb nine miles south of Minneapolis with large swaths of flat, featureless land near major highways, perfectly suited for such a large project. On a 164-acre site, the stadium would provide ample parking and space for other "family recreational activities"

(Weiner 2000). The location was also roughly equidistant from both major Twin City downtowns, and was near the center of the population boom in the Southwest region of the metropolitan area. The location was also advantageous because of its proximity to the airport, which itself was in the Southern suburbs and whose location served the residents of both sides of the metropolitan area equitably.

Despite the best efforts of St. Paul's civic leaders, who had proposed a municipal stadium, the private finance model of the Minneapolis effort won. Through a combination of bond issues, personal seat licenses and private and corporate funding, the stadium in Bloomington was built. At the time of construction, there was still no major league tenant. Contrary to more modern methods, in which stadium construction is not authorized until a contract has been signed with a permanent tenant, Minneapolis built the facility in the hopes that it would, in its ready-to-go state, be a better lure (Weiner 2000). Although this is a rare strategy, it is not entirely unfounded in the modern era: St. Petersburg, Florida had built a Dome in the hopes of luring the San Francisco Giants or Chicago White Sox, and it wasn't until MLB granted an expansion franchise, eight years later, that the facility had a contracted tenant. Oklahoma City's Ford Center was built four years before it was able to lure a tenant, the relocated Seattle Supersonics. The Alamodome in San Antonio never lured the NFL tenant it sought, but the facility hosted the NBA Spurs for two years and continues to host collegiate basketball tournaments and football bowl games. These are the exceptions, however, as most cities do not commit funding to a facility without a permanent tenant. Such was the case in Bloomington, however, and when the city finally won its major league tenant, the Twins, the stadium had to be expanded. By some accounts, even in its expanded state the architecture of the stadium still spoke to its minor league heritage; it had originally been built to seat 20,000 and was later doubled in size. The NFL Vikings added another seating section, further disjointing the structure of the stadium and exposing the glaring inefficiency of a baseball-to-football convertible stadium.

If the 1950's were a period of unbounded optimism of business enterprise, aggressive economic opportunism and can-do civic boosterism, the late 1960's and 1970's were a more cynical age in which society began to fracture along ideological lines. Students challenged authority, civil rights were pushed to the front of the national political agenda, and major urban centers were decimated by riots. An increasing divide developed between those who sought to protect private economic interests, and those who were concerned about the greater good of the community as a whole. It was in this context that a new era of stadium location was emerging. Old cities of the industrial core, such as St. Louis, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, fought against the trend of suburban stadium relocation, which had

occurred in Detroit, Cleveland and New York. They turned towards new stadium projects that kept teams in downtown areas, and in the most economical efforts, towards stadium designs that could accommodate both football and baseball (giving rise to the “O-ring” or “cookie cutter” design of stadia that were perfectly round, and ill-suited for either sport). Replacing old-fashioned, nostalgic, long-beloved ballparks such as Forbes Field in Pittsburgh, the aim was to preserve the relevance of the core inner city, and to militate against a seemingly irreversible tide of suburbanization. However, the design style of many stadia further separated the spectator from the action, a phenomenon that accompanied a similar figurative distance that was increasingly separating the highly-paid professional athlete from the common fan. However, demand was growing and the power of sport could not be ignored by city leaders .The issue of urban stadium location was as much about civic pride as it was urban preservation; leaders did not want to cede the core to urban blight, but instead wanted to emphasize its relevance as an entertainment destination.

The Twin Cities stood squarely in the midst of this phenomenon, stuck with a stadium that was poorly suited for football or baseball, on account of its original minor-league rigging, and the obvious fact that the Minnesota weather made outdoor spectator sports challenging. By the late 1970’s, civic leaders were scrambling for other options, and urbanists fought hard for a return of sport to downtown Minneapolis (Weiner 2000). Already emerging as one of America’s most dynamic urban centers, Minneapolis had completed the renowned Walker Art Center in 1971 and Orchestra Hall in 1974. Nicollet Mall revitalized shopping in the downtown district, and many businesses and corporations remained. The relocation of the Twins and Vikings would further prove to residents that the downtown core was still a thriving place. As with rust belt cities, the issue was more about civic pride. Although Minneapolis did not face the same racial dynamics as many other cities, there was a general sentiment that suburban expansion would gut the inner city of its vitality. Planning “wonks” favored a downtown location because of its possible effect on housing improvement, public transportation, job growth and riverfront redevelopment (Weiner 2000). They shared the same ambitions as other civic leaders, but at the time, few saw the proposed stadium as an economic engine; rather, they were focused on the intangible effect it would have on local residents’ perceptions about downtown, and national perceptions about Minneapolis as an exception to the rust-belt trend towards urban blight. Suburbanites were still hesitant about the downtown location, worried about limited parking and getting lost in a maze of freeway interchanges and one-way streets, both of which were a prominent feature of downtown Minneapolis’ urban environment. The Metrodome was eventually approved and built in 1982, serving not only as the new home for the Twins and Vikings, but also as a central sports

gathering point for the whole state, hosting the high school playoffs and various other national sports events, such as the NCAA basketball tournament. Today, the stadium is surrounded by an area of mixed industrial and commercial use, with few bars, restaurants and housing, the hallmarks of more recent mixed-use stadium developments.

<u>Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis: Luring a Team for Economic Development</u>

Attracting sports teams is often considered a quick way for a city of peripheral national significance to capture the attention of a big league town. Additionally, sports teams are seen as economic generators, and in Indianapolis, both were the case. Following the patterns of many other Midwest and rust belt cities, Indianapolis was losing the core of its downtown to urban blight, as the white flight of the 1960's and 1970's gutted the downtown of capital, a base economy of consumers, and regional importance. Indianapolis' "branch town" status as a peripheral production center for companies located elsewhere made the city especially vulnerable to market conditions (Schimmel 124). Although the city already had the annual Indianapolis 500 auto race and NBA's Pacers, it sought to revive the downtown core, and to forge its reputation as a major league city. Civic leaders surveyed the sports market for possible team relocations. In an era when teams were frequently playing one city against another to secure better stadium financing deals, teams from all major sports were relocating. Indianapolis found a willing suitor in Bob Irsay, owner of the Baltimore Colts. Locked in a sub-optimal stadium arrangement, Irsay was eager to consider outside offers. Old Municipal Stadium in Baltimore was an aging facility, lacked the revenue-generating capabilities of more modern stadia that had box seats and higher capacity, and was located in a neighborhood with little else to supplement the gameday experience. Parking was difficult and often forced patrons to park in private lots and yards far from the stadium. This created an environment in which property crime rose. Residents also resisted the increased traffic (Schimmel 142). Irsay wanted a new stadium, which the city of Baltimore was unwilling to provide. In 1984, the Colts left Baltimore under the clandestine cover of night, team buses pulling away from headquarters in a spooky scene that quickly became a famous reference point for the beginning of an era of sports ownership greed. The move severed a "nuptial-like" relationship between the Colts and Baltimore, a holdover concept from an era in which teams, through the "norm of reciprocity," were inextricably linked with their communities and the perception of ownership was shared by fans (Schimmel 112).

Indianapolis had secured its NFL team, and the development of the domed downtown stadium was supposed to be the start of a grand economic renewal project. City leaders evaluated the micro-

economic effects of stadium location in a hollowed-out downtown, and sharing the same hopes as so many other cities of the time, anticipated the relocation of corporate headquarters that had left for the suburbs (Schimmel 114). By providing an amenity infrastructure of sports and entertainment, civic leaders hoped to reverse the negative image of the city and create a sense of progress and relevance, civic boosterism with a corporate focus at its core. However, critics from both sides of the political spectrum held dim expectations for the project. Neo-classical economists insisted that in a free market, capital will naturally attract to the greatest opportunities for investment return, and investing in a severely blighted area of downtown would not generate such returns (Schimmel 117). The appropriation of public resources in places where they would not generate the highest benefit would weaken the competitive advantage of the city relative to others (Schimmel 119). This deterministic efficiency established patterns within cities that had caused regional inequalities of investment. Structural Marxist theory also discredited this approach, emphasizing class struggle and warning that capitalist initiatives within the urban space would exacerbate economic disparity, especially for those people who reside there. This theme is further explored by Collins and Grineski, referenced below. Both camps, according to Schimmel, ignored the political economy in favor of explanations that emphasized the urban spatial effects of the national and global productive system (Schimmel 120). The exhortations of the Marxists were well-founded, as the dome development project and surrounding urban regeneration focused on middle and upper-income markets, featuring luxury hotels, high-end restaurants and expensive housing. A convention center was also included. Renovation projects took advantage of the many abandoned or under-utilized buildings that were left empty during the flight years, and the liberal application of the "blight" label granted the city access to further redevelopment funding. This inventory of infrastructure was supplemented by new construction, and in the end these projects had the same effect as so many other renewal initiatives: class struggle through forced relocation of poor residents. Exacerbating the situation was the fact that a low-income housing initiative was denied, and public housing remained underfunded while city resources were appropriated for a development project that only benefitted the wealthy few (Schimmel 138). Civic leaders espoused the redistributional effects of an increased tax base and the provision of jobs. Many studies have discredited this assumption. The types of jobs, service-focused in a tourist district, are frequently low-paying and seasonal. Stadia had been placed at the center of urban redevelopment projects since St. Louis and Houston in the 1960's, but in many cases the gentrifying effects add no real economic benefit to a depressed region; they merely reshuffle capital, as wealthy residents "reclaim" downtowns and the urban poor are forced to the suburban fringes, as they are in major European cities (Schimmel 149). The Indianapolis example is notable, however, because by

some metrics it is seen as an economic success, perhaps because of the city's status as the single major city in the state and focal point for regional events. Twenty-four years later, a vibrant, functioning downtown Indianapolis has riverside walkways, loft housing, renovated monuments and an active arts scene. The most noticeable landmarks, however, are two new stadia; Conseco Fieldhouse, an 18,000-seat arena for the NBA Pacers, opened in 1999, and Lucas Oil Stadium, a $720 million retractable-roof football stadium that replaced the "aged" RCA dome, built when the Colts first relocated. Baltimore has since recovered from the loss of the Colts, benefitting from Art Modell's own wanderlust and relocation of the Cleveland Browns.

Cleveland and Detroit: Contrasts in Downtown Redevelopment

An archetypal rust-belt city exhibiting all the commodity-stock characteristics of industrial relocation, urban decay and economic distress, Cleveland presents two interesting cases of stadium location: suburban flight and urban redevelopment. In 1974, the NBA Cavaliers moved to Richfield Coliseum, located twenty miles from the core, but squarely situated among its wealthy fan base in the southeastern suburbs. Cleveland suffered from a negative national image that had labeled it the "mistake by the lake." Finance problems, including a bankruptcy in 1978, further exacerbated the problems of a city that had lost half of its population since the 1950's (Eckdish Knack 12). In reaction to the bad image generated by the fire on the Cuyahoga River, race riots, and typical white flight, city leaders embarked on an ambitious redevelopment plan called the Gateway Center to "eradicate a shaky national reputation" (Jozsa/Guthrie 135). The scope of the project can be appreciated by comparing the "old" and "new" Clevelands. In the 1970's, Cleveland's core was empty except for old industrial and commercial remnants. The MLB's Indians and NFL's Browns both shared a giant but outdated stadium on the depressed waterfront, separated from downtown by a highway and rail tracks. The NBA Cavaliers were playing basketball in a distant suburb, and general real-estate and commercial disinvestment shifted capital to the fast-growing eastern suburbs, generating a suburban automobile-centered environment of expressways, shopping malls and tract housing. The "donut" theory was clearly applicable. By contrast, the Cleveland of 2008 is a much different profile, and the $300 million Gateway Project is the reason. The Indians relocated to a more central downtown location, in a state-of-the-art facility, Jacobs Field, that has been noted for its architectural brilliance. The Cavaliers moved back downtown, into new Gund Arena, a modern facility which shares infrastructure with its baseball neighbor. The Browns moved to Baltimore, but the NFL awarded Cleveland an expansion franchise of the same name, which now plays in its own $200 million, 80,000-seat stadium. Urban redevelopment

included other investment as well. Cleveland Flats has been developed into a center of nightlife and the warehouse district into a residential area, transforming a once-abandoned eyesore into a unique environment that incorporates historic architecture. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame has re-energized the lakeshore, as has a new library, science center and museum (Eckdish Knack 13). Four early 20th century theaters in the Playhouse Square area have been renovated. The core city once again has restored the economic pulse it had in the height of the industrial boom. The Gateway Project was a comprehensive plan that included infrastructure improvement, entertainment, and housing. Most notable is the effect of three major sports teams located within the tight core, bringing thousands of people downtown throughout most of the year (as one sport season concludes, the other begins). Downtown Cleveland is now a fashionable place to be, driven by the energy of progress, a youthful exuberance, and wise urban planning (Bachelor 95). Some have even indicated that the benefits of such development include "social mixing," as people from the suburbs congregate downtown and interact with a broader diversity of people than they would in their isolated fringe environments (Rosentraub 290).

Detroit faced many of the same problems as Cleveland. Its reliance on hard industry subjected it to economic hardship in the era of spatial redistribution of production. Like Cleveland, Detroit saw teams move to the suburbs. In 1987 the Palace at Auburn Hills was constructed, and became the new home for the NBA's Pistons. Nearby, in Pontiac, the Silverdome was completed in 1975, and housed the NFL's Lions. The only teams that remained downtown were the NHL's Red Wings and MLB's Tigers, both in outdated stadia in depressed areas. There is perhaps no more striking example of suburban stadium flight; Auburn Hills and Pontiac are 30 miles to the north of Detroit's central core. It is evident that the location was strategically chosen to suit the wealthy sports fans; the suburbs northwest of Detroit, starting roughly ten miles out of downtown and extending much farther, were perceived as "safe" places for wealthy families to attend games. There was no long drive, nor the hassles of the decaying downtown highway infrastructure, nor concerns about crime. These new stadium environments were made for the automobile, unlike old Tiger Stadium and Joe Louis Arena. They had ample parking and easy highway access. Meanwhile, the Tigers suffered from falling attendance. The Red Wings, due to their extreme success, history as one of the original six NHL teams, and loyal fan base, did not see as precipitous a fall in attendance. Like Cleveland, civic leaders had already hatched an urban redevelopment plan. Unlike Cleveland, it was unsuccessful. Centered on the Renaissance Center, a collection of five circular high rises built in 1977 on the Detroit River, the development plan failed to understand how humans interact with their physical environment, according to critics. The Renaissance Center was primarily home to corporate office space, but did have a retail mall at its base. However, the

design was a failure from the start; its concentric layout was confusing, and its environment was deemed unattractive. A monorail was constructed for the immediate area, with little transit demand study; it was largely unused and contributed to the feeling of emptiness and blight that kept people away.

More recently, civic leaders proposed a sports project that included two new stadia, one for the Tigers, who would only relocate a few blocks, and the other for the Lions, an important move that would bring the NFL team back downtown. Sharing road infrastructure and parking, Comerica Park and Ford Field created a new environment in the north part of downtown. Supporters of the Comerica project cited a 20-year $2.4 billion impact (Bachelor 95). However, attendant spill-over development has been slow to proceed. Part of the problem is the fact that the plan lacked a comprehensive approach, as did the failed Renaissance Center project decades earlier. Few provisions were made for other externalities, except for the usual promise of typical downtown development commercial profiles: microbreweries, cafes, restaurants, and the renovation or replacement of old buildings (Bachelor 98). These have been slow to materialize. Fox Theater and Symphony Hall, both downtown, provide the only cultural outlets, and they attract a very small audience of the upper class. Patterns of stadium use began to resemble that of the suburbs; people drive in, park, attend the event, and drive out. The environment is centered on a sports facility, its parking lot, and little else. Additionally, although it can be said that these facilities are in the urban core, they still lie on the periphery of downtown, presenting few opportunities to take advantage of healthy business which exist in the heart of the central business district. In short, Detroit's case exhibits the fact that a stadium is not enough without a surrounding development strategy, such as Cleveland and Indianapolis had. Newark, NJ, which has seen similar troubles (economic downturns, riots, white flight, decaying infrastructure), has successfully built an arena for the NHL's New Jersey Devils, a facility that relocates the team from the barren environment of the Meadowlands to the dynamic environment of a redeveloping city. The Prudential Center was appropriately placed close to Newark Penn Station, allowing for multiple modes of transit, but also amidst a lively area of bars, restaurants and new housing. The negative side is poor parking facilities. Since the automobile age, parking has been a significant factor in stadium construction, which explains why stadia are either located in the suburbs or on the peripheries of downtowns where lots may be cheaper. However, this approach has ignored the importance of involving the urban fabric in the lives of event-goers, who might be more likely to spend money if they must walk through a commercial zone on the way to the event, rather than through a parking lot. Even a downtown stadium can be "isolated" from its environment.

Other stadium projects have been used for core city redevelopment, to varying degrees and with predictably varying results. Another notable stadium project as part of urban redevelopment is Camden Yards in Baltimore. After playing in Memorial Stadium, the same venue the NFL Colts had vacated a decade earlier, the MLB Orioles moved in 1992 to a downtown location that was at the heart of a comprehensive redevelopment initiative that included an aquarium, retail, housing and a general revitalization of the inner harbor. Additionally, it had the concurrent attractive characteristics of a suburban location, in that it is located at the confluence of several major highways that make it easily accessible from the greater Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area (Josza/Guthrie 157). Stadium location throughout the century has also reflected white flight. The Harry S. Truman Sports Complex in Kansas City was built on a large swath of land in the suburbs eight miles east of the downtown. It includes Kauffman Stadium for the MLB Royals and Arrowhead Stadium for the NFL Chiefs. Kansas City had a history of racial strife, and was no exception to the flight of the white middle and upper class to far-flung suburbs such as Independence and Overland Park. The location of the sports complex was at a crucial confluence of interstates; I-70 is the major east-west thoroughfare through the center of the city, and I-435 is even more significant for the location, as it is the major ring road through the suburbs. This highway network made the complex accessible within less than a half hour from the most populated suburbs. The complex itself is emblematic of the location strategy that also influenced Metropolitan Stadium in Minnesota: it is a micro-environment devoted solely to automobile use, with both facilities sharing a vast expanse of parking. There are no restaurants or other amenities within walkable distance. The design is truly a mid-century, suburbanist, car-centered concept. Other suburban stadium locations for which featureless environments of parking and freeway access infrastructure dominate the spatial ecology include the Houston Astrodome, Joe Robbie Stadium in Miami Lakes, Florida, the New Jersey Meadowlands, San Diego’s Jack Murphy Stadium, Texas Stadium in Irving, Anaheim Stadium and Arena, and Rich Stadium in Orchard Park, NY (Buffalo). In New York City, Mayor Rudy Giuliani proposed a new Yankee stadium project in the west side of Manhattan over the rail yards near Penn Station, taking advantage of the multiplier effects of stadium traffic interacting with one of the most commercially dense areas of the city (Chanayil 876). However, the borough president of the Bronx argued that a new stadium in the existing location of Yankee stadium would have a greater marginal benefit, especially if supplemented with transit improvements and redevelopment of the immediate neighborhood into a “Yankee Village” (Chanayil 876). In both situations, economists have argued that the move would merely “reshuffle” consumer spending from one neighborhood to another, and create no real net increase or economic benefit in the greater region.

New Urbanism and Stadium Location: San Diego, Columbus, Freemont, CA and Louisville

In 2006, Petco Park in San Diego was completed, marking the end of a long-fought battle to bring the MLB Padres back downtown, where they had been located before the team's move to Jack Murphy Stadium. Located, as so many white-flight stadia were, at the confluence of several major freeways serving San Diego's unconstrained, distantly-flung suburban expanses, Jack Murphy Stadium and its surrounding moat of parking concrete served as the home of the Padres and NFL Chargers (the latter still occupies the facility). Designed less for baseball, the facility made the baseball viewing experience a detached, soulless drudgery; this was the primary impetus behind the call for a new facility. However, city leaders also saw the new project as a way to revitalize the southern end of San Diego's downtown. Located in the Gaslamp District, Petco Field is a uniquely designed facility where patrons experience the elements of new urbanism even within the stadium; beyond the left field foul pole is a restored "Western Metal Supply" warehouse converted into box seats, and a large public park sits just beyond the outfield wall, giving casual passers-by excellent views of the facility. Developers viewed the "old-world" charm as a draw, as with such novelty stadia as Fenway Park and Wrigley Field. More significant is what has developed outside the stadium: a large-scale reclamation of 26 square blocks of old buildings, converted into loft apartments, high-end condos, restaurants and clubs (Hequet 22). Investment of $1.3 billion has turned a previously run-down, marginalized district in an isolated, forgotten corner of the business district into a thriving destination for fans, tourists and a generation of middle and upper-class young professionals looking to escape the malaise of suburbia. Small decorative details, such as brick crosswalks, park benches, newly planted trees and streetlights, create an environment of old town authenticity which belies its relatively hasty development (Hequet 22). Across the street is the harbor waterfront, Seaport Village, the city's major Convention Center, and a major hotel development (Hequet 22). The agglomeration-style collocation of so many important facilities is a credit to the foresight of planners and civic leaders seeking to leverage the market of one facility to provide revenue for the others. The game experience and amenity infrastructure complement one another; economic spillover from tens of thousands of fans spilling onto the streets after 81 games per year creates a benefit for resident businesses. Not only are the extra features a draw for baseball fans in the suburbs, but the quickly growing residential area, with its many high-rise apartment buildings within several blocks, serves the Padres a built-in market that is only steps away. Although it is generally regarded that a stadium itself is a poor vehicle for economic development, San Diego exhibits the effects of stadium location to generate developer interest in new areas. The energy and buzz created by the confluence of so many different investment projects captures the attention of other developers, which

multiplies the effects of the initial investment in relation to property values, but also drives market demand among the coveted high-income socio-economic groups that are likely to eat out, frequent club establishments and make entertainment expenditures that are out of proportion when compared to the rest of the population. A stadium is but one component, in some cases the impetus behind development but not the sole explanation for economic growth.

Columbus, Ohio, has long been dominated by the sports scene of Ohio State University, whose 100,000-seat football stadium and recently finished 20,000-seat basketball arena house competitive teams that draw visitors from around the state. Larger than typical university towns such as Ann Arbor and Madison, Columbus recently crossed a population threshold that put it in contention for a major league sports team. Since both Cleveland and Cincinnati were home to NFL and MLB teams, Columbus successfully sought an NHL team, which was to be housed in a new arena on the north side of downtown. The area between downtown Columbus, home to several major corporations and the state capital, and the Ohio State University campus, home to over 50,000 students, is linked by High Street, an economically dynamic corridor of shops, residential developments and the sort of oddities that give a college city its grit. Taking advantage of this momentum, stadium planners situated Nationwide Arena in this area, but also earmarked 95 acres for the development of restaurants, housing, movie theaters and a music hall, all interlinked by brick streets and walkable alley ways (Hequet 22). This resulted in an environment that is not entirely dependent on stadium events for its economic survival, but a symbiotic relationship exists between the arena and surrounding development that enhances the experience of both. People live in the newly developed area who “don’t even care for hockey” (Hequet 22). With 41 home games, nearly 20,000 fans spill out into the streets almost one out of every nine days of the year, but the facility also hosts concerts and NCAA basketball tournament games. The whole area is united by a common urban design that emphasizes brick, and is designed in some instances to reflect a situation in which industrial facilities have been reclaimed for other uses. This is a standard example of stadium as component of urban development, rather than isolated facility.

Other examples of stadia being located in downtowns and used as development tools are St. Louis, where new Busch Stadium has coincided with the development of 400 residential units, 450,000 square feet of office space, and aquarium, a Cardinals hall of fame, and shops (Hequet 22). In Denver, the Pepsi Center arena was located in a downtown district previously dominated by industry and a “skid row” atmosphere, now 15 square blocks of new development that features a convention center, luxury residences and commercial space, anchoring a prosperous entertainment district (Jozsa/Guthrie 135).

The Atlantic Yards project in Brooklyn, although currently stalled due to lack of funding and community resistance, was a Frank Gehry-designed sports and entertainment complex that was supposed to anchor an economic revival of the area immediately east of downtown Brooklyn, near the confluence of many subway lines and street thoroughfares. In Pittsburgh, a proposed new NHL hockey arena is part of a project that includes a casino, and supplements an already carefully developed downtown district that links itself sports facilities across the Allegheny River. In Charlotte, the NBA hornets moved out of the area in 2002 because no stadium plan was passed to replace their aging, suburban facility five miles to the east of downtown. However, the NBA granted the city an expansion franchise on the announcement that civic leaders had approved a $477 million arena and redevelopment project in the heart of the business district (Josza/Guthrie 165).

The Oakland Athletics have inhabited their current facility, Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum, since 1971. However, the facility is now outdated in comparison with MLB stadia that have been built in the last decade. Team owners have always looked to maximize revenue, but the stadium is being viewed in a different light as wealth generator. Previously, the desired model was high capacity; old Cleveland Municipal Stadium sat 80,000 and was the largest facility in the country, Anaheim Stadium sat 64,000 before a renovation reduced it to 45,000, and the Colorado Rockies' home at old Mile High Stadium had a capacity of 76,000 before the team moved to its current stadium of 50,000. However, as skyboxes and club seats are viewed as the new frontier of revenue generation, capacity is less an issue. Oakland Coliseum has fewer club seats and fewer sky boxes; even the addition of the East side seating expansion, primarily for football and dubbed "Mount Davis" in reference to the Raiders' owner, has not made the facility competitive. The Athletics' team owner recognized the need for a new facility and several options were explored, in cooperation with the Oakland government. One scenario had a new facility constructed at the current site, taking advantage of already-existing transport infrastructure including the BART station, freeway exits and the nearby airport; other options locations at a revitalized uptown site, Jack London Square, and Lake Merritt (Munsey and Suppes 2008). Beyond Oakland, the owner has considered Pleasanton and San Jose, although the latter is within the territorial domain of the San Francisco Giants. Freemont has emerged as the most serious option, with a large parcel of land west of Interstate 880 owned by Cisco and called "Pacific Commons Planned District." The proposed development in Freemont has been labeled a "Ballpark Village," appropriate for a new urbanist plan that includes such a wide variety of mixed use purposes: 2,900 residential units on 120 acres, 550,000 square feet of office and retail space, and a 100-room boutique hotel (Economic Research Associates ES-2). The environment will be tightly woven in regards to urban design, with residences organized as townhouses

or row houses of the sort found in major East Coast Cities, creating walkable "brownstone" neighborhoods (E.R.A. ES-2). The project will feature a regional "lifestyle center" and a "main street" environment in which a wide boulevard, with a grassy park in the center, will lead up to the outfield stands of the new stadium. Economic justification for the $1.8 billion project includes a yearly impact on Alameda County of $190 million, and an additional $82 million when the "multiplier effect" is calculated in (E.R.A. ES-2). An additional $52 million per year in personal income from 1,762 incremental jobs created is also used to support the claim that the project as a whole has a net present value, discounted back from 30 years, of $2 billion, although the authors of the impact study admit that variable interest rates can be applied (E.R.A. ES-2). The final justification made by the economic consultants hearkens back to the base/non-base economy argument: the Athletics provide base economy revenue from outside sponsorships and advertising, in addition to visitors attending games from outside Freemont and Alameda County, which will help the residentiary economy of stores and restaurants (E.R.A. II-1). The project is not without its critics, however, as the former Freemont mayor has raised concerns about parking, for which the project might rely on spaces provided by nearby businesses that might not be willing to oblige or on spaces that are too far from the stadium to be considered convenient (Artz 2007). The latest concern is that the project has been severely delayed, if not completely derailed, by a tardy environmental impact report that has yet to be published (Fernandez 2008). This has pushed a possible completion date from 2011 to 2012; the Athletics' owner has said that if the Freemont Ballpark Village fails, he will continue to pursue other location options in the East Bay area (Fernandez 2008).

A $252 million, 22,000-seat arena is presently under construction on the shores of the Ohio River in downtown Louisville, Kentucky. It is planned as a replacement to aging Freedom Hall, located three miles south of downtown, and will house the University of Louisville basketball team; moreover, civic leaders have strategically placed the city into contention for an NBA franchise, which they believe is a natural fit for the largest city in a basketball-crazed state (the University of Louisville and University of Kentucky are both competitive, and high school basketball is popular). The need for the arena is clear, but the project is not necessarily seen as an economic driver in the way other stadium projects in the US have been. The mayor has said that the arena will have a ripple effect, encouraging multi-million dollar project investments from the riverfront through downtown and beyond, especially where there are undeveloped blocks (WLKY 2006). However, no specific plan has been made for development. This separates the Louisville project from so many others that are part of grand multi-use masterplans. Community groups and supporters have called for the arena to be carefully integrated with the surrounding environment and built on a "walkable scale," lest the construction of a river floodwall,

parking structures and loading facilities obstruct pedestrian paths or make them unattractive (Downtowndevelopmentcorp.com 2008). The project originally included a hotel, and the original price was $450 million. Cost concerns prompted planners to downscale the project. There is a separate $250 million downtown development project, but it is not being developed in conjunction with the arena due to their differing locations (Downtowndevelopmentcorp.com 2008). The insistence that the arena be integrated with the downtown is significant; unlike other projects, in which there is a several-block carte-blanche environment in which to create an original environment, the Louisville Arena comes with no other land use development mandate. The same is true to an extent for the Staples Center in downtown Los Angeles, home to three major league teams (two NBA, one NHL). Besides a convention center renovation, no other significant commercial or residential projects were planned (Josza/Guthrie 164). Therefore, its design and use must work well with the surrounding downtown ecology, a challenge not often encountered in modern stadium-cum-redevelopment proposals.

A White Flight – New Urbanist Hybrid: Glendale Sports Complex, Arizona

In 2006, Phoenix completed a sports complex for two major league sports teams. The NFL Cardinals, which had played at Arizona State University's stadium since their move from St. Louis in 1988, relocated to University of Phoenix Stadium. The NHL Coyotes, after their move from Winnipeg in 1996, had occupied a substandard facility, America West Arena, which was configured for basketball and had several thousand obstructed-view seats for hockey. The team moved to a hockey-centered facility, Jobing.com Arena, in an effort to improve the spectator experience. Glendale, Arizona, in order to gain recognition as a major league city as so many other suburbs have, offered incentives for the teams to relocate. Like the Harry Truman complex, the site was adjacent to a major by-pass freeway, Arizona 101, which reached almost every major, wealthy suburb of Phoenix, including tony Scottsdale and Paradise Valley. The location is 15 miles from downtown, in the west valley of the Phoenix metropolitan area, the fastest growing of all the suburbs. Also like the Truman complex, these facilities share a parking area and infrastructure (two exits on the 101). What is notable about this project, however, is the incorporation of new urbanist development around the site, and this is where it departs from the Kansas City model. A major shopping mall sits on the site and includes many high-end restaurants and retail establishments, all of which conveniently utilize stadium parking during weekdays and other times when there are no events. However, this is also a clear indication that the city of Glendale and developers of the site have carefully profiled patrons of the sports stadia on the basis of purchasing patterns. In the surrounding three square miles, four million square feet of commercial development has been planned, along with

413 housing units (Hequet 22). The city of Glendale has made a $12 million infrastructure investment in the project that includes six miles of new roads, freeway exits, and $500,000 in traffic monitoring equipment. The location is also an important component of the marketing pitch. Downtown Phoenix, home to the area's MLB and NBA teams, has seen some degree of development, with a renovated symphony hall, new convention center, shops and restaurants, but this area of development is tightly contained. Among wealthier suburban Phoenicians, namely those in the northeast valley, downtown is an undesirable place, although both downtown franchises rely on suburban populations for a majority of their business (Jozsa/Guthrie 135). Not only is it difficult and timely to access downtown due to Phoenix's lagging freeway infrastructure, but parking is scarce and the area is perceived as dangerous. The stadium complex location in Glendale, in a vast empty stretch of desert within the limits of a wealthy suburb, is a more comforting notion. As home to major events that include the annual college football Fiesta Bowl and a quadrennial rotating college football National Championship game, in addition to Super Bowls and a possible NHL All-Star game, the complex will also become a national destination. The area's golf courses, shopping, accommodations and other amenity infrastructure will continue to be a significant draw in the way of externalities. Rather than serving to merely reshuffle the entertainment expenditures from other areas of Phoenix in a zero-sum arrangement, a situation in which the area would see no real net gain in consumer expenditures and the attendant economic boost, Glendale has staked its economic development on a non-residentiary entertainment model that brings money in from nationwide through sporting events of national interest.

Green Bay is another example of a stadium and sports franchise generating outside investment, which benefits residentiary economies such as restaurants and hotels. In a city of 60,000, a football stadium that seats 80,000 must draw on a fan base outside the city, as many people travel in from Milwaukee and other parts of the state. Additionally, the historic significance of the Lambeau Field, and of the team itself, has become a significant tourist draw. In essence, cities often look at stadia as base economies, housing "exportable" goods that appeal to consumers outside the region. This can be captured by facilities that host national events, or by the rare and lucky few franchises that command national attention, such as the New York Yankees, Dallas Cowboys and Green Bay Packers. On the reverse side, cities that host events or teams avoid losing local money that is spent in other cities; this "import substitution" of sports keeps consumer expenditures local (Baade/Dye 7). For example, NFL fans in Nashville, before 1998, had to travel to Atlanta or Cincinnati to see a game. This was entertainment money among a certain consumer market that Nashville surrendered to its fiercest regional competitors. When the city attracted its own NFL team, the flood gates of lost entertainment revenue closed and

Nashville captured revenue that previously benefitted other cities. Also, a small impact is felt as wealthy athletes reside in their franchise cities (Baade/Dye 7). However, after controlling for a variety of factors, Baade and Dye found no significant economic impact of sports franchises in most cases, as the multiplier effects used to justify luring a team and building a stadium are often founded on spurious assumptions about potential growth that fail to take into account possible long-run structural economic changes faced by any city in an unstable economy (Baade/Dye 13).

Pithy Conclusion and Predictions

Franchise owners will always have relocation options, because national population growth will lead to more up-and-coming cities crossing the size threshold to support major league sports. In a society generally obsessed with sports, these aspirational cities will attempt to buy their way into national prominence by courting owners with promises of stadium deals. However, major cities are increasingly ill-equipped to fund such frivolous projects, given the economic burdens many are facing due to a collapsing property market, more demands for services, decaying infrastructure, and pressure to address the concerns of economically marginalized citizens. Therefore, the spatial distribution of stadia within metropolitan regions will fall back into the mid-century pattern of suburban location. Although downtown redevelopment projects are currently very popular, difficult economic times will compel city stakeholders to demand more financial accountability in sports-related investments, and the consensus opinion among scholars is that facilities do not earn back their cost of capital in the long-run. This leaves the door open for wealthier suburban cities to outbid older central cities in the financial incentive war; in a microcosm of the way growing cities seek national recognition, these fringe cities will attempt improve their regional image by hosting professional sports. Given that the general public often shares these sentiments, such measures will often receive voting support, especially projects that tend to be highly visible (Baade 282). The notion of the comprehensive stadium development project will survive out of insistence from planners, and out of financial necessity for non-stadium project revenues to help fund stadium construction costs. In the end, owners are simply driven by the best deal, and many are likely not interested in such altruistic notions as urban redevelopment unless it maximizes their franchise value. The best opportunity for stadia to earn back their costs, and for leaders to maximize stadium effects, regardless of location, is to include comprehensive, multi-use development.

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