

Background on Precourt Sports Ventures and MLS Regarding Potential Columbus Crew SC Move

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General Timeline of Events

AUFW`%&ĒGi bXUnžAUFW`%&ž&\$% . According by a letter to Austin City Council, dated June 18, 2018, MLS Commissioner Garber reportedly met with Mr. Foley, Co-Managing Partner, Austin Sports & Entertainment about MLS coming to Austin, Texas prior to the Columbus Crew SC being sold to Mr. Precourt with the secret 'Austin out clause'

http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Communications/Web_Content/2017/06_Letter_from_Austin_Sports_Entertainment.pdf

>i`m' \$ž&\$% : Precourt purchases Columbus Crew and commits to keeping the team in Columbus to Mayor Michael Coleman

<http://www.dispatch.com/article/20130730/NEWS/307309747>

>i`m' %ž&\$% . Don Garber announces that MLS will expand to 24 teams by 2020 at halftime of the MLS All-Star Game.

<https://www.mlssoccer.com/post/2013/08/01/major-league-soccer-expand-24-teams-2020-season-says-commissioner-don-garber>

Bcj Ya VYf`&ž&\$% : Crew signs partnership with a new United Soccer Leagues soccer team, the Austin Aztex, ending its affiliation with the Dayton Dutch Lions.

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/sports/2014/11/26/1126-crew-affiliate.html>

Bcj Ya VYf`&ž&\$% : Mark Abbott, deputy commissioner of MLS, meets with San Antonio officials and states that there would not be franchise located in both Austin and San Antonio

<http://www.crewnotdoneyet.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Bexar-County-DA-full-letter-to-Judge-Wolff.pdf>

Bcj Ya VYf` (ž&\$%) : San Antonio approves purchase of Toyota Field based on information from MLS officials.

<http://www.crewnotdoneyet.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Bexar-County-DA-full-letter-to-Judge-Wolff.pdf>

8 YWYa VYf`*ž&\$% : Major League Soccer announces future expansion to 28 teams at Board of Governors meeting in Columbus, Ohio, the day of the MLS Cup between Portland Timbers and Columbus Crew SC

<https://www.mlssoccer.com/post/2015/12/05/mls-announces-possible-plans-expand-league-28-teams-scheduling-updates>

: **YVfi Ufm%ž&\$%** : Columbus Crew SC launch For Columbus kits (team uniforms) inspired by the Columbus city flag at a media event hosted by the City of Columbus and featuring Mayor Andrew Ginther. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVSKrg_-aVY

5i [i gh& ž&\$% : Anthony Precourt emphasizes commitment to Columbus and the importance of civic pride and the community as well as the Top 4 selling kits in MLS. <https://www.massivereport.com/2016/8/23/12620428/podcast-anthony-precourt-in-the-house>

GYdhYa VYf' & ž&\$% : Charles Altcheck, special assistant to the commissioner, emails Mayor Adler about research in Austin. Emails between Mayor's office, Altcheck & Mark Abbott, Deputy Commissioner, continue for the next 6 months. <http://www.dispatch.com/sports/20180614/major-league-soccer-made-austin-inquiries-in-september-2016-emails-show>

CWcVYf' %!&ž&\$% : Columbus Crew SC announces the hiring of Barrett Sports Group (now CAA Icon) to perform surveys of fans and the business community in central Ohio. <https://www.bizjournals.com/columbus/news/2016/10/17/crew-sc-hires-firm-to-assess-demand-for-new.html> and <https://www.bizjournals.com/columbus/news/2016/10/20/crew-sc-surveying-columbus-business-community-on.html>

CWcVYf' & ž&\$% : Anthony Precourt tells Dispatch reporter Adam Jardy, "I'm tired of the insecurities. We're playing for Columbus" <https://twitter.com/AdamJardy/status/1007301773269393408>

Bcj Ya VYf', ž&\$% : Anthony Precourt tweets from Major League Soccer's NYC league offices - [APrecourt Twitter](#)

Bcj Ya VYf' &\$% : Dan Barrett of Barrett Sports Group emails Mayor Adler's office about surveys being conducted to gauge business and community interest. <http://www.dispatch.com/sports/20180614/major-league-soccer-made-austin-inquiries-in-september-2016-emails-show>

: **YVfi Ufm&\$%** : Dan Barrett emails Mayor Adler's office referencing San Antonio expansion bid after the official expansion submissions are published on January 31, 2017. <http://www.dispatch.com/sports/20180614/major-league-soccer-made-austin-inquiries-in-september-2016-emails-show> and <https://www.si.com/planet-futbol/2017/01/31/mls-expansion-deadline-12-teams-cities>

YVfi Ufmi& ž&\$%+: Columbus Crew SC signs historic 3 year sponsorship agreement with Acura, a company with over 10000 central Ohio employees.

<https://www.columbuscrewsc.com/post/2017/02/24/crew-sc-partners-acura-historic-sponsorship-agreement>

AUFW % ž&\$%+: Anthony Precourt attends South by Southwest interview of Don Garber by Grant Wahl <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMKE9WN3Tng>

AUFW % ž&\$%+: Mayor Adler emails Don Garber to ask for ideas on what city can do since not on the expansion list. Garber responds, “You Got It”

<http://www.dispatch.com/sports/20180614/major-league-soccer-made-austin-inquiries-in-september-2016-emails-show>

>i bY%ž&\$%+: Dave Greeley of PSV interacts with Austin supporter groups on twitter

<https://twitter.com/MLSinAustin/status/873713178882043904>

5i [i gh' ž&\$%+: Columbus Crew SC 2018 season tickets are promoted.

<https://www.bizjournals.com/columbus/news/2017/11/16/crew-season-ticket-push-began-asmls-lobbyist.html?ana=twit>

5i [i gh+ž&\$%+: Don Garber produces letter authorizing lobbyist to solely represent MLS in Austin.

<https://twitter.com/AEricksonCD/status/938038906439602176>

5i [i gh, ž&\$%+: MLS registers Austin FC and Austin Athletic as trademarks

<http://www.crewnotdoneyet.com/2017/08/16/mls-trademarks-austin-athletic/> and

<http://www.crewnotdoneyet.com/2017/08/16/mls-files-for-trademark-of-austin-fc/>

5i [i gh%ž&\$%+: Columbus Crew SC 2018 season tickets are available for purchase.

<https://www.columbuscrewsc.com/post/2017/08/10/2018-season-ticket-memberships-sale-now>

5i [i gh% ž&\$%+: Multiple lobbyists file with the City of Austin as clients of Major League Soccer

https://www.austintexas.gov/cityclerk/lobbyist/detail_lobbyists.cfm?client=MAJOR+LEAGUE+Soccer+%28MLS%29&send=Search

5i [i gh% ž&\$%+: PSV registers mls2atx.com for a future “community of supporters” website

<https://www.whois.com/whois/mls2atx.com>

CWfcVYf % ž&\$%+: Grant Wahl tweets that Anthony Precourt is pursuing a relocation of the Columbus Crew

<https://twitter.com/GrantWahl/status/920119976488570881>

CWfc VYf`%āž&\$%ā: Columbus Crew SC conducts a media conference call with a remote Anthony Precourt about relocation.

<https://www.columbuscrewsc.com/post/2017/10/17/transcript-anthony-precourt-dave-greeleys-media-conference-call>

Bcj Ya VYf`%āž&\$%ā: MLS and PSV meets with Columbus leaders in New York City

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/mls/2017/11/15/city-leaders-meet-with-crew-mls-over-relocation/107730840/>

Bcj Ya VYf`%āž&\$%ā: MLS responds to San Antonio's Judge Wolff inquiries

<https://www.scribd.com/document/377830917/November-17-Letter-From-MLS-to-Judge-Wolff-re-San-Antonio-and-Austin>

8 YWYa VYf`%āž&\$%ā: San Antonio Judge Nelson Wolff publishes report documenting potentially fraudulent MLS expansion process.

<http://austin-sports-law.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/San-Antonio-Status-Report-to-Wolff-December-7-2017.pdf>

8 YWYa VYf`%āž&\$%ā: 8 Possible sites identified and submitted to Austin Parks Department.

<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=289935>

>Ubi Ufmi& ž&\$% : MLS2ATX accuses Columbus fans of manipulating Austin politics

<https://mailchi.mp/9610814236c7/we-need-you-to-contact-austin-city-council>

JUbi Ufmi& ž&\$% : Don Garber acknowledges existence of Anthony Precourt's Austin clause in an interview with Grant Wahl

<https://www.si.com/soccer/2018/01/25/columbus-crew-austin-texas-mls-relocation-anthony-precourt-clause-don-garber>

A UfW`&&ž&\$% . Parkland is removed from consideration after City of Austin proposes a resolution to remove all public parkland from the potential site list.

<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=295829>

A UfW`&&ž&\$% : Austin City Manager is directed to produce a report about McKalla Place.

<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=295829>

5 dfJ`&ž&\$% . Anthony Precourt changes his twitter bio to change the word "owner" to "investor:operator and chairman" less than one day after the MLS Motion to Dismiss argues that MLS, not PSV, owns the team. <https://twitter.com/AEricksonCD/status/987371593834942469>

> **Public Comment** : City Report produced in compliance with Ordinance 20180322-099. This is also the date the PSV published an unsolicited proposal.

<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=299569> and
<http://mls2atx.com/precourt-sports-ventures-submits-proposal-city-of-austin/>

> **Public Comment** . Reports from Sacramento Bee that Sacramento may be Precourt's second option.

<https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/news-columns-blogs/city-beat/article213123774.html>

> **Public Comment** : PSV published ad claiming unsolicited proposal is in compliance with Ordinance 20180322-099. <http://mls2atx.com/open-letter-to-austinites/>

> **Public Comment** . Richard Suttle, MLS and PSV lobbyist, states "If we have to wait for months to see if McKalla is going to work or not, then I think we have no other option but to look to other cities. The decision may not be made by Precourt. He wants to be in Austin. The decision may be made for him by the league."

<https://www.mystatesman.com/sports/soccer/psv-spokesman-mckalla-site-resolution-threatens-mls-move-austin/KYvSBC5bn3BNIBJkmJDGYK/>

Promises to be Authentically Columbus

New Crew owner promises fans he's committed to winning in Columbus

By Jeff Bell | July 30, 2013

He also promised to keep the team in Columbus even though he said he doesn't plan to move here from his home in the San Francisco area.

Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman said he likes what he has heard from Precourt so far, especially about keeping the team here.

"I think he has a genuine commitment to the city," Coleman said. "I'm looking forward to working with him to bring the Crew to the next level." - [Columbus Business First](#)

Columbus Crew acquired by Precourt Sports Ventures

By Andrew Todd-Smith | August 2, 2013

Precourt surprised the reporters by saying, "I do live in Northern California now, and I intend to be here on a regular basis. I'm not sure we'll be moving here full time, but I'll be here very, very regularly and have a second home here." - [the Lantern](#)

Stoppage Time: Columbus chairman and investor/operator Anthony Precourt

By Kyle McCarthy | February 3, 2014

"We're looking at ways we can evolve and change our logo. We want it to represent the Columbus we've come to know. I don't think a construction crew is really representative. [Columbus is] not a blue-collar, manufacturing, industrial town. It's a smart, young, progressive university town with world-class businesses. It's a white-collar town. We want to be representative. We don't see Columbus in the crest. There are things we can do to represent the capital city better." - [Fox Sports](#)

Quote sheet: New Crew reveal

October 9, 2014

On stadium improvements

"Well, one of our brand pillars is being authentically Columbus. We want to enhance the stadium experience on gameday to feel more authentically Columbus. We are trying to showcase things like Jeni's Ice Cream and Columbus Brewing Company and other microbrews. We are going to create experiences within the stadium that showcase what this great city has to offer." - [Official Columbus Crew SC website](#)

Anthony Precourt message to Crew Fans

March 16, 2015

“I hope you guys get to know me but I am a man of my word.”

“It's been harder than I thought it would be. There's been more work than I thought we needed, more stuff to do than I thought.” - Anthony Precourt, [Massive Report Podcast Episode 144](#)

Club Rebranding

‘For Columbus’ Kits

Crew Unveils "For Columbus" Kit

City of Columbus | February 11, 2016

At Columbus City Hall, Columbus Crew SC unveiled its new “For Columbus” kit in a special event featuring Crew SC Investor-Operator and Chairman Anthony Precourt, Mayor of Columbus Andrew J. Ginther, Columbus City Councilwoman Jaiza Page, Crew SC Sporting Director and Head Coach Gregg Berhalter, Crew SC President of Business Operations Andy Loughnane and select Black & Gold players.

Video 2:19 - 2:54

“The future of this club is brighter than ever under the leadership of Anthony Precourt and his commitment to Crew SC and to Columbus. It’s important, one of the first things that former Mayor Coleman and I talked with Anthony about was his commitment to Columbus and to this club. And I think his actions, his investment, his commitment speaks much louder than words. And we are so fortunate to have an owner and a leader with civic mindedness that Anthony brings.” - [Columbus Mayor Andy Ginther](#)

Video 4:24 - 4:56

“One of my priorities taking over as stewardship of Columbus Crew SC in 2013 was to make a strong connection to the City of Columbus. In 2014 we rebranded the team and put the city’s name into the badge. It also made being authentically Columbus a key part of our brand mission. After living out our brand for more than a year, we are excited to take an innovative step today and connect our club even closer to the city. While we’ll always be the Black and Gold, I’m proud to share our one-of-a-kind ‘For Columbus’ jerseys” - [Anthony Precourt](#)

Video 6:20 - 7:08

“The colors of our kit are inspired by the flag of Columbus. On the front of the jerseys, down in the midsection, is the actual city flag. And in the neck tape of the jersey there are 17 stars which represent the stars on the city crest and Ohio being the 17th state of the union. And one of my

personal favorite features is that inside the jersey, behind the Crew SC badge, is a city of Columbus crest, right over the hearts of the players that they'll wear as they step out on the pitch. This year we play for Columbus. For Columbus is our pitch." - [Anthony Precourt](#)

City and Club Together as One: Is that a continuing vision or a buzzword?

By Massive Report | August 23, 2016

"With the rebrand, it was about being authentically Columbus. It was putting Columbus back in the badge."

"We play for Columbus. We feel really strongly about that, that tapping the civic pride of this community is important. I grew up in Denver, Colorado. Really strong sense of civic pride around all their sports teams that was ingrained in me at a young age. That's the plan, that's my view, is that wearing the city flag and the colors was showing the community our commitment. We took our team roster photo down on the bridge with the backdrop of downtown and Mayor Ginther. We take this seriously. "

"I'll just say for the record, we weren't doing this as a merch sales driving initiative, either. We're doing this really, truly, authentically for Columbus to show our commitment to the city. But it's one of the top 4 selling kits in MLS. I'm not kidding."

"That's what we're working every day to do. We're trying to showcase local products in our stadium with the food and beverage experience. We're trying to play for Columbus."

"We were the first professional team here. We were the first team to win a professional championship for the city. We were the first club to build a soccer specific stadium for this city. So we're just trying to highlight what we do for this city. We think it's an emerging city, a millennial city. We think we're a part of what's happening in Columbus, the food scene, the restaurant scene, what's going on in the Short North. We want to be a part of that."

"We're committed to being Columbus's team" - Anthony Precourt on [Massive Report Podcast](#) minutes 30 through 36.

Interview transcript with Anthony Precourt

By Adam Jardy | June 14, 2018

Precourt, to me, 10/25/16 when asked if the team might move: "I don't really have a comment on that. I've shown my commitment to Columbus. We wore the city's colors this year on the pitch. We put Columbus back in our badge. I'm tired of the insecurities. We're playing for Columbus." - [Adam Jardy Twitter](#)

Precourt Expansion Board a Potential Conflict of Interest

Anthony Precourt was on the MLS Expansion Bid Committee, placing him in a “clear conflict of interest” according to Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff, as San Antonio’s bid was under consideration.

Q and A: Anthony Precourt

By Michael Arace | July 14, 2016

PRECOURT: First of all, I’d say that Cincinnati is a great market for Crew SC. We’ve got a lot of season-ticket holders coming up from Cincinnati for our games. The second thing I’d say is I cheer for club soccer in America. So, the early success they’ve had is great to see. It’s great for the sport and they should be proud of what they’ve done. I hope that it’s sustainable. They’ve got out of the gates fast. Let’s see if they can keep it up. It has worked so far. **I’m a new member of the MLS expansion committee**, which is a sub-committee of the board. We’re charged with looking at markets for expansion, and it’ll be interesting to see how Cincinnati does down the road. - [Dispatch](#)

MLS 'audition' on deck for FC Cincinnati

By Patrick Brennan | June 8, 2017

An MLS spokesman declined The Enquirer's Thursday request for comment. But considering Crew SC investor-operator Anthony Precourt is one of five MLS owners on the league's expansion committee, it seems unlikely that word of FC Cincinnati's various happenings next week wouldn't reach the league's New York City headquarters. - [The Enquirer](#)

Potential Crew relocation to Austin prompts San Antonio to send threatening letter to MLS

By Kim McCauley | October 30, 2017

Bexar County judge Nelson Wolff sent a letter to MLS commissioner Don Garber asking him to clarify the timeline of events that led to Precourt’s pursuit of a move to Austin... The letter says that Precourt’s presence on the MLS expansion committee “presents a clear conflict of interest” if San Antonio’s information about the timeline of Precourt’s interest in a move to Austin is correct. - [SBNation](#)

MLS Expansion Bid

MLS Process

MLS announces expansion process and timeline

By Ben Couch | December 15, 2016

“The league acknowledged ownership groups from 10 markets have publicly expressed interest in securing an MLS expansion team: Charlotte, Cincinnati, Detroit, Nashville, Raleigh/Durham, Sacramento, St. Louis, San Antonio, San Diego and Tampa/St. Petersburg.

Interested expansion owners must submit applications by Jan. 31, 2017. After review, a series of in-person meetings will take place during the first and second quarters of 2017.

Qualified applicants will submit documentation that focuses on the following three areas: 1) Ownership – Structure and financial informations; 2) Stadium – details on proposed site, financing, approvals and support; and 3) Financial Projections, Corporate Support and Soccer Support – a business plan, projections and commitment letters for naming rights and a jersey-front sponsor, along with an overview of support from the soccer community.

Three key aspects are considered top priorities when reviewing candidates:

- 1) A committed local ownership group that has a passion for the sport, a deep belief in Major League Soccer and the resources to invest in the infrastructure to build the sport in their respective market.
- 2) A market that has a history of strong fan support for soccer matches and other sporting events, is located in a desirable geographic location and is attractive to corporate sponsors and television partners.
- 3) A comprehensive stadium plan that ensures the club will have a proper home for their fans and players while also serving as a destination for the sport in the community.

Major League Soccer’s expansion committee consists of ownership representatives from five clubs including Jonathan Kraft (New England Revolution), Andrew Hauptman (Chicago Fire), Anthony Precourt (Columbus Crew SC), Phil Rawlins (Orlando City SC) and Jay Sugarman (Philadelphia Union).” - [MLS Website](#)

...Via Columbus, Ohio?

February 20, 2017

In this piece, we explore the Columbus Crew considering a relocation to Austin. The origin of this story was a question by a member at our 1/29 meetup about Austin getting a team via

relocation instead of expansion. We'll preface this saying this is speculative — but we also have heard some things. We aren't advocating a Columbus move or claim that they have stated publicly that they plan to. However, out of all the existing teams, they are statistically the only probable team to move outside of their current market. In short: It warrants a moment's consideration. - [MLS In Austin SG](#)

Major League Soccer made Austin inquiries in September 2016, emails show

By Andrew Erickson | June 14 2018

On Sept. 29, 2016, Charles Altchek, special assistant to the MLS commissioner, emailed Mayor Steve Adler's office looking to set up a phone call with Adler to introduce him to Major League Soccer deputy commissioner Mark Abbott and discuss "the league and some research that we will be doing in Austin."

...

Two months later, Dan Barrett of Barrett Sports Group, which has since been acquired by CAA Icon, began reaching out to Austin city leaders and officials about the distribution of a Major League Soccer feasibility survey. - [Dispatch](#)

San Antonio

In 2015 San Antonio purchased Toyota Field for \$18 million in order to 'facilitate their expansion bid with MLS'. San Antonio is still waiting for their expansion bid to be accepted.

Wolff encouraged by MLS expansion news

By John Whisler | December 7, 2015

"It's good to see the commissioner say that," Wolff said. "The future of MLS in San Antonio is going to depend on how we come out of that process, a process that might play out in 2017, 2018 or 2019, somewhere in there. That's why we want to get this deal done." [mySA](#)

City approves purchase of Toyota Field, moves closer to MLS franchise

By Robert Taylor | December 17, 2015

...the city and county to split the \$18 million, with with Spurs Sports and Entertainment contributing another \$3 million, bringing the total purchase price to \$21 million. - [KSAT ABC 12](#)

San Antonio City Council approves purchase of Toyota Field, furthers quest to land MLS team

MLSsoccer staff | December 17, 2015

San Antonio lined up the next step in their quest to land an MLS team on Thursday, as the city council unanimously approved the joint purchase of local soccer-specific stadium Toyota Field. - [MLS Website](#)

Wolff asks DA to investigate MLS in Toyota Field deal

By Brian Chasnoff | October 30, 2017

County officials were taken by surprise two weeks ago when they learned that Precourt was exploring relocating the Columbus Crew to Austin. Two years ago, Wolff and Bexar County Manager David Smith met with MLS Soccer President Mark Abbott, who encouraged them to purchase Toyota Field — an \$18 million public investment — and submit a bid. Wolff and Smith also were told that MLS would not establish franchises in both Austin and San Antonio. - [San Antonio Express News](#)

MLS denies Wolff's claim that it misled San Antonio leaders on expansion

By W. Scott Bailey | October 30, 2017

"I was angry. I wanted to get the facts straight," Wolff told me when asked what prompted his letter to Garber — delivered less than two weeks after Columbus Crew Chairman [Anthony Precourt](#) confirmed that Austin was his lone relocation option if the team is unable to secure a new stadium in its current market.

"We are in the process of reviewing the letter and preparing a formal response," the league said in a statement shared first with the San Antonio Business Journal, while nevertheless saying: "We strongly disagree with Judge Wolff's assertion that we misled either him or any public official about the prospects for San Antonio acquiring an MLS expansion team." - [San Antonio Business Journal](#)

Major League Soccer made Austin inquiries in September 2016, emails show

By Andrew Erickson | June 14 2018

In February 2017, after the 12 expansion applicants for MLS teams 24 through 28 were announced, Barrett emailed Adler and others thanking them for the January meeting. He also noted the content of San Antonio's bid material.

"I thought it was interesting, though not surprising, that San Antonio referenced Austin in their video," Barrett wrote. "As Mark (Abbott) mentioned during the meeting, the fact that Austin did not submit a proposal does not mean that it will not have an opportunity for a franchise in the future. We look forward to continuing our research and our discussions with you." - [Dispatch](#)

MAPFRE Stadium, From Crown Jewel to Disrepair

Historic Stadium Announcement

Official Columbus Crew SC YouTube Channel | March 3, 2015

Video 2:41 - 3:00

“When Precourt Sports Ventures acquired the team in July 2013, we did it because we believe in Columbus. We believe in the potential of the city, this soccer club, and this stadium. We’ve talked a lot about the meaningfulness of good business leading to good soccer, and good soccer leading to good business.” - [Anthony Precourt](#)

Video 3:18 - 3:54

“Our stadium is iconic and a special place with a lot of history. We’ve had over four million visitors to this stadium in its history. We’ve hosted MLS Cup, playoff games, MLS All-Star games, four Dos a Cero matches starting in February of 2001.

This place is not just about soccer. It’s also about concerts. We host ‘Rock on the Range’ which is the nation’s largest rock festival.

Today’s press conference is a celebration of two companies coming together who are very like minded. Very civic oriented.” - [Anthony Precourt](#)

Video 5:13 - 5:45

“I’m about to introduce to you Jamie Tamayo, to my left, who is President and CEO of Mapfre North America and his company is a multi-billion dollar global brand that believes in soccer and believes in Columbus. It’s a testament to how far we’ve come in our last two years and it’s a very proud day for our club. We are thrilled to be baring the name of MAPFRE on our stadium and look forward to making them feel like they made the right decision.” - [Anthony Precourt](#)

Video 9:32 - 9:44

“It is the largest commercial partnership ever signed in the franchise's history, so it is a significant deal for us and will help us create the resources we need to be successful on the field.” - [Anthony Precourt](#), responding to an audience question

Numbers Behind the MLS Ambition Rankings: Eastern Conference Clubs

By Brian Straus and Grant Wahl | April 23, 2018

These are answers provided directly by the clubs, edited only for clarity, with some being more forthcoming than others:

...

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3 - Have you upgraded your stadium in the past year, or are you building--or in the process of upgrading--your stadium? What is the cost?

'Mapfre Stadium maintenance and upkeep is a club priority.'

Inspection at MAPFRE Stadium reveals health code violations

@gg`h Ub`Ua cbh` UZyf`h YfYgdcbgY`Zca` 7 c`i a Vi g`7fYk` G7`h UighUXji a` i d`YYd`]g`U
idf]cf]m`UddYUfYX`]b`Gdcf]g`è`i gfUHYZ`h YghUXji a` k Ug`V]hYX`Z`f`U`]ghicZ\ YU`h WèXY`
j]c`U]cbg`Vmi`h Y7]hmicZ7 c`i a Vi g`"

By Cierra Johnson | PUBLISHED: 05/11/18 07:16 PM EDT UPDATED: 06/08/18 02:29 PM EDT
An inspection of several concession stands inside of MAPFRE Stadium revealed a list of violations including issues with drainage and the presence of mouse droppings inside one of the kitchens.

Columbus Public Health conducted inspections on nine concession stands Wednesday and found violations at all but one of them. - [WBNS-10TV](#)

MAPFRE Visitors Document Stadium Disrepair on Twitter

Crew fans and event attendees at MAPFRE Stadium are using the Twitter hashtag #HonorOurHome along with photos and descriptions to highlight how the entire venue has degraded significantly. <https://twitter.com/search?q=%23HonorOurHome&src=tyah>

Multicultural Outreach

Selling Soccer

By Kitty McConnell | April 1, 2013

The Crew's engagement of Central Ohio's Hispanic and African communities, most of whom already watch international soccer, is unparalleled among local sports organizations, says Orozco. "That crowd, we don't have to sell them soccer. They're already huge soccer fans, so we have to sell them the Crew." - [Columbus CEO](#)

Former Employee Discusses Changes

"When I started, The person who held the position was NAME REDACTED, but he accepted a job offer in CITY REDACTED. NAME REDACTED took over from 2013 till the end of 2014. Since 2015 there is no one in charge nor a dedicated department to reach the Latino (or any other) community." - [Crew Not Done Yet Interview](#)

Former Employee Discusses End of Spanish Language coverage

By Nino Torres | December 8, 2017

"In October 2014, when #CrewSC launched the new batch I asked [Andy Loughnane, President of Business Operations] if they had a specific strategy to reach the Latino Fan Base. Since I was noticing a decrease in the Spanish coverage from the Club. This was his answer: This is to encapsulate everybody in our market. This batch recognizes anybody who lives in the city of Columbus, the State of Ohio who wants to be a fan of Columbus Crew SC" - [Nino Torres Twitter](#)

Watch: Don Garber's full interview with Taylor Twellman; Alejandro Moreno's reaction

By Pat Murphy | December 9, 2017

"Alejandro Moreno: It's the company line. It has been business metrics for a while. What I would say is that there are reports coming out of Columbus that give you the other side of the story and that is that the Columbus Crew haven't had a presence in the community for a while. That the Hispanic outreach program is not quite what it used to be. That the activities that brought together the fans with the players are not what they used to be. If all of that is true, that is the ownership's version of tanking, at least from the front office perspective. That is unacceptable. We need to see the other side of the story as well." - [Massive Report](#)

General Media

Smith: As U.S. Soccer crumples, professional soccer in Central Texas potentially blossoms

By Zach Smith | October 18, 2017

I know the Crew would do well here. But it's hard for me to think of everything they've built in Ohio and know the people and the supporters that are so passionate and make the sport great lose everything.

Admittedly, my opinion is biased because of my personal connection to Columbus. But that doesn't change what I think a relocation would do to both fanbases.

Austin deserves an MLS team, but this isn't the right one. - [Hill Country News](#)

Thousands Turn Out For 'Save the Crew' Rally Downtown

By Steve Brown | October 23, 2017

The steps outside Columbus City Hall turned into a sea of black and gold on Sunday as thousands of Crew SC fans turned out for a "Save the Crew" rally.

The rally came five days after team owner Anthony Precourt confirmed reports that he's exploring moving the soccer club to Austin, Texas, unless a new downtown stadium is built in Columbus. - [WOSU](#)

Where can an owner move their football club 1,000 miles on a whim? America

By Jakub Frankowicz | October 26, 2017

The thought of one of MLS's founding clubs suddenly moving rattled the fans in the Nordecke, the supporters group coalition for the Crew. The Nordecke called for a #SavetheCrew Rally and they have enjoyed broad support from fans across the league. - [The Guardian](#)

How #SaveTheCrew grew from hashtag and Twitter DM to nationwide movement

By Henry Bushnell | October 31, 2017

After the 2,000 Ohioans dispersed on that Sunday afternoon, [Crew-related banners or signs popped up at at least 10 of the 11](#) MLS stadiums hosting Decision Day matches. They have appeared at [NFL](#), NHL, and USL games, and could soon appear overseas. They represent a sentiment that has materialized into [public statements from other supporters groups](#), into vocal

opposition to Precourt in other markets, and into widespread support for the resistance. - [Yahoo Sports](#)

Is This MLS Team Worth Saving?

By Copa90 US | November 3, 2017

When news broke about the Columbus Crew possibly relocating to Austin - supporters around the world took notice. Columbus has been a staple in MLS since Day 1 of the league & the idea that they could be moved on an owner's whim shook the football world. - [COPA90 US](#)

Matt Lampson says he knows “for a fact” the Crew cut their marketing budget

World of Bone podcast, Matt Lampson | November 15, 2017

Audio 34:10 - 34:20

“I actually know for a fact they cut their marketing budget. As they should, if he's going to move the team then why should he spend money to market here?”

Audio 34:34 - 34:50

“Ultimately, he [Precourt] lied from the get-go. It's pretty clear that he is a disingenuous person... But he wants to make money.”

Audio 35:10 - 35:16

Interviewer (Bone) asks whether Precourt was fully invested in making Columbus work, Lampson says “Absolutely not.”

<https://soundcloud.com/97-1-the-fan/ep-89-the-definitive-matt-lamson-interview#t=34:10>

Three things: Being happy with 0-0, and sabotage by Precourt

By Andy Edwards | November 21, 2017

How low is Anthony Precourt willing to go in order to sabotage Crew SC, the club he owns and efforts to move to Austin, Tex., without so much as a phony attempt at a non-relocation resolution, and alienate the fans that have supported the franchise since MLS's debut season in 1996? Tuesday night saw Precourt and Co. up the ante as they intentionally restricted entry (two gates for the entire stadium, causing thousands to miss the game's opening minutes) into MAPFRE Stadium with the presumed intent of a half-empty venue when the television broadcast kicked off and panned left to right. - [NBC Sports](#)

Time's a-wasting for MLS to get cracking on to-do list

By Jon Marthaler | December 15, 2017

Columbus is one of the league's founding members. In some ways, its stadium — the venue for many of the men's national team's most memorable victories, all against Mexico — is the spiritual home of American soccer. Throwing all of that away over declining revenue would be a

slap in the face to every fan who has loyally followed the league through all of its varied missteps. If nothing else, the Crew has to stay in Columbus to let MLS fans know that they matter more than the pocketbooks of team owners. - [Star Tribune](#)

Viewpoints: Why Austin voters may have the last say in MLS turf deal

By Editorial Board | December 15, 2017

The charter states: “The council shall have no power to, and shall not: Sell, convey, lease, mortgage, or otherwise alienate any land which is now, or shall hereafter be, dedicated for park purposes, unless the qualified voters of the city shall authorize such act by adopting in a general or special election a proposition submitting the question and setting forth the terms and conditions under which such sale, conveyance, lease, mortgage, or other alienation is to be made.” - [My Statesman](#)

Goodbye Columbus?

By Brian Everett | February 16, 2018

As I fight to save my team, I find myself encouraged by your story. A story about a community in the south-west of London who refused to be told who their team was or how far they would need to travel to support them. I learned about the founding of Milton Keynes and the rebirth of AFC Wimbledon thanks to the supporters. I read about a team that went from open try-outs on the common all the way to League One in a little over a decade. - [The Don's Trust, Owner's of AFC Wimbledon](#) a club that replaced another that was controversially moved from Wimbledon to Milton Keynes in 2003

Ohio Attorney General sues to prevent Crew relocation

By Nicholas Mendola | March 5, 2018

The good guys and girls could win.

Of course every owner is allowed to move a team, but the way Precourt Sports Ventures has conducted itself — from nascent “except for Austin” clauses in its contract to the limiting of entrances at a playoff game to make the stadium look empty at opening kick — has been extremely off-putting. - [NBC Sports](#)

MLS commissioner Don Garber's 'preference' is for the Crew 'to stay in Columbus'

Jonathan Tannenwald | March 13, 2018

Major League Soccer commissioner Don Garber told the Inquirer and Daily News on Tuesday that he hopes for “a solution” that would allow the Columbus Crew to stay in that city, instead of moving to Austin, Texas as owner Anthony Precourt has threatened. - [Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News](#)

Columbus soccer move deserves English-style resistance

By Jon Marthaler | March 16, 2018

Columbus Crew owner Anthony Precourt is the most hated man in the league right now, because of his harebrained scheme to move his team to Austin, Texas. This is potentially the team's last season in Columbus. You could imagine Crew fans gathering beneath the owner's box, as West Ham fans did, to chant at Precourt, "You've destroyed our club."

This isn't the kind of passion that MLS wants to build. The obvious solution is for the league to unequivocally state that the Crew is staying in Columbus, but MLS is currently too caught up in raking in expansion fees to be bothered with the franchise stability of a club that doesn't make big money. In this case, West Ham-style anger is justified. MLS needs to reverse tack before — as in east London — the situation gets out of hand. - [Star Tribune](#)

Goodbye, Columbus. You didn't deserve to be abandoned by the Crew

By Steven Goff | March 26, 2018

Pulling the Crew out of Columbus is a two-footed, studs-up tackle, deserving of a red card and lengthy suspension. Unfortunately, the referee — in this case, league headquarters — is complicit.

...

But Columbus has played an important role in shaping soccer in this country in the past two decades. Aside from hosting the dos-a-cero U.S. victories over Mexico (until, at least, the latest World Cup qualifying cycle), Columbus proved in MLS's early years that a city off soccer's demographic radar would take to the sport. This was a big deal because it laid the foundation for the league to enter markets such as Salt Lake City, Orlando, Minneapolis and, coming soon, Nashville. - [Washington Post](#)

A long way from home

By Blogger from America | March 29, 2018

The fans - as you may guess - are rather miffed and some are boycotting matches. So attendances have fallen, giving more ammunition to the owner that he could do better in the Lone Star state. Adding another wrinkle, MLS approved the switch, but could be getting sued if it happens. The nearby city of San Antonio are set to launch their own MLS side and are angry the authorities have given permission for a rival to appear in Austin. - [Chelsea FC Blog](#)

Columbus Attorney accuses Precourt, MLS of ‘factual misdirection’ in lawsuit

By Evan Weese | April 23, 2018

Anthony Precourt identified himself as “Owner/Chairman” of Crew SC until the league on Friday made its case for dismissing the lawsuit. Precourt’s Twitter profile now reads “Investor/Operator and Chairman.” - [ProSoccerUSA](#)

2018 MLS Ambition Rankings: Which Clubs Raise the Bar Highest as the League Grows?

By Brian Straus and Grant Wahl | April 23, 2018

23. COLUMBUS CREW (LAST YEAR: 19) - Either Anthony Precourt didn’t have the means, skill or commitment to make the Crew successful in Columbus, or he willfully sandbagged the club in order to justify his desired exit. For the purposes of this ranking, it doesn’t matter—both are a long, long way from ambitious. - [Sports Illustrated](#)

How three cities are fighting back against the oldest scam in US sports

By Elliott Turner | May 8, 2018

Billionaire owners have for years leveraged the threat of relocation to line their pockets. Here’s how three cities are fighting back against one of the longest-running scams in American sports

Does this story sound familiar: a sports team pleads poverty and gets public funds to build a new stadium. A few years later, that same team changes hands at a massive valuation. A decade or two later, the team gripes about the stadium and leaves town. To the dismay of local fans and politicians, taxpayers are stuck with a tenant-less stadium and a sizable bill. - [The Guardian](#)

MLS could lose more than Columbus fans if owners complete Austin relocation

By Daniel Rouse | June 8, 2018

This move would force upheaval or even redundancy on staff - both on and off the pitch - while allowing a city to sneak ahead of others that actually applied for an expansion franchise (and running the risk of provoking similar MLS relocations) and making a mockery of the community ties that have underpinned recent years of Garber's spiel. - [theScore](#)

FC Cincinnati fans heading to Columbus to “Save the Crew”

By Geoff Redick | June 9th 2018

A few dozen fans of Cincinnati’s soccer club are planning a road trip north on Saturday afternoon, to cheer on the Columbus Crew SC against the New York Red Bulls.

The goodwill visit has a second purpose: supporting the “Save the Crew” movement as the team’s ownership explores a move to Austin, Texas next year. FC Cincinnati fans are eager for an Ohio-based rivalry, after their team was awarded a Major League Soccer expansion franchise just last week. - [WSYX ABC 6](#)

Grumet: Austin’s MLS stadium numbers aren’t as strong as they look

By Bridget Grumet | June 19, 2018

Austin is crunching and weighing all kinds of numbers as Precourt Sports Ventures, which owns the Columbus Crew SC, pushes for a commitment soon on soccer stadium negotiations. Precourt is asking for virtually free use of city-owned land at McKalla Place, where it would build a stadium that would pay no property taxes.

Make no mistake: Very real money is on the line. - [Statesman](#)

Player and Coach Statements

Brad Evans, MLS player since 2007.

“How do fans go about buying/owning a club? Asking for my #SaveTheCrew faithful.”
https://twitter.com/brad_evans3/status/993978573550649344

Alejandro Moreno, former MLS player, current ESPN broadcaster

“Feel very strongly about my scarf choice for a cold and windy #MLSCup 4et @espn #SaveTheCrew” <https://twitter.com/AleMorenoESPN/status/939554452331261952>

“You have to respect your history. You have to respect your roots. You’ve got to know where you came from.”

<https://www.massivereport.com/2017/12/9/16757084/watch-don-garbers-full-interview-with-taylor-twellman-alejandro-morenos-reaction-columbus-crew-sc>

Matt Lampson, MLS player

“Columbus was my home. The Crew gave me my 1st opportunity to play the game that I love for a living. They are a pillar of #MLS #SaveTheCrew”
<https://twitter.com/lampstrong/status/920754854188011520>

Justin Meram, MLS Player

“My ‘thank god’ comment was a sarcastic joke about being a Michigan man in Ohio. And I love Columbus & always will. Never spoke bad about the club esp the fans, coaches and my brothers I played with. I just could never support an owner moving the team. One love Cbus #SaveTheCrew” <https://twitter.com/JustinMeram/status/982817283767664641>

Eric Gehrig, MLS Coach

“They proved last night they're more than capable of keeping what is theirs. Well done Columbus, the city that gave me a chance. #SaveTheCrew”
<https://twitter.com/egehrig16/status/925739428139716613>

Federico Higuain, MLS Player

“It’s hard to talk about this because I like the city, because I love the club, because I’m proud to be part of this club, because I like the fans - the relationship is reciprocal, so it’s very hard.”
<https://twitter.com/OSAliciaD/status/954865558524067840>

"It's hard, it's hard. To me, it's very difficult to understand, because if this happened in Argentina, maybe people die. Someone could die, you know?"

"I really like to play for this club. I like the city. I like everything in Columbus."

<http://www.espn.com/soccer/columbus-crew-sc/story/3357198/crews-federico-higuain-someone-could-die-if-clubs-relocated-in-argentina>

Josh Williams, MLS Player

"I was a fan first. I don't want the team to go anywhere, I think I've made that clear before."

"It's a rivalry [Columbus Crew vs FC Cincinnati] I hope will be around for a long time."

<https://www.thescore.com/mls/news/1552753>

Brian McBride, former MLS and USMNT Player

"@DMcB20 and I got our @HOMAGE #BeMassive shirts. I'll be Wearing mine tomorrow. #SaveTheCrew" <https://twitter.com/BMcBride20/status/930222652480016384>

Dante Washington, former MLS and USMNT Player

What's his biggest beef with the way the proposed relocation has gone down? "I guess the narrative of the business metrics that continue to be discredited really bothers me."

<http://www.dispatch.com/sports/20171023/save-crew-thousands-rally-in-support-of-keeping-team-in-columbus>

Former Crew player Dante Washington told WCMH that he hopes the rally tells Precourt to think "three times, four and times, really hard about what he's trying to do."

<http://radio.wosu.org/post/thousands-turn-out-save-crew-rally-downtown#stream/0>

Ethan Finlay, MLS Player

"It's real when it becomes more than backroom chatter. Sad for the City of Columbus & Crew SC supporters. I hope they find a solution to stay"

<https://twitter.com/EthanFinlay13/status/920301333323816966>

Mark Dougherty, Former MLS Player

"I said, 'Who is this Anthony Precourt guy? Oh, he's a trust fund baby without any business experience who doesn't care.' It's a business to him rather than a family and a team and a culture. Columbus has that. It's unique. When I played in Tampa, it was a job. Columbus is a family. That comes from Lamar, all the way down. I just imagine, for Anthony, it's just business and he doesn't care."

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/mark-dougherty-17719869>

Brian Carroll, Former MLS Player

“I was shocked. I couldn’t believe it. I knew new ownership came in and you never know how that stuff is going to go, but this was one of the last things that I ever expected, for Columbus to even think of moving anywhere else. I thought I was going to be hearing some news about moving to a downtown location and bring the club even closer to the downtown environment and downtown vibe. I didn’t even know ownership had a business connection outside of the Columbus area and that this would even be a possibility.”

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/brian-carroll-17430533>

Jason Garey, Former MLS Player

“I read stuff about it or talk to people in the MLS world, and most people were just like, ‘Really? Columbus?’ It’s just not what you thought. And having a personal connection, it’s jarring. I don’t know how it’s going to end up, obviously, but it would seem to be a shame to move a club with that history and that support. It would be a shame for that city to lose that team.”

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/jason-garey-and-17167584>

Steven Lenhart, Former MLS Player

“So now the fans get a little glimpse of what it’s like to be a player in MLS. Generally, people in management only do what works for them. Bottom line. We all think we’re a part of something, but at the end of the day, it’s all smoke and mirrors, man. I mean, we ARE a part of something in the fact that you and I are on the phone, laughing and experiencing joy, but the ground is not as firm and sturdy and safe as you think it is.”

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/love-and-elbows-17032130>

Robbie Rogers, Former MLS Player

“When I think of the original MLS teams, I think of Columbus. I think of all the fans that supported us when I was there. Obviously, it’s such a great town. I think of my own memories, so I have a biased opinion because I loved my time there. Whenever I go back, I get chills. Even when I was with the Galaxy, I loved going back and playing. So I was shocked. Shock and sadness came together. But I guess MLS is a massive corporation now, so it’s going to try to make as much money as it can.”

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/robbie-rogers-16921000>

David Winner, Former MLS Player

“I’m just really hoping that something good will come out of this. The league, however they want to do it, I mean, I love reading these article about Beckham in Miami. They keep using the words ‘deep discount.’ Deep discount. So Don Garber can give Anthony Precourt a deep discount and give him a team in Austin and leave the team here in Columbus.”

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/david-winner-and-16266786>

Adam Moffat, Former MLS Player

“I just encourage everyone to keep fighting for it. I know it’s not just the Columbus fans. It’s league-wide. I think the consensus across the country is that it’s not a positive thing. It’s a team with more history than pretty much any other team in MLS.”


<https://www.patreon.com/posts/adam-moffat-and-16655041>

Duncan Oughton, Former MLS Player

“I hope this outpouring is being noticed by the powers that be in various areas of the sport, whether it be ownership or the league or anyone that has a platform or a say. At the end of the day, if the team moves or if the team stays, the community just showed why players feel so much part of something. The fans are amazing. This group of people is amazing. Whatever happens at the end of the day, everyone that’s a part of the #SaveTheCrew thing and the fans from way back to the fans of today—everyone!—that’s why the Crew has made me personally feel like Columbus is home. And it’s why so many other players, so many of my peers and players before me and players after me, it’s why you love playing for the colors. It’s a huge part of it. I think it’s continually shown through this entire situation. While it’s not a nice situation, it’s a different side of it that no one sees. This is why players have always loved playing in Columbus.”

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/kiwi-columbus-16019862>

Kyle Martino, Former MLS and USMNT Player

“When I was little I dreamed of playing soccer for a living #SaveTheCrew made that dream come true. I’m  & thinking of the amazing Crew Fans”

<https://twitter.com/kylemartino/status/930966684575420416>

Eric Wynalda, Former MLS and USMNT Player

“For personal reasons and I think more important reasons I’m hoping soccer survives in Columbus in some fashion. It almost to a certain extent needs to and I would hope that we’re doing as much as we can to try and make that happen. It’s just not fair to some of the better fans that we have in the country.”

<http://www.dispatch.com/sports/20171114/crew-cuts-gampa-with-eric-wynalda>

Brian Dunseth, Former MLS and USMNT Player

“The following is a list of people across different cities, states, races, religions, genders, ethnicities, abilities and even countries who support Real Salt Lake and believe that the Crew should stay in Columbus: ... Brian Dunseth (Dunny/The G.O.A.T)”

<https://www.rslsoapbox.com/2017/12/25/16813164/the-real-salt-lake-family-stands-in-support-of-savethecrew>