

NFL Minnesota Vikings prospective new owner plans new publicly-funded stadium

Reggie Fowler, the prospective new owner of the NFL Minnesota Vikings, has expressed an intention to build a new, publicly subsidised stadium in a bid to improve the team's revenues, according to local media reports.



The latest image of its new stadium

Fowler has recently been in advanced negotiations to purchase the franchise from San Antonio-based businessman Red McCombs, and has suggested lobbying city officials to help build a new stadium to host its consistently sold out NFL home games. The Vikings' lease provides them with one of the lowest stadium revenues in the NFL, despite their popularity.

Fowler has to obtain approval of 75 per cent of all 32 NFL owners before any deal can be concluded to buy the franchise, which may not happen for another three months, due to the schedule of owners' meetings.

Minnesota governor Tim Pawlenty has previously backed proposals for a new stadium solution, declaring it one of his priorities during last year's legislative session.

Pawlenty proposed that plans for both the Vikings stadium and the MLB Twins venue would allow some funding from income and sales taxes generated at the stadia.

Financing options included local hospitality taxes to surcharges on parking and season tickets. The state would capture an increase in sales and income taxes. Reports say that for a Twins ballpark alone, the tax increment financing could mean USD7m or more a year to repay stadium bonds.

A concept developed about a year ago by Crawford Architects shows a retractable-roof stadium capable of accommodating NFL and NCAA football games. It features 68,500 seats, expandable to 72,000, the league minimum to host a Super Bowl.

For more information on Minnesota's new stadium plans, visit

www.vikings.com/stadiumvision.html