



August 4, 2015

Mr. Don Garber
Commissioner
Major League Soccer
420 Fifth Avenue, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10018

Sent via Email and U.S. Mail

Dear Commissioner Garber:

I am writing to transmit a resolution of support for the proposal to construct and operate a major league soccer facility in the Minneapolis neighborhood known as the Farmers Market that was adopted by the general membership of The 2020 Partners at its meeting held on July 28. This is our organization's third formal action in support of this project.

In recent weeks the political will of the elected officials who represent us to work with team owners to create an effective public-private partnership has been called into question. Our organization wants to assure you this is not what has been represented to us, and in many other public forums, by city, county and state elected officials.

Though Mayor Betsy Hodges has expressed a preference that MLS locate in an existing sports facility, we are heartened by her recent comment that she believes the Hennepin County framework has merit. We believe that when fully examined this project is in complete alignment with the Mayor's vision for "One Minneapolis" and her initiatives for equity and social justice.

Beyond being a sport so thoroughly enjoyed by our robust population of increasingly diverse and global Minnesotans, the soccer facility—with a pledge of \$150 million of private investment—could be a keystone to revitalizing a fallow area and linking burgeoning development in the North Loop to create opportunities for Near North Minneapolis.

This resolution fully supports efforts underway by our city council leaders and urges them to expand their working group to formally include Hennepin County along with private sector civic leadership. We know that together they can assemble a development toolkit that will fulfill the public side of the ledger and meet the tests of our legislature should its approval be needed.

We also invite you and your colleagues personally to meet with us, without filters, to learn first-hand what lies behind our zeal for this area and our deep belief in the potential for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "NICK KOCH". The letters are bold and slightly slanted, with a casual, energetic feel.

Nick Koch
Chair, The 2020 Partners

cc: Minneapolis Mayor Betsy Hodges
Minneapolis City Council Members
Hennepin County Board of Commissioners
Minnesota Ballpark Authority



THE 2020 PARTNERS
RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

WHEREAS The 2020 Partners (2020 Partners) is a coalition comprised of more than 300 stakeholders—including developers, sports franchises, government, private businesses, neighborhood organizations and individual residents—united to encourage economic development in the western side of downtown Minneapolis; and

WHEREAS the expressed mission of 2020 Partners is to lay the foundation and attract investment for future development by knitting together communities and leveraging the assets of Target Field, Minneapolis Farmers Market, transit and energy; and

WHEREAS these stakeholders are united in promoting the power of fundamental, successful design principles including connectivity and vitality; and

WHEREAS the Minnesota United Football Club (MN United FC) has tentatively been awarded a franchise from Major League Soccer; and

WHEREAS the conditions of that franchise are that the team demonstrate a stable ownership group, a good soccer environment, and a plan for profit, including a suitable facility to play in; and

WHEREAS the owners of the current Division 2 MN United FC have expanded its principal ownership group to include owners of other major league sports franchises and other prominent Minnesota investors; and

WHEREAS Minnesota has historically demonstrated a deep and widespread love of the beautiful game of soccer at all levels, e.g. hosting the Schwan's USA Cup, the largest youth soccer tournament in North America, reflecting the fact that more than 70,000 youth under the age of 19 will play organized soccer here; high school soccer participation will exceed 17,000 players in the fall of 2015; thousands of adults play in six statewide leagues; and

WHEREAS MN United FC has identified and obtained options on parcels in the Minneapolis Farmers Market District but has indicated it needs to engage in a public partnership to ensure a profitable stadium operation; and

WHEREAS while the extent of the required public financial participation has not been specifically reported, officials from the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County are on record as being willing to join in a constructive dialogue with the goal of crafting the framework of an acceptable public-private partnership to construct and operate a soccer facility in the Minneapolis Farmers Market District;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the general membership of 2020 Partners that this organization reaffirm its full unwavering support for the proposed public-private initiative for a soccer facility that will serve as a catalyst for creating

important connections and other infrastructure improvements to support redevelopment of the Farmers Market District—retaining as a key element the Farmers Market with improved facilities—with specific intent to continue revitalization across Seventh Street and along Glenwood Avenue North.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that 2020 Partners fully supports the Minneapolis City Council’s establishment of a working group to examine the issues and identify available development tools to support a soccer stadium and urges the expansion of the working group to formally include representatives of other units of government and the private sector to identify available public resources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that 2020 Partners hereby formally invites the Commissioner of Major League Soccer, along with any other appropriate league decision makers, to a special meeting of the general membership for purposes of understanding both the advantages of this site and really realizing the deep and widespread support for this proposed project.

This resolution was adopted unanimously by the membership of
The 2020 Partners at its July 28, 2015 meeting.

The 2020 Partners membership includes the following stakeholders,
along with many individual participants:

Minnesota Twins Baseball Club	Minnesota Ballpark Authority	Minnesota Timberwolves Lynx
Target Corporation	Trammell Crow Company	HGA Architects & Engineers
United Properties	Hines Interests	Schafer Richardson
CenterPoint Energy	Covanta Energy Corporation	NRG Energy Center Minneapolis
North Loop Neighborhood Association	Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association	Warehouse District Business Association
Fulton Brewing Company		Neerland & Oyaas, Inc.