

# METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY



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MAYOR

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## **An open letter to Nashville:**

When we come together in Nashville, we do incredible work. When we open our arms to opportunity, we grow stronger as a community. And when we embrace the things that unite us, we make this city an even sweeter success story.

On September 4 the Metro Council will take its final votes on the legislation that will authorize us to build a Major League Soccer stadium at the Fairgrounds Nashville. America's top soccer league is raring to go, ready to make Nashville the next MLS city. Impressed by the work Metro did throughout 2017 to get ready for professional soccer, MLS decided last December to award a franchise to Nashville Soccer Holdings, the local ownership group led by businessman John Ingram.

No one could have realistically predicted that outcome 18 months ago, just as no one could have predicted an NHL Stanley Cup Final in Nashville would dominate national sports headlines when we built a downtown arena 22 years ago. But Nashville's collective vision and diligence propelled us to the top of the pack of cities vying for a new MLS team.

Make no mistake about it: Nashville is a soccer city. Whether you grew up playing soccer or just came to it in the last few years, whether you found it on your own or through your kids, whether you first loved soccer in Nashville, Nigeria or the Netherlands, your passion is loud and clear. I know we'll see another crowd of more than 50,000 people at Nissan Stadium, the Tennessee Titans' home, when the U.S. and Mexican men's teams play on September 11. We could even host the pinnacle of the sport, the World Cup, in 2026.

Now we just have to close the deal. And that deal has only gotten better and better since the day last December when the MLS came to town and made the announcement before a big, diverse and fired-up crowd:

- The Fairgrounds now will receive at least \$22.8 million in rent for the 10 acres of private development that will make the stadium and the Fairgrounds even bigger destinations.
- The stadium now will have 30,500 seats, which is 3,000 more than were originally planned, meaning more sales tax and seat tax revenues to reduce the financial exposure to the city.
- We now have a significant commitment for affordable housing units in the private development.
- And I look forward to announcing very soon that Nashville Soccer Holdings and Stand Up Nashville have completed the first Community Benefits Agreement for a major civic project in Nashville.

This deal is a new way of doing business in Nashville, one that will guarantee minority business opportunities, create affordable housing and provide for new cultural and community space.

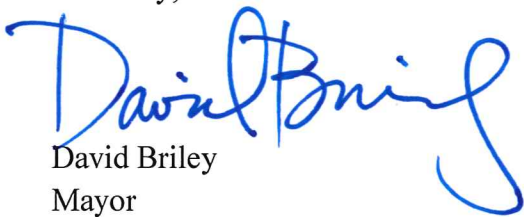
And none of it will harm the existing Fairgrounds uses. The fair, the flea market and racing will continue, and existing uses will be preserved, benefiting not only from the traditions they've created over the past 100 years but also from brand new Fairgrounds facilities. This is a chance to make a significant investment in a growing area of town, and ensure the Fairgrounds remains a treasure for decades to come.

While some have made last-minute calls for a referendum on stadium construction, I know the Metro Council is ready to vote. Your elected representatives on the Council make big decisions all the time – after all, that's what you elected them for – and they're ready to tackle this one after the long and thorough process that led us to this point.

And I'm confident they'll make the right choice.

When Nashville comes together, we lift our community to amazing heights. Together, we can score another big goal for our great city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Briley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping "D" and "B".

David Briley  
Mayor