

NEWSLETTER

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Design for Hopkins Replacement Needs to Start Over:

The Design Presented by the City, Port and Architect Fail to Establish a New, Exciting Identity for Cleveland and a World Class Travel Experience

Overview:

In May, Cleveland Hopkins Airport announced and released its proposed renovation of Hopkins Airport, which is not a renovation at all – it is a complete replacement!

And the design presented for that complete replacement is totally lacking in design integrity and requires a complete re-conceptualization if it is to position Cleveland as a destination of **any** substance and delight, worthy of coming to via the air.

Project Overview:

While the official announcement stated that the project's cost would be \$1.1 billion, the architect's web site reports that it is actually a \$3 billion project. Two weeks later, the city's estimate had grown to \$1.6 billion. The stated objectives are "transforming the airport's infrastructure, enhancing passenger facilities, and boosting long-term economic growth for the region." That does not go anywhere near far enough and is another shining example of the lack of vision of our so-called leaders.

What is unstated is that the meaning of a 'transformative' project is the opportunity to redefine the region's identity into something distinctive, memorable and high in quality and excitement. Officials are referring to the project as TMDP - Terminal Modernization Development Program, a two-decade block puzzle that involves the demolition of massive existing elements that began with the demolition of the nine-story Airport Sheraton Hotel in late 2024 and was completed earlier this year.

The City hired RS&H of Dallas in 2019 for \$4.5 million to create a Master Plan for Hopkins that now has AECOM on board as Master Planner. At the time the planning began, then-Mayor Frank Jackson defined the objective as to "ensure that Cleveland Hopkins International Airport's remains competitive in the industry and continues to grow in the number of flight options offered and passengers it serves. This Master Plan process will identify investments that will make Hopkins a more modern, user-friendly airport to attract business flyers as well as leisure travelers." That did not go far enough, but then Jackson was never called out for having any vision. RS+H's 826-page Master Plan was submitted in 2021.

The initial implementation work involves renovation of an existing 21,700 sf



Above & Below: Conceptual Rendering of Hopkins Airport Replacement; Corgan Architects, Dallas



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building on Cargo Rd., which will be renovated for TMDP staff offices. The \$4 million for this work will come from the \$176M Phase I kitty the airlines have previously approved.

The Players:

At the end of 2024, the city's Department of Port Control that manages Hopkins and Burke Lakefront Airports hired the Paslay Group of Fort Worth, TX to provide executive program management services to deliver the city's TMDP for Hopkins Airport. *NEOtrans* has reported that Paslay is partnered with Corgan, a nationally recognized architecture and design firm, and Connico, which specializes in cost estimating, scheduling and phasing for airports across the US. The airport planning team also includes Cleveland-based firms Robert P. Madison International and Van Auken Akins Architects, since renamed DVA Architecture, to provide additional design services.

Corgan is the No. 2 firm in the US when looking only at annual fees for airport-related design services with annual revenues in that market sector of \$161 million, behind Gensler who takes in \$214 million. Corgan is responsible for the Terminal C at LaGuardia Airport, JFK JetBlue Terminal 6, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport Terminal C South Concourse (with Smith Group), Montrose (Colorado) Regional Airport Master Plan, LAX 15-Gate West Concourse (with Gensler) and Nashville's Airport Arrival Facility.

It would be inaccurate to characterize Corgan as a firm known for design excellence, and their design for Hopkins makes that clear. At Mayor Bibb's press briefing, the design was described by Port Control Director Francis, "This design is a symbol of fluidity... It's a structure that dances with sunlight gliding through glass and steel to create a sense of calm and movement for travelers."

In actual fact, the design is an ungraceful assembly of orthogonal planes in both plan and section that has no fluidity to it at all. "Dancing sunlight gliding through glass and steel?" One only has to throw up a glass wall to achieve that. Is that the height of Cleveland's aspirations for this project? Is that all our Port Director could proclaim that the design achieves? That is pathetic. That is just BS to try and take your eye off the fact that **there is not a wonderful hearth space(s), no significant amenities – at all?! – or quality materials at work here. This is a grossly inadequate front door for Cleveland.**

The terminal design is a tall rectangular metal shed with no creativity and seven slits in the roof for a bit more daylight. A sophomore architecture student would be given a D grade for this. And our client team does not have the intellectual or aesthetic acumen to recognize this, dramatically demonstrating the continued deterioration of our community's architectural design culture.

Design Standards for Airports:

The design of *all* airports around the world has been elevated in the past two decades to now provide welcoming, exuberant places for passengers that are hospitality-driven with daylight, live plant materials throughout, excellent lighting and quality finishes and are filled with multiple amenities to allow patrons to pleasantly pass their wait times in comfort. **The best airports also have substantial 'hearth' spaces, many with water and daylight that are terrific places to wait, watch people, relax with a beverage and pass the time in a pleasant manner.**

The design for the replacement of Cleveland Hopkins Airport



Above: Hopkins Replacement Southeast Elevation
Below: Hopkins Existing Dropoff Canopy Protection
Third: Hopkins Replacement Terminal Interior
Bottom: Hopkins Terminal Rendering with Cheap Ceiling & Lighting



Design for Hopkins Replacement Needs to Start Over:

provides **none** of those attributes despite its multi-billion dollar price tag. Why not? There're two principle reasons:

1. Lack of Design Consciousness:

The city's 'leaders' lack a commitment to design excellence that is painfully evident from major projects implemented in recent decades - the Medical Mart/ Convention Center, Downtown Hilton Hotel, Rocket Arena Renovation, The Beacon, Lumen Tower, Skyline 776 (City Club Apartments), Sherwin-Williams HQ, Rock-N-Roll HOF Expansion, Museum of Contemporary Art, Ten60 Bolivar, Cleveland Clinic Peak Performance Center, Cleveland Clinic Neurological Institute, etc.

Maryland architecture professor Ryan Scavnick who hails from Cleveland critiqued the proposed move of the Browns stadium to Brook Park as one that severs that historical connection between the Browns and downtown in favor of a sterile, suburban stadium that he compares to "a suburban Wal-Mart in a gaming PC costume." He critiques that design by HKS Architects as **lacking any distinctive identity or consideration of Cleveland's cultural or geographic context.** Other than the roof scallops at Corgan's Hopkins design, the same is true for the latest mediocre architecture proposed to be dumped on Cleveland.

Cleveland's public officials and NGO executives today uniformly lack a baseline appreciation for architectural excellence to form even a fundamental awareness of what constitutes good design so they can contribute to an assessment and evaluation of design quality on important projects. Unlike their predecessors a century ago, they have not invested time or effort to travel to Europe or other locations of architectural significance to experience Architecture with a capital "A." Accordingly, **they lack any idea of what constitutes excellence in architectural design.**

In presenting the design to the public in early May, Mayor Bibb claimed, "As Mayor, I am fully committed to advocating for the transformation of this vital asset. I stand proudly behind the Airport team's efforts to deliver a modern, welcoming experience that reflects the innovation, pride, and momentum of our city. Cleveland deserves, and will have, a world-class airport."

The design presented in very far from 'innovative' and it is most definitely not 'world class,' which is precisely why it needs to be completely reimaged.

At the time industrial Cleveland was a hub for European immigration, it was natural for

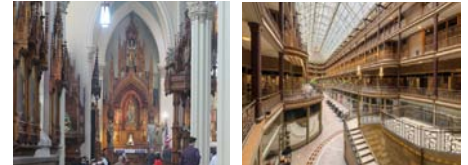
Cleveland's leaders to travel to Europe for politics, business, and cultural enrichment. Many made Europe the focus of their travel to experience high quality fine art and architecture. From 1876 to 1919, the number of art museums in the US tripled. Just as many of our citizens traveled to Europe to acquire fine art, they returned also with an understanding and appreciation for the architectural excellence they experienced abroad.

Hinman Hurlbut and his wife Elizabeth made repeated trips to Europe and left a strong art collection and \$1.2 million (\$29.3M today) to the Cleveland Museum of Art. Henry Ranney spent four summers in Europe visiting museums to contribute to his rendering informed judgment on the design of the CMA and assembling his personal art collection. Horace Kelley and Judge James Jones were similarly motivated.

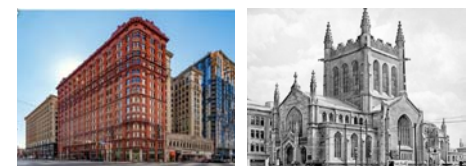
They then put this knowledge to use in their selection of architects for important Cleveland projects, which most often focused on local talent. Despite the lack of experience with many of the building types, Cleveland architects then rose to the occasion and consistently delivered exemplary results.

The result of the efforts of the community's elites to educate themselves to be able to effectively participate in the selection of competent architects and the evaluation of their efforts for important buildings produced a "Golden Age" for Cleveland architecture:

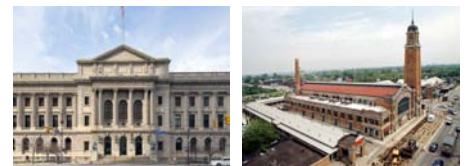
St. Stephen Church; Cudell & Richardson; 1875
The Arcade; John M. Eisenman & George K. Smith; 1890
Shoreby Club; Charles Schweinfurth; 1890
Pilgrim Congregation Church; Sidney Badgley; 1894
Rockefeller Park Bridges; Charles Schweinfurth; 1897 - 1990
Wade Memorial Chapel; Hubbell & Benes; 1901
Schofield Building; Levi Scofield; 1902
Florence Harkness Memorial Chapel; Charles Schweinfurth; 1902
First Methodist Church; J. Milton Dyer; 1904
Union Club; Charles Schweinfurth; 1905
Trinity Cathedral; Charles Schweinfurth; 1907
Lake County Courthouse; J. Milton Dyer; 1909
Mather Mansion/ University Hall at CSU; Charles Schweinfurth; 1910
Cleveland Athletic Club; J. Milton Dyer; 1911
Cuyahoga County Courthouse; Lehman & Schmitt with Frank Walker; 1911
West Side Market; Hubbell & Benes; 1912
Flora Stone Mather Memorial Hall; Charles Schweinfurth; 1913
Cleveland Museum of Art; Hubbell & Benes; 1916



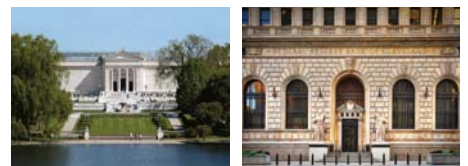
Above: St. Stephen Church; Cudell & Richardson (L); The Arcade; Eisenman & Smith (R)
Below: Pilgrim Congregational Church; Sidney Badgley (L); Wade Memorial Chapel; Hubbell & Benes (R)



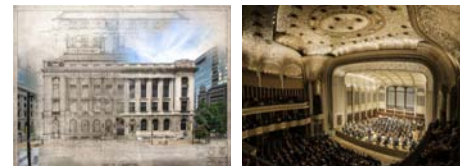
Above: Schofield Building; Levi Schofield (L); First Methodist Church; Now Majestic Hall; J. Milton Dyer (R)
Below: Union Club; Charles Schweinfurth (L); Trinity Cathedral; Charles Schweinfurth (R)



Above: Cuyahoga County Courthouse; Lehman & Schmidt + Frank Walker (L); West Side Market; Hubbell & Benes (R)
Below: Cleveland Museum of Art; Hubbell & Benes (L); Federal Reserve Bank; Walker & Weeks (R)



Below: Cleveland Public Library Rendering/ Elevation; Walker & Weeks (L); Severance Hall; Walker & Weeks (R)



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Design for Hopkins Replacement Needs to Start Over:

Cleveland City Hall; J. Milton Dyer; 1916
Federal Reserve Bank; Walker & Weeks; 1923
Cleveland Public Library; Walker & Weeks; 1925
Allen Memorial Medical Library; Bertram
Goodhue & Walker & Weeks; 1926
Ohio Bell Telephone; Hubbell & Benes; 1927
Epworth-Euclid Methodist Church; Walker & Weeks; 1928
First Baptist Church; Walker & Weeks; 1928
First Church of Christ Scientist; Walker & Weeks; 1929
Severance Hall; Walker & Weeks; 1931
US Coast Guard Station; J. Milton Dyer; 1940
St. Ann Church; Walker & Weeks; 1952

2. Lack of Adequate Talent from Design Team:

Top tier design talent has been sought out by most modern airport owners who were serious about their project to sieze the opportunity to elevate the stature of their community and provide an ease and quaity of travel for the public. That has not (yet) happened in Cleveland.

The consensus architects of the world's best airports consistently that are recognized for their design excellence includes Moshe Safdie, HOK, Gensler, Grimshaw, Zaha Hadid, SOM, Renzo Piano and Sir Norman Foster. **These firms have a depth of quality, talented personnel and a commitment to design excellence that simply distinguishes them from the 'building standard' architects that are typical to the industry and have been retained and tasked to design Cleveland's replacement airport.** In this context, Crogan has to be characterized as a 'building standard' airport architect.

Just as Dick Jacobs did when the first design for the Galleria at Erieview was produced, he realized his project's success required a higher standard of architectural excellence so he engaged design guru Pietro Belluschi from Detroit to re-imagine and refine the project to produce the pleasant daylight-volume that stands today.

The Cleveland Hopkins Airport project is in desperate need of a major architectural redesign to provide a truly exemplary result to re-position Cleveland and reverse the downward trajectory of our mediocre architectural design culture that has been eroding for decades.

While the airport design presented *does* deliver on a level too often missing in NEOH buildings with its gently – understated - curling roof forms symbolically representing the short-chop waves of Lake Erie, **the building fails to deliver a substantial and exciting experience for users that represents other important attributes of our community and our citizens.**

It also fails to present a compelling rebranding image for Cleveland – a colossal “miss” of the once-in-a-hundred year opportunity that the project represents. With no Cleveland architect given an opportunity to design a major project here since Piet van Dijk was entrusted to design Blossom Music Center in 1967, THIS project calls for a top tier architect to boldly put Cleveland back on the top tier architectural map it has not been anywhere near for decades except for Frank Gehry's Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University.

Seven shallow light monitors poke through the terminal roof facing east to allow a little daylight into the terminal, though they are quite close to the exterior wall which is fully glazed and will make the terminal unbearable in the mornings as it faces southeast. The short overhang to the southeast will do little to shield the monumental glass wall from solar heat gain – something that has been acknowledged internationally as a

Passenger numbers continue slide at Cleveland Hopkins airport as airlines cut back

Updated: Dec. 31, 2024, 12:33 p.m. | Published: Dec. 31, 2024, 12:32 p.m.



Passenger traffic at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport was down in November 2024, compared to the same period a year ago. The Plain Dealer

Above: Hopkins Passenger Traffic Shrinks
Below: Pittsburgh Airport Dropoff Under Construction; Gensler
Third & Bottom: Pittsburgh Airport Under Construction; Gensler



Design for Hopkins Replacement Needs to Start Over:



Above & Below: Hamad International Airport; Doha, Qatar; HOK



serious design error in architectural design for well over ten years.

Another unforgivable sin that illustrates the lack of design skill on the part of the design team is the absence of a large and deep sheltered drop-off area that covers the entire drop-off apron and at least two curb lanes of traffic – something essential in our challenging climate. Hopkins currently provides more/ better protection than Corgan's concept which covers only the sidewalk. Pittsburgh's new terminal by Gensler addresses this need effectively. **We should not be going backwards on anything.**

The second unforgivable sin is the absence of a dramatic 'hearth' space that funnels passengers to and from their gates with a grand welcoming experience that lets incoming people know that they are somewhere special. This kind of element appears in **every** significant new airport today – but not in what Corgan has proposed for Hopkins.

Those in charge can send Corgan back to the drawing board like the Cleveland Museum of Natural History did with the Fentress firm from Denver with their first design. But CMNH did right to dump Fentress when they failed a second time and gave the baton to Paul Westlake and DLR Group to produce the design that has just been completed and just this month has been judged to be one of the best museums in the US.

Given CMNH's success with the DLR Group riding in on the white horse to save their project, the city's Hopkins team should earnestly contemplate dropping Madison and DVA for DLR to help or replace Corgan to come up with something inspirational, bold and welcoming.

Airport design in the world today has become a key branding and marketing vehicle for communities. Europe, China and Japan are leading the way with bold and exciting designs. **Cleveland's proposed replacement terminal for Hopkins cannot be described as bold, exciting or innovative which reinforces Cleveland's second-class identity, hardly our objective.**

The Corgan-proposed reconstruction of Hopkins Airport does nothing to advance Cleveland as an important destination of any consequence. While a challenging complex of functions to successfully stage over time, the design eliminates the existing terminal and places the new terminal where the existing massive parking garage is, which appears to leave the terminal gates for the passengers another 300' – 500' further away from their gates.

A rendering of a gate area actually illustrates an acoustical lay-in ceiling which is the least expensive – cheapest – ceiling usually reserved for low-budget schools and offices, and wholly inappropriate in an airport for a city larger than 150,000. There should be no such second-class materials in any common areas of Hopkins Airport. The entry concourse and ticketing area is hardly pleasant and the design falls down even further as you move towards your gate. **This project needs a new top tier architect.**

Comparisons:

To illustrate just how disappointing and substandard the proposed Hopkins design is, an abbreviated inventory of the top airports in the world indicates that **most involve swooping, soft, romantic forms that reflect the forms of the planes that transport passengers, rather than the hard edged forms of Corgan's Hopkins design. Most top airports have dramatic daylighting in their hearth and concourse areas at their center that provide pleasant and natural respite areas to soften the stress of air travel. And most are filled with scores of dazzling true amenities.**

While opinion summaries are often contested – who are the best guitarists of

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Design for Hopkins Replacement Needs to Start Over:

all time?, who is the best symphonic composer?, etc. – a review of the ‘best airports in the world’ reveals consensus:

Hamad Airport; Doha, Qatar; 2014; HOK Architects: \$16 Billion:

Reclaimed land supports 60% of the Hamad Airport. On the existential side, Doha has sleep pods, can handle 5,000 bags an hour or 120,000 a day, and has a maintenance hangar that can handle 13 planes at once. **The airport offers a variety of four-star hospitality, relaxation and rejuvenating offerings for travelers. The Vitality Wellbeing and Fitness Centre has a 25-meter swimming pool, gym, spa, golf simulator and a squash court; and located at multiple locations at the airport are sleep ‘n fly lounges and showers and a Be Relax Spa, amongst other amenities. High-speed wi-fi service is available at no charge throughout the airport.**

At its center, “The Orchard” is a 312,000 square feet indoor tropical garden hearth spaces under a wave-styled glass roof with 300+ trees and 25,000 plants sourced from sustainable forests. A key attribute that resulted in Hamad being named the top airport in the world is its hosting of the most luxurious brands for shoppers, including Fendi, Rolex, Dior and others. In addition to its spacious feel and stunning design, the flow of passengers is smooth and seamless. Jewelry, electronics and cigarettes are bargains at Hamad’s duty-free shops.

The Corgan design for Hopkins incorporates no such features or amenities.

Jewel Changhi Airport; Singapore; 2019; Moshe Safdie Architects: \$1.9 Billion:

The airport contains Jewel, a huge amusement park-like garden area with activities, food and shopping around a 40’ vortex waterfall, the largest indoor waterfall in the world. Changi has the World’s Best Airport Dining and World’s Best Airport Washrooms. Many visitors come just to enjoy the Jewel’s design, activities and amenities – not to fly or greet friends and relatives.

Changi has a free butterfly garden, impressive art installations, free movie theatres in Terminals 2 and 3, a free Enchanted Garden in T2 and a free Singapore City Sights Tour. The Crown Plaza Changi Airport Hotel has been voted the world’s best hotel seven times since 2015. Over 100 airlines operate out of Changi with 366,000 landings and departures in 2024, making it the fourth busiest in the world with 7,400 flights each week. Changi saw 67.7 million passengers in 2024.

For context, Hopkins handled 10.1 million passengers in 2024.

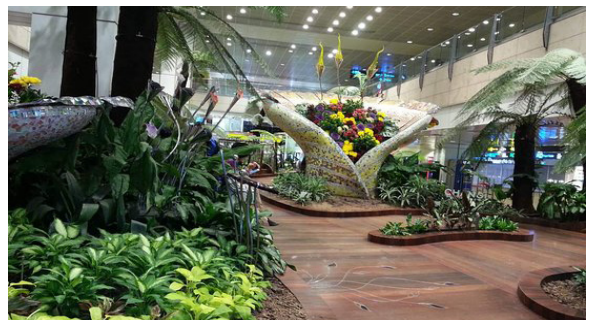
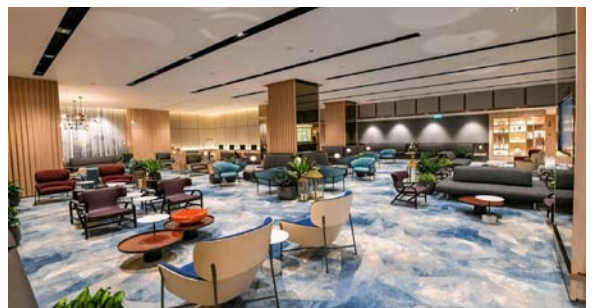
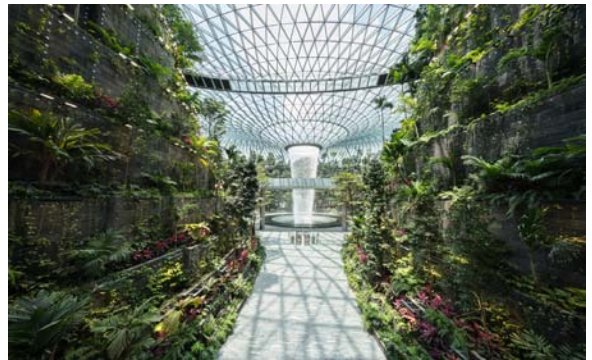
Changi Terminal 5 is being designed by KPF and Heatherwick Studio to be pandemic-proof and is expected to be operational by the mid-2030s.

Incheon International Airport; Seoul, Korea; 2001; Phase 1 = Terry Farrell & Partners with Samoo Architects & Engineers; Phase 2; 2018; Gensler with HGMV Consortium Terminal 1: Fentress Architects; \$3.974 Billion; Terminal 2; 2018; Gensler:

Incheon was built on reclaimed land between Yongjongdo and Youngyudo and is one of the most prominent gateways for Northeast Asia. First stage of building started in 1992 and it took eight years and four months to finish. It cost \$5.66 Billion US. This allows Incheon International Airport to have up to 170,000 flights, 27M passengers and 1.7M tons of cargo per year. Currently, Incheon has 111 boarding gates. The Phase I project provided a terminal area of 5.33M square feet, two



Above & Below: Jewel Changi Airport; Singapore; Moshe Safdie



Design for Hopkins Replacement Needs to Start Over:



Above & Below: Incheon International Airport; Seoul, Korea; various Architects



parallel runways, a control tower, administrative center, a transportation center, an integrated operations center, three cargo terminals, international business center and a government office building.

Phase 2; 2018; Gensler with HGMY Consortium; 2002 – 2008; A third parallel runway was added with a 32-acre cargo terminal and a 41- acre – 1.78 Million sq. ft.- concourse with two 2,854-foot-long motorized underground ‘Starline’ train passageways. The overall design of Terminal 2 was inspired by the legendary creature “Phoenix” with its exterior resembling the wings of the Phoenix embracing the structure from both sides. Further, the check-in area took inspiration from the Phoenix’s feathers, creating a captivating ambience for travelers.

Phase 3: 2018: Heerim Architects and Gensler & Assoc. International; \$4B US; A second passenger terminal of 507,000 sf was added with cargo and infrastructure additions. Capacity increased to 62M passengers annually. **The airport signed an agreement to add a six-star hotel, theme parks and a casino.**

Phase 4: 2017 – 2024; Terminal 2 expanded, fourth runway added, addition apron and parking added.

This airport also has 71 gates, a golf course, spa, private sleeping rooms, an ice skating rink, a casino, indoor gardens, a video game center and the Museum of Korean Culture. In 2019, Incheon served 71 million passengers.

Haneda International Airport; Tokyo, Japan;

Haneda is one of two airports serving Japan. Haneda handled 87 million passengers in 2018 and 90 million in 2019. In 2010, a third terminal of five stories was completed. Expansions have increased capacity to 407k movements and 60,000 overseas flights annually. Haneda handles over 80,000,000 passengers a year. The airport has been fielding complaints that amenities are absent for late evening and early morning arrivals.

Terminal 2; Jun Mitsui & Pelli Clarke & Partners Japan, Inc.; 2004

Terminal 3: Azussa Sekkei & Pelli Clarke & Partners Japan, Inc.; 2010

International Passenger Terminal; Pelli Clarke & Partners Japan, Inc.; 2020

Stuttgart Airport; von Gerken Marg + Partner; 2004, 2026:

Not all exemplary airport design is found in larger cities and markets. Stuttgart’s (pop. 633,000) airport is a pleasant forest of steel tree-like columns holding up a large floating roof that makes a strong, welcoming statement that ties the entire terminal together. The latest Terminal 4 Renovation project will achieve Net Zero by 2040. The plan includes the use of large-scale photovoltaic systems to generate electricity from renewable energy. Other measures include the use of rainwater, wastewater heat exchangers, ice storage, and geothermal energy to make the energy supply more sustainable. The facades will also be improved by using energy-efficient, coated double or triple glazing. The facade structure will be preserved – by renovating existing building parts, the embodied energy within them can be retained. Final plans for the new terminal design were formalized in 2024 and early construction is expected to begin in 2025, the centennial anniversary of the airport.

Cleveland Hopkins Funding:

The Hopkins terminal replacement is funded by non-aviation-related revenues: concessions, parking, carrier rents and landing fees in addition to federal grants. This first phase comes as Hopkins is also negotiating new lease agreements with airline carriers. Port Control Director Bryant Francis said the airport continues to negotiate financing details with the airlines, who are expected to fund much of the terminal construction. *NEOtrans* reports that a final agreement could be reached as early as 2026.

Who/ What is CAF?

The Cleveland Architecture Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit which was formed by three area architects in early 2018. Our purpose is to elevate the design culture of Northeast Ohio and enhance public appreciation for our architecture heritage.

Our initial perspective recognized that there were a half dozen prominent accomplished area architects who were 90 years of age who were still with us. We believed that they had valuable lessons and perspectives to be shared.

We partnered with the Cleveland Public Library to produce a series of Video Interviews which are hosted on CPL's Oral History website. To date, video interviews of Richard Fleischman FAIA, Piet van Dijk FAIA, and Paul Westlake FAIA are available. Interviews with Norman Pertulla FAIA and William Blunden FAIA are currently in a lengthy editing phase.

CAF has begun an Archive Initiative to enable all to access information, drawings and photos of important area architects and architecture. To date, over 4000 records have been digitized per the new archive standards of the American Library Association. We seek volunteers/ interns to help pair metadata reference records with each image so the images can be searchable at no cost.

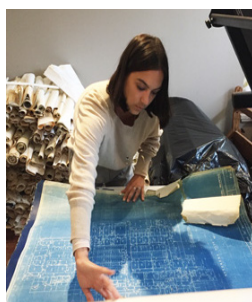
We have been asked by Case Western Reserve University to update the architectural content of their Encyclopedia of Cleveland History and have to date provided CWRU with over 1000 color photos with more on the way.

We have initiated a popular Lecture Series with important local and national individuals to speak on architecture, urban renewal, historic preservation, and compatible design in historic districts. Our quarterly Newsletters currently go out to 1200 professionals, government and NGO officials throughout NEOH. We have hosted educational neighborhood bus tours and will continue this series.

CAF has a small committed Board:

John Rousch AIA; Archive Director
David Ellison AIA; VP & Secretary
William Eberhard AIA, IIDA; President

Right is volunteer Vanina Batistella, examining documents for potential inclusion in the digital archive.



THE RETURN OF ERIEVIEW

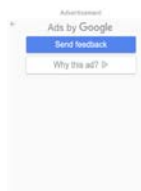
New Owners Finally Get Financing & Hotel Commitments

Tower at Erieview, Galleria sell for \$17.7 million

Published: Aug. 02, 2018, 12:02 p.m.



Erieview Tower and Galleria



Above: Erieview Tower, Galleria & Garage sell for \$17.7 million in 2018.

The Tower and Galleria at Erieview have declined since 2008 when previous owner Werner Minshall was unable to secure and utilize funds for needed improvements to maintain the property and assure its marketability.

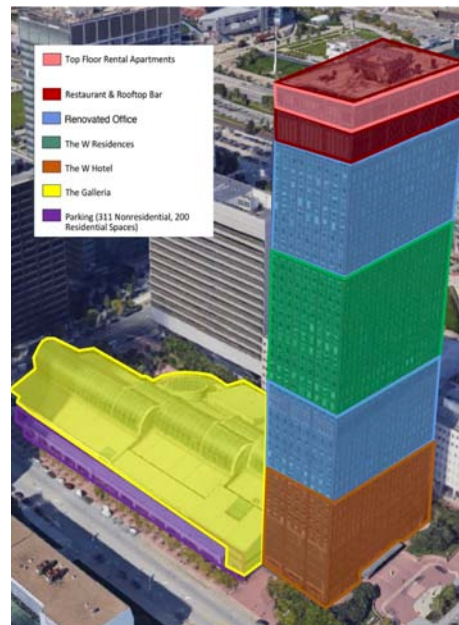
In 2018, real estate owner and parking lot operator James Kassouf and a band of investors acquired Erieview for only \$17.7 million - \$22.20/ square foot! - assuming the garage and Galleria were free! In 2020, Trump pardoned Kassouf who plead guilty to filing a false tax return in 1989. Now the Kassouf team has been joined by KJK law firm managing partner Jon Pinney and TurnDev of Beachwood who have assembled a project mix and team with financing that will hopefully see the aging property given a capital injection to reposition the property.

Erieview's Urban Renewal History and Its Failure:

In 1973, the renowned *New York Times* architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable described Cleveland's Erieview Plaza as "a huge, bleak, near empty plaza with a complete set of non-working fountains and drained pools, focusing on a routine glass tower by New York architects Harrison and Abramovitz, then known to Clevelanders as the 'jolly green giant.'"

She lamented that the plaza was flanked by

Below: Erieview Urban Renewal lot Clearing;



Top: 2023 Erieview Tower Renovation Stacking Plan
Bottom: Original Erieview Plaza & Fountain

"vast, open parking lots." Huxtable was referring to Erieview Plaza and Erieview Tower, together the focus of the Erieview urban renewal project, which she derided as a "monument to everything that was wrong with urban renewal thinking in America in the 1960s." Erieview attracted more than architectural criticism. Some Clevelanders also argued that the project set back the downtown district it was intended to revitalize.

Plain Dealer columnist Philip W. Porter called Erieview "the mistake that ruined downtown." Porter wasn't alone. Even in the 1960s, some downtown interests worried that Erieview, which some considered a "surrogate downtown," might siphon energy away from the downtown shopping district. Would Erieview workers continue to walk several blocks to Euclid Avenue to shop on their lunch break, or would they demand amenities in a new, self-contained city-within-a-city?

Erieview was born of the same concerns about

THE RETURN OF ERIEVIEW



Above: Original Erieview Tower Rendering

downtown stagnation that gripped many U.S. cities by the 1950s. Pittsburgh's Gateway Center became a national model for downtown renewal, and Cleveland leaders formed the Cleveland Development Foundation in 1954 to attempt to emulate Pittsburgh's Allegheny Conference on Community Development. CDF weighed whether to launch its urban renewal effort - with federal dollars matching municipal expenditures in a 2:1 ratio - in downtown in a subsidized version of Pittsburgh's privately financed downtown renewal or start in east-side neighborhoods.

Local architect Richard Hawley Cutting even drew a plan, pro bono, that he pitched to CDF. Called Erie View, it featured a geometric assemblage of modernist towers and plazas along the lakefront to the east of East 9th Street. CDF, whose chairman was Republic Steel president Tom Patton, rejected that urban renewal design

Below: Architect Richard Hawley Erieview Concept rendering



Top: I. M. Pei's Erieview Master Plan
Second: Harrison & Abramovitz's Socony-Mobil Tower; 1956
Third: Dimit Architects' 2023 Lobby Renovation Design
Fourth: Dimit Architects' 2023 Lobby Renovation Design



and, in 1956, proceeded instead with another, dumping Republic Steel slag in Kingsbury Run and building the euphemistically named Garden Valley, which offered substandard housing and exacerbated residential segregation.

A succession of failed downtown projects - the collapse of a plan for underground parking beneath the Mall, voters' rejections of a convention center expansion, and county commissioners' denial of a downtown subway - led to a series of secret meetings in the spring of 1959. Weary of the slow pace of neighborhoods-first renewal and impatient with the CDF-commissioned \$100,000 downtown plan due out later that year, CDF president Upshur Evans, Cleveland Chamber of Commerce president Curtis Lee Smith, and Cleveland Urban Renewal and Housing Director James M. Lister convened to strategize how to catalyze downtown revitalization.

They approached Chase Manhattan Bank's David Rockefeller in the hope he might invest in Cleveland. He refused but reinforced their belief that only a large, coordinated plan was worthwhile. They turned to Newark-based Prudential Insurance to try to interest the company in a regional headquarters along Lake Erie. They also passed.

Undeterred, the trio bypassed the Cleveland Planning Commission and went straight to Mayor Anthony Celebrezze, who saw in their idea a project he could sell. Unveiled in January 1960, the plan, christened Erieview, promised the nation's largest downtown urban renewal project, a reflection of city leaders' desire to make up for lost time.

The city's 'leaders' then pronounced the 125-acre renewal area - roughly bounded by the Memorial Shoreway, East 9th Street, Chester Avenue, and East 17th Street - "blighted," sealing the fate of many small businesses and manufacturers and some single-room-occupancy hotels.

Downtown's northeastern quadrant once had hundreds of units of low-rent housing units, but these held no place in the vision of Cleveland's boosters. They yielded to civic aspirations for a new downtown of gleaming office towers. Although Erieview aspires to reemerge as a residential neighborhood, its upscale rental housing inventory means that it cannot rightly be said to have come full circle.

The city commissioned prominent modernist architect I. M. Pei to design the Erieview master plan, which looked like many other plans of its era - a Tetris board of low-slung, interlocking buildings wrapping around open plazas punctuated by taller towers. The tallest of them was plotted between East 9th and 12th Streets with an open plaza and reflecting pool.

Continued Next Page

THE RETURN OF ERIEVIEW

It was not the first time Cleveland saw a grand scheme to reorient its downtown toward the lakefront. Pei's conception reprised, updated, and extended eastward the early 20th-century Group Plan designed by the "City Beautiful" architect Daniel Burnham of Chicago. The demolition zone widened to 160 acres before the last dump truck removed materials from the site.

But Pei's plan has been criticized by scores of design professionals over time. The late Piet van Dijk FAIA, one of Cleveland's best architects criticized Pei for failing to recognize Cleveland's weather and failing to integrate covered colonnades to shelter pedestrians. In his CAF interview weeks before his passing, van Dijk observed, "You know he saw the Arcade."

Columbus developers John Galbreath and Peter Ruffin planned to build one or more office towers in Erieview, including the focal building at its heart. The 529-foot-tall, 40-story Erieview Tower was designed by the New York firm of Harrison and Abramovitz. Firm partner Wallace Harrison was best known for his work on Rockefeller Center and the United Nations, but the Erieview design more closely resembled the firm's 45-story Socony-Mobil Building (1956) in New York, also developed by Galbreath and Ruffin.

The tower, with its underground 450-car parking garage, was completed in 1964 though the full renewal plan was not fully implemented, leaving much of the area that was cleared for redevelopment relegated to surface parking. For a time into the late 1970s and early 1980s, the area became a cold and foreboding place to be with the East 9th Street corridor a limit to downtown's growth.

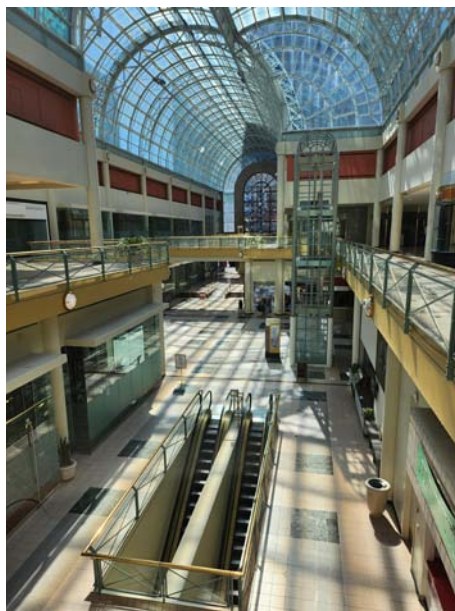
Erieview Tower was a simplified version of its H&A predecessor, substituting black and green glass curtain walls for black windows and silver patterned aluminum walls. Yet both buildings were fairly panned by some as "ugly" designs. True to its nickname, the greenish tower did loom, giant-like, over the wide-open expanse of Erieview Plaza whose fountains and reflecting pool doubled as an ice rink in winter – when it did not leak. Widespread clearance left mostly parking lots surrounding Erieview Plaza for years.

Erieview was billed as an antidote for an ailing downtown and as an outlet for downtown's expected office boom. While these aims may appear contradictory – one intended to reverse decline and another to accommodate anticipated growth – they actually reflected the complex situation facing downtowns in the 1960s.

Suburban retail competition was causing downtown shopping to wither, while at the same time many firms were eager for more flexible modern office space. Many believe that Erieview initially spurred overdue renovations by several leading downtown department stores. That their



Above: Erieview Tower; Harrison & Abramovitz
Below: The Galleria; Kober-Bellusch; 1987



Below: Erieview Transformation Headline

A transformation is under way at one of Downtown Cleveland's tallest buildings

After years of planning, construction is finally starting to turn the Tower at Gateway into Ohio's first W hotel and apartments – and a high-rise restaurant

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efforts ultimately failed to save them owed less to Erieview than to the effects of population decline, suburban retail growth thanks to longer hours of operation and free parking, and the city's failure to cultivate a strong convention trade.

Office expansion promised a respite from retail slippage. After Erieview Tower, a half-dozen major office towers appeared, including headquarters for the Cuyahoga Savings Bank HQ/ IMG Center (1965), the 32-story Celebrezze Federal Building (1967), Central National Bank/ 800 Superior/ Amtrust Financial Center (1969), Ohio Savings Plaza (1969), Cleveland Trust Tower (1971), Bond Court/ Penton Media/ AECOM (1972), Diamond Shamrock/ 1100 Superior/ Oswald Center (1972), National City Bank/ PNC Center (1980), Ohio Bell HQ/ AT&T HQ/ 45 Erieview Plaza (1981), One Cleveland Center (1983), Eaton Center/ 1111 Superior (1983), BP America/ 200 Public Square/ Huntington Bank Tower (1985), North Point Office Complex (1990), Skylight Office Tower (1991) and the Bank One Center/ 5/3 Center (1991) opened over the next three decades.

No sooner had Erieview been completed than downtown employment started to drop while the market continued to absorb office space each year with tenants shedding Class B and C locations for newer more efficient Class A buildings. Downtown employment dropped by one-third in the forty years after 1970, and by the 21st century, the main demand downtown was for living space. Boosters had long predicted a return to the central city.

Erieview added three apartment towers – including Reserve Square – between 1967 and 1973, but it would take another four decades before downtown became a true residential magnet, aided by conversions of older office buildings, often employing historic preservation tax credits.

In 2010, the Downtown Cleveland Alliance rebranded the Erieview area, nearly one-third vacant, as a "live-work-play" concept dubbed the Nine-Twelve District. The meaningless slogan failed to impact the market woes. As renovators exhausted the supply of historic buildings, mid-century properties were just crossing the fifty-year threshold to qualify as "historic."

In 2016, Cleveland's *Plain Dealer* art and architecture critic Steven Litt observed that the flaws of the Erieview District are evidence that Cleveland needs new zoning laws to enable the development a more vital, inviting, pedestrian-friendly downtown which can best be understood by taking a walk around the Erieview District on foot.

He fairly characterized Erieview as a "wilderness of blank walls of concrete or brick, reflective glass windows, and multistory garages with wide entries and exits, big ventilator grilles and exhaust fans."

THE RETURN OF ERIEVIEW

Jacobs

In 1985, reports state that retail developers Jacobs, Visconsi & Jacobs paid between \$33M – \$45 million for Erieview. Owner John Galbreath had not invested in maintaining the tower for some time and had then become more focused on his horses – he won the Kentucky Derby three times – and his Pittsburgh Pirates which he owned through 1985. Galbreath was 86 when he sold the complex to the Jacobs’ and died in 1988 at the age of 90. Jacobs technically bought the complex from the lender CIGNA to whom Galbreath had surrendered the property.

When JVJ acquired the property, they renamed it the Tower at Erieview and spent \$43 million to have noted architect Pietro Belluschi lead the design and construction of an attached Galleria shopping mall in place of the old E. 9th plaza and fountain.

The brothers also spent heavily to renovate the tower to move it from a Class C property to Class A tower. The brothers bought the Cleveland Indians in 1986 as follow-up act of civic pride. JVJ also invested heavily to properly fund tenant improvement allowances with competitive rental rates so that tenancy significantly increased.

The opening of the Galleria in October 1987 marked a legible extension of the original Erieview plan. But the 207,600-sf retail mall was small and lacked a major anchor, and with retail hours of 9/10 am to 6 pm and the need to pay to park, with low/ no downtown residents at the time and competing with suburban retail hours of 9 am – 9 pm with free parking, the Galleria’s stores external to its popular food court struggled.

David Jacobs passed away in 1992 at the age of 82 and Richard Jacobs sold the Indians in 2001 and died at the age of 84 in 2009.

Werner Minshall

In 2002, Bethesda, MD developer Werner Minshall bought the Erieview complex from JVJ for only \$30 million. At the time, it was on the tax rolls as a \$76 million property.

Minshall’s ties to Cleveland are attributable to growing up here, son of a Jones Day attorney who became a congressman. In exchange for legal work in the last century, Minshall’s father was given 30 acres of land on the west side of Kelly’s Island for payment, which contained an abandoned rock quarry and a century cabin that Minshall and his three children continue to use frequently for family vacations.

As the CEO of Minshall Stewart Properties, Minshall grew his portfolio to 1.8 million square feet of commercial properties and 560 apartment

units, including two high-rise office buildings in downtown Columbus. But Tower at Erieview and Galleria was his biggest acquisition then – and now.

Minshall was a charismatic hands-on owner which distinguished him from other downtown office owners who were increasingly out-of-town investors or publicly traded companies.

“He’s charismatic. There’s something nice about being able to sit down with an owner and get a deal done,” said Al Wiant, a previous partner at the Brandon Wiant Converse brokerage firm. But Mr. Wiant notes Mr. Minshall needed all of his resources given the sour downtown office market.

By 2012, tenants were paying lower rents than they were in 2002. US Bank foreclosed on the \$44 million mortgage for the tower and garage in April 2012 but not the Galleria.

The bank said it was then owed \$58 million with late fees and default interest payments dating back to March plus interest until foreclose produces the property’s sale. When Minshall acquired the tower in 2002, it was 40% vacant and was down to 24% occupancy at the time of foreclosure.

Minshall had originally proposed closing the Galleria and converting it into a convention center. But the Galleria was one-third the size of Cleveland’s “then-too-small” convention center, so Architect Richard Fleischman FAIA developed designs for a convention center east of the tower where there was adequate land area for the required exhibition, ballroom and meeting spaces.

Minshall enlisted broker Jim Breen to help lease the tower and successfully landed a number of solid tenants - with LESCO (40k sf) and Emerald Health Care (22k sf), but they also lost McKinsey & Company Inc. (45k sf) and Dix & Eaton (20k sf) to the BP Tower.

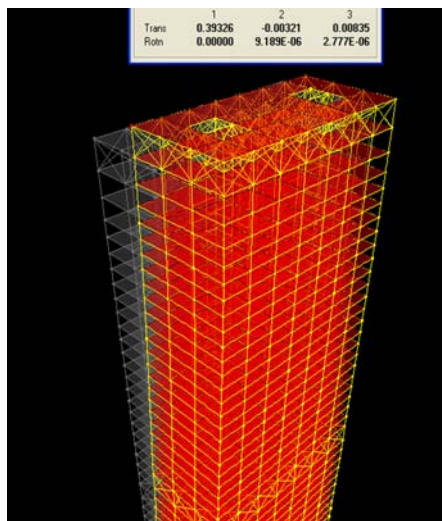
After initial success in re-tenanting the tower with competitive rents thanks to his low purchase price, Minshall had no money to keep the property up. When it rained, the Galleria sported an army of yellow buckets. By 2010, downtown real estate was hurting with Erieview’s tower occupancy down to 60% - which is below what’s usually needed to break even.

In an interview back then, Minshall said, “It’s Armageddon,” describing the status of commercial and retail property along the East Ninth Street corridor. “There’s almost no hope. My equity in this investment is wiped out. It’s disastrous. I love Cleveland, but there’s sort of a poisonous, weird attitude there. People spend all this time muddling on things that never get done.”

Continued Next Page



Above: I. M. Pei’s Initial Rendering of Proposed Erieview Urban Renewal
Below: Minshall’s Proposed Addition to the Top of Erieview Tower; Oliver Design Group
Bottom: Wind Impact Study of Erieview Tower’s taller Addition



THE RETURN OF ERIEVIEW

At the time, *Plain Dealer* reporter Michelle Jarboe reported that the corridor from East 9th St. to East 12th St., from Euclid Avenue to Lake Erie contained two million square feet of empty office space – enough to fill Terminal Tower 3.5 times.

The Jacobs brothers had acquired the Cleveland Indians and spent with confidence to upgrade the Erieview Tower from Class C to Class A office space. They offered adequate tenant improvement allowances and succeeded in increasing occupancy to 90% within two years.

By 2005, the Galleria building with 137,000 sf of rentable space had only 36 of its 66 retail spaces occupied. But the *New York Times* reported that Erieview Tower was 88% leased, providing a sign that Cleveland was “back from the edge.”

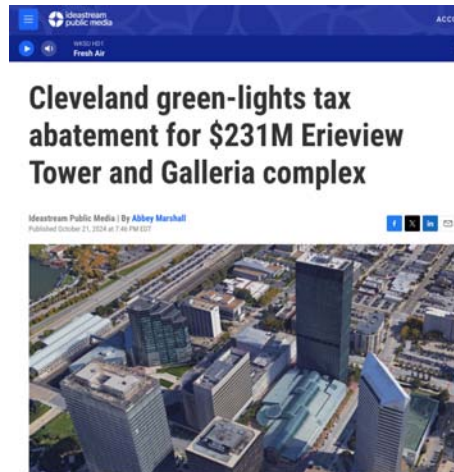
Minshall contemplated an addition to the top of the building to create luxury apartments after talking to a number of Guardians and Browns players. He had Oliver Design Group explore additional gravity loads on the tower's structural frame with structural experts at Case Western Reserve University.

The team placed oscillation gauges on the tower's roof to measure sway. Five additional floors were a comfortable add for gravity loads, but the tower's increased oscillation at the top under wind loads would increase movement to a level that was believed to begin to induce discomfort to residents.

Minshall also explored expanding the city's best parking garage into the base of the tower's two subgrade levels, but without money, Minshall was unable to pull the trigger. For every new major office tenant Minshall signed, he had to refinance the building to produce sufficient funds for construction.

But in 2012, Minshall staved off foreclosure when he arranged for RAIT Financial Trust of Philadelphia, who already held a second mortgage on the tower, to acquire the \$42 million first mortgage at a significant discount. According to court records, C-III Asset Management of Irving, Texas, a special servicer tasked with handling bad loans, filed a motion to dismiss the foreclosure lawsuit. However, C-III Asset Management filed to foreclose on the property nine months later.

RAIT Financial provided \$17 million for renovations. Minshall then had the funds to redo the tower's lobby, replace elevators and reopen the ceiling to its original 1960s height. But he failed to follow through on that work scope which could have successfully revitalized the property. In December 2015, lender RAIT Financial Trust Inc. of Philadelphia took control of the property to satisfy the outstanding loan balance. RAIT announced its intention to convert part of the tower to apartments to satisfy its value for shareholders.



Above: Erieview Gets Tax Abatement
Below: Beyer Blinder Belle's renovations for the Renovation of the Galleria



James Kassouf

In 2017, with the tower 37% vacant at the time, developer James Kassouf and a group of investors bought the Erieview complex for \$17.7 million. Assuming that the 450-car parking garage was included for free instead of its \$8M - \$10M value, that amounts to a disturbing \$22.13/sf for the tower – virtually the average yearly rent for downtown Class A office space at the time.

The Tower has now been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and Kassouf initially developed plans to convert twelve vacant floors into apartments. He retained Lakewood's Dimit Architects to design new common areas and the apartment floors. But with construction documents complete, Kassouf could not get financing.

To the immediate north, the former Ohio Bell/AT&T HQ was sold to Texas-based developers for \$21.5 million in 2022. Previous owner Somera Road paid \$36 million for the property in 2016. The new owners renovated the building into 367 apartments and branded it as “The Bell.” Designed by Norm Pertulla FAIA of Cleveland's Dalton Dalton Little & Newport and constructed in 1983 with a granite exterior, the project received historic State and Federal tax credits of \$5.8 million.

In January, the project team closed on its \$218 million financing package, clearing the way for work to begin. The project will include 227 W-branded by Marriott luxury apartments, a 210-room W-branded luxury hotel, a 38th-floor fine-dining restaurant and bar, a 15,000-square-foot ballroom, spa, fitness center, lobby lounge, renovated office spaces across 12 floors, and the connected retail Galleria, plus indoor parking.

Tenants of the W-branded by Marriott apartments will have access to hotel-like services including concierge, housekeeping, doorman, bellman and butler services, in addition to all hospitality and experiential amenities. The hospitality component brings the first W Hotel in the state of Ohio. The dual-branded W Residences plus W Hotels project is a limited concept that Marriott offers worldwide with only eight other locations in the United States offering this Marriott apartments-hotel combination in one building.

Construction will be phased by component, with residential construction commencing immediately, hotel construction beginning later in 2025, and the project expected to be completed in late 2026. Other participants are architects Berardi + Partners Inc., Turner & Townsend, Novogradac & Company LLP, BakerHostetler LLP, Polsinelli, Bricker Graydon, Roetzel & Andress, DiPerna & Co., Rockwell Architecture Planning and Design P.C., Beyer Blinder Belle, and Independence Construction. TurnDev is providing development services and debt financing for the project.

CH Marquee at Cedar Lee Fire a Total Loss;

On January 24, the north building of the Marquee at Cedar apartment development under construction caught fire. In 12-degree weather, it took fire departments from 16 communities 20 hours to put out the fire. Cedar Road was closed for two months for safety reasons. The \$66 million project was declared a total loss.

In early February the State Fire Marshal stated that there were no signs or evidence of tampering to cause the fire to start. "At this time, electrical and structural engineers have evaluated the building and electrical systems as much as the damage will allow. Investigators have conducted approximately 60 witness interviews, including with 911 callers, construction workers, security company representatives, property owners, and previous and current building management," the SFM stated in a release.

Investigators also processed and viewed several hours of video footage of the fire and structure, and used drone technology to produce a 3D scan of the structure.

SFM officials say the investigation first focused on the upper floors of the building's north wing, located adjacent to Cedar Ave. The building has been demolished and materials removed but for a small area of structural steel at Cedar Road which engineers have approved salvage for reconstruction.

On March 20, the City approved the demolition to begin. Developer Flannery & Collins stated that they intend to rebuild the project as originally planned. No time frame has been suggested.

"We are fortunate that the State Fire Marshal is collaborating with our Fire Investigation Unit to get to the root causes of the fire so that we may move forward quickly on re-opening Cedar Road and the district parking garage, and on future redevelopment of the site," said Cleveland Heights Mayor Kahlil Seren in a statement. "Given that our fire investigation team is staffed by full-time firefighters who must continue to do their daily jobs, it was critical to have the added assistance of the State."

Developers on the \$66 million project, which was 75% complete, remain committed to rebuilding the rest of the complex once the site is cleared. They do not have a choice.

The development agreement between Cleveland Heights and Flaherty & Collins Properties requires the developer to finish the 266-unit project due to a "personal guarantee" of completion clause. Construction got underway in May 2023, and the first phase of the mixed-use development on the corner of Lee Road and Meadowbrook Boulevard is now accepting tenants.



Above & Below: Marquee at Cedar-Lee Fire & Demolition



Fire-ravaged Marquee at Cedar Lee apartments coming down in Cleveland Heights

Updated Mar 18, 2025, 8:59 a.m. | Published Mar 18, 2025, 8:44 a.m.



Demolition of the Marquee at Cedar Lee apartments will allow for the reopening of Cedar Road, which has been closed between Lee and Goodnow roads since the



Spotlight: Cass Gilbert

Bosworth Hall & Fairchild Chapel

Oberlin College is a private liberal arts college in Oberlin, Ohio, 34 miles west-southwest from downtown Cleveland. The college is noted for being the first American institution of higher learning to regularly admit female and Black students in addition to white males. The Oberlin Conservatory of Music, part of the college, is the oldest continuously operating conservatory in the country. The college is famously referred to as "the college that started the Civil War". It is also referred to at the "Harvard of the Midwest" for its high academic standards.

Oberlin College has four exquisite buildings designed by the great Cass Gilbert, known for the Woolworth Building (1913) in New York – the tallest building in the country until 1930, and the US Supreme Court (1935). Cass Gilbert (1859-1934) was a conservative who believed architecture should reflect historic traditions and the established social order. His design of the new Supreme Court building with its classical lines and small size contrasted sharply with the large federal buildings along the National Mall in Washington, D.C., which he disliked.

Architectural historian Margaret Heilbrun said that "Gilbert's pioneering buildings injected vitality into skyscraper design, and his 'Gothic skyscraper,' epitomized by the Woolworth Building, profoundly influenced architects during the first decades of the twentieth century." Historians Christen and Flanders wrote that his reputation among architectural critics went into eclipse during the age of modernism, but has since rebounded because of "respect for the integrity and classic beauty of his masterworks".

Oberlin College's Theological Triangle was designed by Gilbert and his son and opened in 1931 for the College's Graduate School of Theology. The complex, comprising Bosworth Hall, Shipperd Hall and Fairchild Chapel, was designed to provide divinity students with a small campus of their own, complete with chapel, library, classrooms, faculty offices, dining hall, gymnasium, and living space, all surrounding a quiet green interior courtyard.

Bosworth Hall, built of Indiana limestone, fronts Tappan Square with a central Romanesque tower and hand-carved medieval doorways. Fairchild Chapel's stained glass windows were designed and fabricated by Henry Lee Willet of Pittsburgh, PA.

Fairchild Chapel is the centerpiece of the quadrangle with its 150-seat Medieval-inspired sandstone chapel named for James Harris Fairchild,

Continued Next Page

Spotlight: Cass Gilbert at Oberlin College

college president from 1866-1889. The space houses two Brombaugh organs dedicated to performing 17th-century repertoire—a one-manual instrument and a two-manual instrument in mean-tone temperament. The college makes the chapel available for weddings and receptions.

Fairchild Chapel projects northward from the Bosworth tower's base into the north yard. Shipherd Hall, finished in dark red brick, encloses the complex on the north. Masonry dormitory wings flank the yard on either side, connected to Bosworth by arcaded limestone colonnades. The capitals of the west colonnade are decorated with the carved faces of notable men in Oberlin's history. When someone asked the architect's son what the quadrangle's style was, he tartly replied, "the stonework was American, the character was based on Northern Italy, and the style was 1930 Cass Gilbert."

After the closing of the Graduate School of Theology in 1965, Bosworth Hall became an administrative annex and Shipherd was converted into Asia House. Fairchild survives as the main reminder of the quadrangle's original purpose. Shipherd Hall/ Asia House (1931) is a red brick masonry Romanesque Revival-style building just north of Bosworth Hall with a hipped red terra cotta tile roof, roman arched bays on the first floor, and a central courtyard. The building is a contributing structure in the Oberlin College Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.

Cox Administration Building

Gilbert's correspondence with Oberlin's president Henry Churchill King (1902-1927) reportedly reflects Gilbert's ongoing frustration with the small budgets he was charged to embrace for Oberlin. Yet it required Gilbert to refine his compositions to achieve genuine elegance. Gilbert's Cox Administration Building was executed between 1913-1915 and was Gilbert's second structure on the Oberlin campus, and marked the turning point for Gilbert's influence on the college's campus design.

There had been two factions within the college's administration, one supporting Gilbert's vision for the campus and another in support of competing Chicago architect Joseph Lyman Silsbee's scheme. Silsbee (1848-1913) was senior to Gilbert, and had a longer history with the Oberlin campus.

Silsbee designed the Memorial Arch (1903) and the Men's Building (now Wilder Hall, 1911). His campus plan would have made the Memorial Arch the focal point and entry to the campus, with a north-south axis running from the arch though the center of Tappan Square. Tappan



Above: Bosworth Hall; Cass Gilbert
Below: Fairchild Chapel; Cass Gilbert
Third: Cox Administration Building; Cass Gilbert;
Fourth: Finney Chapel; Cass Gilbert
Bottom: Allen Memorial Art Museum; Cass Gilbert



Square would then have been filled in with several campus buildings, centered on a large Administration Building featuring a pedestrian passageway through it.

Alternatively, many of the college's trustees and Oberlin College President Henry Churchill King favored Gilbert's plan, which was inspired by and elaborated an earlier plan by the Olmsted Brothers of Boston, the sons of famous landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted.

The Gilbert-Olmsted campus plan, in sharp contrast to Silsbee's, called for the complete removal of all structures from Tappan Square, creating a central park at the heart of campus. The campus would be laid out with a highly formal structure of orthogonal lines, and buildings would all be constructed in one unifying Mediterranean-inspired style.

The selection of Gilbert as architect for the Cox Administration Building ended the debate and ushered in what is now known as the Cass Gilbert Era of the campus. The building was named for Jacob Dobson Cox, notable as a Civil War general, holder of several political offices, and a university dean and president.

The Cox Building is an exercise in restrained elegance. Round-arched windows are arranged in rhythmic regularity on the facades. The decorative wrought-iron grille above the entrance was fashioned by the noted Philadelphia artist Samuel Yellin.

In the vestibule, two lunette-shaped murals were painted by son Kenyon Cox, one of the sons of Jacob Cox which were restored in 1986. The symbols and allegory allude to his father and his mother, Helen Cox, daughter of Charles Finney. Cox's construction cost, including furniture and site, was \$85,000.

The building was renovated in 1928 to expand the office space and install an elevator, and has been renovated and remodelled multiple times since. In 1940 two rooms were added to the back of the building, enclosing part of the porch. In 1949 the plaza was rebuilt. The Cox Administration Building currently houses the Office of the President, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Secretary of the College, and the Vice President for Finance.

Finney Chapel

Gilbert's first commission for Oberlin College was Finney Chapel. President Churchill-King approached the son of former OC President Charles Grandison Finney about building a new chapel to honor his late father. Frederick Norton Finney was enthusiastic and suggested Charles

Spotlight: Cass Gilbert at Oberlin College

Follen McKim of the legendary firm McKim Mead & White, and Cass Gilbert.

King selected Cass Gilbert, and disagreements quickly developed between Finney and Gilbert. Gilbert struggled to find the correct balance of the College's restrained austerity and the environment created by Peters Hall, Carnegie Library and Warner Gymnasium. Gilbert settled on an interpretation of the Romanesque of Southern France for Finney Chapel.

Finney Chapel, built on the site of President Finney's former home at Lorain and Professor Street, was dedicated June 21, 1908, with a seating capacity of 1,960. Gilbert's vision for the interior was not realized as the College was unable at the time to expend funds to achieve Gilbert's aesthetic goals.

In 1982, architect William Blunden FAIA, using a Gilbert 1907 drawing, guided a renovation of the chapel and the interior colors that brought the space closer to Cass Gilbert's original intention.

The original Skinner organ was extensively rebuilt by Aeolian-Skinner in the early 1950s and then sold to Truro Episcopal Church of Fairfax, Virginia in 1999 with the arrival of the new C.B. Fisk Opus 116. The Fisk organ, whose installation was completed in 2001, was partially financed by a bequest by Kay Africa plus gifts from others including Richard Connelley '50 and the Phoebe Haas Foundation.

Finney Memorial Chapel was listed on the National Register as part of the Oberlin College thematic nomination in 1978. It was listed by the City of Oberlin as an Oberlin Historic Landmark in November 1997.

Allen Memorial Art Museum

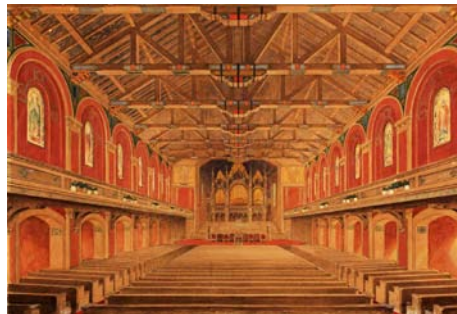
Gilbert designed the Allen Memorial Art Museum, which was completed in 1917 thanks to a gift from the estate of Oberlin physician Dudley Peter Allen to showcase its art collections and support the art curriculum.

Dr. Allen admired Cass Gilbert's Finney Chapel, and consulted steadily with Gilbert about the museum project through his last years. Allen's widow, Elizabeth, was the daughter of oil millionaire Louis Henry Severance, donor of Severance Laboratory. Elizabeth Allen saw the project through to its completion in 1917.

The museum was to be one of three large structures which Gilbert and President Henry Churchill King projected for the east side of Tappan Square, but only the art museum was realized. Arrangements inside the building, with a central sculpture court flanked by galleries and



Above: Finney Chapel; Cass Gilbert;
Below: Finney Chapel Interior Rendering; Cass Gilbert; 1907
Bottom: Finney Chapel Interior; Cass Gilbert & William Blunden



Below: Allen Memorial Art Museum Main Exhibit Hall; Cass Gilbert; 1917



academic workrooms, made for Oberlin's most sumptuous indoor space.

Gilbert exercised more personal control over the museum's construction than in any of his other local commissions, guarding quality in every detail, from the iron grillwork to the texture of mortar sand.

Clarence Ward, Professor of the History and Appreciation of Art from 1916 and Director of the Allen Memorial Art Museum from 1917, was an architect as well as a scholar. In 1937 he designed a much-needed addition to the east for lecture rooms, an auditorium and offices that blends so well with Gilbert's design as to be nearly indistinguishable from the outside.

Ward's addition opened in 1938, and continues to serve its original functions, except for the auditorium, which was repurposed as a student gallery space.

It was not until 1976 that the building's space and functions were expanded with another addition, the Robert Venturi Wing, which received significant international attention as an acceptable and compatible Post-Modern addition to the classic Gilbert main building.

In 2011 a two-year renovation project was completed to provide new infrastructure and sustainability, setting a precedent for historic museum structures. The museum was awarded LEED gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.



Above: Allen Memorial Art Museum Addition Conceptual Design Sketch; Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown; 1974
Below: Allen Memorial Art Museum Addition; Venturi, Roach & Scott Brown; 1976



Browns' 'Plan B' Is Not the Latest:

In early May, the Browns finally released a single rendering of how they think the lakefront stadium should be renovated if they cannot pull off the move to Brook Park.

Days later, the Browns publically claimed that they can proceed with the Brook Park stadium without a contribution from Cuyahoga County. But the statement is nothing but bravado as the large and complex series of issues regarding the scope and cost of massive infrastructure improvements that would be needed for a Brook Park Stadium have yet to be identified, addressed, and responsibilities accepted to pay for the work.

The Browns have irresponsibly stated that they view the infrastructure improvements as an \$80 million series of projects. Just as the Browns have grossly overstated the alleged economic benefits of the Brook Park stadium, so have they short-sold the cost of the required infrastructure upgrades.

And if the scope of that work was defined, engineered, bid, bought and the allocation of costs agreed-upon today, the Browns would not be able to play ball immediately after their lakefront lease expires at the end of the 2028 NFL season. An important individual with an unimpeachable source has also stated that **the rendering the Browns released of their thinking on the lakefront stadium is NOT the most current version.** So much for Haslams' claims that they are being transparent with officials and the public.

At the end of March, the Haslams acknowledged that they will need to pull back to Plan B and renovate the lakefront stadium if Ohio does not come through with the \$600 million gift to the couple that has been discussed.

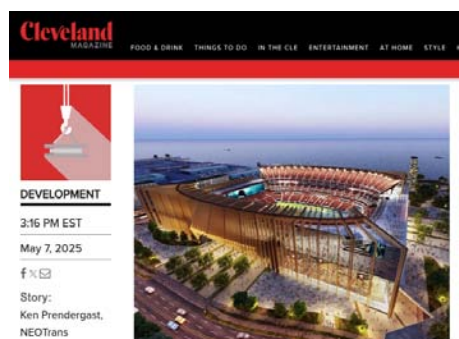
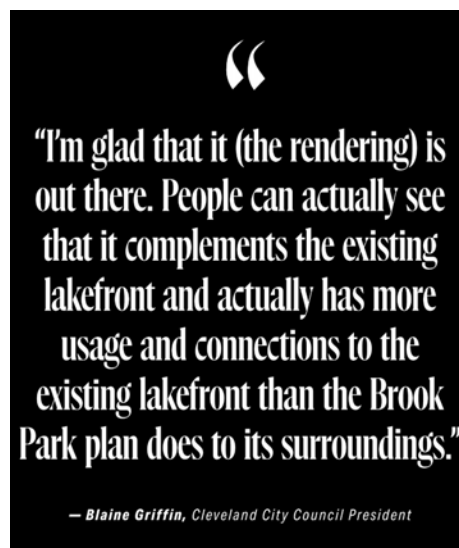
At the NFL owners' meeting, Haslam told beat writers, "I mean here's the positive is we will know on the state funding by June 30. And so assuming that goes well, then we can then move quickly to try to start sometime in the first quarter of (2026). So this is not going to be a drawn out two or four-year deal. It's either going to happen and happen quickly or **we'll go to Plan B.**"

But with Governor DeWine, the unresolved infrastructure scope and costs, the House and Senate having different thoughts, Haslam may not know his fate on state money until later.

Critics of the Browns' narrative for the lakefront upgrade have observed that the work scope is not responsible and the costs put forth are highly inflated, intended to create the impression that 'it's not that much more to move to a new facility with a dome.' Specifically, the notion of excavating out the lower level of the stadium on east and west sides – where most fans enter the



Above: Browns' Released Rendering of Their Lakefront Stadium Renovation
Below: Council Pres. Blaine Griffin's Reaction to the Browns' Lakefront Rendering



Why Didn't We See These Renderings of a Renovated Lakefront Stadium Sooner?

Despite Haslam Sports Group claiming they're nearly four years old, new renderings obtained by *Cleveland Scene* have local officials asking why they weren't released sooner to help inform the public. By Ken Prendergast, NEOTrans

The article is published as part of an exclusive content-sharing agreement with neo-trans.blog.

After the first image of a renovated Huntington Bank Field on Downtown Cleveland's lakefront was publicly released today by *Cleveland Scene*, local officials are asking why it and other

stadium – to improve access and egress to the lower level for food deliveries and trash removal is simply foolish. That is an idea where "the juice ain't work the squeeze."

Additionally, the idea of adding a full-height glass wall at the stadium's exterior to shield fans from the wind is redundant, given the concrete structure for the risers already in place. But the Browns want to add huge elevated plaza areas around the perimeter at east and west sides, the value of and need for which is open to debate.

The media has acknowledged that while the Browns have been exploring the prospect of building a new venue or renovating their current home since 2017 as their lease at the current Huntington Bank Field expires in 2028, until recently the Browns have not released any visual information on the concepts for what would be the team's 'Plan B.' **And now that they have, it is not even the most current thinking.**

Now finally published by local news outlet *Scene*, the supposed \$1 billion redevelopment focuses on cosmetically revamping the exterior of the stadium, while adding two large public gathering areas above each end zone and widening interior walkways. Planned mixed-use development can also be seen on the western side. It is unclear if the Haslams are planning on sticking taxpayers with the cost of building multi-tenant retail space for seasonal tenants that never pay enough rent to justify the cost.

Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne, a vocal critic of the Browns planned move to Brook Park, told *Scene*: "From day one, I said we need to reveal your lakefront transformation plan as well, so the public can get an honest comparison of the two plans, because both involve a request of the public for subsidies and support."

"They have never revealed what they've shared with other members in the community – business leaders, chamber of commerce members, public officials. It's only fair to the public to have a full view and not just one side of an argument. Share it with your partner, the public, if that's what you're going to call the public."

A City of Cleveland spokesperson added: **"The early renderings of the downtown Cleveland stadium transformation demonstrate the possibility for a world-class, year-round facility on the lakefront that builds on decades of investment made in Cleveland."**

"This compelling vision for a transformed stadium offers a connected and activated lakefront anchored by the stadium and surrounded by dynamic public space and development."

Browns' 'Plan B' Is Not the Latest:

The Browns' determination to improve their stadium situation has led to an increasingly fractious relationship with Cleveland authorities, who are seeking to push their claim to retaining the team at a redeveloped Huntington Bank Field. The Browns signaled their intention to pursue a move to a new domed stadium in Brook Park back in October, a decision Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb slammed as **"driven by a desire to maximize profits rather than positive impact"**.

Gov. Mike DeWine, who cannot seek re-election next year, has come out against contributing \$600 million in up-front state bond financing to the Brook Park stadium. He has instead proposed a tax hike on sports betting. The bond funding would be part of the upcoming two-year state budget.

Meanwhile, **GOP lawmakers are proposing to strip \$650 million in education funding from the budget.** The GOP's \$600M bond has been identified as a potential \$1.2 billion repayment fiasco if the Browns' revenues and taxes in Brook Park do not meet their claims which is entirely likely.

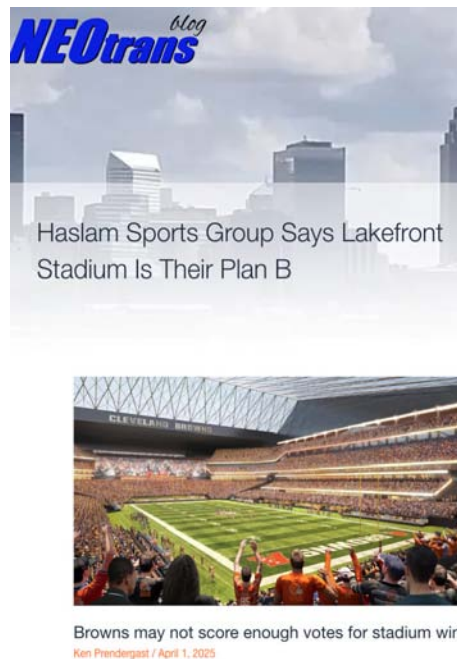
DeWine told the *Ohio Capital Journal*, "I don't think we can afford to continue to go into the general fund of our budget and take this money. This (stadium) money directly competes against education. It directly competes against mental health, drug addiction, all these things that we actually need money to try to help people achieve their ultimate goals."

Browns vs. Bengals

The State of Ohio is currently considering funding requests from not one, but two stadium projects. Hamilton County called on the state in April to contribute \$350 million towards a proposed redevelopment of Paycor Stadium, home of the Cincinnati Bengals, after \$600m was set aside for the Browns' Brook Park project.

The request came a day after the Ohio House approved a two-year state budget proposal that included \$600m in bonds for the Browns to build their proposed new domed stadium at Brook Park. The budget is now with the Senate, which could make changes before signing it off by the June 30 deadline.

It has now also been revealed that Bibb has joined Ronayne's earlier request to state senators to reject the Browns' \$600m Brook Park proposal, and instead back a \$350m contribution towards a revamp of the existing Huntington Bank Field. *Cleveland.com* said a new letter from Ronayne reiterates many of the same points from a previous document, arguing that renovating the existing stadium is the wisest use of tax dollars and that a Browns move to Brook Park would hurt downtown Cleveland.



Above: NEOtrans Headline on Browns Plan B; April 1, 2025
Below: Bibb & Ronayne ask Ohio for \$350M for Lakefront Stadium Renovation
Row Three: St. Ignatius Original Sanctuary Rear



HSG's Chief Operating Officer Dave Jenkins responded to Ronayne's letter, alleging that it contained "misleading statements that the county executive continues to convey." But he did not identify or refute any of Ronayne's statements. The Browns' have won the contest for the most misleading statements and the most egregious disinformation in the stadium battle.

In his letter, Jenkins said "We have made every effort to work with you to find a unified vision for a long-term stadium solution that will be transformative for our city, county and state. We have worked methodically to find the most responsible solve for our region that is based on facts. I am sending this letter to clearly articulate those so you do not continue to communicate misleading information."

But this is blatantly false. Haslam and the Browns were dismissive of Bibb's offer to site a new domed stadium at Burke Lakefront Airport and have apparently failed to even investigate the efficacy of such an opportunity.

Jenkins said HSG has comprehensively looked at every stadium option over the last eight years - but not a serious look at the Burke Lakefront Airport site. In so doing, he said in the letter that renovating the stadium and putting more than \$1 billion into a "short-term fix that would present the same dilemma 15 to 20 years from now" is neither a strategic nor a fiscally responsible long-term approach.

He argued that the city of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County have "failed to put forth a viable economic solution" to renovate the existing, 1999-built stadium, including the "glaring omission" of a solution for capital repairs and an over-reliance on dollars from the city's general fund. The Browns' lease at the existing lakefront stadium ends after the 2028 football season.

If contracts were awarded today - and design, engineering, drawings, bids and contracts were awarded which are not even started for just the infrastructure improvements needed for a stadium in Brook Park, the Browns would not be able to kick off their 2029 season in Brook Park.

Jenkins slammed the county for "suffering economic hardships" including cost overruns with the Consolidated County Jail and more than 600 jobs that are being moved from Downtown Cleveland to suburban Garfield Heights. **Ronayne and his backers at Downtown Cleveland Inc. reportedly consider the Browns move to Brook Park a far greater threat to downtown businesses than the loss of 600 jail workers.**

Continued on Next Page

Browns' 'Plan B' Is Not the Latest:

DeWine Backpedals on Support for Brook Park:

With DeWine and even NFL Commissioner Goodell pimping for the Browns in Brook Park, DeWine clarified in Mid-May that the people of Greater Cleveland should decide where the stadium belongs.

Brett Larkin Weighs In:

The recent poll that showed people favored downtown by a 61% - 28% margin makes that clear.

Former *Plain Dealer* editor Brett Larkin in a candid article on May 14 quoted the Governor: "This is a decision that needs to be made locally," said DeWine, when asked about the controversy prior to leaving Columbus for meetings in Cleveland last December. "We get involved in these things, but ultimately the local community makes the decision and decides which way to go."

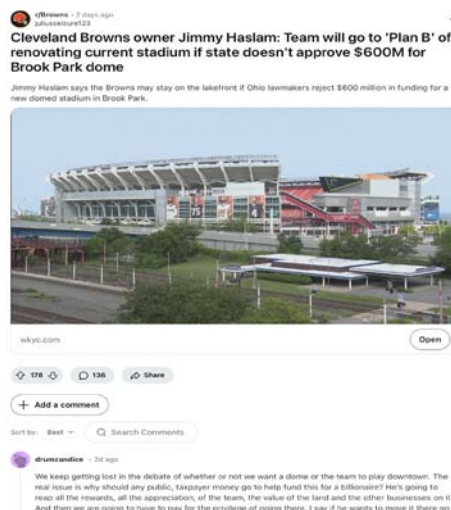
"Case closed. Or at least it should be, as the local community's preference is crystal clear. A recent letter co-signed by Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne and Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb shows neither want the Browns leaving Cleveland for a new, \$2.4 billion covered stadium in Brook Park. The Haslams want taxpayers to supply at least \$1.2 billion for a pricey campus development 12 miles southwest of downtown."

"That's more public money than it cost to build the entire Gateway complex. But unlike past deals, the public would get no ownership, no naming rights, no seat at the table. All the public would get is fleeced."

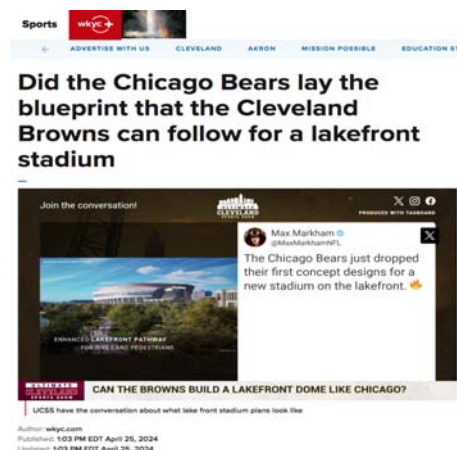
"Greater Cleveland's spineless business leaders have refused to take a position on the proposed Browns move. Where are all those CEOs who claim to care about urban revitalization? Silence is complicity. If Greater Cleveland Partnership CEO Baiju Shah and his board truly care about our future, maybe they should act like it."

"Business leaders should understand what Ronayne and Bibb have known for months: If county taxpayers were given a voice on using tax proceeds to help fund this stadium deal, the result would be a referendum on the Haslams' ownership. For them, the result would be catastrophic. The Browns brain trust surely knows this, which is precisely why team officials want to keep democracy off the field."

"Cleveland's future shouldn't be decided this way with billionaires cajoling and pressuring behind closed doors. To his credit, the governor



Above: Haslam Admits Plan B is the Lakefront Stadium Renovation
Below: Chicago Bears Precedent for Lakefront Stadium
Bottom: Officials Doubt Haslams' Claims of Brook Park Benefits



has refused to publicly side with the Browns owners, despite their generous contributions to Republican candidates and causes -- even when the causes they support are designed to undermine the democratic process and harm the fans they claim to care about."

"NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell donned his tin-man outfit and visited Columbus on May 13, pitching the Browns plan and, without promising anything, dangling the mouthwatering prospect of a Super Bowl in the heart of Brook Park, Ohio. If that happens, we know for sure the Browns will be idle that day."

"The Browns viewed moving to Brook Park as a viable possibility since the day they purchased an option on the land in the spring of 2024. Jimmy Haslam has a reputation for doing whatever it takes to get what he wants, even if it involves allegedly trying to defraud Warren Buffett. That makes him an ideal suitor for a legislature with a reputation that's as bad as any in the country."

"The Ohio House giveaway that would force Ohio taxpayers to guarantee \$600 million in state-backed bonds is almost certain to be changed in the final budget bill that lands on DeWine's desk. But it won't alter the long and irrefutable history of public subsidies for new stadiums invariably falling far short of revenue projections."

"And adopting a hybrid version of DeWine's far more realistic proposal to help fund stadium projects by doubling the tax on sports gambling doesn't mean Ronayne and Bibb will support raising local taxes to help the Browns add another \$600 million to their mountain of taxpayer cash. So far, team officials are finding that exerting public pressure on politicians doesn't work when no one likes you."

"The new stadium plan calls for hotels, restaurants, housing and office space. But using tax money to move economic activity from one part of town to another is the most reckless and indefensible public policy imaginable. And one of the losers would be Cleveland's downtown. Another might be small businesses in the nearby Cleveland neighborhoods of West Park and others."

"What won't be known for perhaps a decade is the extent of the downtown damage. By then, the governor, mayor, and most of the state legislators will have moved on. Some of the major players in this decision-making debacle probably won't even live here."

"But if time confirms the suspicion that \$1.2 billion in taxpayer funds were used as a weapon against downtown Cleveland, the ramifications

Browns' 'Plan B' Is Not the Latest:

could be devastating."

"The most significant downtown development project since construction of the Terminal Tower might be Dan Gilbert's heavily subsidized Bedrock plan. This 20-year development, a \$3.4 billion reimagining of the Cuyahoga River shore line, is the planned home of 2,000 residential units, 850,000 square feet of office space, and 12 acres of parkland, with room for retail and entertainment venues."

If successful, Bedrock could transform downtown. It is a major investment in urban America, as opposed to a flight to the suburbs by owners of a professional sports team who care only about themselves and parking revenue.

Among some who genuinely care about Cleveland exists a fear the Haslam project could do enough harm to downtown that it leads to a downsizing of the Bedrock development. **So local leaders today better be careful not to sign a downtown death warrant dated 2035 or beyond.**

Mitchell Schneider is the founder of First Interstate Properties, a successful developer of multi-use projects in the city and suburbs. He is also a board member of the North Coast Waterfront Development Corp.:

"In a zero population growth environment, retail and dining dollars spent in Brook Park would largely come at the expense of downtown Cleveland," Schneider wrote May 5 in Crain's Cleveland Business. "Moving the Browns to Brook Park may sound like progress, but it risks undermining Northeast Ohio's economic cohesion while erasing what makes Cleveland unique."

Ken Silliman held prominent positions for three Cleveland mayors in a 33-year career in city government, and served for years as a longtime member and chair of the Gateway sports complex board. It's difficult to imagine anyone caring more about Cleveland and its future than Silliman.

"My issue with the whole concept of this Brook Park plan is there is no public purpose for financing this project," Silliman told me. "There's not going to be this flowering of hundreds of other events. It doesn't add to the economy. But if they (the Haslams) pull it off they will be draining tax money from Cleveland."

"This is about more than a football stadium. It's about the future of a city and its downtown. It's about not risking a city being sacrificed on the altar of private profit."

Summary:

Continued Next Page

SCENE

NEWS & VIEWS ARTS & CULTURE FOOD & DRINK MUSIC CANNABIS CALENDAR BEST OF PROMOS-EVENTS SLIDESHOWS SUPPORT

Exclusive: Rendering Shows How Cleveland Browns Would Renovate Existing Lakefront Stadium

As the Haslams push for a dome in Brook Park, Scene has obtained a rendering of the much talked about but never publicly seen plan B, which remains a real possibility.

By Vince Grigoriak on Wed, May 7, 2025 at 8:27 am



What Huntington Bank Field could look like after a renovation.

Jimmy and Dee Haslam have been anything but shy in sharing imagery for the dome and surrounding development they hope to build in Brook Park.

The possible future home of the Browns — a \$2.4 billion project with a proposed \$1.2 billion privately financed by the Haslams and \$1.2 billion coming from public coffers in the form of state and county bonds — has been teased in photos, videos, and social media as the team sells the idea to government officials, business leaders and the public.

But what they haven't shared publicly are how renovations at the current lakefront stadium would look. The clear and admitted option number two.

TRENDING

Steelyard Walmart Ranked 10th Worst Individual Grocery Store Location in America

By Vince Grigoriak May 6, 2025

Cleveland Clinic Again Ranked One of Worst Hospitals in America for Community Spending

By Vince Grigoriak May 6, 2025

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ALL NEW

POSTUREPEDIA

Above: Scene Breaks the Story on Browns' Lakefront Stadium Redesign

Below: Crain's: "It's Just Money Down the Drain," 10-18-24

Bottom: Browns Announce They Can Proceed with Brook Park Stadium Without County Money; May 14, 2025

CRAIN'S CLEVELAND BUSINESS

A CRAIN FRANCHISE BRAND

OCTOBER 18, 2024



'It's just money down the drain'

Brook Park dome may be good business for Browns, but experts warn it's bad public policy | Joe Scatze

There's no doubt about it: The Browns' new stadium in Brook Park is a money pit. "It's just money down the drain," says Joe Scatze, a former Cleveland mayor and now a columnist for Crain's Cleveland Business. "The Browns are spending millions of dollars on a stadium that will be obsolete in 10 years. And they're spending millions more on a new stadium that will be obsolete in 10 years. It's just money down the drain."

See DOME on Page 17



Above: Vegas Predicts Browns Are Worst Team for 2025 - 2026 Season

Below: Media Observes that the Public Does Not Like Browns' Brook Park Option

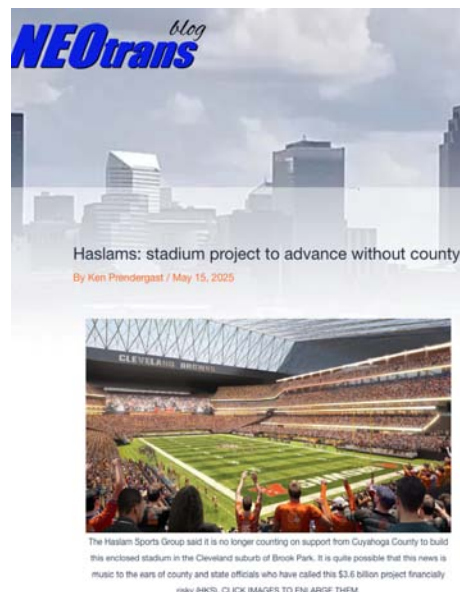
Bottom: Browns Tell County They Will Proceed in Brook Park Alone

Browns Reveal New Dome Stadium Mockup (That No One Seems To Want)

By Alex Kazzara

Updated on March 19, 2025 at 4:00 am

7 Comments

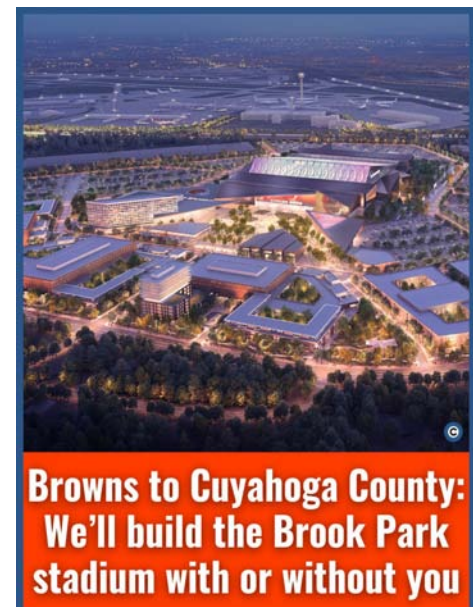


Haslams: stadium project to advance without county

By Ken Pendergast / May 15, 2025



The Haslam Sports Group said it is no longer counting on support from Cuyahoga County to build this enclosed stadium in the Cleveland suburb of Brook Park. It is quite possible that this news is music to the ears of county and state officials who have called this \$3.6 billion project financially risky (HKS). CLICK IMAGES TO ENLARGE THEM.



Browns to Cuyahoga County: We'll build the Brook Park stadium with or without you

Browns' 'Plan B' Is Not the Latest:

Browns' blistering letter to county executive reveals stadium showdown endgame

Updated: May 18, 2020, 1:01 p.m. | Published: May 18, 2020, 1:00 p.m.



Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne might soon need a hard hat for his negotiations over a Browns stadium, as he is becomes the last one standing against the team's plan for a covered stadium in Brook Park. Today in Ohio hosts analyzed why the Browns sent a strong letter to Ronayne saying the discussion on where the stadium goes is over. Karlin Durlin, cleveland.com



Above: Browns Attack Ronayne
Below: Proposed Dome on Lakefront Stadium; 2012
Row Three: Mayor Bibb's 3-19-25 Quote



“We have offered a viable proposal to **keep the Browns playing on the lakefront in a reimagined stadium** as the centerpiece of a huge lakefront development – **for half the cost to the public** of the dome in Brook Park. The Haslam scheme pays for itself on the backs of fans.

The Haslams need to raise your taxes, make it more expensive for you to attend games, and steal events away from downtown Cleveland to pay for their stadium. The Haslam stadium play raises more questions than it answers and makes wild assumptions that will crush taxpayers.

MAYOR
Bibb!

It is passed time for the Browns to live up to their claims of transparency and release the most current thinking on the existing lakefront site as well as any due diligence on the potential re-use of the Burke Lakefront Airport site which would give the team the opportunity to develop a downtown domed stadium – the best possible outcome for all.

Mitch Schneider Steps Up:

In the May 12 issue of *Crain's Cleveland Business*, founder and Chairman of First Interstate Properties Ltd. Mitch Schneider observed that “moving the Browns stadium to Brook Park is a misstep.” Schneider's factual, rational observations tell the story:

1. The lakefront open-air stadium is an asset. Despite a lousy team, the near-100% attendance demonstrates that “fans embrace the outdoor football experience.” “Cleveland's diehard fans come for the game, not the roof.”
2. “The open-air stadium is part of Cleveland's identity and its lakefront stadium enhances the experience.”
3. “Moving the stadium to a suburban dome risks alienating 70% of fans coming from outside of Cuyahoga County who value an authentic downtown experience – not created environments that are available throughout the region.”
4. The proposed mixed-use development in Brook Park will cannibalize existing business instead of creating new demand, particularly in a zero-growth population community like NEOH. This redistribution will not, contrary to the Browns' claims, grow our “tax base and will not create “new” dollars to pay off new debt.”
5. Independent analyses commissioned by Cleveland and Ohio's Legislative Service Commission (LSC) have both identified the adverse economic impact on Cleveland and identified that the Browns' projections of new visitors are “overly optimistic.”
6. The Browns' promised of non-NFL events at their domes stadium are “Overstated,” and such facilities in other cities “have struggled to attract enough events to justify their costs, leaving taxpayers with underperforming assets.”
7. The financial burden on taxpayers for the support Haslams want “is staggering.” Schneider points out that the Browns' promise to pledge up to \$50 million towards interest costs of Ohio's bonds are nothing when compared to taxpayers debt service of over \$1 billion over 30 years.
8. The State Budget Director have flagged the team's revenue projections as “overly optimistic,”

“lacking transparency” and “risky” for taxpayers.”

9. “The LSC further noted that the bonds may lack clear constitutional authorization and would not be backed by the full faith and credit of the state.”

10. Of Biblical significance, “No infrastructure or roadway reconfiguration costs – or a plan to pay for them – are included in the team's plans...”

11. The State's own analysts and outside experts “have found no credible evidence to support” the Browns' claims that the project will generate \$1.3 billion more in tax revenue than the state would pay in debt service. In other words, the Browns are lying.

Schneider concludes that the community should “focus on renovating Huntington bank Field as part of a comprehensive lakefront development plan... which preserves Cleveland's identity, minimizes taxpayer exposure and ensures economic benefits stay in the city. Moving the Browns to Brook Park...risks undermining Northeast Ohio's economic cohesion while reprising what makes Cleveland unique.”

Cudos to Schneider for saying publically what needs to be said since our docile media and NGO's have been AWOL on the subject - and to *Crain's* for publishing it..

Greater Cleveland Partnership Fails Cleveland:

It is in this context that the GCP on May 21 came out in support of the Browns' move to Brook Park.

There is no intellectual, economic, political, cultural or dogmatic argument that in the context of their mission rationally justifies GCP's position to support its Board member, Dee Haslam, who had formally requested GCP's endorsement.

GCP has been a failure to our region for many years for its lack of leadership, its failure to match any of our neighbors for job growth, and its blind support of taxpayer expenditures for unvoted ongoing lavish sports facility renovations, a new convention center that was supposed to double the size of our current one and connect with Public Auditorium – but we built exactly the same size minus the 500-car underground parking for the facility – and cut connecting a renovated Public Auditorium from the budget which our project managers completely blew - that left us with \$800 million in debt, followed by a \$50 million

Browns' 'Plan B' Is Not the Latest:

addition to an unvetted – and unneeded – medical mart only to turn the vacant POS into more conference space for our convention center that our supposed experts designed, a \$25 million renovation of Public Square that would utilize no public funds that actually cost \$50 million with virtually all of it paid for with public money, to the 2016 Republican National Convention which was supposed to deposit over \$200 million in our economy but managed to deliver only one-fourth of their projections.

Both the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County immediately slapped GCP in the face for their outrageous stupidity and announced that they were both withdrawing from any and all GCP-related activities and severing all ties with the chamber. Both represent a woodshed-quality whipping that GCP deserves.

On 5-21-25, in a joint letter from Mayor Justin Bibb and County Executive Chris Ronayne, the pair said **GCP's decision to endorse the Brook Park stadium is "an affront to any partnership we have had together,"** so as a result, they will stop participating in any GCP-led initiatives.

"The City and County are eager to continue engaging with the business community, but engagement with the Greater Cleveland Partnership is no longer a proper proxy for those business relationships," the mayor and executive wrote.

Two weeks earlier, Ronayne had recalled the history of Haslams push for downtown lakefront redevelopment which was given full attention from the City and County: "In 2023 and some of 2024, the Browns were entertaining two plans: Brook Park and Cleveland," Ronayne said. "But the lakefront transformation plan including the Browns has been around for a number of years and for four or five of them, the Haslam Sports Group led the plan, they led the advocacy."

When I took office in 2023, it was a full-throated effort to petition the state to assist with the lakefront with the Browns as a key anchor. We've netted \$280 million now in ready infrastructure, and that has been secured in part because HSG helped us make the pitch down state. But, at some point, HSG revealed to – let's say civic and business circles – their plans for Brook Park instead."

And the City and County have already raised \$280 million to begin the work.

And while the Browns have touted an economic impact report championing the number of additional events, visitors and revenue a dome would bring – a key component in how they say the state, county and Brook Park will be able to

repay those \$1.2 billion in bonds, which, by the way, would balloon to \$2 billion when interest is factored in – **analysis by the state's nonpartisan Legislative Service Commission's legislative budget office called those projections "overly optimistic."**

As is his responsibility, Ronayne keeps pointing to the taxpayer risks the Browns have attempted to short-sell; **"I want to keep surfacing the truth and the truth is the Brook Park proposal is too risky,"** he said. **"Our analysts at the county have deemed it too risky. I've said to the public it's too risky, and we urged the legislative services commission to analyze it and the office of budget management and both have done that and found in the same week that it's overly risky for the state."**

"Why are we flying away from the downtown energy? The only thing I can see is a money grab – a money grab that's putting the risk on the public and the profits in the hands of private developers," he said. **"[A renovation] is half the price, far less risk, and much less infrastructure needed and we've secured dollars ready to go. On top of that you can develop an area commensurate with the Brook Park modeling. The only thing you can't guarantee is a sea of surface parking in a suburb where you get all the profits."**

The same for Bibb, who has said time and again he wants the Browns stay downtown, playing "good or bad football" on the lakefront, as he jested at the State of the City in April.

"The HSG Brook Park stadium plan diverts economic activity away from downtown and costs taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars more. In contrast, the Lakefront plan demonstrated in the renderings offers an incredible fan experience for half the cost of HSG's Brook Park proposal," the Cleveland spokesperson added.

Below: Even Gov. DeWine Says Decision Should be Local

Even Gov. DeWine says where the Browns play should be a local decision. So how did we get here? Brent Larkin

Published May 16, 2025, 5:42 a.m.



A 2009 file photo of Browns stadium with a view of downtown Cleveland in the background. (Chuck Cross/The Plain Dealer, file) The Plain Dealer

By Brent Larkin, cleveland.com

Not once has Gov. Mike DeWine publicly strayed from his belief that the people who live here must decide if taxpayers subsidize the Browns' decision to abandon Cleveland for a suburb.

You Might Like



Above: Mayor Bibb Quote; 5-21-25

Below: Greater Cleveland Partnership Comes Out in Support of Browns Move to Brook Park; 5-21-25

Bottom: GCP Backs Browns Move to Brook Park

Greater Cleveland Partnership over Browns Brook Park stadium support

Updated May 21, 2025, 9:50 p.m. | Published May 21, 2025, 5:38 p.m.



Cleveland and Cuyahoga County are severing ties with the Greater Cleveland Partnership, now that the region's chamber of commerce has endorsed the plan to build the Cleveland Browns' future stadium in Brook Park, rather than downtown. Submitted by the Cleveland Browns

By Sean McDonnell, cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Cleveland and Cuyahoga County are severing ties with the Greater Cleveland Partnership, now that the region's chamber of commerce has endorsed the plan to build the Cleveland Browns' future stadium in Brook Park, rather than downtown.

In a jointly written letter Tuesday, Mayor Justin Bibb and Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne said GCP's decision to endorse the Brook Park stadium is "an affront to any partnership we have had together," so as a result, they will stop participating in any GCP-led initiatives.



Greater Cleveland Partnership backs Browns' plans for domed stadium in Brook Park

The endorsement of the region's leading chamber of commerce adds a new wrinkle to what has become a bitter battle between the team, the city, and the county.



Larkin Thrashes Greater Cleveland Partnership over Browns:

It is simply astonishing that GCP lacks the critical thinking to understand their obligation as a chamber of commerce to support the urban core. Without it, Cleveland perishes, and so will GCP. In a May 1 article in *cleveland.com*, Brent Larkin, editorial director of the *Plain Dealer* from 1991 until his retirement in 2009 offered a savage beat-down of the Greater Cleveland Partnership for their thoughtless endorsement of the Browns' proposed move from downtown to Brook Park, fairly characterizing their actions as a "betrayal."

Larkin rewound the clock to the days when former mayor George Voinovich created a "public private partnership" with Greater Cleveland's business community to help Cleveland escape default. Harvard Business School called the partnership for the "Cleveland turnaround." Larkin observed that the public private partnership "imploded" nine years after Voinovich's death with GCP's endorsement of Haslams' plan to leave downtown:

"The end came May 19, when the area's business 'elite' endorsed a greed-fueled proposal by Browns owners Jimmy and Dee Haslam to build a new stadium complex in Brook Park. **The Haslam project would include the hotels, restaurants, retail, offices and residential units that would siphon business from the city's always fragile downtown.**"

"It was an epic betrayal, engineered by leaders of the Greater Cleveland Partnership, the region's chamber of commerce. Voinovich, in concert with corporate Cleveland, would have never allowed this to happen. Neither would Mike White -- with or without the business community's help."

"And during the 22 consecutive years these two spent as mayor (1980 through 2001), Ohio's state government would have never even considered funding a new stadium project opposed by an incumbent mayor of Cleveland. Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne and Mayor Justin Bibb do not enjoy that luxury. They're forced to live in a state whose legislative leaders care more about rewarding campaign contributors than they do about the city of Cleveland's future."

Larkin credited Mayor Bibb and County Executive Ronayne for their "swift and appropriate" reply, ending the city and county's relationship with the GCP "effective immediately." Their letter to the "Leadership of the Greater Cleveland Partnership" "included this devastating sentence: **'It is unclear whose interests GCP represents -- but it is clear you do not represent the business owners in downtown Cleveland that stand to lose millions of dollars in revenue or the business owners across Cuyahoga County who would have to compete against a new publicly subsidized entertainment district in Brook Park.'**"

Larkin observed, "No GCP board member who

genuinely cares about Cleveland can read that sentence without understanding the enormity of their error."

"Bibb and Ronayne believe, with good reason, the only interest the GCP is representing on this issue is the Haslams'. The GCP cannot function with City Hall and Cuyahoga County's government as its enemies. Members who pay dues are wasting their money."

"Bibb and Ronayne have an army of allies in this fight, most importantly a huge majority of the voters. Cleveland City Council President Blaine Griffin also weighed in, accusing the GCP of supporting a project that "threatens the economic vitality of our downtown." Councilman Kerry McCormack, whose ward includes most of downtown, demanded new GCP leadership, saying, "Clevelanders deserve a chamber of commerce with a backbone that champions the urban core."

Larkin noted that "the Cavaliers made their displeasure known. A letter from Rock Entertainment Group CEO Nic Barlage correctly reminded the GCP that any countywide vote on a sin tax extension to pay for repairs at Rocket Arena and Progressive Field would be "doomed to fail" if part of the proceeds would be earmarked for the Browns stadium project."

Guardians CEO Paul Dolan was singled out for a "mealy mouthed" letter as GCP Executive board chair. Larkin caught him right between the eyes: "A board chair is expected to lead, not hide in the bushes of neutrality. Dolan's failure to defend the very same downtown where his team plays is, at the least, a colossal disappointment."

Larkin observed the historical context for GCP's monstrous failure: **"This is such an obvious sellout by the GCP that it ignores the history of a city it falsely claims to serve.** Fifty-one years ago, the Cavaliers fled downtown for a new arena in Richfield after city and business leaders initially ignored warnings from team owner Nick Mileti that he might build a new facility elsewhere. Twenty years later, the cost to bring the Gordon Gund-owned Cavaliers back downtown was so enormous that county taxpayers are still paying for it."

"The Browns funding stream for Brook Park is now clearer, but there's no way they'll be able to shake down state and local taxpayers for the entire \$1.2 billion they want to finance half the cost. The morally bankrupt state legislature will come through with no more than \$600 million. **And the Browns will pressure Brook Park to enact taxes based on phony revenue**



Above: Brett Larkin
Below: Browns' Facebook Poster of May 1



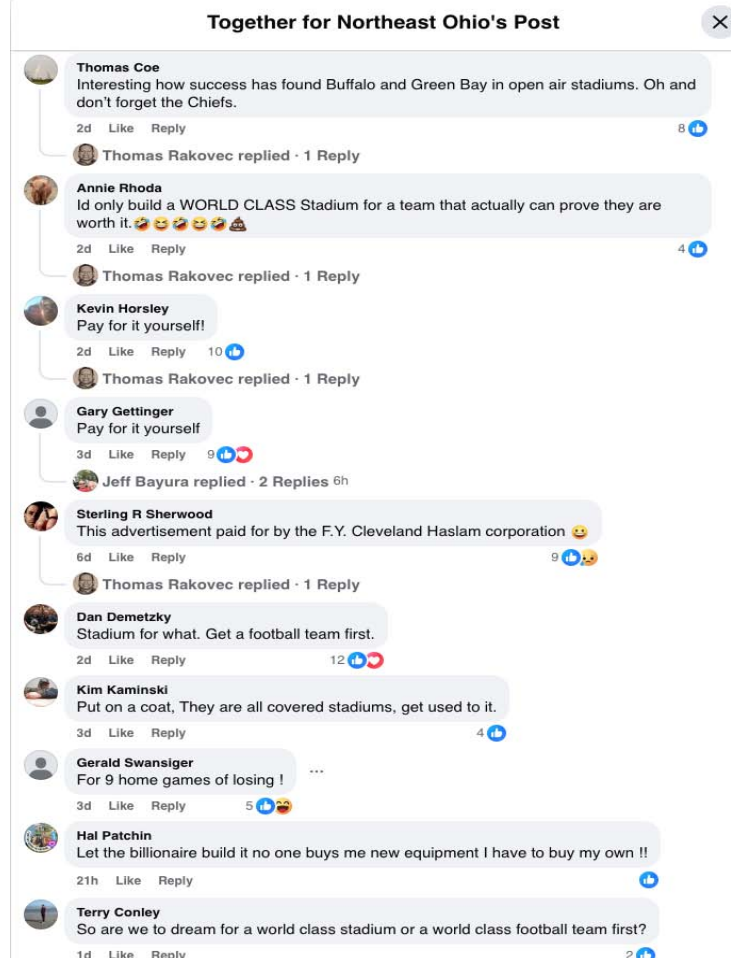
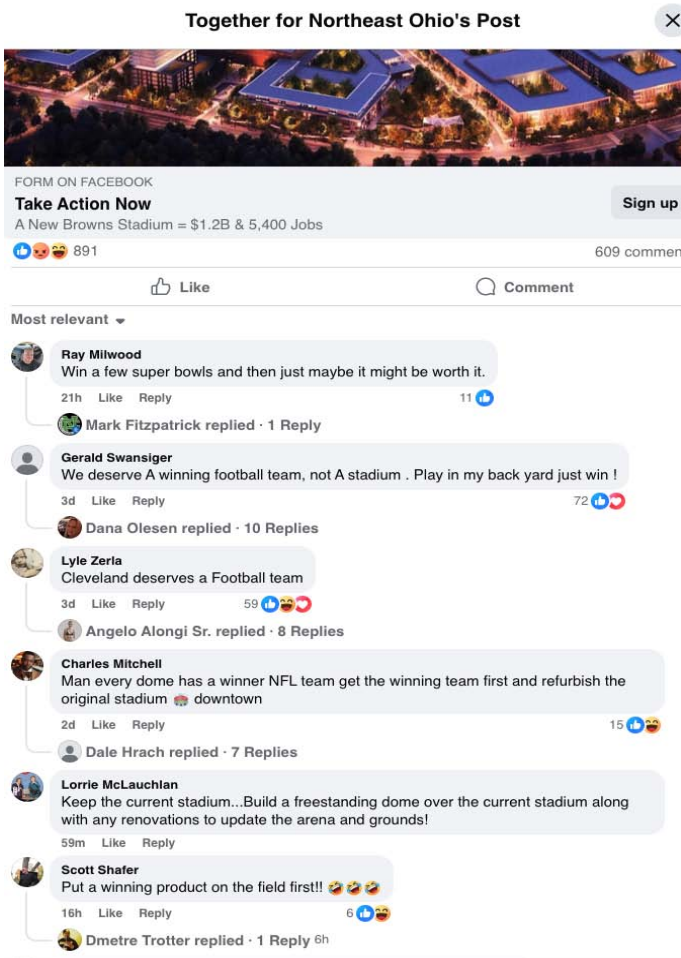
projections. City officials in that city better be careful of steering Brook Park down the path towards insolvency."

The disdain for Ronayne held by the Haslams and other Browns officials is now prompting speculation they may recruit and fund a candidate to run against him for re-election next year.

In a humiliating act that reflects the significant degree to which the Haslams and the Browns are out of touch with the residents, they uploaded a Facebook poster supporting the Brook Park move on May 1. The responses from readers were almost unanimously hostile to the Browns and the Brook Park stadium idea, with most urging the Browns to concentrate instead on playing at the lakefront and delivering at least a winning team.

Haslams' Facebook Cheerleading Flop:

Readers' comments to the Browns attempt to rally citizens to contact legislators to support their Brook Park stadium initiative were overwhelmingly hostile:



"My issue with the whole concept of this Brook Park plan is there is no public purpose for financing this project...There's not going to be this flowering of hundreds of other events. It doesn't add to the economy. But if they (the Haslams) pull it off they will be draining tax money from Cleveland."

Ken Silliman
Author, "Cleveland Sports Facilities, a 35-Year History"
Former Chair, Gateway Economic Development Corporation

"Architcture is the constant fight between man and nature, the fight to overwhelm nature, to possess it. The first act of architecture is to put a stone on the ground. That act transforms a condition of nature into a condition of culture; it's a holy act."

Mario Botta
1943 -

WEST SIDE MARKET'S RENOVATION IS FINALLY UNDERWAY:

For those Clevelanders who have enjoyed the experience at West Side Market for decades, it is hard to believe that the 123-year old facility will finally be stabilized and improved.

West Side Market is Cleveland's oldest publicly owned market which began as an open-air marketplace on a tract of land donated by two Ohio City landowners, Josiah Barber and Richard Lord, at the corner of West 25th (Pearl) and Lorain.

The centerpiece of the market, the yellow brick Market Hall with an interior concourse, was designed by the architects Benjamin Hubbel and W. Dominick Benes who also designed other important buildings in Cleveland, including the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Wade Memorial Chapel in Lakeview Cemetery.

After years of construction delays, the Market Hall was dedicated and opened to the public in 1912. Its 137-foot clock tower has stood as a Cleveland landmark for over a century. The last major renovation of the West Side Market took place in 2004 when the arcade portion of the market was enclosed and heated and interior and architectural renovations were completed in the main building.

Today the market hosts over 70 ethnically diverse vendors of fine meats, fresh produce, fresh seafood, baked goods, dairy and cheese products and fresh flowers. There are also vendors of ready-to-eat foods, herbs, candy and nuts.

Tourists from all over the world tour the market every year drawn by television programs produced by the Travel Channel and Food Network featuring segments on the West Side Market. It is estimated that over a million people visit the market annually. WSM is open Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Tensions between tenants and the City have been around for decades as the City failed to properly maintain the property and take tenants' concerns seriously. Improvements previously appeared in Band-Aid form.

In 2024, day-to-day management and execution of the Market Master Plan was transferred from the City to the Cleveland Public Market Corporation (CPMC), an independent 501(c) 3 non-profit. The City of Cleveland maintains ownership of the Market's land and facilities.

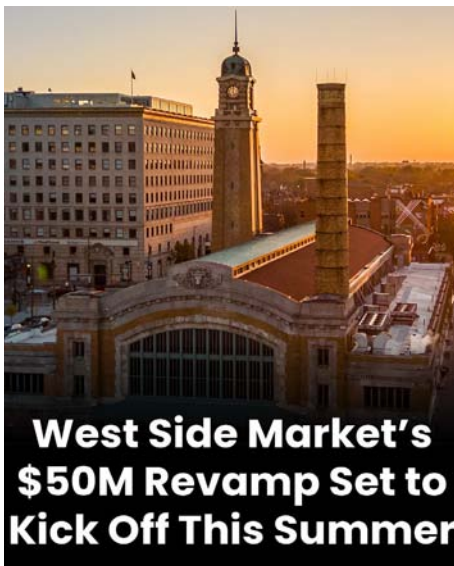
The group unveiled a Master Plan for the Market's renovation in June 2023. In November 2024, the George Gund Foundation committed \$3.6 million to the Cleveland Public Market Corporation to support the market's renovation masterplan which includes facilities improvements and enhancements, new public



Above: West Side Market in 1919.
Below: The Market's Great Hall.



Below: WSM Renovation to begin in Summer 2025



gathering spaces, and outreach efforts to attract a mix of visitors and vendors that more closely reflects the diversity of Northeast Ohio.

CPMC has already secured \$20 million from the city of Cleveland, an additional \$6 million from other government sources, and anticipates receiving another \$17 million from a variety of other public and private sources, including Historic & New Markets tax credits.

JMT Architecture of Charlotte, Philadelphia and Baltimore were hired to develop the conceptual renovation design for WSM. Why it was necessary to go out of town for design professionals to plan and execute this project speaks volumes about the design culture of our community.

JMT design portfolio is an average C grade commercial work that gives no hint that they are capable of historic preservation. The firm claims to have 2000 people. In mid-May, *Crain's* announced that the DLR Group and Madison International were taking over the architectural design and construction administration.

The group is planning to construct an events space at the east end of the great vaulted room but admits that one staffer has "asked around to events people" and that they have not done a demand analysis of any sort to allow intelligent deductions on size or location and amenities that would assure success.

The Costs & Financing:

Based on initial conceptual plans, the physical improvements described in the masterplan are estimated to cost about \$50-\$70 million. The actual cost will be refined during the design and engineering phases of the project.

In June 2024, Cleveland City Council allocated \$20 million to masterplan improvements. With the masterplan now completed, the City and CPMC have initiated the process to identify additional sources of funding which are likely to include federal and state tax credits, foundation grants or loans, and debt.

The Planned Changes:

BASEMENT

The West Side Market basement renovation aims to improve functionality for merchants while updating equipment to meet modern needs:

- Individual walk-in coolers for merchants
- Elevator directly connecting the Arcades to the basement

WEST SIDE MARKET'S RENOVATION IS FINALLY UNDERWAY:

- Shared commercial kitchen for use by merchants and new entrepreneurs
- Pallet jack charging area
- Office space for facilities staff and staff lockers

FIRST FLOOR

The first floor of West Side Market aims to create a welcoming, authentic market experience for customers while improving functionality for merchants and creating spaces for prepared food and over 350 new seats of public seating:

- North Arcade (see rendering) with eight (8) spaces equipped with exhaust fans for new prepared food vendors, two additional leasable spaces, and two full-service bars.
- Courtyard (see rendering) with retractable glass wall hallways between the North Arcade and Market Hall to protect customers from the elements when moving between buildings. The new courtyard will accommodate events and public seating.
- East Arcade (see rendering) for produce merchants with heating and cooling and adequate utilities to accommodate refrigerated cases.
- First-floor accessible bathrooms in the Northeast corner of the Market Hall that will help serve North Arcade and second-floor event space.
- Customer elevators on the northeast and southwest corners to ensure balconies, offices, and new event spaces are all ADA accessible.

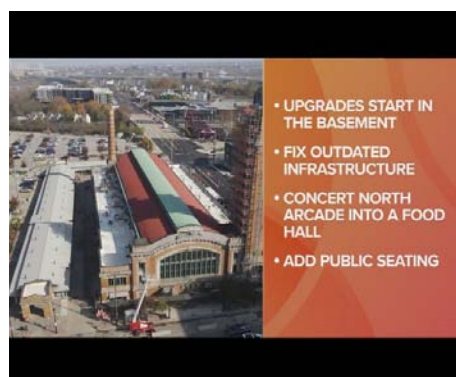
SECOND FLOOR

The second floor of West Side Market activates long-underutilized spaces for public and Market staff use:

- The Mezzanine (see rendering) on the East side of the second floor reimagines the long-abandoned men's locker room as a space for events and public seating, accommodating over 100 new seats and adding seating on a new balcony in the Market Hall. The new balcony also creates easy access to the demonstration kitchen on the Southeast side of the Market Hall
- A Teaching Kitchen (see rendering), on the Southeast side of the Market Hall, will provide opportunities for people, including students, to learn about the preparation of healthy foods, enjoy evenings with chefs, and will support the adjacent event space.



Above: Proposed new Mezzanine Cafe area.
Below: Proposed East Arcade
Third: Proposed North Arcade
Fourth: Proposed Produce Hall
Fifth: WSM Masterplan Summary



- Renovated offices on the Northwest and Southwest sides of the building will accommodate Cleveland Public Market Corporation staff, made ADA accessible by the new Southwest elevator.

MEZZANINE

West Side Market Mezzanine – birds eye view of the new second floor mezzanine. This space will be across the Market Hall on the opposite side of the existing balcony where customers sit above the radiators to overlook the Market.

- Accommodates 100 people seated (64 inside, 36 on the balcony) or approximately 250 standing.
- The Mezzanine will be available for event rentals. Events will be an important source of new income for West Side Market.
- The door in the middle of the space opens and closes. The interior portion of the mezzanine can be separated from the balcony if needed.
- The mezzanine is accessible via stairs and elevator from the northeast side of the Market.
- The Teaching Kitchen on the second floor and shared commercial kitchens in the basement will support event catering in the mezzanine.

NORTH ARCADE

North Arcade – Twelve (12) new leasable spaces to accommodate prepared food vendors and bars will allow West Side Market to diversify the types of cuisines offered while still maintaining the authentic, fresh food focus of West Side Market.

- The North Arcade could operate different hours from the rest of the Market. The North Arcade could be open later to accommodate the dinner crowd.
- North Arcade vendors will be charged both a base rent and rent based on a percentage of their sales, which will help keep rents affordable for fresh and specialty food vendors who create the Market's authentic shopping experience.

EAST ARCADE

East Arcade – 24 stalls for produce vendors with building-wide air conditioning, heat, and adequate electrical and water connections. With updated infrastructure, vendors can use refrigerated cases, improving produce quality and cutting down on labor.

- Rendering shows both a traditional West Side Market produce vendor layout with one large counter and new proposed layouts where

Continued Next Page

WEST SIDE MARKET'S RENOVATION UNDERWAY:



Above: Proposed North Drive Redesign
Below: Proposed Teaching Kitchen



individuals could “walk in” to their produce vendor’s space.

- With a new elevator in the Arcade, vendors will no longer need to go outside to bring their goods up from the basement.

COURTYARD

Courtyard – New hallways between the North Arcade and the Market Hall can protect customers from the elements. They have retractable doors that can be opened in accommodating weather

- The new interior courtyard provides public seating and an additional event venue. Event revenue can be an important source of income for the Market.

TEACHING KITCHEN

Teaching Kitchen – a hands-on teaching kitchen provides a dynamic space for a variety of programming, including hands-on cooking classes for children and adults, merchants’ product demonstrations, chef dinners, and nutrition education. The kitchen can also support catering that takes place in the mezzanine event areas.

Over the past decades, WSM shifted from a revenue-producing asset to a financial burden to the City. The Market currently relies on a \$700,000 annual subsidy from City Hall’s Special Revenues Fund which is attributable to a 32% tenant vacancy, due to increased rents for a facility lacking fundamental modernization.

FUNDING FINALLY IN PLACE

in March, the Port of Cleveland board of directors in March gave a boost to the nearly multi-million-dollar West Side Market overhaul. The Port voted to include the market renovation in a program allows for large community projects to purchase construction materials exempt from sales tax. That means the market will save significant money as it moves forward on the \$70 million transformation.

The market’s upcoming changes include renovation of the Market Hall, arcades and the basement. Renovations will begin this summer with the East Arcade and the main market building. Initial improvements will include:

- New HVAC systems and upgraded vendor stalls.
- Basement renovations featuring mechanical upgrades, walk-in coolers, a shared commercial kitchen and a new freight elevator.

Future phases of the transformation plan will add new seating areas, restaurants, event spaces, food stalls, full-service bars and public dining options.

“We have one of the most stunning market structures in the country, and this initiative is focused not only on preserving this vital historic treasure but also supporting small businesses and having greater community impact,” said Rosemary Mudry, executive director of the Cleveland Public Market Corporation, in a press release. CPMC is the non-profit that manages the West Side Market for the City of Cleveland, which owns the property.

“We have received tremendous support from many partners, and we are immensely grateful to the Port for their assistance in making this great regional asset even better.”

J. Stefan Holmes, Port board chair, added, “The West Side Market is a cherished institution that attracts visitors from around the world, some of them who arrive via cruise ships using our Port.”

But the promises of matching the cool factor of Atlanta’s Krog Street Market, or the colorful practicality of Cincinnati’s Findlay Market, some worry that the market would change too much.

“I actually wonder how much of the integrity they’ll keep,” Olivia Kinczel, a local food advocate and pasta maker at Ohio City Pasta, told *Scene on Truss’* balcony overlooking Lorain Ave.

She looked out to the market’s facade. “I mean, obviously the outside will look the same. But some of those pictures look so modern that you almost can’t recognize it.”

Survey:

“Ultimately, the Haslams’ stadium plan socializes the cost and privatizes the profits for a leisure complex in the suburbs that doesn’t benefit surrounding businesses, taxpayers or anyone except themselves.”

**Ciara Ahern, Founder
Sixth Element Creative**

Quote:

“I’ll plan anything a man wants from a cathedral to a chicken coup. That’s the way I make my living.”

**Henry Hobson Richardson
1838 - 1886**

Quotes:

“It’s not a sign of creativity to have sixty-five ideas for one problem. It’s just a waste of energy.”

**Jan Kaplicky
1937 - 2009**