

To Build, or Not to Build

Title: Atlanta Sports Council Representative

I represent the Atlanta Sports Council. The Atlanta Sports Council was formed by the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce to address forward-thinking issues associated with hosting major sporting events as well as to advocate for Atlanta's professional and collegiate sports teams and annual events.

Over the years, we have played a role in helping to attract more than 50 major sporting events to metro Atlanta, including Super Bowls 28 and 34, the Centennial Olympic Games, two NCAA Women's Final Four Championships, four NCAA Men's Final Four Championships, three ACC Men's Basketball Championships, WrestleMania 27, and the MLB, NBA and NHL All-Star Games.

A new, state-of-the-art, retractable-roof stadium is essential if we want to keep bringing world-class sporting events to Atlanta.

Title: Vine City Community Organizer

I'm a community organizer in the Vine City neighborhood of Atlanta. The new retractable-roof stadium will be smack in the middle of my neighborhood if it gets built. I share a great concern with many of my neighbors that the new retractable-roof stadium will bring with it increased levels of traffic and congestion. On top of that, we will be exposed to a massive construction site for the next three years as that thing is being built. The noise is going to be horrible.

Title: Mount Vernon Baptist Church Member

I have been a member of Mount Vernon Baptist church in Vine City since 1962. I remember watching Dr. King's funeral procession from the front steps of my church. No amount of money can convince me to rip down this historic house of worship. You're trying to tell me that a bunch of football players are more important than this congregation's long and storied history.

Title: Atlanta-area Construction Worker

I'm an Atlanta-area construction worker that specializes in steel work. Work has been less than steady for me since the Great Recession began in 2007. I've seen the architectural plans for that new retractable-roof stadium, and it looks to me like it will take thousands of workers to get that thing built in three years.

Title: Co-Owner #1 of the Glenn Hotel

I'm a co-owner of the Glenn Hotel in downtown Atlanta. After looking at a local street map I just realized that the new retractable-roof stadium will be just a few steps away from the front door of my hotel. In fact, my hotel will be the closest one to the new stadium.

Title: HUGE Soccer Fan

I'm a HUGE soccer fan and have been waiting for Atlanta to get a Major League Soccer (MLS) team since the league was founded in 1993. The MLS recently announced that Atlanta United FC will begin play at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in 2017. I've already got my season tickets and I know the stadium is going to be rocking during each home game. Go United FC!

Title: Co-Owner #2 of the Glenn Hotel

I'm the other co-owner of the Glenn Hotel in downtown Atlanta. After reading a recent news report, it just hit me that I will have to start charging every single customer that rents a room from me an extra 7% tax per night. I recall learning in my high school economics class that Quantity Demanded decreases as price increases.

Title: Falcons Season Ticket Holder

I have been an Atlanta Falcons season ticket holder since 1990 and have only missed one game since that time. I have loved the Falcons through thick and thin and have only one major complaint about going to games at the Georgia Dome – I feel that the scoreboards in the current dome are way too small. I want a huge scoreboard like the one they have in Dallas.

Title: Out-of-Town Business Planner

I work for a company here in Atlanta that helps out-of-town businesses plan conferences in our city. I am not really looking forward to telling future customers that hotel costs will be going up by 7% as a result of the new hotel tax needed to pay some of the costs of the stadium. Many of our largest competitors in other cities don't have to worry about this extra 7% tax at their hotels.

Title: Small Business Representative

I represent a group of small businesses located about two miles north of the new retractable-roof stadium site. It's looking very likely that many of the roads serving my group of business owners will be undergoing major reconstruction over the course of the next three years because of their proximity to the new retractable-roof stadium. Many of these businesses are restaurants and boutiques that rely on daily car traffic for their income. Three years is a long time to deal with all of the construction currently being proposed by stadium planners.

Title: Crushed Stone Company Owner

I am the owner of a crushed stone company in the metro Atlanta area. After looking at the new retractable-roof stadium plans, I'm really excited about the number of new roads and parking lots that will be needed to satisfy the driving and parking needs of all of those fans that will be coming to the new retractable-roof stadium to watch sporting events.

Title: Citizens Against Corporate Welfare Representative

As a representative of the Citizens Against Corporate Welfare group, I am here to speak out against yet another example of taxpayer money being thrown at the feet of some billionaire who is more than able to pay for his own mammoth-sized football palace. If Arthur Blank wants to spend more than a billion dollars just to impress his fellow NFL team owners, let him pay for it himself. There is absolutely no reason why taxpayers should have to help pay for this stadium. We've cut funding for schools, our city and state infrastructure is in dismal shape, and we're closing libraries. How on earth can we justify spending tax dollars for a football stadium at a time like this?