

## ARENA & STADIUM DEVELOPMENT



Arenas, ballparks and stadiums are complex, high-profile projects that trigger intense negotiations between teams and their host communities, drawing scrutiny from a wide variety of stakeholders. Husch Blackwell's arena and stadium experience spans MLB, NBA, NHL, MLS, and NFL venues, as well as USL and Minor League Baseball, giving us the industry knowledge, contacts, insight, and skills to steer clients through these politically-charged projects with a steady hand and seasoned perspective.

Our sports venue team structures, negotiates, and documents deals for clients across the United States. Whether a sports facility project is a new ground-up development, a renewal of terms requiring additional capital improvements, or a significant redevelopment, we work closely with community leaders, team owners, and financial advisors to clarify each party's obligations and contributions and how the parties will respectively benefit. Because no sports venue is exactly like any other, we tailor our approach to each venue's unique circumstances, with expertise to cover every aspect of a sports venue project – from financing and land acquisition to intellectual property and community benefits. Professional sports teams and their home venues drive community engagement, with lasting economic impacts – that's why we're driven to help our clients deliver on the opportunities a sports venue promises.

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### Case Study

## Harris County Sports & Convention

## Corporation

Harris County—the largest county in Texas and third-largest county in the U.S.—recently embarked on a monumental Climate Action Plan aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030. A significant step in the plan concerned upgrades to county facilities, including NRG Park, a 350-acre sports and entertainment complex housing NRG Stadium, home of the Houston Rodeo and the NFL's Houston Texans and hosting over 500 events and 5.5 million people annually. The county leases NRG Park to Harris County Sports & Convention Corporation (HCSCC), which operates as NRG Park's landlord. Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year and in need of upgrades to the park's central plant; building automation systems; and controls, water conservation, lighting, and life safety systems, HCSCC looked to tackle its infrastructure needs while finding the most fiscally and environmentally sustainable solution.

## Representative Experience

Structured P3 arrangement and negotiated primary agreements for design, development, funding, and use of new \$477 million, publicly-owned arena for the city of Sacramento and the NBA's Kings.

Negotiated complex P3 development agreement for construction of a \$60 million ballpark and long-term lease with the city of El Paso, Texas on behalf of MountainStar Sports Group in its acquisition of the Tucson Padres.

Advised Wisconsin Center District on creation of a public-private partnership to develop, finance, own, and operate a new \$524 million arena for the NBA's Milwaukee Bucks. We created the arrangement in which the principal parties equitably shared

the liability and benefits of the private-public venture. By the end of the negotiations, the Wisconsin Center District obtained annual rent of \$1 million, escalating each year, and one of the strongest non-relocation agreements in professional sports.

Represented the City of Phoenix in the negotiation of a master amendment to the operating agreement with the Phoenix Suns for the Phoenix Suns Arena, involving a shared \$230 million capital infusion for a significant renovation of the aging arena, as well as a 15-year extension of the Suns' term. Our Sports Facility Planning, Development, & Use team also drove a reallocation of risk for maintenance and capital improvements to the arena going forward and implemented new non-relocation provisions to better protect the public interest in the City's capital investment in the arena. In addition, the agreements incorporated a commitment from the team to build a new practice facility in Phoenix, enhancing economic benefits to the wider community.

Represented the City of Phoenix in its negotiations with the Milwaukee Brewers for a renovation of the Brewers' spring training facilities and extension of the Brewers' operations at the City-owned Cactus League facilities, including a new 25-year operating agreement, a development agreement delineating the team's responsibilities for renovation of the facilities, and a new non-relocation agreement. The team also negotiated the optioning of development rights to the Brewers for a mixed-use development on underutilized City land to help spur economic development in the community.

Represented City of St. Louis in the development of Ballpark

Village, a master-planned neighborhood that would include retail, entertainment, and office spaces, with a baseball stadium at its center. Represented the city in negotiations with the St. Louis Cardinals and the Cordish Co. to develop the \$600 million project. Our attorneys also assisted the city with \$18 million of Missouri Downtown Economic Stimulus Act (MODESA) bonds for the first phase of the project.

Served as lead negotiator for the city of San Diego on the building of a new ballpark that was part of a larger development aimed at revitalizing a blighted area of downtown. By opening day, the area included more than \$1.2 billion in private investment. We also represented the city in its lease and new stadium negotiations with the San Diego Chargers.

Represented the City of Fresno, owner of Chukchansi Park, the hometown ballpark of the Fresno Grizzlies, in renegotiating the City's facility use agreements with the Grizzlies following Major League Baseball's takeover of Minor League Baseball (MiLB). Guided the City in understanding potential impacts of MLB's new framework for Player Development Licenses (PDL) and drafted and negotiated amendments to existing agreements to re-align certain terms with new requirements imposed by MLB.

Represented the City of Oakland in negotiating terms for the City's investment in infrastructure related to the Oakland A's proposed waterfront ballpark district on the San Francisco Bay and extension of the A's commitment to call Oakland its home.

Represented the Charlotte Hornets in redevelopment of Spectrum Arena and development of a new training facility.

Represented the public owner of T-Mobile Park in renegotiating

the Seattle Mariners' lease, with extensive new provisions that ensure the ballpark will remain in the top one-third of all MLB ballparks.

Represented the Wisconsin Center District in the development of the new \$524 million Fiserv Arena for the Milwaukee Bucks.

Represented the City of Phoenix in renegotiating the Milwaukee Brewers' use agreements for the city-owned spring training facilities, which included extending their term and negotiating the terms of conveying development rights to the Brewers for new mixed-use development on city-owned land.

Represented the City of Sacramento in the development of the \$477 million Golden 1 Center arena for the Sacramento Kings.