

COWS: Releases new report on public money in soccer stadiums

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Today, COWS released [Playing with Public Money in Milwaukee: Data, Context, and Questions on Soccer Stadiums](#). This report offers an overview of research on the economic impact of sports arenas and information on recent public investments in soccer stadiums in five U.S. cities. This resource, along with a companion report to be released this fall, aims to provide context to Milwaukee residents and political leaders as they consider the “Iron District” proposal for a soccer and entertainment venue downtown.

Cities across the nation are funneling millions in public money into soccer stadiums and ancillary mixed-use developments. While sports stadiums are often sold as engines of urban economic development, economic research provides very little support for the claims that developers make about positive impacts in terms of jobs, income, and other economic development measures.

“Economic development is a priority for Milwaukee. Equitable economic development requires investing in community infrastructure that builds a base for future growth – like stronger transportation services, replacing aging infrastructure, and building stronger child care,” said Laura Dresser, Associate Director for COWS. “Community leaders must decide whether a taxpayer subsidy for yet another private development project is truly the greatest priority and best use of limited funds to serve the public good in Milwaukee.”

The report highlights soccer stadium deals in Saint Louis, Louisville, Pawtucket, Washington, D.C., and Nashville, between them accounting for more than \$500 million in public investment in private interest.

Playing with Public Money in Milwaukee is a product of the “EARN in the Midwest” project in Wisconsin, a collaborative of [COWS](#), [Milwaukee Area Service and Hospitality Workers Organization \(MASH\)](#), and [Kids Forward](#).

Read the full report

at: <https://cows.org/publications/playing-with-public-money-in-milwaukee>.