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Even When Teams Pay, Stadiums Still Aren't Free for Cities.

MLS' Columbus Crew is willing to pay for a new stadium in Austin, but is the Texas city really getting a deal?

While many cities are no longer willing to foot the bill for sports stadiums, they are still facing other costs or lost revenue when teams come to town.

These can take several forms: forgone property tax revenue if cities offer an exemption, missed ticket and parking tax revenue if teams are allowed to keep it for themselves, or passed on stadium maintenance and improvement costs.

Who's responsible for maintenance and improvements can be a particular flashpoint as crumbling stadiums are often used as a reason by teams to relocate. That's what happened when Stan Kroenke moved the NFL's St. Louis Rams to Los Angeles in 2016 and what precipitated the sale of the NBA's Seattle SuperSonics and eventual move to Oklahoma City in 2008.

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