

NFL to L.A.? No . . . to the City of Industry

Land developer Ed Roski Jr. to meet with league officials to discuss stadium site in Greater L.A.
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Land developer Ed Roski Jr., who was instrumental in the building of Staples Center, has 600 acres, a plan for a new stadium in the City of Industry, and experience in dealing with the confounding folks who run the NFL.

Maintaining he's not "nuts" for resuming his NFL quest after the frustrating and fruitless try to win an expansion team for the Coliseum a few years ago, Roski said Monday he will meet with NFL officials soon.

Neil Glatt, NFL senior vice president of corporate development, said NFL staffers will meet in Los Angeles next week and will "most likely" tour the City of Industry stadium site.

"I wouldn't spend all this time or money if I didn't think the NFL wanted to have a team in the Greater L.A. area," said Roski, chief executive of Majestic Realty. "When the NFL categorically said recently it had no interest in the Coliseum, I put the second phase of a project I was developing in the City of Industry in abeyance and started to get this NFL project together."

Roski declined to specifically name the location for his new stadium until meeting with the NFL. It appears to be a vacant piece of land just beyond the intersection of the 57 and 60 freeways and adjacent to his industrial and retail Grand Crossing project.

"We own the land, have all the entitlements in place, and if you made a list of 100 things you would like to have with a new stadium, this probably has 90 of them," Roski said. "And working in the field that I do, I know something about location, and this is the perfect place for the Greater L.A. area – located right in the middle of five counties."

Roski and John Semcken, who did much of the early legwork on Staples Center, took over the management of the Eisenhower and Zaharias Golf Courses in Industry Hills six years ago and have made a number of substantial improvements to the attached Pacific Palms Resort.

The resort will play host on Nov. 12 to a golf tournament benefiting the armed forces. Roski, an ex-Marine, is expecting to raise more than \$1 million for military charities.

"We've got some great things going here in the City of Industry," Roski said. "What I do is develop, and we have the Staples experience to make this work."

When the NFL awarded an expansion franchise to Houston, the league contended Roski didn't have the money to make a mega-deal work, so Roski recruited billionaire Eli Broad's help. Roski said the development business has been good the last six years, and he will go it alone in this project. If he does a similar deal to Staples Center, he will be a minority owner of the team moving here, while working to pool money from various sources to help defray the cost of a stadium. Roski remains a minority owner of the Kings, Lakers, Staples Center and L.A. Live downtown.

"We're going to have a stadium with a team playing in it in 2010 or 2011," Roski said, "or I'll just go back to my master plan for industry and retail development on the 600 acres we've now set aside for football."

Times staff writer Sam Farmer contributed to this report.

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