

Research Paper

NFL expansion to LA

The National Football League has become one of the biggest profiteers of sports marketing within the United States. Profits have boomed since the 1920's and the formation of the league itself. It has made profits through expansion and TV marketing. Starting at 10 teams, the NFL, has grown to be a 32 team league with teams in every major city and then some. In recent years the league has started talks about expanding into the city of LA and wanting to start a European league, and possibly putting European teams into the league.

With any expansion in any sport there are some difficulties that come along with it. One potential issue is the idea of scheduling in more games. If you throw in 1 team to a 32 team league, you're basically throwing a wrench into a well-oiled machine. The current system promotes a rotation where divisions are in a competitive balance. It's not a perfect system but there is still parody every week when it comes to the best teams playing what some would consider the worse off ones. In the past 2 years the commissioner, Roger Goodell has relentlessly tried to add London trips to the schedule to promote American Football to other countries. While this may sound appealing to those who love the game of football, it creates a huge problem: scheduling. By adding additional teams, we do avoid stripping teams from leaving their beloved fanbase.

Looking specifically at the expansion in Los Angeles, there are a lot of different factors that come with bringing in a franchise. In 2012, the Los Angeles City Council approved a proposal by Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG) to build a \$1.2 billion dollar football stadium next to the Los Angeles Convention Center. There was a setback to the deal and that was they needed to

also come to an agreement with the NFL to bring the team to Los Angeles. Currently, news reports have caught a head of steam in talks with NFL owners.

So far AEG has promised to create around 25,000 jobs, both temporary and permanent. The company is also committing \$314 million in remodeling the Los Angeles Convention Center which will turn the venue into a top tier venue. While these promises keep the public optimistic, when you look closer though, the events held in the center will increase by around 5 to 6 per year but that is only true if they can take events away from ones in other states rather than ones in the state. Most of the jobs they promise will also only be temporary construction jobs. When companies make claims there will be increased revenue coming into the entertainment sports facet of their city they don't let the citizens know that the extra revenue will take away from the other entertainment related activities. New spending and an increase on income is usually never produced.

So who's in charge of getting southern California a new football team? Team owners and the commissioner are the ones who have a majority of the say in bringing a new team to LA. Recent reports have said Roger Goodell is looking to a team to LA. He is considering either moving the San Diego Chargers, St. Louis Rams, or the Oakland Raiders. The idea of expansion doesn't seem plausible to some owners like Robert Kraft. He thinks it is too hard to earn the trust of a community and therefore, cities that already have teams need to "love them up". What will ultimately bring a team to LA or even other countries in Europe, there needs to be a city that is willing to finance a stadium and "if they come up with a plan that looks pretty good and strong... we have an obligation to have a team".

NFL expansion and even relocation is an absolute commitment to a team and the community surrounding it. It has a number of moving parts and players. The most important players in

expansion include the commissioner, the owners, the city, the contractors, city officials, and the players. While the owners and developers are the ones who give the final say, the many different levels within the league are able to put in their two cents. For players it is already hard to stay within a town for more than a couple years because the NFL has become an extremely cut throat job and the idea of free agency has made players move their families for bigger contracts. Yes, these players have a say but overall the team owners are the ones that decide it is the right step to move forward and relocate. With plans set in place, the league owners are set to decide on moving to LA by January of next year.

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