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## CREW DISCUSSES NEW TRAINING FACILITY WITH INTERESTED COMMUNITY PARTNERS

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Representatives of more than a dozen Central Ohio communities met April 6 with Columbus Crew officials to discuss plans for the development of a new team training center and soccer complex.

The meeting was conducted as part of the process to select a community development partner to create a world-class, indoor soccer training facility with adjacent outdoor soccer fields. The Crew has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) as part of the process; community responses are due in late April.

Representatives from Columbus, Canal Winchester, the City of Delaware, Delaware County, Dublin, Fairfield County, Gahanna, Granville, Grove City, Licking County, London, New Albany, Newark, Obetz, Pataskala, Pickaway County and Reynoldsburg attended the pre-proposal meeting held at Crew Stadium.

“We’re pleased that these communities have expressed an interest in this exciting project,” said Mark McCullers, Columbus Crew general manager. “Our goal is to partner with a local community to create an environment that meets the Crew’s training needs and enhances and increases much needed soccer infrastructure, while also drawing thousands of participants and spectators to tournaments, camps and recreational events.”

Local officials expressed strong support for the training facility project.

“The Crew Stadium was the first soccer stadium in the country, which brought national attention to the City of Columbus,” said Boyce Safford, City of Columbus interim development director. “We love having the Crew here and we will be putting together a very competitive proposal to locate a state-of-the-art training facility in Columbus that will further enhance the sport of soccer.”

Preliminary conceptual plans drafted for the Crew by Columbus architect Acock Associates include team training facilities, a full-size indoor field and 16 outdoor fields. A sports medicine and physiotherapy clinic and retail development are among the elements also under consideration.

The selected community partner will construct the soccer complex. The Crew will be a long-term tenant and provide continued managerial and maintenance expertise.

Pizzuti Solutions, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Pizzuti Companies, is managing the selection process and will make recommendations to the Crew following review of the submitted proposals.

"This is an exciting opportunity for a community to partner with a professional sports franchise and create a unique regional destination," said Jim Russell, Pizzuti Solutions' senior vice president. "In addition to evaluating the proposals submitted by each community, we are also seeking input from businesses interested in being part of the project."

The Columbus Crew was the first Major League Soccer franchise to develop a state-of-the-art training facility 10 years ago in partnership with the Village of Obetz.