

3 suburban sites are vying to land Cardinals stadium

By Betty Beard
The Arizona Republic

Although Phoenix and Tempe could come up with some surprise sites for the stadium, only three sites are contenders so far.

These candidates, which have already been analyzed to various extents are on the Mesa-Tempe line, in west Phoenix and on the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation northeast of Fountain Hills.

Mesa, Tempe and a group of 11 cities offering the west-side site, face the same problem, figuring out how, in just a short time, to come up with millions of dollars to prepare the sites and build parking lots.

It was only a week ago that the Nov. 7 votes were finally tallied on Proposition 302. The state Tourism and Sports Authority that will select the host wants all serious contenders to let them know by mid-December.

Having a bond election in the cities is out of the question because by state law the earliest an election could be held would be March, and the authority wants to complete negotiations in February.

The sites offered so far:

■ Mesa-Tempe: 108 acres southeast of the intersection of the Red Mountain (Loop 202) and Price (Loop 101) freeways. It has an Arizona State University surplus property storage building, a Maricopa County dog kennel, water lines and part of Mesa's Riverview Golf Course that would have to be moved. Cost to ready the site: \$122 million.

■ A 40-acre site in west Phoenix that is being donated by developer John F. Long. The 11 cities would need to buy an addition 133 acres for parking. The site is in a cotton field at 99th Avenue and Thomas Road. Cost to develop: \$56 million.

■ Up to 1,500 acres on the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. The land is 3.4 miles northeast of Arizona 87 and Shea Boulevard and is virgin property. A report by the tribe states that the land is free of environmental hazards and says an archaeological study will be made. Cost to develop: unknown.

Republic reporters David Madrid and Bruno Navarro contributed to this article.

Reach the reporter at betty.beard@arizona-republic.com or (602) 444-7982.