



## CCDC Hears About New Trends In Stadium Financing

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**By Katie Orr**

There's still no formal plan for building a proposed San Diego Chargers stadium downtown, but redevelopment officials are learning about some of the options for financing a project.

The formula for building and operating new NFL stadiums has changed. Lately the trend has been for teams to contribute more money up front in exchange for most of the revenues.

Mitchell Ziets is a consultant who has studied the issue for San Diego. He says cities want long term leases, ownership of the stadiums and significant rent. He says projects tend to succeed in downtown areas.

"To spur development, to taking advantage of existing assets, such as parking assets so you don't have to build a sea of parking. To take advantage of infrastructure that's already there," he says.

Ziets presented a report to the Center City Development Corporation comparing how NFL stadiums built since 2002 were paid for. It did not include any specifics on how San Diego might finance a new stadium; such a plan hasn't been created yet. But some people are already opposing spending any public money on the project.

Murtaza Baxamusa is with the Center on Policy Initiatives, a local think tank on issues effecting working people. "Schools are facing a critical time with teacher layoffs, increased class sizes," he said. "You're also diverting property taxes from our city services at a time (when) police and fire (are seeing) increased response times. "

According to the report from Ziets, the average public contribution for newer stadiums has been about \$300 million. The average private contribution is about \$230 million.