

San Antonio mentioned as possible site for new pro football league with familiar name

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A group of sports executives and investors hope they can do what no one else has managed to accomplish and that is create a successful, sustainable professional spring football league. The latest group to try and compete in a space dominated by the NFL plans to borrow its name from one of the many failed ventures — the United States Football League — and could look to place a franchise in San Antonio.

You may remember that other USFL, the former spring league that included the San Antonio Gunslingers and Donald Trump.

This proposed new league hopes to place teams in eight cities that do not currently have an NFL or Major League Baseball franchise. The Alamo City qualifies, and USFL officials are keenly aware of San Antonio.

USFL CEO Jim Bailey (no relation), said the league is interested in markets where there is “a strong sense of community, a deep appreciation of sports, and a forward-thinking business atmosphere.”

Bailey added that USFL officials believe “markets such as Portland, San Antonio or Orlando can develop into football havens, much like Green Bay ...”

The interest in San Antonio comes as local leaders continue their effort to convince Mark Davis to move the NFL Raiders from Oakland to San Antonio. A decision on where the AFC team will play after 2015 could come as soon as January.

USFL officials said the league will not announce where it intends to place teams until all of its funding is in place. Stakeholders are currently engaged in a second round of fundraising to complement capital that has already been secured.

The new funding will support a “large-scale private placement to ensure a strong and long-lasting foundation for the USFL,” according to Bailey.

San Antonio has been down this road before. The city has played host to teams in a number of defunct leagues, including the initial USFL, the World League of American Football and the World Football League.

It’s difficult to imagine, with all the talk about a possible Raiders move to San Antonio, that Alamo City football fans would have much appetite for another minor league team.