**Local businessman pushes MLB expansion in Nashville**

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (WSMV) -- Local businessman John Loar has been laying the groundwork to bring a Major League Baseball team to Music City for the past year and a half.

His approach, however, is a little unexpected.

Loar, a transplant from the San Francisco Bay Area who now calls Nashville home, likes what he sees in Nashville.

"There is something about Nashville, something special about it," Loar said.

Many question if the city's fan-base is large enough to support an MLB team with so many other professional sports teams sharing the stage, including a brand-new Major League Soccer team that plays it's first game next year.

However, Loar believes Nashville's unprecedented growth is something that will continue for years to come.

"There's that growth factor -- cranes in the air, how many people move here each day, [and] corporate interests are here," he said

As a real-estate developer and consultant, Loar has helped companies like Starbucks acquire land and investment groups purchase MLB teams.

Now, he wants to use his business experience to improve the city.

He recently formed the Music City Equity Group, a network of business, sports, music and other community leaders that are also focused on bringing the MLB to Tennessee.

But where would another stadium even fit in our ever-more-crowded city?

According to Loar, there is land near Nissan Stadium that is already owned by the Metropolitan Sports Authority and is large enough to carve out space for more than just a stadium.

He says the plot is large enough to build a "destination" entertainment complex that could houses both professional football, baseball and other events -- an idea so enticing, Loar believes, it would lure investors without needing public money to fund the project.

"From what I understand, there is talk -- they are potentially going to request a proposal for the Sports Authority property around the Titans stadium," Loar explains. "That might help facilitate a master plan where you can justify the improvements to [Nissan] Stadium and, potentially, set aside a 15-acre site for future major league expansion."

Charlotte, North Carolina, is reportedly one of the cities competing with Nashville for an MLB team, but Loar believes Music City has a leg-up.

"I think Charlotte is a great place, [but] what intrigued me about Nashville is just the growth -- corporate growth, existing sports teams, and just the 'music' element to it," he said. "It has the Las Vegas vibe without the gaming."

Another major hurdle Nashville faces when it comes to getting an MLB team is its proximity to Atlanta, and would cause rights issues in overlapping media markets.

"If you look at Atlanta's territory, that would be a conversation we would have to have with the ownership and Major League Baseball," Loar.

While Loar's equity group is taking active steps to get an MLB team in Nashville in the future, it is not something that will happen anytime soon.

However, Loar hopes Music City Equity Group will have a plan in place in the next few years so that they can approach the MLB.