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## **Without Quicken Loans Arena, Cleveland wouldn't be in consideration for 2016 Republican National Convention**

CLEVELAND – April 3, 2014 -- Yesterday's announcement by the Republican National Committee that Cleveland remains in contention to host the 2016 Republican National Convention provided Cuyahoga County voters with another example of how Cleveland's sports facilities help Keep Cleveland Strong and another reason for voting yes on Issue 7.

Quicken Loans Arena will be the primary venue for the GOP 2016 Convention if Cleveland wins its bid. Hosting the 2016 GOP convention will create significant benefits for Greater Cleveland, attracting 35,000 visitors, creating new jobs and generating more than \$150 million in economic impact. The GOP requires an arena capable of seating for at least 18,000.

"Voters made a good decision in 1990 to build the Gateway complex," said David Gilbert, President & CEO of Positively Cleveland and the Greater Cleveland Sports Commission. "Quite simply, Cleveland wouldn't be in contention for this convention if the sin tax wasn't approved."

"For Cleveland to be competitive for this kind of event, we need a world-class facility," he continued. "The fact that we built The Q 20 years ago, and because the Cavs have invested \$120 million in the facility to keep it up-to-date, I believe gives us a leg up. Attracting the biggest and best conventions and concerts, and the economic boost we get from them, is what the voters will again be supporting by voting yes on Issue 7."

Voting yes on Issue 7 renews, and does not increase, the current tax on alcohol and cigarettes in Cuyahoga County to support major capitol repairs at The Quicken Loans Arena, Progressive Field and FirstEnergy Stadium.

"In addition to the immediate economic benefits of hosting the GOP convention, the attention of most of the country and the world will be focused on Cleveland for an entire week in August 2016, if we win this bid," added Len Komoroski, CEO of the Cleveland Cavaliers and Quicken Loans Arena. "As another chance to showcase Cleveland to the world, it would be invaluable exposure."

Joe Roman, President & CEO of the Greater Cleveland Partnership noted the role Cleveland's sports facilities has played in preparing Cleveland for its convention bid extends beyond their role hosting events.

"The first step on the road to this convention bid started in 1990 when Cuyahoga County voted to fund Gateway's construction," he said. "Cleveland's sports facilities – and the four million people they attract downtown every year – have been indispensable to developing the elements like our hotels, restaurants, and attractions that make Cleveland a compelling location for a national convention."

In 1990, there were no hotels or residents and only four to six full-service restaurants in the Historic Gateway Neighborhood immediately adjacent to the Gateway Sports Complex. Today, after \$700 million in investment in this neighborhood alone, there are:

- Five hotels, offering nearly 1,000 rooms, with four additional hotels on the way.
- 15 residential buildings with roughly 900 apartments that are almost fully occupied, with more apartments under construction.
- More than 40 restaurants and 20 additional “eateries” that are not full-service restaurants. Five more are under construction.

For more information, go to [www.keepclevelandstrong.org](http://www.keepclevelandstrong.org).

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