



# BRING THE WORLD TO OTTAWA



## NEWS RELEASE

Friday, March 20, 2009

### **Eugene Melnyk comments on Major League Soccer's decision to award expansion team to Portland**

**OTTAWA** – Eugene Melnyk, owner of Senators Sports & Entertainment, has issued the following statement with regard to Portland having been awarded an MLS franchise:

“I want to congratulate Merritt Paulson and the City of Portland on their selection as the 18<sup>th</sup> team to join Major League Soccer. As with Vancouver's entry, both teams are led by very strong ownership groups that will generate a new, uncharted level of soccer passion and pride in their respective cities.

Throughout the MLS selection process, Commissioner Don Garber and league executives have done an exceptional job of keeping me informed. It speaks to the close working relationship we have developed with the league and its executives.

Absolutely nothing has changed with respect to the level of effort and resources Senators Sports & Entertainment is placing toward our MLS expansion and stadium efforts in Ottawa. The main hurdle for us is to gain the city's support for our proposed world-class stadium.

We continue to work very closely with council and city staff in securing a favourable decision by its meeting on April 22.

This week is about celebrating the growth of Major League Soccer and the addition of two great cities into the league. In the coming days, I am confident Commissioner Garber will be able to turn his focus to the league's expansion plans beyond 2011 and reaffirm that Ottawa remains under active consideration.”

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