



# JOHNSON COUNTY POST

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## Royals stadium at Aspiria would push T-Mobile out, company says

Kaylie McLaughlin  
STAFF REPORTER

T-Mobile, one of Johnson County's largest employers, said it will leave its current Overland Park offices if a Royals stadium comes to the Aspiria campus near 119th Street and Nall Avenue.

In a late October email obtained by the Post, CEO Srinu Gopalan told Overland Park T-Mobile employees that the telecommunications company wants to stay in Overland Park. However, Gopalan said, "[i]f a stadium were ultimately built here, it could change our ability to remain" at Aspiria.

In a statement emailed to the Post Tuesday, a T-Mobile spokesperson confirmed the company plans to leave if the Royals decide to build a stadium there.

"Our campus supports over 3,500 T-Mobile employees, with growth plans, and cannot accommodate both our workforce and a stadium," the statement reads. "[W]e'll explore new locations, preferably within the city and state, if the Royals proceed while continuing to work with the City and community leaders on a solution."

Aspiria is one of at least three possible locations around the metro the Royals have identified as the home of a future ballpark. Earlier this year, an affiliate of the Royals acquired the mortgage on the Aspiria campus, solidifying it as a possible option.

T-Mobile occupies multiple office buildings on the west side of the 200-acre campus that was built up in the late 1990s, originally for the Sprint Corporation. Currently, the site is owned by Wichita-based Occidental Management, which has envisioned it as a retail, dining, housing and entertainment hub.

In a written statement to the Post, Mayor Curt Skoog said a Major League Baseball stadium in Overland Park is "an exciting possibility."

"We must approach any project with the same standard we apply to everything we do at the City: It has to be good for Overland Park," Skoog said, his comments echoing previous statements made to the Post.

"We know residents, business owners, and other stakeholders have many questions. Our City has a thorough development review process that includes community engagement. Should the Royals make Overland Park their future home, we will work with the team and the community to share information and answer those questions openly."

At the time of publication, a spokesperson for the Royals had not returned the Post's request for comment.

T-Mobile has a lease to occupy offices at Aspiria through mid-2029, while the Royals' current lease at the Truman Sports Complex in Kansas



Parts of the former Sprint world headquarters campus now dubbed Aspiria serve as corporate offices for T-Mobile and other companies. File photo.

City, Missouri, goes through January 2031.

T-Mobile's presence at Aspiria is a carryover relationship from Sprint after the two telecommunications giants merged in 2020 in a \$26 billion deal. Originally, Sprint owned the campus and intended to have some 15,000 employees staff the world headquarters.

Though the office park never fully lived up to its original vision, Sprint did build out several office buildings and multi-story parking garages to serve its employees.

Now, T-Mobile occupies some of those buildings, and other corporate tenants have joined it, including HNTB, Hill's Pet Nutrition and Fiserv, a financial technology firm that recently announced plans to open a Midwest hub at Aspiria.

T-Mobile officials aren't alone in their concerns about Aspiria being in the running for a future Royals ballpark.

At a community gathering on Monday evening, hundreds of residents of both Overland Park and Leawood packed a meeting room at Leawood City Hall to voice their worries about a stadium so near to their homes, schools and hospitals.

The event was hosted by Rep. Mari-Lynn Poskin, an Overland Park Democrat, who represents the area around Aspiria in the Kansas House, as well as several neighborhood leaders.

A handful of speakers raised several specific issues — infrastructure preparedness, traffic, public safety expenses, the proximity to schools, etc... — but the primary theme was clear: A stadium for a professional sports team doesn't be-

long in this suburban area.

Marsha Friedman, an attorney who lives in Overland Park and helped organize the town hall, told the Post after the event that she and her neighbors take it as "an affront that they would even think to do it."

"Nobody wants this in their neighborhood. We are a well-developed suburban area; this will change our lifestyles," she said. "And absolutely everybody's against it."

That community meeting is part of a wider effort from some residents in opposition to the stadium.

As of Tuesday morning, an online petition opposing the Royals' idea for a stadium at Aspiria had nearly 1,500 signatures, and about 300 people had joined a Facebook group — started by former Overland Park mayoral candidate Faris Farassati — called "No Stadium OP."

Additionally, at the town hall meeting in Leawood, community members discussed possible next steps for opposing the stadium even further, including sending correspondence to state legislators and potentially getting an attorney to represent homeowners' associations.

Kansas has allowed a special incentive package to entice the Royals and potentially the Chiefs to the Kansas side of the metro, which expires in summer 2026.

However, the leadership of the Legislative Coordinating Council — a group of leaders from both chambers of the Kansas Legislature — has said they won't consider a proposal submitted after Dec. 31, 2025. That means whether one or both teams intend to come to Kansas could be announced by the end of this year.

Even if the Royals did decide to move to Aspiria, the city of Overland Park would still get some say on what a stadium would look like and what kind of infrastructure upgrades would be needed.

The exact approval process would largely depend on what kind of application would be submitted.

The Aspiria campus is already zoned for mixed-use development, which means a stadium would likely not require a rezoning, according to the Unified Development Ordinance. However, a revised preliminary development plan approval would likely still require consideration from the Overland Park Planning Commission and the Overland Park City Council, which could come with a public hearing.



Hundreds of Leawood and Overland Park residents crammed into the Oak Room at Leawood City Hall for a community meeting about the potential Royals stadium at Aspiria in Overland Park. Photo credit Kaylie McLaughlin.