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Denver NWSL team pushes back opening date for permanent stadium



Fans cheer as the Denver Summit FC take the field during the Denver Summit's inaugural home game at Mile High Stadium on March 28, 2026, in Denver.

SETH MCCONNELL | DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL



By [Lincoln Roch](#) – Intern, Denver Business Journal
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Story Highlights

- Denver Summit FC's permanent stadium may not open until the 2029 NWSL season.
- The city approved \$50 million in December to purchase the Santa Fe Yards property.
- Team's officials had urged Denver be quick on the land buy to meet NWSL expectations the stadium would debut for the 2028 season.

Denver Summit FC will be getting more use out of its new temporary stadium in Centennial than expected. The opening date for the new professional women's soccer team's permanent home in Denver is being pushed back before construction begins after the team faced roadblocks over the land where the stadium will be built.

The Summit FC, fresh off its first match at its temporary stadium, plans to build a permanent, 14,500-seat home stadium at Santa Fe Yards, off Interstate 25 and Santa Fe Drive in Denver. Its franchise agreement with the National Women's Soccer League dictates that the team must debut the permanent stadium in the 2028 NWSL season, according to previous comments by team President Jen Millet.

Construction is expected to begin in the fall, but after delays with Denver City Council votes and the acquisition of the land, the team does not expect the stadium to be complete for the start of the 2028 season, and its debut may slip to be closer to the beginning of the 2029 season.

"With design complete, construction schedules are being finalized. Our hope remains to play some of our 2028 NWSL season matches at Santa Fe Yards," team spokesperson Shelby Cravens told the Denver Business Journal.

Cravens and representatives from the League did not respond to questions from the DBJ about any potential repercussions from the NWSL over the stadium's delayed opening.

The team expects \$150 million to \$200 million in private investment to pour into the stadium site, but it also asked the city to help acquire the land and make infrastructure improvements. But the property purchase was hindered when a City Council committee delayed a key vote by several weeks in November. At the time, the [Denver Business Journal](#) reported that Cohen had said the team wanted to close on the land deal by the end of 2025 to begin stadium development in the first quarter of 2026.

After the team threatened to look at sites outside of the city, citing their 2028 mandate from the NWSL, the City Council approved \$50 million in December to purchase the Santa Fe Yards property and prepare it for development. The city has committed to spending \$20 million on improvements in the surrounding area.

The land deal was further delayed by a need to release a Colorado Department of Transportation encumbrance on 80,000 square feet at I-25 and Broadway, where the stadium itself will sit, [according to previous Denver Business Journal reporting](#). [The DBJ reported](#) that the encumbrance was lifted and the land was acquired on March 27.

The land was purchased by the Broadway Station Metropolitan District using city funding, and the plan is to lease the land to the Summit FC. BSMD is a taxing entity designed to access bond funding for the former Gates Rubber Factory site at Santa Fe Yards.

In a July meeting with bondholders, BSMD board President Mark Tompkins said that there are still several hurdles for the project that he expects to be cleared in the next 90 days. The city must complete a right-of-way vacation for the

encumbered land, which he expects to be finished by early August. That will allow BSMD to reconfigure the development parcels in the stadium property.

The city also needs to vacate existing utility easements before it can approve the site development plan. Once the parcel map and development plan are finalized and approved, the stadium's building permit can be issued, Tompkins said.

He expects all of those things to occur within roughly 90 days. The team plans to start building infrastructure by early September that will enable the stadium and adjacent private development, he said.

"The club expects, once that construction starts, that the stadium will be ready to be open to begin the 2029 National Women's Soccer League season," Tompkins said.

In addition to the stadium, the Summit's plans for Santa Fe Yards include a hotel, residences and retail offerings, [according to previous DBJ reporting](#). The team will also provide \$7 million worth of direct benefits over the next 10 years to the communities in the area, something it committed to in a [community benefits agreement](#) negotiated with nearby neighbors.

The Summit FC's [12,000-seat temporary stadium](#) in Centennial opened on Saturday after facing delays of its own. It will remain in the Summit's hands until the opening of the Santa Fe Yards stadium.

The temporary venue will then be downsized to 4,000 seats and turned over to the Cherry Creek School District. The Summit FC's adjacent \$20 million training facility, [which opened earlier this summer](#), will remain in Centennial.

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2	2	Bank of America
3	3	The Huntington National Bank
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