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Has the Rock (Hall of Fame) stopped here?

Greater Cleveland residents are hedging all bets today on a report that Cleveland has been chosen as the site for a Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame.

Hall of Fame Foundation members met last night in New York and selected Cleveland over Philadelphia and Chicago for the hall, according to an unattributed report this morning in USA Today.

The report said an official announcement is expected in Cleveland on Monday.

Those who fought hard to bring the Hall of Fame here say they have yet to be informed of such a decision, but most exhibited a celebratory mood.

Cleveland Mayor George V. Voinovich, in a prepared statement through a press secretary, said, "This is a great day for Cleveland. It shows what all Clevelanders can do when we pull together."

There were other indications that Cleveland will be the site.

Mayfield Village Mayor Fred N. Carmen said yesterday he expected a decision today. Carmen and his rock singer brother, Eric, produced the single "The Rock Stops Here" to promote the hall of fame in Cleveland.

Carmen said he received a call yesterday from a representative of Gov. Richard F. Celeste, asking how quickly the governor could receive a "Rock Stops Here" T-shirt, also marketed by the Carmen brothers.

"They said they needed it today," Carmen said. "When I asked whether it had anything to do with the decision, they gave me an official 'No comment.'"

Brian Usher, spokesman for Celeste, said this morning the governor has received no official word.

"That's terrific news if it's true," Usher said. "At this point we haven't heard."

Carmen said this morning he had not received formal confirmation from the Hall of Fame foundation, but said, if it was true, "It means the city of Cleveland pulled

together. It's going to mean \$25 million in additional revenue and jobs."

The hall of fame would mean 722 new jobs and a \$26.4 million in annual revenues, according to estimates by the Greater Cleveland Growth Association. Those figures are based on 200,000 yearly visitors to the hall.

K. Michael Benz of Concord Township, who has headed the association's committee to bring the hall of fame to Cleveland, was unavailable for comment this morning.

But a member of the growth association's board of directors, Kim Colebrook, said he was still awaiting official word of the decision.

"I've heard nothing," said Colebrook, who is president of WGCL and WERE radio stations.

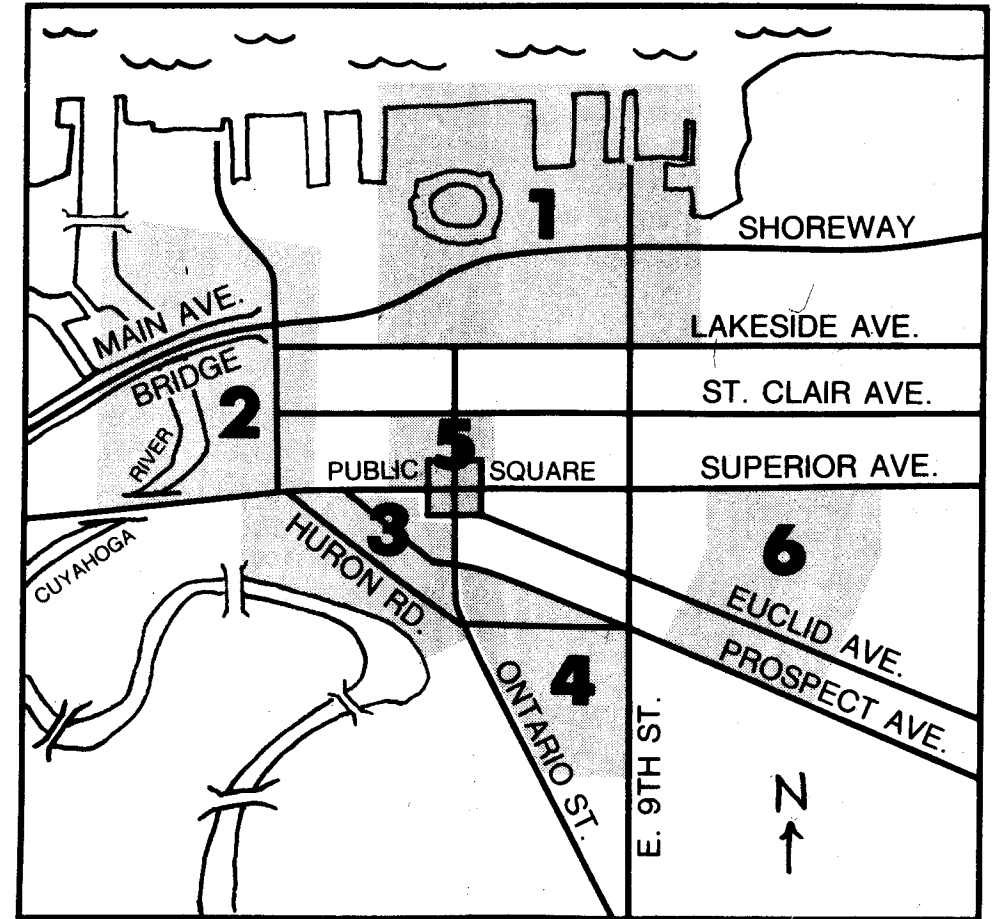
Phone lines were jammed this morning at radio station WMMS, a leader in the effort to attract the museum. The USA Today story was the prime topic of conversation this morning on the airwaves. Although employees there said they had no official confirmation of the story, morning disc jockey Jeff Kinzbach said they were taking the story "very seriously."

"USA Today has not been wrong yet," Kinzbach said. "I think it's a tremendous accomplishment for this area, a tremendous accomplishment for this city."

Clevelanders launched a massive petition drive collecting 600,000 signatures to convince the foundation panel that Cleveland was the best site for the hall of fame. Rock stars like Tina Turner and Michael Jackson also were among those who backed Cleveland's bid.

Cleveland also staged the Moon Dog Coronation Ball in March, a re-enactment of the first rock concert which was held in Cleveland 34 years ago.

This story was compiled by News-Herald reporters Marcia Myers, Donna Furman, Karen Sandstrom and John Russell.



Scott Butler/News-Herald
Six commercial districts in downtown Cleveland have been mentioned as possible sites for Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame. They are: 1.) the lakefront, 2.) the Flats/warehouse district, 3.) Tower City, 4.) Central Market, the proposed site for a domed stadium, 5.) Public Square, and 6.) The Playhouse district.