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Luzhniki Redevelopment Plans to Be Reworked

By The Moscow Times

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Either Moscow City Hall or the FIFA authorities will have to change their position concerning plans to redevelop the Luzhniki stadium — if FIFA insists on its 2018 Soccer World Cup capacity requirements, the grand stadium may have to be razed and rebuilt, Acting Deputy Mayor Marat Khusnullin said.

Currently, the stadium has 78,360 seats, which is 10,640 seats short of the 89,000 required by FIFA for the opening ceremony and the cup's final, Vedomosti reported.

"When we began replanning the Luzhniki stadium, unfortunately it became clear to us that it was impossible to meet the FIFA conditions with the existing stadium. We have to either demolish the stadium or reduce the parameters required by FIFA," Khusnullin, who is in charge of construction, said in an interview with the Golos Rossii radio station last week.

The new parameters for reconstruction will be firmed up in a meeting with FIFA authorities

on July 8, 2013. Khusnullin estimates that reconstruction would cost around $700 million, which would come from the city budget.

Previously, the news that the iconic Soviet era stadium could be demolished to pave the way for a new stadium resulted in public outcry and opposition from construction engineers, city heritage groups and local residents, all of whom said Luzhniki was a symbol of Moscow that must be preserved.

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