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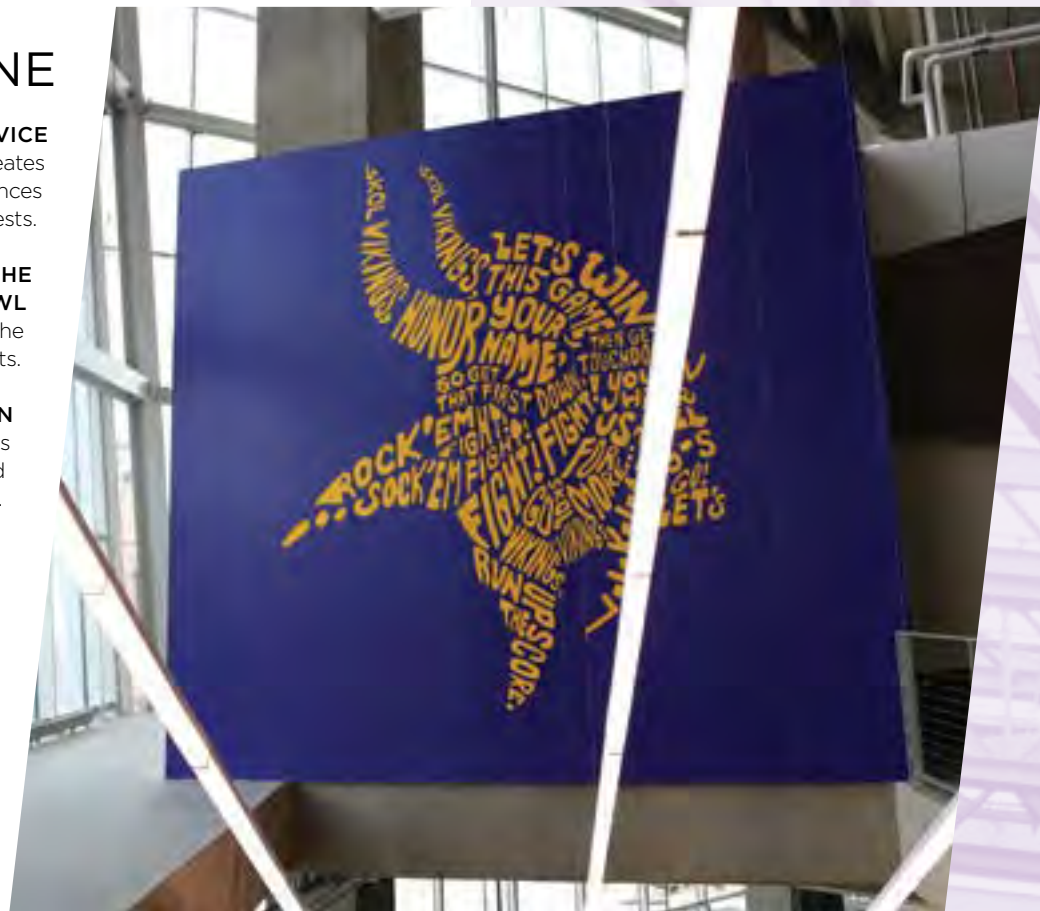
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Creating a Community Catalyst

When I signed legislation for a new Minneapolis stadium four years ago, it was about a lot more than football. It was about creating a catalyst for the community. Since then, U.S. Bank Stadium has risen from the undeveloped concrete of East Town to enliven the Minneapolis skyline and enrich the surrounding landscape.

We are proud that the project has strengthened the diversity of Minnesota's workforce. At the peak of construction, the project's workforce was 38 percent people of color and 9 percent women. No other project in Minnesota history has achieved this level of diversity, giving opportunities to new workers in the construction industry.

The project is transforming East Town from cascading parking lots to places for people to work, live and gather. Overall, the area has experienced more than \$1 billion in additional private economic development. Without this project, the new office towers, hotels, condominiums, apartments, and grocery stores that now dot East Town would remain an unrealized vision.

This stadium chiefly is a place for the community. In the coming decades, thousands of Minnesota high school athletes will celebrate state championships. It will host early season amateur and college baseball games when spring remains a theoretical possibility in Minnesota. And it will be Minnesota's welcome mat as travelers visit for conventions, concerts and other entertainment events.

Visit Minnesota, and experience our new, iconic stadium. There is nothing else like it.

Sincerely,

Mark Dayton, Governor



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PRESIDENT & PUBLISHER R. Craig Bednar
GROUP PUBLISHER Dick Ausman
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER Marcel Gyswyt
CUSTOM PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Jim Younger
 612.548.3874
jim.younger@tigeroak.com

EDITOR Bobby Hart
ASSISTANT EDITOR Morgan Halaska
DIGITAL CONTENT EDITOR Julianna Fazio
EDITORIAL INTERN Hannah Fox

SENIOR ART DIRECTOR Courtney Nielsen
ART DIRECTOR Casie Beldo

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR Dianne Talmage
PROJECT COORDINATORS Chelsey Rohrbacher, Sarah Swindle

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER- NATIONAL SALES Anne DeWolfe
 612.787.3148
anne.dewolfe@tigeroak.com



Worldwide Entertainment and Convention Venue Management

Patrick Talty **GENERAL MANAGER**
 Jerry Goldman **ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER**
 Curtis Schmillen **DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**
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 David Kingsbury **DIRECTOR OF IT**
 Billy Langenstein **DIRECTOR OF EVENT SERVICES**
 Danielle Ottman **SALES MANAGER**
dottman@usbankstadium.com | 612.777.8732
 Shannon Corrigan **SALES COORDINATOR**
scorrigan@usbankstadium.com | 612.777.8733
 Lisa Niess **MARKETING MANAGER**
 Jordan Nommay **INTERACTIVE MARKETING AND DESIGN COORDINATOR**
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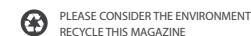
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PHOTOS: TATE CARLSON, MINNESOTA VIKINGS, JOEL SCHNELL.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE »

A Warm Minnesota Welcome

SKOL Service ensures a stellar experience for everyone who steps foot inside.

BY MORGAN HALASKA

SKOL—it's how Vikings fans celebrate a touchdown or northerners toast a drink. "SKOL is something that all Minnesotans know and relate to," says Billy Langenstein, director of event services at U.S. Bank Stadium. "We wanted that positive energy with our customer service program."

SKOL Service permeates the entire stadium, whether it's at a sporting event—"from the way we greet guests, serve a hot dog or a beverage or how we place a trash can on the concourse"—or meeting or special event. "Each interaction from our sales team to marketing to event services operations and finance will be smooth for every single guest," says Langenstein. "It's that genuine care that we have as guests are booking an event at the stadium."

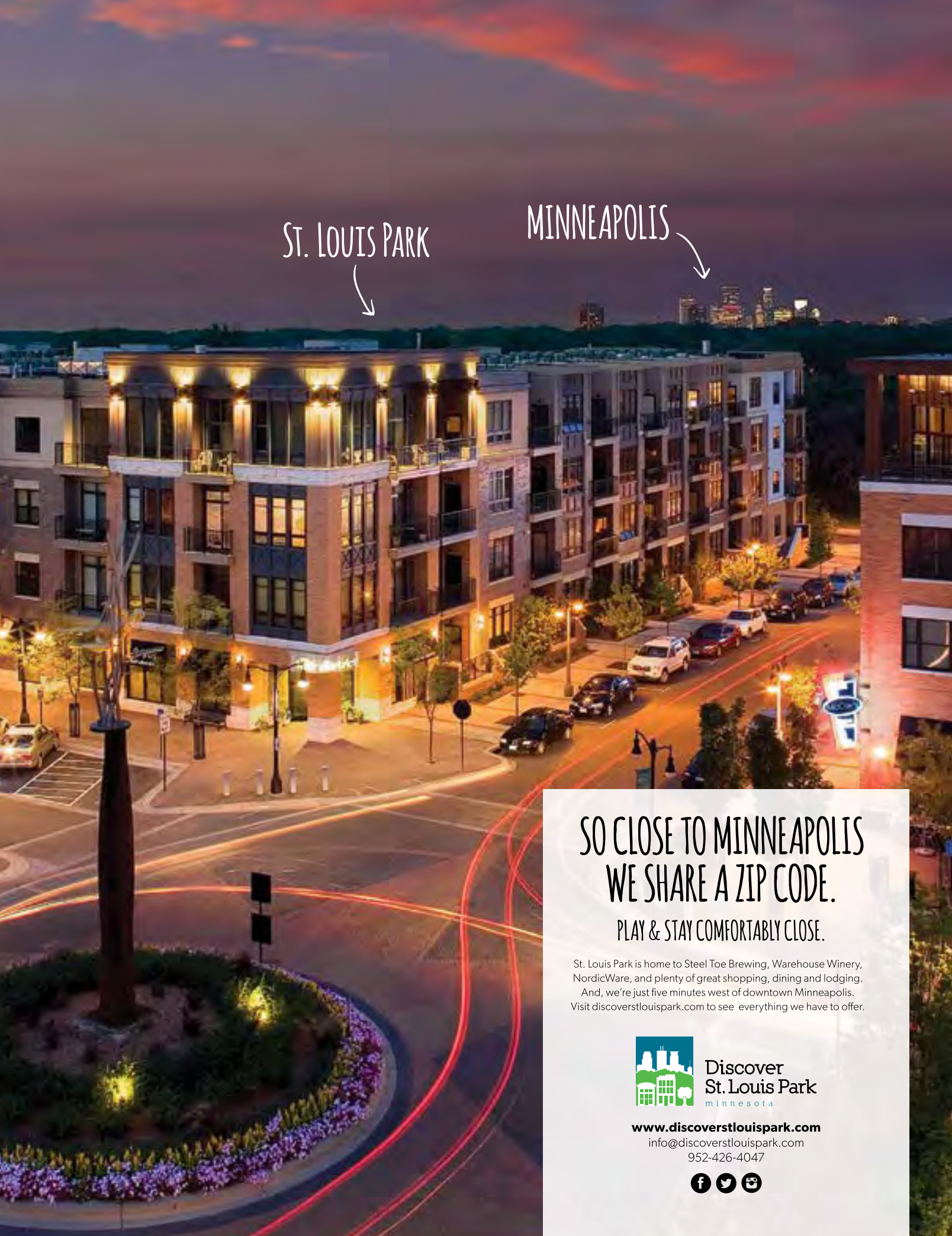
Langenstein leads a talented team of eight and oversees everything from guest experience, transportation, public safety and security, medical services and event management. SKOL Service's event day partners—including

Aramark's M Hospitality, Monterrey Security, Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC), MainGate Retail, SMG, MSFA, Minnesota Vikings, Minneapolis Police Department and Minneapolis Regulatory Services—ensure the upholding of what Langenstein calls the pillars of SKOL: Safety, Knowledge, Ownership and Loyalty. "Everything that we do relates back to those pillars," says Langenstein. "When [clients are] booking their event, when they're planning their event, and finally when their event is actually at the stadium, and the follow-up, will all relate back to our mission statement [to create memorable experiences through service excellence] and the genuine care that we're going to provide for them."

The Pillars of SKOL:
SAFETY,
KNOWLEDGE,
OWNERSHIP,
AND LOYALTY

PHOTO: MINNESOTA VIKINGS

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PHOTO AND RENDERINGS: MINNESOTA VIKINGS

The stadium features the world's largest pivoting glass doors, a highlight of Carlson Nelson's presentation to NFL owners: "It's like opening its arms to welcome the community."



"The community-wide collaboration is very exciting and many good things will come of that beyond the Super Bowl, particularly for event planners who want to bring people to our community."

—Marilyn Carlson Nelson, former Carlson CEO

"Clearly [Marilyn Carlson Nelson] was the glue that bound us together."

—Melvin Tennant, CAE, president and CEO, Meet Minneapolis



WINNING THE SUPER BOWL

Well, almost. The team is still on the way, but the city, state, stadium, local businesses and community are already basking in glory.

BY BOBBY HART

When it came to pitching Minneapolis as the host city of the Super Bowl LII, the bid committee was faced with filling a blank canvas, equal parts gift and curse. Its final competitors, Indianapolis and New Orleans, had hosted Super Bowls in 2012 and 2013, respectively, so they could paint a familiar picture when presenting to NFL owners. Minneapolis' last successful bid was for Super Bowl XXVI in 1992 in the Metrodome. Suffice to say, Minneapolis was essentially starting from scratch, telling the tale of a transformed city and a new stadium that didn't yet exist. "The advantage of it is that it forced us to go into excruciating detail about what we could do to make the NFL feel as though this was the best site for Super Bowl LII," says Melvin Tennant, CAE, president and CEO of Meet Minneapolis.

The Minneapolis team also brought some hard-hitting presenters: Marilyn Carlson Nelson, former Carlson CEO; Richard Davis, chairman and CEO, U.S. Bank; and Doug Baker, chairman and CEO, Ecolab. It was no coincidence Carlson Nelson was chair of the host committee for Super Bowl XXVI. "Clearly she was the glue that bound us together because I think one of the story lines that really helped us to get the Super Bowl was the fact that even though it had been a long time since we had hosted it, we still had this community leader who was there and who was going to be with you again the next time," Tennant says. "That really made a difference."

Pitching a stadium that didn't yet exist was a unique obstacle, but one the bid committee embraced. Carlson Nelson gushed to the owners about her favorite feature of the stadium: the world's largest pivoting glass doors made of 60,000 square feet of glass—five of them—the tallest standing 95 feet tall. "I said it's like opening its arms to welcome the community and that's just going to be spectacular," she recalls. "No one has seen anything like that. During the presentation, I had them stop, rewind and do that a second time so people could just look at it and wonder at it because there's no other stadium that has something like that."

Without U.S. Bank Stadium, it's safe to assume there would be no Super Bowl LII in Minneapolis. The city hadn't been asked to bid since 1992 because the modern Super Bowl had become such a large attraction that the Metrodome wouldn't be equipped, according to Tennant, who added that Minneapolis was turned down in 2008 for a Final Four bid for that very reason. "So that just reinforced the fact that, yes, getting U.S. Bank Stadium up and running was absolutely pivotal," he says. "Pivotal."

Tennant and Carlson Nelson both vividly remember the suspense of the owners placing their votes after the final presentation, while a media scrum piled outside of where the New Orleans team was gathered in anticipation. It was clear who the favorite was. "One of my favorite moments when it was announced, there was this huge rush to get outside our room and interview us," Carlson Nelson remembers. "They were practically falling over each other to get back to our room because they had anticipated incorrectly. That was really fun."

Now the fun part is preparing for Feb. 4, 2018. "One of the big things we'll have to do now is get some [8,000-10,000] volunteers," Carlson Nelson says. "The community-wide collaboration is very exciting and many good things will come of that beyond the Super Bowl, particularly for event planners who want to bring people to our community." ■



The stadium might look like it was made to resemble a Vikings ship, but it's Minnesota's extreme climate that impacted the roof's angular shape in a very practical way.

GOING GREEN»

THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE STADIUMS

The new multipurpose stadium is setting new standards for sustainability.

BY MORGAN HALASKA

“[U.S. Bank Stadium] looked at sustainability beyond a mere checklist. It looked at it in a holistic manner, from its location to climate responsive design to multiuse characteristics,” says Brian Wolfe, associate, sustainable design coordinator at HKS Architects, who provided direction in all sustainability matters from analyzing energy efficiency strategies to helping with material selection. In designing U.S. Bank Stadium based on its climate and location, a truly sustainable stadium was built.

The stadium might look like it was made to resemble a Vikings ship, but it's Minnesota's extreme climate that impacted the roof's angular shape in a very practical way. “The slope of the roof was designed to prevent snow from settling,” explains Wolfe. “The snow sheds into a snow catchment that wraps the brow of the stadium.”

But that doesn't mean you're wrong if you see a ship. “When people say it looks like a Vikings ship or it looks like a shard of ice or

it looks like this or that, those for us all prove that we've developed a form that people liken to other things in that region and in that place. Those things heavily influenced us,” says Bryan Trubey, executive vice president, director of sports and entertainment at HKS Architects.

The stadium's sustainability effort began before construction even started. More than 90 percent of the Metrodome's demolition waste was diverted. Concrete and rebar

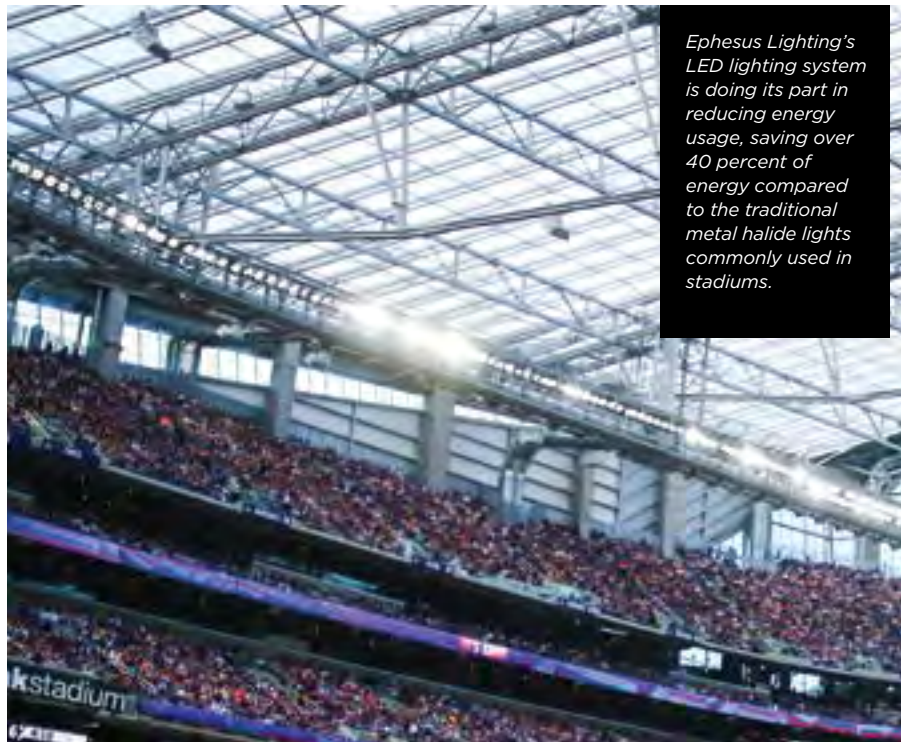
were recycled in Shakopee, while “some of the demolished concrete was used as backfill for the surrounding area,” explains Wolfe. Furthermore, the fact U.S. Bank Stadium was built on the same site as the Metrodome was already a step in the right direction. “By utilizing the existing site, economic development was spurred, enhancements were made to the public transit stop and the downtown skyway was extended,” Wolfe says, pointing also to The Commons, the two-block green

PHOTO: ISTOCK PHOTO: RACHEL NADEAU; MINNESOTA VIKINGS



“The slope of the roof was designed to prevent snow from settling. The snow sheds into a snow catchment that wraps the brow of the stadium.”

—BRIAN WOLFE,
associate, sustainable design coordinator, HKS Architects



Ephesus Lighting's LED lighting system is doing its part in reducing energy usage, saving over 40 percent of energy compared to the traditional metal halide lights commonly used in stadiums.

space near the stadium. "These all contribute to creating one of the most urban stadiums in the country."

It may sound like a no-brainer, but the new stadium is more energy efficient than the Metrodome. "If the square footage, technologies and equipment utilized in the Metrodome were applied to the USBS program, energy usage would be 13 percent higher" when compared on the industry standard EUI, says Wolfe. To give that number more punch, take into account the amenities U.S. Bank Stadium has added—two large videoboard, thousands of flat-screen TVs, ribbon boards that wrap around the bowl and twice the amount of concessions—and it still manages to have a lower EUI than the Metrodome.

Ephesus Lighting's LED lighting system is doing its part in reducing energy usage, saving over 40 percent of energy compared to the traditional metal halide lights commonly used in stadiums, according to Wolfe. "The expected life of the LED sports lights is over 100,000 hours, which would theoretically last more than 50 years," he says.

U.S. Bank Stadium is setting many new standards and its ventilation system is no exception. "The airflow within the bowl is

controlled to supply and return air from desired locations for efficiency and control," explains Wolfe. In summer, cool air is moved from the upper level to the lower level and then returned, and vice versa in the winter. "This building is really the only building of this scale that uses the natural physical properties of air buoyancy to actually make the interior of the building more comfortable," says Trubey. "From an environmental standpoint, that's a macro issue that we really addressed that hadn't been addressed in these buildings."

Especially in Minnesota, where winter temperatures can often be found in the negative range, reducing heating costs is quite the undertaking. But with the usage of the translucent ETFE (see sidebar for more information) and high-performance glass on the roof's southern side, the stadium's temperature benefits from solar thermal heating and passage of natural daylight. "The ETFE roof allows for better control of the interior stadium environment," says Wolfe.

"From an environmental standpoint," Trubey adds, "this will be one of the most sustainable buildings of this scale anywhere in the world." ■

10 Things to Know About ETFE

1. ETFE stands for ethylene tetrafluoroethylene and is a co-polymer resin—a translucent plastic-like material that covers about 60 percent of the roof, or 245,000 square feet, the largest application of the material in the northern hemisphere.
2. Lightweight in nature, ETFE doesn't need as much material (like steel) to support it.
3. ETFE allows for passive solar heating—a nonelectric phenomenon that distributes solar energy in the winter and rejects solar heat in the summer.
4. There's less of a demand for artificial lighting because of the transparent ETFE that lets daylight into the stadium.
5. "[Passive solar heating and maximized natural daylight] allow patrons the opportunity to feel as if they were in an outdoor stadium while being in a conditioned space," says Wolfe.
6. As opposed to retractable roofs, ETFE makes for a continuously sealed roof envelope. "This is a major concern in extremely cold climates, where any breaks in the roof envelope lead to drastic stack effect in the building," explains Wolfe.
7. Even though it's 1/100 the weight of glass, ETFE is durable and can withstand snow and wind.
8. ETFE does not deteriorate from UV damage, atmospheric pollution or extreme temperatures.
9. Since the surface is nonstick and nonporous, rainfall is sufficient to clean ETFE externally.
10. ETFE is expected to last 30-50 years.

AROUND THE STADIUM »

HIDDEN GEMS

A look at the stadium's impressive private layers. **BY BOBBY HART**

U.S. Bank Stadium's clubs and suites are the main attractions when it comes to meetings and events, and for good reason (see page 36). But every space within the facility was carefully planned and crafted with a purpose. Here are some of the interesting behind-the-scenes spaces.

Video Production Room

Size: 2,500 square feet, with room for 40-50 staffers during typical NFL game

Location: Southeast corner, upper concourse

Features: SMG has 11 manned cameras (all 4K resolution) and seven remote controlled cameras.

You Should Know: This room controls 2,000-plus TVs in the stadium, instant replay, graphics, videoboard, ribbon boards and bowl audio system. "Everything is tied together to promote automation and synchronization," says Curtis Schmillen, P.E., the stadium's director of operations. "When a touchdown is scored, an operator will push one button that will simultaneously play graphics on the LED video displays, LED ribbon boards, take over all of the TVs in the stadium, and make the lights on the Vikings ship flash."

Broadcast Booth

Size: 1,100 square feet, with approximately 10 people occupying it during gamedays

Location: South side, main concourse, 50-yard line, behind Vikings bench

Features: Fully retractable glass, special desktops and ceiling grid system to support broadcast operations

You Should Know: This space accesses a private elevator that connects to event level.



Loading Dock

Size: 32,000 square feet

Location: East side, indoors, 55 feet below ground, with access from 4th Street South below the East Entrance

Features: Six trucks can be offloaded at one time and seven broadcast trucks can fit on gameday. Parking is available for NFL visiting team buses and tour buses for concerts and shows.

You Should Know: This will be the main load-in point for any show or event. From here, items can be moved to club spaces via three freight elevators or two service elevators.

Security Command Centers

Size: Approximately 30-35 people will be working between the two rooms on gameday.

-Joint Operations Command (JOC): 1,200 square feet, staffed 24/7/365

-Stadium Operations Command (SOC): 460 square feet, staffed when necessary for events

Location: JOC on event level, SOC on upper concourse

Features: Over 400 security cameras cover the interior and exterior of the building; JOC, 15 display screens; SOC, 11 display screens.

You Should Know: SMG utilizes an incident management system that will time stamp and track all incidents from inception to resolution. There is a direct link between the command centers and staff. The command centers operate in unified command structure under the Incident Command System (ICS) model. ■



Vikings Locker Room Complex

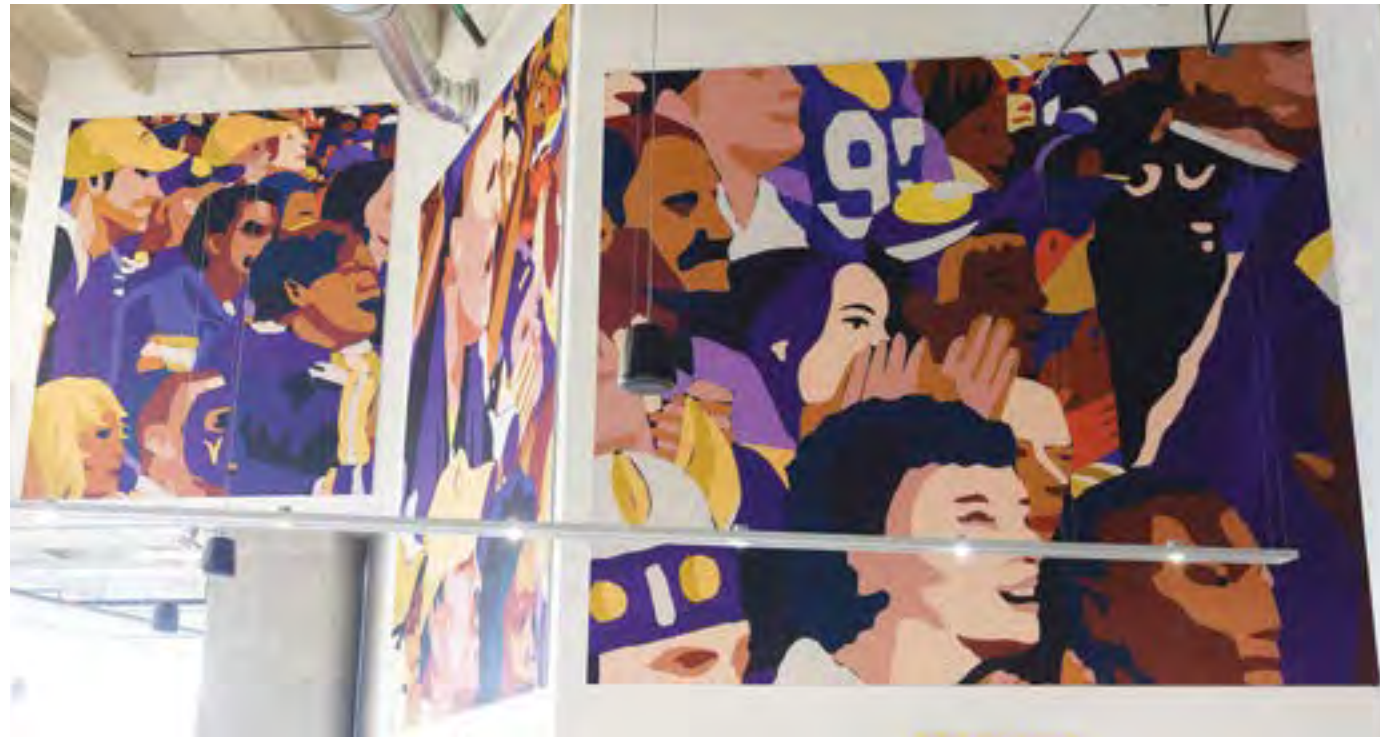
Size: The entire locker room complex is 21,500 square feet, including training rooms, medical offices, hydro therapy room, etc. The home locker room is 4,600 square feet. There are approximately 160 Vikings personnel in the locker room complex on gameday. During the preseason, there are 92 lockers, including 32 on wheels. During regular season, there are 60 permanent lockers.

Location: Event level, southeast corner

Features: Three 80-inch smart TVs, plus a metal Vikings logo on the ceiling that measures 200 square feet.

You Should Know: One of the nicest locker rooms in the NFL is only used by the team 10 times per year plus playoffs. Some teams have practice facilities adjacent to the stadium so they use their locker room year-round.

PHOTO: MINNESOTA VIKINGS; (OPPOSITE) STEVEN BERGERSON PHOTOGRAPHY; COURTNEY NIELSEN



ART»

LOCALLY SOURCED TALENT

Within U.S. Bank Stadium's walls are works of art by Minnesotans. **BY MORGAN HALASKA**

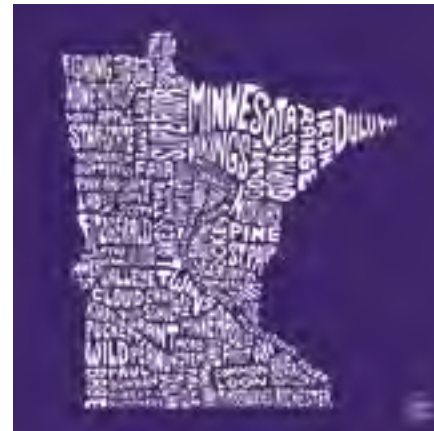
IF U.S. Bank Stadium had to be described in one word, "Minnesota" is proving to be the best nine letters to do so. Between its overall design, food partnerships and customer service program, the stadium is tapping into the Nordic culture on virtually every possible level. The idea to install a museum-quality art collection—made primarily of brand-new commissioned pieces just for the stadium—is yet another way to weave Minnesota into stadium walls, quite literally.

"We wanted to curate a collection for the stadium that would thank Minnesota for its support of the Vikings since 1961," says Tanya Dreesen, vice president of partnership activation and special projects for Minnesota Vikings Football. "We have an incredibly robust art community here and what better place to showcase the talent of our artists but on the walls of U.S. Bank Stadium?"

Dreesen and her team selected Sports & The Arts (SATA) as their partner in curating the collection, having experience implementing large-scale installations in stadiums like

the new Yankee Stadium. "We liked the work that they did at other venues and we liked how they have an incredible strength at researching a market."

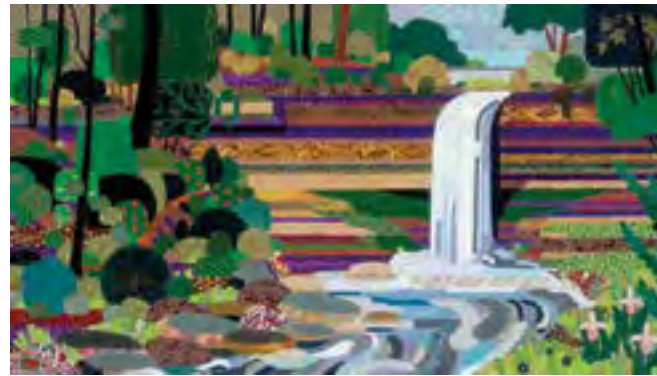
A call for artists in January 2015 garnered over 1,100 submissions in just a couple months—all of which were carefully reviewed. "We wanted the pieces to fall within some of the pillars that we had listed like the region, or other sports other than the Vikings," Dreesen explains. Not only that, but the goal was to also feature mostly Minnesota artists. Of the 104 artists involved in the collection, 97



are local—including nine who graduated from Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD).

Privately funded by the Wilf family and the Minnesota Vikings, the collection is spread throughout the entire facility—in concourses, stairways, elevator banks, suite corridors and club areas—and includes over 300 pieces of original art work and 200 photographs. Dreesen says that number will grow and the collection will be refreshed every year. "There are going to be new things to honor each year."

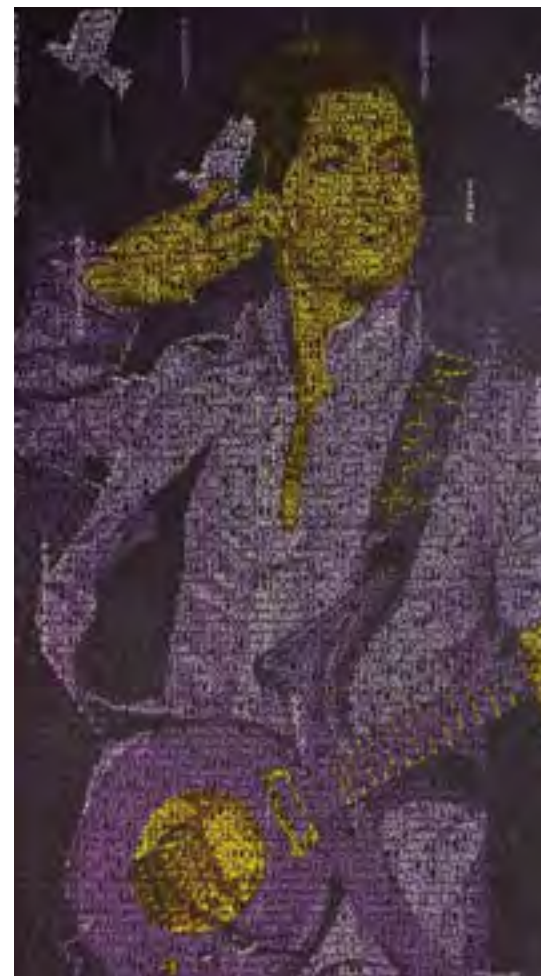
Mediums range from sculptures to sketches, oil on canvas to digital illustrations, and even gunpowder and forged iron. While subjects do indeed include Vikings football, that's just one facet of the collection's theme of Minnesota's



collective regional and sports history. "[The selected] artists are the ones that are able to take their thoughts and their impressions of Minnesota and sports and the Vikings and tell their story in a dramatic way through art. We want to make sure we can honor the community that way by having the community on the walls," explains Dreesen.

Stadium guests can expect an enhanced experience of the stadium through the collection, which is meant to inspire conversation between guests. Says Dreesen, "That's really what art can do for somebody: bringing together drama and excitement, which is what we do down on the field too." *sportart.net* ■

TRIBUTE TO PRINCE AND HIS LYRICS;
BY NICHOLAS SCHLEIF

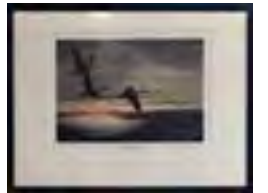


PHOTOS: RACHEL NADEAU, MICHAEL SHAY, NICHOLAS SCHLEIF.

Meet the Artists

RETIRED VIKINGS PLAYERS AND AN ARTIST WHO WORKS WITH GUNPOWDER: A SAMPLE OF U.S. BANK STADIUM'S DIVERSE ROSTER OF CREATIVES.

Vikings fans might remember **Jim Marshall's** signature Silver Eagle from his days as a player. Drawn on his uniform and around his gloves, it became part of his identity on the field. Now, sketches of his iconic eagle appear in the art collection on the walls of U.S. Bank Stadium.



Carl Eller, Matt Blair and **Bud Grant** join Marshall as alumni who are now occupying the stadium in a different capacity. Eller's sculptures of Minnesota lakes, Blair's private blast-from-the-past photography collection from his time as a Viking, and Grant's wildlife sketches (in collaboration with Les Kouba) from his hunting escapades are displayed throughout the stadium.

But as Tanya Dreesen, vice president of partnership activation and special projects for Minnesota Vikings Football, points out, "Some have stories connected to the Vikings and many do not."



David Grimsrud's triptych, "Play Ball Minnesota," contains three 60-inch-by-30-inch canvas panels, each depicting different sports venues throughout Minneapolis, the University of Minnesota and St. Paul. "I've always considered art and sports participation to be much the same. It takes courage, talent, hard work, confidence and pride. The end result can be joy and celebration or rejection and disillusionment," says the Zumbrota resident.

Grimsrud's daughter, **Holly Mujica**, also has her pop art-style piece displayed. Entitled "Potential," Mujica cut out seven figurines from MDF (medium-density fibreboard)—adolescents playing different sports who are "frozen in different states of potential success, disappointment, glory and heartbreak," says Mujica. "The cut-outs are inspired by how sports unite races and youths with different upbringing, experiences and abilities beyond societal stereotypes and towards a common

Continued on pg. 19



ART»

THE MURALS

You can't, even if you tried, miss the two hand-painted murals that make 3,500 square feet of the main concourse's wall pop.

BY MORGAN HALASKA

Greg Gossel's 17-foot-tall-by-85-foot-long "The Vikings Are Coming!" pop-inspired mural on the main concourse's south side transports passers-by into a comic book setting with its "SMAAASHH" and "TZiiiiING" exclamations. Gossel's boldly designed mural is a representation of Minnesota Vikings franchise history, layered with imagery of vintage ticket stubs, game programs and other mementos that one might collect from games. "These elements come to life with a vibrant color palette capturing the energy and excitement of the Vikings as they begin writing a new chapter in U.S. Bank Stadium," says Gossel.

Those familiar with Urban Flower Field

in St. Paul's Pedro Park might recognize a similarity in Ed Charbonneau and Jeremy Szopinski's latest mural, located on the north side of the stadium. The 17-foot-tall-by-127-foot-long mural uses the same concept of the golden spiral—a logarithmic spiral that opens to a certain height-to-width ratio that creates what's known as the golden ratio. "We're always looking for the crossover between art and the other world, like science and nature," says Charbonneau. "That inspired [Urban Flower Field] and we decided to bring that into the design [of the stadium mural] and complicate it immensely."

The mural was hand painted with supplies donated from Valspar to abstractly replicate

the movement of footballs. "There are 11 spirals that start at different points in the mural and they all follow the same spiral trajectory," says Charbonneau. Coincidentally, Charbonneau discovered after the mural was painted that football spirals have to wobble at 11 percent to be the most accurate: "We like it as a metaphor for perfection and harmony."

The stadium's design also influenced Charbonneau and Szopinski's mural. "We photographed the outside of the building and took those photographs and traced the shapes that we got and placed them into the design," explains Charbonneau. "But we abstracted it so it wouldn't be a literal representation of the building." The team, in preparation for paint-

ing the mural on-site, created four strike offs, which were also acquired for the collection. "They're in all four corners of the stadium," he says.

Alumni of the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, the two artists recruited six interns (all BFA or MFA students at MCAD) to help with the project: Hannah Farrell, Elisa Gomez, Jonathan Herrera, Celia Olson, Aimee Strzok and Suyao Tian. ■

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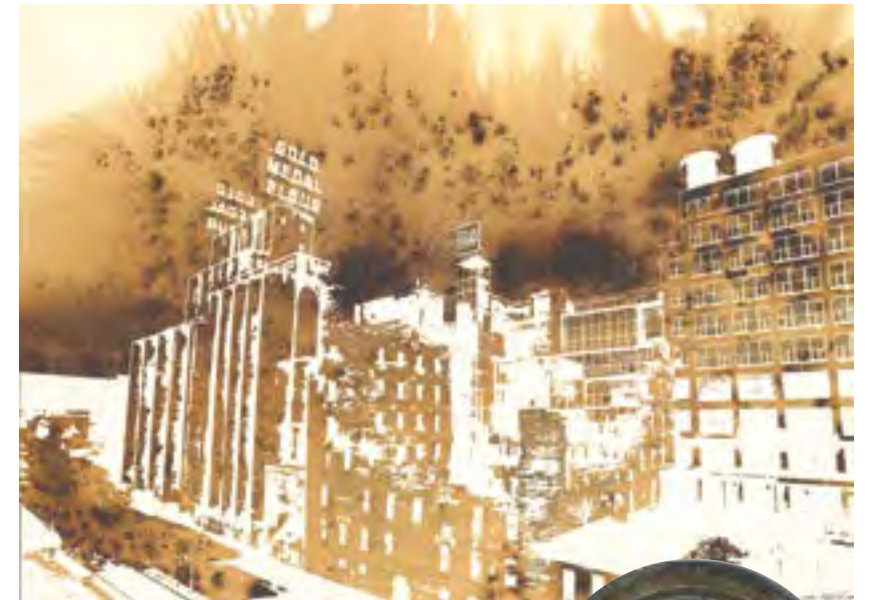
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PHOTOS: MINNESOTA VIKINGS, JOEL SCHNELL.

Continued from pg. 17

goal. ... These athletes make up a patchwork of identities, which shape the future of the Minnesota cultural landscape."

Lisa Friedrich created her six pieces at the stadium—which represent Twin Cities landmarks and locations throughout Minnesota—using smoke, fire and gunpowder. "Each piece is created from a photo, then cut into a masking agent which is then melted and ignited into thick paper, after the flames and smoke have cleared," explains Friedrich. "The piece is carefully cleaned to create a one-of-a-kind image." While the medium is a dangerous one, Friedrich admits, its unique product is attention-grabbing. "Trying to control something that can't be controlled is exciting and challenging," she says.



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James Brenner's hand-forged shields made out of iron is "one particular installation that we're excited about," says Dreesen. "The shields are a great symbol of the Viking era and a piece that you'll see us start to honor more." James Lundberg and Rebekah Glasmann worked together to create five custom-designed Vikings shields, as well. ■

NEIGHBORLY LOVE

Local businesses share their thoughts on their large, popular, new neighbor.

BY BOBBY HART

Being the new kid on the block can be a jarring experience, but welcoming neighbors can make all the difference when it comes to adjusting and thriving in new surroundings. U.S. Bank Stadium was lucky to have several East Town businesses awaiting its arrival with the proverbial welcome basket.



Neighbor
TROY E. WHELAN
REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF
SALES & MARKETING
ALOFT MINNEAPOLIS
900 Washington Ave. S.

"U.S. Bank Stadium benefits local businesses by drawing both physical and logistical demand to the east side of downtown. This will naturally increase the need for food and beverage, parking, entertainment, lodging, event planning, etc., as compression for these needs increases. The neighborhood will benefit from a PR perspective, as increased visibility from filming, etc., will show off neighborhood signage and various landmarks. The community will be enhanced from the U.S. Bank Stadium presence via the various park spaces as well as the renewed possibilities for group and social gatherings—the spotlight on the [East Town] and Mill District neighborhoods will encourage both increased living, working, lodging and dining spaces and subsequent demand and usage of these spaces."



"The stadium brings much more than additional jobs and economic impact coming from NFL games. Because it is designed as a year-round venue and can host national events such as the Super Bowl and Final Four and concerts featuring national acts, its impact increases significantly. It also contributes to the overall desirability of our city as we look to attract new talent and corporate investment.

"The new stadium enhances the reputation of the city. And, because the stadium is designed to host all types of events, Minneapolis is more attractive for large city-wide conventions. These conventions bring travelers with disposable income to our city, benefitting hotels, restaurants and all of their supporting businesses."



Neighbor
MICHAEL CLARK
MANAGING DIRECTOR
RENAISSANCE MINNEAPOLIS
HOTEL, THE DEPOT
225 Third Avenue South



Neighbor
JEFF HAHN
OWNER
DAY BLOCK BREWING COMPANY
AND DAY BLOCK EVENT CENTER
1105 S. Washington Ave.

"I'm thrilled with the local investment that has come hand in hand with the new stadium. I'm looking forward to an increased residential population in East Town—it's such a growing and vibrant area of Minneapolis and there are so many in our community that have worked very hard to make it one of the most attractive areas in town.

"It brings a lot of people back to the neighborhood for large events, and that is great for us because many people going out for an event will supplement it by grabbing some food and drink before and after."



Neighbor
PHIL JOHNSON
GENERAL MANAGER
COURTYARD MINNEAPOLIS DOWNTOWN
1500 Washington Ave South

"There is a lot of development activity in [East Town]—which was unwelcoming to developers pre-stadium. I feel the stadium will continue to spark development and brighten/improve the landscape of the neighborhood. Given the neighborhood improvements surrounding the stadium, I would expect more visitors, which will allow local businesses to flourish.

"I expect the stadium will bring liveliness and a new buzz, which will help put this area on the map once again. Many guest rooms and our exercise room, located on the 14th floor, overlook the stadium, so our guests have a bird's-eye view of this new architectural marvel and its new surroundings."



PHOTOS: COURTNEY NIELSEN

FULL OF FLAVOR

Aramark's M Hospitality dining program offers up the best eats and treats the state has to offer.

BY MORGAN HALASKA

MODERN, memorable and Minnesota: Aramark's M Hospitality, the dining program custom fit for U.S. Bank Stadium, is aptly and cleverly named. While Aramark may be the exclusive hospitality partner and dining services provider at U.S. Bank Stadium, the food service company knew that in order to succeed, it had to foster local culinary partnerships. "From the outset, our collective goal was to create a dining environment that represents the award-winning, diverse and distinct tastes of the Twin Cities," says Jamie Hodgson, general manager of Aramark's M Hospitality.

Suffice to say, Dome Dogs aren't on the menu.

For those disappointed, take comfort in the 430 concession points of sale. Aramark certainly did its homework in scouting the region, with help from tastemaker Andrew Zimmern, to fold the best chefs and restaurants into the stadium's offerings. Revival's fried chicken, Ike's monstrous Bloody Mary and Kramarczuk's sausages—there's not only something for every taste, but there's also

something from every figurative corner of the Twin Cities. "From classic concessions to Minnesota-centric fare to high-end catering, our goal is to ensure we create menus that feature something for everyone."

THE CATERING

"We engage in the meeting planning process very early to ensure alignment on meeting goals and discuss how the food and beverage offerings can help planners achieve those goals," says Hodgson. "We're sensitive to special diets, food allergies and dietary restrictions and work with meeting planners to develop alternative menus for those requiring special arrangements."

Each club is specially equipped to handle meals of any type, with a Mongolian grill in Medtronic Club and a wood-fire grill in the Delta Sky360 Club. Fresh and local ingredients are used; the culinary staff has partnered with Minnesota farmers and producers for the best locally sourced ingredients.

SWEETS IN THE SUITES & CLUBS

Not only was local king for Aramark's culinary program, but Aramark looked specifically for woman-owned and minority-owned vendors. "It's important for us to involve local businesses and incorporate their offerings into the menu and offerings," says Hodgson. "We want our operations to reflect the character of the Twin Cities, and it's important for us to include these local-owned businesses that fans, guests and visitors can relate to."

"I always say size matters and it kind of does," says Tina Rexing of her award-winning **T-Rex Cookie**, which comes as "little" as one-half pound or as big as 5 pounds. "They're crunchy on the outside and still chewy in the middle. ... They're known to feed a family of four." Before baking for a living since February 2015, Rexing worked in corporate America for 20 years. Now she makes about 2,000 cookies by hand a week, which can be found in local establishments like the Minneapolis Farmers Market, during intermission at Orchestra Hall and now at U.S. Bank Stadium. Available in the clubs and suites is the tray of 10 half-pound cookies (four chocolate chip, three sea salt caramel chip and three sugar) and orders of the monstrous 5-pound cookie.



Crafty Partnership

Aramark's commitment to local flavor has, naturally, extended to beer. In collaboration with the Northeast Brewers and Distillers Association (NEBDA), a rotating selection of microbrews like Fair State Brewing Cooperative, NorthGate Brewing, Insight Brewery, Sociable Cider Werks, Bauhaus Brew Labs and 56 Brewing will be on tap at events. "Northeast Minneapolis has emerged as the epicenter of Minnesota's craft beer movement, and we are incredibly excited to be able to showcase the variety and quality of beer produced by NEBDA member breweries," says Evan Sallee, CEO, Fair State Brewing Cooperative and member of the NEBDA Board of Directors.

PHOTOS: T.J. TURNER; ARAMARK; MINNESOTA VIKINGS



WHAT'S ON THE MENU:

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

For U.S. Bank Stadium's ribbon cutting ceremony on July 22, 2016, guests noshed on a lunch showcasing M Hospitality's catering expertise.

LAVENDER LEMONADE

RAISIN-WALNUT FARM BREAD, HERBED CIABATTA, SEEDED LAHVOSH, SWEET CREAM BUTTER

PAN-ROASTED BREAST OF CHICKEN WITH RED ONION JAM

RED LAKE WILD RICE SALAD WITH SUNDRIED LOCAL CRANBERRIES, CANDIED PECANS, FIELD CHIVES

SUMMER LETTUCE BOUQUET WITH CHAMPAGNE VINAIGRETTE

SALTED CARAMEL CREAM PUFF CHOCOLATE GANACHE, VANILLA CRÈME, FRESH BERRIES



Just Truffles has made appearances on *The Oprah Show* and the Food Network, but St. Paul is home base for these truffles, which have been a local delicacy for 28 years. What makes these handmade chocolates so exceptionally good? “We don’t use any wax or preservatives. It’s all fresh, local ingredients. And a little bit of love goes in each one. They’re all made completely by hand,” says Kathleen O’Hehir-Johnson, who makes 1,500 truffles a day. Just Truffles are kosher certified and most flavors are gluten-free. On the clubs and suites menu, though—made just for the stadium—are cannolis dripped in chocolate and filled with caramel or Bailey’s ganache and individual tarts topped with caramel ganache and sprinkled with sea salt.

Thomasina Petrus is first and foremost a singer and an actress—her **Thomasina’s Cashew Brittle** is just something she happened to be good at making, and people demanded she keep at it. Using only the simplest ingredients—not corn syrup or baking soda, which can make brittle hard—Petrus’ melt-in-your-mouth candy is sinfully delicious. Petrus, who calls herself “a total product of this city,” graduated from North High School and has been a union actor for more than 25 years in the Twin Cities. Her cashew brittle has been at the Minnesota State Fair for 10 years, and now her 4.5-ounce bags are being served in clubs, and 1-pound and 2-pound boxes in the suites. “Food is like music and entertainment. It brings people together,” she

says. “Good food creates good memories.”

Popcorn and nuts are a staple in any stadium. But Kiki Louise’s **Bohemian Kettle** sweet and salty snacks won’t be like anything you’ve tasted. Her sumac popcorn is completely unique to Minnesota. “Some people say they don’t know what sumac is, but they know what sumac is because, when you’re driving down the highway, it’s the really beautiful bushes that turn this crimson color in the fall,” says Louise, who used to lick the stems of sumac as a girl scout. “It’s got this tangy lemon flavor. It’s the strangest flavor in the world.” Louise’s uniquely flavored “cheffed-up” popcorn and nuts (peanuts, almonds and cashews) are meant to go well with beers and drinks in the clubs and suites. All of her flavors

of nuts and popcorn come with a quirky title and one-liner that pays homage to her relatives. There’s the smoked sea salt popcorn that “tastes like a campfire” called Ol’ Smokey’s Smoked Popcorn (Always puffing on a stogie, he stunk to high heaven) and MN Hot Dish-flavored popcorn dubbed “Aunt Tillie’s Hot Dish” (She’d wear black, white gloves and pearls to go downtown shopping. What a dish!). “It makes for a conversation starter,” she says. “Maybe people will talk about their goofy family.”

Q: *What's one thing about the stadium you think will pleasantly surprise planners and attendees?*

A: *“The food! From Minnesota-theme options like gourmet brats to southern fried chicken with all the accoutrements, the variety of offerings we have is unmatched. Guests and planners are able to choose from their favorite stadium cuisine to gourmet options, customizing menus specific to their event.”*

—TOYYA LASSERE,
guest experience manager

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JUST TRUFFLES | justtruffles.com

THOMASINA'S CASHEW BRITTLE | thomasinacashewbrittle.com
T-REX COOKIE | trexcookie.com

PHOTOS: MINNESOTA VIKINGS, TJ TURNER; ARAMARK, RACHEL NADEAU.

TOP TECH

U.S. Bank Stadium sets the standard for large facility innovation. **BY BOBBY HART**

FOR Tony Mulder, there's pride that goes beyond his company's work on U.S. Bank Stadium's 25,000 square feet of high-definition LED displays—the highest quantity and quality of any stadium in the NFL—including 13 HD video and ribbon boards.

Mulder, who has been with Daktronics for 20 years and currently serves as regional sports manager, has family roots in Minnesota and has been a Minnesota sports fan his entire life. "Getting to interface with the team I grew up revering has been something I could never have imagined growing up," says Mulder, who has been in charge of the U.S. Bank Stadium project costing, proposal development and contract execution for Daktronics, a South Dakota-based company that has produced U.S. Bank Stadium's top-notch technological equipment in its newly expanded plant in Redwood Falls, Minn.

That's not a coincidence. Creating local work was an important point of emphasis for the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA), so when Daktronics pitched its role in the project, it proposed an expansion of its Redwood Falls plant by 30,000 square feet and 100 extra jobs. That helped, but the local angle

wasn't the only card in the company's hand.

"Daktronics is also the only company that can provide all the relevant pieces: scoring, timing, displays and display control into a truly integrated system," Mulder explains. "Most of our industry competition evolved from manufacturers to brokers, and purchase pieces from multiple companies in order to try to have a complete system. These pieces can include everything from the scoring, display control, video processing and even the LED displays themselves. Daktronics is the only company in the industry that manufactures all those pieces into a truly integrated system."

There is no shortage of opportunities for visual stimulation at the stadium. Two large videoboards—55 feet high by 95 feet wide and 80 feet high by 120 feet wide—placed above each end zone, are the main attraction for not only Vikings games, but also events. The west board, the larger of the two, measures 8,160 square feet, the 10th largest in an NFL stadium. But the boards' placement at approximately 10 feet above the main concourse, lower and in a superior sightline than a giant center-hung board, is what stands out, so to speak, allowing fans and event attendees a visual sweet spot from just about anywhere without draw-

"From a meetings standpoint, we had a corporate client in here that has a big annual meeting and they were talking about using the scoreboards for PowerPoints. They can be used for graduations or trade shows; we have the technology to support all those kinds of things." —DAVID KINGSBURY, director of IT



ing attention too far away from the field. Also contributing to that cause are two levels of ribbon boards that wrap around the stadium, 15 large high-definition video walls and 2,000 4K televisions placed throughout.

"From a meetings standpoint, we had a corporate client in here that has a big annual meeting and they were talking about using the scoreboards for PowerPoints," says David Kingsbury, the stadium's director of IT. "They can be used for graduations or trade shows; we have the technology to support all those kinds of things. The two big scoreboards are actually pretty close to 4K resolution. Those two look awesome."

And don't forget about the two exterior boards on the west side. The 160-foot-long Vikings Legacy Ship features a 2,000-square-foot LED videoboard as its 55-foot-tall sail, and the prow videoboard is even larger at 2,700 square feet.

All these screens are controlled in a state-of-the-art the control room. "I think the video production control room is amazing," says Curtis Schmillen, P.E., the stadium's director of operations. "It can control the scoreboards, ribbon boards and each television in the building with a separate feed. We have the capabili-



PHOTOS: MINNESOTA VIKINGS, RACHEL NADEAU, JOEL SCHNELL

BY THE NUMBERS

- 1.7 MILLION WATTS OF LIGHTING
- 2,000 4K TELEVISIONS
- 1,300 WI-FI HOT SPOTS
- 400 WIRELESS 2-WAY COMMUNICATION RADIOS
- 15 LARGE HIGH-DEFINITION VIDEO WALLS
- 4K RESOLUTION IN-HOUSE CAMERAS
- 2 GIANT ENDZONE VIDEOBOARDS
- 2 2,000-PLUS-SQUARE-FOOT EXTERIOR LED DISPLAYS
- 2 APPS: U.S. BANK STADIUM APP AND MINNESOTA VIKINGS APP



ties to run scrolling pictures as a feed to some of the TVs in a club, while using local input to a videoboard for a presentation, at the same time having a company's logo on other TVs to create a highly customizable and interactive experience for guests."

The stadium has an Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) system, meaning each TV can have a unique input and output. "You are not limited to a defined stream of cable or satellite feeds," Schmillen says. "It acts more like a computer monitor that displays the information sent to it. It can be a traditional cable network feed, or it can be a static message board, or it can be part of a presentation. The video control room is the hub of this system and controls and distributes the content throughout the building. Plus it just looks cool with all the monitors and gadgets in the space."

U.S. Bank Stadium brings new meaning to the term *hot spot*. With 1,300 Wi-Fi access points mounted on ceilings, walls and handrails, *scorching hub* is probably more appropriate. The distributed antenna system (DAS) installed by Verizon Wireless is considered carrier neutral, so all four of the major wireless carriers (Verizon, AT&T, Sprint and T-Mobile) have solid connectivity.

"The cell phone coverage and Wi-Fi capacity are amazing in the building and even around the exterior perimeter," Schmillen says. "Many meeting places have pretty good Wi-Fi coverage since most have upgraded their systems over the last few years. But many have poor cell coverage, especially if you get deeper into the building. Or, if they do have good coverage, it is just Verizon or just AT&T because that vendor put their equipment in under an exclusivity agreement with the site. Our system is vendor neutral, so guests will be able to get access to the system no matter what provider they have."

Additional antennas are positioned throughout the stadium for two-way radio communication—about 400 wireless radios are available for event staff.

Feeding off the Wi-Fi will be both a U.S. Bank Stadium app (for events) and Minnesota Vikings app (for games) for Apple iOS and Google Android. They will allow for seamless navigation to the stadium, parking spots and even seats.

Although there's plenty of natural light, thanks to the ETFE roof, there's also 1.7

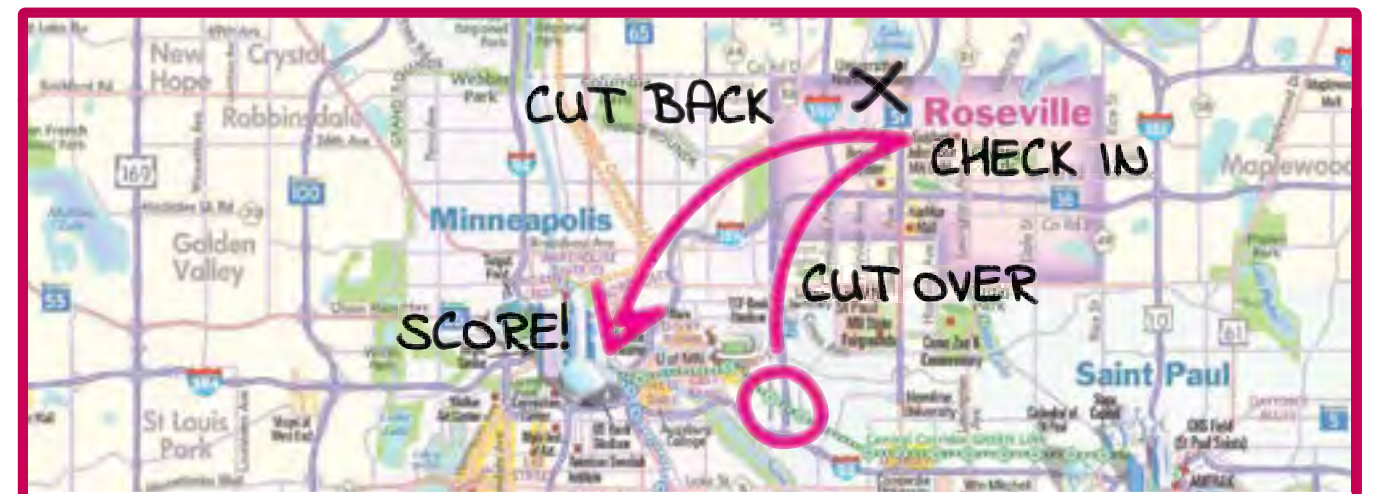
million watts of sports lighting, ideal for the 4K house cameras in the stadium. U.S. Bank Stadium is the first stadium in the NFL to be built with an advanced LED lighting system (though others have been retrofitted with it), which is estimated to reduce installation loads by 37 percent while using 75 percent less energy than traditional lights.

Whether it's the lights, Wi-Fi or videoboard, there are so many technological innovations within the new stadium that "you could go through it 10 times and still find new things," Mulder says. "There really isn't a stadium that compares today. The most rewarding part personally is going to be taking my family to an event and getting to show what I have been fortunate enough to be a part of." ■

"The cell phone coverage and Wi-Fi capacity are amazing in the building and even around the exterior perimeter."

—CURTIS SCHMILLEN, P.E., director of operations

PHOTOS: MINNESOTA VIKINGS, CASIE BELDO.



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A MASSIVE MODERN MASTERPIECE

The many hours of construction and design labor that went into U.S. Bank Stadium culminated in a work of art. BY BOBBY HART

TO simply call U.S. Bank Stadium the largest public-private construction project in state history is accurate, though it doesn't put things in proper perspective. Even an exterior critique of the 1.75-million-square-foot facility doesn't quite do it justice, considering a third of the building is below ground.

To truly appreciate it, you have to see it through the eyes of Leo Pidde, the stadium's facility manager who also worked at the Metrodome for nearly three decades. Same site. Different world.

"I don't know if you want to compare it to the Metrodome—it doesn't really compare," warns Pidde, who was manager of building services at the 900,000-square-foot dome, which could fit inside the new structure with room to spare. "This building is on steroids compared to the old building. When we walk into the concourse on the east side, it's 80 feet

wide. The Metrodome's was 24 feet wide. The average of the main concourse as you walk around is about 40 to 50 feet wide."

BUILT BY THE BEST

The stadium, designed to seat 66,400 and expand to 72,000 for special occasions such as the upcoming 2018 Super Bowl, is made of over 100,000 cubic yards of concrete supported by nearly 18,000 tons of structural steel.

The massive size of the stadium is impressive in itself, but perhaps the more shocking feat is that it was constructed in two and a half years, six weeks ahead of schedule. The stadium's construction manager, Mortenson—the same locally-based construction company that built the Target Center, Xcel Energy Center, TCF Stadium and Target Field—used 4-D technology to plan the construction and stay on schedule, building the stadium virtually in 3-D and adding the dimension of time to project any scheduling challenges.

And the only thing that could keep such a challenging schedule

on track was a team of talented, tireless workers. "I think the best of Minnesota's construction capability has been on show on this project," says John Wood, Mortenson's senior vice president. "[We completed] the project in just over [two and a half years], one of the shortest durations for an NFL stadium, and for that to be done through working through two difficult Minnesota winters just sort of adds to the achievement."

From the groundbreaking on Dec. 3, 2013 until Mortenson turned the keys over to the MSFA June 17, 2016, more than 8,000 workers worked approximately 3.8 million hours on the project, with as many as roughly 1,500 workers on-site at one time.

Of all the companies that worked on the stadium, 90 percent (roughly 315) were based in Minnesota, and more than 20 Minnesota companies or individuals were brought on as design subcontractors in areas such as interior and exterior design, landscaping and structural engineering.

Approximately 240 ironworkers from Danny's Construction, LeJeune Steel Company and Iron Workers Local 512 worked 240,000 hours on the roof's steel. Other Minnesota contractors included Bald Eagle Erectors, E&J Rebar, Woody's Rebar, InterClad, Viracon, Local 535, Gopher Stage and Lighting. Minnesota-based Viracon produced all the glass.

Beyond creating local jobs, the project not only met, but surpassed aggressive equity hiring goals for women and minorities. "So far, I think that's the most rewarding piece of this project," says Michele Kelm-Helgen, chair of the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA), on creating work for local companies, minorities and women. Minority- and women-owned businesses accounted for 28 percent of the work, 8 percent more than the goal, while minorities and women accounted for 45 percent of the workforce, surpassing the goal by 7 percent.

SHIP-TOP SHAPE

Through nothing short of a herculean effort, construction staff shaped U.S. Bank Stadium. But into what shape, exactly? A shard of ice? A ship? "These are things that can't be interpreted literally into the design," admits Bryan Trubey, executive vice president, director of sports and entertainment at HKS Architects. "They influenced the design but are interpreted in abstract form, so when people say it looks like a Vikings ship or it looks like a shard of ice or it looks like this or that, those for us all prove that we've developed a form that people liken to other things in that region and in that place. Those things heavily influenced us."

When drawing up the plans for the stadium, HKS took into account many factors, including the local geography, history and anthropology.



PHOTOS: MINNESOTA VIKINGS.



Every angle and material has a purpose.

“There are really no two sections of the building that are the same because of the shape and angles and how they hung the lights is even different,” says Pidde. “There are a lot of straight walls, but they’re very, very short. Just as you see them on the outside of the building, they sort of mirror them inside with the angles and plains.”

The stadium has seven levels, including two general admission 360-degree concourses connected via 35 escalators, 14 elevators, stairs and a continuous ramp.

The structure of the building is all built around one key focal point, a 989-foot-long single-ridge steel truss that runs the length of the building and provides the primary support for the roof. That super truss climatically protrudes to the stadium’s highest point at about 270 feet from ground level and 313 feet above the field (or approximately 30 stories), known to the construction crew as the “prow.”

HKS pitched this single-truss design not only for the modern look, but also for maximum functionality. “We developed a roof form that likened the same roof forms of traditional structures built in this climate for thousands of years in steeply pitched single-ridge roof lines,” Trubey says. “It’s one of the things that gives it a very aggressive and progressive look, but then we also tilted the ridge line so the roof floats away from the ridge line but the front of it facing downtown is much higher than the part facing east. It’s just one of the different mechanisms we used to take that traditional roof framing concept, which is really more residential and meeting hall scaled, to a monumental scale, but have it look appropriate for the building and have it be a big part of the beautiful form of the building.”

CLEAR FLEXIBILITY

Transparency plays a vital role in the stadium’s design. The largest ethylene tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE)—a lightweight, durable, self-cleaning and transparent material—roof in the nation combined with 200,000 square feet of glass throughout the building, including 20 feet of clerestory glass below the roof to give it the floating effect, provide an outdoor feel in a climate-controlled environment. Triple-layer ETFE panels, which are pumped full of air and measure 10 feet by 300 feet, account for 60 percent of the roof, while the other 40 percent is metal deck and membrane roofing. Zinc covers the exterior, giving it the smooth, dark tone, which may subtly change over time, depending on weather. And when the heavy snow inevitably hits, diverters along with 40-to-50-foot-deep gutters that run the radius of the roof about 100 to 120 feet above ground await with a snow-melt system of cross-linked polyethylene (PEX) pipe designed by Uponor Inc. of Apple Valley.

Contributing largely to the transparency and the outdoor atmosphere on the west end of the building are the world’s largest pivoting glass doors made of 60,000 square feet of glass (2,000 pieces). Five of them stand from 75 to 95 feet tall, the largest measuring 50 feet wide and weighing 57,000 pounds, and they sure can move. It takes five to 10 minutes to open them with a hydraulic system, and they can open individually or simultaneously.

The doors open onto Medtronic Plaza, The Commons—4.2 acres of green space—and the Light Rail Transit station. “That whole space really lets events spill out into this outdoor area and have all this space for people to come and enjoy before events, after events and as a part of events,” Kelm-Helgen says.

Another large moveable feature will add to the space design and functionality: Nearly 6,000 retractable seats making up 34 rows on the north side allow for another 40,000 square feet of floor space that can be used for extra event space or even baseball games. “We worked with the retractable seating vendor [Irwin Seating Company] to make sure when retracted it took up the least amount of space as possible to maximize usable floor space,” says Curtis Schmillen, P.E., the stadium’s director of operations. “This also creates a space where a dinner or reception can be set up, but the field can be left open if guests wanted to play on the field as part of the event.”

Instead of being installed directly into concrete, U.S. Bank Stadium’s seats were installed on a rail system that allows the flexibility to remove them or move them closer together to allow for additional seating. This will come in handy for the 2018 Super Bowl and other major events when approximately 8,000 seats can be added.

“There’s more of everything,” says Pidde, marveling at the new world that surrounds him. “This is monstrous. I can’t get over how large it is.” ■

PHOTOS: MINNESOTA VIKINGS.





TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

May 14, 2013 MSFA, the Vikings, HKS and Mortenson Construction reveal the new stadium's design.

Dec. 27, 2013 One of three EarthCam cameras is installed, documenting the progress of construction 24/7.

Jan. 18, 2014 Demolition of the Metrodome officially begins, making room for U.S. Bank Stadium.

April 11, 2014 The first horizontal concrete is poured; the 277-cubic-yard deck will form the ceiling (or "lid") of the stadium's loading dock.

April 17, 2014 All 850,000 total cubic yards of soil from the Metrodome demolition is removed.

April 30, 2014 The 7,500-square-foot stadium Preview Center opens to the public.

May 16, 2014 33 tons of structural steel for the roof truss foundation are placed on-site.

June 14, 2014 METRO Green Line opens, connecting St. Paul to the stadium via light rail.

July 11, 2014 The Terex CC6800 crawler crane, the third largest crane in the world at 400 feet high, is assembled after 11 days; it is on-site for 15 months.

Aug. 22, 2014 The Vikings and MSFA select SMG as the new stadium operator.

Sept. 12, 2014 The second piece of structural steel that makes up the stadium's west "prow" is placed on-site.

Sept. 30, 2014 *23% complete*

Oct. 16, 2014 The first precast stadium concrete is installed, continuing through January 2016.

Oct. 31, 2014 Installation of the ring beam, which will support the roof trusses, begins.

Nov. 18, 2014 The largest piece of steel ridge truss, weighing 700,000 pounds, is placed.

Nov. 21, 2014 *28% complete*

Dec. 1, 2014 Bud Grant Way—the former Carew Drive—is unveiled.

March 20, 2015 The steel columns for the five pivoting glass doors (which reach 95 feet) are placed on-site.

March 25, 2015 The first of about 8,500 glass units that make up the exterior is installed.

March 26, 2015 The Legacy Brick Program is announced; granite pavers are engraved with personalized messages, appearing in Medtronic Plaza.

Feb. 5, 2015 The third of 11 queen's trusses is placed.

May 26, 2015 Final concrete columns poured, "topping out" at more than 17,500 cubic yards of concrete and 1,200 columns.

June 12, 2015 The installation of 245,000 square feet of ETFE on the roof begins.

July 20, 2015 *65% complete*

July 21, 2015 The U.S. Bank Stadium exterior signage is installed

Aug. 10, 2015 All 11 queens post trusses are installed.

Aug. 14, 2015 The five operable doors for the west side entrance are set for installation.

Aug. 18, 2015 The first of the purple stadium seats are installed.

Sept. 9, 2015 The Terex CC6800 crawler crane is hauled off-site.

Sept. 17, 2015 The last steel beam is placed; construction workers celebrate with a "topping off" party.

Oct. 9, 2015 *75% complete*

Nov. 13, 2015 ETFE panel installation is finished and the stadium is fully enclosed.

Nov. 20, 2015 *80% complete*

Dec. 2, 2015 Scoreboard and ribbon board installation begins.

Dec. 17, 2015 *85% complete*

Jan. 22, 2016 The Minnesota-made 13 HD LED video boards are completely installed.

Feb. 19, 2016 *90% complete*

March 25, 2016 Metallica tickets sell out in less than 10 minutes for the Aug. 20, 2016 grand opening concert.

March 29, 2016 The stadium bowl seating is completely installed.

April 15, 2016 *95% complete*

April 28, 2016 The exterior west prow videoboard is installed.

May 10, 2016 Field turf installation begins.

June 17, 2016 Construction is "substantially complete" six weeks ahead of schedule; Mortenson Construction symbolically hands the stadium's keys to MSFA and Minnesota Vikings.

July 22, 2016 The official ribbon cutting and grand opening ceremony takes place.

Aug. 3, 2016 The stadium holds its first sporting event: AC Milan vs. Chelsea F.C. as part of the 2016 International Champions Cup.

Aug. 19, 2016 The first stadium concert is performed for a sold-out crowd by Luke Bryan, followed by Metallica on August 20, 2016.

Aug. 28, 2016 The Vikings play for the first time in the stadium, a preseason game against the San Diego Chargers (23-10, Vikings).

Sept. 18, 2016 The Vikings play their first regular season home game against the Green Bay Packers (17-14, Vikings) with an all-time home attendance record of 66,813.

BY THE NUMBERS

Old vs. New

SEE HOW THE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY METRODOME STACKS UP AGAINST U.S. BANK STADIUM.

By Morgan Halaska

Okay, we admit it's unfair to pit the Metrodome against U.S. Bank Stadium; that's like matching up a freshman team versus varsity. But looking beyond the point that, yes, U.S. Bank Stadium is indeed larger than its predecessor, the comparison illustrates a paradigm shift of sorts. It's a testament to not only how the times have changed, but also indicates where we now place our values. There's a focus on the foodie culture, a concerted effort to be green, and an increase in the quality and comfort of the public's stadium experience.

	METRODOME	U.S. BANK STADIUM
YEAR OPENED:	1982	2016
COST TO BUILD:	\$55 Million	\$1.1 Billion
STADIUM SQUARE FOOTAGE:	900,000	1,750,000
SEATING/CLUB/SUITE LEVELS:	3	6
TOTAL SEATING CAPACITY:	64,000	66,400 (EXPANDABLE TO 72,000)
CLUB SEATS:	243	8,200
CLUB LOUNGES:	1	7
SUITES:	87	131
WHEELCHAIR & COMPANION SEATS:	190	690
VIKINGS HALL OF LEGENDS:	0	1
TEAM RETAIL STORES:	0	2
CONCOURSE WIDTH:	24 FEET (AVERAGE)	32-50 FEET
RESTROOM FIXTURES:	435	979
GENERAL CONCESSION POINTS OF SALE:	313 (231 FIXED)	430 (336 FIXED)
VIDEOBOARDS/TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE:	2/646	2/12,560
HI-DEFINITION TVS:	280	2,000
LED LIGHTING:	NO	YES
WIRELESS INTERNET:	NO	YES
ELEVATORS:	3	11
ESCALATORS:	0	33
INTERIOR PEDESTRIAN RAMP:	0	1
PREMIUM PARKING SPACES:	546	2,500

Notable Figures

U.S. Bank Stadium is almost double the size of the Metrodome.

The new videoboard is 13 times larger than the Metrodome's.

U.S. Bank Stadium is about 30 stories tall at its highest point.

PHOTOS: U.S. BANK STADIUM, MINNESOTA VIKINGS, RACHEL NADEAU.



WELCOME TO EVENT PARADISE

U.S. Bank Stadium is touted as a multipurpose facility—that’s because in addition to sporting events, it has the versatile spaces to host everything from trade shows to monthly meetings.

By Morgan Halaska

Seven to 70,000 people is a range meeting and event planners love to hear. What that range means is flexibility, which leads to possibility.

“We are truly unique in that the facility was designed to host almost any type of function,” says Jerry Goldman, assistant general manager, U.S. Bank Stadium. “I think event planners and attendees will be pleasantly surprised by the diversity and the versatility of all the different usable spaces in the stadium.”

And while U.S. Bank Stadium is the official home of the Vikings, games only account for approximately 10 days a year. But the stadium won’t be collecting dust in the offseason. It’s going to be energized with people who are meeting, celebrating, dancing, doing business and networking.



The Clubs

Each of the six clubs have a distinct design and features that make for a perfect fit—depending on what a group is looking for. “As I talk to any client that’s interested in coming into the building, it’s always apparent which club is going to work best for them just by finding out their capacity, finding out the type of event they want, the type of feel they want,” says Danielle Ottman, sales manager, U.S. Bank Stadium.

► Hyundai Club

Capacity: 1,400 gameday; 370 banquet-style; 350 theater-style
20,000 square feet

Running between the two 30-yard lines on the north side’s lower club level, The Hyundai Club is the stadium’s largest club. Two walls of windows overlook the field (windows can be closed or open) on one side and Minneapolis’ Mill District on the other, creating an open environment. Guests can have a seat at the padded purple booths that wrap around the space’s pillars or on barstools at high top tables. Two bars are situated near the field, while a third portable bar can also be used. The LED lighting, which highlights the wavy ceiling design, can be changed to any desired color.

On top of the HD TVs throughout, the Hyundai Club features a 12-foot-by-7-foot-screen video wall as well as a built-in projector and a drop-down screen. With its own street level entrance and additional prefunction space, this club is ideally suited for large events. “We’re doing a lot of galas in here, a lot of big meetings and other receptions and events,” says Ottman.



PHOTOS: RACHEL WADEAU; (OPPOSITE) MINNESOTA VIKINGS; TATE CARLSON



▲ Delta Sky360 Club

Capacity: 1,100 gameday; 320 banquet-style; 350 theater-style
16,500 square feet

If you’ve experienced the adrenaline-pumping welcome into the Vikings Preview Center, you’ve already got a sense of what gameday might be like from Delta Sky360 Club’s vantage point on the south side of the stadium. Completely even with the playing field, guests can walk right out onto the gridiron (but not during games) or be close enough to high five players as they run from the locker room to the field. The Delta Sky360 Club takes the sports bar concept to an entirely new level, quite literally, and that’s not to mention it being in the same vicinity as the locker room and interview room, which features glass windows that can be opaque or transparent and can fit 85 people theater-style. Located directly underneath the stadium bowl, the club’s industrial vibe features panels of LED lighting that roller coasters through the ceiling and a mix of seating including comfortable sofa seating and high top tables.

In addition to the interview room, there’s a selection of multi-functional breakout space—like the visitor’s locker room, media dining room and Vikings family room—on the same level. “The Delta Sky360 Club has been extremely popular for people who want to have a general session and luncheon in the Delta Club and then break out to smaller meeting rooms to follow for the afternoon,” says Ottman, who’s been able to mix and match spaces to each group’s needs. “I have a group that’s coming [into the Delta Sky360 Club] with about 800 people.” However, Ottman points out that’s a tight fit for a presentation in this space. “So what we’re doing is we’re utilizing stadium seating. ... There’s a staircase leading directly into the stadium seating which falls at about the 50-yard line. And so we can have the meeting attendees sit in the seats, the presenter can be on the field speaking to that group and then when the presentation is over, they can go directly down the stairs to the Delta Club for a reception to follow,” explains Ottman.



▲ Mystic Lake's Club Purple

Capacity: 750 gameday; 310 seated; 110 theater-style
Club: 10,500 square feet; patio: 7,000 square feet

Contemporary and midpriced, Mystic Lake's Club Purple—which sits on the upper suite level of the facility's west side—is proving to be one of the more popular event spaces in U.S. Bank Stadium. It's no coincidence either that it's the only club with an outdoor patio (complete with a fire pit); the glass' reflection of the downtown skyline will have attendees pulling out their cameras to capture the city's newest unique view. On the opposite side, a full wall of windows boast an aerial view of the field, and the garage-door-style windows can be opened or closed depending on the objective of the event. Mystic Lake's Club Purple extends beyond into the stadium bowl, with purple L-shaped couches that seat between six and 10 people and can be used as a prefunction space. "I love that you can watch an event from the comfort of a couch or move outside onto an enormous patio overlooking Medtronic Plaza and The Commons," says Goldman.

Eight-foot-by-4.5-foot-screen video walls and a track of TVs every 10 feet fill in the gaps of the club around the large center bar.



Buffalo Wild Wings Club

Capacity: 650 gameday; 140 banquet-style; 100 theater-style
9,500 square feet

As the sister club to the FMP Club for its similarity in size and shape, the Buffalo Wild Wings Club is the smallest club of the six. The difference in square footage is due to its large center bar. Like the FMP Club, Buffalo Wild Wings Club features three floor-to-ceiling video walls, but unlike its sister club, there is a view overlooking the north main concourse and Minneapolis' Mill District neighborhood. The space can be booked for 50 people or more, but also used in conjunction with another club. "I have [a group] that's doing a large dinner in the Hyundai Club but they're having a silent auction beforehand with a reception [in the Buffalo Wild Wings Club]," notes Ottman.

PHOTOS: MINNESOTA VIKINGS; TATE CARLSON; STEVEN BERGERSON PHOTOGRAPHY

FUN FACT:

Cambria quartz surfaces were installed throughout the six clubs and 131 suites, accounting for 18,000 square feet of surfaces ranging from countertops, bars and banquets. There are 12 custom designs ranging in colors from deep purple and gold to marbling applications. cambriausa.com



USBS BY THE NUMBERS

241,000 SQUARE FEET OF EVENT SPACE (FIELD AND MAIN CONCOURSE)

7-70,000 PEOPLE CAN BE ACCOMMODATED FOR MEETINGS/EVENTS

33 ESCALATORS

11 ELEVATORS

6 CLUBS THAT TOTAL **80,000** SQUARE FEET

5 DISTINCT ENTRIES

▲ Medtronic Club

Capacity: 850 gameday; 150 banquet-style (on first floor); 70 theater-style
11,500 square feet

While the Medtronic Club is located directly above the Delta Sky360 Club on the lower club level—separated by one escalator—it couldn't be more different in terms of ambiance. "It doesn't scream football," sums up Ottman. The two-story club is distinctly upscale executive, with its neutral color palate and natural elements like its Cambria quartz surfaces, wood beams that line the ceiling and stone pillars—two of which have fireplaces. "It's a really nice mingling space. And having the second floor [with a built-in bar] is very nice as well if people want some kind of prefunction area," says Ottman.

A Mongolian grill-style cook top, a permanent feature to the space, can also be used during events, as well as a 16-foot-by-9-foot-screen video wall above the bar that's visible on both the first and second level. And even though there are no field views from the enclosed club, there are several staircases that lead out into the stadium bowl so guests can take a couple snapshots.

There are options upon options for clients finding the right combination of clubs. "What some people are doing is having their meeting in the Delta Sky360 Club and then coming up to the Medtronic Club afterwards for appetizers and drinks," says Ottman.



FMP Club

Capacity: 800 gameday; 320 banquet-style; 160 theater-style
11,600 square feet

Located on the south side of the stadium on the upper club level, above the Delta Sky360 Club and Medtronic Club, the FMP Club can be used alone or in combination with these two clubs since all three are easily accessible to each other via escalators. "What we've been doing for some larger events is booking all three clubs and just moving back and forth between them," Ottman says. Rectangular in size, the club features three floor-to-ceiling video walls as well as windows that look out onto 6th Street and the concourse. There are no views of the field inside the club, but there are multiple entrances leading directly to seating areas in the stadium bowl.



MAIN CONCOURSE



THE COMMONS

The 4.2-acre outdoor plaza, which extends across Chicago Avenue, is prime outdoor space in the heart of East Town. It can be used in conjunction with stadium space rentals or rented independently; booths, a small stage or food trucks can be set up when weather permits. Capacity is flexible depending on the event type.

commonsmpls.com

Unique Spaces

The Field

“It’s not very often that people get the opportunity to stand on the field where a Super Bowl is going to take place,” says Ottman. And if the sun is shining, because of the transparent roof, you might even find yourself with sunglasses on while in the company of the Vikings’ Norseman logo in the center of the field.

The stadium floor can accommodate banquet tables for up to 5,600 people directly on the turf or on top of a metallic interlocking system that resembles concrete. Stages and dance floors can be set up for galas or concerts, and the field can also be arranged in either football (99,000 square feet) or baseball (126,000 square feet) configuration for a trade show. One side of the field can be set for dinner while activities can be arranged on the other side. Audio-visual services come with the territory, with the two giant Daktronics displays on each side of the end zones and 3,300 feet of LED ribbon boards, not to mention an audio system with concert-level sound quality.



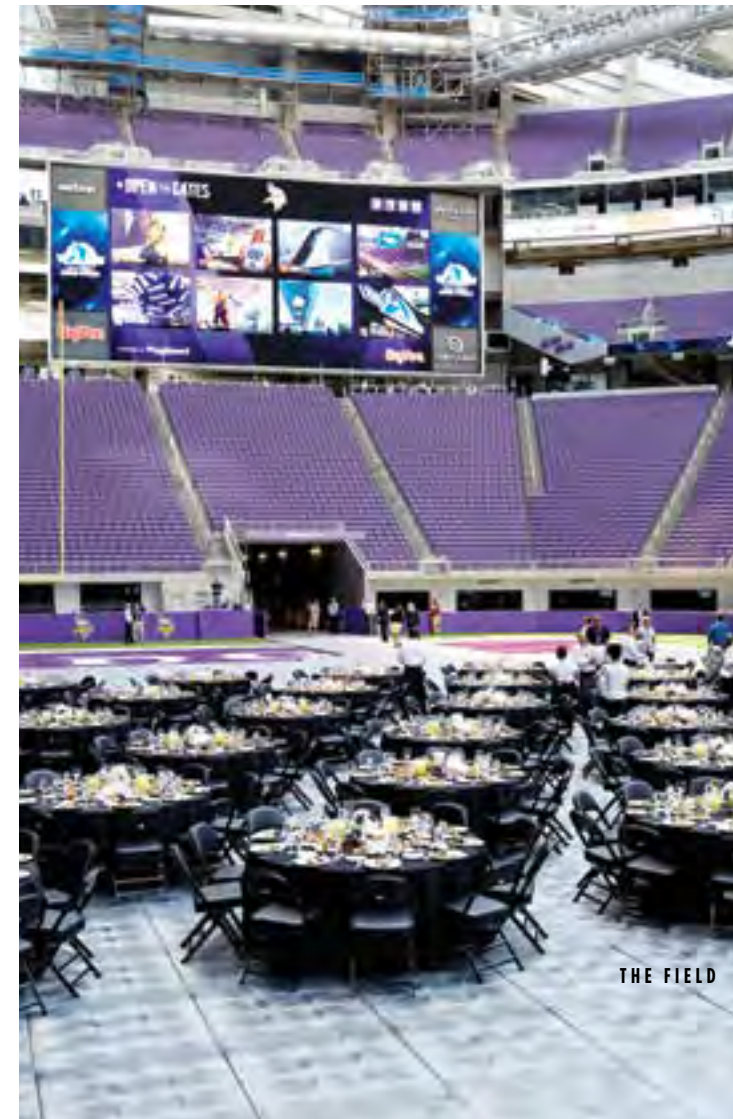
Main Concourse

“I love the north concourse,” says Ottman. “It’s wide, it’s open, it’s airy. It’s got a full wall of windows.” This space has proven to be perfect for about 50 trade show booths, and groups can migrate to another club for a meal. The west concourse behind the glass is suitable for events as well, and the entire concourse can hold about 300 booths for a trade show. With bars and TVs throughout, the main concourse can also be dressed up with standing tables for prefunction space.

Medtronic Plaza

As epic as U.S. Bank Stadium is on the inside, the exterior is a sight to behold in and of itself. The Medtronic Plaza—on the stadium’s west side, where the five massive glass doors open—is not an area to breeze by, either. At the cusp of the plaza outside the Legacy Gate entrance is The Horn, the spiral sculpture resembling the Gjallarhorn. The Legacy Ship, on the corner of 6th Street and Chicago Avenue, boasts a custom-built 2,000-square-foot curved LED board as its sail and stands 160 feet long and 43 feet above street level. Constructed from more than 14,000 Legacy Bricks, the ship is a true testament to the loyalty of Vikings fans.

PHOTOS: MINNESOTA VIKINGS; TATE CARLSON; JOEL SCHNELL; STEVEN BERGERSON PHOTOGRAPHY



THE FIELD



Booking

The thing Ottman has found to be pleasantly surprising to clients looking to book a meeting or event is the price. “Everybody assumes we will be too expensive for them,” she says, explaining that careful planning went into the pricing structure. “Knowing how many corporations we have in the Twin Cities, we want them to have the ability to host multiple events per year.”

A standard rental is four hours. For two-hour meetings in the Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. time frame, discounted rates at up to 60 percent of the normal price are available. In those cases, boxed lunches or continental breakfasts are available for as low as \$15 a head. “It’s been very popular for people having breakfast meetings or lunch meetings and tacking on tours with those,” adds Ottman, who notes that about 75 percent of groups who book a club will also schedule time for a tour. Tours run for about 60 minutes, can be customized to each group and offered at a reduced rate from public tour pricing.

If, for instance, clients are using multiple spaces, then a customized pricing structure will be applied by taking the base rental rates of each club and other expenses. “You don’t need to be all inclusive for all the spaces because you’ll utilize some of the same staff-



“Everybody assumes we will be too expensive for them. Knowing how many corporations we have in the Twin Cities, we want them to have the ability to host multiple events per year.”

— DANIELLE OTTMAN,
sales manager

ing,” explains Ottman. “We’ll work with the customer to make sure they’re paying a fair price.” When it makes sense, all-inclusive rates are an option, covering operating expenses in the form of ushers, security and housekeeping. “We’re not going to nickel and dime people,” Ottman asserts. Indeed; 501(c)(3) organizations get a 15 percent discount on rental rates.

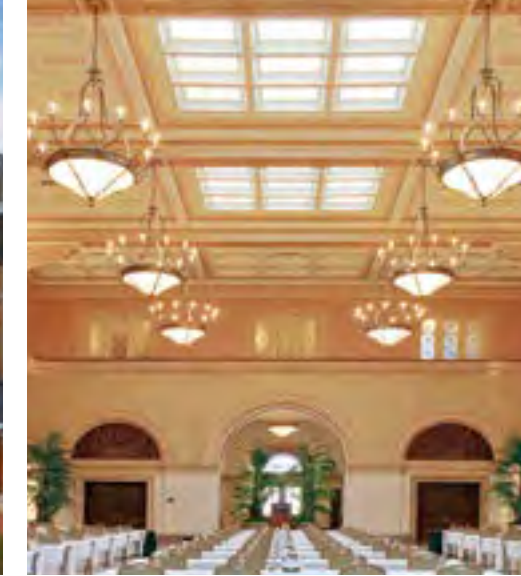
The Logistics

Once the contract is signed, the Event Operations Team at U.S. Bank Stadium is clients’ go-to resource for ensuring a seamless group function. The team works out all the logistics, from room layout, to getting people into the space quickly and safely, to setting up vendor load-in schedules. Staff is on hand

to make recommendations in terms of space usage and available amenities, bringing planners’ visions to life.

While the stadium isn’t a convention center or hotel, it does have a similar capacity in terms of space, furniture and décor for any function. Tables, chairs, podiums and basic linens are available for use in all clubs.

And with 2,000 TVs throughout the stadium, each club certainly has many of its own flat-screen HD TVs. “Each club is outfitted with A/V capabilities, whether that is a projector and screen, video walls, or floor-to-ceiling projection walls,” says Ottman. “Clients can run their PowerPoints on any of these options, while also utilizing in-club TVs to display logos or looped, short videos.” Built-in audio-visual options in clubs range from wireless microphones, local inputs, touch screens to control audio and video walls and/or projections screens. █



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PHOTO: MINNESOTA VIKINGS



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Leading *the* Way

**FIVE CHAMPIONS OF THE STADIUM SHARE
THEIR TREASURED INSIGHT.**

By Bobby Hart

It was a long voyage with chapters of adventure and choppy waters, but thanks to the tireless leadership, vision and determination of five pioneers, U.S. Bank Stadium navigated its way to a successful opening.



The Chair
MICHELE
KELM-HELGEN
Chair, Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority

ever had was as chair of the school district out in Eastern Carver County, which was a rapidly growing district. Over 10 years as I was chair, we built three elementary schools, a middle school and a high school, so obviously on a much smaller scale.

Q: What's been most unique about this stadium experience for you as a part of your life and job?

A: I was appointed by the Governor and so my focus is the protection of the state's interest, yet everything we do has to be jointly agreed to by the Minnesota Vikings. I think it's

also probably one of the biggest challenges that we've had and I think we've certainly figured out a way to work together, which is really important. To balance the state's interest, which is what the Authority represents, along with the Vikings' interest, which clearly the team represents, and come to agreement and yet balance those various interests, I think that's probably the most unique aspect of the process and also the most challenging. The fact that we were able to stay on schedule and keep the project on budget shows that the process we put in place, that the state legislation outlined through this Stadium Development Committee, has been very successful.

from 2010-2012, and was chief of staff for the Minnesota State Senate from 2006-2010.

Q: Have you ever worked on a project close to this magnitude before?

A: Certainly nothing of this size and scale from a construction standpoint. I've run a lot of big projects and divisions. I ran a division at Ceridian, I was also the chief of staff of the Minnesota State Senate. And of course as part of my job with the Minnesota State Senate and the Governor's office, I was involved in negotiating and putting together the state budget, which is \$34 billion, so considerably bigger than this project. But from a construction standpoint, the closest experience I

Every dollar. Every major decision. All things important to the U.S. Bank Stadium project has needed the approval of Michele Kelm-Helgen, chair of the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA) and one of four members (along with Mark Wilf, Don Becker and Ted Mondale) of the Stadium Development Committee.

Appointed as the MSFA chair by the Governor in June 2012, Kelm-Helgen oversaw the design and construction process for the stadium, as well as handling external communications with all stakeholders, the city and county, and of course the purple partners in the project, the Minnesota Vikings.

Prior to her role as MSFA's chair, Kelm-Helgen served as deputy chief of staff for legislative affairs for Governor Mark Dayton

Q: What's been the most rewarding part of seeing this project come to fruition?

A: The state had some very aggressive equity goals for both Minnesota minority and women workers (38 percent combined) on the project as well as Minnesota minority and women-owned businesses (20 percent). The fact that we've been able to meet and actually exceed those goals is nothing short of remarkable. The other piece is just seeing the Minnesota companies that are involved in the project. Over 90 percent of the work has stayed with Minnesota firms. That, to me, has been very important. Keeping all this work within the state was important. It has really made a big difference in those firms' business and communities.

Q: Any examples or stories you can share about the stadium stimulating the local economy?

A: Daktronics won the contract to do all the LED, scoreboards, videoboards, which are everywhere in and outside the stadium. It's a huge contract and a big piece of business. We didn't have Minnesota-headquartered companies that bid on this contract. Daktronics is headquartered in South Dakota. As a part of their bid, they said they have a large manufacturing plant in Redwood Falls, Minn. and said, "We'd manufacture the whole thing at our Redwood Falls plant. We'll expand the footprint of that plant by 30,000 square feet, we'll hire 100 extra workers and this will be permanent space and permanent jobs in this community." That to me is just a great story and sort of exemplifies some of the impact that this project has had. Before the stadium even opened, there was over \$1 billion in private construction happening all around the stadium. It really was Wells Fargo building those two office towers and then that large park that was a public-private partnership with the Authority, the City of Minneapolis, the Vikings, Ryan Development that started the development boom in East Town. It was an incredible feat to have that park come to

fruition, and along with that we have those two Wells Fargo office towers, which represent \$400 million in private economic development and 5,000 jobs and a lot of residential construction right around that park.

Q: Is there anything that sticks out to you that you think will knock the socks off event planners and their attendees?

A: [Mystic Lake's] Club Purple is a unique space never before seen in an NFL stadium. It's just a beautiful space. To top it off, it's got an outdoor deck that overlooks downtown with a fire pit and outdoor bars. There's not going to be anything quite like it in the Twin Cities. We have 32 rows of retractable seating on the field for baseball, but that space can also be used for floor shows and conventions. We can offer one of the largest floor areas for any of those events—that's also true for concerts. We hosted Luke Bryan and Metallica, and their sound engineers were very happy and the promoters want to come back again.

Q: Considering you have been so involved in this stadium project since the very beginning, do you have anything that stands out as a favorite space or feature of the stadium?

A: I think one thing that's really fun that we made sure we did is we've got two concourses that go 360 degrees around, and when we started the first year when I was chair, we went around the state and had listening sessions all over Minnesota and we asked people what they wanted to make sure was included in the stadium, and probably the biggest thing was rollerbladers, walkers, runners said, "We want to be able to use those concourses as we did at the Metrodome." The biggest difference is not only do you have the beautiful wide open concourses, they all have open views to the stadium bowl as well. So that's probably one of my favorite features because it's certainly something that the people seem to care a lot about.

Q: What's a major goal that you're shooting to accomplish within the first year of opening the stadium?

A: The Vikings have the stadium for their 10 games every year. The other 355 days are available for groups to rent, girls and boys soccer championships, high school football championships, and we'll run 24 hours a day

"Over 90 percent of the work has stayed with Minnesota firms. That, to me, has been very important. It has really made a big difference in those firms' business and communities."

—MICHELE KELM-HELGEN

baseball games for high schools and colleges for about five or six weeks so that these teams don't have to travel in the spring to get their home games in. So I think the multipurpose nature of the stadium is really important to demonstrate this first year. We successfully hosted two major concerts booked back to back. We had an international soccer game prior to those and many other events are scheduled. This showcases the uses and purposes of the stadium and this multipurpose venue is really important to the state.

PHOTO: MINNESOTA SPORTS FACILITIES AUTHORITY



The Viking LESTER BAGLEY

*Executive Vice President of Public Affairs
and Stadium Development, Minnesota Vikings*

Hard to argue with him on that. Bagley was hired by Red McCombs, previous owner of the Vikings, to start a stadium campaign. He not only started it, but as the Vikings' lead advocate working with legislative leaders, the governor and business community leaders, he also finished it.

Q: You've been through quite a campaign. What really drove this stadium project for you?

A: What's going to be outstanding is the fan experience, and since the legislation passed in 2012, the Vikings and the Wilf family have invested an additional \$130 million, so we're nearing \$607 million as a team-private contribution. Everything that we've done in our additional investment and overall investment has gone toward the fan experience, so we're trying to make this the best experience for the fans. We have the closest seats to the action, the stadium is for all seasons with the transparent roof and the pivoting glass doors provide that indoor-outdoor experience. I think it's going to be the best fan experience in the NFL, and that's what our focus has been on.

Q: What was the biggest challenge when planning and creating the new stadium?

A: This is the largest construction project in the history of Minnesota and there are multiple partners both public and private, so it's an extremely complicated project. To get everybody to work together and to keep all trains running on time has been a massive undertaking. The good news is it was on budget and on track and on time, so that in itself is a major accomplishment on a very, very complicated project.

When recalling how many years he's spent on the U.S.

Bank Stadium project, Lester Bagley doesn't have enough fingers to count. He envisions the timeline and process he knows all too well in his head.

"We started an advocacy campaign in 1999 and started bringing it forward to the capital in 2000," recites Bagley, who oversees communications, community outreach and relationships with public partners, among other responsibilities for the Vikings management team. "So it was 12 years at the capital and then four years once the bill passed in May of 2015. They spent four years on design and construction, so 16 years total. I think I have the record for longevity on the project."

Q: What has been the most rewarding aspect of planning and creating the new stadium?

A: I think this has been an incredible team effort, particularly within the Vikings organization all the way through the last 16 years, it's been, ownership, management, companywide, a priority. But on the stadium itself in a team effort with the Mortenson Construction, with HKS Architects, with the MSFA and now with SMG on board, it's been really an outstanding team effort, and the great news is we're going to deliver a great venue not only for Vikings fans but for everyone in the community, so that's what I think has been most rewarding.

Q: What are some of your favorite features of the stadium?

A: The scoreboards, which are the 10th largest in the NFL. So they're not the largest, but they're the best because of where they're located. They're right in the natural line of sight of fans in either end zone. The scoreboards are going to be great. The gathering spaces: [Mystic Lake's] Club Purple, which has the outdoor deck overlooking the city—that's going to be awesome. This new northeast expansion space, which includes a lodge bar and group cabins, is part of the gathering spaces where fans can hang out. I think the other thing that's exciting is the in-stadium app, which is part of the fan experience. Fans will know the traffic situation, and the best routes to the stadium, and when they get to the stadium, they'll have information on parking and where there's available parking. There will be gameday highlights, instant replays and opportunities to order food.

"We would not have gotten the 2018 Super Bowl or NCAA Final Four in 2019 without the new stadium."

—LESTER BAGLEY

Q: What does this stadium mean to the Minnesota Vikings as an organization and how vital is it to the organization's future success?

A: It's part of the energy and momentum in the Vikings organization. There's no doubt a lot of great things are happening: Our team just came off winning the NFC North and is playing very well, and the stadium is part of that rise of the organization. It boosts the energy, morale and comradery within the organization from the players to the staff to the coaches and front office. There are great things happening for the Vikings on and off the field, and the stadium is helping to build that energy and momentum.

Q: Can you share the feedback you've received about the stadium from neighboring businesses?

A: We've received tremendous feedback. Obviously the stadium has been a catalyst for a lot of development in the [East Town] area of

Minneapolis. The city of Minneapolis sold a record \$2 billion in building permits last year and more than half have been focused in the [East Town] area. I think the feedback we've received is about the progressive design; this stadium is going to be a signature element of the Minneapolis skyline. Inside the building, the business leaders, the partners and neighbors that have been through the construction process are very excited. They're really blown away by the design, look and feel of the building both inside and out.

Q: What kind of impact can you foresee the new stadium having on the area and local economy?

A: We advocated for 12 years at the capital that the stadium was going to deliver jobs, economic development, national and international events and would be a catalyst for growth in the neighborhood, and I think the results have proven that the stadium is delivering on that promise and actually exceeding what we even advocated. The stadium is a \$1.1 billion project, 90 percent of those dollars are going back to Minnesota's economy. There were 1,400 construction workers on the job [at one time]. There has been a tremendous amount of work and jobs created. We would not have gotten the 2018 Super Bowl or NCAA Final Four tournament in 2019 without the new stadium, so the stadium has delivered on all those things we advocated for and will continue to do so in the events that have already been booked.

When it comes to the construction of U.S. Bank Stadium, the largest public-private project ever in the state of Minnesota, the schedule has always been a key part of the plan. The schedule John Wood, senior vice president of Mortenson, and his team put together for completion of the job was part of the proposal to MSFA back in December of 2012. "And that is essentially the plan we have followed ever since," says Wood, who, in his 40th year with Mortenson, was the principal in charge of the U.S. Bank Stadium project. "One of the things that distinguished Mortenson in the sports construction business is when we say complete, we mean complete. Or as we like to say, done is done."

And it was done six weeks ahead of schedule. "That's somewhat unusual in the business of building sports facilities because quite often at the first event there are still parts of the building that aren't finished, there are guys in hard hats walking around," Wood says. "But we don't operate that way."

Wood's first stadium project was Target Center in 1990, and he's also overseen the stadium projects for Minnesota's other two pro sports teams: Target Field and Xcel Energy Center.

Q: You've worked on some major local stadium projects. What is unique about this one for you?

A: The unique and exceptional architecture of the project. I believe it's the best NFL stadium in the country. We had a unique contract for this project with some extraordinary risks as the construction manager. So it required an exceptional level of oversight to ensure that we were not only delivering on what we promised, but we were ensuring success for ourselves as well as our customer. It's the largest project in the state. It's the largest project Mortenson has ever undertaken as a sole venture.

The Builder

JOHN
WOOD

Senior Vice President, Mortenson

Q: What has been the biggest challenge for you and your team to overcome when building the new stadium?

A: There has been a variety of challenges that come with the territory, so to speak, on a project of this size and complexity. The demolition of the Metrodome had its own complexities that needed to be overcome to ensure that building could be demolished safely. We were pleased to be able to execute it in that way. The steel structure of [U.S. Bank Stadium] was particularly complex, and thanks to the phenomenal work of LeJeune Steel, the steel fabricator, and Danny's Construction, the steel erection company, both local firms, it was really a flawless performance by those contractors. It really helped enable us to keep the project on schedule and deliver the kind of quality that the building represents.

Q: What has been the most rewarding aspect of planning and creating the new stadium?

A: The most rewarding part has been working with the phenomenal men and women that have made up the work force on the project. Just the level of craftsmanship, work ethic and ingenuity of the construction team has been something that has been very impressive for me. I've been very proud to be a part of it. We've had just an incredible team of subcontractors and specialty contractors that have made up the overall project team.

Q: What is something about the stadium that you think will pleasantly surprise event planners and attendees?

A: There's so much about it that will impress people. The amount of natural light in the building makes it unique. Just the expansiveness of the building, people are awestruck when they first enter the building and see just how massive it is. It's obviously impressive and it looks big from the street level, but then when you're inside and you recognize that about a third of the building is below ground, people are generally taken aback by the size of the building. It also has an incredible arrival experience. When you enter the building through either the west or east entrances, just that experience walking into how impressive the bowl is, it's awesome. From a meeting and event planner perspective, the building having the number and variety of spaces that it has will be very appealing. And my understanding is that's proven to be the case, because MSFA and SMG are already getting a lot of business booked for the various spaces. I know Mortenson will be a regular customer for events in the building.

Q: What are some of your favorite features of the stadium?

A: The ETFE roof is unique within existing stadiums in the United States. The operable doors are going to be a feature that is going to be magnificent. We've really built a lot of prototypical elements of this building, the doors being one, the retractable seating system that will allow for baseball configuration of the building is the first of its kind. So there are some features about the architecture that are impressive. Just the contrast in the openness of the concourses to the bowl as compared to the Metrodome, where you felt like you were in a tunnel when you were in the concourse going to a concession stands or

going to the restrooms, you were completely isolated from whatever event was taking place. This is very different than that because you have a sense of connection to what's going on in the bowl from wherever you are in this building.

Q: What are some things relating to the stadium's design that you wouldn't find in another stadium?

A: The building has a very contemporary design compared to the other sports facilities in the Twin Cities, although Target Field has a contemporary feel to it as well. This is even more so. It's got a little bit of an edgy look to the interiors of the building. The ETFE roof and retractable doors are features that give the building its unique characteristics. Just the volume of the space and this soaring ridge truss, and the height of the building in the west end and allowing that expansive glass and tremendous views of the downtown skyline, all of that is really going to add to the fan experience and the enjoyment of the people who are using the building.

Q: How do you think this project has benefited the local economy and community?

A: It's been a huge benefit to the local economy. Certainly for the local construction industry, it was a massive benefit at a time when it was very much needed, coming out of the Great Recession. So it's provided a great benefit in all the jobs it's created as well as the business for the hundreds of companies that have been involved in the job. And as you know, and I'm sure others like Michele [Kelm-Helgen] will speak to, it's also stimulated other significant investment in this part of town, notably, the Wells Fargo development and other hotels, housing and commercial facilities that are being planned and I'm sure will continue in the years ahead to really create a revitalization in this part of the city.

PHOTO: TATE CARLSON

The Architect
BRYAN TRUBEY
*Executive Vice President,
 Director of Sports and Entertainment, HKS Architects*

Bryan Trubey, executive vice president, director of sports and entertainment at HKS Architects, is indeed an architect, as his title suggests. But when it came to planning and researching the U.S. Bank Stadium project, Trubey and his team transformed their specialty into anthropology.

Fresh off completing highly touted NFL stadiums such as Lucas Oil Stadium (2008), home of the Indianapolis Colts, and AT&T Stadium (2009), home of the Dallas Cowboys, Trubey and his team took their time researching Minneapolis' culture and roots.

"The work that we've produced or the anthropology we developed around that region was very detailed, and you see it play out in all the details in the building, but the big-picture things that really rose to the top were beliefs that were basically culturally embedded in that community based on its past and a lot of the Northern European roots," says Trubey, HKS' lead designer on the stadium project. "The two biggest values that rose to the top were craft and value."

Q: You've worked on your fair share of stadiums recently. What's different about U.S. Bank Stadium?

A: The site was absolutely spectacular in terms of what we started with. The quality of the site really speaks to the wisdom of all the players involved in making the deci-

sion there in a city, county and team standpoint, that this project would go on the existing Metrodome site, because in a lot of ways that's one of the hardest decisions to make and it has already shown to be one of the most valuable decisions yet on the project. It was challenging because they had to move the team for two seasons. That's a very hard decision to make, and the Wilfs and the whole Vikings team made a great long-term decision. The byproduct of that decision is that we spent as much time thinking about the outdoor room, which is the park in front of the stadium, as the stadium itself because in our practice and in our way of thinking, those two things working together equals a much more powerful thing than just thinking about a stadium by itself or a public park by itself.



PHOTO: TATE CARLSON

Q: Can you expand on the role this area's history and culture played into this project?

A: Even though we're very careful to say that Minneapolis is a very culturally diverse community because there are a number of different ethnic groups and belief systems that all coexist in Minneapolis, it's one of the beautiful things about that city that the Northern European roots are still one of the bigger determinants of the values. Having something that's finely crafted and beautiful but getting it at a good value—those two things really emerged as the two primary criteria we had to respond to. Other parts of the country are still building in the classical styles in terms of building a civic monument. In Minneapolis, it's just the opposite. You can think all the way back to 1945 and during that entire post-war period, it didn't matter if it was a federal courthouse or City Hall or the Guthrie Theater or the public library downtown, they are all very progressive, modern, innovative facilities. They're technically crafted very well, but they're designed in the modern style. So when we showed this to the whole client group, it really gave us the mandate to design a very progressive, modern building.

Q: What was the biggest challenge when planning and creating the new stadium?

A: The response to the environment. It's a huge creative challenge every time we do another one of these facilities to make each one look unique. One of the things we look at is climate. All of our competitors had proposed roof structures very similar to the ones that had been built on the rest of the stadiums in the country, and for us there was huge opportunity in responding and saying we developed a

roof form that likened the same roof forms of traditional structures built in this climate for thousands of years in steeply pitched single-ridge roof lines. That was quite shocking to everybody because it was so different. They loved the form and the rationale behind the form—that story became richer and richer because we were doing things essentially the same way they've been done in climates that have enormous snow loads, we were keeping the snow off the roof in a very traditional way, but the form we had created was very modern looking, so it was interpretive, not literal. And we developed a pretty unique structural system to go along with it.

Q: What are some of your favorite spaces or features of the stadium from an architectural perspective?

A: The presentation of the space when you walk in off the west end of the plaza. One of the things we've been told that is most impactful of our buildings is the transparency. People I've heard that from, especially the architectural criticism community, that's the one thing they say—it's the most un stadiumlike of its characteristics. It's been so interesting to be part of and to see and experience firsthand. The transparency issue works a couple different ways: the visibility of the downtown skyline from inside the facility, which is a completely different thing to accomplish, a technically enclosed building compared to an open-air baseball field. This is really the first time this has ever been accomplished in a building of this scale. That visual connection between the vast majority of the built CBD and the bowl—I think that's one of my favorite sequences of spaces and what that all means visually.

Q: What are some environment-friendly features of the stadium's design?

A: From an environmental standpoint, this will be one of the most sustainable buildings of this scale anywhere in the world. We have that ventilation system that exhausts heated air in the summertime; we have the ability to use that heated air in the wintertime, and one of the reasons for it is, again, our form. If we feel like we're doing the right thing as archi-

itects, we can have a form solution for a project that has a number of different attributes to it. I went through the cultural aesthetic and functional attributes, and one of the things that the loft and the roof does for us that no other building has really done is it creates a heat reservoir that keeps the heat away from the patrons, whether it's summer or winter, because there are some times in the wintertime when we have more heat in the building than we want. So just from a sustainability standpoint, this building is really the only building of this scale that uses the natural physical properties of air buoyancy to actually make the interior of the building more comfortable. From an environmental standpoint, that's a macro issue that we really addressed that hadn't been addressed in these buildings before.

Q: How did you approach the ETFE roof and how did that come into play?

A: This is a big contributor of the sustainability program. Early on in the project, we started off with a program that was similar to other buildings: a retractable roof. We actually moved through the analysis of that pretty early on in the project and convinced the owner of the Vikings that it would be better to have a clear roof so we could feel like we're open air all the time rather than having to move a panel to feel like we're open air. Part of the rationale for that is in that climate with the snow loading and sometimes wind, we wouldn't actually be able to operate the roof all that often. So that's the reason we coined the phrase: "Clear is the new retractable." It's really an appropriate thing because in one of the harshest environments in the country for NFL football, we figured out a way to have what will seem like an open-air building.

The Manager PATRICK TALTY

General Manager, U.S. Bank Stadium

Former WWE World Champion and local college wrestling product Brock Lesnar is no longer the strongest connection between the Minnesota Vikings and the WWE.

Patrick Talty, who was hired by SMG as the general manager of U.S. Bank Stadium in January of 2015 after most recently serving as senior vice president of live events for World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. (WWE), may not have the bulging biceps, the NCAA heavyweight wrestling title for the University of Minnesota or the short-but-well-publicized stint on the Vikings defensive line, but he has the ideal career experience to give U.S. Bank Stadium the punch it needs. He knows how to manage pro sports stadiums. And he knows how to promote the sizable events that fill them.

Talty started his stadium career at the now-extinct RCA Dome in Indianapolis (1996-2001), worked for a small-market convention center and baseball stadium in Lansing, Michigan (2001-2004), helped open the University of Phoenix Stadium in Arizona (2004-2009) as assistant general manager, and even took his talents abroad as general manager of Zayed Sports City in Abu Dhabi (2009-2012), a multiveneue facility highlighted by a 45,000-seat soccer stadium. Talty helped manage the complex through a massive renovation that would allow it to host a FIFA Club World Cup.

"It went from 25 events in the year before I got there to 125 events in one year," Talty says. "We changed it from a site that looked like it was closed to it really became the central hub of Abu Dhabi, and the site has won multiple Middle East's Best Sports Complex awards. I'm very proud of that."

Q: You've had a number of different roles with different stadiums. What sets U.S. Bank Stadium apart from others you've worked on?

A: I have worked in sports facility management for most of my adult life. This is my third NFL building. This is my second opening of a stadium, but this is the first time I've been a GM of a new NFL stadium. I was the assistant GM last time when I opened up Arizona. This is my fourth opportunity to really build a team

"I want the way we run the facility and what it means to people here, I want it to equal the grandiose of the facility."

—PATRICK TALTY

from the ground up and create opportunities for excellence. Opening a stadium is very different each time because the people are different, the atmosphere is different and the work environment is different, so that's what makes it kind of different yet the same. That's also my favorite thing: You get to build a team and create a professional, hard-driven, excellent team.

Q: What's been the biggest challenge with this project?

A: That's a good question. I think maybe one of the challenges for us is this has been a facility that's been a long time coming for the community and there was a lot of positive and negative feelings about the facility, so it's a much-anticipated facility, and something that weighs on me when I think about it: I want the way we run the facility and what it means to people here, I want it to equal the grandiose of the facility; I want that to equal what people feel about it and how they treat it and what they think about it later. I really want people to be proud of this facility, even if they didn't like it back when everyone was fighting about it. I want them to be proud and excited about events. That weighs on me in terms of making sure that what we deliver is that world-class customer service and world-class events to match the stadium and the anticipation of it.

Q: What's been the most rewarding aspect of creating this new stadium?

A: By far the most rewarding aspect has been building this new SMG team, and seeing the people come together and watching them work, and building it as a really close-knit high-performance team, seeing people loving what they do and wanting to come to work. That's been for me, by far, the most rewarding thing, is seeing these people blossom and coming on and working together and enjoying themselves. That's important for me. This is an opportunity for me to create something and help create kind of a legacy in Minnesota, and one that people can be proud of. It's really rewarding to be a part of that.

Q: What are some of the things that will pleasantly surprise or greatly benefit event planners?

A: One of the things people are going to be surprised by is the technology. People expect at a convention center that the Wi-Fi is good and I think they're going to be pleasantly surprised that's going to work well in here. The club areas and the ability to have different events, I think people will be surprised by that. And I think the other thing that people will really be blown away by is the way our staff will treat our customers and our clients and our guests in a professional customer-focused way.

Q: Do you have a favorite space in the stadium?

A: My favorite club space is probably [Mystic Lake's] Club Purple; I think that's really innovative; that's the area that has an outdoor balcony that overlooks the plaza and downtown. It's a beautiful setting with a fire pit, then it's got the indoor space that overlooks the field. So it's got that indoor-outdoor feel. To me, that's really cool. Then from a football standpoint, [Mystic Lake's] Club Purple has a seating section with couches, and that's really cutting edge and cool. I haven't seen that in other stadiums and I've been around quite a few of them.

Q: What are your short-term goals for the stadium?

A: Booking-wise, we have people selling two, three, five years out; we have people always working on events. Having youth sports in the building, having running club, rollerblading, corporate events, weddings, bar mitzvahs, proms, all those different things—making sure we work really hard to get to all those different groups so they have opportunities to experience the building.

Q: What's a modern, unique feature of this stadium that sticks out to you?

A: One of the things that is somewhat modern is that we can accommodate baseball. We've done it in a way, when you're in the football setup, you won't really feel like you

could do baseball in this building. It's done in such a way that you wouldn't even notice it, and that's really cool.

Q: Any feedback you've picked up from the local meetings and events community?

A: Local meeting and event planners are very excited because they're looking for new and different meeting spaces to come



PHOTO: TATE CARLSON



1955-1985
The Metropolitan Stadium Era

The Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome Era
1979-2014

2016
U.S. Bank Stadium Era

STADIUM HISTORY

The Metropolitan Stadium Era

June 20, 1955 Groundbreaking on the Metropolitan Stadium, aka The Met, begins.

April 24, 1956 The Met opens in Bloomington.

1956 - 1960 The Minneapolis Millers minor league baseball team plays its final seasons.

April 21, 1961 The Minnesota Twins (formerly the Washington Senators) play their first regular season home game, losing to the new Washington Senators (now the Texas Rangers).

Sept. 17, 1961 The Minnesota Vikings play their first regular season home game (upsetting the Chicago Bears, 37-13).

July 13, 1965 The 36th MLB All-Star Game is played (6-5, National League); attendance was 46,706.

Oct. 14, 1965 The Los Angeles Dodgers win game seven of the World Series (2-0) against the Minnesota Twins in front of a crowd of 50,596.

Aug. 21, 1965 The Beatles, on their 1965 U.S. tour, perform in front of 25,000 screaming fans.

Aug. 1, 1978 The Eagles, Steve Miller Band and Pablo Cruise perform in front of a crowd of 65,000 (a stadium record).

June 24, 1979 The Allman Brothers Band performs.

Aug. 26, 1981 The Kicks play their last game, winning 1-0 in a shootout in the play-offs against the Tulsa Roughnecks; the team folds in December.

Sept. 30, 1981 The Twins play their final game (5-2, Kansas City Royals).

Dec. 20, 1981 The Vikings play their final game (10-6, Kansas City Chiefs).

1982 - 1984 The Met is officially abandoned.

Jan. 28, 1985 Teardown of The Met begins and takes four months.

The Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome Era

Dec. 20, 1979 Construction of the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome begins.

Nov. 19, 1981 The roof collapses from snow accumulation.

April 3, 1982 The Metrodome opens in downtown Minneapolis; the Twins win an exhibition game against the Philadelphia Phillies (5-0)

PHOTOS: MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY; U.S. BANK STADIUM; JOEL SCHNELL; TATE CARLSON

Sept. 11, 1982 The Minnesota Golden Gophers football team begins its first season at the Metrodome.

Sept. 12, 1982 The Vikings play their first regular season home game (defeating Tampa Bay, 17-10).

Dec. 30, 1982 The roof deflates from a tear caused by heavy snowfall.

April 14, 1983 The roof once again deflates from a tear caused by heavy snowfall.

July 16, 1985 The 56th MLB All-Star Game is played (6-1, National League).

April 26, 1986 The roof tears from high winds, but doesn't deflate.

Oct. 25, 1987 The Twins win game seven of the World Series (4-2) against the St. Louis Cardinals.

Oct. 27, 1991 The Twins win game seven of the World Series (1-0) in extra innings against the Atlanta Braves.

April 6, 1992 Duke wins the NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Tournament championship.

Jan. 26, 1992 The Washington Redskins win Super Bowl XXVI.

April 2, 2001 Duke wins the NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Tournament championship again.

Nov. 22, 2008 The Gophers play their final game at the Metrodome.

Oct. 11, 2009 The Twins play their final game at the Metrodome, losing the American League Division Series (4-1) to the New York Yankees.

Dec. 12, 2010 The Metrodome's roof collapses from a severe winter storm.

July 13, 2011 The roof is repaired and reinflated.

Dec. 3, 2013 Elected officials, business leaders and Vikings fans gather for a ceremonial groundbreaking.

Dec. 29, 2013 The Vikings play their final game after 32 seasons, winning 14-13 against the Detroit Lions.

Jan. 18, 2014 The roof is (intentionally) deflated.

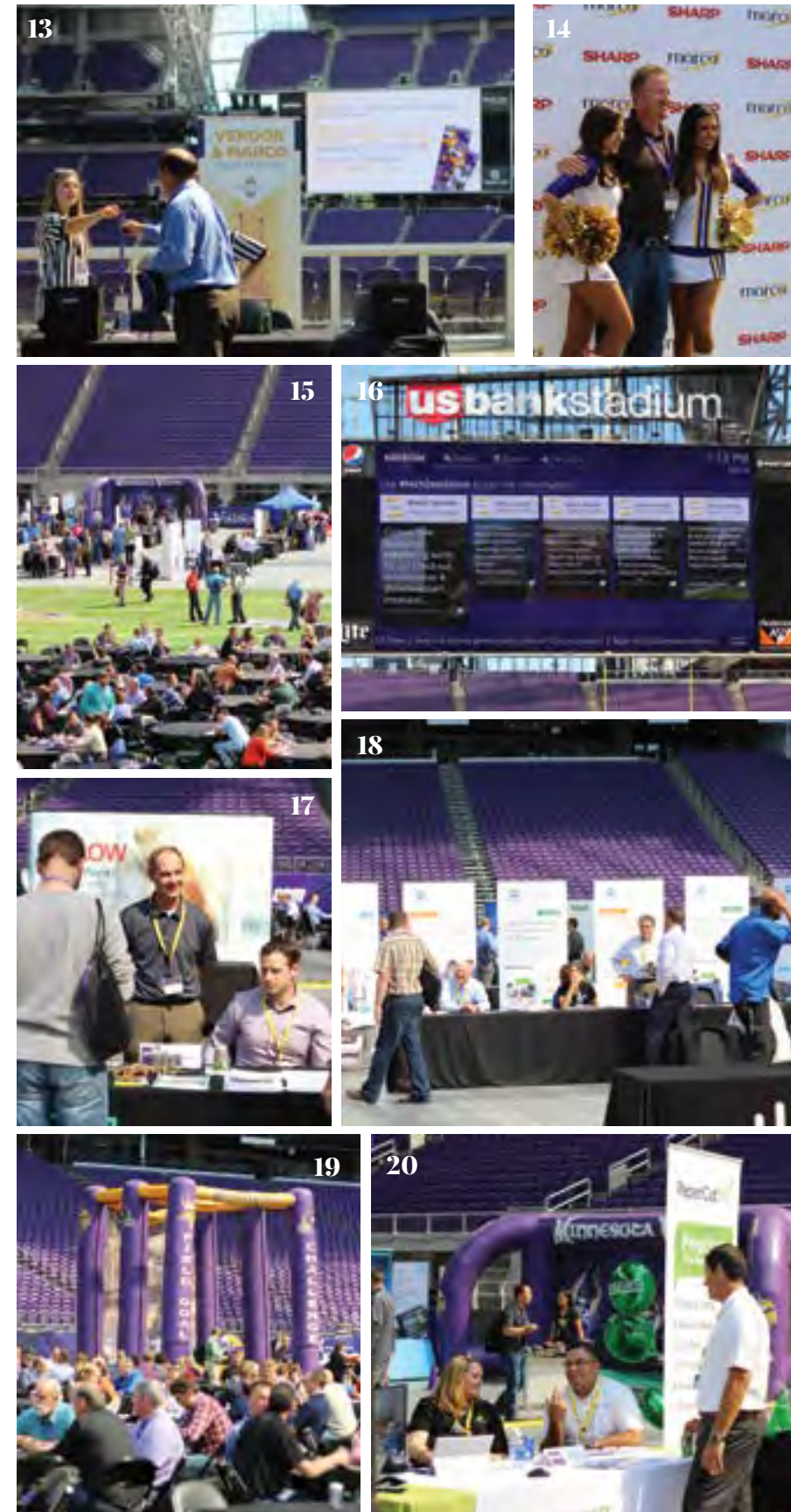
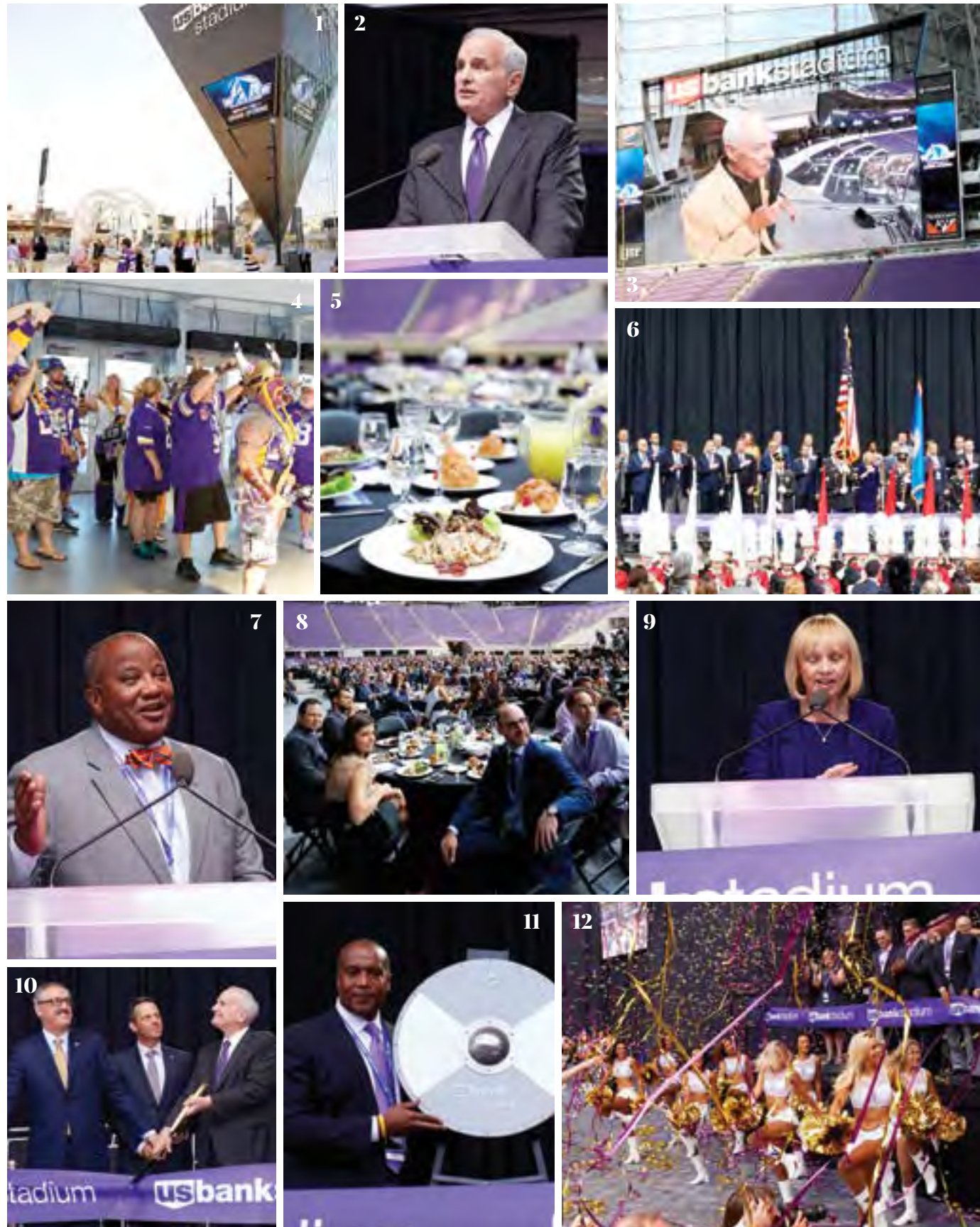
April 17, 2014 Demolition is declared complete.

U.S. Bank Stadium

July 22, 2016 The official ribbon cutting and grand opening ceremony

Aug. 3, 2016 The stadium's first sporting event: AC Milan vs. Chelsea F.C.; 2016 International Champions Cup.

Sept. 18, 2016 The Vikings play their first regular season home game (defeating the Green Bay Packers 17-14) with an all-time home attendance record of 66,813. █



PAPARAZZI»

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

U.S. Bank Stadium held its official ribbon cutting and grand opening ceremony on July 22, 2016.

1. Fans eagerly waiting outside the Legacy Gate.
2. Governor of Minnesota Mark Dayton.
3. Former Vikings head coach Bud Grant speaks to the crowd before sounding the Gjallarhorn.
4. Vikings fans display their team spirit.
5. Aramark's M Hospitality catered the lunch.
6. The Eden Prairie High School marching band played the national anthem.
7. Louis King, president and CEO, Summit Academy OIC.
8. The field was arranged with table rounds.
9. Michele Kelm-Helgen, chair, Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority.
10. Zygi Wilf, owner and chairman, Minnesota Vikings; Mark Wilf, owner and president, Minnesota Vikings; and Gov. Mark Dayton.
11. Kevin Warren, chief operating officer, Minnesota Vikings.
12. Vikings cheerleaders celebrate in confetti.

Marco's Technology Trade Show

More than 850 attendees, 116 vendors and 37 booths filled U.S. Bank Stadium on Sept. 14, 2016, for Marco's Technology Trade Show. Marco rented out multiple spaces in the stadium, including Delta Sky360 Club, interior lobbies, the entire stadium floor and space for 20 breakout sessions throughout the facility.

13. Event staff dressed as referees.
14. Vikings cheerleaders and attendees.
15. The U.S. Bank Stadium field was set with tables and booths.
16. The end zone videoboard displayed images like social media feeds.
17. Hewlett Packard Enterprise's booth.
18. Vendors and attendees did business on the temporary interlocking flooring system.
19. An inflatable field goal was set up for attendees to enjoy.
20. ecoprintQ's booth.

PHOTOS: TATE CARLSON; (OPPOSITE) COURTNEY NIELSEN



PAPARAZZI»

Page Education Foundation All Star Gala

The Page Education Foundation's All Star Gala on Sept. 10, 2016, marked the first community fundraising event at U.S. Bank Stadium. The foundation, created by Pro Football Hall of Famer and former Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Alan Page and his wife Diane, gives college scholarships to Minnesota students of color who attend Minnesota post-secondary schools. Approximately 1,000 guests attended the event, which raised more than \$500,000. For more on Alan and his foundation, turn to page 64.

1. The annual All Star Gala raises about a third of the nonprofit's budget. **2.** Dressed to impress, guests flock to the stadium. **3.** Jude Ghangha and Jocelyn Ricard. **4.** Alan Page addresses the crowd in the Hyundai Club. **5.** Chastity Brown provided musical entertainment. **6.** Amala Chidthachack, U.S. Bank; Allen Peterson, Toro; Nathan Starkson, Olympus. **7.** Spin the Wheel activity. **8.** Alan Page and Page Scholars. █

PHOTOS: THE PAGE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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VIP »

Still a Star

Giving back through education is the name of the game for NFL legend and former Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Alan Page. **BY BOBBY HART**

GIVING back to the community has never been a luxury, hobby or PR stunt for Minnesota Vikings Hall-of-Famer and recently retired Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Alan Page. He views it as a responsibility. Even after retiring from professional football and the state supreme court, he remains dedicated to The Page Education Foundation, a nonprofit Alan and Diane Page created in 1988 to “encourage Minnesota students of color to pursue post-secondary education.” The Page Education Foundation, which raised more than \$500,000 at its All Star Gala at U.S. Bank Stadium Sept. 10, 2016—marking the first community fundraising event at the new stadium—has provided more than 6,500 Page Grants of \$12 million in financial support in 28 years. But the responsibility shines in the fact that those grant recipients, known as Page Scholars, have given back over 420,000 hours serving communities, primarily mentoring elementary and middle-school children. “I’ve had the good fortune to have had a lot of good things happen to me,” Alan says. “I think it would be irresponsible not to try to help other people get into the same position.” For the 2015-2016 academic year, 536 Page Scholars were awarded \$900,000 in grants and racked up 20,623 volunteer hours while serving 13,138 children.

Q: What drove you and your wife to launch this foundation back in 1988?

A: From our experience, we know that education was a tool that we had used to achieve some degree of success and that it’s a tool that anybody can use to overcome the disadvantages of being a person of color: It can be used to overcome discrimination, it can be used to overcome poverty, it can be used as a tool that really helps everyone achieve whatever their hopes and dreams are. And we had the sense that if we could motivate and encourage young men and women of color to pursue education beyond high school, there would be a benefit not only to them but to society at large and the community at large.

Q: What role did your job in the justice system play in your foundation?

A: For a while when I was on the court, it was a mixed blessing because I’m sure it brought some attention. People would hear about me and hear about the foundation and make the connection, but at the same time because I was on the court, I wasn’t in the position to be involved in the fundraising for the foundation. Diane took that over and she has done just an incredible job on an annual basis of fundraising. Our budget is roughly \$1.3 million a year—we have to raise that every year—and she has done just an incredible job in doing that with the support and help of a lot of people, obviously. It is not an easy task.

Q: What are your thoughts on U.S. Bank Stadium?

A: It’s spectacular in its presence. It has a very intimate feeling. Everything is very compact and close together. Just that closeness of the fans to the field creates an energy that for those players that need that, it’s built in. Just the physical layout should contribute to a sense of energy and urgency that you don’t necessarily get when everybody is far away.

Q: After such an impressive career, a lot of people might ride off into the sunset and live the word “retired” to the fullest. Yet I get the sense that you feel like you still have work to do. Why?

A: My view of the world is I’ve always been riding into the sunset, wanting to get as much done as possible until the sun goes down. The fact that I don’t have a job per se doesn’t change my view of the world. There’s so much that each of us as human beings can do. With the opportunities I’ve had, it’s hard not to want to keep trying to make the world we live in a little bit better.
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