

C-17

New Ballpark Citizens Committee
Report to the Mayor and City Council



www.NewBallparkInc.org



March 2001





February, 2001

Dear Mayor Sayles Belton and Minneapolis City Council Members:

In August of 2000, you charged this Committee to investigate the feasibility of a privately-funded baseball park in Minneapolis. You asked us to tell you whether it made sense for the City to move forward with this idea and, if so, what the community's priorities were regarding a new ballpark. We are pleased to forward to you our report.

We started the project with the belief that baseball is an asset to the community, one that we would not like to lose. We also started by acknowledging that for a new ballpark to be constructed, new financial solutions needed to be crafted. Those solutions would have to involve new ways of thinking not only about financing, but also about Major League Baseball and ballparks themselves. We conducted our work by listening to and questioning experts, reading a wide variety of relevant information, and talking to one another for hours about what we had learned.

We found that across the country thoughtful people have put many hours into finding new ways to do business. We found that a variety of smart and creative strategies will need to be employed for a private investment plan to work — but that it has been done. We found that Major League Baseball is in serious trouble, that its financial structure is not sustainable for the sport over time. We found that the input of community members, like those who served on this committee, will be essential for future work.

We recommend that you support efforts to finance and build a privately-funded baseball park in Minneapolis. We recommend that a follow-up on the findings of this report be charged to a staff member at the MCDA so that this project can move forward as swiftly as possible.

As we report our findings to you, we would like to thank you, the City Council, for the trust you placed in us and for the opportunity to serve the City. Through the hours of talks, debate, and deliberation, we did not lose sight of our mission to think well about the needs of Minneapolis and its residents.

Elizabeth A. Hodges,
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Co-Chair

Carol Andersohn

Dario Anselmo

John Beal

Nancy Beals

Jim Cook

Tom Goldstein

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Rev. Ricky Rask

Milt Schoen

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Mark Suchy

Transmittal

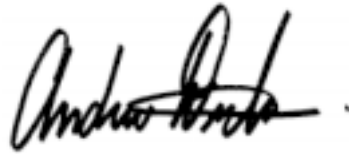
We would also like to thank those who shared their knowledge with us. Wheelock Whitney, David Welle, Bar Chadwick, Tom Chema, Chuck Ballentine, Gretchen Nicholls, Art Rolnick, Philip Bess, Rick deFlon, Don Eyberg, Bruce Lambrecht, Jack Bair, Minnesota State Senator John Marty, and Chuck Neerland all provided invaluable information and we appreciate their time. Special thanks go to Tom Goldstein and Ricky Rask, committee members, who were also willing to share their expertise with us from the podium.

Again, many thanks for this opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,



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Co-Chair



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Special thanks to all community members who attended the open forums and gave us feedback.

Rendering courtesy of Bruce Lambrecht, BL Investment Management, Inc. and HOK.

C-17 Introduction

This report presents the findings and the work of the Ballpark Committee appointed by the Minneapolis City Council in August 2000 (sometimes called the Committee of 17, or C-17). We are a committee of residents and business people who were asked to explore the possibility of designing and building an urban ballpark that would be privately-financed, produce the revenues necessary for the baseball team and financiers, stimulate compatible urban development, and improve the urban fabric of Minneapolis. During October and November, committee members attended nine presentations — held at International Market Square — that dealt with the issue. These presentations were made by individuals involved in the planning, design and financing of sports facilities throughout the country.

The presentations were taped and broadcast on Channel 6 cable TV and archived on the New Ballpark Inc. website: www.newballparkinc.org. Interested members of the public were able to register their opinions on the website, adding to the committee's deliberations.

The week after each presentation, the committee met to discuss what they heard and what elements might be applicable to their charge. Discussions were often lively as people debated various ideas and proposals. Each committee member was expected to participate fully, offering insights and opinions about the material. The consensus that emerged from those meetings is presented for the City Council's consideration.

Technical assistance for the committee was provided by Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc.; Biko Associates, Inc; and Devine deFlon Yaeger.

These discussions were initiated by New Ballpark Inc., a non-profit organization of Minneapolis business interests committed to developing a privately funded downtown ballpark for the Minnesota Twins.

1. **The State of Baseball as a Business:**
Wheelock Whitney, Tom Goldstein
and David Welle,
October 2, 2000
2. **The Ballpark and the City:**
Tom Chema and Bar Chadwick,
October 10, 2000
3. **The Ballpark and the Neighborhood:**
Chuck Ballentine and Gretchen Nicholls,
October 17, 2000
4. **The Ballpark and Community:**
Senator John Marty, Reverend Ricky
Rask and Arthur J. Rolnick,
October 25, 2000
5. **A New Proposal – the Form:**
Bruce Lambrecht and Dave Albersman,
November 1, 2000
6. **The Neighborhood Ballpark Model:**
Philip Bess,
November 9, 2000
7. **Understanding the State of the Art:**
Rick DeFlon and Don Eyberg,
November 16, 2000
8. **A New Proposal – the Financing:**
David Welle and Chuck Neerland,
November 20, 2000
9. **Giant Lessons from San Francisco:**
Jack Bair, San Francisco Giants,
November 30, 2000

C-17 Summary

In this report we recommend that the Minneapolis City Council support efforts to finance and build a privately-funded baseball park in Minneapolis. Historically, we believe that public funding of a ballpark has not been a feasible option in Minnesota. We do believe that a private option is possible, however, and point your attention to the plan conceived and developed in San Francisco. Although their situation is different than ours, the results suggest that creative solutions can be found for private ballpark financing, and we recommend that Minneapolis pursue finding a similar solution.

Few disagree that Major League Baseball makes our community more appealing, both to current residents and to prospective residents. We like having the Twins here — rooting for a team joins people together, gives people from all walks of life common ground. We also value what the Twins' presence does for our state and its residents. Outside of any debate about the economics of baseball, the national pastime generates public goods. The sense of something unique, something genuinely American, is fundamental to our experience of the game. To lose it would be sad.

However, we make the recommendation to pursue private financing for a ballpark with the understanding that Major League Baseball (MLB) is not financially healthy. No salary cap, huge revenue disparities, and limited revenue sharing mean that only a few teams can field a competitive roster. Left unchecked, the structure of MLB is a serious detriment to any plans for a ballpark in small to mid-size markets, as well as to the game itself.

This is not to say that an outdoor ballpark in Minneapolis will solve the Twins financial problems. Or that it will guarantee the team will again become competitive in a sport with huge revenue disparities between the large- and small-market clubs. But we believe that a smaller-scale, open air ballpark that puts the fans closer to the action will substantially improve the

experience of going to a ball game, and that by helping the Twins to meet their revenue needs without burdening public coffers, provides an ideal solution to the ballpark debate that has swirled around the Twin Cities the past several years.

Given the current status of Major League Baseball, we believe a privately-financed ballpark can be successful if the following three conditions are met. [\(See Right\)](#)

Site Selection

We recommend that a site be approved that makes cost a top priority and minimizes neighborhood disruption.

Building Design

We recommend making a smaller facility than we've seen in the past, using a smaller, constrained site, and making the ballpark a single use facility. This should be done with the experience of the fans as an organizing principle, but not to the exclusion of practical considerations about the amenities needed to assure adequate revenue streams.

Development and Urban Planning

n *Spin-Off Development*

Ballparks are not good development generators. Rather, we recommend that the ballpark be used to enhance the development of existing entertainment venues in the city. Build the ballpark in or near an area where mixed-use development already exists, and generate an urban design plan for the area around the ballpark.

1

The ballpark must be a scaled-down, compact building, leading to considerably lower construction costs. Such a ballpark may not provide the same revenue streams as the large-scale, publicly-financed "retro" ballparks being built in other cities, but we believe it will provide a considerable increase in team revenue, giving the Twins far more flexibility in trying to put together a competitive roster.

2

The Twins must take a leadership role within the Twin Cities community, building relationships with large companies and organizations that are much more likely to invest in a ballpark project if they perceive the club to be making a sizable financial commitment of its own.

3

Major League Baseball must change the way it does business. While complete revenue sharing among teams of all broadcast revenues may never come about, there is little incentive for the Twins to undertake a ballpark project if they have no hope of gaining some financial parity with other ball clubs. However, the team should begin working with local, state, and national political leaders to pressure Major League Baseball to finally address the game's harmful financial inequities.

n *Parking and Transportation*

Do not build a surface area parking lot adjacent to the ballpark; rather prioritize sites that have significant street and structure parking already in existence within a ten-to-fifteen minute walk of the ballpark.

n *Public Spaces*

The facility should have entryways from doors and gates rather than ramps, and we recommend a public plaza outside the ballpark for pre- and post-game gatherings. The design of the ballpark should incorporate artful landscaping, open spaces, and public art in and around the facility.

Financing

We believe the Twins will have to be a leader of this project – both in their own significant financial investment and in encouraging other investors — if it is to succeed. We recommend that the City support efforts to explore every possible source of additional private financing, encouraging and supporting a wide base of investors to the extent possible. The City would be in a much better position to assist with related infrastructure needs, site selection issues, evaluating impacts, and other pertinent matters.

C-17 Report

Baseball is an American institution. Nothing evokes Americana like Cracker Jack and the crack of the bat.

As a committee, we appreciate baseball for its historical significance. We appreciate how the game draws us in with its athleticism, its intellectual elegance, its sheer joy. We have fond memories of baseball played outdoors, on a wide green expanse with a brilliant blue sky overhead.

As Minnesotans, our memories of professional baseball stretch back to the Twins arrival in 1961, and before that, to the intercity rivalry of the Minneapolis Millers and St. Paul Saints. We appreciate what baseball does to create a sense of community, and how the Twins have been involved in our communities and in our lives for more than forty years. Their civic contributions have left a permanent place in the hearts of many, and few can forget the excitement of the 1965 World Series and the unexpected World Championships of 1987 and 1991!

We also value what the Twins presence does for our state and its residents. Outside of any debate about the economics of baseball, the national pastime generates public goods. There are benefits that are hard to articulate, but easy to feel. This instinctive understanding of the benefits underlies the passion of ballpark proponents in arguments on the street, on the radio, and even in our committee meetings. The sense of something unique, something genuinely American, is fundamental to our experience of the game. To lose it would be sad.

Few disagree that Major League Baseball makes our community more appealing, both to current residents and to prospective residents. We like having the Twins here — rooting for a team joins people together, gives people from all walks of life common ground.



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Baseball, however, is a game meant to be played outdoors. Regardless of whether the Metrodome has been a wise investment or not, the experience of watching a baseball game there is less than satisfactory: the seats are poorly arranged; the sightlines are bad; and there is little of the intimacy found in the historic ballparks of past eras. Simply put, if baseball is a joyful cultural experience that we want to pass down to our children, the game played indoors leaves much to be desired.

This is not to say that an outdoor ballpark in Minneapolis will solve the Twins financial problems. Or that it will guarantee the team will again become competitive in a sport with huge revenue disparities between the large- and small-market clubs. But we believe that a smaller-scale, open air ballpark that puts the fans closer to the action will substantially improve the experience of going to a ball game, and that by helping the Twins to meet their revenue needs without burdening public coffers, provides an ideal solution to the ballpark debate that has swirled around the Twin Cities the past several years.

Area residents have made it clear that they are not interested in directing public funds to pay for a new Twins ballpark, and some members of this committee have echoed that sentiment. We believe that continued attempts by the Twins to secure public financing for an outdoor ballpark will further alienate an already frustrated citizenry and, in the long run, prove to be counterproductive and divisive. What is needed is a new approach, one that looks to the private sector and private resources for a solution. Based on the information provided to this committee, the model employed by the San Francisco Giants in building privately-financed Pacific Bell Park appears to offer the most promise.

While the demographics of San Francisco and the ownership structure of the Giants are much different than that of Minneapolis and the Twins, the key element of the Giants ballpark campaign is that they took a positive, pro-active approach: “How can the private sector get a ballpark built in this community?” Team officials met with community leaders, business executives, and residents for a two-year period. They forged partnerships with many community-based corporations. They built enthusiasm among local fans that brought in an unprecedented amount of revenue from the sale of permanent seat licenses. And when they needed a small public investment to relocate a city facility on the ballpark site, area residents overwhelmingly gave their approval.

With a similar, can-do approach, the Twins could be the driving force in developing a ballpark themselves, investing their own funds, forming partnerships with the area's many Fortune 500 companies, and gaining the support of the many affluent citizens whose purchase of permanent seat licenses could fill potential revenue gaps. Most importantly, with the Twins bearing much of the weight of the financial risks in such a project, the City would be put in a much better position to assist with related infrastructure needs, site selection issues, evaluating impacts, and other related issues.

We think such a privately-financed ballpark could work in this community, and this report is intended to give the green light to our City Council to enthusiastically support the Twins in gaining the necessary commitments within the private sector, keeping in mind that such a process must also best serve the needs of city residents. However, we also understand that such a project is problematic even under the best of circumstances, given the current state of Major League Baseball.

We on the committee have serious reservations about the viability of the professional game, particularly where it concerns the financial structure of MLB. With no salary cap, such that the wealthiest teams can constantly bid up the cost of player contracts, and huge revenue disparities created by the rapidly escalating revenues in the largest television markets, only a handful of teams can field a competitive roster from season to season. For most fans in cities that host MLB, there is little hope on Opening Day that a winning season will become a reality. And while revenue sharing does exist to some degree in baseball, it is not nearly enough to level out the differences between small-market and large-market teams. Over time, the financial structure of Major League Baseball, left unchecked, is a serious detriment to any ballpark plans for mid-size and small-market teams, not to mention the game itself. From the standpoint of a small- or medium-market team, it simply makes little sense to invest in an industry that has no competitive balance.

Unfortunately, the present circumstances in Major League Baseball are beyond the control of an individual team or city. One would like to think that MLB will eventually see the writing on the wall – most baseball fans do not live in the three or four largest media markets and are not happy with the direction baseball has taken — and take corrective action.

The recent contracts awarded Alex Rodriguez (\$250 million) and Manny Ramirez (\$200 million) do not offer much encouragement. They are disheartening because they sharply underscore the problems with Major League Baseball: skyrocketing player salaries, significant disparities in local revenues, and ineffective revenue sharing. These have created deep inequalities in baseball resulting in a competitive imbalance.

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1

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The Twins must take a leadership role within the Twin Cities community, building relationships with large companies and organizations that are much more likely to invest in a ballpark project if they perceive the club to be making a sizable financial commitment of its own.

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Major League Baseball must change the way it does business. While complete revenue sharing among teams of all broadcast revenues may never come about, there is little incentive for the Twins to undertake a ballpark project if they have no hope of gaining some financial parity with other ball clubs. However, the team should begin working with local, state, and national political leaders to pressure Major League Baseball to finally address the game’s harmful financial inequities.

The current bargaining agreement between players and owners expires after the 2001 season, leaving open the very real possibility that MLB could experience another work stoppage like that which occurred during the 1994-95 seasons.

Thus, the major question becomes whether a privately-financed ballpark can generate enough revenue for the Twins to survive, and how the community can assist and support the team in achieving that objective. Based on the testimony and materials furnished to this committee, we believe that local fans will embrace such a project, and that a ballpark creatively financed with a variety of private funding mechanisms can be viable. However, certain conditions must be present ([See left](#)).

We believe that a unique, privately-financed, traditional urban ballpark has the potential to become a national attraction of its own, such that local fans and tourists will enthusiastically attend games and spend dollars in and around the park. We also believe that with proper siting in a mixed-use location, ancillary benefits to neighboring businesses will increase and potential housing options enhanced.

As we see it, this is a significant opportunity for the Twins to work with the community, firmly establishing themselves as a good neighbor and citizen. By making commitments to the neighborhoods and businesses of Minneapolis, the team could earn valuable allies in trying to overcome the inherent problems in the current structure of Major League Baseball. Ultimately, the Twins could have a wonderful ballpark that would draw regular support from the hundreds of thousands of fans who are likely to attend games every year, giving the team an enhanced and reliable income stream in the years to come. Better yet, a show of good faith and commitment to this ballpark process could revitalize baseball not only in Minnesota, but around the country. It might provide a whole new vision of how a small market team can work together with a community to craft a financially prudent solution.

Minneapolis is a great place for outdoor baseball. Our infrastructure is well suited for a new ballpark, including highways, mass transit, parking, and utilities. We are a vibrant city that doesn’t need a ballpark to spur its growth, but we would be able to take full advantage of one that enhances local development.

Most of all, we want the Twins to be here.

Given this contextual overview, the Committee of 17 believes that the planning, financing, and building of a new, outdoor ballpark in Minneapolis should focus on the specific priorities outlined on the following pages.

Community Involvement

Rationale: Although the ballpark envisioned by this committee is more compact than most other major league parks built or proposed since 1991, it will still be a significant development project that will likely impact the local community for decades after its completion. As such, we believe that continued citizen involvement in this process is essential, both to insure that a ballpark project will be integrated with the community's larger goals and that its impact on surrounding neighborhoods will be positive.

Recommendations:

- 1) As the ballpark planning moves forward to the site selection phase, a committee of community members should remain an integral part of the process. This involvement could include the continuation of the current C-17 committee, or take the form of a separate, select committee that works with other stakeholders.
- 2) As this process moves to the general design phase, community members should be included to ensure that a new ballpark meets the needs of fans. This goal might best be achieved by having community members as part of the overall design team.

Site Selection

Rationale: Unlike the way government may have functioned in the past, it is now understood that major development decisions need to account for the potential impacts on the local community. Clearly, the siting of a new ballpark *anywhere* in Minneapolis requires careful deliberation and planning, especially as we confront the new challenges and demands of the 21st Century.



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Recommendations:

- 1) Cost efficiencies should be a top priority.

If a privately-funded ballpark is to be successful, it must generate enough revenue to provide the team and investors with an adequate revenue stream. One way to do that is to minimize the team's development expenditures. Thus, it is important to consider a site with the necessary infrastructure already in place—highway access, parking options within a fifteen-minute walk, transit options, a supportive neighborhood, a nice mix of surrounding businesses and housing, etc. Acquisition costs must also be within acceptable parameters, and a potential site must not require excessive preparation costs to make it ready for development.

Implicit in this recommendation is the assumption that the ballpark will be sited on as small a parcel as feasible. A compact urban ballpark generally requires ten acres of land for its needs; most retro stadiums have required thirteen to fifteen acres. A constrained but adequate ten-acre-site will most likely be less expensive, and will result in efficiencies in design, integration with the neighborhood, and less disruption to normal city life.

- 2) Neighborhood disruption must be kept at a minimum.

Keeping costs low by building on an amenable site will have the added advantage of causing less disruption to a neighborhood. We imagine that a site near the edge of town, or in a commercial core location currently in the process of development, would meet these requirements while at the same time not displacing residents, destroying scarce housing stock, or requiring a costly relocation process for existing commercial tenants. We do not believe, however, that sites where a ballpark might actually *improve* the quality of neighborhood life (i.e., by reinforcing neighborhood circulation patterns and increasing public safety through the ballpark's orientation on a particular grid) should be ignored simply because development will cause some neighborhood disruption.

- 3) Be visionary.

A site should not be selected merely because it offers convenient parking or will cause the least amount of disruption. Many suburban sites could accomplish these goals. Rather, the ideal site would be one where the

integration of the ballpark into the existing mosaic of city architecture will capture the community's imagination, and where the surrounding neighborhood would seem worthy of significant investment in complementary housing, office, and retail uses.

- 4) The project must be compatible with the Minneapolis Development Plan.

Obviously, we are concerned that any project of this magnitude fit in with the city's current development plans, or that it could become a sensible part of an updated plan. To the extent that a desirable site can be found that would also integrate well with City and regional plans for expanded transit options and further development, such a site deserves close consideration.

Building Design

Rationale: Among the stated goals of New Ballpark, Inc. is the idea that “It is possible to design and build an ‘urban neighborhood’ scale ballpark that can be privately financed...” This idea represents a departure from the way almost every other new major league ballpark has been conceived in the last decade. In other words, this committee was charged with finding an entirely new way to design, finance, and build an outdoor ballpark that would provide an adequate revenue stream for the Minnesota Twins. Arriving at such a solution requires a creative vision that is “outside the box” of current ballpark design. Thus, one of the guiding principles of the committee has been the need to consider a ballpark design that features a more compact building.

This is an advantage for everyone – the fans, the team, the sport, potential investors, and the city. A compact urban ballpark would be more intimate, and like Fenway Park in Boston and Wrigley Field in Chicago, could offer a unique fan experience that would make Minneapolis's new ballpark an attraction in its own right. As the first traditional urban ballpark built in eighty-seven years, such a building would also enhance the city's cultural reputation as well as significantly increase the number of annual tourist visits—perhaps drawing visitors the world over. It would provide all fans with a great place to see a game, and the fan base would build and grow. A positive fan experience at the ballpark could help Major League Baseball recover from the many hits it has taken in recent years, and MLB would also benefit from the positive public image their support of a reasonable ballpark plan would generate.



Recommendations:

- 1) Design and build a smaller ballpark.
 - a) The primary advantage of a compact ballpark is cost: With smaller land requirements than retro ballparks, site acquisition costs are cheaper. And, by creatively incorporating necessary amenities like luxury boxes and club seating into the ballpark design, significant savings on construction expenses can be realized.
 - b) Second, a compact ballpark will provide a superior viewing experience for most fans in attendance, not just those in the best seats of the lower deck. During the past three decades, ballpark construction has resulted in stadiums that are progressively less fan-friendly. Some recent ballparks have been an improvement, but they are usually packed with “extras” like in-stadium stores, arcades, food courts, and restaurants, resulting in large buildings that do not fit comfortably in a mixed-use neighborhood setting. These ballparks also feature a large number of skyboxes, which require the creation of multiple upper deck seating levels above them, pushing many fans’ seats farther and farther from the action. And in multiple-sport stadiums like the Metrodome, desirable seats (i.e., behind home plate) are limited in number while plentiful outfield seats are distant from the field.

A compact urban ballpark would be designed for the regular fan as well as for wealthier patrons and potential investors. The seating bowl would be closer to the field of play, bringing all fans closer to the action. And by placing the upper deck above the lower deck, even fans in the cheap sets will enjoy good sightlines. Circulation throughout the ballpark would be possible within the seating bowl as well as in the concourse ringing the seating area. Luxury suites would be designed and located so as to minimally interfere with the view of those seated in the back rows of the lower deck.

- 2) Study other ballpark designs.

Pacific Bell Park in San Francisco and PNC Park in Pittsburgh are considered by many as the best and most unique of the recent ballparks. Minneapolis’ ballpark should learn from these two facilities and move forward, creating an even more intimate and neighborhood friendly ballpark. We should study the traditional ballparks

in Boston and Chicago as much, or perhaps even more, than the newer ballparks in Denver, Baltimore, Cleveland, etc.

- 3) Make the ballpark a single-use facility.

Our vision of this project rests on this principle: a ballpark is a place to watch baseball and root for the home team. It is not a restaurant (though food would obviously be served); it is not a mall (though merchandise would be sold); and it is not a bar (though beer and peanuts would be plentiful). Because the building will be compact in size, consideration needs to be given to locating facilities such as workout rooms, administrative offices, etc., in a mixed-use building adjacent to the ballpark proper.

- 4) Assemble a constrained, approximately ten-acre site.

The ballpark parcel should have defined edges and fit within an existing grid of streets and blocks. As mentioned earlier in this report, ten acres should be the targeted size for the site, only slightly larger than the amount of land used by the new Midtown YMCA on Lake Street.

- 5) Have a positive fan experience be the guiding principle.

Compact urban ballparks require the location of the upper deck above the lower deck, rather than above *and* behind the lower deck (as occurs in retro parks). By utilizing this design feature, patrons in the second deck are much closer to the field of play, though a small number of obstructed seats will result in the lower deck. We believe that such a tradeoff is reasonable, will create a more intimate viewing experience for a greater number of fans, and will not negatively impact the ballpark's revenue stream. It is also the kind of thoughtfulness in the design process that can ensure the Twins will have a truly unique ballpark capable of garnering national interest and attention.

- 6) Do not neglect the necessary amenities.

Fan experience as the organizing principle need not—and should not—ignore the “bells and whistles” that have become necessities in the modern ballpark. We understand the need for skyboxes, club seats, and permanent

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seat licenses, as well as for adequate concession areas and expanded locker rooms. The difference between our plan and others is that these amenities would be designed as part of a ballpark that still caters to average fans, not just wealthier patrons.

7) Hold a design charrette.

As the City, team, and potential investors move forward on this proposal, we recommend that New Ballpark, Inc. and the City hold a design charrette. This is an open and public process where a site is chosen speculatively and a ballpark designed within it so that people can see what issues are at stake and what sort of decisions and compromises are necessary to achieve desired goals. The charrette would produce a schematic design of the ballpark as well as an urban design plan for the surrounding neighborhood. Including the surrounding neighborhood in a design charrette is not unlike how the City is proceeding with LRT development: The City has undertaken master plan studies around most LRT stations, and those projects are being planned a full half-mile radius from each station. The charrette should be led by Philip Bess, who has experience in this area, or some other individual or group committed to designing a compact, urban ballpark.

Development and Urban Planning

n *Spin-off Development*

Rationale: No area of ballpark planning—aside from financing—has aroused more debate than related development issues. As a committee, we agree that ballparks are not good development generators. Rather, the evidence points to ballparks as revenue *enhancers* for already existing commercial areas. And even this is illusory: dollars spent around ballparks are just as likely to have been spent on other forms of entertainment within a city or state.

As a result, our recommendation is that the city maximize what new development is possible and enhance the development of entertainment venues that already exist within the city.

Recommendations:

- 1) Build the ballpark in or near an area where mixed-use entertainment and living already exist (e.g., restaurants, bars, shopping, museums, community centers, etc.).
- 2) Walking or easy public transit should be available at the ballpark site to give easy access to nearby venues before and after the game.
- 3) Generate a realistic, mixed-use development and urban design plan for the area around the ballpark.
 - The idea is to concentrate current growth rather than generate new growth. New development will not necessarily occur spontaneously; the City should plan effectively and offer incentives to developers that will encourage additional housing, retail, and office usages compatible with the ballpark neighborhood.
 - In a healthy city such as Minneapolis, a ballpark will force changes to occur within a neighborhood. A mixed-use development strategy and urban design plan will predict and manage these changes so that they occur as part of the vision of the community, rather than haphazardly.

n Parking and Transportation

Rationale: As with development, we recommend locating a ballpark where there are already (or soon will be) parking and transportation options.

Recommendations:

- 1) Do not build a large surface lot anywhere around the ballpark, except perhaps a small lot for players and staff. This allows easy access by foot and will yield more neighborhood friendly uses around the park itself.
- 2) Prioritize places that have significant street and structure parking already in existence within a ten to fifteen minute walk from the ballpark. This would cut down on the need for new parking garages in the vicinity of

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the facility. We also believe that parking options dispersed throughout a half-mile radius around the ballpark are more desirable than concentrating parking just a few blocks away.

- 3) To the extent that parking garages are used, work to find solutions with those garages that would increase revenue for the team and/or the investors.
- 4) Widen sidewalks around the ballpark to facilitate pedestrian traffic.
- 5) Promote alternative means of getting to the ballpark. LRT, commuter rail, shuttle buses, charter buses — even bicycles — will provide a way to come to the ballpark that will greatly reduce the need for parking.

n *Public Spaces*

Rationale: A large facility such as a ballpark creates a unique opportunity to enhance the public experience in Minneapolis. We recommend that the city carefully and thoughtfully take advantage of this opportunity.

Recommendations:

- 1) Provide gracious entries directly from the sidewalk into the ballpark. Fan should enter by doors and gates, not stairways and ramps.
- 2) Design and build a public plaza adjacent to the ballpark that will allow for pre- and post-game gathering, as well as daily use.
- 3) Make the ballpark somewhat “transparent,” allowing for a permanent view into the ballpark proper and outside to the City’s vistas and landmarks.
- 4) Incorporate artful landscaping, open spaces, and public art in and around the facility.

Financing Plan

Rationale: Members of this committee believe that public financing of a ballpark within Minneapolis is not a realistic option in the present political climate. Public sentiment appears to run strongly against such a possibility, and even some members of the committee believe taxpayer support of professional sports to be improper. Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, in particular, are reluctant to use significant public financing for a ballpark. We believe that the majority of Minnesotans (including Minneapolis and metro area residents) support baseball, however, and are deeply invested in having and keeping the Twins here. This Committee supports the efforts of New Ballpark, Inc. to help the Twins find private financing for a ballpark, and we believe that such a goal, while challenging, is possible to achieve.

Recommendations:

- 1) Look to the financing of Pacific Bell Park for guidance.

As mentioned in the introductory section of this report, we believe the experience of the San Francisco Giants offers the most promise for how the Twins might craft a Minnesota-version of the Giants' financing strategy that allowed that team to build Pacific Bell Park almost entirely with private funds. (See Appendix A for details.) We understand that San Francisco and Minneapolis are significantly different in their circumstances, but still feel that the Giants' approach serves as a valuable example of how a creative team strategy could lead to a private financing solution for a new ballpark here as well.

- 2) The Twins must lead.

Because the revenue needs of major league teams have grown so dramatically in the past decade, committee members could not envision a scenario where a new Twins ballpark would generate revenue in excess of the Twins own budgetary requirements. We do believe that private partnerships with large, local corporations (similar to what the Giants achieved in San Francisco) are a distinct possibility, and that by demonstrating a sizeable commitment to a ballpark project (perhaps half of the cost), the Twins are likely to attract the corporate support needed to fill the financing gap.



- 3) All private financing sources should be considered.

We recommend that the City support efforts to explore every possible source of private financing, including the feasibility of New Ballpark, Inc.'s preferred stock proposal. While some on the committee had strong reservations about such a plan's viability as the primary source of potential investment by developers and others, the idea is intriguing and should not be dismissed out of hand.

- 4) Encourage and find incentives for investment.

Members of this committee, as do others, feel that the initial proposal suggesting that the City sell future development rights to raise funds for the financing of a new ballpark is unworkable legally, and would not avoid the \$10 million statutory limit established in Minneapolis. However, the intent—to have a mechanism in place that makes investing in a ballpark appealing to developers—makes sense, and we encourage the exploration of other creative ideas that would bring in the capital necessary to move this project forward.

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Appendix A

According to Jack Bair, Senior Vice President and Legal Counsel of the San Francisco Giants, the financing of the \$315 million Pacific Bell Park was achieved through the following sources:

n Permanent Seat Licenses	\$ 73,000,000
n Sponsorships	\$ 57,000,000
n Loans	\$ 170,000,000
n Tax-increment Financing	\$ 15,000,000
Total	\$ 315,000,000

n Lifetime rights to 15,000 season tickets were sold at a cost of between \$1,000-7,500 each, or approximately \$4900 per seat.

n Sponsorships were sold to several major corporations, including Anheuser-Busch, Visa, Catholic Health Services, Enron, Charles Schwab, Pacific Bell, Chevron, Coca-Cola, Old Navy, and Bank of America. (Pacific Bell's contribution was part of a \$50 million naming rights deal that is spread out over several years.)

n The Giants borrowed this money from a syndicate of insurance companies headed up by Chase Securities, and the loans are backed by "contractually obligated income"—annual ballpark revenue sources such as luxury suites and club seats.

n The City of San Francisco provided \$15 million in financing, which covered the cost of razing and relocating a city-owned facility on the ballpark site, constructing a plaza by the ballpark entrance, and adding a light-rail station for the BART.

