

## COMMISSIONERS CELEBRATE BALLPARK'S GROUNDBREAKING

Photo Gallery



Commissioner Michael Vekich speaks to KSTP reporter Susanna Song on day of groundbreaking. All five Minnesota Ballpark Authority (MBA) Commissioners were on hand in downtown Minneapolis to celebrate the new ballpark's groundbreaking on August 30th, 2007.

"What a great day for Minnesota," said MBA Commissioner John Wade. "Let the building of a new outdoor ballpark begin!"

In addition to the MBA commissioners, civic leaders, government officials, current and past Minnesota Twins players, Major League Baseball officials and hundreds of fans took part in the groundbreaking festivities, which included the official turning over of dirt with shovels made of baseball bats.

"I am thrilled that outdoor baseball is coming back," said MBA Commissioner Joan Campbell. "Finally the Twins will get their own home."

Stadium construction is on schedule with the 40-thousand seat open-air facility slated to open in 2010. The urban ballpark will sit on the north edge of downtown between 5th and 7th streets on 3rd Avenue North.

"We're excited about working with the Twins and all our partners to create a fantastic new landmark," said Steve Cramer, MBA Chair. "This facility will be a baseball fan's dream and we believe it will reshape the western edge of downtown for decades to come."

The MBA was created by the Legislature to oversee the construction and operation of the new ballpark. The public's contribution to the project is capped: \$90 million for ballpark infrastructure and \$260 million for ballpark construction

"This is a historic day," said MBA Commissioner Michael Vekich. "As this project moves forward the MBA is committed to protecting the public's investment and building a state of the art facility."

The MBA Commissioners said their outstanding partners - the Minnesota Twins and Hennepin County - made the historic day a reality.

"The construction of the most transit friendly, urban ballpark in America has begun," said MBA Commissioner Barb Sykora. "I can hardly wait to hear the cry to ...play ball! "

The Minnesota Ballpark Authority was created by the 2006 Minnesota Legislature and charged with overseeing the construction and operation of the new ballpark. The MBA is partnering with the Minnesota Twins, Hennepin County, M.A. Mortenson Company, HOK Sport and HGA Architects.