

## TARGET FIELD GIVES DISABLED FANS GREATER ACCESSIBILITY



The gradually sloping pedestrian bridge runs along the north side of Target Center, connecting the plaza to 1st Avenue. Target Field will be one of the most accessible sports facilities in America, exceeding nearly every state and federal regulation for persons with disabilities. From the moment fans arrive, they'll enjoy an array of new amenities ensuring the disabled have the most memorable experience possible, even before seeing a single at-bat.

The Minnesota Ballpark Authority, the Twins, designers and disability advocates are particularly proud that every entrance to Target Field will be accessible to those with disabilities. This design feature exceeds both Minnesota's 60 percent standard and the federal government's requirement that 50 percent of entryways be wheelchair accessible.

But that's just the beginning. There are several other design features that will significantly improve access to the ballpark. For example, the MBA worked with the Twins and Target Corporation to fund an extension of the ballpark's plaza to 1st Avenue. Also, designers and advocates ensured the North Star Transit entrance had dual elevators in the Vertical Circulation Building that connects transit users to the Hiawatha LRT platform. There are extensive drop-off areas for Metro Mobility vehicles at the entrance by home plate and the city of Minneapolis has installed curb ramps that are wider than required.

Once inside, special design features will bring disabled fans closer to the game. There will be great sight lines that guarantee fans in wheelchairs won't miss any of the action on the field. In addition, those who are deaf and hard of hearing can read real-time PA announcements on outfield captioning boards. There will also be lower counters (34 inches) with braille and large print at all food and beverage concessions. This will make it much easier to grab a hot dog and soda.

The fan experience will also be more convenient for those with disabilities. Devices connected to the microphones at select ticket windows will allow agents to transmit directly into hearing aids. Disability advocates hope Target Field's implementation of this new technology will become a national building standard.

Also, speaker boxes at all ticket windows will be set below the agent's mouth so those who are deaf or hard of hearing can read lips.

Early in the design phase, the Target Field Accessibility Advisory Committee was formed and selected Dom Marinelli as its chair. He has an accomplished career advising cities and builders on how to best comply with or exceed Americans with Disability Act standards on large public venues.

"Never before have I seen a project in which disability advocates, a sports team and government agencies worked together so cooperatively and proactively to build a venue universally accessible to those with disabilities," said Marinelli, who recently worked on the new Yankee Stadium and Citi Field, home to the New York Mets.

"The public is making an enormous investment in this new ballpark; therefore, everyone in the community should be able to access and enjoy Target Field," said MBA Commissioner Joan Campbell. "While it's exciting to see all of the new features that will bring disabled fans closer to the action on the field, it's important that we continue updating and improving access long after the first pitch."



New sight lines guarantee fans in wheelchairs won't miss any action when others are standing during a big play.