

MBA THANKS PARTNERS FOR SUCCESSFUL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

The Minnesota Ballpark Authority (MBA) formally acknowledged and thanked nearly a dozen public and private partners at its May 21, 2010 Board meeting for their contributions in developing the Ballpark's Transportation Management Plan, executing an effective campaign to educate fans on getting to and from the new ballpark and continuing to direct the flow of fans before and after games at Target Field.

"Thanks to the hard work of many organizations, there have been minimal delays and little congestion on game days around Target Field," MBA Executive Director Dan Kenney said. "Their collective efforts have helped to make the ballpark's opening a success for the entire community."

In 2007, Kenney said Hennepin County worked in conjunction with the MBA, the Minnesota Twins and the city of Minneapolis to organize the committee to develop the Traffic Management Plan for the ballpark. Metro Transit, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the ABC Ramps Working Group, the Warehouse District Business Association and the North Loop Neighborhood Association were all active players in the plan's development. "Each entity involved in the Traffic Management Plan process brought a commitment to assisting in making Target Field and this emerging area of downtown Minneapolis a success," according to a resolution passed by the MBA Board.

After the Traffic Management Plan was completed, the Minneapolis Department of Public Works formed the Event Management Committee in September of 2009 to manage traffic and pedestrians around Target Field and other major venues and events taking place downtown.

Two months later, the Minnesota Twins engaged Weber Shandwick to work with all of these organizations to form a communications group, the Strategic Communications Committee, to develop key messages about getting to and from Target Field. The members of the Strategic Communications Committee developed destinationtargetfield.com as the main resource for fans to learn about transportation options to the ballpark.

In addition to the web site, the Communications Committee developed print materials for distribution in advance of Opening Day highlighting four key themes: Plan Ahead, Let the Past be your Guide, Consider Transit and Come Early/Stay Late. According to Metro Transit, in the first six games at Target Field, on average more than 20% of fans arrived at the ballpark via bus, train, or bicycle.

In order to direct the flow of fans the rest of the season, the Event Management Committee has developed game day traffic management plans to handle traffic and pedestrians around Target Field and added changeable message signs and radio traffic alerts to provide drivers with real time parking alternatives as ramps near the ballpark reach capacity.

On game days, city streets and parking ramps in the vicinity of Target Field have operated efficiently and with minimal delays, and establishments throughout downtown have enjoyed increased foot traffic and business both before and after Twins games, Kenney said.

The MBA's resolution "extends the utmost appreciation" to the Minnesota Twins, Hennepin County, Metro Transit, the City of Minneapolis, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Target Center, the Minnesota Timberwolves/Lynx, the ABC Ramps Working Group, the Warehouse District Business Association, the North Loop Neighborhood Association and Meet Minneapolis.