

Finance & Commerce Top Projects: Siebert Field

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Minnesota plays a game vs. Nebraska on May 11, 2013, at Siebert Field. (Submitted photo)

Address: 1606 Eighth St. SE, Minneapolis

Project cost: \$7 million | **Project size:** 140,000-square-foot baseball field, with 1,420-seat stadium, ticketing, concessions and amenities

Owner: University of Minnesota | **Contractor:** PCL Construction

Architect: DLR Group | **Engineers:** DLR Group (design-build mechanical/electrical)

After years of fundraising, coaxing and waiting, University of Minnesota's men's baseball coach John Anderson was impatient. Having broken ground on a new stadium in June 2012, Anderson was determined to put his team on the field for fall practice. While the new Siebert Field under construction on the old stadium's site was scheduled for completion by the end of the year, Anderson pushed the project team to shift priorities "on the fly," recalls PCL design/build project manager Trent Johnson.

Dodging additional curveballs, such as a high pressure gas line discovered underneath left field, buried house foundations and contaminated soil, the project team was able to accelerate installation of the playing surface while keeping the stadium on schedule.

As a result, the Gopher men's baseball team started taking batting practice in late September in the middle of an active construction site around the perimeter. The stadium was completed a week early, just before Christmas. Ironically, Mother Nature threw the final curve ball when an early April snowstorm pushed out the scheduled inaugural day game for the new 1,420-seat stadium.

Building Information Modeling (BIM) enabled the PCL/DLR team to monitor project progress, flag potential delays and solve problems in real time through three-week look-ahead reviews that included key subcontractors and university representatives. The team placed special emphasis on critical path items such as delivery of synthetic turf and timely decision-making by the U.

Construction in a densely populated neighborhood required tight scheduling of truck traffic and frequent communication during excavation to mitigate potential complaints from surrounding apartment dwellers. Virtual construction modeling also allowed the team to address concerns about potential fly balls hitting nearby apartments and a potential visual distraction for batters.

Planning also had to accommodate a phased approach to deliver the critical functions of a Division I field while allowing for future additions as funding becomes available, Johnson explained. "Overall, it was a great experience. I had a lot of fun building it," he said.

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