Arrowhead Stadium and Kauffman Stadium were built side by side in the early 1970s and had become significantly outdated. Fans of the Kansas City Chiefs and Kansas City Royals frequently encountered traffic jams in the too-narrow concourses, while the stadiums lacked enough restrooms, concession stands, premium seating, suites and restaurants.

Replacing both Jackson County, Mo.-owned stadiums was too costly. In 2006, Jackson County voters approved a 3/8-cent sales tax to renovate the stadiums, providing $475 million toward the $650 million renovation project. In addition to the public funds, the Chiefs pledged $150 million and the Royals $25 million to cover certain costs, and the teams took responsibility for any cost overruns.

Renovations at Kauffman Stadium, home of the Royals, were completed in July 2009. The Chiefs’ Arrowhead Stadium will be complete by August 2010.

The Jackson County Sports Complex Authority (JCSCA) hired Burns & McDonnell as its owner’s representative to manage the renovations. Burns & McDonnell represents the public, making sure the Chiefs and Royals include all appropriate features in the renovations, meet the construction schedule and manage costs, as well as meet minority- and women-owned hiring goals and workforce participation.

Challenges
All major building projects place a lot of responsibility — even pressure — on the design and construction teams. But the stadium renovations had especially high visibility because taxes pay the majority of the bill. Further, the Chiefs and Royals draw nearly 4 million fans each year, all of whom would judge whether the facelifts were worth the money.
"One goal was to do a $650 million public project with only positive press," says Blake Ellis, project manager for Burns & McDonnell. "While the long-term challenge was to deliver on the promise of two great sports venues, the immediate task was to balance the concerns of the Chiefs and Royals as construction got under way."

Over the years, the teams had not always seen eye-to-eye. As next-door neighbors sharing loading docks, parking, stadium access roads and utility systems, the Chiefs and Royals were bound to see operations impacted by the other team’s construction projects.

**Solutions**

Communication paved a smooth path to successful completion of Kauffman Stadium renovations. From the outset, biweekly meetings with Burns & McDonnell, the JCSCA and team representatives covered minority- and women-owned hiring and workforce participation, project financials, construction progress and, most importantly, work on one project that might impact the other team. For example, spring construction at Arrowhead was causing dust to blow into Kauffman during early-season baseball action.

"The Chiefs volunteered to water down the Arrowhead site before each Royals game. The teams also had to work out access to loading docks, delivery gates, parking lots and other areas," Ellis says. "It was little things, but it made a big difference to get them resolved."

**Results**

Close contact among the team representatives, the JCSCA and Burns & McDonnell helped alleviate disputes, project delays, change orders and cost increases to the public.

"We didn’t have the level of surprises one would think in a project of this size," says Jim Rowland, executive director for the JCSCA. Tom Beckenbaugh of The Konrath Group, owner’s representative for the Chiefs, and John Loyd of the Owner’s Perspective, owner’s representative for the Royals, both said Ellis was instrumental in keeping the county and the teams true to their development agreements.

"The sports authority and Burns & McDonnell in the background identified issues and assisted both teams to resolve conflicts in a non-controversial way," Beckenbaugh says.

The authority and Ellis also have helped the project meet goals of placing 22 percent of contract dollars with firms owned by minorities and 8 percent with firms owned by women.

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