HOW CAN I IMPROVE THE BALLPARK EXPERIENCE FOR ALL USERS?

MY RESEARCH INCLUDED FINDING OUT HOW ALL TYPES OF USERS EXPERIENCED THE BALLPARK. AFTER COMING UP WITH A LIST OF 20 WAYS THAT EXPERIENCE MAY BE INFLUENCED, I STUDIED EACH WAY AND HOW IT INFLUENCED EACH TYPE OF USER. THROUGH MANY CASE STUDIES, HISTORICAL RESEARCH, AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, I CAME UP WITH A GUIDE OF CONSIDERATIONS FOR WHEN DESIGNING MID-SIZE BALLPARK STADIUMS

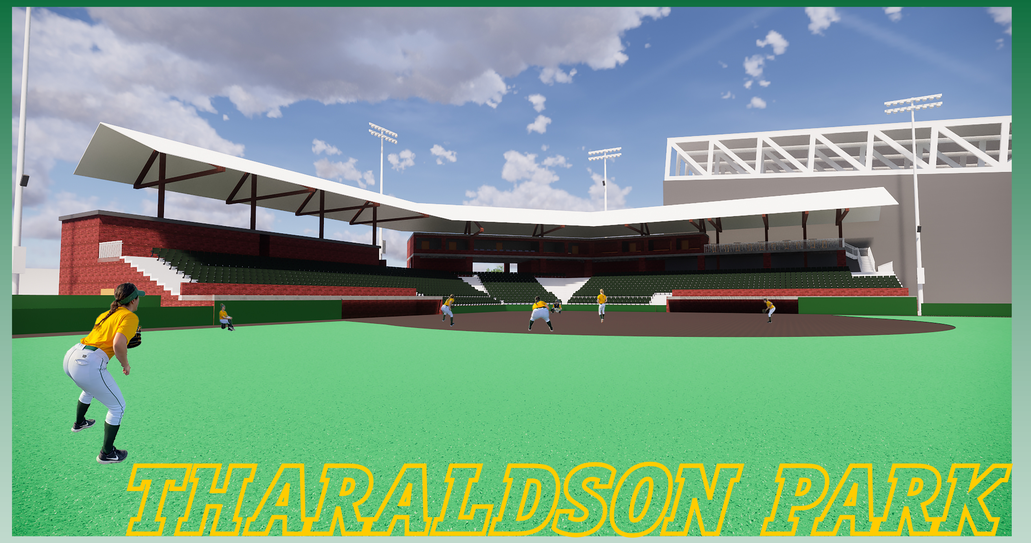
FOUR MAIN USER GROUPS

STUDENT ATHLETES: THE MOST IMPORTANT SET OF USERS THAT THIS PROJECT IS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR IS THE STUDENT ATHLETES. THEY ARE THE WHOLE REASON BEHIND THE NEED FOR A FACILITY LIKE THIS. THESE HARD-WORKING ATHLETES ARE ALSO FULL-TIME STUDENTS WHO DESERVE TO WORK AND PLAY IN NICE ENVIRONMENTS. THIS PROJECT WILL SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS THE STUDENT ATHLETES AT NDSU WHO ARE ON THE WOMEN S FASTPITCH SOFTBALL TEAM. ANOTHER GROUP OF STUDENT ATHLETES THAT NEED TO BE CONSIDERED ARE THE ONES OF THE OPPOSING TEAMS THAT TRAVEL TO THIS FACILITY TO COMPETE AGAINST NDSU. IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE THEM FEEL WELCOME WHEN PLAYING ON THE ROAD.

COACHES: THE ROLE OF THE COACH IS TO PROVIDE ORDER, INSTRUCTION, GUIDANCE, TRAINING, AND SUPPORT FOR THE STUDENT ATHLETES, ON AND OFF THE FIELD. THEY ARE IN CHARGE OF MAKING SURE THAT THE TEAM IS ALWAYS DOING WHAT THEY NEED TO, WHILE GIVING THEIR BEST EFFORTS SO THEY CAN PERFORM AT PEAK LEVELS. ANOTHER TASK THAT NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN DESIGNING FOR THE COACHES IS RECRUITING FUTURE STUDENT ATHLETES, AND WHAT THEY NEED TO HELP BRING IN THE BEST TALENT TO THEIR PROGRAM. COACHES NEED PERSONAL SPACES IN THESE FACILITIES TO GET THEIR WORK DONE AS WELL. THERE IS A LOT OF WORK THAT GOES ON BEHIND THE SCENES THAT MOST PEOPLE DO NOT CONSIDER WHEN THEY THINK ABOUT THE JOB OF A FULL-TIME COACH.

STAFF: ATHLETIC EVENTS NEED TO HAVE STAFF TO MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS RUNNING PROPERLY. THIS GROUP OF USERS WILL NEED THEIR OWN SPACES TO UTILIZE ON GAMEDAYS, AS WELL AS ALL THE OTHER DAYS THAT THEY MAY BE WORKING. SOME OF THESE STAFF MAY BE PEOPLE WHO SOLELY WORK WITH THE NDSU SOFTBALL TEAM, OR WITH NDSU STUDENT ATHLETES IN GENERAL. WE WILL ALSO NEED TO CONSIDER SUPPORT STAFF, FIELD MAINTENANCE STAFF, AND MEDIA STAFF AND THEIR SPECIFIC NEEDS ON GAMEDAYS.

FANS: LASTLY, IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER THE FANS THROUGHOUT THE DESIGN PROCESS. THE FANS ARE SO IMPORTANT TO ATHLETICS. FANS HAVE AN IMPORTANT INFLUENCE IN THE GAMEDAY ENVIRONMENT. THE MAIN GOAL IS TO BRING IN AS MANY FANS AS POSSIBLE TO WATCH AND SUPPORT THE ATHLETES. MARKETING STAFF HAS A LARGE ROLE IN BRINGING FANS IN, BUT MY GOAL IS TO LET THE FACILITY AND GAMEDAY EXPERIENCES TO DO THAT AS WELL. ONE OF THE TOP INFLUENCES BEHIND THIS DESIGN IS TO BRING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER.

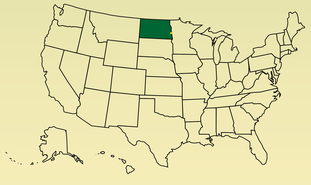


THARALDSON PARK

THE SITE

THE SITE FOR THIS PROJECT IS LOCATED IN FARGO, ND ON THE CAMPUS OF NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY. IT IS THE HOME TO THE NDSU WOMENS SOFTBALL TEAM. NDSU FACES DIFFERENT CHALLENGES FROM OTHER COLLEGIATE SOFTBALL TEAMS AROUND THE COUNTRY IN THAT THE CLIMATE IN FARGO IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM MOST OTHER CITIES. WITH MUCH COLDER TEMPARATURES FOR MOST OF THE SOFTBALL SEASON, IT BECOMES A YEARLY BATTLE OF FINDING PROPER FACILITIES TO PRACTICE AND PLAY IN.
THIS THESIS AIMS TO ADDRESS THESE SPECIFIC CLIMATE PROBLEMS IN ADDITION TO OTHERS THAT ARE MORE COMMON NATIONWIDE.

IN 2018, THE SOFTBALL FACILITY RECEIVED UPGRADES TO THEIR GRANDSTANDS AND FIELD SURFACE. WHILE THESE CHANGES HAVE IMPROVED THE QUALITY OF THE FACILITY IMENSELY, MANY MORE CHANGES WOULD HELP EVEN MORE.



FARGO, ND

CASE STUDIES

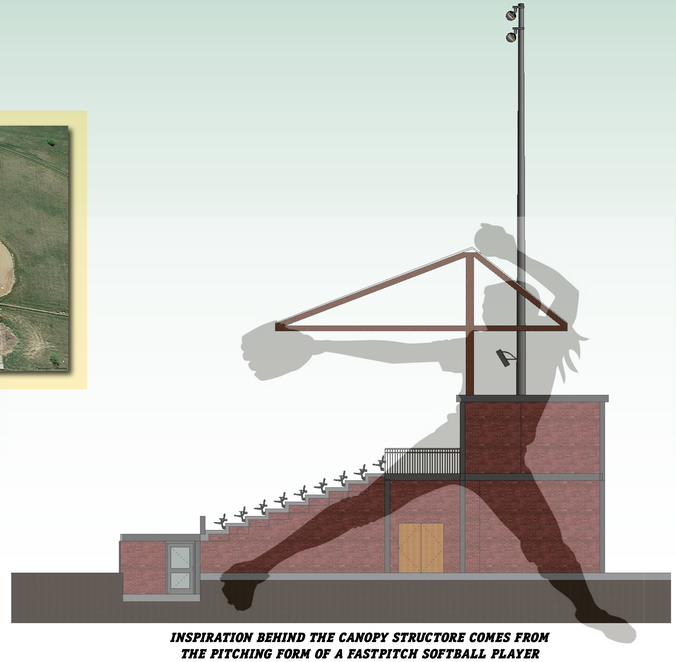
CASE STUDIES WERE IMPORTANT IN FINDING OUT WHAT WAS SIMILAR AND DIFFERENT BETWEEN VARIOUS COLLEGIATE SOFTBALL FACILITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY. WITH MOST OF THE NICE, NEW FACILITIES BEING IN WARMER CLIMATES, I HAD TO FIGURE OUT WHAT WOULD WORK IN THIS LOCATION AND WHAT WOULD NOT. THESE CASE STUDIES ALSO HELPED BUILD THE PROGRAM, TAKING PIECES FROM ALL OF THE FACILITES THAT WERE STUDIED.

OREGON

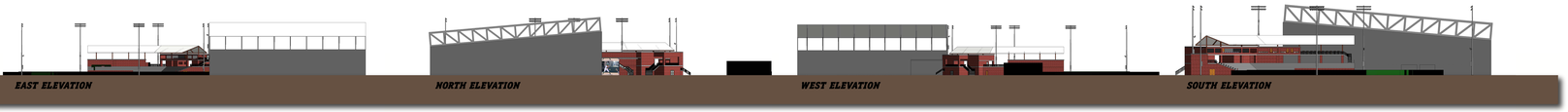
OREGON

FLORIDA

UTAH



INSPIRATION BEHIND THE CANOPY STRUCTORE COMES FROM THE PITCHING FORM OF A FASTPITCH SOFTBALL PLAYER



AESTHETICS
OVERALL BUILDING LOOK, SURROUNDING SCENERY, VIEWS, BUILDING DETAILS

MEMORABLE EVENTS
CLOSE GAMES, UNIQUE SPACES, ART, BRANDING, DETAILING WHAT WILL BRING PEOPLE BACK TO THE SPACE

STRESS
MINIMIZING STRESS FOR ALL USERS - ON FIELD, IN PUBLIC AREAS, ACCESS TO THE FACILITY AND THROUGHOUT IT

EXCITEMENT
ENHANCING EXCITING MOMENTS THROUGHOUT FACILITY ON GAMEDAYS, AS WELL AS YEAR ROUND FOR THOSE USERS. WINS, SPECIAL EVENTS

FOCUS
ALLOWING APPROPRIATE AMOUNTS OF FOCUS FOR PLAYERS ON FIELD OR AT PRACTICE, COACHES/STAFF WHILE WORKING, FANS WATCHING GAMES

DISTRACTION
ADDRESSES GOOD AND BAD DISTRACTIONS FOR ALL USERS. HOW TO MINIMIZE BAD DISTRACTIONS AND INFLUENCE GOOD DISTRACTIONS

INSPIRATION
ABILITY TO INSPIRE ALL USERS. PLAYERS, COACHES, AND STAFF DAILY. INSPIRE FANS ON GAMEDAYS AND AT SPECIAL EVENTS

SUPPORTIVE EQUIPMENT
INCLUDES PROPER EQUIPMENT TO ASSIST ATHLETES ON IMPROVING THEIR PERFORMANCE. ALSO FOR STAFF ASSISTING IN GAMEDAY PRODUCTION

SUPPORTIVE FACILITIES
HAVING THE PROPER FACILITY NEEDS FOR ALL TYPES OF EVENTS THAT WILL BE HELD THERE - WITH MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY

RELAXATION
ABILITY FOR ALL USERS TO FIND RELAXATION DURING THEIR TIME AT THE FACILITY. FANS IN PUBLIC AREAS, PLAYERS IN LOCKER ROOMS AND ON FIELD

MOTIVATION
PRODUCES MOTIVATION FOR ALL USERS. IMPORTANT IN PRIVATE TEAM AREAS, IN PRACTICE FACILITY, AND ON FIELD

COPING
ALLOWS PROPER SPACES FOR USERS TO COPE WHEN DEALING WITH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS, SUCH AS LOSING GAMES, NOT PLAYING WELL, DAILY ISSUES

ACCESS
WELL-PLANNED ACCESS ROUTES FOR ALL TYPES OF USERS. FROM GETTING TO THE SITE, TO MOVING THROUGHOUT THE CONCOURSE AND TO SEATS IN STANDS

THERMAL COMORT
ADDRESSES CLIMATE CONDITIONS FOR NORTH DAKOTA. PROPER BARRIERS AND PROTECTION TO KEEP USERS COMFORTABLE. INDOOR FACILITY

VISUAL COMFORT
PROPER LIGHTING AND SITE LINES DURING GAMES, PRACTICES, EVENTS AND AROUND THE WHOLE FACILITY

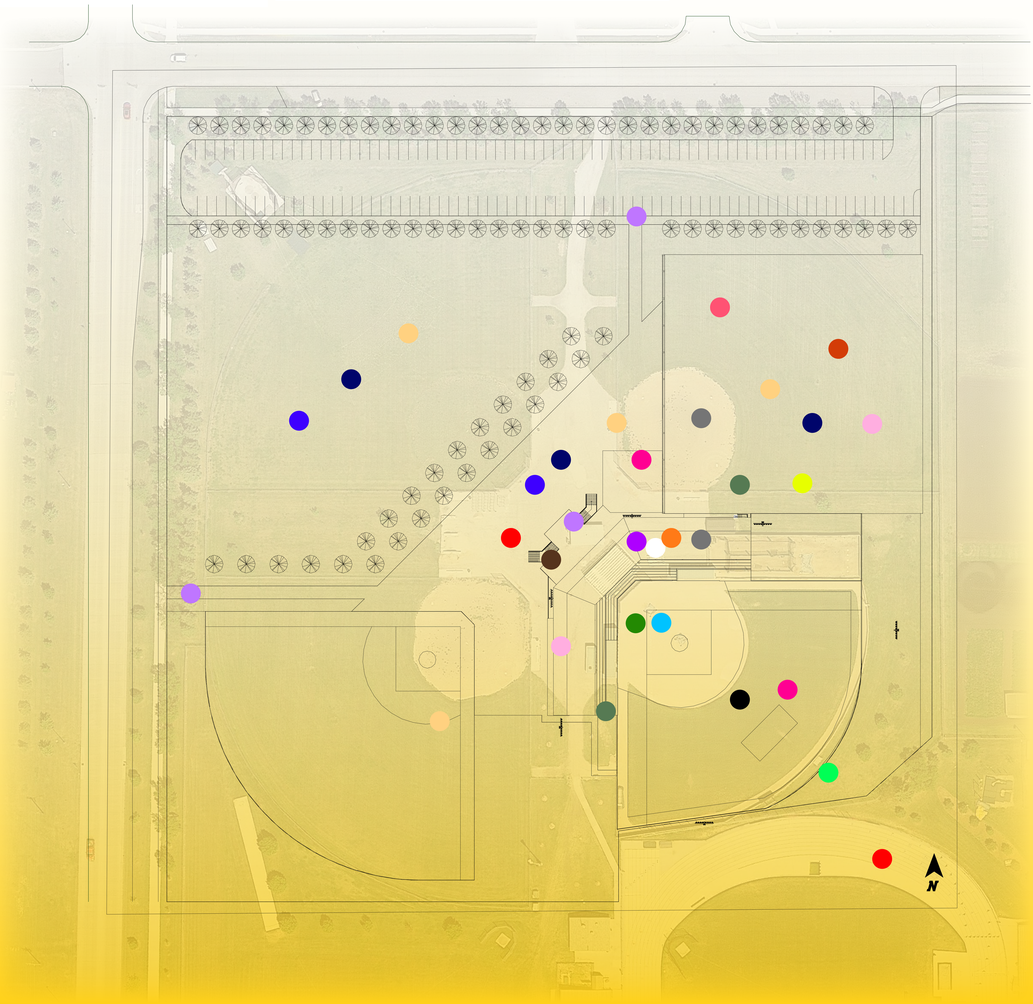
ACOUSTICS
ADDRESSES PROPER ACOUSTIC LEVELS THROUGHOUT THE FACILITY. GAME DAY SPEAKERS, PROPER ACOUSTICS IN PRACTICE FACILITY

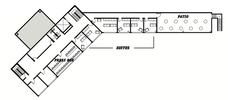
FREE MOVEMENT
ALLOWS FOR FREE MOVEMENT FOR ALL USERS AT FACILITY, WHILE ALSO CONSIDERING SECURITY AND PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE AREAS

PHYSICAL COMFORT
CREATES OVERALL PHYSICAL COMFORT WHILE SPENDING TIME IN THE FACILITY FOR ALL USERS - WILL BRING PEOPLE BACK IF GOOD

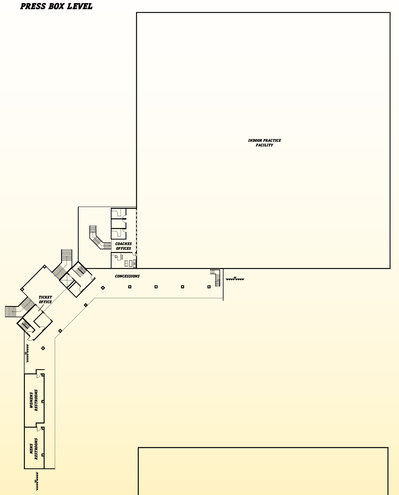
FOOD & DRINK
HAVING PROPER SPACES AND FACILITIES TO PROVIDE CONCESSIONS ON GAMEDAYS AND FOR EVENTS. FUELING THE ATHLETES DAILY

FIELD CONDITIONS
PROPER FIELD CONDITIONS ARE NECESSARY TO KEEP FAIRNESS OF GAME PLAY. ABILITY TO PLAY IN DIFFERENT WEATHER CONDITIONS

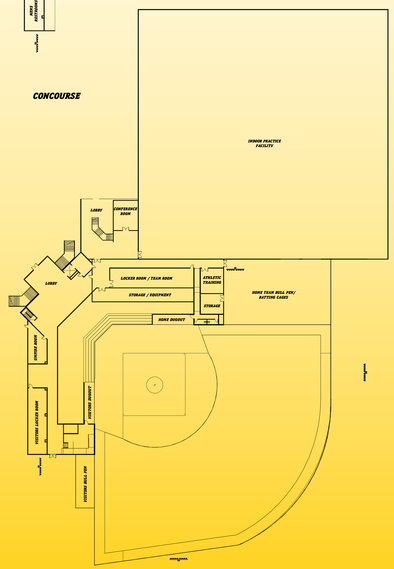




PRESS BOX LEVEL



CONCOURSE



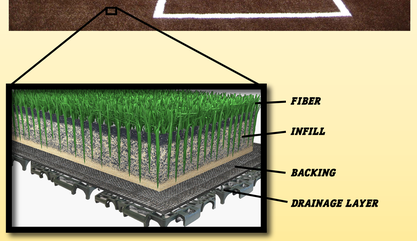
DUGOUT LEVEL & GROUND FLOOR

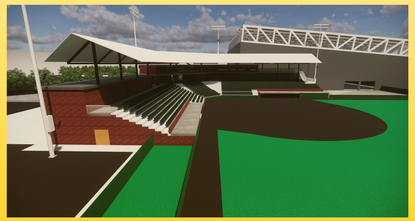
FIELD TURF

IN 2018, THE SURFACE OF THE NDSU SOFTBALL FIELD WAS UPGRADED FROM REGULAR DIRT, TO A FIELD TURF SYSTEM. THIS SYSTEM IS MUCH MORE PRACTICAL FOR AREAS UP IN THE NORTH THAT GET THE LONG, SNOWY WINTERS AND WET SPRINGS LIKE IN FARGO, ND. THE FIELD TURF SYSTEM ALLOWS FOR MUCH FASTER WATER DRAINAGE - FOR MELTING SNOW, OR HEAVY SPRING SHOWERS. IN THE SPRING DIRT FIELDS TAKE MUCH LONGER TO BE PREPARED FOR PLAY AS THEY CANNOT BE USED UNTIL THE EARTH BENEATH IT IS THAWED TO A CERTAIN DEPTH.

HAVING THIS UPDATED PLAYING SURFACE ALLOWS THE SOFTBALL TEAM TO GET OUTSIDE TO PRACTICE AND PLAY EARLIER IN THE SPRING. RAIN DELAY TIMES ARE ALSO DECREASED WITH THE ADDITION OF THE TURF, WHEREAS A DIRT FIELD WOULD TAKE SIGNIFICANTLY LONGER TO DRY.

FIELD TURF SYSTEMS ARE AN INVESTMENT, BUT MOST PEOPLE WOULD AGREE THAT IT IS WORTH EVERY PENNY. MANY SCHOOLS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY IN THE NORTH, ARE SWITCHING FROM GRASS TO FIELD TURF PLAYING SURFACES FOR ALL TYPES OF SPORTS.





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