

Final Plans for Kauffman Stadium Unveiled

Written by Maury Brown
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Yesterday, the **Kansas City Royals** and Jackson County officials unveiled the final plans for the \$250 million renovation project to **Kauffman Stadium** that will start at the end of this season and completed before the start of the 2010 season.

One aspect of the design that will be missing from what was originally proposed is a 9,500-seat amphitheater beyond left field.

The renovations come by way of a sales tax increase of 3/8 of a cent that Jackson Co. voters approved last year.

(Select the image to provided to see a high-resolution version)

At the announcement, the Royals avoid controversy by saying that they would add \$900,000 to the project for a state-of-the-art video control room. As [reported by MLB.com](#) :

The changes will be done in phases (***Biz of Baseball Note: to see an outline of the phases as released by HOK Sport, [select this link](#)***). By Opening Day 2008, the stadium will feature new bullpens that will be perpendicular to the field, expanded dugout and crown seating and expanded vomitories -- the tunnel-like passages between the seats and the outside walls -- in the stadium.

"We need to do everything in a certain sequence," [Kevin Uhlich, Royals' senior

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vice president of business operations], said.

Opening Day 2009 will feature several more changes, including an outfield plaza, a walk of fame, an expanded View Level concourse and a food court, new scoreboard and new press facilities. Everything should be finished by Opening Day 2010, with several final touches, including completed areas in the Diamond Club, Crown Club, Stadium Club and home-plate suites installed.

"There are going to be areas in the stadium that are going to be touched for all facets of fans, not only the premium areas -- obviously those are necessary for any renovation -- but the fan who is going to come to one game a year," Uhlich said earlier this season.

As for removal of the amphitheater, those plans were scrapped in favor of improving Kauffman, itself. As [reported by the Kansas City Star](#) :

Although the pavilion stood to be a money-maker for the Royals, fan focus groups gave it a thumbs down, said **Earl Santee**, senior principal of HOK Sport, which is doing the stadium design.

The Royals planned to put more than \$4 million into the pavilion, with the county chipping in \$2.5 million from the sales tax revenue. Sanders said the pavilion would be a bigger benefit to the Royals than to fans and should not be subsidized.

“We decided it was not a prudent thing to build,” said Kevin Uhlich, Royals senior vice president for business operations. “We thought there were a lot better uses for the money within the stadium.”

Instead, the Royals and the county agreed to redirect the money into such fan-friendly changes as wider concourses on the upper level, a kids' ball field and play area beyond left field, more food outlets and more picnic-like seating.

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Two signature aspects of the ballpark will remain. The fountains in centerfield, and the crown scoreboard in centerfield. The scoreboard will be significantly larger as part of the renovation.

To see renderings like you see above, along with the finer details of the renovation, and the funding aspects, select [The Biz of Baseball's Kauffman Stadium Renovations page](#)

To read [The Biz of Baseball with HOK's Earl Santee, select this link](#)