

# Case Study

MINNESOTA STATE FAIRGROUNDS HAS INCREASE  
IN EVENTS WITH NEW SUPERIOR SHELTERS



# MINNESOTA STATE FAIRGROUNDS

St. Paul, Minnesota

**THE CUSTOMER:** Known as the largest state fair in the United States by average daily attendance, the Minnesota State Fair attracts nearly 1.8 million people annually. It is their mission to educate and involve their guests by providing a world-class showcase that is innovating, entertaining, and fun. Often referred to as the “Great Minnesota Get-Together,” this end-of-summer tradition has taken place since 1854.

**THE CHALLENGE:** Events were held in an open grassy area under portable tents that were set up and taken down each day of the fair. In the event of inclement weather, scheduled group events were prevented from taking place. Community leaders decided to tackle this problem to better cater to guests. They sought to create permanent shelters that can be used during the fair and throughout the rest of the year as well. The fair was scheduled to start on August 27, 2015 so it was important to find a company that can provide a superior quality product and install it within their tight deadline.

**THE SUPERIOR SOLUTION:** The customer wanted to revitalize the space by installing permanent pavilions in the area just east of the Grandstand music stage. In partnership with Brian Flannagan, President of Parkitecture, they sought out to find the best shelter structures for their space.

“We are very happy with the beautiful pavilions and the feedback from event coordinators and fairgoers passing by the area. The structures have a classy and clean look that allow groups to feel comfortable and relaxed even during a busy day at the fair.”

-Emily Diedrick  
Event and Group Hospitality Supervisor

Parkitecture is a trusted organization that has been in business since 1984. Their dedication to creating exceptional architectural and recreational environments encouraged the customer to work

Even with their long and successful history, they are constantly looking for ways to improve their aging facilities and programming. Community leaders founded the Minnesota State Fair Foundation 501 (c) (3) in 2002 as a nonprofit entity to oversee the preservation and improvements of the fairgrounds. Located next to the Grandstand music stage is an outdoor event space where they sought to replace portable tents with permanent structures.



Photo by Justin Graddy | Buffalo Cinematic Productions

with them again. Parkitecture did some initial product comparisons for the customer. After looking at different solutions, they chose Shelter by Superior Recreational Products because of the classic construction, modern design, price, and install deadline.

The customer chose two 44' x 64' Gable End Shelters that needed to be manufactured and completely installed within the lead time of eight weeks before the grand opening of the fair, which was accomplished.

The space was named the Horton Pavilions after a donor who wanted to see family gathering spaces created at the fair.

They had 45 different groups scheduled to have an event under the large space provided by the pavilions. The events ranged from corporate functions, weddings, anniversaries, reunions, and more.

“We are very happy with the beautiful pavilions and the feedback from event coordinators and fairgoers passing by the area,” Emily Diedrick, Event and Group Hospitality Supervisor said.

# SHELTERS IN ACTION

Wedding Reception and Brewery VIP Event

**THE IMPLEMENTATION:** Now that there are permanent shelter structures at the Horton Pavilions, the area can be utilized for the entire spring, summer, and fall events rather than just the duration of the fair.

On the first day of the 2015 fair, two big groups were the first to utilize the new event space at the Horton Pavilions: a wedding reception for 100 people in the south pavilion and a Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Company VIP event for 200 people in the north pavilion.

With the excitement of the fair in the background, the guests

enjoyed food, drinks, and entertainment underneath the new shelters.

The Horton Pavilions is a perfect gathering space because the shelters are secluded from the hustle and bustle of the fair with the grass and trees as a boarder, but still close enough to the action. Guests can take the short private pathway into the fair after their event.

“The structures have a classy and clean look that allow groups to feel comfortable and relaxed even during a busy day at the fair,” Diedrick said.

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**THE RESULTS:** The new Horton Pavilions were a big hit during the grand opening. Now that the portable structures are a thing of the past, they are able to host more events throughout the year underneath the new shelters and grow their business within the hospitality market place.

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-Jeff Caldwell  
National Accounts Manager

“The structures turned out beautiful and I am excited to book more events as a result!” Diedrick said.

The two 44' x 64' Gable End Structures added more than just shade to this space. It created significant value, moving it from an open area into a usable, functional, and attractive outdoor gathering space.

They chose one of the largest sizes available in a standard shelter structure.

“They needed more space because the fair has gotten so big and the opportunity to have events was a priority,” Jeff Caldwell, National Accounts Manager at Superior Recreational Products said.

The 2015 fair set a new attendance record of 1,779,738 people in combined daily attendance.

The hospitality group is providing more than just an event space. They provide banquet tables, use of the surrounding park, cleanup and garbage removal, food and beverage options, audio/visual equipment, and more extras!

It is their goal to make the pavilions a great space available to the community year-round.

The Horton Pavilions were named after a donor who wanted to see family gathering spaces created.

“The Minnesota State Fair has been able to program more events under these spaces and Parkitecture, like SRP, can tell the story of some nice-looking shelters where people can play, relax, and live,” Caldwell said.



**TO LEARN MORE AND SEE THE SHELTERS IN USE CLICK HERE!**