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spectacular retailing entertainment venues, which made them a logical choice for Comerica Park.

While the ballpark certainly isn't the firm's largest project in its 22-year tenure, project architect Rand Harder says it may be the most complicated. Harder said his firm could have used about six months to a year longer to create its masterpiece, but they're used to working on a short deadline. Projects of this scale can take from three to five years to complete.

JPRA had about two years to design Comerica Park's premier evening destinations. It was a

stretch, but JPRA seems to be pulling it off. Harder said the carpet and final touches will be put in place by April 2.

"After awhile, you get used to the stress," Harder said. "This was such a complex project because of the quality of detail and the deadline."

He compared the time restriction to remodeling a school, when they have only a short time until students return from summer vacation. "You just have to get it done," Harder said.

Here's how the process works: JPRA provided Olympia Entertainment Inc. with the designs and construction documentation.

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**Rand Harder**  
—Architect

Contractors started working on the project in November, with JPRA operating as an agent for Olympia Entertainment, Tigers owner Mike Ilitch's company.

Harder runs the project, making sure everything gets done. He doesn't have any ulcers yet,

but he's counting his gray hairs, many of which he jokingly attributes to this project. Touring the spaces he's directly responsible for, Harder exudes a sense of ownership.

"We've created an attitude within our spaces," Harder said.

"Everything revolves around a theme, from the signs to the wall surfaces."

For example, the Beer Hall is a rough-and-tumble, manly man's kind of bar. "It's where you can take a good beating," Harder boasted.

The concrete floors will be stained to look like leather, with exposed ceilings and picnic tables. This space came straight out of German beer halls, with an ancient, primitive look. To design these features, JPRA used a team of graphic artists and the Internet for research. They created four drawings over five months.

The estimated cost for their nine restaurants, clubs and retail areas is \$11 million. The Beer Hall opens into the Beer Garden, with the feel of an old-style, outdoor beer festival.

With contractors running around and into him, many calling his name, Harder clearly feels comfortable in this chaos. He calmly declares, "This space will provide an old celebration of the outdoor beer festival. Ilitch wanted a Ferris wheel, so one is being installed just prior to opening day." Of course, this is no stock Ferris wheel, with cars shaped like baseballs and room to carry 60 adults.

As with most everything at the park with a commercialized name, there are no free rides. Cost hasn't been announced yet. Thanks to Ilitch's vision, the estimated \$300-million stadium has many surprises for adults and children alike, with a carousel featuring 30 hand-painted tigers, liquid fireworks and the largest scoreboard in American baseball, at 202 feet wide and 147 feet high.

"Those people who held onto the nostalgia of Tiger Stadium will be nicely surprised," said David Peterhans, JPRA's project director. "Nobody's done exactly what he's (Ilitch) done here. Most ballparks have a concentration on food as an important component. But he's put together food and entertainment as no one else has."

While some fans were allowed full access a month before the stadium opened, that may be the last time they see The Tiger Den and Tiger Club only welcome to premium and suite season ticket holders, who pay an additional price to lounge comfortably while watching the game. The 5,400-square-foot lounge area features member lockers, a piano and smoking lounge. Fans can watch the game from a comfortable chair with a fruity drink in hand.

"We created intimate zones and open seating, for exhibitionists to voyeur," Harder said. This style of world-class presentation will change baseball fans' expectations of what a ballpark should offer, Peterhans said.

"It's sort of like what Somerset did to people's expectations of a shopping center. They just don't know how great it will be until they see it. It's a pageant almost," he added.

## Bullard seeks new position

Senator Bill Bullard, Jr. (R-Highland) today announced that he is a candidate of the office of Oakland County Drain Commissioner.

Present Drain Commissioner George W. Kuhn who is serving his 28th year in that position is not running for re-election this year.

"I am pleased and gratified that George Kuhn has endorsed my candidacy and is recommending to the voters of Oakland County that I be selected to succeed him," Senator Bullard stated. "George Kuhn has established a record of honesty, integrity and dedication as a public servant for over 40 years as an elected council member, Mayor, State Senator and Drain Commissioner," Senator Bullard concluded.

Senator Bullard is serving his 18th year in the Michigan Legislature. He has sponsored over 90 bills which have become laws.

Senator Bullard has served as township trustee, township supervisor, state representative and state senator over the past 22 years.

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