

## PROJECT PROFILE

Project Name	Lowertown Urban Village	Location	St. Paul, MN
Owner	N/A		
Project Use(s)	Mixed Uses		
Project Size	180 Acres	Total Development Cost	Investment to date - \$428 million
Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate)	\$350,000		
Date Initiated	Late 1978	Percent Completed, December 2, 1994	
Projected Completion Date (if appropriate)	15 - 20 years		
(Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates)			
Application submitted by:			
Name	Weiming Lu		
Title	Executive Director		
Organization	Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation		
Address	175 E. 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55101		
Telephone ( )	612 227-9131		

## Key Participants (Attach an additional sheet if needed)

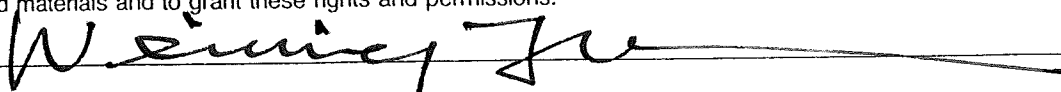
Organization	Key Person	Telephone
Public Agencies	John Wirka	(612) 266-6411
St. Paul Parks Dept		
St. Paul Planning & Econ. Dev.	Ken Peterson	(612) 227-9505
St. Paul Public Works Dept.	Leon Pearson	(612) 266-6180
Developer	Gordon Awsumb	(612) 297-6734
Zaidan Holdings, Inc.		
Professional consultants:		
Architect	Craig Rafferty	(612) 224-4831
Rafferty, Rafferty, Tollefson		
Landscape architect		
Urban designer	Milo Thompson	(612) 332-1234
Bentz Thompson		
Planner	Fritz Angst	(612) 223-6595
Briggs & Morgan		
Lawyer	Merrill Busch	(612) 872-7700
Busch & Partners		
Other	Cheryl Kartes	(612) 778-2107
Community group(s)	John Mannillo	(612) 292-8306
Artspace Projects, Inc.		
Downtown Community Development Council		
Downtown Council of St. Paul	Lois Lindquist	(612) 297-6988
Sponsor		
Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation		

Please indicate how you learned of the Rudy Bruner Award in Urban Excellence.

mailing       media       previous RBA entrant       other

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**ABSTRACT**

Project Name: Lowertown  
 Location: St. Paul, MN

**1. Describe briefly the project's design and implementation**

Lowertown, St. Paul is an ongoing urban revitalization program affecting the historic heart of the city, more than 180 acres. From the beginning, we weren't satisfied with merely individual projects. We set our goals for building an "urban village". We wished to create in the heart of the city a new community, where people of every income level, age and ethnic background may live and work.

The vision of an "urban village" was implemented through an effective public/private partnership, involving public agencies, private lenders, foundations, neighborhood organizations, the artist community, business associations and many other organizations. Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation (LRC), as the catalyst for the revitalization, has been engaged in three types of activities since its founding:

- a) as a design center, envisioning a new future for this historic district;
- b) as a gap financier, providing crucial gap financing for projects;
- c) as a marketing office, working with investors, residents, and business persons in marketing the area.

Above all, our program stresses 1) incremental sensitive rehabilitation, rather than large-scale, destructive urban renewal; 2) self-reliance, rather than over-dependence upon public subsidies, 3) maximum leveraging of private investment.

The Lowertown project was envisioned, not as a short-term "fix" for a declining neighborhood, but as a long-term approach to recreating a vital, dynamic, economically viable, and desirable new urban neighborhood. As such, the program is ongoing, and anticipated to continue well into the 21st Century.

**2. What local urban issues did this project address? What were its goals?**

**Were there issues that, in your judgment, might have been addressed but were not?**

The project strives to address many urban issues, including disinvestment in central cities, eroding tax base, declining job opportunities, suburban sprawl, displacement of urban poor, including artists living in run-down warehouses, and destruction of historic buildings.

Former Mayor George Latimer and The McKnight Foundation were among the first to envision the potential of reinvestment in this historic area, once known as the Lower Landing on the Mississippi. Together, they took the initiative in establishing Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation as a unique partnership of public and private interests, charged with taking a leadership role as a change agent for the Lowertown Historic District. Our goals were:

- to attract new investment, to create new jobs, and broaden the tax base,
- to provide permanent housing for all income levels through historic preservation and new development,
- to establish a lively art district, including providing affordable working and living spaces for artists;
- to save energy through conservation measures including rehabilitation of older buildings to meet energy code, and district heating;
- to create a sense of place by establishing an effective urban design plan, guidelines, and review process to ensure that new development harmonized with historic architecture.

Most of the critical issues initially facing Lowertown have been successfully addressed. However, as our development steadily moves toward the river, we are in a better position today to seek new development opportunities along the Mississippi Riverfront, Lowertown's "new frontier". Second, since we have been especially successful in developing housing, and resulting in the fastest growing neighborhood in the city, we believe we are in a better position to develop more housing in the future, including new construction as well as rehabilitation, to meet a growing demand on the part of people who, attracted by the neighborhood's new life and energy, wish to make their homes in the central city. Third, because of our success in attracting artists and creative activities to our area, it's natural for us to put increased emphasis on attracting jobs related to creative industries to our area over the coming decade.

**3. Describe the financing of the project. Do you think it could be replicated?**

**Financing:** In the beginning, The McKnight Foundation set aside \$10 million in 1978 with a goal of attracting \$100 million of private investment. Today total investment in Lowertown exceed \$428 million, four times the original goal. Given our ambitious revitalization goals and limited resources, LRC always seeks maximum leveraging of its funding. To date, for every dollar LRC has invested in Lowertown, we have attracted \$20 of other public and private investment.

In attracting new investment, we have employed many forms of creative financing, including industrial revenue bonds, tax exempt and taxable bonds, tax increment financing, tax abatement, historic rehabilitation tax credits, low income housing tax credits, Minnesota Housing Financing bonds, Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG), Section 8 housing (rental subsidies), foundation grants, capital improvement program funds, National Equity Funds, LRC loans and loan guarantees, LRC loans for front end development expenses, artist "sweat equity", and many others.

Replication: Many of the above financing forms could be replicated elsewhere. Other funding mechanisms, such as UDAG, were unfortunately terminated. Still others, such as historic rehabilitation tax credits, have been severely cut back because of the 1986 tax law. However, there is also discussion of new financing tools in the Congress. For example, homeowners' historic rehabilitation tax credits may well become an important new financing tool.

#### 4. Why does the project merit the Rudy Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment?

For seven reasons:

a. While so many central cities have lost their population and businesses to the suburbs, we have demonstrated that through envisioning and cooperative public/private efforts we have reversed the trend and actually built a successful new neighborhood from scratch in the central city.

b. Substantial economic revitalization has been achieved, with more than \$428 million in new investment attracted to the neighborhood. Our program has generated 2900 construction jobs and 4600 permanent jobs. Many businesses, large and small, have moved in, helping to broaden the tax base by more than 400 percent.

c. Substantial numbers of housing units, both rental and owner-occupied, have been added to the area, strengthening the sense of community and making Lowertown one of the fastest-growing neighborhoods in the city. Of the 1,500 units built thus far, 30% are for low and moderate incomes.

d. Substantial leveraging of LRC resources: for every dollar LRC has invested in Lowertown, we have attracted twenty dollars of other public and private investment, achieving a leveraging ratio of 1 to 20, which compares very favorably with UDAG record of 1 to 5.

e. LRC keeps its office and expenses lean, uses disciplined gap financing, takes substantial but carefully calculated risks, and seeks reasonable return. Relatively speaking, we have had only modest losses on the loans and loan guarantees we have made over the years.

f. Using an ever-evolving visionary process, LRC has worked with many different individuals and organizations in public and private sectors, to envision a better future for the area, one which has exceeded many of the original goals. LRC has been successful in setting a larger vision for the whole area, developing a methodology for working cooperatively with others, and then devising specific year to year programs to implement this larger vision.

h. LRC has already served as a model for many U.S. cities. By request, we have spoken to civic forums from Hartford to Los Angeles, from Cleveland to Dallas, sharing our experiences and helping them initiate similar public/private efforts to solve their urban problems.

We have helped cities like Chattanooga, Tennessee set up mechanisms similar to LRC, which has helped to spearhead their riverfront and downtown development. To date, more than \$288 million has been attracted to their downtown and riverfront. Authors of the book "Reinventing Government" cited LRC as an urban development model.

Government officials and civic leaders from 20 countries have visited Lowertown to see for themselves how we work, and have gone back to apply what they have learned in meeting their own situations .

Looking ahead, Lowertown sees many new challenges and opportunities, including the creation of a River Garden along the Mississippi River, featuring housing, a marina, and possibly a museum, and a technology park as a center for businesses with the potential to create new types of jobs for St. Paul. The future of our exciting urban village is limited only by what we envision and how we act upon that vision today and over the next decade.

## PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE

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If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

Name Ken Peterson (former Deputy Mayor under Mayor Jim Scheibel, and former Director of City of St. Paul/Planning & Econ.Devel.)

Organization O'Neill Burke - attorneys Telephone (612) 227-9505

Address 800 Norwest Center, 55 E. 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55101

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### 1. What role did your organization play in the development of this project?

"My role and that of my organization (Planning & Economic Development Department (PED) of the City of St. Paul) varied; sometimes we were a partner with LRC; sometimes LRC played an advocate role, pushing the city to get something accomplished. We were a financing partner with LRC in the Tilsner Building renovation for artists. In the River Garden project, PED was actually a funder, and sent staff to work along with LRC on this project. We had a close relationship with LRC in these and other projects in Lowertown.

### 2. Describe what requirements were made of this project by your agency (eg., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statement).

It depended on what was needed to make each particular project work. The River Garden Plan had a specific timeline that needed to be adhered to. The Tilsner housing project needed the gap financing filled to proceed. For the Mears Park pergola, the Parks Department put in some money, and LRC was able to obtain some money from the McKnight Foundation. In the Galtier project, LRC's bridge loan was critical to help its recovery. I always sensed that LRC represented the community's interest; 99.9% of the time, LRC spoke for the public's interest.

### 3. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment? Describe how, if at all, these intentions changed over the course of the project. What trade-offs and compromises were required? How did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you do differently?

Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation's goal, like the city's, was to create a unique and attractive living environment, as well as a desirable business environment. The dynamics are exciting, in that a non-government entity like LRC has more flexibility than a government agency. In Mears Park, the architecture is exciting, and makes it a more desirable place to live. LRC played a great role in the Tilsner Building renovation, in that it was able to get the cost down to a reasonable level. It is easier for LRC to get this kind of project done than it is for the city, and

They have been pretty successful so far. LRC was also willing to compromise sometimes, as in the negotiations with the Twin City Housing Development Corp. on the Tilsner project. With the River Garden Plan, LRC was able to get the study done and present it for public acceptance and support.

In hindsight, I think we should have done the Warner Road project differently. We should have brought LRC in earlier, and didn't use it enough as an advocate for the community. We learned from our failures - that you have to try different things to attract new businesses and it's always worthwhile to try. Particularly in the Eau Claire/Steve Chen proposal, we didn't have too much success there, since so much money was needed. We would have to have the state's support. But it could have brought 1,000 or more new high-paying jobs to St. Paul in the Lowertown area, and it was worth it to try.

**4. Describe any data you have that document the impact that this project has had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Attach etc... What have you observed of the project's impact?**

The Economic Impact Study commissioned by LRC is probably the best document that would describe the impact Lowertown has had. It isn't just statistics, however; it's real people like an associate of mine at the law firm who has moved into the Tilsner Building. He moved here from New York because he didn't want to bring his children up in a potentially dangerous environment, but he and his wife still wanted to live in an urban community. That's why they chose the Lowertown area - they felt they were getting the urban life, with more safety.

**5. What about this project would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?**

Lowertown is a good model to look at, and should be helpful to other cities, as well as other parts of the Twin Cities. There has to be someone here who is an advocate on an ongoing basis, and I think LRC fits that role. LRC isn't tied into government as they are an independent entity, and not subject to political pressure.

**6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?**

If people are still happy with Mears Park, and the housing like the Tilsner Building, then I think this project is still successful. If it continues to grow, and is still attractive enough to entice residents and businesses alike to locate here, this is certainly a success.

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Name John Wirka Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization City of St. Paul/Parks Dept. Telephone ( 612 ) 6411

Address 25 W. 4th St. , St. Paul, MN 55102.

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## 1. What role did your organization play in the development of this project?

(John Wirka, of St. Paul Parks Dept., played a multiple role in the Mears Park project, working with architects, artists, landscape architects, city and city council members and business owners, carrying out an evaluation and enhancement study in 1988 and creating a design team.)

"My own experience is with Mears Park (its redesign). I'm talking about the context and role we played in the design and construction supervision." Mears Park is the keystone of the Lowertown project. It badly needed to be rebuilt since, in a previous redesign, it had unfortunately been covered over with brick paving. The park was given to the city in 1849, intended to function as the center of the community. "For Lowertown, we tried to bring back the village green concept as it was originally."

The study created the impetus for the city to go ahead and provide financing to rebuild the park. "The study, based on interviews with hundreds of people and three sessions of focus groups, set the tone for what we did. It led us to our core ideas for improved circulation, better seating, more grass and trees, sunlight, safety and improved lighting." The city also retained an artist to work with the Park Department's landscape architect.

## 2. Describe what requirements were made of this project by your agency (eg., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statement).

"It had to relate to the neighborhood's history and to enhance the natural environment. A community group was assembled to work with the park planners. "Our goal overall was to try to determine how the public would most benefit. We envisioned the lighting, circulation, space for gathering, comfort with more seating, while remembering to respect and enhance the history of the area..to make it more a more inviting, useful place for the community." Minnesota materials and plantings were used. "The stone used is common to the buildings in the area, the evergreens are Norway Pine and the deciduous trees Birch. All native to Minnesota." The use of water in the park symbolizes a Minnesota stream or river."



From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment? Describe how, if at all, these intentions changed over the course of the project. What trade-offs and compromises were required? How did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you do differently?

"Generally, by redesigning the park, bringing it back to the way it had been 100 years ago, we made the whole area a lot more inviting." The study, (by "Projects for Public Space") confirmed that people wanted grass and trees, comfortable seating, sunlight, safety through improved lighting, a place to walk and gather. We also provided space for special events (a new public pavilion and small plaza), for vendors and for displays by local artists.

Tradeoffs: "Due to cost, we had to give up some things. Artificial fog, eg., rising up over the stream, and a light tower." Actually, the lighting tower was replaced by mounting lights on the adjoining building top. A fountain was suggested and taken out of the design. Some people wanted a Carousel, but LRC talked them out of that.

4. Describe any data you have that document the impact that this project has had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Attach etc... What have you observed of the project's impact?

"The numbers of people using the park is an obvious sign of the park's impact on Lowertown." The city's "Visual Preference Survey" of downtown showed that Mears Park came out on top. The park's redesign has helped immeasurably in drawing more investment to Lowertown and more housing for residents. Housing is now 99% occupied.

5. What about this project would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

"Patience. If I were to get a call from another agency, I would say be patient. Persevere. Things will improve. You have to have your act together. The study did that for us. But people have to be willing to wait for funding. Have a public organization that operates inclusively. The chemistry of the design team is very important. Make sure the consultants you chose can work well together. Ours made a good team, and they were also challenged to do their best.

6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

"Open inviting space, variety, still well lit, comfortable and secure. More activity than there is now because more people will be living and working in Lowertown. Just go back (to the study) to see what people wanted. I'm sure that will be true five years from now."

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Name Leon Peterson Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization City of St. Paul/Public Works Dept. Telephone ( 612 ) 266-6180  
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Leon Peterson

**Background:** Over the years of Lowertown's existence, The St. Paul Public Works Dept. has helped on such projects as street lighting, streetscape, bus shelters, a sewer separation project, Warner Road and the proposed River Garden.

### 1. What role did your organization play in the development of this project?

"As designers, authors of environmental studies, builders, funders, design reviewers. In the street lighting and Warner Road projects, we were the designers and builders who funded it. I was the project manager on Warner Road from beginning to end. We always looked to LRC for a check and balance as to how we were doing from an urban standpoint. We made presentations to the local district council but our tendency was to get to LRC first and see what they thought."

I did the environmental documents, was involved in the acquisition of the roadway (which took a long time) and did the initial geometric layout. Then we turned the project over to our designers in the department and put together a team--landscape architect, street and road designers. Then I stepped back into a design review position."

The Warner Road project (a major highway and parkway with a large park, bike and pedestrian trails alongside the river) is critically important in fulfilling LRC's vision of improving the Lower Landing area and its potential for Lowertown residents.

On the River Garden concept plan, I was a member of the design team. Public Works played a part in selecting the consultants, supervising the study, then supporting coordinating when LRC presented it to the city as a potential for further investments.

One of the clear objectives was to strengthen the project with future federal dollars that would be set aside for expansion of the Post Office and for extending the Great River Road."

. Describe what requirements were made of this project by your agency (eg.zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements).

"One of the first requirements was when we purchased the railroad rights (for Warner Road project), we were required to complete the open space (funded at the start under the Great River Road project). The trail system that's built had to be continued for bikes and pedestrians.

Our second requirement was to improve access to the river for Lowertown residents and to improve the intersection for traffic. The third requirement, in moving the road back, we also wanted better protection from the changing river channel. It was in danger of washing away. Another part of our concern was related to the barge traffic. Then, our fourth requirement was that large industry maintained its ability to use the river's edge."

Re. Future impact: "Our goal is to make this a populated area with strong Lowertown usage, but let it evolve into whatever it needs to be. Meanwhile, we will keep the open space and landscape it, plant it, make it comfortable, see how people use it. Then let that drive any future capital investment."

**3. Describe from your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment? Describe how, if at all, these intentions changed over the course of the project. What trade-offs and compromises were required? How did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?**

The Warner Road project not only helps improve the traffic situation with new signals, turning lanes, it also improves the riverfront with the park and bikeway as the solution.

"There were many tradeoffs in this project. Particularly in the Lower Landing area (of Warner Road). If we were to move some of the large railroad infrastructure, we could get into some problems of affordability. We saw that we could make some pretty large strides without getting into a mega project."

The River Garden concept plan calls for converting the existing concrete wall that elevates the rr. tracks and blocks Lowertown from the river into an aesthetic visual amenity. Public Works decided to use the wall as the Northern boundary for the Warner Road project and still do a good job.

Another tradeoff was the width of Warner Road. Some feel it should have been two lanes, instead of four. But the road designers didn't agree. A balance was struck between accommodating traffic and securing more parking space. In these times, you have to face compromise. You recognize going in that there are going to be compromises, but it doesn't prevent us from coming back to improve it further."

Describe any data you have that document the impact that this project has had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Attach supplementary materials as appropriate. What have you observed of the project's impact?

The road was just completed, the park will be next spring. I believe it will have much impact, but it's too early to state its impact.

**5. What about this project would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?**

"The fact that LRC had confidence in our Public Works dept. led to a successful project here. It's a matter of how well you do in relating to people's needs and getting people's input from the start. You have to be open and have a willingness to listen. There's also sometimes a tendency on the part of an agency which thinks it has a really good project to get out in front of the community and presented everything has been decided. Then it dies because of opposition. A very important phase of any of these projects is city involvement."

**6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?**

"If, in fact, the space was populated and became an activity center, that would say it's a big success for Warner Road. If I could see the roadway playing a part in a more vital downtown, I would certainly think it's a success. If the Lower Landing were busy and had connections to Lowertown, that would also mean success. In the future, I'd love to see private vessels coming down the river, stopping at Lower Landing and going to shop in Lowertown as their destination."

## DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which did.

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Name Gordon Awsumb Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization Zaidan Holdings, Inc. Telephone ( 612 ) 297-6734  
Address 175 E. 5th St., (Galtier Plaza) St. Paul, MN 55102

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**1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.**

(Gordon Awsumb is the developer who worked on Lowertown's largest mixed use project, the \$105 million Galtier Plaza, (after it was built) and two other buildings in Lowertown and served on the advisory committee for Mears Park.)

"I represent Zaidan Holdings, Inc., the investors who came into Lowertown into the late '80's just when the recession was hitting real estate. We acquired Lowertown's five properties and Galtier Plaza at a time when everyone else was having difficult economic difficulties. We had to reposition the office, retail and housing and also extend a parking development. We worked very closely with LRC who provided gap financing at a critical time." Through advertising and marketing, LRC also helped the retail component by getting the word out to investors about the advantages of Lowertown.

**2. What, if any, modifications were made to the original proposal as the project was developed? What trade-offs or compromises were required during the development of the project?**

"For a variety of reasons, Galtier Plaza was initially less than successful. Originally, the striking glass-enclosed atrium was intended for specialty shopping and included a mix of restaurants, a movie theater, new YMCA, and two towers for apartments and condominiums. After the market turned down, our corporation bought it at a substantial discount.

We made many trade-offs. Yes. We're not what we set out to be. We repositioned the retail to relate to downtown office workers and residents and end use destinations." Some of the changes Awsumb made included improving site lines within the atrium, moving the food court to the first floor, adding more food features and entertainment venues, and create a campus for the Globe Business School. Today, there's substantial improvement in Galtier's retail, housing and office components. Retail is now 90% occupancy, office is 100%. Condos are 90% occupied."

**3. What, if any, innovative means of financing the project were used?**

Two years ago, LRC provided a \$540,000 bridge loan to help the developer. "We still had to spur the sales of the condos as there was no money available. So we had to package or write our own end loans for the condominium buyers. Then we sold the mortgages in the secondary market. Once we showed some success, we were able to bring in insurance companies and after a while other financial institutions.

A creative financing example is the way the we convinced Globe Business College to move into Galtier. Globe, although well established in St. Paul since 1899, was threatening to move out of downtown St. Paul. We convinced them that Galtier would give them a business campus in a prestigious downtown building with all the amenities--food, parking, shops, YMCA-- under one roof. We offered them a packaged proposal whereby they paid a year's rent in advance. They promptly bought the idea, moved in two years ago and have now increased enrollment by 20% up to 450 students.

**4. How did the financial benefits and economic impact of this project differ from other proposals? How does the project's quality relate to the financial goals?**

"Fortunately or unfortunately, the Galtier Plaza project set the tone for Lowertown. Galtier's success is Lowertown's success." When it first opened, Galtier triggered a number of other development projects. such as Park Square Court. But when Galtier suffered, the entire area suffered. Obviously, it was to LRC's interest to work with Awsumb and his firm.

Concerning design quality, Galtier Plaza is a premier architectural project. The design of the atrium, soaring up 7 stories, is a marketing benefit for the project, as far as the residential and office components. Frankly, though, it's detrimental to the retail component and maintenance is a problem. Yet it's a world class building architecturally and over the long term will be more of an asset for the city." People like the way all four sides of the building are open, very approachable, user-friendly and connected by skyway to adjoining buildings. They like the fact that it's not a fortress; that Galtier has the YMCA, a beautiful movie theater, a comedy club with facilities second to none, classy restaurants and convenient food court on the street level. Underground parking fees helps the developer financially in keeping up all these amenities".

**5. What was the most difficult task in the development of this project? What was the least successful aspect? With hindsight, would you do anything differently?**

"Our most difficult task was the development of the condos and, in hindsight, we would not have done them. Ultimately, it's like a lot of government-driven projects. Longterm, there'll be market success but they don't make money in the short term.

The least successful aspect from our aspect economically was housing, the condo development. Long term, it will bring back more tax dollars, more population of the inner city. And the interior

design for the condos is excellent, layout is superb, each one has a balcony. In hindsight, we would have spun off the housing and let someone else do it." Another less than successful aspect of the design was the maintenance issue. "Perhaps the fault was because the design was done on a fast track basis, driven by an UDAG grant."

**6. What about this project would be instructive to other developers?**

"A bargain is not always a bargain. There was a tradeoff at the time that the Zadains bought Galtier. They paid 15 cents to the dollar and thought they were still paying too much but didn't want anyone else to get it at that price. We've invested a lot more than we planned and a lot more time."

**7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?**

"I think that the housing would still be stable, pricing arrangements of the condos really cater to the market, apartment occupancy still high, the retail maintained and office occupancy still stable." The proof is in the pudding now that it is a success. This is a seasoned project that has been successful for at least three years. (Occupancy rates for retail 90%, office 100%, housing 90%). Some suggest that we should at least see 10 years of positive return to confirm its success. In my view, five years will just confirm that it's where it should be."

12/14/94-Awsumb

# PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

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If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

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Signature

*Craig E Rafferty*

## 1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?

"I have played a multiple professional role for Lowertown. I was the consultant for the recent River Garden plan update. I also served on the advisory committee for the design of Mears Park. I was principal architect of the Union Depot renovation (1988), a national historic site, and set the standards for the streetscape project in Lowertown. Besides my professional consultant role, I have become a champion of Lowertown's revitalization. I have also chaired the DCDC Council, and served as vice chair for St. Paul's Historic Preservation committee."

## 2. From your perspective, how was the project intended to benefit the urban environment?

"Lowertown is an example of how to preserve a city within federal and historic guidelines. There are other districts that could benefit if they had the same perseverance and dedication that LRC has. The streetscape project, though simple, enhanced the park and natural environment. It created a more desirable place for people to live and work in. The city actually picked up some of our ideas, such as the historic lighting, and used them throughout the city. In renovating the Depot, our goals were to harmonize the old with the new, by updating the interior, installing modern ventilating and heating systems and designing unique restaurants. It revitalized the area.

The River Garden project (on the Lower Landing) calls the city's attention to the need for reevaluating the entire riverfront in terms of entry. The railroad has been abandoned, river traffic is increasing. Planning is essential for Lowertown to have access to the river. We should tie in with the master plan that's slowly emerging for the Upper Landing."

## 3. Describe the project's impact on its surroundings and on the people in the area. Do you have data that document these effects?

"The St. Paul Union Depot restoration had a direct impact in historic preservation. It was one of the first steps in the redevelopment of Lowertown. " Its restoration has revitalized the area, and



now that it is linked via skyway to public television station KTCA, more and more people are using the Depot restaurants. The streetscape project gave people, such as developers, some pride in wanting to build near it. City planners picked up on it and used the same kind of historic lighting and street furniture design standards around the city. Also the redesign of the freeway bridges (symbolizing history) around Lowertown became possible thanks to a citizens task force and LRC's encouraging the state highway department to rise above the ordinary in their design.

"Regarding the River Garden concept, this plan would allow people of Lowertown access to the river. There are very few cities that have this opportunity."

**4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?**

" There were trade-offs with the Department of Transportation, the city, the Great River Road project (a federal one), the post office and others. In the streetscape project, for example, we were limited to trees and street furniture and bus shelters. We didn't have time to redo the sidewalks with a given budget. We were also confined to Lowertown's initial nine block area; however this has since extended to much larger surrounding areas.

For the River Garden plans, we were faced with derelict railroad yards and existing tracks and buildings blocking access. But we tried to work around these problems. One solution was to build a large public green space above a new mail-processing facility. Another was to extend the Lowertown Urban Village concept to the riverfront by proposing new housing units with a river-view."

**5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?**

"With the limitation of St. Paul market, the initial phase of Lowertown hasn't yet reached the northern area. I think you need to make sure the surrounding areas are also enrolled in the participation of a project."

**6. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?**

"If I were to advise others, the project really must incorporate citizen's input and participation. I also think you have to have some champion for design in the city. We've had that in Weiming Lu. ...As far as architects are concerned, you need to have a feeling for the historic importance that you work with and the need of citizens' input."

**7. If five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?**

"As far as our three projects (the streetscape, Depot and RiverGarden), if they continue to spawn, these projects become a catalyst for many other projects. (eg., the Depot is now renting out other

space to be remodeled.) "As to the proposed River Garden, it remains to be seen. But the mere fact that there have been discussions of extending the promenade down Kellogg Boulevard to the Depot, is encouraging. It would give a wonderful new edge to the city and access to the Lower Landing. I do think these projects we've been working on with Weiming Lu have had a far greater reach in terms of they might do for the city. I hope they serve as a catalyst for the city planning department to incorporate some of these ideas."

(12/14/94-rafferty

# PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

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Signature X

Milo H Thompson FAIA

## 1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?

"We played three roles: urban design, designing a hotel, and design review of two major projects. In the early stages of Lowertown, we did some planning for the North Quadrant including some housing and became principal design architect of a new hotel. Later, we played a design review role in the Galtier Plaza project and the KTCA block.

We were consultants providing certain master plan ideas for the North Quadrant, an overall vision for the area and a specific design for a hotel. The significant challenge was to provide a historical context. The developer wanted to impose a southwestern style but we wanted it designed contextually. LRC provided the design guidelines for the whole block--height, views to the state capitol, relating materials to the warehouse district."

In design review for Galtier Plaza, after LRC had successfully convinced the developer to build it in two towers instead of one, we came in with ten exciting alternative desugbs following LRC's guidelines. Also, for the KTCA Block, we did some extensive schematic designs moving the office tower from one side to the other so the sun would not be blocked."

## 2. From your perspective, how was the project intended to benefit the urban environment?

"It helps to revitalize and redefine an urban core. Building on the street was important in the urban context. Because we were on the edge of an area, we had the advantage of urban parking and the building could be tight on the corner providing a traditional street scene. This way the architect made better use of the land. In its design, the hotel makes a statement in its massing, color and lighting.

Concerning Galtier Plaza, with the given scale of the project, we helped to minimize the overwhelming mass on the park and the neighborhood.

**3. Describe the project's impact on its surroundings and on the people in the area. Do you have data that document these effects?**

"The hotel, originally the Embassy Suites now Crown Sterling Suites, has had substantial economic impact on the area--\$11 million a year's visitor expenditure.

**4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?**

"There was a positive tradeoff. "The hotel project is detailed much more sophisticatedly because of the character of the existing architecture and of our climate. The developer paid a premium for the exterior form, balcony details, exterior lighting etc." Now the hotel enjoys high occupancy (85%).

**5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?**

"Although I'm happy the hotel turned out as well as it did, I wish parking were done less expediently. Although I can understand why it isn't fully landscaped (because of our climate), I fully understand how parking is handled there."

In Lowertown as a whole, the hope was that it could be done faster. Its quality is best appreciated as it nears completion. Then it was hard to see what was intended. "

Admittedly, urban design is generally a slow process.

In hindsight, regarding the Union Depot project, that area has not been able to take hold in spite of the opportunities, and it's so key."

**6. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?**

"In urban design, I think the lesson is to look carefully at context and try to extend what is there. Basically, historic buildings should be respected and transformed to good uses. It can be done. When new buildings come in, we need to reinforce that vocabulary and building patterns fully realizing the modern techniques we use today. Cities can be added to incrementally in the character of existing buildings."

**7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?**

"I would ask whether there is still a pedestrian character to the street and the second or skyway level. Our challenge here in the north is to keep two levels lively. Also, that it maintains its traditional quality and image and still allows different people to come in and design. This goes back to LRC's leadership in all this. Every city should have an organization like LRC or through city government. LRC provides a focus for doing things in a clearly directed way."

12/14/94-Thompson

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*Fritz Angst*

(Ron Orchard of Briggs & Morgan with extensive experiences as a banking and corporate lawyer and in gap financing, was LRC's legal counsel for many years, advising LRC on matters of liability. Since Orchard's death in 1992, Fritz Angst, also of Briggs & Morgan, became LRC's new counsel.)

### 1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?

"We were originally approached by the city of St. Paul (in 1978) to develop a vehicle that would allow the McKnight Foundation (and its gift of \$10 million) a means for attracting future investment." LRC, Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation became that vehicle. We were also asked to help in the initial selection of board members representing a balance between politics and development.

We also helped in the startup phase finding an appropriate director and investor prospects. Next was to develop strategy for the organization that would act as a catalyst for development of the neighborhood. Working with LRC, we set up the rules in advance--eg., what should and should not be in the contracts. We also took part in the negotiation process for gap financing, never forgetting that our constituents were not only the people who received the money but the people who lived, worked and governed our area."

### 2. From your perspective, how was the project intended to benefit the urban environment?

"In three ways: One, it provided a uniform approach to development; it eliminated a shot-gun approach. Two, it brought the financing gap closer on money terms. Even though the amount of money wasn't that big, it was able to spread the gap. Three, I think the office of LRC gave a prospect of hope; it was the place where you could go to get answers on Lowertown, a sort of clearing house."

**3. Describe the project's impact on its surroundings and on the people in the area. Do you have data that documents these effects.**

"As a lawyer, the impact is very clear--that there's a part of town where people are willing to move into, a place to live and work. It's restored a neighborhood." It was also evident from the three reports on the economic impact of Lowertown development by LRC over the past 15 years, they documented the impact in terms of investments, jobs, tax base and housing built.

**4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?**

"There were thousands of them. We participated with LRC Director Weiming Lu in trying to strike the balance...a balance between the quick-change artist and the need to provide a more permanent development. Because many people at the time thought this part of town wasn't worth saving (bad buildings etc.), there was much skepticism that this program would never succeed, and there was a lot of community sales work to be done, and LRC was able to do that and encourage the city to put its own money in. "We put together the corporate structure and in negotiating with these folks, we were very forthright."

**5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?**

"I sometimes wish we could develop more of a grocery store, neighborhood store atmosphere. It's underway, but some of our residents need to go out of the neighborhood to get groceries."

**6. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?**

"In this world of 'what have you done for me lately', the tried and true long term view is the one that continues to succeed and be successful. If another organization approached me, I would tell them to go slow. Be sure of what you want to do. Also, be sure you keep the mission ahead of the personalities involved."

**7. In five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?**

"I would look at the community to see if it has the kind of community environment that you see in small town America--people on the streets, activity, folks shopping and walking. I don't know if you can see that a project is successful in just five years. More likely 20 years! You build neighborhoods, cities and all the things to go with it to last."

## PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

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### 1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

Our firm has worked with LRC as a consultant in marketing, public relations and communications since 1989. In that role, we have assisted in maintaining a constant, reliable flow of factual information and frequent updates to a variety of publics and special audiences, including City government leaders, the downtown business community, Lowertown merchants and residents, potential developers and investors, as well as the larger publics in the Twin Cities.

We have provided counsel and planning assistance to LRC in implementing the communications aspects of its working partnerships with dozens of organizations and individuals, establishing and maintaining the open lines of communication required to build consensus within the larger community on issues of common concern. We have also assisted LRC in the development of targeted marketing materials and strategies designed to promote the neighborhood to potential residents, merchants, developers and investors.

### 2. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment?

LRC was originally charged with the formidable challenge of developing an entirely new vision for the renewal of a deteriorating neighborhood which represents nearly one-fourth of the central business district.

If successful, the effort would change St. Paul's urban environment dramatically creating a new and desirable place to live and work, while extending the useful life of scores of turn of the century buildings which preserve the city's early history in brick and stone.

A successful effort would halt the spread of blight before it could affect other areas of the city, saving St. Paul's core from falling into the vicious downward spiral of economic deterioration, population loss and business flight which has already destroyed large parts of many of America's aging northern cities.

**3. Describe the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and on the people in the project area. Include any data or supplementary materials that support your conclusions.**

LRC's energetic work on behalf of the Lowertown neighborhood, now little more than halfway through its anticipated quarter century life cycle, has already succeeded beyond anyone's expectations.

Out of these years of effort has developed a true urban village which provides a comfortable, save and attractive environment for living and working, and is now home to more than 1,500 families. In growing numbers, people are discovering Lowertown's many advantages and special charms. The village that has been created here is real. Lowertown is not a hothouse experiment or a test tube baby...it has become a living, breathing community, economically viable, culturally aware and socially strong in its own right.

**4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?**

In my view, the largest trade-off made in the development was the many partners' willingness to accept the fact that recreating and re-energizing such a large part of the city could not be accomplished overnight, but would require great patience and continuing support, despite bumps and setbacks along the way.

Successful public/private partnerships do not blossom spontaneously. They require a steady diet of careful listening, mutual respect, total commitment and constant nurturing. The result is a process which may move more slowly and deliberately than some would prefer. However, that process in the long run results in a shared vision, and a stronger development whose chances of enduring are far better because ownership in it can be claimed by many people and organizations within the larger community.

**5. What was the least successful aspect of the project? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?**

In hindsight, perhaps the least successful aspect of the project was the inclusion of a large-scale mixed use and "festival retail" component called Galtier Plaza. Its early problems colored people's perceptions of the entire project for several years. Negative press coverage blinded the public for a time to Lowertown's steady progress in achieving its overall vision, particularly in the area of housing, and perhaps slowed commercial investment and development more than general economic conditions warranted.

However, new owners and management have refocused the center to to provide shops and services which are neighborhood oriented, and what had earlier been something of a liability has turned into one of Lowertown's most important and visible assets.



**6. What can others learn from this project?**

Other cities are already learning from Lowertown's success. City officials from all over the world come to visit, see and learn. Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation has perfected the public/private partnership concept as a vehicle for catalyzing change on a large scale in a contemporary urban environment. Its approach, envisioning process, and methodology work well, and are capable of being learned and applied to solve local problems by communities of all sizes.

**7. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?**

I would look for urban life's vital signs. Are there many different kinds of people living, working and playing there? Is there activity, energy and a sense of excitement palpable in the streets? Are shops and services still present...still serving...still successful? If the streets, parks and buildings reveal---by their condition, cleanliness and liveliness---that people still care about them? Is there a sense of openness to new ideas, new people, new possibilities?

Lowertown has all of these qualities today, and I would be very surprised if it did not still have them five, ten and even 25 years from now.

# COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

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Signature  Cheryl Kartes

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? For example, was there a public review process in which you took part?

In the early stages of Lowertown's development, I was then director of Artspace Projects Inc., working with LRC, the city, and the artists, we helped to achieve the first affordable housing project in Lowertown. There was very limited living and working in the same building. So we needed to build as many partnerships as we could. Our connection with LRC helped give us credibility at city hall.

We played an educational role in advocating for the artists; also in the final packaging. We believe we were resourceful in getting the artists involved to set priorities, hosting many planning meetings with artists and involving local arts organizations such as the St. Paul Arts Collective, and through them building support with the city council. Ultimately, Artspace, in collaboration with others, was able to develop the Lowertown Lofts, a housing cooperative, as studio/living environment for some 40 artists. (Today there are 170 artists living and creating art in their Lowertown studios in several projects.)

LRC's role was critical to ensure we could build the public/private partnerships we needed to make that first project happen."

Concerning the public review process, we held numerous public meetings and with building owners and others for input. then went before the city council with their findings. We had to show that artists have the ability to work together, to provide a unified voice to speak to the city about their needs. With credibility gained from LRC, Artspace proved that the artists exceeded all expectations. Lowertown Lofts became the catalyst to prove that the concept of artists living and working in the same environment could be successfully replicated in other buildings.

**From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?**

That low and moderate income housing (for artists and others) could be done economically and would mean that as potential new homeowners, they would remain in the neighborhood they helped to create. The urban village concept worked.

**3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them? With hindsight, what, if anything, would you do differently?**

"Tradeoffs were endless. On the Lowertown Lofts project, we did a design competition. It came back more expensive than expected. We had to revamp it, but still got down to a small gap in financing and we had trouble finding other grant money. We had to drop some appliances and floor finishes, let the artists finish themselves. We discussed with the artists on sound insulation between floors. They felt they could live without it. Later on, they regretted and had to raise more money to do it in code compliance and affordable. But it was painful."

**4. How has this project made the community a better place to live? Why should this project win this award? Please be as specific as possible.**

Lowertown now has one of the largest concentration of artists living and working together in a city of our size. All sorts of artists live here and some now are condominium owners of their own studio/lofts. At first, we put it together as a master lease with buyout option because people weren't sure. LRC made a substantial concession to the loan payment, the the artists could do a buy out with a new loan a year ahead of schedule.

In these renovated warehouses, there are also spaces for artists exhibitions and even gallery space. No other city, especially considering the size of St. Paul, has done anything like this."

**5. If a community group came to you for advice in carrying out a similar project, what would you tell them?**

"Build as many partnerships as necessary. Keep the financing structure as simple as possible, but don't be limited. We were very lucky to gain access to "program-related investment" funds through LRC's loans and loan guarantees. We encouraged the artists to organize, so they can speak with a collective voice. We understood them so we could help them articulate their needs."

**6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?**

"That there is a continuation of a mix of occupancy (allowing for changes and renewal) and that there would be a continued way for the neighborhood and business owners to continue helping to shape Lowertown. That more and more artists would be flourishing here. Also, that LRC would still be helping build the vision for Lowertown through marketing and information-sharing pieces."

12/14/94-Kartes

# COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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*John E. Mannillo*

**1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? For example, was there a public review process in which you took part?**

"I wear many hats in relationship to the Lowertown project. I was a building owner, developer, broker, leasing agent, chair of Mears Park committee, chair of Downtown Community Development Council, chair of local Historic Preservation committee. Therefore, I have played multiple roles.

My first involvement was because I was a building owner. I also managed the Depot and helped to develop Lowertown Lofts. I've also been involved as a broker, developer, project management, financing and chairing community groups." In the mid 70's, Manillo was President of the Lowertown Commercial Club which later merged with DCDC. "Back then, Lowertown was pretty much bottomed out.

In 1978 the McKnight Foundation came along with seed money to redevelop Lowertown with LRC as a catalyst for development. An important board was established.

Through what had been the Commercial Club we started the Lowertown music festival in Mears Park. This meant we finally made some impact on the downtown council and the city. Then I became chairman of District 17, DCDC. which was funded through the city block grant. We were the official organization for public input for development in Lowertown. District 17 became the vehicle for the public review process.

**2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?**

"The big issue in Lowertown was what to do. There were no investments coming in, few jobs, light manufacturers were starting to move out, there was no residential, and some vagrancy. The city had to kick out artists who lived in the old warehouse buildings illegally. The city was losing ground here."

**3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them? With hindsight, what, if anything, would you do differently?**

"Part of the trade-off was time. As soon as the McKnight Foundation announced its grant, it generated speculation." LRC needed time to plan, even though it delayed development, but meant it did not become haphazard development. Another tradeoff was reliance on government funding (or UDAG). That meant there were some strings attached. Becoming an historic district was also a kind of tradeoff because you can't put skyways into faces of historic buildings." Hindsight may tell us, it would be nice if Galtier Plaza weren't designed the way it is, too big for the block. It is the focal point of Lowertown and the building was hard to fill up. LRC, however, with considerable effort made sure the old and the new fit together by changing the color of the bricks at the base and other details.

When the renovation of the Depot began, the developer was undercapitalized, so it was underutilized. Furthermore, he tried to do way too much."

**4. How has this project made the community a better place to live? Why should it win this Award? Be as specific as possible.**

"We took probably the worst part of the city in response to investment. It was virtually vacant. Buildings were dirty, windows broken, sidewalks falling apart, no lighting, bad fire escapes. The city turned that around when the McKnight Foundation invested money and established the LRC. The commercial sector filled up Lowertown with condos, apartments, offices, businesses and we brought traffic down here. We went from the worst part of town to the highest occupancy rate in St. Paul and still kept the historic character. I also served as chairman of the Mears Park redesign task force. Completing the park as a village green created a sense of place. A lot of people were involved so the park was re-designed and developed with a sense of community. Now it's the crowning part of Lowertown. A budget and timetable was faithfully adhered to, dollars were stretched. The rebuilt Park, true to its historic image, now attracts many people and more developers.

**5. If a community group came to you for advice in carrying out a similar project, what would you tell them?**

"You have to get everybody coming together in the same direction. Bring the different parties to the table--the city, many foundations, public support, media support and the community. Then don't bite off more than you can chew. Set reachable goals."

**6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?**

"Checking to see whether the occupancy rate is still healthy. Whether there's still investment going on in the community, and whether it's continuing to grow. Another thing that's a sure sign of success is ownership. I would look for those factors." 12/14/94-Mannillo

## COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

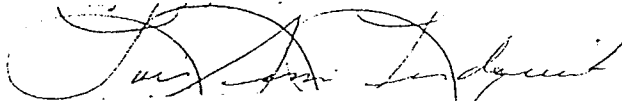
This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

If possible, answers should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. Please limit answers to the area provided.

Name Lois Sinn Lindquist Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization Downtown Council of St. Paul Telephone ( 612 ) 297-6899  
Address 101 Norwest Center, 55 E. 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55101

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**1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? For example, was there a public review process in which you took part?**

I came late to Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation's activities on behalf of Lowertown just four years ago, after many years of work, were already coming to fruition. My partnership with LRC centered on the creation of the "Bright Lights, City Nights" holiday promotion, lighting up downtown parks with millions of lights. The program, which has been very successful, was designed to make downtown St. Paul a destination for both residents and visitors, and Lowertown a destination within a destination.

The image that has been created is very inviting, has made residents feel safer and more secure, and has been a strong impetus for business.

We also cooperated with LRC's Weiming Lu in the establishment of a trolley committee, with the goal of establishing a downtown trolley system which would make cross-city travel - particularly from the Ordway Theater and other downtown cultural institutions to Lowertown - much simpler, safer and friendly for visitors, residents and the business community. That system will shortly begin operating a full daily schedule.

We also worked with LRC and others in developing a color-coded directional signage system for Lowertown and downtown. Now in place, that system has made the city far less intimidating for visitors and residents alike.

Through all of these programs, Mr. Lu and LRC have been excellent partners of the downtown business community, and Lowertown has become an important contributor to the dynamism of the central city.

**2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?**

The vision behind the Lowertown plan was to restore a neighborhood. and in the process, strengthen the entire core city. The goal was to create something truly unique by restoring the historic heart of the city, something that was not replicated anywhere, that people would once again find a desirable place in which to live and work.

For our organization, it was a process of reclaiming that ~~which~~ was decaying, raising values and expanding the tax base of the city.

**3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them? With hindsight, what, if anything, would you do differently?**

The Lowertown vision has become a living, working community in its own right. By bringing many people to a part of downtown that had languished and deteriorated for many years, Lowertown has been re-energized and is once again a vital and lively part of the larger community.

What was once a dead part of the city has been fully restored as a wonderfully human scale, romantic and charming urban village.

Most of the trade-offs were temporary in nature - for example, residents and workers giving up convenience and access for a time while something better was built or restored. This was particularly true in the case of redesigning and totally rebuilding Mears Park, which serves as Lowertown's Village Common. Now that the new park is completed, people have forgotten the inconveniences of the past several years of construction, and the park has become a popular gathering place and a magnet year-round.

**4. How has this project made the community a better place to live? What should it win this award. Please be as specific as possible.**

Everything has turned out so well in Lowertown, I don't know what might have been done differently or better. I arrived on the scene late, in time for the backpatting and ribbon cutting, which tells me that the larger community is equally pleased with the outcome of LRC's work.

**5. If a community group came to you for advise in carrying out a similar project, what would you tell them?**

I believe that other cities can observe Lowertown's success and how it was achieved, and learn that it is possible to turn an eyesore into a sight for sore eyes. In Lowertown's case, I think the most important lesson to be learned is the critical necessity of having a project's funders share in the vision. and be equally committed to seeing that vision realized.

6. If, five years from now, you were to judge that this project was still successful, what characteristics would convince you of that fact?

The presence of successful businesses and committed residents would tell me that it was a success - as well as the things I see there now - that it is clean, beautiful and safe.

Lowertown will age, but as long as the commitment to it is strong, I believe it will age beautifully.

12/14/94-lindquist