

PROJECT DATA

Project Name: Children's Museum and Family District
 Owner: Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

Location: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Project Use(s): Family cultural organization, field trip destination, office space for child-focused organizations, art gallery, community café, community meeting space, theater, Public School Head Start/Pre-K program, learning research lab, radio studio, after-school program space, and literacy program space.

Project Size: 100,000 square feet
 Annual Operating Budget: \$3.7 million
 Date Initiated: 1999

Total Development Cost: \$15.8 million

Percent Completed by Dec. 1, 2006: 100%

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates: Please see question #3 under Project Description

Application submitted by:

Name: Jane Werner
 Organization: Children's Museum of Pittsburgh
 Address: 10 Children's Way
 Telephone: (412) 322-5058
 E-Mail: werner@pittsburghkids.org

Title: Executive Director

City/State/Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15212

Fax: (412) 322-4932

Weekend Contact Notification: (412) 361-7110

Key Participants: (Attach additional sheet if needed)**Organization****Key Participant****Telephone***Public Agencies:*

City of Pittsburgh
 State of Pennsylvania
 National Endowment for the Arts

Former Mayor Tom Murphy
 Governor Ed Rendell
 Mark Robbins (former)

N/A
 717-787-2500
 N/A

Architects/Designers:

Koning Eizenberg Architecture
 Perkins Eastman

Julie Eizenberg
 Dick Northway

310-828-6131, ext. 112
 412-894-8356

Developer:

Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

Jane Werner

See above

Professional Consultant:

Green Building Alliance

Rebecca Flora

412-431-0709

Community Groups:

Northside Leadership Conference
 Pittsburgh Public Schools
 UPCLOSE
 Reading is FUNdamental
 Child Watch
 Saturday Light Brigade

Mark Fatla
 Bill Isler, Board President
 Kevin Crowley
 Cindy Krappweis
 Judy Horgan
 Larry Berger

412-330-2559
 412-687-2990
 412-624-8116
 412-624-8116
 412-967-9852
 412-586-6300

Other:

Pittsburgh History and Landmarks
 Wos Productions
 Pentagonam
 Ned Kahn
 Hazlett Theater
 Andy Warhol Museum

Arthur Ziegler
 Joe Wos
 Paula Scher
 Sara Radelet
 Tom Sokolowski

412-471-5808
 412-798-9273
 212-683-7000
 707-823-1760
 412-381-5533
 412-237-8354

Please indicate how you learned of the Rudy Bruner Award: Professional Organization

Signature: _____

ABSTRACT

Project Name: Children's Museum and Family District
Address: 10 Children's Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15212

1. Give a brief overview of the project, including major project goals.

The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh utilized an innovative development process that leveraged collaborations to create a Children's Museum and Family District on the Northside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This values-focused development process resulted in a financially stable, Silver LEED certified, award-winning Children's Museum and Family District that is a model for how one organization can be a catalyst for urban development. The Children's Museum envisioned creating a new kind of "town square" for children and families. This concept drove the development of the new Museum from the creation of its new physical home, to collaborations with other child-focused organizations, to looking beyond the Museum to create a Family District for the City of Pittsburgh.

The Children's Museum is located in the center of Allegheny Square, the heart of the former Allegheny City in the 1800's. This area of Pittsburgh is typical of other "rust belt" cities in that it had empty or under-utilized historic buildings, an economically distressed population, and uneven pockets of gentrification and development. When designing its physical expansion, the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh linked the Museum's historic home (the National Registered Old Post Office Building, circa 1893) and the vacant Buhl Planetarium Building (circa 1939) next door with a new, three-story construction designed by Koning Eizenberg Architecture. The resulting facility is an astonishing combination of three centuries of architecture that attracted over 250,000 people in 2006 and created a thriving new urban core for the Northside.

The Children's Museum did not just build a larger new home. The Museum's concept of creating a new town square led to the dedication of 25% of its space to be used as incubator space for other child-focused organizations. The Museum is joined by Reading is FUNdamental (literacy), Child Watch (advocacy), Saturday Light Brigade (family educational radio program), Wos Productions (educational television), Pittsburgh Public Schools (two, on-site Head Start/Pre-K classes) and the University of Pittsburgh Center for Learning in Out-of-School Environments (UPCLOSE). The Museum and its partners share space, resources (ordering supplies, group health care rates, etc.), ideas and programs. The Museum's award-winning partnership with UPCLOSE has resulted in quality museum exhibits (UPCLOSE studied all prototypes during planning for the new Museum) and important research about family learning that is being disseminated to the field. The collaborations that have resulted from this concept have spurred the Family District development within and beyond the Museum.

Leveraging outside collaborations, the Museum worked with the Andy Warhol Museum, the City of Pittsburgh and the Northside Leadership Conference to rehabilitate and re-open the adjacent, historic Carnegie Music Hall (the first one commissioned by Andrew Carnegie) that used to be a thriving theater. The partners raised an additional \$2.4 million for the renovation of the 450-seat theater and helped create a new, independent 501(c)(3). The New Hazlett Theater opened in September of 2006 and is fully booked from January through June of 2007 by community arts groups.

2. Why does the project merit the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence?

This project merits the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence because the Museum is addressing a key development problem facing many former industrialized, "rust belt" cities (and, many cities in general) - how to attract and keep families in urban centers. This project is unique in that it shows how a cultural institution, through collaboration and vision, can act as a positive development catalyst for an urban neighborhood.

The Children's Museum and Family District project does this on many levels. First, it created a strong Children's Museum committed to its urban neighborhood. Second, it leveraged many community organizations and partnerships to create a new kind of "town square" for children and families. Third, it used the strength of this concept to build a new facility that incorporates abandoned and underused historic structures. Fourth, it leveraged new partners to revitalize a historic theater for the community. Finally, the project looks to creating a vibrant family district on the entire Northside by creating an urban redevelopment process based on the strengths and interests of cultural organizations. The unique approach and design quality of this project are shown in the many national awards the project has won (please see awards list in supplemental information section).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Name: Children's Museum and Family District
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1. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

The Children's Museum has defined the following values as shaping this project and its future focus:

1) Family and Child Centered Development - they are key to the health of the Children's Museum and to the reinvigoration of the City of Pittsburgh; **2) Collaboration** - by working together, we can accomplish more than by working individually; **3) Sustainability** - we must use/re-use existing urban resources (empty historic buildings) and "green" technology for new space construction and ongoing operations; **4) Good Design** - quality design impacts the ultimate success of programs, collaborations, the built environment and urban revitalization; **5) Cost Effective**; **6) Research** - leveraging our collaboration with UPCLOSE provides benefits to both organizations and provides crucial information to the museum field.

By keeping these values at the forefront during its expansion process, the Children's Museum was able to make appropriate trade-offs that ultimately benefitted the project and helped identify new opportunities. When considering the expansion of its physical plant, the Museum looked first to existing resources in its neighborhood - the neighboring, vacant Buhl Planetarium Building. Although incorporating this building into the expansion created many complications (environmental remediation, traffic redirection, etc.), the Museum sees sustainable architecture and adaptive use as morally necessary.

Early on, the central building of the Children's Museum had to be re-designed to fit the construction budget. The Museum was not willing to cut back on exhibits and programming in the building for the benefit of the envelope. A re-design by KEA advanced the Museum's values and resulted in an innovative design collaboration between KEA and environmental artist Ned Kahn to create a wind sculpture (Articulated Cloud) that covers the three-story connecting building. This design gives the building a distinctiveness that reflects the activity inside and has become a symbol to the neighborhood.

Collaboration helped the Museum realize the goals of the project in a cost effective manner. To achieve the goal of creating an on-site school, the Museum partnered with the Pittsburgh Public Schools to locate two Head Start/Pre-K classrooms on site. These students use the Museum exhibits everyday, and the school district is integrating the Museum's hands-on philosophy into a written curriculum for other Head Start/Pre-K programs in the district.

2. How has the project impacted the local community? Please include relevant information on urban context.

The Children's Museum and Family District has had a great impact on the Northside of Pittsburgh. Like many "rust belt" cities across the country, Pittsburgh had been trying to redefine itself in a post-industrial economy. The Children's Museum and Family District is helping Pittsburgh define itself as a wonderful place to live and raise a family. The Museum believes that this concept is one key to the City's long-term survival and that the success of this project will be a model for other cities.

This project has brought new life back to Allegheny Square, the core of the historic Northside of Pittsburgh. The Museum renovated three historic buildings - the Old Post Office, the Buhl Planetarium Building and The new Hazlett Theater building. While the Old Post Office has housed the Museum since 1983, the Buhl Planetarium has been vacant since 1991 and required major renovations to bring it back to life for the community and The New Hazlett Theater closed when the Pittsburgh Public Theater moved to a new theater downtown in 1999. Through Museum programs, partner programs and The New Hazlett Theater offerings, the **Museum and Family District is bringing nearly 300,000 people** into the core of the Northside neighborhood (the former Children's Museum had attendance of 86,000 the last year of operations before its expansion).

To further the concept and reach of the Family District, the Children's Museum is also leading a project to collaborate with other Northside cultural organizations to leverage their strengths for further urban redevelopment projects. This "charm bracelet project," funded, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts brings four diverse, international teams together to explore the Northside and its cultural organizations. The result of their explorations will be ideas for further urban redevelopment, collaborative programs and branding possibilities. We believe the momentum begun by the Children's Museum will continue to encompass the entire Northside in a model program for the revitalization of an urban core for families and children.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONT'D)

Project Name: Children's Museum and Family District
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3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

The Children's Museum used a collaborative development process for this project. Highlights are as follows:

- **December, 1999: Stakeholder Meeting** - Stakeholders share their individual visions for the project
- **January, 2000: Design Charette** - 65 people (stakeholders, partners, museum professionals, and community members) attended a design charette to develop a collective vision for the project.
- **August - December, 2000: Design Competition** - The Children's Museum conducted an NEA funded architectural competition. Six architectural teams from around the country submitted models and drawings.
- **December 5, 2000: Design Competition Results** - The winning team, Koning Eizenburg Architecture, was chosen by a jury made up of local and national design professionals on December 5, 2000.
- **February, 2001: Design Charette, Visitor Experience** - 70 people (staff, Board members, museum professionals, educators, architects and artists from around the country) assembled at the Museum to work on the educational and exhibit content of the Museum's new exhibits.
- **June - August, 2000: Children's Museum Capital Campaign Feasibility Study and Business Plan Complete**
- **August, 2000** - Leadership Phase of Children's Museum Capital Campaign Begins
- **May, 2001: First Partner Meeting:** The Children's Museum brought all partners together to discuss how to best share resources, where organizations can collaborate to strengthen existing programs and building needs.
- **June, 2001: Children's Museum Capital Campaign Announced**
- **November, 2002: Children's Museum State Funding Secured**
- **December, 2003: Hazlett Study Completed:** Completed by consultants Dewey and Kaye
- **April, 2003 to October, 2006: Hazlett Fundraising Campaign**
- **November 6, 2004: Grand Opening of the new Children's Museum of Pittsburgh**
- **August, 2005: Hazlett Architectural Assessment Completed**
- **September, 2006: Grand Opening of The New Hazlett Theater**
- **October, 2006: NEA Funded Charm Bracelet project convenes in Pittsburgh** - 4 design teams spend three days on the Northside reviewing plans and meeting with representatives from cultural organizations

In addition, Executive Director Jane Werner and other Museum representatives met regularly with community groups, made trips to Harrisburg to meet with political representatives and hosted many cultivation events for capital campaign prospects. This process was heralded as a model process and was designed to garner as much input and community support as possible.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

This project was financed in two separate phases; first, through the Children's Museum's capital campaign and then through a collaborative fundraising effort for The New Hazlett Theater. The Children's Museum project raised a total of \$28.9 million dollars for the project: \$2.6 million from the Board, \$772,000 from individuals in the community, \$818,000 from corporations, \$15.6 million from foundations and \$9.0 million from the State of Pennsylvania. Due to timing of pledge payments, the Museum entered into a loan agreement (for bridge funding) with the Allegheny County Industrial Authority for \$12.1 million in Series 2003 revenue bonds. The Museum retired the bonds on September 30, 2005, three years early. The campaign for The New Hazlett Theater raised \$2.4 million: \$1.4 million from foundation and \$1.0 million from the State of Pennsylvania. The development of the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh cost \$14.2 million (\$177 per square foot) and the development of The New Hazlett Theater was \$1,860,000 (\$93 per square foot).

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

This project addresses one of the most significant issues facing urban communities - how to attract families to strengthen the urban core. The Children's Museum believes that this is a model project for other urban settings. By committing to the re-purposing of old buildings and collaborating to leverage the strengths of communities, other organizations could adapt this project for the development of their own urban centers.

ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services. Copies may be given to other design professionals if desired.

Name Julie Eizenberg Title Principal
Organization Koning Eizenberg Architecture Telephone (310) 828-6131, ext. 112
Address 1454 25th Street City/State/ZIP Santa Monica, CA 90404
Fax (310) 828-0919 E-mail jeizenberg@kearch.com

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Signature

Julie Eizenberg

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

The most important programmatic and social objective was to rethink the conventional values about spaces for children- incorporating ideas about family learning and encouraging exploration rather than prescriptive interpretation. Consequently the setting is deliberately "not cute", informal and welcoming and designed to appeal to all age groups with an array of textures, materials, lighting and heightened spatial sequences to encourage curiosity, imagination and engagement. Materials, often considered to too harsh for children (like concrete, steel, glass, plastic and aluminum) have been embraced by visitors of all ages. The design of the children's museum was inspired by an old Chinese proverb that instructs parents to give their children both roots and wings. In the context of reviving a faded neighborhood and the reuse of historic buildings the advice spoke not only to past and future but also to old and new and safety and risk; all in the frame of reference of our responsibility to children. Consequently choices for materials and scale were made to both heighten the old as well as highlight contemporary architectural objectives (particularly sustainability) with modern technology, space, and materials. In brief the program involved expanding the museum from its home in the old Post Office (1897) into the adjacent long-vacant historic Buhl Planetarium (1930). The linking three-story steel-and-glass structure enlarged the museum to a total of 80,000 square feet, four times its original size. The new light-filled verandah/lobby introduces visitors to activities and possibilities. Interactive exhibits - based on the museum's philosophy of "Play with Real Stuff" - are straight ahead and through the new tunnel to the old Post Office. The Real Stuff philosophy is all about the value of the experiential and provides opportunity for hand's-on discovery by doing. The building in turn became an expression of this program and an armature for discovery from its steel grate ramps that heighten the sense of travel to the exterior fluttering skin that both shades the glass and reveals wind movement. At night the new addition appears as a glowing lantern; a kind of night-light symbolic of children's advocacy and the revitalization of Pittsburgh's underserved north side.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

The most important programmatic and social objective was to rethink the conventional values about spaces for children- incorporating ideas about family learning and encouraging exploration rather than prescriptive interpretation. Consequently the setting is deliberately "not cute", informal and welcoming and designed to appeal to all age groups with an array of textures, materials, lighting and heightened spatial sequences to encourage curiosity, imagination and engagement. Materials, often considered to too harsh for children (like concrete, steel, glass, plastic and aluminum) have been embraced by visitors of all ages.

ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

The design for the Children's Museum originated through a competition and featured a folded doubleskin translucent polygal structure to house new space. As design progressed through design development this structure had to be completely rethought to meet budget and construction risk limitations. The intent of a glowing lantern however was still everyone's goal. The rub was how to achieve a resonant and poetic replacement on the reduced budget that did not look like a compromise. The successful strategy emerged out of a collaboration with artist, Ned Kahn. We pooled our resources and essentially drawing on Ned's previous explorations with wind sculptures developed the idea of a fluttering translucent shade to surround a simple glass and aluminum enclosure. The shade appears to break apart as the wind sets the 5" beaded acrylic flappers in motion. This new lantern proposal did more than the original, it was innovative technologically, appropriately protected the glass from solar gain and also provided an experiential cue to the Museum's philosophy of learning by direct experience.

4. Describe the ways in which the project relates to its urban context.

The Museum believed in the power of the Children's museum to anchor a revitalization of an abandoned neighborhood that featured some of the most historic buildings in the city; the post office, the planetarium and, adjacent to that, the first Carnegie Library in the country. The design team believed that part of this success would rely on architecture that spoke of something new and optimistic afoot and as previously mentioned celebrating both roots and wings. The design for the museum reinforced connections between the buildings with windows added to reinforce visual connections and the verandah entry placed to strengthen the pedestrian street to the south; a first step to reinstatement of the original street sometime in the future. It is easy in Pittsburgh to be overwhelmed by the serious historic heritage. The acceptance of this design by the community at large, as well as the historic preservation constituency (the project won a national preservation award), demonstrates that contemporary architecture can actually strengthen historic settings and invigorate neighborhoods.

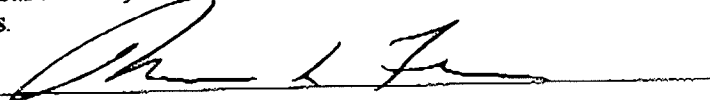
Professional Consultant Perspective

Rebecca L. Flora, AICP, LEED AP
Green Building Alliance
64 S. 14th Street
F: 412-431-1432

Executive Director
T: 412-431-0709
Pittsburgh, PA 15203
rebeccaf@gbapgh.org

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

The Green Building Alliance was hired to serve as the design competition advisor for the project. The competition advisor assisted the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh (CMP) with development of the overall structure and process of the competition, and ultimately facilitated the jury deliberations leading to the selection of a the winning design team. The competition process was customized to solicit input and respond to the needs of the CMP staff and board, its direct constituency (children and parents), and the surrounding urban community with its many contextual challenges and opportunities. The process also included site meetings and workshops with the short listed firms, most of who were from out of town and required extensive orientation to the site and surrounding community, along with our region's culture and history. The diverse jury of experts was supplemented by a 40-member advisory committee that provided the jury with detailed notes and perspectives that were invaluable to the jury in its deliberations.

2. Describe the project's impact on its community. Please be as specific as possible.

The expansion of the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh from the beginning was considered not just a "bricks and motor" project, rather a community investment in our region's children while at the same time serving to stimulate renewal of the adjacent distressed neighborhoods. First, its impact by physical presence, CMP respects both the historic neighborhood character in the preservation of its historic buildings that are joined by a new, environmentally (and human) friendly space. As a green building that has earned LEED Silver certification, it demonstrates a commitment to future generations and care for the world they will inherit. Second, the programming that is provided through this expanded facility directly serves not only its member families but also the community beyond through outreach programs. The new facility has also enabled the program to grow in its reach to a broader age range of children connecting also with pre-teens and teens.

3. **How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?** The project is instructive in a number of ways.

- The design competition process was different in that it was considered “a competition of ideas” not a final “beauty pageant” product. By establishing “project principles” as a basis for judging the winning team, less emphasis was placed on final picture and more on the responsiveness of the team to listen and translate through design the values reflected in the principles. Ultimately, the winning submission was a team that not only was most responsive to the values but their ability to express these through design. Often design competition are about the most dramatic or cutting edge drawing based on iconic architecture rather than the ideas and needs of the project.
- The project also provides a model for the value of upfront project planning and community input, before designs are set and decisions made. This was followed by an ongoing collaborative effort that was undertaken to engage the community and the city in dialog to ensure that many complexities and challenges of the project were successfully met.
- The green building aspects of the project illustrate how historic preservation and museum functional needs can both be met while also respecting the natural environment.

4. **What do you consider to be the most successful aspects of this project?**

- The design solution is elegant in how it respects the adjacent historic architecture while introducing a new, vibrant entry and spaces beyond, blending the past with the future in a seamless and exciting manner.
- The community involvement and sincere desire to listen was far beyond what is typically witnessed in a project of this scale. As noted earlier, the process was one of the best I have ever participated in and result was community development at its best.
- The green building aspects of this project were introduced at the beginning of the project, the board and staff never backed down on their commitment to a green building and the future of the children they serve. The specific green features are numerous and commendable. Even more important than the specific features is the impact they are having on other museum projects throughout the country. CMP has demonstrated leadership by integrating green principles and serving as a model for others in their field.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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Name Charles L. Rosenblum Title Adjunct Assistant Professor
Organization Carnegie Mellon University Telephone (412) 979 3477
Address 4743 Butler St. City/State/ZIP Pittsburgh, PA 15201
Fax () E-mail charles4@andrew.cmu.edu

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Signature Charles L. Rosenblum

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

I played a number of roles in the development of this project. During the public charette, I acted as both a community member, contributing comments and responses to the developing design ideas. As an architectural historian, I also gave a public lecture on the history of the buildings and site. At the completion of the process, I have acted as a journalist, writing articles on the finished building for *Pittsburgh City Paper*, *PHLF Newsletter* and *Preservation*.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on your community. Please be as specific as possible.

The impact of this project has been very positive and very widespread. An historic building, the Buhl Planetarium, that was at risk of destruction, has been saved, enhanced and reused. An important, uniformly positive and widely regarded local institution, the Pittsburgh Children's Museum, has expanded not simply its physical fabric, but also its visibility, attendance and popularity. The practices of green building, already experiencing some growth in Pittsburgh, have a new and widely regarded exemplar of their positive possibilities. These phenomena have benefitted the community in a variety of ways. As part of the expanded Children's Museum, local organizations have offices and meeting spaces available for the administrative, community and programmatic needs. Equally importantly, they have such amenities in a facility that has built into its fabric values of caring, education and positive personal growth. All of these factors are working in a neighborhood that has seen struggles of economic decline and unsympathetic Urban Renewal. And yet the resurgent Children's Museum has established, with great accolades locally and nationally, both an outstanding facility for children's institutions and a culture of healthy growth that encourages similar standards of excellence in Pittsburgh's North Side and beyond.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

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

Although I did not participate in the process of construction of the Children's Museum, I think that there were two major compromises of which I am aware. The first is that the design from the competition came in far over budget, and a late-stage redesign of the building was necessary. I think this was handled superbly, and I suppose that the remarkably positive critical press and outpouring of awards affirms this notion. The building as redesigned is less expensive but at least as inspiring, perhaps more so, than the competition scheme.

The other compromise that I am most aware of was in the reuse of the old Buhl Planetarium. The Children's Museum as an institution deserves full credit for preserving landmark structure that otherwise was in danger of being demolished. The reuse of the building did involve the loss of a few artifacts that were admired by long-time visitors to the building. However, the change in use of the structure from pre-War planetarium to 21st century children's museum did necessitate changes of esthetics, equipment and image.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

This project is wildly successful, perhaps even beyond the hopes and aspirations of many of the people involved at the beginning. Although it is a children's museum, it is a destination-type spot for adults as well, due to the outstanding architecture and the remarkable collection of fine art objects. In an area in which redevelopment has been defined mostly by sports stadiums and national chain-type restaurants, the Children's Museum has generated significant energy in non-profit, educational and family oriented activities. One of the most telling aspects of this institution is that city politicians and various non-profit administrators are looking for ways to expand upon the success of this institution by building or expanding other organizations nearby. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. I honestly do not think that there is a significantly unsuccessful aspect to this project.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

Name: Sara Radelet Title: Executive Director
Organization: New Hazlett Theater Telephone: 412-320-4610 ext 11
Address: 6 Allegheny Square E. City/State/Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15212
Fax: 412-320-4612 E-mail: sara.radelet@verizon.net

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

The Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh has developed its leadership capacity in the community over the course of the past six years, in planning and successfully executing its award-winning expansion project and in spearheading the relaunch of the Hazlett Theater. My role has been as project consultant to the New Hazlett Theater Board of Directors during the course of 2005 and as Executive Director of the New Hazlett Theater during the course of 2006. In the scope of what the Children’s Museum has accomplished, my role has been minimal, but is critical to the ongoing success of the revival of the Hazlett Theater.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on your community. Please be as specific as possible.

The Children’s Museum, under the leadership of Jane Werner, transformed two historic buildings to an active and vibrant family use and reclaimed one of the community’s landmark buildings. The restoration of the Buhl Planetarium, which had been vacant for over a decade, was one of the key positive outcomes of this project. Additionally, in the process of restoring the Buhl building, they built a new building that features an artist-created façade that is an attractive outward symbol of the creative programming presented at the Children’s Museum. Attendance has boomed and the museum has created key partnerships with other mission-related educational organizations. The best outcome of the entire project has been the example the Children’s Museum provides in striving for the best and working tirelessly to achieve a vision. They were able to revive a segment of the Northside neighborhood that had previously suffered from neglect and a lack of real economic investment for decades. This project has been just the first step, as they simultaneously invested time, energy and connections to revive the New Hazlett Theater and are now focusing energy to drawing together the cultural amenities in the community with visitor-friendly “wayfinder” methods. They are also about to launch a study regarding a neglected park across from their buildings and a soon-to-be-vacated library.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

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

With any large-scale project directed by a non-profit cultural institution, choices must be made among a list of potential projects to complete with the good-will and financial support of organizational donors. The Children's Museum worked diligently to determine solutions to their need for added space and need for improved visitor amenities and in the process utilized a holistic, broad-scale approach. They determined actions that would also benefit the museum's immediate community and forged partnerships with nearby landholders, the City of Pittsburgh, and smaller, kid-centered nonprofit organizations. The entire project has worked so well that it is difficult to recognize trade-offs, if there were any substantial compromises.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The most successful aspect is the creative use of two historic buildings and the beautiful design that brings together the distinct facilities into one extremely functional museum. The design is noted and award-winning, drawing considerable positive attention to the community nationally. The improved administrative spaces have led to great partnerships with small organizations invited to share office space there, in a wonderful example of collaboration.

There is not really an unsuccessful aspect to the project, although it creates increased attention to additional design flaws in neighboring property, like the park adjacent to the museum. The Children's Museum board and staff are moving forward in the community development leadership role solidified through this successful project to outline next steps to address challenging, expensive but badly needed improvements for the immediate community. Fortunately for the City of Pittsburgh, they are not content to simply rest on this recent success.

OTHER PROSPECTIVE

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Name: Cynthia Krappweis

Title: Executive Director

Organization: Reading Is FUNdamental Pittsburgh

Address: 10 Children's Way, Suite #300

Fax: 412-586-0883

Telephone: 412-321-8022

City/State/Zip: 15212

Email: ckrappweis@rifpittsburgh.org

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Signature: 

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

Reading Is FUNdamental (RIF) Pittsburgh is a partner at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. We have been working together for years to bring literacy and the arts to many of our region's children and now our offices are located in the Museum, which allows for greater opportunities for collaboration. RIF Pittsburgh supports The Children's Museum and is proud to be a part of their plans in leveraging collaborations with other children's organizations to create a Children's Museum and Family District on the Northside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Pittsburgh Children's Museum is a model in the fact that it provides incubator space for existing organizations that work for or on behalf of children. This project helps RIF Pittsburgh to continue to provide educational reading programs for the many children and families in our neighborhoods. Our goal is to create an environment that results in changed behavior (to ignite a habit of reading in those students who normally would not read on their own) to build a strong reading culture. We know that by collaborating with other community organizations can only help to enhance each of our individual programs and to provide the highest quality programming to all children and their families in our community.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on your community. Please be as specific as possible.

The Children's Museum's plans that have now come to fruition makes use of a building that had been vacant for many years and for a use of which it was originally intended... an educational venue, as well as a catalyst for urban development. This collaborative project is providing an exciting place for young children to learn, play and create. It is a worthy endeavor to create a new kind of "town square" for children and families, to create a Family District for the City of Pittsburgh. Children and families already love to come to the Museum and this will add to their enjoyment and positive experiences.

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

I do not feel that RIF had to make any trade-offs or compromises as we moved our offices into the Museum and as we continued collaborative projects.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The most successful aspects of this project are the opportunities for children organizations to be under one roof and work together on providing unique learning experiences for children and families. RIF believes that by working with different community organizations can help to enhance individual programs and provide the highest quality programming to all children and their families in our neighborhoods. Together we can auspiciously build and share resources that will enhance program impact and improve organizational stability for all those involved. RIF looks forward to our collaboration with The Pittsburgh Children's Museum, we hope that this endeavor will continue far into the future and allow us to help more children experience learning at its best.