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Two Rivers Historic Park Structure in Anoka

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Hennepin rising again

With four development proposals on its desk, the city of Minneapolis once again is eyeing opportunities to redevelop downtown Hennepin Avenue’s Block E.

Several years back when bulldozers barreled through infamous Block E, civic leaders and the public cheered for the demise of vice on the tattered Great White Way. With bated breath, the city waited for developers to rush in with all kinds of dazzling new proposals for the block. An early ’90s recession and glutted retail/office market squashed those expectations. Block E remains a surface-parking lot—but perhaps not for much longer.

The Minneapolis Community Development Agency, the city’s development branch, will choose the most viable alternatives, which will filter through a series of committee reviews. While two proposals—one by TOLD Development Co. of Maple Grove and the other by Loon State Ventures of Minneapolis—call for creating retail and entertainment, a third suggests developing a memorial park, Garden of Courage, for victims of breast cancer, and a fourth by Forecast Public Artworks asks for designing a temporary public square.

The city often has cited Block E as a crucial urban link between The Target Center and the First Avenue nightclubs on the west and City Center and the business/retail districts on the east. Perhaps one of these proposals will connect that link.

Bridging the water

The new $24 million Wabasha Street Bridge spanning the Mississippi River in downtown St. Paul will be a boon to auto, bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

The bridge is split in the middle to provide two separate bridges for north- and south-bound traffic. Two 12-foot-wide lanes with 6-foot-wide shoulders for bicycles in each direction run adjacent to 12-foot-wide sidewalks buffered by traffic barriers. In addition, the bridge provides six overlooks with ornamental grillwork in weathered copper, decorative railings in earth brown, as well as stylized lighting and three pairs of searchlights to announce special events in St. Paul. Pedestrians can gather at two plazas at either end or descend a stair tower to Raspberry Island.

Toltz, King, Duvall, Anderson and Associates, Inc. (TKDA) of St. Paul is the lead engineering firm, working with Figg Engineering of Tallahassee, Fla. TKDA also worked with a special team on the aesthetic designs.

Work is slated to begin this winter, with a late 1997 completion date.

Minnesota cast in bronze

This series of cast-bronze sculptures was created by Simon Beeson, a student at the University of Minnesota, and Nicola Moss, an artist. The husband-and-wife team from Britain have made temporary stints in Minnesota while Beeson completes his studies. The pieces are inspired by regional building forms. Grain Elevator developed from the couple’s trips to Morris, Minn., where Moss had an exhibit of her work. In the paper-weight size medal, a grain elevator stands beside a prairie rail track, overshadowing a plowed field. The reverse side shows a corn cob, freshly picked. In Ice Fishing, a hut stands on a frozen Minnesota lake with snow sweeping around. Turn the medal over and you see below the lake, alive with fish. Beeson and Moss hope to complete one more series before returning to Britain in September this year. The sculptures are available at Circa Gallery near Loring Park in Minneapolis.

Among the proposals for Block E is The Hennepin Crescent, an entertainment complex centered on Block E by Loon State Ventures, Inc. with Cuningham Hamilton Quiter of Minneapolis.
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Up and coming

Just as the Gold Medal honors senior members of the profession, the Young Architects Citation recognizes young and rising members of the architectural community. This year, AIA Minnesota cites Timothy A. Alt and Rolf Haarstad for demonstrating leadership and promise to the profession and community.

Alt is an associate with Walsh Bishop Associates in the firm's Financial Market Studio. His design credits include the AT&T Tower in downtown Minneapolis, and he's team leader of the firm’s interior-design side for the new Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. He also designs his own custom furniture.

Haarstad began his architectural career in Baltimore. He was director of design for Hord Coplan and Macht Inc., and was involved in the design of the Yellow Transportation Headquarters, which won a national AIA Honor Award. In Minneapolis, where he's lived since the early '90s, he is a founding member of Xerxes Architects. He won an AIA Minnesota Honor Award last year for the design of Xerxes's own offices.

Good as gold

Curt Green, one of the founding partners of the Minneapolis-based architecture firm Hammel Green and Abrahamson, is the ninth recipient of the AIA Minnesota Gold Medal. Among Green’s most notable buildings are the Honeywell Headquarters Expansion, the Hamline University Library, St. Bede’s Priory in Eau Claire, Wis., the College of St. Catherine Arts Building, and the Gustavus Adolphus College Arts Buildings. Through his career, Green has been a practitioner, teacher and lecturer. He graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1946, and received a master’s degree in architecture from The Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1948.


Shooting hauntingly beautiful full-color, panoramic images, photographer Maxwell MacKenzie records the abandoned structures of this western-Minnesota region in Abandonings: Photographs of Otter Tail County, Minnesota. The decaying barns, houses and schools featured were built by Scandinavian immigrants, whose struggle with the economic hardships of the Great Depression and frontier life propelled them to move onward for better opportunities. To evoke the spirit of the Upper Midwest, Abandonings interlaces quotes from writers Wallace Stegner and Hal Borland and other stories of prairie pioneers alongside the 28 photos. MacKenzie, a Washington, D.C.-based photographer, often spent his summers as a youth in Otter Tail County, where his Swedish great grandfather settled in 1882. In the early 1990s, MacKenzie returned to the county to record these structures during different seasons. Abandonings is published by Elliott & Clark Publishing in Washington, D.C.
When it opened in 1921, the State Theatre in Minneapolis was hailed as the most luxurious showplace between New York and San Francisco. Sixty years later however, when planning began for a $130 million office/retail complex for the site, it appeared this grand old theatre would go the way of the silent films it once screened.

But in 1985, a determined group of preservationists succeeded in getting the State placed on the National Register of Historic Places. And one of the first companies to become involved in its restoration was Marvin Windows and Doors.

You see, the windows above the theatre's marquee posed a two-sided problem. Not only would they have to fit perfectly and look exactly like the originals, they'd also have to be durable and maintenance-free. And Marvin was the only manufacturer willing to make these unique windows and stand behind them.

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As a result, the State got windows that look like the originals but actually feature the newest ideas in design, craftsmanship and energy efficiency. And Marvin got the opportunity to prove once again that responsiveness
and flexibility are as much a part of every window and door they build as wood and glass.

Today, more than 70 years after it first opened its doors, the State Theatre has reopened as the glittering star of the Twin Cities' cultural scene. And those who've seen it agree that everyone involved in its restoration deserves to take a bow.

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Andrew Wyeth: Autobiography
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
Kansas City, Mo.
Sept. 2-Nov. 26

For the first time in more than 20 years, American art lovers will have the opportunity to see the full sweep of Andrew Wyeth’s work. The exhibit, with its only American showing at the Nelson-Atkins, will feature 142 pieces from Wyeth’s six-decade career, from watercolors of the 1930s to the tempera paintings of the ’50s and ’60s, and his light-infused works of the 1990s. Wyeth’s subjects, involving the everyday events and dramas of family members and friends, focus on two locales: his hometown of Chadds Ford, Penn., and Cushing, Maine, where he spends summers. A 165-page, fully illustrated catalog is available.

For more information, call the Nelson-Atkins at (816) 561-4000.

Bewildered Image
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
Through Oct. 15

Paintings by nationally recognized Minnesota artists Lance Kiland and T.L. Solien are featured as part of the Minnesota Artists Exhibition. The show highlights a series of new self portraits and a monumental landscape by Solien, and the more enigmatic works of Kiland, who integrates organic and architectural motifs. Solien often borrows from art-historical traditions to reflect on his own life experiences. Kiland, however, works on a more intuitive level, using abstract painting methods to express “visual thinking.”

For more information, call the Institute at (612) 870-3000.

Legend and Legacy
Recent Works by George Morrison and Lillian Pitt
Carolyn Ruff Gallery
Minneapolis
Through Oct. 14

Minnesota artist George Morrison, who has exhibited nationally and internationally, is known for his abstract paintings. A member of the Ojibwe Nation in Grand Portage, Minn., Morrison is artistically inspired by Lake Superior. Lillian Pitt, who lives in Portland, Ore., is known for her ceramic work and uses symbolic forms to highlight her Warm-Springs-Yakima heritage.

For more information, call (612) 338-8052.

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Minnesota Woodworkers Guild
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  editor The Magazine ANTIQUES, $5

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Paul Shambroom: Hidden Places of Power
Walker Art Center
Minneapolis
Through Oct. 22

On display are approximately 50 large-scale color photographs from the past 10 years by this Minneapolis-based artist, whose documentary-style work explores the various places of power. Viewers will see pieces from his Nuclear Weapons series, as well as a selection from his earlier Factory and Office series. Pictures focus on such subjects as the ground-level view of a conference-room table at General Mills, the scaffolding beneath a space shuttle under construction at Rockwell International or the underbelly of a Minuteman II missile at Ellsworth Air Force Base.

For more information, call Walker at (612) 375-7600.

Claude Monet: 1840–1926
The Art Institute of Chicago
Through Nov. 26

In one of the largest and most comprehensive exhibits mounted of Claude Monet’s work, 159 works from around the world, including many from private collections of rarely seen pieces, will chronicle the life and achievements of the renowned French impressionist painter. The exhibit analyzes the primary phases and themes of his career, from flowers and gardens, bridges and cathedrals, sunsets and sunrises, wheat stacks and water lilies, and trains, boats and seascapes. Highlights include Water Lily Garden, a selection from the Houses of Parliament series, and a central panel from Luncheon on the Grass.

For more information, call the Art Institute of Chicago at (312) 443-3600.

In addition . . .

Richard Avedon:
Evidence 1944-1994
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
Through Sept. 17

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Preservation Builds Communities
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Minneapolis
11 a.m.–4 p.m.
Oct. 22

This statewide festival celebrating historic preservation will feature educational programs as well as booths and displays of preservation businesses, educational institutions, government agencies and community organizations.

For more information, call Preservation Alliance at (612) 338-6763.

Fragile Dwelling:
Photographs of Homeless Communities
By Margaret Morton
National Building Museum
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Through Nov. 8

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Mary Jo Copeland Through the efforts of its tireless founder to provide transitional shelter for homeless women and families, Sharing and Caring Hands builds Mary’s Place from the ground up in Minneapolis.

By Diane Richard

Mary Jo Copeland, her expression earnest, settles into a swivel chair in the waiting room of Sharing and Caring Hands, a Minneapolis transitional shelter for women and families.

“What did you want to ask me?” she says.

Earlier this morning she had forgotten our appointment to tour Mary’s Place, her new transitional shelter. When I introduced myself, she had surmised me to be a new volunteer and set me to work. Her apology for the confusion is sincere, but her embarrassment slight.

“I’m too busy to show you around now,” she says, placing an arm around my shoulder. “There’s too much for me to do now.”

Waving to anyone willing to run interference as a tour-guide, she foists me off on her daughter-in-law Michele.

An hour later, Copeland and I eke out a moment to talk.

But wait—two figures are filling the door frame.

Copeland raises a finger to me—a hold-that-thought gesture—as she rises to greet the volunteers. They hash out schedules and duties, Copeland’s gravelly voice warm but definitive.

She turns to sit, lifting her eyebrows expectantly. Then, a knock.

Outside the door stands a group of kids from St. Andrews. They’ve come to meet the woman for whom they’ve collected two huge plastic bags filled with towels. Their faces register awe and fear, as if they were meeting a saint. She bends down to shake each child’s hand.

“Thank you, thank you for your hard work and generosity,” she says. “The poor thank you.”

The teacher praises the neighboring Mary’s Place, less than a month old and almost fully occupied.

Copeland beams.

“Isn’t it beautiful?” she says. “Isn’t it just beautiful?”

The shelter that began on a lawsuit and a prayer now stands as a symbol of promise. Mary’s Place—named not for Mary Jo Copeland, but for The Mary, the biblical mother of Christ—opened May 22 on the south side of the Seventh Street bridge near Target Center in Minneapolis.

Like the soft shoulder it hopes to provide, the 3-story, 52,000-square-foot transitional shelter for homeless women and families hugs the otherwise austere urban site.

Continued on page 52
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Suburban growth, fueled by the proliferation of automobiles and highway expansion after World War II, has changed the way Americans live. Suburban growth also has changed the way the built American landscape looks.

Unlike America’s older urban centers with densely developed downtown cores—New York, Chicago, Boston—many suburbs have grown amorphously, with seemingly no center or place of origin—no civic identity. They have become seas of tract-house subdivisions and random edge-city office towers sprouting up around highway exchanges. Strip malls and mini-marts along busy intersections have become the new downtowns.

In this issue featuring architecture and development in the suburbs we learn, however, that many towns are not satisfied to grow without reflecting upon where and how they’re growing. They are trying to create new town centers that generate a cohesive civic identity.

Accomplishing such a goal won’t be easy in municipalities accustomed to thinking in terms of subdivisions, freeways, and strip malls. Suburbs were created with cars in mind, not pedestrians. Places that evoke strong civic identities foster pedestrian activity and a sense of history.

Think of some of your favorite towns in Minnesota and around the country—places like Stillwater, Minn., Georgetown in Washington, D.C., Williamsburg, Va., Santa Barbara, Calif. Part of their lasting charm and value is that you can experience them on foot.

We hear a lot these days about the “New Urbanism.” The New Urbanism is actually quite an old-fashioned idea: Create towns that resemble towns.

Although it’s easy to criticize cars for fracturing urban planning, we need to remember that cities and towns—since the beginning of cities and towns—have been designed around the day’s predominate mode of transportation. Up until the beginning of the 20th century, that primary mode of urban transportation was by foot, with some help from the horse and buggy.

With thousands of years of civilization under our belt, the car is a new-born babe. Civilization, accustomed to traveling at a horse’s trot, became enamored of the automobile’s speed. Urban planning after World War II recognized the seductive power of speed, and thus designed suburbs accordingly—meaning freeways and cars first. The New Urbanism cautions planners that the auto mentality of urban design has alienated the individual. People have the need to interact with each other outside of a congested rush-hour asphalt artery.

If the New Urbanism is to have any impact, it must apply the successes of old-fashioned, pre-auto town planning to a new civilization. Short of a catastrophic world event, cars aren’t going away. We have to design for people, but we also have to design for cars. Somewhere between the car and the foot lies the solution to better town planning.

And for those who can’t wait, we still have Georgetown and Stillwater to enjoy.

Eric Kudalis
Unlike train stations, airports rarely have achieved soaring architectural heights. Typically, airport terminals have been pretty perfunctory spaces. There are a few historic exceptions, of course, notably Eero Saarinen's famous terminals at Dulles and Kennedy airports in the early 1960s, and more recently Helmut Jahn's United Terminal at O'Hare. Perhaps because train travel is a near-extinct mode of transportation, airports of late have been putting more design punch into their new terminals. Midfield Terminal at the Pittsburgh airport has some razzle and dazzle. And Denver's new airport, a running joke long before it opened due to cost overruns and technical problems, nonetheless presents a striking image with its roof forms resembling tents.

Surprisingly, the new emphasis on airport architecture is reaching beyond the terminals. All those maintenance facilities and hangars out back are hardly the stuff of great design, but there are some bright spots at the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport.

Miller-Dunwiddie’s addition to the airport’s Equipment Maintenance Center brings color and drama to a purely utilitarian building in an architecturally uninspiring setting. The expanded facility accommodates ever-increasing air traffic and the inherent need for more airport maintenance. Two wings at right angles to each other connect with the original building, providing a new maintenance...
In such a setting, almost any shedlike structure would have done the job as long as it satisfied its functional requirements. Credit the architects—and the client—for looking beyond mere function.

Reflective of such ubiquitous airport-maintenance machines as snow plows, deicers and the like, the facility has a humming machinelike aesthetic. Structural supports, steel beams, metal-truss roof, and nuts, bolts, cables, brick and precast concrete all express their function and content. Yet all these structural components are brightly colored and articulated in such a way as to tame the building’s whopping scale and ignite architectural energy, inside and out. Yellow, red and blue metal structural elements define the office/dormitory wing, while green and purple garage doors punch up the maintenance wing.

Color aside, smaller details and unexpected use of materials nudge this building above the rest of the pack. An angled plane, breaking the rigidity of the boxy massing, marks the front entrance to the dormitory/office side. In addition, corrugated-aluminum sunscreens—framed in blue-painted steel and supported with red-painted steel struts—protect interior spaces from glare and create a shimmering band along the west and south façades. This high-industrial aesthetic continues inside, where the architects combine intersecting planes of particle board with exposed carriage bolts to form the reception desk. A typical machinelike material—chrome checker-plate—forms the base of the desk.

As might be expected, the 25,300-square-foot addition offers state-of-the-art technology in heavy-equipment repair. An under-floor heating system melts snow from the vehicles upon entry, while an in-floor service pit with exhaust and oil-evacuation lines expedites repairs. Up above, a 6-ton crane zips 185 feet along the full length of the facility to allow crews to service equipment in different locations.

**Project:** Airport Equipment Maintenance Building Addition
**Architect:** Miller-Dunwiddie Associates
**Client:** Metropolitan Airports Commission
An expanded equipment-maintenance facility enlivens an airport's landscape with an industrial aesthetic.

The 25,300-square-foot addition (shaded on plan) includes maintenance area (above), dormitory and locker rooms (top left), and offices. The reception desk (right) is composed of standard industrial materials.
For centuries, Peninsula Point has served the various people occupying it. In the 1600s, the Dakota Indians staked their ground where the Rum and Mississippi rivers meet. Later, white settlers built their commerce here, as the rivers' currents fueled a thriving logging industry. Most recently, the area has served the less glamorous function of sewer-waste site.

With the closing of the waste site about two years ago, the city of Anoka saw a prime opportunity to capitalize on the area's history with a new park building. Designed by BWBR of St. Paul, the park facility is the first step in the city's overall plan to develop the site as an interpretive center.

Stephen Patrick of BWBR says the design was inspired by images of early 19th-century settlements and saw mills, here apparent in the heavy-timber trusses, sloping metal roof, and exposed brackets and hardware. Functionally, the 4,400-square-foot, masonry-block building is straightforward. A covered walkway divides the park facility in half, with a classroom and restrooms to one side, and administrative/public-information office, food-service and covered picnic shelter to the other.

For the city of Anoka, the building establishes a strong architectural precedent for future development. E.K.

**Project:** Two Rivers Historical Park Structure  
**Architect:** BWBR Architects  
**Client:** City of Anoka
The Pleasant Hill Library (above), built on a prairie setting in Hastings, respects the city’s historic character. The architects used such sturdy and classic materials as copper and horizontal brick to create a textured façade. An arched awning (right) protects the front entrance. Copper detailing and skillful brickwork (opposite right) enhance windows.
The Pleasant Hill Library in Hastings, Minn., is a little gem in a prairie setting.

Historic Hastings, the second oldest city in Minnesota with a population of 19,000, played a role in the facility’s design. Downtown Hastings, still thriving, is distinguished by elegantly detailed brick commercial buildings. Designed by Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle of Minneapolis, the 16,000-square-foot library is meant to historically respect—but not mimic—the architectural nature and high-technology.

A small-town library combines history, nature and high-technology.
Interior woodwork and furnishings recall Prairie School detailing, as seen in a reference desk (above). Tall windows brighten the oval-shaped reading area (opposite), while allowing patrons views of the prairie. The floor layout (plan) is straightforward, running from the main entrance directly to the reference desk at center and then to the oval-shaped reading area. Skylights at the entrance, center and reading area offer plenty of daylight.

Project: Pleasant Hill Library
Architect: Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle
Landscape architect: Damon Farber Associates
Client: Dakota County Library
A new campus library bows to its historic neighbor while maintaining its own architectural identity.

Academic resources

Berntsen Resource Center at Northwestern College north of St. Paul is a low-key building that serves its clients well. Designed by Collins Hansen Architects of Minneapolis, the 38,000-square-foot library, which accommodates up to 140,000 volumes, is part of the nondenominational Christian college's expansion plans.

The college occupies a 100-acre wooded site overlooking Lake Johanna. Northwestern bought the site in 1970 from the St. Paul Archdiocese and inherited Nazareth Hall, a 1922 Romanesque-revival beauty with arched loggias, fine brick detailing and a 10-story water tower. Since then, all new buildings have related, in one way or another, to Nazareth Hall.

Berntsen Resource Center, named after a former president and chancellor, William B. Berntsen, is a straightforward rectangular box that places open book stacks on three levels. A tight budget of about $80 per square foot, however, dictated function over architectural frills. The facility makes room for increased seating and study areas, the latest computer technology, and state-of-the-art listening/viewing areas and media services.

Despite financial constraints, the building displays a steady architectural hand, especially in the exterior detailing. A curving aluminum-panel canopy announces the entrances. Reddish brick with precast detailing and panels relates the building to its collegiate neighbors. Reading bays and vertical glass walls illuminate stairwells, further breaking up the façade's massing. Brick arches around windows and vertical bands of brick along the roof line reflect finer, similar detailing found on Nazareth Hall. The 2-story height keeps Berntsen in line with the nearby Fine Arts Center and still allows Nazareth to remain king of the campus.

E.K.

Project: Berntsen Resource Center
Architect: Collins Hansen Architects
Client: Northwestern College, St. Paul
Good architects always give the clients what they want. Great architects do more.

They create lasting pieces of architecture that satisfy clients’ functional requirements while expressing a self-assured signature style. Step inside the Carlson/Larson house on Lake Johanna north of St. Paul and you know you’re in a James Stageberg-designed house. That’s not because Stageberg repeats himself; it’s because he has developed architectural themes and concepts that evolve and mature with each new project.

Once a strict modernist, Stageberg has entered a lighter, more whimsical phase of his career. Gone are modernism’s straight, rigid lines and cool, aloof hues. Planes are now softer and lines gently curve, while ceilings soar and colors sometimes pop up in the most unexpected places.

Look at his own retreat on Lake Pepin in Wisconsin, which he designed for his wife, writer Susan Allen Toth. Over the years it has become a minicom-pound of colorful, curving forms, from the main house with rooftop deck, to writer’s studio built into the cliff, car port and garden gazebo.

Stageberg, once shy of color like a true modernist, credits his wife to introducing him to tones and hues. Color finds its way into many of his residential projects today, from a screened gazebo in Marshfield, Wis., to a recent house at University Grove in St. Paul and even on the side of a downtown-Minneapolis parking ramp.

For this new house at Lake Johanna, Stageberg bypasses color for natural wood grain—but not entirely. Brush strokes on the front door—teal, yellow, burnt burgundy—tell you you’re entering Stageberg territory.

The clients, who originally owned a duplex in south Minneapolis, gave Stageberg a fairly open design board.

“We had ideas of what we wanted in terms of rooms and such, but we wanted the architect to have a level of freedom,” they say.

The exterior is designed by James Stageberg to embrace views of Lake Johanna. A roof deck (top) offers a bird’s-eye view of the surroundings, while a wall of windows in the back (above left) curves outward toward the water. The front façade (above) is more reserved than the back. A roof overhang (opposite) provides a protective shelter.
Stageberg himself admits that he prefers the interior to the exterior. Sheathed in cedar with a band of teal trim, the exterior is a bit unassuming. The back—with its curving façade reaching out to the lake and a garden path extending to a small deck overlooking the dock—is certainly the most appealing side. The back of the house, indeed, takes full advantage of the lake. Windows for the den, and dining and living rooms sweep the length of the curving wall. Up above, a triangular balcony pokes out from the master suite, and from there a roof-top deck offers a bird’s-eye view of the lake and environs.

Some of the house’s real pleasures and surprises are reserved for the inside. The living and dining rooms arch outward, and the birch-wood ceiling soars upward. Diamond-shaped portals from the upper-level hall overlook the main room. Though the living and dining rooms are actually quite small, the high ceiling and generous windows create a spacious feel.

Stageberg’s modernist training is clearly evident in the understated detailing and simple, uncluttered surfaces. The main room, with birch trim and walls, maple floors and limestone fireplace reaching the height of the ceiling, has a serene, almost Scandinavian aura; perhaps all that natural-tone wood soothes the senses, making the living room feel peaceful.

The house also has a strong spatial flow. A few steps up take you to the master suite, with its cathedral ceiling clothed in birch. Some more steps take you up to a hall, where you can peek through the diamond-shaped portals to the main room below or outward to the lake. A few more steps lead to the roof-top deck, a feature characterizing many of Stageberg’s house designs.

Residential design is always a duel creative process, with architect and client working hand in glove. Stageberg is quick to credit the homeowners when a project turns out well.

“A great client is open and asks questions,” Stageberg says. “They never ignore what you say. That’s why certain clients get better houses.”

E.K.

Project: Carlson/Larson
House
Architect: The Stageberg Partners
Client: Carlson/Larson

A dramatic arched ceiling heightens the spacious of the living and dining rooms (opposite and top). Diamond-shaped portals (above) overlook the living and dining rooms from the upper-level hall. Leisure, dining and living rooms (floor plan) are grouped under the arched ceiling, with large windows framing the lake. The master suite is up half a level from the main floor. Another bedroom and den are a half level up from there.
Across the country, suburban sprawl has reached epidemic proportions. A recent report from the Bank of America states that suburban sprawl in California creates “enormous social, environmental and economic costs, which until now have been hidden, ignored, or quietly borne by society. Businesses suffer from higher costs, a loss in worker productivity and underutilized investments in older communities” (Newsweek, May 15, 1995). Well sure, but that’s California.

Of course there’s Cleveland, where the metropolitan area expanded by one-third in 20 years even though the population declined. And there’s Phoenix, which is currently adding 5,000 houses every three months. No one even mentions the Boston-to-Washington, D.C. corridor anymore.

Here in the Twin Cities, suburban growth has been equally dramatic. According to the Metropolitan Council, suburban growth has doubled the size of the “urban” area in the last 25 years. The number of jobs increased by two-thirds and the number of households increased by one-half (Council Directions, July/August 1995). Virtually all of this growth has occurred in suburban areas.

In general, this growth is based on the demographics of the baby-boom generation—as is its eventual decline. How individual suburbs deal with the growth will determine the quality of life we enjoy for the next decades.

In Plymouth, a second-ring Minneapolis suburb, there is a six-month moratorium (May-November 1995) on all new subdivisions for commercial and industrial development. According to Anne Hurlbut, Plymouth’s director of community development, the moratorium provides time to update procedures and ordinances. This is especially critical because Plymouth has reached a point where wide-open development parcels, especially for residential construction, are no longer available. Plymouth is in the enviable position of having an excellent tax base and abundant jobs. There are 40,000 jobs ranging from manufacturing to medical research, and single-family homes have an average value of $200,000.
THE NEW ECLECTICISM

CITYWALK AT UNIVERSAL CITY IN LOS ANGELES EPITOMIZES THE TRIUMPH OF STYLE OVER SUBSTANCE

To stroll through Universal City Walk, a 4-block long “pedestrian promenade”-cum-shopping mall by The Jerde Partnership and developed by MCA Development Co. for Universal City Studios, Inc. is to be bombarded and manipulated by the history of architectural imagery. A pink Cadillac flies from the façade of The Hollywood Freeway, an ice-cream parlor. King Kong clammers up the 1920s art-deco skyscraper façade of The Warner Bros. Store. A Frank Gehry-inspired metal-panel construction flies from the otherwise classical façade of the Sam Goody Superstore, contradicting its overscaled, 4-story-tall Corinthian columns. Giant cutouts of hockey and baseball players decorate an art-moderne ziggurat façade. An upside-down, bright-yellow surfboard with a pink fin forms a googie roof to Current Wave. Neon-blue atoms float free from the façade of The Scientific Revolution. Meanwhile, a life-size Fiberglass statue of Marilyn Monroe pushes her dress down in front of Wolfgang Puck’s Cafe, whose façade is a nuclear meltdown of neo-Mediterranean polychromatic tile.

After an hour or so, one’s initial wave of wonder at CityWalk wanes, degenerating to restless boredom. Then it’s hard not to be depressed by what CityWalk represents: the triumph of style over substance. For at CityWalk, the meaning of architecture—and the power of architecture to have meaning—is being watered down by the values of the marketplace.

Welcome to The New Eclecticism.

Eclecticism is nothing new. It dominated the 19th century until being swept away by the cultural juggernaut we call modernism. In retrospect, 19th-century eclecticism seems perfectly innocent, the consequence of excessive enthusiasm. Architects were giddy with their knowledge and wanted to introduce their fellow citizens to the wonders of the world. They abandoned the quest for a distinctively American architecture and packed American cities with buildings clad in every conceivable style: office towers shaped like Egyptian obelisks; prisons decorated with ancient Egyptian motifs; libraries based on the palaces of Italian Renaissance bankers. What would Minnesota be without such eclectic masterpieces as the Foshay Tower, or the New Ulm Post Office or St. Paul’s Landmark Center?

But if innocence marked the old eclecticism, cynicism defines the new: The marketplace is free to separate style from substance and exploit any style that will sell.

Consider Seaside, Fla.
New towns may sound good on paper, but critics often complain that these self-contained "utopian" villages create unreal environments that ignore more important regional urban concerns.

around the world. Variations of his themes resurfaced in the 1960s and 1970s, when the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) adopted new town planning principles as part of its policy for managing suburban growth.

Among the most prominent advocates of new town thinking in the metro area was Henry T. McKnight, a Minnesota state senator with a strong interest in planning and environmental issues. In 1966, McKnight, an urban visionary, formed a partnership known as the Ace Development Corporation (later renamed the Jonathan Development Corporation), which acquired 5,000 acres on the outskirts of Chaska for a new town development. They called it Jonathan, after the early English explorer Jonathan Carver who ventured up the Minnesota River in search of the Northwest Passage.

From the start, the group was careful to distinguish itself from other suburban developers. "Contrary to popular thinking," the prospectus says, "the Jonathan story did not begin just a few years ago with an idea, a desire for profit and the purchase of substantial quantities of land." Jonathan Development distanced itself from its contemporaries with good reason. Developers such as Orrin Thompson, who by the time of his retirement in the 1970s accounted for 10 percent of the postwar housing stock, churned up the countryside for his industrial house farms, blanketing farm fields with tidy but featureless bedroom communities almost overnight.

Instead, Jonathan advertised itself as a complete cradle-to-grave community which promoted social, urban and environmental ideals. According to the prospectus, Jonathan "has its roots in man's failure to plan his living, working and playing areas so as to take advantage of, but at the same time preserve and protect natural resources and the environment." It was also a place for "all kinds of people with all kinds of ideas about how they want to live... a community where people can live up to their full potential and capabilities as human beings."

To accomplish these utopian-sounding goals, Jonathan would provide its residents with local sources of employment, offices and stores, along with social, cultural and recreational facilities—a compact, closely knit, recognizable place to live and work, that is both urban for convenience and rural for the pleasures of Minnesota living.

Unlike the anonymity of the Levittown look-alikes in other parts of the metro area, Jonathan was to have consisted of three distinct residential villages of about 10,000 to 15,000 people each. A range of housing types, costs and densities, from garden apartments to single-family detached homes, was to cluster around a village center, which provided local convenience shopping. Major retail, office, medical, entertainment and other service needs would be accommodated by a larger regional commercial center located on Jonathan's periphery.

Plans also called for four industrial sites, which would provide a wide array of jobs for 18,000 workers. These industrial zones would be buffered from the Jonathan villages by open space and park lands and accessible to Jonathan residents via highway or the villages' internal streets and pedestrian pathways.

Central to the industrial, commercial and residential areas were public green spaces. Developers pledged more than 25 percent of Jonathan's square footage to parks, picnic areas and walkways. Lakeshore and wetlands were to be set

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New Towns
By Adelheid Fischer

A chorus of critics, from the pulpit to the town hall, warns that the Twin Cities metro area is going the way of other big American cities—a widening doughnut hole of blight and abandonment surrounded by expanding rings of suburban development. Their concerns—though well-taken—are nothing new. More than three decades ago, a handful of Twin Cities developers tried to break this cycle of abandonment and sprawl using principles known as new town planning. Though communities like Jonathan in Chaska or the Preserve in Eden Prairie never attained the scale and prominence of their East Coast cousins—Reston, Va., and Columbia, Md.—they represent more than just historic curiosities. The inquiries that led to their creation cut to the heart of debates about urban livability and environmental preservation, and resurrect some of the same issues hotly contested today in such widely publicized movements as New Urbanism.

New town planning traces it roots to Sir Ebenezer Howard, a 19th-century British court stenographer who launched the garden-city movement (later renamed the new towns movement) with his 1898 volume, Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Reform. Howard proposed that self-sufficient communities be built around London with a full range of employment and services close at hand. The hope was that Londoners, attracted to these green-belted new towns, would vacate the city so that its slum housing and aging infrastructure could be rebuilt without massive displacement of residents. Lewis Mumford and his colleagues, architects Clarence Stein and Henry Wright, introduced new town planning to America in the 1920s. Stein’s design for Radburn, N.J., with its segregation of pedestrian paths from roadways and houses clustered around common greens set a new standard for community design.
to define their town centers and civic identity

By Janet Whitmore

The most exciting development right now is the creation of “downtown Plymouth.” Located at Highway 55 and Vicksburg Lane, this city-owned land has become the focal point for an out-pouring of community enthusiasm. “We have to decide what we want that land to be before we do anything,” Hurlbut says. “The City Council is really committed to the planning process.”

Under the guidance of the Hoisington Koegler Group, the community has already drafted a vision statement and is in the process of developing design guidelines. Although nothing is finalized yet, there is consensus that the land be developed as a civic center, a place where residents can gather and enjoy a sense of community.

In nearby Golden Valley, that same sense of community takes a different form. As a first-ring Minneapolis suburb, Golden Valley’s civic/commercial center at Highway 55 and Winnetka Avenue needs revitalization. The once-fashionable

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Seaside is a radical new/old idea of how Americans might live. Rather than building autonomous houses packed around endless suburban cul-de-sacs, architects Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk proposed we rediscover the classic American small town. The meaning of Seaside rests in its substance: Every Seaside resident lives within five-minutes’ walk of such basic day-to-day necessities as a post office, grocery store, coffee shop; each house has a front porch close to the street to encourage spontaneous social interactions; white picket fences demarcate the public and private realms; and garages are behind houses to make the streets more pedestrian friendly. Substance, not style, has made Seaside a phenomenal success.

Yet stretching for miles along Florida’s Highway 98, developers have pasted Seaside’s style—its white picket fences, pastel colors, and metal roofs—onto the tract-house façades of standard subdivisions. Each bad imitation is a triumph of style over substance. Each bad imitation further waters down the meaning of Seaside. Each bad imitation is another example of The New Eclecticism.

Consider MTV.

Only on MTV is a skinhead no longer a white supremacist, but any guy who shaves his head and buys the right Doc Marten boots and the right brand of tight black jeans. A Rastafarian is no longer a Jamaican who believes his soul resides in his hair and who worships the former emperor of Ethiopia, but any guy who buys the right hair-care products to replicate dreadlocks. The colors and clothes urban gangbangers wear on Saturday night show up in white suburban high schools Monday morning. On MTV, style is separated from belief. Meaning is diluted to no meaning.

Now think of CityWalk as the architectural equivalent of MTV.

CityWalk epitomizes—indeed cartoons—the New Eclecticism.

Its designers began with a genuine experience: the dynamic variety one experiences on a walk through a real city like Los Angeles.

But Los Angeles gains its energy and vitality from genuine diversity, from the

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hough born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1886, Edwin Lundie seems the quintessential Minnesota architect for creating a romantic, North Woods image of the state's vernacular architecture. In his 50-year practice, he designed modest cabins, sprawling country estates and finely detailed city houses primarily in Minnesota. He also designed publicly accessible structures, most notably Lutsen Resort and the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Anyone who has ever been in a Lundie-designed building is familiar with his trademark concerns for detailing and proportions. He lived in a time of sweeping modernist changes, but Lundie stepped to a different beat, preferring picturesque romanticism to austere modernism.

Lundie is truly one of the 20th century's great architects. Surprisingly, Lundie is little known outside Minnesota. He's one of those hidden treasures with a small but select group of followers. A new book by Minneapolis architect Dale Mulfinger, however, illustrates for readers everywhere the treasure Minnesota has in the lasting legacy of Lundie's work.

The Architecture of Edwin Lundie is a beautifully rendered 132-page monograph that uses 160 luminous color photographs, floor plans and reproductions of Lundie drawings and renderings to document some 30 projects. Organized in such categories as Country Houses, City Houses, Cabins,
and Other Structures, *The Architecture of Edwin Lundie* shows how Lundie's structures are recognized for their detailing, which can be found in hand-crafted timbers, molding, wrought iron and delightful brickwork.

While many great architects create icons to their own egos, Lundie created lasting architecture that is highly livable. In the book's forward, architectural historian David Gebhard writes, “Lundie’s work impressively fulfills several of the essential qualities sought by traditionalist architects—of expressing romance, character, and personality.”

Anyone fortunate enough to pick up *The Architecture of Edwin Lundie* will discover these qualities of Lundie's work. Lundie was influenced by both early American and Scandinavian architecture. His structures seem timeless because they evoke a far-away, story-book feel. The book’s clean, polished design heightens the sense of romance.

Eileen Michels, an architectural-history professor at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, provides a biographical essay on the architect. Mullinger, also an architecture professor at the University of Minnesota, explores Lundie's design concepts and examines—through an opening essay and project descriptions—the architectural concepts and craftsmanship that make a house or cabin truly Lundie. Also included is one of the last interviews Lundie agreed to before his death in 1972.

With this book, Lundie finally wins well-deserved public recognition. We can only speculate on how many other architects of his caliber have existed through history, designing for a select client base with little recognition outside their small circles.

*The Architecture of Edwin Lundie* will be published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press this October, in cloth or paperback.
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Pyramidal roof forms are the strongest design feature of this dealership. Used to define interior showroom/service entrances, they break up the mass of the large facility and create a landmark visibility from 35W. A standing seam metal roof encases the pyramids and metal wall panels; precast concrete encase the walls. All exterior materials will be a warm grey and the window mullions, rails and fascia accent stripe will be a dark “Ford” blue.

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Continued from page 19

where Copeland’s day shelter, Sharing and Caring Hands, also stands.

The place vibrates with Copeland’s energy and moral resolve. A devout Ro-
man Catholic and mother of 12 chil-
dren, Copeland and her new facility
propel people toward self-sufficiency
through personal discipline, comfort
and inspiration.

But Mary’s Place grew out of ad-
versity.

First it was the Minneapolis City
Council, who opposed building the resi-
dence on an industrial site; when the
charity sued, the council gave the
shelter a zoning variance.

Then there was
the matter of
raising $6.6 mil-
lion to finance the
building, entirely,
Copeland empha-
sizes, without
government re-
sources. (“When
something’s built
with private dol-
ars, it’s not
work,” she says.
“It’s an act of
love.”) An inver-
terate canvasser,
Copeland raised
$5 million in private do-
ations from large corporations, small
businesses and individuals. A loan for the
remainder will be repaid with future do-
nations, she says.

Then there was the building itself.

“We didn’t have a program,” says
project architect David Engleson of
Cunningham Hamilton Quiter Architect-
ts. “The only program we had was
how they helped people, which was dif-
ferent from how everyone else helps
people in the Cities, or even in the
country.”

The architectural team took its lead
from Copeland and her husband, Dick,
who helped oversee the three-year pro-
ject. Designed for two- to six-week
stays, the shelter contains 56 dorm-style
apartments and 200 beds to house up to
2,400 people per year. There are two
levels of single apartments in one wing
and two levels of family apartments in
the other. Each apartment contains a
bathroom, kitchenette and furnishings,
as well as a telephone with voice mail.

There are also classrooms, a chil-
dren’s play area, laundry facilities and
other support areas on site. For secu-
ry, the building uses a key-card system,
equipped with preprogrammed photos of
each tenant.

The goal was to provide dignity, dura-
bility and security for residents, says
John Hamilton, CHQA’s principal in
charge.

“For a shelter, I think this is a highly
appropriate place,” he says. “It’s not a
dishonor to live there, nor do people

Children’s play area at Mary’s Place.

who have donated [to it] feel their mon-
ey is misspent. It feels right.”

Copeland agrees.

“It’s been a dream trying to give these
people some dignity,” she says.

Moreover, everyone involved with the
building has remarked on the profound
experience of working with the
Copelands.

“It was an incredibly different project
than any I ever worked on, stemming
from Mary Jo herself,” Engleson says.

“It’s really personal. They have 12 kids,
but I kind of feel I’m their 13th.”

 “[Copeland] cares for the people,
then the work, then the people,” Hamil-
ton says. “She lets herself be so vulnera-
ble, so trusting, that you want to be dog-
gone sure that you get it right.”

Diane Richard is a writer living in
Minneapolis.
sprawl
Continued from page 41

strip malls of the 1960s now look grubby, and the traffic patterns are woefully inadequate.

The City of Golden Valley began the revitalization process when Hennepin County decided to upgrade Winnetka Avenue. Damon Farber Landscape Architects of Minneapolis designed semicircular arbors for the main intersection, creating not only a visual focal point, but also a pedestrian orientation for the heart of the commercial district.

The planning process continues as the city takes on the development of the Valley Square Redevelopment Area on the north side of Highway 55. This 100-acre parcel has been under consideration for development since the 1970s, but only recently has it actually become a viable project. In part, the development was spurred by community opposition to a proposed 68,000-square-foot Cub Foods store. Mark Grimes, Golden Valley’s director of planning and development, states the case clearly: “The community opposed the development of a big-box retail outlet at this site. They wanted a pedestrian-friendly, smaller-scale retail development.”

The Golden Valley HRA rejected the Cub Foods proposal and appointed a special citizens’ task force to evaluate the development options. The task-force report is a strong statement about the value of community-based development. “We are convinced that a proper pedestrian-friendly community and a realistic acceptance of the automobile’s continuing impact can exist together,” the report states. “What is required is imagination, skill and commitment. The challenge to developers who may submit a proposal is that they think like pedestrians and propose a development that they would want for their own communities.”

The report goes on to specify three uses that are not acceptable: big-box retail, free-standing fast-food restaurants and any drive-through facility. In short, the civic/commercial heart of Golden Valley is to be respectful of community values that encourage a pedestrian context. The city has received two development proposals based on the task-force criteria; it remains to be seen if either one will be approved.

In contrast to the community-driven
Welcome to Architecture Minnesota's first Directory of General Contractors. The following paid listings were solicited from the membership of the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Minnesota, a statewide association of building, heavy/industrial, highway and municipal/utility contractors since 1919.

General Contractors are important team players in the building and design industry. We invite you to use this directory as a resource for upcoming projects, both in Minnesota and out-of-state.

Peter A. Rand, FAIA
Publisher

ACKERBERG CONSTRUCTION COMPANY
3100 W. Lake Street
Minneapolis, MN 55416-4510
Tel: 612/824-2100
Fax: 612/824-2122
Established 1964
Contact: Alan C. Ackerberg
— Stuart I. Ackerberg, Pres.
  Alan C. Ackerberg, Sr. VP
  Kriss M. Novak, Senior VP
  Stuart J. Zook, Senior VP
  Stacy A. McMahon, CFO

The company provides general contracting services which include new construction, renovation, rehabilitation on, adaptive re-use, tenant improvements and consultation. Ackerberg Construction Company has been a proud member of the AGC for 31 years.

Lake Pointe Corporate Centre, 3100 W. Lake Street, Minneapolis; Caribou Coffee Stores (25 throughout the Twin Cities); 1300 Lagoon Building, 1300 Lagoon Avenue, Minneapolis; Lake/Irving Building, 1601-15 W. Lake Street, Minneapolis; Planned Parenthood of Minnesota, 1200 Lagoon Avenue, Minneapolis.

ALVIN E. BENIKE, INC.
2906 Highway 14 West
Rochester, MN 55901
Tel: 507/228-6575
Fax: 507/228-0116
Established 1937
Contact: James W. Benike
— John W. Benike, Pres.
  James W. Benike, Treas.

Albin E. Benike, Inc., as a team, provides non-residential building construction and renovation services within an 80 mile radius of Rochester. Project sizes vary from $200,000 to 13 million. Skill, integrity and responsibility are demonstrated through continuing education and training, use of modern technological innovations and adherence to professional ethics.

PEMSTAR, Rochester, MN; Rochester Public Library, Rochester, MN; McDonalds, Rochester, Winona and Owatonna, MN; Domaille Engineering, Rochester, MN; Ronald McDonald House, Rochester, MN.

OSCAR J. BOLDT CONSTRUCTION CO.
1001 Tall Pine Lane
Cloquet, MN 55720
Tel: 218/779-1293
Fax: 218/779-5290
Established 1889
Other Offices: Appleton, WI (HQ); Wausau & Milwaukee, WI; Oklahoma City, OK, Memphis, TN
Contact: Gerald C. Wunderlich
— Warren F. Parsons, Pres.
  James M. Rossmeissl, Exec. VP
  John M. Lawson, Exec. VP
  Gerald C. Wunderlich, VP Minnesota
  John M. Salentine, VP Finance

Boldt project involvement is in industrial, institutional and commercial marketplaces. A full range of services is offered including program management, construction management, general construction, machinery installation, consulting, planning, design/build, crane service, heavy rigging, optical alignment, maintenance, steel erection, conceptual estimating, piping and electrical, and instrumentation.

— Braintree Technical College, Braintree, MN; Potlatch Corp., Cloquet, MN; Potlatch Corp., Braintree, MN; Ashland Oil, St. Paul, MN.

BOR-SON CONSTRUCTION, INC.
2001 Killebrew Drive, Ste. 141
Bloomington, MN 55425
Tel: 612/354-8444
Fax: 612/354-8910
Established 1957
Contact: Jim Dempster
— W. Arthur Young, Pres.
  James Mrazek, Sec./Treas.
Roger Raum, VP Field Operations
Raymond Schwartz, VP Estimating

BOR-SON is a General Construction and Construction Management Company providing services to public and private clients in the Midwest area. Working with the Owner, Architects and Engineers in a team relationship; pre-construction services covering costs, scheduling, and Value Engineering are provided.

Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter, Minneapolis, MN; Mille Lacs Indian Museum, Mille Lacs, MN; Cargill Research Center, Minneapolis, MN; Chippewa Valley Ethanol Coop, Benson, MN; Minnesota History Center, St. Paul, MN.

ADOLFSON & PETerson, INC.
6701 W. 23rd Street
Minneapolis, MN 55426
Tel: 612/544-1561
Fax: 612/525-2333
Established: 1946
Other Offices: Denver, Co; Tempe, AZ; Wausau, WI
Contact: David Adolfson
— David Adolfson, Pres.
  Brook Adolfson, Exec. VP
  Scott Weicht, VP Operations
  John Palmquist, VP Bid
  Clyde Terwey, VP Heavy/Industrial

Adolfson and Peterson, Inc. (A&P) provides "Total Construction Services" to public and private clients including general construction, construction management, negotiated general construction, design/build, heavy industrial, and preconstruction services. AP Technology Management, Inc. is a subsidiary providing design/build services for advanced technology manufacturing facilities.

— Cub Foods-Midway, St. Paul, MN; Maple Grove Senior High School, Maple Grove, MN; Federal Reserve Bank (concrete and masonry), Minneapolis, MN; Green Bay Packaging, Coon Rapids, MN; Stillwater Area Elementary Schools, Stillwater, MN.

GEORGE F. COOK CONSTRUCTION CO.
2333 Lyndale Avenue S.
Minneapolis, MN 55406
Tel: 612/872-4100
Fax: 612/872-4103
Established 1885
Contact: George F. Cook III
— George F. Cook Jr., Chmm.
  George F. Cook III, Pres.
  Donald O. Sellner, Vice Pres.
  Joel D. Cleveland, Sec.

George F. Cook Construction Co. is a general contractor providing rehabilitation and new construction for commercial, industrial, and manufacturing facilities. Company employees perform selective demolition, concrete, and all types of carpentry work. Projects include schools, community facilities, high tech manufacturing, and power plants.

Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Minneapolis, MN; Westminster Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis, MN; GTC Infill Construction, Airport; Hennepin County Correctional Facility, Plymouth, MN; Semiconductor Plant Remodeling, Bloomington, MN.

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Tel: 218/751-4433
Fax: 218/751-0946
Established 1948
Contact: Don Berg

Don Berg, Pres.
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FRANA AND SONS, INC.
7500 Flying Cloud Drive Ste. 755
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Tel: 612/941-0282
Fax: 612/941-4993
Established 1977
Contact: Peter Donnino

Gary Frana, CEO
Peter Donnino, Pres.

Frana and Sons, Inc. has directed construction of over 6000 units of housing representing over $200 million in construction costs. Frana specializes in all types of housing with extensive experience in new multi-unit elderly and family, assisted living, nursing homes, government assisted, barrier free, and renovation housing of all types.

Meridian Manor Assisted Living, Wayzata, MN; Oaklawn Nursing Home, Mankato, MN; Rosewood Estate Assisted Living, Waterloo, IA; Lourdes Square Townhomes, Minneapolis, MN; Southwinds Estates Barrier Free Housing, Great Falls, MT

W. GOHMAN CONSTRUCTION CO.
30618 County Road 133
PO Box 57
St. Joseph, MN 56374
Tel: 612/363-7781
Fax: 612/363-7207
Established 1950
Contact: Bruce Gohman

Bruce Gohman, Pres.
Denis Anderson, VP Project Admin.
Dennis Kehr, VP Field Ops.

W. Gohman Construction Co. specializes in commercial, industrial and institutional building, remodeling, renovation and retrofit. Providing complete Construction Management, estimating, budgeting, value engineering, and construction services to Owners throughout the greater Central Minnesota area.

Nahua Printing, Inc., St. Cloud, MN; Benton County Jail, Foley, MN; S.L. Hachan Student Center, College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN; Heartland Family Practice Clinic, St. Cloud, MN; Church of St. Joseph Addition, Grey Eagle, MN

MAX GRAY CONSTRUCTION, INC.
2501 5th Avenue W.
PO Box 689
Hibbing, MN 55746
Tel: 218/262-6622
Fax: 218/262-2109
Established 1947

Other Offices: Satellite operations in Duluth, MN
Contact: Scott R. Erickson

Scott R. Erickson, Pres/CO-Owner
James M. Erickson, Vice Pres/Co-Owner

Max Gray Construction, Inc. is a diversified general building contractor headquartered in Hibbing, MN, serving all of Northeastern Minnesota and Northwest Wisconsin. MGC has a proven track record with a wide variety of different types of construction (commercial, industrial, institutional, Varco-Pruden Pre-Engineered metal buildings, remodeling of all types, multifamily residential, etc.), as well as for different project delivery methods (lump sum, negotiated, Design-Build, construction management, etc.). Projects range from under $100,000 to over $10 million.

H. G. HARVEY CONSTRUCTORS, INC.
PO Box 558, Old Hwy. 53 N.
Eveleth, MN 55734
Tel: 218/744-3344
Fax: 218/744-4824
Established 1962

Contact: Rick or Chris Harvey

Richard H. Harvey, Sr., Pres.
Richard H. Harvey, Jr., Vice Pres/Treas.
Christopher H. Harvey, Vice Pres.
Nancy Harvey, Sec.

A medium-size general contractor, serving N.E. Minnesota for over 30 years. Customer-oriented, committed to quality work done on time and within budget. Very strong in working with owners who need to stay in operation during their construction project; we’ve never had an uncompleted project.

U. S. Border Station, International Falls, MN; Blandin Foundation Headquarters, Grand Rapids, MN; U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame, Eveleth, MN; Vermilion Student Housing, Ely, MN; Ironworld Amphitheater, Chisholm, MN

HASSLEN CONSTRUCTION CO., INC.
45 First Street S.E.
Ortonville, MN 56667
Tel: 612/339-2529
Fax: 612/839-2339
Established 1893

Other Offices: Willmar, MN
Contact: Dan C. Hasslen

Dan C. Hasslen, Pres/CEO
Brent C. Hasslen, Vice Pres.

Hasslen Construction Company, in addition to general contracting, provides design-build services, custom building programs, professional construction management and consulting services.

Unity Square Community Center, Milbank, SD; Lyon County Courthouse Addition and Renovation, Marshall, MN; A.M.P.I Cheese Factory, Dawson, MN; 40+ Church construction projects in Illinois, South Dakota and Minnesota; 60+ School projects including elementary, junior high schools, senior high schools, and state university buildings in Minnesota and South Dakota.

HAYMAKER CONSTRUCTION, INC.
2201 W. River Road N.
Minneapolis, MN 55411
Tel: 612/522-2200
Fax: 612/522-2728
Established 1961
Contact: Mark H. Haymaker

Mark H. Haymaker, Pres.
Doug L. Feudler, VP Operations
Boo L. Ang, VP Estimating
Mark A. Denhartigh, Gen. Supt.
Randi Robinson, Field Supt.

Haymaker Construction is a full service general contracting, construction management firm specializing in commercial, industrial, multi-family and medical projects throughout the Upper Midwest.

The Henly at Edina Condominiums, MN; Elk River Medical Building, MN; Sherburne County Government Center, MN; Cloverleaf Park Apartments, MN; Ridgepoint Medical Building, MN
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<td><strong>Heymann Construction Company</strong></td>
<td>210 3rd South Street PO Box 606 New Ulm, MN 56073</td>
<td>Tel: 507/554-3147 Fax: 507/554-3173</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>John P. Heymann, Pres/Treas John H. Heymann, Vice Pres. Jerry O'Brien, Vice Pres. Patricia M. Heymann, Sec.</td>
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<td><strong>Kraus-Anderson Construction Company</strong></td>
<td>325 South Eighth Street Minneapolis, MN 55404</td>
<td>Tel: 612/332-7281 Fax: 612/332-8739</td>
<td>Established 1897</td>
<td>Other MN Offices: St. Paul, Circle Pines, Bemidji Contact: Ray Rauch Lloyd Engelsma, CEO Bruce Engelsma, CFO William J. Jaeger, Jr., Pres. Kraus-Anderson Construction Company is a privately held contractor/construction management firm that provides services to a diverse client base primarily in the Upper Midwest with capabilities to manage projects on a nationwide basis.</td>
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<td><strong>Knutson Construction Company</strong></td>
<td>3550 Wayzata Blvd., Ste. 300 Minneapolis, MN 55416</td>
<td>Tel: 612/546-1400 Fax: 612/546-2226</td>
<td>Established 1911</td>
<td>Contact: Edward B. Curtiss Steven O. Curry, Pres/CEO Edward B. Curtiss, Vice Pres. James Mee, Dir. of Project Mgmt. Richard H. Peper, Vice Pres. Lawrence A. Trom, Vice Pres. Knutson Construction Company provides construction management, general contractor, and design/build services through the use of its in-house estimating department, state of the art software systems, and highly trained and skilled personnel. Knutson devotes its energy toward exceeding customers' expectations and employs a nationally award-winning work force of 300 skilled craftpeople. They have expertise in the areas of concrete, masonry, rough and finish carpentry, ironwork and stonework.</td>
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<td><strong>A. J. Lysne Contracting Corporation</strong></td>
<td>Route 3, Box 325 Owatonna, MN 55060</td>
<td>Tel: 507/451-7121 Fax: 507/451-0957</td>
<td>Established 1978</td>
<td>Contact: Allen J. Lysne Allen J. Lysne, Pres. General commercial contractor, design builder and construction management firm whose owners are third generation of a construction family. Projects include industrial plants, churches, government buildings, schools, hospitals, hotels, and retail establishments in Minnesota, the East Coast, Southwest and the Southern part of the United States.</td>
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<td><strong>Olson General Contractors, Inc.</strong></td>
<td>5010 Hilltabro Avenue N. New Hope, MN 55428</td>
<td>Tel: 612/533-1481 Fax: 612/535-1484</td>
<td>Established 1909</td>
<td>Contact: Ed Sorgatz or Jack Jarrard Robert Olson, Pres. Edward Anderson, Vice Pres. Olson General Contractors, Inc. is a full service design/build development company whose products and services are found in the corporate office, manufacturing, high-tech, retail, food and commercial marketplaces. Ryan also owns and manages nearly five million square feet of lease space.</td>
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<td><strong>PCL Construction Services, Inc.</strong></td>
<td>9303 James Avenue S. Bloomington, MN 55431</td>
<td>Tel: 612/388-9200 Fax: 612/388-1733</td>
<td>Established 1906</td>
<td>Other Offices: Denver, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Fort Lauderdale, Mexico City, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Regina, Calgary and Yellowknife Contact: Fred Auch Fred Auch, District Mgr. Steve Knight, Chief Estimator Peter Taylor, Special Projects Mgr. Bruce Lowell, Administration Mgr. PCL Construction Services, Inc. is one of Minnesota's largest and most diversified construction firms. Founded in 1906, the company is engaged in industrial, medical, institutional, commercial and civil construction - delivering projects as a general contractor, construction manager and as a design builder.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ryan Construction Company of Minnesota, Inc.</strong></td>
<td>700 International Centre 900 2nd Avenue S. Minneapolis, MN 55402</td>
<td>Tel: 612/336-1200 Fax: 612/337-5552</td>
<td>Established 1938</td>
<td>Other Offices: Hābbing, MN; Phoenix, AZ; Cedar Rapids, IA Contact: Jeffrey A. Cupka, AIA James R. Ryan, Pres. Patrick G. Ryan, Vice Pres. Timothy M. Gray, Vice Pres. Robert J. Cutshall, Jr., Vice Pres. Jeffrey A. Cupka, AIA, Vice Pres. Ryan Construction is a full service design/build development company whose products and services are found in the corporate office, manufacturing, high-tech, retail, food and commercial marketplaces. Ryan also owns and manages nearly five million square feet of lease space.</td>
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Ravoux Hi-Rise Community Room Addition and Renovation, St. Paul, MN; New Northwest and West Central Elementary Schools, Minneapolis, MN; MnDOT Transportation Building Life Safety Improvements, St. Paul, MN; Messiah Lutheran Church Addition and Remodel, Lakeville, MN; Southdale Area Hennepin County Library Addition and Remodel, Edina, MN

**STAHLS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY**
5900 Rowland Road
Minnetonka, MN 55343
Tel: 612/931-9300
Fax: 612/931-9941
Established 1991
Other Offices: Kansas City, MO; Waterloo, IA; Denver, CO
Contact: Cathy Schmidt, Dir. of Mktg.

Wayne Stahl, Pres.
Phillip Baum, Vice Pres.
Sharon O'Brien, Sec/Treas.

Stahl Construction Company provides construction management and general contracting services to public and private clients in the Upper Midwest. Services include planning, estimating, value engineering, competitive bidding, guaranteed maximum pricing, job site supervision, project management, scheduling, cost control, and time completion and a commitment to meeting the needs of each client.

**TURNER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY**
1201 Marquette Avenue, Ste. 350
Minneapolis, MN 55403
Tel: 612/338-2488
Fax: 612/338-1226
Established 1902
Other Offices: Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, Boston, Dallas, Houston, Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, Nashville, New York, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Portland, Seattle, Washington DC, Miami, Orlando, Atlanta and 6 California locations
Contact: Glenn W. Anderson, Regional Mgr.

A. T. McNeill, Chrm.
H. J. Parmeele, Pres.
J. V. Vunbcacco, Exec. VP
J. A. McCullough, Senior VP
J. S. McIntire, Vice Pres.

Turner provides services to public and private clients from 35 office locations in 20 states and abroad. Services include program and construction management, preconstruction and construction consulting, design-build, design-build/finance, general contracting and building maintenance for industrial/manufacturing, R&D, healthcare, hotel, commercial, justice, educational, recreation, public, retail and interior/renovation projects.

U. S. Federal Building and Courthouse, Minneapolis, MN; IDS Buildings, Minneapolis, MN; Circuit City Stores, Various Twin Cities Locations, MN; Holland High-Rise, Minneapolis, MN; Summit Park Development, Burnsville, MN

Sears, Mall of America, Bloomington, MN; St. Croix County Government Center, Hudson, WI; Rocky Mountain Factory Outlet, Denver, CO; Wayzata Community Church Addition, Wayzata, MN; South St. Paul High School Addition/Renovation, South St. Paul, MN

**WATSON-FORSBERG CO.**
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Minneapolis, MN 55416
Tel: 612/544-7761
Fax: 612/554-1826
Established 1965

John Forsberg, Chrmn.
Dale Forsberg, Pres.
Mike Ashmore, Vice Pres.
David Forsberg, Sec/Treas.

General Contractor and Construction Manager providing services for commercial, retail, multi-family residential and industrial projects.

- University of Minnesota, Riverside Family Practice Clinic, Minneapolis, MN; Schmitt Music, Minnetonka, MN; Lincoln Apartments, Chisholm, MN; Fairview Ridge, Burnsville, MN; Long Lake Power Equipment, Long Lake, MN

**WEIS BUILDERS, INC.**
1550 E. 79th Street, Ste. 350
Minneapolis, MN 55425
Established 1939
Tel: 612/288-2041
Fax: 612/288-7979
Other Offices: Rochester, MN
Contact: Dave E. Olson

Joe Weis, Chrmn. of the Board
Jay Weis, Pres.
Erik Weis, Exec. VP
Dave Olson, VP Business Dev.
Larry Corbin, VP Finance
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Weis is a general building contractor serving the Upper Midwest with significant experience in Commercial, Retail, Industrial, Health Care, and Multi-Housing construction. Services include: preliminary cost estimating, detailed scheduling, value engineering, cost and quality control, award-winning safety program and partnering. Customers are offered a choice of general contracting, design-build, or construction management.

- IBM Credit Union, Rochester, MN
- JC Penney, Davenport, IA; Lake Pepin Plaza Senior Housing, Lake City, MN; Shops at Lyndale Shopping Center, Richfield, MN; Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN; Northtown Village Shopping Center, Coon Rapids, MN

**WESTIN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY**
250 Prairie Center Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Tel: 612/946-1519
Fax: 612/946-1576
Established 1994
Contact: Mark Westin

Westin Construction Company is a full service general construction and construction management firm. We provide a very customer-focused approach to our projects and our business. In particular, our comprehensive post-construction phase services, to include cost estimating, planning, scheduling, value engineering, etc. provide great value to our clients and design team partners. We also offer project/program management, design/build and build-to-suit construction services.

- Cargill Records Storage Warehouse, Minnetonka, MN; Fluoroware Manufacturing and Headquarters Facility, Chaska, MN; Cargill Headquarters Parking Facility Expansion, Minnetonka, MN; Viking Engineering Headquarters Remodeling, Fridley, MN

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P.O. Box 381349
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Tel: 612/830-9001
Fax: 612/830-1346
Established 1945
Contact: Kenneth A. Styrlund

- Kenneth A. Styrlund, Pres.

General Contracting and Construction Management for negotiated, design build, public and private projects. Extensive experience in fast track and remodel projects. Services include pre-construction and construction planning and scheduling, value engineering, cost estimating and overall project management. Crews perform self demolition, concrete and carpentry - rough and finish.

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PLANNING IN GOLDEN VALLEY AND PLYMOUTH, the outer-ring suburb of Eagan has taken a different approach. “To a large degree, the private market has planned Eagan, and that’s okay with the City Council,” says Peggy Reichert, Eagan’s community development director.

Eagan is a young suburb, a growing residential community with good schools, lots of parks, and a location near the airport and freeways that attracts numerous businesses. As Reichert notes, “the commercial development follows the residential growth.”

Only recently has the community begun to articulate its desire for a strong sense of place. The discussion was initiated by the same kind of proposal that distressed Golden Valley citizens: a developer wanted to create a big-box retail power center at the intersection of Interstate 35E and Yankee Doodle Road. Ironically titled Eagan Promenade, this proposal calls for a series of large, box-like retail outlets engulfed by the requisite parking lots. “Promenading” in this complex is highly unlikely.

The community objected, saying that it wanted a small-town environment with small shops lining the streets. They itemized such things as a “place for a community Christmas tree,” or festivals and special events. The desire for a more human, pedestrian scale of design is clear.

The city is negotiating with the developer for better materials and more landscaping, trying to “mesh the community’s goals with what the private sector is doing,” according to Reichert. Ultimately, it seems unlikely that the citizens of Eagan will get a genuine community space in this particular development.

The lessons learned here, however, may well be the catalyst for the next development proposal.

The upcoming decade will be the proving ground for Twin Cities suburbs. With the Metropolitan Council increasing growth restrictions, insisting on cluster planning among communities and wrestling with difficult transportation issues, there is no doubt that urban sprawl will be curtailed. How the suburbs respond will make the difference between creating vital communities, and a series of disconnected housing and businesses without a sense of place.

Janet Whitmore is a frequent contributor to Architecture Minnesota.
aside and “accessible for any resident ... from house or apartment.”

This same egalitarianism extended to the governorship of the Jonathan Association. Each property owner automatically became a member of the Jonathan Association, which owned and maintained greenways, walkways and recreational facilities, as well as exerted architectural control over new and existing properties. Contrary to the “boxes, little boxes” stereotype of midcentury suburban design, Jonathan residents were encouraged to test the limits, says Jim Main, Jonathan’s executive director. “When you bought a house here, you were buying into an experiment,” Main observes. He says some homes were built using a new plastic material developed by Olin Chemical. Ceilings, flooring, even bathroom fixtures were made of the material. Movable walls enabled residents to reconfigure their living spaces. Stanford Research Corporation built an entire fleet of experimental houses devoted to the efficient use of interior space. Another street featured design-competition housing. Also encouraged were experimental residential arrangements, such as prefab modular housing and yardless homes.

But the Jonathan dream was never fully realized. The up-front planning and development costs for new towns made them initially more expensive to build than traditional suburban subdivisions. Ironically, though McKnight believed that American new towns, unlike their British counterparts, should be privately financed, the Jonathan Development Corporation, like many other new town developers, was encouraged to approach the federal government for help. In 1970 HUD granted the Jonathan group a $21 million loan to keep the company afloat until housing sales rolled in, making Jonathan the first new community in the U.S. to qualify for funds under Title IV of the New Communities Act of 1968. This loan was followed up by a substantial grant awarded to the City
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of Chaska to help underwrite Jonathan’s infrastructure needs.

But a slump in the real-estate market in the early ’70s put a damper on Jonathan’s plans. Rumors unfairly painted a bleak picture of the company’s finances, scaring off prospective buyers who turned instead to more conventional suburban housing. Main says the company dwindle by the late 1970s and finally defaulted on its government loan. HUD sold the property to a new developer who abided by the legal covenant restrictions on the land, but passed over much of the project’s innovative spirit.

With the change in ownership went the emphasis on residential innovation. Main observes, but he points to several enduring features of the original Jonathan vision. Though only one of the four light-industrial sites was built, the complex remains framed by a rolling landscape of prairies, woodlands and wetlands. Only one of the three villages was constructed. Its center is a truncated version of the shops, schools, fire station and churches called for in the original plan. Today, a gas station and convenience store, as well as an early childhood center and a park-and-ride lot, mark the spot. The village center, along with a beach, parks and neighborhoods, are linked by popular pedestrian paths which tunnel under major roadways, providing safe and pleasant access on foot or bicycle to every corner of the community. And Jonathan has fulfilled its founders’ concern for a range of housing types and costs. The highest residential densities—condominiums, apartments and townhomes—are clustered around the village center as planned, with lower-density, single-family homes ringing the periphery. Home valuations range from $80,000 to $500,000, with subsidized rental units located across the street from $200,000 homes, Main points out.

Though Jonathan new town never reached maturity, its design ideals inspired other developers in the metro area. In the 1970s, emboldened by the Jonathan example, as well as new communities in Britain and northern Europe, John Gertz and George Carter set out with blessings from the likes of Minnesota’s governor and Senator Hubert
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Humphrey to create an 1,100-acre new town in the farm fields west of Eden Prairie's Anderson Lakes. Known as the Preserve for its emphasis on retaining area trees, lakes, open meadows and topography, the development features multifamily housing around a community-and-recreation center ringed by lower-density, single-family homes. Pedestrian paths crisscross the development and connect residents to a restored wetland, as well as such regional amenities as the public trail system around the Anderson chain of lakes. Backyards eschew the isolation of other suburban lots and about green commons which contain tot lots and picnic areas. Like Jonathan, the community features a wide price range of housing, including a subsidized rental building whose construction was sponsored by the Minnesota chapter of the American Institute of Architects in the 1970s and designed by local architects Elizabeth and Winston Close.

Like Jonathan, the full spirit of the project, however, was never realized. Though critics, such as Edward Relph, maintain that "like clean-sweep urban renewal, the planning of new towns is an idea whose time has passed," these communities nonetheless present a number of ideas worth revisiting. Minneapolis architect James Stageberg, whose firm designed the community layout for the Preserve, praises the new town push for greater densities while preserving open space around environmental features, pedestrian paths and a variety of housing types and prices. But he decries their lack of architectural interest. This is true of new towns, whether abroad or at home, says William Whyte in his 1968 book The Last Landscape. "Big housing projects tend to look like big housing projects," Whyte observes in a critical chapter on new town developments. "It does not seem to matter when they were put up or where.... It is the sameness, not the differences, that impress one. Whether the projects are built by a speculative builder or by a government agency, whether they are animated by social impulses or the desire for money, the layouts and the arrangement of space—even down to the fanciful statuary—has the same recurring patterns." More important, in the last three decades, as communities have tallied the

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environmental, economic and social costs of leapfrog development, they’ve exposed the folly of thinking, as Whyte submits, that new towns “will have everything the city has ... except its faults.” Both the Preserve and Jonathan, however laudable their internal design goals, have become islands cut off by the seas of sprawl and gridlock they hoped to escape. Self-containment, we’ve discovered, is a dangerous myth, and there is a big price to be paid for taking a private parcel-by-parcel approach to planning instead of a more inclusive regional view.

The call for architects, planners, governments and developers in the ’90s is for less hubris and more humility. Instead of lighting out for the tabula rasa of our countrysides, we should be attending to the task of restoring the abandoned corners, the overlooked interstices, and restoring the connective tissue we’ve severed in our hasty retreat to greener pastures. Local infill projects, such as the Centennial Lakes development in Edina, which reclaimed an abandoned gravel pit with a pleasing landscaped promenade flanked by housing, shops and offices, seems a good place to begin.

The most worthy challenges now lie in mending the connections between existing human communities and the forces which revitalize and sustain them. In the Culture of Nature, landscape architect Alexander Wilson observes: “My own sense is that the immediate work that lies ahead has to do with fixing landscape, repairing its ruptures, reconnecting its parts. Restoring landscape is not about preserving lands—saving what’s left,” as it’s often put. Restoration recognizes that once lands have been ‘disturbed’—worked, lived on, meddled with, developed—they require human intervention and care. We must build landscapes that heal, connect and empower, that make intelligible our relations with each other and with the natural world: places that welcome and enclose, whose breaks and edges are never without meaning.” Minneapolis writer Adelheid Fischer writes frequently about landscape issues.
eclecticism
Continued from page 45

raw energy of different people speaking
different tongues and holding different
beliefs colliding in shared public space.
Genuine diversity and vitality are titilating,
but threatening, and real cities
like Los Angeles have a scary edge of
dangerous unknowability.

CityWalk, in contrast, is utterly safe.
It is a sanitized commercial simulacrum
of a real urban experience stripped of
all danger for its suburban milieu. The
genuine diversity of beliefs and values
that gives a city its edge are reduced to
the symbolic diversity of architectural
styles and ethnic foods, all strained
through the filter of the values of the
marketplace: whatever sells is good.
CityWalk stands traditional marketplace
architecture on its head. Architecturally,
bazaars or souks provide a simple,
quiet backdrop to the age-old dance
between merchant and customer, fea-
turing the goods front and center. Ex-
citement rests not in the architecture,
but in the goods and interactions be-
tween people. Style defers to substance.
CityWalk, in contrast, spends millions
pumping up visitors with ersatz energy
and excitement. There's no place to buy
the necessities of life, say a hammer and
nail, groceries or white cotton boxers.
You can get anything there except what
you may really need.

One can argue that CityWalk is a
harmless distraction, and that the values
of the marketplace respond to what
people genuinely want. Yet the values
of the marketplace are not neutral. They have
but one yardstick of measure: whatever
sells is good. They encourage blandness
and conformist, for strongly stated be-
iefs might scare away customers. And
by defining citizens as consumers, they
courage passivity. Don't worry; be
happy. Where there is no meaning, there
must be excitement, pizzazz, visual ener-
y, hyperactivity and constant buzz of
the new.

What happens when the marketplace
appropriates an architectural style? It is
stripped of its vitality, integrity and
meaning. Style in architecture, like style
in clothing, originates in someone's desire
to make a statement. Frank Gehry's
discordant forms and industrial materi-
als grew out of his musings about post-in-
dustrial L.A. Googie's wacky forms and
wild colors originated in the delirious op-
timism of post-World War II prosperity.
Classicism's sober, symmetrical forms
are rooted in a belief in the ultimate or-
der of the universe and the perfectibility
of form. Modernism's stark, simple
forms are the direct expression of one
generation's exaggerated belief in the
power of reason and logic. Style origi-
nates in belief. Style has substance. Style
has meaning. Style by style, the New
Eclecticism is impoverishing the very lan-
guage of architecture.

Like it or not, California in general
and L.A. in particular is America's test-
ground for new architecture. Such
radical ideas as gated communities and
drive-in architecture first flourished in
L.A. before spreading throughout the
United States (and the world). Whatever
happens in L.A. will soon happen in
Minnesota.

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Client: Northwestern College
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Project manager: Michael Collins
Project architect: Ron Brenner
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For decades, the drive-in movie theater reigned as perhaps the most ubiquitous commercial enterprise of post-War suburbia. Not only were big tracts of land available in the suburbs, but so were culturally hungry residents.

The Bloomington Drive-In may have been Minnesota’s first such theater, and it was certainly the Twin Cities’. For 14 years after the opening of the nation’s first drive-in in Camden, N.J., theater owners in Minneapolis and St. Paul had successfully blocked all building-permit applications for outdoor cinemas. In 1947, however, the Flager drive-in theater chain of Memphis, Tenn., managed to slip in an application without any publicity, and construction was underway before the area’s other theater owners could mobilize opposition. The Bloomington Drive-In opened on Aug. 29, 1947.

Designed by prolific theater architects Liebenberg and Kaplan, the drive-in had a 600-car capacity, ramped parking, and room in front of the autos for viewers in beach chairs to watch the films. The audio system, which provided individual speakers for each car, cost nearly $100,000. Admission was 60 cents for adults and 12 cents for kids. Handicapped by winter’s cold and summer’s late sundown, Flager planned a 150-night season, with two screenings per night.

Twin Citians responded with enthusiasm. During the drive-in’s first week, Bloomington saw some of its earliest traffic jams and thousands of cars had to be turned away. It was novelty, not the opening-week film, a lackluster musical called *Carnival in Costa Rica*, that lured them. Minneapolis Tribune film critic Will Jones watched the first night’s show in a taxi cab, racking up a $9 fare.

In 1958, drive-in theaters reached their peak numbers nationally. More and more, however, commercially zoned suburban land gained in value, and drive-in owners frequently sold out to the highest-bidding developer. By 1966, 16 drive-ins remained in the Twin Cities, and a few years later the Bloomington Drive-In closed. It served as a drive-in church for a time before being razed in the early ’70s.

*Jack El-Hai*