

Recap of East Downtown Council's Annual Meeting and Business Forum
Thursday, April 16, 2015
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Best Western Normandy Inn, 405 South 8th Street
Downtown West Neighborhood of Minneapolis

• ***Welcome and Introductions***

EDC President Paul Mellblom introduced himself and welcomed the audience to the April 2015 annual meeting and business forum. He explained that the EDC is committed to wielding the economic viability and vitality of the East Downtown district that encompasses the Mill District, Downtown East and Elliot Park neighborhoods. After describing the agenda, he then introduced EDC Executive Director Dan Collison to lead the program.

Dan noted that this is his first annual meeting as Executive Director and when often asked what does the EDC do, the short version of what's on the brochure and website has been distilled down to: (1) builds value through public and private initiatives; (2) a critical source of information; and (3) collaborates with all parts of downtown for the common good. What's not mentioned is that we're fun, grassroots, and have great business forums that help achieve all of those things.

Dan extended gratitude to the audience and its membership for their support and a special thanks to the following platinum sponsors whose additional investments help improve staff capacity, marketing and communications as well as to host the business forums that connect us to all that is going on within the district:

- Allied Parking
- CenterPoint Energy
- Hennepin County Medical Center
- Kraus-Anderson
- Minnesota Vikings
- Mortenson Construction
- NRG Energy Center
- PadillaCRT
- Ryan Companies
- Valspar
- Wells Fargo

Thereafter, the audience was asked to introduce themselves.

• ***EDC Board of Directors Election***

Paul read out the slate of candidates (indicated below in alphabetical order):

Carina Aleckson	Chris Fleck	Paul Mellblom
Jeff Anderson	Daniel Gumnit	Lynn Regnier
Jackie Barrett	Jeff Hahn	Kelly Stenzel
Marc Berg	Hilary Hart	Carletta Sweet
Tim Briggs	Tom Hayes	Alex Tittle
John Campobasso	Varun Kharbanda	Tim Tucker, absent
Joshua Clark, absent	Brian Maupin	Bert Winkel

Hearing no additional nominations, Dale White moved and Jackie Barrett second to approve the slate of candidates as presented. The motion passed.

- **Five Year Strategic Framework**

Paul explained that over the past year and a half the EDC went through several strategic planning sessions that culminated in the 5-year strategic framework for four overarching activities: Connection and Collaboration; Advocacy and Resourcing; Leadership and Voice; and Sound and Sustaining Organizational Structure. The 2014-2015 goals and objectives established under each were prioritized as follows:

1. Adopt a new Executive Director model and necessary governance changes. This has been accomplished. Have a new ED and resulting governance changes.
2. Develop EDC board capacity, diversity and collaborative edges. Progress has been made but still a work in process.
3. Clearly define the EDC brand. A work in process.
4. Influence the EDC area brand. A work in process; want it have all the great vitality and image as some of the other downtown neighborhoods.
5. Enhancing green space and public realm improvements. Have a body of interested people who serve on relevant committees (e.g., Minneapolis DID, City and MPRB joint Downtown Public Realm Framework/Downtown Service Area Master Plan Steering Committee).
6. Connect EDC businesses and broader city residents to unfolding job opportunities. A work in process as the area grows and changes (e.g., the Ryan and Wells Fargo project).
7. Leverage transit improvements for future residential, office and retail growth. A work in process.
8. Strengthen ties to the University of Minnesota, including physical connectivity. A work in process and are hugely exciting about the possibility of a lid over I-35W.

- **Debut of EDC Promotional Video**

Paul explained that Dan had this 2-minute video produced to sell what the EDC is to those unfamiliar with the organization and to leverage all of the development activities going on in the area. It will be placed on the EDC's website and social media.

- **Review of Business Forums and Preview of Next Season**

Executive Coordinator Christie Hantge introduced herself and explained she has worked with the EDC since November 2012 and one of her job responsibilities is to help plan and coordinate the business forums in partnership with Dan and the Business Forum Committee which includes Carina Aleckson, Jackie Barrett, John Campobasso, Jessica Johnson, Brian Maupin, and Carletta Sweet. She has had the good fortune to get to know many in the audience over the last 2-1/2 years and she looks forward to seeing them at future forums. Then she gave a quick rundown of the 2014-2015 business forum season:

- *September 18, 2014.* The season began with the celebration of Valspar's investment in their East Downtown campus that was a build-out by EDC member Kraus-Anderson. The redeveloped campus has space for hosting advanced degree jobs, cutting-edge paint technological developments, a best-in-class laboratory, as well as meeting and office space.
- *October 16, 2014.* Michael Langley, CEO of Greater MSP, was the featured speaker who helped frame the possibilities and some important strategies that will need to be capitalized on what is unfolding as well as help create future waves of development in our district.

- *November 20, 2014.* Michele Kelm Helgrem from the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority, and Michael Tennant from Meet Minneapolis shared how we won the 2018 Super Bowl bid. Received a crime and safety update from the Minneapolis Police Department's Chief of Staff Medaria Arradondo. The featured topic, led by Ben Shardlow, Director of Public Realm Initiatives for the DID, was a discussion about how urbanism studies are showing that greening and safety catalyze local investment, visitor spending, environmental cost savings, and increase public health vitality.
- *December 18, 2014.* This was a panel discussion of elected officials, i.e.: District 59B State House Representative Raymond Dehn, District 60B State House Representative Phyllis Kahn, District 59 State Senator Bobby Joe Champion, and District 61 State Senator Scott Dibble.
- *January 15, 2015.* Focused on how cities envision, create, program parks, green, and placemake in outdoor spaces. Guest presenters Steve Cramer, CEO of the Minneapolis Downtown Council, and Peter Brown, project consultant, discussed leading concepts and actual projects that are transforming how people experience life outdoors in downtown Minneapolis.
- *February 19, 2015.* A panel discussion on access and equality and featured seasoned voices discussing public policy, education, housing and equity labor as key means to transform the economic vitality and potential of our city.
- *March 19, 2015.* The following questions were posed: How do nearly 180,000 people in the downtown workforce come and go from their jobs? How do downtown residents come and go from their homes on a day-to-day basis? How do millions of downtown visitors come and go from the events and experiences they seek to have here? City of Minneapolis staff, regional transportation specialists, and commercial transit guests treated us to a fast-paced conversation about the transportation ecosystem that exists in downtown Minneapolis.

Looking ahead to the 2015-2016 business forum season, Christie advised that the following topics are being explored:

- *East Downtown Through the Eyes of the Minneapolis City Council*
- *The Social and Economic Capacities of the Fine Arts*
- *Even More Safe and Green: The Downtown Improvement District Heads East!*
- *The Downtown East Mixed-Use Development and How it Changed the Trajectory of Our District*
- *Crossing the Goal Line: Completion and Grand Opening of the Stadium*
- *Growing the Minnesota Workforce Through New and Innovative Means*

If you've not had the opportunity to attend the forums, Christie encouraged visiting the EDC's website where you can find summaries of them prepared by EDC board member Carletta Sweet.

In closing, Christie thanked everyone who has attended these great events. Attendance has grown substantially over the past few years averaging between 35-40 to 45-50 and sometimes more. She thanked the Normandy Inn for hosting and the other venues that have hosted over the past season, i.e.: Day Block Brewing, Valspar, Hyatt Place Hotel, Meet Minneapolis, Guthrie Theater, PadillaCRT, Aloft Hotel, and 1010 Metrodome Square. They will round out the 2014-2015 season at North Central University and Hope Community Church. Then she encouraged those interested in hosting during the 2015-2016 season to let her or Dan know and to please RSVP for the forums!

- ***Minneapolis Downtown Council-Downtown Improvement District Partnership Update***
Steve Cramer, CEO of the MDC/DID, stated that it has been a pleasure to see the evolution of the relationship between the MDC and EDC over the last year. It started with Dan's initiative, prior to Cramer joining the MDC, to see what the MDC and EDC could do together that would amplify their collective efforts especially as East Downtown begins to heat up as a premier place for growth in the

greater downtown. They were able to secure funds from the McKnight Foundation. Cramer then thanked MF, a neighbor in the Mill District and a huge benefactor for many causes throughout the Twin Cities, who saw the benefit of helping the two organizations come together to (1) evaluate how they might work together on a more sustained basis; and (2) support some of the work that also needed to be done around shared interests between the EDC and its constituents and the MDC's goals of the 2025 Plan relevant to emerging issues in East Downtown many of which aligned around greening, transportation, and workforce. With the MF grant, that work has progressed and taken form in a really vibrant and broad-based task force of the 2025 Plan Development Committee that is becoming increasingly a go-to mechanism or forum for broad stakeholder involvement in some of these key issues for East Downtown. Dan is doing a stellar job of leading that effort and many people in the room are part of those efforts.

On the organizational side, there were a small group of board members from each organization, including Paul Mellblom and John Campobasso, who reviewed various options from doing nothing other than communicate and cooperate to merging the organizations. Where they ended up was an astute approach, i.e., both organization have clear standing and should continue as independent organizations but to explore a shared staffing model. That is what they've been doing for this past year and hopefully in the future with resources from the MDC/DID, EDC, along with continued support from the foundation community sustaining Dan's shared positions of Director of East Downtown Partnership for the MDC and Executive Director for the EDC. It has been a great model and Dan is a wonderful contributor to the MDC's overall staff and has helped them think through the strategic issues around potential expansion of the DID to this part of downtown and many other things. Cramer commented that it was great pleasure to get to know Dan and the tremendous gifts and skills he brings to this work. He sees nothing but positives for their collective work together and for the future of East Downtown. He further stated that all of us have a stake in this area and it's been a long time coming. In closing, he thanked all who hung in there and helped create the groundwork for the "overnight" success.

- **Membership and Program Growth**

Dan addressed the audience by stating that they comprise the EDC and its committees, i.e., Board Development; Business Form; Membership, Marketing and Communications; and the MDC's East Downtown Development Committee Task Force, are where opportunities exist in which to become engaged with the EDC (with the exception of the newly formed Executive Committee where all positions have been filled). Then he encouraged those wishing to serve on any of the aforementioned committees to send him or Christie an email.

Regarding strategic engagement, Dan pointed out that they are studying district branding and have a professional partner, PadillaCRT, a national leading communications firm who has given the EDC a significant pro bono contribution to study what it would mean to create a business district that weaves together the Downtown East and Elliot Park neighborhoods, connects to the broader developments of the 2025 Plan, and sets forth three stages: establishing what might be our brand essence, creating a marketing plan for it, and deliverables. It's a privilege to have PadillaCRT partnering with us, and you the audience will also be partnering as we garner more input.

Regarding land use, Dan referenced the April 11th *Star Tribune* article wherein he was interviewed by Kristen Leigh Painter (<http://www.startribune.com/local/minneapolis/299384281.html>) because they are involved in a land development strategy that involves:

- Convening a cross section of city staff, elected leaders, EDC-MDC-DID business members, development community, residential community, and landowners;
- Exploring specific and measurable projects such as the "Portland Avenue Residential Corridor" initiative. This will occur in May as part of a regional exploration of East Downtown sponsored by the Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation with internationally recognized leaders in urban design and health (invitations will be sent to the membership); and

- Website, team building, strategic responses to land use opportunities.

- ***The Theater of Public Policy***

Having interviewed the EDC board during the luncheon period of the program, Tane Danger and his talented troupe (comprised of Brandon, Joe, Joy, Molly, Greta, and keyboardist Dennis) reconvened to perform comedic improvisational sketches based upon responses they received. Topics used for amusement included:

- The budding relationship between the MDC and EDC
- To RSVP for the forums
- Gum on the sidewalk
- New brand names for the area (e.g., frontier land, awesome town, apex city, Oz)
- Experience of driving through East Downtown to get to Downtown
- Have a lawyer and are suing everyone for the littlest infraction
- NCAA soccer field
- Viking ship disguised as an sports stadium
- Roof over I-35W
- Tearing down houses to building the largest badminton stadium
- McKnight Foundation sponsorship
- HCMC inventory of hearts and kidneys
- Skyways, sidewalks
- Parking
- Comparison of the old versus new East Downtown

Thereafter, Danger thanked the EDC for inviting them to perform and to the audience for attending.

- ***Closing Announcements***

Dan announced that the next business forum will be on Thursday, May 21st, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at North Central University's Trask Worship Center. The topic will be *HCMC's \$224 Million Investment for a New Ambulatory Outpatient Specialty Center* (<http://www.journalmpls.com/news-feed/hcmc-boosts-expansion-project-with-33-million-investment>) with Dr. Jon Pryor, CEO.

Paul reminded the audience to respond to the EDC survey forwarded by Christie. Their feedback is valued as it helps to guide what the EDC does on behalf of their membership. Then he thanked Dan and Christie for all the hard work they do on behalf of the EDC and noted that Dan would be recognized as an emerging leader at the Minnesota Business Magazine's The (Real) Power 50 of 2015 Awards on Thursday, April 30th, 6 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis. It is a great networking event and encouraged other to attend.

Finally, Paul thanked the platinum sponsors who have the means and are willing to step up in order for the EDC to be able to hire people like The Theater of Public Policy as entertainment for its business forums.