

Recap of the joint EDAM, ETBP and MDC Business Forum
Thursday, September 21, 2017, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Dakota Jazz Club & Restaurant, 1010 Nicollet Mall
Downtown West Neighborhood of Minneapolis

- **Welcome and Announcements**

Dan Collison, Executive Director for the East Town Business Partnership and Director of Downtown Partnerships for the Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District, welcomed the audience to this member forum organized by three business associations – Minneapolis Downtown Council (MDC), East Town Business Partnership (ETBP), and Economic Development Association of Minnesota (EDAM) – who came together to celebrate the soon-to-be reopened Nicollet Mall, the premier facet of the gem of downtown that makes it so special. He noted that Peter Bruce of Pedestrian Studies Consulting (<http://pedestrianstudies.com/index.html>) has given him a pedestrian count and currently there are approximately 20,000 people visiting a day and hundreds of thousands more are anticipated when the mall is completed. Collison then announced the following upcoming events:

- ***Minneapolis Downtown Council***

- *Explore Downtown Living.* Visit approximately 23 residential communities throughout downtown on Saturday, September 23rd, 10 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (<http://exploredtliving.com/>).
- *Final Go Outside with Hennepin County of the season.* Monday Night Fitness on September 25th at Target Field Station (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/gooutside>).
- *Final Mill City Farmers Market Night Market of the season.* Tuesday, September 26th, 3:30-7:30 p.m. at the Commons (<http://millcityfarmersmarket.org/visit/tuesday-night-market/>).
- *A Morning with Steve Cramer: Downtown Office Trends Breakfast Roundtable* on Wednesday, September 21st, 7:30-8:45 a.m., at Assemble Shared Office, 15 South 5th Street, Suite 500 (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/morning-steve-cramer-downtown-office-trends/>).
- *Happy Hour Presentation: Park & Portland Vision for Development.* A joint event with the ETBP on Thursday, September 28th, 4:30-6:00 p.m., the Renaissance Minneapolis Hotel at The Depot. The 2025 Plan Development Committee has been an engine behind this effort to study two major corridors stretching across East Town from the riverfront to the edge of Elliot Park, and BKV Architect who will be presenting has invested hundreds of pro bono hours (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/happy-hour-presentation-east-town-business-partnership/>).
- *Annual Gala* on Wednesday, October 11th, 5:00-9:00 p.m., at the Minneapolis Event Centers, 212 2nd Street SE. Celebrate an evening of networking and honoring recipients of the 2025 Plan Leadership Awards (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/2017-mpls-downtown-council-annual-gala/>).
- *Good Morning Minneapolis: Tourism, Wayfinding and Super Bowl LII*, a joint event with Meet Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce on Friday, October 27th, 7:30-9:00 a.m., at The Grand Hotel, 615 2nd Avenue South (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/tourism-wayfinding-super-bowl-lii/>).
- *2025 Plan Quarterly Forum: Update from Development Committees* on Thursday, November 9th, 4:30-6:30 p.m., at a location to be determined (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/2025-plan-quarterly-forum-3/>).

➤ **East Town Business Partnership**

- *Business Forum: Getting Around in East Town Now and for the Next 25 Years* with executives from Metro Transit (<http://www.metrotransit.org/>), Move Minneapolis (<http://moveminneapolis.org/>), and Our Streets Minneapolis (<http://www.ourstreetsmpls.org/>), on Thursday, October 19th, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Radisson RED Minneapolis, 609 South 3rd Street.
- *Business Forum: Super Bowl 52: Let's Get the Party Started!* with Maureen Bausch, CEO, Super Bowl Host Committee, on Thursday, November 16, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., tentatively at the newly redeveloped Armory Event Center, 500 South 6th Street.

➤ **Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association**

- *Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board District 4 Candidate Forum* in collaboration with Citizens for a Loring Park Community on Wednesday, October 11th, 6:00-9:00 p.m. at Loring Park Community Center with DMNA Chair Joe Tamburino moderating (<https://www.facebook.com/events/1936142163324357/>).
- *Annual Meeting featuring Public Forum on 800 Washington Avenue South* on Tuesday, October 24th, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Open Book, 1011 Washington Avenue South. For this and other DMNA activities, visit <http://www.thedmna.org/>.

➤ **Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership's** Mississippi Minute Film Festival on Monday, October 23rd at the Mill City Museum (<http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/riverfront-initiatives/mississippi-minute-film-festival/>).

➤ **Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.**

- For information about its Livability Task Force and Building, Land Use and Housing Committee meetings, visit <http://elliotparkneighborhood.org/>.

Collison then thanked Lowell Pickett and Richard Erickson, co-owners, and Joe Doermann, Events Coordinator, of the Dakota Jazz Club & Restaurant (<http://www.dakotacooks.com/>), a premier venue in the Midwest that over the past three decades has taken innovative approaches to music styles, outreach and fine dining, for hosting.

He also thanked the event sponsors: IDS Center (<http://ids-center.com/>), Westminster Presbyterian Church (<http://www.westminstermpls.org/>), and Snow Kreilich Architects (<http://snowkreilich.com/>).

• **Presenting Sponsor Spotlight**

Collison introduced Eric Becker, Associate Landscape Architect at the renowned James Corner Field Operations (<http://www.fieldoperations.net/home.html>) and Project Manager for the Nicollet Mall reconstruction project (<http://www.nicolletmallproject.com/>).

Becker thanked all those who JCFO has partnered with over the past 5 years on this project, i.e., MDC, City of Minneapolis, and businesses and Building Owners and Managers Association properties along Nicollet Mall. Using a slide presentation, he advised JCFO has approximately 65 professional designers representing 10 countries who work in 5 offices around the world, i.e., London, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Shenzhen. The flagship office in New York is where he is based. JCFO works on internationally recognized public realm projects with a deep commitment to integrating ecology, program and people. Their designs are calibrated to the peculiarities of the place,

and rooted in analysis, public participation and sustainable principles. Their approach is guided by the following themes: exceptional public realm, urbanism, economic catalysts, varied programming, and innovation + sustainability, all of which is why they are here working on the Nicollet Mall project. The scale of their work ranges from large multi-acre projects down to the size and variation of materials used. Examples of their range of work illustrating their design themes include:

- The 6-acre High Line linear park in New York built on a former New York Central Railroad spur on the west side of Manhattan;
- The 7-acre Tongva Park in Santa Monica [named after the indigenous Tongva people who have lived in the Los Angeles area for thousands of years];
- The 1-acre Race Street Pier on the Delaware River Waterfront in Philadelphia;
- The 55-acre Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in London, a sporting complex built for the 2012 Summer Olympics and Paralympics;
- The 32-acre Central Waterfront of Seattle that is currently under construction;
- The 24-acre Navy Pier in Chicago on which Becker worked over the past 5 years;
- The 10-acre Public Square in the heart of downtown Cleveland;
- The 5-acre Navy Yards Central Green in the heart of the Philadelphia Navy Yard Corporate Center; and
- The 6-acre Domino Sugar Waterfront in Brooklyn that is currently under construction.

Becker then described the important urban public realm project JCFO is working on in downtown Minneapolis, i.e., the 12-block, 1-mile, 11-acre Nicollet Mall reconstruction project. Design teams they pull together for all of their projects include local firms who bring in expertise of the local market. Factors that played an important role in their design for this project include: (1) historical significance, i.e., building upon Lawrence Halpern's design of Nicollet Mall (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_Halprin); (2) pedestrian-friendly tabled corridors, walk-through zones of café areas, signage and wayfinding, simple and durable paving patterns; and (3) greening in the right-of-way, groves, woods, and programmed spaces.

In closing, Becker thanked the business associations for inviting him to present and then he provided ways to contact JCFO via social media: Website: www.fieldoperations.net; Twitter: @fieldoperations; Instagram: @fieldoperations

- **Making a Mall for Everyone: The Nicollet Mall Project**

Collison introduced moderator Steve Cramer, President and CEO of the Minneapolis Downtown Council, by quoting from the Harvard Business Review: “He is a triple-strength leader; a seasoned civic, nonprofit and business leader charged with organizing the entire downtown business community toward creating a compelling and inclusive downtown.” Then he thanked Cramer for all he has done in fulfilling his charge.

Cramer explained the first call to revamp Nicollet Mall came in the MDC's *Intersections: 2025 Plan* that was published in fall of 2011 [read Initiative 2. Transform Nicollet into a “must-see” destination.]; it was viewed as an important part of downtown's infrastructure. When he joined the MDC in December 2013 and began plugging into the responsibilities of his position, JCFO and other eminent architect and landscape firms across the world had interviewed for the Nicollet Mall project at the Guthrie Theater that JCFO ultimately won ([http://tcbmag.com/news/articles/2013/mpls-chooses-ny-firm-for-\\$40m-nicollet-mall-redesi](http://tcbmag.com/news/articles/2013/mpls-chooses-ny-firm-for-$40m-nicollet-mall-redesi)). Since then, the project has proceeded at a pretty good pace for a major infrastructure redo on a roadway in the middle of a major American downtown and it is exciting to see its progress and they are looking forward to an opening event later in November.

For the NM to be successful, they realized it had to have a successful design, engaging and varied programming, and challenges to the livability issues had to be addressed. After JCFO was hired, the MDC convened a broad base of stakeholders to address the livability issues to ensure everyone on

Nicollet Mall is welcomed and treated respectfully. Some of those strategies have been in place and will be implemented by the Downtown Improvement District (<http://www.mplsdid.com/>) pursuant to its strategic plan adopted in 2015 when the NM reopens.

Then he introduced the following speakers:

- David Wright, Board and Executive Committee Member of the MDC-DID, Chair of DID Operations & Services Budget Committee, Chair of the Nicollet Mall Implementation Committee, and his daytime job is VP of Corporate Real Estate at U.S. Bank (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/dave-wright-80757210>).

Wright advised he was approached by the MDC-DID a long time ago to be a part of the group that would talk about redesigning and reconstructing Nicollet Mall, and after giving it consideration, he realized it was a great opportunity to get together with a great group of people on one of the largest public/private partnerships undertaken in this city. It wasn't a road project, but an architectural opportunity to make their mark in Minneapolis.

The total cost of the project ended up at \$50 million, \$25 million of which would come from property owners assessments along NM and within the downtown core, \$21.5 would come from the state through a bonding bill, and \$3.5 million from the City (<http://www.nicolletmallproject.com/about>). Having these three large stakeholders required that they create a public/private partnership which they never had done before. In 2012, nine initial members came together and formed the Nicollet Mall Work Group to discuss the feasibility and viability of reconstructing and redesigning NM. The NMWG met for months as an advisory group to the City and MDC and as it evolved became known as the Nicollet Mall Implementation Committee in early 2013. Today, the NMIC is still made up of those 9 initial members with a supporting Project Team consisting of 17 members. Its early focus was on the interviews of design firm candidates, with the ultimate recommendation of JCFO who hit the ground running.

The NMIC did not finish when it selected JCFO, it had its hands on every aspect of the design elements being implemented today, i.e.: hard surfaces, lighting, landscaping, furniture, art, programmable space. They also interfaced between property and business owners and the project team throughout the design and construction process. At the end of the day, if you don't like what you see you've got 9 people to pick on and he welcomes full transparency on the design's implementation.

As they progressed, the NMIC morphed from a design team (the design was turned over to JCFO) into a communicator between the Project Team and business owners and employees downtown all while representing the private sector and their investment in this project.

Their communication efforts involved: weekly stakeholder meetings; project website; one-on-one meetings with property and business owners as appropriate; and close coordination with the City's communications team.

The 9-member NMIC is comprised of: Mayor Betsy Hodges (who replaced Mayor R.T. Rybak); 7th Ward CM Lisa Goodman; 3rd Ward CM Jacob Frey; Neil Reardon, Designer at UrbanWorks Architecture; Minnesota House Representative Raymond Dehn; and the following MDC members: David Marquis, Director of Corporate Real Estate for Target Corporation; Bob Pfefferle, Director at Hines; David Wilson, Senior Managing Director at Accenture; and himself.

The 17-member Project Team, many of whom are here today, has done the yeoman's share of the work but don't get a lot of accolades. There are so many people who have touched all aspects of the project; not only are they great colleagues but have become good friends over the last 5 years.

They're glad to be in the home stretch; come back when it's done and experience it.

- Don Elwood, Director of Transportation, Engineering & Design at Minneapolis Public Works Department. He wasn't expecting to get thrust into the spotlight, to be covered by the media (<http://finance-commerce.com/2017/08/some-artistic-touches-for-nicollet-mall/>, <https://www.minnpost.com/politics-policy/2017/08/no-really-say-minneapolis-officials-new-nicollet-mall-track-be-finished-nove>), or to conduct over 100 interviews; what a strange circumstance for an engineer.

Elwood began by providing a construction update. First he displayed a group photo of his core team headed by Rick Kreuser, Construction Manager (his MacGyver), and advised they're doing a great job in delivering NM. Furthermore, all the concrete work is done; 50% of the trees are planted and the rest will be planted during the remainder of this year; five traffic signals are installed, half are operational; 20 lights are being installed per week and will be done by the end of September and the white light will be on by early November; barricades will start coming down in a couple weeks; the Light Walk by the IDS Center is 75% complete; the arts – Prairie Tree, Shadow Spirit – are going in; the [Jack Nelson's] Sculpture Clock is installed and the internal kinetics are coming next. All that's left to do is plant the trees, turn on the lights, add some art, clean up and they're open! For updated information on construction progress, go to <http://www.nicolletmallproject.com/construction>.

Elwood then described what it's like to management a project like NM in a manner that would help the audience in what they do in their businesses and communities. Most projects have highs and lows, periods of calm and periods of extreme excitement, and most fly under the radar and have a few bumps along the way. He started the NM project by saying "keep businesses open," but right in the middle of the lunch hour they were installing asphalt right next to an outdoor dining table which he received an ear full of complaints about afterwards.

Management of this project has been more about partnerships, quality, integrity, and relationship building, not Gantt charts. Elwood's approach and attitude with his management team has been "if you're not successful, I'm not successful." As the NM project got bigger, he immediately changed the project management because he needed to understand and adapt, e.g., during the Westminster Presbyterian Church expansion, an 8-story building was being taken down with a protective curtain wall. Suddenly everyone was in the same spot at the same time, access to two major hotels was impacted, and residents were impacted by a lot of noise. Scheduling for both projects meant making difficult decisions and working with stakeholders. This type of intensity continued throughout the entire corridor and he needed to remember partnerships, integrity, quality, and relationship building.

As he displayed a picture of his son hanging on a glass barrier that read "Do not hang or pound on glass," Elwood noted people management is also difficult. Tactics and methodologies (e.g., signs, detours, gates, bridges, fences, bikes, skateboarders) had to be adapted while meeting logistical challenges.

While displaying a picture of his son in the batter's box preparing to swing in a Lakeville South 11AA baseball game, Elwood queried, "What is a successful outcome?" The biggest success on this project that got them to this point is relationships and open communication; he needs to understand concerns, to explain the situation and options, to make decisions, and to build confidence and credibility. And the biggest challenge on this project has been relationships and open communication; he needs to have the ability to provide detailed information so stakeholders can plan their business needs versus successful solutions to unknown problems encountered during construction, i.e., the known unknowns. Sometimes he overcommitted and at the end of the day he had an unhappy stakeholder.

Referencing back to the baseball picture, Elwood noted there are three direct stakeholders, i.e., the pitcher, batter, and catcher. And there are indirect stakeholders, i.e., parents, coaches, grandparents, umpire, other players. If the batter hits a double, he's happy but the pitcher isn't, and if the batter strikes out, he's not happy but the pitcher is. The same correlation can be made for the NM project where one stakeholder is happy with what's being done while the next one has a different perspective. Understanding a successful outcome is very difficult, but it is predicated on partnerships, integrity, quality, and relationship building. And in the NM project tactics and methodologies were changed based on circumstances because what happens in the first three innings in the last ball game is different than what happens in the last three innings and you have to understand that on a major project as well.

Also, it's hard to keep the lead, so Elwood asked his Project Team to play like they were behind. One of the important phone calls he made was in March to his mentor asking what he should do in September if he were 2 months behind schedule. When they worked that out, Elwood instituted those actions that same month. Speeding up decision making and making decisions as if you're behind schedule got them to where they are today.

Referencing back again to the baseball picture, Elwood doesn't recall what happened to his son in that game, but does recall that his son had fun playing with his friends, he got really dirty and they went to the Dairy Queen afterwards. And in the case of the NM project, he can't tell us about individual outcomes, but personally, professionally and organizationally, hopefully what he has done is build lasting relationships with the stakeholders, built credibility for himself and his organization, operated with integrity, delivered a quality product, and achieved their objectives. If what they did harms relationships, integrity and credibility, that's not success. Thus far, things have gone really great.

- Lisa Middag, Director of Nicollet Activation, Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/lisa-middag-066b65b>). She was trained as an urban planner but also worked in the arts for 15 years and has the opportunity to work on activating the new NM.

The DID's services relate to having a Clean (<http://www.mplsdid.com/clean>), Green (<http://www.mplsdid.com/green>), Safe (<http://www.mplsdid.com/safe>), and Vibrant downtown. Middag's work relates to the latter, i.e., the vibrant piece that needs to happen in order for the NM project to slide into home plate. Success of this project is key to the success of the businesses within the downtown community in order for them to be able to attract and retain residents and workers. And a successful NM comes about by having the following three components: a great design that's coming online now, activation, and livability.

Middag then described what they mean by activation: "an inclusive range of unique cultural experiences for daily users and destination visitors"; a lot of different things for a lot of different people. They asked people what they wanted to see on the new NM now that the project is winding down. Some of the responses were not surprising, e.g., physical activities, interesting market activities, musicians, quality street performers, fun things to do during lunchtime, and #1 was something to highlight the unique restaurants. And much of that will be happening soon.

When Middag was hired, she was asked to develop an activation framework, which is as follows:

Spring-Summer 2017: Discovery

- Build stakeholder and community relationships
- Get to know the space
- Determine activation advisory structure
- Convene downtown placemakers

Summer-Winter 2017: Development

- Develop, prototype and test
- Build stakeholder capacity
- Make business case
- Test/refine new Nicollet regulatory environment

Spring 2018 and Beyond: Delivery

- Deploy year-round activation program
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement
- Ongoing program evaluation

Currently they are in the testing phase of Development, and Delivery of the full program will occur next year. Now that the project is winding down, there is an opportunity to rediscover NM like you haven't seen before by engaging in the following strategies being implemented:

- 2 | 4 Tuesdays (<https://mplsdowntown.com/event/2-4-tuesdays-nicollet/2017-10-24/>)
- Street Show at five locations on Nicollet programmed by the Warming House (<http://www.thewarminghouse.net/>)
- Nicollet Makers Market (<https://www.facebook.com/events/1778004789166804/>) in partnership with Springboard for the Arts (<https://springboardforthearts.org/>)
- Mobile Library partnering with Hennepin County Library using DID mobile bikes
- Food Cart with City Food Studio (<http://cityfoodstudio.com/>)
- Nicollet Mobile Tours which will be deployed in November 2017
- And many other activities

Lastly, Middag distributed her business card and encouraged the audience to provide her with ideas and to think of them as a partner. She can be reached at lmiddag@mplsdid.com or 612.656.3828.

- **Closing Remarks**

As a bike commuter, Collison asked the presenters once this part of the triple spine of Hennepin Avenue, Nicollet Mall and Marquette Avenue is reopened, what's going to happen with transit. Elwood advised it will be activated with people and buses only. Bikes will not be prohibited, but he doesn't have a dedicated bike facility, therefore it will be buses and nonmotorized transit when all is done.

Collison closed by thanking the host, event sponsors, sponsoring presenter, guest speakers and audience and encouraged them to attend the next joint ETBP, MDC and EDAM event.