



# Riverfront Revitalization Task 1 Final Report

Prepared for  
The City of Minneapolis  
and  
Riverfront Revitalization  
Core Group  
November 2005

## **Bacon & Associates**

2912 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South \* Minneapolis, MN 55406  
Phone: 612.724.8459 \* Fax: 612.729.4326

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# Executive Summary

The City of Minneapolis has a long history of commitment to the revitalization of the Mississippi River. Many coordinated efforts have resulted in major achievements. Nevertheless, questions have surfaced as to whether it is desirable and feasible to establish a separate organization or make other organizational changes that would strengthen cooperative efforts and financial support of revitalization efforts.

With the help of a grant from the McKnight Foundation, the City hired Bacon & Associates to help the City examine how Minneapolis can enhance its organizational capacity so riverfront revitalization efforts can be completed more effectively.

The first stage of this process (Task 1) is a high-level assessment to understand the roles of organizations involved in riverfront initiatives, what seems to be working well, and what are the challenges of the current arrangement. In addition, organizational models in other communities actively pursuing waterfront revitalization were researched.

## Methodology

Bacon and Associates used a combination of action research methods. These included individual interviews, organizational questionnaires, review of documents, and web research.

## Core Group

Carolyn Bacon and Cathy Tilsen of Bacon & Associates worked in collaboration with a small group of representatives primarily from the Riverfront Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), called the Core Group. The Core Group consists of: Ann Calvert, Carrie Flack, Pam Miner and Barbara Sporlein, Community Planning and Economic Development, City of Minneapolis; John Crippen, St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board/Mills City Museum; Rachel Ramadhyani, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board; David Kelliher, Minnesota Historical Society; Larry Blackstad, Hennepin County; and Chuck Sullivan and Matt Massman, Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee.

## Findings

These common themes emerged from the organizational questionnaires, individual interviews, and document review:

### Current Gaps, Challenges, and Opportunities

1. Unclear common vision
2. Lack of clear, defined leadership
3. Constraints on funding
4. Lack of consistent coordination among agencies
5. Role of the Park Board
6. Influence of neighborhood groups
7. Lack of effective marketing
8. Limited awareness and support in the community
9. Poor planning

### **What is Working Well?**

For those involved in riverfront revitalization efforts, there is a great deal of energy and passion. People care about what happens on the river. When asked what has worked well, these themes emerged:

1. Much has been accomplished
2. Staff support is strong
3. Above the Falls Citizens Advisory Committee is highly committed
4. Partners at the table: experiences of cooperation and collaboration

### **Summary of Research From Other Communities**

Bacon & Associates researched the following five communities:

- Riverfront Corporation (St. Paul)
- River Action (Quad Cities region)
- RiverCity Company (Chattanooga)
- City of Vancouver (British Columbia)
- Fraser River Estuary Management Authority (British Columbia)

(In addition, research is underway into the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Coordinating Board, RDCB, which existed from 1977 to 1981.)

### **Findings from the research**

- Each organizational structure reflected the uniqueness of that region's people, culture, history, patterns, and hopes for the future. There was no one-size-fits-all model or approach.
- It took a champion and other strong civic leaders to make a nonprofit organization a reality.
- Each region developed a compelling vision for revitalization that incorporated design principles, which were often linked to a long-term Master Plan.
- Each community had gone through some kind of extensive community engagement process.
- There was an understanding that these kinds of major revitalization efforts require long-term and ongoing political, financial, and community support.
- All models emphasized ongoing collaboration among governmental agencies, developers, businesses, and community groups.
- Policy-setting and decision-making were transparent.
- In St. Paul, the Quad Cities, and Chattanooga, the organizations were set-up to jump-start major redevelopment efforts *before* much revitalization had been undertaken.

### **Consultant Team's Overall Observations**

- The sheer number of groups and individuals that have a hand in riverfront activities in Minneapolis is both remarkable and overwhelming. The potential richness of all of these organizations working together is tremendous; but one can also see the potential for competing goals, communication challenges, and unnecessary gaps and/or redundancies.

- The issues around the lack of a common vision are complicated. It is the most constant theme heard and for some, the most troubling concern. However, it's possible that the lack of a shared vision is a *symptom* that points to the fact that there is no organizational body that unifies all of the riverfront stakeholders.
- With no one agency or organization in charge of riverfront revitalization initiatives, it is more difficult to move initiatives forward.
- Minneapolis's unique governance structure—it's weak mayor/strong city council system, array of departments, and the independent park board—makes coordinated decision-making more difficult.
- No clear consensus emerged about the ideal organization design; but there was strong agreement that there is a need for change.
- The absence of a clear champion with authority, power, and influence is sorely missing.
- There is an attitude of mistrust of government and its ability to make things happen. Thus, real concern exists that if a governmental agency is put in charge of riverfront activities, little will get done.
- There is a strong sentiment that it is time to focus significant attention and funding on the redevelopment of the river on the north side of the city. There is also strong sentiment to take a more regional approach to the river, both within Minneapolis itself, and in connections to St. Paul and its riverfront work.

## Recommendations

We recommend proceeding with the study into Task 2:

- Do small group facilitated sessions with Minneapolis elected officials to share the themes from the Riverfront Revitalization Task 1 report, attain their reactions and insights, and further explore their level of interest in riverfront revitalization.
- Do the same with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board commissioners and superintendent.
- Staff will aid in developing questions for the sessions; however, they will not be in attendance at the facilitated sessions.
- Simultaneously, conduct interviews with additional key stakeholders (civic leaders, developers, etc.) to further assess riverfront revitalization as a priority and willingness to provide input on organizational options.
- Assuming enough interest exists to continue the study process, convene Task 3 Workshops in early 2006. At this time, the research on various design options in other communities will be used to develop organization design scenarios. Invitees to these workshop/s will include representatives from neighborhood groups, the public sector, elected officials, the business sector, the non-profit sector, foundations, and key civic leaders.

# Introduction

## Background

The City of Minneapolis has a long history of commitment to the revitalization of the Mississippi River. Many coordinated efforts among public, private, and nonprofit organizations and partners have resulted in major achievements. Nevertheless questions continue to surface among various stakeholder groups as to whether it is desirable and feasible to establish a separate organization or make other organizational changes that would strengthen cooperative efforts and financial support of ongoing and future revitalization efforts.

With the help of a grant from the McKnight Foundation, the City of Minneapolis hired Bacon & Associates to develop and guide a process for the City to explore if and how Minneapolis, as a community, can enhance its organizational capacity so that future riverfront revitalization efforts can be completed more effectively and efficiently.

The first stage of this work, Task 1, involved a high-level assessment to understand the roles of organizations involved in riverfront initiatives, what seems to be working well, and what are the challenges of the current arrangement. In addition, organizational models in other communities actively pursuing riverfront or waterfront revitalization were researched.

This report is a summary of the findings from this assessment and research. It also includes observations and recommendations from Bacon & Associates.

## Methodology

Bacon and Associates used a combination of action research methods. These included individual interviews, organizational questionnaires, review of documents, and web research. For a list of organizations surveyed, individuals interviewed, and cities researched, please see the appendix.

## Core Group

Carolyn Bacon and Cathy Tilsen of Bacon and Associates worked in collaboration with a small group of representatives primarily from the Riverfront Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), called the Core Group. TAC is an interagency group, representing a variety of organizations—public, nonprofit and citizens groups—that are involved in riverfront revitalization efforts. The Core Group consists of: Ann Calvert, Carrie Flack, Pam Miner and Barbara Sporlein, Community Planning and Economic Development, City of Minneapolis; John Crippen, St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board/Mills City Museum; Rachel Ramadhyani, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board; David Kelliher, Minnesota Historical Society; Larry Blackstad, Hennepin County; and Chuck Sullivan and Matt Massman, Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee.

# Findings

Common themes emerged from the organizational questionnaires, individual interviews and document review. These include frequently raised concerns, issues, ideas, and suggestions. The findings are organized into three sections: summary of current gaps, challenges, and opportunities; what's working well; and thoughts on a new organization.

*Note:* the following themes are perceptions of the respondents. These perceptions may or may not reflect the actual facts. However, all of these perceptions deserve our attention as they represent commonly shared opinions held by many of those that participated in this aspect of the assessment.

## **Current Gaps, Challenges, and Opportunities**

### **1. Unclear common vision**

A vision is an organization or community's picture of its preferred future. It is a beacon of light that excites those involved in striving for this future, as well as those directly affected by it. A compelling shared vision guides decisions and becomes a rallying point for all involved. A vision is usually a statement that is succinct and is spoken about frequently, rather than a set of comprehensive plans.

However, perception is strong that there is a lack of vision for the river, or if there is a vision, it's not well understood or embraced. More importantly, the perception exists that there is a lack of vision for the City of Minneapolis, and that any vision for the river should be an aspect of the larger vision for the City as a whole. Others expressed the need for a regional vision of river redevelopment efforts. Many people noted that there are many visions for the river; however, they are not well-coordinated or connected. "If everybody has a vision, then nobody really makes it happen."

### **2. Lack of clear, defined leadership**

Closely aligned with the perception of the lack of an overarching vision for riverfront revitalization, is the view that there isn't a clear champion for the riverfront. Furthermore, there isn't one group or agency that oversees and coordinates riverfront initiatives; many expressed frustration with the variety of agencies and bureaucracies they had to deal with to get anything done. Not only do respondents want a clear, shared vision, they want a designated group to monitor and measure progress on the attainment of that vision.

### **3. Constraints on funding**

Both the limitations of current funding streams and the barriers that exist in raising funds from nongovernmental sources were frequently cited as serious problems. Some people have a hope that potential non-governmental investors and funders would get better informed and involved, but there isn't a process to explore these ideas that would also garner action. Many seemed to think that just having more funds was the answer to the perceived difficulties— and it's hard to argue that this isn't a core and critical barrier.

**4. Lack of consistent coordination among agencies**

There are pockets where agencies work well together, and the existence of the staff-level Riverfront Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board have resulted in creative and thoughtful solutions.

However, the overriding view is that turf issues, lack of trust, competing goals and priorities, and the need to slog through the many layers of bureaucracy impede sound, consistent coordination among all the different entities. Several people noted that the staff of the different agencies worked well together, but that the decision makers were rarely seen in a similar vein.

**5. The role of the Park Board as a key player**

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is an important player, and there is recognition of the importance of working well with them. However, many talked about difficult experiences in working in a collaborative manner with the Park Board leadership, especially during the past few years. People talked specifically about leadership issues, while speaking well of the staff. For the Park Board itself, it appears that a key struggle is around the need for adequate funding—particularly for operations expenses.

**6. Influence of neighborhood groups**

Neighborhood groups are viewed as both a strength and a weakness. On one hand, they reflect the grassroots nature of Minneapolis, and provide an important avenue for citizen engagement. On the other hand, there is not a level playing field for all constituents. In addition, it is the nature of neighborhood groups to take a small picture view of the city, rather than consider the big picture needs of the city as a whole. Some people pointed out that it takes a convener or lead organization to help communities look across jurisdictional boundaries. Others talked about the need to focus efforts on the North side. Most agencies welcome public input—but want processes that are less cumbersome and less reactionary in nature.

**7. Lack of effective marketing**

Clearly, much has been accomplished along the riverfront—and respondents recognized that. By a large majority, we heard that a major gap has been in the promotion of all that has been achieved. There is a perception that the broader public has limited awareness of all that the riverfront has to offer—despite efforts of a number of groups to do some promotional and marketing work. In the absence of funds and a clear body to take responsibility for marketing, the efforts are disjointed and have limited success.

**8. Limited awareness and support in the community**

In an era of intense competition for public attention and resources, the perception is that the riverfront is not on the radar screen for the general public. Elected officials and others spoke of other key priorities such as public safety, education, transportation, and affordable housing. However, many believe that this lack of awareness may be a reflection of issues mentioned earlier (lack of both vision and appropriate marketing), and that there is still a need to continue to invest in the beauty and recreational opportunities offered by the river flowing through our community.

## 9. **Poor planning**

Again, the issue of planning has a strong relationship to issues already mentioned. Respondents who spoke of this as a concern talked about the need for a set of design principles that have been developed with broad input from all interested parties. Part of the criticism was that revitalization efforts don't appear coordinated, but rather look like a "hodge-podge of efforts." However, in the absence of a unified vision, and a group to coordinate all riverfront initiatives—it would be difficult to develop and manage the design principles.

## **What is Working Well?**

For those involved in riverfront revitalization efforts, there is a great deal of energy and passion. People, whether private individuals, public sectors employees or elected officials, care about what happens on the river, even if there are conflicting views, ideas, and suggestions. Without that passion and energy, much of what has been achieved could not have happened. When asked what has worked well, these themes emerged:

### **1. Much has been accomplished**

Many made the observation that even without a shared vision and guiding design principles to coordinate efforts, much has been accomplished along the river. Some point to the Stone Arch Bridge, Mill Ruins Park, Mill City Museum, the new Guthrie building, and all the housing developments along the riverfront. Small projects add up and make a difference.

### **2. Staff support is strong**

While interviewees may have identified overall concerns about agencies and leadership, there is a strong and consistent theme of respecting and appreciating the efforts of the staff from multiple agencies. Many point to the commitment, dedication, intelligence, and creativity of key staff. In fact, there is the opinion that without the staff, riverfront revitalization would not be as successful as it is today.

### **3. Above the Falls Citizens Advisory Committee is committed**

AFCAC's commitment and energy has caused many things to happen.

### **4. Partners at the table: experiences of cooperation and collaboration**

Although there are some clear challenges to having so many stakeholder groups working on riverfront issues, there is also real value. "It usually takes all of the multiple contributions to get anything done." When divergent groups come together, people experience greater focus on the big picture and common goals; separate agendas seem less important. There is usually a "can do attitude."

One example of this was with the rebuilding of the Stone Arch Bridge. Under the guidance of a legislative Cooperative Agreement among MNDOT, Minnesota Historical Society (SAFHB), the City, the Park Board, and the County, "cooperation [eventually] became the watch word."

Another example of cooperation is with the TAC; several people mentioned that TAC has helped to reduce agency territoriality and improve coordination (but only up to a point).

As one respondent said, “[When we partner] we learn more about each other and sub-liaisons, and other unexpected partnerships occur.” Having partners at the table is also seen as way to widen possible resources.

### **Thoughts on a New Organization**

While the overwhelming majority of those that participated in this assessment agree that there are serious and significant gaps in the coordination of riverfront efforts, respondents were all over the map about how to remedy the problems. When asked about solutions to the problems identified, several themes emerged:

1. Any new organization must be lean and strategic—and it must avoid bureaucracy.
2. Any organization will need the buy-in of all elected officials (including the Park Board), businesses, and the staff of all of the implementing agencies.
3. Strong civic support and participation will be essential in any design.
4. Strong, charismatic, focused and consistent leadership will be required to both spur and sustain interest in riverfront revitalization.
5. Some thought a new organization should be directly modeled after the St. Paul Riverfront Corporation. However, many thought the St. Paul model won't work in Minneapolis for a variety of reasons, primarily the difference between the strong mayor/weak council and weak mayor/strong council structures.
6. Others thought that a separate nonprofit organization was the only way to proceed, since it would be the sole steward of the goals and vision for riverfront revitalization.
7. Some spoke of tweaking what exists today.
8. Some fear that a new organization won't be accountable to the public. Any new organization must fully support and respect both public and private interests, including historical, cultural, environmental, and economic concerns.
9. Finally, some thought that any discussion of organizational design is premature, and that community engagement and a unified vision must come first.

## **Summary of Research From Other Communities**

The Core Group wanted to learn about the organizational structures and governance approaches of other riverfront/waterfront revitalization projects.

After brainstorming and prioritizing, the Core Group instructed Bacon & Associates to review the organizational processes for riverfront or waterfront redevelopment in: St. Paul, Minnesota; Quad Cities; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Anacostia, Maryland; and Vancouver, British Columbia. Representatives from Milwaukee and Anacostia did not return phone calls. Therefore, the Core Group decided to add Chattanooga, Tennessee. In addition, one of Vancouver's senior city planners suggested reviewing the Fraser River Estuary Management Authority, which brings together multiple jurisdictions and private sector interests. The Core Group agreed to look into this as well.

Together with the Core Group, Bacon & Associates developed questions to guide the research into these five organizations:

- Riverfront Corporation (St. Paul)
- River Action (Quad Cities region)
- RiverCity Company (Chattanooga)
- City of Vancouver (British Columbia)
- Fraser River Estuary Management Authority (British Columbia)

(In addition, research is underway into the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Coordinating Board, RDCB, which existed from 1977 to 1981.)

Bacon & Associates reviewed documents and websites, and for, most sites, interviewed leaders of these organizations or those closely involved in the process.

### **Findings from the research**

- Each organizational structure, including the private, nonprofit organizations, reflected the uniqueness of that region's people, culture, history, patterns, and hopes for the future. There was no one-size-fits-all model or approach. They all seemed to be created from the ground up.
- In each situation in which a private, nonprofit organization was established, it took a champion and other strong civic leaders to make things happen. Leading involved educating and advocacy, inspiring not only initial financial investment, but also political and civic involvement, and ongoing community-wide engagement.
- Each region developed a compelling vision of revitalization initiatives for their area that incorporated design principles. The vision was often linked to a long-term Master Plan or other long-term redevelopment goals, and had been developed with input from divergent stakeholder groups.
- Each community had gone through some kind of extensive community engagement process. This created more buy-in for the vision of redevelopment. It also created more support for the governance structure that already existed, as with River Action and the City of Vancouver, or resulted in the recommendation to establish a separate organization, as in Chattanooga. Both the vision and the community engagement process helped create a commitment to the greater common good.
- There was an understanding that these kinds of major revitalization efforts require long-term and ongoing political, financial, and community support for success, not just for the redevelopment plans but for the organizational structure. As one executive director observed, "This kind of work takes a long time. Organizations need to have long-term support to stay the course, to implement the vision and goals."
- All models emphasized ongoing collaboration among stakeholders, specifically among governmental agencies, developers, businesses, and community groups. Several of those interviewed expressed their opinion that no matter what governance structure is employed, the only way to be successful in the long run is through inclusive collaborative efforts.

- Whatever governance structure was employed, policy-setting and decision-making were transparent.
- In St. Paul, the Quad Cities region, and Chattanooga, the nonprofit organizations were set up to either jump-start or initiate major revitalization along their riverfronts. Little, if any, redevelopment had taken place prior to the organizations' active existence.

## Consultant Team's Overall Observations

- The sheer number of the groups and individuals that have a hand in riverfront activities in Minneapolis is both remarkable and overwhelming. In the organizational questionnaires, we asked respondents to identify their role with the riverfront. Following is the result:

Regulatory role:	8 organizations
Implementer/taking action role:	15 organizations
Funder role:	8 organizations
Input role:	14 organizations
Advocacy role:	7 organizations
Other (programming, maintenance, management, etc.):	12 organizations

Note: some organizations play multiple roles, and the questionnaire process did not include all of the organizations involved in riverfront activities.

Additionally, we asked respondents to identify the *intensity* of their focus on the river. Following is the result:

Our only focus:	4 organizations (including AFCAC)
One of our top 3-5 focus areas:	2 organizations
One of many focus areas:	14 organizations

The TAC works to coordinate the effort of all of these groups. However, it's clear that, with no one organization in authority, and no commonly shared vision, each group will interpret and act upon their own individual goals in an effort to maximize the outcome *they* believe is most critical. Also, for the majority of the organizations, the riverfront is one of many priorities.

The potential richness of all of these organizations working together is tremendous; but one can also see the potential for competing goals, tremendous communication challenges, and perhaps unnecessary gaps and/or redundancies.

- Issues around the lack of vision are a bit complicated. It is the most constant theme heard throughout the interviews and for some, the most troubling concern. However, it's possible that the lack of a shared vision is a *symptom* that points to the fact that there is no organizational body that unifies all of the riverfront stakeholders. There is vision out there—lots of it. Each entity maximizes their efforts to achieve *their* version of the vision.

- The fact that there is no one agency or organization in charge of riverfront revitalization initiatives makes it more difficult to move initiatives forward, primarily because of the perceived layers a project must go through to get support and approval. It may not be feasible, but many long for a one-stop shop.
- The uniqueness of Minneapolis's governance structure, with its weak mayor/strong city council system, its array of departments, and the separate and independent park board, make any decision about establishing an organization dedicated to riverfront revitalizations efforts more cumbersome and difficult – but it should not be viewed as an insurmountable problem. Strong, charismatic, focused, and consistent leadership (along with a clear vision) can overcome this potential obstacle.
- While most see a need for change, no clear consensus emerged about the ideal organizational design. Some people clearly support a private nonprofit entity; others want to see CPED granted extended authority; still others suggest a return to a more quasi-governmental organization like MCDA; and some prefer to leave things just as they are.
- The absence of a clear champion with authority, power, and influence to garner enthusiasm and support for a particular organizational and governance model is sorely missing. A champion would consistently speak of and engender excitement for a compelling vision and direction, and help bring together the multiple jurisdictions and interests that have a stake in the riverfront. Additionally, if that champion is a recognized civic leader (working alongside key electeds), the potential to build support among non-governmental funders might be realized.
- As in many communities across the nation, the early stages of this kind of work reveals that there is mistrust of government—and its ability to make things happen. There is real concern that if a governmental agency is put fully in charge of riverfront activities, little will get done. Interestingly, people *in* government expressed this feeling as well as those outside of governmental departments and entities. Experiences and perceptions of mistrust include: 1) the turf issues among departments and entities; 2) the multiple and often conflicting agendas of city council members to the city; 3) that the city is anti-business; 4) the quality of community engagement processes, especially with the more disenfranchised neighborhoods close to the river.
- There is a strong sentiment that it is time to focus significant attention and funding on the redevelopment of the river on the north side of the city. There is an equally strong sentiment that a more regional approach to the river is needed, both within Minneapolis itself and in connection with St. Paul. This could be an opportunity to create and deepen those connections with St. Paul and its riverfront work.

## Recommendations

Many of those interviewed, and a number of the respondents to the questionnaires, suggested that any discussion about organization design is premature. Some called for this study to focus its efforts on a deep and broad engagement process with the community, and that such an effort should result in a shared vision for the future of the riverfront in Minneapolis. Once that vision is established, determine the organizational entity that will best assure the attainment of that vision.

While the consultant team recognizes the wisdom of the above suggestions, we also see some significant barriers to such a broad effort at this point in time. Given all of the entities that currently play a role in riverfront activities, who would lead such an effort? Would taking that leadership role inadvertently set that entity up as the future lead agency? How would we develop the interest to fund such a study? It is our opinion, that if there is enough support to develop a new organization (or designate a current organization as the lead), one of the first items of business will be to spearhead the deeper community engagement and build a unified, shared vision. It is the role of a passionate leader to inspire the hearts of Minneapolitans around the concept that the river is the *center* of our community. As stated by one interviewee – “We aren’t just the City of Lakes – we’re the City of Water.” Bold leadership won’t wait for a public outcry to do more with the river – they will inspire and lead people to that conclusion.

At this point, we recommend proceeding with Task 2 and continue exploring organizational options. (Task 2 involves assessing civic and political readiness to support organizational options):

- Do small group facilitated sessions with Minneapolis elected officials to share the themes from the Riverfront Revitalization Task 1 report. Attain their reactions and insights to the findings, and further explore their level of interest in riverfront revitalization and organizational capacity issues.
- Do the same with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Commissioners and Superintendent.
- Staff will aid in developing questions for the sessions; however, they will not be in attendance. To encourage candid responses, anonymity will be assured through any write-up or communication of the results of the sessions. If possible, sessions will be scheduled and held before the end of the calendar year.
- Simultaneously, conduct interviews with additional key stakeholders (civic leaders, developers, etc.) to further assess riverfront revitalization as a priority.
- Assuming enough interest exists to continue the study process, convene Task 3 workshops in early 2006. At that time, the research of other communities will be used to develop organization design scenarios. Invitees to the workshop/s will include representatives from neighborhood groups, the public sector, the business sector, elected officials, the non-profit sector, foundations, and key civic leaders.

Bacon and Associates would like to thank the many individuals that gave of their time and wisdom throughout the first stages of the Riverfront Revitalization study process.

# APPENDIX



# Riverfront Revitalization

## **Full Review of Other Communities' Waterfront Organizational and Governance Structures**

October 2005

### **Bacon & Associates**

2912 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South \* Minneapolis, MN 55406  
Phone: 612.724.8459 \* Fax: 612.729.4326

## **Full Review of Other Communities' Waterfront Organizational and Governance Structures**

The core group wanted to learn about the organizational structures and governance approaches of riverfront/waterfront revitalization projects in cities that:

- Were similar in size to Minneapolis;
- Had city or regional governments similar to that of Minneapolis, e.g., a weak mayor system, an independently elected park board, strong neighborhood involvement, multiple jurisdictions overseeing river or water use, etc.; and
- Were known nationally for highly-successful waterfront redevelopment or revitalization efforts.

Surprisingly, after initial research, the City learned that no such similar cities or regions exist.

After a brainstorming and prioritizing, the core group instructed Bacon & Associates to review the organizational processes for riverfront or waterfront redevelopment in: St. Paul, Minnesota; Quad Cities; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Anacostia, Maryland; and Vancouver, British Columbia. Representatives from Milwaukee and Anacostia did not return phone calls. Therefore, the core group was decided to look into Chattanooga, Tennessee. In addition, one of Vancouver's senior city planners suggested reviewing the Fraser River Estuary Management Authority, which brings together multiple jurisdictions and private sector interests. The core group agreed to look into this as well.

Together with the core group, Bacon & Associates developed questions to guide the research into these five organizations:

- Riverfront Corporation (St. Paul)
- RiverAction (Quad Cities region)
- RiverCity Company (Chattanooga)
- City of Vancouver (British Columbia)
- Fraser River Estuary Management Authority (British Columbia)

(In addition, research is underway into the Minneapolis Riverfront Development Coordinating Board, RDCB, which existed from 1977 to 1981.)

Bacon & Associates reviewed documents and websites, and for, most sites, interviewed leaders of these organizations or those closely involved in the process.

### **St. Paul, Minnesota**

The beginnings of St. Paul's Riverfront Corporation, a private, nonprofit 501c3 can be found back in the 1980s, when proposals for commercial uses, housing initiatives and recreational activities presented themselves. In response, Mayor George Latimer commissioned the Riverfront Land Use Plan, which became the organizing tool for the city to plan for future riverfront development. In 1992, the City of St. Paul, the Riverfront Corporation and key civic leaders commissioned a study to be led by the nationally known architect Benjamin Thompson. This resulted in a three-year process that engaged thousands of citizens in creating a vision for the city and, specifically, the riverfront.

At first, many in the downtown business community didn't appreciate the river as an asset. But two things turned that around: regular and consistent support from Mayor Norm Coleman, and the sophisticated and extensive process of community engagement. The vision can best be described as a set of guiding principles. These principles, known as the design framework, continue to provide high-level direction. Common agreements exist on this high level, although there may, at times, be disagreements about specific activities or development possibilities.

The Riverfront Corporation serves as steward of the design framework through its Design Center, which:

- Serves as a resource for planning and urban design
- Educates about and advocates for urban design
- Develops and provides urban design tools
- Works in partnership with the City of St. Paul to organize and prioritize funding decisions.

The Riverfront Corporation also focuses on ongoing public outreach and communication. There is an understanding that community engagement must be continually built, and that public support is very important at all times. The organization continues to build on its good relationships with the media and elected officials, and looks for ways to build more goodwill and support with neighborhood groups.

The Riverfront Corporation also gets involved in special projects that might not otherwise be feasible. For example, it raised substantial dollars for the redevelopment of Harriet Island Regional Park.

The Riverfront Corporation has a 30+ member board of directors. The board is a mix of county commissioners; appointees of the mayor; and elected members through a traditional board process. Those elected tend to be civic, corporate, and foundation leaders. The board operates at the policy level and does much of its work through committee structures.

The Riverfront Corporation has an annual budget of approximately \$1.5 million and according to the [Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation: Donors 1994-2003 Report](#) the funding breakdown is as follows:

- 54% from Foundations
- 29% from Corporations
- 11% from Government
- 3% from Earned Income
- 3% from Individuals

## **Quad Cities Region**

River Action is a private nonprofit 501c3 that was chartered 21 years ago when a group of citizens, primarily from Davenport, Iowa and Moline, Illinois, came together over concern about the dilapidated parts of the Mississippi riverfront in both cities. Today, the organization still operates as a citizen group that sees the river as an integral part of the area's future. River Action spearheads projects and programs that matter most to citizens, many of which involves tourism, and today represents 12 Iowa and Illinois communities along the river.

River Action's board of directors consists of 16 citizens who represent the cross-section of the broader community in both states; current board members range from retired business leaders to professors to doctors to activists to "ordinary citizens." There is no public sector representation on the board. Staff from cities and counties sit on committees.

River Action's mission is "fostering the environmental, economic and cultural vitality of the Mississippi river and its riverfront in the Quad Cities region." The organization focuses on programs and activities rather than land or housing development. (It did, however, help fund a 1998 study on the feasibility of re-establishing residential development along the riverfront and in the two urban downtowns. It also conducted a housing inventory to promote the redevelopment of residential housing.) River Action's programs include environmental clean-ups, restoration projects, bike and walking trail development and activities, arts festivals, ensuring public access to the river, and sailing lessons for youth.

River Action sees itself as a catalyst for initiating programs and activities, obtaining grant money, getting them up and running, and then turning them over to organizations that have more expertise, e.g., park boards, the state DNR, or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. River Action also acts as public educator and promoter of the river and its importance to the vitality of the region. The staff is small but works with hundreds of volunteers.

River Action's current budget is about \$450,000, with about 18% coming from cities and counties, and the remainder from foundations and individuals. In terms of working in partnership with the public and private sectors, Kathy Wine, the Executive Director said that what everyone has learned over the years is that "water knows no boundaries," and in fact, it's the river that unites everyone for the common good.

### **Chattanooga, Tennessee**

RiverCity Company is a private 501c3 nonprofit, established in 1986 after a three-year community-wide process.

In 1982, the Chattanooga and Hamilton County governments appointed the Moccasin Bend Task Force, a citizen committee, to lead the community in an inclusive planning process to outline future development plans for the 22-mile river corridor between the Chickamauga Dam and the Marion County line. At that time, local governments did not have any plans for redevelopment.

Funded by the local Lyndhurst Foundation, the City of Chattanooga, and Marion County, the three-year process involved hundreds of public meetings and thousands of citizens. The result was the Tennessee Riverpark Master Plan, a 25-year plan to reconnect the river with the downtown. It also included parks and trails, residential development, tourist attractions, and industry. The Master Plan was completed in March 1985 and later presented to an overflow crowd of 1700. During the next few months the city, county and regional planning agency adopted this comprehensive plan, which was designed to draw both residents and tourists, and to make the river the central focus of Chattanooga's future development.

The plan's vision advised that the Chattanooga riverfront was owned by everyone and should be developed "under a guiding idea which will bring its banks to life, make it a central point of pride for the City's people, and move it to the forefront of national consciousness." Central to Chattanooga's revitalization was widespread understanding of the importance of its downtown. Today, Tennessee Riverpark includes recreation, historical exhibits, new housing, museums, industry, hotels, shopping, and tourist attractions along the banks of the Tennessee River.

Since so much community engagement work went on before the Master Plan was unveiled, it was overwhelmingly welcomed by the community. The idea of a private non-profit came as a direct recommendation of the Moccasin Bend Task Force and the Tennessee Riverpark Master Plan. It stated that neither of the local governments were in a position to undertake \$750 million in economic development. Instead, the Task Force and Master Plan recommended a professional staff that woke up each day and was focused on the implementation of the plan. Thus, RiverCity Company was born, with \$12.3 million seed money from the Lyndhurst Foundation.

Once RiverCity Company was established in 1985, the Company's executive director studied how other communities approached riverfront revitalization, from both design and organizational perspectives. He made site visits to about 25 communities across the country to learn about best practices. One place that became a model for both process and structure was St. Paul's Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation. (This study was also funded by the Lyndhurst Foundation.)

Initially, RiverCity Company was largely funded by foundations and private donations. Today, its funding is split about evenly between public support and private and foundation contributions. Its goal is to increase the percentage of private and foundation support. Its current budget is \$1.7 million.

RiverCity Company has eight staff and 17 board members. Board members and the actual number of board members are entirely up to the board, except that written into the charter and by-laws, the city mayor, county mayor, city council chairperson, and county commission chairperson serve during their terms of elected office. The other members are chosen by virtue of their passion for downtown and their ability to add something to the mix.

The organization has a strategic plan, which they purposely keep flexible so that it can adapt to changing priorities. The focus of the strategic plan is on connecting the central downtown district with specific riverfront districts and on creating mixed-use downtown housing. A subdivision of the corporation, the Chattanooga Downtown Partnership, is charged with increasing the city's livability by promoting and supporting downtown business, beautifying streets and sidewalks, and sponsoring special events and programs.

RiverCity Company maintains that, although the lengthy and often messy process of involving citizens as stakeholders early in any planning debates requires lots of time and energy, the outcomes are well worth it. In the end, the RiverCity Company believes, the results are more solid, better tested, and more likely to be successful.

## **Vancouver, British Columbia**

Vancouver was chosen primarily because of its independently elected park board and a history of strong, active neighborhood groups. Revitalization efforts are directed and managed by the City of Vancouver. Land, however is largely privately-held. The city is able to get a lot of what it wants by negotiating with private developers, in a spirit of collaboration. In addition, there is long history of collaboration between the city and the park board.

The city has a redevelopment Master Plan with many sections and sub-sections. The city went through a rezoning process over the last few years; but today all zoning can be negotiated. For example, if a private developer seeks more density in a housing project, it can offer in exchange to provide a community asset, such as a day care center or additional low income housing in the project. Moreover, it's up to the developer to provide the funds for that community asset.

The negotiation process involves true give and take and is built on the principle that "private profit should still contribute to the public good." An underlying philosophy of collaboration exists between city planners and developers, and has now become institutionalized. Redevelopment is largely funded through fees charged to developers for cost recovery. The city also allows for development allowances, e.g., zoning for the community and the public good.

Vancouver separates policy-making from decision-making, which developers like because it provides greater transparency, and because decisions are not made in a vacuum:

- The city council sets broad policy direction and approves redevelopment projects, but does not make decisions on design.
- There is a development planning board, which is essentially an advisory panel that advises the city manager and the director of planning. This board consists of two designers, two private developers, a representative from Vancouver's Heritage Commission, and four members of the general public. People apply at large for board positions.
- Policy and regulatory functions are kept separate.

## **Fraser River Estuary Management Authority Plan**

FREMP is a cooperative effort of Canadian federal, provincial, and local governments to coordinate planning and decision-making on human activities in the estuary. Over 30 government agencies have some form of jurisdiction over the activities and resources of the estuary.

The mid-1970s saw growing concerns about the cumulative impacts of development on the estuarine ecosystem, in particular water pollution, habitat loss, and pressures on fish and wildlife. A proposal to expand Vancouver International Airport into the estuary brought the issue to a head and resulted in the federal, provincial, and local governments beginning joint studies. These eventually evolved in the mid-1980s into the

Fraser River Estuary Management Program (FREMP), whose goal is "to improve environmental quality in the Fraser River Estuary while providing economic development opportunities and sustaining the quality of life in and around the estuary." FREMP itself is not an agency but operates through a cooperative agreement managed by representatives of two federal agencies (Environment Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada), a provincial agency (Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks), the two harbor commissions in the two arms of the estuary (North Fraser and Fraser River), and the Greater Vancouver Regional District (representing the 12 municipalities in the estuary). These six members constitute the FREMP Management Committee; the position of chair rotates among them annually.

FREMP emphasizes developing consensus on coordinated and cooperative management policies and programs that strengthen the linkages among existing agencies rather than creating new ones. Under the direction of the six member Management Committee, FREMP functions through four major committees, primarily consisting of representatives from these relevant existing agencies. These four committees—Water and Land Use; Environmental Management; Environmental Review; and Habitat Classification Review—along with their various sub-committees, work groups, and task forces, are assisted by a small office of five people who act as the FREMP Secretariat. The Secretariat also serves as the coordination and communication center for FREMP, as well as a point of contact for all estuary stakeholders.

FREMP has an annual budget of \$600,000Can, which is provided by equal contributions from each of the six agencies on the Management Committee. In addition, agencies contribute the time of their personnel, who serve on the various committees, and, much more substantially, the resources they provide in implementing their respective components of the jointly-agreed-upon programs in the estuary.

Critical to FREMP's work is its Coordinated Project Review Process, which includes these essential elements:

- Lead agencies are identified in order to provide single windows for developers to apply for the numerous approvals required for projects within the FREMP boundaries. The lead agency is the government agency that controls the right to administer the land use and waterlot tenures for the site where the project is being proposed.
- Standard application forms have been developed so that the applicant provides all the information that will be required by all agencies involved in the review process.
- Environmental protection guidelines and policies have been developed for the various types of activities in the estuary (e.g., log storage guidelines; dredging guidelines for fisheries protection, etc.), so that applicants incorporate these into their proposals before submission.
- Completed applications go from the lead agency to all concerned agencies for review. The Environmental Review Committee then consolidates all responses, including any public comments, before returning them to the lead agency, which issues a decision statement, including all terms and conditions.

- Throughout the process, the FREMP office serves as the central source of information, maintaining files for each application, along with all submitted information, comments received, and decisions made. A referral log, available to anyone through the FREMP website, provides quick access to information on the status of any proposal.

This process handles 100-150 proposals a year, and the average time from application to decision is about 80 days. Most proposals are approved because applicants have incorporated the provisions required by the established guidelines and policies. The FREMP office is a point of contact for members of the public and provides information through newsletters, brochures, reports, school programs, and its website. Stakeholders are periodically involved through workshops in developing components of the program (e.g. drafting the environmental management plan), and some of the sub-committees sometimes include non-agency people (e.g. Recreation Sub-Committee). Stakeholders have been directly involved in volunteer habitat clean-up initiatives.

FREMP has attracted attention from around the world as a model of coastal zone management based on sustainability principles and collaboration among governmental agencies. It has developed a coordinated approach to planning and decision-making among more than a hundred agencies, and has steadily that has grown in efficiency and effectiveness. FREMP has a strong record of preserving and restoring habitats, improving water quality conditions, *and* accommodating economic development during a period of expansion and growth.

### **Observations From Other Community Research**

From the research of other communities, the following observations emerged that may have meaning for the City of Minneapolis:

- Each organizational structure, including the private, nonprofit organizations, reflected the uniqueness of that region's people, culture, history, patterns, and hopes for the future. There was no one-size-fits-all model or approach. They all seemed to be created from the ground up.
- In each situation in which a private, nonprofit organization was established, it took a champion and other strong leaders to make things happen. Leading involved education and advocacy, inspiring not only initial financial investment, but also political and civic involvement, and ongoing community-wide engagement.
- Each region developed a compelling vision of revitalization initiatives for their area that incorporated design principles. The vision was often linked to a long-term Master Plan or other long-term redevelopment goals, and had been developed with input from divergent stakeholder groups.
- Each community had gone through some kind of extensive community engagement process. This created more buy-in to the vision for redevelopment. It also engendered more support for the governance structure that already existed in the cases of Vancouver and River Action, to the governance structure, or resulted in the recommendation to establish a separate organization, as in Chattanooga. Both the vision and the community engagement process helped create a commitment to the greater common good.

- There was an understanding that these kinds of major revitalization efforts require long-term and ongoing political, financial, and community support for success, not just for the redevelopment plans but for the organizational structure. As one executive director observed, "This kind of work takes a long time. Organizations need to have long-term support to stay the course, to implement the vision and goals."
- All models emphasized ongoing collaboration among stakeholders, and specifically among governmental agencies, developers, businesses, and community groups. Several of those interviewed expressed their opinion that no matter what governance structure is employed, the only way to be successful in the long run is through collaborative efforts.
- Whatever governance structure was employed, policy-setting and decision-making were transparent.
- In St. Paul, Quad Cities, and Chattanooga, the nonprofits were set-up to jump-start or initiate major revitalization efforts. Prior to their existence, little, if any redevelopment along their riverfronts had taken place.



# Riverfront Revitalization

## Task 1

Interviews and Questionnaire Themes with  
Sample Comments  
October 25, 2005

### **Bacon & Associates**

2912 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South \* Minneapolis, MN 55406  
Phone: 612.724.8459 \* Fax: 612.729.4326

**Riverfront Revitalization – Task 1**  
**Interview and Questionnaire Themes with Comments**  
*RAW DATA*

**Today's Gaps, Challenges, Opportunities**

**1. Vision**

- Perception is strong that there is a lack of vision for the river, or if there is a vision – it's not well-understood or embraced
- More importantly, the perception exists that there is a lack of vision for the City of Minneapolis – the vision for the river should be an aspect of the vision for the city
- Many people noted that there are many visions for the river – however, they are not well-coordinated or connected - "If everybody has a vision – then nobody really makes it happen"
- Lack of clear "owner" of the vision who has the authority/responsibility to safeguard that vision
- Lack of visible leadership from the city
- It won't work if it's only the City Council's vision – must have input from all aspects of the community (neighborhoods, business, governmental entities, etc.) – it must be a "collective vision"
- There are lots of plans out there – but a plan isn't a vision
- Things happen on a project-by-project basis today

**2. Lack of Clear/Defined Leadership**

- Who's in charge?
- Much frustration expressed around how difficult it can be to get something done along the river – particularly the need to deal with all of the different groups
- There is no one clear person to go to – someone/group needs to keep an eye on the entire river
- It's time consuming and challenging to deal with all of the entities
- We lack a body/group that manages an overall plan – we need some entity that evaluates and monitors progress on plans and the overall achievement of the vision
- Multiple entities/departments/elected officials makes it hard for Minneapolis to speak with one voice in regional discussions and activities
- The City of Minneapolis is viewed as not being supportive enough of major City of Minneapolis events held in the Minneapolis Riverfront District (e.g. 4<sup>th</sup> of July and New Year's Eve Fireworks) – permitting for large events is viewed as expensive and disorganized and it's difficult to work with the Park Board and the City of Minneapolis
- Within CPED, a lack of clear direction around priorities

### **3. Funding**

- Need more funding to do it faster and better
- Vagaries and unpredictability of funding sources make it harder to do thoughtful long-term planning
- Agencies sometimes compete for same funding sources
- Lack of a well-funded group of primary stakeholders whose focus should be on the promotion of the site with consideration for public safety, appearance, future development
- More funding is needed for more staff, more marketing and promotion, operations
- There is no organized way for potential non-governmental investors/funders to get informed and involved – would it be possible to expand the funding sources to include additional interested parties?

### **4. Coordination between agencies**

- Lots of turf issues
- “It’s a mess” – everyone is going their own direction
- People seem to like each other – but the trust level is low
- The sheer number of groups (most with a variety of focus areas) makes it extremely difficult to plan and implement in a coordinated way
- Different agencies sometimes have competing goals
- Although many of the agency staff work hard to coordinate and collaborate (e.g. TAC), the leadership of these agencies isn’t at the table and questions are raised as to how effective the group can be in terms of policy development without leadership involvement.
- Many layers of bureaucracy
- Many wondered about the role of GMCVA and the Downtown Council – wanting them to play a larger role – however, the Downtown Council does not see riverfront work as being a part of their mission and GMCVA has such a broad reach
- It takes a lot of time and effort to coordinate all of the groups and to keep everyone in the loop
- Governmental agencies have many strengths, but aren’t able to work quickly and/or confidentially

### **5. Issues with the Park Board**

- The Park and Recreation Board is an incredibly important player in all of this work – there is a very high premium on working well with them
- “Massively dysfunctional” – and the issues have been accelerating the last couple of years
- Non-responsive – difficult to get leadership to return calls or to get meetings scheduled
- Unwilling to commit to something bigger
- Won’t acquire more land – always tell us they lack the operating dollars
- A creative, but difficult culture
- Want to do well, but suffer from poor leadership

## **6. Neighborhood Groups**

- Note: neighborhood groups are viewed as both a strength and a weakness
- Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee (AFCAC):
  - Viewed as having some tensions with other groups
  - Good people that are very committed – but unorganized and lacking the resources to do more than react
  - Viewed as frustrated with the “lack of progress” with the Above the Falls plan
  - Viewed as having a protective mindset
  - Some believe that the agencies are “too” tuned into AFCAC
- Frequently, neighborhood groups were viewed as an “impediment” to getting things done – viewed as having knee-jerk reactions to any initiatives
- Public input structures are more fragmented and cumbersome than would be ideal

## **7. Lack of Effective Marketing**

- The great work that has been accomplished along the river has not been effectively marketed
- CPED believes there is a well-defined vision – but it's possible that it has not been effectively communicated
- Not enough marketing of riverfront events and activities

## **8. Level of Awareness/Support in the Community**

- Generally, the perception is that there is a low level of awareness
- People appreciate and notice things when they are completed
- The level of support for riverfront work falls way below crime and affordable housing
- The opening of the Guthrie will stimulate interest –and more people are moving to the river
- Few view the Mississippi as an asset

## **9. Poor Planning**

- Planning that isn't coordinated – happens project by project
- Lack of clear design principles – some “ugly” development has occurred because of that

## **What is Working Well?**

### **1. Much has been accomplished**

- Many made the observation that even without a vision – much has been accomplished along the river
- Small projects add up and make a difference
- However, the work doesn't appear coordinated – a “hodge-podge” of efforts

### **2. Staff Support**

- While interviewees may have identified overall concerns about agencies and leadership – there is a strong theme around respecting and appreciating the efforts of all of the staff

### 3. **AFCAC**

- Their commitment and energy has caused things to happen

### 4. **All the Partners at the Table**

- Although there are some clear challenges to having all of the varied groups working on riverfront issues, there is also real value. "It usually takes all of the multiple contributions to get anything done." It's helpful to have a wide variety of resources available.
- We've learned more about each other and "sub-liaisons" and other unexpected partnerships have occurred

### **Focus of the Next Phases of the Riverfront Work**

1. There are some potentially competing views (split roughly equally) of what should happen next in terms of revitalization efforts:
  - It's finally time for the north and northeast side of the city to get their due – and the focus of riverfront revitalization should occur there
  - Others are concerned that it's important to continue work along all parts of the river
2. Some interviewees identified specific pet concerns or projects they want to see addressed:
  - a. A public plaza at the end of Chicago Avenue that goes down to the river
  - b. Greater access (stairways) at some parts of the river
  - c. Complete the gap in the trail near the Stone Arch Bridge – we want continuous trails
  - d. Some areas don't provide enough access for low-mobility people
  - e. Upper Harbor Terminal redevelopment
  - f. Purchase of available land that isn't being pursued more vigorously
3. The perception exists that there are many unrealized assets near the river (e.g. the Post Office space)

### **Potential Conflicts with a New Organization**

1. Could be threatening to elected officials
  - a. Any new organization could be viewed as a "competitor" with the neighborhood groups that electeds represent
2. No group will want their power threatened or diminished
3. Very strong theme about a concern that a new entity will only add another layer of bureaucracy and make it even more difficult to get things done – some believe that a new organization should lighten the workload for City of Minneapolis staff that currently have a role with riverfront issues (even if that role is relatively peripheral right now)
4. From Hennepin County's point of view – it must continue to put historical preservation high on its list
5. If an organization were created in a similar manner as the Heritage Board, but as a pure development model with no regard for historic resources, it could pit the two boards against each other in terms of priorities or resource allocation.

## **Thoughts About a New Organization**

1. There is a great deal of support for a designated organization to coordinate/manage riverfront work – but little agreement about what the organization should look like
2. A dedicated organization will:
  - a. Pick up land as it becomes available
  - b. Have greater development capacity
  - c. Have someone/people who wake up every day and have their job totally dedicated to the river
  - d. It shouldn't be led by a city (government) person
  - e. Be able to raise funds from additional interested parties
3. Some thought that the responsibilities for riverfront revitalization should be assigned to CPED – although most vacillated on this idea
4. Many thought it can't be CPED – or any governmental organization that takes the lead
5. Generally, CPED is viewed as not being positioned politically to get things done – and a number of interviewees had a variety of complaints about CPED (too bureaucratic, slow, effectiveness suffered when moved to the city)
6. Minneapolis is viewed as being effective on a smaller scale – viewed as not very effective in serving as a facilitator to bring people together across jurisdictions, agency boundaries, etc.
7. We need something like St. Paul's Design Center as an element in the design
8. Consider thinking out of the box – a “virtual” organization
9. We need an organization that took the Heritage Board model and applied it to the entire Minneapolis Riverfront -- might provide some needed structure for various entities to collaborate
10. Keep the organization lean and strategic – avoid bureaucracy
11. Any organization will need the buy-in of elected officials, businesses, and the staff of all of the implementing agencies
12. Some thought a new organization should be directly modeled after the St. Paul Riverfront Corporation
13. Many thought the St. Paul model won't work in Minneapolis for a variety of reasons (primarily the difference between the strong mayor/weak council and weak mayor/strong council designs)
14. Some fear that a new organization won't be accountable to the public – a worry that the public interest will be swallowed up as it has been in St. Paul – must fully support and respect both public and private interests

## **Thoughts about How to Move Forward**

1. Slow down – don't be doing structure before you have a common vision – the focus right now should be on guiding principles – don't jump too quickly to the organizational solution
2. It's too early to approach individual funders
3. Whatever is done moving forward, must be done with sensitivity
4. The creation of a common vision should come through "conversations" with the community, businesses, and all of the key players
5. If we have developed a collective vision – we'll have lots of support moving forward
6. Don't make business the "villain" – we need to understand their plans for the future and work with them
7. Keep the neighborhood groups and residents involved
8. This work needs to be about hands-on relationship building
9. Need a broad citizen engagement process
10. If we're going to be successful in raising money – those that give will need to be confident that there is a long-term plan and vision and that it is a real priority for the city
11. "Movers and shakers" need to be involved – but we need to make sure it's at the right time
12. Create a group of major stakeholders comprised of primary and secondary entities with representatives that can make decisions
13. Create a "blue ribbon" group
  - a. Have a 2 year in-depth discussion
  - b. Bring in 6 of the best urban architects and planners (Bill Morrish came up numerous times)
  - c. Discussion around how to reconnect the city to the riverfront
  - d. This group can best figure out the most appropriate organization
  - e. Go visit cities/organizations as a group
  - f. View as the starting point to last about 18 months

## **Suggested Cities/Organizations to Research**

1. San Diego
2. Tampa
3. Philadelphia
4. Central Park Conservatory
5. Millennium Park in Chicago
6. Chattanooga
7. Anacostia
8. Detroit River Conservancy
9. Quad Cities

## SAMPLE BLANK QUESTIONNAIRE

# **SEEKING YOUR INPUT TO IMPROVE MINNEAPOLIS' RIVERFRONT REVITALIZATION CAPACITY!**

Thanks to a grant from the McKnight Foundation, the City of Minneapolis is embarking upon an exciting process to explore if and how Minneapolis as a community can enhance its organizational capacity to continue riverfront revitalization.

Through the partnership efforts of the City of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and numerous public and private entities, great strides have been taken in bringing the riverfront to life, particularly in the Minneapolis Riverfront District near downtown. Additional opportunities and challenges remain ahead, and now is an opportune time to investigate if there are ways to revise or add to our existing organizational structure so that future riverfront revitalization can be completed more quickly and/or with even better results.

The City has hired the consulting firm of Bacon & Associates to lead a two-phase process. The team of Carolyn Bacon and Cathy Tilsen will be working throughout the process with a small group representing public agency staff and community interests.

Phase I of the process will include four tasks that are expected to extend into early 2006. Task 1 will include research to summarize what entities and organizations currently are involved, what their roles are, what riverfront plans and goals are being pursued and what organizational models are being used in other communities. Tasks 2 and 3 will seek input through interviews and workshops as to the strengths and weaknesses of the existing organizational structure and will explore options for improvement. (Options might include a new organization, having an existing organization take on one or more new roles and/or finding ways for the existing organizations to better coordinate their activities) Task 4 will bring whatever proposal(s) result from the earlier phases out to the community for broader feedback. Assuming that Phase 1 results in an organizational proposal that has broad support, Phase 2 will move forward in 2006 with implementation of that proposal.

Stakeholders whose input will be sought during this process include the many governmental bodies involved with riverfront activities, existing and potential funders, businesses, developers, non-profit organizations, neighborhood organizations and residents.

As part of the Task 1 research, we are asking organizations that currently are involved in the Minneapolis riverfront to provide feedback via the following questionnaire. Your input and insights will help get this process off to a productive start.

**Please complete this questionnaire and return it by Monday, August 8, to Carolyn Bacon of Bacon & Associates at [carolyn@baconandassoc.com](mailto:carolyn@baconandassoc.com).**

## Riverfront Revitalization Organizational Questionnaire

Note: when responding or note-taking, please attempt to use bullets and avoid long narrative

Name of Organization: Name of person completing questionnaire: Date:
--

1. What is the role of your organization as it pertains to Minneapolis riverfront issues/activities/projects? Check all that apply.
  - Regulatory (please describe)
    -
  - Taking action/implementer (please describe)
    -
  - Funder (please describe)
    -
  - Input role (please describe)
    -
  - Advocacy (please describe)
    -
  - Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
    -
2. Who, from your organization, is currently involved in Minneapolis riverfront issues/activities/projects? (please provide names and titles)
3. How would you describe your organization's level of focus on Minneapolis riverfront issues/activities/projects?
  - Our only focus
  - One of our top 3-5 focus areas
  - One of many focus areasComments:

4. Has your organization been involved in any joint riverfront organizations and/or projects? If “yes”:
  - a. What worked well with the group/project?
    -
  - b. What didn’t work so well?
    -
5. What have you noted as some particular gaps in all efforts around revitalization of the Minneapolis riverfront (e.g. lack of coordination, lack of funding, agency territoriality)?
  -
6. What would it take to close those gaps? What capacity might we need to close those gaps?
  -
7. What kinds of changes to the existing organizational framework for Minneapolis riverfront revitalization would create possible synergies or opportunities (in general and/or particular to your organization)?
  -
8. What kind of changes to the existing Minneapolis riverfront revitalization organizational framework might create areas of conflict with your organization or its activities?
  -

## Riverfront Revitalization Other Cities' Questionnaire

City Name:

Website:

1. What is the governance and organizational structure that oversees riverfront/waterfront revitalization?
2. How did you come to that kind of governance structure? What process was used? Who was involved?
3. What are the organization's mission and values?
4. What are the goals & objectives (e.g., is it focused on just parks or some other kind of development?)
5. What is the relationship of the organization to other governmental entities? How does the organization connect (or not) to governmental entities? To private developers? To citizens' groups?
6. What are the financial parameters of the organization? What is the budget? Where does the financial support come from? What is it used for?
7. Does it have statutory authority? For what? What kind of regulatory authority? Is it sunset?
8. How long has this organization been in existence? From an organizational perspective, what progress can you point to? What results?
9. Was there a Master Plan? If so is it still used and being implemented? How has the implementation gone, particularly from an organizational perspective?
10. From your organizational framework and governance structure, what's the biggest success? How did that come about? What are the biggest challenges?
11. What would you/others do differently given what you know now?

**Detailed responses from question #1 of the Organizational Questionnaire listed according to the responding organization**

(Public/quasi-public entities are listed first in alphabetical order, followed by non-profit, private and community entities in alphabetical order.)

**What is the role of your organization as it pertains to Minneapolis riverfront issues/activities/projects? Check all that apply.**

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department  
(The Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Department contains three general functions that have roles in riverfront revitalization. These include the both the Business Development and Multi-Family Housing Development sections (shown here as "Development") and the Community Planning and Development Services sections of the Planning Division.)**

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department -- Development**

- Regulatory (please describe)
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - "Change agent" to facilitate redevelopment of real estate (residential, business, non-profit) through land acquisition and disposition, pollution remediation, installation of public improvements, provision of financing, etc. (note: goal is not to own property long-term)
- Funder (please describe)
  - Manage multiple funding programs for residential, business and non-profit real estate development
  - Fund St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board
- Input role (please describe)
  - Provide input into comprehensive and small area planning and planning for development parcels
- Advocacy (please describe)
- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
  - Manage Upper Harbor Terminal
  - Gather and distribute info about riverfront revitalization activities
  - Have represented Minneapolis in regional riverfront activities
  - Communications via River Forum e-newsletter, web
  - Participate in promotion of Minneapolis Riverfront District

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department -- Community Planning**

- Regulatory
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - Prepare long-range plans
  - Integrate plan policies into capital improvement process
  - Develop small area plans and help facilitate implementation of adopted plans through various means (CLIC, consistency, ZNG)

- Funder
- Input role (please describe)
  - Prepare long-range plans
  - Provide input to development proposals
- Advocacy (please describe)
  - Conduct outreach and education on adopted plans and policies
  - Integrate plan policies into capital improvement process
- Other, e.g. programming, maintenance/management (please describe)

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department -- Development Services**

- Regulatory
  - Process land use applications; review for consistency with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, adopted small area plan(s) and forthcoming Critical Area Plan
  - Conduct environmental previews
  - Administer Heritage Preservation regulations and staff HPC
  - Administer zoning ordinance and staff Board of Adjustment and City Planning Commission
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
- Funder
- Input role (please describe)
  - As to consistency with adopted plans, policies, guidelines and regulations
- Advocacy (please describe)
  - Conduct outreach and education on land use decision-making process and regulations
- Other, e.g. programming, maintenance/management (please describe)

**City of Minneapolis Public Works Department**

- Regulatory (please describe)
  - Review development proposals to assure that they meet requirements re: traffic, storm water, other public infrastructure requirements
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - Plan public infrastructure systems
  - Build public infrastructure (e.g., streets, bridges, parking, utilities, commuter bike trails)
  - If needed, can acquire land for above
- Funder (please describe)
- Input role (please describe)
  - Provide input into comprehensive and small area plans and specific development objectives/proposals
- Advocacy (please describe)

- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
  - Maintain City's infrastructure (e.g., streets, bridges, utilities, commuter bike trails)
  - Operate public parking ramps and lots

**Hennepin County – Housing, Community Works & Transit**

- Regulatory (please describe)
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - Hennepin County does not have land use authority in any municipality; however, the county has jurisdiction over county roads. Through the redesign/reconstruction of this infrastructure the county can be an implementer in projects adjacent to the riverfront; i.e. Marshall Street Design Plan
  - Hennepin County can support local agencies and provide financial and staff support to their projects
- Funder (please describe)
  - Hennepin County has funded aspects of Mill Ruins Park through its capital budget
  - Hennepin County funded portions of Mill City Museum
  - Hennepin County funded and completed the Marshall Street Design Plan
- Advocacy (please describe)
- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)

**Metropolitan Council (including MPOSC)**

- Regulatory
  - The Metropolitan Council is not a regulatory agency, per se. However, it does have some authorities that are fairly complicated to try to explain. With some respect to the riverfront, the Council reviews and comments on the City's comprehensive plan, which is required by state law to be updated at least every 10 years. The comprehensive plan, which must include a Park and Open Space section, is reviewed by the Metropolitan Council for consistency with regional plans, conformity to regional system plans and compatibly with the plans of adjacent governmental units. The Council can require that a local comprehensive plan be modified if it finds that the local plan is more likely than not of having a substantial impact on one or more regional system plans. State law requires that local zoning must be consistent with the Council reviewed local comprehensive plan.
  - The Council is one of three agencies; the other two are the Minnesota DNR and the National Park Service, that have an oversight role with respect to the Mississippi River Critical Area and the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA). The Council reviews and comments on local Critical Area/MNRRA plans, but it has no

formal “approval/disapproval” authority. In addition, the Council has acted as a conduit and grant administrator in the past for pass-through grants to local governmental units from the National Park Service related to such plans.

- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - The Metropolitan Council owns, constructs, maintains, and operates public facilities within the Minneapolis Riverfront (bus and transit stations and layover facilities), and regional interceptor sanitary sewers. The Council also operates a Transit Police force. Neither the Metropolitan Council nor the MPOSC takes direct action as an implementer in the area of regional parks, trails, and open space. Implementation and direct actions are taken by the City and MPRB.
- Funder
  - The Metropolitan Council provides a variety of grants for such things as environmental clean-up, affordable housing, new development demonstration projects, various state and federal pass-through grants for transportation (highways, transit, bikeways, pedestrian – with advice from the Transportation Advisory Board), grants for regional parks and trails (with advice from the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission), and has in the past provided federal pass-through grants for Critical Area and Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, and regional grants for innovative surface water management demonstrations.
  - In addition, the Metropolitan Council has two operating divisions – Environmental Services and Metro Transit. Environmental Services owns and operates regional interceptory sanitary sewers and regional wastewater treatment plants. Funding to operate the system is primarily from user fees charged to local governmental units based on wastewater flows.
  - Metro Transit operates the majority of buses in the City of Minneapolis and the Light Rail Transit (LRT) operations. Funding to operate the system is partially from user fees charged to transit users, and partially from state and federal funding sources.
- Input role (please describe)
  - The Metropolitan Council and its advisory bodies like the TAB and MPOSC have a regional (seven-county area) focus. The Council prepares an overall generalized land use plan, and four regional system plans (Aviation, Transportation, Park/Trails, and Wastewater). The plans are prepared after a lengthy public input period, and once adopted serve as the basis for local comprehensive plans prepared by cities, townships and counties in the Metropolitan area.
- Advocacy (please describe)
  - The Metropolitan Council is an advocate for its polices and regional system plans, and for state and federal funding to help implement its plans.
- Other, e.g. programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
  - As described above.

## **Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board**

- Regulatory (please describe)
  - Limited regulatory role, confined to issuing permits for activities by others conducted on MPRB-owned riverfront property
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - The MPRB owns approximately 75% of the linear footage of Mississippi riverfront in Minneapolis. Most of this land is already developed as parks; periodically, these need to be refurbished or redeveloped to meet changing needs or due to infrastructure deterioration. There are several undeveloped parcels intended for parkland, and funding is not currently available to fully develop these. There are also existing plans for acquisition of additional riverfront lands to extend this green space corridor.
- Funder (please describe)
- Input role (please describe)
  - Input into riverfront developments via staff contacts such as the Riverfront TAC, involvement with the DNR in the proposed Whitewater Park, discussions with the U of M, etc.
- Advocacy (please describe)
- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
  - Maintenance/management: MPRB has sole responsibility for the riverfront parklands mentioned above, as well as maintenance responsibility for City-owned vegetated lands (some of which are along the river; e.g., along West River Road).
  - Programming: Many of the riverfront parks have programming and events of various types offered by MPRB staff and others. The parks are the venue for many athletic events, as well, such as the Twin Cities Marathon.

## **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Critical Area Program (within Division of Waters)**

- Regulatory (please describe)

The Mississippi River Critical Area Program provides coordinated planning and management for 72 miles of the Mississippi River, four miles of the Minnesota River, and 54,000 acres of adjacent corridor lands. The designated Mississippi River Critical Area Corridor stretches from Ramsey and Dayton, Minnesota, to the southern boundary of Dakota County on the west/south side of the river and the boundary with the Lower St. Croix National Scenic River way on the east/north side of the river, and runs through the heart of Minneapolis-St. Paul.

The designation of the river and its corridor as a State Critical Area was reaffirmed and continued by Governor Albert Quie on March 27, 1979, through Executive Order 79-19. Local units of government and regional agencies are required to adopt critical area plans and regulations that comply with Executive Order 79-19. The standards in Executive Order 79-19 are required to be followed by all local units of government in the corridor when preparing or modifying plans and regulations.

The DNR has three primary roles for the Mississippi River Critical Area Program. The DNR reviews existing ordinances that affect lands within the Mississippi River Critical Area Corridor for their compliance with state critical area standards and guidelines. In addition, adoption or amendment of plans (particularly the Critical Area Plans required of all jurisdictions within the Critical Area) and ordinances affecting lands within the Mississippi River Critical Area Corridor and relating to Executive Order 79-19 purposes and standards are effective only after approval by the DNR. The DNR reviews the plans and ordinances to ensure their consistency with the provisions of Executive Order 79-19, following an evaluation by the Metropolitan Council.

In communities where critical area plans and ordinances have become effective, the local governmental unit also must notify the DNR area hydrologist at least 30 days before action is taken for all development applications or variances requiring a public hearing or discretionary action. In communities where plans and regulations have not been adopted or approved, the DNR is also to be notified about additional types of projects listed in the Interim Regulations. DNR will review and comment on the project's compliance with critical area and state requirements.

For more information, see

[http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt\\_section/critical\\_area/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/critical_area/index.html)

- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
- Funder (please describe)
- Input role (please describe)
- Advocacy (please describe)
- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)

### **Minnesota Historical Society/Mill City Museum**

- Regulatory (please describe)
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - The museum was a key part of SAF Interpretive Plan, and the Society's commitment to build here was helpful in encouraging others to invest in the riverfront
- Funder (please describe)
- Input role (please describe)
- Advocacy (please describe)

- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
  - The museum provides ongoing programs that educate visitors about the riverfront, but also attracts them to come in the first place.
  - In 2005, we intensified our efforts to host outdoor tours in and around the riverfront district and intend for this to be a permanent part of our program.
  - The museum is entering into agreement with the city for cooperative maintenance of the interpretive elements of the Chicago Plaza improvement project.

### **Minnesota Historical Society/State Historic Preservation Office**

- Regulatory (please describe)
  - Conducts a 106 review of any projects within the Historic District that involve federal funds.
  - Occasionally may invoke the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act for other types of projects
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
- Funder (please describe)
- Input role (please describe)
  - The office will occasionally comment or advise on projects, even if it does not have a regulatory role to play.
- Advocacy (please describe)
- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)

### **Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO)**

- Regulatory (please describe)
  - The MWMO does not currently have any regulatory programs. However, if our standards are not met by local ordinance, then the MWMO may regulate certain activities such as erosion control or storm water.
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - The MWMO has several programs (See Other below) and funds water quality, water quantity, and water-related natural resource improvements with its capital improvement projects.
- Funder (please describe)
  - The MWMO has authority to levy taxes to complete the projects and programs under MS 275.066 Special taxing districts, (21) Middle Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization and under MS sections 103B.211 and 103B.241.
  - The expenditures are limited to the goals and activities identified in the MWMO Joint and Cooperative Agreement, MWMO Bylaws, the MWMO Watershed Management Plan, the purposes of the water management programs required by MN Statute Sections 103B.205 to

103B.255 of MS 103B Metropolitan Water Management Act, and MN Rules 8410.

- The MWMO has levied between \$3.5 and 4.1 million each year between 2002 and 2005 for these purposes.

Input role (please describe)

- Monitor the river
- Review and comment to permitting land use authorities on new and redevelopment projects
- Set water quantity and quality standards

Advocacy (please describe)

- Participate in local and state level policy-making for storm water management, water quality, natural resources, etc

Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)

- Ongoing water quality monitoring program
- Education and community outreach program
- Water-related research – monitoring methods, best management Practices, diagnostic and feasibility studies
- Small grant program to neighborhoods, non-profits, etc - Stewardship Fund
- Land acquisition fund
- Habitat restoration

**National Park Service – Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA)**

Regulatory

Taking action/implementer (please describe)

- Providing leadership and coordination in implementation of MNRRA CMP – promoting a common vision for the river corridor

Funder

- MNRRA grants program
- Funds available through federal funding calls
- Mississippi River Fund

Input role (please describe)

- Work with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Metropolitan Council to implement state critical area program
- Review federal actions for consistency with the MNRRA Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) which includes State Critical Area Program and various federal requirements (i.e. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation)
- Review proposed development plans and actions for consistency with MNRRA CMP
- Technical assistance to local communities, as requested, to assist with riverfront protection

- Advocacy (please describe)
  - Work with local partners and communities to achieve visions and goals of the MNRRA CMP
  - MNRRA provides the lead role in advocating the vision of a continuous, 72 mile trail and open space corridor along the Mississippi River in the Twin Cities Metro area while protecting the area resources. To help achieve this goal, the National Park Service established and facilitated the Trails and Open Space Partnership (TOSP), a group of over 50 public and private agencies and organizations working together to accomplish this goal. TOSP activities include advocating the trail vision to decision-makers and the general public, developing promotional products like the *Connections to the River Map*, and helping local communities identify funding opportunities to implement their individual projects.
- Other, e.g. programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
  - MNRRA provides the lead role in coordinating interpretive activities in the 72-mile river corridor. The Mississippi River Visitor Center provides a gateway of information for all the partner sites within the MNRRA. MNRRA coordinates and partially funds interpretive exhibits, waysides and interactive computer kiosks. MNRRA sponsors interpretive programs such as Ranger Walks, Bike with a Ranger, Birding Boat, etc. MNRRA provides the lead in facilitating the Mighty Mississippi Passport program and award winning Big River Journey.
  - MNRRA provides leadership and technical assistance to local governments in the corridor in the areas of habitat restoration, native plant design, streambank stabilization, and invasive species removal. The National Park Service exotic plant management team and MNRRA staff have removed exotics in several locations within the corridor and MNRRA staff work with NPS volunteers, public and private landowners, and various non-profit organizations to restore the river's natural shoreline, establish wildlife habitat, and address stormwater management and erosion control issues.
  - Historical and archeological research by the MNRRA staff has identified important sites and led to designation of several of these sites on the National Register of Historic Places within the river corridor. *A Historic Resource Study of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area* was completed, published, and shared with partners. MNRRA works with communities and citizens to promote the rich historic values found along the river corridor.

### **St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board**

- Regulatory (please describe)
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - Created the St. Anthony Falls Interpretive Plan
  - Created the SAF Heritage Trail, as well as a number of other smaller project initiatives (see below under funding)

- Coordinated work on major redevelopment projects such as the Stone Arch Bridge, Mill Ruins Park, and Mill City Museum
- Funder (please describe)
  - City of Minneapolis (CPED); Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, Hennepin County, and Minnesota Historical Society (State of MN funds) each contribute \$31,000 annually to fund the board's activities.
  - In turn, the Heritage Board approves an annual workplan that includes funding for projects, primarily implemented by its member agencies.
  - The Board has also served as a conduit for occasional capital grants from the State Legislature.
- Input role (please describe)
  - From time to time, the board's opinion is solicited on various projects along the riverfront. Some examples include the University Steam Plant and the Federal Reserve Plaza.
- Advocacy (please describe)
  - The board attempts to promote the preservation and interpretation of the historic resources in the Heritage Zone. A recent example is the Pillsbury Mill development proposal, in which the board passed a resolution to the city regarding the development's impact on the historic buildings and district.
- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
  - Heritage Board projects in the recent past have included the creation of promotional and educational brochures about the area.
  - In addition to creating the Heritage Trail, the Board also performs annual maintenance on the trail's interpretive signs

**Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee (AFCAC) – draft response**

- Regulatory (please describe)
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
- Funder (please describe)
- Input role (please describe)
  - Initiating proposals to realize the "Above the Falls" Master Plan for the Upper River in Minneapolis
- Advocacy (please describe)
  - Defining the actions needed to implement the ATF plan
- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)

**The BHI Group, Pracna on Main, Vic's, Tuggs Tavern**

- Regulatory (please describe)
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)

- The BHI Group owns and manages three major restaurant establishments within St. Anthony Main; Pracna on Main Historic Dining Saloon, Vic's and Tuggs Tavern.
- On behalf of Pracna, Vic's, Tuggs and other major riverfront attractions (Mill City Museum, The Depot, Hitching Post horse drawn carriages, Minneapolis Queen Paddleboat, Mill Ruins Park), The BHI Group regularly contacts the Minneapolis Riverfront Residential high-rise management companies delivering area attractions premiums for their residents, hosts Riverfront Resident "Mixers," regularly contacts the major Minneapolis hotel, residential and corporate concierges with riverfront updates and information.
- Coordinates Minneapolis Riverfront District cooperative promotions and advertising.

Funder

- Partially funded the current Minneapolis Riverfront District brochure (map) produced by the GMCVA.
- Fund the cost of maintaining the above mentioned web site.
- Contributes dollars to the fireworks shows from Pracna, Vic's and Tugg's Tavern.

Input role (please describe)

- Organizes the Minneapolis Riverfront District Meeting Calendar and sends notices with attached agenda to all members.
- Built and maintains the [www.minneapolis.neighborhoods.com](http://www.minneapolis.neighborhoods.com) website for the Minneapolis Riverfront District.
- Organized two Minneapolis Riverfront District Concierge and Tourism media open houses with riverfront attractions, one held at St. Anthony Main, the other at Mill City Museum.
- Actively pursues new members to the Minneapolis Riverfront District
- Promotions and Coordination Committee.

Advocacy (please describe)

Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)

- See above checked items.

### **Greater Minneapolis Convention and Visitors Association**

Regulatory

Taking action/implementer (please describe)

- Marketing/promotions/hosting writers – local, national and international

Funder

Input role (please describe)

Advocacy (please describe)

- Marketing/promotions/hosting writers – local, national and international

Other, e.g. programming, maintenance/management (please describe)

**Minneapolis Riverfront Arts and Events Committee Inc. a nonprofit organization**

- Regulatory (please describe)
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
  - The Minneapolis Riverfront Arts and Events Committee Inc. purpose is to promote the Minneapolis Riverfront District via quality events that draw people to the area and familiarize them on how to get there, where to park and expose them to the amenities that the district has to offer.
  - Our organization produces the Stone Arch Festival of the Arts every fathers day weekend for the past 11 years. This event attracts 80k to 100k visitors to district.
  - Our office raises and solicits all of the funds for the Mpls. 4<sup>th</sup> of July and New Years Eve fireworks shows in the Minneapolis Riverfront District.
  - Our office obtains the numerous permits required, provides insurance, provides media promotion and coordinates with the MPLS Park and Rec. for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event on the riverfront. (Approx 50k-75k attendance).
  - Has built and maintains various web sites devoted to the promotion of the Minneapolis Riverfront District. [www.mrdbridges.com](http://www.mrdbridges.com), [www.stonearchfestival.com](http://www.stonearchfestival.com), [www.mpls4thofjuly.com](http://www.mpls4thofjuly.com), [www.saintanthonymain.com](http://www.saintanthonymain.com).
- Funder
  - Any excess funds generated by the Stone Arch Festival of the Arts (Father's Day weekend) not used to produce the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event and seed money for the following years events is designated for the improvement of the Minneapolis Riverfront District i.e. landscaping, lighting signage etc.
  - Partially funded the current Minneapolis riverfront District brochure (map) produced by the GMCVA.
  - Fund the cost of the above mentioned web sites.
  - Contribute dollars and like kind to the fireworks shows.
- Input role (please describe)
  - Originated the concept for the Minneapolis Riverfront District current brochure.
  - One of the original proponents to change the name of the Mississippi Mile to the current Minneapolis Riverfront District name and redefine its boundaries to better focus the area.
- Advocacy (please describe)
- Other, e.g., programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
  - See above checked items.

## **Minneapolis Riverfront District Promotions and Coordination Board**

- Regulatory
- Taking action/implementer (please describe)
- Funder
- Input role (please describe)
- Advocacy (please describe)
- Other, e.g. programming, maintenance/management (please describe)
  - Coordinate events and activities in the Minneapolis Riverfront District (MRD).
  - Promote attractions and amenities in MRD to concierges, travel media, group event planners, riverfront residents, and others.
  - Raise funds for July 4 and New Year's Eve fireworks.
  - Preps and sends press releases for July 4 and New Year Eve Riverfront activities.
  - Maintain MRD neighborhood website, provide input to GMCVA website to be more successful.
  - Update and monitor informational hotline.

**Detailed responses from question #2 of the Organizational Questionnaire listed according to the responding organization**

**Who, from your organization, is currently involved in Minneapolis riverfront issues/activities/projects? (please provide names and titles)**

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department -- Development**

Business Development section –  
Riverfront Team -- Ann Calvert, Carrie Flack;  
other – Judy Cedar, Jim Forsyth, John Harrington, Sharrin Miller-Bassi  
Multi-family Development section –  
Dollie Crowther, Kevin Dockry, Bernadette Hornig, Jerry Le Page, Cherre Palenius, Donna Wiemann  
(All staff listed are Senior or Principal Project Coordinators;  
middle and senior management staff to whom they report also are involved)

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department – Community Planning**

Barb Sporlein, Planning Director  
Pam Miner – Supervisor, Critical Area Plan  
Jack Byers, Downtown Sector  
Jennifer Jordan, East Sector  
Mike Larson, South Sector  
Tom Leighton, North Sector

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department – Development Services**

Numerous planners; middle and senior management staff to whom they report also are involved

**City of Minneapolis Public Works Department**

Riverfront TAC rep from Public Works -- Don Pflaum  
Mill Quarter liaison – Jack Yuzna  
Multiple staff involved in various topical areas

**Hennepin County – Housing, Community Works & Transit**

Andrew Gillet, Principal Planning Analyst

**Metropolitan Council**

Jim Uttley, AICP, Planning Analyst and Sector Representative, Local Planning Assistance  
Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst, Regional Parks and Open Space and principal staff to the MPOSC

## **Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board**

The MPRB is led by an elected, nine-member Board of Commissioners. Six Commissioners represent geographic districts, and three are elected at-large. All but one of the six districts includes some portion of the riverfront.

The MPRB organization is managed by Superintendent Jon Gurban. Directly reporting to him are Michael Schmidt, General Manager for Operations, and Don Siggelkow, General Manager for Administration. The MPRB staff structure below this level has recently been reorganized on a largely geographic basis, with a division into three districts. District staff report to Michael Schmidt. The "River District" encompasses all of the east bank and the west bank from the north city limits to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue bridge. All maintenance and programming responsibilities and some planning responsibilities for that area are controlled by that district. Upper-level district staff are:

District Manager Jon Oyanagi

District Planner Emily Ero-Phillips

Recreation District Supervisor Sara Ackmann

Operations (maintenance) District Foreman Kelly Dennis

A short stretch of the west-bank riverfront between the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue bridge and Portland Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the Lakes District. Upper-level Lakes District staff are:

District Manager Paul Hokeness

Recreation District Supervisor Cindy Wilson

Operations District Foreman Casey Randall

The District Planner has yet to be named.

The west bank from Portland Avenue to the south city limits is under the jurisdiction of the Minnehaha District. Upper-level Lakes District staff are:

District Manager Eileen Kilpatrick

Recreation District Supervisor Mary Kay Witek

Operations District Foreman Brad Erickson

The District Planner has yet to be named.

Construction projects are currently managed by staff of the Planning and Project Management Department, headed by Judd Rietkerk. Staff currently working on riverfront construction projects are:

Tim Brown, Engineer

Rachel Ramadhani, Landscape Architect

Andy Lesch, Landscape Architect

This department also includes a City-Wide Planner, Jennifer Ringold, who is involved with some riverfront planning.

Permitting of events is currently managed by the Special Services Department. Most riverfront permitting is handled by Shane Stenzel.

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Critical Area Program  
(within Division of Waters)**

Critical Area review is performed by Sandy Fecht, Critical Area Hydrologist. This program is housed within the DNR Division of Waters, Rivers and Shorelines Unit; Rebecca Wooden is the Unit Supervisor.

**Minnesota Historical Society/Mill City Museum**

Nina Archabal, Director  
Michael Fox, Deputy Director  
David Kelliher, Legislative Liaison  
Lisa Higgs, Board Relations Manager  
John Crippen, Mill City Museum Director  
Laura Salveson, Mill City Museum Manager  
David Stevens, Mill City Museum Public Programs Manager  
Joanna Danks, Mill City Museum Community Relations Manager  
Ellen Steinman, Mill City Museum Visitor Services Manager

**Minnesota Historical Society/State Historic Preservation Office**

Nina Archabal, State Historic Preservation Officer  
Britta Bloomberg, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
Dennis Gimmetstad, Government Programs and Compliance Officer  
Susan Roth, National Register Historian

**Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO)**

**Board of Commissioners:**

Paul Ostrow, City of Minneapolis, Chair  
Jerry Faust, City of St Anthony, Vice Chair  
Karen Gill-Gerbig, City of Lauderdale, Treasurer  
Karlyn Eckman, City of St Paul  
John Erwin, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

**National Park Service – Mississippi National River and Recreation  
Area (MNRRA)**

Steve Johnson, Chief, Resource Management  
Joan Guilfoyle, Chief, Education and Visitor Services  
John Anfinson, Historian/Cultural Resource Specialist, Stewardship Team  
Jim Von Haden, GIS/Development Reviews, Stewardship team  
Susan Overson, Landscape Architect/Park Planner, Stewardship Team  
David Wiggins, Manager Mississippi Visitor Center, Education Team  
Stan Zobel, IT Coordinator, Education team  
Lyndon Torstenson, Park Ranger, Education Team

**St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board**

All members of the organization.

**Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee**

Chuck Sullivan and Matt Massman are AFCAC representatives to the riverfront organizational thought process steering committee. The Phase I Trail (west bank) task force (which wrapped up its work earlier in 2005) included a number of AFCAC members and two explicit AFCAC appointees; they were Ted Tucker and Mindy Isaacs.

**The BHI Group, Pracna on Main, Vic's, Tuggs Tavern**

Ira Heilicher, owner; Scott Brinda, owner; Victoria Barlow, marketing director.

**Greater Minneapolis Convention and Visitor's Association**

Michael Rainville, Director of Community/Sponsorship Development  
Bill Deef, Vice President of Tourism  
Elizabeth Volkman, Creative Services Manager

**Minneapolis Riverfront Arts and Events Committee Inc. a nonprofit org.**

Ira Heilicher, President  
Sara Collins, Stone Arch Festival Director  
Victoria Barlow, past director of the Stone Arch Festival and Mpls 4<sup>th</sup> of July event, now currently marketing director for the BHI Group.

**Detailed responses from question #3 of the Organizational Questionnaire listed according to the responding organization**

**How would you describe your organization's level of focus on riverfront issues/activities?**

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department -- Development**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments:

Business Development Riverfront Team is entirely focused on Riverfront. For other sections and staff, Riverfront is not a special focus

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department -- Community Planning**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: Four of the five community planner sectors include riverfront segments (North, East, Downtown and South); riverfront issues are one of many in those sectors.

**City of Minneapolis CPED Department -- Development Services**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments:

**City of Minneapolis Public Works Department**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments:

Staff identified above have particular roles relative to riverfront efforts (amongst many other roles). Otherwise, the riverfront has no particular focus within department.

**Hennepin County – Housing, Community Works & Transit**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: Staff from Housing, Community Works & Transit are involved in numerous planning, infrastructure, and implementation projects throughout

the county. Many of these projects involve partnerships with both local municipalities as well as state agencies.

**Metropolitan Council (including MPOSC)**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments:

The Metropolitan Council's jurisdiction includes seven counties and 192 cities and townships within those counties. The Metropolitan Council's governing body consists of 17 people appointed by the Governor, of which three represent portions of the City of Minneapolis. Two of the three have districts that include portions of the Mississippi River.

The Metropolitan Council is one of three entities involved in the establishment and monitoring of the Mississippi River Critical Area and the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. It cooperates with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the National Park Service in the funding and support of the Mississippi River Critical Area and the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

The Council also has responsibilities for helping to plan the overall transportation system in the Metropolitan area, which includes airports, highways, transit, bicycle and pedestrian movement and good movement. With respect to the latter, the Council is interested in truck, rail and barge movements and interrelationships. In February 2002, the Metropolitan Council approved the park element of the Above the Falls (ATF) Master Plan. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board requested the approval, so that it could seek funding for acquisition of land in the upper harbor area. The Council directed staff to analyze the potential impacts on the regional highway system if the Upper Harbor Barge Terminal (UHT) on the Mississippi River in North Minneapolis was to close. The study was conducted and completed in June 2004.

**Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments:

The MPRB owns, develops, manages, and programs over 6400 acres of land throughout the entire city, with some parks falling partly outside the city limits. The riverfront had, in past years, been among the top focus areas for the MPRB; however, in the past couple of years, it has probably slipped to a lower priority. Major budget reductions have increased the level of competition.

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Critical Area Program (within Division of Waters)**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: As noted above, the Critical Area encompasses a far larger area than just the Minneapolis riverfront.

**Minnesota Historical Society/Mill City Museum**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments:

During the planning, fundraising, and construction of the museum, this was one of the organization's top priorities and area of focus. Ironically, this effort sometimes pulled us away from broader issues on the riverfront. Since the museum opening, museum staff have intensified their focus on the broader riverfront, while other Society staff have perhaps diminished their role.

**Minnesota Historical Society/State Historic Preservation Office**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: None

**Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO)**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments:

The Mississippi River is our primary water resource to protect. Our success is largely determined by how the organization improves and protects the river and the related natural resources. All of our programs are tied to improving the water quality in the river and entering the river.

**National Park Service – Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA)**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments:

MNRRA's focus is the entire 72 miles of the river corridor.

**St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: None

**Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: The AFCAC has been formed for a catalyst for implementing a master plan for development along the Mississippi River between Plymouth Bridge and Camden Bridge.

**The BHI Group, Pracna on Main, Vic's, Tuggs Tavern**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: None

**Greater Minneapolis Convention and Visitor's Association**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: The Riverfront is very important to us in overall promotion as well as individual convention delegates and tourism

**Minneapolis Riverfront Arts and Events Committee Inc. a nonprofit org.**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: None

**Minneapolis Riverfront District Promotions and Coordination Board**

- Our only focus
- One of our top 3-5 focus areas
- One of many focus areas

Comments: None

## Contact information for Cities and Communities Research

St. Paul Riverfront Corporation  
St. Paul, MN  
Patrick Seeb, Executive Director  
[www.riverfrontcorporation.com](http://www.riverfrontcorporation.com)

River Action (Quad Cities region)  
Davenport, IA  
Kathy Wine, Executive Director  
[www.riveraction.org](http://www.riveraction.org)

RiverCity Company  
Chattanooga, TN  
Jim Bowen, Vice President  
[www.rivercitycompany.com](http://www.rivercitycompany.com)

City of Vancouver  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
Kevin McNaney, Planner, Central Area Planning  
<http://www.vancouver.ca/commsvcs/currentplanning/urbandesign/>

Fraser River Estuary Management Plan  
British Columbia, Canada  
[www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/981201/p1.htm](http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/981201/p1.htm)  
[www.idrc.ca/en/ev-25527-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-25527-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

## **Acknowledgement of Task 1 Participants**

### **Organizations**

Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee (AFCAC)  
City of Minneapolis – CPED, Community Planning  
City of Minneapolis – CPED, Planning Division  
City of Minneapolis – CPED, Development  
City of Minneapolis – CPED, Development Services  
City of Minneapolis – Parks and Recreation Department  
City of Minneapolis – Public Works Department  
Department of Natural Resources – Critical Area Program  
Greater Minneapolis Convention and Visitors Association  
Hennepin County – Housing, Community Works & Transit  
Metropolitan Council (including MPOSC)  
Minneapolis Riverfront Arts and Events Committee Inc.  
Minneapolis Riverfront District Promotions & Coordination Board  
Minnesota Historical Society/State Historic Preservation Office  
Minnesota Historical Society/Mill City Museum  
Mississippi Watershed Management Organization  
National Park Service – Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRA)  
St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board  
The BHI Group, Pracna on Main, Vic's, and Tuggs Tavern

### **Individuals**

Nina Archabal - Minnesota Historical society  
Peter Brown - North Loop Neighborhood Association  
Whitney Clark - Friends of the Mississippi River  
Jay Cowles - Founder and Member of the Friends of the Minneapolis Riverfront  
Sam Grabarski - Minneapolis Downtown Council  
Superintendent Jon Gurban – Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board  
Karen Kelley-Ariwoola – Vice President, Community Philanthropy, The Minneapolis Foundation  
Chuck Lutz, CPED, City of Minneapolis  
Commissioner Peter McLaughlin - Hennepin County Board of Commissioners  
Council President Paul Ostrow – City of Minneapolis  
Cordelia Pierson – Trust for Public Land  
Rip Rapson – former President of the McKnight Foundation  
Mayor R.T. Rybak – City of Minneapolis  
Patrick Seeb - St. Paul Riverfront Corporation  
Barbara Sporlein – CPED, City of Minneapolis  
Commissioner Mark Stenglein - Hennepin County Board of Commissioners  
Joanne Walz - The Minneapolis Foundation  
Charles Zelle – Founder and Member of the Friends of the Minneapolis Riverfront