



Great News

FROM THE GREATER DOWNTOWN COUNCIL

Urban Living on the Rise in Duluth

Turn a corner in Duluth's Downtown and it's likely you will see construction equipment working on one of several new downtown housing projects. Over the years, Downtowns across the country have been touting the "back to the city" movement as more and more people are getting into urban living, creating a demand for additional housing. And this year, the movement has taken a leap forward in Duluth as a substantial number of housing units will be coming on the market.

414 West First Street

Seth Oliver of Oliver Companies recently spoke to members of the Greater Downtown Council about his venture. Oliver is renovating the former City of Duluth Water & Gas Building into 8 upper scale condominium units, along with ground-floor office space.

"The biggest reason I decided to take on this project was the booming national trend in

downtown housing," said Oliver. "But I also appreciated the historic characteristics of the building and the sound construction."

A model unit will be available in April for prospective residents to tour. Oliver said they showed the property to approximately 20 individuals prior to building the model and it was tougher for people to visualize the great possibilities. Now, he says, prospective residents can get a real feel of what it's like to sit in the living room and look out the window overlooking the waterfront.

From underground parking and skywalk access to rooftop gardens and balconies, the condominium units offer many amenities that attract downtown residents. As a matter of fact, Oliver is becoming one of the downtown's newest residents as he and his wife purchased one of the condo units.

Bridgeman Russell Building

A & L Properties acquired the Bridgeman Russell Building from the Duluth Economic Development Authority to create an historic

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Second Street Targeted for More Parking

The City of Duluth is floating an idea that recently gained an endorsement from the GDC Board of Directors.

City leaders are looking at the possibility of creating approximately 100 new parking spots on Second Street between 4th Avenue West and 4th Avenue East. Under the plan, the street would be converted from three driving lanes down to two driving lanes. This move would make

way for the addition of parking and meters on the north side of the street.

The proposal also gained general support from the city's parking commission, although there are a few issues that must still be worked out to be sensitive to residential units in the neighborhood.

It is hoped that the new meters could accommodate more long-term users

and serve as an added benefit to our downtown.

This move will also serve as a traffic-slowing mechanism, something that allows our streets to become more walkable. What is also interesting is that John Norquist, the keynote speaker at the GDC's Annual Dinner, was quick to point out the option for such a change when he toured our downtown. **GDC**

IT'S OK TO SAY NO TO PANHANDLERS

The Duluth Downtown Waterfront District is taking a new approach to the panhandling issue in the downtown.

In a typical year, as the outside temperature increases, so does the number of complaints about panhandling, especially along the downtown's First Street. So, the DDWD is coming out with an educational brochure in hopes of nipping the problem in the bud this spring.

The brochure is aimed at educating employees and others in the downtown that it's ok to say no to panhandlers.

"As Minnesotans, there is that stereo-typical "Minnesota Nice" mentality that if someone asks for money to buy food, we give it to them," said Kristi Stokes of the Greater Downtown Council, the

managing organization of the DDWD. "What our employees and others need to understand is that assistance is already available to individuals on the street, so more often, the money is used to feed an addiction."

Many downtown service districts across the country have used similar educational tools to help cut down on the number of calls about panhandling. While the brochure provides tips about what to do when encountered by a panhandler, such as walking away and saying no, it also lets individuals know they can give their spare change to organizations that provide services to people in need.

The DDWD Clean & Safe Team will have brochures for distribution. If you are interested in helping your employees with this issue, please contact our office at 727-8549. **GDC**

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO HELP PANHANDLERS, DON'T GIVE THEM MONEY.

- * Make eye contact or acknowledge the person with a nod.
- * Don't encourage conversation. Politely, but firmly, say "no" or "sorry."
- * Keep walking, and walk with confidence because the Downtown Waterfront belongs to all of us.
- * Remember that the assistance panhandlers claim to be looking for is already available to them in our community.
- * Call 911 if you feel threatened or want the police to respond. Call the Duluth Downtown Waterfront District's Clean & Safe Team at 218-390-8899 with any other concerns.

GIVE TO ORGANIZATIONS THAT CAN CREATE CHANGE.

- * From shelters to food shelves to job- and housing-placement services, there are many agencies in our area that serve people in need.
- * Give without guilt by making a donation to one of the non-profit organizations listed on the back.

...Urban Living

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

redevelopment project. And while the team has been excited about the project, Joel Kozlak says it has come with some definite challenges.

"We did estimates of costs and you continue to get surprises," said Kozlak, who joined Oliver in providing the GDC membership with an update on their project. "This is not an economic winner, but it's the right thing to do."

The Bridgeman Russell Building was constructed in 1905 to house the operations of the Bridgeman Russell Creamery Business. It has housed various businesses over the years, but has sat vacant as an eyesore in recent years.

A & L will be creating 31 apartment units-from studios to 1 and 2 bedroom-and they expect that young professionals will be their target market.

"There are a significant number of young professionals in our market and they like the feel of urban living," said Kozlak. "If there are more people living downtown, there will be more economic vitality here, so we see this as a long-term investment."

Kozlak expects that apartments will be ready for tenants after June 1st.

311 Superior

Unlike some of the other redevelopment projects, 311 Superior is new construction linked with new Sheraton Hotel. 33 upscale condominium units will overlook Lake Superior on the five floors above the hotel. Residents will get the added benefit of access to the hotel's services, such as the fitness center, pool and meeting rooms.

Richard Hicks of Sherman Associates says almost every unit has a lake view, as there are only five units facing the hillside. And the interest in the condos has been strong.

"Most of the interest has come from Duluthians, but we are starting to get some from outside the area, such as the Twin Cities and out of state," said Hicks. "So far, 16 units have already been reserved."



Due to the strong interest from Duluthians, this will also mean an increase in houses going on the market here. Many will be getting rid of their snow-blowers and lawn-mowers to enjoy the maintenance-free life of urban dwellers.

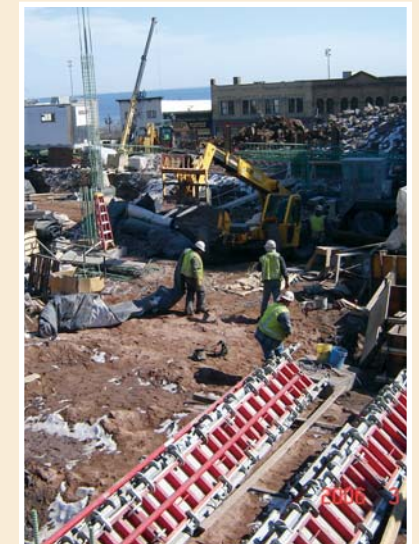
The project is slated to be completed in June of 2007.

The Benefits

Many downtown stakeholders are energized to see such progress finally taking shape in our market as housing adds tremendous benefits to the business district. From increased street life and a sense of community to a demand for a broader commercial base and entertainment and cultural events, it can help turn the downtown into a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week neighborhood.

This is just what we were hoping when the GDC partnered with LISC, Wells Fargo Bank and US Bank in 2002 to conduct an assessment on the demand for housing in Downtown Duluth. Maxfield Research concluded the market was ripe for such development and "if you build it, they will come." Demand for for-sale housing for primary residences was estimated at 41-84 units through the year 2010. The demand for rental housing as a primary residence was estimated at 22-32 market rate units and 55-75 affordable units. And finally, Maxfield indicated there would be demand for at least 52 condominium units that could be utilized as a second residence, especially for those in the Twin Cities market area.

The Greater Downtown Council looks forward to getting residents actively engaged in our downtown community and for that reason; we are also creating a new membership opportunity for downtown residents. Together, we can all work toward creating a more active and vital downtown. **GDC**



JUNE'S SWEET SOUNDS • • • Rock the Block! • • •



Old Man Winter is slowly letting go of his grasp on the Northland, which means that summer is just around the corner. Summer 2006 in Downtown Duluth will be all about the rock thanks to our new summer concert series Rock the Block! Marketing and Events Coordinator Laura Nelli recently had the opportunity to speak with Eric Brandt of the Urban Hillbilly Quartet and Dan Vaught of Midnight Ride. The 2 bands will be performing in our June segment of Rock the Block! These interviews should give you a taste of what to expect from the two great bands that will be hitting the bricks of Superior Street in June to bring us some rockin' block parties.

URBAN HILLBILLY QUARTET

**Eric Brandt • June 15, 5 to 7 pm
300 Block of West Superior Street**

LN - *The Urban Hillbilly Quartet has a distinctive and unique sound could you explain it for our readers?*

EB - It's a combination of rock, folk, country and jazz. I guess it fits loosely under the "Americana" umbrella. Basically, we just play whatever we happen to be enjoying at that time and that makes shows fun for us and our audiences...there's always something new coming up.

LN - *Urban Hillbilly Quartet, what a witty name. Who can take the credit for coming up with the band name and how did it come to be?*

EB - Ummmm, I actually came up with the name because I wanted a band that fit the 3 words in the title: "Urban = rock", "Hillbilly = folk/country", and "Quartet = jazz & improvisation". It came to me about 11 years ago as I sat in the Turf Club in St. Paul drinking a really bad beer.

LN - *What type of a show can "Rock the Block" goers expect from UHQ?*

EB - Unquestionably, it will be the highlight of their rock-and-roll experiences. There will be puppets, laser-lights, huge balloons, 14 marching bands, and belly dancers. Additionally, the entire show will be performed on ice skates.

EB - In truth, it'll be fun for people of all ages. We love outdoor festival shows because kids can come, people can dance & be themselves... they're just full of surprises.



LN - *UHQ has been around since 1995. How did UHQ get there start and what would you say has been the most "exotic" venue that the band has played?*

EB - We started in a bar that has since burnt down. Alas. We've done a lot of shows all over the country...but the strangest place we know of isn't too far from you: Tom's Burned Down Cafe, on Madeline Island. That place is an alternate universe. After the last ferry leaves on the weekend, ANYTHING can happen there! Trust us, we know! (And that's why we keep going back to play there!)

LN - *What are some fun facts about UHQ and or its band members?*

EB - We've played in 42 of the 50 states, released 8 albums, and we have excellent hair. **GDC**

MIDNIGHT RIDE

**Dan Vaught
June 29, 5 to 7 pm
100 Block of West Superior Street**

LN - *What bands have had an impact on Midnight Rides sound?*

DV - Diamond Rio, Alabama, CCR, BR549, BoDeans, Bonnie Raitt, John Prine, and I'm certain I'm leaving many more off the list!

LN - *Midnight Ride is a well known band here in the Twin Ports... How many years have you been bringing your sweet country sound to the area?*

DV - Since 1999 that sweet sound has been injected by a healthy dose of electric blues given the presence of Rachel Becker who does our female lead vocal work. She's simply amazing!

LN - *What type of a show can "Rock the Block" goers expect from Midnight Ride?*

DV - There will be something for everyone! Over the years we've had many people come up to us after a show and say, "I don't really consider myself a country fan, but I really like you guys!" It's not that we water down our country sound. It's that with the exception of Chip Beal who grew up in Oklahoma and 'cut his teeth' on country and southern gospel music, the rest of us are "musical mutts", meaning that our individual play is influenced by many kinds of music. At our show, you'll hear everything from original country power ballads, to 'Heard It Through the Grapevine' influenced by Creedence Clearwater Revival.

LN - *What would you say has been the most "exotic" venue that the band has played?*

DV - Grand Ole Opry in Nashville

LN - *Any big plans for Midnight Ride in the upcoming year?*

DV - This summer we plan to eat as many corndogs in the same time zone as we can! Seriously, we're performing at several country fairs/city celebrations throughout MN and WI and love walking the midways, eating fair foods and petting the farm animals. Does life get much better for a band in the summer? We think not! **GDC**

2006 EVENT SEASON SPONSORS:

PREMIER:



PLATINUM:

Security Jewelers • Wells Fargo Bank

GOLD:

A&L Properties • Great Northern Music • Holiday Center
Merchant's Association • Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites
Maurices Inc. • Republic Bank • SMDC

SUMMER CONCERT SERIES MEDIA SPONSORS:



HOLIDAY 2006 MEDIA SPONSOR:



Annual Dinner Highlights Successful Year and New Urbanism

A crowd of more than 300 people turned out to celebrate another year of the GDC's dedication to promoting and developing a healthy, vibrant and exciting Downtown Waterfront.

Among the 2005 success stories highlighted by the organization was the implementation of the Duluth Downtown Waterfront District. The DDWD provides enhanced services and programs throughout the district, including Clean & Safe, marketing and events and miscellaneous physical improvements. During its first year of operation, the Clean & Safe Team worked hard to be a visible and effective addition to our downtown. From providing directions to tourists to assisting businesses and employees with issues or concerns, team members logged

more than 4,000 personal assists and collected thousands of pounds of litter. The GDC also used the Annual Dinner Meeting to unveil a new event for 2006 - a summer concert series called Rock the Block. You can read more about this exciting event elsewhere in our newsletter.

Serving as the Keynote Speaker for the Annual Dinner Meeting was former Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist who is now the President & CEO of the Congress for the New Urbanism. Norquist used the opportunity to get audience members thinking about the importance of a city's central urban core and the negative impacts of sprawl. A leader in national discussions of urban design and educational issues, Norquist is the author of *The Wealth of Cities*. **GDC**



Keynote speaker John Norquist addresses the crowd.



Outgoing Chair Dan Maddy and Immediate Past Chair Barb Perrella were recognized by GDC President Kristi Stokes for their years of service to the Board of Directors.



Newly elected Chair Tim Meininger joins GDC President Kristi Stokes and outgoing Chair Dan Maddy.

THE GREATER DOWNTOWN COUNCIL WOULD LIKE TO THANK THESE SPONSORS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE 21ST ANNUAL DINNER MEETING:

SPEAKER:



PLATINUM:



GOLD: Beacon Bank ■ Fryberger, Buchanan, Smith, & Frederick PA ■ Oneida Realty Company ■ Republic Bank ■ Security Jewelers Service Printers of Duluth ■ Wells Fargo Bank ■ The Jamar Company

BRONZE: A&L Properties ■ Block By Block ■ Cellular One ■ Holiday Center Merchant's Association ■ Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites Housing & Redevelopment Authority of Duluth ■ Great Northern Music ■ LHB, Inc. ■ Maurices, Inc. ■ North Shore Bank of Commerce St. Luke's Hospital

SPECIAL SERVICES: Fitger's Brewery Complex ■ Glenwood Communications, Inc.

Jones Named Ambassador of the Year

The Duluth Downtown Waterfront District is pleased to recognize Mike Jones as its 2005 Ambassador of the Year. Jones was one of the first employees hired when the District's Clean & Safe Team was created last year and he was selected for the award based on his consistent high level of job performance.

"Mike was instrumental in the early and ongoing effectiveness of the Clean & Safe Team," said Operations Manager Jim Janousek. "His knowledge of the District's needs and how to most efficiently address those needs is invaluable to this operation."

Jones is known by many in the Downtown for his ready smile and pleasant attitude, whether he's sweeping sidewalks, picking up litter or providing information to visitors. In addition, property and business owners say he is always quick to lend a hand.



Prior to the creation of the DDWD, Jones had provided some limited cleaning services to the Greater Downtown Council and that put him on track as a perfect fit for the Clean and Safe Team.

"I was very impressed with Mike's strong work ethic and the pride he took in his work," said Kristi Stokes, GDC President. "He is the kind of individual you are proud to have wearing the uniform that represents our DDWD." **GDC**

"MIKE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN THE EARLY AND ONGOING EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CLEAN & SAFE TEAM."

Congratulations Mike!

GET READY FOR TECHNOLOGY CHANGES AT SELECT PARKING RAMPS

What's the first thing you do when you take a ticket at a parking ramp? If you are like most motorists, the ticket stays in the car on the dash so it's easily accessible to hand off to the ramp attendant when you leave. That's all about to change at a few City ramps.

Come May, motorists will be introduced to a new parking system at the Technology Village Ramp called Pay-On-Foot. Under the system, there will no longer be a manned booth at the ramp exit. Instead, hourly parkers will need to take their ticket with them and stop at a Pay-On-Foot station before returning to their car to exit the ramp. The station, located in the main elevator lobby of the Tech Village, will automatically calculate the parker's fee. It then allows the parker to enter cash or credit card to pay for their stay at the ramp. For those who may forget to walk up to the Pay-On-Foot station, they can use their credit card at the ramp exit.

Whether you hear it from members of the business community or city staff

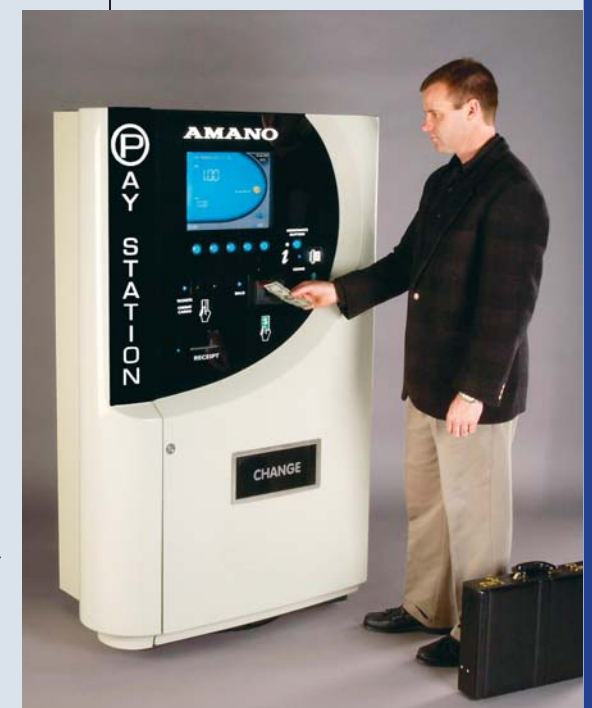
members, all agree that there will be a huge learning curve with the system and education will be key. However, some are quick to point out that is the case with most technological advances.

"Remember when Pay-at-the-Pump was introduced?" asks City of Duluth Facility Operations Supervisor Joe Miller, referring to newer technology at gas stations. "What was once such an oddity is now the norm."

Similar systems have been popping up around bigger cities, such as Minneapolis and St. Paul, which have added 15 new Pay-On-Foot programs to ramps and garages.

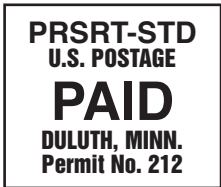
The move to such new parking technology is expected to serve as a cost-saving measure for the financially-strapped City of Duluth. Not only will it be in operation at the Tech Village,

but it will also be introduced at the new ramp under construction near SMDC. City officials project the system will save them an estimated \$90,000 annually in labor costs. **GDC**





5 West First Street
 Duluth, Minnesota 55802
 218-727-8549
 www.downtownduluth.com



“do” AVAILABLE ON LINE

As the number of physically inactive Minnesotans increases and related health care costs continue to rise, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota searches for ways to improve the health of our state and slow these alarming trends. An estimated \$495 million was spent in 2000 to treat diseases and conditions that could be avoided if all Minnesotans were physically active. That’s more than \$100 annually for every man, woman and child in the state, according to the Minnesota Department of Health.

To help address the problem, Blue Cross and the American Heart Association have developed do. The do campaign promotes everyday physical activity in three ten-minute bits each day — walking, playing, taking the stairs, making snow angels, doing yard work, carrying groceries, and more. It encourages people to get active and improve their health.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and the American Heart Association have now made the do campaign worksite materials (including posters, a how-to guide and downloadable games) available for free at www.do-groove.com/order.

The online resource was designed to support Minnesota businesses in creating and maintaining programs that encourage employees to add manageable amounts of physical activity to their workday. **gdc**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



CITY-WIDE CLEAN & GREEN CLEAN-UP DAY

April 29 (Saturday)
 10 a.m.–12 Noon

DECC

Minnesota Ballet
“Sleeping Beauty”
 March 17-19
 7:30 p.m. (Friday & Saturday)
 3 p.m. (Sunday)

Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra
Fairy Tale Heroes
 April 1 (Saturday)

Cracking the Code – Kids Concert
 April 9 (Sunday)
 3 p.m.

THE DEPOT

Family Day
 March 21 (Tuesday)
 April 12 (Wednesday)
 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Second Harvest Empty Bowl Fundraiser
 April 4 (Tuesday)
 10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Free Antique Appraisal
 April 19 (Wednesday)
 Noon – 3 p.m.

THE DEPOT (continued)

Minnesota Ballet
“Wine & Sprints”
 April 20 (Thursday)
 5 p.m.

DULUTH PLAYHOUSE

“West Side Story”
 March 23-26, 30-31
 April 1-2, 7:30 p.m.
 (Thursday-Saturday) 2 p.m.
 (Sunday)

“Alexander & the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day”

April 21-23, 28-30
 7 p.m. (Thursday-Friday)
 1 p.m., 4 pm (Saturday)
 2 p.m. (Sunday)

FITGER’S BREWERY COMPLEX

Taste of the Nation
 March 31 (Friday) 6-9 p.m.

Bennett’s Dinner Theater
“How to Talk Minnesotan”
 March 31
 April 7-9, 21-23, 28-30
 6:30 p.m. (Friday & Saturday)
 12:30 p.m. (Sunday)

FITGER’S BREWERY COMPLEX (continued)

Bob Bennett’s Cooking Class
 April 4 (Tuesday) 6 p.m.

Fitger’s 5K Walk/Run
 April 22 (Saturday)

Homegrown Music Festival
 April 30-May 7
 (Venues all across Duluth)

SACRED HEART MUSIC CENTER

Tom Russell
 April 7 (Friday) 8 p.m.

Dannielle Rose Skorich
 April 9 (Sunday) 3 p.m.

Billy McLaughlin
 April 21 (Friday) 8 p.m.

TECHNOLOGY VILLAGE

Duluth Art Institute Auction
 March 18 (Saturday) 6 p.m.

VISTA FLEET

Fall Colors Brunch Cruise
 Sept. 23-25 (Fri.-Sun.)
 Oct. 1-2 (Sat.-Sun.) 12:30 p.m.