

**Board of Directors and Staff**

**Chair**  
Barbara Perrella  
*Labovitz Enterprises*

**Vice-Chair**  
Daniel Maddy  
*Fryberger Buchanan Law Firm*

**Secretary/Treasurer**  
Pam Kramer  
*Local Initiatives Support Corp. (LISC)*

**Immediate Past Chair**  
Michael Polzin  
*Minnesota Power*

**Board Members**  
Mark Allison  
*U.S. Bank*

Harvey Anderson  
*SMDC*

Abbot Apter  
*Mercury Investment Co.*

Bill Bennett  
*LHB Engineers & Architects*

Tom Cotruvo  
*City Of Duluth, Ex Officio*

Ron Franzen  
*St. Luke's Hospital*

Mary Lundeen  
*Wells Fargo Bank*

Tim Meininger  
*Beacon Bank*

Kathy Pattison  
*Waterfront Art Works/Canal Park Business Association*

Lawrence Stovern  
*Western Bank*

Sara Strom  
*Frame Corner & Gallery*

Tami Tanski-Sherman  
*Fitger's Brewery Complex*

John Ivey Thomas  
*John Ivey Thomas Associates, Inc.*

Merry Wallin  
*KDLH TV3*

Tom West  
*The Budgeteer News*

**Staff**  
Kristi Stokes  
*President/C.O.O.*

Susan Rogge  
*Administrative Assistant*

Diane McGarry  
*Marketing Assistant*



# Great News

FROM THE GREATER DOWNTOWN COUNCIL

## HEARING SET FOR SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT

**Downtown** property owners have spoken. An overwhelming majority signed petitions this summer to support the creation of a Special Service District in Duluth's Downtown Waterfront. And soon the request will be in front of the Duluth City Council.

The Greater Downtown Council has been leading the campaign for a Special Service District over the last year and a half. Such a district requests that property owners pay an assessment to cover the cost of enhanced services and programs within the district's boundaries. The GDC's steering committee vowed that it would not pursue the district if it could not garner support from property owners representing 60% of the area's net tax capacity. On July 15th, 2004, petitions were delivered to the City Clerk's Office from property owners representing nearly 70% of the area's net tax capacity. GDC President Kristi Stokes called it a great victory.

"I think this achievement sends a strong message about the property owners in our

Downtown Waterfront. They are committed to their community, passionate about the Downtown area, and they are willing to take the lead role in improving its environment and strengthening the economic vitality of the heart of our city," said Stokes during a news conference on the steps of City Hall. According to Minnesota

## PUBLIC HEARING SEPTEMBER 13-7 P.M. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

State Statute, no action may be taken to establish a Special Service District unless owners of 25 percent or more of the land area of property that would be subject to service charges in the proposed district and owners of 25 percent or more of the net tax capacity of property that would be subject to service charges in the proposed district file a petition requesting a public hearing on the proposed action. Locally, the GDC's steering committee placed a higher threshold on the approval process to ensure strong sup-

port and a united voice. Notices have been mailed to property owners informing them of a public hearing on the creation of the district scheduled for September 13, 2004. At that time, City Councilors will take input and vote on the issue. If all goes as planned, the district will be certified with the County Auditor's Office in November and implemented in January 2005.

The Downtown Waterfront District will focus on providing a clean, safe and friendly environment for employers/employees, residents and visitors. Among services and programs that will be provided include clean & safe ambassadors, a safety escort program, marketing, special events and physical enhancements.

We have what it takes to be one of the most successful midsized central business districts in the United States. Now, thanks to the support from our property owners, we'll have fuel in the tank to help get us there.

GDC



5 West First Street  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802  
218-727-8549  
[www.downtownduluth.com](http://www.downtownduluth.com)



## THERE IS A NEW LOOK IN THE OLD DOWNTOWN



and day out. "Some of those surprises have been a bit disheartening because they sent us back to the drawing board."

Despite the storefront construction work, Brown says the customer base remained loyal. And she says one of the improvements that gained the greatest amount of attention was the new neon sign on the back of the building.

"As soon as that sign went up, we were receiving positive comments," said Brown. "People would tell us how great it was to see it from the freeway, Canal Park and at night. It's been up nearly a year and we're still getting good feedback."

As part of the project, two new storefronts have been added to the Michigan Street level of the building, one of which has

been leased to Schaefer Guitars. Business owner Ed Schaefer had outgrown his guitar building shop at his Duluth residence and was set on finding a Downtown site for his new workshop. When the GDC coordinated a tour of the Electric Fetus space for him, he knew it was the perfect fit.

"I like being around people and having an audience to see me work," said Schaefer. "This location provides great exposure and a lot of musicians are finding out about me."

Schaefer is a craftsman who is known by musicians across the country. Grammy Award winning Jazz Guitarist Eric Johnson is among the musicians who are trying out a Schaefer guitar right now. Schaefer says he can typically build about 15-16 guitars in a year and now also teaches

guitar-making to others in his downtown shop. Musicians can also venture to his shop to receive guitar lessons in traditional and gypsy jazz from local notables Billy Barnard and 19-year-old Sam Miltich.

"People ask me when I'm going to take a vacation," says Schaefer. "I tell them, I'm living my vacation. I love it right here at the corner of Lake and Superior."

Schaefer has taken a lot of pride in adding to the arts and entertainment mix in the Old Downtown and he's eager to see additional artists move nearby to further help with the area's appeal.

Meanwhile, Covart says a lease with a second tenant on Michigan Street is being negotiated at this time. And the building renovation also included the refurbishing of the building's upstairs office and ballroom space, which was once host to vaudeville shows at the theatre and more recently housed a dance studio.

Covart says he feels confident about his investment, especially since neighboring businesses have made improvements and investments as well.

"I'm also hopeful that the special service district will be beneficial," said Covart. "We need to help people understand that Downtown is a great place to be." GDC

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE DOWNTOWN

**ART GALLERIES IN DULUTH**  
*5th Annual "Annual Autumn Winds Studio Tour"*  
Sept. 10-19 (Fri.-Sun.)  
10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**BAYFRONT FESTIVAL PARK**  
*11th Annual Harvest Festival*  
September 11 (Saturday)  
9 am-4 pm

**Kiwanis Kite Fly**  
September 11 (Saturday)  
11 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Blackwoods Rib Fest**  
September 18 (Saturday)  
4-10 p.m.

**COMFORT ZONE THERAPEUTIC MASSAGE**  
*Saturday Retreat*  
September 18  
9 a.m.-4 p.m.

**CRUISE SHIPS**  
*City of Duluth welcomes "Columbus"*  
September 8, 16, 23  
(Wednesday & Thursday)

**MINNESOTA BALLET**  
*Performances for young children*  
September 26 (Sunday)  
3 p.m.

**THE DEPOT**  
*Free Antique Appraisal*  
September 15 (Wednesday)  
Noon-3 p.m.

**GRANDMA'S OKTOBERFEST**  
Canal Park  
Sept. 22-26 (Wed.-Sun.)  
8 p.m.-12:30 a.m.

**NORTH SHORE SCENIC RAILROAD**  
*Sunday Afternoon Tea Train*  
September 12, 19, 26  
12:30 p.m.

**Elegant Dinner Train**  
September 10, 16, 17  
(Thursday, Friday)  
6:30 p.m.

**NORTH SHORE INLINE MARATHON KIDS SPRINTS**  
Harbor Drive  
Sept. 17 (Friday)  
5 p.m.

**PICKWICK RESTAURANT**  
*Oktoberfest*  
September 27-October 9  
(Monday-Saturday)  
11 a.m.-10 p.m.

**RENEGADE COMEDY THEATRE**  
*"Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"*  
(Thursday-Saturday)  
Sept. 9-11, 16-18, 23-25, 30  
Oct. 1 • 7 p.m.

**VISTA FLEET**  
*Fall Colors Brunch Cruise*  
Sept. 25-26 (Sat. & Sun.)  
12:30 p.m.



**New life** has been breathed into Downtown properties at the corner of Lake Avenue and Superior Street, and the most recent renovation project has been underway at the Electric Fetus Building.

Keith Covart, owner of the Electric Fetus, purchased the building in 2001 after leasing the storefront space for years. He embarked on an exterior façade restoration/remodeling project, which also included a new roof, revisions for building codes and necessary structural modifications in late 2002. Today, some work continues, but the project is near completion.

"It's becoming more rewarding as I see the finished product," Covart says.

The historic building was constructed in 1907 and began life as the Bijou Theatre and then changed to the Empress Theatre. Following fire damage in 1915, the building was altered to support retail. The Electric Fetus, known for such diverse items as music, cds, clothing and jewelry has been at this highly visible corner since 1987.

"It's been a long process and because it's an old building, it's been full of surprises," says store manager Carrie Brown, who has worked with the project day in

## DOWNTOWN HOSTS FALL HEALTH FAIR Tuesday, October 19, 2004

**Thanks** to the great turnout for our health fair that kicked off the "Take the High Road" Skywalk Fitness Program, we are planning another fair this fall.

St. Luke's Heart Partners, Jubilee Foods and the Greater Downtown Council have partnered up to create the program and organize free health fairs that help with the overall health of

our employees and residents. Please join us this fall in the lower level center court of the Holiday Center. Medical experts will be providing cholesterol and blood pressure screening, fitness experts will conduct body composition testing, massage therapists will provide relaxation treatments and there will be much more!

As the weather turns cooler, it's a good time to think about moving indoors and utilizing the Downtown Skywalk System for exercise. Several courses have been mapped out with mileage throughout the system to allow walkers to set reasonable goals and track their progress. **To pick up your map, stop by the GDC office.** GDC



**TAKE THE HIGH ROAD DOWNTOWN HEALTH FAIR**  
Tuesday, October 19, 2004  
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Holiday Center

## HISTORY HELPS PAVE THE WAY FOR THE FUTURE

Duluth's downtown has gained a lot of attention in the past year for its wealth of historic properties. From having buildings surveyed for a potential historic district to learning more about historic tax credits, our community is getting a taste for utilizing historic preservation as a tool for economic development.

The spotlight started to shine on our Downtown when Duluth received a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Knight Foundation. Experts from the Trust conducted an assessment of our community and provided recommendations on how to better assist us in such areas as renovating historic struc-

tures and developing heritage tourism, and now some of those recommendations are starting to take shape. Survey work by the Trust and the State Historic Preservation Office is well underway to determine possible boundaries for an historic district in Downtown Duluth. Those experts continue to stress that there is not a "downside" for a property owner to be included in a federally designated historic district. And the "upside" comes in the form of being able to tap into a new tool if a property owner is looking to renovate their structure, as they could be eligible for historic tax credits. While many Downtown stakeholders are still trying to become further educated on

historic districts and tax credits, there is a great amount of interest in pursuing such a project. This was not the case years ago. Thanks to the Trust, training sessions have been provided to start to put the wheels in motion for those who are interested in learning more, or pursuing a rehabilitation project. This training alone has helped to make many in the business community better understand how to utilize historic preservation as an economic development tool. Great things can happen in our Downtown if we all work together. The GDC will continue to play a role in this important initiative as our organization is eager to see success stories on renovation projects in our Downtown. **GDC**



## DTA STUDIES ALTERNATIVE TRANSIT CENTER SITES

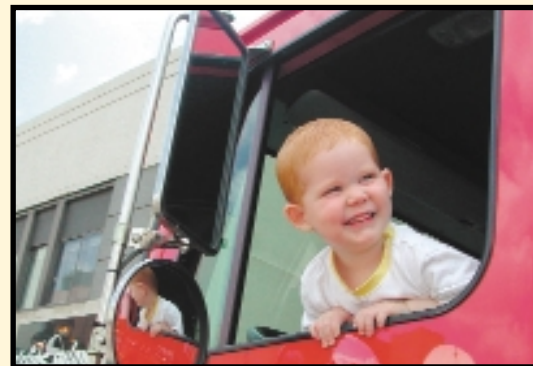
The Duluth Transit Authority has been seeking input on proposed changes to its route structures and Transit Centers in Downtown Duluth. Due to issues raised about congestion at the existing transit center sites in the 200 block of West Superior Street, the DTA hired a consulting firm to help identify alternative locations. After researching approximately 20 sites,

the list has been narrowed to three options: **1)** maintain the existing transit centers; **2)** create a new transit center near 3rd Avenue West and Michigan Street; or **3)** establish new transit centers on either end of Downtown.

Many business owners on Superior Street have voiced concerns about the congestion of the existing transit centers. The Mayor's Downtown Task Force

even recommended exploring alternative sites in which there could be a full-fledged transfer terminal with the possibility of linking other transportation modes in the future.

Based on input from Downtown businesses and bus riders, the DTA hopes to have recommendations brought forth in late September. **GDC**



## SUMMER TIME IN THE DOWNTOWN

This year's Downtown Duluth Sidewalk Days were the **BIGGEST AND BEST** Duluth has ever experienced. Cones piled high with ice cream, people dressed in tank tops and shorts, great deals and endless music characterized the event. The weather—a string of sunny days—could not have been more perfect. In addition, the detour of buses on Superior Street was a benefit to retailers and shoppers alike. Retailers could take full advantage of the areas outside of their stores, and pedestrians could leisurely shop without worrying about traffic. And the food! Local vendors provided a smorgasbord of flavors. Barbequed chicken hot off the

grill, brats, coneys, gyros, sausages and killer curry dishes attracted lines and lines of hungry people. No one left Sidewalk Days hungry. While people were feasting and shopping, they also enjoyed a diverse selection of entertainment. Belly dancers were a crowd pleaser, along with the Hillside Flyers, street musicians and great bands in the Minnesota Power Plaza.

The Superior Grown Farmers Market satisfied shoppers with such products as succulent strawberries, organic cheeses and meats. Plus, Sir Herman, the Scottish Highland calf brought out the child in all of us. The Duluth Playhouse also made guest appearances at the event by sending characters from the

Wizard of Oz who delighted us with their songs. Wow, what more could we ask for?

The bottom line is that **Downtown Duluth Sidewalk Days was a great success.** Most retailers had above average sales and had fun doing it.

"This has been the best Sidewalk Days I've had in eight years," said Sarah Strom, owner of the Frame Corner and Gallery.

Additionally, the Classic Car Show and Harley Revue was a hopping event with a tremendous turnout of classic car and Harley loving participants, with a total number of cars exceeding 170 in all! The Downtown Choice awards in the classic car division went to Dave Stojevich and Tom

Maruska and the People's Choice awards in the Harley division went to Tom Rautio, Jason Gerard and Mary Prudhomme.

Duluthian's also had the chance to rock out and dance the night away at the Friday night street dance sponsored by The Duluth Athletic Club, Pioneer Bar, and Norman's Bar.

The Greater Downtown Council wants to extend its thanks to Fond-du-Luth Casino, A&L Properties and The Muffler Clinic for their great support of the Car Show and Harley Revue. Also, a thank you to Wells Fargo and Minnesota Power for their tremendous support in providing music and kids rides during Sidewalk Days.

