

AIA Minneapolis

A Society of The American Institute of Architects



Reweaving the Urban Fabric

Request for Letter of Interest for Second Round Community-Based Projects

On February 28, 2006, Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak called on the citizens of Minneapolis to join with him to help build the Minneapolis of the future. In his speech "Reweaving the Urban Fabric: Creating Great Spaces for a Great City," the Mayor described the New Minneapolis as not "housing, jobs or transportation in isolation, [instead] it will be an integrated collection of urban villages with quality jobs and stores within walking distance of our homes....It is about how transit, community development, public art, beautiful architecture, environmental design, green-space, a tangible connection to commerce and services, even universal high-speed Internet access all work together to create great, sustainable spaces."

In response to this call, the Minneapolis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) has established the Mayor's Great City Design Teams. The Mayor's Great City Design Teams are made up of architects, landscape architects, urban designers and developers who work with a community-based partner to develop a vision for an urban design opportunity that addresses a gap within their community.

The Mayor's Great City Design Teams have just completed the first round of projects in partnership with six neighborhoods across the city. With this Request for Letters of Interest, the Mayor's Great City Design Teams seeks proposals for the second round of projects to be conducted in partnership with communities towards the end of 2007/ beginning of 2008. Proposals should address where the community has identified a gap in the urban fabric. A project can address the urban design challenge of an individual vacant site, an intersection, or several blocks along a corridor. Projects should provide an opportunity for the Design Team to apply the AIA's 10 Principles of Livable Communities (see sidebar). The community process and final product of the Design Team's work will be determined on a project-by-project basis, but could include a community design meeting or workshop, and conceptual architectural sketches, diagrams, and other visual representations. By way of example, you can see more information about the first round of projects at www.greatcitydesignteam.org.

Individually, a community project will develop a creative vision for a local site. Combined together, the resulting visions will show a rewoven city of great neighborhoods, great buildings and great spaces better linked together.

What will the Mayor's Great City Design Team offer your community?

The AIA will work with its professional partner organizations to provide architecture, landscape architecture and urban design resources to assist the community-based partners in defining a vision and principles for future community improvements. The exact composition of the Design Team and resources provided will be determined on a project-by-project basis.

What are the benefits of working with the Design Team?

- Help your community determine a creative vision for reweaving a specific site within your community
- Learn more about how urban design and development can make for more livable communities

AIA's 10 Principles of Livable Communities

- 1 Design on a Human Scale
- 2 Provide Choices
- 3 Encourage Mixed-Uses
- 4 Preserve Urban Centers
- 5 Transportation Options
- 6 Build Vibrant Public Spaces
- 7 Create Neighborhood Identity
- 8 Protect Environmental Resources
- 9 Conserve Landscapes
- 10 Design Matters

www.aia.org/liv_principles

www.greatcitydesignteam.org

- Learn about design and development tools, including the City's Minneapolis Plan and other adopted planning policies, that can help your community move towards the next step in turning a vision into reality
- Energize your community around a local opportunity site

Who is eligible to apply?

Any citizen groups or community-based organizations are eligible to apply. A selection committee of the Mayor's Great City Design Team Steering Committee seeks 3-5 projects for the second round of projects to be completed towards the end of 2007/ beginning of 2008.

Priority will be given to projects that best meet the following criteria:

- Reflect where the city has a gap in the urban fabric. Projects can be an individual site, an intersection, or several blocks along a corridor
- Where solutions highlight the AIA's 10 Principles of Livable Communities (more information on these principles can be found at www.aia.org/liv_principles)
- Have a community-based partner, who is able to meet the requirements below
- Projects that show community need, public benefit, political and community support, potential for implementation, project timing, and consistency with the Minneapolis Plan
- Collaborations between neighborhoods or community-based organizations are encouraged
- If you want to discuss an idea, please contact us and let's talk about it!

What will be required of the partner organization?

- Serve as the host organization, linking the Mayor's Great City Design Team with community stakeholders
- Work with the Design Team to create the work plan for the project, including community process and deliverables
- Identify community stakeholders that should participate in various components of the project and provide outreach to them
- Help organize and host Design Team workshops or community meetings that may be part of your community's project
- While the professional services of the Design Teams are provided for free, there may be some costs incurred by the host organization/s in the course of the project

How to apply?

Community-based organizations that are interested in being considered as Mayor's Great City Design Team community project should submit a letter of interest by Thursday, August 16th to:

AIA 150th/Mayor's Great City Design Team
International Market Square, 275 Market St, Suite 54
Minneapolis, MN 55405-1621

Letters of Interest should include the following:

- Name and contact information for your organization
- Narrative of no more than 2 pages describing the opportunity site in your community and the gap it creates, what community-based work that has been done on the site to date, and how you think the Mayor's Great City Design Teams can help
- Identify which and how the AIA's 10 Principles of Livable Communities might apply to your project
- A listing of area organizations and stakeholders that would be involved in the project. Multiple neighborhoods and community groups are encouraged to apply together on projects that cross neighborhood or community boundaries
- A letter of notice to, or letter of support from, your City Councilmember
- If possible, please include 1-4 photos of your site

An Informational Meeting will be held on Thursday, July 26th, 4:30 – 5:30 at the AIA, International Market Square, 275 Market St, Suite 54. For more information, or if you want to discuss an idea before determining if you want to apply, please contact: Destin Nygard, Co-Chair, AIA 150 Mayor's Great City Design Teams at dnygard@archalliance.com.