

DEVELOP

Latin America's First LEED Gold Building

Mexico, a nation of abundant natural resources and people, also has abundant environmental problems that include massive deforestation, desertification, water shortages, inadequate sewage treatment, and contaminated groundwater and rivers. Rapidly growing Mexico City, in particular, is known for its brown-skies air pollution.

Contributing to the problems for Mexico are too few environmental regulations, lax enforcement of those it has, and a federal government that has not made the environment a national priority. As

is the case in the United States, however, in lieu of federal action, individual states and organizations are implementing important sustainability initiatives.

For example, the Mexico Green Building Council, founded in 2003, is developing a national green building standard called Sistema de Calificación de Edificación Sustentable (SICES), or Sustainable Building Rating Tool, based in part on the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

Rather than wait for the launch of SICES, which remains in development, HSBC Holdings plc, a worldwide banking and financial services organization, followed LEED stan-

dards to construct Latin America's first LEED Gold building—the Torre HSBC, a 35-story, 855,000-square-foot (79,000-sq-m) headquarters tower in the heart of Mexico City. Constructing Torre HSBC on an infill site protected valuable open space and greenfields in the metropolitan area. The location also gives HSBC employees and customers several different transportation options in a city in which 3 million vehicles are used daily.

The concrete, steel, and glass structure, designed by HOK's Mexico City office, has the largest landscaped green roof in Latin America, which, coupled with energy-efficient technologies, has helped reduce Torre HSBC's energy consumption by 55 percent compared with a similar conventional high rise. Inside the tower, 75 percent of occupied spaces receive natural daylight, and 90 percent of the occupied spaces have outdoor views.

Other environmentally friendly features include an artificial lighting system that automatically adjusts to the presence or absence of natural daylight, a heating and air-conditioning system that uses no chlorofluorocarbons, and videoconferencing rooms, which help reduce long-distance business travel. GreenGuard-certified furniture is used in workspaces, and carpeting, paints, and other materials have low volatile-organic-compound content.

The Torre HSBC (left and facing page), a 35-story headquarters tower in Mexico City, consumes 55 percent less energy than similar conventional high rises. Seventy percent of occupied spaces receive natural daylight and 90 percent have outdoor views.



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Water-conserving plumbing and irrigation systems—coupled with a rainwater collection system and an on-site wastewater treatment plant that recycles water for use in the air-conditioning system, toilets, and irrigation system—have reduced potable water consumption by 55 percent.

“We hope this project serves as an example for greening the community and encouraging the Mexican government to offer more incentives for creating environmentally friendly buildings,” says Javier Presas, HOK’s project manager in Mexico City. Adds Ken Hydes, chair of the World Green Building Council, “The LEED Gold certification of the HSBC Tower in Mexico City represents a major milestone in the development of sustainable office buildings in Mexico and throughout the Latin America region.”

In 2004, HSBC, one of the banking industry’s leading investors in and supporters of sustainability, pledged to become carbon neutral by 2006, primarily through improved energy efficiency; the purchase of green electricity in Australia, Brazil, the U.K., and the United States; and through carbon offsets. The company, for example, invests in low-carbon energy technologies, water infrastructure, and sustainable forestry and related agricultural commodities, particularly in China, India, Brazil, and Mexico. Funding or investing in these projects gives HSBC carbon credits that help it offset its own emissions.

“We have made a start, a good start,” Sir John Bond, group chairman of HSBC Holdings plc, declared in 2005. “But I know how far we have



to go in the coming years to play our part in slowing global warming. We have recognized the problem. We have plenty of learning to do.”

In 2005, HSBC claimed it had achieved carbon neutrality, primarily through carbon offsets and credits, and targeted an additional 5 percent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions through 2007. However, in 2006, its greenhouse gas emissions jumped 23 percent. HSBC was not the only sustainability-oriented financial institution with this problem: ABN AMRO’s emissions rose 20 percent, and other international banks also increased their emissions.

HSBC blamed its increased greenhouse gas emissions on the company’s rapid expansion around the world. Yet, companies like Bayer and DuPont have proved that an international company can expand and still cut emissions. Bayer planned to reduce its overall greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent below its 1990s levels by 2010. In fact, as of 2004, it had cut its emissions by 63 percent. In 2000,

DuPont committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 65 percent by 2010, and by 2005 had already met that goal.

In order for multinational corporations to cut their energy consumption and actually reduce their greenhouse gas emissions rather than just offset them, they need to create uniform green building standards for all their properties—not just those in Europe and the United States, but their properties all around the world, particularly in nations like Mexico that are just starting to address environmental issues.

HSBC recently committed to spending \$40 million to improve the environmental performance of its office buildings around the world. It has promised that, by 2011, 50 of its major buildings will earn a minimum of LEED Gold certification or its equivalent.

CHARLES LOCKWOOD is a green real estate authority and consultant in southern California and New York City.

Green Protocol Signed by U.S. and Brazilian Designers

Representatives from a consortium of U.S. and Brazilian architecture and design organizations in June signed a protocol in Manaus, Brazil, calling for increased cooperation between professionals in each country in the area of green building design. Among those signing the document were Brazil-based professional architecture organizations CONFEA Brasil and CREA Amazonas; the Texas Society of Architects, a state component of the American Institute of Architects; and Orlando, Florida-based Morris Architects, which has offices in both the United States and Brazil.

The primary objectives of the protocol are the following:

- ▷ to promote the dissemination of knowledge regarding green building and sustainability between Brazil and the United States in the fields of architecture and engineering;
- ▷ to promote exchange of information and experiences between Brazil and the United States in those same fields;
- ▷ to disseminate information to colleagues, professionals, and clients within their sphere of influence throughout the world;
- ▷ to bring professionals from Brazil and the United States together in a collaborative manner so they can help each other with problem solving, and enhance the quality of work, ethics, and professionalism.

Chris Hudson, president and chief executive of Morris Architects and

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president of the Texas Society of Architects, participated closely in the creation of the protocol and was present at its signing. He believes that the collaboration will be beneficial in fighting global warming.

Brazil, which has the world's fifth-largest population and is the tenth-largest energy consumer, is also a major producer and exporter of ethanol. "I expect [Brazil] to be offering creative green solutions beyond its production of ethanol in the years ahead," Hudson says.

SAM NEWBERG is an urbanist, writer, and consultant, and the founder of Joe Urban, Inc., based in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Environmental Sensitivity Is Key in Design of New Resort for the West Indies

For the first time in a century, West Caicos, an uninhabited, undeveloped island in the Turks and Caicos Islands in the West Indies, is allowing settlement on its shores.

The 11-mile- (18-km-) long, 6,000-acre (2,430-ha) island, reachable only by boat, helicopter, or small plane, has some of the most pristine beaches in the Caribbean. It is home to the 500-acre (200-ha) Lake Catherine, a natural wildlife sanctu-

ary and breeding ground for flamingoes, as well as Molasses Reef, rumored to be the final resting place of explorer Christopher Columbus's *Pinta* and ranked among the world's top sites for diving. Providenciales, nicknamed Provo, the island just east of West Caicos, has the largest population in the island group and the third-largest coral reef in the world.

Twenty years ago, the Turks and Caicos Islands had few paved roads or services. "Now it has one of the fastest-growing economies in the world," says Tom Donnelly, president of ValleyCrest Landscape Development, the landscape design/build arm of Calabasas, California-based ValleyCrest Companies. "Its 33,000 residents share their islands with about 300,000 tourists annually and a booming real estate market that caters to the superwealthy. The popularity is due in part to it being a 75-minute flight from Miami. The currency is the U.S. dollar and residents speak English."

A Ritz-Carlton Reserve resort called Molasses Reef is scheduled to open next spring on West Caicos. Designed by Scott Lee of Miami-based SB Architects, it will have groupings of low-density, oceanfront cottages spread over a half mile (0.8 km) of beach. Gencom Group, a Miami-based international investment and development firm founded by Karim Alibhai, is the driving force

behind the project. ValleyCrest is the landscape general contractor.

An emphasis of the development is reducing environmental impact and promoting sustainability. "The coastline has been protected from any major disturbance so that the natural sand dunes and plantings will continue to be protected," says Donnelly. "This setting ties in with the world's most recognized coral reefs and beautiful blue water.

"Landscape and development are low density to ensure that the

island remains unspoiled. Not only that, but an environmental stewardship program is required," explains Donnelly. The landscape design for Molasses Reef was done by Fort Lauderdale, Florida-based EDSA with a focus on and sensitivity to the natural beauty of the island.

ValleyCrest is obtaining plants native to the island habitat from Florida and surrounding islands and bringing them to the island by water. "The use of local and indigenous plant material is playing a big



Molasses Reef will have groupings of oceanfront cottages (above) spread over a half mile (0.8 km) of beach (below) on West Caicos, a previously undeveloped island in the Turks and Caicos Islands in the West Indies.



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Developers and Local Leaders Work Together to Provide Affordable Housing

In Boynton Beach, Florida, a growing coastal town of 65,000 people located between Boca Raton and Delray Beach in Palm Beach County, an aggressive campaign is being led by the city's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to make the American dream of owning a home a reality for local people.

"Through an integrated system of grants, programs, and partnerships, we have helped an increasing number of local residents overcome financial obstacles and bridge the gap between their dreams and their resources," says Jerry Taylor, mayor and CRA board chair. The commitment to pursue initiatives and public/private partnerships that create affordable housing earned the CRA an Innovation and Housing Leadership Award from the Housing Leadership Council of Palm Beach County earlier this year. But, as Taylor is quick to point out, the real reward is "changing lives and making Boynton Beach stronger as residents move from rentals into homeownership and invest in the future of the community." The Boynton Beach CRA guides redevelopment activities within a 1,650-acre (670-ha) district along the eastern edge of the city.

One partnership helping put homeownership within reach is the CRA's financing venture with Coral Gables-based developer the Cornerstone Group to include affordable housing at the Preserve, a master-planned luxury townhouse and villa community being built in Boynton Beach.

Through joint financing, income-eligible buyers can qualify for as much as \$150,000 in financial assistance on a townhouse or villa using a combination of funds available from the State Housing Initia-



tives Partnership (SHIP), the CRA's Homebuyer's Assistance Program, and funds from the Community Workforce Housing Innovation Pilot Program (CWHIP). The financial aid can reduce the mortgage on a \$279,000 three-bedroom villa to as little as \$129,000.

With 54 units built to date, the Preserve at completion will have 180 two- and three-story townhouses and villas. Current prices, ranging from \$223,000 to \$279,000, are among the lowest in Palm Beach County. Fifty units have been set aside as affordable housing for people meeting certain income guidelines. Applicants' income cannot exceed 120 percent of Palm Beach County's median household income relative to family size; for a family of four, that would be \$96,880.

Designed around a natural park-like setting, the Preserve's townhouses and villas range from 1,070 to 1,590 square feet (99 to 148 sq m) in two- and three-bedroom models, each with its own garage. Project amenities include a decorative entry into a gated community, a clubhouse, a pool, and a tot lot. While the lifestyle is upscale, the price is budget sensitive.

"Working with people-focused developers like the Cornerstone Group enables us to bring something

truly unique to aspiring homeowners in the area," observes Lisa Bright, executive director of the Boynton Beach CRA. "The Preserve really represents a new standard in affordable housing that provides a living environment as good as or better than many higher-end developments."

Last year, the CRA's partnership with the Cornerstone Group opened the door to homeownership for single mother Faith Dickens and her daughter—the first beneficiaries of the affordable housing subsidy at the Preserve. Dickens, who shared a spare bedroom with her daughter at her parents' house for six years after her fiancé passed away, had searched in vain for a home she could afford. Now, Dickens and her daughter have a pool and a gym along with their three-bedroom townhouse, as well as the feeling of comfort that comes with living in a gated community.

"It seemed like the day would never get here," Dickens says. "Sometimes I just walk into my place and it brings tears to my eyes."

Since Dickens's breakthrough, 30 new homeowners have used CRA funds to buy their homes at the community, and an additional source of financial aid has helped create even more affordable housing. In October 2007, the Cornerstone

Fifty units of the Preserve, a luxury townhouse and villa community being built in Boynton Beach, Florida, are being set aside as affordable housing for people meeting certain income guidelines.

Group was awarded \$5 million in funds by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation through CWHIP. CWHIP funds are awarded on a competitive basis to public/private entities seeking to build affordable housing.

"In today's challenging housing market, middle-income workers like teachers, police officers, and nurses are often frozen out of homeownership opportunities that offer an outstanding quality of life for them and their families," says Bright. "The Preserve project shows what is possible when developers and local leaders work together to find solutions to critical issues like the affordable housing shortage."

MARGEE ADELSPERGER is marketing and communications director for the Boynton Beach Community Redevelopment Agency.

Sheridan Station Designed as Transit Village for Broward County, Florida

It began in 2003 with a request for proposals from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to redevelop its Tri-Rail park-and-ride lot in Hollywood as a transit-oriented development (TOD). Miami's Pinnacle Housing Group, a workforce housing developer, got the nod with a plan for 450 affordable apartments and a charter school.

"But when we showed the plan to the city, they said something developers rarely hear from a municipality," recalls Pinnacle partner Michael Wohl. "They said 'No, we want a larger project.'"

T. Neil Fritz, Hollywood's downtown and corridor redevelopment director, explained that the city's 2001 master plan envisioned a comprehensive transit village around the Tri-Rail station and suggested that Pinnacle buy two adjacent mobile-home parks in order to obtain the additional space needed for such a project. Pinnacle agreed, then formed a joint venture with RAM Development Company of Fort Lauderdale, a national developer of commercial and multifamily properties.

The result will be Broward County's first authentic TOD, due to break ground early next year. At buildout, the \$500 million, 40-acre (16-ha) Sheridan Station will provide 1,050 residential units, 300,000 square feet (27,900 sq m) of retail and restaurant space, 299,000 square feet (27,800 sq m) of office space, a 150-room hotel, a 793-space parking garage to serve the Tri-Rail station, and a six-acre (2.4-ha) live oak hammock that developers will donate to the city for use as a public park. The project is expected to generate the equivalent of 2,150 full-time jobs with at least an \$80 million annual

payroll, plus millions of dollars in new annual city and county tax revenues.

Developing the project has not always been smooth sailing, however. Completing the approval process took more than four years, and a few steps remain. "Though the TOD concept had broad support, some neighbors balked at its scope, fearing increased traffic, school congestion, and overbearing building profiles," says Hugo Pacanins, RAM development manager.

The team responded with reduced building heights, statistics showing no negative impact on area schools, four detailed traffic engineering studies, commitments for major road improvements, and preservation of hundreds of mature live oaks and a historic house built of coral rock on the six-acre (2.4-ha) park parcel originally slated for townhouses.

"We eliminated 550 residential units, accommodating neighborhood concerns and allowing for more office/retail space, which has stronger market demand and will have greater impact on the city's tax base," says Pacanins.

Twenty percent of all residential development at Sheridan Station will be workforce housing, distributed through each phase and exceeding the county's 15 percent requirement, says Wohl, south Florida chair for ULI's Terwilliger Center for Workforce Housing. Phase I workforce housing in the project will be rental units.

Sheridan Station's design team includes Cooper Carry Inc., Atlanta, master land planning; Wakefield Beasley & Associates, Atlanta/Jacksonville, retail; Roger Fry & Associates Architects, Coconut Grove, Florida, residential; Stiles Corporation, Fort Lauderdale, office; and Witkin Hults Design Group, Hollywood, Florida, landscape architecture.

Witkin Hults has been assigned the task of visually integrating the diverse components to give the project a unified appearance. Hardscapes of concrete pavers in different sizes, patterns, and shades of color



Sheridan Station (below) will provide 1,050 residential units; a 150-room hotel; retail, restaurant, and office space; and a parking garage adjacent to an existing rail station on a site (above) that includes a six-acre (2.4-ha) live oak hammock.



will give each building/entryway a distinctive profile while establishing a signature look for Sheridan Station's overall exterior environment, says Juan Pacheco, senior project manager for Witkin Hults. Major water features defining the central plaza will include a 24-by-10-foot (7.3-by-3-m) mirrored water wall and a 15-by-15-foot (4.6-by-4.6-m) stainless steel landmark feature of interlocking S shapes sitting on an 800-square-foot (74-sq-m) round water basin, he says. Native royal palms and street furniture will provide shaded rest areas. Walkways and bikeways will link all the project elements to the Tri-Rail station.

In keeping with the project's pro-environment character—it is one of six Florida projects chosen by the U.S. Green Building Council for its Leader-

ship in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development pilot program—Witkin Hults worked closely with civil engineers Carter & Burgess of Fort Lauderdale to design a road through the live oak hammock that will preserve every single tree.

Michael Hammon, RAM's chief development officer, hopes future TOD developers in Florida will have an easier time gaining entitlements.

"Given that TODs are in the public interest, regulatory agencies shouldn't put the full burden for achieving land use changes on the developer and make them meet the same standards as for traditional development," he says. "Elsewhere in the country, agencies are treating TOD developers more as partners. Florida isn't quite there yet."

Adds Debbie Orshefsky, Sheridan Station's land use attorney, "Everyone, including FDOT, has known for years the Sheridan Street/I-95 interchange is dysfunctional. The developers will now construct almost \$5 million in traffic improvements to address longstanding problems that would likely continue to exist if this project hadn't come along."

Despite the challenges of the past four years, Wohl says the team is thrilled with the final plan. "I think it will be a TOD model; it's definitely the highest and best use of the land," he says. "And with rising gas prices, it obviously couldn't be happening at a better time."

JAN MYLES SCHWARTZ is president of Janet Schwartz Associates, a marketing and business development firm in Boca Raton, Florida.

MiMo: Miami's Authentic DNA

Miami is not a particularly nostalgic city. Just blink and another old building has been demolished to make room for a skyscraper. The 1926 Everglades Building downtown, the 1916 Bliss House in Edgewater, and the 1954 Maule Building on Biscayne Boulevard are just a few of the structures that became memories for picture books over the past five years.

Preservationists are fighting back. On Biscayne Boulevard, it started with a community newspaper that regularly reported demolitions and encouraged residents to attend city hall meetings. Inspired by Miami Beach's designation of art deco hotels as historic, residents were able to save Biscayne Boulevard's row of post-World War II Miami modern (MiMo) motels between Northeast 50th and 77th streets.

The Shalimar. The South Pacific. The Saturn. The Stardust. The Vagabond. A drive down what locals affectionately call the 'Cayne is like a trip down the Carousel of Progress at Walt Disney World's Tomorrowland.

"I think the boulevard has experienced a huge change in the last three years," says Fran Rollason, president of the MiMo Biscayne Association, which started meeting in January 2007. Active members, who meet weekly to discuss the district's progress, include Nancy Liebman, former Miami Beach commissioner, who worked to preserve the Miami Art Deco District; Teri D'Amico of D'Amico Design Associates; Randall Robinson of the Urban Arts Committee; and architect Allan T. Shulman, principal of Miami-based Shulman + Associates. They organized the first Cinco de MiMo festival this year to raise awareness of the district.

"Some people don't realize the motels are coming back," Rollason says. "Motel Bleu has been renovated, and last winter season they were at 100 percent capacity."

It is certainly not an easy task—as was done at Motel Bleu—to transform a haven for prostitutes and drug dealers into a full-amenity hotel with a restaurant on the water operated by organic chef Kris Wessel. Four years of construction on Biscayne Boulevard between Northeast 36th to 125th streets—to install new stormwater drainage systems, new sidewalks, new medians and traffic separators, new traffic and pedestrian signals, and new streetlights and street signs—has also hampered

the awareness campaign to some extent, adds Rollason.

But little by little, these properties are once again getting the kind of attention they enjoyed before Interstate 95 stole their traffic.

The highest-profile and most anticipated renovation in the area involves the classic jet-age Vaga-

bond Motel, built in 1953 by architect B. Robert Swartburg, who also designed the Miami Civic Center complex, Miami's Bass Museum of Art, and the Delano Hotel at South Beach. In 2003, the city designated the motel as a historic site under its historic preservation ordinance, which provides a process by which



In 2003, Miami designated the Vagabond Motel, built in 1953, as a historic site under the city's historic preservation ordinance. The motel is currently undergoing renovation. Other structures on Biscayne Boulevard also reflect the post-World War II style referred to as Miami modern (MiMo).



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individual sites, historic districts, and archeological zones can be officially recognized.

Eric Silverman, former president of Hugo Boss and Dolce & Gabbana, took on the labor of love of renovating the motel in 2006 and says it should be ready for opening next February.

During due diligence, Silverman said he was advised by the city that he could add one or two stories, but after studying the site and its various limitations, “we only requested an 1,800-square-foot [167-sq-m] addition to the front restaurant space.” Shulman designed the addition.

Silverman said he gets his inspiration from old Miami, Havana, “the swank and swagger of the fifties and early sixties,” the Rat Pack, the old Palm Bay Club dating from the 1960s, the Forge restaurant in Miami Beach, the Embers restaurant of the 1940s to the 1970s, Joe’s Stone Crab restaurant in Miami Beach, the Mutiny Hotel in Coconut Grove, and Jimbo’s Place restaurant in Key Biscayne.

“The MiMo movement is alive and growing,” says Silverman. “It has great interest internationally for fashion shoots. We have had *Elle*, *Vogue*, *Marie Claire*, *Ocean Drive*, *944* magazine, and numerous international designers shoot here on a continual basis. The Vagabond sign, which to many is Miami’s ‘Welcome to Las Vegas’ sign, is daily photographed by people from all over the world.”

Renovation has been no easy task. Delays in the passage of Miami21, a citywide plan intended to make the city greener and more pedestrian friendly, and the construction of Biscayne Boulevard have posed challenges for Silverman.

Three different commissioners have represented this area of Miami in three years, although Silverman adds, “We are very lucky to have commissioner Marc Samoff and his staff, which have continually supported us and been a very helpful part of the change.”

The challenging developer financing market and the time required

for the city to approve his adaptive use plans have held up progress, Silverman says, but he sees the project as a worthwhile endeavor not only for himself, but for future generations. “I love this era and architecture,” he said. “After seeing Sunny Isles [a city north of Miami Beach just across from Aventura] destroyed, with no memory of the wonderful and vibrant past existing today, I know that we had to save this special district.”

Other notable MiMo-style architecture on the Boulevard includes the Bacardi Building at Northeast 21st Street and Andiamo Pizza at 55th Street Station.

KEMILA VELAN is a Miami-based freelance writer.

Repairing Pensacola’s Fragile Ecosystem

Landscaping work at the Pensacola Naval Air Station (NAS) in Pensacola, Florida, will involve not only addressing damage from Hurricane Ivan three years ago and planning for nature trails along protected wetlands, but also preserving a 16th-century shipwreck and constructing nesting platforms for ospreys.

A naval station since 1826, NAS Pensacola is the primary training base for U.S. Navy and Marine aviators and home base for the Blue Angels precision flying team. Because Navy personnel not only train there, but also live and relax there, it is important that the station be a modern, up-to-date, sustainable facility, says William Leathers, senior vice president/regional manager of ValleyCrest Landscape Development of Destin, Florida. The installation’s base exterior architecture plan had not been updated for several years and did not reflect many of the changes that have taken place in naval operations and training.

ValleyCrest will perform about 70 percent of the site development and



landscaping work, which includes cost estimating and arboricultural consulting, as well as tree protection and pruning, removal, and general clearance to address damage caused by Hurricane Ivan. The firm also will be responsible for rough and finish grading, erosion control, stormwater pollution prevention, drainage systems, concrete, irrigation, landscape planting, wetlands and native plant revegetation, and landscape maintenance.

With NAS Pensacola located at the edge of Pensacola Bay, designers and work crews are reconstructing nature trails along protected wetlands and restoring fragile dune grasslands. They also will be rebuilding boardwalks and a suspension bridge. Lighting for the project will follow dark-skies design concepts—employing low-pressure sodium vapor lamps with directional shielding—to prevent artificial light from interfering with the instinctive celestial navigation of the local sea turtle population.

For the ospreys, ValleyCrest is building structures and nesting platforms designed especially for the fish-eating birds, which are a protected species in Florida; populations there have declined drastically due to the impact of pesticides now banned, says Leathers. “Ospreys have been nesting on the base, but their nests were destroyed during



The spires and fabric wings of this structure (top, during construction; above, completed) were designed by ValleyCrest Design Group/SiteWorks Studio to emulate flight and the flying spirit of the U.S. Navy. Serving as a focal point in the west plaza of the Pensacola Naval Air Station, the sculptural feature was engineered and installed by Fabric Architecture of England.

Hurricane Ivan.” The new nesting platforms ValleyCrest built are critical to keeping the ospreys out of flight patterns and have become an important tool in reestablishing ospreys in the Florida Panhandle, he says.

Because the base predates the Civil War and its Gulf Coast location is historically important, the project mandates excavation oversight, archaeological monitoring, and preservation of cultural resources. Severe storms such as Hurricane Ivan have uncovered items of historical interest, Leathers says. “Of particular interest was the discovery of a 16th-century shipwreck, most probably a Spanish galleon sent by Spain during its attempt to colonize Florida in 1559.”

The entire project is expected to take two years. “It’s one of our biggest and most exciting challenges,” Leathers says. “We’re not only dealing with putting down the grass and pruning thousands of trees, but also repairing the fragile ecosystem and contributing to its sustainability.”

ValleyCrest is coordinating the activities of all participating team members. The design team includes ValleyCrest’s in-house landscape architecture studio, Fairhope, Alabama-based ValleyCrest Design Group/SiteWorks, and San Diego, California-based KTU+A.

Minneapolis Skyway Displays Public Art as Part of the City’s 150th Anniversary Celebration

For the first time in Minneapolis history, one of the city’s famous skyways has become a site for public art. Artist Nancy Ann Coyne’s 150-foot- (46-m-) long photographic installation *Speaking of Home* is intended to inspire fresh appreciation for the ubiquitous urban bridges while focusing on the in-

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Larger-than-life photographs installed on a skyway in Minneapolis can be viewed by pedestrians walking on or under the bridge.

creasingly diverse mix of people who use them.

Coyne has installed 23 larger-than-life portraits and family photographs of Minneapolis/St. Paul's immigrants in the 10-by-13-foot (3-by-4-m) windows of the IDS Center—Macy's skyway in downtown Minneapolis. Printed on semitransparent fabric scrim and accompanied by text narrating the stories of the immigrants depicted, the installation has converted the utilitarian walkway into a work of public art that straddles Nicollet Mall, the city's busiest pedestrian mall. Installed in August, the images will remain on display through October.

Minneapolis has the most extensive skyway system in the nation. Inaugurated in 1962, it provides a network of second-story, climate-controlled pedestrian walkways that link 69 blocks and cover more than seven miles (11 km). Beloved by winter shoppers, office workers, and tourists for the protection they offer from climate extremes, skyways are often criticized by urban planners and public-space advocates for siphoning off street-level pedestrian traffic, diminishing commercial vitality, suburbanizing once-vital downtowns, and segregating the

affluent from those who do not enter climate-controlled buildings to make or spend money.

While skyway-type pedestrian bridges are crucial to cold-weather cities like Fargo, North Dakota; the Twin Cities; and Des Moines, Iowa, their presence in other major American cities such as Baltimore, Cincinnati, Dallas, and Milwaukee is widely considered to be a mistake. At least two of Baltimore's skywalks have been removed.

Speaking of Home is the result of a three-year campaign by Coyne in cooperation with Twin Cities-based nonprofit group Forecast Public Art to install a public art project in the city's skyways, which are owned by the buildings they connect but governed by city agencies.

"Minneapolis is a city full of great architecture, wonderful arts institutions, and a wide variety of public art," says Coyne. "With the *Speaking of Home* installation I hope to add an innovative and thought-provoking gesture to spark dialogue and engage an extremely diverse public unused to seeing art in downtown Minneapolis."

Although located more than 1,000 miles (1,600 km) from major U.S. ports of entry, Minneapolis has long been a destination for immigrants.

Starting with northern Europeans from Ireland, Germany, and Scandinavia more than 150 years ago, the city has long had a vibrant immigrant population. As the city celebrates its sesquicentennial, it is now the home of the largest Somali and Hmong populations and the second-largest Tibetan population in the United States. Coyne was inspired to embark on the project after learning that some 120 languages are spoken by children in the Minneapolis and St. Paul public school systems.

With the help of a research grant from Forecast Public Art, Coyne began investigating the process for using the skyways and engaging the local immigrant communities.

The black-and-white, semitransparent photographic portraits of immigrants are enlargements of snapshots or formal portraits they brought with them to America. Accompanied by text culled from interviews, the installation provides an episodic narrative of the immigrants' lives—their reasons for leaving their native countries, what they gave up or fled from, and the lives they have created in Minneapolis. The project also includes the word for *home* in 23 languages, with the words written in the immigrants' own handwriting.

Designed for the most centrally located skyway, the exhibit inverts the relationship between the city's native-born citizens and more recent arrivals, says Coyne, situating the immigrants as stationary onlookers as the locals pass by and move through the city in transit.

The photographs will be viewed by the approximately 18,000 people who pass through the skyway each day, as well as by the tens of thousands of Nicollet Mall pedestrians who will look up at the architectural structure to see 23 faces appearing to look out onto the city as the skyway passersby intermingle with the still images. After dusk, the skyway will appear as an architectural light box.

Working with the nonprofit groups the Family Housing Fund and CommonBond Communities, Coyne researched the lives and histories of dozens of immigrants from five continents for inclusion in the project. She selected those whose lives represented the tremendous variety of immigrant experiences both in their home countries and after their arrival in the Twin Cities.

ANDREW DECKER is president of Andrew Decker Communications.

Daniel Rose Provides \$5 Million to Fund ULI Center for Public Leadership in Land Use

Real estate industry leader Daniel Rose has committed \$5 million to the creation of the ULI Daniel Rose Center for Public Leadership. The mission of the new center will be to empower leaders in the public sector to envision, build, and sustain successful 21st-century communities by providing access to information, best practices, peer networks, and other resources to foster creative, efficient, and sustainable land use practices.

“Success for large-scale developments invariably reflects effective working relationships between the public and private sectors,” says Rose, chairman of New York City-based Rose Associates Inc., which operates throughout the East Coast as developer and manager of more than 30 million square feet (2.8 million sq m) of major office towers, commercial retail centers, mixed-use complexes, and high-rise residential buildings. “I hope that this new center, through education and training, will be a significant factor in facilitating such relationships.”

The guiding principles of the center will be the following:

- ▷ leadership in a regional context;
- ▷ integrated problem solving;
- ▷ public/private collaboration; and
- ▷ experiential and peer-to-peer learning.

“We all need more education, more thought, more reflection on every aspect of dealing with the built environment,” Rose says.

“At any given time, we should be asking ourselves what lessons we can learn from the best of the old, and then we should look forward and ask how we can most effectively apply those lessons learned to the future. That goes for

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the public and private sector. We should all be open minded and constantly learning. I am hoping this center will be a vehicle for improved communication both ways.”

The ULI Daniel Rose Center will initially undertake three programs: the Daniel Rose Fellowship program, workshops for public officials on sustainable development, and public/private forums on key land use issues. The fellowship program will serve as the flagship program of the center, with the purpose of providing city leaders with the information, insights, peer-to-peer learning, best practices, and experience they need to successfully build and



Daniel Rose is chairman of New York City-based Rose Associates Inc.

sustain their cities. It will incorporate three overarching themes: real estate finance and development; the interdependencies and respective roles of the public and private sectors; and the roles and importance of the public realm, its relationship to private property, and how the public sector can

use the public realm as leverage to create viable communities.

The ULI Daniel Rose Fellowship will bring together high-level agency officials from a small group of select cities with experts and development industry leaders to learn about real estate development and finance, land use concepts, and best practices. During the term of the fellowship, these city leaders will be able to draw upon the knowledge and expertise of the experts and industry leaders to solve problems faced by their cities.

Carbon Offsets: A Real Estate Opportunity

Many in the real estate industry are taking steps to integrate green methods and materials into their developments as a means to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. For most, though, achieving true carbon neutrality is not yet possible. But given the pervasive nature of carbon emissions—regardless of where greenhouse gases are emitted, they have the same negative impact on the atmosphere—any enterprise unable to eliminate emissions from its own endeavors can purchase carbon offsets to help others cut their emissions by the desired amount.

The biggest causes of carbon emissions and their projected growth in the coming years are electricity demand from buildings and vehicle-miles traveled in automobiles—that is, the buildings the industry designs, constructs, operates, leases, and finances, and the trips generated getting to and from those buildings. Over time, the industry has been a major contributor to climate change, but this does not have to be the case. The real estate industry can take the opportunity in front of it today to reduce emissions associated with buildings and offset what it is unable to do on site.

Carbon offsets can help the industry achieve carbon neutrality. Carbon offsets are also becoming

an important part of the public-policy discussion on climate change that could have huge implications for the real estate industry. The major cap-and-trade proposals that have advanced furthest in Congress and those outlined by presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama have not included much in the way of incentives to make real estate a more effective part of the climate change solution. The focus instead has been on power plants and sources of direct emissions.

Buildings, however, are responsible for at least 40 percent of the carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuel combustion, according to reports from the Pew Center for Global Climate Change.

Within the building sector, residential structures are responsible for 21 percent of that share of emissions. There is growing recognition that addressing energy efficiency in buildings specifically at the residential level could provide the most cost-effective and easiest path to immediately curbing carbon emissions.

Part of the problem may be that there have been no major carbon offset programs that show how greener buildings can help cut carbon emissions in a meaningful way; typical offset projects include

renewable energy, methane destruction, and forestry land-based projects. And very few offset projects exist in the United States.

Columbia, Maryland-based Enterprise last year launched the Green Communities Offset Fund to help change that. Through the offset fund, Enterprise Community Partners, a national nonprofit, raises and deploys 100 percent of all contributions to enable community-based groups to create green affordable housing developments for low-income people that generate lower carbon emissions by being more energy efficient and using renewable energy. All contributions to the fund are tax deductible.

The offset proceeds account for a very small share of the overall housing development costs, but pay substantially for specific measures that reduce carbon emissions that the project would not otherwise have integrated. For example, the fund's first purchase will enable a 119-unit green affordable housing development in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to install a more effective wind turbine that will provide most of the project's power. The project, Silver Gardens, is being codeveloped by the Supportive Housing Coalition of New Mexico Inc. and Romero Rose, LLC, the Albuquerque affiliate of Jonathan Rose Companies, a leading U.S. developer of urban green affordable housing.

Some have criticized carbon offsets for not addressing the root of the problem, for having little impact, and for being purely feel-good gestures. However, uniform standards and best practices for quality control and program integrity are emerging in the voluntary carbon market.

Well-designed, fully accountable carbon offset programs enable smaller and more innovative green projects to secure funding they otherwise could not to lower carbon emissions. In this way, offsets can create seed capital for environmental innovation in the real estate industry.

ULI has joined Enterprise to expand awareness of carbon offsets for affordable housing projects by committing to make the 2008 Fall Meeting and Urban Land Expo a fully carbon-neutral event through a contribution to the Green Communities Offset Fund. Enterprise plans to work with ULI members to raise additional support for green affordable-housing carbon offsets and educate policy makers about the role green development projects can play in all kinds of policy solutions to address climate change. For more information, visit www.greencommunitiesonline.org.

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Through its Green Communities Offset Fund, Enterprise Community Partners will help Silver Gardens (street views, above; courtyard view, left), a green affordable housing development planned for Albuquerque, New Mexico, purchase a wind turbine that will provide most of the project's power.



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