

CapitolRiver Council - District 17

2008-2009

Annual Report



*Giving voice
to the residents and businesses of downtown Saint Paul*



District 17

A Message from the Chair

CapitolRiver Council (CRC) was founded in 1975 under the premise that St. Paul needed neighborhood participation to achieve good results in government. Under this model, 34 years later, CRC represents all of downtown St. Paul including the Capitol area, 12,000 residents and an estimated 68,000 business owners and employees. CRC reports our recommendations and findings to City Council for discussion at formal City Council meetings, and has a strong voice in downtown activities.

CRC's 2008-2009 year was full of many exciting updates, including our new Director, Katie Sabaka. Katie comes to us with a master's degree in Advocacy and Political Leadership. She's been a welcome addition to our team and has shown her outstanding Director skills in her first 6 months in our office.

In spring of 2009, CRC completed a Strategic Planning workshop, resulting in a unified team direction for committee and task force activities. This strategy work will enter phase two soon, where we begin to engage our stakeholders through public committee meetings and refine our mission and objectives.

I would like to recognize those members who will be leaving us after this term and thank each member for their service to the board: David Bradshaw of Cities Management, Ken Smith of District Energy, Margaret Ann Hennan of Minnesota Public Radio and Caitlin Skinner Marlotte, a resident of the Rossmor Building.

I would also like to take a moment to pay honor to the work of John Schachterle, our former Director. John passed away in February after his term as Director. Before his term as Director, John spent countless hours as a CRC volunteer and was an avid downtown advocate with a great big smile who will be sadly missed.

I think I can speak for the board when I say that 2007 and 2008 were years of change for our organization, and although it wasn't always easy to be a board member, we stepped up to the challenges and emerged a stronger, more focused organization ready to meet the future challenges of the downtown district while embracing our rich heritage as a Capitol city.

I hope you'll find ways to join us this coming year. Your voice is important to the vitality of downtown, and in the spirit of continuous improvement, each of you is critical to our success in making St. Paul a great place to live, work and visit.

Kim Hyers



2008 Financial Report

CapitolRiver Council's 2008 income and expenses both came in just below budget at the year's end. Though individual and small business donations decreased from the prior year, event-related revenue increased. Compensation expenses significantly decreased as a result of two transition periods that left CRC without a Director, though spending in other areas increased as CRC invested in new computer and office equipment. The vast majority of 2008 expenses went toward citizen participation events and programs and crime prevention coordination.

Thank you to all who contributed to the financial success of CapitolRiver Council during 2008!

CapitolRiver Council Committees

The Development Review Committee reviews all public funding, subsidy, and variance requests and makes a recommendation to the full CapitolRiver Council board, which in turn advises the City Council. The committee also reviews preliminary proposals and receives updates on previously approved proposals. In 2008-2009, the committee also worked on LRT issues.

The Downtown Life Committee connects downtown residents through the monthly First Friday meetings, acting as a way for residents to network in a social setting and providing an informal forum for neighborhood concerns. This year the committee assisted with community outreach and publicity for dog parks, the Jazz Festival, and a neighborhood webpage on livemsp.org.

The Environment, Public Realm and Movement (EPRM) Committee focuses on issues pertaining to the quality of downtown's public spaces, transportation and environmental sustainability. Major issues addressed include: successful advocacy for Fitzgerald Park; implementing an adopt a-block initiative; the impact of LRT; organizing information to promote dog parks; enhancing transportation choices and car alternatives; raising resources for park improvements through the Parks Conservatory; and organizing Earth Week activities. The committee also sponsors a monthly educational brown-bag lunch on various environmental matters.

The Marketing & Fundraising Committee seeks to increase the visibility, awareness, and engagement of CapitolRiver Council and raises funds through events, sponsorships, and individual giving. This past year, the committee conducted a resident survey to better understand perceptions of CapitolRiver Council and to identify concerns residents have about living in downtown. The committee also implemented a strategy to increase board giving and organized a new fundraising event.

The Skyway Advisory Committee advises CapitolRiver Council on all skyway issues. Skyway hour variance applications are reviewed by the committee in accordance with the skyway ordinance passed by the City Council. The task of improving skyway directional signage has been a major agenda item through the 2008-2009 committee meetings. Skyway advertising is another area the committee has begun to work on improving.

The Small Business Committee works to promote and attract downtown businesses. The committee has organized and hosted promotional events for downtown businesses and has worked collaboratively with other organizations to attract new retail tenants to downtown. Over the past year, the committee has met with economic development specialists representing the Capital City Partnership, Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation, Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Planning and Economic Department of the City of Saint Paul. The committee is working to support and collaborate with other organizations pursuing downtown economic development.



2008-2009 Board of Directors

David Bradshaw, *Cities Management*
Larry Englund, *College Avenue Resident*
Julio Fesser, *Securian Corporation*
Sarah Fossen, *Capital City Partnership*
Tim Griffin, *Saint Paul Design Center*
Rod Halvorson, *City Walk Resident*
Vern Harmon, *Unity One Credit Union*
JoAnn Hawkins, *Twin Cities Public Television*
Michael Heelan, *Great Northern Lofts Resident*
Margaret Ann Hennan, *Minnesota Public Radio*
Kim Hyers, *Dakota Resident*
Kristi Iverson, *Ecolab*
Adam Johnson, *Saint Paul Convention
& Visitors Association*
Mark Karason, *Printer's Row Resident*
Karl Karlson, *City Walk Resident*
Susan Kimberly, *Saint Paul Chamber of Commerce*
Lynda Koren, *American Bank*
Paul Mandell, *Capitol Area Architecture
& Planning Board*
John Mannillo, *Mannillo, Womack & Associates*
Lisa Cotter Metwaly, *Q Kindness Café*
Jim Miller, *James Miller Investment Realty Co.*
Chamath Perera, *Tilsner Resident*
Greg Peterson, *Market House Resident*
Rosemarie Reger Rumsey, *Listening House*
Emily Reller, *Saint Paul BOMA*
Andrew Schlack, *Lowry Resident*
Caitlin Skinner Marlotte, *Rossmor Resident*
Renee Skoglund, *Healtheast City Passport*
Ken Smith, *District Energy*
Jan Thomas, *Lancer Service, Inc*
Bill Thurmes, *The Hearn Company*
Dina Vaynerman, *Landmark Center*

CapitolRiver Council – District 17 engages residents, employees and property owners in issues and projects throughout downtown Saint Paul. From policy development to the sponsorship of community events to design review of new projects, CapitolRiver Council provides venues for fruitful citizen participation that lead to the continued revitalization and economic growth of this historic downtown.

Through a network of volunteer-based committees and a 35-member board, CapitolRiver Council works to make downtown a better place to live, work and visit.

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Images courtesy of Teresa Boardman