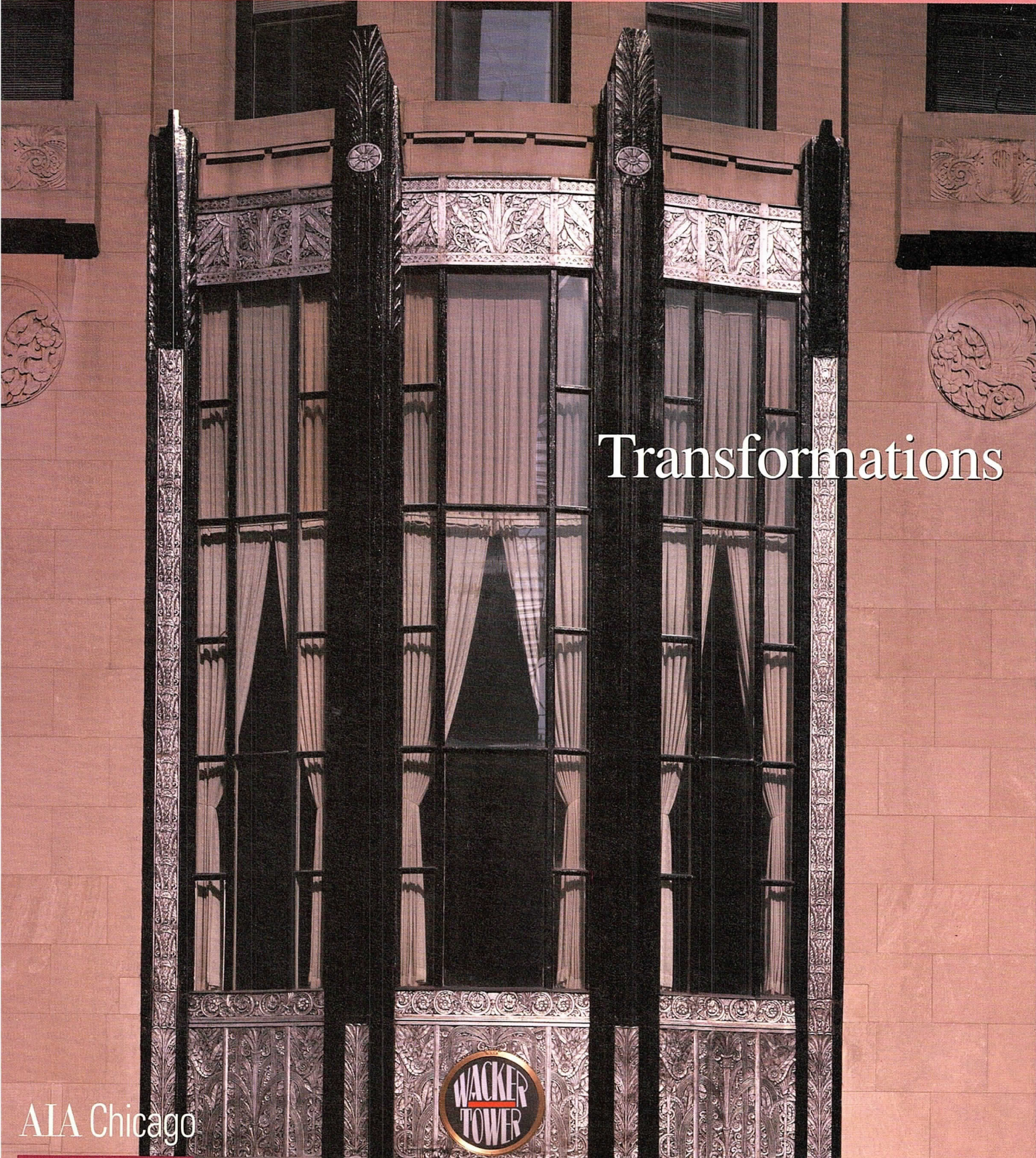


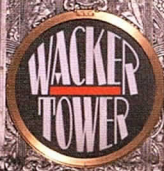
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## Transformations

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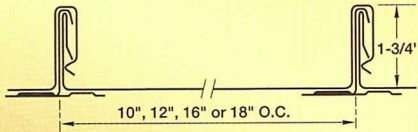
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Cover photo: Wacker Tower, originally designed in 1928 by Holabird & Root LLP for the Chicago Motor Club, is being novated by Vinci/Hamp Architects Inc. It was photographed by Anthony May for *Focus: Architecture Chicago*.

# Transformations Come in All Shapes and Sizes



Architecture is synonymous with the word *transformation*. Each day, on every project, architects are charged with translating clients' ideas into three dimensional spaces. Even on the simplest level, architects are transforming design solutions into drawings and written descriptions that allow others to build the structure.

This issue of *Focus: Architecture Chicago* explores transformations within the cultural, economic, and political realm, and it highlights the importance architects play in turning these ideas into reality. As architects, we design buildings which form neighborhoods that are woven together by transportation networks, zoning districts, political wards, school

districts, and ethnic groups to become cities and suburbs.

The projects in this issue illustrate that transformations come in all shapes and sizes. The architect that renovates a storefront may impact a neighborhood as much as one who converts an empty lot into a new high-rise building. Often the projects that affect our lives on a daily basis go unrecognized in the shadows of more glamorous structures. So, there is more to the stories of the projects profiled in this issue than intriguing pictures and interesting floorplans. They exemplify the role design plays in keeping our city vital, and they give testimony to the architect's role as community leader, facilitator and designer.

I hope you enjoy the spring issue of *Focus: Architecture Chicago*. Watch your

mail in October for our next special edition, mailed to you compliments of the American Institute of Architects Chicago.



W. Stephen Saunders, AIA  
President

Postscript from the editor:  
What do you think? I'd like to hear from you – by post, fax or e-mail. Susan Nelson, Editor, AIA Chicago, Suite 1049, The Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654; 312/670-2422 (fax); aiachgo@mcs.com (e-mail).

## Transformations Public Lecture Series

These free programs are presented by AIA Chicago in the second floor theater of the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Randolph St., and begin at 5:30 p.m.

**May 21 – The Place Where We Live: New Views of Urban Housing.** Speakers: Peter Landon, AIA, Landon Architects Ltd.; Chris Lee, AIA, Johnson & Lee Ltd.; James Nagle, FAIA, Nagle Hartray Danker Kagan McKay.

**June 18 – Point of Entry: Transportation Gateways and the City Image.** Speakers: James DeStefano, FAIA, DeStefano and Partners; Douglas Farr, AIA, Farr Associates; Diane Legge Kemp, FAIA, DLK Architecture Inc.

**July 16 – Audience Response: Keeping Cultural Icons Viable.** Speakers: Laurence Booth, FAIA, Booth/Hansen & Associates Ltd.; Joseph Gonzalez, AIA, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP; Ralph Johnson, FAIA, Perkins & Will.

**August 20 – Not Your Typical Day at the Office: Transformations in the Workplace.** Speakers: Neil Frankel, AIA, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP; Angie Lee, AIA, O'Donnell Wicklund Pigozzi and Peterson; Thomas Zurowski, AIA, Eastlake Studio.


**September 17 – Lofty Goals: New Lives for Old Buildings.** Speakers: Ken DeMuth, Pappageorge/Haymes Ltd.; Kenneth Schroeder, FAIA, Schroeder Murchie Laya Associates Ltd.; Raymond Hartshorne, AIA, Hartshorne + Plunkard Ltd.

**October 15 – My Old School: Campus Traditions/Campus Transformations.** Speakers: James Gimpel, AIA, University of Illinois at Chicago; Donna Robertson, AIA, Illinois Institute of Technology.

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# Rising Stars

by Susan Nelson

**A**uditoriums, museums and parks are intrinsically popular, drawing crowds to their performances, exhibits and public spaces. They still need to reinvigorate themselves, however, to attract audiences in an increasingly competitive entertainment market.

Today, to capitalize on their place in city, many of Chicago's cultural icons are racing to revitalize, and architecture plays a leading role. For these clients, architects are producing designs and renovations that have star quality. Some are newcomers. Some are making a comeback. We invite you, with map in hand, to be the critic. Visit each one and decide what you think.

*Susan Nelson is the editor of Focus: Architecture Chicago. Comments about the publication can be addressed to her attention at AIA Chicago, Suite 1049, The Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654.*

## Kids on the Fly

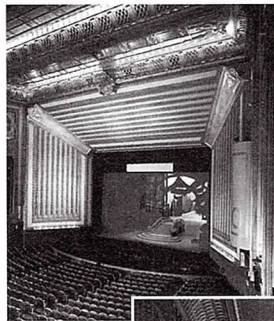
Kids on the Fly, a new permanent exhibit designed by Peter J. Exley Architects, with Julie Anderson Mathias Interior Architecture Studio, offers a welcome destination point for children in Terminal 2 at O'Hare International Airport. Continuing the mission of the Chicago Children's Museum, this "hands-on" museum space celebrates air travel with multi-sensory activities appropriate to the world's busiest airport, all within a building type often devoid of such conveniences.

The museum's design calls for a dynamic, safe and secure environment to replicate in miniature the quality and mission of the main Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier and to set a new standard for stand-alone exhibits. Young travellers can load cargo, sit in a cockpit of a specially designed plane, or listen to the goings-on of a simulated control tower.

Architect Peter Exley, AIA has designed a satellite museum that upholds the standards of its parent institution and, through thoughtful coordination and detailing, withstands the extraordinary maintenance requirements of an international airport.



Doug Snower



Heidrich Blessing



## Civic Opera House

Built in 1928, the Civic Opera House of Chicago was sorely in need of a major renovation when Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP was hired to create a viable performance center for the increasingly sophisticated operatic productions Chicagoans desire. After a rigorous research phase that even included broad philosophical questions about the Lyric's direction and image, the architects recommended improvements in four principal areas: back-of-house, stage, front-of-house and building exterior.

Notably, a creative construction schedule was developed to take advantage of the typical three-month off-season to permit the annual opera season to go uninterrupted.

Though much of the renovation is not visible to the public, including a four-story scenery handling area with a 35-foot by 35-foot stage door, a three-story rehearsal room duplicating the actual stage, and acoustically isolated rehearsal rooms, the stunning glamour of the 3,563-seat auditorium and lobbies has been preserved and renovated.

## Orchestra Hall

Chicagoans will experience music in a new way after the \$105 million Symphony Center project is completed this fall. Master planning by the architecture firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP focused on creating more than a performance space. Its goal was to create a lively hub of activity throughout the day with a space for a full spectrum of performance and educational programming.

The new complex will include completely renovated public and performance spaces in the existing building. Acoustic improvements will result from a massive increase in volume in the main hall, a reconfiguration of the stage, and installation of hidden acoustical elements. All rigging, lighting and sound systems will be replaced. The lobbies will be expanded and improved, and additional public amenities, such as food and beverage service, will be located throughout the complex.

The most notable change is a public arcade, located just north of the main hall, that will connect the current Michigan Avenue entrance to a new rotunda, establishing a new main lobby for the expanded complex.



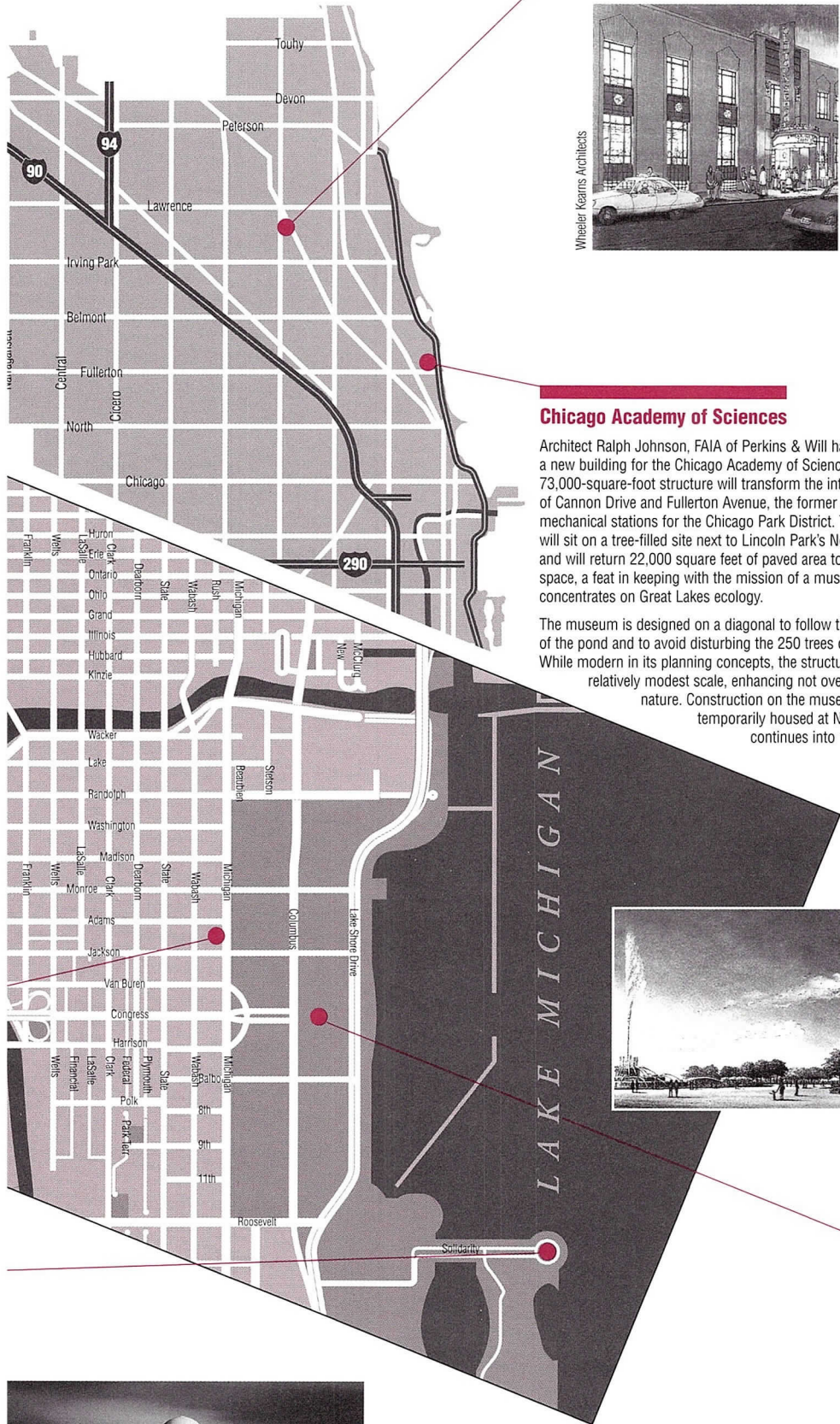
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP

## Adler Planetarium

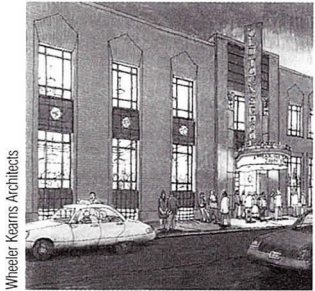
As an architect, how do you design an addition to one of Chicago's most ocular Art Deco structures? If you're Dirk Lohan, FAIA, principal of Lohan Associates, you design a new pavilion to be built partially below ground. The glass roof of the new 60,000-square-foot addition to the Adler Planetarium will be seen as it circles the existing building 180 degrees.

The addition will contain a sky-show theater, exhibition space, and a scenic winter garden. It takes advantage of the site and provides visitors with dramatic views of the lake and skyline. A groundbreaking was held in February for the new addition.





**Old Town School of Folk Music**



Wheeler Kearns Architects

Wheeler Kearns Architects is transforming the former Hild Library, 4544 N. Lincoln Ave., into The Old Town School of Folk Music's new state-of-the-art home. The renovated 40,000-square-foot building includes a 421-seat performance hall, cafe, retail music store, classrooms, practice rooms and school offices.

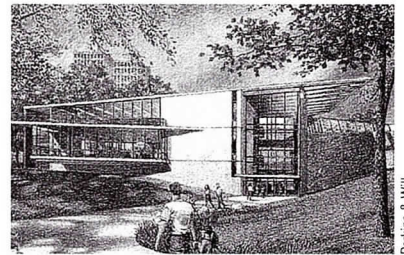
According to Larry Kearns, AIA, the firm decided to build upon architecture which was already in place because the structure is a treasured landmark in the Lincoln Square neighborhood of Chicago.

The Hild Library, designed by Pierre Blouke in 1929, is steeped in distinctive Art Deco architecture. The building contains several decorative features typical of public buildings from this era, including two large WPA murals. Kearns said the murals are being restored and will be incorporated into the redesign. The School is scheduled to open officially early next year.

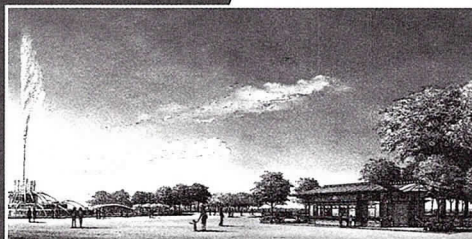
**Chicago Academy of Sciences**

Architect Ralph Johnson, FAIA of Perkins & Will has designed a new building for the Chicago Academy of Sciences. The 73,000-square-foot structure will transform the intersection of Cannon Drive and Fullerton Avenue, the former site of mechanical stations for the Chicago Park District. The museum will sit on a tree-filled site next to Lincoln Park's North Pond and will return 22,000 square feet of paved area to green space, a feat in keeping with the mission of a museum which concentrates on Great Lakes ecology.

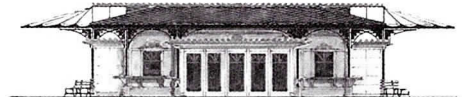
The museum is designed on a diagonal to follow the shoreline of the pond and to avoid disturbing the 250 trees on the site. While modern in its planning concepts, the structure is of relatively modest scale, enhancing not overwhelming nature. Construction on the museum, temporarily housed at Navy Pier, continues into 1998.



Perkins & Will



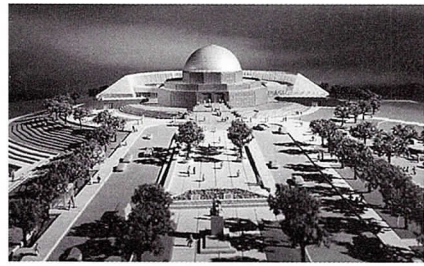
David Woodhouse Architects



**Buckingham Fountain Pavilions**

Buckingham Fountain is one of Chicago's most robust civic symbols. Situated at the very heart of historic Grant Park, it evokes rich cultural, historical and natural imagery. The new service pavilions – once controversial annexes to the green space around the historic Fountain – open this month, providing much-needed public amenities. By all accounts, the design by David Woodhouse Architects is historically sympathetic; the pavilions are carefully sited to ensure they are subordinate to the Fountain, melting into the system of architectural and landscape elements which surround it.

There are four pavilions in all, paired to flank each end of the Fountain plaza's long, narrow north/south axis. Their shape, a forest of tree trunk-like columns at ground level arching into a canopied roof above, evokes the Grant Park canopy of American Elm trees.



Stenkamp/Ballogg

Map by Dennis McClendon, Chicago CartoGraphics



# Transformations

by Laurie McGovern Petersen

*Anyone who reads the newspaper or visits downtown Chicago is aware of major public works revising the city. The museum campus created by rerouting Lake Shore Drive, the redesigned State Street, the new Navy Pier and the expanded McCormick Place are all high-visibility evidence of architectural design in the urban environment. The city is also undergoing a quieter renaissance at the neighborhood level, where smaller projects are setting examples that create ripple effects. This article examines four such pioneers.*



Anthony May

**In Wacker Tower's grand lobby, a terrazzo floor of the same color and design as the original has been laid, the frosted glass chandeliers have been reinstalled, and a monumental mural has been restored.**

**T**ransforming the untransformable is one way of describing Chicago's smaller redevelopment projects. Each one involves a creative vision that sees beyond the obvious obstacles and imagines what could be. An old downtown office building becomes a luxurious condominium tower, abandoned storefronts become attractive homes, a troubled two-block area becomes a model for community development, and a derelict residential shell becomes housing for an emerging neighborhood. Each one is an important catalyst for its surroundings as well as an example of urban renewal at the local and national level.

## Wacker Tower

An outdated office building may be a white elephant on the commercial leasing market, but it can become a glamorous addition to a city's housing stock – at least that is the hope of developers and civic leaders in aging downtowns across the country. Chicago's leading example of this new concept is the conversion of the 16-story Chicago Motor Club, 68 E. Wacker Place, building to the lavish Wacker Tower condominiums.

The biggest challenge of this project is that it sets a new precedent and therefore requires brand-new ideas. Developer Sam Roti of Markwell Properties Development Inc. praised Vinci/Hamp Architects Inc. for their “outstanding job of adapting the building to the residential equation.” He credits John Vinci, FAIA for seeing that the building's small floorplate of 48 feet by 100 feet could be turned into an advantage by creating one unit per floor. This not only results in unusually large and well-appointed apartments with four exposures, it sets a distinctive tone and activity level for the entire building.

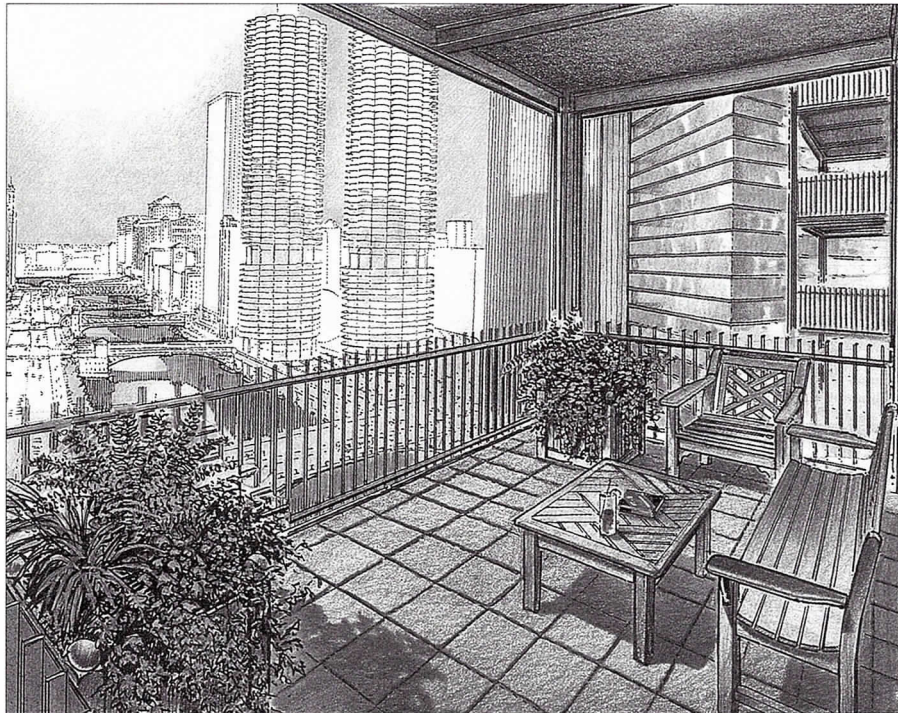
Wacker Tower's location and siting enhance its attractiveness for residential conversion. It is free-standing on four sides and has an unobstructed western wall facing the Chicago river. An adjacent vacant lot provides the site for a new enclosed garage topped by a landscaped park. Also significant are the building's excellent condition and stunning Art Deco style.

Designed in 1928 by Holabird & Root LLP, the building's most significant and beautiful historic features are the narrow limestone facade on Wacker Place and the dramatic two-story lobby. In this grand space, a terrazzo floor of the same color and design as the original has replaced recent granite flooring and all the frosted glass chandeliers and wall sconces have been reinstalled. Eventually, the elevator doors will be of stainless steel etched to match the woven nickel of the original doors. The lobby's showpiece continues to be John Warner Norton's 19 feet by 29 feet restored canvas mural of the United States, a decorative map of the country's major highways (complete with picturesque names), cities, mountain ranges, and national parks.

**These projects open up a whole new future for these buildings.**

The architectural ingenuity required to reconcile the sometimes contradictory demands of historic preservation and adaptive reuse is most evident in the design of the new balconies. The plain brick western facade needed large balconies to capitalize on the light and views, but their design had to conform to historic preservation guidelines. These guidelines specify that a major facade





James Smith

The balconies of Wacker Tower, which ingeniously meet historic preservation standards, will provide unprecedented outdoor space for a Chicago apartment.

addition must be in character with the architecture yet clearly appear to be an alteration rather than an original feature. The final design of the balconies resulted from extensive discussions with Mike Jackson of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and Susan Benjamin of Historic Certification Consultants. The balconies will be supported by columns anchored to the new two-story parking structure, enabling them to be 10 feet deep and thus provide unprecedented outdoor space for a Chicago apartment.

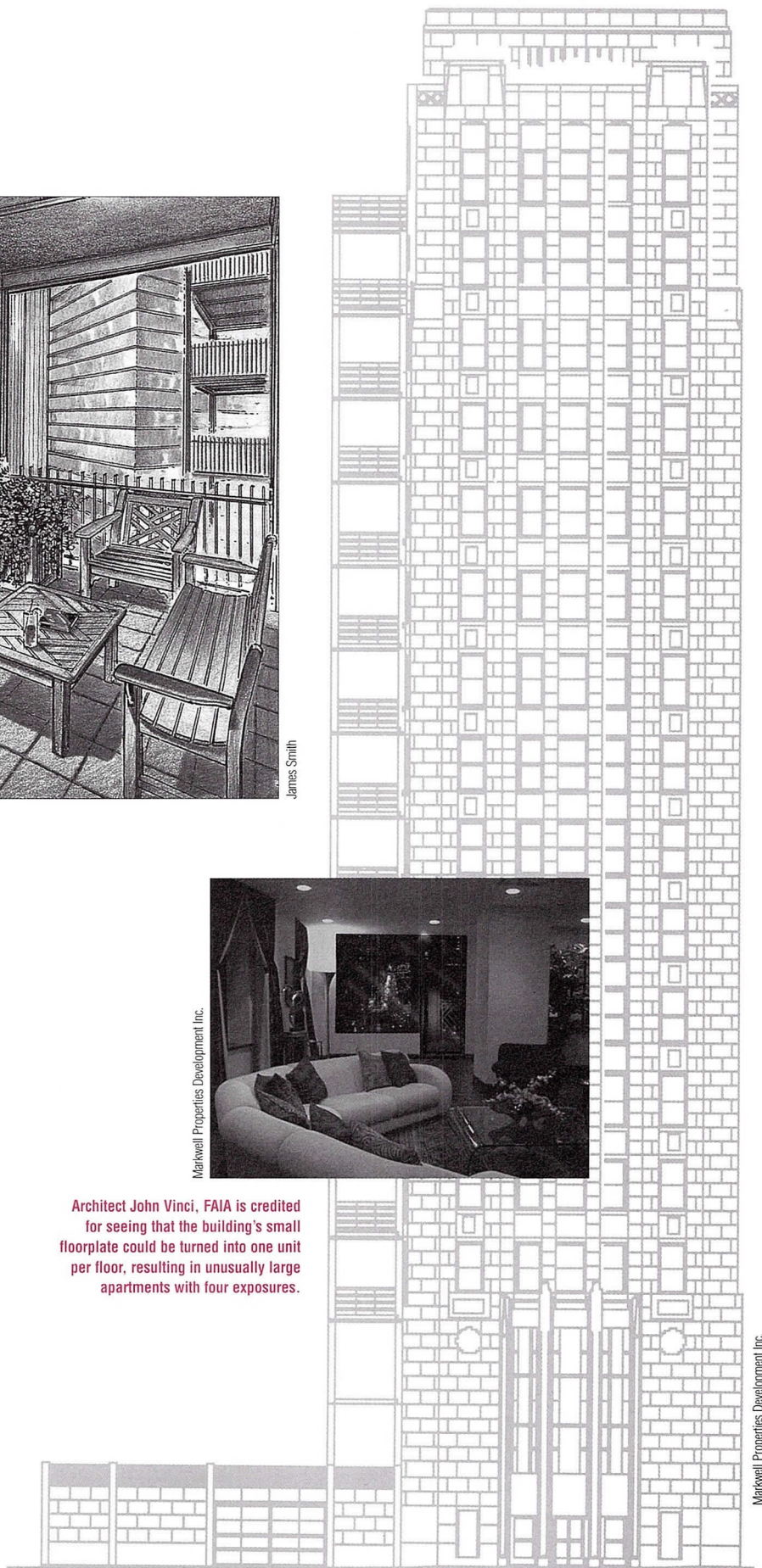
While many factors make this project unique, other pre-War Loop buildings are also in the process of residential conversion, including the Singer and the Chicago buildings on State Street. These projects “open up a whole new future for the recycling of these buildings,” Vinci points out.

*Continued on page 10*



Markwell Properties Development Inc.

Architect John Vinci, FAIA is credited for seeing that the building's small floorplate could be turned into one unit per floor, resulting in unusually large apartments with four exposures.



Markwell Properties Development Inc.





Mike Jackson

The guiding principle behind the exterior renovation is to remain as faithful as possible to the storefront's original character.

Architects are great  
at seeing potential  
in a situation.

## Converting Storefronts to Housing

Old office buildings in the Loop are not the only commercial spaces left vacant by economic changes. A more widespread urban challenge is the decline of small retail businesses, which has resulted in miles of empty storefronts. In popular North Side neighborhoods many of these ground-level spaces have been converted



Mike Jackson

to residences, and the city of Chicago would like to encourage this trend as a revitalization tool throughout the city.

As in the early days of loft conversions, a pioneering spirit and architectural creativity can establish the desirability of an unconventional housing type. While living above the store has a long tradition, living *in* the storefront itself is a more challenging concept. The Landmarks Division of the Department of Planning and Development recently published an introductory manual to the design and preservation issues involved,

titled *Converting Storefronts to Housing*. Written by project manager Mary Fishman, AIA, this illustrated guide documents real as well as hypothetical examples of conversions, establishes categories of storefront buildings and identifies the pros and cons of each type, and suggests design strategies and guidelines. Photographs and drawings illustrate contrasts between recommended and not-recommended design options, and provide many practical suggestions for dealing with the key issues of privacy, light, ventilation, and interior layout.

The guiding principle behind the exterior renovation is to remain as faithful as possible to the storefront's original character. The economy of minimal renovation allows these buildings to become an excellent source of low or moderate-income housing in neighborhoods with depressed real estate prices (and thus those that would benefit the most from this type of revitalization).

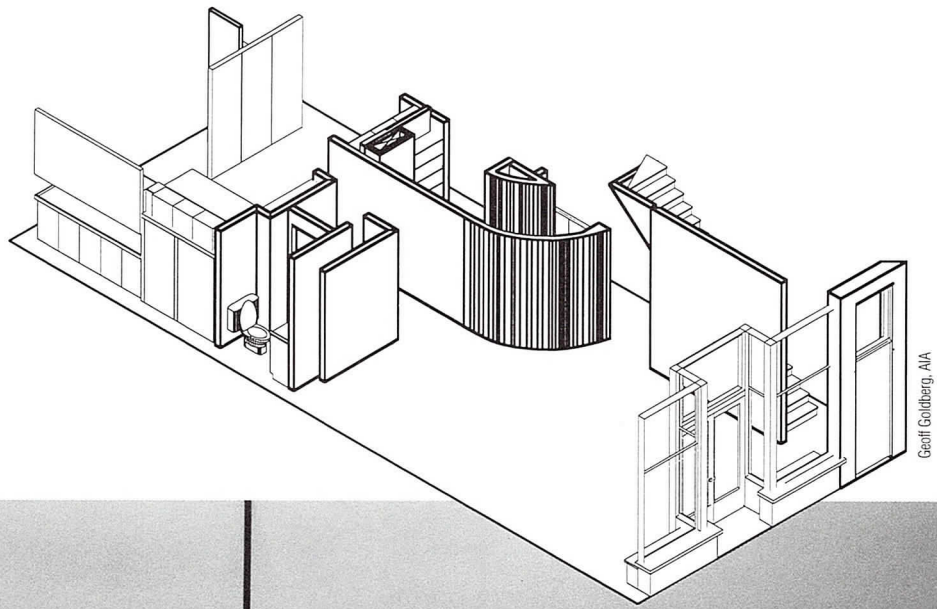
Other advantages include easy handicap accessibility provided by street-level living and the fact that these changes are reversible if the street eventually redevelops as a commercial thoroughfare. Charles Thurow, deputy commissioner of planning and development, points out that these conversions present new options for residents unhappy with their run-down commercial areas.

Thurow praises the architects involved with the project, including a group of AIA convention attendees who sketched design solutions for a hypothetical storefront and came up with a variety of ideas. "Architects are great at seeing potential in a situation," he comments. "It takes that initial creative energy to figure out how to do these things so that they are attractive and livable."

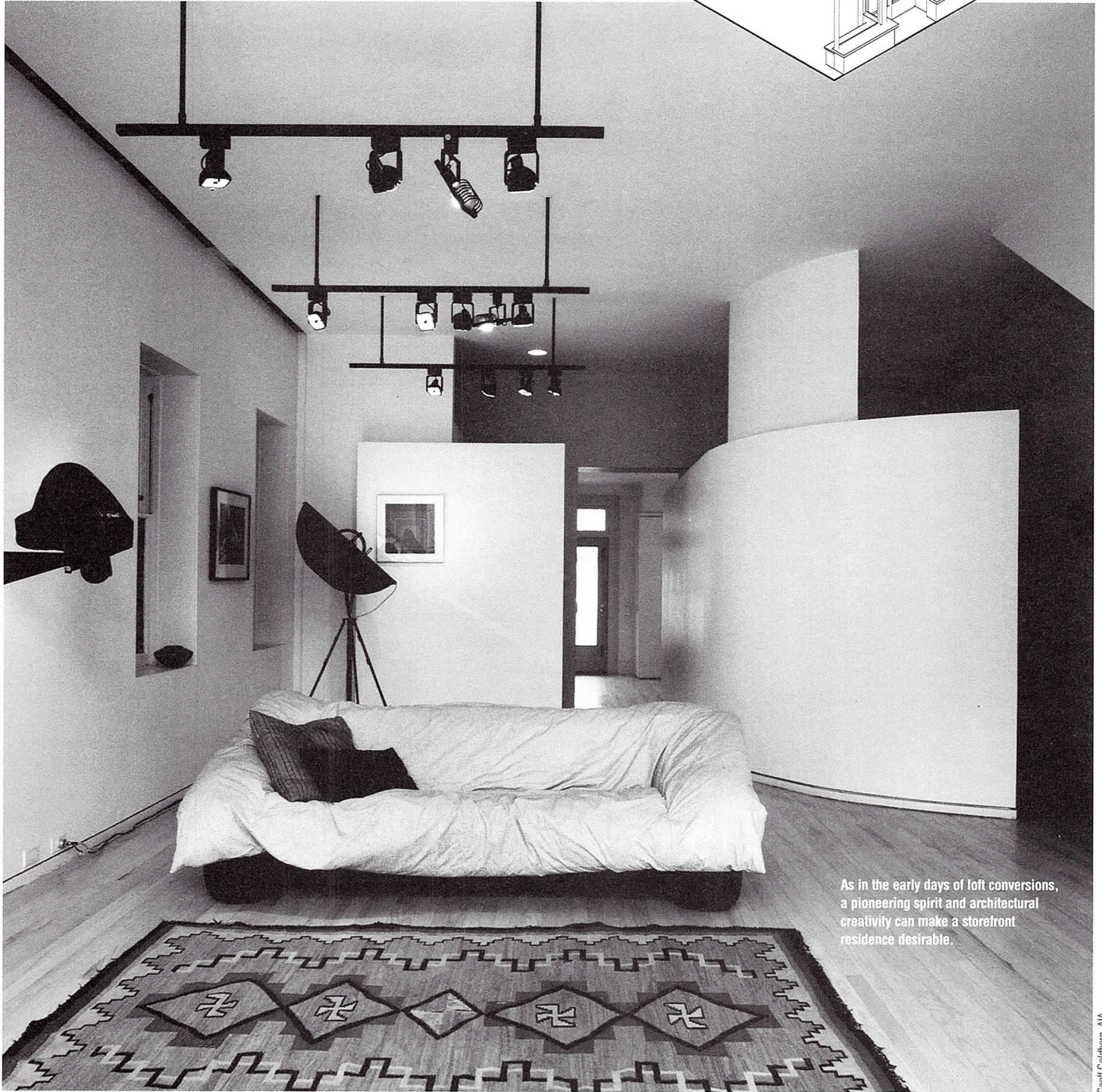
Continued on page 12



With case studies, such as this interior by Geoff Goldberg, AIA, *Converting Storefronts to Housing* provides suggestions for dealing with key issues. The manual is available from Chicago's Department of Planning and Development.



Geoff Goldberg, AIA



As in the early days of loft conversions, a pioneering spirit and architectural creativity can make a storefront residence desirable.

Geoff Goldberg, AIA

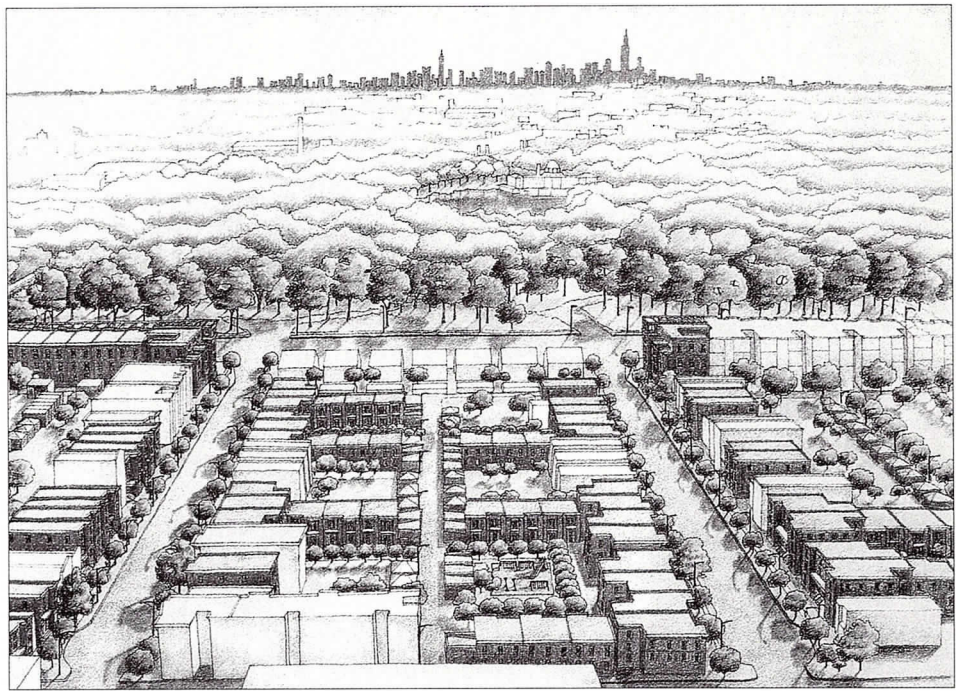


**Parkside**

As with the city's storefront revitalization initiative, community group Bethel New Life turned to architects when they decided to forge a model of urban transformation. In essence, the West Side neighborhood of Garfield Park is relying on an old idea that is being invigorated by New Urbanists: Transit-Oriented Development, which posits mass transit as the core of a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood.

**When you live in a terrible place, it's hard to imagine alternatives.**

The formation of the Lake Street El Coalition in response to the CTA's 1992 decision to shut down the Green Line sparked the neighborhood's uphill climb. The Coalition worked with Farr Associates on a grass roots planning process to develop a prototype for community redevelopment centered around the El stops. The West and South sides would each have one, \$10 million superstation with an attached day care center and convenience retail;



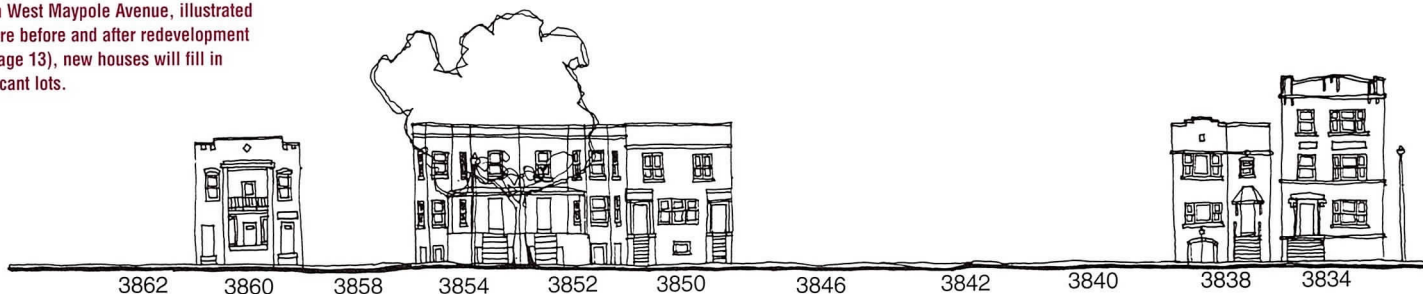
within walking distance would be clustered a supermarket, pharmacy, bank and entertainment complex. This vision of using transit as a neighborhood redevelopment catalyst was instrumental in convincing the CTA to spend over \$300 million to rehabilitate the Green Line.

In 1994, spurred by the magnitude of this public investment, Bethel New Life gave the name Parkside to a two-block area just east of the proposed Lake-Pulaski superstation and on the western edge of Garfield Park, whose renowned conservatory was also receiving increased city funding. They selected Farr Associates to develop a community-based plan for the area that would capitalize on the neighborhood's existing and potential assets. The project's goals were to identify public infrastructure improvements, develop a land use plan, and build community support for the result. Both the planning process and the finished development are meant

to serve as models for distressed communities throughout the city. Cooperation between city agencies is key to the process, as are resident input and consensus-building.

Throughout the planning process Doug Farr, AIA attended many neighborhood meetings to present ideas and alternatives of what planning and redevelopment could achieve. His slide show of "best practices" illustrates how land use and urban design affect the character of a neighborhood and includes specific examples of what can be done to solve local problems. At Parkside, traffic-calming curbs and cul-de-sacs emerged as a solution to specific traffic problems generated by drug-dealing as well as the presence of a major CTA facility. A consensus emerged that new construction should be owner-occupied and of similar appearance to the area's

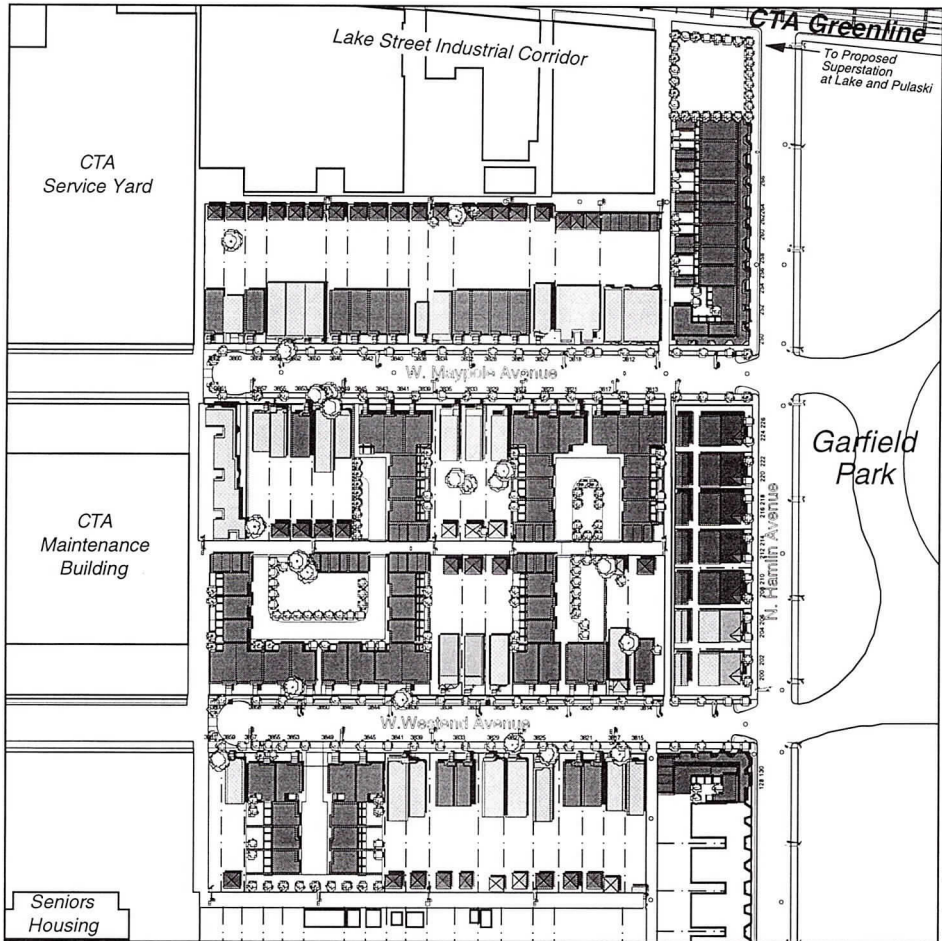
On West Maypole Avenue, illustrated here before and after redevelopment (page 13), new houses will fill in vacant lots.





For devastated city neighborhoods far from the amenities of the Loop, saving a single building has little transformative effect. Focused area planning is a more effective strategy.

Bethel New Life gave the name Parkside to a two-block area just east of the proposed Lake-Pulaski superstation and selected Farr Associates to develop a comprehensive community-based plan for the area.



improvements and building demolition) and presents a land-use plan featuring new construction along with renovation of existing buildings to provide owner-occupied housing for a variety of incomes. The largest houses face the park, moderately priced homes are on the two side streets, and the least expensive homes are townhouses clustered around gated, landscaped playlots. Attached or clustered garages will be accessed from the alleys in order to avoid multiple curb cuts on the street. New construction of 89 units is broken into 10 sites to spread out the total cost of around \$13.5 million. Bethel will rehab a nine-unit graystone into condominiums, and local homeowners will be encouraged to seek financing for improvements through the Chicago Rehab Network.

Farr asserts that this example of comprehensive community-based planning will serve the city's larger strategy of re-seeding urban neighborhoods. The success of such ventures has ramifications through the region.

As Farr points out, "community redevelopment can provide an alternative to endless tollway construction as we absorb metropolitan growth in the city itself."

*Continued on page 14*

traditional masonry buildings. Residents also preferred private green spaces to unsupervised public parks.

Bethel's executive director Mary Nelson cited the importance of pictures and slides to the community consensus process, praising Farr for his ability to listen carefully to the residents and walk them through alternatives.

"When you live in a terrible place, it's hard to imagine alternatives," Nelson says. "Doug was very good at lifting up their eyes to the possibilities."

The Parkside Residential District Revitalization document identifies municipal actions needed (e.g., street





## North Kenwood Renovation

Although the South Side community of North Kenwood has a high proportion of vacant buildings and empty lots, its proximity to Lake Michigan and the Loop is spurring private redevelopment. An abandoned building at 44th Street and Ellis Avenue presented the challenge of transforming a decaying shell, ravaged by weather and vandals, into condominiums that enhanced the troubled neighborhood yet remained affordable to local residents.

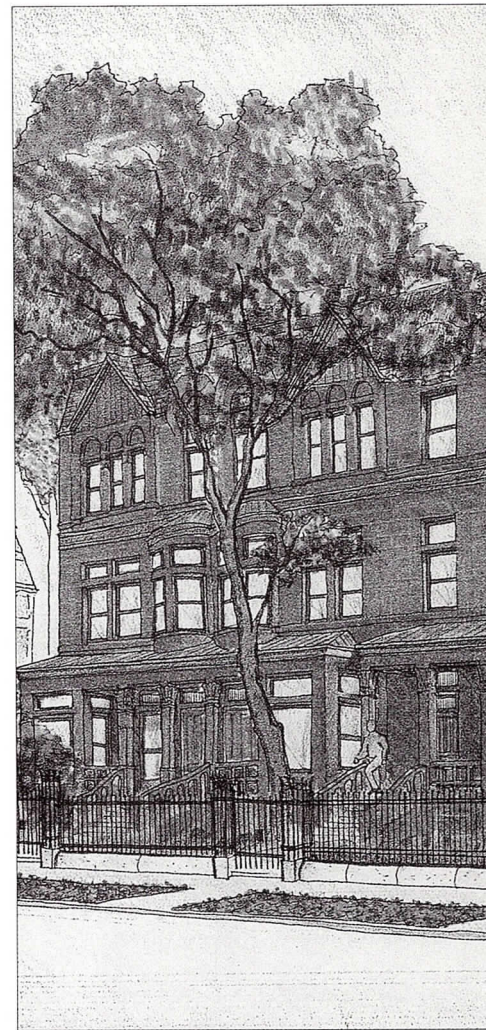
Restoring the building was a labor of love as well as an act of faith in the neighborhood. Developer Ronald Flesch, who is an architect himself and has a degree in architectural preservation, worked closely with Robert Sierzega, AIA on this ambitious project.

“If an architecture lover had not been involved, the project would not have been done,” asserts Flesch, because the expense of demolition and exterior restoration raised construction costs to the limit of what the market would bear in sale price.

Flesch sees it as an investment in the future of North Kenwood, where he plans to develop other projects. Restoring this building to its rightful status as a neighborhood showplace creates an anchor for further rehab and infill construction.

**With a project like this, you have to make every inch count.**

Corner buildings have always been the architectural stars of densely built city blocks and consequently the bellwethers of an area’s rising or falling fortunes. This building is especially prominent on a block of modest rowhouses because it was built in 1880 as a corner mansion with an attached six-flat that generated income for the owners. Its decay was equally conspicuous, as it became an 18-room boarding house and then sat empty for 10 years while drug dealers



A corner mansion in Chicago’s North Kenwood decayed conspicuously, while drug dealers stripped any salable architectural elements.

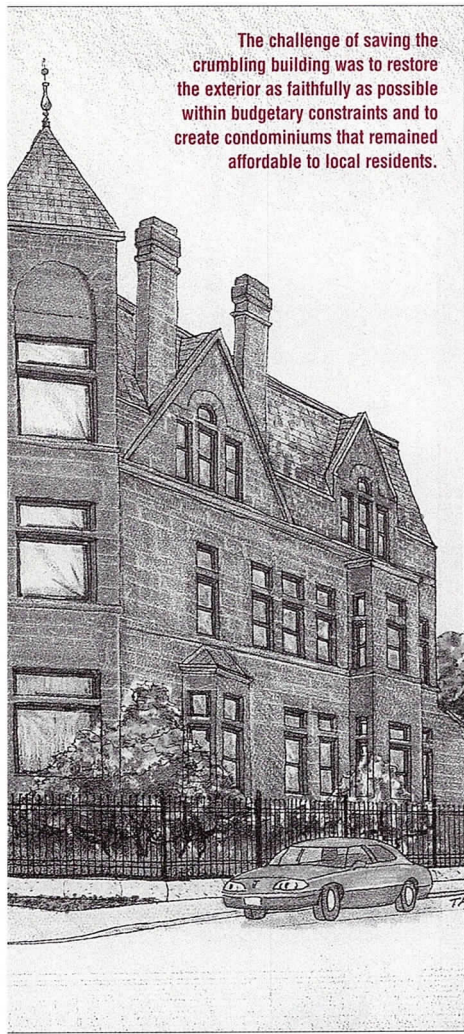
stripped any salable architectural elements. The building’s condition was deemed so hopeless by the Landmarks Division that they did not include it in the North Kenwood Landmark District despite its strong architectural merit.

Doing the right thing with this building meant restoring the exterior as faithfully as possible within budgetary constraints. The grimy black facade was cleaned to reveal its original pinkish hue, and large chunks of stonework such as a stair rail were salvaged from the rubble-strewn lot and put back in place. Tinted concrete was used to patch together original elements or replace what had been lost. The greatest expense was providing over 200 new windows in a variety of custom sizes.

The interior was gutted and rebuilt to maximize the number of rooms in each of the 10 units. “With a project like this, you have to make every inch count.”



The challenge of saving the crumbling building was to restore the exterior as faithfully as possible within budgetary constraints and to create condominiums that remained affordable to local residents.



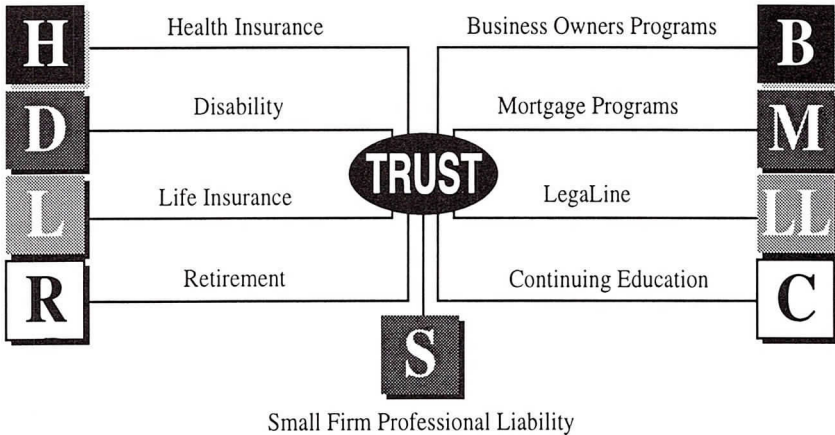
Jack Tejpala

comments Fleisch, and architect Sierzega cites the need to create "clean, simple spaces that are very usable."

North Kenwood's lakefront location and many vacant lots have begun to attract developers of new houses, as witnessed by two recent Parade of Homes events. Restoration of its historic housing stock can complement this new construction to recreate the vibrant, mixed-income community that existed here just a few decades ago. ■

Laurie McGovern Petersen is a Chicago-based free-lance writer. She is a regular contributor to Focus: Architecture Chicago and is the editor of ARCHIDEK: Chicago, a set of architectural collector's cards.

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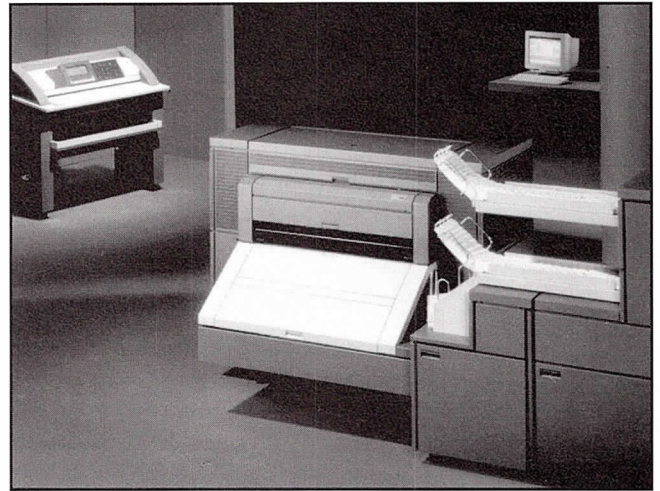


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# At Howard's End, A New Beginning for North Side Neighborhood

by Laura Gatland

**H**oward Street has long been home to one of the city's busiest public transportation stops. At least 40,000 city and suburban residents a day pass through via bus or El. Yet the area surrounding this bustling transportation hub is anything but vibrant: Vacant storefronts, scraggly lots and seedy businesses dominate the commercial strip. The aging, dingy bus terminal is sorely in need of rehabbing.

But local residents and community leaders are hopeful that a project to redevelop a 30-acre parcel of land surrounding the Howard depot will help revive the Rogers Park neighborhood. The \$50-million project has aptly been named Gateway Plaza to symbolize the Howard and Clark street entryways to the city and northern suburbs. The plans call for creating a 260,000-square-foot

shopping center bounded by Howard, Clark and Birchwood streets and the El tracks. A 1940s industrial building at the site will be refurbished into a new bus terminal, and a parking garage will be built with at least 1,200 spaces.

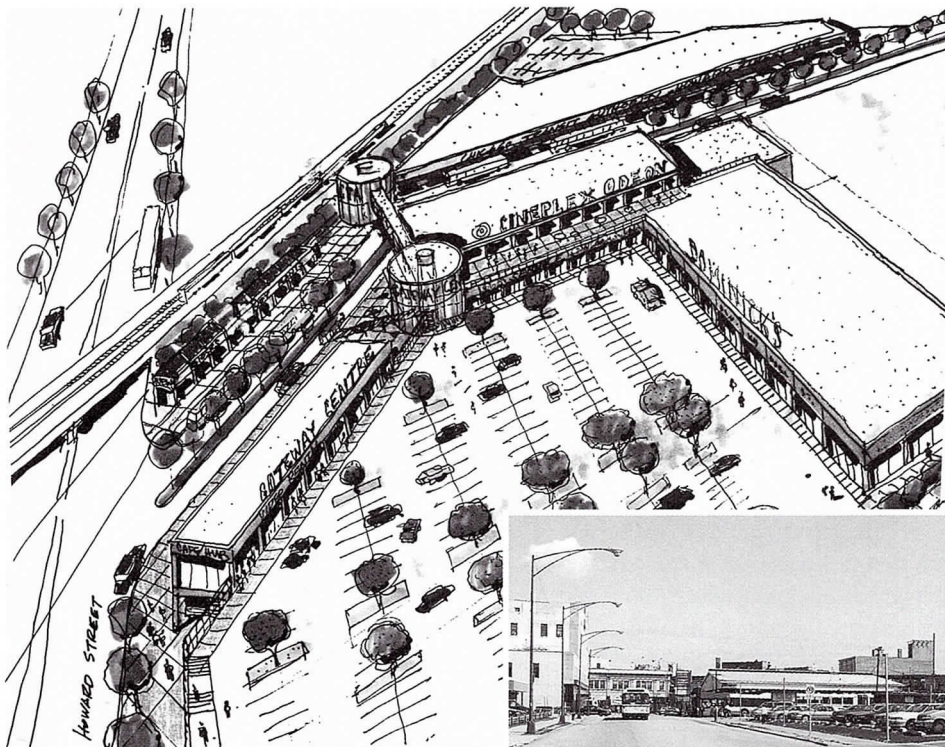
In residents' minds, the heart of the development is a plan for a new Dominick's – the first full-service grocery store in the neighborhood since a Jewel closed four years ago. Cineplex Odeon has also signed a letter of intent to open a multiscreen theater in the new plaza, and Service Merchandise has committed to opening an adjacent store.

One of the key contributors to the project's concept is the Macondo Corp. architecture firm, led by Rodrigo del Canto, AIA. The firm's design team created the project's design and schematics, aiming for both a transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly development.

"For the city of Chicago, it's the first in terms of a very large development – 260,000 square feet of retail and cinema, the bus terminal and CTA station – all working in tandem in a plan that has really integrated these different activities," said del Canto. "It's an opportunity that doesn't happen very often, to be able to program something as comprehensive as this."

The architects stressed that the scale and landscape of the proposed Gateway Plaza will give an urban feel, rather than a suburban strip-mall appearance. Macondo Corp. achieved this concept by integrating the street grid into the center of the development while allowing for ample landscaping in the

The area surrounding the Howard Street CTA stop is anything but vibrant: Vacant storefronts, scraggly lots and seedy businesses dominate the commercial strip. Residents are hopeful a new 30-acre development will help revive the neighborhood.



Robert Gordon



Continued on page 18



plaza. The challenge, del Canto added, is to blend the large scale center into the neighborhood.

At the center of the development is a vertical atrium that will house a food court and an enclosed walkway connecting to the El and bus stops. An elevator and escalators inside the atrium will connect to the movie theater, parking and two levels of shops.

"By putting a shopping center in, we were attempting to make use of the high-density orientation of the CTA itself, and all of these [bus] lines converging," said project designer Robert Gordon.

Gordon believes that commercial activity bolsters safety at public transportation, and vice versa. From 1985 to 1992, Gordon worked as an architect in France, where he saw success from connecting new transit stops to high-density commercial and residential developments.

"The most important thing is that this project is being done with a transit component," said Maria Green, vice president of community development for the Chicago Transit Authority. "We certainly want this to be a development... that fully utilizes the transit orient."

**The goal is to create one of the first urban developments outside of the Loop that really incorporates transit.**

Macondo Corp. worked on the initial plans with real estate developer Combined Property Development Corp., which put together the retail facilities along the Orange Line out to Midway Airport. To create the Gateway Plaza plans, the architects and developer attended a number of community meetings for residents' input. The Rogers Park dwellers were most adamant that the project include

a grocery store, good security and ample parking without creating a traffic jam.

"Obviously, it is a complicated project, and the architect has worked with the city, the community and the CTA to meet a diverse set of concerns that each of us has in making a project like this work," said Jack Swenson, assistant commissioner for Chicago's Department of Planning and Development.

The project's design immediately won community support because the architects clearly understood the neighborhood's needs for a pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented development, said Chicago Alderman Joe Moore (49th Ward).

"I'm very excited about it because it's going to bring our neighborhood a full-service grocery store and much-needed retail stores," Moore added "I'm also hoping it will further solidify the renewal of Rogers Park."

DevCorp North, a non-profit economic development corporation and chamber of commerce for Rogers Park, has worked closely with Macondo and Combined Property to ensure that the community has a voice in the project. DevCorp is creating a jobs program to hire local residents for the project's construction work and for the new businesses that open.

"This project will be a catalyst for creating a jobs program, new shopping opportunities, cleaning up this intersection and acting as a magnet for investment," predicted Mari Gallagher, executive director of DevCorp North.

Although the development is largely designed for public use, it is relying on mostly private funding from Combined Property.

"The whole goal is to create one of the first urban developments in the city outside of the Loop where you really incorporate the transit, the pedestrian and the car traffic," said Rudy Mulder, president of Combined Property.

"At the same time, [the hope is to] provide quality retailing to that community," Mulder added.

The Gateway Plaza area has been designated by the city as a tax-increment financing (TIF) district, which eventually will reimburse the developer a small portion of the project's costs. TIF funding is expected to total somewhere between \$5 million and \$8 million.

**This project will be a catalyst for creating a jobs program and cleaning up this intersection.**

That this architect-developer team has attracted such major tenants as Dominick's is particularly gratifying for community leaders. Over the last decade, at least four other attempts to redevelop the site have stalled. Construction is slated to begin in July, and the project should be completed by mid- to late 1998.

"We're best known for being able to articulate the requirements of the developer and the local community and for trying to bring [them] into the same common denominator," Macondo's del Canto said. ■

*Laura Gatland is a free-lance journalist. Her work is featured regularly in Crain's Chicago Business and the journal of the American Bar Association.*

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## New Library Pays Homage to the Past and Points Suburb to the Future

Originally a small farming community known as Sarah's Grove, in 1850 the area's predominant German population voted to change the town's name to Schaumburg. The village was formally incorporated in 1956, prompted in part by the construction of the Northwest Toll Road.

by Barbara Hower

It somehow seems like an oxymoron to refer to "downtown Schaumburg," for this sprawling northwestern suburb of Chicago is known more for its mega shopping center, Woodfield Mall, its large office towers, and its assorted strip malls than for a charming, centrally located city center. An endeavor is currently under way, however, that village officials hope will create a downtown and foster a sense of community.



Working closely with the library board and the village, Phillips Swager Associates created a building that met the village's historic guideline requirements for a turn-of-the-century design, yet distinguished the library from the rest of the development.

Located at the corner of Schaumburg and Roselle roads, the heart of the village's designated historic district, Schaumburg's new Town Square will differ from the ubiquitous shopping centers of suburbia. It will provide a civic presence with the new state-of-the-art Schaumburg Township District Library, designed by Phillips Swager Associates. It will also include a pedestrian-oriented public commons area, a 55-foot-high clock tower, and a 250-seat amphitheater where concerts may be held or library patrons can retreat with a good book. A mix of stores and restaurants will comprise the remainder of the project, including a 65,000-square-foot Dominick's.

Not a typical "finger suburb" that developed along a rail corridor like neighboring Palatine and Arlington Heights, Schaumburg developed along the major roadways that define the village. It soon radiated away from the historic Schaumburg and Roselle roads

locus. But Mayor Al Larson believes the new Town Square will bring people back as a place where they can get out of their cars and walk, shop, relax or mingle.

It has been a learning experience for Larson. Six years ago at the Mayor's Institute of Design, he presented a proposed plan for upgrading a derelict shopping center that stood where Town Square will be located. The design panel, which was composed of urban planners, architects and engineers, urged him to retool the scheme, pointing out that a successful downtown should, by definition, be more than a place to shop. The mayor and the Schaumburg planning department regrouped and decided to utilize an existing TIF district and take over the shopping center, turning it into a true village center.

At the same time, the Schaumburg Township Library District expressed an interest in relocating to Town Square. As the largest community library in the state and with about 70,000 patrons a month, the library easily will attract people to Town Square.

Working closely with the library board and the village, Phillips Swager Associates designed a building reminiscent of the Prairie School of architecture. The plans met the village's historic guideline requirements for a turn-of-the-century design, yet distinguish the library from the rest of the development. The two-story, 120,000-square-foot library will be constructed of buff-colored roman brick for the first floor and of precast concrete for the second story to express the building's Wrightian massing and detailing.

The library will form the west side of the public commons area. Overlooking the commons area, the building's east side is free of parking and was designed to maintain the intimacy and sense of an outdoor room.

"Adequate parking, a grade-level entrance and a centrally located circulation desk were critical for the library," explained Phillips Swager Associate's

*Continued on page 20*

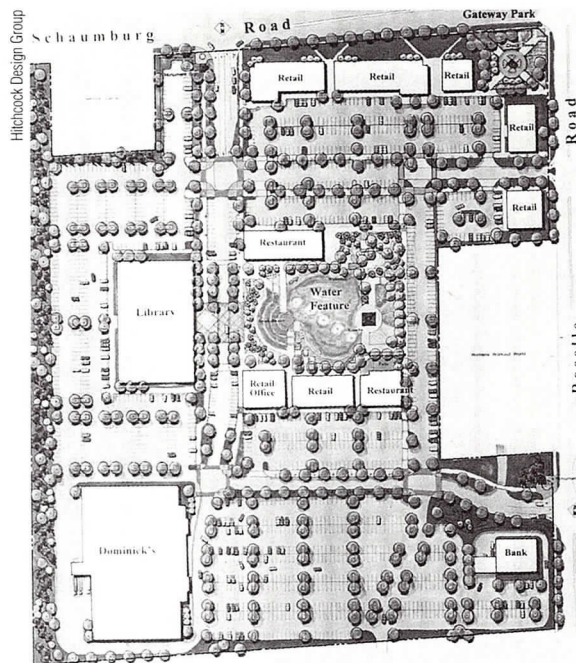


**Schaumburg Library**  
Continued from page 19

project manager Mark Balasi, AIA. Consequently, the primary entrance is situated on the west facade of the building, adjacent to parking.

Critics of Town Square point out the folly of attempting to simulate traditional downtowns like those in Naperville, Wheaton or Glen Ellyn that were built before the automobile dominated the scene.

"The problem with Schaumburg is that it's gotten a bad rap for the amount of retail development that's occurred," said Geoff Roehll, vice president at the Hitchcock Design Group, land planners for Town Square. "If you were to ask somebody in the Chicago area where the heart of downtown Schaumburg was, I guarantee they wouldn't say the intersection of Schaumburg and Roselle roads."



Located at the corner of Schaumburg and Roselle roads, the new Town Square will differ from the ubiquitous shopping centers of suburbia. It will provide a civic presence with the new state-of-the-art Schaumburg Township District Library.

He pointed out that a major problem with this location is that the two roads are large collector streets and, as such, lack the character and feel of a typical downtown with its two-way streets and on-street parking. "One of the most frustrating things we had to face was dealing with

contemporary parking regulations to create a downtown," explained Roehll.

In spite of the criticisms that the Town Square development has received, many of its detractors have also conceded it is a valuable lesson for architects and planners in generating community amidst the traffic-snarled realities of modern-day urban America. For this reason, the development has been garnering much national media attention as a creative solution to urban planning that responds to contemporary needs. ■

*Barbara Hower is a former editor of Inland Architect. She has written design-related articles for the Chicago Tribune, Chicago magazine and Realty and Building magazine.*

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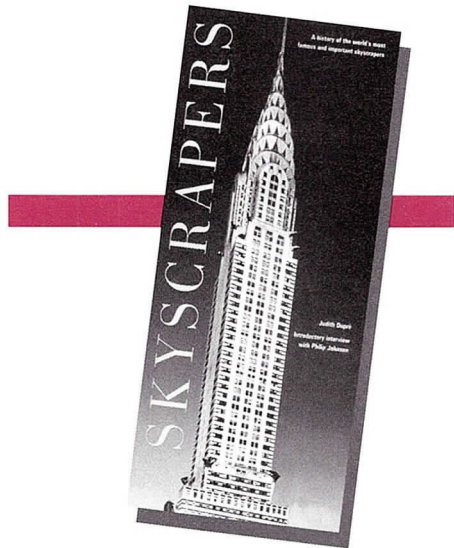
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# Tall Tales Top Bestseller's List

compiled by Mark Millmore

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This magnificent book presents a fascinating look at 50 of the greatest skyscrapers in the world. Breathtaking full-page photographs take the reader behind the scenes.

### 2. AIA Guide to Chicago, the Guide to the Premier City of American Architecture

(Sinkevitch, Alice, ed. 1993. 500 pages, \$25.00 paperback.)

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### 3. Chicago's Famous Buildings

(Schulz, Franz and Harrington, Kevin, eds. 4th edition. 1993. 300 pages, \$10.95 paperback.)

This thoroughly revised and updated edition includes some of Chicago's best buildings in the Loop, neighborhoods and Oak Park.

### 4. Chicago Architecture and Design

(Larson, G. and Pridmore, J. 1993, 256 pages, \$49.50 hardcover.)

This book is the first examination of Chicago's finest buildings from the viewpoint of their interior architecture. It chronicles the development of Chicago's architecture and brings to life the events that surrounded it, beginning with the Great Fire of 1871.

### 5. Chicago: In and Around the Loop, Walking Tours of Architecture and History

(Wolfe, Gerard. 1996, 465 pages, \$22.95 paperback.)

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Continued on page 24

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**6. City of the Century, the Epic of Chicago and the Making of America**

(Miller, Donald L. 1996, 704 pages, \$35.00 hardcover.)

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**7. Louis Henry Sullivan**

(Elia, Mario. 1996, 280 pages, \$60.00 hardcover.)

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**8. A Walk Through Graceland Cemetery**

(Lancot, Barbara. 1988, 61 pages, \$6.95 paperback.)

This popular Chicago Architecture Foundation walking tour is provided in written form to lead readers on a path through the architectural, sculptural, and historical splendor of Graceland Cemetery.

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**9. They All Fall Down, Richard Nickel's Struggle to Save America's Architecture**

(Cahan, Richard. 1994, 320 pages, \$24.95 paperback.)

After a career of documenting Louis Sullivan's work, Richard Nickel lost his

life while salvaging material from the Stock Exchange Building. This biography interweaves Nickel's crusade with architecture and historic preservation in Chicago.

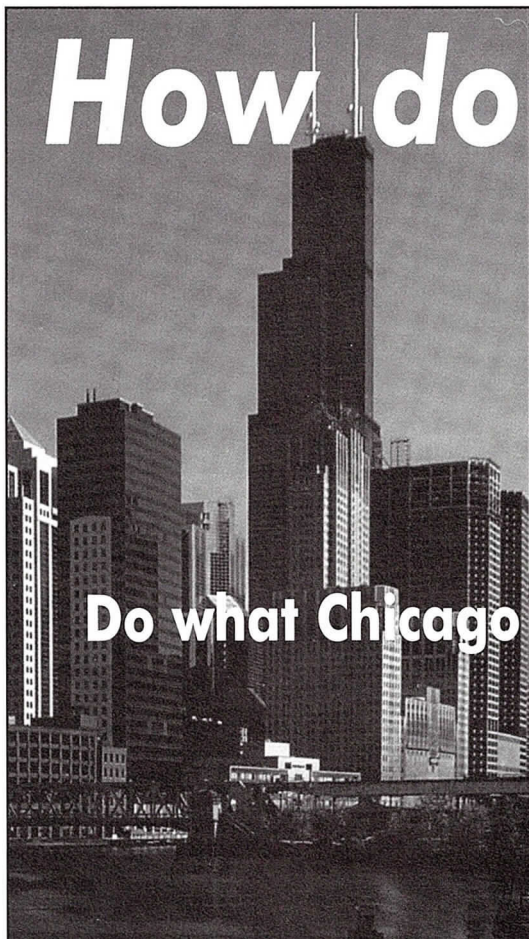
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**10. Feng Shui, Arranging Your Home to Change Your Life**

(Lagatree, Kirsten M. 1996, 84 pages, \$9.95 paperback.)

Feng Shui is the ancient Chinese art of placement. Readers can journey room-by-room through their home, apartment or office to learn how feng shui principles work.

Mark Millmore is assistant store manager for the CAF Shop.



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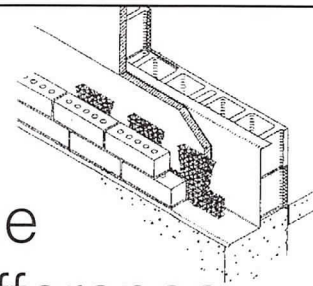
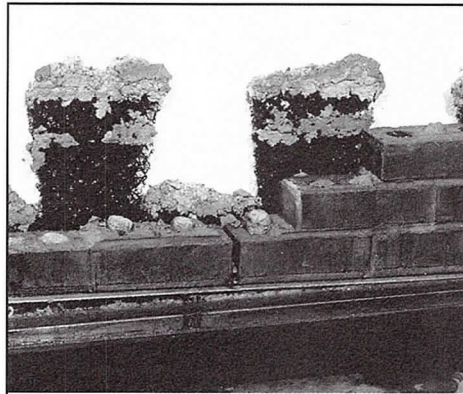
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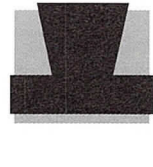
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**1 The Art Institute of Chicago.** Exhibit. Views of Chicago: Travel Sketches by Contemporary Architects. Through July 6; Gallery 24, 111 S. Michigan Ave. \$7 admission to the museum. Information: 312/443-3600.

**3 Chicago Architecture Foundation.** Tour. Movie Palaces by Bus. 9:30 a.m.; 224 S. Michigan Ave. \$35 prepaid. Reservations: 312/922-3432 ext. 240.

**4 Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois.** Tour. Chicago's Historic Churches. 12:00 noon; Monadnock Building, 54 W. Van Buren St. \$25 at the door. Information: 312/922-1742.

**7 Chicago Architecture Foundation.** Lecture. Northwestern Memorial Hospital Redevelopment Project: Caring for Today, Building for Tomorrow. Speaker: Thomas Fromm, AIA, VOA Associates. 12:15 p.m.; 224 S. Michigan Ave. Free. Reservations: 312/922-3432 ext. 239.

**9 Museum of Science and Industry.** Exhibit. Designer Dream Cars. Through September 7. 57th Street and Lake Shore Drive. Information: 773/684-1414.

**14 Chicago Architecture Foundation.** Lecture. Frank Lloyd Wright and the Arts and Crafts Movement. Speaker: Lyman Shepard, architectural historian. 12:15 p.m.; 224 S. Michigan Ave. Free. Reservations: 312/922-3432 ext. 239.

**15 Illinois Institute of Technology.** Exhibit. Student Work. 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.; S.R. Crown Hall, 3360 S. State St. Information: 312/567-3230.

**17 Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio Foundation.** House Walk. Wright Plus. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; 951 Chicago Ave., Oak Park. \$55. Information: 708/848-1976.

**21 Chicago Architecture Foundation.** Lecture. The Accessible House: Issues of Adaptability. Speaker: Carl Lewis, University of Illinois. 12:15 p.m.; 224 S. Michigan Ave. Free. Reservations: 312/922-3432 ext. 239.

**AIA Chicago.** Public Lecture Series. The Place Where We Live: New Views of Urban Housing. Speakers: Peter Landon, AIA, Landon Architects Ltd.; Chris Lee, AIA, Johnson & Lee Ltd.; James Nagle, FAIA, Nagle Hartray Danker Kagan McKay Architects. 5:30 p.m.; Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St. (second floor theater). Free. Information: 312/670-7770.

**22 The Art Institute of Chicago.** Exhibition preview and wine tasting. The Grand Tour: Travel Sketches from the Permanent Collection. 5:30 p.m.; Kisho Kurokawa Gallery of Architecture, 111 S. Michigan Ave. \$12. Information: 312/857-7166.

**28 Chicago Architecture Foundation.** Lecture. Louis Sullivan and the Language of Modern Architecture. Speaker: Victor Simmons, curator. 12:15 p.m.; 224 S. Michigan Ave. Free. Reservations: 312/922-3432 ext. 239.

**31 Chicago Architecture Foundation.** Workshop. Young Archeologist Family Workshop. 9:30 a.m. -12:00 noon; 224 S. Michigan Ave. Free. Information: 312/922-3432 ext. 220.

**! Summer Events**

**June 18 – AIA Chicago.** Public Lecture Series. Point of Entry: Transportation Gateways and the City Image. Speakers: James DeStefano, FAIA, DeStefano and Partners; Doug Farr, AIA, Farr Associates; Diane Legge Kemp, FAIA, DLK Architecture Inc. 5:30 p.m.; Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St. (second floor theater). Free. Information: 312/670-7770.

**Now Through June 22 – Art Institute of Chicago.** Exhibit. Architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Regenstein Hall, 111 S. Michigan Ave. \$7 admission to the museum. Information: 312/443-3600.

**July 16 – AIA Chicago.** Public Lecture Series. Audience Response: Keeping Cultural Icons Viable. Speakers: Laurence Booth, FAIA, Booth/Hansen & Associates Inc.; Joseph Gonzalez, AIA, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP; Ralph Johnson, FAIA, Perkins & Will. 5:30 p.m.; Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St. (second floor theater). Free. Information: 312/670-7770.

**Now Through July 16 – Art Institute of Chicago.** Exhibit. A Great Little City: Chicago Souvenir Buildings. Kraft Education Center, 111 S. Michigan Ave. \$7 admission to the museum. Information: 312/443-3600.

**July 25 – Chicago Opera Theater.** Premiere. Shining Brow. Opera based on the life of acclaimed architect Frank Lloyd Wright. 8:00 p.m.; 60 E. Balbo St. \$12 to \$60. Information: 773/292-7578.

**August 20 – AIA Chicago.** Public Lecture Series. Not Your Typical Day at the Office: Transformations in the Workplace. Speakers: Neil Frankel, AIA, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP; Angie Lee, AIA, O'Donnell Wicklund Pigozzi and Peterson; Thomas Zurowski, AIA, Eastlake Studio. 5:30 p.m.; Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St. (second floor theater). Information: 312/670-7770.

**DO YOU NEED INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE WITH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?**

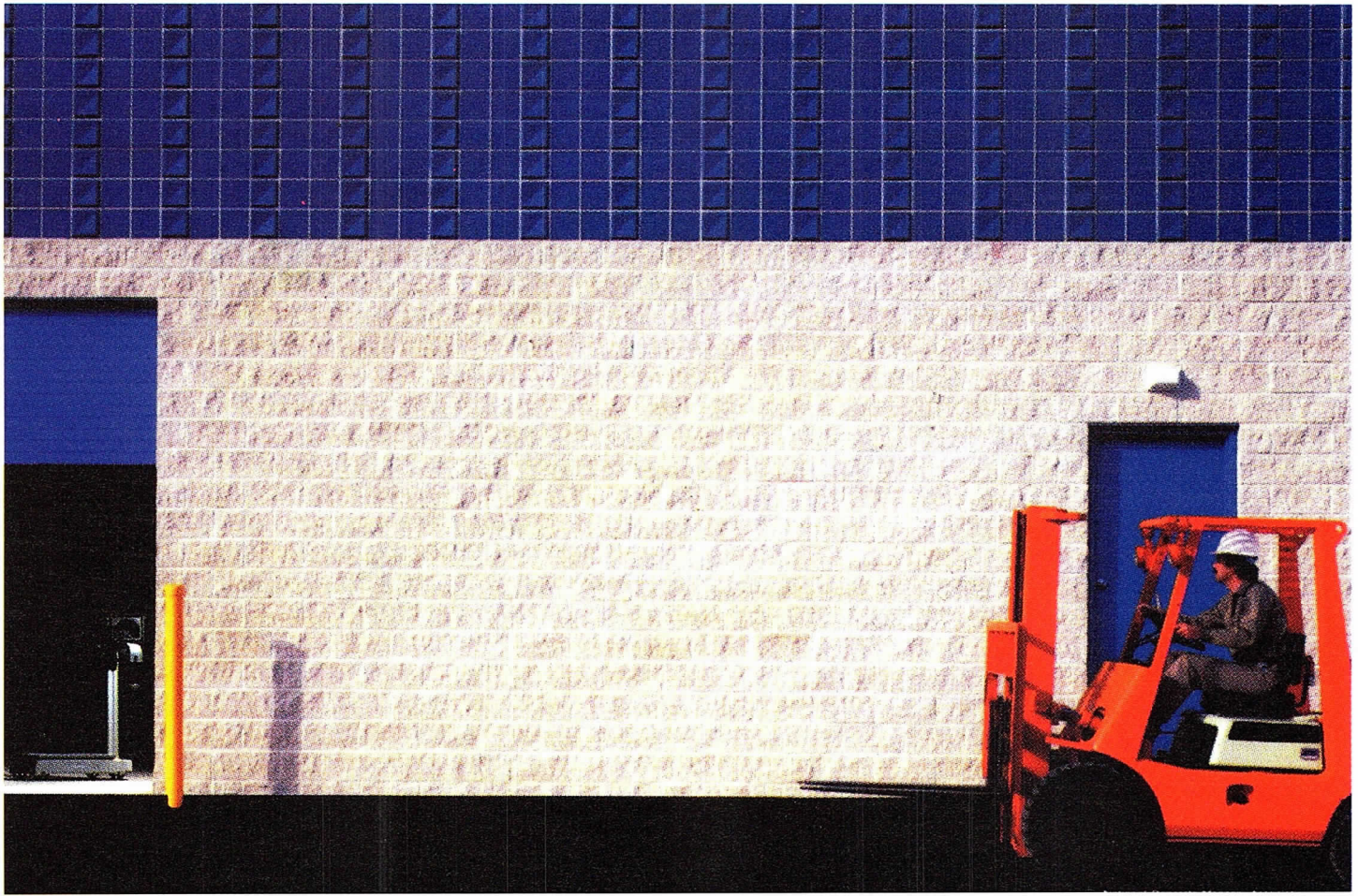
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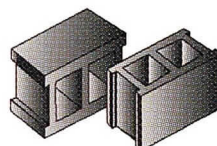
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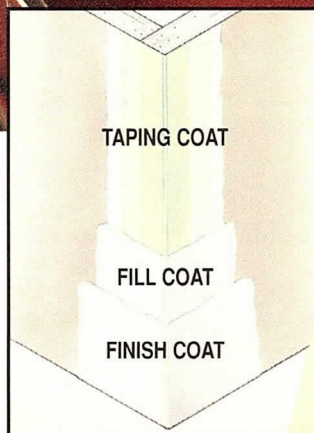
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