

# Working Solutions

THEODORE THOERIG

**The latest winners of the recent Awards for Excellence: the Americas competition, announced in April at the 2010 ULI Real Estate Summit at the Spring Council Forum in Boston, reflect a balance among economic viability, ecological stewardship, and social equity.**

FROM AN OPEN-AIR SHOPPING center in Guadalajara, Mexico, to a LEED Platinum-rated convention center in Vancouver, British Columbia, and from the 5 million-square-foot (465,000-sq-m) L.A. Live development in Los Angeles to the eight-unit, 72-foot- (22-m-) wide Thin Flats townhouse project in Philadelphia, this year's Americas winners in the ULI Awards for Excellence program integrate solutions to environmental challenges as well as social and economic challenges.

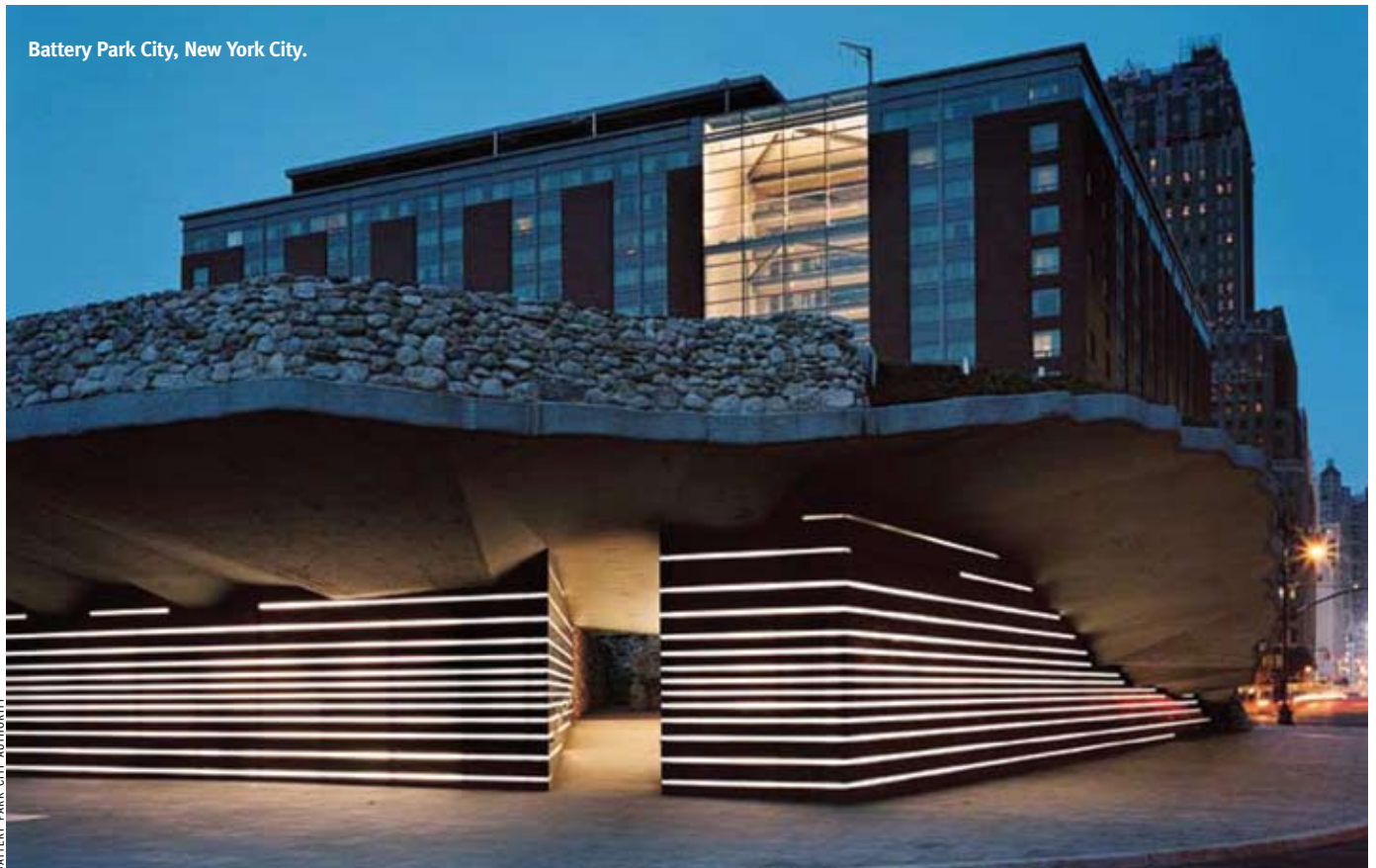
The ten Americas award winners and one Heritage winner constitute a portfolio of proj-

ects that reflect a healthy balance among economic viability, ecological stewardship, and social equity, noted jury chair Marty Jones, president of Corcoran Jennison Companies in Boston. "Many of these developments involve environmentally sustainable features, public/private partnerships, and innovative financing. All have proven to be financially successful in their industry class while enhancing and strengthening the surrounding community."

This is in keeping with the ULI's Awards for Excellence program, which recognizes the full development process of a project—construc-

tion, economic viability, marketing, and management—not just its architecture or design, using criteria that include leadership, contribution to the community, innovation, public/private partnership, environmental protection and enhancement, response to societal needs, and financial viability. In short, the projects selected for the award are not chosen solely for design; they have to work, be replicable, and be good for the community. They offer examples for others of financially successful projects, ones that can be replicated and provide solutions in these difficult times.

Battery Park City, New York City.



BATTERY PARK CITY AUTHORITY



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Bethel Commercial Center in Chicago (top and above); Madison at 14th Apartments in Oakland, California (below left); and Columbia Heights in Washington, D.C. (below right).

## Social Responsibility

In the area of social responsibility, three of the projects exhibited a major community impact, each filling gaps—both large and small—in their respective city’s social fabric.

### Bethel Commercial Center, Chicago.

Bethel Commercial Center arose out of a community effort to save the Green Line train route, which serves the city’s West Garfield neighborhood, where only 6 percent of residents own cars. The transit center includes ground-floor retail space, employment and job training offices, the only full-service bank in the neighborhood, and a daycare center. The latter gives residents the opportunity to drop off and pick up children and commute to work without using a car. “The Bethel Commercial Center is the anchor of a larger commitment to activate redevelopment along the Green Line,” says Stacey Flint, senior director, real estate development, for developer Bethel New Life. This commitment includes revitalization of the commercial district, production of more affordable housing units, and plans for a grocery store.

**Madison at 14th Apartments, Oakland, California.** Combining award-winning contemporary architecture with a social mission, Madison at 14th Apartments has reserved 20 of its

79 units for former foster children, thousands of whom emerge from the state’s foster care system each year with no family support or social safety net. In addition to housing opportunities, these people are offered job training, education, and life skills programs. The remaining 59 apartments are available to families earning 30 to 60 percent of the area median income. The \$31 million project—clad in colorful panels and partially powered by a 27-kilowatt photovoltaic system—was financed with a mix of 15 different private and public funding sources; it was developed by Affordable Housing Associates of Berkeley, California.

**Columbia Heights, Washington, D.C.** Once a vibrant hub of African American culture, Columbia Heights was devastated by the riots following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968. The neighborhood has since risen to its former prominence, largely through a District government–initiated revitalization of more than 20 acres (8 ha) of land assembled from vacant parcels along the 14th Street corridor. Reactivated by a new Metrorail station, the redevelopment encompasses 1.2 million square feet (111,500 sq m), including more than 600 housing units, of which 150 are affordable; 650,000 square feet (60,400 sq m) of retail space, both large and small format, occupied by a mix of local merchants and national chains; 24,000 square feet (2,230 sq m) of office space; a grocery; and a renovated historic theater. The social and economic benefits for the community are readily apparent, with more than 1,200 jobs created and more than \$12 million in tax revenue projected to result from the project.



STEVE HALL



HEDRICH BLESSING



MICHAEL O'CALLAHAN

**Foundry Square in San Francisco (left); Sundance Square in Fort Worth, Texas (right and below right); and L.A. Live in Los Angeles (bottom).**



STEVE HALL



HEDRICH BLESSING

## Economic Transformation

Four of the award winners offer examples of an economic transformation—economic success not just for the developers, but also for their surrounding communities.

**Foundry Square, San Francisco.** A 1.6-million-square-foot (149,000-sq-m), four-building office development by San Francisco-based Wilson Meany Sullivan, Foundry Square has led the transformation of the Transbay Transit Center District. The area—hemmed in on all sides by ramps and rail lines—has resisted successful development for decades, consequently suffering a lack of character and pedestrian street life. The mid-rise Foundry Square project has largely reversed this trend: its public spaces and human-scale architecture have activated the streets, and its varying size and floor-plate configurations have attracted a variety of high-end tenants.

**L.A. Live, Los Angeles.** Anchored by the Staples Center and encompassing 5 million square feet (465,000 sq m) of entertainment, hospitality, and office uses, L.A. Live has transformed a stretch of underused land in downtown Los Angeles into a vibrant, 24-hour entertainment district. The \$2.5 billion L.A. Live's economic impact extends well beyond its physical boundaries: the project, developed by Los Angeles-based AEG, has stimulated construction of more than 2,500 housing units, a grocery, retail space, and dozens of restaurants and cafés in the adjacent neighborhoods. Also, a community benefits agreement has ensured the creation of affordable housing, a significant amount of open space, local hiring requirements, and child care facilities.

**Sundance Square, Fort Worth, Texas.** A 38-block redevelopment of the city's downtown, Sundance Square adopted a long-term

development approach. Governed by a master plan designed by David M. Schwarz Architects of Washington, D.C., Fort Worth's downtown—formerly a broken pedestrian environment interrupted by multiblock parking decks and surface lots—has evolved over more than 25 years into a vibrant, walkable, entertainment-led urban core. The deliberate development process has created both economic stability—the district is outperforming local, regional, and national real estate markets—and an authenticity driven by extensive historic preservation efforts. According to Sundance Square developer Ed Bass, "Cities really need to be reenergized with every generation to thrive, and . . . our generation is giving the next a healthy, vibrant downtown to enjoy and work with going forward."

**Andares, Guadalajara, Mexico.** One of two winners located outside the United States, Andares is a retail-led mixed-use project comprising a 197-store shopping center, nine apartment towers, two office buildings, and a luxury hotel. Designed by Mexican architect Javier Sordo Madaleno, Andares is one of the largest shopping centers in western Mexico and represents the largest private investment in the country last year. The developer, Desarrolladora Mexicana de



AEG

Inmuebles SA, constructed a water treatment plant and an electrical substation, creating key infrastructure for the city.

## Environmental Stewardship

Three projects rated Platinum under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program take environmental design to the next level—beyond bike racks and hybrid car parking spaces to state-of-the-art renewable energy production and water conservation strategies.

**Thin Flats, Philadelphia.** Developed by Onion Flats, a small Philadelphia-based firm founded by two brothers, Thin Flats is an eight-unit residential project that rethinks the Philadelphia rowhouse—traditionally a narrow, long, light-deficient building. The new up/down duplexes use light wells to brighten the core of the units, solar panels to provide hot water, green roofing to reduce thermal gain, and rainwater-harvesting cisterns for irrigation of yards and gardens. This modular prototype is now being scaled up for use in other cities, emerging as a development/design/build model that is replicable for infill sites across the country, and even the world.

**Vancouver Convention Centre West, Vancouver, British Columbia.** The Vancouver Convention Centre West turns the convention center concept—traditionally a white elephant of urban regeneration—on its head. Simultaneously a building, an urban destination, a park, and an ecosystem, the 1.2-million-square-foot (111,500-sq-m) convention center sits low on the waterfront, preserving existing vistas from downtown, and includes a six-acre (2.4-ha) living roof—the largest in Canada. Designed by LMN Architects of Seattle, the folded form of the building is modulated to extend the lines of the downtown street grid to the water and permit continuous public access to the water’s edge through a series of walkways, bike paths, and open spaces, creating an important link in the city’s existing harbor greenbelt. A seawater heat pump, graywater recycling, blackwater treatment, and a desalination plant greatly reduce energy and water consumption.

**The Visionaire, New York City.** Codeveloped by the New York City-based Albanese Organization and Starwood Capital of Greenwich, Connecticut, the Visionaire is one of



FRANCISCO PÉREZ ARRAGA



FRANCISCO PÉREZ ARRAGA

the city’s greenest buildings in its most sustainable neighborhood, Battery Park City. The 35-story glass and terra-cotta structure, designed by Pelli Clark Pelli Architects of New Haven, Connecticut, includes 246 condominiums, 4,300 square feet (400 sq m) of retail space designated for an organic and local food market, and a 44,000-square-foot (4,100-sq-m) maintenance facility for the Battery Park City Parks Conservancy. “The Visionaire is a culmination of a true team effort, which includes the Battery Park City



TIM McDONALD



SAM OBERTEER

**Andares in Guadalajara, Mexico, one of two winners located outside the United States (left, top and bottom); Thin Flats in Philadelphia (right, top and bottom); and Vancouver Convention Centre West in Vancouver, British Columbia (below).**



NIC LEHOUX PHOTOGRAPHY



JEFF GOLDBERG, ESTO

**The Visionaire in New York City (above and right).**



JEFF GOLDBERG, ESTO

**Battery Park City in New York City (below). The Battery Park City Master Plan, adopted in 1979, won the Heritage Award.**



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Authority's vision and the collective expertise of our design and construction teams," said Russell Albanese, president of the Albanese Organization. Green building technologies, from a photovoltaic array integrated into the building facade to an on-site blackwater treatment plant, combine to reduce potable water use by 29 percent and aggregate energy use by 42 percent.

Also, the Battery Park City Master Plan was selected as a Heritage Award winner, only the tenth such award given by the Institute. The Heritage Award honors development projects and programs that have established new concepts or standards that have been emulated elsewhere, are of national or international renown, have been completed for at least 25 years, and meet all other criteria for ULI award winners. The Heritage Award, introduced in 1989, is given only with a unanimous vote of the Americas jury.

The Battery Park City Master Plan, adopted in 1979, has facilitated the private development of 9.3 million square feet (864,000 sq m) of commercial space, 7.2 million square feet (668,900 sq m) of residential space, and nearly 36 acres (14.5 ha) of open space in lower Manhattan, becoming a model for successful large-scale planning efforts. The strength of the master plan has allowed development by the Battery Park City Authority to occur incrementally, thereby creating a neighborhood with a stable mix of uses and diverse architecture that blends into the existing New York City street grid. "The

Battery Park City Master Plan represents a positive shift away from the urban renewal mind-set of the 1960s and 1970s," noted Joseph E. Brown, chief executive of planning, design, and development at Los Angeles-based AECOM and chairman of the ULI Global Awards for Excellence. "The plan has been responsive to changing conditions—such as the emergence of energy-efficient buildings—but has remained true to its original intent, becoming an international model for public/private partnerships on a grand scale."

The winners of the 2010 Awards for Excellence: the Americas competition were selected from among more than 170 entries. The jury of 12 land use development and design experts noted being challenged by the large number of applications and the high quality of the projects, which struck the judges as particularly significant in the current economic environment. "Especially in these challenging times, ULI hopes to inspire others by sharing the stories of these creative, high-quality finalists," noted Jones. **UL**

**THEODORE THOERIG**, a ULI associate, is author of *Best Practices in Development: ULI Award Winning Projects 2009*.

## What Makes for a ULI Awards for Excellence Winner?

- ▷ The project must be in stabilized operation and financially viable or, in the case of the public and special projects/programs, must make a significant contribution toward the betterment of its community.
- ▷ The project must be complete; however, this does not require that the project be newly constructed.
- ▷ The project must achieve a high standard of excellence in all areas—design, construction, economics, marketing, and management.
- ▷ The project must demonstrate relevance to the contemporary and future needs of the community in which it is located.
- ▷ The project must be worthy of emulation.

## 2010 ULI Awards for Excellence: Americas Jury

Jury members for the ULI Awards for Excellence: Americas are selected from North and South America to achieve regional balance and represent several facets of development expertise, including finance, architecture, land planning and development, public affairs, design, and professional services. The 2010 jury members were:

- ▷ Marty Jones, jury chair, president, Corcoran Jennison Companies, Boston.
- ▷ Michael S. Balaban, president, eastern region, Lowe Enterprises Real Estate Group, Washington, D.C.
- ▷ Amanda M. Burden, director, New York City Department of City Planning, New York City.
- ▷ Thomas E. Cody, principal, ProjectPDX, Portland, Oregon.
- ▷ William A. Gilchrist, senior associate, AECOM, Atlanta.
- ▷ Gary A. Hack, professor of urban design, University of Pennsylvania School of Design, Philadelphia.
- ▷ Kenneth H. Hughes, president, Hughes Development LP, Dallas.
- ▷ Christopher W. Kurz, president and CEO, Linden Associates Inc., Baltimore.
- ▷ David Malmuth, president, David Malmuth Development LLC, San Diego.
- ▷ Randall K. Rowe, chairman, Green Courte Partners, Lake Forest, Illinois.
- ▷ John B. Slidell, executive vice president, the Bozzuto Group, Greenbelt, Maryland.
- ▷ Rebecca R. Zimmermann, principal, Design Workshop Inc., Denver.
- ▷ Joseph E. Brown, ex-officio adviser, group chief executive, AECOM, San Francisco.

## Campus Martius Park Wins First ULI Amanda Burden Urban Open Space Award

IN A CITY MORE OFTEN characterized by hardship than success, Campus Martius Park in Detroit has received national recognition as the first winner of the ULI Amanda Burden Urban Open Space Award, which recognizes an outstanding example of a public open space that has catalyzed the transformation of the surrounding community.

Known as “Detroit’s official gathering place,” the 2.5-acre (1-ha) vibrant central square, created from a desolate downtown parcel, has become the heart of the city’s downtown redevelopment initiative. With extensive landscaping, movable seating, and an ice skating rink, Campus Martius Park, designed by Rundell Ernstberger Associates LLC in Muncie, Indiana, provides a much-needed recreational respite and an entertainment venue that is credited with breathing new life into the area. Attracting more than 2 million visitors year-round, it has catalyzed an estimated \$700 million of adjacent development, including street-level cafés, retail shops, and the new 1 million-square-foot (93,000-sq-m) Compuware World Headquarters.

A \$10,000 cash prize is being awarded to the Detroit 300 Conservancy, which developed the park as a legacy gift to the

city. Campus Martius Park was chosen from among six finalists selected from 88 entries representing urban areas throughout the United States. The finalists, with the project’s champion listed in parentheses, were:

- ▷ Bremen Street Park, Boston (Brown, Richardson & Rowe Inc./Massport);
- ▷ Falls Park on the Reedy, Greenville, South Carolina (City of Greenville);

announcement last October that Burden had been selected winner of the ULI J.C. Nichols Prize, awarded annually by ULI in recognition of a person whose career demonstrates a commitment to the highest standards of responsible development. The Nichols Prize includes a

Campus Martius Park has catalyzed an estimated \$700 million of adjacent development.



DETROIT 300 CONSERVANCY

- ▷ Herald and Greeley Square Parks, New York City (34th Street Partnership);
- ▷ Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle (Seattle Art Museum); and
- ▷ Schenley Plaza, Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy).

Creation of the ULI Amanda Burden Open Space Award immediately followed the

\$100,000 honorarium, which, at Burden’s suggestion, ULI devoted to an annual competition honoring transformative and exciting public open spaces.

TRISHA RIGGS is ULI’s vice president of communications.

## Amanda M. Burden: 'When Done Right, the Payback Is Enormous.'

AMANDA M. BURDEN, chair of the New York City Planning Commission, director of the New York Department of City Planning, and 2009 laureate of the ULI J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development, offers some thoughts about the selection of Campus Martius Park as the first recipient of the ULI Amanda Burden Urban Open Space Award. The award was created with ULI, Burden says, because of her belief "in the power of well-designed public space to be a focal point for cities, bringing together residents of all income, race, age, and social status."

In my nearly 30 years in urban planning, it has become increasingly clear that great cities are not about buildings, they are about people. Public spaces that are destinations for all people boost the economic, environmental, and social well-being of cities. This is exactly what Campus Martius Park has achieved. There are people having lunch; relaxing in movable chairs; enjoying the sunshine, the flowers, and the waterfalls and playing petanque; walking dogs, strolling, lingering, and using this piece of Detroit as if it were their own. The park is used year-round—with a skating rink in the winter and multiple events including concerts in the summer. The park design and programming clearly merit emulation."

Campus Martius Park is an exemplary model of a creative transformation of central city space. It serves both as a gathering place for residents and visitors, and as a much-needed economic catalyst to the city. This vibrant 2.5 acres of green space projects optimism and civic pride—quite the opposite of the dire stories and images often used to characterize this city.

What makes this park successful is that it is a place where people want to spend time, and, as the perception of the area changes, investors will want to spend money. The \$700 million this park has triggered in investment and development in the surrounding area illustrates the multiple benefits of well-designed urban parks. When done right, the payback is enormous.

Campus Martius Park is a testament to the "decade of rediscovery" that defined much of the urban revitalization efforts of the past ten years, in which down-

towns across America started attracting increasing numbers of young professionals and empty nesters seeking both the convenience and energy of urban life. As part of the evolution of central business districts into places to live and work—not just work and leave—more cities have started transforming vacant, abandoned, and underutilized space into vibrant urban open space.

In the post-recession economy, this trend will pick up momentum. It's all about the fortunes of cities being determined by people being attracted to places to live and work, which then determines where companies choose to locate. As in the case of Campus Martius Park, the



Amanda M. Burden

result is new life for downtowns. For cities that are looking to change their image, spur reinvestment, and create amenities for their residents, urban open space is the answer.

## ULI Amanda Burden Urban Open Space Award Jury Members

- ▷ Marty Jones, jury chair, president of Corcoran Jennison Companies, Boston.
- ▷ Michael S. Balaban, president, eastern region, Lowe Enterprises Real Estate Group, Washington, D.C.
- ▷ Amanda M. Burden, chair of the New York City Planning Commission, director of the New York Department of City Planning, and 2009 laureate of the ULI J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development.
- ▷ Thomas E. Cody, principal, ProjectPDX, Portland, Oregon.
- ▷ William A. Gilchrist, senior associate, AECOM, Atlanta.
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- ▷ Rebecca R. Zimmermann, principal, Design Workshop Inc., Denver.



DETROIT 300 CONSERVANCY

## Team from Two North Carolina Universities Wins ULI Gerald D. Hines Student Urban Design Award

A TEAM OF STUDENTS representing North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) won the \$50,000 top prize in the 2010 Urban Land Institute Gerald D. Hines Student Urban Design Competition with a redevelopment plan for a San Diego neighborhood that emphasizes neighborhood diversity, affordability to families of mixed incomes, and walkability.

Nearly 660 students making up 132 teams from 48 universities in the United States and Canada were among those in the 2010 competition who were challenged to create a design and development proposal for a 73.5-acre (29.7-ha) site in East Village in downtown San Diego. East Village, one of eight neighborhoods in the city's downtown area, spans a total of 1,450 acres (587 ha) bounded by Interstate 5 and the San Diego Bay. The teams had to develop a transformative vision for East Village, incorporating the highest and best sustainable use, new

economic development activities, and evidence of market support for their development activities—all fused with financial justification for their design decisions.

The winning proposal from N.C. State–UNC, called “Family-Oriented Development/F.O.D.,” homes in on the concept of the family as the central component necessary for catalytic redevelopment of East Village. Designed to accommodate the diverse needs of families of all sizes, ages, and economic levels, the sustainable plan incorporates many critical family-friendly elements, such as community space, connectivity, public arts, and job incubation.

The N.C. State–UNC team members were Maria Papiez, Daria Khramtsova, Rebecca Myers, Jeff Pleshek, and Matt Tomasulo. The team was advised by Robin Fran Abrams. “We’ve gained a huge amount from working as a team and haven’t had any other such opportunity to collaborate with

other disciplines,” said Papiez, team leader. “We’re inspired to continue to work this way.”

Based on a hypothetical situation, the 2010 Hines student urban design competition addressed the city’s attempts since 1975 to revive its downtown through efforts by San Diego’s Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC). The teams were encouraged to respond to the city’s goals of tripling the current residential capacity to 90,000 and doubling the downtown workforce to 165,000. While the CCDC’s redevelopment efforts have revived other downtown neighborhoods, the competition focused on East Village because the area has remained largely bypassed by those city initiatives.

The challenge posed to the students was to devise a scheme that incorporated achievement of highest and best sustainable use, generation of new economic activity, and inclusion of a catalytic component to give East Village an identity and trigger broader redevelopment throughout the neighborhood.

“The jury felt like the winning scheme was comprehensive in its solution and understood all the elements necessary to make things not just real, but great,” explained jury cochair Bert Gregory, president and chief executive of Mithun in Seattle. “Cities all across the U.S. face the issue of accommodating families with children in denser neighborhoods, and it’s one we need to address. This team took it on in a very brave solution.”

“The entries created a strong sense of place and showed the ability to transform an idea, while figuring out how to lay out an idea that could actually be built with financial strength and feasibility,” commented jury cochairman Lizanne Galbreath, managing part-



MELISSA JACOBS

NC State–UNC team members were (from left) Matt Tomasulo, Rebecca Myers, Daria Khramtsova, Jeff Pleshek, and Maria Papiez. The team was advised by Robin Fran Abrams.

ner, Galbreath & Company in Norwalk, Connecticut. “The winning team and the other finalists all had a sense of contextual orientation, how to properly fit it into the greater area of San Diego, and a strong central theme that tied into all the blocks and neighborhoods around them,” she added.

“Through this competition, we are raising awareness among the students of the key role that high-quality urban design plays in creating sustainable living environments,” said real estate developer Gerald D. Hines, chairman and owner of the Hines real estate organization in Dallas. “Real estate development is a very exciting, imaginative field. It involves many disciplines and interaction with so many parts of our world.”—T.R.

### What Is the Hines Student Urban Design Competition?

The ULI Gerald D. Hines Student Urban Design Competition is funded through a \$3 million endowment by real estate developer Gerald D. Hines, chairman and owner of the Hines real estate organization in Dallas. Its aim is to encourage cooperation and teamwork—necessary talents in the planning, design, and development of sustainable communities—among future land use professionals and allied professions, such as architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, historic preservation, engineering, real estate development, finance, psychology, and law. The competition is designed as an exercise; there is no intention that the students’ plans will be implemented as part of any development of the site.

For more information on the ULI Gerald D. Hines Student Urban Design Competition, visit [www.udcompetition.uli.org](http://www.udcompetition.uli.org).