# 2002 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence Application
Neighborhood Services Department, City of Phoenix, Arizona

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  - Betty Bellanger, Village Center Neighborhood Leader, (602) 943-0824, northtownbetty@aol.com  
  - John C. Lincoln Community Development and Housing, Cindy Hallman, (602) 870-6060 x 1722, challm@jcl.com or Lynn McDonald x1253, lmcdon@jcl.com |
| 5   | 2003 RUDY BRUNER AWARD DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE  
  - A & C Properties Inc., Mike Richey, mike@aandcproperties.com, (602) 494-7800/(602) 595-6125, Fax (602) 494-7898 |
| 6   | 2003 RUDY BRUNER AWARD ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE  
  - Randall Ewers Associates (REA), (602) 264-5454, rubysk8@aol.com |
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  - Greg Ewers / Pk ARS Consi. |
| 8   | EXTRA COPY OF ABSTRACT, PROJECT DATA, AND IMAGE |
PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Project Name: New North Town/Village Center
Neighborhood Initiative Area
Owner: NA
Project Use(s): Residential and Commercial
Project Size: Northern to Dunlap avenues, Central Ave along Arizona Canal to 12th Street
Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate): NA
Date Initiated: 1995
Project Completion Date (if appropriate): NA
Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates: NA

Application submitted by:
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Organization: Neighborhood Services Department, City of Phoenix
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Key Participants (Attach an additional sheet if needed)

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<th>Organization</th>
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<tr>
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Please indicate how you learned of the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. (Check all that apply).

- [ ] Direct mailing
- [ ] Magazine Advertisement
- [x] Professional Organization
- [ ] Newsletter
- [ ] Magazine Calendar
- [ ] Previous RBA entrant
- [ ] Previous Selection Committee
- [ ] Other (specify) __________

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ABSTRACT

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Project Name: New North Town/Village Center Neighborhood Initiative Area
Address: 200 W. Washington St
City/State/ZIP: Phoenix AZ 85003

1. Give a brief overview of the project, including major project goals.

The City of Phoenix established the Neighborhood Initiative Area (NIA) program in 1993 to provide for comprehensive and concentrated revitalization in target areas across the city. At the inception of the NIA program, five areas were selected to participate. The program addresses the physical, social, and economic deterioration of central city neighborhoods. While the main goal of the program is revitalization, the specific objectives for each area vary depending on the priorities identified through the program. Using partnerships with residents, public and private organizations and businesses, and other interested organizations, City staff lead an intensive effort in the NIA to match available resources with identified priorities to effect results-oriented visible change in the neighborhoods.

Major Project Goals for the New North Town/Village Center NIA:
- Neighborhood Organization and Resident Involvement - increase participation to develop strong neighborhood associations
- Public Safety - increase safety of vacant buildings and lots; educate residents on crime fighting/prevention
- Housing Rehabilitation - efficient property acquisition, rehabilitations/reconstructs, and preservation enforcement
- Property Maintenance/Appearance - eliminate preservation ordinance violations through education and promotion of comprehensive housing rehabilitation programs
- Public Facilities/Infrastructure - provide improvements as identified by city staff and residents
- Economic Development/Land Use/Commercial Revitalization - improve the overall appearance of the neighborhood to improve economic investment and desirability; build new office space and attract diverse retail

2. Why does the project merit the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence?

The New North Town/Village Center NIA is unique in that it is not a single project to address a single urban issue. Rather, it is a composite of diverse projects implemented over a larger area supported with creative, sustained, and concentrated resources to achieve its goals. Recognizing that neighborhoods are at the heart of every community, the Neighborhood Services staff works closely with the residents to identify and address unique needs and challenges in their neighborhoods. This relationship continuously helps the city discover community needs that may otherwise be neglected. As neighborhood needs are discovered, they are incorporated into a Neighborhood Initiative Area action plan supported with a budget and dedicated timeframe for completion. In actuality, needs raised by residents become opportunities to address community needs with direct community action and involvement. The traditional approach of government reacting on behalf of the people only when called upon has transformed into people collaborating in concert with a proactive local government.

The Neighborhood Services Department is able to bring multi-faceted solutions to the NIA through their vast network of partnerships from other city departments, county and state agencies, as well as other public and private organizations. Through these connections, there are substantial and visible impact in dealing with issues such as public safety, blight, graffiti, housing rehabilitation, and commercial and residential revitalization in the NIA, allowing residents to have a renewed sense of community identity and sense of belonging.

The Bruner Award can assist in engaging and energizing residents, private and public relationships in their Neighborhood Initiative Area. By sharing our accomplishments and possibilities, other neighborhoods and communities across the nation may reach out and collaborate with their neighborhoods, public and private partners. Successful community sustainment and revitalization can be achieved with resident initiative, and private and public partnerships.
**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

*Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.*

1. How has the project impacted the local community?

   In 1927, the New North Town/Village Center area was a small community developed around the Desert Mission, a health camp for people suffering from tuberculosis. In 1993, when the City of Phoenix designated this historical community as an NIA, the area was disadvantaged, neglected, and in disrepair. Surrounded and nestled by pristine hills and desert vegetation, the area was negatively contrasted with high crime, blight, graffiti, and general neglect, with no economic base or infrastructure to adequately support local residents. Many barriers existed to attract private sector investments and residents to this distressed area.

   Like many other cities with a rapidly growing economy, the Village Center/New North Town area was not benefiting from the current prosperity. As the central agent for neighborhood health and revitalization, the NIA Team facilitated and aligned the necessary organizations and their activities into orchestrated actions. The NIA has improved the community’s quality of life in many ways. With significant collaboration from neighborhood groups, private and public partners, improvements and developments are expedited by reducing the time and cost of assembling and clearing blighted sites and obsolete infrastructures, and resolving incompatible land use issues. Incentives and assistance were developed to create attractive environments and conditions to attract private reinvestment.

   The key to success has been the collaboration of all the diverse organizations contributing their resources to a common goal.

   Through community-wide anti-crime programs such as the City of Phoenix Fight Back and Graffiti Buster programs, and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Weed and Seed program, drug crime rates have been mitigated to a 7 year low—down 65% from one of its highest levels. Infrastructure improvements such as street and parking resurfacing, and lighting for parks and streets have helped to improve the community’s image and reduce opportunities for crime. To stimulate economic development, storefront improvements have helped attract business and stimulate employment opportunities contributing to increased incomes for local residents. Public facility improvements initiatives created a partnership with the Maricopa County Flood Control District and the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department to build a 10 acre water retention basin which also served as a park. This dual-purpose project removed residents from the flood plain and relieved them from paying flood insurance. A canal improvement along the NIA’s boundary using art and landscape architecture to reconnect the community to the historic and vital canals was awarded the Merit Award for Design by the American Society of Landscape Architects. Lastly, housing infills and rehabilitation have contributed to home ownership and increased home values in the surrounding area.

   Throughout the NIA, the Neighborhood Services Department has consistently proposed projects that focused on eliminating blighted rental and vacant properties, upgrading or providing new infrastructure for older and distressed neighborhoods and served as a catalyst for new investment and development. Residents, as well as business and government leaders, have concluded that these physical requirements, along with neighborhood-based services, can increase the quality of life in a neighborhood.

   * SeeAttachment for New North Town/Village Center NIA Recent Accomplishments and Highlights

2. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

   In 1993, the City of Phoenix was awarded the Carl Bertelsmann Prize for the “Best-run City-government in the World.” The Carl Bertelsmann Prize is an international competition search for models of modern, efficient municipal governments. The prize awards “innovative approaches and outstanding ideas that help shape and further develop democratic societies.” This accolade was achieved through a consistent emphasis and application of the City’s core operating values (We Work with Integrity, We Value and Respect Diversity, We Are Dedicated to Serving Our Customers, We Each Do All We Can, We Work as a Team, We Focus on Results, We Learn, Change and Improve, and We Make Phoenix Better). NIA team members understand and know the level of resident expectations and satisfaction required response time in delivering services, and the cost of delivering those services. Translated, the NIA strategies for fostering healthy neighborhoods have been streamlined to include neighborhood capacity building and training, youth programs and social services, blight elimination, infrastructure improvements and housing and commercial revitalization and redevelopment. While any of these strategies may be moderately successful on their own, the NIA program’s innovative approach is to use public-private partnerships and collaborative efforts to carry out multiple strategies that lead to long-term and sustainable revitalization.

   The NIA program targets only five neighborhoods at one time, so resources can be concentrated to deliver comprehensive services. Once the revitalization objectives are met in one neighborhood, a new NIA is designated.
3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

In addition to the internal function of the teams, they also work closely with the neighborhood residents to ensure their actions are in-line with the priorities of the neighborhood. Throughout the year, the NIA team meets regularly with neighborhood associations and residents to identify what needs are in the community and also to provide awareness of available resources to solve local problems. Together, the Staff Team and residents develop a comprehensive plan and modify it as appropriate throughout the year. The NIA team continuously updates and involves the residents in the actions associated with carrying out the plans. This constant communication with the residents is critical for the success of the NIA program.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

The NIA program is funded through federal, state, local and private sources. Each year, in addition to their action plan, the NIA team prepares a budget for the NIA. The primary sources of funds are Federal grants and bond financing, including: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership funds (HOME), Slum and Blight Elimination bonds and Historic Preservation bonds. In addition, the NIA team utilizes United States Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Lead Hazard Control grant funds and the New North Town/Village Center neighborhood receives United States Department of Justice Weed and Seed funds. Private funding sources include matching funds from owners investing in their homes, businesses and rental properties; funds available to non-profit and for-profit partners in development projects; private mortgage investment by new homeowners; and in-kind donations. With these diverse resources, distressed neighborhoods can be successfully turned around in conjunction with stimulating the private market.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

The NIA Program uses a unique approach for local government in identifying and addressing urban issues. The Neighborhood Initiative Area Program is at the heart of the Neighborhood Services Department’s mission to “preserve and improve the physical, social and economic health of Phoenix neighborhoods, support neighborhood self-reliance, and enhance the quality of life of residents through community-based problem-solving, neighborhood-oriented service, and public-private cooperation.” The comprehensive approach used with the NIAs has proven to be successful and provides many opportunities for celebration as the residents and City of Phoenix move closer to their common goal of neighborhood revitalization.

The Neighborhood Initiative Area (NIA) program is a unique approach to delivering comprehensive and concentrated revitalization to targeted neighborhoods in an era of declining redevelopment resources. The City of Phoenix created a mechanism that allows for a more comprehensive and intensive approach. This mechanism is the service delivery teams, made up of City staff from multiple departments, who coordinate the internal and external efforts that promote reinvestment in the NIA. While this approach is unique, it could be adapted to other local governments facing similar issues in their neighborhoods.

The service delivery teams allow staff from various City departments to share their time and talent in a focused environment for the NIA. Each team includes staff members from each of the divisions within the Neighborhood Services Department, who focus on the code enforcement, housing rehabilitation, community involvement and community and economic development of the NIA. In addition, depending on the needs and priorities of the NIA, staffs from other City departments participate on the teams. The NIA team has a team leader who organizes and oversees the efforts of the team. Another unique feature of the program is the use of upper-level management as a coaching team for the NIA staff teams, this team is known as the Coaches. As the staff teams encounter complicated decisions or need additional resources, they collaborate with Coaches for feedback and support. This interaction surfaces critical issues and generates creative solutions to chronic or “out of the ordinary” problems that arise in the NIA.

Many of the tools used in the revitalization effort are the same for each team. Their unique approaches, necessitated by diverse neighborhood challenges, provide the mechanism for bringing all of the necessary participants together to develop and carry out a detailed plan for turning deteriorating neighborhoods into viable communities.
**New North Town/Village Center NIA Recent Accomplishments and Highlights**

### 2001-2002
- Construction work started on the alley improvement project between Central Avenue and First Street, and Townley and Alice avenues. Alley improvement is the first phase in a storefront improvement program.
- An architectural firm, McClaren, Wilson and Lawrie architectural studio, opened a new office in the NIA. This building and site serves as the catalyst for future quality redevelop in this once depressed area. The firm specializes in the programming, planning and design of public safety architecture, including Law Enforcement, Forensic Science, and Forensic Pathology Facilities.

### 2000-2001
- 2 Housing Infill built
- 3 Housing Rehabilitation completed
- Installed new playground equipment for Desert View Elementary School
- Large sidewalk installation from Central Ave to 7th St and Alice to Townley avenues
- Arizona Canal Demonstration Project Sunnyslope Community wins The American Society of Landscape Architects Merit Award for Design

### 1999-2000
- 2 Housing Infill built
- 7 Housing Rehabilitation completed
- 92 Total homes have been rehabilitated in NIA, 8 more scheduled for completion
- Sunnyslope Village Center developed and opened; 12 acre retail center (Central Ave. and 2nd Way, from Dunlap to Townley avenues); community struggled since 1979 to revitalize this area, land was condemned and fell into disuse, such centers often open with little community fanfare, but this one celebrated by residents, who are low income and few have cars; provided employment opportunities, increased property value
- Bellanger Heights, new residential subdivision, named for community leaders; replatted the subdivision and built 4 new homes
- Palma Park storage building converted into Teen Center; basketball court lights installed, parking lot resurfaced
- NSD collaborates with Parks and Recreation Department to transform the 10th Street Basin into usable park space; removed residents from flood plain alleviating need to pay flood insurance, added 25 security lights and installed street lights throughout the NIA
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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This letter is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name: Betty Bellanger
Organization: New North Town Neighborhood Association
Address: 1001 E. El Camino Dr.
Fax: NA
Title: Neighborhood Leader
Telephone: (602) 943-0824
City/State/ZIP: Phoenix, AZ 85020
Email: northtownbetty@aol.com

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Signature

Submitted with author's permission. Input received via email.

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play?

In 1983, my husband Paul and I were leaders of one of five neighborhoods that were originally in “Fightback” areas. The other four neighborhoods quit so we took what money was left and started an after school program for little ones, first to sixth grades. We have a committee of secretary, members-at-large, etc. Paul and I walked all over the neighborhood and discovered that the seniors were afraid to come out at night and the children were home alone, frightened and hungry. That was totally unacceptable.

2. From the community’s point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?

The community was so helpful and enthusiastic. They knew the needs, the problems, and were then and still are amazingly helpful and supporting.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?

When the Fightback money ran out, we had to apply for Community Development Block Grants. Then finally a few years ago, the City of Phoenix put us in their budget and now all I have to do is find money for extras, such as toys, books, etc. The tradeoffs and compromises were many and some were difficult. We had to get a 501(c) (3) and we partnered with the police and the wonderful people in the city of Phoenix City government. The help they gave us and are still giving us is the only reason we have been able to do what we do.
4. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how?

This project has absolutely made this community a better place to live and work. Our crime is the lowest of all the neighborhoods around us. Our neighborhood is so clean and pleasant. We have no graffiti. The seniors are out walking in the evenings, and the children are safe and happy. In conjunction with the after school program, we also have a summer program, full of children that are happy, well fed and healthy, thanks to John C. Lincoln Hospital who provide medical, dental and vision assistance for the children. Our neighborhood is something to be proud of, and we are.

5. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through?

No, I would not. The people in the City were so supportive and so helpful. I feel as though they are my friends as well as my benefactors. The police have been incredible. They have helped us so much.
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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This letter is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name: Cindy Hallman
Organization: Jolm C. Lincoln Health Network
Address: 9108 N. Third Street
Fax: (602) 944-8062
Title: Director of Community Development & Housing
Telephone: (602) 870-6060 ext. 1722
City/State/ZIP: Phoenix, AZ 85020
Email: challm@jcl.com

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Signature: Cindy Hallman

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play?

The Sunnyslope Village Revitalization, Inc. (SVR) an affiliate corporation of the John C. Lincoln Health Network is a non-profit community development corporation whose mission is to promote and facilitate the development of the community, housing, and business in the Village of Sunnyslope.

The City of Phoenix and SVR have partnered on several projects within the Village Center NIA. Recently, SVR completed the construction of four homes built to meet the incomes of low-moderate families. The City of Phoenix through the abatement process acquired the property. The homes that were on the site were known drug houses and crime and violence surrounded the property. The NIA cleaned up the area, took over the property and demolished the existing structure. SVR responded to a request for proposal to build affordable quality housing. In addition to these four properties SVR has built twelve others in the NIA area.

SVR served as the local developer for a $37 million commercial development project at a 12-acre site that was condemned and where other developments failed over the past two decades. SVR worked with the City of Phoenix and Neighborhood services to bring the project to fruition. This is now a vibrant retail center where local residents can shop for groceries, obtain services and have a cup of coffee with a friend. The retail tenants continually make efforts to hire from within the community.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?

When the City of Phoenix announced that this area had been designated a NIA many felt that would not make a difference. Crime and gang activities were on the rise. Families were moving out and retail businesses were closing. The major issue concerning the project was the ability of the City and residents to impact crime and gang activity in the neighborhood. We were challenged to find local community leaders willing to take on the project.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?

SVR worked closely with the City of Phoenix to ensure that efforts were not duplicated in the NIA area. SVR participated in many community meetings and we stayed in touch with community leaders and City staff. Overall we did not experience any need to compromise as the direction of the neighborhood revitalization was set by the residents and not the City or SVR. Working in partnership each organization’s efforts enhanced the others. With the influx of dollars through the various City departments the neighborhood received a higher level of service then SVR could have done alone.
4. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how?

The project has assisted the community by providing safer neighborhoods. Homes have been rehabilitated, sidewalks put in, block watch groups formed, after school programs have been put in place and a sense of community restored. SVR assisted this project by building sixteen homes. Several took the place of crime ridden, dilapidated homes. The new homeowners have assisted in bringing stakeholders to the community. Through the efforts of the City of Phoenix the community has come together and we have been able to secure additional financial support through various grants.

5. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through?

The project was well organized and inclusive of neighborhood residents. The biggest challenge in trying to accomplish a project like this is to have enough resident involvement. For future projects it would be great if we as a community were able to have more residents involved. Overall the project was a great success.
DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

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This letter is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name: Mike Richey
Organization: A & C Properties Inc.
Address: 4530 E. Shea Blvd., Suite 100
Fax: (602) 494-7898

Title: Vice President
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Signature

1. What role did your organization play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

   A & C Properties, as the Managing Member of Sunnyslope Village Center, LLC, with assistance from the City of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department, assembled 69 residential and commercial lots within the first formal subdivision to be platted in the Sunnyslope area, and worked with the City to abandon 2 streets and 3 alleys to complete the assemblage of the subject property. We assembled and managed the design, construction and marketing teams to entitle, build, lease and now manage this neighborhood shopping center. We worked with the neighborhood architectural committee from Sunnyslope Village Revitalization Corporation to ensure that local flavor and concerns were addressed. We arranged construction, then permanent financing, and were successful enough to buy the City of Phoenix out of their partnership position in the project ahead of schedule.

2. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project?

   The project was originally planned to cover a 4-block area instead of 3. It was reduced because of budget constraints in regards to the City of Phoenix and its ability to assist with the larger land assembly. The City’s participation was critical to getting this project completed because of the increased cost to buy and demolish existing homes and businesses rather than just purchasing vacant land. Value engineering took place constantly throughout the design and construction phases of the project to ensure economic feasibility.

3. How was the project financed? What, if any, innovative means of financing were used?

   The construction and permanent financing vehicles were within normal industry standards. The land acquisition method was innovative because of the City’s involvement. The City of Phoenix already owned several lots within the development area and stepped in at the end of our assembly process to acquire the last lots that we were unable to acquire through normal commercial means. The City then sold us the balance of the lots to complete our assemblage at a price which was below their purchase price in order to make the overall land cost closer to market value.
4. How did the economic impact of this project on the community compare with or differ from other projects you have been involved in?

As far as the project itself is concerned, this project is similar to others we have developed in the Phoenix area. The risk is greater here, however, as this was an infill project in an area of broadly mixed demographics and physical condition. It is clearly the most challenging project we have undertaken because of these mixed conditions of which the retail sector is very leery. Retail tenants want consistent demographics that fit nicely into their sales modeling programs, and this location just doesn't do that. It is one of the most rewarding, however, because the center was built as a result of long term community involvement to standards set forth by the community leaders.

5. What about this project would be instructive to other developers?

As there haven't been many urban renewal projects in the Phoenix metropolitan area, Sunnyslope Village Center has many aspects, which could be instructive to other developers. The primary areas we learned in are those involving the requirements needed to allow the use of federal funds in the acquisition of real estate for use promoted by the City and the interests to be considered in how to structure a partnership/redevelopment agreement with a public entity. Secondarily, marketing to retailers in mixed demographic areas continues to be an area in which we are learning on a daily basis.

6. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The most successful aspect of Sunnyslope Village Center is that we were able to bring an award winning project (2000 Community Development Award) to the community of Sunnyslope where rundown tenements and industrial type, unsightly businesses once stood. The community support and involvement we received on this project was outstanding. The leadership in the Sunnyslope community can be very proud of its involvement with this project.

The least successful aspect has been not reaching full occupancy in the two years the center has been open. However, it is impossible to determine whether the remaining vacancies are due to the post 9-11 economy or the market's reluctance to embrace the mixed demographics as mentioned above. Granted, the vacancy is only 2.8% of leasable area, and as such is quite manageable and well within the market range in the Phoenix metropolitan area.
1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

The redevelopment of the urban environment along the eastern half of Central Avenue, between Townley and Alice is a component of an overall master-plan involving City of Phoenix Streets and Transportation, Landscape, Neighborhood Services, Sunnyslope Village Alliance and the various independent property owners endeavoring to improve the built environment. The primary design concept is based upon providing a sheltered pedestrian experience inviting social interaction and community centering. Re-introduction of scalar materials such as exposed masonry, expansive landscaped pedestrian corridors, tree shaded storefront niches and cafe style patios, landscaped medians and smaller streets offer reduced traffic noise and while increasing safety.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

The pre-vehicular Sunnyslope Community was organized around the concept of providing every neighborhood services with-in a one-half (1/2) mile-walking radius. Sunnyslope was a center of care giving, oriented around the pedestrian interaction and experience, not the automobile. Schools, hospitals, markets, Banks, retail, neighborhood services, job based industry, affordable and mountainside luxury homes all existed together to form a balanced pedestrian oriented community. The Valley of the Sun's appeal to future growth and expansion of the City of Phoenix forced the widening of streets. The need for vehicular access and transportation to suburban destinations funneled through Sunnyslope resulting in a loss of safe pedestrian access. The Sunnyslope Community urban core was forced to multidivisional neighborhoods divided by high-speed vehicular traffic and noise. The problematic conceptual planning issue involved the re-structuring of the community while accommodating vehicular thoroughfares.
3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

The City of Phoenix recognizes the challenges of street reduction, public transportation alternatives, introduction of noise reducing landscape and pedestrian scaled environment as the solution to mending the multiple neighborhoods’ ability to come into balance once again as a community destination. Individual property owners must become educated and resolve, with an affordable commitment of investment and belief, that their participation is the soul of the community. This project will demonstrate that co-operation amongst neighbors with a common goal can achieve a quality urban environment.

4. Describe the way in which the project relates to its urban context.

Gateways for vehicles occur naturally through a transition of scale, speed, and awareness of pedestrian activity. The Canal at Central is the gateway to the Sunnyslope area as a car travels north out of the downtown City core. The re-developed center plus the addition of new retail structures provides for a higher activity of pedestrians in transition to and from shopping and work. The sidewalks have been widened for table spaces, gatherings for Saturday Markets, sidewalk displays by storeowners, and street vendors. Tree lined streets will provide a mechanism of scale indicating a reduction in vehicular speed and offer shade protected gathering niches for pedestrians. Protected bus stop and parallel parking has been incorporated within the street reduction and pedestrian corridor widening.

5. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the project’s design and architecture.

The strength of the design encourages individuality, reflecting each tenant's storefront need, and painting a unique urban experience. Existing doors and windows will be replaced with operable overhead glass and metal doors allowing direct access from the sidewalks with store interiors, promoting window shopping and gathering. Work related employees are encouraged to interact with the outdoors. Tables, chairs and umbrellas provided by each tenant will further enrich the visual experience and scale to passing traffic.

Awnings of metal will wrap light fixtures with a reflective glow and directional light cutouts skim the building's textured surfaces.

The design weakness lies in the various abilities of each tenant to participate equally in the design implementation that is based upon financial investment limits.
OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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This letter is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name: Rich Wherty
Organization: R.C. Wherty Construction
Address: 5501 N. 7th Ave. #841
Fax: (602) 252-0825

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Signature

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1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

   I was the General Contractor on several housing rehabilitation projects in the New North Town/Village Center Neighborhood Initiative Area (5th and 6th avenues). Due to the way the program is set up with the Neighborhood Services Department, I was also responsible for obtaining the building permit, which entailed putting together a full set of plans. In producing the plans, I was responsible for the design of the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems. The majority of the floor plans remained the same. However, there were some portions of the floor plan that were altered to better serve the new tenants.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the community. Please be as specific as possible.

   I believe that the impact on the community was very positive. Please keep in mind that this building had been abandoned for quite some time. All of the windows were boarded up, the front entrance was a combination of old plywood and rusted chain link fencing and was arranged in a manner to prevent viewing and/or entry. The building was being utilized by the local homeless population as a shelter/refuge and showed all of the signs as such. At one point while I was performing my pre-bid walk-through, I startled one of the "residents" who was sleeping in one of the tubs.
3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

There were many trade-offs and compromises during this project, most of them involved decision-making on the part of the owner as to which materials to utilize based on budgetary concerns versus aesthetic appearances. Some of these dealt with door styles, dual pane versus single pane windows, water heating systems, number of electrical panels, flooring materials, shower surround materials, and landscaping issues. I participated in providing the owner with the necessary cost estimates so that he could make the most informed decision possible at that time. As far as deciding which materials and finishes to use, those decisions rested solely with the owner.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

Looking back at what we started with and what we ended up with I would be hard pressed to find a negative aspect of this project. The City and owner took a blighted property which was a magnet for attracting negative uses (drugs, alcohol, and vagrancy) and turned it into a property that increased property values, provided low income housing, all while preserving a historically significant property. Not to mention the fact that the City can now collect taxes off of a property that generated none for a very long time.
OTHER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form. This letter is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name: Greg Esser  
Organization: Phoenix Arts Commission  
Address: 200 W. Washington St., 10th Fl.  
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Title: Director, Public Art Program  
Telephone: (602) 495-0197  
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Signature

1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

The City of Phoenix is primarily a city based on the grid of the street system. This grid is intersected by desert mountains and by a 178-mile open canal system which is the primary water delivery system for residential water use. Historically, tree-lined canals served as open space and a recreational amenity. As maintenance and water delivery demands increased in the mid-part of the last century, trees were removed and urban development isolated the canals with brick walls. The canals became more blight than asset. The Phoenix Arts Commission has managed a decade-long effort beginning in the early 1990s to revitalize the Arizona Canal between Dunlap Avenue and Northern Avenue as a demonstration project. This process involved a diverse group of partners including Salt River Project, the Maricopa Flood Control District and Parks Department, the Arizona Department of Transportation, Sunnyslope Village Alliance, Sunnyslope Historical Society, Sunnyslope Village Revitalization, Sunnyslope High School, New North Town Fight Back, North Mountain Village Planning Committee, Arizona Horsemen's Association, Arizona Bicycle Club, Metropolitan Canal Alliance, Arizona State University, City Council, citizens and various city departments.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the/your community. Please be as specific as possible.

The development of the Sunnyslope Canal Demonstration Project resulted in the groundbreaking license agreement between the Salt River Project, the utility company that manages the canals for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the City of Phoenix to allow for the installation of city-funded improvements and landscaping. This project has served as a model for the enhancement of other sections of the canal system in Phoenix and other Valley cities. The project included the installation of new native trees to provide a shade canopy along a 1.5-mile corridor and the addition of five artist-designed seating areas and water features created with Arizona stone. The project has improved the quality of the experience of the canal by bringing back the tranquility and shade of the once tree-lined canals. The aesthetic enhancements and added amenities invite greater community use of the canal as open space in a heavily urbanized city with relatively few green spaces. This section of the Arizona Canal is now one of the most heavily used sections of the canal for recreation. The canal banks are enjoyed by equestrians, bicyclists, skaters, joggers and walkers.
3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

The extensive community input, dialogue and review during the development of the design for the project were critical to the success of the design. The artistic features originally proposed by the artist team were modified to respond to concerns expressed by the community. The result is a project with a series of five art features that appear to organically emerge from the place, rather than sculptural objects that appear imposed in the landscape. The Phoenix Arts Commission was responsible for the management of the interaction between the artist team and all of the project stakeholders and partners.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The primary success of this project is the broad coalition and community partnership that evolved as a direct result of this project. The project brought often competing interests together to create a design solution that serves as a model for canal enhancement throughout the Valley. The most difficult challenge and least successful aspect of the project was the tremendous amount of time required to bring the project to a successful completion. The investment of time was critical to resolution of issues that have enabled Phoenix to undertake new similar projects in its effort to reclaim green open space that is so rare and vital in the lives of residents in an urban context.
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

1. How has the project impacted the local community?

   In 1927, the New North Town/ Village Center area was a small community developed around the Desert Mission, a health camp for people suffering from tuberculosis. In 1995, when the City of Phoenix designated this historical community as an NIA, the area was disadvantaged, neglected and in disrepair. Surrounded and nestled by pristine hills and desert vegetation, the area was negatively contrasted with high crime, blight, graffiti, and general neglect, with no economic base or infrastructure to adequately support local residents. Many barriers existed to attract private sector investments and residents to this distressed area.

   Like many other cities with a rapidly growing economy, the Village Center/New North Town area was not benefiting from the current prosperity. As the central agent for neighborhood health and revitalization, the NIA Team facilitated and aligned the necessary organizations and their activities into orchestrated actions. The NIA has improved the community’s quality of life in many ways. With significant collaboration from neighborhood groups, private and public partners, improvements and developments are expedited by reducing the time and cost of assembling and clearing blighted sites and obsolete infrastructures, and resolving incompatible land use issues. Incentives and assistance were developed to create attractive environments and conditions to attract private reinvestment. The key to success has been the collaboration of all the diverse organizations contributing their resources to a common goal.

   Through community-wide anti-crime programs such as the City of Phoenix Fight Back and Graffiti Buster programs, and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Weed and Seed program, drug crime rates have been mitigated to a 7 year low—down 65% from one of its highest levels. Infrastructure improvements such as street and parking resurfacing, and lighting for parks and streets have helped to improve the community’s image and reduce opportunities for crime. To stimulate economic development, storefront improvements have helped attract business and stimulate employment opportunities contributing to increased incomes for local residents. Public facility improvements initiatives created a partnership with the Maricopa County Flood Control District and the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department to build a 10 acre water retention basin which also served as a park. This dual-purpose project removed residents from the flood plain and relieved them from paying flood insurance. A canal improvement along the NIA’s boundary using art and landscape architecture to reconnect the community to the historic and vital canals was awarded the Merit Award for Design by the American Society of Landscape Architects. Lastly, housing infills and rehabilitation have contributed to home ownership and increased home values in the surrounding area.

   Throughout the NIA, the Neighborhood Services Department has consistently proposed projects that focused on eliminating blighted rental and vacant properties, upgrading or providing new infrastructure for older and distressed neighborhoods and served as a catalyst for new investment and development. Residents, as well as business and government leaders, have concluded that these physical requirements, along with neighborhood-based services, can increase the quality of life in a neighborhood.

   * See Attachment for New North Town/Village Center NIA Recent Accomplishments and Highlights

2. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

   In 1993, the City of Phoenix was awarded the Carl Bertelsmann Prize for the “Best-run City-government in the World.” The Bertelsmann Prize is an international competition search for models of modern, efficient municipal governments. The prize awards “innovative approaches and outstanding ideas that help shape and further develop democratic societies.” This accolade was achieved through a consistent emphasis and application of the City’s core operating values (We Work with Integrity, We Value and Respect Diversity, We Are Dedicated to Serving Our Customers, We Each Do All We Can, We Work as a Team, We Focus on Results, We Learn, Change and Improve, and We Make Phoenix Better). NIA team members understand and know the level of resident expectations and satisfaction required response time in delivering services, and the cost of delivering those services. Translated, the NIA strategies for fostering successful healthy neighborhoods have been streamlined to include neighborhood capacity building and training, youth programs and social services, blight elimination, infrastructure improvements and housing and commercial revitalization and redevelopment. While any of these strategies may be moderately successful on their own, the NIA program’s innovative approach is to use public-private partnerships and collaborative efforts to carry out multiple strategies that lead to long-term and sustainable revitalization.

   The NIA program targets only five neighborhoods at one time, so resources can be concentrated to deliver comprehensive services. Once the revitalization objectives are met in one neighborhood, a new NIA is designated.
3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

In addition to the internal function of the teams, they also work closely with the neighborhood residents to ensure their actions are in-line with the priorities of the neighborhood. Throughout the year, the NIA team meets regularly with neighborhood associations and residents to identify what needs are in the community and also to provide awareness of available resources to solve local problems. Together, the Staff Team and residents develop a comprehensive plan and modify it as appropriate throughout the year. The NIA team continuously updates and involves the residents in the actions associated with carrying out the plans. This constant communication with the residents is critical for the success of the NIA program.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

The NIA program is funded through federal, state, local and private sources. Each year, in addition to their action plan, the NIA team prepares a budget for the NIA. The primary sources of funds are Federal grants and bond financing, including: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership funds (HOME), Slum and Blight Elimination bonds and Historic Preservation bonds. In addition, the NIA team utilizes United States Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Lead Hazard Control grant funds and the New North Town/Village Center neighborhood receives U.S. Department of Justice Weed and Seed funds. Private funding sources include matching funds from owners investing in their homes, businesses and rental properties; funds available to non-profit and for-profit partners in development projects; private mortgage investment by new homeowners; and in-kind donations. With these diverse resources, distressed neighborhoods can be successfully turned around in conjunction with stimulating the private market.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

The NIA Program uses a unique approach for local government in identifying and addressing urban issues. The Neighborhood Initiative Area Program is at the heart of the Neighborhood Services Department’s mission to “preserve and improve the physical, social and economic health of Phoenix neighborhoods, support neighborhood self-reliance, and enhance the quality of life of residents through community-based problem-solving, neighborhood-oriented service, and public-private cooperation.” The comprehensive approach used with the NIAs has proven to be successful and provides many opportunities for celebration as the residents and City of Phoenix move closer to their common goal of neighborhood revitalization.

The Neighborhood Initiative Area (NIA) program is a unique approach to delivering comprehensive and concentrated revitalization to targeted neighborhoods in an era of declining redevelopment resources. The City of Phoenix created a mechanism that allows for a more comprehensive and intensive approach. This mechanism is the service delivery teams, made up of City staff from multiple departments, who coordinate the internal and external efforts that promote reinvestment in the NIA. While this approach is unique, it could be adapted to other local governments facing similar issues in their neighborhoods.

The service delivery teams allow staff from various City departments to share their time and talent in a focused environment for the NIA. Each team includes staff members from each of the divisions within the Neighborhood Services Department, who focus on the code enforcement, housing rehabilitation, community involvement and community and economic development of the NIA. In addition, depending on the needs and priorities of the NIA, staffs from other City departments participate on the teams. The NIA team has a team leader who organizes and oversees the efforts of the team. Another unique feature of the program is the use of upper-level management as a coaching team for the NIA staff teams, this team is known as the Coaches. As the staff teams encounter complicated decisions or need additional resources, they collaborate with Coaches for feedback and support. This interaction surfaces critical issues and generates creative solutions to chronic or “out of the ordinary” problems that arise in the NIA.

Many of the tools used in the revitalization effort are the same for each team. Their unique approaches, necessitated by diverse neighborhood challenges, provide the mechanism for bringing all of the necessary participants together to develop and carry out a detailed plan for turning deteriorating neighborhoods into viable communities.
New North Town/Village Center NIA Recent Accomplishments and Highlights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2001-2002</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Construction work started on the alley improvement project between Central Avenue and First Street, and Townley and Alice avenues. Alley improvement is the first phase in a storefront improvement program</td>
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<tr>
<td>• An architectural firm, McClaren, Wilson and Lawrie architectural studio, opened a new office in the NIA. This building and site serves as the catalyst for future quality redevelop in this once depressed area. The firm specializes in the programming, planning and design of public safety architecture, including Law Enforcement, Forensic Science, and Forensic Pathology Facilities.</td>
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<tr>
<th>2000-2001</th>
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<tr>
<td>• 2 Housing Infill built</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 3 Housing Rehabilitation completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Installed new playground equipment for Desert View Elementary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Large side walk installation from Central Ave to 7th St and Alice to Townley avenues</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Arizona Canal Demonstration Project Sunnyslope Community wins The American Society of Landscape Architects Merit Award for Design</td>
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<th>1999-2000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 2 Housing Infill built</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 7 Housing Rehabilitation completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 92 Total homes have been rehabilitated in NIA, 8 more scheduled for completion</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sunnyslope Village Center developed and opened; 12 acre retail center (Central Ave. and 2nd Way, from Dunlap to Townley avenues); community struggled since 1979 to revitalize this area, land was condemned and fell into disuse, such centers often open with little community fanfare, but this one celebrated by residents, who are low income and few have cars; provided employment opportunities, increased property value</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bellanger Heights, new residential subdivision, named for community leaders; replatted the subdivision and built 4 new homes</td>
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<td>• Palma Park storage building converted into Teen Center; basketball court lights installed, parking lot resurfaced</td>
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<tr>
<td>• NSD collaborates with Parks and Recreation Department to transform the 10th Street Basin into usable park space; removed residents from flood plain alleviating need to pay flood insurance, added 25 security lights and installed street lights throughout the NIA</td>
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City of Phoenix
Neighborhood Services Department
New North Town/Village
Center Neighborhood Initiative Area