



Revitalizing America: Portland firm's designs range across nation

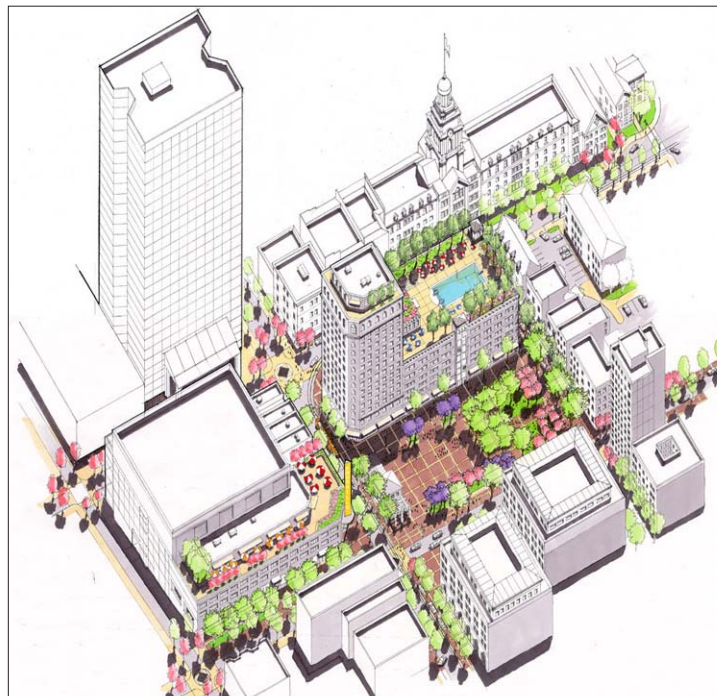
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Crandall Arambula, a Portland-based urban design firm, continues to garner work around the country.

The firm has been selected to prepare downtown revitalization plans for five cities: Lincoln, Neb.; Racine, Wis.; Knoxville, Tenn.; Whitefish, Mont.; and Oak Park, Ill.

Crandall Arambula uses what it calls a "new approach to center revitalization" in its urban design planning techniques. The firm is also known for its mission statement, "Revitalizing America's Cities."

Principal George Crandall said, "preparing downtown revitalization plans will lead each city into an economically brighter and more livable future."



Knoxville Downtown Civic Vision

The city selected Crandall Arambula because of its "boutique characteristics and ability to offer specialized, hands-on service," Morgan said.

It was important to the city that the firm's principals – George Crandall and Don Arambula – lead the project's public involvement, alternative design development and day-to-day activities.

The city of Oak Park, a community of more than 52,000 located 25 miles northwest of Chicago, recently retained Crandall Arambula to prepare its downtown master plan. Architect Frank Lloyd Wright lived in Oak Park from 1889 to 1909. Twenty-five buildings in the city were designed by Wright, including his first public building, Unity Temple, a Unitarian Universalist church.

Creating spaces

With a population of 226,000, Lincoln serves as the state's capital and home to the University of Nebraska.

"The city of Lincoln wants to create a master plan that will support its goal of being the region's economic, civic and cultural hub," said Kent Morgan, the city's assistant director of planning, "and the first choice for employment, education, entertainment and urban living."

Oak Park's city officials said they were impressed with the "human, citizen-based approach" of Crandall Arambula and the firm's principals.

This is not the first time the firm's principals have been involved with projects associated with architect Wright.

Crandall Arambula developed a master plan for a new conference center and guesthouse on the grounds of Wingspread, the historic S.C. Johnson

home designed by Wright in Racine, Wis. The firm also prepared a downtown development plan for Racine where Wright's Johnson Wax building is located. The downtown plan received a 2001 national American Institute of Architects Honor Award for Regional and Urban Design. The plan resulted in \$200 million in new investment since its completion in 1999. Recently, Crandall Arambula was selected to prepare the Phase II Racine Refinement Plan that is meant to position the downtown for ongoing growth and development.

Whitefish, home to the Big Mountain Ski Resort, is located in the northwest area of Montana and serves as a gateway to Glacier National Park. Crandall Arambula was chosen to develop a downtown master plan that would help the business district capture more of the retail and entertainment market, and the economic benefits that come from being a year-around resort community.

In January, Crandall Arambula completed a downtown civic vision and urban design plan for Knoxville that will enable the city to serve as the economic and cultural heart of the region.

"Crandall Arambula did an excellent job of creating a downtown revitalization plan and civic vision for Knoxville using a community-driven public involvement process," said Lynne Fugate, executive director of the oversight agency, Nine Counties/One Vision. "The final plan is visionary, comprehensive and market based, and gained widespread community support."

In addition, the Knoxville Museum of Art Design Lab's inaugural show, "Designing a New Knoxville: The Work of Crandall Arambula," showcased the downtown plan.

"It's exciting to be able to make significant contributions to cities of different sizes across the country, each facing its own set of unique challenges," said firm principal Arambula.

Home sweet home

Crandall Arambula has also been involved in a number of local and Northwest projects.

The firm's recent work includes the Portland Downtown Retail Strategy with the national firm of Economics Research Associates as the prime



Spokane Transit-Oriented Development
Image created by Newlands & Company

consultant, and the Spokane Transit-Oriented Development Study with David Evans and Associates as the prime consultant.

Other regional projects include Portland's Interstate MAX Station Area Revitalization Strategy, The Dalles Union Street Underpass with CH2M Hill as the prime consultant and the city of Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Plan.

The Interstate MAX Station Revitalization Strategy received a 2003 national AIA Honor Award for Urban and Regional Design, and a 2002 Professional Achievement in Planning Award from the Oregon chapter of the American Planning Association. The Dalles Union Street Underpass recently received a 2004 Reconnection & Renaissance Award from the Oregon Downtown Development Association. The city of Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Plan received a 2002 Professional Achievement in Planning Award from the Oregon chapter of the APA.