

# Greenway sprouts new developments

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Residential developer Michael Lander is a "green" trail blazer.

Lander's latest project, the Midtown Lofts in Uptown Minneapolis, is the first new housing on the Midtown Greenway — a 5-mile-long bike and walking path that cuts across south Minneapolis.

His Midtown Lofts is a 72-unit, futuristic loft and townhome development that sits on the north side of the greenway between Colfax and Bryant. The greenway runs from France Avenue in Edina to Hiawatha Avenue in south Minneapolis along a former railway line on 29th Street. The trail runs parallel with Lake Street and will connect to the Mississippi River in 2006 after construction ends on the corridor's third phase.

The Midtown Greenway is spawning a series of new housing proposals (see map).

Beth Elliott, a senior planner for the city of Minneapolis, said city officials plan to create a specific land-use plan for the greenway, given the heightened interest from developers.

"We are recognizing that this is a corridor where there's a lot of demand," she said.

Lander's firm, The Lander Group Inc., joined forces with Minneapolis-based Sherman Associates Inc. to create the Midtown Lofts, the first phase of the Urban Village, a three-block, 192-unit development proposed for the greenway between Aldrich and Dupont avenues.



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**Developer Michael Lander sits in one of the units of the Midtown Lofts, which is one of the first housing projects completed along the Midtown Greenway.**

Other partners on the Midtown Lofts include Minneapolis-based Elness Swenson Graham Architects Inc. and St. Paul-based Close Landscape Architecture.

The first phase of Urban Village has been financed with more than \$4 million in public money from a variety of city, county and Metropolitan Council funding sources, said

Cynthia Lee, multifamily housing manager for the city's Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) department.

Minneapolis-based Brighton Development Corp. and developer Ross Fefercorn are the city's designated developers for the next phases of Urban Village.

At the Midtown Lofts, residents have direct access to the greenway. Two four-story buildings face the corridor and two other buildings, one two-and-a-half and the other three stories, sit to the north. The developers have planned a landscaped promenade between the greenway and the lofts.

Tim Springer, executive director of the Midtown Greenway Coalition, a grass-roots community group, said he's eager to see other developers follow Lander's lead in providing a connection to the bike path.

"[The coalition] has been historically supportive of development along the Greenway — so long as it enhances the greenway's access, aesthetics and safety," he said.

In addition to capitalizing on the bike and walking corridor, the Midtown Lofts feature some of the latest techniques in sustainable design.

Environmentally correct features include a storm-water management system that is separate from the city's storm sewers. All storm-water runoff is filtered to an inner courtyard where it collects in an underground tank, to be used for watering the landscaping.

The lofts and townhomes have been outfitted with energy-efficient appliances. The developers also relied heavily on recycled building materials, such as recycled plastic pop bottles for carpet.

Inside and out, the lofts feature a raw, industrial look with exposed duct work and high-end tract lighting. The lofts and townhomes range in price \$179,000 to \$500,000.

The exterior walls are a bold pattern of painted concrete, "Hardiplank," a durable cement siding that resembles wood, and corrugated metal.

"The low-maintenance corrugated metal references the industrial roots of this neighborhood," Lander said.

## PROJECTS ALONG MIDTOWN GREENWAY

1. A 105-unit condo project at 3104 W. Lake St. (St. Louis Park-based Mathwig Development) **Proposed**
2. A 150-unit apartment building at 3100 W. Lake St. (Ackerberg Group and Michigan-based Village Green Cos.) **Proposed**
3. Upscale condos at 2626 W. Lake St. (Minneapolis-based Lander Group) **Proposed**
4. A 12-story condo tower and a 5-story office tower at Lagoon and Hennepin avenues (Ackerberg Group and Financial Freedom Development) **Proposed**
5. The Midtown Lofts, 72-units of lofts/townhomes; it's phase one of the Urban Village, a proposed 192-unit project between Aldrich and Dupont avenues. (Lander Group and Sherman Associates) **Completed**
6. Machinery Lofts, 123 units of condos at 2848 Pleasant Ave. S. (The Cornerstone Group of Edina) **Developer will break ground this summer.**
7. The Midtown Exchange, the refurbished Sears building at 2929 Chicago Ave. S. will be HQ of Allina Hospitals and Clinics; more than 200 apartments and 80 con-



dos; plus the Global Marketplace retail area (Ryan Cos. US Inc., Sherman Associates and Project for Pride in Living) **Under construction**

8. Greenway Terrace, 26-units of condos at 2850 Cedar Ave.; (Minneapolis-based Heggem & Associates) **Developer will break ground in June**