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Contact:  
Pat Arnst, Executive Director  
Sensible Land Use Coalition  
952-474-3302  
pat@arnst.net

**Five *Great Places* named by Sensible Land Use Coalition in second annual awards program**

Excelsior, MN, December 17, 2014 – On December 10, 2014, the Sensible Land Use Coalition (SLUC) awarded its second annual Great Places awards at the Hopkins Center for the Arts. The five Great Places recognized were: IDS Crystal Court (Minneapolis), cited as a crossroad for pedestrian activity in the heart of the city, and one of the best winter gardens in the region; Midtown Greenway (Minneapolis), praised for transforming an urban corridor from decay and neglect into a connecting thread linking 15 neighborhoods into a vibrant place to live, work and play; Saint Paul Farmers' Market (Lowertown Saint Paul), acclaimed as an institution of community gathering, a unique urban space that has been unparalleled in stimulating new development; Urban Flower Field (Saint Paul), called a delightful temporary solution where the public engagement in science/plants/place is impressive; and Wirth Beach (Minneapolis), singled out as a place once sparsely used that has transformed into a destination gathering, active play space. These five were selected among the 15 nominations received, representing a wide range of place types throughout the region, from temporary to legacy, urban to suburban, small to large.

The ten-member jury included: Mary Altman, Minneapolis Arts Commission; artist Valentine Cadieux; Kim Bretheim, LHB Architects; Mic Johnson, Metropolitan Design Center; Joan MacLeod, Damon Farber Associates; Toby Rapson, Rapson Architects; Patrick Seeb, Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation; Lacy Shelby, City of Minneapolis; and Jim Stolpestad, Exeter Group.

Host and Master of Ceremonies Don Shelby spoke about the need for the design of places to better mimic design in nature where nothing is wasted and everything has a purpose. He noted that the designers representing the nominated Great Places are already working toward this goal.

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**Sensible Land Use Coalition awards 2014 *Great Places of the Twin Cities* at Hopkins Center**

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Event sponsors included the Sensible Land Use Coalition, The Ackerberg Group, Exeter Group, Great River Energy, HGA Architects, Hoisington Koegler Group Inc., Opus, Zan Associates, Damon Farber Associates, ESG Architects, Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation and SRF Consulting Group Inc. A number of organizations with an interest and stake in place-making co-hosted the event with SLUC, including the Minnesota chapter of the American Planning Association, the Minnesota chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, City of Saint Paul, Urban Land Institute - MN, EDAM, Lambda Alpha, NAIOP, Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, New Urbanism Minnesota, Forecast Public Art, and Corenet Global.

SLUC is a non-profit educational organization consisting of members from public and private sectors involved in development. For over 30 years, the Sensible Land Use Coalition has been a local leader in the peer-to-peer, cross-disciplinary exchange of information and ideas among Twin Cities land use professionals, using a balanced, “sensible” approach in providing land use education to the public and private sectors, and hosting low-cost, accredited, educational forums that address timely and relevant issues.

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