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Dallas/Fort Worth Edition

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Austin Bridge and Road



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**Millennium Architectural
Feature**

Bridging the Gap

It has been said, by a wiser man than I, that the art of construction is the last step to heaven, if only someone would build the steps. Of course it would take an architect to translate the mental image of the Owner into something concrete (pun intended), and a structural engineer to inform the Owner (through the architect, of course) that you can't span that kind of distance with a 14" beam. When the design of the device is judged strong and safe by the structural engineer, a civil engineer is called upon to make sure the area around the new improvement will drain properly and indeed sit on the property correctly.

Just imagine the enormity of turning a thought into a building. The idea becomes the plan, the plan becomes the design, the design the finished product.

Details. Many details. Hydrology studies, land surveying, mechanical engineers, landscape designers. The list of required disciplines reads like a who's who of the world's best schools, and it should.

But the architect has to be unencumbered by too many details and allowed to think in concepts. Without that uncluttered freedom, our surroundings would never change. The limits would not be pushed and our most basic instinct—to improve our habitat—would go unsatisfied.

Every culture from ancient Greece to Egypt to Rome in our Western consciousness to the Ming and Han dynasties in the East have been virtually defined by their architecture, the vertical and horizontal spans being perhaps the most symbolic mark left by our ancestors.

Was Stonehenge the first attempt at permanent shelter or perhaps a religious offering? Were the pyramids just a burial site for an overindulged ruler or did they make a statement to the living about the present state of civilization, much as our own skylines do today?

Many of these types of questions may never be completely resolved, but one thing is sure. When we see the architecture of any culture, it leaves a

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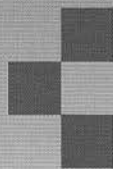
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lasting impression on us about the people who were able to conceive it and build it, and that is a powerful legacy.

It is this symbiotic relationship between the one side, represented by all the talents of the special disciplines—architect, structure, civil, mechanical, electrical, etc.—and the other side, represented by the people who are capable of building, that makes it possible to indeed improve many areas of the human condition. From the first time our predecessors decided (or were forced) to come out of caves to today, there is an unbelievable force that compels us to keep up with the very dynamic and explosive growth of our 21st-century economies and populations.

In the coming months I have been asked to write a series of articles exploring the area of construction I address on a daily basis. An area I refer to as “bridging the gap.” From the first time man placed one stone on top of another to today’s intricate structures, the natural evolution of the construction process has produced individuals who specialize in translating thoughts to lines on paper. Still other individuals’ areas of expertise are interpreting and conveying those lines to the ground and in space so the builder can turn the dream into reality.

It has been my good fortune for the last 30 years to be one of the individuals who conveys those lines from paper to the ground and space.

It is this interpretation process that “bridges the gap” between idea to reality, designer to builder.

Just in the 30 short years I have been involved in this field I have seen the business of construction surveying/layout evolve from basically the same procedures used to settle the Old West to the sophisticated computer modeling and robotic instruments I use in my business today.

I look forward to examining and investigating some of the world’s most intriguing structures, both old and new, from this perspective.

I hope you enjoy the expedition.

B/A

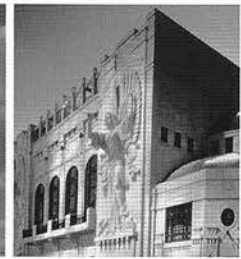
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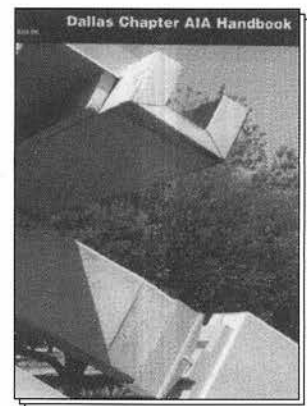
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Rebuilding Fort Worth

Coalition Formed to Promote Downtown in Tornado's Wake **"Fort Worth TUFF" taking proactive steps to preserve city's vitality**

A group of local leaders has joined forces to ensure that downtown Fort Worth's nationally acclaimed success story will continue as the area bounces back from the March 28 tornado.

Fort Worth TUFF (Team United For the Future) is a coalition whose members include the City of Fort Worth, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Fort Worth Inc., the Fort Worth Convention and Visitors Bureau, Sundance Square, and various downtown employers, building owners and business owners affected by the storm.

The team's first order of business will be a communications campaign, "Making it Better Than Ever," celebrating downtown's

continuing highlights and can-do spirit in the cleanup. "Our message is this: Downtown is open for business," said Fort Worth TUFF and Downtown Fort Worth Inc. Chairman John Stevenson, noting that most downtown merchants have resumed normal operations. "The Bass Performance Hall and the movie theaters, which were undamaged, plus almost all restaurants, stores and clubs are open.

"Immediately following the tornado, the advice was 'If you don't have business downtown, stay away.' Thanks to a lot of hard work by a lot of good people, that's behind us," Stevenson said. "Now, we're encouraging citizens to make downtown their business, and to enjoy all our city has to offer."

With all streets open, accessibility is almost back to normal and will improve daily as remaining sidewalk scaffolding is removed.

Also, the new Fort Worth Trolley has begun operations to transport visitors and workers into the downtown business and entertainment districts.

With many downtown workers displaced for weeks or months to come (during the rebuilding cleanup), concerted efforts are needed to help maintain the energy that has earned the city national recognition. "Visitors and local residents alike see downtown Fort Worth as a treasure. It took a long time and a lot of work to make it that way. Working together, we can prove that it would take more than a little wind to bring it down," said Douglas Harman, president and CEO, Fort Worth Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The initiative also will focus on efforts to ensure that organizations forced to relocate temporarily will indeed return to their homes



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