

[Databases selected:](#) Multiple databases...

Architecture firm booming after downtown move

Murray McNeill. *Winnipeg Free Press*. Winnipeg, Man.: Jan 16, 2008. pg. B.5

Abstract (Summary)

[Wins Bridgman] said a variety of factors have contributed to the company's growth. One of them is the work it's been getting from other downtown businesses that want to reward the firm for its contribution to revitalization.

"They're saying, 'You're one of us. You're taking a chance, too, and we want to support you,'" he said in an interview Tuesday.

The two-storey addition, which has a footprint of about 400 square feet, will serve as the new front entrance/foyer for the building and provide elevator access to the second floor. When it's completed in March, the wall of the addition will have a "garden element" to it and can be used to display films or artwork, Bridgman said.

Full Text (550 words)

Copyright F.P. Canadian Newspapers Limited Partnership Jan 16, 2008

By Murray McNeill

SETTING up shop on a bleak strip of Main Street has been a boon for a Winnipeg architectural firm.

Bridgman Collaborative Architecture has doubled the size of its seven-member staff since last April when it relocated its office from a 500-square-foot space in the owner's River Heights home to the former Dominion Bank building on the southwest corner of Main Street and Higgins Avenue.

Most of the new employees are architects and planners, and owner/director Wins Bridgman said he expects to add six more workers before the end of this year to meet the growing demand for the firm's services.

Bridgman said a variety of factors have contributed to the company's growth. One of them is the work it's been getting from other downtown businesses that want to reward the firm for its contribution to revitalization.

"They're saying, 'You're one of us. You're taking a chance, too, and we want to support you,'" he said in an interview Tuesday.

Other downtown clients are coming to his firm because it's now close by, he said, and still others are hiring it to refurbish their heritage buildings because they like the way it breathed new life into the century-old Dominion Bank building.

The executive director of the Downtown Winnipeg Business Improvement Zone said he's not surprised at the support Bridgman Collaborative Architecture is getting from other downtown businesses.

"What he did (by moving to Main Street) was make a statement, and people recognize that and appreciate it," Stefano Grande said.

He said the same thing happened when CTV relocated its Winnipeg studios from Polo Park to Graham Avenue, and when some new restaurants and bars opened near the downtown arena.

"Baskets and gifts were being sent left and right."

In addition to quickly filling up most of its own main-floor space, Bridgman said the company also has found a long-term tenant to lease the top floor of the two-storey building.

He said the National Indigenous Literacy Association signed a five-year lease and took possession of the 3,100 square feet of space on Jan. 1. He said it had been renting space in the nearby Aboriginal Centre of Winnipeg Inc. at 188 Higgins Ave., but felt this new location gives better visibility.

A spokesman for NILA could not be reached for comment.

Bridgman said the redevelopment of the Dominion Bank building has been such a positive experience that if Bridgman Collective Architecture ever outgrows its main-floor space, he would have no qualms about buying another downtown heritage building, fixing it up and moving in.

"This (the downtown) is where we make our stand, no question. And we need more people doing this."

He said building another addition onto the Dominion Bank building isn't an option because the firm is committed to creating a public park and green space on the land that will be left once the small addition now under construction on the northeast corner of the building is complete.

The two-storey addition, which has a footprint of about 400 square feet, will serve as the new front entrance/foyer for the building and provide elevator access to the second floor. When it's completed in March, the wall of the addition will have a "garden element" to it and can be used to display films or artwork, Bridgman said.

murray.mcneill@freepress.mb.ca

Indexing (document details)

Author(s): Murray McNeill
Document types: News
Section: *Business*
Publication title: Winnipeg Free Press. Winnipeg, Man.: Jan 16, 2008. pg. B.5
Source type: Newspaper
ISSN: 08281785
ProQuest document ID: 1413307941
Text Word Count 550
Document URL: <http://proxycheck.lib.umanitoba.ca.proxy1.lib.umanitoba.ca/libraries/online/proxy.php?http://proquest.umi.com.proxy1.lib.umanitoba.ca/pqdweb?did=1413307941&Fmt=3&client Id=12305&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

Copyright © 2012 ProQuest LLC. All rights reserved.

