

Date: 12/06/19
To: Whom It May Concern
From: Ross Currier, Principal Project Manager, City of Saint Paul
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Re: Walter L. Smith III



Walter and I worked together from approximately the fall of 2016 to the fall of 2019. Our shared endeavor was focused on the potential and feasibility of the proposed Rondo Land Bridge. It is a very ambitious and, from a project manager's view, rather ambiguous project.

As the Strategic Development Consultant for Reconnect Rondo, Inc., Walter had responsibility, with direction from his Board of Directors, for coordinating a wide variety of internal and external community stakeholders, partner organizations, and professional consultants for a great number of functional areas related to the land bridge development that included:

- Community Engagement
- Community Assessment
- Engineering Feasibility
- Economic Feasibility
- Employment Opportunities
- Housing Opportunities
- Design Possibilities
- Cultural Heritage
- Business Development
- Transportation/Mobility

As I noted above, it is a very ambitious project. Further complicating Walter's charge was the iterative nature of the project. The paragon goal of community engagement required the scope and specifications of the analyses and proposals to maintain flexibility and adaptability even as the large team worked to move forward on this complex project. Walter assured that the team's proposals continued to align with the community's values.

I was always impressed by Walter. His intelligence came through with his quick and decisive analysis of every proposal and his integrity came through as he reminded the team of the goals of the community as the professional consultants tried to highlight the path of least market resistance. Walter was always respectful of others' views and opinions, even as he was clear in sharing his perspective on whether or not those ideas aligned with the community's priorities.

If I had to pick one example of Walter's strengths, it would be during the Urban Land Institute's Advisory Services Program visit to and work in Rondo. It was a multi-day event, with multiple sessions with a variety of stakeholder groups in a variety of formats. I think Walter worked 24-hour days throughout and the expectations and demands were considerable. Day after day, hour after hour, session after session, topic after topic, Walter handled everything with a clarity of vision and grace in performance.