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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Tom Hoch Announced As Minneapolis Downtown Council And Downtown Improvement District Board Chair**

**MINNEAPOLIS (February 3, 2015)** — The Minneapolis Downtown Council and Downtown Improvement District announced today that Hennepin Theatre Trust President & CEO Tom Hoch has been appointed as Chair of the Board of Directors. He replaces Collin Barr of Ryan Companies, who has served as board chair since February 2012.

Hoch, who has served as chair elect since 2014, will oversee the MDC and DID Board of Directors comprised of members of the Downtown Minneapolis community as well as the organization's 20-member Executive Committee. His tenure as board chair became official today at the 59<sup>th</sup> Minneapolis Downtown Council Annual Meeting.

"It is an honor to be named Chair of the Board of Directors for the Minneapolis Downtown Council and Downtown Improvement District," Hoch said. "Both organizations play incredible roles in making Downtown Minneapolis an inviting and prosperous area. We have a large reach, and I look forward to helping keep Downtown Minneapolis a place where people enjoy living, working, playing and exploring."

In addition to a continued focus on the implementation of [Intersections: Downtown 2025 Plan](#), Hoch will focus on leading the strategic plan for the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District as well as executing the initiatives of the Cultural District into creating a consistently compelling downtown experience, among other initiatives as board chair.

Hoch has been an active member of the MDC and DID community and previously served as the DID Board Chair and chaired the *Intersections: Downtown 2025 Plan's* Downtown Experience Committee. As part of that work and as the leader of the [Hennepin Theatre Trust](#), which collaboratively launched the Downtown Cultural District, Hoch led the implementation of indoor and outdoor pop-up urban parks. The first PARKLOT, located next to the Orpheum Theatre on Hennepin Avenue, transformed four parking stalls and a driveway into a colorfully-painted park, equipped with a food truck, stage, music and a Friday speaker series.

In addition to PARKLOTS, Downtown Minneapolis has been further activated through Hoch's efforts in launching a series of [Made Here MN](#) walking art galleries, which highlight local artists by displaying showcases in vacant storefront windows. Since *Made Here* began, 106 window showcases have been displayed. *BRILLIANCE! Made Here* currently displays 38 storefront windows presenting art at 11



buildings spanning 15 city blocks. Hoch also oversaw the collaborative work lining up art exhibits and activities at the City Center Atrium.

“Tom has been incredibly dedicated to the MDC, the DID and our Downtown 2025 Plan goals, and the hours he’s devoted toward furthering our initiatives are a testament to that,” said Steve Cramer, President & CEO of the Minneapolis Downtown Council and Downtown Improvement District. “We’re thrilled to have Tom as our next board chair during what will be an incredibly exciting time filled with growth and opportunity in our downtown.”

Hoch has been involved in restoring, managing and programming the historic Orpheum, State and Pantages Theatres in Downtown Minneapolis since the mid-1980s, in addition to recently launching the New Century Theatre which fills the needs of smaller, local productions. In 1996, Hoch initiated the six-year effort to save and restore the Pantages Theatre. He also gathered the support of local property owners for streetscape improvements that grace much of Hennepin Avenue today.

During his six years working for the Minneapolis Community Development Agency (now the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development), Hoch coordinated the restoration of the State Theatre and the acquisition and initial operations of the Orpheum Theatre. He then served as the Deputy Executive Director of the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority before returning to the theatres.

In addition to his work with the MDC and DID, Hoch is also the board chair of the Animal Humane Society. He is an attorney, a former teacher with Minneapolis Public Schools and a lifelong Minneapolis resident.

#### **About the Minneapolis Downtown Council:**

Founded in 1955, and one of the oldest central business associations in the nation, the Minneapolis Downtown Council (MDC) is a membership-based entity that works to create an extraordinary downtown. The MDC’s collaborative developments of *Intersections: The Downtown 2025 Plan* was designed to help downtown businesses, community leaders and citizens build on downtown assets and implement future goals. For more information, please visit [DowntownMpls.com](http://DowntownMpls.com).

#### **About the Downtown Improvement District:**

Founded in early 2009, after more than five years of formative planning and advocacy by the downtown business community, the Minneapolis DID delivers higher levels of service to make downtown cleaner, greener, safer and more vibrant throughout a 120-block area, as is the case with most Business Improvement Districts. For more information, visit [MinneapolisDID.com](http://MinneapolisDID.com).

#### **About the 2025 Plan:**

The Downtown 2025 Plan strives to achieve 10 initiatives that will help leaders and citizens build on Downtown’s assets and guide Downtown Minneapolis’ development. These include doubling downtown’s residential population, transforming Nicollet Mall into a must-see destination, creating a compelling and walkable environment around the clock, leading the nation in transportation options, ending street homelessness, forging connections with the University of Minnesota and more. For more information on the 2025 Plan and its initiatives, visit [2025Plan.com](http://2025Plan.com), [BeInBusinessDowntownMpls.com](http://BeInBusinessDowntownMpls.com) and [MinneapolisIdeaeXchange.com](http://MinneapolisIdeaeXchange.com). The 2025 Plan is a Minneapolis Downtown Council initiative established in 2010.