

## THE PANELISTS



### **Gonzalo Echeverria, Panel Chair**

Director of Design & Planning  
McCord Development, Houston

<https://www.mccord.com/leadership/gonzalo-echeverria/>

Gonzalo serves as Director of Design and Planning for MDI. Over the past 20 + years, the focus of his work has been on architecture, urban design, regional planning and research.

Gonzalo's project experience includes several Master Plans for Residential, Commercial, Mix Use, Transit-Oriented, Waterfront and TND communities.

Gonzalo has worked on projects in 38 states across the U.S as well as in Latin America, U.K and Canada.

Prior to joining MDI, Gonzalo was Principal and Design Lead for Looney Ricks Kiss Architects in Princeton NJ. and Philadelphia PA. He was a Project Manager with Urban Design Associates in Pittsburgh, PA, Project Manager with URBE in Santiago, Chile, and Intern Architect at Arquitectonica Intl', Miami.

Gonzalo holds an Architecture Degree and graduate degree in Urban Economics from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile; and Master's Degree in Architecture and Urban Design from University of Miami, Coral Gables.



### **Lance Gilliam, CRX CSM SCLS CDP**

Partner  
Waterman Steele, Houston

<https://www.watermansteele.com/who-we-are/our-team/>

Lance has spent most of his career focused on retail user transactions, including tenant representation and project development. He has represented national, regional and local restaurateurs and retailers throughout a broad market area including Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and most of the southeastern and western United States.

Lance has shared responsibility for leasing numerous significant retail projects in Houston, Texas including lifestyle shopping centers, urban infill redevelopment and community shopping centers associated with master planned communities. He has also advised the City of Houston on programs to incentivize grocers to construct stores in so-called food deserts.

Lance is a partner in Waterman Steele Real Estate Advisors, a member of The Waterman Steele Group and, until 2013, was the managing partner and shareholder in UCR Houston and its predecessors Moody Rambin Interests' Retail Properties Division which he co-founded in 1993. He was also a shareholder in Moody Rambin Interests. Prior to this, Lance was Executive Vice President of Grubb & Ellis Retail Properties Division in Houston, Texas.

A past president of The Children’s Museum of Houston’s board of directors, Lance continues to serve on the museum’s advisory board of directors. He also serves on the Greater Houston Partnership’s Early Matters Committee and as an advisory committee member to The Collaborative for Children.

In 1977, Lance earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in Real Estate with Honors from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. He also attended Southern Methodist’s graduate program in Real Estate and Regional Science.



## **Rebecca Leonard FAICP, PLA, CNU-A**

Founder

Lionheart Places, Austin

<https://www.lionheartplaces.com/about>

Rebecca has over 25 years of experience in community planning, urban design, stakeholder engagement and facilitation and landscape architecture. With a successful career in both the public and private sector, Rebecca understands the needs of both sides and has mastered negotiations between them. She has worked closely with her

private development and public agency clients to ensure that their projects are implemented and their visions are realized.



## **Vanessa Ortega**

Founder & Principal

Loe Ortega Architecture, Houston

<https://www.beyondthebuilt.com/vanessa-ortega>

Vanessa grew up in the Texas panhandle. A passion for art, math and team sports helped define her path to architecture. She loves that part of her job is helping others realize and build their dreams.

Vanessa started her own commercial architecture firm in 2019, and now leads a team of five. She is excited to see the increase in adaptive reuse projects, especially in the inner city of Houston. She has recently discovered a passion for collaborating with other artists and architects, where she is able to share experiences and resources.

A recent project of hers is Railway Height Market. which is a blend of food hall, local market and art gallery. The 24,000 s.f. space is designed to house all local food, retail and art vendors. The stalls vary in size and allow for each vendor to customize their space. The focus of RHM is to provide a space where small businesses can open up their first storefront and collaborate with other small business owners, which are as diverse as the city of Houston.



## **Beth Ostrowski, PE, PTOE**

Transportation Regional Practice Leader

KCI, Nashville, TN

<https://bit.ly/3xhe7q6>

Beth Ostrowski, PE, PTOE serves as Transportation Regional Practice Leader in KCI's Nashville, Tennessee, office. She oversees traffic planning and design, as well as roundabout and bikeway design, and traffic data collection operations across the state while simultaneously leading business and staff development and strategic planning efforts throughout the region.

Ostrowski joined KCI in 2017 as a senior project manager, and since that time has quickly grown into management roles of increasing responsibility, most recently leading KCI's traffic studies team. Her prolific career in traffic studies, transportation planning, intelligent transportation systems design and neighborhood traffic management has led to her recognition as an expert in the Nashville region. Ostrowski leverages her experience in project management and operations oversight to continue expanding KCI's capabilities in the Southeast and supporting the firm's growing client base in Tennessee.

Ostrowski earned her bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Marquette University and is a registered professional engineer in Tennessee. She recently became a certified professional traffic operations engineer, demonstrating her knowledge and ability in her field. Through technical presentations and involvement in professional organizations, Ostrowski frequently works to further the industry and currently serves on committees for both the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the Urban Land Institute.



## **Heather Personne**

Managing Principal

Evolve Ventures, Phoenix, AZ

<https://evolveventuresphx.com/about-us>

Heather has over 20 years of experience in real estate acquisitions, development, management and dispositions. Throughout her career, she has spearheaded the development of more than 100 retail, office and multi-family properties throughout the western United States. Prior to co-founding Evolve, she held roles as a Principal with Point B Property Development, a Retail Partner with Phoenix-based commercial

development and investment firm ViaWest Group and a Principal with Evergreen Devco, Inc., a regional retail and multi-family developer.

Heather graduated Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Arizona Honors College and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and French. She is heavily involved with the Urban Land Institute, currently serving as Treasurer for the Arizona District Council and Vice Chair/Founding Member of the National ULI Placemaking Product Council. Heather resides in Phoenix, Arizona with her husband Matt and three children. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, snow-skiing and traveling.



## **Evan Peterson**

Development Director and Principal  
Radom Capital, Houston

<https://www.radomcapital.com/team>

Evan Peterson is a Principal at Radom Capital and serves as the firm's Development Director. He supports the execution of the Radom Capital's developments by managing the development processes including completing initial land acquisition due diligence, managing consultants through the project design and all construction process. He joined the company in 2017.

Previously, Evan worked at SWA group as a Landscape Architect focusing on urban development projects and transformational master planned communities. He is a member of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and has been active in a number of civic leadership organizations focused on parks and greenspace. Evan holds a bachelor degree in Landscape Architecture from Louisiana State University.



## **Alex Ramirez**

Associate

Design Workshop, Houston

<https://www.designworkshop.com/people.html>

Alex, a landscape architect practicing in Design Workshop's Houston studio, enjoys the challenges complex projects present to the firm and its clients. Valued for his technical understanding and ability to problem solve, Alex takes great pride in understanding complex design problems and guiding his client teams and design teams to solutions that balance the goals and aspirations of each individual project with real world applications. With a diverse design-build background, Alex draws upon

his experiences to lead his teams through all phases of design – conceptualization to implementation – with thoughtful and organized rigor focused on delivering their clients with the highest quality work, documentation and implementation. Alex is a graduate of Louisiana State University, with a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree, a member of Central Houston, American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and the Urban Land Institute (ULI).