

Dana Crawford

Lifetime Achievement Award Finalist

Over the years, Dana Crawford has worked to save the city. Literally.

The award-winning preservationist initiated a concept of urban renewal that was one of the first of its kind in the United States. She pioneered the redevelopment of Denver's historic Larimer Square in the mid 1960s, creating a festival shopping area from the neglected and abandoned buildings of Denver's original main street. Today, Larimer Square serves as a prototype for the revitalization of forgotten main streets and architectural landmarks throughout the country.



Since then, Dana has redeveloped more than 1,000,000 square feet of historic property in the city of Denver including the Oxford Hotel, the Acme Lofts, the Edbrooke Lofts and Cooper Flats Condominiums. She completed Phase One of the Flour Mill Lofts project, converting an abandoned flour mill into unique loft spaces designed for the sophisticated urbanite. She has been steadfast in her belief that core cities can be made livable again.

The city would look vastly different today if Dana had never worked to preserve the history and character of Denver. "Through innumerable developments, she has combined residential with commercial development and has created a new urbanism for the city of Denver," said Debbie Nance. "Her defiance in the face of defeat, her visions for a better place despite opposition, and her quest for historic preservation has helped to make Denver, and in particular LoDo, what it is today."

In addition to her many business accomplishments, Dana has donated much of her time to both local and national concerns. She served nine years on the board of directors of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, six of those years on its executive committee. In 1995, the National Trust awarded her their highest honor, the distinguished Louise duPont Crowninshield Award. For fifteen years she worked with Preservation Action. She presently serves on the national board of Project for Public Spaces.

The legendary preservationist started to shatter glass ceilings before it became popular to do so. "She has been a role model for women wanting to enter careers previously reserved for men," said M. L. Hanson, M. L. Hanson & Associates. "Throughout her career she has mentored the women she hired whether at the Oxford Hotel and Spa, or her various real estate endeavors. She encouraged, financially supported and provided developmental opportunities and connections that helped the women start their own businesses or move to greater roles of leadership."

Dana has served on the board of the Downtown Denver Partnership for 40 years and has been active with the Platte River Greenway Foundation, the Denver Art Museum, Historic Denver, Inc., the Colorado Historical Society and Foundation, and the Denver Center for the Performing Arts.

“She stepped out with her progressive ideas at a time when men were still very dominating in the business and real estate realms,” said Roseanna Frechette, The Oxford Club. “She became one of the first women to take women out of the kitchen and into workplace. Dana also imagined a great workplace by using confidence backed by strong wisdom and the willingness to try.”

Currently she is working with three Front Range communities; Commerce City, Brighton, and Broomfield, and also in Phoenix, Arizona.