



With diverse capabilities White Lotus Group lands major projects

**Pulled from the 1/12/18 issue of the Midlands Business Journal*

Since taking root in 2003, White Lotus Group has blossomed, completing more than \$200 million in projects with another \$200 million in its active pipeline - and nearly \$100 million in production, according to CEO Arun Agarwal.

He says White Lotus Group “optimizes turnkey projects from concept to delivery,” and has established itself as a Midwest leader in spearheading complex real estate and health care projects – as well as hotel acquisition and development, condos, self-storage facilities, office and retail, and multi-family housing projects.

“We are working in several interesting areas,” he said. “Our passion with adaptive reuse developments is going strong with two 40,000-plus-square-foot-buildings in Omaha, and a 60,000-square-foot health care conversion in Chicago.

“We are poised to continue to grow in the health care and industrial markets with over \$150 million in projects planned.”

An example of its work includes the Nebraska Realty building at West Dodge Pointe Office B, 168th and Dodge in Omaha, which Agarwal said filled a market gap and solved both a social and stakeholder need.

Features include the likes of recessed windows, which minimize heat gain, and a common three-story atrium that serves inter entrances to all tenant spaces.

The team also highlighted the 30 Metro Building, which readers may know as the former Mister C’s site.

A \$20 million project, Agarwal said the project’s vision was never compromised.

“We spent a healthy amount of time working closely with stakeholders to identify the needs of the area and ensure that the project was fully integrated into the neighborhood, as well as Metro Community College,” he said.

At the time of this writing, Agarwal expected an opening of March 2018. Another project generating excitement, according to White Lotus Group, is 1401 Jones St. – one of the Old Market’s last remaining warehouses.

“Tentatively, the renovation of this building would include what we are calling an ‘innovation hub’”, he said, referring to offices, a coffee shop/beanery, brewery and rooftop deck space.

“The team sees this as being a place where creativity can flourish for both a new tenant and for the general public,” Agarwal said.

After three “traditional” projects, he notes the team has tended to look at creative projects: Hub 1401 represents that creativity.



"We also have a full-time artist, Justin Queal, that engages the civic goals with our professional ones," he said.

Its energies are also being directed to I-80 Industrial Hub, on I-80 near 132nd Street and Cornhusker Road.

"This industrial park is one of the metro's few Certified Go Ready shovel-ready sites," Agarwal said. There are 7 lots totaling 140 acres.

"This is a huge industrial footprint out in that area and we see this space as an extension of that – being the future home for some great manufacturing or even tech companies."

To the aforementioned West Dodge Pointe, Agarwal said Office Building B emerged from the "inability to satisfy the leasing interest in our Nebraska Realty building."

Located along the newly constructed Burt Street, Agarwal said the building will have both on- and off-street parking, underground parking, and a "full presentation view" along Dodge.

Described as a new \$100 million retail center on 80- acres at the northeast corner of 180th Street and West Maple Road, Maple 180 reportedly answers demand in this fast-growing section of the metro with several apartments and single-family developments on the horizon, Agarwal said.

"the bridge for 180th connecting West Dodge to West Maple has been approved by the city as well," he said.

Generally, Agarwal indicated White Lotus Group's abilities to concept the project, self-fund, construct and manage distinguish them favorably from like firms.

"We feel that on a speed and cost basis, we are stronger than most," he said. "We are a lean, nimble firm that can make decisions analytically, but with great velocity."

And, while he said the environment seems "hyper", Agarwal notes they are seemingly more conservative (or less bullish) than their peers.

He emphasizes this isn't a negative: "We are simply more careful about product type and location, especially as it relates to the importance of the city of Omaha's long-range planning."

Beyond buildings, Agarwal said the region needs a larger, qualified workforce to fill jobs at companies, including White Lotus Group.

"Our colleges, universities, and schools need more attention from us to produce that workforce and to ultimately entice them to stay here," he said.

Going forward, he said they are heavily recruiting talented individuals who fit seamlessly with White Lotus Group's culture.

"We also have several big upcoming announcements around new projects that we believe will be extremely beneficial to the city as a whole," he said.



For now, the team's community commitment also extends to organizations such as: Charing the YMCA of Greater Omaha, Omaha Public Library, MCC Foundation and Girls Inc.

"We strongly believe in the important of giving back to the community where we live and work," he said.