



July 24, 2009

To whom it may concern:

My firm is a twenty two year old architectural firm that began in Mobile Alabama. Like many firms we began as a tiny seed and grew only at a much slower rate than other firms of comparable history. Part of the reason for this is attributable to competition in the Mobile area and the local economy. In 1997 we moved our firm back into the Birmingham area where my wife and I had move from eleven years earlier. It was a restart for us in many ways. Substantial growth came in 2005 when we received the award of several nice size projects. However, the growth period did not last very long and our staff peaked out and began to dwindle as a result of the shortfall of workload. It seemed as if we were in a total stalemate and I became very discouraged about my business efforts as an entrepreneur.

Recently one afternoon Rea Oliver and I were discussing this during lunch together. We were discussing several options that might enhance our opportunities in growth. I noted that there were numerous opportunities that existed for minority firms but not for us as a non-minority. He began to pursue this topic and together we developed a corporate re-structuring plan that we are currently in progress of implementing at this time. I made the comment that it would be better for me to own 49% of something rather than 100% of nothing. Later, as I considered this possibility, things began to fall in place through relationships that I had developed with several minority colleagues that I had come to know and trust through previous working relationship.

Rea has consistently followed up with me and encouraged me through the start up of this process. This has given me a new inspiration and direction for the progress and development of my business. Although this has been a very humbling experience for me, sometimes that is exactly what we need in order to make true progress. It is very helpful to have someone come along side of you in order to help you gain a different perspective on your situation. That person must be a person who genuinely and sincerely cares and wants to see you succeed. I have previously sought other business counseling from professionals in the business, only to find myself being taken advantage of by people who do not hold to these ethics or standard of care. I am very grateful for the relationship with Rea in the development process that we at New South Architects, Inc. have undertaken. We look forward to new horizons of progress in which we seek to skillfully undertake a serious overhaul of our business and thereby open the door to new opportunities that would not have otherwise been available.

With Sincere Gratitude
David R. Mugg, President
New South Architects, Inc.