



2022

**DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT**

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

DEVELOPMENT YEARBOOK

2022

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2022
DOWNTOWN
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DDD BOUNDARY

West boundary at the Mississippi River immediately south of the Old Municipal Dock site, east to River Road, east to Terrace Avenue, east to Nicholson Drive, north to Myrtle Avenue, east to Kansas City Line Railroad (eastern boundary), north along railroad to Choctaw Drive, west along railroad, following southern curve of railroad near River Road, south on railroad, west to river at Eiland Street (north boundary of River Park development site), south along Mississippi River back to southern edge of Old Municipal Dock site.



INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Development District works to initiate, incubate, and support partnerships that develop and enhance the district, using community-driven master plans and economic incentives to aid private-sector and nonprofit philanthropic organization in their development and entrepreneurship efforts. These partnerships have produced unprecedented momentum and excitement for the future of Downtown.

In June of 2022, Whitney Hoffman Sayal, AICP, returned to the DDD as the Executive Director having previously served the DDD for over 8 years under the leadership of Davis Rhorer. She is excited to return to downtown and lead Downtown Baton Rouge's continued progress.

The 2022 Yearbook features new developments over the past year, highlights projects in the pipeline, and provides a timeline giving context to the work that brought downtown to where it is today. In addition, this document showcases the Downtown Development District's projects, events, and initiatives driving the next phase of development.

DDD & DOWNTOWN BATON ROUGE:

A Timeline

1983

Community stakeholders initiate the creation of Baton Rouge 2000, a master plan to revitalize downtown and spur the creation of the DDD.



1985-1987

In 1985, the Legislature officially creates the DDD. An update to Baton Rouge 2000 is completed in 1987. Davis Rhorer is named the DDD Executive Director.



1990

The Capitol Park Master Plan recommends the consolidation of state offices downtown. Also, the Baton Rouge Riverfront Plan proposes improvements on the levee and public / private projects.



1998

Plan Baton Rouge, an ambitious downtown master plan focusing on New Urbanism principles is created.



2005

The Shaw Center for the Arts opens in the heart of downtown, becoming a cultural and artistic hub, as well as a catalyst for surrounding projects.



2006

Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center opens on the site of the old Hotel Heidelberg, having sat vacant and dilapidated for years. This was the first of many other hotels in the Central Business District.



1980

1985

1990

1995

2000



2008

The Downtown Baton Rouge Arts and Entertainment District is created to foster growth and development through the arts and events.



2009

Plan Baton Rouge II is developed to build upon the concepts of Plan Baton Rouge. It recommends specific developments and strategies for adding housing, improving accessibility, and creating more green space.



2010-2015

Several underutilized buildings in the Central Business District are converted to multi-use developments adding significant residential growth. Matherne's, a full-service supermarket, also opens.

2005

2010

2015

2020

2023



2012-2014

The IBM building, a private/public partnership and mixed-use complex on the riverfront is built. It features an office center and residential complex. The borders of the DDD are expanded in 2012, taxing approved in 2016.



2015

Construction begins on the Water Campus, a research based public-private project.



2016-2022

Residential demand downtown continues to grow, outpacing demand in other parts of our region. The Rivermark Centre, a luxury residential development opens in 2022 in the heart of the Central Business District.



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Present – 2023

Downtown has seen an incredible amount of progress over the years - made possible by the DDD and many valued stakeholders. Under new leadership, the DDD will develop a strategic plan in 2023 to define the direction of continued progress!



2022 PROJECTS



RIVER CENTER THEATRE

Post Architects, a local architectural firm, and the New Orleans based firm HMS Architects redesigned the existing River Center Theatre with a renovation budget of \$19 million. The original theatre was built in 1977 and had minor improvements to the facility since that time, making it part of the strategic plan developed for the larger River Center complex. Funding for the project originates from state sales tax rebate funds and construction was completed in 2022.

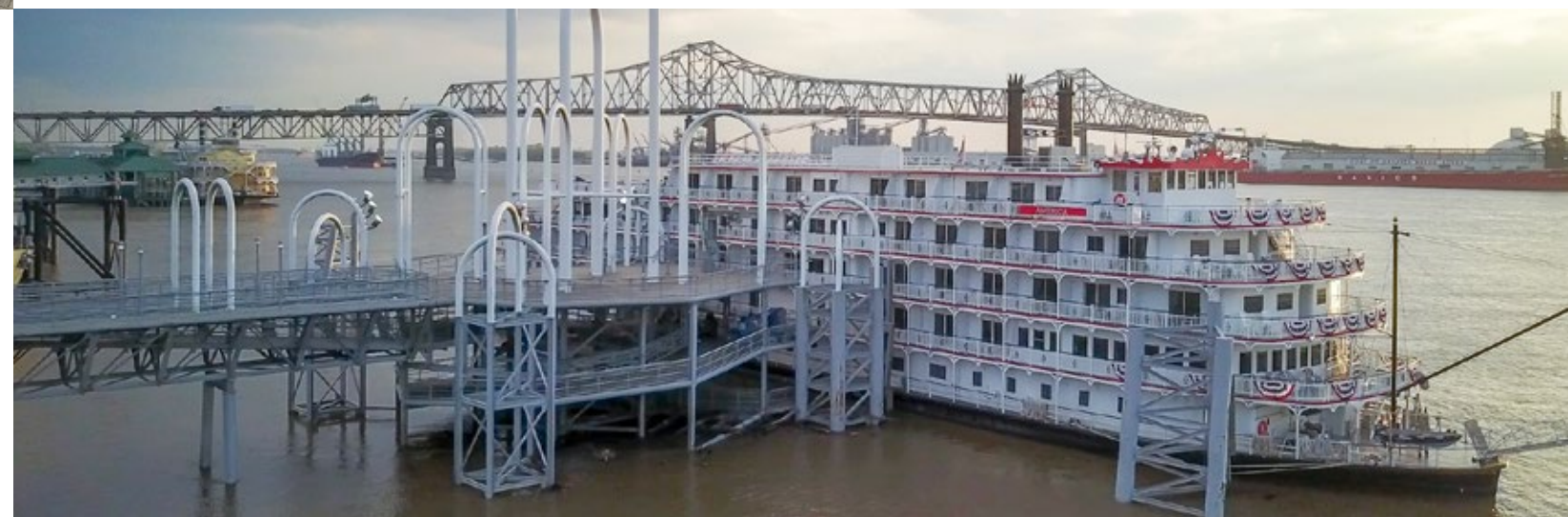
Improvements to infrastructure related items and reconfiguration of the interior seating, lobby, and theatre areas were included in the project. New plantings enhance the exterior area around the River Center Theatre, a sculpture garden featuring works by Ivan Mestrovic has been updated, and an ADA drop-off area added for guests. Since opening, several events have been held in the new space and more events are planned in 2023.

Photo Credit: Tim Mueller Photography



HOLLYWOOD CASINO EXPANSION

Hollywood Casino has been under construction since approval to move their operations land-side, investing approximately \$25 million to expand its existing pavilion to include an additional 42,000 square feet - totaling over 100,000 square feet. The riverboat's 850 slot machines and 12 table games will move into a new 30,000-square-foot casino. The riverboat is open during construction of the new facility and the land-side move means the casino can sell or lease its gambling boat to free up dock space, which can be used by cruise boats traveling the river. Plans include adding a sports bar & grill venue with 250 seats alongside a Shaquille O'Neal Big Chicken Restaurant. The project is expected to be complete in the third quarter of 2023.



RIVERBOATS - VIKING

In 2022, over 90 riverboat stopped in Baton Rouge and in 2023, Visit Baton Rouge has indicated 160 planned stops downtown. Post Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, the riverboats returned to a full schedule in 2022. Viking Cruise Lines made their debut in 2022, marking a long-awaited service to Baton Rouge. Each boat carries approximately 300 tourists that are offered bus and walking tours of Baton Rouge when they arrive. The number of riverboat cruises stopping in Baton Rouge is expected to continue to increase in the next couple of years.



RIVERMARK CENTRE

Mike Wampold, a local developer with several projects located throughout Baton Rouge, is renovating the former Chase Towers located at 451 Florida Street. The buildings are located in the heart of the Central Business District and were originally built in the 1960s. Renamed to Rivermark Centre I and II, the 21 story southern building has been converted from a 333,000 square-foot office building into a mixed-use development with retail, residential, and a full service Chase Bank.

The Residences at Rivermark have community amenities such as a rooftop pool, green space, and a resident parking garage. Nestled in a bustling historic neighborhood near the Mississippi River, Residences at Rivermark will give every opportunity to be social and spend the night out or focus on some personal time in nature. Rivermark is now leasing.



VALENCIA PARK

Renaissance Neighborhood Development Corporation, a subsidiary of Volunteers for America Southeast Louisiana, completed the 122-unit apartment complex in 2022. The 2.56 acre project site is located in Downtown East and is bordered by Spanish Town Road, 14th Street, Gayosa Street, and 15th Street. The project cost was approximately \$22 million and received funding assistance from the Louisiana Housing Corporation with Community Development Block funds. Amenities include a community space, fitness center, club house, courtyard with access to nearby BREC Spanish Town Park.



ELYSIAN III

Gulf Coast Housing Partnership, the lead developer of the mixed income Elysian I and II residential complexes on Spanish Town Road between 11th Street and 13th Street, have also completed construction on the Elysian III in 2022. The Elysian Apartment Homes bring 242 units to Downtown East with 50% of units affordable and 50% market rate. Several surrounding properties have also been targeted for residential development in Downtown East, bringing additional residents to the city's core.



PUBLIC ART RESTORATION

The DDD partnered the Baton Rouge Area Foundation (BRAf) and the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge to restore downtown’s public art pieces. Restoration began in 2021 with the Martin Luther King Jr. Sculpture by artist Arthur Silverman near Davis S. Rhorer Plaza. The Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the Office of Mayor-President, the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge and many civic and business leaders teamed in the early 1990s to kickstart fundraising for the project, and the same stakeholder organizations began discussions in 2017 about the restoration of Silverman’s work. Several Mestrovic Sculptures near the River Center Theatre were also restored.

Two bronze sculptures by the renowned Frank Hayden were restored in the spring of 2022 and include the “Marcha de Galvez” fountain in Galvez Plaza and Oliver Pollock sculpture on the opposite side of Galvez Plaza. Both were restored by Susie Anders, owner of Anders Art Conservation, removing years of mineral deposits. In addition, the Hebe Statue on North Boulevard was also restored.



ROUMAIN BUILDING RENOVATIONS

Tony Clayton of the law firm Clayton, Fruge & Ward has purchased the six-story Roumain Building on Third Street in Downtown Baton Rouge for \$2 million. The office building is on the National Register of Historic Places and was the first “skyscraper” in Baton Rouge. Mr. Clayton is renovating this historic structure. The future use of the building has not been finalized.



PARKING METERS

The City of Baton Rouge contracted with Flowbird Group to replace 421 old parking meters with state-of-the-art digital parking kiosks. 100 parking kiosks, located near intersections and covering approximately 850 parking spaces, have begun to be installed in 2022 with the final phase of installation expected soon. The \$1 million investment will assist with maintaining adequate parking turnover to accommodate downtown business customers. Once operational, payment methods include coin, cash, and credit card - with access to pay online or through a convenient app. Street parking will remain free on weekends, holidays, and after 6pm.



CARY SAURAGE COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER

The Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge (ACGBR) recently renovated the “Triangle Building” on St. Ferdinand Street that formerly housed the District Attorney’s office in to the Cary Saurage Community Arts Center. ACGBR’s renovations to the space includes a community art space, recording studio, rehearsal spaces, artist workshops, roof top patio, and gallery with a total estimated cost of \$2.6 million.

The newly renovated building, allows the Arts Council to be a resource center for the arts, centrally located in the heart of downtown. The Cary Saurage Community Arts Center is a 12,000+ square foot creative space for artists and arts organizations to meet, work, and create. With a black box, recording studio, visual artists studios, exhibition gallery, conference rooms, and rooftop terrace, CSCAC is the first building of its kind in the region.



SECURITY CAMERAS

The Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice Foundation of Baton Rouge in partnership with the Downtown Development District replaced 19 antiquated cameras and purchased an additional 10 cameras in the downtown area to assist with security and monitor undesired activity. The Downtown Development District continues to partner with the Baton Rouge Police Department to identify opportunities to increase safety within the district, resulting in downtown being one of the safest areas to live, work, and play.



HELIX ACADEMY EXPANSION

The Helix Legal Academy is located in the Central Business District, on the corner of Florida Street and 4th Street. It’s mission is to create a relevant and vibrant project based learning environment that prepares all students to be successful in college, career, and citizenship. The school has become a prominent landmark in our community, students often frequenting the public spaces and businesses downtown. In 2022, the school expanded the Helix Legal Academy into the former Raising Cane’s space, next door to their main facility.

NEW BUSINESSES



NEW BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

THE 121, 121 Convention Street, The 121 encompasses about 5,200 square feet of space and serves as a venue for private events.

13 SOCIAL, 350 Third Street, 13 Social is a new entertainment venue featuring a relaxing environment and variety of cocktails.

PEDAL PUB, 436 Government Street, Pedal Pub features the “Bike with the Barrel,” a unique experience with personalized tours to local bars, breweries, restaurants and unique city attractions.

ADVANTOUS CONSULTING, 440 Third Street, Advantous Consulting, LLC. is a leading multi-state tax consulting firm delivering customizable, end-to-end state and local tax solutions ranging from turnkey compliance services to high-level planning and advisory.

APTIM, 1200 Brickyard Lane, APTIM is a company that specializes in critical infrastructure, technical and data solutions, program management, environmental, resilience, as well as sustainability and energy solutions.

BRASS, 327 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge Area Souvenir Shop (BRASS) is a gift and souvenir shop offering one-of-kind, handmade items by local artists.

BLUES CAFE, 320 Third Street, Blues Café combines jazz and blues music with traditional Southern cuisine offering brunch, lunch, and dinner, as well as drinks, such as mimosas, champagne, and specialty cocktails.

CAPITOL GROCERY, 701 Spanish Town Road, Capitol Grocery is located in Spanish Town and has served the community for years. Recently, changing ownership, the business has expanded its offerings and is hosting community events.

CHELSEA’S LIVE, 1010 Nicholson Drive, A legendary Baton Rouge live music staple announced its return as Chelsea’s Live, located between the LSU campus and the edge of downtown.

HNTB, 450 Laurel Street, HNTB, one of the largest architecture/engineering design firms in the nation, is opening an office in the Rivermark Centre. The employee-owned firm specializes in various aspects of infrastructure.

LOUISIANA FILM CHANNEL, 334 Third Street, Louisiana Film Channel opened a retail shop at the company headquarters in downtown. The collection ranges from old to new film materials and memorabilia. The shop is open seven days a week.

THE MAIN LOBBY, 668 Main Street, The Main Lobby is a bar/lounge/patio offering specialty drinks as well as food.

OXBOW RUM DISTILLERY, 760 St. Phillip Street, Formally Three Roll Estate, Oxbow Distillery sells high-end craft rum made with sugar produced on the family’s farm in Pointe Coupee Parish.

RURAL SOURCING, 304 Laurel Street, Rural Sourcing, a software development firm based in Atlanta, will lease office space inside of the Fuqua Building on the corner of 3rd St and Laurel St.

SOCIAL COFFEE, 521 Third Street, Social Coffee offers coffee, pastries, light food, and events in order to help build community in the area.

THE TUNNEL @ HILTON, 201 Lafayette Street, The Tunnel was originally built in 1931 and connects The Hilton and Indigo Hotel. The entry space at the Hilton is now available for events and dining.



PROJECTS IN PLANNING



SPANISH TOWN CONDOMINIUMS

The East Baton Rouge Preservation Commission approved a 24-building 45-unit condominium development at a prominent location near the Louisiana State Capitol, just south of the Capitol Lakes. The project design features a public promenade along Capitol Lake with gazebos on each end, a community center, and 85 parking spaces. With the Historic Preservation approval, the project was given a Certificate of Appropriateness and proceeds to the next stage of permit review.



BELLE OF BATON ROUGE

The Belle of Baton Rouge recently received approval from the Louisiana Gaming Control to move the casino land-side from the riverboat. The first phase of the \$35 million renovations will begin with the hotel renovating and reopening 90 of its 288 rooms. The Belle of Baton Rouge will move the 16,500 square foot gambling floor into the casino atrium, with 316 slot machines and 14 gaming tables. The casino will also open a cafe, oyster bar, bistro pizza, a small bowling area, and an event area in the atrium space. The entire project is expected to be complete by the end of 2024, but the hotel should be complete in 2023.



MAIN ST MARKET RENOVATIONS

Downtown’s public marketplace located at 501 Main Street has been home to Saturday’s Red Stick Farmers Market and weekday food vendors for approximately 20 years. BREADA - Big River Economic Agricultural Development Alliance - manages the market, supports local farmers, and promotes community access to fresh foods. In 2022, plans were announced to renovate the market utilizing allocated state funding of \$1 million. Planning and design for the renovation is currently underway.



ORIGIN HOTEL

The Origin Hotel, formerly known as the Holiday Inn Express, is located on the corner of St. Ferdinand and North Boulevard. The building is being renovated by Thrash Development into a boutique hotel, offering a unique experience to guest and patrons. It was originally the Baton Rouge Savings and Loan Building and became a national historic landmark in 2014. Construction is expected to begin in early 2023.



THE VALLEY HOUSE

Anthony Kimble, a local investor in Downtown East & Spanish Town, has purchased property on Government Street. Kimble purchased property at 1440 Government Street with plans to include a book store, coffee shop, event space, and a bar/lounge area, redefining the building into a concept known as The Valley House. Mr. Kimble has acquired other nearby property on Julia Street that are planned for multi-family housing developments. Plans are to develop 12 to 14 multifamily housing units on the Julia Street site, covering three lots. Mr. Kimble has also acquired other nearby properties on Julia Street that are planned for multifamily housing developments.



BREC SPORTS ACADEMY

BREC is improving the site around Memorial Stadium and creating a new home for the Sports Academy currently located on Laurel Street. WHLC Architecture developed conceptual and schematic plans showcasing desired improvements including a recreation center featuring basketball courts, an elevated track, fitness center, lobby, boxing ring, and several program spaces. The project will also include a Safe Room developed for emergency events using BREC and Community Development Block Grant funding. The final plans for the construction of the project are expected to begin in 2023.



LINCOLN HOTEL

The historic Hotel Lincoln, which hosted African-American guests in Baton Rouge during the period of segregation in the south, was purchased in 2017 by developer Anthony Kimble. Famous African-American musicians including Nat King Cole, James Brown, and Aretha Franklin stayed at the hotel in its heyday. The 12,000 square-foot building has been abandoned since the 1980s, but the developer plans to convert the building into 12 apartments and two retail spaces. The building was placed on the National Historic Register in August of 2018, qualifying it for state and federal historic building tax credits to help finance the redevelopment. Construction is expected to begin in 2023.



LINCOLN THEATRE

The historic Lincoln Theatre, owned by the Louisiana Black History Hall of Fame, opened in 1949 as one of three major theaters in Baton Rouge - welcoming performances by famous musicians and featured films. It also served as a community attraction/hub with a pharmacy, barbershop, dentist office, laundromat, and offices. Unfortunately it was closed in the 1980s, but a renewed interest has spurred its revitalization focused on sign and seating repairs, hazard mitigation, electrical upgrades, window replacement, and other vital elements.



LOUISIANA AVENUE CONNECTOR

The Downtown Development District has proposed additional design and infrastructure improvements at Louisiana Avenue, connecting the Downtown Greenway to the Government Street bike lanes via Louisiana Avenue and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive. The Louisiana Avenue Connector will connect currently disjointed sidewalks, bicycle sharrow markers, ADA compliant crosswalk improvements, wayfinding signage, and streetscape amenities to create a pleasant and safe traveling experience for bicyclists and pedestrians. Grant funding from the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) will fund the area under I-110 and funding from the Safe Routes to Public Places Program will assist with improvement along the Louisiana Avenue and Eddie Robinson streetscapes. The TAP portion of the project is expected to begin in 2023.



ADA IMPROVEMENTS

Several projects focused on improving accessibility downtown are proposed as part of the MOVEBR program. The first project begins in 2023 and focuses around Florida Street. That project is expected to be complete mid-2023. Planning is underway on Main Street and Laurel Street. The projects are focused around streets affected by Bus Rapid Transit and the city is beginning site preparation and construction for the overall project in 2023.



5TH/6TH ST. BICYCLE LANES

The Downtown Development District and other city-parish representatives are working to incorporate bicycle lanes on the one-way streets of Fifth and Sixth. The bicycle lanes would further the development of the Downtown Greenway, connecting Spanish Town and Central Business District residents to the core of downtown and the riverfront. Plans to begin work on Sixth Street are expected in 2023.



BUS RAPID TRANSIT

A bus rapid transit (BRT) was awarded \$15 million in federal grant funding through the Better Utilizing Infrastructure to Leverage Development (BUILD) program. The 9-mile BRT corridor will provide a new transit route connecting educational institutions, the Water Campus, the Downtown Central Business District, medical facilities, commercial businesses and residential neighborhoods along Plank Road, Florida Street and Nicholson Drive. The \$53.6 million BRT project will be funded through federal grants, DOTD, CATS, and the MOVEBR program. Site preparation and construction for the project is expected to begin in 2023.



I-110 LIGHTING GATEWAY

WHLC Architecture has completed conceptual plans to improve the existing, 500 free parking spaces under I-110. Currently, these parking areas are underutilized, and the DDD plans to install security lighting and wayfinding to make them safer and more accessible. The improved parking areas will provide a safe, convenient, and free parking option for downtown workers and visitors. Additional decorative lighting is planned for the gateway areas entering downtown. The development of final plans for the first phase of the project is expected to begin in 2023.



RIVER ROAD EAST

A pedestrian path on the east side of River Road between Florida Street and the State Office Buildings to the north has been planned and integrated with the recently installed streetscape adjacent to the IBM complex. These improvements include street trees, sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals. The project is funded through the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development Transportation Alternatives Program. Plans are in the final stages and construction is expected to begin in 2023.



NOLA/BR PASSENGER RAIL

Canadian Pacific Railway is committed to the establishment of passenger service between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, with large public support and demand. A passenger train has not run between Baton Rouge and New Orleans since 1969. The proposed line would include stops in Baton Rouge (one in Downtown), Gonzales, LaPlace, and at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, with a terminus at the Union Passenger Terminal in New Orleans. State transportation engineers are finishing engineering and financing studies of the corridor, expected to be completed in early 2023. The state is seeking funding from the Biden administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help rebuild the spillway connection and other portion of the tracks in need of restoration/upgrades.



RIVER ROAD WEST

The project continues the existing River Road 10' multi-use path ending at the Hollywood Casino entrance to two residential complexes north. Portions of the path will be 10' but it will transition to a 5' walking trail due to the limited right of way and utility locations, before terminating at the entrance to the Riverview Condominiums. This will provide residents with a safe way to bike or walk to the Mississippi Levee access and Central Business District.



THE WATER CAMPUS

The Water Campus is a reflection of the vision for the redevelopment of the Mississippi Riverfront, illustrated in the recommendations of Baton Rouge’s master plans. The public-private development is a collaboration of the LA Department of Economic Development, Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the City of Baton Rouge, The Water Institute of the Gulf, Louisiana State University, and other coastal research institutions. Its 30-acre campus is located adjacent to the Mississippi River and at the southern area of the DDD. Campus facilities, totaling more than \$50 million, contain the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority’s offices, LSU Center for River Studies, and the Center for Coastal & Deltaic Solutions. An office building on Brickyard Lane, and residential development at 200 Water Street, have also recently been completed.



LASM IMPROVEMENTS

The LASM recently celebrated it’s 60th Anniversary in 2022. During the 2022 Gala, upgrades to the LASM were announced which included lighting the Planetarium Dome, soft washing the exterior of the building, enhancing the river view by installing windows overlooking the river, updating the Train Station building, and upgrading the landscaping around the building.



CHARLES LAMAR YMCA RENOVATIONS

The Charles W Lamar YMCA has been open for more than 20 years and is a staple of downtown. Beginning this summer, the YMCA began a half million-dollar renovation to the facility which included upgrading the showers, as well as changing out the flooring and all the cardio pieces. The YMCA now includes EGYM smart equipment that allows users to electronically set preferences through an app.



RIVER CENTER UPGRADES & STUDY

In 2022, the Raising Cane’s River Center announced \$2.3 million for improvements to the facility including a new LED scoreboard, a Zamboni (ice resurfacer), a basketball court, and other needed items. In addition, Visit Baton Rouge provided funds for a plan to develop recommendations to the facility that make it more competitive in attracting major events to Baton Rouge. The plan is expected to be completed in the spring of 2023.



DDD PROJECTS & INITIATIVES



DDD STRATEGIC PLAN

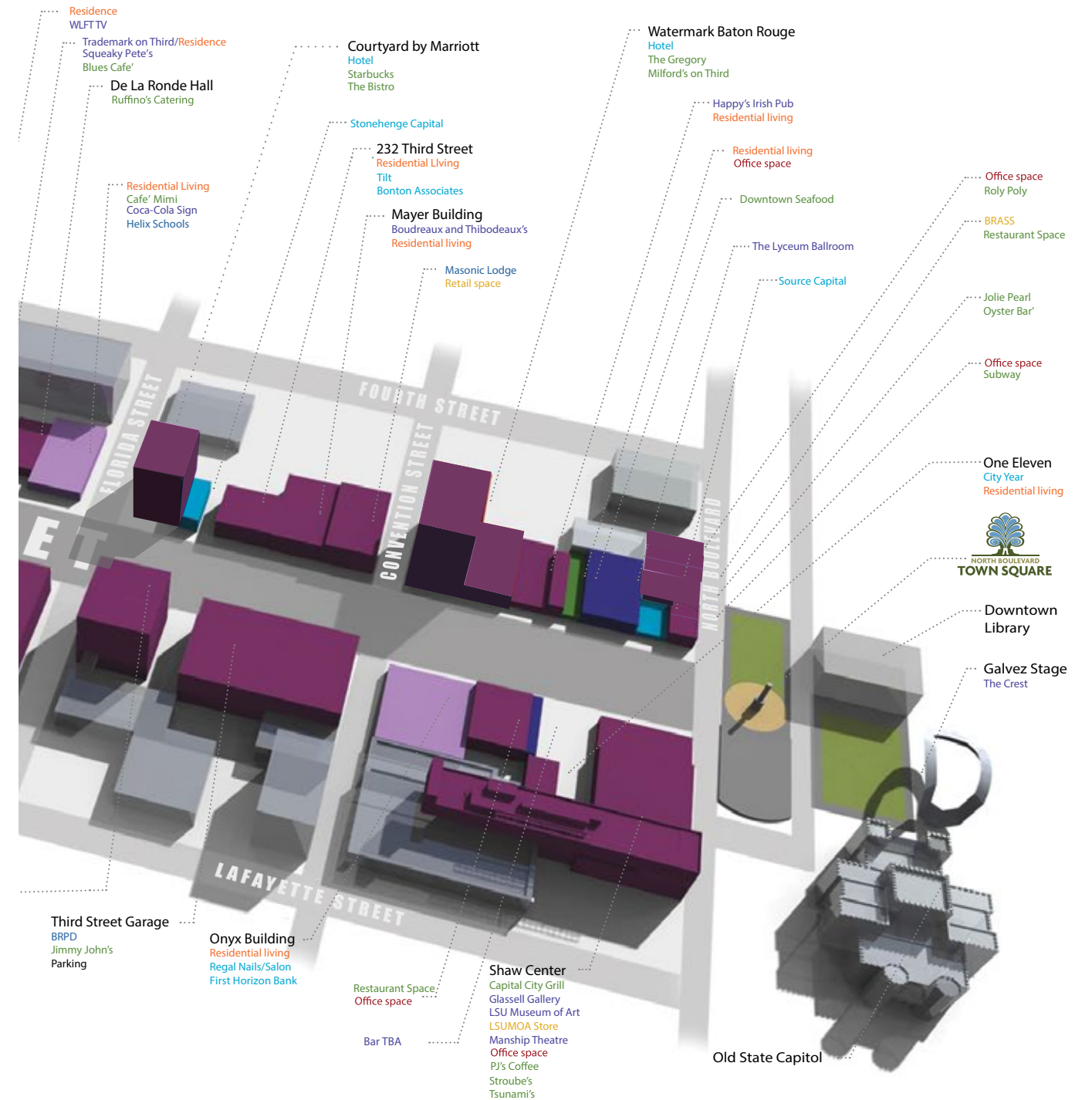
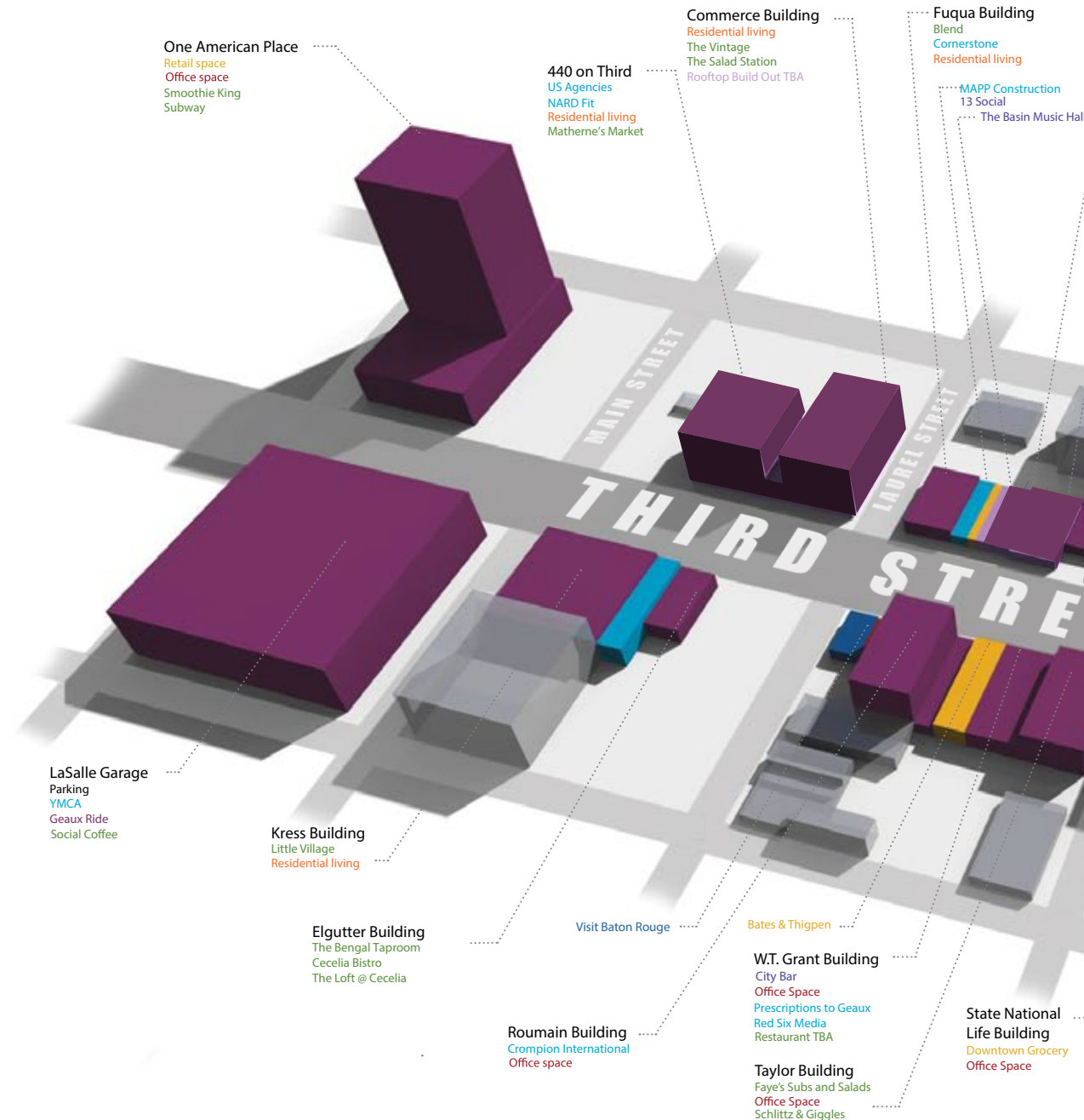
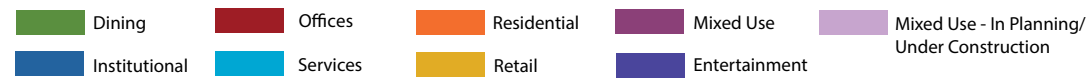
The Downtown Development District relies on community-driven master plans to lead the development of Downtown Baton Rouge and strategic plans to outline the office's activities and initiatives. Master plans are dynamic long-term planning documents that provide a conceptual layout to guide future growth and development. Examples include Plan Baton Rouge II (2009) and the Riverfront Master Plan (2006). Strategic plans define an organization's specific strategies, goals, and actions. The DDD's most recent strategic plan was completed in 2012.

A lot has happened downtown over the past ten years. We've seen an unprecedented level of development and reinvestment, a global pandemic impacting the local economy, and in 2022, a change in DDD leadership. Also in 2022, Baton Rouge leaders traveled to Greenville, SC as part of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber Canvas Trip. The trip emphasized the positive impact an economically vibrant downtown can have on the overall community and reinvigorated leader interest in continuing downtown's momentum. The renewed interest aligns well with plans to create a 5-year strategic plan for the DDD office in 2023. We look forward to engaging our stakeholders and allied organizations in defining our future goals.

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLANS

The Downtown Development District (DDD) launched many planning initiatives during the first 15 years of its existence, setting a tone for redevelopment that is evident throughout Downtown Baton Rouge today. The Baton Rouge 2000 plan was initiated in 1983 and established not only a blueprint for downtown development, but also created the DDD to oversee implementation of the plan. The Capitol Park Master Plan guided the redevelopment of the area around the State Capitol and the consolidation of state offices. Several other plans were developed to further downtown's progress, including the Riverfront Development Plan, Wayfinding Plan, Riverfront Master Plan, and Plan Baton Rouge II.

Plan Baton Rouge II, created in 2009, continues to be a tremendous asset in the development of Downtown Baton Rouge - with many of the recommended projects completed. These accomplishments can be seen throughout downtown and across its skyline. The plan was an economically based urban design vision, focused on continued development and implementation. It builds upon the original Plan Baton Rouge with the overarching goal of making downtown a more vibrant place to live, work, shop, dine, learn, and play. The plan recommends alternative development incentives to encourage investments that will support, enhance, and leverage new projects. It recommends specific residential, commercial, mixed-use, public space, and infrastructure developments, including strategies for adding housing, improving mobility and access, and "greening" downtown. Since Plan Baton Rouge II's creation, the DDD has focused efforts on these strategies and continues to lead and market downtown's success.



3RD STREET DEVELOPMENT DIVERSITY

In 1950, Third Street was the bustling center of Downtown. After years of decline, the Third Street corridor has re-emerged as the place to live, work, and play in Baton Rouge. New retailers and developments along Third Street are bringing more residents downtown than ever before, fulfilling a long-term vision for the city's center that's been in the works for more than two decades. Featuring many of the city's best restaurants, music venues, and bars, Third Street is thriving with nightlife and entertainment options. Major investments in residential developments and essential services, such as a grocery store and a pharmacy, have attracted many new residential developments, providing ample opportunities to live Downtown.

In addition to proximity to restaurants, entertainment venues, and bars, Third Street has become home to many residents and two hotels, The Watermark BR and the Courtyard Marriott. Third Street provides a vast array of entertainment options, residential units, hotel accommodations, retailers, and service-based businesses providing a diverse mix of land uses and vibrant experiences. Third Street was awarded by the Louisiana Chapter of the American Planning Association in 2018 as a 'Great Street.'



THE CENTRAL GREEN

Over several years, DDD has worked to connect numerous civic and cultural institutions near the River Center and City Hall campuses through a unified system of greenspaces known collectively as the Central Green. In total, the Central Green boasts over 11 acres of accessible, contiguous public greenspace. The Central Green has become a premier regional destination, hosting hundreds of annual events on the lush greenspaces, ranging from large concert series that attract thousands of attendees to small informal gatherings.

The realization of the Central Green began as a primary recommendation of the community-driven master plan, Plan Baton Rouge II. The planning team, led by Chan Krieger Sieniewicz Urban Design and Planning and Reed Hilderbrand Landscape Architecture, recommended removing barriers, prioritizing accessibility, increasing tree canopy and permeable surfaces, and creating a series of outdoor “living rooms” surrounded by a variety of cultural destinations. The subsequent implementation of the plan focused on removing concrete, changing surrounding road systems to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles, and replacing hardscape surfaces with expansive green spaces. North Boulevard Town Square, Repentance Park, Davis S. Rhorer Plaza, and Riverfront Plaza are all components of the Central Green. Davis S. Rhorer Plaza was named after the DDD’s founding Executive Director in 2021. The Central Green has become the unifying connective tissue linking our civic and cultural attractions together. The International Downtown Association awarded the Central Green: Connecting Community with Commerce & Culture the 2020 Award of Excellence.



RIVERFRONT

Originally built in 1984, Riverfront Plaza is a classic water garden style public space, a signature of the era in which it was designed. The plaza offers an ADA accessible entry to the riverfront near the dock, but was in need of renovation to rectify numerous maintenance items neglected for a number of years. Approximately \$750,000 was appropriated for Phase One of this project from the state sales tax rebate funding dedicated to Riverfront Master Plan improvements.

CARBO Landscape Architecture redesigned the areas within and adjacent to the plaza and dock area to improve aesthetics while decreasing regular maintenance needs, and further defining individual spaces within the gardens that can be used for events and/or riverboat reception. Some of the enhancements include upgraded event space, new plantings, 'no-mow' wildflower planting areas, additional security and decorative lighting, educational and welcome signage, sound system, updated irrigation, concrete repairs, and ADA and bicycle accessibility improvements. Phase II plans are being finalized and include additional landscaping and shade structures.



DOWNTOWN GREENWAY

The Downtown Greenway is a pedestrian and bicycling corridor that links residential neighborhoods to downtown parks, businesses, and cultural attractions utilizing the existing BREC parks, interstate infrastructure, and public rights-of-way. The creation of the greenway has spurred new investments and redevelopment in the city's core. Planning for the Downtown Greenway was made possible by funding from the EPA's Greening America's Capitals program and Capital Area Finance Authority. An additional \$3 million in grant funding was secured to design and build early phases. Design Workshop completed the design for North Boulevard and East/T.J. Jemison Boulevard.

Construction was completed on the first components of the Downtown Greenway in 2015 at BREC's Expressway Park and the Myrtle Street Connector to the Lincoln Theatre. The North Boulevard section was completed in 2016 and features a separated 10' bicycle path and 5' pedestrian garden path, median crossings, specialty pavement, curb ramps, seating areas, lighting, sculpture, water fountains, bicycle racks, and lush landscaping. This section connects to North Boulevard Town Square and the Mississippi River Levee path. Construction on the T.J. Jemison / East Boulevard portion of the Downtown Greenway was completed in the beginning of 2020 and includes bicycle and pedestrian paths, lighting, and landscaping from Expressway Park to North Boulevard. The greenway connects north into the Central Business District and Spanish Town via 5th and 6th Streets. The DDD and the City-Parish are in the planning process to include dedicated bicycle lanes on the one-way streets.



MARKETING & ATTRACTION

In order to most effectively market the complete Downtown Baton Rouge experience to visitors, residents, and workers; the Downtown Development District has an extensive and informational website. The contents of the website include: Discover Downtown, Live Here, Do Business, and Get Around. The TILT-designed website was updated in late 2019. The DDD website focuses on a new, innovative design, as well as making information more easily accessible to different users.

In addition to the website, the Downtown Development District creates a yearly Development Toolkit to provide developers and investors key market data and statistics about the downtown area and activities. The toolkit outlines numerous permitting processes, provides important contact information, and gives a snapshot into current downtown demographics. All available local and state economic incentives are also outlined within the document that is available on our website and in our complete marketing packets. In addition, the DDD has welcome guides including Attractions and Festivals, Residential, Business, and Parking.



Photo Credit: Visit Baton Rouge



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Downtown residents and guests enjoy over 1,500 annual events including parades, races, and large events such as the popular Live After Five concert series. Many of these events take place in the recently implemented public greenspaces of The Central Green including North Boulevard Town Square, Davis S. Rhorer Plaza, and Repentance Park. The Downtown Development District strategically implemented these spaces as recommendations from downtown's master plans in order to spur investment and provide a constant stream of attractions and activity.

In addition to implementing these unique public spaces, the DDD also manages all aspects of these greenspaces such as the beacon programming, assistance with event logistics, and maintaining the landscape in order to enhance the public's downtown experience. The DDD, functioning as a liaison between event coordinators and City-Parish departments, also reviews event applications and assists in required permitting processes. Event information is also available and marketed through various DDD outlets, including emails, social media, the North Boulevard Town Square Media Beacon, and website calendars. The Special Event Procedures and Guidelines Handbook, available online or in our office, was developed and is maintained as an overview to the logistics and processes in event coordination. The 2022 event calendar rebounded from the pandemic impacts of 2020/2021, and in 2023, a robust series of downtown events are expected.

For more information on the event related resources provided by the DDD, visit www.downtownbatonrouge.org.



10 YEARS OF ORGANIZATION & PROJECT RECOGNITION

- 2020

Central Green - International Downtown Association – Award of Excellence, Connecting Community with Commerce and Culture
Central Green - Boston Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects – Merit Award, Design
Rotary Sculpture - International Downtown Association – Best Practice, Professional Urban Place Management Principles
- 2019

Davis Rhorer - LA Chapter of the American Planning Association, Partners in Planning
City Hall Plaza* - Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. National Chapter, Excellence in Construction Pyramid Award
Downtown Greenway - LA Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture, President's Award of Excellence
City Hall Plaza* - LA Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture, Honor Award
- 2018

Power of Implementation Award to Davis Rhorer by the Center for Planning Excellence.
City Hall Plaza* – Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. Pelican Chapter, Excellence Award
City Hall Plaza* - Baton Rouge Growth Coalition – Good Growth Award
Historic Third Street - LA Chapter of the American Planning Association, Great Street
Central Green - LA Chapter of the American Planning Association, Implementation
- 2017

Certificate of Commendation for 30 years of Leadership from the EBR Office of Mayor President
Yazoo Plaza at The Louisiana Art & Science Museum - LA Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture, Merit Award
- 2016

River Road Project – Baton Rouge Growth Coalition – Good Growth Award
DDD Toolkit – International Downtown Association – Merit Award, Marketing
- 2015

River Road Project – LA Chapter of the American Planning Association, Louisiana Great Places
River Road Project – International Downtown Association – merit Award, Public Spaces
- 2014

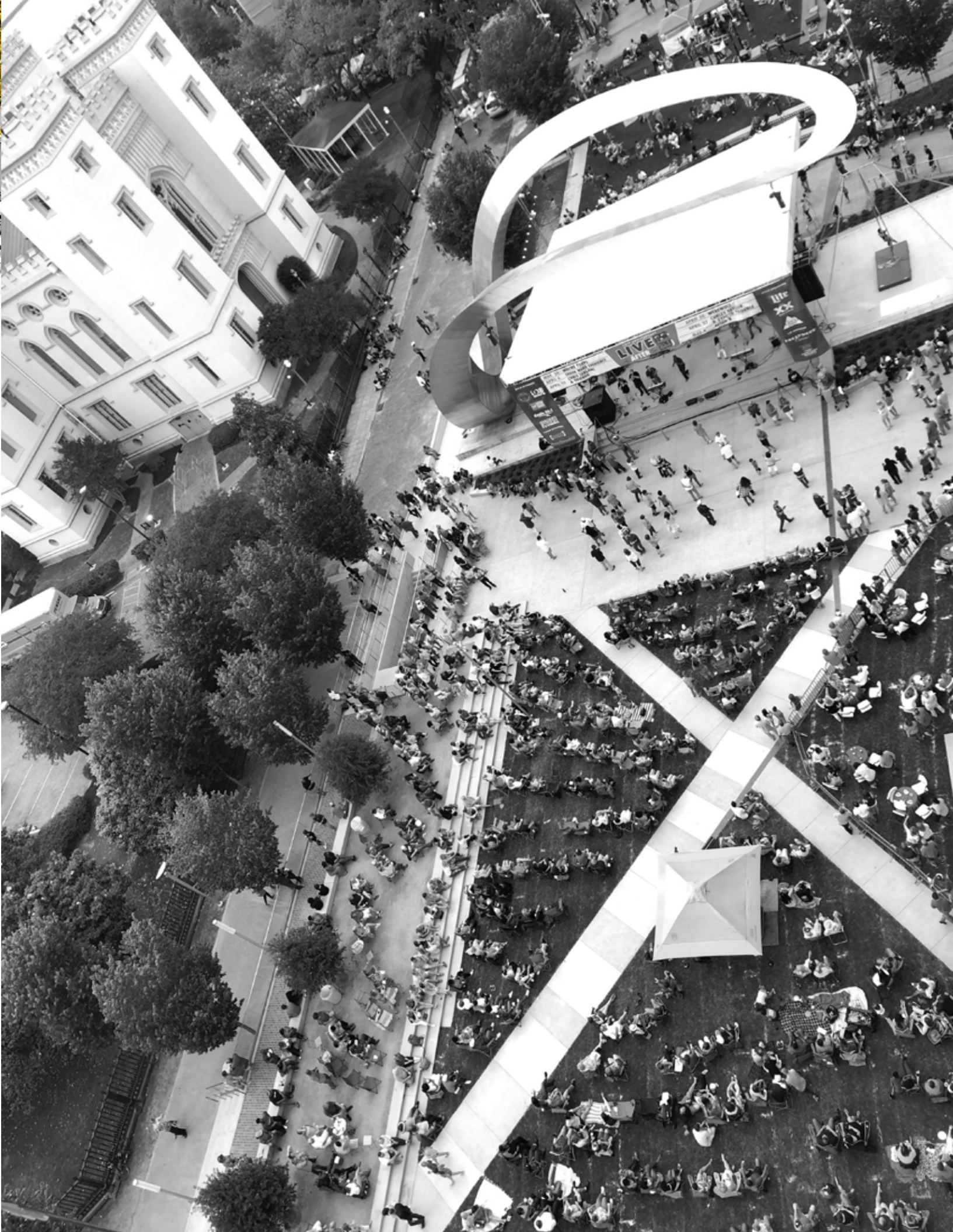
The Crest – National Engineering News Record “Best of the Best” Landscape/Urban Development Category
Repentance Park - LA Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture, Merit Award
The Crest at Galvez Plaza – Engineering News-Record, LA & TX Region – Best Project, Landscape/hardscape/Urban Design
The Crest at Galvez Plaza – International Downtown Association – Merit Award, Public Spaces
The Crest & Repentance Park - Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc., Pelican Chapter
The Crest & Repentance Park - Associated Builders and Contractors, Eagle Award (national)
The Crest - The Associated General Contractors of America (national)
The Crest at Galvez Plaza - Baton Rouge Growth Coalition Good Growth
North Boulevard Town Square – LA Chapter of the American Planning Association – Louisiana Great Places
- 2013

Repentance Park – International Downtown Association, Public Spaces
Downtown Development District 25 Years – International Downtown Association, Leadership & Management
North Boulevard Town Square – LA Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture, Honor Award
- 2012

North Boulevard Town Square – ENR TX/LA, Best Hardscape Urban Development Project
North Boulevard Town Square - The United States Conference of Mayors, Merit Award, City Livability
North Boulevard Town Square – International Downtown Association Merit Award, Public Spaces
North Boulevard Town Square – Baton Rouge Growth Coalition Good Growth, People's Choice Award
North Boulevard Town Square – Associated Builders & Contractors, Excellence in Construction
North Boulevard Town Square – LA Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture, Planning
North Boulevard Town Square – Municipal Association for Economic Development
- 2011

Downtown Greenway – International Downtown Association, Planning

* Renamed Rhorer Plaza in 2021



SPECIAL THANKS

SPECIAL THANKS

We remain dedicated to the development and promotion of Downtown Baton Rouge as we move forward into 2023. We thank all of the countless individuals who support our mission and cause, enabling Downtown Baton Rouge to grow and develop into a place to live, work, and play. They include private developers, public agencies, and non-profit organizations. We are extremely grateful for the partnerships that make such extraordinary projects happen. Special thanks to Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome and the Metropolitan Council for the continued support of the DDD’s vision.

Honorable Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome

Chief Administrative Officers Darryl Gissel & Major General Glenn Curtis

East Baton Rouge City-Parish Metropolitan Council

Brandon Noel	District One
Chauna Banks	District Two
Rowdy Gaudet	District Three
Aaron Moak	District Four
Darryl Hurst	District Five
Cleve Dunn Jr.	District Six
LaMont Cole, Pro Tem	District Seven
Denise Amoroso	District Eight
Dwight Hudson	District Nine
Carolyn Coleman	District Ten
Laurie Adams	District Eleven
Jennifer Racca	District Twelve

DDD Commissioners

Melanie C. Montanaro	Chairwoman
Eric Dexter	Vice Chairman
Jude Melville	Treasurer
Prescott Bailey	Secretary
Erin Monroe Wesley	
Patrick Michaels	
Scott N. Hensgens	

DDD Staff

Whitney Hoffman Sayal, AICP	Executive Director
Casey Tate	Assitant Executive Director
Ute Cress	Administrative Assistant
Morgan Lewis	Design and Marketing Coordinator
Houston Tullis	Student Intern



DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT