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2024 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

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Night Market 2024 (Rhorer Plaza)



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

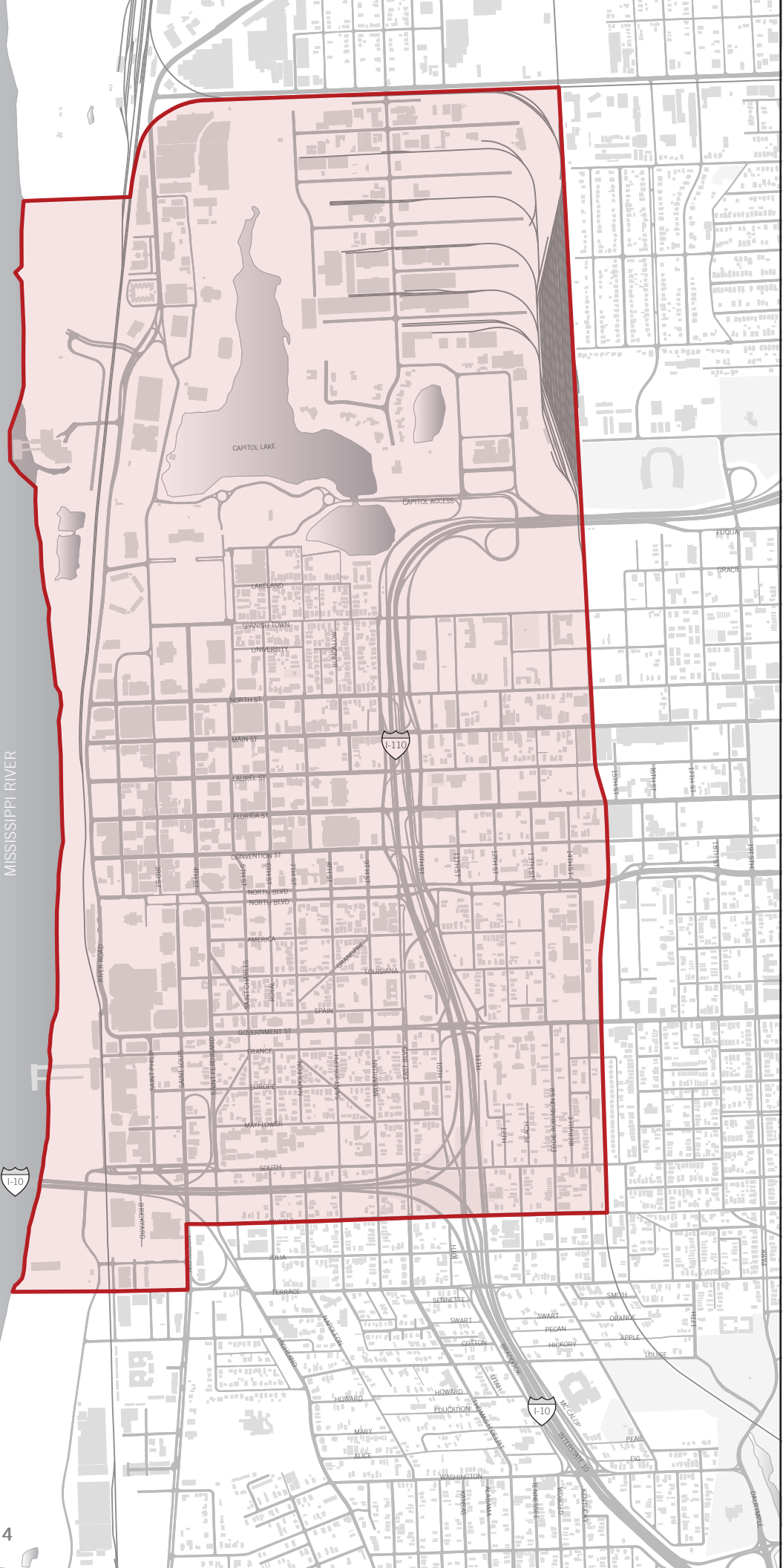
DEVELOPMENT YEARBOOK

2024

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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's mission is to generate funds to create a comprehensive policy for the promotion and enhancement of the District to benefit the entire community. To fulfill this mission we work to initiate, incubate, and support partnerships that develop and enhance the district, using community-driven master plans and economic incentives. These partnerships are key to continuing the momentum and excitement we have for the future of Downtown.

In 2024, we completed many goals from our 5-year DDD strategic plan and welcomed new businesses, development, and events to downtown. We also released our updated 2024 Downtown Development Toolkit, highlighting downtown's positive trends and data including the rise in residential, as well as high occupancy rates in both office and hotels. This year's toolkit also included unique PlacerAI data - utilizing cell phone data to understand people's movement, attendance, and interests.

The 2024 Yearbook features developments over the past year, provides a snapshot of data and statistics, highlights projects in the pipeline, and features a list of acknowledgments and recognitions. In addition, this document showcases the Downtown Development District's projects, events, and initiatives driving the next phase of development.



STATS SUMMARY

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT



90%

CBD RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY

HOTELS



68.4%

OCCUPANCY RATE

\$135 MILLION

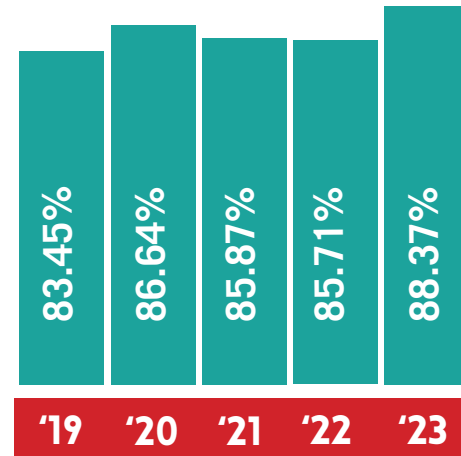
HOTEL INVESTMENT

STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

✓ PLAN BATON ROUGE III KICK OFF

- ✓ BYLAWS UPDATE
- ✓ DEVELOPMENT PROJECT DIRECTOR HIRED
- ✓ DESIGN & MARKETING COORDINATOR HIRED
- ✓ NEWSLETTER CONTENT UPDATED
- ✓ 24 HOUR POLICE SERVICE
- ✓ MARKETING/MYTH BUSTERS
- ✓ THIRD STREET LED LIGHTING UPGRADE
- ✓ ALLIED PARTNER ENGAGEMENT
- ✓ 19 PROJECTS/INITIATIVES MANAGED BY THE DDD

OFFICE OCCUPANCY



CLASS A/B/C OCCUPANCY

Occupancy rate per percentage

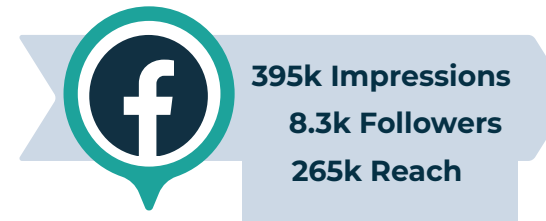
CBD Office Occupancy for 2023 is **88.37%**



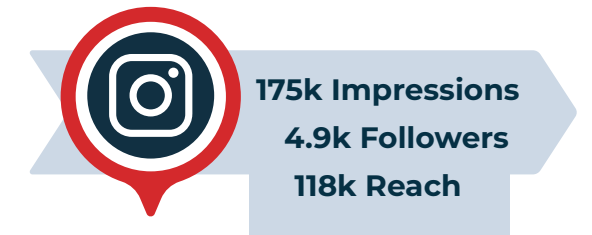
STATS SUMMARY

SOCIAL MEDIA

DDD Facebook Stats for 2024



DDD Instagram Stats for 2024



8K + follower increase from 2023!

NEWSLETTER



Over 100 marketing emails sent between 2023-2024

3,015 DDD newsletter subscribers

16.6 % INCREASE in subscribers from 2023

8 Newsroom blogs posted in 2024

LAUNCHING New Newsletter in January 2025

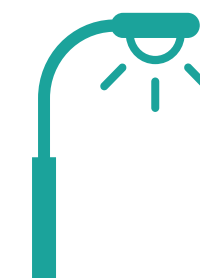
SECURITY AND LIGHTING



24 HOUR POLICE PRESENCE

MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH BRPD 5TH DISTRICT

300+ HOURS ADDED EXTRA DUTY SECURITY PATROLS TO DOWNTOWN EAST



35+ STREET LIGHTS REPAIRED

LIGHTING UPGRADE TO LED

- SPANISH TOWN ROAD
- THIRD STREET



2024 PROJECTS



HOTEL INDIGO RENOVATIONS

The Hotel Indigo is one of the first hotels redeveloped in downtown and is located in the heart of the district. The first major renovation began with a budget of \$25 million in 2009 and offered 48,000 sq ft and 93 rooms. For over a decade, the pet-friendly boutique hotel has welcomed thousands of visitors. This fall, the hotel again renovated all of the hotel rooms and gathering space utilizing a unique style that showcases southern hospitality in the Red Stick. The renovations cost approximately \$8 million and the hotel's newly refurbished restaurant, King Bar & Bistro, reopened with a Creole style menu.

THE BELLE BATON ROUGE

In addition to the Queen Baton Rouge, The Belle of Baton Rouge also received approval to move the casino land-side from the riverboat. The casino is investing approximately \$140 million towards renovating the hotel's 242 rooms and suites, as well as a new landside casino inside the historic Atrium. The gaming and entertainment complex will feature 25,000 square feet of gaming, a large sports lounge, 600 slot machines, and 14 gaming tables. The casino will also open a café, oyster bar, bistro pizza, and a small bowling area. This expansion is expected to increase employment to 460. While the hotel and casino area are finishing construction, guests can now enjoy the Belle's temporary land-based casino with 9,775 sq. ft. of gaming space including over 220 slot machines and 3 table games. The hotel is expected to open in March 2025 and the gaming and entertainment complex in the fall of 2025.

This summer, the casino withdrew their effort to appeal the Historic Preservation Commission's denial to demolish the Maritime II building. The DDD and community partners are working with the casino to determine alternative uses for the building and available economic incentives.



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 – serving as a community attraction and welcoming performances by famous musicians and featured films. Unfortunately, it was closed in the 1980s, but several recent revitalization efforts have been made on the historic sign, seating, electrical systems, windows, and other vital elements. Franklin Lassiter, project architect, completed plans that include additions to the theatre, lobby, gallery space, and other amenities. Construction, funded by the city-parish and state, is currently ongoing with an expected completion date of May 2025.



ORIGIN HOTEL

The Origin Hotel, formerly known as the Holiday Inn Express, is located on the corner of St. Ferdinand and North Boulevard. The original building was built in 1956 and was home to the Baton Rouge Savings and Loan Bank. Following the bank, a charter school was also housed in the facility before its major renovation in 2015 into the Holiday Inn Express. Thrash Development acquired the building from the operators of the Holiday Inn Express and completed renovations to the 87-room boutique style hotel early this year, offering a unique experience to guests and patrons.

The new Origin Hotel Baton Rouge is a Wyndam Hotel and has several amenities including flexible meeting and event space, a fitness center, complimentary bike rentals, pet-friendly accommodations, and private roof deck event space. Renovations also included an additional floor to the hotel, additional penthouse suites, and a full-service restaurant and bar. The design style of the hotel combines art deco elements and contemporary patterns and colors centered around one of Baton Rouge's famous icon Mike the Tiger. The \$10 million renovation was completed in January 2024.



HERON II

Key Real Estate and John O. Hearin partnered to bring the Heron to downtown a few years ago at 625 Convention Street and intend to construct an additional residential development in a property adjacent to the existing building and the Downtown Greenway. The former building on the site was demolished in 2024 and the developer is finishing designs for the site. The new residential development is expected to include 200-250 residential units as well as a potential retail component. The design concept is intended to attract young professionals working downtown as well as older university students.



STREET TREE PLANTINGS

In addition to downtown's greenspaces, the Downtown Development District maintains an inventory and assessment of the Central Business District's Street trees in partnership with the City-Parish GIS Department and Baton Rouge Green. \$50,000 from the 2023 City-Parish Budget Supplement was allocated to address the needed replacement of trees that have been extensively damaged or in poor condition. In 2024, the DDD utilized the dedicated funds to plant 20 trees, located in highly visible street corridors on North Blvd., River Road, and Lafayette Street.



MAIN STREET MARKET RENOVATIONS

Downtown's public marketplace located at 501 Main Street is the home of Saturday's Red Stick Farmers Market and weekday food vendors. BREADA - Big River Economic Agricultural Development Alliance - manages the market, supports local farmers, and promotes community access to fresh foods. In 2023, renovations to the Main Street Market began with a \$1 million allocation from the state.

BREADA hosted its annual fundraising event at the Main Street Market, giving guests a sneak peak of the newly renovated facility. However, renovations are not yet fully complete and the facility is not yet officially open; finishing work is nearing complete. The newly renovated facility will reopen in early 2025 with expanded restrooms, updated fixtures, and a programming space to better serve the downtown community. In addition to the facility's opening, BREADA will also in tandem announce the new market vendors that will serve guests during the week and at the Farmers Market.



LSU RIVERFRONT STUDY

The LSU School of Robert Reich Landscape Architecture 5th year students studied the Downtown Baton Rouge riverfront as part of the fall semester studio project. The class was divided into three groups and divided the length of the riverfront into three different sections. They began by studying the downtown master plans and reviewing the recommendations of the plans, incorporating the concepts into their plans. The final plans focused on improving accessibility to the riverfront, creating social gathering spaces, and incorporating modern design concepts. The DDD, in partnership with the Mayor-President, hosted an Open House in the spring of 2024 highlighting the student work and also released a public survey to gain insight on desired future improvements. The survey revealed the desire for more restaurant and retail opportunities on the riverfront as well as the opportunity to better connect to the River Center as that facility is replanned/transformed.

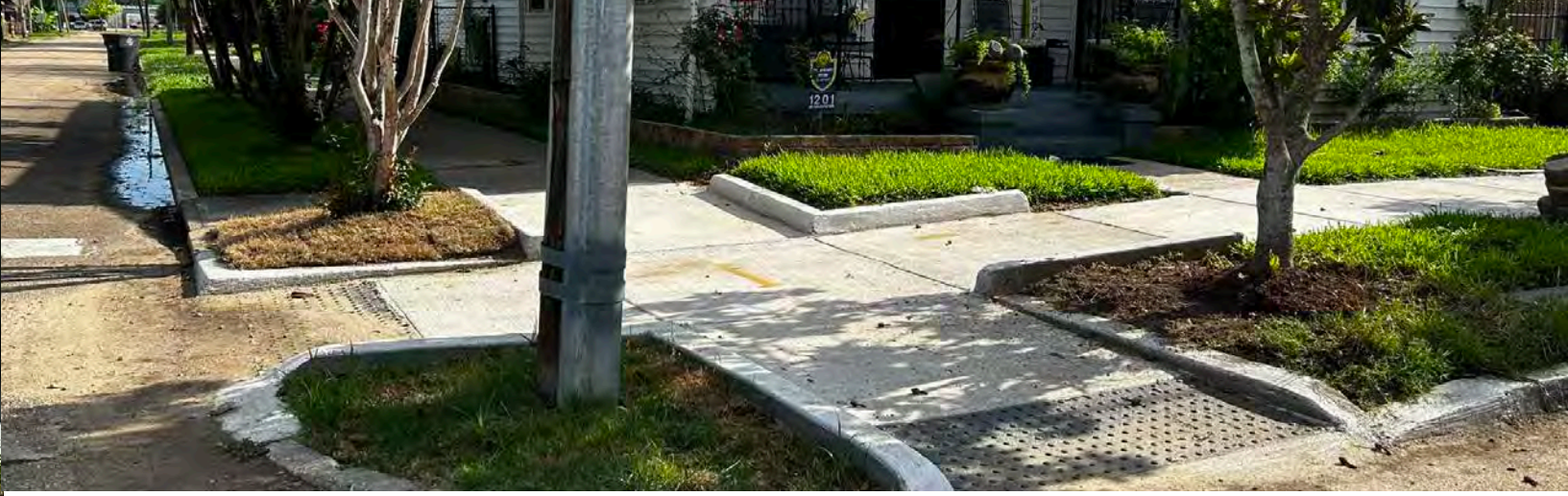
Existing Assets

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Russell B. Long Federal Building | 6. Renaissance Park |
| 2. United States Postal Service | 7. Inglesia Ni Cristo |
| 3. Baton Rouge Planning Commission | 8. St. Vincent De Paul |
| 4. East Baton Rouge Parish Health Unit | 9. Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church |
| 5. Greyhound Station | 10. Mid City Redevelopment Alliance |



FLORIDA CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN

Build Baton Rouge hired a planning consultant team, Perkins & Will, to develop a plan that will guide the development of projects along the Florida Corridor that will leverage concurrent investments in infrastructure and spur additional economic opportunity. The master plan addresses transportation, land use, urban design, and community development. The plan identified six focus areas, including one in the downtown area that straddles Interstate I-110. The plan noted this area as the most socially vulnerable area of Florida Corridor and envisioned enhancing the interstate infrastructure as well as additional residential developments.



ADA IMPROVEMENTS

Several projects focused on improving accessibility downtown are proposed as part of the MOVEBR program, including ADA Improvements in locations near the planned Bus Rapid Transit project. In 2024, improvements have been focused around East Blvd., T.J. Jemison Blvd., and North Blvd. The improvements include ADA accessible curb ramps, pedestrian signals with audio, crosswalks, and other necessary upgrades. More ADA improvement related projects are expected downtown as part of the MOVEBR and Bus Rapid Transit projects.

LOUISIANA CONNECTOR

Construction is complete on the Downtown Greenway Louisiana Connector, connecting the Government Street Bike Lanes to the Downtown Greenway at T.J. Jemison Boulevard. The Downtown Greenway project is spearheaded by the Downtown Development District and is a 2.75-mile interconnected network of bike/pedestrian pathways connecting Baton Rouge's public parks and recreational facilities, inner city communities, and cultural attractions through the use of greenways, or linear parks. 1.75 miles have been completed.

The first phase of the project focused on the portion under I-110, showcasing new signage and ADA and bicycle access; completed in the fall of 2023. The second phase of the project includes sidewalks, bicycle sharrows, ADA compliant crosswalk improvements, wayfinding signage, and streetscape amenities along Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive and Louisiana Avenue. It was complete in the second quarter of 2024. Grant funding for phase one is from the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and phase two from the Safe Routes to Public Places Program.



BUS RAPID TRANSIT

Bus Rapid Transit is a high-quality rapid transit mode for buses combining physical and operating improvements into the existing integrated transit system. The Plank-Nicholson Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) connects neighborhoods, employment centers, medical facilities, and major destinations. It is intended to promote revitalization on these corridors by encouraging transit-oriented development and supporting small business activity. The route does bring riders to the downtown area via Florida Street, 4th Street, St. Louis Street, and Nicholson Drive. The system is expected to be fully operational in late 2025.



USS KIDD RESTORATION

The USS Kidd is a World War II battleship and has long attracted visitors from around the world to Baton Rouge. The ship was originally commissioned in 1943 and earned 12 battle stars during its service. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1986 and came to Baton Rouge in 1983. The museum plays a vital role in preserving and sharing the rich history and personal stories of those from our community that have served in the armed forces and provides an enormous economic impact to the downtown area.

Over the last 40 years, the ship's hull has been damaged, requiring the ship to be properly repaired in a shipyard's dry dock. The State of Louisiana identified fundings for the repair and City-Parish has provided funding to protect the ship's historical artifacts and the museum's continued operations while waiting for the ship to return. The ship was removed from its Baton Rouge Mississippi River cradle and taken to a shipyard for its repairs this spring. It is expect to return in the spring of 2025 and the museum is also planning new exhibits to showcase to visitors upon its arrival.



LIGHTING UPGRADES

The DDD's 5-year Strategic Plan highlighted a need to upgrade lighting in the district. Fortunately, the City-Parish partnered with Entergy on a pilot project to upgrade to LED lighting on one of downtown's most traveled and historic streets, Third Street. These upgrades aim to create a vibrant, safe, and sustainable downtown environment that enhances the experience for both residents and visitors. They also contribute to reducing energy consumption and long-term operational costs while modernizing the look and feel of the area. Planning is underway to potentially include similar lighting upgrades on Spanish Town Road.



PARKING METERS

The parking meters recently installed downtown are part of an effort to improve traffic management and ensure better access to the area's commercial zones. They feature updated technology, which allows for a variety of payment options including credit cards, text to pay, and mobile apps. There is a 2-hour maximum time limit for on-street parking in each designated zone during enforcement times. Parking spots in the Central Business District are enforced Monday-Friday from 8am-6pm and remain free on weekends and holidays.



ST. JOSEPH CATHEDRAL

The St. Joseph Cathedral's Garden Committee and church leadership have enlisted the help of Jeff Carbo, a Landscape Architect from Baton Rouge, to design renovations to the church's campus. Recent campus improvements to the entrance of the cathedral were completed in early summer on North and Fourth Streets, sponsored by the Garden Club and the Preservation Society. The leadership, with Jeff Carbo are identifying other opportunities to improve the church's campus, including in the Bishop's Garden where three Bishops are buried. Implementation of the plans will be phased in conjunction with available funding.

LED BUILDING

The State of Louisiana is making a significant investment of \$5.5M in the former Welcome Center, transforming it into a premier asset for Louisiana Economic Development. This space is being reimagined to showcase the strength and diversity of our existing industries and will serve as a platform to tell the story of innovation, growth, and opportunity across our state while highlighting the forward momentum of our state's economy. The reimagined facility will also position LED to engage more effectively with businesses, stakeholders, and visitors, emphasizing our commitment to fostering economic development and building a vibrant future.

The renovation will modernize the facility while maintaining its original architectural character. Once complete, the building will serve as a hub for agency operations, enhancing access to LED's resources and programs. The revitalization of this building is another exciting development happening near the riverfront, highlighting and reiterating the Mississippi River's significance to our city and state. Construction is expected to be complete in the second quarter of 2025.



CURB REPAIRS

The City-Parish Department of Maintenance repaired 337 feet of broken curbs in the downtown area early this fall. These curb repairs contribute to improving pedestrian safety, accessibility, and the overall urban environment, ensuring that the downtown area is functional and welcoming for residents, visitors, and businesses alike. This project will continue in 2025.

BUSINESSES



BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

The following list is a snapshot of businesses opening downtown in 2024, but is not inclusive of all business openings.

GARDEN HOUSE - 705 ST. JOSEPH. Nancy Noonan opened the Garden House in Beauregard Town, an event venue that features a unique style with bold hues and vintage furnishings. The venue is approximately 1,300 square feet and can accommodate 45-60 people.

THE 121 - 121 CONVENTION. The 121 is an event venue in the heart of the Central Business District. It is two stories and has 5,200 square feet of event space. Many weddings utilize this space for the ceremony, reception, or wedding preparation.

DIGITAL KNOMAD-227 FLORIDA Digital Knomad is a creative design space in downtown Baton Rouge specializing in branding, multimedia production, and space rentals for creative projects and events.

OKKI TOKKI - 549 MAIN. A new Korean restaurant opened in the Galvez Parking Garage and offers patrons a unique experience to build their own bowls complete with sauces, protein, and vegetables.

O'HARA'S IRISH PUB - 136 THIRD. A new entertainment venue opened in the previous Happy's location. It features live music and was named after a bar in NYC that has become a hub for first responders following 9/11.

LOUISIANA MOTOR TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION - 325 FLORIDA. LMTA represents trucking and related industry companies throughout the state and the nation. Plans are to include a trucking museum on the bottom floor of the building.

CITY ROOTS- 400 CONVENTION. City Roots specializes in small-batch roasting and handcrafted coffee beverages. This fall City Roots opened their second location in the City Plaza building.

LUCKETT PORTRAIT STUDIO - 207 FLORIDA. portrait studio offering hair and makeup services, as well as a variety of backgrounds, has opened. The studio is located in heart of the CBD, offering close proximity to Baton Rouge's top photo destinations!

VIOLET - 214 THIRD. Violet offers a luxurious nightlife experience with a vibrant EDM atmosphere featuring top DJs and VIP experiences.

SECOND STORY - 214 THIRD. Second Story bar is located on the second floor, above Violet nightclub. The venue opened this summer and features hanging flowers and twinkling lights on the balcony serving high-end cocktails.

HOT STUFF - 244 LAFAYETTE. Hot Stuff restaurant opened this summer and occupies the former space of The Blues Room. It features hot breakfast and lunch meals in a diner-style setting.

MASSAGE EMPORIUM -334 THIRD. The Massage Emporium has returned downtown, opening its now second location on historic Third Street. The spa offers a variety of massage therapies, including couples massages, as well as facials and waxing services.



PROJECTS IN PLANNING



PLAN BATON ROUGE III

Baton Rouge civic leaders are launching a new planning process aimed at continuing the revitalization and enhancement efforts in Downtown Baton Rouge. Community champions, the City of Baton Rouge/Parish of East Baton Rouge, Downtown Development District, Visit Baton Rouge, Baton Rouge Area Chamber, and Baton Rouge Area Foundation (BRAAF) have joined together to sponsor Plan Baton Rouge III, an update to downtown's master planning efforts. This new, forward-looking plan will focus on placemaking, developing new residential opportunities, enhancing the riverfront, improving infrastructure and connectivity, attracting new restaurants and businesses, and highlighting downtown Baton Rouge's unique arts and cultural potential. A new master planning initiative was a major recommendation within the DDD's strategic plan; the planning work is expected to begin in early 2025.

The prior master plans, Plan Baton Rouge I and II, have guided our work and are the drivers for the revitalization efforts we have seen, however there is significant potential for new and exciting development. Initiating Plan Baton Rouge III is the catalyst to continued growth and prosperity not only for downtown, but our entire region" said Whitney Hoffman Sayal, director of the Downtown Development District. "We are thrilled to begin this transformative process."



CAPITOL LAKES

In 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officially added the Capitol Lakes to its Superfund National Priority List, prioritizing the lake system for pollutant clean-up. A fishing advisory has long been in place for the lakes, with signs posted along the shorelines - as it has been known to contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other toxic material. Next steps will include a remedial investigation to determine the extent of the contamination and then determine possible clean-up methods. As the Capitol Lakes are an asset of the downtown area, this project offers an opportunity to not only remove toxic material, but also capitalize on its potential.



RIVERFRONT SIGNAGE

The Downtown Development District acquired a grant from the Atchafalaya Trace Commission is to create and install educational signage along the riverfront. The interpretive signage panels will give information on the water systems within the region that visitors, particularly riverboat visitors, may not otherwise be exposed to. The grant is a matching funds grant, providing up to \$12,500 for the signage. The DDD hired CARBO Landscape Architecture to develop the informational graphic layouts and the construction details for the signage structures. The signage is expected to be installed in 2025.



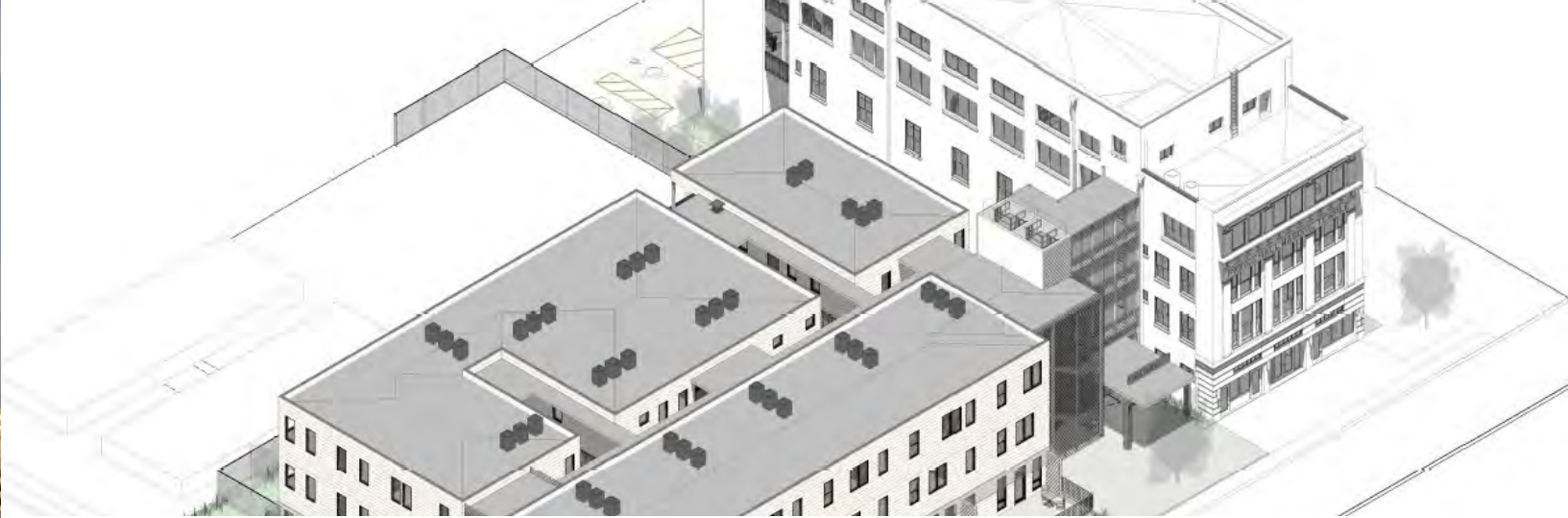
RIVER CENTER

The city has established an Oversight Committee to guide the revitalization of the Raising Cane's Center, aiming to modernize its facilities and attract more conventions. The committee is exploring the feasibility of a Convention Center Hotel along with other amenities and alterations. The renovation is expected to boost local tourism, attract high-profile events, and strengthen the city's reputation as a premier destination for conventions and conferences.



LSU WATER CAMPUS STUDY

The LSU School of Robert Reich Landscape Architecture second year graduate program students studied the Downtown Baton Rouge riverfront near the Water Campus as part of the fall semester studio project. The Riverfront is recognized as one of Baton Rouge's greatest assets, yet to be fully unveiled. The students' designed aimed to transform the area into a hub of recreation, culture, and community connection. Some of the design ideas included scenic walking and biking trails, lush green spaces, amphitheatres, plazas, improved access for boating, and waterfront seating to encourage outdoor activities and relaxation. Eco-friendly components were also explored including native landscape materials and flood-resilient infrastructure.



PRINCE MASONIC TEMPLE

The historic Prince Hall Masonic Temple, 1335 North Boulevard, is planned to be redeveloped into a mixed-use affordable housing complex. The developer, Wendy Daniels, spoke to the DDD Commission in December about the creation of 46 mixed-income units and the \$2 million in funding it received from EBR City-Parish Office of Community Development. The building was listed as one of Louisiana's Most Endangered Places by the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation, as the buildings architectural character and historical significance were threatened by years of neglect. Built in 1924, the building housed two entertainment venues, including the Temple Roof Garden. The developer plans to restore the roof garden as an event space. The project is expected to begin construction in 2025.

CBD HISTORIC SURVEY

The DDD, in partnership with the EBR City-Parish Planning Commission, has been awarded a grant from the Louisiana State Office of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism to update the historic building survey of the Central Business District. The project will involve comprehensive documentation and assessment of historic structures, identifying those that contribute historically to the district and may be eligible to receive historic tax credits. This updated survey will serve as a valuable resource for city planners, historians, developers, and property owners, ensuring that the unique character of downtown is protected and buildings are restored for future generations to enjoy.

The CBD has had two other historic surveys completed, in 1984 and 2004. Buildings over 50 years old are eligible to receive historic tax credits and developers use the historic survey information in their applications for the credits. As the latest survey is 20 years old, many buildings not deemed historically significant, may now be contributing to the historic character of the district. The survey is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2025.



LINCOLN HOTEL

The historic Lincoln Hotel, 410 Eddie Robinson Sr. Boulevard, which hosted African-American guests in Baton Rouge during the period of segregation in the south, was purchased 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 2018, qualifying it for state and federal historic building tax credits to help finance the redevelopment. The project also received additional HOME funds from the EBR City-Parish Office of Community Development at the end of 2024. Construction is expected to begin in 2025.



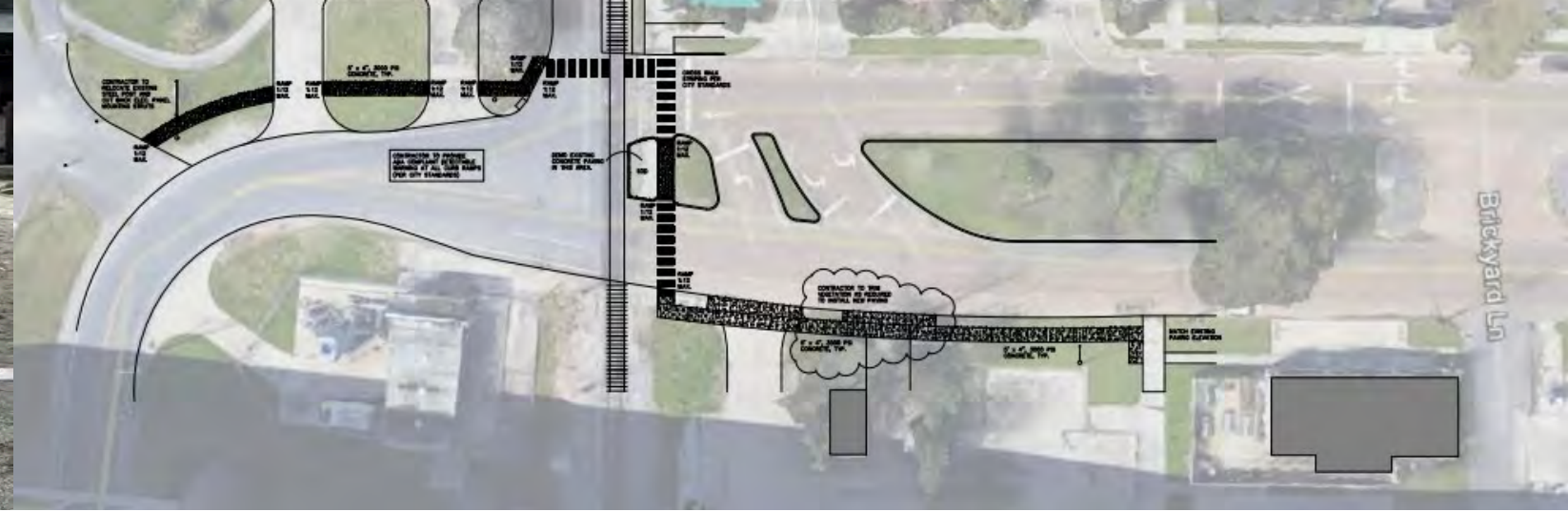
ADA IMPROVEMENTS

Construction is complete on the Downtown Greenway Louisiana Connector, connecting the Government Street Bike Lanes to the Downtown Greenway at T.J. Jemison Boulevard. In 2024, phase II of the project was complete. This phase of the project improved access for all by bringing all the sidewalk and ramps up to code. The Downtown Greenway project is spearheaded by the Downtown Development District and is a 2.75-mile interconnected network of bike/pedestrian pathways connecting Baton Rouge's public parks and recreational facilities, inner city communities, and cultural attractions through the use of greenways, or linear parks. 1.75 miles have been completed.



NORTH BLVD ENHANCEMENTS

The North Boulevard MOVEBR Enhancement project proposes to enhance pedestrian and cyclist mobility by extending the Complete Streets corridor from the Downtown Greenway project eastward into the developed areas along North Blvd. Bicycle facility space is being considered as well as space for continuous sidewalks through the corridor. High visibility crosswalks at all intersections and pedestrian countdown signals at signalized intersections will also be considered. The design consultants are working towards 90% final plans and required right-of-way mapping. Construction is expected to begin in 2025.



SOUTH BOULEVARD ENHANCEMENTS

In early 2023, the Metropolitan Council approved the South Boulevard Trailhead Connection project to receive MOVEBR Community Enhancement Funds. The DDD envisioned the project to better connect pedestrian and bicyclists to the Mississippi River Levee Trail and the existing South Boulevard Trailhead. The enhancements will include crosswalks, wayfinding signage, ADA ramps, and sidewalks that connect the trailhead to nearby parking and walking facilities. The project is currently in the planning and design phase and was awarded to Regis Infrastructure Group. It is expected to begin construction in the third quarter of 2025.



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. In 2023, Governor John Bel Edwards' office announced his signature on an agreement that included Amtrak's participation. The Department of Transportation and Development also received \$500,000 to complete an environmental study and a service development plan.



RIVER ROAD WEST

The multi-use path extension 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. Bonton and Associates have been contracted to complete the construction plans for the project. The plans are expected to be complete in the first quarter of 2024 and construction is estimated to begin in the second quarter of 2025.



RIVER ROAD EAST

A pedestrian path on the east side of River Road between Florida Street and the Office of State 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 2025.



DOWNTOWN GREENWAY NORTH

The Downtown Development District and other City-Parish representatives are working to incorporate bicycle lanes connecting the Downtown Greenway at North Blvd. north to the Capitol Park and Spanish Town. The DDD Strategic Plan recommends completing a transportation plan that integrates the transportation recommendations from other planning initiatives, including the EBR City-Parish Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Plan Baton Rouge II, to identify the most feasible and desirable connection. The final recommendation will further the development of the Downtown Greenway, connecting Spanish Town and Central Business District residents to the core of downtown and the riverfront.

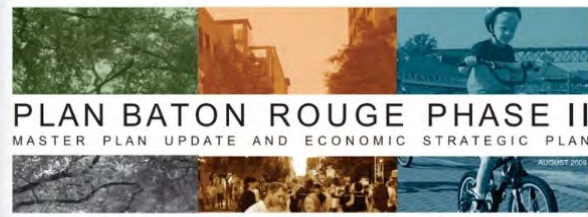
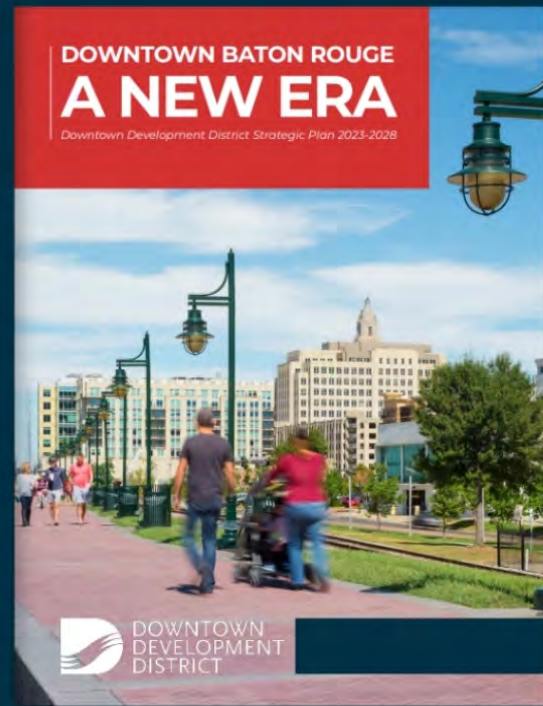
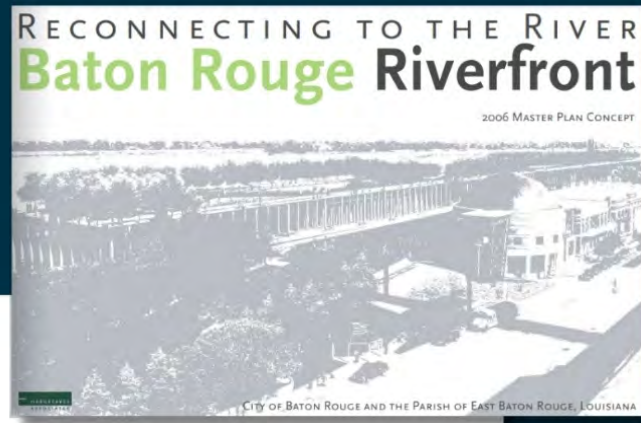


THIRD STREET MASTER PLAN

The City-Parish provided funding to the DDD to develop a master plan for Historic Third Street, aiming to celebrate its rich heritage while fostering economic growth. The plan spans from North Boulevard to North Street and includes enhancing pedestrian walkways, proposing lighting upgrades, enhancing the tree wells and landscaping, seating areas, and other pedestrian amenities. Once the plan is complete, a pilot project will be implemented to showcase some of the recommended improvements for the entire corridor. The recommendations will focus on attracting additional retail and dining spaces, complement the area's historic and cultural landmarks for locals and visitors alike. The plan is expected to be complete in the summer of 2025.



DDD INITIATIVES



DATA AND STATISTICS

Data is a critical driver of economic development as it enables informed decision-making, efficient resource allocation, and evidence-based policymaking. By analyzing trends and patterns, the DDD can identify growth opportunities, monitor economic performance, and address challenges. Data also supports innovation by providing insights into consumer behavior, market demands, and technological advancements. The DDD prioritizes data collection and monitoring, gathering vital information on economic trends, demographic changes, and other critical metrics to inform strategies and measure the impact downtown. Several tools and data sources are used including Census Data, Baton Rouge Trends Report, Placer.ai (utilizes cellphone data), as well as DDD led surveys.

DOWNTOWN PLANS

The Downtown Development District (DDD) relies on several community-driven master plans to lead the development of Downtown Baton Rouge, as well as its 5-Year Strategic Plan 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. Strategic plans define an organization's specific strategies, goals, and actions. The most recent 5-Year Strategic Plan was completed in the fall of 2023 and was developed from a robust public engagement campaign. Several components of the strategic plan have already been completed and most of the remaining goals have been initiated. One of those goals is to commune community organizations to identify projects that activate downtown and also pursuing funds and partnerships to begin a new downtown/urban core master planning effort - Plan Baton Rouge III. The planning process is expected to begin in early 2025.

Downtown's first master plan, Baton Rouge 2000, was initiated in 1983 and established not only a blueprint for downtown development, but also created the DDD to oversee implementation of the plan. Since that plan, the DDD has launched many planning initiatives including; The Capitol Park Master Plan, Riverfront Development Plan, Wayfinding Plan, Riverfront Master Plan, and Plan Baton Rouge II. Plan Baton Rouge II, created in 2009, has been guiding the DDD's efforts over the past several years - with many of the recommended projects completed.



STAKEHOLDER LIAISON

The DDD serves as a liaison between community stakeholders, organizations, developers, and governmental agencies. The DDD staff have a deep understanding of governmental processes and project implementation, with the communication skills to foster positive relationships between stakeholders that ensure projects get completed. We stay informed about policy changes, keep stakeholders informed, advocate for downtown's benefit, and anticipate potential challenges to ensure smooth collaboration. We have built a reputation as being a reliable organization with a high level of integrity, strengthening our role as a bridge between the government and other entities.



RIVERFRONT

The Downtown Riverfront is a primary feature of Baton Rouge and features the Mississippi River Levee Path, Riverfront Plaza, the Levee Green, Sing the River sculpture, and more. Several investments have been made over the years to strengthen the river as a regional destination for visitors and additional investments are on the horizon. Recently, the pedestrian bridge spanning over River Road has been stabilized and Riverfront Plaza's landscaping, water features, and lighting have been enhanced. The Baton Rouge Rotary Club also located their centennial sculpture piece known as Sing the River on the riverfront at Florida Street. River Road enhancements including multi-use paths and landscaping have been completed north to the Queen BR Casino, with plans for further northern expansion to the residential developments, The Hive and Riverview.

Public Input received from the 2023 downtown strategic planning process revealed the public's interest in additional social gathering spaces, often focused on the riverfront. Also in 2023, the LSU School of Robert Landscape Architecture 5th year class, focused on redesigning the riverfront, offering ideas to begin reimagining how the space can be enhanced to become more of a regional destination. This reinvigorated focus on the riverfront has prioritized the area for additional planning and infrastructure enhancements.



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 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.



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.

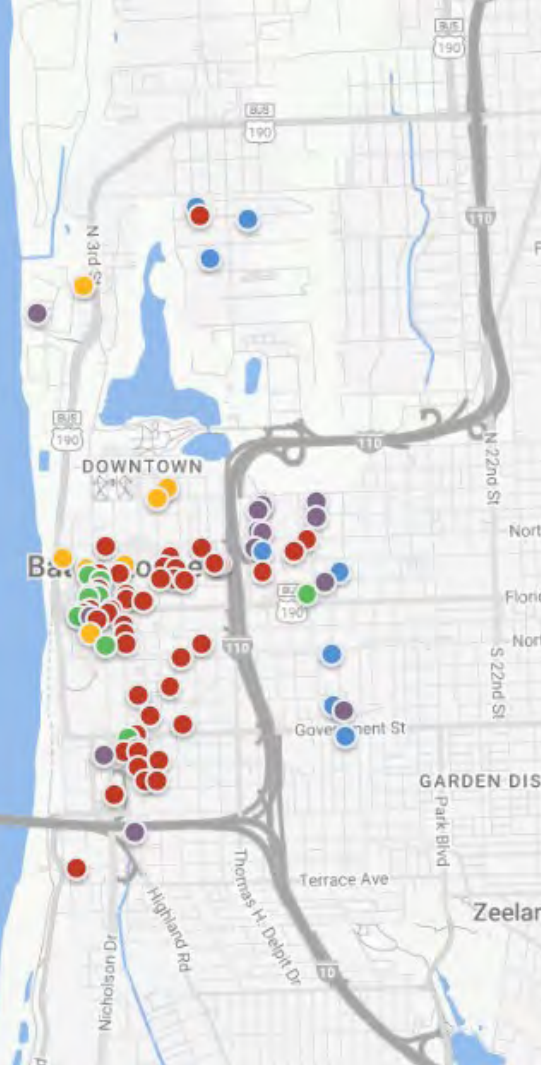
In total, more than 1.75 miles of the Downtown Greenway have been completed. Construction was completed on the first components of the Downtown Greenway in 2015 at BREC's Expressway Park and the Myrtle Street Connector to the Lincoln Theatre. The North Boulevard section was completed in 2016 and features separated bicycle and pedestrian paths, 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. In 2023, the greenway was connected to the nearby Government Street bike lanes via the Louisiana Connector, also spearheaded by the DDD. 2024 brought additional sidewalks, signage, and crosswalks along the connection between the Downtown Greenway and Government Street. The DDD and the City-Parish are in the planning process of identifying possible additional on-street bicycle infrastructure.

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. In 2023 we had a robust series of events, which is expected to be repeated in 2025. The DDD also recently acquired a technological tool that can track event attendance in 2024, called Placer.ai.

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



Industrial

1400 Main St

42,315 SF
\$1,359,000
Warehouse/Distribution

ELIFIN

Multi-Family

615 Spanish Town & 630 ...

1 SF
\$1,200,000
11 units

ELIFIN

Industrial

120 S 14th St

3,000 SF
\$275,000
Light Industrial

Flyer

Office

232 3rd St

15,100 SF
\$3,200,000
Mixed Use

LAND HAWK

Office

758 Royal St

3,741 SF - 3,750 SF
\$568,632 / \$14.00 Annual/...
2 spaces available

stirling

Industrial

887 Joplin Ave, Baton Ro...

16,000 SF
\$5.50 Annual/SF
Warehouse/Distribution

Office

Office

Office

Office

Office

Office



STREETSCAPE

The Downtown Development District works closely with the City-Parish in maintaining the streetscape by reporting needs and inventorying assets in GIS. In 2024, the DDD utilized the tree inventory assessment and received \$50,000 from the City-Parish to plant 20 trees, located in highly visible street corridors. Additional funding is needed to restore all of the tree wells in the CBD and the DDD is advocating and researching grant opportunities to meet this need. The DDD is also currently inventorying other streetscape amenities including trash cans, bike racks, and benches. In addition, the DDD and Visit Baton Rouge entered into a partnership to fund the installation and maintenance of several planters along the corridor in the summer of 2023/2024 to beautify Third Street.

REAL ESTATE

The Downtown Development District's website serves an important resource for developers. In 2024 the DDD partnered with the Greater Baton Rouge Realtors Association to provide a real time commercial database on the DDD Website. The commercial real estate database is customized to show properties within the boundaries of the Downtown Development District.

Click on the Do Business tab at downtownbatonrouge.org to access the page.



MAINTENANCE

The DDD collaborates with the City-Parish to ensure public spaces are well-maintained, clean, and inviting for residents and visitors. In collaboration with the departments of Transportation and Drainage, Buildings and Grounds, Maintenance, and Development, we coordinate maintenance activities, including landscaping, trash removal, and repairs, to uphold the functionality of sidewalks and green spaces. The DDD also works directly with BRPD and Entergy to identify street lighting that is out and coordinate repairs to enhance safety downtown, creating a welcoming environment for all. By pooling resources and fostering community involvement, the DDD works with city departments, organizations, and utility companies to ensure downtown is vibrant and attractive.



MARKETING AND ATTRACTIONS

In order to most effectively market the complete Downtown Baton Rouge experience to visitors, residents, and workers, the DDD website focuses on making information more easily accessible to different users with subject contents. These subject contents include: Discover Downtown, Live Here, Do Business, and Get Around. In 2023, the DDD also reinvigorated and prioritized communication through its email blasts and social media pages, substantially increasing our presence and interaction with the public.

In addition to the website, emails, and social media, the Downtown Development District creates an annual Development Yearbook (this document) and a 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 toolkit document that is available on our website and in our complete marketing packets.

ADVOCACY

Advocates representing the International Downtown Association traveled to the U.S. Capitol in April of 2024 to engage with Louisiana's congressional representatives, emphasizing the importance of federal support for urban development initiatives. Representatives from both the New Orleans and Baton Rouge Downtown Development District's attended the event to represent Louisiana. The group highlighted key bills aimed at Office to Residential Conversions, expanding affordable housing, safety initiatives and programs, and supporting small businesses in downtown districts. They shared compelling stories of how federal and state investments, citing historic tax credit restoration projects specifically, have spurred economic growth and job creation in Louisiana's urban areas, underscoring the need for continued funding and new incentives to sustain this momentum and adapt to the new urban environment following the pandemic.

During their meetings, the advocates stressed the importance of preserving the cultural and historic character of Louisiana's downtowns through the Revitalizing Downtowns and Main Streets Act (RDMA) introduced this year. They urged representatives to support this legislation as it promotes sustainability, ensures equitable development, and fosters strong partnerships between federal, state, and local governments to make downtown areas more vibrant, resilient, and inclusive. The RDMA Act gained strong bipartisan support in 2024 and the International Downtown Association is hopeful the bill will advance in 2025.



DOWNTOWN RECOGNITION

BEST OF 225 WINNERS

Downtown Baton Rouge has many accomplished businesses that won Best of 225 Awards! These including Chelsea's Live as Best Live Music Venue, Watermark as Best Hotel, Weiler Plastic Surgery as Best Local Medical Spa, along with many other honorable mentions.



BUSINESS REPORT'S BEST PLACES TO WORK

Downtown Baton Rouge proves once again why it's the best place to work and grow your business. With 20 Downtown Businesses recognized in the Business Report's Best Places to Work, this vibrant district offers unmatched walkability, proximity to courthouses and government agencies, and a wealth of dining and entertainment options that enhance work-life balance.



APA AWARD & DAVIS RHORER RECOGNITION

The Downtown Development District was honored to receive the Francis P. Keevers Award in recognition of Davis Rhorer's transformative leadership. Rhorer played a pivotal role in revitalizing Downtown Baton Rouge, driving partnerships, and overseeing key development projects that attracted over \$2.4 billion in investments. His vision shaped initiatives like Plan Baton Rouge, riverfront development, and the enhancement of cultural & recreational spaces, leaving a lasting legacy. Davis' son and brother were present to accept the award. The DDD also received Honorable Mention for the Process Award.



BOARDS & COMMITTEES

- River Center Advisory Board
 - Complete Streets Committee
 - BREADA (Big River Economic & Agricultural Development Alliance)
 - Live After Five Inc.
 - International Downtown Association's Top Issues Council
 - Plan Baton Rouge III Advisory Committee
- *The DDD staff serves in several boards and committees



SPECIAL THANKS

SPECIAL THANKS

We remain dedicated to the development and promotion of Downtown Baton Rouge as we move forward into 2025. 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 the Office of the Mayor-President and the Metropolitan Council for the continued support of the DDD's vision.

The Office of the Mayor-President and Staff

Department of Public Works

East Baton Rouge City-Parish Metropolitan Council

Brandon Noel, Pro-Tem	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

Eric Dexter	Chairman
Prescott Bailey	Vice Chairman
Patrick Michaels	Treasurer
Gary Jupiter	Secretary
Joshua G. Hollins	
Tara Titone	
Philip Jordan	

DDD Staff

Whitney Hoffman Sayal, AICP	Executive Director
Casey Tate	Assitant Executive Director
Iboro Udoh	Development Project Director
Schuyler Olson	Design and Marketing Coordinator
Ute Cress	Administrative Assistant
Houston Tullis	Student Intern
Sydney Milligan	Student Intern
Ethan Bergeron	Student Intern
Amanda Richter	Student Intern
Gabriella Duvall	Student Intern



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DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT