

North Boulevard Town Square Programming Charrette Report

July 25, 2008



BROWN+DANOS
landdesign
JOSEPH FURR
design studio
A JOINT VENTURE, inc.



**DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT**

A Passion for Progress

I. General

As one of the first steps in the process of designing North Boulevard Town Square, the project design team met on July 25, 2008 to discuss the site program. During this programming meeting, the entire team toured the Town Square site, conducted a charrette brainstorming session on potential programming activities and events, and identified site design requirements for each activity and event. This report documents the programming charrette results.

II. List of Participants

a. BROWN+DANOS landdesign, inc. team

1. Dana Brown
2. Chad Danos
3. Madeline Ellis
4. Justin Lemoine
5. Steven Lumpkin
6. Austin Evans
7. Chris Hall
8. Yuanman Zhong
9. Trisha Brown

b. JFDS team

1. Joseph Furr
2. Matt Wilks
3. Joe Labbe
4. Margaret Wilkinson

c. Subconsultants

1. Sam Corso, Dufour/Corso Studios, Ltd.
2. Thomas Holden, AIA, Holden Associates
3. Bradley Cantrell, Visual Logic, Inc.
4. Johnny R. Palazzotto, PAL Productions
5. Jenni Peters, Varsity Sports
6. Chancellor "xero" Skidmor

d. User Agency

1. Davis Rhorer
2. Jeff Fluhr



III. Process/Methodology/Results

a. Site Visit

The charrette began with a tour of the project site to orient the team to site boundaries and surrounding land uses. Team members took particular note of people using the site that afternoon, ongoing construction activities in the area, as well as relationships to the Mississippi River, the River Center, and the Arts and Entertainment District.

b. Program Brainstorming

Using classic brainstorming methods and rules (there are no bad ideas, quantity not quality counts), team members randomly generated numerous ideas for organized, spontaneous, and everyday activities and events that could take place in Town Square. Many of these activities occur at similar venues in other towns, while some are ideas for bringing to the outdoors events and activities that would engage the citizens of Baton Rouge. Still other, very creative ideas for events have the potential to make a name for Town Square, to make it a very special place. Once the team had generated over 100 ideas, the activities and events were organized into major categories as follows:

1. Organized Entertainment

- Recreation
- Live music/concerts
- Live performances
- Award events-athletic
- Plays
- Political rallies
- Speed dating
- Festivals
- Tailgating
- Independent films
- Fashion show
- Movies (age appropriate events)
- Christmas festival
- Seasonal activities
- Art lessons
- Dance floor
- Dance competition
- Dance lessons
- Living art (pageant of masters)
- Pop-up retail
- Portable bar



Pageant of the Masters. California



Pageant of the Masters, California

- Art vendors
- Donation events
- Nonprofit recreation events/fund-raisers
- Pet parade
- Mardi gras parades
- Best in show dog pageant
- Car show
- Local artist venue
- Skateboarding demonstrations, etc.
- Xtreme sports competitions
- Video game tournaments
- Youth competitions
- Monthly kid events – spillover

2. Spontaneous Entertainment

- Recreation
- Live music/concerts
- Live performances
- Viewing art
- Tailgating
- Free speech area
- Tourism/sightseeing
- Walking track/oval
- Water play
- Living art: wall, sidewalk changed weekly, monthly
- Street dancing
- Teen Sports
- Drum circle
- Martial arts
- Yoga
- Chalk art

3. Casual/Passive Gathering

- Recreation
- Hanging out
- Emailing
- Viewing art
- Internet café
- People watching
- Remembrance
- Learning/education/teaching
- Cooling off, comfort
- Putting greens
- Lawn sports



Kansas City Live



Hancock Bank. Gulfport, MS



Chalk Art by Augusto Bordelois

Scrabble, chess, large-scale gaming
Walking tours

4. Technology/Media

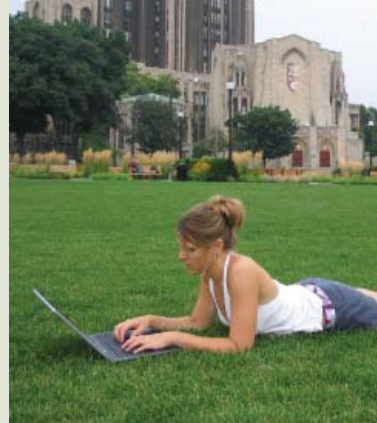
Emailing
Giant video screen
Mood ring-user interaction technology
Rent-use electrical equipment
Plug-ins for laptops, technology
Lights
Interactivity
News updates, weather
Speakers/sound system
Website connection
Webcams
Work w/ movie industry
Virtual suggestion box – kiosk
Digital chalkboard
Online access
Outreach and program awareness
Baton Rouge promotion space
Interactive art
Energy generation
Video game tournaments
Connecting with youth

5. Circulation/Transportation/Connectivity

Pick up/drop off
Access to/from
Driving through
Walking through
Riding through
Deliveries
Scooters
Waste control
Corporate sponsorship of components
Segway tours
Horse & buggy tours
Connecting to the river

6. Baton Rouge Identity

Civic/history
Baton Rouge promotion space
Walking tours



Public wireless Connectivity



The Center for Asian American Media



16th Street. Denver, CO.

They story of Baton Rouge
Historical markers
History scavenger hunt
Past-viewing lense
Understanding the river, water level, etc.

7. Multi-Generational Users

Business crowd
School kids
Jury duty
Teen needs
Religious groups
Multi-generational uses
Simultaneous activities for different groups

c. Program Requirements

The nineteen team members divided into five smaller groups, each assigned major categories one through five. Each of the smaller groups was also assigned categories six and seven: those that relate to the very identity of Baton Rouge and those that attract multi-generational users . The groups analyzed the program items in their categories to identify spatial and physical requirements of each. These data will directly affect the design of Town Square: size and form of spaces, access and orientation, shade and other human comfort needs, lighting and sound, seating, signage, and every aspect of design.

1. Organized Entertainment/Events

Existing Events to plan for:
Festivals (Blues, Earthday, Fest for All, etc.)
Christmas Lights'
Fourth of July Fireworks
Live after Five and Sunday musical events
Local performing artists
(dance, mime, poetry, music)
Athletic races use Town Square as venue
(Susan Khomen Race for the Cure,
Corporate Cup, Reindeer Run and
Lighting of North Blvd.)



Kansas City Live



Live after Five. Baton Rouge, LA



16th Street. Denver, CO.

Potential Events to plan for:
Organized fitness walks at lunch
Kid's fitness activities
Multi events-biathlons and adventure races
Champagne strolls using boulevard and levee

Program/Spatial Needs:
Permanent performance area with associated infrastructure
Defined ¼ mile walking track
Area for post-event entertainment and awards
Interactive gaming with big digital screen
Gathering areas for spectators
Support space for vendors
Public access rest rooms

2. Spontaneous Entertainment/Expression Program Notes

Program/Spatial Needs:
Open Space
Contained and welcoming
Flat areas
Flexibility
Versatile/multi purpose spaces
Accommodates multiple events or one major event
Circulation and connectivity to surrounding high activity areas
Cohesive Flow
Pavilions
Smart pole
Storage for components -Underground?
Activity coordinator
Wet/dry Fountain - Stage
Mobile equipment

Technology Needs:
Spontaneous activity updates through technology
Create awareness of activities through media and web
Kiosk of downtown activities
Flash Mob (web initiated group activity)
Art Mob (web initiated art group activity)
Lighting reflective of activity usage

3. Passive/Casual Group Programming Notes

Program/Spatial Needs:

Spaces need to be intimate

Small groups 1 - 10 people

At least some need located to be far away from more active/entertainment spaces

Some should be located as nodes along the main circulation corridors

Seating configurations that allow for conversation between small groups

If sound system is throughout the square the ability to adjust volume in these spaces.

Comfortable seating maybe some cushioned seating

Shade/ fans/misters in summer - heat in winter

Power supply for laptop plug in

Spaces should be quiet and more passive

Need close access to rest rooms

Need close access to rest rooms food/coffee/drink

Multiple spaces (50 - 150 sf each) should be provided.

Need tables or flat surfaces for work tops in some areas

Create some areas that can be used for small presentations, classes or performances (still 100 - 150 sf)

Need some game tables either built in or suitable for bring your own boards.

Need a good distribution of these spaces throughout

Noise suppression

Separation from Traffic

Drinking fountains near by

4. Technology Program Notes:

Program/Spatial Needs

Wifi connection

Electricity infrastructure

A/V System – concentration of electricity in different places

Energy – Solar, Wind, Water

Vertical Turbines and localized solar

Broadcasting – screens

- small scale embedded screens

Information kiosk – exposes people to different layers of information as they navigate the menus

Possible ad revenue

Large screen

-Can be programmed in any way

-Can be continuously updated

-Limits are imposed by the size of space needed for such a screen

Lighting – programmable and movable lighting that changes with the

time of day or time of year

Interactive Art – space that allows multiple levels of interaction

- Related to screens or physical control over the site
- Maps – Interactive for whole city
- Embedded in screens
- News and activities displayed differently from a normal RSS feed

Webcams – track people’s movements

Site responds to peoples locations

Virtual Comment system

- need for something on site but has to discourage
- recommendation system

Real-time data collection that changes site

Lighting changes to focus people in different directions

Tie history in to technology

- Overlay or project imagery or information
- Infrastructure is difficult

Projections on to buildings and other surfaces – much more ephemeral

Wattage shut-off for electrical outlets – shuts off if a certain wattage is pulled

Shaded spaces to encourage people to sit there and use technology

Limit what sorts of information can be accessed to avoid crashes and political problems

Ad-based web access to support network

Required to log in to system – not a complete open system

5. Circulation/Transportation/Connectivity/Facilitation/

Staging Program Notes

Needs for Program elements:

Pick up/drop off

Pull off area without interfering with traffic flow

Covered waiting areas

Bus Routes/Stops

Bike and/or Scooter Security

Rental/storage

Signage

Routes

Gateway

Identity markers

Connection to levee path

Climate adjustment

Fans/misters

Space heaters

Delivery

Loading zones



Millenium Park. Chicago, IL

- Dock for big equipment
- Waste Management
- Recycling Receptacles
- Rainwater Collection (Cisterns)
- Trash Collection (Underground)
- Virtual Water Level
- Historical Background of River
- Trolley tour
- Attracting Hotel users
- Circulation Views of Corridor
- Traffic restrictions for special events
- Equipment storage
- Restrooms
- Sponsored plazas
- Town Square Shopping bags

IV. Conclusion

To ensure North Boulevard Town Square can and will function as the heart, the social and cultural center of Baton Rouge, it must be designed with all the possible events and activities in mind. The forms, colors, textures, and features that will be designed into Town Square must also capture the spirit of the progressive city that Baton Rouge is rapidly becoming.



National Botanical Garden. Washington, D.C.



16th Street. Denver, CO.



Millennium Park

Program Report Review

August 5, 2008

The project design team met with the Design Oversight Committee on August 5, 2008 to discuss the site program charrette results. During this meeting, the design team was introduced, the July 25, 2008 program charrette report was distributed, and the project scope and schedule were discussed. The DOC offered additional program related suggestions, possibilities of corporate sponsorship were discussed, and an overview of the next design charrette scheduled August 22, 2008 was revealed. This report documents the meeting results.

Attendees:

a. BROWN+DANOS landdesign & Joseph Furr design studio, A Joint Venture

1. Dana Brown (BDLD)
2. Justin Lemoine (BDLD)
3. Joseph Furr (JFDS)
4. Matt Wilks (JFDS)

c. Subconsultants

1. Thomas Holden, AIA, Holden Associates
2. Bradley Cantrell, Visual Logic, Inc.
3. Jenni Peters, Varsity Sports
4. Stafford Kendall, Covalent Logic
5. Sam Corso, Dufour/Corso Studio, Ltd.
6. Mike Bruce, ABMB Engineers

d. Design Oversight Committee

1. Jim Frey
2. Steve Shurtz
3. Troy Bunch
4. Mark Goodson
5. Norman Chenvert
6. Davis Rhorer (Downtown Development District)
7. Jeff Fluhr (Downtown Development District)
8. James Andermann (Downtown Development District)

Agenda

- 1:00** - Introduction of the Design Oversight Committee (DOC)-Davis Rhorer
Introduction of the Project Design Team - Dana Brown
- 1:10** - Project Site - Dana Brown
- 1:30** - Project Scope of Work & Schedule - Dana Brown
- 2:00** - Break, Refreshments
- 2:15** - Programming Charrette Recap - Joey Furr
Discuss Programming Charrette Report
Present Programming Images
- 2:45** - DRC Input
- 3:15** - Q & A Session - Dana Brown, Team
Discuss Component Sponsorship Potential
- 3:30** - Statement of Consensus
- 3:40** - Next meeting: Design Charrette, August 22nd - Dana Brown
Closing Comments - Davis Rhorer

Comments from Design Oversight Committee

1. Spaces need to be flexible to accommodate various uses.
2. Minimize curbed street edges. (Barriers)
3. Address the relationships between the outdoor dining areas of the restaurants, pedestrian circulation requirements, and main gathering areas.
4. Collaborate with Library consultants to create a connection between the library and Town Square. (Library board has engaged Trahan Architects to assess the library and its future)
5. Emphasize visual arts in addition to performance arts. Possible outdoor gallery or pop-up studio spaces. Program development to address spontaneous art events. (Energetic vs. Stagnant art)
6. Sustainable Design is important.
7. Provide visual, audible, and/or touchable interaction with water.
8. Circulation considerations to include transit to LSU, SU and BRCC. (Game day shuttles)
9. Information elements to CATS schedules, routes, etc.
10. Identify potential land use for vacant buildings at North Blvd. and St. Ferdinand based on relationship to Town Square.
11. Way-finding is important to visitors. (First time visitors potentially Baton Rouge residents) Lighting or features extending to I-110 to aid users in the location and identification of Town Square.
12. Iconic imagery to be considered during the design process.
13. Respect the history of Baton Rouge and downtown.
14. Corporate Sponsorship. Legalities to be explored.
15. Explored options to increase project budget. Leveraging of available funding for additional funding a possibility.
16. Updated program document to be sent as pdfs.