

Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building

Boston, Massachusetts



Submitted by the City of Boston

2017 RUDY BRUNER AWARD

PROJECT DATA



**RUDY
BRUNER
AWARD**
FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Project Name **Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building** Location **Dudley Square, Roxbury** City **Boston** State **MA**

Owner **City of Boston**

Project Use(s) **Mixed Use Retail, Community Space, and Office**

Project Size **215,000 sf** Total Development Cost **\$124,000,000.00**

Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) **\$1,650,000.00**

Date Initiated **July 2011** Percent Completed by December 1, 2016 **100%**

Project Completion Date (if appropriate) **February 2015** Project Website (if appropriate)

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates

Application submitted by:

Name **Maureen Anderson** Title **Senior Project Manager**

Organization **City of Boston, Public Facilities Department**

Address **26 Court Street - 10th Floor** City/State/Zip **Boston MA 02108**

Telephone **617-635-0535** E-mail **maureen.anderson@boston.gov**

Perspective Sheets:

Organization	Name	Telephone/e-mail
Public Agencies		
	Dana Whiteside	Dana Whiteside dana.whiteside@boston.
Architect/Designer	Fiske Crowell	617-923-7130 fcrowell@sasaki.com
Developer	N/A	N/A N/A
Professional Consultant	Building Conservation Associates	Alicia Svenson asvenson@bcausa.com
Community Group	Haley House + Dudley Dough	Luther Pickney lpinckney@haleyhouse.

Other **Shawmut Design & Construction Tim Hurdelbrink trh@shawmut.com**

Please indicate how you learned of the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*. (Check all that apply).

- Direct Mailing
- Direct Email
- Previous Selection Committee member
- Professional Organization
- Professional
- Previous RBA entrant
- Online Notice
- Other (please specify)
- Facebook
- Social Media
- Bruner/Loeb Forum

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, and to post on the Bruner Foundation websites, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature  Date **12/08/16**

2017

RUDY BRUNER AWARD

PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE



**RUDY
BRUNER
AWARD**
FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet, the Project Data sheet, and the representative photo will be sent to the Committee in advance as the *Project Overview*.

Project Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

1. Give a brief overview of the project. (1000 characters)

2. Why does the project merit the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.) (1000 characters)

2017 RUDY BRUNER AWARD

PROJECT DESCRIPTION



**RUDY
BRUNER
AWARD**
FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

1. Describe the underlying values and goals of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project? f) \$\$\$ k cfXg'a UI Ł

2. Briefly describe the project's urban context. How has the project impacted the local community? Who does the project serve?
How many people are served by the project? f) \$\$\$ k cfXg'a UI Ł

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONT'D)

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate. fl \$\$\$ k cfXga UI Ł

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable. fl \$\$\$ k cfXga UI Ł

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings? fl \$\$\$ k cfXga UI Ł

2017 RUDY BRUNER AWARD

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE
PERSPECTIVE



**RUDY
BRUNER
AWARD**
FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name **Luther Pinckney, Bing Broderick** Title **Team Leader- Dudley Dough**
Organization **Haley House** Telephone **6178573058**
Address **2302 Washington St** City/State/ZIP **Roxbury MA 02119**
E-mail **lpinckney@haleyhouse.org** Website **Haleyhouse.org**

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature  Date **12/8/16**

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play?

Haley House has been an active member in the Roxbury community and has run a business in the area for 11 years. We have a long history in Social Justice movements in Boston, and when we opened our social enterprise cafe in Dudley, it became a place to meet and organize in the neighborhood. When Sasaki/Mecanoo first came to Dudley to envision how to design a building that is meaningful to the community, they spent a lot of time with our customers and staff, inquiring what their wants and needs were. And many of those interests are represented in the way that the building engages with the community.

We opened a gourmet Pizza shop in the lobby of the Bruce C Bolling Building in October 2015. I am the team leader and was in charge of the build out and opening operations.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?

We didn't want a building that was designed for downtown or an office setting. We wanted the retail space to mix and fit the neighborhood. At one time Dudley was the #2 shopping district in Boston, and it has been neglected for a long time. We envisioned a return to that kind of bustling community, with independent businesses that folks can't find at the mall. There was a lot of interest in establishing a space that was a community asset, that residents would take pride in, rather than one where they felt they had no sense of community ownership. The community ownership piece was very important, because without it, there would be a sense of the buildings being developed without attention to community benefit, and this could be perceived as another step toward the displacement of the vibrant community that exists here.

3. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how?

The building is beautiful and respectful of the needs of the community. I have the pleasure of walking into a well designed building every day. The building evokes a sense of worth and gives the neighborhood a sense of value. With the open concept to the lobby and the street I get to see people and things normally not available. It feels more secure because there are no corners to hide and again your able to see people and things from a distance.

With the building at the heart of Dudley, it's activation during the day and at night has resparked the light that has long been gone from Dudley. Before, it was a hole or a void in the middle of the square, but now, with events happening on different levels and spaces at the same time, it is a hub of activity and a symbol of community health. People have also commented about how nice it is not to have to leave the neighborhood to get different amenities.

For Haley House's 50th Anniversary celebration, we chose to hold two of our four events in the Bolling Building to show our stakeholders through the years the exciting project that we have participated in helping to develop, with the City of Boston, Sasaki and Mecanoo.

4. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through?

We thought the process was thoughtful and well done. The level of attention that was given to outreach before the design stage made people feel like their ideas were being heard and as a result, they felt like they were having a say in what this building would look like and feel like. The school committee room is a spectacular space, and many have commented on the symbolic impact of our school department being able to conduct its business in a space that is more respectful of its staff and stakeholders. As a business, we try to activate the lobby with our events and our "family game night" to contribute further to the sense of community ownership of the building.

2017 RUDY BRUNER AWARD

PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE



**RUDY
BRUNER
AWARD**
FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

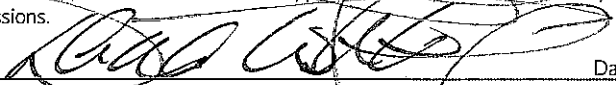
PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by staff representative(s) of public agency(ies) who were directly involved in the financing, design review, or public approvals that affected this project.

Name **Dana Whiteside** Title **Deputy Director Economic Development**
Organization **Boston Planning & Development Agency** Telephone **Dana Whiteside**
Address **One City Hall Square, 9th Floor** City/State/ZIP **Boston MA 02201**
E-mail **dana.whiteside@boston.gov** Website **bostonplans.org**

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature  Date **12.8.2014**

1. What role did your agency play in the development of this project? Describe any requirements made of this project by your agency (e.g., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements).

The Boston Planning & Development Agency ("BPDA") – known as the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") during the project's development – provided support for functions of development of the Bolling Building including planning coordination, property assembly to facilitate building scope, management of the stakeholder/community process and assistance with programmatic elements such as tenant interface for the commercial component as well as program development for the Roxbury Innovation Center and assistance with coordination around project financing.

2. How was this project intended to benefit your city? What trade-offs and compromises were required to implement the project? How did your agency participate in making them?

The creation of the Bolling Building is the capstone to the overall Dudley Vision Initiative which sought to benefit the Dudley district, the neighborhood of Roxbury and the City of Boston as a whole. With the completion of this building situated at the heart of the district which is quite literally at the geographical heart of Boston, the goal was to take municipal investment and create a destination that would catalyze additional private investment to enhance an already vibrant part of the City that was economically depressed.

The City of Boston as owner and landlord of a mixed use building that includes commercial uses made the intentional choice to be responsive to stakeholder concerns and create an education and economic development focused center that would draw families, important school uses and offer a space wherein entrepreneurship could be fostered. The tradeoff here was to promote and support local businesses as opposed to regional brands thereby making this a mission-driven building.

The BPDA collaborated with sister-agencies like Property & Construction Management Department (now Public Facilities Department), Budget Management, Department of Neighborhood Development, Boston Public Schools as well as community members to shape a project that bridged programmatic needs and fiscal /fiduciary requirements.

PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Describe the project's impact on your city. Please be as specific as possible. fl \$\$ k cfXga UI Ł

4. Did this project result in new models of public/private partnerships? Are there aspects of this project that would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities? fl \$\$ k cfXga UI Ł

5. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project? fl \$\$ k cfXga UI Ł

2017 RUDY BRUNER AWARD

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT
PERSPECTIVE



**RUDY
BRUNER
AWARD**
FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other services. Copies may be given to other professionals if desired.

Name	Alicia Svenson	Title	Senior Architectural Conservator
Organization	Building Conservation Associates, Inc.	Telephone	(617) 916-5661
Address	10 Langley Road, Suite 202	City/State/ZIP	Newton Centre MA 02459
E-mail	asvenson@bcausa.com	Website	www.bcausa.com

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature *Alicia 2.2* Date 12/5/2016

1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?.....

The Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building integrates the historical facades of the Ferdinand (1895), Curtis (1888), and Waterman (1890) buildings into its design. Building Conservation Associates, Inc. served as the historic preservation sub-consultant for Sasaki Associates, Inc. during the design and construction the Bolling Municipal Building. In this role we were responsible for evaluating the preservation needs of the three historic buildings, assisting the design team with presenting the project to the Boston Landmarks Commission and other preservation agencies, developing repairs for the portions of the existing buildings to remain, assisting the design team with design for new elements to replace missing historic elements, and project monitoring of the restoration work during construction to ensure work was carried out as intended. We also assisted Sasaki with development of an historic interpretive exhibit about the site and buildings.

2. Describe the project's impact on its community. Please be as specific as possible.....

The Ferdinand Building, home of "Ferdinand's Blue Store", a store specializing in the sale of medium-priced furniture is located on the most prominent corner of Dudley Square and has been a landmark for the neighborhood since its construction in 1895. From the 1980s onward the building stood in the square as an empty shell, with many previous attempts to find a new use for the structure having stalled or failed. At the time the project began, the storefronts at the ground floor and all of the window openings above were missing their glass and were boarded up. The loss of the elevated rail line terminal at Dudley Square (demolished 1987), and the demolition of a series of newer extensions to the Ferdinand building had left the Ferdinand, Curtis, and Waterman buildings as lone structures in a block of empty fenced-in lots. The relocated Dudley terminal faced the largest empty lot and the backs and blank sides of the existing buildings.

The project successfully reconnected the block to the neighborhood, engaging with the Dudley terminal and the surrounding streets. The new building has a "front" on all three sides of its triangular site, with commercial storefronts and public access on all sides. It is now a true center for the square. From a preservation standpoint, the project was able reclaim the Ferdinand building as a neighborhood landmark by giving it a new life and purpose. It also sends a message to about the importance of preservation of the city's history.

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession? f) \$\$ k cfXg'a Ul Ł

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project? f) \$\$ k cfXg'a Ul Ł

2017 RUDY BRUNER AWARD

ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER
PERSPECTIVE



**RUDY
BRUNER
AWARD**
FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services. Copies may be given to other design professionals if desired.

Name	Fiske Crowell	Title	Principal
Organization	Sasaki Associates	Telephone	617-923-7130
Address	64 Pleasant Street	City/State/ZIP	Watertown MA 02472
E-mail	fcrowell@sasaki.com	Website	www.sasaki.com

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature		Date	12/8/16
-----------	---	------	----------------

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc. (300 words max)

The Bolling Building was designed to be a beacon for Dudley Square, an icon visible from all approaches, sitting stoically as the cornerstone of the neighborhood. And its location does not deceive it - it is the north corner, the southeast corner, and the southwest corner of a complex triangular lot. This provided a unique challenge to the design of the building - there is no "back-of-house" facade, all sides of the building are equally prominent. To add to the intricacy of the site, there were three existing buildings within the triangle that needed to remain. The design team fully embraced these obstacles as opportunities to better incorporate the new building into its existing historic surroundings. This gesture developed into a concept of three corners and the glue that holds them together. The Ferdinand building, standing tall at the north, would become the anchor for the building along the approach from Washington Street. The Curtis and Waterman buildings, paired on the southwest corner, would form the edge of the site for those arriving from Malcolm X Boulevard. And the vacant southeast corner provided an opportunity for the design team to make a statement with a new bright corner for Warren Street, taking its direction from the storied and celebrated neighboring facades and launching them into the 21st century. All three corners were elegantly detailed in beautiful granite and terra cotta, following a formal architectural style of the late 1800s. Conversely, the infill needed to contrast that architectural language, taking on a more playful aesthetic. The team chose a red brick for the infill as a nod to the beautiful historic architecture of Boston, but added an iron spot detail and various textures to give it a more modern feel. The infill also molds itself to the shape of the site. The form of the building peels away from the existing facades so as not to overshadow, allowing them their prominence at the street level, and maintaining the scale of the existing urban fabric. Its sinuous curves are influenced by the curve of the Ferdinand prow, nestling the 215,000 sf structure into the site as if it has always been there.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design. (300 words max)

This project was always meant to be for the people of Boston. And as such, the building needed to feel welcoming to both its visitors and its neighbors. It could not feel foreign to the atmosphere of Dudley Square, and it could not feel restrictive to the families of Boston Public Schools. To resolve both issues, the design team looked to the history of Dudley Square for inspiration on how to fit in to the existing fabric while looking to more modern examples for how to create transparency throughout. The composition of the ground floor then became paramount. Through the input from various community meetings, the majority of the first floor of the building was given over to retail tenants, providing opportunities for local businesses to have a presence in the new building. This resulted in a ground floor that interacts with the public realm on a more personal level. It is occupied by retailers who resemble and are part of the local community. To draw people into the lobby, the design team capitalized on former circulation paths, historically trains, and worked them into new pedestrian paths, forging a seamless transition from exterior to interior. Programmatically, this gave the entry sequence an intuitively comfortable and welcoming feel, devoid of restriction or constraint. Furthermore, the first two floors are managed and monitored by staffed concierge desks instead of metal detectors, highlighting the personal touch and removing the stigma of harsh municipal security. Pedestrians, neighborhood locals, and visitors alike not only feel welcome to pass through the building, but encouraged. As for the interaction with Boston Public Schools, the design places all public-facing programs on the second floor of the Bolling Building, allowing families to move freely between the lobby and their destination without impeding on the security of the offices above, or imposing on the perception of an inviting public service. The project also brings all of these services under a single roof for the first time, providing families with a one-stop-shop for all BPS needs. This new functionality equips BPS with a cohesive, efficient, and accessible presence to accommodate their students and their staff.

2017

RUDY BRUNER AWARD

OTHER PERSPECTIVE



**RUDY
BRUNER
AWARD**
FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Name **Tim Hurdelbrink** Title **Director of Construction Operations**
Organization **Shawmut Design and Construction** Telephone **617.622.7000**
Address **560 Harrison Avenue** City/State/ZIP **Boston, MA 02118**
E-mail **thurdelbrink@Shawmut.com** Website **http://www.shawmut.com/**

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature  Date **12/8/16**

1. What role did you play in the development of this project? (300 words max)

Shawmut Design and Construction served as the Construction Manager on the project. Through case study presentation and an open discussion, we explored the unique considerations and critical decisions that led to optimal approaches in the field and ultimately the attainment of an extraordinary outcome within budget and in time for scheduled occupancy.

The Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building has a significant impact on Dudley Square. Since the start of construction on the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building (former Ferdinand's Blue Store) in July 2011, Shawmut engaged community groups, organizations, residents and businesses to provide a number of initiatives that have been beneficial to the community.

Some of our initiatives included:

- Partnering with local community organizations, groups to monitor the workforce goals, meeting bi-weekly
- Using local sub-contractors and vendors on the construction project
- Partnering with local and city-wide construction apprentice programs, informing walk-on applicants that they could obtain the support and credentials needed to enter the trades. These programs also offered academic instruction to prepared students for the workforce
- Connecting with Madison Park High School, the only trade school in the City of Boston, and placing a number of trade students with subs, and assisting students to obtain necessary certification in the respective trades

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible. (300 words max)

The Boston Redevelopment Authority stated prior to construction start that the project would bring major economic and community benefits to the Dudley Square community. "In addition to the construction jobs that will come from a project of this size, approximately 400 municipal workers would be relocated to the new facility, which should spur the economic revitalization that has been envisioned for the Dudley Square area."

Shawmut Design and Construction has had a significant impact in Dudley Square since starting construction on the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building (former Ferdinand's Blue Store) in July 2011. SDC engaged with community groups, organizations, residents and businesses to provide a number of initiatives that have been beneficial to the community.

Shawmut's goal was to make an effort for their subs to employ 50% residents, 25% minorities and 10% women; large numbers of tradesmen from the area obtained jobs. The actual percentages have exceeded the goals, and are some of the highest ever achieved in Boston. The greatest impact has been the economic boost that resulted in the hiring of minorities and the women and men who live, work, and shop here.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them? f) \$\$ k cfXga Ul k

4. What do you consider to be the the most and least successful aspects of this project? f) \$\$ k cfXga Ul k

Historic Dudley Square



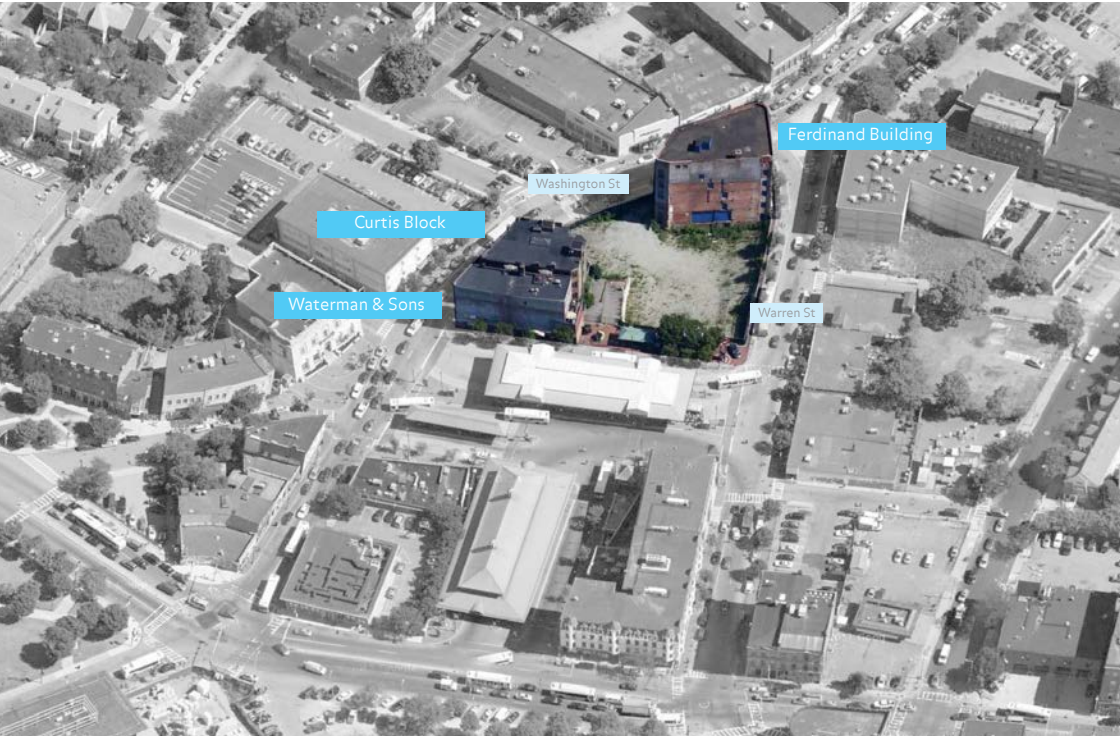
The Ferdinand Building, 1895. Image: Junction of Washington and Warren St., Boston, 1899.



Image: Dudley Street Station, Boston, 1955.

For over 100 years the Ferdinand Building has served as the symbolic center of Dudley Square in Roxbury, MA.

Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions aerial of project site



Existing conditions view of Ferdinand Building

Over time, the neighborhood experienced periods of disinvestment that left only vestiges of the Ferdinand, Curtis, and Waterman buildings in various stages of disrepair.

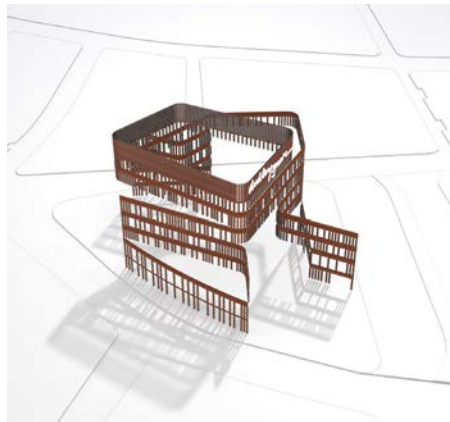
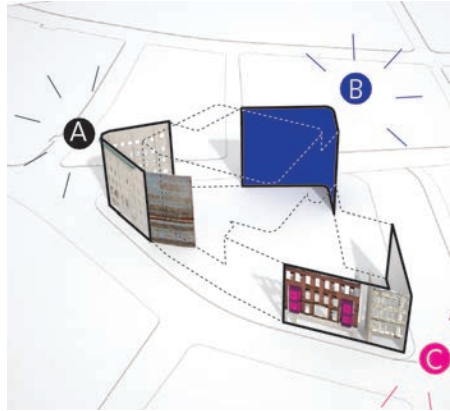
Concept

The shape of Dudley Square was determined by the culmination of three of the most important streets in Roxbury: Washington Street, Warren Street, and Dudley Street. These roads were originally foot paths that evolved into major arteries through the neighborhood, and defined Dudley Square as a node of activity from the very beginning—a highly visible place in the heart of a community.

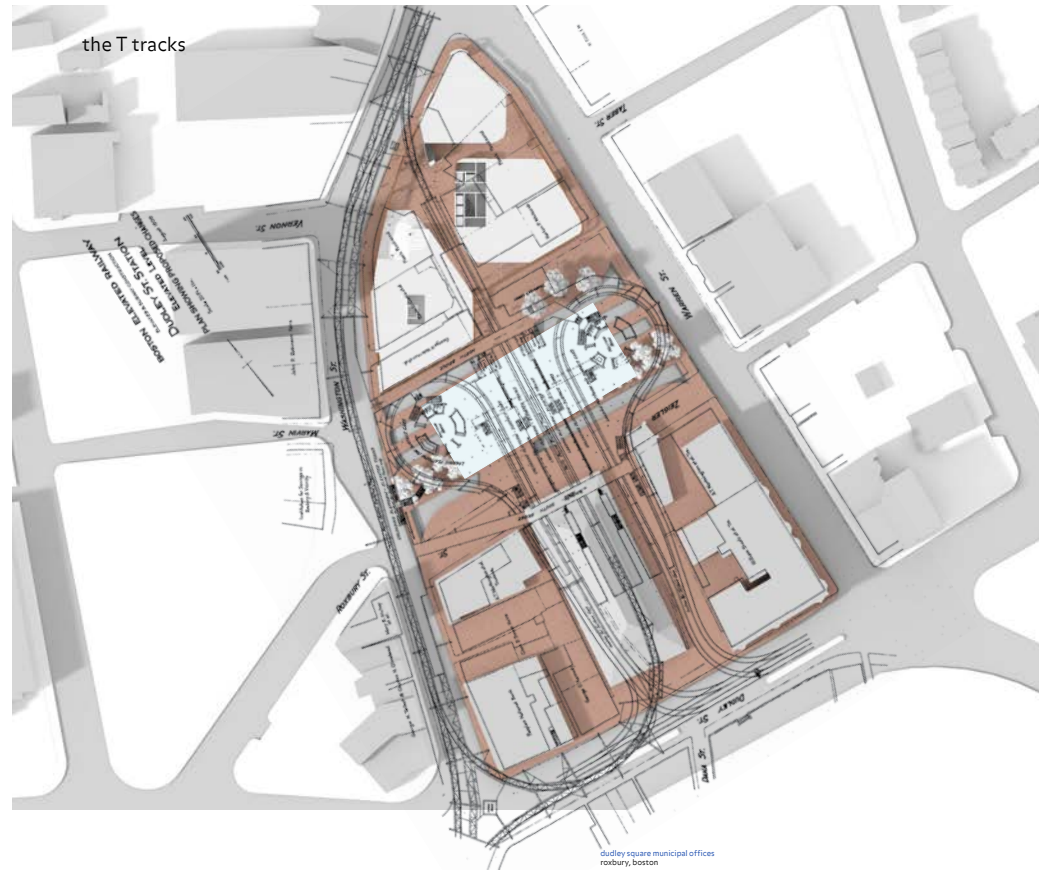
The team chose a red brick for the infill as a nod to the beautiful historic architecture of Boston, but added an iron spot detail and various textures to give it a more modern feel. The infill also molds itself to the shape of the site.



Three corners



Brick infill



ferdinand village



social heart of roxbury

Three Became One



The Ferdinand facade is a key element in the revitalization of Dudley Square, a legacy from the past.



Aerial view from the construction site.



Intersection of the Curtis Building and the Waterman Building.



Historic preservation efforts at the Ferdinand facade.



The Ferdinand Building before and after restoration.

By uniting and re-engaging the three existing facades with the neighborhood, the building reaches back out to all sides of the city. In blending new and old into one proud yet subtle, interconnected series of spaces, it boldly looks to the future while referencing the neighborhood's rich and vibrant past.



“

The Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building reads as a true collaboration between architects, contractors, and client—it's a good sign when everyone involved wants ownership. Touring it felt both bracing and inspiring, proof that letting architects solve urban problems with strategy and taste creates richer, more open cityscapes.

ALEXANDRA LANGE FOR ARCHITECT
APRIL 02, 2015

”

Given the historic significance of the location and the project's aspirations, it was important that the design team craft a contemporary response that could restore Dudley Square's iconic stature within the community and the city at large—considering urban scale, historic content, neighborhood revitalization, sustainability, and new collaboration models for Boston Public Schools.





New construction of stone and brick unite the complex—detailed and built with careful attention to craft.



Every facade of the building is considered a face to the public, a welcoming sight to the residents of Roxbury. Elements of new construction woven with the historic structures forge one cohesive, new complex.



The Curtis Building, 1888 (left) and the Waterman Building, 1890 (right).
Image: Dudley Street Station, Boston, 1899.



Construction progress.





BRUCE C. BOLLING MUNICIPAL BUILDING

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2300

OPENING SOON IN 2015



Building entry across from Dudley Station. A light installation marks where the tracks of the former elevated rail used to run.



A new energy and optimism radiates from an undulating, deep red brick building rising up from behind surrounding historic facades.



A 700 square-foot, hand-drawn mural graces the wall of the lobby. It depicts a map covering the area from Readville in the South to Orient Heights in the North, with Dudley Square located in the center.

The rich blue background of the silver colored mural references Ferdinand's Blue Store, the famous furniture shop whose facade has been restored and incorporated into the new structure.



The lobby serves as a welcoming public space for families, commuters, and neighborhood residents alike to come together and share stories, new ideas, and cultures.



Glazed walls and bright daylight enhance the ideas of government transparency. A single contact point for families to interface with BPS streamlines the registration process and allows for a more efficient and easier experience for students and their families.



The second floor of the building is a mix of open conference rooms and community rooms, which provides visitors with resources to congregate and meet in a safe and inviting atmosphere.



BOSTON
Public Schools
Focus on Children



The project co-locates departments that had previously been in six scattered locations, centrally placing them within a 2.5 mile radius of the majority of the demographic they serve, across the street from a public transportation hub.

"We were far removed from most of our schools and most of the families that attended our schools. This facility allows us to bring people together from different offices, creating a sense of oneness. It's a great environment to get work done. I've already seen more meetings happen than I've ever seen before which I think is going to help the district get its work done better and sooner. We feel that BPS is transforming and this building is the catalyst for the transformation."

Carleton Jones
Executive Director, Capital & Facilities Management
Boston Public Schools



BPS employees are now connected: neighborhoods naturally flow into one another, providing the flexibility needed to respond to change. Further flexibility was provided by designing 6-by-8-foot workstations that can be shifted to create 6-by-6-foot stations—without costly reconfiguration—providing the ability to increase the number of open offices by 18 percent.

"We've already noticed a big change in the culture of BPS. Between the open sight lines of the office, shared conference rooms, shared pantries, and other shared spaces, people can get together and work a little bit more efficiently. Seeing the users and the community so thrilled with the result of our project, I think that's the best part – seeing the project that's come to fruition and that is successful, not just aesthetically but functionally as well."

Maureen Anderson
Senior Project Manager
Property and Construction Management Department
Boston Public Schools



"You can see BPS staff's habits shifting with every passing day, as they take advantage of collaborative spaces, state of the art facilities, and, of course, appreciate the tremendous natural light that flows from every window."

John McDonough
Superintendent, Boston Public Schools



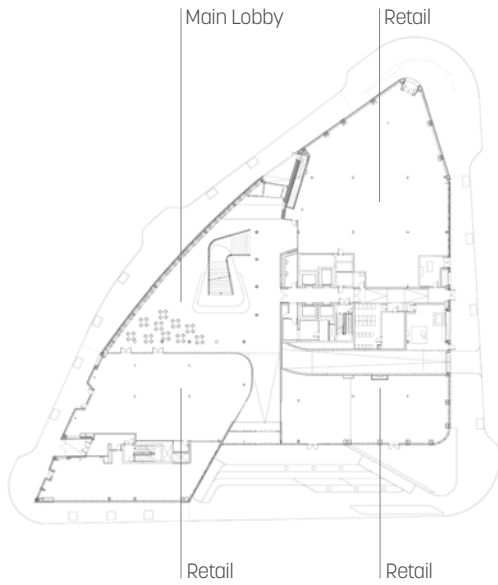
The building's vertical, repetitive fenestration casts dramatic and abundant natural light into the sixth floor community space.



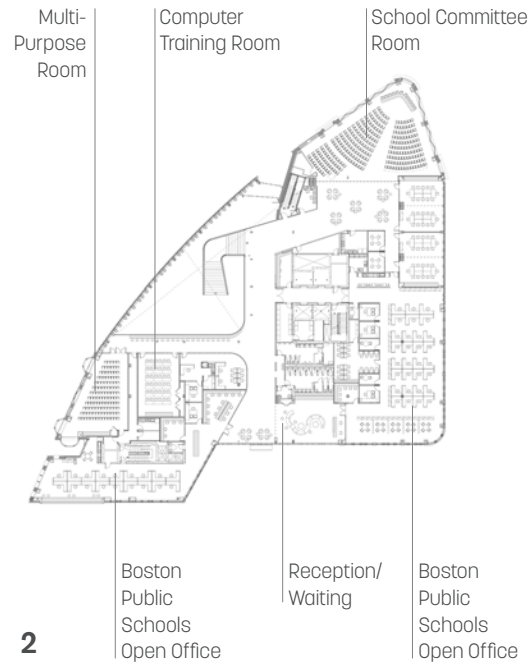
The sixth floor community space includes conference rooms, a shared kitchen, and entry to the roof deck. The conference room's glass wall can be retracted to create a large event space.

A green roof is also accessible to the community, offering sweeping panoramic views of the downtown Boston skyline.

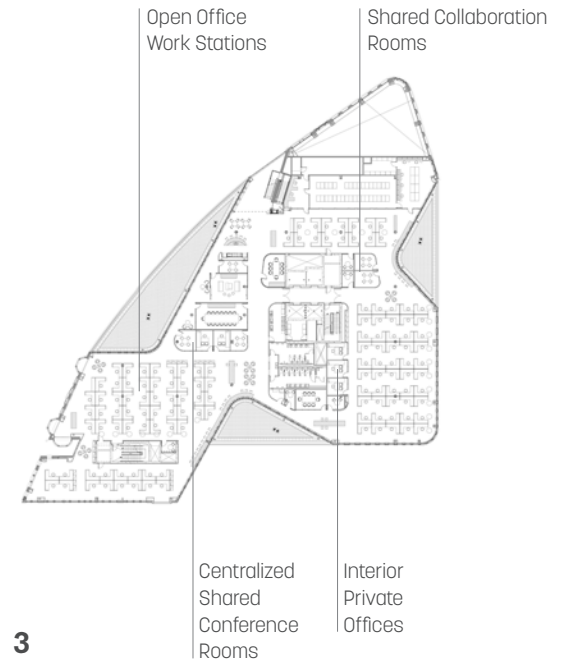




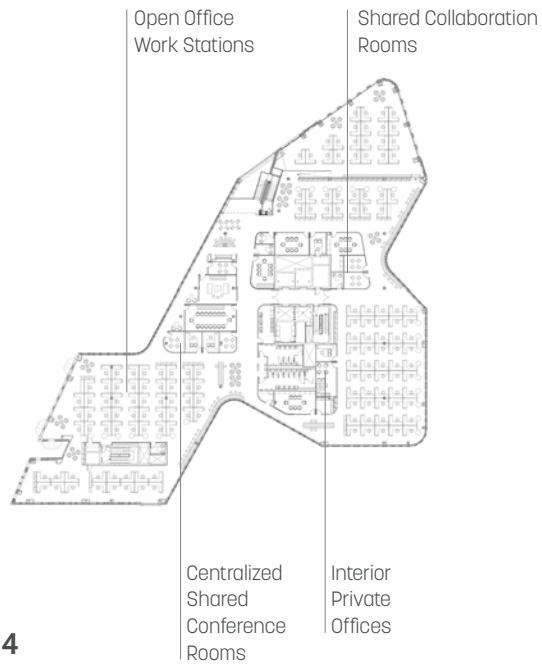
1



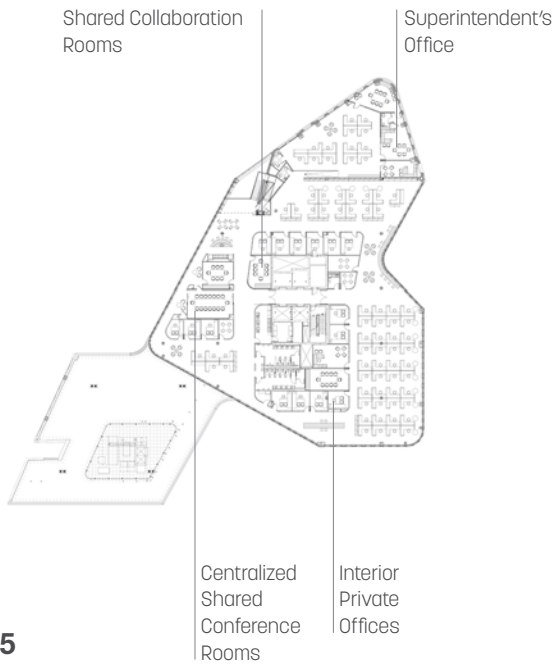
2



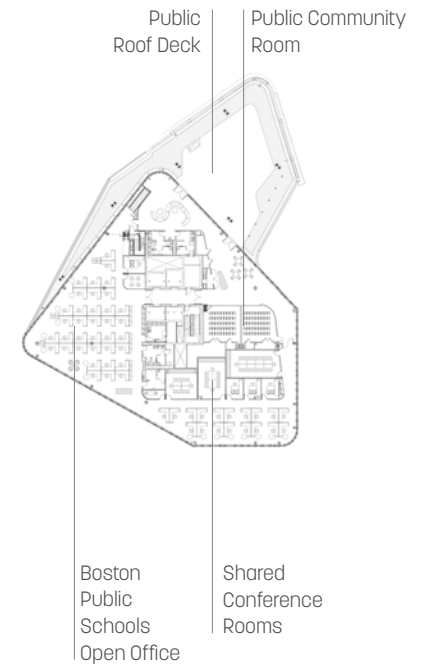
3



4



5



6



Photography by ©Anton Grass/Esto

Transforming, but Not Disrupting Time for Strategic Architecture

By ALEXANDRA LANGE SEPT. 3, 2014

The new building in Dudley Square in Boston doesn't look like anything else in sight. And yet it fits right in. That's a good description of the tempered ambition of many American urban projects opening in the coming months: They aren't disruptive but (their supporters hope) transformative, and their shapes, even their sparkle, come from understanding past civic hopes and redesigning them to meet the future. The curvaceous brick cornice of the **Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building** in Dudley Square knits together three historic buildings, provides offices for 500 employees of the Boston Public Schools and incorporates an old rail track into its ground-floor plan, the better to connect the building to the adjacent bus station.

The building's striking design, by **Mecanoo Architecten** and **Sasaki Associates Inc.**, is a literal beacon (the mechanical penthouse has nighttime lighting) as well as a metaphorical one, signaling the city's reinvestment in an area where community groups fought off a highway and organized land trusts to create affordable housing, schools and gardens on vacant land. The new building does not seem parachuted in, but inflects to the existing fabric, taking its curves not from the computer but from the distinctive round corner of the 1895 Ferdinand building.

The Bolling building fits a new category of what one might call strategic architecture: projects that combine the forces of community activism and historic preservation with government muscle, encourage future development through eye-catching design, and link to the parks, plazas, bike paths and libraries that give neighborhoods a center. These are hybrids, not large-scale institutions like museums

but urban players, being built in places not necessarily known for design. They will open new routes through old cities and new ideas about what businesses can be successful in which locations.

The idea that urban planning could build upon citizen action, rather than consisting of imposed boulevards or housing blocks (as with the urban renewal that originally gutted Roxbury) is gaining traction. The Museum of Modern Art, which has exhibited its fair share of top-down architectural proposals, amplifies that conversation with "Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms for Expanding Megacities" opening Nov. 22. The museum asked six interdisciplinary teams to devise new strategies to deal with environmental, spatial, and residential challenges in six of the world's cities, often learning from informal, smaller-scale design that residents have accomplished on their own.

Theaster Gates, the Chicago artist and planner who gave a keynote speech at this summer's American Institute of Architects national convention, has recently offered a twist on bottom-up efforts at revitalization. Over the past few years, Mr. Gates and his nonprofit have renovated buildings on the South Side, creating housing and small-scale cultural facilities with a distinctive aesthetic of reused, patchworklike building materials.

His most ambitious project, the Stony Island Arts Bank, will open next spring, transforming an abandoned 1920s terra-cotta-clad bank Mr. Gates bought from the city for \$1 into a gallery, restaurant and reading room, stocked with the library of John H. Johnson (founder of *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines). For Mr. Gates's social project to succeed, the programming is as important as the paneling, and the bank has already been selected as a site for the first Chicago Architecture Biennial, opening October 2015.

In downtown Durham, N.C., a 17-story Art Deco bank designed by Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, architects of the Empire State Building, will reopen as an art and entertainment hub in February 2015, the latest in the chain known as 21c Museum Hotels. The company picked Durham to follow Louisville, Cincinnati and Bentonville, Ark., because of existing revitalization: the redevelopment of the city's defunct tobacco factories, the thriving food culture, the local start-ups. The adaptive

reuse of the bank will combine a boutique hotel and gallery, with rooms in the tower above site-specific art installations, a restaurant, ballroom and a spa tucked into the former bank vault. All the hotels in the chain were designed by **Deborah Berke Partners**.

Independent journalism.
More essential than ever.

Subscribe to the Times

Libraries have proved a building block for neighborhood change in Washington, where the public library system built and renovated 14 new branches under its former director Ginnie Cooper. The latest neighborhood to get an elegant new library is Woodridge: A lanternlike, precast concrete building with green roof terrace by **Bing Thom Architects** and **Wiencek & Associates** is set on a rise in Langdon Park and due to open in mid-2015. Branch libraries are also a focus for the Architectural League of New York and the Center for the Urban Future, which commissioned five teams to study the design challenges faced by libraries as they become both digital and physical hubs. Results will be presented in December.

The Ryerson University Student Learning Center in Toronto by **Snohetta** (in collaboration with **Zeidler Partnership Architects**) is another library with urban ambitions. The building, to open in early 2015, looks like a gem on stilts, with a bridge to the historic building where the books are kept. The ground floor on busy Yonge Street will have retail shops; around the corner, on pedestrian-heavy Gould Street, a set of steps and mirrorlike triangulated canopy invite students and the public into an open lobby. In Houston, **Lake/Flato Architects**, known for their pitched-roof, ranch-inflected modernism, are transforming the 1910 **Sunset Coffee Building** into a boat- and bike-rental shop, a second-floor cafe and offices for the **Buffalo Bayou Partnership** at the site of the city's first port. The \$5.3 million project will provide a hub for larger urban projects that link up at the site: the light-rail line that connects the University of Houston-Downtown campus to the museum district, the city's historic district and the sprawling 160-acre Buffalo Bayou Park itself. A new park segment, designed by **SWA Group**, will also open in the spring, allowing for a continuous trail from the Coffee Building to downtown's western edge, some of it navigable by kayak.

When a section of the earthquake-damaged Central Freeway came down in San Francisco, local advocates saw a chance to create a template for a stronger neighborhood. Buildings along the newly created Octavia Boulevard by several architect-developer teams include retail and affordable housing, and take advantage of the area's walkability and public transportation. Their design does not mimic historical architecture but offers distinctive character: contemporary, delicate in its details, referring to San Francisco Victorian bays and pastels without imitating them.

The newest, 8 Octavia, an eight-story condominium by **Stanley Saitowitz/Natoma Architects**, opening this month, has a facade of operable, white louvers, making a changing pattern across the simple surface and a virtue of its long, narrow site.

Transportation is at the heart of many cities' strategies, as planners focus on life beyond the automobile. The **Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center** is a new station where 10,000 passengers can board eight different transportation modes daily. It will open in Orange County in November under a retro-futurist parabolic roof formed by polymer pillows (the material used for the Water Cube at the 2008 Beijing Olympics). Its designers, **Parsons Brinckerhoff** and **HOK**, with **SWA Group** as landscape architects, created paired plazas: one beneath the roof, one under a canopy of trees. Los Angeles's elegant 1939 Union Station is also getting a face-lift to accommodate more foot, bicycle and bus and rail traffic, as well as the long-awaited high-speed train.

Will architecture make people get out of their cars? Read books? Explore new neighborhoods? When it makes personal connections, yes.

Correction: September 21, 2014

An article in the New Season issue on Sept. 7 about new buildings omitted one of the architectural firms involved in the design of the Ryerson University Student Learning Center in Toronto. The center was designed by **Snohetta**, in collaboration with **Zeidler Partnership Architects** — not just by **Snohetta**.

A version of this article appears in print on September 7, 2014, on page AR86 of the New York edition with the headline: Transforming, but Not Disrupting.

Architect Magazine

April 2014

ARCHITECT

PROJECTS TECH & PRODUCTS PRACTICE CULTURE & CRITICISM AWARDS CONTINUING ED

DESIGN

[Home](#) > [Design](#) > [Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, Designed by Mecanoo and Sasaki](#)

Posted on: April 02, 2015

OFFICE PROJECTS

Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, Designed by Mecanoo and Sasaki

Alexandra Lange on what makes the new Boston Public Schools headquarters a model for urban redevelopment

By ALEXANDRA LANGE



Anton Grass/Esto

PROJECTS

The story of the \$124 million [Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building](#) in Boston's Roxbury neighborhood is a long architectural saga with an unexpected happy ending. In 2006, late Boston Mayor Thomas Menino first raised the idea of bringing Dudley Square, the historic center of the city's African-American community, back to life by redeveloping the block that included the long-vacant Ferdinand Furniture building. Dutch firm [Mecanoo](#) and locally-based [Sasaki Associates](#) teamed up to enter a competition for the site two years later. The design—to create a centralized headquarters for Boston Public Schools (BPS)—had to satisfy two demanding communities: Roxbury residents and business owners and the 500 BPS employees being relocated there from sites across the city.

But it couldn't be too expensive and, at least initially, it couldn't be iconic: "Dudley Square has been the recipient of a lot of heroic urban design and planning ideas," says Kairos Shen, director of planning for the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA). "Francine [Houben, Hon. FAIA, the creative director of Mecanoo] and Sasaki won with a concept about what the square meant. This wasn't an iconic autonomous building that you could immediately recognize—even though now you do."



Mecanoo

The northeast corner of the Bolling building, which features the restored façade of the 1895 Ferdinand furniture store.

The 215,000 square-foot, six-story Bolling building sits on a triangular lot bordered by Washington and Warren Streets and the Dudley Square bus station, the busiest in New England. When the architects won the competition in 2008, the 30,000-square foot site included the Ferdinand building, but two 19th-century commercial buildings at the southwest corner of the block were still in private hands. A few months into design development, the designers and the city realized that to achieve the catalytic neighborhood effect they wanted, the site needed to include those buildings, too. The local community supported an eminent domain process, overlooking decades of negative history (land was seized in the 1970s for a never-built Inner Belt highway, for instance). The businesses in those two buildings were relocated, and everything that could be salvaged from the historic façades was absorbed into the Bolling building's undulating sides.



Basemap created in Google Maps

That acquisition meant that two of the three corners of the new building were preservation projects: One, the landmark 1895 furniture store, a wedding cake with a prominent curved corner, oversized round windows, and two stories of storefront glass; and two, the Curtis Block and Waterman & Sons storefronts, made of sandstone and granite. Mecanoo and Sasaki decided to give the third corner, on Warren, a character of its own, cladding it in granite matching that of the vintage Waterman façade.

Boston Bricks with a Dutch Touch (2014)



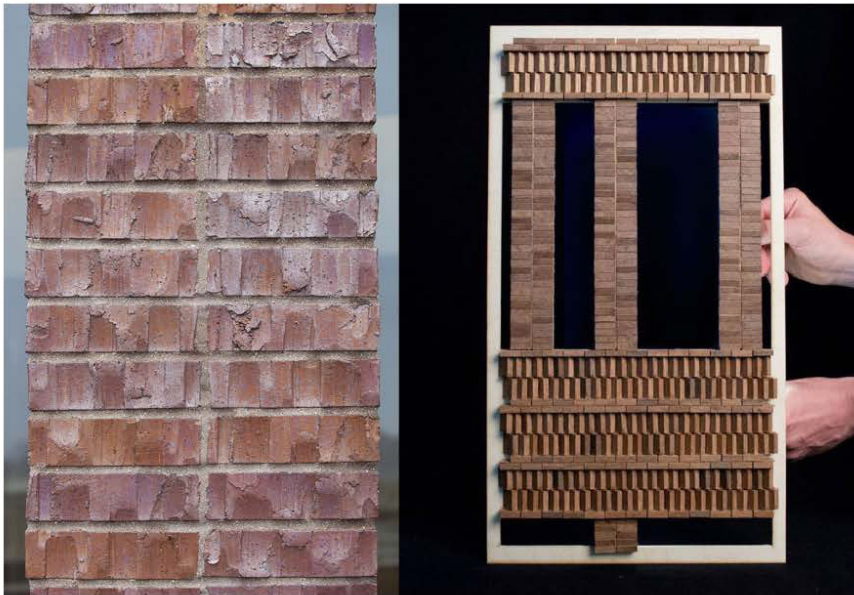
The “cement” holding the whole project together, as Houben puts it, are rippling, stepped layers of Endicott Medium Ironspot brick in an iridescent brown, set three ways: running bond, stacked bond, and a rotated

soldier course. The curves are not parametric, but riff on the Ferdinand corner, turning an artifact into a design motif. These layers meet the sidewalk at the center of each side, but step back above the historic façades to meet the sky, ending in a mechanical penthouse with LED lighting that has already gone red, white, and blue for the New England Patriots’ Super Bowl win. “Boston is very much a brick town,” says Victor Vizgaitis, AIA, principal at Sasaki. “We wanted to really focus on the idea of craft. Looking at Waterman, it is the articulation of the detail that really makes that special. We thought, let’s not mimic that but pay attention.”



Sasaki/Mecanoo

The effect of the brick, both close-up and far away, is hypnotic. I originally spotted the top of the Bolling building on a trip to Marcel Breuer’s nearby 1978 Madison Park High School and was drawn toward it. Handsome and solid, it is clearly the product of thoughtful design without being showy or fancy or corporate—all characteristics the city and the BRA wanted to avoid. The aluminum window frames are held behind the brick and are visible only on the interior—a detail that helps the reading of the exterior and its rounded corners as a continuous fabric, punctuated by rhythmic, not repetitive, rectangles.



Mecanoo

It took some doing to convince local masons that they could accomplish the task the architects had set out, including the two-brick-wide columns between many of the windows. The rotated soldier pattern, originally conceived with the blocks at a 45-degree angle, had to be tweaked because the holes down the center of typical bricks would have been left exposed. To avoid the extra expense of custom pieces, the architects changed the angle to 30 degrees. As I stood outside with Vizgaitis by the broad, terraced entrance on the bus station side—where most members of the public will likely enter—he pointed out the light hitting the one interior corner, turning the vertical bricks into glowing fish scales.



Anton Grassl/Esto

Through the clear glass windows above this entrance one can see a row of diminutive wooden tables and chairs on the second floor—a waiting area that leads into a welcome center for children new to the school system. Down the hall is a 3,000-square-foot space being developed as the Roxbury Innovation Center. A counter has been installed around the upstairs balustrade, turning it into birds-eye public seating; this generous space will have free Wi-Fi, as well as community rooms. (There's also a roof deck on the sixth floor—available for events—with a 270-degree view of Boston.)



Anton Grassl/Esto

At ground level, six retail spaces open onto the streets and into the public lobby, a large space with flexible seating and a dark terrazzo floor centered on a striking, switchback steel staircase. Veneered wood columns and wood slats on the ceiling offer some warmth. Future tenants will include a sit-down restaurant—there were none in Dudley Square—as well as an optometrist (also new to the zip code), a coffee shop, and an organic pizza and salad shop, all locally owned. Former BPS superintendent Carol Johnson vetoed fast food chains as sending the wrong message to kids.



Anton Grassl/Esto

The bulk of the BPS employees will work in private offices on the third through the sixth floors. On the Washington Street side, the architects have half-exposed the fire stair to the street, in hopes of encouraging more employees to walk between floors rather than take the elevator. The offices are not lavish, but they are dominated by daylight and views through the floor-to-ceiling windows banded by aluminum. It's a Silicon Valley-lite landscape of white desks, colorful breakout spaces, bright blue kitchens, and glass-fronted conference rooms. The outside curves have been cleverly incorporated into the corners and soffits around the core, so one moves smoothly in and around the various lobes of desks and communal spaces.

Interim BPS superintendent John McDonough says he can already see a different in the workplace: "The way that it is structured allows for a very different culture of collaboration and communication. You can just walk around and everybody engages immediately. For those of us who work in public agencies, it is a considerable shift that is very welcome."



Anton Grassl/Esto

The Bolling building is part of a series of city-led developments in the area. A new police station was completed in 2011, and the site of the old "bunker-like" building cleared for another mixed-use site on Dudley Street. The branch library, designed by Boston City Hall architects Kallman McKinnell & Wood, [got a new marquee by Utile last year](#) and is due for an interior renovation.

But more than that, the Bolling is a beautiful piece of architecture. The city and the BRA see it as a model for future office projects, a prototype for government buildings with mixed-use civic amenities—the white workstations have already become the city standard. The scale of the project also makes it an accessible model for smaller cities that need to intervene in commercial neighborhoods with a historic fabric.



Mecanoo

Southwest corner of the building, which features the restored façades of the Curtis Block (far left) and the Waterman & Sons building (left).

As an entrée for Mecanoo into American architecture, the Bolling project is less flashy than other Dutch debuts, but it should appeal to a broader range of clients. (For flashy, consider the firm's [Library of Birmingham in England](#).) Mecanoo's next U.S. project, [the renovation of and addition to Mies van der Rohe's 1972 Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library in Washington, D.C.](#) (with Martinez+ Johnson as a partner), has some similar goals: activating ground-floor retail, creating greater vertical transparency and legibility within the library, combining new and old(ish) architectures on the roof. One hopes Mecanoo can negotiate those imperatives with as much grace.



Mecanoo

The southeast corner of the building.

The Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building reads as a true collaboration between architects, contractors, and client—it's a good sign when everyone involved wants ownership. Touring it felt both bracing and inspiring, proof that letting architects solve urban problems with strategy and taste creates richer, more open cityscapes.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



[Alexandra Lange](#)

Alexandra Lange is the architecture critic for Curbed and the author of *Writing About Architecture: Mastering the Language of Buildings and Cities*. She was a 2014 Loeb Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Read more of her work at alexandralange.net.

Advertisement

Keywords:

SUBJECT:

[Design](#) [Urban Development](#) [Office Projects](#) [Historic Preservation](#)

LOCATION:

[Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH](#)

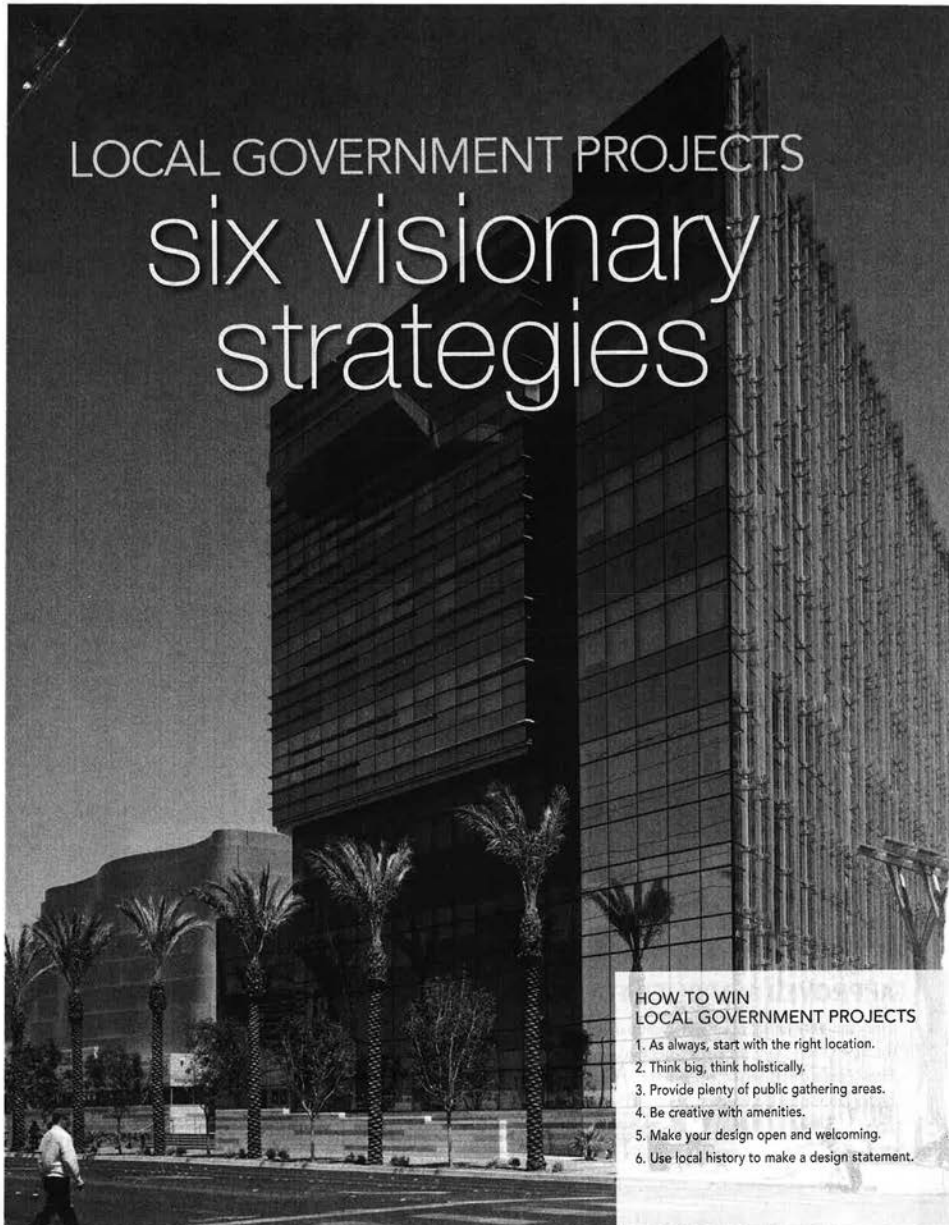
PEOPLE:

[Francine Houben](#)

ORGANIZATION:

[Sasaki Associates](#) [Mecanoo Architecten](#)

MORE FROM ARCHITECT



LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROJECTS six visionary strategies

HOW TO WIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROJECTS

1. As always, start with the right location.
2. Think big, think holistically.
3. Provide plenty of public gathering areas.
4. Be creative with amenities.
5. Make your design open and welcoming.
6. Use local history to make a design statement.



public-sector projects BUILDING TRENDS REPORT

Civic projects in Boston, Las Vegas, Austin, and suburban Atlanta show that a 'big vision' can also be a spur to neighborhood revitalization.

BY PETER FABRIS, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

The mid-20th century (and perhaps a few decades beyond) saw the construction of many local Brutalist-style city halls, libraries, police and fire stations, and administrative office buildings that more closely resembled bunker-like monuments to power than they did places of civility, comfort, and respite for the public they were meant to serve.

Recent municipal and county projects are being designed to be much more open and inviting to the local citizenry in an attempt to recalibrate the public's relationship with local officials and institutions. Some go a step further, striving also to be catalysts for neighborhood revitalization that will draw more people and new businesses to neglected areas.

Building Design+Construction examined several new city and county projects that exemplify these trends. What we found could signal a movement toward local government projects that not only relate more closely to the community, but also help fuel neighborhood economic development.

Las Vegas City Hall, constructed at a cost of \$109 million, \$17 million below budget. Building Team: Forest City Enterprises (public/private development partner), Eikus Manfredi Architects (design architect), JMA Architecture Studios (AOR), DeSimone Consulting Engineers (SE), JBA Consulting Engineers (MEP/telecom/AV), Poggenmeyer Design Group (CE), Shen Milson & Wilke (acoustical/AV), Lighting Design Alliance (lighting), The Weidt Group (energy/daylighting), CDC Curtainwall Design Consulting (curtain wall), GrEn A/E Consultants (LEED consultant), and The Whiting-Turner Construction Co. (CM at risk).

1. AS ALWAYS, START WITH THE RIGHT LOCATION

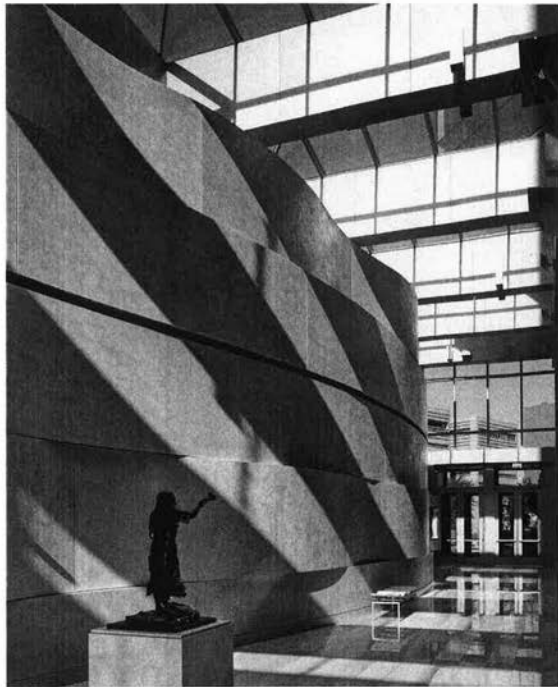
Cities usually have more than one choice about where to site a prominent new municipal building. Besides looking at property values and site development costs, public officials and their Building Team partners must first ask: Will the site be convenient for city workers and the public to access? Can a less desirable city-owned property be sold to help pay for a new building at the right location? Would it be more cost-effective to renovate and adapt an existing building, rather than building new?

Some new local government projects probe further: Which location would generate the heftiest economic boost? For instance, the downtown site of the new seven-story, 308,000-sf Las Vegas City Hall lies in an economic dead zone. The new project is the centerpiece of a grand downtown revitalization plan advocated by Oscar Goodman, the flamboyant former mayor (1999-2011). "It is part of the former mayor's vision for a total transformation of downtown," says Howard Elkus, Elkus Manfredi Architects (www.elkus-manfredi.com), the design firm for the building.

Using his considerable lawyerly skills, Goodman pushed the controversial project through the city council in the midst of the 2008-2009 recession, and even secured low-interest federal Build America bonds to finance it.

Located about 10 miles from the Las Vegas Strip, the 2.75-acre site is bounded on the west by a 61-acre parcel dominated by a rail yard and surrounded on the other three sides by mostly decrepit structures. The master plan calls for the redevelopment of a five-block area. "If you imagine the neighborhood as a mall, consider City Hall the anchor tenant," says Michael Vavovich, AIA, Project Manager, City of Las Vegas Public Works.

Completed in 2012, the new \$109.3 million, LEED Gold City Hall houses more than 500 employees. They now patronize nearby restaurants, retail shops, and service providers, injecting new economic vitality into the neighborhood. Add a new



The Las Vegas City Hall's two distinctive shapes—the curvilinear, 430-seat city council chamber and the angular seven-story glass office tower housing the city's administrative departments—come together in the lobby's profusion space. Providing places of congregation like this is an important selling point for the new generation of municipal and county buildings.

concert hall and children's museum nearby at the old rail yard site, and a variety of other commercial and cultural projects that are about to open, and you've got a rebuilt, thriving neighborhood. The city estimates 13,000 new jobs and up to \$20 million in new tax revenue will result from this downtown renaissance, although such projections always have to be viewed somewhat skeptically. Meanwhile, the old City Hall, in another part of downtown, has been sold to Zappos.com; it will host 2,000 employees of the online shoe retailer.

Stimulating neighborhood rebirth takes leaders who think big and are extremely persistent. Boston's new school headquarters in the Roxbury neighborhood presents such a case. The location, known as Dudley Square, contains a historic building that had been vacant for over 40 years.

Various proposals to redevelop the area had been advanced by federal and state officials in recent decades, only to be abandoned. As we'll see, it took a determined effort by Mayor Thomas M. Menino to finally get the project moving.

The takeaway: Advise your public-sector clients to consider how a new municipal or county project could inject new life into an economically moribund area. Pose this question: "Where could we create the biggest economic shot in the arm, at the most reasonable cost?"

In some cases, this line of thinking may lead to a specific site that could be more costly to develop than other alternatives, but have a greater long-term payoff in terms of neighborhood revitalization. That's when your team will need to work with civic leaders to make a compelling case to taxpayers

regarding the far-reaching benefits of going with the more expensive option.

2. THINK BIG, THINK HOLISTICALLY

Sometimes it's better to set aside timidity and think big, by proposing multiple complementary projects that will garner support from a wider swath of the community.

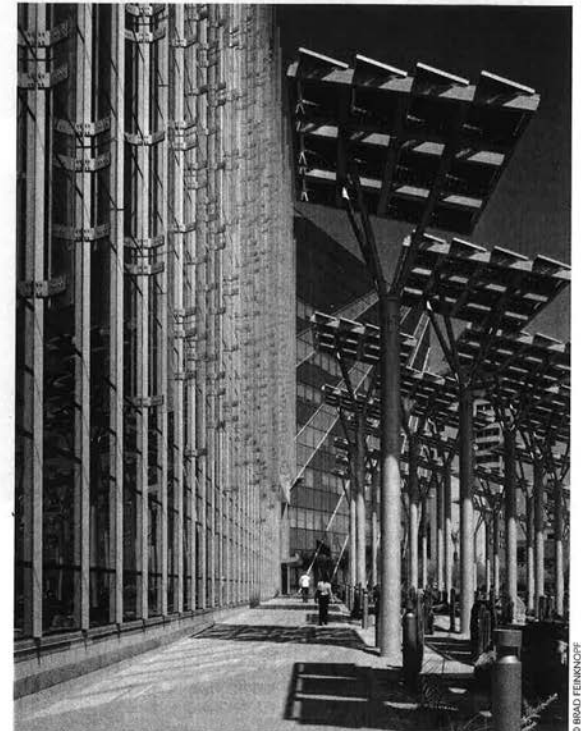
That's what happened in Boston, where 20-year-incumbent Menino (who recently announced he will not run for reelection) kept urging his planning staff to think big about the new school headquarters. "It wasn't like we were going to plunk down the building and walk away," says Patrick Brophy, Assistant Director of Operations of Capital Construction Division in the city's Property and Construction Management Department. The idea was to schedule public- and private-sector projects so that the area would receive a major economic jolt to spur private-sector investment. "We didn't want a 20-year slow leak of investment," says Brophy. This strategy required years of planning and detailed coordination with multiple stakeholders, including electric, telecommunications, and natural gas providers.

For Sasaki Associates (www.sasaki.com) and its partners on the school headquarters project—Dutch firm Mecanoo architecten (www.mecanoo.nl), Arup (www.arup.com), and CM at risk Shawmut Design & Construction (www.shawmut.com)—neighborhood revitalization figured prominently in the thinking behind the six-story, \$115 million building, which will house more than 500 full-time employees. The 200,000-sf facility's large, open lobby and main entrance are oriented to create a direct line of sight to the bus station across the street. In addition, the neighborhood is undergoing a complete infrastructure rebuild—roads, utilities, even traffic signals. The local police station was replaced with a new structure, and the branch library is being renovated. All this activity has been taking place over an 18-month period.

This infusion of public dollars and spirit seems to be having the hoped-for effect.

Nuestra Comunidad Development Corp. is expected to begin construction soon on Bartlett Place, a mix of 323 housing units, offices, and retail shops on the site of a former bus yard just outside Dudley Square. On land cleared by the Boston Redevelopment Agency, design/development firm Urbanica plans to construct a hotel/housing

complex, while Tropical Foods and the Madison Park Development Corp. are building new offices, apartments, and a grocery store. And the city's Director of Neighborhood Development, Sheila Dillon, has told the *Boston Globe* she's getting numerous calls from developers inquiring about publicly owned land in Dudley Square.



The solar "tree farm" in the plaza at Las Vegas City Hall—33 tubular columns, 25 to 35 feet in height, mounted with photovoltaic panels that generate 7% of the building's annual energy use. The LEED Gold building's sustainable design also avoids 240,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions.



Two views of the Dudley Square Municipal Office Facility, keystone of the redevelopment of Boston's Roxbury neighborhood. The Building Team for the \$115 million Boston Public Schools headquarters is being led by Sasaki Associates (architect/CE/landscape/interiors), with Mecanoo International (architectural design collaborator), Arup (MEP/SE/FP), McPhail Associates (geotechnical engineer), Weston & Sampson (environmental engineer), Building Conservation Associates (historic preservation consultant), Lam Partners (lighting), Cavanaugh Tocci Associates (acoustical), ACT Associates (AV), and Shawmut Design and Construction (CM at risk).



THE "BIG VISION" APPROACH is also being put to work by the city of Alpharetta, Ga., which is using its new 48,000-sf city hall as a means to create a central locus for the community. "We've been a fairly small city until recently," says City Administrator Bob Regus. "We've never had much of a downtown." The city, an emerging high-tech center about 25 miles north of Atlanta, grew by 65% in the 2000s, to 58,000, with a median family income of more than \$95,000.

As plans for the new city hall evolved, Alpharetta kept thinking bigger, buying up vacant and underused properties until it put together a 20-acre site that eventually will include a new 25,000-sf county library, a 450-space parking structure, and five acres of parkland that will create the city's first downtown gathering space. A "town green" is envisioned to hold concerts, fairs, and other civic gatherings. Various agencies are involved in developing design guidelines to give the new city hall and surrounding

structures a cohesive look and feel.

The takeaway: A new civic building can be the centerpiece of a coordinated effort to remake a neighborhood, especially if it can be the catalyst for complementary development that adds critical mass for economic growth.

3. PROVIDE PLENTY OF PUBLIC GATHERING AREAS

For the new generation of civic buildings, providing multiple spaces for neighborhood events is becoming a crucial component of design—and a proven way to generate

widespread support from taxpayers.

That's one reason the new \$31 million, 48,000-sf Alpharetta City Hall will have a multipurpose room on the main floor for use by community groups. "We allow groups to use the council chamber in the existing city hall, but these events can be rough on the furniture and floors," says City Administrator Regus. Having the new facility should solve that problem.

Outdoor amenities are also becoming a more common component of civic projects. For example, the community room in Alpharetta's city hall will connect with an

outdoor plaza to provide additional space for public gatherings. The Boston Public Schools headquarters will feature a second-floor meeting space with flexible partitions to accommodate community meetings of various sizes on weekends and on weekday evenings when official business is not being conducted. (There's even talk of allowing neighborhood residents to rent the space for birthday parties and other private celebrations.) The building's landscaped rooftop patio, offering spectacular views of downtown Boston, will also be available for public events.

In Austin, Texas, a new 198,000-sf central library will be topped with a landscaped terrace offering dramatic vistas of the downtown environs, notably that of nearby Lady Bird Lake. Las Vegas's new City Hall offers a similar events venue on a second-floor outdoor plaza, which also serves as an informal lunch spot for area workers. The building's interior features a 430-seat, acoustically tuned Council Chamber, equipped with theatrical lighting, A/V systems, movable walls and cyclorama curtain to host community artistic performances and special events. Access to all these spaces is controlled or monitored by security personnel.

The takeaway: Work with public officials responsible for programming these buildings to explore how these structures can play multiple roles for the community at large. When a city or county adds a prominent new structure to the landscape, the building should provide multiple uses and benefits for everyone—not just government employees—to enjoy.

4. BE CREATIVE WITH AMENITIES

Public buildings at the local level have to be neighborhood friendly. To that end, the Austin Central Library planners have set aside leasable space for restaurants and retail stores, notably a popular used bookstore run by the library itself. Boston is reserving space for mixed-use retail—"the first time the city has ever tried to put retail space into a city building," says Brophy.

Amenities like these should not be an afterthought; they can be crucial components of



Overview of the greater Roxbury area of Boston, site of a major redevelopment envisioned by Mayor Thomas N. Menino. Dudley Square is on the left, with the renovated branch library at center left and the new Roxbury neighborhood police station at right. The area is also undergoing a complete refitting of public infrastructure—roads, utilities, even traffic lights—as a spur to private investment.

a grander scheme. The planned restaurant in Boston fills a void. "The area is commercially and socially dead after dark," says Victor Vizgaitis, AIA, LEED AP, Principal, Sasaki Associates. "There are few restaurants open after lunchtime." That's one reason Sasaki's designers expanded retail/restaurant space from 8,000 sf to 18,000 sf, a change that garnered strong support from neighbors hungering for such quality-of-life amenities.

In Austin, the library's eatery will serve a rapidly developing neighborhood. The city is constructing a bridge over the adjacent Shoal Creek to extend Second Avenue, Austin's thriving downtown commercial strip, past the library. Private developers are putting up new apartment and mixed-use complexes nearby. The library's restaurant, which will connect with a patio for al fresco dining, is expected to draw more patrons and add an important social dimension to this fast-emerging neighborhood.

Two other spaces in Austin's library speak to the area's outdoor-oriented lifestyle. Two screened, shaded, open-air porches furnished with rocking chairs—one in the children's section with seating for 60, another in the adult area that will seat 45—

will look out over Shoal Creek and the nearby lake. The city's warm climate means library visitors can read and relax in these spaces most of the year.

The open-air porches stirred up controversy at first, according to Sidney R. Bowen, AIA, Managing Principal, Shepley Bulfinch (www.shepleybulfinch.com), the joint-venture architect with Lake|Flato Architects (www.lakeflato.com). Librarians feared that some patrons might try to steal items from the collection by throwing them from the porch, but those fears were allayed when the designers added screens to prevent such nefarious activities by the book-reading public.

A bicycle garage under the library is another Austin-style amenity. "There will be more parking spaces for bikes [150-200] than for cars," says Bowen. Plans call for the bicycle parking station to be leased to a bike repair shop, which will collect parking fees and offer maintenance services for cyclists while they visit the library.

The takeaway: These projects show that local government decision-makers are increasingly open to proposals with innovative amenities that line up with a project's overall goals. One way to discern what will be appealing is to analyze neighborhood

public-sector projects

BUILDING TRENDS REPORT

amenities and consider how space in a new building could enhance the quality of life.

5. MAKE YOUR DESIGN OPEN AND WELCOMING

Civic projects cry out for prominent elements in and around their entrances to encourage visitors to come inside. After all, these are public buildings.

Boston's old police station in Dudley Square was built in the late 1960s with no windows. "The neighborhood wanted a design where you didn't feel like you were intruding on the bunker," says Brophy. The new police station features floor-to-roof fenestration around the entrance, with a brightly lit lobby—a signal to the neighbors to engage with their local police in community-based crime prevention.

The Municipal Office Facility embraces transparency as well, with large, bold fenestration lining the lower floors of the modern areas of the façade, allowing passersby to peer into the daylight-flooded, open lobby. And the entrance to the Dudley Square library, another Brutalist monument, was remodeled with better lighting and a huge, colorful sign to make the facility more easily identifiable.

The takeaway: During programming, work with area residents to evaluate their desire for more welcoming public facilities.

6. USE LOCAL HISTORY TO MAKE A DESIGN STATEMENT

Historic elements can and should enrich civic projects, making them more of a draw to visitors and thereby enhancing their value proposition. This was certainly the case for the \$109.3 million Las Vegas City Hall, which became a kind of diorama of the city's geological past.

After an early conceptual design was rejected, Howard Elkus delved into the region's geological history for inspiration. He learned that the name "Las Vegas" means "the meadows," a reference to the time when verdant grasses fed by an underground spring made the valley a lush home to the Southern Paiute. The curvilinear form of the 430-seat council chamber was inspired by the mounds created by the spring, represented in the undulating sand-colored walls and metallic-ribbed ceilings.

Nearby Hoover Dam, which helped shape Las Vegas into a modern, neon-drenched city, is reflected in the vertical glass fins of the façade, signifying the flow of water through the intake towers of the dam's turbines. Horizontal bands in the main structure portray the earthen layers in the Black Canyon where the dam is located. The Grand Lobby's horizontally veined stone floor and walls recall the stratified rock layers visible on the canyon

walls. The illuminated glass sculpture of the Grand Staircase calls to mind the energy of the Colorado River, while gigantic concrete blocks emulate the dam's muscular form.

Solar power, a key technology of the future for this city of abundant sunshine, is represented by decorative rays that adorn the east-wing façade. These rays lead to 33 photovoltaic "trees," 25- to 35-foot steel structures that shade the main plaza during the day and are expected to produce 290,000 kWh of electricity a year, or 7% of the building's energy needs. The photovoltaics illuminate glass fins on the façade in a changing display of colored LED lights—a new landmark in the city's nightscape.

Similarly, Boston's Municipal Office Facility will preserve the historic façade of the neighborhood's most prominent landmark, the flatiron-shaped Ferdinand's Furniture Building. Many Bostonians of a certain age have fond memories of trips to this store as children, notes Vizgaitis. "If you bought your furniture there, it was a sign of success," he says.

The design also incorporates the historic Curtis and Waterman buildings to create a triangle of historic façades connected by new construction. The restored Ferdinand, Curtis, and Waterman shells will maintain the historic scale of Dudley Square, even as the new building seeks to blend a modern aesthetic



A view of the future downtown of Alpharetta, Ga., a rapidly growing suburb about 25 miles north of Atlanta. Jones Lang LaSalle is the program manager for the city, with the Building Team of Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart (architect), David M. Schwarz Architects (associate architect), Uzun & Case (SE), HESM&A Inc. (MEP/FP), URS Corp. (CE to the owner), Metromont Corp. (precast parking deck), and Choate Construction Co. (GC).

Austin embraces THE FLEXIBLE, EVOLVING LIBRARY



COURTESY SHEPLEY BULFINCH



The City of Austin (Texas) New Central Library. Building Team: Lake|Flato Architects/Shepley Bulfinch (JV architects), Datum Engineers and P.E. Structural Consultants (SE), Jose I. Guerra Inc. (M/E engineer/energy modeling), Hartman Engineering (electrical service engineer), Encotech Engineering (plumbing engineer), Urban Design Group (CE), Rolf Jensen & Associates (FP), Coleman & Associates (landscape architect), Simpson Gumpertz & Heger (building envelope), HOLOS Collaborative (LEED consultant), and Integration Design Lab/University of Washington (daylighting consultant).

As libraries morph from book repositories to digital-age institutions, designs must emphasize flexibility in the use of space. Increasingly, clients also want Building Teams to provide commons areas where patrons, visitors, and staff can interact.

The old central library in Austin, Texas, which opened in 1979, has no gathering or meeting spaces to speak of. It was conceived in an era when the primary function of a library was to store books and protect them from sunlight, says Sidney R. Bowen, AIA, Principal with Shepley Bulfinch (www.shepleybulfinch.com), the architect for the new library with Lake|Flato Architects (www.lakeflato.com).

The new \$90 million, 198,000-sf library will still have books, but a lot fewer of them, due to the availability of digital technology. "We can try to guess what the library of the future will be, but we'd probably be wrong," says Bowen. Thus, the design minimizes permanent interior walls, and all bookshelves will be set on casters. "We want the building to last 100 years, not just structurally, but functionally," he says.

John Gillum, Facilities Process Manager for Austin's library department, says he and his staff originally thought the building would have to be much bigger—350,000 sf—but that thinking changed during the design process. "We decided that if we relied more on technology, we

could have a smaller footprint," he says.

Some of the space that once might have held books will be replaced with space for congregating. There will be a tiered seating area suitable for such nontraditional library events as cooking classes. A 2,500-sf multiuse room, set up like a large hotel meeting space outfitted with high-tech A/V equipment, will seat up to 500. A ground-floor café and a rooftop terrace provide more opportunities for people to gather.

Increasingly, libraries will be conceived more as public squares than quiet places to read and study—though, in the case of the Austin library, several rooms will be reserved for those purposes. "We all spend too much time on computers by ourselves," says Gillum. "We want places where we can rub shoulders with other human beings."

Rare books will be stored at the city's other libraries, allowing the new library to be flooded with sunlight. "Daylight is the best type of reading light," says Bowen. "We think this library will be second to none in the U.S. in terms of daylighting." In Austin's hot climate, though, maximizing daylighting while controlling energy use is a complex task. "To get light without heat requires a lot of scrim and a huge amount of modeling," says Bowen.

in between. Preserving these façade gems, replete with ornate terra cotta and detailed brickwork, added \$4 million in costs to the project. The construction manager, Shawmut, will also have to deal with a three-foot front-to-back differential between the old buildings.

The building's interior lobby space also adds historic references—orange panels and stripes that recall the former elevated

Orange Line trolley, which used to dominate Dudley Square from across the street. "We've made an effort to recall where that was with storytelling signage and graphics," says Vizgaitis.

The takeaway: Communities looking to build iconic, 100-year buildings may be willing to spend what it takes to achieve imaginative design if they can embrace a grand

vision that will spark economic revitalization. These projects require innovative conceptualization, and often take several years to build public support, generate funding, and secure approvals. With a strong commitment to seeing things through, however, Building Teams and their civic partners can construct award-winning community assets that last generations. +