



Partnering Strategies for the Urban Edge

2011 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence

BRUNER FOUNDATION, INC.

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2011 RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE



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Introduction: The 2011 Rudy Bruner Award

THE RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

The Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence (RBA) is a national award for urban places that promotes innovative thinking about the built environment. Established in 1987, the Award celebrates urban places distinguished by quality design – design that considers social, economic, and environmental issues in addition to form.

The RBA is unique among design awards because it emphasizes the process of urban placemaking and multiple aspects of place. The RBA considers architecture in terms of the skill with which a design responds to its user, neighborhood, city and region. In exploring the story of each winner, the Award articulates the ways in which these places respond to the uniqueness of their urban settings. In celebrating the winners, the RBA seeks to increase their visibility, and promote fresh thinking about the kinds of projects that make our cities better places to live and work.

With each cycle, the Rudy Bruner Award starts anew. Applications are reviewed by a Selection Committee chosen for each Award cycle from the most prominent placemakers, design professionals and mayors in the country. The Committee is challenged to identify places that achieve design excellence with nuanced responses to their users and urban settings. As they consider the applications,



Committee members are asked to define their own criteria for urban excellence in light of their experience and expertise. In discussing the applications, they identify the current challenges facing our cities, and develop a consensus on the kinds of urban places that make meaningful contributions to the built environment.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Because the RBA seeks excellence in places where it may not be expected, the criteria for submitting an application for the RBA are intentionally broad, encouraging applications from all sorts of projects. The few limiting criteria are that the project must be a real place, not a plan; it must be sufficiently complete to demonstrate its excellence to a team of site visitors from the Bruner Foundation, and it must be located in the contiguous continental United States.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

To ensure lively and informed discussion, each Selection Committee is an inter-disciplinary group of urban experts. Selection Committees always include the mayor of a major city as well as design professionals, developers, community organizers, philanthropists, and financiers. In their discussions, members of the Selection Committee explore a range of urban issues that relate to the most critical challenges facing our cities today.

The Selection Committee meets twice. In its January meeting the Committee selects five finalists from a field of about 100 applications. A Bruner Foundation team then visits each of these sites for two to three days, exploring the projects and pursuing questions raised by the Selection Committee. The team tours the site, interviews fifteen to twenty-five or more project participants (including community participants), takes photographs, observes patterns of use, and collects secondary source documentation on the project.

Findings from the site team visits are presented to the Selection Committee at its meeting in May. The Committee discusses the relative merits of each project and awards one finalist Gold Medal status, a \$50,000 award. The other finalists are Silver Medal winners and each receives \$10,000.



Rudy Bruner Award winners are never been presented as models to be replicated or as formulas to be transplanted to other urban settings. Instead, their value to placemakers resides in the innovative strategies they have used to meet challenges and create new models of placemaking that can be adapted to the unique conditions inherent in every city and neighborhood.

2011 SELECTION COMMITTEE:

LISA A. WONG, *Mayor, Fitchburg, MA*

RANDY GRAGG, *Editor-in-Chief, Portland Monthly, Portland, OR*

DAN PITERA, *Executive Director, Detroit Collaborative Design Center, Detroit, MI*

RENATA SIMRIL, *Sr. Vice-President, Forest City Development West Coast, Los Angeles, CA*

EDWARD K. UHLIR, *FAIA, Executive Director, Millennium Park Inc., President, Uhlir Consulting LLC, Chicago, IL*

JESS ZIMBABWE, *Executive Director, Daniel Rose Center for Public Leadership in Land Use, Urban Land Institute, Washington, DC*

2011 AWARD CYCLE

In 2011 the Selection Committee selected five projects: Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn NY; Gary Comer Youth Center/Gary Comer College Prep, Chicago, IL; Civic Space Park, Phoenix, AZ; and The Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment, Santa Fe, NM; The Bridge Homeless Assistance Center, Dallas, TX. These projects are distinct, yet are united by their imaginative repurposing of under-utilized urban space, their combining of excellence in design with essential urban services and amenities, and the impacts they made on their respective neighborhoods and cities. As a group these winning projects have:

- Transformed and activated underused urban space
- Created well-designed environments in which to provide essential services to underserved populations
- Built spaces that were developed through complex community dialogue
- Created new models of sustainable design in very different urban environmental conditions.

2011 WINNERS

2011 GOLD MEDAL WINNER:

The Bridge Homeless Assistance Center, Dallas, TX

The Bridge is a well designed, 75,000 square foot homeless assistance center located in downtown Dallas, that provides day-shelter, emergency nighttime shelter, and transitional housing to the city's homeless population. It also provides a variety of services dedicated to respectful treatment of homeless individuals, and reintegrating homeless persons into the life of the city. The Bridge is a LEED Silver certified complex, working to end homelessness in Dallas.



The Bridge Homeless Assistance Center

2011 SILVER MEDAL WINNERS:

Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn NY

Brooklyn Bridge Park is an 85 acre/1.3 mile linear park along the East River waterfront in Brooklyn, NY. It is a major civic project that reuses a derelict post-industrial area, and reclaims the waterfront for public use. A major new urban green space, utilizing sustainable technologies in plant selection and maintenance, the Park is designed to be financially and ecologically sustainable, and provides for a variety of recreational uses in a dense urban area.

Civic Space Park, Phoenix, AZ

Civic Space Park is a newly-created open space of 2.77 acres in an under-used and semi-blighted area between downtown Phoenix and the new in-town campus of ASU. The park is the result of a unique partnership between the City of Phoenix and ASU, with other partners in more minor roles. The park provides a variety of recreational spaces, including lawns, shaded seating areas, an outdoor performance venue, and a renovated historic building with a large meeting/class room, a public café, as well as a major work of public art. In addition, the park employs a variety of technologies geared toward energy-saving and sustainability.

Gary Comer Youth Center/Gary Comer College Prep, Chicago, IL

Gary Comer Youth Center is a 13.5-acre campus in the Grand Crossing neighborhood of Chicago, composed of the 80,000 square foot Gary Comer Youth Center and the 45,000 square foot Gary Comer



College Prep. Together these facilities comprise an education-focused complex that provides academic, recreational, athletic, job training and other programs for impoverished students on Chicago's South Side.

The Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment, Santa Fe, NM

The Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment is a 50-acre, \$127 million project to restore and revitalize the industrial and transportation district directly adjacent to the former Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company spur line. It includes 13 acres of open space

Clockwise from upper left: Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn, NY;
Gary Comer Youth Center, Chicago, IL; Civic Space Park, Phoenix, AZ;
Santa Fe Railyard, Santa Fe, NM

(including public plazas and a 10-acre park), and 500,000 square foot of buildings in a mixed-use project that includes retail and gallery spaces, the Railyard Park, the New Mexico RailRunner Express train depot, and four core nonprofit tenants: the Farmers Market Institute, SITE Santa Fe, Warehouse 21, and El Museo Cultural, with housing and residential space adjacent.

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Award presentations celebrate the accomplishments of each winning project and raise awareness of the issues addressed by each of them. Past awards have been presented at the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development,

and in many of the cities in which winning projects are located. At the presentations, planners, community organizers, architects, and developers speak about their projects, and mayors are often present to recognize the contributions these projects have made to their respective communities.

RUDY BRUNER AWARD BOOKS

Rudy Bruner Award winners are all real places in real communities, and each site has a complex story. These “back stories” involve struggle and perseverance, leadership and cooperation, tension and resolution. The winning projects are never simple, and for the most part, they come to fruition despite limited budgets, competing agendas, and political complications. The RBA has found that great urban places respond to challenges by enhancing the quality of design and extending the use of design beyond initial expectations.

In order to tell these stories, Bruner Foundation publishes a book that details the story of each winner and also includes a synopsis of the Selection Committee dialogue. All Rudy Bruner Award publications are available online at www.brunerfoundation.org; most RBA books are also available from the Foundation in hard copy.

The books are part of the RBA’s commitment to facilitating a national dialogue on the meaning and nature of urban excellence, and to promoting important new ideas about urban placemaking. They



RBA Founder Simeon Bruner presenting a 2011 Silver Medal to Commissioner Adrian Benepe, New York Department of Parks

are a resource for placemakers, educators, policy makers, financiers, and community organizations who wish to use the creative thinking of RBA winners in their own communities. Bruner Foundation books are used in graduate and undergraduate programs across the country.

THE RUDY BRUNER AWARD WEBSITE

The Rudy Bruner Award website is a primary access point for RBA history and resources. The site contains case studies and images of every RBA winner, summary profiles, and links to winner websites. The site also includes profiles of Selection Committee members and news about ongoing RBA activities. It is also the location for the Rudy Bruner Award application, which is now offered only through the website, and no longer in printed form.

We encourage you to visit the website to learn from the experience of our winners, and to use their stories to create excellent urban places in your own communities.

<http://www.brunerfoundation.org/rba>

ACCESS TO OTHER RUDY BRUNER AWARD MATERIALS

A digital archive of Rudy Bruner Award winners is also available at <http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/bruner>. The Rudy Bruner Award Digital Archive (RBADA) includes award winners' original application materials. Projects are searchable by keyword in seventeen categories including housing, historic preservation, art, land use controls, commercial development, and transportation. The University at Buffalo site is coordinated through The Urban Design Project, directed by Robert Shibley and developed by the staff at the University at Buffalo's Lockwood Memorial Library. It is a valuable tool for students, practitioners, and others interested in various aspects of the urban built environment.

BRUNER LOEB FORUM

Established in 2001, the Bruner•Loeb Forum brings together two of the preeminent national programs dedicated to the urban built environment. In the Bruner•Loeb Forum, the Rudy Bruner Award partners with the Loeb Fellowship Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Design to present two forums per year in cities around the nation. The Forum is an interactive program, designed to apply the experience and expertise of RBA winners and Loeb Fellows to challenges facing our cities, and to create dialogue among a diverse group of stakeholders. In so doing, the Bruner Loeb Forum fosters a

national dialogue on the most important urban issues of the day.
For more information please visit: www.brunerloeb.org

RBA RECOGNITION

The work of the Rudy Bruner Award and its winners has been recognized by organizations across the country, including the Mayors' Institute on City Design, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Environmental Design Research Association, and, *Partners for Livable Communities*.

Articles on the Rudy Bruner Award have appeared in *Foundation News*, *New Village Journal*, *Architectural Record*, *Design Book Review*, *Architecture* magazine, and most recently *Next American City*. See also the chapter on the RBA in Lynda Schneekloth and Robert Shibley's *Placemaking: the Art and Practice of Building Community* (John Wiley and Sons, 1995), and in the McGraw Hill compendium on the state of the art in urban design, *Time Saver Standards for Urban Design*, published in 2003, edited by Don Watson, Alan Plattus, and Robert Shibley.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Emily Axelrod, MCP, is a former director of the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. She holds a master's degree in city planning from the Harvard Graduate School of Design and has worked in urban planning in both the public and private sectors in San Francisco and Boston.

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Jay Farbstein, PhD, FAIA, is an architect and the president of Jay Farbstein & Associates. He leads a consulting practice in Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo, CA, specializing in helping public sector and private clients develop and document their requirements for building projects as well as in evaluating the degree to which their completed buildings meet those requirements.

Robert Shibley, FAIA, AICP, is the Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the State University of New York, Buffalo. He is also a founding partner of Caucus Partnership, a consulting practice on environmental and organizational change. At the University at Buffalo, he is a former chairman of the Department of Architecture and also serves as the director of The Urban Design Project, a center in the school devoted to the study and practice of urban design.

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Gold Medal Winner

The Bridge Homeless Assistance Center

Dallas, Texas





Project At-A-Glance

WHAT IS THE BRIDGE?

- ➔ A 75,000 square foot homeless assistance center located in downtown Dallas that provides day-shelter, emergency nighttime shelter, and transitional housing for the city's homeless population.
- ➔ A service facility that provides coordinated healthcare, mental health and substance abuse services, employment assistance, laundry facilities, library and computer access, and three meals every day to those in need.
- ➔ A LEED Silver certified six-building complex that incorporated the reuse of an existing vacant warehouse, natural day lighting, grey water recycling, and a "green roof" dining room.

PROJECT GOALS

- ➔ To implement a strategy aimed at the elimination of chronic homelessness in Dallas by providing "housing first" and by connecting the homeless to a continuum of support services to assist their transition back to permanent housing.
- ➔ To reduce the financial and operational strain of chronic homelessness on police, jails, hospitals, and other social services, conserving scarce resources for the newly-homeless.
- ➔ To reduce the negative impacts on people experiencing homelessness living on the street, such as crimes of need, panhandling, inappropriate use of public facilities, and congregating in public spaces.
- ➔ To locate a shelter facility in a way that does not isolate or stigmatize the homeless, but instead connects them to transportation, green space, and public facilities as well as to shelter and services in a safe, caring, respectful, and dignified refuge.
- ➔ To design a shelter facility that projects a positive image to both the homeless and the general public and expresses the community's compassionate attitude toward the plight of the homeless.

Project Chronology

1999 Day Resource Center for homeless persons anticipates 2006 termination of lease on its facility and begins a search for new accommodation. Board takes this opportunity to rethink programmatic approach.

2003 Then Mayor Laura Miller creates a task force to end chronic homelessness in Dallas in ten years. Tom Dunning, Miller's opponent in the 2002 mayoral election is appointed city's first "Homeless Czar." Dallas voters approve \$3 million bond referendum to plan for a homeless assistance center to serve as the keystone for a plan to end chronic homelessness.

2004 Dallas City Council approves plan to end chronic homelessness using the "housing first" model that includes construction of a homeless assistance center, The Bridge, with coordinated continuum of care services and permanent supportive housing.

2005 Overland Partners in collaboration with Carmargo-Copeland were selected as architects to design the homeless assistance center.

April: City Council approves recommendation of Homeless Task Force to acquire St. Louis Street site for the new facility. Downtown site a few blocks from City Hall and adjacent to the Farmers' Market district is chosen for the new facility. Design team, members of staff, and board visit other cities to learn about other homeless centers. Public workshops held to gather input for facility design and generate citizen support for the project.

September: Tom Dunning resigns as "Homeless Czar" and Mike Rawlings is appointed to succeed him.

November: Dallas voters approve \$23.8 million bond issue to develop the homeless assistance center and permanent supportive housing (PSH).

2006 City Council creates Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance, (MDHA), a private membership organization, to leverage public and private resources for The Bridge and PSH.

2007 Dallas County pledges \$1 million in annual operating aid for The Bridge.

February: construction begins on The Bridge.

2008 City Council contracts with MDHA to develop, deliver, and manage The Bridge with \$3.5 million operating funds to be matched by more raised by MDHA.

May: The Bridge opens its doors for the first time and offers some level of service for 800 to 1400 guests a night in its first year, when it was designed to accommodate up to 650 (325 in transitional housing).

2011 MDHA and The Bridge separate into two organizations. The Bridge focuses exclusively on sustaining and increasing benefits for people experiencing homelessness.



KEY PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEWED

JAMES ANDREWS *RIBA, AIA, LEED AP, Principal,
Overland Partners Architects*

RICHARD ARCHER *FAIA, LEED AP, Principal, Overland
Partners Architects*

ZAIDA BASORA *Assistant Director, Public Works, City of Dallas*

CHRISTIANE BAUD *Christiane Baud Consulting*

MYRIAM CAMARGO *AIA, Partner, Camargocopeland Architects*

JOHN CASTLE *Chairman, Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance.*

Artwork was incorporated into the design



JAY DUNN *Managing Director, The Bridge, Metro Dallas
Homeless Alliance*

MIKE FAENZA *President and CEO, Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance*

LOIS FINKELMAN *Member, Dallas City Council and Quality
of Life Committee*

LARRY HAMILTON *CEO, Hamilton Properties Corporation*

THOMAS LEPPERT *Mayor, City of Dallas*

DANIEL MILLET *Owner, Millet the Printer, Inc.*

LIAM MULVANEY

MIKE RAWLINGS *Former Chairman, Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance*

KAREN D. RAYZER *Asst. Director, Housing/ Community Services,
City of Dallas*

SUSAN HEINLEN SPALDING *Medical Director, Parkland Health
and Hospital System*

MARY SUHM *City Manager, City of Dallas*

TIM TOLLIVER *Associate Services Manager, The Bridge, MDHA*

DAVID TREVINO *Senior Program Manager, Public Works,
City of Dallas*

Project Description



Charles Davis Smith

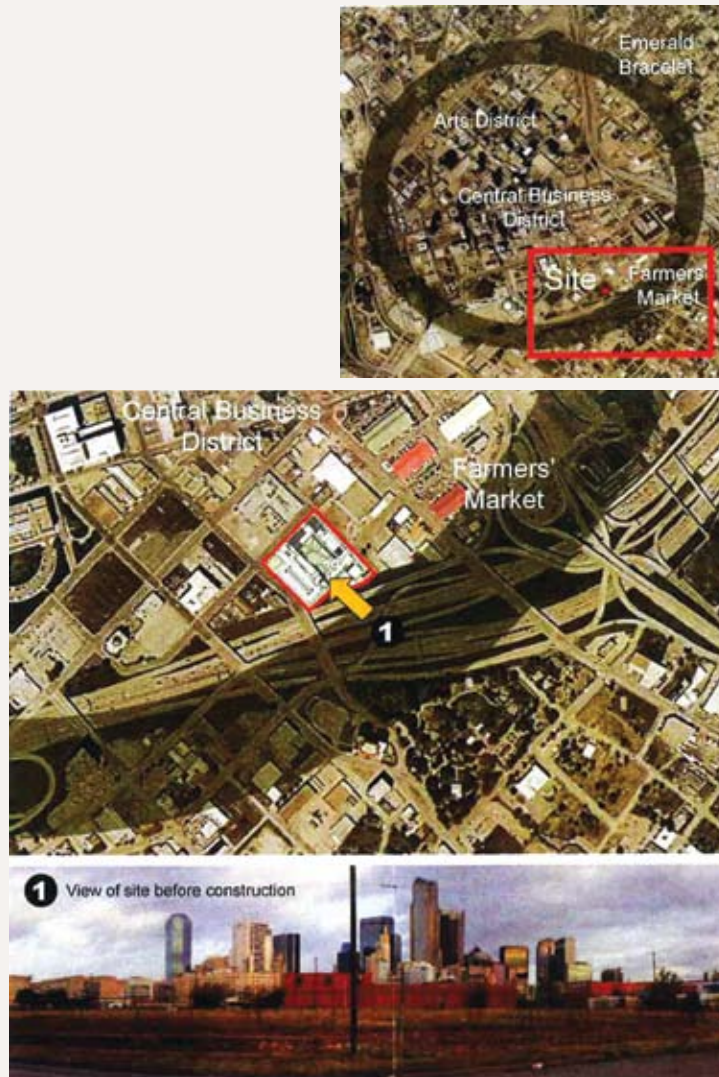
URBAN CONTEXT

The Bridge Homeless Assistance Center is located in the Warehouse District on the edge of downtown Dallas, backed up to Interstate 30, adjacent to the Farmers' Market, and three or four blocks from Dallas City Hall where many of the homeless served by the new facility used to congregate.

The complex occupies an entire city block – and a little more – about 3.4 acres. The site is bounded by Park Avenue, Corsicana Street, and St. Paul Street. One block of St. Louis Street to the south-east was vacated to accommodate part of the complex but the right of way has been left undeveloped so as not to preclude its future use as a public thoroughfare.

The six building ensemble is generally most dense toward the north and east of the site to minimize impact on the neighborhood and to leave room for expansion. Building facades come right to the sidewalk, creating a clear urban edge consistent with neighboring buildings – a printing plant, a vacant warehouse, the commercial structures of the Farmers' Market, and, one block away, a public school.

Otherwise, the neighborhood – known as the Warehouse District – is dominated by surface parking lots and city streets connecting downtown destinations with the Interstate Highway. Once a thriving commercial zone, economic activities there declined in parallel with



the broader trends of suburbanization and de-industrialization. As the employment base shrank, supporting retail uses disappeared, and many structures were left vacant or were demolished and replaced by parking lots. Members of Dallas' growing homeless population came to fill the void, loitering or camping on those streets.

Project sponsors have emphasized the importance of the site's proximity to City Hall and Downtown Dallas in general and the visibility of the location within the civic realm. They have rejected the "out of sight, out of mind" approach to homelessness by placing the facility "a stone's throw" from City Hall where it can be a source of civic pride. Indeed, it is a short walk to City Hall but not a comfortable one across parking lots and busy streets. Public places are accessible from the facility but the core of the downtown office district is five to ten blocks away. Overall, The Bridge is not very visible to the everyday public in the daylight, although the "beacon" is visible from City Hall at night.

THE BRIDGE

sits on the edge of the City's Emerald Bracelet, a plan for a contiguous series of parks, trails, and landscaping that will circle the Central Business District, Arts District, and Farmer's Market.

This allows the homeless to access the site from downtown and surrounding areas. The project's courtyard becomes a destination on the Emerald Bracelet.

Overall, the location of The Bridge seems to express a public ambivalence toward the homeless and reflects a compromise between keeping the homeless somewhat out of view and ensuring they are connected to a network of public spaces, transportation facilities, pedestrian paths, and amenities such as the planned “Emerald Necklace” of city center parks. The selection of this site balanced an impulse to show compassion for the homeless with the imperative to protect private and public investments in downtown Dallas.

Given much apprehension about the impact of the facility on the neighborhood, it is ironic that The Bridge is arguably the best building there. While some business interests feared that building it there might dampen the market for additional housing development downtown, the opening and operation of the facility seems to have had the opposite effect.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic profile of homeless persons in Dallas continues to evolve, but a 2008 “Point in Time” survey by the Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance provides a broad picture of who the homeless are, how they came to be homeless, and what their major needs are now. The 2008 study counted 5,869 people experiencing homelessness in Dallas County. Of these, 49 percent were adult men; 29 percent were women; and 22 percent were children.

Those surveyed self-reported the causes of their homeless situation. The categories below add up to more than 100 percent because people who become homeless often have multiple problems. The causes cited were:

- Loss of a job or because of unemployment – 43%
- Substance abuse or dependence – 31%
- Lack of money – 27%
- Domestic abuse or family problems – 22%
- Mental illness – 22%
- Medical disability – 16%
- Legal problems or a prior criminal conviction – 11%
- Eviction – 7%
- Natural disaster – 1%
- Other – 7%



People experiencing homelessness who were surveyed also reported a wide range of needs for service. The top five categories identified were:

- Permanent housing (other than for disabled persons) – 26%
- Job placement – 21%
- Bus pass – 18%
- Dental care – 15%
- Transportation – 14%

The results of this survey do not distinguish between those who might be temporarily homeless, and the chronically homeless – those people who have been continually homeless for more than a year or with four or more episodes of homelessness in the past three years and with some kind of disabling condition.

PROJECT HISTORY

At the beginning of the first decade of the 21st century, the City of Dallas, Texas faced what many community leaders considered a crisis of homelessness. An estimated 6,000 people in Dallas were homeless including 1,000 who were classified as “chronically homeless” – persons with a disabling condition who were also continuously or repeatedly without shelter. Homelessness had doubled during the 1990s and the number of chronic homeless had increased six-fold. Their community-wide impact was notable.

Many of the homeless congregated in Downtown Dallas, spending their days in public parks, in public buildings, or on the street. A majority of crimes downtown were being committed by members of the homeless population, albeit often out of material necessity. Downtown business owners were outraged at having to constantly clean up after homeless visitors and having clients and customers being frightened off by the increasing number of panhandlers in the city streets. Many believed that the sense of despair brought by homelessness downtown was standing in the way of economic development. Some initial responses to the problem, such as anti-panhandling ordinances, were considered punitive.

At the same time, it began to be understood that homelessness, as it had been addressed up to that point, was more costly to the community than it needed to be. Dealing with the homeless through the police, in jail, in mental health facilities, in the emergency room, and in emergency shelters was far more costly than providing housing. Meanwhile, research across the country was revealing that the chronically homeless absorbed far more than their share of resources aimed at helping those who had only temporary housing difficulty.

Everyone agreed something had to be done to address the problem. In September 2003, then-Mayor Laura Miller announced the City would devise a comprehensive strategy to end chronic homelessness within ten years. The plan would increase funding for homeless programs, expand the capacity of assistance centers, and increase the supply of permanent housing for the homeless. At the core of the



plan would be a new 24-hour homeless assistance center to provide daytime and nighttime shelter and access to a full continuum of care and services to help the homeless on the road back to housing.

The new facility would replace the Day Resource Center, a health care and counseling clinic that also served as a homeless shelter. It was located elsewhere downtown and was considered by its own management to be inadequate to meet the needs of the homeless population, and was about to lose its lease.

Miller created a homeless task force – an often-used approach to problem-solving in Dallas – to develop the plan and the new facility. The task force was made up of civic and business leaders, social workers with knowledge of homelessness, volunteers from local soup kitchens, city staff, and health care providers. Miller also named Tom Dunning, a local businessman and her opponent in the February 2002 mayoral election, as the city's first Homeless Czar.

In 2003 voters approved a \$3 million bond referendum to fund the planning process for the homeless assistance center. There is some evidence in the journalistic record that it was understood at the time that \$3 million would pay for some significant portion of construction costs but ultimately it wasn't even enough to buy the site. Either way, the task force and the Dallas Department of Public Works soon selected CamargoCopeland of Dallas and Overland Partners of San Antonio to lead the design process.

The next steps in the process – site selection and project design – would be crucial. Funding to build the facility would require another public bond referendum. Public and political support would be important. Where the facility was located and how it looked would help shape public opinion on what was now known as "The Bridge."

The Wall of Bridge Donors

When the center officially opened in May of 2008, they were immediately overwhelmed. Designed for about 350 transitional housing guests, The Bridge served over three times that number in both transitional and emergency shelter on a typical day that year.

The task force believed that to have the greatest effect in alleviating homelessness their new facility needed to be located where people experiencing homelessness could get to it and close to where they already spent their time. Business interests argued that the site should be outside of downtown where it wouldn't interfere with efforts to develop market-rate in-town residential projects. Homeless advocates beyond the task force insisted on a location within walking distance to other shelters and the range of services available downtown. The task force evaluated six potential sites in Dallas but the site in the Warehouse District on the edge of downtown was clearly the best from their perspective.

It would not, however, be the most politically palatable location. Potential opponents believed that to build the homeless assistance center in downtown Dallas would increase the visibility of the homeless on the street and exacerbate the problems of crime. Some argued that the site chosen was too valuable for other purposes to dedicate it to the care of people experiencing homelessness, and that such a facility would make it harder for others to justify investments in the same neighborhood such as in market-rate housing which has been increasingly common in and around the downtown. One developer offered to put up the money for the site – on the condition that it wasn't downtown. Another businessman urged other facilities to take on the day-shelter function The Bridge

was planning. Still another predicted the proposed facility would draw the homeless “like stray cats.”

The task force and the design team invited business leaders and other concerned citizens to participate in a series of community workshops. They hoped that providing potential critics an opportunity to shape the design and operational plan would both improve the project and increase support for its implementation. Nevertheless, when the City Council placed a \$23.8 million bond referendum on the November 2005 ballot, opponents organized to defeat it.

Led by Daniel Millet – Millet the Printer, a next-door neighbor of the project site – a business group calling itself the “Heart of Dallas Partnership” raised and spent more than \$160,000 to argue that building the facility at Corsicana and Park would attract larger numbers of people experiencing homelessness, damage the surrounding neighborhood, and inhibit investment Downtown. Two economics professors from the University of North Texas published research that suggested property values depressed by the presence of people experiencing homelessness downtown cost the city and school district \$2.4 million a year in revenue. Notably, however, the powerful Central Dallas Association – representing the largest downtown businesses – did not take a position on the matter.

Voters gave the referendum a 59 percent majority anyway and money to build and operate the new facility was assured. Dallas City Council followed up by creating the Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance to supersede the task force and appointed them to manage The Bridge. It is worth noting that capital bond issues in Dallas are typically put forward as packages that fund multiple projects. The Bridge bond act passed on its own, reflecting the degree of concern about this issue on the part of Dallas citizens, and also their willingness to contribute to solving it.

With money in hand, the design process could move forward. Architects, staff, and board members toured homeless facilities in Houston, Los Angeles, and Atlanta, among other places. They interviewed staff, guests, neighbors, and residents of surrounding communities to understand their design, operation, and local impacts. Generally, they didn't like what they saw and heard. Many of the shelters were impersonal, unwelcoming, and institutional in character. Guests were often expected to live in rooms more like cells with little access to natural light. Such conditions bred apathy in staff and aversion by guests.

The designers resolved to give the new facility light, air, beauty, and a sense of dignity. They also worked with staff to create a complex program that would accommodate the unusual service model devised for The Bridge. This involved creating a range of spaces for emergency shelter and transitional housing, allowing some to sleep outside where they would feel less enclosed and others to



stay long-term. The program also included spaces to meet with case managers, and to socialize, as well as spaces for a variety of service providers, and spaces in which a sense of community might flourish.

Construction of The Bridge began in January 2006 and the center officially opened in May of 2008. They were immediately overwhelmed. Designed for about 350 transitional housing guests, The Bridge served over three times that number in both transitional and emergency shelter on a typical day that year. Three or four hundred people would sleep outside in the courtyard each night. Those that still could not be accommodated were referred to other shelters.

Looking into the central courtyard

Staff became overburdened with the demand and problems arose. Drug dealing, gangs, fighting, and theft became more prevalent. An initial philosophy of tolerance gave way to new rules. A 10 p.m. curfew was initiated and the whole facility was evacuated each afternoon at 5 p.m. with only guests who had registered in advance for a mat or transitional bed allowed to return. Incoming guests were searched and drugs, weapons, or other contraband confiscated. The Bridge entered into a partnership with Downtown Dallas, the city center business improvement district, to provide security patrols and entry screening. There were some conflicts. But the problems of the start-up were just that – start-up problems.

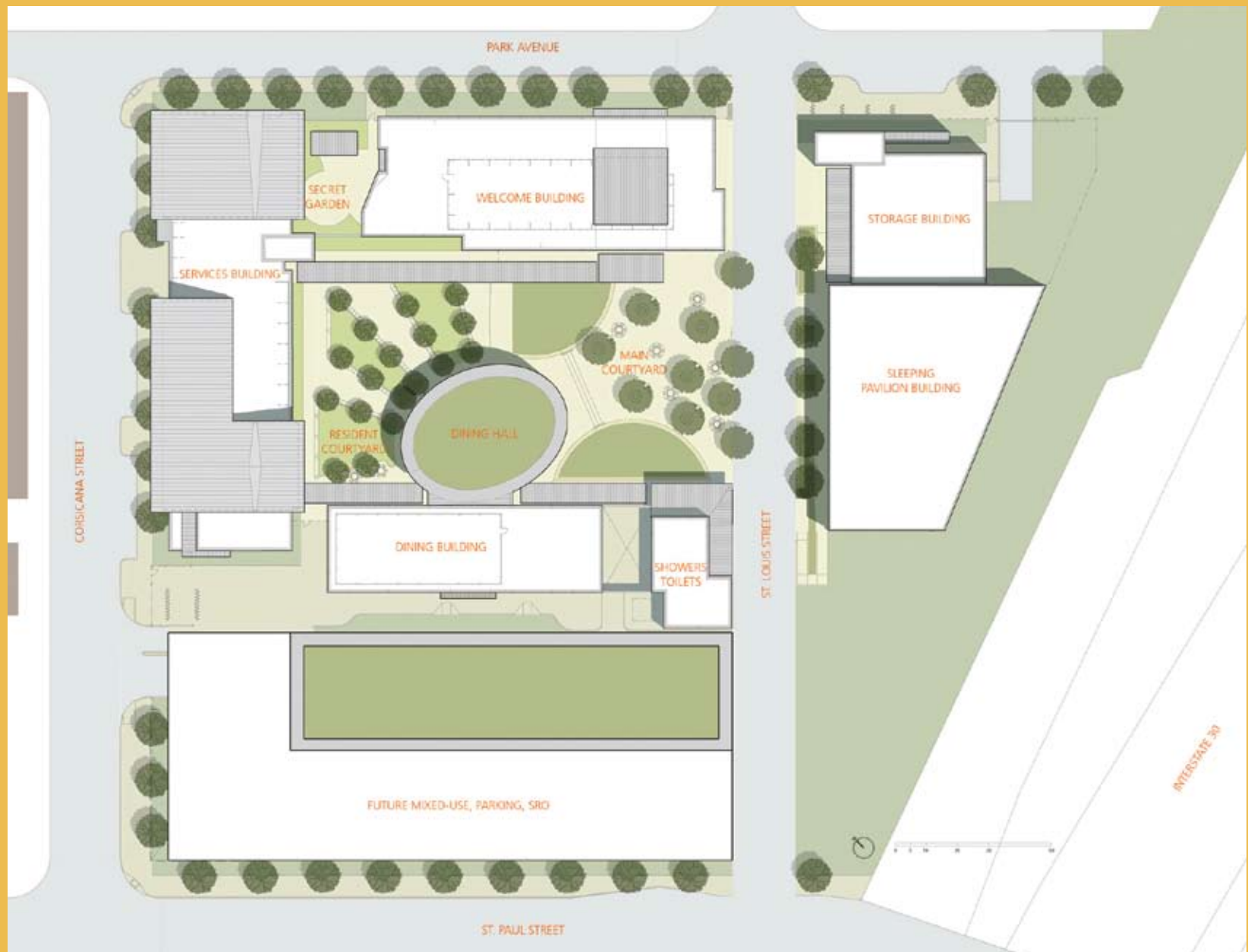
Since that time, management has stabilized, problems have subsided, and The Bridge has become a focus for the homeless of Dallas. It is widely considered to be vital, active, and welcoming. Even those who actively opposed the bond issue and the location of the facility have become supporters. One of the leaders of the “Heart of Dallas Partnership” now advocates for the expansion of permanent supportive housing and the head of Downtown Dallas describes The Bridge as a “selling point” for center city offices, shopping, and housing because it shows Dallas is doing something about the problem.

FACILITIES

The Bridge is organized to address the needs of the homeless comprehensively at one location, serving as a central node in a network of services designed to help individuals find their way back to shelter, employment, supportive services, and normal life. It links emergency shelter to transitional housing and permanent supportive housing around the community. It also provides for the immediate and ongoing needs of people experiencing homelessness who are unemployed, mentally ill, addicted, abused in domestic settings, or otherwise troubled.

The 75,000 gross square foot complex consists of six buildings organized around a series of interior courtyards: (1) the Welcome Building, (2) the Services Building, (3) the Dining Hall and Kitchen, (4) Outdoor Restrooms and Showers, (5) the Sleeping Pavilion, and (6) a Storage Building. Together, they give physical form to the continuum of care concept on which The Bridge is founded, connecting short term with long term services, and integrating shelter, food, personal care, health care, transitional housing, and assistance in searching for employment and permanent housing.

1. *The Welcome Building* adjoins the Entry Courtyard on the north-east side of the complex and includes laundry facilities, post office, daycare, a barber shop, library, and classrooms. It’s also the place where guests meet with intake staff – The Bridge has a “concierge” – to consider their next step in a transition process.



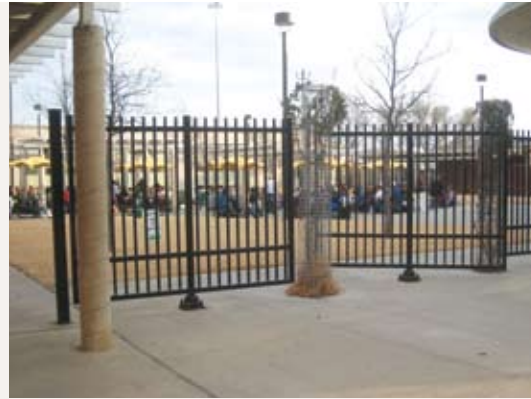
Site plan courtesy of Overland Partners / Architects



2. *The Services Building* includes first floor space for medical clinics, health screening, counseling, and training; second floor space for supportive services such as legal aid, travelers' aid, job placement, housing assistance, work-live housing, and administration; and third floor space for longer-term residents – a men's dorm, a women's dorm, and rooms for special needs guests such as the transgendered, convalescing, or elderly.
3. *The Dining Pavilion* and Kitchen occupies a central location in the complex, creating the social hub of the complex, and providing three meals a day prepared by the Stewpot, a long-time Presbyterian Church charity in Dallas. They relocated their meal service from their main site when The Bridge opened round the clock service.
4. *Outdoor Restrooms and Showers* offers the opportunity for all guests of The Bridge, regardless of how long they stay, to take care of their basic personal needs in an accessible location.



Top left: Day Guest Entrance



Charles Davis Smith

5. *The Sleeping Pavilion* is an adaptively reused warehouse building on the southwest side of the complex providing emergency shelter for about 300 people who sleep on mats. The garage-style doors of the building are left open for residents who feel more comfortable sleeping outdoors, as many long-term people experiencing homelessness do.
6. *The Storage Building* provides space for guests to keep their possessions safely while visiting The Bridge. It also includes a kennel for dogs – incorporated in the complex in acknowledgement that many people experiencing homelessness have canine companions that travel with them.

The courtyards, meanwhile, are a crucial part of the design. One shapes the entrance sequence – guests arrive through a gate into the Entry Courtyard, not a door. A second gives an outdoor space to the dining hall. A third is for residents. And a fourth, the “secret garden” is reserved for individuals with children under the ages of eighteen experiencing homelessness.



DESIGN

The Bridge complex was designed by a team of architects who readily acknowledged they had never before done a building such as a homeless shelter, but given the emergent character of the approach and service model, it's unlikely that very many firms anywhere had created facilities for the kind of program envisioned. The result was a campus and ensemble of buildings that appears to have been well-accepted by guests and staff at The Bridge, appreciated by the community at large, and has been widely-recognized through several architectural awards.

Some of the issues that deserve consideration include original programming, the campus concept, the use of air, light, and glass, trade-offs between budget and aesthetics, urban design, image, and designing for sustainability. Overall, the designers attempted to resolve all of these issues in a way that reinforced the attitude of tolerance and respect toward the homeless that The Bridge espoused.

Programming

Because the service delivery model is so complex and the needs of guests of The Bridge are so diverse, programming needed to start from the ground up with a lot of effort devoted to understanding the multiple pathways guests might take through the facility and its services as well as the specific needs of people *experiencing homelessness* (e.g. the need to accommodate some who would prefer to sleep outside).

A campus concept

It appears the campus concept emerged in the early stage of design, perhaps reflecting an intuition by early participants that the complex needed to be simultaneously open and protected. The specific organization of buildings and the resulting series of courtyards represent value added from the architecture team. The courtyards create spaces in which community can grow.

The designers strived for a complex that would project an image that both the community and the guests would be proud to associate with.

Air, light, glass

The use of space, natural and artificial lighting, and windows both to project light from the building at night – it is sometimes described as a “beacon” or “lantern” – and to provide light to interior spaces – even sleeping spaces in some cases – is a key feature of the design.

Budget and aesthetics

The designers worked to achieve a desired image for the project within a constrained budget. They turned to durable, local materials – mostly brick – to achieve their goals. Otherwise, a generally neutral color palette is employed, and is considered consistent with the needs of the clientele.

Urban design

The buildings of the complex are built to the sidewalk, consistent with the character of neighboring buildings, and obviating the need for exterior fencing. Only the parking lot on the southwest side of the project interrupts this rhythm. It's also important to note that the complex encloses but does not build on the right of way for St. Louis Street in the event that it is needed in the future as a public thoroughfare.



Charles Davis Smith



Image

Overall, the designers strived for a complex that would avoid the typically institutional character of homeless shelters and other such facilities and would project an image that both the community and the guests would be proud to associate with. One of the architects relates a story about a luxury home client who was skeptical about the project until he told her they intended to build “something beautiful.”

Public Art

The design incorporates original artwork into the fabric of the building with the words of the homeless etched into glass doors and walls in the interior of the complex.

Sustainability

The building was certified as LEED Silver and features a long list of sustainability strategies: re-use of an existing building, low albedo roofing and paving, native plantings, grey water recycling system, energy and water conservation measures, building systems commissioning, use of recycled, local, and low-emitting materials, and extensive use of natural light and ventilation. The complex is also well-located in relation to public transit and the urban hike and bike trail.

Entrances to the complex were designed to segregate users as they entered with the southern entrance for volunteers and staff, a western entrance for long-term residents, and a main entrance on the north side of the complex for first-time guests. This arrangement was partly in response to demands that a main entrance be located away from a nearby school.

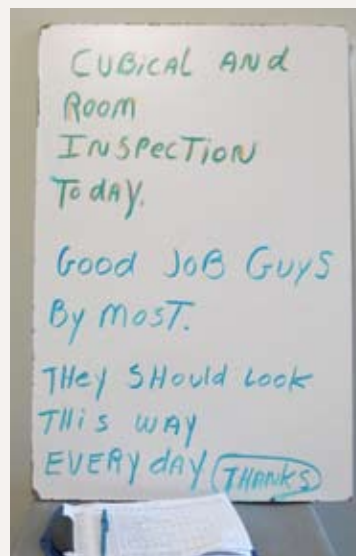
The Bridge has won a wide range of design awards including the AIA National Housing Design Award; the AIA HUD Secretary Award; the U.S. Conference of Mayors Livability Award; Tschwane Foundation Rebranding Homelessness Award; Environmental Design + Construction Sustainability Award; World Architecture News – Civic Building Design Award; and the Dallas Topping Out Award.



PROGRAMS

The basic approach for delivering services at The Bridge is to provide shelter first, then link homeless persons to a continuum of care to give each access to the help they need to reestablish a normal, sheltered way of life. As such, The Bridge is the “hub” in a “hub-and-spokes” design, establishing a key point of contact for the homeless to a comprehensive array of services including:

- **Shelter**, including day shelter for approximately 1,200 people; on-site night shelter for 325 people including emergency and transitional shelter; and off-site night shelter referrals and placements for 875 people through a network of cooperating providers.
- **Meals**, through the Stewpot, a long-time church-based Dallas charity that agreed to join forces with – and moved its meal service operations to – the Bridge. To date more than 2.5 million meals have been served.
- **Care management**, providing coordination among a range of providers of health and behavioral health care, jail diversion and re-entry services, job-seeker services, and housing-seeker services for 600 people per week.
- **Health and behavioral health care**, including health screenings, acute disease care, chronic disease care, and mental health and chemical dependency diagnosis and recovery services for 600 people per week.



- **Jail diversion and reentry services**, including coordination of shelter, care management, community services, and probation and parole.
- **Job-seeker services** provided in collaboration with LifeNet Community Behavioral Healthcare and WorkForce Solutions Greater Dallas for 75 people per week and helping more than 600 people per year find employment.
- **Housing-seeker services** for people seeking affordable, supportive, or transitional housing.



A “REVOLUTIONARY” APPROACH TO HOMELESSNESS

The Bridge as an organization takes an approach to homelessness that diverges from that of many of the long-term providers in the field. It combines a commitment to the still-emerging “housing first” movement, whose proponents believe it is not possible to provide needed services to the homeless until after they have secure shelter, with an assumption that serving the chronically homeless requires that providers create a “low-demand” environment in which all – except the most disruptive – are welcome. Some have suggested this approach is “revolutionary.”

The “housing first” approach has growing support across the nation and carries a powerful logic. It promises not only to link all the services that a homeless person might need in one system or continuum of care, but also to provide services at the most appropriate venue, offering a cost savings to government, health care, and others. It is cheaper, not to mention often more effective, to house someone in a shelter or in permanent supportive housing than it is to keep them in a jail or psychiatric ward. This aspect of the philosophy practiced at The Bridge has won them some allies.

Another aspect of their approach, however, has been far more controversial. Unlike many other shelter agencies in Dallas and elsewhere, The Bridge purposely puts few demands on its guests. Because they seek to deal with the chronically homeless they are often dealing with individuals who are shelter-averse. Such individuals are unlikely to take shelter with agencies where they must sleep in enclosed spaces, commit to substance abuse treatment, take part in religious services, pay for a bed, participate in mandatory work programs, or evacuate the premises early each morning. Agencies that enforce such rules believe that to do otherwise is simply to enable the homeless in the continuation of their condition.

At The Bridge all are welcome, within certain broad norms of behavior, and the road back to permanent housing is understood as longer and more complicated. Inevitably, however, that road must begin with getting the chronically homeless person – however troubled or cantankerous – to come in off the street. As of December 2010, The Bridge boasted a 90% success rate in transitioning clients to permanent housing, placing over 850 clients that year. It also found employment for 1600 individuals and served 1.6 million meals to homeless individuals. Staff emphasizes “guest services,” the idea that there is “no wrong door” for people to come in, and that tolerance for the homeless and respect for their dignity are key to success in the mission.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

To a great extent, The Bridge owes its creation to a grand alliance between the “heart” and “head,” in which the “heart” represents all those people acting on a moral concern for the welfare of some of society’s least fortunate members, and the “head” represents those who act as stewards for important individual, corporate, and governmental assets. The former are involved because they care about the homeless; the latter are involved because they want to minimize the impact of the homeless on their interests; they came together because their respective interests overlapped.

People like Mike Faenza and Jay Dunn had made careers out of caring for the homeless, mentally ill, and other such people. They proposed a strategy they believed would be effective in alleviating chronic homelessness where other approaches had failed. Elected officials like Laura Miller and Lois Finkelstein responded to pressure both from constituents in the business community and the people who manage public budgets to do something about a homeless problem that was (a) darkening the business climate and (b) having a major impact on demand for public services.

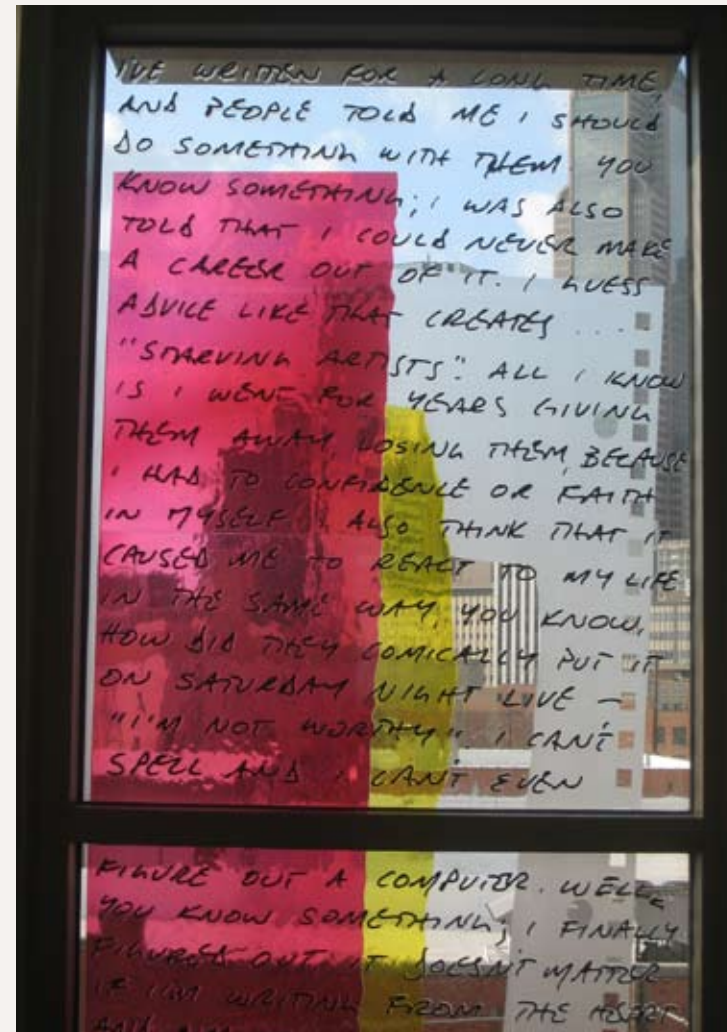
Earlier on, business people as represented by the Central Dallas Association and Downtown Dallas, and later in the game, former members of the Heart of Dallas Partnership, came to see the logic and the benefit in the strategy in action. Treating the homeless in

this new way was not only more effective, it saved scarce public dollars, and it preserved and even enhanced commercial or property values in the city center.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

Individually and organizationally, the success of The Bridge has depended upon strong leadership at several key junctures in the process. At its inception, the role of Laura Miller as Mayor of Dallas, was key, responding to a sense of crisis and establishing the task force that created the proposal and plan for The Bridge. Later on, the leadership of Mike Rawlings as “Homeless Czar”, Mike Faenza President and CEO of Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance Jay Dunn President and CEO of The Bridge and John Castle Chair of The Bridge was also important. For each of these, being able to manage the tensions inherent in the “coalition of heart and head” was a central strength, providing strength to keep pushing the initiative but being flexible enough to understand and respond to the interests of other participants.

As of December 2010, The Bridge boasted a 90% success rate in transitioning clients to permanent housing, placing over 850 clients that year.



FUTURE PLANS/STRATEGIC PLANNING

The facility was initially intended – and designed – to serve a broader range of homeless individuals, specifically including families with children. As the project opened, however, staff became less confident that it would be possible to serve a full range of homeless individuals and at the same time accommodate families with children. While the facility provides a range of different spaces for different guests, the problem of how to guarantee the security of children within the more heterogeneous population of the shelter was a persistent one. While spaces – including a playground – were designed for such guests, management at The Bridge decided to limit its clients to individuals, and some of those facilities are therefore relatively little used.

In the aftermath of this shift, management and board say they would like to develop a second facility specifically to serve families with children. However, no such work is in progress and given the demands on all to maintain programs and facilities at The Bridge, not to mention the “heavy lift” required to establish the current facility in the first place, it seems like such a facility is not imminent. It might be easier to expand facilities on the current site, a significant part of which is now occupied by parking. In fact, the original design for the complex anticipated the potential to build permanent supportive housing and a parking structure on the parking lot there now.

The other critical issue which The Bridge, MDHA, and the City of Dallas need to tackle is the provision of permanent supportive housing. The housing first/ continuum of care model cannot work, advocates say, if there is not sufficient housing in which the once-homeless might be placed. This means not just housing, but housing connected to the ongoing health, mental health, behavioral health, employment, and transportation services people need to maintain a normal life. Besides the obvious need for funding for additional units of PSH, there is a significant obstacle to the siting of such facilities. Neighborhoods often oppose them. The success of The Bridge may have helped to pave the way for other such developments by the City or other developers, but as we go to publication it appears the current focus is on expanding the capacity of The Bridge, not providing facilities in other locations

FINANCES

Operating Costs

The operating budget for The Bridge ramped up quickly in the facility's first three years of operation, rising from \$5.4 million in 2008 to \$7.5 million in the second year, and \$8.2 million in the 2010. About 41% of operating funds come through program contract fees from the City of Dallas. Another 11% comes from Dallas County and 15% from the State of Texas. Fully one third of operating funds are raised privately.

Central to the rationale for providing public support for operations at The Bridge is that money spent on services there reduces the demand for services provided by police, jails, hospitals, and others – all of which are provided at higher per day costs than at the Bridge. Indeed, support from Dallas County is provided contingent on demonstrating that people *experiencing homelessness* are diverted from the county jail. The Bridge and the city have determined that for every \$1 million dollars of funding loss per year, there would be 200 fewer people served. They then work with the correlations between the number served and those that are placed in more expensive programs in each sector of service. In this fashion they demonstrate significant municipal savings. Arguments like this strengthened the rationale for continued and integrated service delivery.

Capital Program

Two referendum-approved bond acts funded the development of the facility, one in 2003 for \$3 million and one in 2005 for \$23.8 million for a total of \$26.8 million – all of which went for project development costs. This included:

- \$17 million for construction
- \$3 million to purchase the site
- \$2.5 million for SRO dedication
- \$2.3 million design expenses
- \$1.5 million for FFE/ IT/ and contingency
- \$0.4 million for project expenses

PROJECT IMPACTS

The Bridge appears to have had a wide range of positive impacts, consistent with its mission, and responsive to the coalition that helped make the project a reality. These impacts cover the homeless, themselves; the immediate neighborhood; the larger community, especially Downtown Dallas; and the general public as reflected in public budgets.

Outcomes for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

- Homeless individuals are measurably healthier with 24 percent fewer health emergencies than before the facility was in operation.
- Guests are more likely to become employed with job-seeker services provided for 150 people per year and 1,571 job placements in nearly three years since the facility opened.
- Guests' housing needs are being met with housing-seeker services for 300 people per year and 960 housing placements since the shelter opened in 2008.
- The vast majority of persons who have made a transition through the programs at The Bridge have found – and maintained – permanent supportive housing, removing them from the cycle of chronic homelessness.
- Chronic homelessness in Dallas overall declined by more than half between 2004 and 2010 from nearly 1,200 individuals to slightly more than 500.

Outcomes for The neighborhood

- The Bridge has benchmarked the level of crime in the neighborhood prior to their services and notes a 6% drop in incidents.
- A “guest giving back” program has been implemented that allows guests to provide five hours of community service to the neighborhood each week, which has kept the neighborhood cleaner than it has ever been.
- The bridge has increased activity in the neighborhood by bringing professionals and volunteers to an area where they would normally not go.

Outcomes for The larger community

- Crime in the Central Business District has been reduced by 20%.
- The visible presence of homeless persons in the Downtown area – and objectionable behavior associated with people who lack access to bathrooms, showers, and beds has decreased.

Outcomes for Public budgets

- The Bridge reports public savings because the homeless are being housed at The Bridge, and ultimately in permanent housing, rather than in jails, hospitals, or psychiatric institutions.

Assessing Project Success

SUCCESS IN MEETING PROJECT GOALS

- *To implement a strategy to work toward the elimination of chronic homelessness in Dallas by providing “housing first” and connecting the homeless to a continuum of care and services to assist their transition back to permanent housing.*

With almost ,1000 housing placements since opening and 1,571 job placements, the slogan of “housing first” with the ability to make it sustainable through employment is working. The homeless in Dallas are significantly more healthy and there is an over 50% reduction in the chronic homeless population between 2004 and 2010. Much of this reduction is attributable to the ramp up and implementation of The Bridge programs.

- *To reduce the financial and operational strain of chronic homelessness on police, jails, hospitals, and other social services, conserving scarce resources for the newly-homeless and saving money overall.*

Bridge and City personnel report over 600 people per week participate in the jail diversion/reentry services including shelter services, care management services, community service coordination, and probation/parole coordination. Such services are presented by The Bridge at a fraction of the cost of service through the criminal

justice or emergency health care systems. For example, The Bridge increased the number of individuals participating in rehabilitative behavioral health care services by thirty-one percent. Crisis related services, which are twice as expensive as regular outpatient services, decreased by twenty-four percent for people experiencing homelessness participating in Bridge services.

- *To reduce the negative impacts of people experiencing homelessness living on the street such as crimes of need, panhandling, inappropriate use of public facilities, and congregating in public spaces.*

The 20% reduction in crime downtown, and the reported reduced visibility of homeless persons in the downtown area offer evidence of success. The conversion of resistance to the Bridge to support for the Bridge by some elements in the business community offers further evidence.

- *To locate a shelter facility in a way that does not isolate or stigmatize the homeless, but connects them to transportation, green space, and public facilities as well as shelter and services in a safe, caring, respectful, and dignified refuge.*

The selection of this site successfully avoided “downtown” and the perceived difficulty a central location would present even as it is close and walkable from the downtown. Bus transportation services are available but the alignment with the so-called greenbelt was not evident in either the interviews or in tours of the site area.

- *To design a shelter facility that projects a positive image to both the homeless and the general public and expresses the community’s compassionate attitude toward the plight of the homeless.*

The facility design has received eight design awards with seven of them from national or international venues. Its design has demonstrably added value to the immediate neighborhood and its program secures and sustains the image of a clean and well lit place. Evidence of the communities respect for the project includes municipal and private sector support for its programs and the recent Dallas based “Topping Out” award celebrating outstanding building projects that impact the environment.

The project delivers on its promise to offer a comprehensive approach to homelessness in Dallas. It has delivered fully on the promise to integrate services in order to facilitate the transition from homelessness to stable housing and it has done so in an environment that is respectful, tolerant, disciplined and effective.



SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The Committee noted that The Bridge offers a realistic and convincing plan to end homelessness in Dallas, based upon the provision of shelter and services offered with a discipline that helps to assure the success of this more ambitious intention. The approach is characterized by experimentation and mid-course corrections within an ethic of patience and interagency cooperation.

While there is a long history of architectural and social experimentation with the poor and disadvantaged, the Committee felt that The Bridge's approach to services is unique. Their creative approach to achieving political success, the manner in which they have learned from the experience of other programs and are continuing to learn-by-doing programmatically have all contributed to the evolution of a new service model. The Bridge is also unique in recent decades in its response to the long term demographics of homelessness not just the recent market place dynamics and the housing foreclosure crisis. The Selection Committee commended The Bridge for going beyond the temporary conditions of crisis and working on long-term structural solutions to the factors that contribute to chronic homelessness.

The architecture of the Bridge was discussed at length by the Selection Committee. Some praised the simple expression of the lantern, believing The Bridge functions as such a beacon both literally and metaphorically. Others praised the adaptability of the spaces at the Bridge as it continues to experiment with program. Still others saw The Bridge as adding to the quality of the streetscape in the neighborhood. However, the appreciation for the architecture was not universal. Some members of the Committee felt the architecture was modest, even pedestrian, and others saw the base of the beacon along the street front as fortress-like.

All agreed that the strongest part of the project was its comprehensive integration of program and image with architecture and the way it has changed the politics and social engagement of the issue of homelessness in Dallas. One Selection Committee member concluded the discussion with the idea that every city in the United States should have a comparable plan to end homelessness in their city.

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Silver Medal Winner

Brooklyn Bridge Park

Brooklyn, New York





Movies at the Park

Julienne Schaer

Project At-A-Glance

WHAT IS BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK?

- An 85 acre/1.3 mile linear park along the East River waterfront in Brooklyn, NY.
- A civic project that reuses a post-industrial site and reclaims the waterfront for public use.
- An urban green space designed to be financially & ecologically sustainable.
- A park designed for passive and active recreational activity, that also adds greenery and open space to a dense downtown with a growing residential population.

PROJECT GOALS

- Transform a “derelict and inaccessible vestige of New York’s industrial past” into beautiful, accessible, useable green recreation space.
- Return a part of the Brooklyn waterfront to public use.
- Create a “democratic and multi-use civic space”.
- Adhere to “community-identified principles for redevelopment and connectivity with the adjacent neighborhoods”.
- “Incorporate sustainable practices in every aspect of the park’s planning, design, construction and operation”.

Project Chronology

1984-85 Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) announces the close of cargo operations and intention to sell piers for commercial development. Neighborhood-based grassroots groups emerge to advocate for park.

1989 Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition, an alliance of more than 60 member groups, forms and begins advocating for a park on vacated PANYNJ site.

1992 “13 Guidelines” emerge from community discussions, including idea of a self-sustaining park that will generate revenue to pay for its operating costs.

January 1994 Governor Mario Cuomo announces that the Urban Development Corporation will take the lead in implementing a plan for mixed-use development on the Brooklyn waterfront at Piers 1 through 5.

1996 The Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition commissions an economic viability study for the Park, paid for with State funding (\$1.5 million planning grant).

1997 State allocates \$1 million for master plan of the Park.

February 1997 Economic Viability Study for the Park is released, recommending that the park include a pool, marina, conference center, hotel, and ice-skating facility.

December 1997 Brooklyn Waterfront Local Development Corporation (BWLDC) formed and conducts community planning workshops and focus groups to solicit ideas for the waterfront. State Legislature provides almost \$2 million more for planning. Urban Strategies, Inc. with Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA) selected to develop master plan.

1999 Developer proposal for movie theater, retail shops, hotel and marina between Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges dies in the face of community opposition.

2000 City commits \$65 million to the Park project.

Summer 2000 First Annual Park Film Series.

Sept 2000 Vision for the waterfront authored by BWLDC released in an “Illustrative Master Plan.”

January 2001 Governor Pataki commits \$87 million to the Park project and donates adjacent state land to the Park.

May 2002 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the State and the City finalizing a \$150 million commitment to design and construct the park through the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation (BBPDC). MOU indicates that the park must develop its own resources for maintenance and programming, with no less than 80% of the area be reserved for park uses.

September 2003 Mayor Bloomberg and then Governor Pataki cut the ribbon on the completed first section of the Park – a 4.8 acre landscaped green with paths overlooking the Brooklyn Bridge.

December 2003 BBPDC signs a funding agreement with the State for \$85 million which also provides for the transfer of piers 1, 2, 3, and 5 to the BBPDC.

February 2004 Funding agreements signed to provide capital dollars from NYC (\$65 million).

2004 Environmental studies find pier piles eroding and inadequate to support some proposed uses. Financial analysis identifies \$15 million of annual operation and maintenance costs, and announces search for complimentary uses within the Park to generate revenues. Some community groups argue that this amounts to privatizing public park space.

Spring 2005 BBPDC proposes new Master Plan for Park designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc (MVVA). Public presented with alternative housing development scenarios for the Park. Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition supports the plan.

July 2005 General Project Plan (“GPP”) adopted by the by the Empire State Development Corporation, (ESDC) and the the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation (BBPDC). (The GPP has since been modified several times, with the last modification approved on June 15, 2010.)

Nov 2006 Court ruling in case brought by Brooklyn Bridge Park Defense Fund affirms that it is legal to fund park with housing internal to the project boundaries.

Summer 2007 Floating pool brought to Pier 1 is a great attraction and establishes the popularity of the park as a recreation site.

February 2009 Demolition, site preparation work commences; construction on the piers section of the Park begins at Pier 1.

2008 One Brooklyn Bridge Park opens. Ground lease and Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) generate almost \$4m per year for park maintenance.

March 8, 2010 MOU signed between the City of New York, and local State legislators to require new study of funding alternatives to housing. State representatives given veto over decisions on funding.

March 22, 2010 Pier 1 opens with Old Fulton Street entrance, lawns with bridge and harbor views, waterfront promenade, playground, concessions, and pedestrian paths.

June 2010 Pier 6 uplands open, including a 1.6-acre destination playground, bikeway/walkway, dog run and seasonal water taxi service to Governors Island and other points in the harbor.

August 2010 The uplands between Pier 1 and 2, the Pier 1 water garden and the uplands of Pier 2 open, including spiral pool, boat ramp and a salt marsh with a stone seating area, portions of the park greenway opened and interim bikeway/walkway linking Piers 1-6.

Feb 2011 Study of Alternatives to Housing for the Funding of Brooklyn Bridge Park Operations report released for public review and discussion (BAE Urban Economics, 2011; Webster, 2011).

August 2011 Report concludes that housing is the most viable revenue generating model for Brooklyn Bridge Park and a Memorandum of Understanding is signed by the city, State Senator Daniel Squadron and Assembly member Joan Millman detailing the terms of development in Brooklyn Bridge Park.

KEY PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEWED

REGINA MYER *President, Brooklyn Bridge Park*

ELLEN RYAN *Vice President, Brooklyn Bridge Park*

JEFFREY SANDGRUND *Vice President of Operations,
Brooklyn Bridge Park*

KARA GILMOUR *Director of Education and Stewardship,
Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy*

DAVID LOWIN *Vice President for Real Estate, Brooklyn Bridge Park*

JENNIFER KLEIN *Vice President of Capital Operations,
Brooklyn Bridge Park*

NANCY WEBSTER *Executive Director,
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NANCY BOWE *Chair Board of Directors,
Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy*

MARTY MARKOWITZ *Brooklyn Borough President*

MICHAEL VAN VALKENBURGH *Partner,
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MATHEW URBANSKI *Partner,
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STEVE NOONE *Senior Designer,*
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CHRISTOPHER BURKE *Gardiner & Theobald*

NANETTE SMITH *Special Assistant to the Mayor, NYC*

ADRIAN BENEPE *Commissioner,*
NYC Department of Parks & Recreation

KATE D. LEVIN *Commissioner, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs*

JOAN CHAN *President, Downtown Brooklyn Partnership*

DAVID OFFENSEND, PETER ASCHKENASY, HENRY GUTMAN, DANIEL SIMMONS
members Brooklyn Bridge Park Board of Directors

JANE VALENTAS *Doner/restorer of Jane's Carousel*

JOHN DEW *Co Chair Brooklyn Bridge Park Community Advisory*
Council, Chair, Brooklyn Community Board 2

SUE WOLFE *Boerum Hill resident*

LESLIE SCHULTZ *President of BRIC*

FRANKLIN STONE *resident, former Cobble Hill Association President,*
Downtown Brooklyn Waterfront Local Development Corporation
and former member Brooklyn Bridge Park Community
Advisory Council

ANDREW LASTOWECKY *Chair, Brooklyn Community Board 2 and a*
member of the Parks Committee for Brooklyn Community Board 2

TOM POTTER *Chair, Brooklyn Bridge Boathouse and former member*
of Brooklyn Bridge Park Community Advisory Council

SUSAN FELDMAN *Artistic Director, St Ann's Warehouse*

JANE CARROLL MCGROARTY *President, Brooklyn Heights Association*
and member of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Community
Advisory Council

ROBIN MOORE *Professor of Landscape Architecture,*
Natural Learning Initiative, North Carolina State University

DENNIS HOLT *Editor, Brooklyn Eagle*

ANDREA GOLDWYN *Director of Public Policy,*
New York Landmarks Conservancy

PETER FLEMMING *resident, Brooklyn Heights and member of the*
Brooklyn Bridge Park Community Advisory Council



Project Description



Julienne Schaefer

View from Pier 1

URBAN CONTEXT

The area occupied by BBP runs along the East River opposite the lower tip of Manhattan, with the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges at its north end. The park both uses and replaces the maritime, industrial infrastructure that lies along 1.3 miles of this Brooklyn waterfront. It includes 6 piers, Fulton Ferry Landing, and 2 existing, though redesigned parks – Empire Fulton Ferry Park (formerly a state park) and Main Street Park. It also includes Empire Stores and the Tobacco Warehouse, landmarked Civil War-era buildings.

The park is within the purview of Community Board 2 and directly borders Community Board 6. It abuts Brooklyn Heights, a site of the Revolutionary War Battle of Brooklyn, New York City's first suburb and its first designated historic district. Brooklyn Heights sits on a bluff 60 feet above the harbor, separated from it and the park by Robert Moses' triple-deck Brooklyn-Queens Expressway (BQE), two highway levels topped by a promenade that provides views of the harbor, lower Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty. In the 1950s Brooklyn Heights experienced a brownstone revival among its trove of the "country's largest ensemble of pre Civil War houses" (*Schneider & Junkersfeld, 2011*) and is among the wealthiest of Brooklyn's communities. Other neighboring communities near the park include the recently named DUMBO (Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass), a gentrified area with arts, office,



retail and housing in old warehouses and factory buildings, Cobble Hill, Carroll Gardens, Boerum Hill, Vinegar Hill (all Historic Districts) and the Columbia Street Waterfront District, all of which add increasing economic and ethnic diversity. "The 95,000 households in Community Districts 2 and 6 comprised approximately ten percent of all households in Brooklyn in 2010." (*BAE Alternatives to Funding, 2011; p. 84*). The park is also a few blocks from downtown Brooklyn, which has seen a major recent building boom of hotels, offices, and residences.

PROJECT HISTORY

There has been commercial ferry service between Manhattan and the Brooklyn piers for over 350 years, including Fulton steam ferries starting in 1814. The area grew along with Manhattan, but its major population boom came with the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883. While ferry service declined with the availability of the bridge, Brooklyn remained a major commercial shipping port until

Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc.

the mid-20th century. “At its peak, the New York Dock Co. owned or managed over 40 piers and approximately 150 stores and warehouses, making the Brooklyn waterfront the largest private freight terminal in the world” (*History of Brooklyn Bridge Park, 2011*). “At one time, Brooklyn had so many waterfront warehouses that it was known as ‘the walled city’” (*Spector, 2010; p. 95*). Because of this industrial presence, though, there was essentially no waterfront access available for public recreation. Port and warehouse business declined through the 1950s and 1960s, moving to newer ports (many in New Jersey) that were better situated to accommodate containerized shipping.

In 1954, the waterfront was further cut off from the population of Brooklyn Heights by the construction of the BQE. That this highway was hidden under a pleasant promenade was, as Robert Caro (1974) indicates, a concession to the affluence of the Brooklyn Heights neighborhood, as well as evidence of the effectiveness of the Brooklyn Heights Association (BHA). In less affluent neighborhoods, such as Red Hook, the highway cut through surface streets and disrupted both vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

The piers and warehouses ceased being revenue generators by the 1970s. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, a quasi-governmental agency established in 1921 and empowered to build and operate transportation infrastructure in New York and New Jersey, ceased cargo ship operations in Brooklyn in 1983 and a year later proposed sale of the piers for commercial development.

Discussions within the community began almost immediately about potential uses for the piers and harbor. Local community groups, such as Brooklyn Heights Association, (BHA) were intent on avoiding a massive housing development of the sort proposed (and later built) at Battery Park in Manhattan. Many focused on the idea of a park which would serve this “underparked” area while also eliminating the possibility of a major real estate development.

In 1998 the Downtown Brooklyn Waterfront Local Development Corporation (DBWLDC) was created with state funds to lead a planning process for the site. DBWLDC included many governmental and community stakeholders. An RFP to study the site was won by a group of design and planning consultants including Urban Strategies and MVVA and led to an illustrative master plan made public in 2000. The plan, which had many elements that ultimately found their way into the final park design, was subjected to considerable public review and discussion. Public comments, for instance, demonstrated a desire for active as well as passive recreation and the impact of this input can be seen in the recreational fields now being built at Pier 5. In 2000 the Port Authority, which had hoped for a large, commercial development on the site, publicly agreed that a park was the best use for the land, and Mayor Giuliani announced the first significant commitment of public funds for park construction with an allocation of \$65 million, followed in 2001 by a donation of land and \$87 million from by the state.

The 2002 Memo of Understanding between Mayor Bloomberg and Governor Pataki is viewed as a landmark event for the park. In it they commit both entities to long term capital funding for the park, create the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation (BBPDC) as a subsidiary of the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC), and affirm the long held understanding that the park would be self-sustaining for operational expenses, mandating, however, that at least 80% of land would be reserved for park use. That was also emphasized in Spring 2003 when the a concept plan, based on the Illustrative Master Plan, was released. The reality of the revenue generating plan, however, may not have hit home for some in the neighborhoods until spring 2005 when the specific plans for development, including housing sites, were laid out. “The 2004 announcement of condo developments along the site’s border at the southern and northern edges of the park set off an outcry from some residents who felt they were blindsided” (*Gonzalez, 2008*) leading to formation of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Defense Fund, which filed suit in federal court to block the plan – a suit it eventually lost.

Demolition, site preparation and construction on the piers began in 2009 but controversy over revenue sources continued. A 2010 Memo of Understanding reaffirmed the city and state’s financial commitment to the park, and the principle of self-financing for park operations, but also required a new assessment to examine alternatives to housing for funding sources – resulting in the study released February 2011 and final report released in June 2011 (*see Finances*).



Etienne Frossard



Julienne Schaefer

Top: View of Brooklyn Bridge from the Park
Bottom: Pier Uplands

Many of these structures, and parts of the piers themselves, were deteriorated after decades of disuse and neglect. In fact, the 19th century shed on pier 4 collapsed in a storm in winter 2010.

Major use of the park by the public began in Spring, 2010 with the opening of the Old Fulton Street entrance along with Pier 1's lawns, waterfront promenade, playground, concessions, and pedestrian paths. Later that spring the Pier 6 playground, bikeway/walkway, and dog runs opened, and in the summer of 2010 the park opened the water garden, spiral pool, boat ramp, salt marsh with a stone seating area on the area upland of Piers 1 and 2 and the interim bikeway/walkway linking Piers 1-6.



Julienne Schaefer



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FACILITIES²

- Pier 1 encompasses 1,300 feet of promenade along the East River, 2.5 acres of lawns, a playground, all with sweeping views of the New York harbor, the Manhattan skyline, and the Brooklyn Bridge.
- Pier 2 will have a structure for shading and rain shelter that was adapted from original storage shed. A spiral tidal pool where Pier 2 meets the shoreline uplands provides visitors with opportunity for direct access to the water
- Pier 6 includes a 1.6 acre playground, with “swing valley” featuring long rope swings, “slide mountain” with two-story high slides, a water-play area, climbing structure, and a large sandbox, as well as three sand volleyball courts, a dog run, lawns and seasonal concessions.
- Main Street is a 4.8-acre park that features a nautically-themed playground and dog run in addition to rolling lawns and ways to walk down to the water’s edge for river views. Main Street includes a cove that is between the Brooklyn Bridge and the Manhattan Bridge on the Brooklyn shore of the East River which provides visitors access to the water, and is a rich habitat for fish, crabs, and birds of the New York Harbor Estuary.
- The Empire Fulton Ferry section of the park, opened in September 2011, and includes a refurbished lawn and promenade, the historic 1922 Jane’s Carousel within a new all-weather pavilion designed by Jean Nouvel, and a picnic grove.

- Tobacco Warehouse is a Landmark 19th century warehouse saved from demolition in 1998 and stabilized as a two story building with four walls and no roof. It currently serves as outdoor space for public and private events.

DESIGN

The designers of BBP were faced with a series of challenges but also enjoyed some natural features that lent themselves to the creation of a spectacular space. A major challenge was the physical separation of the waterfront from population centers—the piers are several blocks from most housing and the nearest subway stops, and in addition are cut off from the rest of Brooklyn by the BQE. The site is dominated by five large piers, each approximately 5 acres, with large industrial sheds that held the shipping facilities. Many of these structures, and parts of the piers themselves, were deteriorated after decades of disuse and neglect. In fact, the 19th century shed on pier 4 collapsed in a storm in winter 2010.

On the other hand, the space occupies 1.3 miles of waterfront that faces out onto New York Harbor with spectacular views of the Statue of Liberty and the lower Manhattan skyline. Van Valkenburgh said “it’s about the views... Until we walked out behind the sheds we didn’t understand that these were the best views in New York.” The design, he added, is about both the green space and the “blue space,” providing grass, vegetation and water that are accessible to

² Taken largely from BBP website

park patrons. In addition, the size offers advantages and opportunities for design and programming options. Each pier is large enough to provide significant park space. Van Valkenburgh notes that they were also lucky that the land designated for the park was not contaminated – it was never used for harsh industrial processes such as coal gasification. Therefore no environmental remediation was needed.

The park is viewed as a place within the city rather than an escape from it. The final design is a “collage” of different kinds of spaces and materials, busy, messy and complex, providing opportunities for many people to be involved in a broad variety of behaviors all around the park. Each pier provides the opportunity for independent programming, such as green lawns for waking and viewing (Pier 1, Pier 3), playing fields and courts (Piers 2 and 5). (Plans to connect the piers with a floating waterway were shelved because of the cost and lack of permits from New York State). The structural capacity of the piers drove aspects of the topography of the park, with heavier elements being located on the uplands and lighter landscapes on the pile supported piers.

Connection to the water is critical. This is one of the only places in New York where a park visitor can have actual contact with the bodies of water that surround the city, avoiding large bulkheads at the waterfront. Beaches, marshes, ramps for wading and boats, the waterpark and sprays – all allow and encourage people to see, touch, and enter the water.



Connecting the park to the city was trickier. The design places wide and welcoming entries at the 3 spots where major streets touch the park (Atlantic, Old Fulton, and Main Street) with playgrounds near the entries at Old Fulton, Atlantic and Main Street for easiest access for parents and children who are likely to have walked several blocks to get to the park. The 396-foot-long Black Locust timber Squibb Park Bridge, designed by Ted Zoli, will climb 60 feet, connecting Pier 1 to the Brooklyn Heights promenade. Buses along Atlantic Avenue bring people to Pier 6 and an interim bike/jogging path connects Piers 1 and 6.

The design creates a varied topography with rolling hills, valleys, grassy meadows and marshes, broad open spaces with vistas as well as smaller intimate areas. The playgrounds carve out a distinct area in Pier 6 but fold around pathways that encourage adults without children to stroll through and beyond. Varieties of vegetation provide greenery everywhere and serve to mark boundaries.

Pier 1 kayacking



Photos by Julianne Schaefer

The west side of the park unfolds to the East River with meandering trails of crunchy stone that was designed to slow down movement and enhance the experience of moving through the varied settings.

Design elements were chosen to fit the large scale of park. The tall light poles, for instance, fit the park's scale and allow for use of fewer lights, saving energy and providing a "moonlighting" effect on broad swaths rather than lighting small points. The city has standards for fixtures and furniture (lights, benches etc.) but as Van Valkenburgh partner Matt Urbanski noted, large parks have an opportunity to be different. Here they created "elements that are easy to replace, simple and relatively inexpensive — but at the same time specific to this site" (Davis & Schaer, 2010). Large swaths of lawn and wetland, large boulders and paving stones also emphasize the scale of the place.

The varied views and topography frame user perspectives. From the south the park looks at the Statue of Liberty while the north end is framed by the base of the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges. The west side of the park unfolds to the East River with meandering trails of crunchy stone that was designed to slow down movement and enhance the experience of moving through the varied settings. Van Valkenburgh's design choices of landscapes and plantings reflect the coastal nature of the park, but also fit his emphasis on the user experience moving through the setting.

Top: Pier 1 summer
Bottom: Movie night in the Park



Photos by Julianne Schaer

The designers were opportunistic in finding places to add programming. For instance, the Pier 1 gatehouse is used for a food concession. Where there are typically utility buildings to shelter electrical boxes, pipes, meters, etc., at Pier 1 they took that small structure and added some programming to it. “Suddenly it becomes a visitor’s center that can open up and display or distribute information; it’s part of the gateway to the park. The building is constructed of galvanized steel and wood timbers — common park materials. The steel is a good, cheap material for marine locations, and the wood we found on site. That architectural vocabulary becomes a motif throughout the park” (*Davis & Schaer, 2010*).

Another design challenge was dealing with the noise from the BQE that supplies a constant 80 decibel background din. A large berm is planned that will slope up toward the back of the park to block some sound and is projected to reduce noise levels to a more manageable level of 60 dbA.

Playgrounds were designed in collaboration with the Natural Learning Initiative (NLI) at North Carolina State University, experts in child development and play, led by Professor Robin Moore. Van Valkenburgh notes their philosophy that for parks to be successful, parents have to be comfortable. The play areas at Pier 6 include Swing Valley, with swinging ropes, Slide Mountain, with a thirteen-foot winding tube slide; Sandbox Village; and Water Lab, a water play space with moat, fountain, and wading pool. The spaces were organized so that parents could stay with toddlers in the central playground while still keeping an eye on older children who are more comfortable in peripheral play areas.

Sustainable Design

Adrian Benepe, Commissioner of Parks and Recreation and BBP Board member says that BBP represented “an all out effort for sustainable design... our ultimate recycled park.” Focus on minimizing environmental impacts can be seen in a number of approaches. Recycled materials were used in significant scale. Wooden benches throughout the park are made from the almost one million board

Left: Pier 6 playground, Slide Mountain
Right: Pier 6 playground



feet of long leaf yellow pine salvaged from the National Cold Storage Warehouse that was demolished for park construction. The pine was milled and benches constructed in Greenpoint Brooklyn woodshops³. Once ubiquitous in the Southeast but now nearly extinct, long leaf pine has high levels of resin that makes it highly resistant to weather and insects. Fence posts and other features are made from locally harvested Black Locust. Benepe noted that the Parks Department is watching these uses carefully as they are seeking alternatives to rare rain forest hardwoods and MVVA is studying the potential for Black Locust to be that alternative.

Granite used in the Granite Prospect overlooking the harbor was salvaged from the reconstructed Roosevelt Island Bridge while over 3000 cubic yards of granite from the recent reconstruction of the Willis Avenue Bridge in the Bronx are being used in other seating at Pier 1 and for landscaping in the Empire Fulton Ferry section of the park. A 20+ foot hill at Pier 1 (a height determined by ADA grade requirements) was built with rock taken from excavations by the Long Island Railroad.

City parks have a mandate to reduce or eliminate rain water discharge into city sewers and BBP represents the most ambitious attempt to date. Water from all over the park drains into underground tanks that are unprecedented in New York. Four tanks holding over 350,000 gallons are already in operation and the system is anticipated to provide the majority of water needs for irrigation of park plantings.

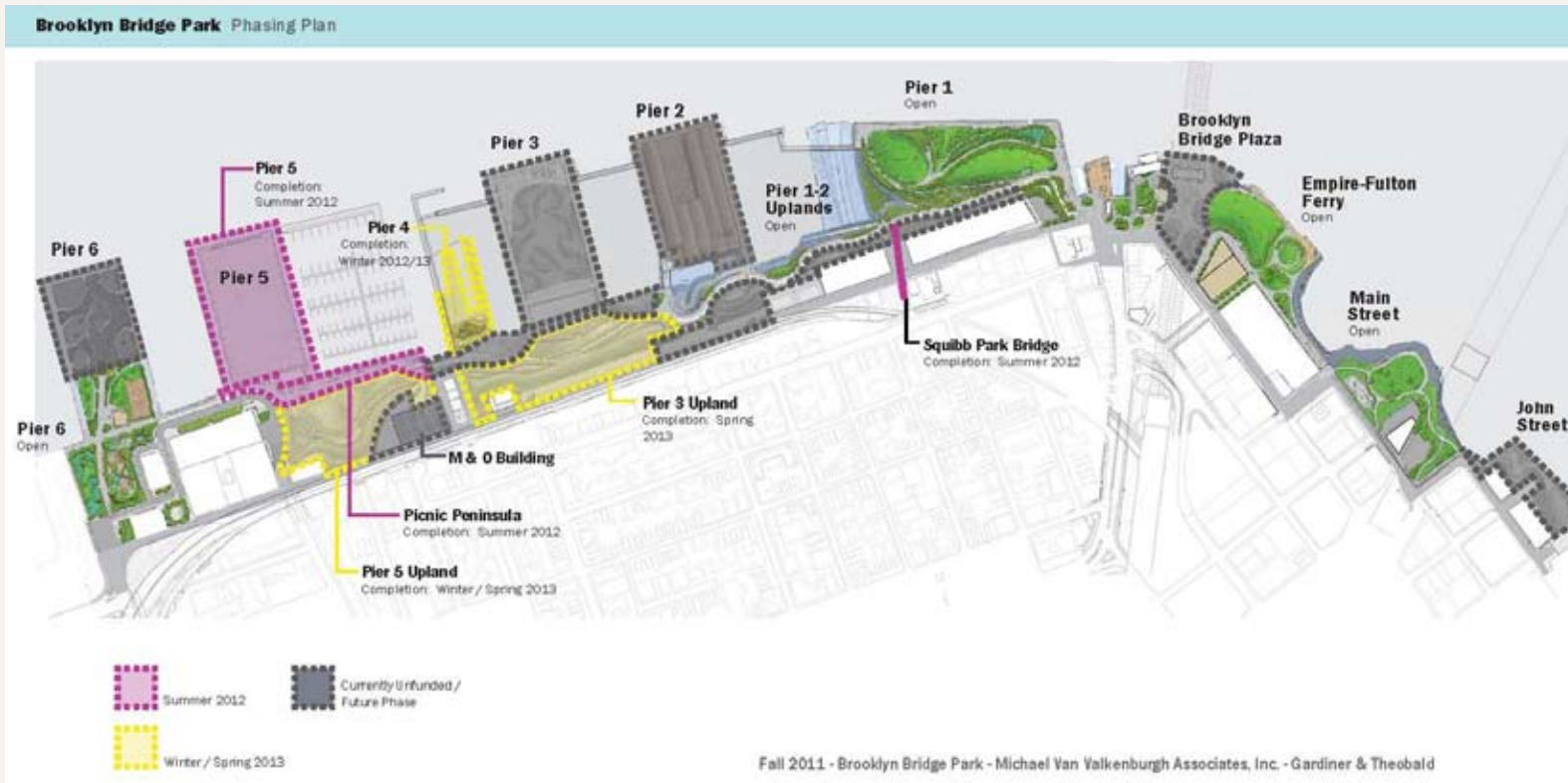
Other sustainable features include the selection of plants – mostly native – to minimize the need for irrigation, organic lawn care, soft downlighting to reduce light pollution, and electrical park vehicles supported by a solar charging station. Varieties of vegetation were also chosen to be able to survive the harsh winds and the salt spray that come off the tidal estuary.

Phasing Plan

The initial phase opened public entries and playgrounds at Piers 1 and 6, and in September 2011, the refurbished section known as Empire Fulton Ferry. These destinations include a variety of spaces on land at the water's edge, that are of varying scales, topographies and planting, with a connecting path. These spaces define the breadth of the park and support uses intended to build a constituency among parents, children and those who frequent events ranging from kayaking to evening films.

A number of other facilities are now in design and under construction to open through Spring, 2013 such as Pier 5 sport fields and picnic peninsula and the Pier 3 uplands (see Figure 1 Phasing Plan). The final elements will wait until the revenue generating development is in place so that the full operational costs don't come online before there are funds to cover them. At that point the first priorities will be construction of Pier 2, wave attenuation for the calm water harbor, completing Piers 6 and 3, and the John Street section to the north.

³ Some of the woodworking was done in shops that were, themselves, part of a previous Bruner Award winner – The Greenpoint Design and Manufacturing Center (see http://www.brunerfoundation.org/rba/pdfs/1995/05_greenpoint)



Etienne Frossard



Evening in the park

PROGRAMS

The park offers a vast array of educational and recreational programs for child and adult users and learners. Programs tie into the park's location and make use of its facilities, and are intended to provide opportunities for active and passive recreation, including waterfront access, to communities sorely lacking in park space.

Most public programs are organized by BBP Conservancy staff, usually in coordination with local schools and community groups. Crowds are often large – 8,000 commonly come to the evening movies – and the Conservancy says that half a million visitors have attended free public programs since the park opened. Typical free summer offerings have included:

- Evening “Syfy Movies with a View”
- Boating weekends
- Multiple fitness programs including workouts, dance, and biking
- Books Beneath the Bridge Literary Series at the Granite Prospect on Pier 1
- Children’s theatre presentations
- Seining to catch and release sea life
- Multiple classes on natural history, such as plant life, geology and birds
- Live performances representing cultures from around New York City
- Music programs including Jazzmobile and a Metropolitan Opera recital series
- Craft programs
- Public historical and architectural



Biking in the Park

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community partnerships are many and varied and have been integral to this story from its start. The initial idea and many early conceptualizations of the park emanated from both existing and ad hoc community groups. The BHA, an organization with a long history of effective community advocacy, was involved from the start, for positive reasons (the area is underserved by parks) and was also driven by fear of large scale development in the community's front yard. Other neighborhood associations, such as those from Cobble



Etienne Frossard



Julienne Schaeer

Hill and the Fulton Ferry neighborhoods have also been heavily involved. In the late 1980s more than 60 groups came together in the Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition, to advocate for the Park. The Coalition was an important force in working with local representatives to obtain funding for studies on park feasibility, planning and design and in developing a set of principles that have guided planning for several decades. In 2005, when the funding and planning for the park was becoming a reality the Coalition morphed into the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy (BBPC), with a primary task of raising funds to support programming in the park.

Community input to park decisions now comes in several forms. BBP has created the Brooklyn Bridge Park Community Advisory Council to provide continual public feedback, as well as the Park Community Council, with representatives from a variety of stakeholder organizations, including the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy. In addition, through the Conservancy's programs there are numerous relations with local public and private schools, recreational organizations (such as boating, biking), arts groups and

others who use the park's facilities for the many and various kinds of programming.

While the park is well known and overwhelmingly seen as a popular and significant asset for the area, community groups have been on different sides of several long-term and ongoing disputes that in some ways go to the heart of the parks sustainability plan. The notion of a self-sustaining park goes back to the principles that emerged from community participation, but what that means and how that is to be implemented has led to considerable disagreement. Some ad hoc groups were created around the issue of keeping housing out of the park, at least in part based on a belief that such development represents privatization of a public space, with the presumption that other funding options can be found that are less onerous (see Finances for a discussion of alternatives). The Brooklyn Heights Association (BHA), a long time advocate for the park, joined with the New York Landmarks Conservancy (NYLC) to oppose the BBP on the use of the Tobacco Warehouse, though that opposition led to several resignations from the BHA board. BHA, along with the

Left: Opera in the Park
Right: Boating at the Park

New York Landmarks Conservancy, argued successfully in court that these properties were inappropriately removed from National Park Service protection. Even those who are in the midst of these disputes, however, agree that the process of displaying and vetting plans and designs was extraordinary and extensive and that plans were altered along the way on the basis of community input.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

There is no one person who stands out as a visionary, singularly responsible for creating the idea of this park or moving the process that made it a reality. The push for the park was, to a significant extent, generated from the within the community. Public officials at the borough, city and state levels also played significant roles as did leaders and members of civic associations.

Brooklyn Bridge Park is a public park owned and run by a not-for-profit entity – The Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation, which is responsible for the planning, construction, maintenance and operation of the park. BBP has close ties to the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, whose director is one the 17 member board of directors.

The Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy is a non-profit (501c3) organization whose mission is to “ensure the creation, adequate funding, proper maintenance, public support, and citizen enjoyment



Julienne Schaer

of Brooklyn Bridge Park through partnership with government, development of programming, and active promotion of the needs of the park and its constituents.” The Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy has a membership of more than 60 civic, community and environmental organizations.

Brooklyn Bridge Park Community Advisory Council consists of 27 members representing various park constituencies appointed by local officials and serves as the “primary forum through which the community will provide feedback and comments to the Corporation on its major initiatives and policies.”⁴ Several dozen community organizations are represented, mostly from neighborhood associations.

FUTURE PLANS

There are a number of remaining elements of the plan for which funding is in place, that are either under construction or are about to break ground.

Pier 1, summer

⁴ <http://www.brooklynbridgeparknyc.org/about-us/community-advisory-council>



- Fall 2012 Expected completion of Pier 5. This will provide active recreation facilities featuring three outdoor multi-purpose recreation fields for soccer, lacrosse, cricket, rugby, football, field hockey or softball, a picnic peninsula, along with concessions, play equipment and passive recreation park space. These artificial turf fields will be available for play day and night. Pier 5's perimeter will provide a continuous waterfront esplanade for strollers, river viewers, sports spectators, and people who want to fish."
- Fall 2012 Expected completion of Squibb Park Bridge connecting the park at Pier 1 to Brooklyn Heights.
- Summer 2012 Expected completion of Squibb Park Bridge connecting the park at Pier 1 to Brooklyn Heights.
- Fall 2013 Completion of Pier 2 and Pier 3 upland area. In addition, a separation between Pier 4 and its upland area is planned to allow a wildlife preserve area to develop.

Other elements of the park are currently unfunded and awaiting decisions on development of revenue sources for maintenance and final allocations from New York City.

- Pier 2 – will include active recreation courts (basketball, handball, and bocce) in-line skating rink, swings, picnic tables, restrooms and a small concession, and a boat ramp for non-motorized craft.
- Pier 3 – recreation lawns, naturalized plantings and picnicking at the water's edge, a continuous waterfront esplanade, including fish cleaning stations as well as play equipment for young children.
- Pier 4 – will be planted with native species to assist its evolution as a protected habitat preserve. The deteriorating connection between the pier and shoreline will be removed. Pier 4 will be surrounded by a calm water zone for non-motorized boating. The upland park area adjacent to Pier 4 will be an accessible beach for launching various water craft.
- John Street is the section of Brooklyn Bridge Park north of the Manhattan Bridge. It will feature a sculpted lawn with a harbor view of the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges and the East River. A pedestrian bridge will allow viewing of the tidal pool that registers the daily and annual fluctuations of the river.

FINANCES

The model for financing this park is simple and straightforward, though the efforts to bring them to fruition and the discussions which have followed have been significantly more complicated. The city and state have agreed to fund the construction of the park but have declared that the park must generate its own revenues for maintenance, operation and programs. Maintenance and operations funds are required to come from revenue producing uses that can be located on up to 20% of the land included in the site, while other programming are supported by approximately \$1 million per year of fundraising. Table 1 shows expected maintenance and operation costs at full build out – \$16 million, while Table 2 presents figures for the most recent fiscal year, both for expenses and revenue. Current expenses are entirely supported by ground leases and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) from One Brooklyn Bridge Park, the only housing project currently open, and the \$8 million reserve fund from revenues that were accumulated before the park opened.

Table 3 shows the sites identified for revenue generating development, which represent less than half of the allowed 20% of the project area. Table 4 provides the sources and uses of capital construction. Current estimates are that the full build out of Brooklyn Bridge Park will cost a total of \$350 million in capital funds, up from the original \$150 million estimate. Currently, \$274.9 million has been allocated, of which \$185.8 million comes from the City

of New York, \$85.7 million from the Port Authority (counted as the state commitment), and a \$3.5 million gift from David Walentas (for the Empire Fulton Ferry section). An additional \$55 million that was committed by Mayor Bloomberg, is now being released following an August agreement on financing. All parties involved indicate that it's a matter of when, not if, these final segments will be funded.

Funding and development controversies

The financial ground rules noted above came first from early community-generated guidelines and were memorialized in the 2002 Memo of Understanding that established BBP. The sites for revenue producing development (Table 3), identified in the 2005 General Project Plan (GPP), make up 9% of the project area. The GPP also delineated height limits and allowable uses for those sites. While these include some restaurants and other concessions, the primary generators are from housing developments, at One Brooklyn Bridge Park (already open), John Street, Empire Stores, along Furman Street, and at Atlantic Avenue. BBPC notes that their analysis found this approach would maximize and provide stable sources of revenue while minimizing the amount of commercially developed space, concentrating on sites on the city side of the site, while protecting the view corridor from the Brooklyn Heights Promenade. In addition they argue that these developments add “vital, active urban junctions at each of the park’s three main entrances,” and bring traffic and “eyes on the street” to support an urban feel and the safety of users in the park.

**TABLE 1: PROJECTED FULL-BUILD
ANNUAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES**

Security	\$ 2,500,000	15.60%
Maintenance	\$ 1,150,000	7.20%
Utilities	\$ 800,000	5.00%
Insurance	\$ 100,000	0.60%
Landscaping	\$ 800,000	5.00%
Admin	\$ 1,501,520	9.40%
Tech Services	\$ 400,000	2.50%
Equipment	\$ 600,000	3.70%
OTPS	\$ 250,000	1.60%
General Contingency	\$ 2,430,456	15.20%
Market Contingency	\$ 1,500,000	9.40%
Maritime Maintenance ^a	\$ 4,000,000	25.00%
Total	\$ 16,031,976	100.00%

^a presents an annual average cost over 50 years

TABLE 2: FY11 OPERATING BUDGET
(JULY 1, 2010 – JUNE 30, 2011)
BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK

Park Administration and Management	\$ 580,777
Park Maintenance and Operations	\$ 2,772,000
Security	\$ 825,000
Landscape	\$ 170,000
Sanitation	\$ 440,000
Other Technical Services	\$ 223,000
Equipment and Repairs	\$ 360,000
Utilities	\$ 150,000
Miscellaneous and Supplies	\$ 204,000
Contingency	\$ 400,000
Maritime	\$ 375,000
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 3,727,777
Support and Revenue	\$ 3,727,777
Development Revenue (One Brooklyn Bridge Park rent & PILOT payments)	\$ 3,727,777

The park went through an unusually detailed and thorough effort to establish maintenance and operations costs into the foreseeable future (Table 1). The largest single expense is for inspection and repair of the nearly 12,000 underwater wooden piers (attacked by marine borers (*Foderaro, 2011a*), and needing concrete cladding) amortized over 50 years. Generating revenue to meet this \$16 million expense budget is the basis of the biggest controversy surrounding the park. The BBP Corporation is convinced that housing is the only source that can provide sufficient funds without changing the nature and program of the park. Its sole source of income for current operations comes from One Brooklyn Bridge Park, a 438 unit luxury apartment complex. This site provides \$3.7 million annually in rent and PILOT fees to BBPC. This site was not originally listed as part of the park property or a potential income source. It was purchased by RAL, a private developer, from Jehovah's Witness as condominium development. Facing, ULURP (Unified Land Use Review Procedure), the daunting and protracted process required for city approval, they chose instead to give the building to BBPDC (for \$1) and rent it back at market rates. This allowed them to let BBPDC negotiate the less onerous state and city reviews for governmental operations, trimming years off of the development timetable.

Some in the community oppose housing as a means of supporting park operations because, they argue, it takes away useable park space, will block views to the harbor, and/or because it represents a change from traditional means of funding park operations through the city budget (one blogger said "I'll accept housing here when

TABLE 3: SITES FOR DEVELOPEMENT

Site Description	Allowable Use	Maximum Height (ft)	Maximum # of Floors	Maximum # of Units
John Street	Residential	170'	16	130
Empire Stores	Commercial/Retail	50-60'	4-5	n/a
PIER 1: Site A	Hotel/Residential	100'	9-10	175 Hotel/ 180 Residential
Site B	Residential	45'	4	
One Brooklyn Bridge Park	Residential	230'	14	450
PIER 6: Site A	Residential	315'	31	290
Site B	Residential	155'	15	140

TABLE 4: CAPITAL FUNDING

Sources – Currently Allocated (in thousands)

Item	Total Pre-FY11	FY11	FY12	FY13	Total
New York City Funding	\$ 105,873	\$ 13,042	\$ 4,900	\$ 62,000	\$185,815
Port Authority Funding	\$ 52,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 22,652		\$ 85,652
Fulton Ferry Park – Walentas donation	\$ 3,459				\$ 3,459
Total Sources	\$ 161,332	\$ 24,042	\$ 27,552	\$ 62,000	\$ 274,926

Uses – Phases Completed or In Progress* (in millions)

Item	Status	Cost
Pier 1	Complete	\$ 49,785,527
Pier 6, Pier 2 Spiral Pool and Greenway	Complete	\$ 52,692,012
Empire Fulton Ferry	In Progress	\$ 3,459,000
Pier 5 Pile Repairs	In Progress	\$ 13,000,000
Pier 5 Landscaping and Picnic Peninsula	In Progress	\$ 17,000,000

* Totals do not include Soft Costs or Early Works (site preparation and demolition)

high rises surround Prospect Park, Central Park...”). To address these concerns an MOU was signed in March 2010 between city officials and the two local state representatives that established a commission to study alternatives to housing for funding park maintenance. The MOU also gave these two state legislators effective veto over the Pier 6 and John Street housing site, presumably assuring that any outcome will be acceptable to the community.

The study of alternatives took as its base assumptions that funding approaches could not divert current funding sources from general city revenues and had to have similar timing and risks to the approved housing models. Alternatives studied included establishing a Park Improvement District, charging fees for recreational activities, increasing fee-based events, concessions and retail development, fund raising and parking fees. It specifically excluded from consideration potential revenue from other nearby properties owned by Jehovah’s Witnesses that are expected to come on the market soon, as a diversion of potential city revenue.

The draft study, released in February 2011, concluded that various options could generate between \$2.4 million and \$7 million of income for the Park – less than half of the funding expected to be generated by the original plans for the Pier 6 and John Street sites. Moreover, some of the options carried their own liabilities – maximizing concessions could affect the park environment and atmosphere, and charging for recreational activities potentially changes the park’s mission and program goals.

The argument was perhaps best framed by the cases made by the BBP Conservancy, on the one hand, and Community Boards 2 and 6, supported by the BBPCAC, on the other. For the Conservancy Nancy Webster writes that alternatives in the plan “will not be sufficient to replace the Pier 6 and John St. residential sites, which are expected to contribute approximately \$8.25 million in revenues per year” (*Webster, 2011*). She notes that the remaining funding from the city is at risk unless adequate revenues can be found as is provided in the proposed housing, which, she says, provides “the most park for the least development.” She is concerned about loss of momentum in park development.

Taking a different position, the local Community Boards, supported in an April 21 2011 vote by the BBP Community Advisory Council, reject the study’s initial premises and have asked the group conducting the Alternatives analysis to “aggressively study potential revenue generating ideas... involving the Watchtower properties” (*Scales, 2011*). Moreover Community Board 6 has said that until alternatives are in place any shortfalls in revenue should be covered by the BBP Corporation and city budgets, “justified by the fact that this unique location’s characteristics have already contributed to a vibrant synergy between the park, its surrounding neighborhoods, the waterfront and New York Harbor.”

Ultimately, an agreement was struck and memorialized in an August 2, 2011 Memorandum of Understanding that removed the state elected officials' veto powers and reduces the height and possible the number of housing projects at Pier 6 and John Street through a combination of additional revenue sources like concessions and parking fees, including the potential use of revenue from rezoning and sale of Jehovah's Witness-Watchtower properties to residential use before December 31, 2014 (*Foderaro, 2011b*).

Another controversy focuses on The Tobacco Warehouse in the Fulton Ferry Historic District. The Tobacco Warehouse, built in the 1870's, sits next to Empire Fulton Ferry Park, and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. It had deteriorated in recent decades and currently is a two-storey roofless structure that is used for some public and private fee-based events. The Tobacco Warehouse and the neighboring Empire Stores were included in a 2001 National Park Service map made as part of an application for federal funds for marine restoration of Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park. This map delineated properties that were federally protected for outdoor recreation. In 2008, at the request of the city and state, the National Park Service, (NPS) removed these properties from that map saying that their inclusion had been a "correctable mistake," (*Strum, 2011*) potentially saving them from a lengthy and contentious process involved in converting a protected property. BBP has proposed leasing the site to St. Ann's Warehouse, a not-for-profit organization long identified with preservation efforts as well as high quality theatrical productions. BHA, the Fulton Ferry Landing

Association and the New York Landmarks Conservancy objected, however, saying that use of park property for private operations was not permitted under the terms of the grant and its associated map. They asked the NPS for clarification and eventually filed suit to stop the lease process. In April, 2011 the federal court ruled in support of opponents and the future of these properties is unclear, leaving St. Ann's future in limbo and, more importantly for the Brooklyn Bridge Park budget, doing the same for the adapted reuse prospects of Empire Stores (*Strum, 2011*).

Assessing Project Success

IMPACTS

- This is the largest new park in New York City in decades and the first new park in Brooklyn in over 100 years. It is in an "underparked" area of an "underparked" borough.
- This park provides important facilities for young families already living in the area, attracts more to come there, and is a destination for people all over Brooklyn.
- It has turned a decaying post industrial site into showpiece park with facilities for active and passive recreation.
- The park is by design environmentally and economically sustainable.

- The design is being used to promote sustainable methods in NYC Parks and supports excellence in design as a public park standard.
- The park clearly supports development of this area, although there are two caveats. First, because this is such a large and diverse section of the city with so much recent economic activity, it is very difficult to pinpoint the economic benefits of one development, even one this large. Second, economic development in this area is not universally seen as a social benefit. As noted above, some people supported the idea of a park as a substitute for large scale development.
- The park's Final Environmental Impact Statement (2005) states that upon full build-out the park will create 605 restaurant jobs, 424 retail jobs, 144 office jobs, 75 hotel jobs, 128 education/research and development jobs, and 94 jobs at the park itself (maintenance, operations, & administrative) for a total of 1469 jobs. In addition, it estimates that construction of the park will create the equivalent of 150 construction jobs per year of construction, over \$300 million in direct and indirect economic output with \$18 million non-property related tax revenues.
- This is considered a "statement park." It makes a statement about the value of high quality design; about capability to adopt sustainable practices on a large scale in both materials reuse and water reclamation; about the willingness of the public sector to invest in creating this kind of public infrastructure, even in difficult economic times; and about the public sector's inability to commit to long-term maintenance of these investments.



Julienne Schaer



Etienne Frossard

Top: Pier 1 Promenade
Bottom: Aerial View of Park

SUCCESS IN MEETING PROJECT GOALS

- *Transform “derelict and inaccessible vestige of New York’s industrial past” into beautiful, accessible, useable green recreation space*

The project succeeds (some national design critics say magnificently) in taking this derelict and empty space and turning it into an accessible and heavily used showpiece for the park system.

- *Return of the city’s waterfront edge to public use*

Brooklyn’s waterfront is open and available for public recreation as never before in its more than 300 year history. Formal water play areas, wetlands, boat ramps and docks make the water touchable and useable. It is heavily used. An internal park survey showed that over 30,000 visitors came to the park on summer weekend days, even when there were no major park events.

- *Create “democratic and multi-use civic space”*

This space is not, as was once feared, a playground for the nearby wealthy. With its many free programs, access by local schools, and ad hoc use by people from many Brooklyn neighborhoods this is a park that, like Central Park, is more than a local green space.

- *Adhere to “community-identified principles for redevelopment, connectivity with the adjacent neighborhoods”*

The park design and operation follows the 13 Guiding Principles developed from community meetings in early planning stages, though

some question the interpretation of these principles for housing as part of development to support operations (see discussion in Finances).

- *Incorporate sustainable practices in every aspect of the park’s planning, design, construction and operation*

The park is viewed by the Parks Department as the broadest expression of sustainable design yet (see Design). It did the common things well, in plantings and organic lawn care, and went far beyond accepted practice in finding and using recycled materials. The designers used materials, design and topography to eliminate water run-off to the river and sewers, and then went far beyond common practice to channel those waters into vast underground tanks for use in irrigation.

The park is designed to be economically sustainable, using park space for revenue to cover operational expenses and depending also upon fundraising (through the Conservancy) to address programming costs.

SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Discussions among Selection Committee members on Brooklyn Bridge Park addressed a complex array of topics including questions regarding ownership of the park, sustainability of operation and maintenance, and accessibility of the park. All of this discussion was



Etienne Frosard

in the context of a clear admiration for the engagement of issues and the emerging success of an incomplete project.

Ownership of the public realm is a classic debate. Is the park a public amenity supported by public resources or is it a private facility supported by commercial revenues. The Selection Committee reviewed perceptions of how Central Park in New York has a reputation of being for New York natives and visitors alike, while Prospect Park in Brooklyn appears to be more associated with more local community ownership. The Committee asked the question, “Who owns Brooklyn Bridge Park?” The conclusion was that the park is both a public and private sector enterprise, and has importance both for close neighbors and visitors alike. While the implications surrounding the balance of private vs. public revenue streams was

hotly debated, the Committee concluded that both have importance in long-term sustainability. The disposition of the perimeter parcels for private investment in a way that interferes with the full enjoyment of the park are seen by some as selling out the public realm, and by others as a reasonable way private property interests to support the public interest. The Committee found no clear moral high ground in this discussion, but rather praise for the creative funding projected in as a method of securing the future of a major new public amenity.

The Selection Committee discussion also focused on the ability to both complete and sustain Brooklyn Bridge Park. There were open questions on what was yet to be completed and how it would be financed. There were also questions about how the financial model projected for sustainability might be adapted by other cities and towns, as the scale of the project would be difficult to replicate outside of New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, or other major urban areas. While such questions were raised, the level of public support and long term commitment to the very idea of this park left the Committee believing it was not likely to fail.

The Committee also raised questions about and expressed admiration for the approach the project took to prioritizing accessibility. The park events were free and avoided privatization. It supported multiple events even as it became so crowded that the locals opted out and made room for the tourists. Also, the park has become such a popular amenity it was increasingly true that rising property

values adjacent to the park may force out all but the wealthiest residents. There were also some concerns relating to the physical isolation of the park. It is separated by the BQE except at piers 1 and 6. The proposals for future connections across the BQE require some extraordinary infrastructure improvements, but at a cost that only the government of New York City might be able to manage. Also, the lack of parking requires access by transit, but the access points are very limited. Overall the park struggles with a tension between trying to be a place separate from the fabric of the city and one fully integrated with it.

In the final analysis the Committee praised the project for the dynamic and passionate debates among stakeholders that are bound to assure its continued success. Landscape architect Michael Van Valkenburgh considers it a life's work; he has been involved formally for fourteen years and remains very proud of both the completed work and the future plans that continue to emerge. He and many others follow the politics around its evolution, try to protect and defend its key features when threatened, and make room for the public debate still occurring.

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Silver Medal Winner

Gary Comer Youth Center & College Prep

Chicago, Illinois



Jasmine Shah



Steve Hall

Project At-A-Glance

WHAT IS GARY COMER YOUTH CENTER AND COLLEGE PREP?

- ➔ A 13.5-acre campus in the Grand Crossing neighborhood of Chicago, composed of the 80,000 square foot (sf) Gary Comer Youth Center and the 45,000 sf Gary Comer College Prep.
- ➔ An education-focused complex that provides academic, recreational, athletic, job training and other programs for under-served students on Chicago's South Side.
- ➔ A project that originated from the philanthropic efforts of Gary Comer (founder of Lands' End), who founded the Comer Science and Education Foundation to foster his work with the Revere Elementary School community where he grew up.

PROJECT GOALS

- ➔ To offer positive extracurricular alternatives in a welcoming and safe environment, with the goal of providing support for all students to graduate from high school prepared to pursue college or careers.
- ➔ To provide college preparatory education for families living in poverty with few educational options.
- ➔ To develop the discipline necessary for their students to succeed in their future professions.
- ➔ To teach students to honor their community.
- ➔ To provide a wide range of programming, events and social support for the community.

Project Chronology

1999 Gary Comer visits Paul Revere Elementary School, which he attended as a child. After talking with Principal Shelby Taylor, he decided to partner with the school to provide up-to-date computers for student use. In June Comer Science and Education Foundation (CSEF) is incorporated.

2002 Gary Comer hosts a series of breakfasts to find out more about community needs; Sam Binion conducts door-to-door outreach asking similar questions. Greg Mooney meets Gary Comer through the breakfasts.

2002 Greg Mooney is hired in 2002 as Executive Director of CSEF, and works closely with Shelby Taylor on initiatives at Revere School and in the wider community.

2002 Gary Comer begins to talk with Arthur Robertson about ways to support the award-winning South Shore Drill Team (SSDT) and its youth development activities.

2003 Gary Comer meets John Ronan, and hires him to work on upgrades to the Revere School building. They later begin to discuss creating a home for SSDT, and the program quickly expands to a community center for youth.

2004 Sam Binion is selected by community residents to act as a liaison for CSEF's ongoing efforts in community engagement and development.

December: Groundbreaking for the Gary Comer Youth Center (GCYC).

2005-06 CSEF begins a program to develop new housing on vacant lots in the neighborhood.

2006 *May:* GCYC is dedicated.

June: GCYC opens for community programs.

October: Gary Comer dies at 78 of bone-marrow cancer.

2008 *February:* The Chicago City Council approves purchase of land (from CSEF) for a public library branch in Grand Crossing. (The 5th Ward (out of 50 in Chicago) is the only one without its own library.)

September: Gary Comer College Prep (GCCP) holds classes for its first freshman class in space at GCYC.

2008 Revere C.A.R.E., born from CSEF's community outreach efforts, becomes an independent community organization comprised of 10 block clubs in the area.

2009 Early in the year, design begins on a new building for GCCP. The design is initially constrained by an existing landholder who operates bar on his site; he is eventually persuaded to sell his land to CSEF. Construction begins later that year.

2010 February: Construction begins on the Grand Crossing Branch Library.

August: GCCP building is completed; classes begin at the new building in September.

KEY PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEWED

Core Project Team Members

GREG MOONEY *Executive Director, Comer Science and Education Foundation and Gary Comer Youth Center*
 JAMES TROUPIS *Principal, Gary Comer College Prep*
 JOHN RONAN *Project Architect; Principal, John Ronan Architects*



Jasmin Shah

CSEF/GCYC Board and Staff

GUY COMER *President, CSEF*
 BILL SCHLEICHER *President, GCI (Gary Comer, Inc.)*
 AYOKA SAMUELS *GCYC Senior Program Director*
 EMILY CONRATH *CSEF and GCYC Development Manager*
 KATIE ESTES *GCYC Art Instructor*
 DOT BENFORD *GCYC Program Support Coordinator*
 MARJORIE HESS *GCYC Garden Manager*

GCCP Staff and Students

MIKE HUGUELET *Dean of College & Citizenship*
 ADE FATOKE *Dean of Operations*
 CHRIS CARLSON *Science Teacher*
 PATRICE ARNWINE *Student, 10th Grade*
 BENNIE DANIEL *Student, 11th Grade*
 JOSHUA JACKSON *Student, 11th Grade*
 LAURA JONES *Student, 10th Grade*
 VINNETTA SIMA *Student, 11th Grade*

City of Chicago

CHRISTINE RAGUSO *Deputy Chief of Staff for Mayor Daley*

LISA HOPE WASHINGTON *Project Manager, Department of Housing
and Economic Development*

LESLIE HAIRSTON *5th Ward Alderman*

Program Partners

LINDA SHAPIRO *Vice President of External Affairs and Strategy,
ACCESS Community Health Network*

ARTHUR ROBERTSON *Founder and Executive Director,
South Shore Drill Team*

JEFF McCARTER *Executive Director, Free Spirit Media*

Community Members

SHELBY TAYLOR *Former Principal, Paul Revere Elementary School*

SAM BINION *Program Director, Revere C.A.R.E.*

ANTHONY WRIGHT *Pastor, Just Christ Ministries; President,
Revere C.A.R.E.*

DORIS LEACH *President, South Oakwood-Brookhaven
Neighbors Organization*

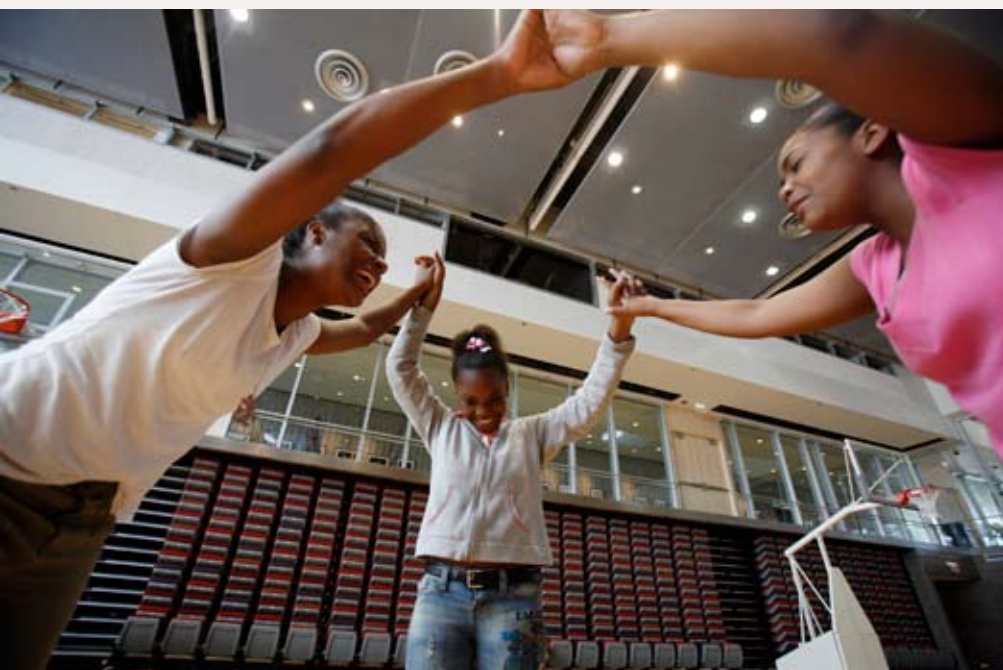
CONSTANCE BENSON *Member, South Oakwood-Brookhaven
Neighbors Organization*

ADRIENNE HILL *Member, South Oakwood-Brookhaven
Neighbors Organization*

LENORE JACKSON *Member, South Oakwood-Brookhaven
Neighbors Organization*

FRANCES POWER *Member, South Oakwood-Brookhaven
Neighbors Organization*

Project Description



Summer Classes

PROJECT HISTORY AND PROCESS

At first glance, it is tempting to cast the story of the Gary Comer Youth Center and Gary Comer College Prep as the heroic endeavor of one man to turn around a failing school and its surrounding neighborhood. To do so not only obscures the crucial contributions of many dedicated participants in the project's development; it also belies the spirit in which Gary Comer approached his efforts in Grand Crossing. A more accurate telling of the story reframes Comer's role as that of a catalyst, helping a broad range of people and groups to connect their interests and efforts with one another through these two buildings.

Lands' End Founder Looks to Give Back

Comer began adding his spark to the process in 1998, when he returned to visit the Revere Elementary School from which he graduated in 1942. Disturbed by the condition of the school's educational facilities and materials, Comer approached then-Principal Shelby Taylor with an offer to help. Taylor was in his first year as principal, the third principal of the school in less than two years. Seeking to transform the educational outcomes in the school, Taylor accepted Comer's offer and the two worked together to implement \$68,000 of initial investment, including new computers, building renovations, teacher training and health services. The result was an unprecedented gain in test scores.

Jasmin Shah

As Comer continued working with the Revere School, he began to broaden his vision for the impact of his investment. After creating the Comer Science and Education Foundation to manage his community efforts, he also pursued a wider community development model that sought to address the wide range of factors affecting student performance, from direct educational support to housing and family health to opportunities for positive social activities. Comer began holding monthly breakfasts in 2000 to meet community members and identify community needs. Through these breakfasts, he would connect with local leaders such as Alderman Leslie Hairston and Sam Binion, both of whom became critical to CSEF's outreach efforts. He also met educator Greg Mooney, whom he later hired to become CSEF's Executive Director.

A Home for the South Shore Drill Team

Comer's ongoing work with the Revere School kept him in contact with the school's Dean and Disciplinarian, Arthur Robertson. Robertson had founded the South Shore Drill Team in 1980 to provide an afterschool activity with discipline, mentoring and educational support for local youth; in 20 years, the team grew to over 300 members, won national championships and had been featured in movies, and demonstrated a near-perfect high school graduation rate among its participants. In a testament to Robertson's commitment and leadership, SSDT had achieved these successes without a permanent practice space; practices for its component teams (divided by age, skill level and skill type) were held in a variety

of borrowed spaces around the community, and the team had no space where it could gather as a whole.

Comer recognized the tremendous positive influence of SSDT on community youth, and began to talk with Robertson about finding a practice facility. Although Robertson at first envisioned little more than an empty warehouse, Comer encouraged him to think more broadly. Eventually, the concept evolved into a community youth center, with SSDT at its heart. Around this same time, Comer met architect John Ronan, and hired him to do some of the building upgrades at the Revere School. As Comer began to develop his plans for the youth center, he engaged Ronan to give the concept form.



Steve Hall

Gary Comer Youth Center



While the core needs of SSDT were clear, the rest of the youth center program was continually in flux; in interviews, Ronan described the program as changing from week to week. While community residents proposed a variety of programs for youth and adults, Comer was insistent that the project focus on the needs of youth rather than becoming a general community center. Other CSEF initiatives, such as purchasing vacant lots in order to develop affordable housing, addressed wider community needs, but were still based on an interest in providing a holistically healthy environment for neighborhood youth. As part of these broad community development efforts, Binion's community relations work included not only eliciting neighborhood ideas for the programs and design of the youth center, but also building community leadership capacity by organizing and supporting block clubs and other neighborhood action groups.

Midway through the project, an unexpected event shifted planning and construction into high gear: the recurrence of Gary Comer's bone-marrow cancer. Comer pressed to complete the youth center quickly, and he participated in its dedication months before his death in 2006.

Comer was insistent that the project focus on the needs of youth and provide a holistically healthy environment for the neighborhood.

Expanding Educational Opportunity

The Gary Comer Youth Center opened with a core set of programs, including the Drill Team, arts and dance, sound and video production, and urban gardening. The Center's programs continued evolving, and health services were slowly added. But as CSEF observed the outcomes for the students it served at Revere School, it noticed that proffered college scholarships for Revere School alumni were not being used. The reason: students the foundation invested in during elementary and middle school were being lost in Chicago public high schools, and many were not graduating.

This observation led CSEF to establish a partnership with the Noble Street Charter Schools, a network with a strong reputation that had opened a number of schools on the West Side. CSEF invited Noble to start a high school in Grand Crossing. At the same time, James Troupis was working with Noble to pursue a charter start-up, and became principal of the new Gary Comer College Prep (GCCP).

GCCP started its first class of 155 freshmen in 2008, in two seminar rooms at GCYC that were converted to classrooms during the school day. In the early months of 2009, CSEF and Troupis began to plan a new high school building, once again turning to John Ronan. The design and construction process was completed in 18 months, and the new building hosted its first classes in fall 2010.

URBAN CONTEXT

The Greater Grand Crossing community area is located on Chicago's South Side, approximately 9 miles from the downtown area. The area is crisscrossed by transportation infrastructure including commuter rail and elevated train lines and highways I-90 and I-94. The Grand Crossing neighborhood within the wider community area (also known as the South Oakwood-Brookhaven neighborhood) is a triangle located in the NE corner of Greater Grand Crossing. It is bounded by the Oakwood Cemetery to the north, the Metra Electric District rail line to the east, and the Chicago Skyway/I-90 to the west.

The area is in the SE corner of Chicago's 5th Ward, a ward which includes the University of Chicago and Jackson Park in the north, but also a series of less affluent neighborhoods in the south. As one heads through the 5th Ward west on 71st Street toward Grand Crossing, the neighborhood shows both signs of urban decay and a few flourishing businesses along the main commercial corridors. Grand Crossing is primarily a residential area, except for a small business district at the intersection of South Chicago Avenue, Cottage Grove Avenue and 71st Street. Many homes show signs of disrepair or abandonment, but much of the housing stock is of good base quality. Although a large number of vacant lots created holes in the residential fabric over the past few decades, recent residential development by CSEF has filled in many of these spaces with new construction and new residents.



The site of GCYC and GCCP runs in a narrow band south from 71st Street along South Chicago Avenue. South Chicago is a wide traffic artery that carries approximately 40,000 cars per day. Crosswalks are infrequent, tree cover along sidewalks is limited, and there are large numbers of blank walls or empty lots as one travels south, creating an unfriendly pedestrian environment. Directly across South Chicago from the GCYC/GCCP site, a row of homes and a church help this section of the street feel relatively pleasant and populated. Recently the City added a crosswalk to the intersection.

The neighborhood of housing on the eastern side of the site is a dense network of lots with 20' wide frontage and about 120' of depth from sidewalk to alley. A row of garages along an alley is directly adjacent to GCYC; a neighborhood street with backyards runs alongside GCCP. The entire site is fenced off from the surrounding neighborhood; access to the buildings and site is only available through the main lobbies of each building, or a gated entrance to the parking lot between them. All three entrances are monitored by security staff (via intercom in the case of the parking lot).

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Grand Crossing neighborhood has approximately 2,000 residents, approximately 350 of whom are school age children and youth. The area is more than 95% African-American with a me-



Jasmin Shah

dian household income of \$34,000 for 3 people. Two-thirds of families in the area with children have incomes below the poverty level. Statistics are similar throughout the Greater Grand Crossing community area.

Students who participate in programs at GCYC or attend school at GCCP come from across the South Side, not just the Grand Crossing neighborhood. GCCP serves approximately 30% of the high school students in the Revere School catchment area (which is contiguous with the Grand Crossing neighborhood boundaries). Before GCCP opened, students from the neighborhood attended over 50 different high schools across Chicago. The graduation rate for Chicago Public high school students is less than 50%.



All photos: Steve Hall



MAJOR FACILITIES AND SPACES

Gary Comer Youth Center

The Gary Comer Youth Center opened in 2006 and serves community residents by providing a safe alternative for youth in the evenings, weekends and summer with a wide range of programming in arts, health and fitness, and academics. It provides support space for the high school classes and classroom space for the middle school students during school hours and is also home to a number of clubs and community organizations including the 300-member award-winning South Shore Drill Team. GCYC serves 1,000 members annually in its programs, and provides three meals daily to students (breakfast and lunch for GCCP students and dinner for GCYC users). The parking lot between GCYC and GCCP serves as a parade ground for SSDT.

Clockwise from top left: Gary Comer Youth Center, Roof Garden, Gary Comer College Prep

Gary Comer College Prep

Gary Comer College Prep, a campus of the Noble Network of Charter Schools, opened in its new building in 2010 after two years of operation in GCYC. GCCP provides a rigorous college preparatory education for approximately 685 high school and 6th grade students from across the South Side. The school expects a full population of 800 6th-12th grade students beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. Comprised mostly of classrooms, the school creates a campus with the youth center, which provides support space for co-curricular classes and other activities (gym, cafeteria, computer lab, art and music rooms, and assembly space). The middle school students attend classes within GCYC.

Urban Farm and Gardens

The GCYC/GCCP complex includes three garden spaces: the rooftop garden of GCYC, an outdoor classroom and rain garden next to the parking lot, and an urban youth education garden that was established on a vacant lot across the street. Students use the spaces for science education during the school day, but they are primarily active afterschool during GCYC's urban agriculture programs. In the roof garden and urban garden, students grow produce for sale, for use in the GCYC cafeteria, and for browsing by GCYC users (an example given was seniors who may pick flowers or edibles after yoga class). The rain garden is used as a teaching tool, and also contains a large grill that is used for events.

DESIGN

Architectural Design – GCYC

Ronan turned the uncertainty in GCYC's design development process into an asset by creating a series of flexible spaces around the central theater and gymnasium that serves as practice space for SSDT. He describes the design as a series of programmatic bars wrapped around this core; the bars terminate in showcase spaces with extensive glazing that highlight special programs: the art room, the dance studio, and the exhibition rooms. Mayor Richard Daley's green roofs initiative required that the building include this feature; Gary Comer's addition of a third floor to the program during the design phase helped to make this an easily accessible space that could also be used for programming. Two spaces had to be designed for their particular purpose because of special equipment requirements: the audio recording studio and the video production room, which is linked to the theater space for live recording of events.

Security was an important concern within and around the building. The focus was on both discipline inside and potential gun violence outside. In order to avoid the fortress implied by such a program, Ronan developed an elaborate screen of red, blue and white panels (the colors derived from SSDT uniforms) with discreet penetrations for light. In addition, bullet proof glass was used up to eight feet where more light was required. The result is a surprisingly well-lit facility with good views from the inside to the neighborhood and well-protected direct views to the interior.



The glazing in the interior facilitated good sight lines among spaces, thus heightening internal security; this comes with the additional advantage of allowing a visual layering of activities as one looks across multiple spaces. The result is a wonderful sense of liveliness, as views to the roof gardens, the gymnasium or the dining hall animate rooms throughout the building.

A white tower projects from the southwest corner of the roof, encircled at the top by a scrolling LED display. Several interviewees and written sources noted the role this tower plays as a landmark for a neighborhood that has often lacked a clear sense of identity. The LED screen highlights GCYC as the home of the South Shore Drill Team and can also be used for major event announcements.



Architectural Design – GCCP

The two floors of GCCP have a very simple parti: classrooms on the outside, service and administrative spaces on the inside. The concept is designed to illustrate the clear priority of teaching and learning within the building. GCCP's main entrance is a two story atrium facing the youth center across the parking lot. The space is bright and welcoming, and the walls are lined with large inspirational quotes and graphics, college crests, and the school logo. The main stairs at the building's entrance are of humble materials, but they still give some of the sense of a grand staircase. The rear staircase at the opposite corner of the core is more of a service stair. The offices and staff service spaces that are tucked into the core feel cramped and cheerless, but administrators appear to fully embrace the idea that their offices should receive less attention.

Classroom features are custom-designed for particular rooms; English classrooms include built-in shelves created using the building's exterior structural supports, and chemistry and physics teachers specified the design of their classrooms to match their teaching activities. Students and teachers enjoyed the transparency of the spaces they occupied in GCYC during the first two years, and this feature was carried into the new building. Almost all classrooms have walls of windows along the hallway, and both teachers and students are on display. Both groups appreciate the accountability that comes from such high visibility, and students are not noticeably distracted by people walking in the hallways.



Steve Hall

Gary Comer College Prep

One of the highlighted classrooms is a large college-style lecture hall; faculty members consider this room part of students' preparation for the college environment. The campus arrangement of co-curriculars held in the GCYC building is also considered part of college prep, as students get used to walking between buildings for classes. The space sharing with GCCP building reduced the space requirements for the GCCP building and cemented the partnership between the two facilities.

The building is screened on the three sides facing the neighborhood by a perforated metal grille. The grille makes it difficult to locate or see into windows from outside the building, but the perforations

provide enough light and visibility from within the building to keep classrooms from feeling dark. Ronan's security treatments on the façade and windows are creative and allow a good sense of connection to the outside while maintaining a secure interior environment. The building is certified LEED Silver, and key green features include daylighting, energy efficient lighting, and local building materials. The architect indicated that the concrete, aggregate and gypsum board were among the local materials used. To enhance the economic development effects of the project, contractors were required to use a certain percentage of local labor as a skills-training strategy for the neighborhood. (Although GCYC is not LEED certified, similar strategies were also used in the design and construction of that building.)



Landscape Design – Gardens and Parking Lots

The landscape of the rooftop garden is quite simple: rows of crops alternating with pavers for circulation. Plantings include both flowers



and edibles. Protective tents enable the growing of some crops (like lettuce and other greens) in the cooler months. Signs on the windows along a 3rd floor hallway provide a moment of garden history, showing the plants that were in each row during the garden's first year of operation.

The rain garden is adjacent to the GCYC building and includes two areas encircled by a stone bench to create outdoor teaching areas. The bioswale along the edge of the parking lot in this area illustrates storm water management and rainwater harvesting for students. A large industrial outdoor grill also sits in the garden area and is used by culinary program students during events.

The main parking lot between the two buildings is asphalt; because it is used as a parade ground for SSDT, the team's formation lines are marked on the pavement (in blue) along with the usual parking space lines (in white). At the edge of the parking lot near GCCP is an area named the quad; it provides a place for students to gather before and after school, and it is furnished with planters that offer seating space as well as bike racks for students. A secondary parking lot for GCCP at the intersection of 71st Street and South Chicago Avenue has permeable pavers as part of the building's green design strategies. A fence made of the same material used on GCCP's façade encircles the entire complex, except at the public building entrance on S. Ingleside Avenue for GCYC.



Steve Hall

PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND PATTERNS OF USE

With the opening of GCCP in 2008, the campus has established an interesting ebb and flow of activities between the two buildings. Most students start the day at the GCYC cafeteria for breakfast; they then proceed to GCCP for the start of the school day, joining a stream of students being dropped off at the school entrance on South Chicago. For the next several hours, streams of students move back and forth between the buildings on their way between classes. In inclement weather, students are given green and white umbrellas (the school colors are green, grey and white) to stay dry, and more than one staff person described the “parade of umbrellas” as a highlight of those days.



As the school day draws to a close, GCYC undergoes a rapid change from classroom use to afterschool use. The cafeteria offers students a healthy afterschool snack, and they proceed to their various program spaces throughout the building. The drill team also begins to practice in the gymnasium, and you can watch flags and rifles flying in the air from multiple vantage points in various rooms and hallways.

Program offerings in the youth center are diverse, including gardening and farming, cooking and nutrition, art, sound production, live and recorded video production, digital media training and other computer access, dance classes, basketball court use, game room use, and the South Shore Drill Team. Through GCYC's programs, students are prepared with workforce skills, both behavioral (discipline, timeliness, proper dress, professional conduct) and technical (culinary, urban agriculture, A/V production, etc.). The embedded health center provides a valuable aspect of community support, helping youth and their families to address physical and behavioral health issues that can compromise academic achievement and



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career success; while such services are available in other areas of the 5th Ward such as the University of Chicago, the GCYC center is much more convenient.

Activity continues into the evening, as GCYC also hosts community meetings, theater performances, and other community events, although we did not witness any such events during the time of our site visit. Some community members expressed concern that the interaction of security with visitors needed to be improved. GCYC security staff were not always aware of public meetings or events taking place in the buildings, and occasionally hindered legitimate visitors.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

Until his death in 2006, the strategic direction of CSEF was directed primarily by Gary Comer as President, with advising and involvement from Bill Schleicher, President of GCI (Gary Comer Investments). As Gary Comer became increasingly ill, his son, Guy Comer, began to attend meetings and discussions with him, and took over as President of CSEF after his father passed away. Guy Comer and Bill Schleicher continue to partner in the strategic and investment management and decision-making for CSEF.

In CSEF's daily operations, CSEF and GCYC Executive Director Greg Mooney leads a staff team that is primarily focused on GCYC pro-

grams and operations, assisted by GCYC Senior Program Manager Ayoka Samuels. GCYC program staff develop and manage programs in areas including arts, dance, and urban gardening; however, some specialized programs like the video production studio or the community health clinic, are run through contracts between GCYC and its nonprofit program partners. Additionally, administrative staff in areas including information technology and development split their time between CSEF and GCYC business.

GCCP faculty and staff are led by Principal James Troupis, who in his first years was the youngest principal in the Chicago Public School system and the Noble Network. Troupis is assisted by a series of deans responsible for key administrative areas, including Deans of Operations, College & Citizenship, Discipline, and Students. Most teaching faculty focus on a specific subject and grade level. The school also employs special education, social work and other professionals who can provide students with additional support.

Conversations with staff at CSEF/GCYC and GCCP revealed a strong shared understanding of the mission, values and goals that underpin work in their organizations. Staff discussed their dedication to working with youth, their belief in high standards and high achievement and ability among the students served, and a commitment to improving the Grand Crossing neighborhood, demonstrated in a number of cases by their decision to move to or stay in the community. Staff members also noted the care and thoroughness with which the hiring process is conducted: early hires at GCYC described exchanges



that were conducted over months to find the right fit, and Troupis highlighted the selectivity of GCCP hires, with a pool of 1500 applicants from around the country for just 20 open positions.

FINANCES

The overall financing of the Gary Comer Youth Center and College Prep reflects support from the Comer Science and Education Foundation, (\$3 million in FY 2011), direct funding from conventional Chicago Public Schools, state and federal sources, fees and fundraising. Each portion of operating and capital funding involved a dialogue among the funders, and internal dialogue within each funding organization. The narrative on such funding seems

straightforward as we report on the results of these discussions, but the process itself was far from simple. Interpersonal dynamics and professional assessments tied to each source and deal were carefully negotiated in a context of a long history of community, institutional and interpersonal conflicts. The success of the Gary Comer projects is grounded in the deliberate process of negotiation and continuing collaboration among project supporters.

Operating Costs

GCCYC has a budget of approximately \$4.5 million. Its income sources include \$3 million from CSEF, \$1.5 million in individual contributions and grants from a variety of sources.

Gary Comer College Prep also has an annual budget of approximately \$4.5 million. The vast majority of their budget comes from Chicago Public Schools, as well as state and federal education funds. However, the school does bring in \$360,000 in fundraising and another \$250,000 in fees.

Capital Program

The \$35 million total development cost (\$30 million for construction, \$375/sf) for the Gary Comer Youth Center was funded entirely by CSEF. The \$21.5 million total development cost for Gary Comer College Prep (\$15 million for construction, 333/sf) was funded through a combination of leveraged loans and New Market Tax Credits.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY

Partnership between GCYC and GCCP

GCYC and GCCP together illustrate a holistic youth empowerment model, providing students with an environment of caring, discipline and opportunities for growth and leadership. Both organizations are committed to providing students with the skills, tools and support to successfully complete high school; GCCP adds the further commitment to college enrollment and success. GCYC supports college preparedness, but adds a critical component of career preparation in a variety of fields, for young people to explore other options in addition to college education. The range of programs available at GCYC is remarkable; the South Shore Drill team, urban agriculture, and media production (audio and video) programs deserve particular mention. The partnership with GCCP keeps GCYC's spaces occupied during school hours, when they would otherwise be vacant.

Community Engagement

During the planning for GCYC, community participation started through monthly breakfasts that Gary Comer would host, and continued through the development and strengthening of block clubs and other neighborhood groups. The breakfasts and block clubs provided vehicles through which CSEF could learn about community needs and assets and respond through the building and programs. Community members were suspicious of Comer's intentions at the outset, but it appears that these structures built



trust and credibility over time. CSEF also worked in partnership with recognized community leaders such as Alderman Hairston, Shelby Taylor, and Sam Binion.

Since the completion of GCYC, CSEF has maintained relationships with and support for community groups and leaders, but the involvement is less direct. Interviews indicated that both community members and GCYC staff would like improved communication and engagement, but the best methods are still being worked out. CSEF/GCYC and GCCP staff members contribute to community events such as Back-to-School Day, and there remain a variety of educational support partnerships among CSEF, GCCP, the Revere School and the South Oakwood-Brookhaven Neighbors via scholarship programs or tutoring.

Partnership with the City of Chicago

Representatives from the Mayor's Office and the Department of Housing and Economic Development noted Mayor Daley's enthusiasm for the project and its impact on the neighborhood. They stated that the Mayor's enthusiasm led him to assign the project a dedicated staff member who would assist CSEF with the bureaucratic hurdles of the City's planned development process. Other interviewees felt that the City's assistance was not as effective in expediting the development process as they would have desired, but they also acknowledged the Mayor's support.

Within the 5th Ward, Alderman Hairston has been a consistent partner and advocate since the early days of CSEF's involvement in Grand Crossing. Alderman was instrumental in community outreach efforts, helping connect the community's vision for transformation with the foundation's resources. She was also able to capitalize on CSEF's neighborhood investments in a successful campaign to create a new branch library on South Chicago a short distance from GCYC; this was a culmination of 12 years of work to bring a library branch to the only ward in the city without one.

The idealism of partnership between the Chicago Public Schools and CSEF met some difficulty in their relationship with the Revere Elementary School. CSEF hit some rough spots tied to conflicts about how schools measure success, briefly suspended their alliance with Revere, but returned to a new collaborative arrangement based upon bringing high school students to Revere to tutor the elementary

There was a successful campaign to create a new library a short distance from GCYC; this was a culmination of 12 years of work to bring a library branch to the only ward in the city without one.

school students. This kind of tension tested assumptions about how to measure success and how best to reward such success. The overall result has been a stronger alliance.



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FUTURE PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Future Planning

Both GCYC and GCCP staff noted that the projects are still in early phases and indicated that the true results for the community's youth and for the neighborhood's development would not be known for many years yet. GCYC is still establishing its full mix of programs and GCCP has yet to graduate its first class of seniors. Nonetheless, both organizations are looking to build on existing successes and expand their scope of work. The level of engagement with the Revere School has varied over the years as different models of partnership and programs continue to be tested.

GCYC's physical expansion plans focus on the urban farm; the center is working with the City to expand the farm into an adjacent vacant lot. Programmatically, GCYC is exploring both additions, such as an increase in programs for adults, and modifications, including a shift in the health center's focus from a medical treatment approach to a holistic wellness model.

GCCP began serving middle school students in the current school year, demonstrating an innovation for the Nobel Network that seldom expands downward into the lower grades. A move like this is an acknowledgement that success in the upper grades is dependent on the foundational work that precedes it.

Financial Sustainability

CSEF and GCYC are currently supported in part by a charitable trust created after Gary Comer's death; this endowment provides a significant portion of the operating budgets of both organizations, but does not cover the whole. The endowment will only continue for the next 16 years; CSEF leaders consider it a "long runway" which will allow them time to plan for a self-supporting future. The foundation is seeking a Development Director to build the organization's resources over the next several years. GCCP's local, state and federal education funding appears stable and sufficient to meet its needs for the future.

Leadership Sustainability

The leadership of CSEF, GCYC and GCCP is largely composed of young and enthusiastic staffers with a high level of commitment. Although the site visit team expressed some concerns about the potential for burnout, staff members appear interested in long-term roles with their organizations, and the leadership team is highly invested and stable. A larger challenge for the organizations is their leadership role within the community, especially for CSEF. The foundation invested in a wide range of community development efforts, but would like to re-focus on its core interest in youth and education. CSEF hopes to attract additional institutional partners who will also build relationships with local leaders and make substantial and consistent investments in the community. As far as GCYC and GCCP, CSEF will remain heavily involved with both

programs and facilities. GCYC is the foundation's home facility, and most of CSEF's staff is devoted full or part time to programs and operations. CSEF will also continue working with GCCP on education initiatives, including the expansion of the school to lower grades.

CSEF and GCYC also continue to work with local community groups to increase their capacity for community action. Revere C.A.R.E. (A Community Actively Reaching Each Other), a coalition of neighborhood block clubs, grew out of CSEF's organizing efforts, and Program Director Sam Binion manages the organization's activities around public safety, education and economic opportunities. Other long-time organizations, such as South Oakwood-Brookhaven Neighbors, also provide neighborhood clean-up, scholarship and capacity-building programs. Some interviewees noted the expanded access that CSEF can provide to resources and attention beyond the neighborhood as one of the strengths of the foundation's ongoing involvement.

Operational Sustainability

GCYC and GCCP set aside funds for ongoing maintenance of buildings and equipment; this is a substantial part of GCYC's operating budget (see Finances above). The site visit committee felt some concern about the sustainability of maintaining GCYC's technology and mechanical systems and keeping them up to date, including the A/V production rooms and embedded projection systems in the exhibition rooms. (In another example, the theater seating system



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could not be demonstrated for the team because it was waiting for maintenance). GCYC staff indicated that they work to keep the systems in good condition so that they will serve the organization well for many years; some of the production equipment is also maintained by program partners.

PROJECT IMPACTS

Impacts on Youth

By all accounts – including those of GCCP/GCYC students – the impact of the center and the school on youth opportunities has been exceptional. Students commented on and embraced the value of the discipline they learn at GCCP, the new skills they are exposed to at GCYC, and the adult caring and mentoring they receive through both organizations. Members of the South Oakwood-Brookhaven Neighbors related stories of the positive effects of GCYC programs and GCCP education on their children and grandchildren. GCYC staff noted the professional interactions that urban agriculture program participants have with local chefs, who regard them as equals when discussing micro-greens. Across the board, interviewees high-

lighted the new opportunities and higher expectations that are now available to participating youth.

Some interviewees also indicated that involvement with the center and the school is not successful for everyone. Some students leave GCCP because they are not comfortable with the discipline and rigor of the program. Other youth in the neighborhood are not ready even for the less restrictive environment of GCYC. Revere C.A.R.E.'s Ring of Hope boxing program is an example of community efforts to engage harder to reach youth and young adults in the neighborhood.

Impacts on Community Perceptions

Interviewees were also consistently appreciative of the changed perceptions inside and outside Grand Crossing as a result of the project. Neighbors enjoyed the beauty of the projects (although some didn't love the colors), and were glad to have facilities that helped draw positive attention to the community and its residents. The GCYC/GCCP complex is considered a strong aesthetic contribution to the neighborhood, offering both a beautiful facility and a way of putting Grand Crossing "on the map" within Chicago. Many people commented on a renewed sense of pride and hope in the neighborhood.

Although specific crime statistics were difficult to come by, interviewees across the board reported improved perceptions of neighborhood safety and quality of life and noted that even an improved perception is an important change for local residents. Anecdotally, interviewees described a lower incidence of audible gunfire, and a shift in violent crime involvement from youth age 14-17 to older youth (18-21). Several reported that residents are more willing to be out on the streets and in public spaces, and neighbors engage in safety walks to provide eyes on the street. CSEF's wider community development programs, including community organization support and housing, have also contributed to neighborhood improvements.

Assessing Project Success

SUCCESS IN MEETING PROJECT GOALS

- *To offer positive extracurricular alternatives in a welcoming and safe environment, with the goal of providing support for all students to graduate from high school prepared to pursue college or careers.*

GCYC and GCCP together illustrate a holistic youth empowerment model, providing students with an environment of caring, discipline

and opportunities for growth and leadership. The physical environment of the buildings provides safety from negative elements in the neighborhood and a high level of observation within, but is not oppressive. Both GCYC and GCCP have strong, solid masses and clear security features, yet the buildings feel bright and welcoming from the outside, and the façades seem light rather than heavy.

- *To provide college preparatory education for families living in poverty with few educational options.*

GCCP's program is rigorously directed toward college enrollment and graduation, including mandatory visits to local campuses and opportunities for overnight stays at schools around the country. They maintain strong discipline and goal orientation, and this message is clearly internalized by the students. The school also recognizes the low level of educational preparedness that many students coming into the school may have received, and they direct significant resources and support to helping students address their academic challenges. In fall 2010, 96% of students returned to GCCP for the upcoming school year, a strong retention rate compared to the 50% dropout rate for Chicago Public Schools. The school currently has its first class of seniors, so graduation rates will not be known until spring 2012. GCCP is the top performing open-enrollment high school on Chicago's south side and the third highest ranked high school across the entire City in student academic growth from freshman to junior year based on the ACT.

- *To develop in youth the discipline necessary to succeed in their future professions.*

See above; discipline is extremely high at GCCP, with a system of demerits and other consequences that students understand and work to avoid. GCYC provides a more relaxed environment, but still has a good structure of rules and expectations (around such issues as use of particular spaces and equipment, respect for staff, or violent behavior). GCYC also provides ways for youth and staff to productively address conflicts or behavioral issues.

- *To teach students to honor their community.*

Students and youth center users are encouraged to give back to their community through service, mentoring and re-engaging as alumni of the programs.

- *To provide a wide range of programming, events and social support for the community.*

GCYC is well-used throughout its open hours for a variety of programs and events – mostly by youth, but there is increasing attention to providing opportunities for the families of youth and for adults in the community.

Interviewees considered the GCYC/GCCP campus a highly successful project, in terms of its design, its program, and its impact to date. The project is still fairly new, so some aspects of operations, programming and community relations are still being worked out, and some impacts on youth, families and the neighborhood will not be fully evident until many years down the road. However, the project has substantially shifted perceptions of neighborhood safety and has expanded the educational, job training and recreational opportunities for local youth. Both GCYC and GCCP are seen as positive, productive, attractive, safe and welcoming facilities that address important community needs.



SELECTION COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The Selection Committee discussion on the Gary Comer campus focused on the quality of program execution, design quality, replicability as a community model, and what this project has to teach us about urban interventions in neighborhoods like South Chicago. There was significant praise for the layered integration of school and after school programming, and for the relationships among participants that the project continues to facilitate. Early measures of success indicate that the staff and facility efficiencies found in the sharing of space have fostered nearly seamless cross programming, and have supported the growth of the school. Projected success rates in college preparation and the reduction of violence in and around the neighborhoods of the complex all speak to the excellence of the project.

Design themes identified by the SC included significant praise for the internal transparency and sectional character of the structures. The capacity to see through one activity into another within and between campuses enlivens the spaces and increases the capacity to support the program of behavior and, especially, the discipline encouraged by the leadership. The sectional properties of the design reinforce this transparency offering framed views to the neighborhood throughout the building, even as it limits views into the facility for security reasons.

How replicable is the project? Discussion on the fortress-like exterior and bullet proof glass used in the campus led the committee to wonder aloud if traditional forms of street friendly urbanism were possible in this location. That said, the “eyes on the street” in the building appear to act as a deterrent to crime. The imperative to provide a safe haven in a distressed neighborhood was seen as critical to the success of the project. Another dimension of replicability is its dependence on the unusual generosity of a single donor organization over twenty years. A final concern was the issue of charter schools and their viability in delivering quality education to the full population over time. In the end, there was no Committee consensus on the replicability of the project. There was, however, clarity that it was a well crafted project directly responsive to the circumstances within which it is operating.

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Silver Medal Winner

Civic Space Park

Phoenix, Arizona



Craig Smith



View of Park looking toward downtown

Project At-A-Glance

WHAT IS CIVIC SPACE PARK?

- ➔ Civic Space Park is a newly-created open space of 2.77 acres on the cusp between downtown Phoenix and the new in-town campus of ASU.
- ➔ The park is the result of a unique partnership between the City of Phoenix and ASU, with other partners in more minor roles. A city bond election funded not only the public park, but also very substantial construction of ASU academic and support facilities, and there is a formal partnership agreement for ongoing operation and maintenance of the park and buildings.
- ➔ The park provides a variety of settings to support varied activities. There are rather extensive lawns, shaded seating areas, an outdoor performance venue, and a renovated historic building with a large meeting/class room, a public café, and other spaces.
- ➔ The park is actively used and does, indeed, appear to be a venue for the meeting of town and gown. It is used by a wide variety of people, drawing surrounding residents, students who attend classes and/or live in the area, downtown office workers, and people from other parts of the city as well.
- ➔ There is a very prominent and large art installation which hovers above part of the park, suspended from four tall pylons, and visible from a considerable distance.

- ➔ Other features include two fountains (one interactive) and a light “sculpture” consisting of computer-controlled LEDs.
- ➔ Despite the extensive lawns, many environmentally-sensitive features are included in the design, including photo-voltaic panels on shade structures, permeable paving, underground detention tanks for storm drainage that recharge the ground water, energy-efficient lighting, and extensive planting of trees which, together with the shade structures will result in the site being about 70% shaded within 10 years when the trees grow in.

PROJECT GOALS

- ➔ To provide a “place for the community to come together”
- ➔ To become a “true ‘civic space’ that would bring together the intersecting and overlapping needs of various users” including students, low-income seniors, downtown residents and workers, and visitors to Phoenix
- ➔ To create a civic amenity – not just a recreational amenity
- ➔ To be very “green” – environmentally friendly and to incorporate many ecological and energy-efficient features
- ➔ To energize and enliven a substantial (and underdeveloped, if not blighted) area at the edge of the downtown Phoenix urban core (this is a goal of the overall development, including ASU, not just the park).

Project Chronology

Park and City Project Schedule

2006 Successful bond election for \$600 million, including \$232 million for ASU downtown facilities and about \$32 million for the park (of the latter about \$3 million was designated for art).

Spring 2007 Public and stakeholder meetings to discuss design and function

Dec. 2008 Phase 1 of the light rail system completed (runs on both sides of Civic Space Park).

Spring 2009 Civic Space Park opens.

Fall 2011 Anticipated Civic Space Park completion with expansion at north (toward the post office).

ASU Project Schedule

Spring 2004 Begin conceptualization, location, programs, schematic design, partnership formation

Fall 2005 Open PURL (Phoenix Urban Research Lab)

March 2006 Passage of bond election (\$232 million for ASU)

Fall 2006 Open campus with Public Programs and Nursing in a variety of buildings (2,750 students; 300 beds)

Fall 2008 Open new School of Journalism and Taylor Place student housing (7,850 students; 1,800 beds)

Fall 2009 Post Office Union (not completed on this schedule) and 424 Building (unclear)

Spring 2010 Open Nursing expansion

Other Related Projects – Projected Dates:

June 2011 Transit Center completion

April 2012 Post Office renovation for ASU campus student union/center (RFQ issued at time of site visit)

2012-13 YMCA expansion for ASU campus recreation (planned but not firmly scheduled)

KEY PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEWED

DAVID CAVAZOS *City of Phoenix, City Manager*
 RICK NAIMARK *City of Phoenix, Deputy City Manager*
 JASON HARRIS *City of Phoenix, Deputy Director,*
Community & Economic Development Department
 TOM BYRNE *City of Phoenix, Parks & Recreation*
(project manager for design and construction)
 TJ PENKOFF *City of Phoenix, Parks & Recreation*
(manages daily operations of park)
 BARBARA STOCKLIN *City of Phoenix, Historic Preservation Officer*
 ED LEBOW *City of Phoenix, Public Art Program Director*
 RAPHAEL NGOTIE *City of Phoenix, Senior Public Art Project Manager*
 SAM FELDMAN *City of Phoenix, Management Intern (RBA liaison and*
ASU student during park construction and opening)
 DEBRA FRIEDMAN *University Vice President and Dean,*
ASU College of Public Programs (key ASU administration
liaison to the city and this project)
 WELLINGTON (DUKE) REITER *FAIA, former Dean*
ASU College of Architecture and special advisor to the
President for the downtown campus.
 MALISSA GEER *Engagement Liaison (and student),*
ASU College of Public Programs (events coordinator)
 JAY HICKS *ASLA, Vice President, AECOM (formerly EDAA),*
principal in charge of park design

JEFF SWANN *architect for historic preservation*
of AE England building
 SUSAN COPELAND *Downtown Voices Coalition*
 STEVE WEISS *Downtown Voices Coalition*
 JEFF MYERS *Executive Director,*
Lincoln Family Downtown YMCA (not interviewed)
 PUBLIC ALLIES AND ASU DOWNTOWN REPRESENTATIVES



Project Description

VISION AND PLANNING

Civic Space Park is the result of the intersecting visions of the City of Phoenix and Arizona State University. ASU's vision included expansion from its main campus to three satellites, including one downtown.

In 2004, when the economy was still strong, the city concluded a strategic visioning exercise. It had a number of components, but several of them directly affected the area around the park. These included:

- “Knowledge anchors” – which entailed support for the health and biosciences and a new ASU campus
- An “arts and entertainment hub” – to which the park contributes as an activity venue and locus of a major work



- Creating or preserving “great places/great spaces” – with an emphasis on historic preservation and creation of open space
- “The connected oasis” – fostering public transportation, shade, and the like (including the light rail system).

To move toward realizing its vision, the city began planning a large public bond measure. It was an omnibus approach, with “something for everyone”, structured to appeal to the maximum number of constituencies and, therefore, voters. The \$600 million bond included money for parks, education, transportation, street improvements and utilities. Included in this bond was an unprecedented \$232 million for construction of a new ASU campus in downtown. Obvious benefits of having a downtown campus include enlivening the area and providing customers for bars, moderately-priced restaurants, shops and rental housing. While every city may want a new university downtown, few (if any) are willing or able to pay for it.

Meanwhile ASU, under the direction of its visionary president, Michael Crow, was elaborating its plan to expand to a downtown campus to complement its main campus in Tempe as well as other satellites. ASU targeted programs and schools that would derive benefit from (and provide value to) the city center. These include nursing (close to hospitals and fostering a community health emphasis), journalism (around the corner from the main local newspaper and television news channels), and public programs (including social work, criminology, and public affairs). At this new downtown



campus, ASU “remains committed to serving as an urban crucible for education and research-intensive social and economic change”.

The bond also included \$32 million for the park, including renovation of the one remaining historic building and the commissioning of a major public art installation. It passed comfortably, with over 70% of the vote.

Aerial View of Park



URBAN CONTEXT

Civic Space Park is immediately north of Phoenix's downtown civic and business center. It is directly adjacent to Arizona State University's (ASU) new downtown campus, a YMCA, a transit center, and a historic post office building. It is very close to a subsidized senior housing project that occupies a converted historic hotel.

Downtown

Development in the downtown Phoenix area has been substantial, but spotty – with surface parking lots and under-developed buildings mixed with high rise offices, hotels, and some residential towers. Recent improvements include a convention center with related hotels, civic buildings (including a courthouse currently under construction) and light rail that runs through downtown and serves the surrounding

ASU Student Center



suburbs and cities, including Scottsdale to the east, the location of the main ASU campus. Recently, like everywhere in the US, development has stalled, with only a few projects going forward, though many are planned (*see the section on Future Plans*).

ASU Campus

Three academic components are complete. These include the schools of journalism, nursing and public programs – the former in new facilities, the latter in a re-purposed office building. In addition, a large, privately-funded and operated dormitory is complete. These facilities are immediately to the east of the park and two of them front directly on it. Current operations support about 8,200 students and 1,250 faculty as well as 1,050 beds in dorms or apart-

ASU building with shade canopy in foreground

“Importantly, when the inclusion of the sculpture was threatened for budgetary and political reasons, arts groups rallied to support its retention and prevailed at a public city council meeting.”

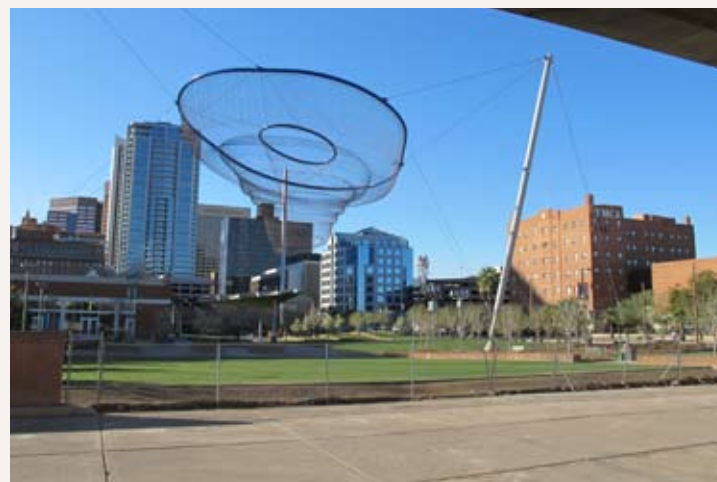
ments. The planned build-out of the campus is projected to include 15,000 students, 1,800 faculty and 4,000 beds. The city already owns an adjacent, vacant city block (former site of a Ramada Hotel) immediately to the east of the campus which is dedicated for ASU use (its purchase utilized the last of the bond monies). ASU plans to construct a law school on this block, once funding is secured. Additional university programs including exercise, wellness and nutrition are slated to open downtown by August 2012.

YMCA

The YMCA is immediately across the street to the west of the park. Its entrance more or less aligns with the main circulation spine of the campus (which connect across the park) providing a destination that draws students into and through the park. Since the Y also serves local residents and downtown office workers, it is part of the vision of connecting town and gown. The Y plans a major expansion which will, in effect, become the recreation center for the ASU campus. The timing of this expansion is not yet certain.

Intermodal Transit Hub

Under construction immediately south of the park, this will be the interchange between buses and the light rail system.



Top: Janet Eichelman sculpture
Bottom: transit stop at park

Light Rail

The light rail lines flank the park on its east and west sides, with a stop in each direction. The system is planned to expand, but already connects the ASU downtown and main campuses; thus, it is heavily used by students and faculty. Theoretically, the rails form a barrier to pedestrian traffic. However, the tracks are embedded in the street, so they represent only a limited impediment to crossing and could not be said to limit access to the park (certainly not for jay-walkers). In addition, there is a crosswalk on the east side at the main east-west pedestrian axis of the campus, so the rails pose little or no constraints on crossing on that side. While there is no corresponding crosswalk at the west (toward the YMCA), this fact seems to be generally ignored by crossing students, since the rails are at grade – and we were told that a crosswalk was planned.

Between the transit hub and the light rail stations, the park is very well served with public transportation.

US Post Office Building

The historic post office building will be integrated into the park – which will extend all the way to the former loading platform where mail was shipped in and out. At the request of locals, a retail postal function (clerk windows and post office boxes) will be retained while the balance of the space will be converted to ASU student union functions. ASU has issued a request for qualifications for a \$3 million program of upgrades (in addition to the park expansion costs). The reason this part of the project was not already completed is due to complications with the property transfer from federal GSA,



View from shade canopy looking toward historic Post Office

which reportedly has been finalized. Demolition of paving and other elements was already initiated at the time of the site visit.

Westward Ho Senior Housing

This historic high-rise hotel, across the street and to the north of the post office, has been converted to subsidized senior housing. Many residents were observed passing through or using the park for passive activities.

PROJECT HISTORY AND PROCESS

While the site had been occupied by a variety of uses for many years, the park project has a surprisingly short history. Design and construction were compressed into an accelerated schedule, which was particularly short for a public project. Following the 2006 bond election, planning and design took place during 2007; construction began and the site was cleared by January 2008 and the project opened in spring 2009.

As a public project, park planning was subject to the usual hearings and public meetings. It also followed very close on the heels of the taking of another city park, Patriot Square, for a redevelopment project immediately south of downtown. While Patriot Square did not have a lot of general public support (it was rundown and had attracted a homeless population), there was considerable public in-

terest in urban open space and in the replacement of Patriot Square with something more attractive and more broadly useful.

Despite the short duration for planning and design, the formal process for gaining input and review included at least twelve meetings spanning from March to May 2007. Meetings were held with two types of groups: identified stakeholders, who were invited, and members of the public who could attend Parks and Recreation board meetings or general public meetings devoted to the project. Some of the meetings made use of ASU's Phoenix Urban Research Lab (PURL) near the site, which has a large scale model of downtown and the site area.

Among the identified stakeholders were the arts and business communities, neighborhood groups, and ASU. At the meetings, program and design concepts were presented and comments received. The meeting organizers prepared a very detailed list of the programmatic and design objectives expressed by participants and ranked them by level of support ("shade" ranked number one). Initially, there were five quite distinct design concepts; by the time of the final public meeting, plans had been refined to two main alternatives – and the one preferred by the public was selected as best responding to the programmatic objectives. It was referred to as "the urban weave" (*see the section on Design*).

It is apparent that the project leaders and designers, as well as elected representatives, did indeed take into account what they

heard from participants. Site visitors got a clear sense from meeting with community representatives that their input and concerns were sought after, listened to and, at least to an important extent, incorporated into park design and management. For example, residents wanted the post office to retain services, and that is happening. There were also requests that the design support a wide variety of simultaneous activities, and it does, in fact, appear to do that. Importantly, when the inclusion of the sculpture was threatened for budgetary and political reasons, arts groups rallied to support its retention and prevailed at a public city council meeting (*this is discussed in more detail in the section on the Art Pieces*).

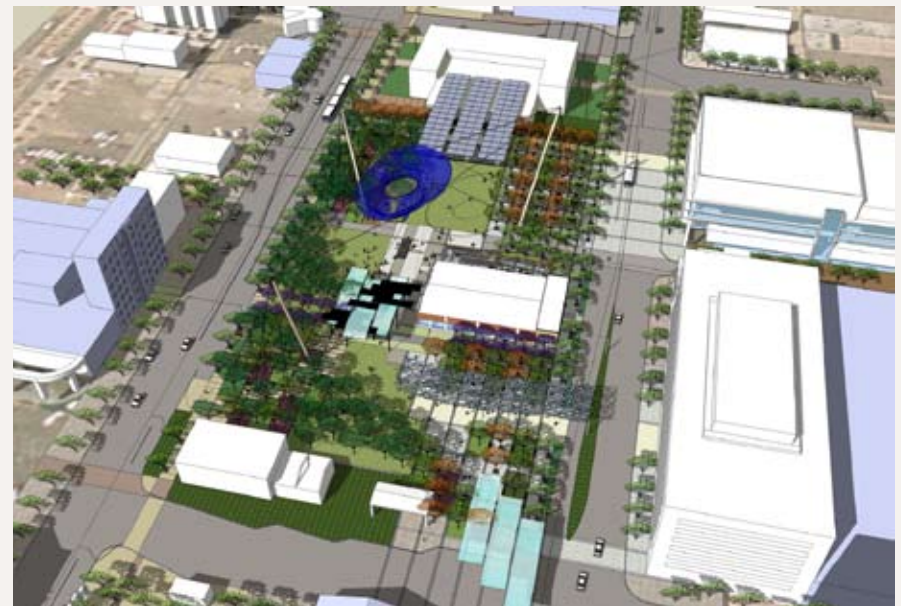
Beyond the formal process of public hearings and scheduled meetings, it is clear that the park has attracted a very broad base of support. Site visitors met with a diverse group of “public allies”, some of whom were affiliated with ASU, but many of whom were not. They ranged from volunteers who assisted with programming, to individuals or representatives of groups who use the park – either on a regular basis or for special events or performances. The

OVERVIEW OF THE PARK FROM THE SOUTHEAST CORNER.

Note that the shade structure in that corner, which appears to project over the street, is not included in the final design. The canopy soon to be constructed at the post office is visible at the top of the illustration and the art piece can be seen hovering just below it. Also visible are the YMCA across the street to the left, ASU University Center across the other street to the lower right and the ASU School of Journalism just above it.

group’s diversity could be measured along a number of axes – from young to old, establishment to upstart; and they were culturally and ethnically varied. What unified the group was their enthusiastic endorsement of both the park facilities and the programming and management; all felt welcome and supported in the scheduling and logistics of their events.

The park opened in the spring of 2009 and the final piece of the park was starting implementation at the time of the RBA site visit. It entails landscaping and hardscape that will extend the park to the



Sketch by AECOM

Civic Space Park site plan

north across a currently paved area and connect to the post office building. A shade structure, like the other ones in the park, will be added to extend the postal canopy. The park is expected to be 100% complete by the winter of 2012.

PARK DESIGN

Site Design

According to the designers, AECOM (formerly EDAA), the integrating “big concept” for the park is that of an “urban weave” tying the park into the fabric of downtown. The “weave” is somewhat hypothetical, being visible only in the shaping of certain landforms and the design of the shade structure canopies. Perhaps the most successful example of “weaving” is extending the axis of the ASU campus main circulation into and through the park at its approximate midpoint and the fortuitous location of the open side of the historic building just along that axis, providing an excellent connection to its facilities (meeting room, gallery, terraces and café). Otherwise, circulation seems to meander (in a not unpleasant way) through the park on diagonals that take the visitor through or past shade structures, art installations, lawns, and the performance space – and which will connect to the transit station upon its completion at the southeast corner.

Perhaps in an attempt to keep most edges and corners of the park open and permeable, there is little special or of interest that occurs

at them. One design critique of the park finds the corners to be a bit weak and lacking in definition, especially compared to other designs that have been recognized by the RBA (*see the Park at Post Office Square in Boston, 1993 or Millennium Park in Chicago, 2009*).

Hardscape

Hardscape and paving consist of concrete, cement pavers (mostly in seating and activity areas), and permeable paving (mostly on walkways).

Landscape/Plantings

There is a very substantial amount of lawn (the variety of grass was selected to thrive in the hot months; the permanent turf is seeded with rye grass to fill in during the winter). The grass is planted over what was referred to as “structural soil” (incorporating a polymer as well as dirt), designed to retain moisture and resist further compaction under heavy use.

Much thought was given to the selection of the site’s trees. All are said to be drought-tolerant shade trees. While not native species (which were reported not to thrive in downtown), they are a mix of evergreen and deciduous, selected to provide seasonal variations. They are live oaks, ash, pistachios, and flowering pears (which were in bloom at the time of the visit). Other plantings, including lantana, had been badly hit by an unusual frost and had not yet revived at the time of the site visit. There are also areas with deciduous trees that were bare during the visit and the combined affect was that of a still not mature landscape.



Tom Byrne



Seating

There are a number of types and locations for seating, offering options for levels of tranquility and of sun or shade. Moveable benches are located under most of the shade structures. Concrete benches, unshaded at the moment, are located at planters whose trees will, within a few years, provide shade for them. In addition, there are undulating concrete retaining walls that sculpt the lawns on the west side into various levels. The retaining walls that front on paved areas have been fitted with anti-skateboarding rails, while those in the lawn generally have not; where installed, they clearly discourage sitting as well as skateboarding.

We observed all types of seating being used at one time or another during the site visit. The moveable benches were generally used by solitary individuals or couples. The undulating walls provided seating during the performances and for an ASU class on park management – as did the concrete benches for another class.

Energy and Environment

Among the environmentally-sensitive features of the park are over 15,000 square feet of permeable paving and a “StormTech” retention and percolation system that captures rain and spare irrigation water, and recharges the ground water basin. Lighting is energy-efficient and the canopies provide an ideal location for photovoltaic panels, which currently cover about half of them. These generate up to 75,000 KW and will likely be expanded in the future.

Top: seating under shade canopy
Bottom: ASU class in Park

Canopies and Shade Structures

Shade is a very important consideration in the desert and it permeates design standards, both for the park and for Phoenix in general. Here, shade will eventually be provided over more than 70% of the park – by the trees, canopies and shade structures. The latter are designed as warped planes, made up of colored tubes or rods which are suspended below the supporting structure, in part to allow photovoltaic panels to be mounted above them. Where panels are in place, they are staggered to allow dappled light to reach the ground.

Performance Spaces

The canopy to the west of the A.E. England building provides a raised stage and space for about 500 spectators, including the hard-scape and adjacent lawns (with undulating raised seating elements). During the site visit, there was an all-day series of performances and speeches related to Black History month. We also saw groups

of musicians and dancers rehearsing at other times. As part of the final phase of park development, the planned canopy will extend the old post office loading dock's covering while the raised dock will function as a stage. Facing the north lawn, we were told that it would accommodate up to 2,000 spectators.

Fountains

There are two fountains in the park. One is a kind of water wall that runs on two sides of the café's lower-level terrace. It ripples over stainless steel mesh and runs into a base of blue glass. The second is an interactive fountain, mostly intended for children to play in. It has jets that rise out of the ground. Pavers are interspersed with glass tiles which are illuminated at night and are programmed to provide a variety of colors and patterns.



Left: Looking through shade canopy into Park
 Middle: Fountain detail in café
 Right: Plaza fountain

Safety & Security

Security is achieved through both design and enforcement. ASU's chief of security reported that he was highly engaged during design and brought his knowledge of CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) to the table. Among the principles that applied were keeping the park animated and active, eliminating places where threatening individuals could lurk unseen, and providing at least minimal levels of lighting to all areas, brighter along the main walkways. In addition, ASU initiated the placement of several security "kiosks" at strategic locations with call buttons to summon assistance; they are reported to be "rarely if ever used". In the event of need, a park visitor would likely dial 911. In the chief's words, the challenge has not been to fight crime, but to fight the perception of crime. His goal, which he claims has been achieved, was that all populations, ranging from students to the homeless, feel comfortable and safe in the park and have the opportunity to interact. This results in a sense of ownership and territoriality which prevents the park from being taken over by unsavory elements (e.g., for drug dealing).

In addition to potential response from ASU, city and transit police, the park has private security patrols. We interviewed one officer who reported very few incidents. He views his role more as "customer service" than enforcement. There are also "downtown ambassadors" employed by the local business improvement district, who visit the park periodically and are available to answer questions or give directions.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION/RENOVATION – AND RESULTING FACILITIES

The decision to retain and renovate the historic AE England building was a key element of the park plan, but it was not a foregone conclusion. The building, (half of the original structure), was built in 1926. It was a car dealership, with showroom, service bay and ramp to the basement where vehicles were stored. The exterior is made of brick – blond at the front and common (red) around the sides and rear. The structure consists of bowstring trusses which span the entire width, leaving the interior column-free. The trusses, in particular, were in very poor condition and needed substantial reinforcing.

*Left: Emergency phone and kiosk
Right: Historic Post Office entry*



The renovation retained and refurbished the elements of historic value (brick, cast concrete decorations, trusses, window openings). The yellow brick and its mortar joints were repainted by hand to appear like the originals, which were found to be a more cost-effective means of restoring them.

The historic building was imaginatively integrated into the park. The north wall of the structure had been a common wall with the half of the building that could not be retained because it was in too poor condition. This wall was of no historic value and its removal opened up the entire north façade at both ground and basement levels. Fortuitously, this side of the building faces directly onto the park's main cross-axis, connecting ASU and the YMCA. Thus, it made an excellent location for the café – which is on the lower level and opens to a newly-created terrace. Also on the lower level are meeting rooms and utility spaces.

ASU Student Center with Fair Trade Café in foreground

The main floor is given over to a large meeting room, which was inserted into the space as an apparently floating volume (solid walls below and glazing above where it meets the trusses and ceiling). The design intent was to “show restraint” and leave the original structure exposed so that it could be seen and appreciated. The circulation space between the meeting room and the exterior wall on the north and east sides is dedicated to an art gallery, with paintings displayed on the solid interior walls. The gallery space is jointly operated by ASU and a community arts group (Art Link) and features rotating exhibitions, mostly of local artists. Outside on the north is a balcony with tables (that was little-used during our visit); it overlooks the café terrace, below.

ASU, by agreement, has priority use of the meeting room on weekdays, where it schedules a variety of activities including academic and recreation classes such as yoga. When not reserved by ASU, the room is available for civic and community functions. A review of the meeting room schedule shows it to be intensively used. There is another smaller set of meeting or conference rooms in the basement.

At the lower level is the Fair Trade Café which opens onto a sunken terrace to the north (and is thus shaded by the building and its overhangs). The café is operated under a contract and offers coffee and sandwiches. It was observed to get moderate use, mostly students (many of whom were using their laptops which were connected to the free wifi).

THE ART PIECE(S)

Phoenix has a very extensive public art program with a 20-year history of success. Some of the art is free-standing and recognizable as such, but there are also many projects woven into the fabric of public works projects such as highway bridges, retaining walls, and light rail stations (including the ones flanking the park).

The park includes two more minor art pieces: an illuminated, interactive fountain and a computer-driven installation of lighted columns, but the focal object is the monumental “Her Secret is Patience” – a net sculpture suspended about 100 feet above the park. This was the subject of an invited, national competition (which included the designer of the Crowne Fountain in Chicago’s Millennium Park; an RBA Silver Medalist in 2009). The selection committee was most impressed by Janet Echelman’s submission and referred to a prior installation of hers in Portugal which somewhat resembled the Phoenix proposal.

One advantage of Echelman’s proposal was a very light footprint, saving ground space for other activities. The huge net is suspended by cables from four very tall masts which rest on concrete piers sunk deep into the ground. The project posed many engineering and construction challenges, which are probably not germane to the success of the park (so are not described here). The sculpture is very different during the day and at night, when it is illuminated by a number of ground and building-mounted colored flood lights.



These are programmed to change slowly (and the color gels are also changed seasonally).

The city art program’s brochure describes the sculpture in these terms: “monumental yet soft, fixed in place but constantly in motion. Responding to the desert winds.... The artist says she was ‘mesmerized by the broad open sky’... and the distinctive monsoon cloud formations... ‘the shock of desert winds, whirls of dust, the crash of lightening, and that luminous blue turning to violet and orange, then velvety blue-black.’” She was also inspired by desert cactus blooms.

The sculpture is placed strategically at the intersection of the main circulation paths to maximize its visibility and impact. It is, indeed, prominent as one approaches the park from the main ASU pedestrian way, as well as from many other vantage points.

Civic Space Park looking toward Echelman sculpture

One interesting aspect of the park's implementation process is that at one point the inclusion of the sculpture was threatened. This hesitation was based on political perceptions that the citizens might not appreciate the expenditure of \$2.5 million when the economy was tanking in 2008. A resolution recommending its removal was scheduled to be heard by the city council; but the local arts community mobilized support and packed the meeting – and the council decided to go forward with the sculpture.

PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND PATTERNS OF USE

There are two types of program activities at the park: informal activities and scheduled events.

Informal activities include active pursuits, such as strolling or playing games on the lawn (we observed Frisbee, children playing in the fountain, and the blowing of giant bubbles) as well as more quiet or passive activities, such as reading, sitting in the sun or shade, quiet conversation, picnicking, and studying with or without the use of a laptop. The site visit occurred on Valentine's Day and at least one couple was having a picnic dinner on the lawn with candles and wine. The security officer saw them from a distance and ignored the violation of park rules (the alcohol) since they were not causing any trouble. Site visitors also saw classes being held in at least two



Tom Byrne

Echelman sculpture at night

locations. The park offers benches, tables, and of course substantial lawn areas to support these activities.

Clearly, part of the park's function is to serve as a quad for the ASU campus; but it is a quad that is fully connected and accessible to the city. By observation, and also as reported by Commander Wilson of the ASU police, a wide range of people use the park. Apparently, diversity is effectively encouraged.

In February the weather was mild and the park was used at moderate levels during the day and in the evening. We were told, however, that during hot weather, temporal utilization patterns shift such that there is much less daytime use, and much more in the evening. Even during hot weather, the shade structures (and, in the future, the trees) provide opportunities to sit outside.



Impromptu music group in the Park

The park is the location of numerous scheduled events and activities sponsored by the city Parks and Recreation Department and ASU. This appears to be a joint effort with contributions by city staff and ASU paid interns who function as event coordinators. Some events are recurring; these include:

- Yoga classes every Saturday morning – sponsored by the YMCA and held indoors or outdoors depending on the weather.
- First Friday – arts and music performances – 7 to 10 pm.
- Second Saturday – community cinema – at sundown.
- Sundays (1 per month, generally 3rd or 4th) – Civic Space Jam

The park also provides a venue for unique events. During the site visit, there was an afternoon celebration of Black history with speakers and a wide variety of performances (spoken word, poetry slam, music, theatrical). It drew a moderate-sized crowd which was diverse while being substantially African-American. Another event in February was a showing of a film sponsored by the local Slow Food chapter.

According to the ASU event coordinators, during 2010 their work leveraged approximately \$24,000 in donations and sponsorships (including in-kind and cash). An additional like amount is represented by the value of the time of the interns. Finally, the city spent about \$15,000 on its events.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION: THE CITY-ASU PARTNERSHIP

Every city wants a new university campus downtown, but few are willing and able to pay for one. And while not every university may want to be downtown, more than a few recognize the synergy that can be gained for their urban-oriented programs. As described above, in the case of Phoenix, bringing the ASU campus to downtown strongly complemented many of its strategic goals – and, in a time of strong economic growth, its citizens were willing to support a bond election to pay for the majority of the new campus.

For ASU, the downtown campus fit into the “imperatives” articulated by President Crow for the “new American university.” As expressed by Wellington Reiter, former dean of architecture and advisor to the president on design matters (including the downtown campus), the plan leverages the following of Crow’s imperatives:

- Leveraging place
- Societal transformation
- Knowledge entrepreneurship
- Use-inspired research
- A focus on the individual
- Intellectual fusion
- Social embeddedness

Given the strength of mutual self-interest and the clear benefits to be gained by both the city and the university, perhaps the fact of the partnership is not surprising. But the cost and scale of the joint projects were said to be “unique in the world”, according to Debra Friedman, ASU’s university vice president and dean of one of the downtown colleges.

The partnership also appears to have evolved and matured from the initial vision through the realization phase and now into operations. In formalizing the legal basis of the relationship, a master lease agreement was entered into between the city (as landlord) and ASU (as tenant) in 2006. It identified the parcels that were to be developed for ASU, the fact that ASU would be responsible for operating costs, and the eventual transfer of ownership to ASU of their facilities. Prior to the lease, there was a more conceptual inter-governmental agreement setting out intentions. In 2009, a second inter-governmental operating agreement was entered into specifically for Civic Space Park and the England Building. This establishes ASU as the “priority tenant” for the building, specifies an annual rental payment for its proportional use of the park and facilities (\$125,000 per year), and establishes responsibilities for operations and maintenance (city) and programming (ASU) among many other factors.

While it is always important to have sound contractual arrangements, it is also clear that there is abundant good will and a strong spirit of cooperation between the two parties. And the relationship appears to be capable of evolving and responding to emerging



circumstances. This may be due in part to the high level of representation both entities contribute to the partnership. For the city, it falls to the deputy city manager, Rick Naimark, and for ASU to the high-ranking Debra Friedman. She described the partnership as representing an outstanding working relationship, characterized by a “collective, collaborative” spirit of shared values and interdependence. In addition to the frequent meetings during the planning and design phase, coordination meetings continue on a monthly basis with this high-level representation. Another measure of the success of the town-gown collaboration is the fact that ASU won the 2009 C. Peter McGrath University Community Engagement Award from the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (not for Civic Space Park, but for another community engagement project).

FUTURE PLANS

The plans for completion of the park were described above and they were, in fact, underway at the time of writing. Projects around the park were also described, including the post office, YMCA, and transit center.

Beyond the immediate edges of the park, there are also a number of other initiatives that are likely, eventually, to transform that part of the city. There is an undeveloped block of land still reserved for ASU just to the east and south of its current facilities. This will allow them to add one more major component to their campus, a law school, which ASU predicts is likely within three to four years and would also benefit from proximity to the downtown law firms, courthouses, and the like.

Another vision, which has been partially realized, is substantial expansion of the city’s bio-medical complex (the Arizona Biomedical Collaborative), with the addition of a genetic engineering component. Some of this is already in place, including a bio-science high school and the Translational Genomics Institute. The recently-constructed convention center is also only a few blocks away to the south and this has generated development closer to the park, including the large, soon-to-be-completed mixed-use project just to the south and east of the campus.

FINANCES

Capital Program

The park was almost entirely funded through the city's bond program, passed in 2006, providing approximately \$30 million. Additional funds were provided from historic preservation bonds (for the England Building) and from Parks and Recreation. Of the total, about

CIVIC SPACE CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION COST BUDGET

Sources	
2006 Parks Bonds	\$ 29,869,520
Historic Preservation Bonds	\$ 588,427
Phoenix Parks and Preserves	\$ 3,550,000
2006 Economic Development Bonds	\$ 100,000
Total funds available	\$ 34,107,947
Uses (Expenditures and Encumbrances)	
Contractual Engineering	\$ 2,391,269
City Engineering	\$ 819,670
Construction	\$ 14,283,630
FFE, Equipment, Security, Other	\$ 589,200
Land, Relocation, Property Management	\$ 16,275,901
& Legal Interest on Assessments (revenue)	(815,305)
Total expenditures	\$ 33,544,365

\$3 million was designated for art projects; the bulk of this, \$2.5 million, was spent for the single major installation.

Operating Costs

It costs about \$400,000 per year to operate the park. ASU contributes \$125,000 toward these expenses as well as the cooling for the England Building which comes from the ASU central downtown cooling plant (the value of that contribution is not included below). of the balance of the operating budget is provided by the city.

PARKS AND RECREATION CIVIC SPACE 2010/11 OPERATING BUDGET

Recreation Budget	
Personal Services	\$ 106,163
Contractual Services	\$ 4,541
Total Recreation Budget	\$ 110,704
Maintenance Budget	
Personal Services	\$ 191,272
Contractual Services	\$ 101,253
Commodities	\$ 11,500
Total Maintenance Budget	\$ 304,025
Total Civic Space Operating Budget	\$ 414,729

PROJECT IMPACTS

Town & Gown Relationships and Interactions

Perhaps the most important question about project impact and level of success is whether town and gown actually find “common ground” in the park. By observation and report, it would appear that they do. At a minimum, the park has attracted a variety of users from its immediate surroundings (students, residents, the elderly, downtown workers) and from farther afield (for more substantial events, both as performers and as audience members). While some events and activities serve a particular group, many have a broader appeal.



Our meeting with the so-called “public allies” and ASU representatives demonstrated this very clearly. One after another, people from the community praised the park as a unique venue in the city and the region where meaningful events and interactions are fostered. These people had either sponsored, organized or taken part in performances, exhibitions, classes, or other events. They were very positive about the roles of ASU in organizing activities and events and of the city in fostering a welcoming and supportive attitude. Having such a venue clearly contributes to making Phoenix a more urbane urban center.

Economic Impacts

It is not realistic to try to measure the economic impact of the park itself on the city. Certainly, some construction jobs were created and some on-going employment results from its presence. But the real impact would have to be measured in the context of the insertion of the new ASU downtown campus together with the park. We were provided with an assessment of the predicted impacts of the ASU campus by Wellington Reiter (the original source is not identified).

The estimated tax revenues of over \$21 million in ten years could be weighed against the capital costs of \$223 million or the costs to repay the bonds but this represents a small portion of the potential returns if the secondary benefits of the new university occupancy are fully analyzed.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO PHOENIX 10-YEAR CUMULATIVE GROSS IMPACT

University Operations	
Wages	\$ 106,700,000
Economic Output	\$ 215,600,000
Tax Collections:	
State	\$ 4,000,000
County	\$ 1,400,000
Phoenix	\$ 900,000
Private Retail	
Jobs	1,762
Wages	\$ 54,000,000
Tax Collections:	
State	\$ 5,400,000
County	\$ 1,900,000
Phoenix	\$ 2,300,000
Private Office	
Jobs	2,100
Wages	\$ 78,600,000
Tax Collections:	
State	\$ 4,200,000
County	\$ 2,300,000
Phoenix	\$ 600,000

Other quantifiable impacts were listed earlier in this report in terms of number of students, faculty and staff positions.

The estimated tax revenues of over \$21 million in ten years could be weighed against the capital costs of \$223 million or the costs to repay the bonds but this represents a small portion of the potential returns if the secondary benefits of the new university occupancy are fully analyzed.

Other quantifiable impacts were listed earlier in this report in terms of number of students, faculty and staff positions.

Stimulus for Other Development

There is considerable development taking place, and more planned or likely, in the vicinity of the park and the campus. The YMCA plans a major addition and the post office will be renovated. These projects are directly related to the campus as is the planned law school. Other development (as described above) may have been encouraged by the perceived benefits of the ASU campus, including bringing thousands of students and staff to the area, as potential customers (as well as their contribution to making a more lively and safer neighborhood), but it is impossible to measure this impact. Having mostly filled in a substantial sector just north of the downtown core, ASU may set the stage for additional development further to the north.

Other, intangible impacts include the contribution ASU and the park will make to light rail (and other public transit) ridership, helping to make or keep them viable. Finally, there is the improvement in perception of Phoenix as a sophisticated sponsor of public arts by virtue of the major, iconic sculpture showcased in the park (notwithstanding the city's long history as a sponsor of public art).

Assessing Project Success

SUCCESS IN MEETING PROJECT GOALS

- *Provide a “place for the community to come together”.*

The park does indeed succeed in providing such a venue.

- *To become a “true ‘civic space’ that would bring together the intersecting and overlapping needs of various users”. These groups include students, low-income seniors, downtown residents and workers, and visitors to Phoenix.*

The park is a civic space. It not only serves a variety of needs (and supports a wide variety of activities and events), it appears to foster the interaction of town and gown – and of an ethnically, economically, culturally, and age-diverse set of people.

- *To create a civic amenity – not just a recreation amenity.*

Recreational opportunities are available for unstructured activities on the lawns (such as Frisbee) and more organized activities in the England building (e.g., yoga classes). However, the park is used more for passive recreation and community events than for active recreation. Thus, it meets this goal.

- *To be very “green” – environmentally friendly and incorporate many ecological and energy-efficient features.*

The park does incorporate many green and energy-efficient features (e.g., PV solar panels, ground water recharging system, energy efficient lighting, etc.). It is unclear whether the extensive use of turf grass (and the water required to maintain it) is consistent with this goal.

- *To energize and enliven a substantial (and underdeveloped, if not blighted) area at the edge of the downtown Phoenix urban core (note: this is a goal of the overall development, including ASU, not just the park).*

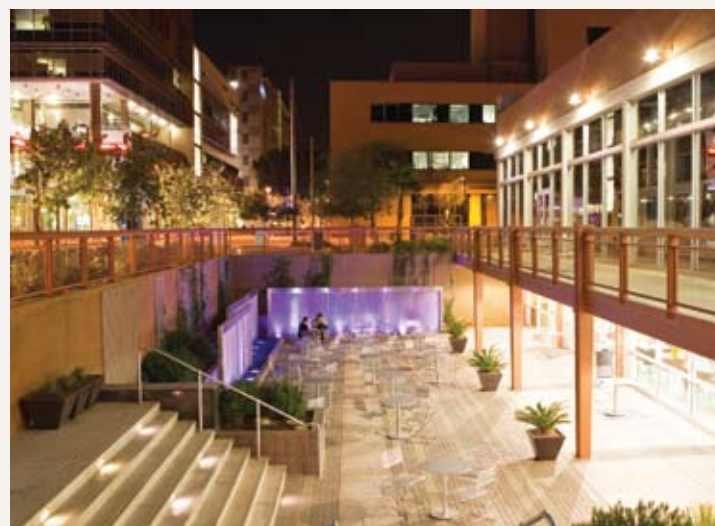
The park, together with the ASU campus, the YMCA and other developments, has without a doubt energized and enlivened this area, which was at least in part close to derelict.

SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The selection committee found much to praise about Civic Space Park. In initially selecting it as a finalist, the committee expressed great interest in this major and very successful collaboration between the city and the university. Located immediately adjacent to the heart of downtown, the committee noted that the university campus and park contribute greatly to the quality of urban life in Phoenix, providing an excellent forum for town and gown to meet.

They found the project to be innovative in terms of sustainability in the desert climate, education and transportation. In terms of design, the committee felt that the park demonstrates an excellent relationship between open space and built environment, including historic preservation and adaptive reuse. It also has a very impressive artwork with great visual impact at night. The park (especially together with the university campus) represents a huge transformation compared to the underutilization and dereliction it replaced. The committee also praised the strong community engagement process, with lots of input that is reflected in the design and, on an on-going basis, the programming of activities.

With all these positives, the committee was still left with some questions and concerns. They felt that the plantings and some of the detailing (e.g., of the shade structure supports) could have been more sensitively designed. While plant selections were climatically appropriate, they did not reinforce the image of the desert environment. In addition, planting larger, more mature trees, that would have provided shade initially rather than in some years, would have been appreciated. While some committee members liked the differentiation of the park into sub-areas, others found it to be somewhat disjointed. Finally, there was also a sense that the sculpture was so successful and such a powerful attraction that it may overwhelm the park itself.



Craig Smith

REFERENCES

City of Phoenix, *Downtown Phoenix: A Strategic Vision and Blueprint for the Future*, December 14, 2004

Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture, *Infusion: 20 Years of Public Art in Phoenix*; 2005

“Intergovernmental Operating Agreement (IGA) & Operating and Maintenance Operating Agreement,” contract between City of Phoenix and ASU for Civic Space Park and the England Building – dated 7/06/09

“Master Lease and Operating Agreement,” contract between City of Phoenix as landlord and ASU as tenant for the park and campus facilities and sites – dated 6/22/06

WELLINGTON REITER, Dean, College of Design, ASU: University as Civic Partner; The Arizona State University Downtown Phoenix Campus; PowerPoint presentation, 2006



Silver Medal Winner

Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment

Santa Fe, New Mexico





Historic Santa Fe Railway Station

Project At-A-Glance

WHAT IS THE SANTA FE RAILYARD REDEVELOPMENT?

- ➔ The Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment is a 50-acre, \$137 million project to restore and revitalize the industrial and transportation district directly adjacent to the former Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company spur line.
- ➔ The Santa Fe Railyard includes 13 acres of open space (including public plazas and a 10-acre park) and 500,000 square feet of buildings.
- ➔ The North Railyard District of the project contains a variety of retail and gallery spaces, the Railyard Park, the New Mexico Rail Runner Express train depot, and four core nonprofit tenants: the Farmers Market Institute, SITE Santa Fe, Warehouse 21, El Museo Cultural and one core for-profit tenant, the Santa Fe Southern Railroad.
- ➔ The Baca District of the project contains housing and small business spaces.
- ➔ The project is the culmination of more than two decades of planning and community activism related to the development of this area.

PROJECT GOALS

- ➔ To become a community asset that emphasizes local artists, local businesses and local cultures.
- ➔ To preserve the history and continuing use of the Railyard as an alternative mode of transportation, while maintaining a primarily pedestrian environment.
- ➔ To ensure that existing community-based nonprofits could remain in the Railyard through rent reduction.
- ➔ To cherish and protect the beauty and quality of surrounding neighborhoods, and to respect their unique architectural characteristics.
- ➔ To maintain the vitality of the deeply-rooted neighborhood by keeping development consistent with the historical context while maintaining the industrial architectural character of the site.
- ➔ To provide affordable activities for the community in beautiful, welcoming public spaces that offer social vitality, healthful activity, and vibrant artistic elements.
- ➔ To create a sustainable park appropriate for New Mexico's arid high desert climate.

Project Chronology

1880 First train of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company pulled into the capital city of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

1940s The Santa Fe Railyard remained an active center of rail activity.

1980s Due to the decline in rail activity the site had become an unused section of town with homeless living in cars on site. In other parts of Santa Fe, boom-time growth was occurring, and the city had begun to develop plans to manage that growth.

1985 Mayor Montañño announced a plan to develop the Railyard.

1985 Trust for Public Land (TPL) approached Mayor Pick to initiate the idea of acquisition of the Railyard through a non-profit purchase program.

1987 June: the City of Santa Fe passed a resolution declaring the Railyard a “blighted area” which required the City to follow State laws on the redevelopment of the property.

1987–88 The City began planning the Railyard. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Commission (MRC) was created, began hearings and hired Robert Charles Lesser Co. to develop a Master Plan for the Railyard. The City did not commit to a purchase of the Railyard.

1989–90 Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company formed Catellus Development Corporation to prepare development plans for the Railyard.

1991 Catellus Report for the Railyard was released. The plan included demolition of most existing buildings and new buildings two to six stories tall with 1.2 million square feet of development planned.

1992 The Catellus Plan was rejected by the MRC and the City Council.

1994 City of Santa Fe General Plan update reflected a major shift in policy toward community planning and participation as a result of the election of Mayor Debbie Jaramillo.

1995 *December:* the City of Santa Fe purchased the 50 acres of the Railyard with bridge financing support and facilitation from TPL.

1996 *December:* The City, TPL, Santa Fe Land use Resource Center (LURC) and the Santa Fe Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), with the National AIA Regional/urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) issued an open invitation to the citizenry to come and vote for what they wished to have on the Railyard. The number one desire was to keep the railroad running to the historic depot for freight, passenger and excursion use. The public also requested a large park, a teen center, local business opportunities, and an arts and cultural district within the Railyard. They valued protection of adjacent neighborhoods and keeping the “rugged, gritty” look of the Railyard.

1997 *February:* the City, LURC and Santa Fe AIA held a four week long design process. In week one, over 200 people worked with local architects and planners to design preliminary land use concepts for the Railyard. During week two, the AIA R/UDAT and local designers produced the “*Community Plan*.” The report was released as a donation and gift by the Santa Fe Reporter, so that everyone in town could receive a copy. *Spring:* City Council unanimously approved the Community Plan

1997 The Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation (SFRCC) was formed as a New Mexico non-profit corporation in response to recommendations in the Community Plan; however the City of Santa Fe waited until 2002 to sign an agreement with SFRCC.

2000 The City and TPL approved a 13-acre easement agreement for a central open space spine, including the park, the rail line, a plaza and alameda in the Railyard.

2001 The City chose TPL to facilitate design and development of the new public spaces, with the intention of developing a formal stewardship organization (modeled on the Central Park Conservancy) to assist the City in managing the future public spaces.

2001 *March:* Design Workshop Inc. was selected by the City of Santa Fe to develop the Railyard Master Plan and Design Guidelines.

2001 *June & September:* Public meetings were held to provide the opportunity for representatives of 30 organizations to participate in widespread community discussion.

2002 Spring: TPL conducted an international design competition and received 52 applications for the design of the Railyard Park and Plaza. Four finalists—groups of architects, landscape architects, urban planners, artists, etc. both local and national—prepared plans and models of their visions for the rail yard public spaces. Hundreds of community members viewed the designs and made comments. After studying the plans a jury of local and national experts chose a winning conceptual design by Ken Smith, landscape architect; Frederick Schwartz, architect; and Mary Miss, artist. During schematic design the design was transformed by the suggestions of the community which held several formal and informal meetings.

2002 February: The Railyard Master Plan was approved by the City Council. The Master Plan honored the history and cultural heritage of the site – embracing the “rugged, gritty” look of the Railyard and encouraging the presence of local businesses, particularly non-profits, with a focus on alternative transportation, arts, culture and community.

2002 February and July: The Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation (SFRCC) entered into a lease and management agreement with the City. SFRCC took responsibility to develop the 37 acres of mixed-use space that will include museums, galleries, restaurants, retail shops, office space and live/work residential units for artists and craft persons.

2004 September: Ground breaking occurred on the Railyard with the beginning of archaeological studies.

2005 Resident prairie dogs relocated to large rural wildlife preserve; infrastructure construction begun.

2006 June: TPL launched public phase of capital campaign to build the Railyard Park and Plaza, as well as other public spaces on the Railyard.

2006-08 Building sites and public spaces developed by SFRCC, and private developers; TPL begins development of public space.

2008 September: Santa Fe Railyard Grand Opening, including the Farmers Market’s first day in new site; REI (Recreational Equipment, Inc.) store opened; underground parking garage opened; and park, plaza and alameda hosted two-day festival, including “ribbon cutting” ceremony featuring the Santa Fe

Southern Railway and the New Mexico Rail Runner Express, performances and activities, and cartoons and movie on the park.

2009 TPL's all-volunteer Railyard Advisory Committee, which provided community guidance for the project since 1985, was incorporated as the Railyard Stewards, an independent nonprofit organization.

KEY PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEWED

Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation

RICHARD CZOSKI *Executive Director*

SANDRA BRICE *Director – Events & Marketing*

STEVE ROBINSON *Board President*

LLETA SCOGGINS *Board Member, Former Executive Director*

OUIDA MACGREGOR *Board Member; Former City Councilwoman*

CRAIG BARNES *Board Member*

GILBERT DELGADO *Board Member*

ELLEN BRADBURY *Board Member;*

Member, Historic Guadalupe Neighborhood

Railyard Stewards

ELIZA KRETZMANN *Executive Director*

CAROL SCHRADER *Director – Outreach & Education*

TOM HNASKO *Board President*

SUBY BOWDEN *Board Executive Committee; Railyard Master Plan
Team Member, and Community Design Consultant*

CARMELLA PADILLA *Emeritus Board Member;*

Community Historian and Journalist

VARIOUS VOLUNTEERS AND PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

City and State Officials

MAYOR DAVID COSS *City of Santa Fe*

DEBBIE JARAMILLO *Former Mayor, City of Santa Fe (by phone)*

ROSEMARY ROMERO *Councilwoman, City of Santa Fe*

ROBERT ROMERO *City Manager, City of Santa Fe*

JEFF GONZALEZ *Parks Department, City of Santa Fe*

CHRIS BLEWIT *Project Manager, NM Rail Runner Express*

ROBERT GONZALES *Operations Manager, NM Rail Runner Express*

Design and Planning Team

KEN SMITH *Principal, Ken Smith Landscape Architecture (by phone)*

FAITH OKUMA *Lead Principal,*

Design Workshop for the Railyard Master Plan

JENNY PARKS *Former Executive Director,*

*Trust for Public Land New Mexico; Current Executive Director,
New Mexico Community Foundation*

Developers and Tenants

ANA GALLEGOS Y REINHARDT *Executive Director, Warehouse 21*

JAIME BECCERRIL *Interim Board President, El Museo Cultural*

MARCO GONZALES *Partner, Railyard LLC*

RICK JARAMILLO *Partner, Railyard LLC*

ROSE UTTON *Developer,*

North Railyard and Baca District art spaces (by phone)

JONAH STANFORD *Baca District tenant;*

Architect, NeedBased Studio, Inc.

KEVIN DANIELS *Baca District tenant; Railyard Enterprises*



Project Description

PROJECT HISTORY AND PROCESS

Early History of the Railyard

Santa Fe is a city with a strong sense of history; so it is no surprise that, when asked about the history of the Railyard project, many interviewees began in 1880. That was the year the first train came into the Santa Fe Depot, after a furious political and financial effort by the city's leaders to bring a rail spur to Santa Fe off the main rail line (which bypassed Santa Fe in favor of Albuquerque). In the decades following that first train, multiple rail lines from other parts of New Mexico and the rest of the US were constructed, carrying both passengers and freight.

Freight service began taking a much greater proportion of trips than passenger service as World War I started. Regular passenger service was eliminated after World War II, but some tourism excursion services continued. Starting in the early 20th century, a number of industrial businesses began to lease space near the depot and build warehouses and other buildings for their operations. Lease holders included a coal yard, a beer bottling works, a fruit company, a gunpowder manufacturer, and a storage facility. Along with the railroad, these historic industrial uses set the character for the rail yard district. (One interviewee also suggested that this industrial development may have prompted the Santa Fe Style architectural mandate that was established in the 1950's. The Gross Kelly Ware-



Courtesy of the Palace of the Governors

Historic Photo of Santa Fe Railway Station

house was the first Santa Fe style building in Santa Fe after the Museum of Art was built downtown.)

Many older residents tell stories of growing up in the Hispanic residential neighborhood that built up around the rail yard; they talk of playing in the nearby acequia and picking lettuce for dinner. As the late 20th century progressed, the rail yard area also became home to less laudable activities such as drug dealing and violent crime, and homeless camps developed. Industrial buildings on the site fell into disrepair; however, the area still offered low-rent space for small businesses and nonprofits.

Railyard Redevelopment Planning

In 1985 prior to development pressure, the TPL and the Mayor's office discussed purchase of the Railyard as a Park and future Master Planning district for the City. However the Mayor was not interested at that time. During the late 1980's development pressure began to increase in Santa Fe, and the city looked to the rail yard as its next redevelopment area. The mayor's office, TPL, the citizens of Santa Fe, and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company (AT&SF) (then owner of the site) were establishing their own master plans; however, it was the plan by Catellus (a national development company formed by AT&SF to manage and develop its holdings nationally and at the rail yard properties) that drew particular ire. The Catellus proposal included 6-story buildings with hotels, office



buildings, and tourist-oriented facilities, but included no open space or train. City residents recognized the impending “Disney-fication” of their last remaining major open space and expansion area. Neighbors from the Guadalupe District next to the rail yard, one of the oldest Hispanic neighborhoods in the city, organized with community activists from around the city to defeat the proposal.

With the community's success and the subsequent election of local activist Debbie Jaramillo as mayor, the community began to move forward with its own visions for the site. The Trust for Public Land, which had approached earlier mayors about purchasing the site for open space, now worked with Mayor Jaramillo and the City of Santa Fe to purchase the land from Catellus in 1995 and convey it to the City. In a remarkable show of commitment to community priorities and land conservation, the City passed a bond to cover the \$21

Santa Fe RailYard site prior to development

million land acquisition, and agreed with TPL to set aside 13 of the 50 acres for open space in a permanent conservation easement. This also illustrated TPL's nationwide transition from a focus on land conservation in rural and suburban areas to a greater involvement in urban parks and open space.

Over the next 14 months, TPL, the Land Use Resource Center, the Santa Fe Chapter of the AIA, and City officials conducted an extensive participatory planning process, inviting community members to discuss and define the possibilities for the major priorities for the area's redevelopment. Following this process, these 4 Team members held a citywide vote to prioritize what they had learned. The third phase invited an AIA Regional/Urban Design Assessment Team (R/UDAT) to join the community to codify the community's recommendations into a series of guidelines and a concept "Community Plan". Key recommendations included focusing on local business development; protecting the character of the surrounding neighborhoods; preserving the rail yard's gritty, rugged character; creating a pedestrian-friendly rather than car-dependent area; establishing freight, excursion and commuter rail service to maintain an active rail yard; designing sustainable open space; assisting current valued tenants to remain in the redevelopment area; and creating an agency representing a broad cross-section of the community to manage the redevelopment. The City Council then voted unanimously to support the "Community Plan."

Railyard Design and Development

After the completion of the public process and the "Community Plan," the Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation (SFRCC) was formed to assist with implementation and development. However, it would be several years before SFRCC contracted with the City; the City initially managed the process through its own internal agency. After years of attempted implementation stalled by politics, the City recognized the need for a different strategy. In 2001 the City asked TPL to manage the design and development of the park and plaza spaces in the conservation easement, and hired Design Workshop (a regional landscape and planning firm) to prepare a full Railyard Master Plan for the entire property. In 2002, SFRCC entered into a lease and management agreement with the City to manage and select tenants who developed the remaining 37 acres as mixed-use commercial and residential property.

Also in 2002, TPL conducted an international competition to select the public space design team. As in the planning phase, the design competition had a strong public engagement component, with community members viewing the finalists' models and making comments on the proposals. Once the design team (Ken Smith, landscape architect; Frederick Schwartz, architect; Mary Miss, artist) was chosen and the Master Plan approved, formal design work began for both public spaces and the development of major buildings. The project broke ground in 2005, overcoming some unusual hurdles along the way – such as community activism

SILVER MEDAL WINNER SANTA FE RAILYARD REDEVELOPMENT



starting in 1996 around the humane relocation of a community of prairie dogs on the site. The relocation was completed in 2006, allowing construction to finally begin.

Over the course of the planning and development process, more than 6,000 residents gave their input. More than 3,000 people attended the Railyard's grand opening in October 2008. The New Mexico Rail Runner Express began service to Santa Fe in December 2008.

URBAN CONTEXT

North Railyard

The North Railyard is approximately ½ mile southwest of the Plaza, Santa Fe's historic center. The eastern border of the site is South Guadalupe St., a major commercial thoroughfare that leads north toward the center of the city. South Guadalupe is lined by mostly single-story buildings containing a variety of small businesses; the North Railyard buildings that face this street maintain this character. Paseo de Peralta, which runs in a large loop around Santa Fe's downtown core, bisects the North Railyard, with the Railyard plaza, commercial development and rail depot to the north and the Railyard Park to the south. Many of the larger buildings of the North Railyard are clustered along the Paseo, including SITE Santa Fe, the Farmers Market, Warehouse 21, and contemporary art galleries.

The Railyard Park is bounded by S. Guadalupe to the east and Cerrillos Road to the south; a small portion of the southern end of the park is also bordered by St. Francis Drive to the west. Cerrillos and St. Francis are also both major traffic avenues, and their intersection is quite busy; some interviewees commented that St. Francis Drive has a particularly difficult pedestrian crossing, hindering access to the park from this end. (Improved crossings were conceived in the Community Plan and will be implemented as the trail between the North Railyard and the Baca District is completed over time.) Interviewees also expressed concern that the park was accessible but not very visible from the intersection of Cerrillos and S. Guadalupe at its southeast corner; there is little indication of the park's presence at that corner, as the park sits in a "bowl" below street level.



The national economic downturn has caused certain projects in the Park to be delayed, but those projects are still planned for future completion.

To the north and west of the North Railyard site is the Historic Guadalupe Neighborhood, a traditional area of adobe-style homes. When the community plan for the Railyard was developing, this was the largest remaining historic, predominantly Hispanic area with a high rate of homeownership; preservation of its character was an important goal of the community planning process. The north section of the neighborhood is more affluent than the south end. However, this southern area has also improved as planning and development for the Railyard have progressed. Not surprisingly, the Railyard increased development pressure on the south section of the neighborhood, and the community plan originally suggested neighborhood conservation district to protect the area's historic quality. While the conservation district has not yet been implemented, a moratorium on teardowns was temporarily established and the density was down-zoned, easing development pressures. Community meetings have occurred to develop studies and proposals for the residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Railyard.

Three additional landmarks are within easy walking distance of the North Railyard. The Santa Fe River runs along the north edge of the Guadalupe neighborhood, with a linear park along its length. At the intersection of S. Guadalupe and Alameda St. (which follows



Jennifer Esperanza

the alignment of the river), Our Lady of Guadalupe is an important church in the Spanish-speaking immigrant community. It is the oldest extant shrine to the saint in the United States, with a history dating back to the late 18th century. Finally, the Sanbusco Center, directly adjacent to the north end of the site near the rail depot, is a historic complex originally built for a building supply company that grew up around the rail yard in the late 1800s. It has been creatively adapted as a market for local businesses and restaurants and now anchors the neighborhood.

Baca District

The Baca District is an additional ½ mile to the southwest of the southernmost end of Railyard Park; it is connected to the North Railyard by Cerillos Road, and is connected by a newly constructed bike and walking path. On the western edge of the area is Baca St., from which the area derives its name; along this street is a neighborhood of traditional adobe buildings containing a burgeoning arts district. The small arts and manufacturing businesses within the Railyard's Baca District connect to this aspect of their surrounding

neighborhood; however they have chosen to be the most contemporary architectural district of the Railyard. Otherwise, the Baca District on one side is relatively isolated; its neighbors to the north-east are 25 acres of an old power station and a cemetery, which is conceived in the Community Plan to become a future citywide recreational area for the Railyard, with a first option for purchase by the City. The development with the Baca District reflects the same gritty, industrial character as the North Railyard. The area is also close to public transit, as designed in the Railyard Master Plan with a commuter rail stop one block east of Cerrillos Road.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Railyard is intended for community-wide use. Although the Railyard may be more locally-oriented than the historic downtown Santa Fe Plaza, visitors are not only welcome but encouraged to visit the Railyard, and local residents are adamant that they have not abandoned the Plaza. Instead, the Santa Fe Railyard is envisioned as the “family room” of the city, working together with the “living room” of the historic Plaza to expand the availability of spaces for the social, cultural and economic life of Santa Fe.

One socio-cultural issue that came up at multiple points in the visit was “the myth of tri-cultural harmony.” Interviews indicated that the tapestry of ethnic identities attempting to blend in Santa Fe goes beyond Old Spanish, Native American and Anglo; what is more,



this mix of cultures, while offering great richness to the city, also results in ongoing tensions. Santa Fe—and Railyard managers and supporters—continue to wrestle with the challenges of representation, inclusion and cultural differences. This plays out in the continued adjustment from a majority Hispanic to a majority Anglo population (which officially shifted in the 80s and 90s); in the tensions between Hispanics with Spanish ancestry and more recent Latino immigrants; the authentic engagement and representation of Native American culture and history; and the role or voice given to other ethnic groups, such as African-Americans or Asian immigrants. Railyard managers are aware of these issues and are working to address them in their programming and the makeup of their community volunteers and board members, but some community members charge that a lack of ethnic diversity in users and tenants is a failing of the Railyard.

MAJOR FACILITIES AND SPACES

Railyard Park

The Railyard Park makes up 10 acres of the 13-acre conservation easement within the Railyard. It is designed to provide a variety of distinctive areas for passive, active and educational use. The Park is designed with sustainable management in mind, both in terms of water use and maintenance time. The Railyard Park includes reflective areas such as the circular ramada near the intersection of S. Guadalupe and Cerrillos; an interpretive area highlighting the

alignments of former rail tracks through the site; a children's play area; several picnic areas with benches and grills; a performance green and open field for large events; orchards, community gardens and teaching gardens; and representations of traditional New Mexico irrigation features. The irrigation features include an arroyo and the historic Acequia Madre, part of a 400-year-old (still active) water rights management system in northern New Mexico. The Acequia has been preserved and restored and is actively used as part of the irrigation of the Railyard Park.



Railyard Plaza and Public Spaces

The Railyard Plaza and Alameda make up the remaining 3 acres of the conservation easement. The Railyard Plaza is a central paved open space just north of the Farmers Market building. Along the rail lines in the North Railyard runs the Alameda, a walking path that serves as the spine of the North Railyard and that connects to a newly constructed walking and biking path to the Baca District. The City and the New Mexico Department of Transportation are currently under contract to develop a formal connection across the one thoroughfare that is an impediment to the two bike trails. The portion of the Alameda next to the Farmers Market building holds a shade structure that is used by market vendors in the high season as well as by other special events. In the north section of the North Railyard, three other public spaces line the Alameda: the two casitas groves that provide shady pocket parks in front of the Market Station development; and the Montezuma Pocket Park at the northernmost end of the Alameda, which creates the entrance to the Alameda and the Railyard from Montezuma Avenue.

Railyard Depot

The Railyard Depot serves New Mexico Rail Runner commuter trains from Albuquerque as well as Santa Fe Southern Railroad's excursion trains. The Rail Runner was a transit project conceived 25 years prior for northern New Mexico, but shepherded and lead by former Gov. Bill Richardson; service began in 2008 shortly after the Railyard's grand opening. Rail Runner service is managed by the

Mid-Regional Council of Governments (MRCOG) and operated by Herzog Transit Services; there are 8 daily roundtrips on weekdays, 4 roundtrips on Saturdays, and 2 on Sundays.

The Rail Runner passenger service results in an unusual interaction between an intensely used public space and an active rail line, which conventional wisdom might deem too dangerous. However, the project management and operations team from MRCOG works with the rail operator, the City, and its agent SFRCC to devise solutions to safety and noise issues (such as installing bollards to keep cars and pedestrians off of tracks or establishing "quiet zones" near neighborhoods where train horns cannot be blown). The passenger rail service is used by commuters and weekend visitors. Average ridership is 4,000-4,500 passengers on a weekday; weekend ridership varies seasonally from 2,500-4,000 on a Saturday. On the most popular schedules, a 700-person train may carry up to 1,200 commuters.

The Santa Fe Railyard Depot is a historic landmark built in 1889; the building and platform have been maintained. The old train depot has historically served as a ticketing and information booth for all trains, as well as the Santa Fe Southern Railway (SFSR) freight and excursion trains for the last 25 years. SFSR has been the largest financial contributor to the Railyard project, and a leading citizen advocate from the early 80s. However, the City and SFRCC as the City's agent have controversially chosen to ask SFSR to leave the Depot and the Railyard, consistent with Chamber of Commerce plans to expand



the Depot into a more comprehensive visitor center. To connect with the incoming train service, a variety of public and private bus services now take visitors from the depot into downtown Santa Fe, out to nearby towns, and to regional attractions like casinos and resorts. These bus services stop on Montezuma Avenue at the north edge of the Railyard.

Farmers Market

The Farmers Market is considered one of the anchor tenants of the North Railyard; on a Saturday in the summer season, the market attracts 6,000-8,000 visitors to the area, and over the course of the year draws approximately 180,000 people. The building includes a 10,000 sf market hall, used for the weekly farmers market as well as periodic public events, and 9,000 sf of commercial space (of which 3,200 is office space). Major tenants include the 2nd Street Brewery, a restaurant specializing in local, organic ingredients, and Bioneers, a nonprofit office tenant. The Farmers Market Institute developed and owns the building and is the holder of the ground lease from SFRCC. FMI leases the market hall to the Farmers Market Association; FMA runs the market, manages market leases for the 150 members who participate in the market throughout the year, and runs a small café on market days. The farmers market also makes use of the adjacent plaza space and shade structure for outdoor vendors during the high season.

Market Station Area

Market Station is a commercial development owned and managed by Railyard LLC. The buildings contain the only two national retailers in the Railyard, REI and Verizon, as well as some local businesses. Underneath Market Station is the Railyard's main parking facility, a 400 space garage run by the City of Santa Fe; finding national retailers was a condition of the financing for the development of the parking facility along with the above-ground commercial space.



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Railyard Park Stewards

Just south of Market Station is the proposed location for a 28,000 square foot, 12-screen IMAX cinema and café; Railyard Company, LLC is still seeking a national or regional cinema operator as a partner for this portion of the development.

Nonprofit Tenants—

SITE Santa Fe, Warehouse 21, El Museo Cultural

One of the key priorities that emerged from the community planning process was the inclusion in the final Master Plan of space for four nonprofits occupying 100,000 square feet, and one for-profit on the site, each of which was considered an essential community institution. The four primary nonprofit tenants— SITE Santa Fe, Warehouse 21, the Farmers Market Institute, and El Museo Cultural and one for-profit tenant, SFSR— are all still on-site in new or renovated space. SITE Santa Fe remained in its existing building (which it now owns) on Paseo de Peralta adjacent to Railyard Park; SITE has renovated its facility in stages over the past several years; El Museo Cultural also remained in its existing space, in a warehouse that is part of a series of buildings along the rail line north of Paseo

de Peralta; the building is owned by the City of Santa Fe, but El Museo has grown to occupy more of the space with its activities. Warehouse 21 moved out of its old space, which was in very poor condition, into a new anchor building they designed and constructed. The Farmers Market Institute built a new anchor building in the center of the North Railyard, which houses the Farmers Market, office space, and retail and commercial tenant spaces.

Although the preservation of space for these organizations was a core goal of the Railyard's redevelopment, the process was not smooth. During the development and construction process and in ongoing operations, almost all of them faced challenges when their needs conflicted with the requirements or vision for the overall development:

- The area owned by the City, but used as SITE Santa Fe's parking lot was taken to create the Railyard Park; they continue to feel that parking in the area is located too far away from their building (and the park) to be convenient for visitors and that this affects attendance at events. In the negotiations over their

ground lease rate, SITE Santa Fe has also had to combat perceptions that they are rich, elite nonprofit. They feel that they have gotten closer to parity with the other nonprofits but are still treated differently in rental rates.

- Warehouse 21 had a designated site in the Community Plan; in order to compel SFRCC to relocate their site within the Railyard, they hired an architect to select a new site and draw up plans for them. They used these plans to generate community pressure that helped them to obtain their current location (originally slated for commercial development).
- The Farmers' Market was required to build a building in order to lease a lot. This resulted in the formation of the Farmers Market Institute as a 501c3 to oversee the fundraising, design and construction and to act as the landlord for vendor subleases and

for subleases to commercial tenants. The amount of fundraising and the transition to a nonprofit operating a building and running a wider variety of programs was a significant shift for the organization after 40 years of not having a permanent site.

- El Museo Cultural is the nonprofit tenant facing the most challenges; they are an organization with a very small operating budget (\$80,000-\$100,000) trying to lease and maintain a very large space (40,000 sf). Internal board struggles added to the financial difficulties, and the organization was in arrears on rent. El Museo also has differences in perspective with SFRCC about how the building needs to be used and maintained to fit into the Railyard vision. SFRCC staff appeared to view El Museo's space as unkempt, rundown and uncomfortable for visitors, while the original citizens who created the Community Plan, called for gritty spaces such as the El Museo, and the staff and board of El Museo view it more as a creatively messy place that houses essential cultural programming. The weekly flea market to which El Museo rents a large portion of their space is also viewed by SFRCC as an incompatible use in the Railyard, largely because it is prohibited by city zoning. Despite differences, both organizations are committed to working together to address organizational, financial and physical challenges that El Museo faces in order to keep it as a Railyard tenant.



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- The Railyard began in the mid 80s as a location for homeless to park their cars, and therefore they were part of the community conversation from the beginning of the planning process. Shortly after the completion of the Railyard master planning, a homeless shelter was established adjacent to the Northern Railyards. However, as adjacent residents have gentrified the area, there have been conflicts between the homeless and the historic residential area.

In short, the four core nonprofits have remained in the Railyard redevelopment, and the one core for-profit has been threatened from remaining. The City and its agent SFRCC, and the organizations express commitment to the continued relationship, but it is not without some ongoing conflicts and negotiations.

Galleries and Cultural Facilities

Clustered primarily along Paseo de Peralta are a series of contemporary art galleries and other cultural spaces. The four nonprofit tenants are part of this cluster, offering a variety of arts-related programs in their buildings. The pioneering galleries to locate in the Railyard are at the intersection of Paseo de Peralta and S. Guadalupe in historic warehouse buildings. These galleries with the anchor: Jim Kelly, as well as some newly constructed galleries, such as LewAllen Gallery (directly east of the rail line on Paseo de Peralta) were developed by Rose and John Utton, who were early investors in the North Railyard and are also developing a warehouse in the Baca District.





At the north end of El Museo's building is Santa Fe Clay, a ceramics retail shop, gallery and studio that provides workshop programs throughout the year. Directly to the south of El Museo's building is a smaller warehouse containing another gallery and the Railyard Performance Center, which holds a variety of dance and fitness classes; dance, theater and music performances; and other events.

Guadalupe Street Area

Along S. Guadalupe between Alcala Street (meaning "female mayor," named for Mayor Debbie Jaramillo, who championed the project) and Manhattan Avenue is the Gross Kelly Warehouse, a historic building and one of the few Pueblo Revival style buildings in the Railyard. The building has been creatively renovated primarily as office space, but also contains a café, restaurant, and a series of retail shops. In front of the building next to the street is a small surface parking lot.

Artyard Lofts

At the southeast corner of the North Railyard is the Artyard building, a development of live/work lofts for artists that also contains a gallery. Originally the Artyard project was to have additional phases; however, the economic downturn limited the project's access to capital, and the future phases were never developed. SFRCC was wooing a video post-production company to build offices in this area, with anticipated tie-ins to the planned cinema and to youth job training at Warehouse 21. The project required extensive Master Plan amendments, changing the scale of the Master Plans for this neighborhood. Primarily due to national economic downturn, the project did not proceed. This area also contains the largest surface parking lot in the North Railyard – 165 spaces out of the 900 total parking spaces in the North Railyard (which are distributed across surface lots, along the streets, and in the underground parking garage), and these lots are planned for future multi-story parking lots.

Baca District Development

The Baca District is still an emerging neighborhood; only 2 buildings in the area have been completed, with four more under construction and an additional 5 parcels available for lease. The completed buildings include a small mixed-use commercial and residential development and a commercial building. Projects under construction are mostly very contemporary live/work spaces for established artists or design businesses. Among the remaining vacant parcels are a few historic industrial buildings in marginal condition; SFRCC hopes to find tenants who can preserve and reuse these buildings as part of their development plans.

The Baca District feels very separate from the North Railyard and has a distinctly different character. Tenants describe themselves as “pioneers” and the area as “a bit like the Wild West”; there is a sense that there is more room for experimentation by developers in this section than in the more tightly controlled North Railyard. The Baca does not contain any significant public space, and is not an area for tourism. While the area is connected to the North Railyard by a biking and walking trail and is intended to be walkable, parking is required for developments in this section.

DESIGN

Architectural Design

One of the stated goals of the redevelopment is to preserve the unique architectural character of the Railyard district, both in the appropriate restoration or renovation of existing buildings and in contextually sensitive design for new buildings. The community also wanted to maintain a sense of authentic architectural and industrial evolution rather than creating a faux-historic district. To that end, the architectural design guidelines in the Master Plan take architectural cues from the existing buildings, but do not specify a rigid template.

Buildings in the Railyard purposefully did not have a single architect, and the goal was to have a variety of building types and styles. The design guidelines describe appropriate lot placement, building massing, and materials for both renovations and new construction. They give guidance on certain building features, such as windows and skylights, porches and overhangs, building lights and signage, and temporary art installations. The guidelines also encourage sustainable building strategies for water, energy, and renewable building materials. Existing buildings of architectural significance are also noted in the Master Plan, and many were highlighted for preservation. Some buildings, like the Rail Depot, are under fairly strict historic controls; others, like the Barker Building and galleries along S. Guadalupe, retain much of their exterior character while allowing for contextually-sensitive adaptation on the interior.

To date, the guidelines have produced a diverse range of buildings that give a sense of authentic and fairly organic development in keeping with the way the rail yards historically grew over time. The mix of preserved, renovated and new construction also helps with the authentic feel. While buildings vary in their aesthetic success, the design guidelines help the project hang together without forcing a false uniformity.

Community response to the design has generally been positive, although there are points where aesthetic opinions diverge. Some Santa Fe residents would prefer the Railyard to have continued the Santa Fe Style present in other areas of the city, even if that style is not representative of the actual history in this location. For those who appreciate the Railyard's particular aesthetic, there is still some disagreement among different parties involved in the project about how "gritty" the site and its buildings should be. Some prefer the industrial form but a cleaner and more refined appearance; others are more comfortable with the messy, working aesthetic of the rail yard's past.

Landscape Design – Railyard Park, Plaza and Public Spaces

The Railyard Master Plan also includes guidelines for landscape design in the public open spaces of the Railyard. The guidelines offer illustrative cross sections for each major public way, as well as materials, furnishings and plant specifications. Ken Smith, landscape architect for the project, indicated that the Master Plan was



Don Unser

a valuable tool that helped the design team to understand what the community wanted in the project. It is important to remember that the Railyard redevelopment was not initiated, conceived or developed as a park project. The city purchased the property to create a public realm for Santa Feans which would replace the tourist dominated Plaza as the local's gathering place for shopping, dining and recreation. The "park" was an artifact of the conservancy easement and still struggles to be fully integrated as part of a larger and more cohesive public realm.

Railyard Park

At the north edge of the park near the Paseo de Peralta are the linear and circular ramadas, a series of simple wood and metal frame arches that outline walking paths in this portion of the park.

Circular Ramada serves as a "Public Porch" for the Park

In season, the ramadas have flowering vines that grow along the frame; these are still coming to maturity, and because of the time of year, the vines were dormant during our visit, however the intention is to have the completed landscape around the ramada encircled with more trees, with a hidden garden inside. The shape of the circular ramada recalls both the kiva, a traditional Native American religious space, and the rail yard turntable that once sat on the site. Both ramadas serve as event spaces: the linear ramada holds the weekly Railyard artists' market and is used for an annual gay pride event; the circular ramada hosted the Park's first wedding in summer 2010. The linear entry ramada is one of the two main paths into the heart of the park. The circular ramada stands near the major intersection of S. Guadalupe Street and Cerrillos Road, and is surrounded by plantings of roses, sage and sedums, and an outer circle of Austrian pines.

Between the ramadas are the arroyo and the rail gardens. The arroyo is a naturalistic interpretation of a dry creek that seasonally fills with rain; it runs alongside the entry ramada into the center of the park and is planted with a variety of native trees, shrubs and grasses. The rail gardens are host to some of the only permanent sculptures in the Railyard — full-scale sculptures of old rail axles that mark the end of preserved portions of historic rail alignments. The preserved rails show the actual locations of four rail lines that used to run north along what is now S. Guadalupe Street (they terminated in a historic building that now houses a popular Mexican restaurant). The mix of plantings in the ornamental garden around the rail align-

ments includes drought-resistant natives and non-natives chosen for their year-round presence; these plants also reference the kinds of materials and horticultural varieties that arrived in Santa Fe with the advent of rail commerce.

Continuing further into the Park, one next encounters the children's play area, which includes a range of play equipment, climbing structures, slides and water play features. Chalk drawing is permitted and encouraged on the walls and other surfaces in the play area. There is play equipment specifically for toddlers; the rest of the play area is for all ages. In the vicinity are several tree-shaded picnic circles, a brick labyrinth, and a bird and butterfly garden. The area is planted with drought-resistant native grasses and shrubs, and non-native trees that require weekly watering.



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The southern section of the Railyard Park is less structured than the northern section. A large portion of the southern section is an open field for active and passive recreation that includes two picnic circles. Along the Cerrillos Road edge of the park is an orchard containing apricot and apple trees; running next to the orchard is a border garden of xeriscape (dry landscape) plantings. The main feature of the south half of the Park is an open portion of the Acequia Madre, a 400-year-old system for water rights sharing throughout northern New Mexico. The Acequia is a traditional irrigation ditch with rough stone walls; it is surrounded by cottonwood trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers. A new tributary of the Acequia Madre, the Acequia Niña, was built to extend the irrigation system into other parts of the park; it feeds into the Waffle Garden.

The Waffle Garden, represents a historic Pueblo garden with rain-water conservation features that allow for arid climate gardening. The Waffle Garden is maintained by the Railyard Stewards and used in their educational programs; homeless users of the Park also sometimes pick food grown in the garden. In addition to the Waffle Garden, a community garden is located at the southernmost end of the Park. There are 12 lots in the community garden; plot assignment is managed by Santa Fe Community Gardens.

The remaining major space in the Railyard Park is the performance green, just north of the open field and west of the entry ramada; the green is used for a wide range of performances and public events. Between the performance green and SITE Santa Fe is a city parking



Top: James McMurtry performing
Bottom: Concert featuring "The Skatalites"

lot planted with trees and native shrubs. West of the performance green and the parking lot are a bike rail trail and the Alameda that runs throughout the North Railyard.

Alameda and Other Public Spaces

The Alameda is the North Railyard's spine; it runs along the rail tracks and connects all of the public spaces in this area. The Alameda provides a clear walking path for Railyard visitors. During our visit, it was also used by residents on their way to daily activities. Along the Alameda, interpretive and informational signage is provided to orient visitors to the site's history and to the redevelopment's intent to maintain aspects of the area's character.

The main program spaces along the Alameda are the Railyard Plaza north of the Farmers Market Building and the shade structure to the west. The shade structure has room for up to 38 vendor stalls and is frequently used for the Farmers' Market and public events. The Railyard Plaza is intended as a community "free play area" where residents can toss a Frisbee, play guitar, and make chalk drawings or public speeches. Public policies and procedures define the Railyard as the only location in the City where free speech, and free improvisational performance art are legally encouraged. The Plaza can also be used for organized and advertised events, with a license. At the northwest corner of the Plaza is the iconic water tower, which can hold 3500 gallons of collected rainwater collected from the building roofs in the North Railyard.

The three other public spaces along the Alameda are small, shady pocket parks: the East and West Casitas Groves on either side of the rail line in front of Market Station, and Montezuma Pocket Park at the north end of the Alameda. The pocket parks are planted with trees and shrubs requiring infrequent maintenance.

PROGRAMS, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES AND PATTERNS OF USE

SFRCC and Railyard Stewards staff members indicated that both buildings and events are oriented toward the Alameda and Railyard Plaza, and this matched our observations during the site visit. This leaves the edges of the development along S. Guadalupe (east) and Camino de la Familia (west, the street on which El Museo is located) feeling somewhat deserted, but keeps the central public spaces populated. When events are not taking place, a light stream of pedestrians and bikers uses the Alameda for routine travel; this stream becomes heavy during rush hour when Rail Runner trains arrive and depart.

The conservation easement requires that public events in those spaces be free and open to the public, which keeps activities affordable; teenage residents were particularly pleased to have a place to go that didn't require spending money. Events include public markets, festivals, rallies, concerts and dance parties, and public art installations. For-profit as well as nonprofit businesses are encouraged

to give back through community events (for instance, the cinema, when developed, would be strongly encouraged to provide space for local film festivals). SFRCC indicated that the public spaces are fully booked for events during the high season, and those events are well attended. A list of recent public events provided by SFRCC includes markets, arts programs, musical and theater performances, walk-a-thons and rallies. The site visit team was able to observe two of the Railyard's regular events: a monthly Friday night arts walk that is an open house for the arts and cultural facilities in the Railyard; and the Saturday Farmers' Market.

The site visit team saw the project at night during the Friday night art walk, which provided a sufficient level of traffic for the area to feel populated in the evening. The 6:30 commuter rail departure also drew pedestrians through the site. Public ways and areas around the buildings are sufficiently (but not always brightly) lit, and the area generally feels safe in the main public spaces and along the main streets. The western side of buildings to the west of the rail line was a little darker and felt more deserted; lighting, buildings and activity are definitely oriented to the Railyard Plaza and Alameda. A restaurant next to the Railyard Plaza was fully occupied with patrons waiting to be seated. The team also observed an evening event at Warehouse 21, which drew a crowd of 20-30 young people.

The site visit team did not observe the park in much use, due to the winter season and to weather conditions. There were volunteers and youth program participants maintaining the plantings, and a few



Photos: Santa Fe New Mexican

"Volunteers and participants in Railyard Stewards programs stated that the Park is well used in season, for events, casual use, and a variety of job training, community service and education programs."

residents taking a stroll. There were also two or three homeless men in and around the park; City of Santa Fe park staff note that homeless residents are welcome to use the park, but they have had fighting and other disturbances. Interviews with volunteers and participants in Railyard Stewards programs stated that the Park is well used in season, for events, casual use, and a variety of job training, community service and education programs.

Transportation

It is not difficult to reach the rail depot on foot, as the Alameda along the rail line provides a safe pedestrian zone. It is an ongoing challenge to manage pedestrian behavior next to the rail line (vehicles are also an issue, as some community members were accustomed to driving and parking in the rail right-of-way before redevelopment). Specific areas for rail crossings are provided at Alcaldesa Street, at the midpoint of the shade structure, at Paseo de Peralta, and at two additional points along the Alameda south of Paseo de Peralta. The intersection of the rail line at Paseo de Peralta is a difficult crossing for both pedestrians (crossing the street) and cars (crossing the rail and accommodating pedestrians). It is easy, however, to make the transfer from the commuter rail to the bus services that stop on Montezuma Avenue near the pocket park.

The parking strategy of the Master Plan is to disperse spaces among scattered sites throughout the development, with some strips of parking spaces along various streets and only a few concentrated areas of surface parking. The goal is to keep the Railyard accessible for and oriented toward pedestrians rather than cars. The largest surface parking lot has 165 spaces; 400 of the 900 parking spaces in the North Railyard are in the underground parking garage.

Despite the goal of minimizing vehicular presence, parking was a repeated complaint of residents and site tenants. Some commenters felt that the main parking lot was too far from activities or difficult to find; others were uncomfortable with underground parking. Technical issues contributed to some of the frustration; pay-and-display machines initially installed throughout the project did not work well and are being replaced with meters. There is also a perception that parking is more expensive in the Railyard than downtown; however, SFRCC and City officials ensure there is equal parity between the two areas on parking and event fees.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

The initial concept of the community was to have ongoing operations and management of the Railyard include both City and citizen representation, with the idea that a purposeful tension would lead to a healthier and more democratic urban environment over time.

The primary leadership for the Railyards has always been the City of Santa Fe, the non-profit and modest Trust for Public Land, and the citizens of Santa Fe. These three entities have participated for over 25 years together to conceive, design, finance, construct, and manage the 50 acres of the Railyard. Still to this day, TPL and the City act as grantor and grantee for the perpetual conservation easement for the public spaces. The City chose a citizen organization, SFRCC, to manage the Railyard for the City. And TPL is in the contract implementation phase of transferring the perpetual easement to the Citizen co-partners of the Railyard Stewards and the Santa Fe Conservation Trust, in continuing partnership with the City of Santa Fe.

The City provides full staff support through all of its departments to the Railyards, including police, parks, fire, parking, streets, utilities, public works, community services, financial, and the great commitment of weekly participation by the City Manager and Department Heads.

The two key organizations that evolved from the citizen process were the Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation (SFRCC) and the Railyard Stewards. SFRCC acts as the City's manager of the 37 acres of mixed-use development in the Railyard, including all tenant leases, building construction, and event planning. The Railyard Stewards share with the City the primary responsibility for enhanced maintenance of the landscape features in the Railyard Park, as well as community engagement and education around its use. The two organizations partner together on the use and future planning for the site. In addition, the City of Santa Fe continues to play the lead role as the landowner of the site and through its Parks Department, works with the Railyard Stewards on park maintenance.

FINANCES

Capital Program

The City and SFRCC place the total value of the Railyard redevelopment at \$137 million dollars, including an estimated \$70 million to date in private investment by Railyard tenants on construction and building improvements. Of the remaining \$67 million in public funds, its sources and uses were as follows:

- \$21 million (in 1995 dollars) for acquisition of the site from Catellus, financed by a City bond issue. The bond was repaid primarily through a 1/16 cent gross receipts tax; approximately \$3 million of SFRCC's rent to the City through 2024 will also be counted toward repayment.

- \$14 million for construction of the underground parking garage, also financed by a City bond. The bond was originally to be repaid through parking revenues; since revenue has fallen short of expectations, the 1/16 cent gross receipts tax has been directed toward this debt service since July 2010.
- \$14 million for infrastructure costs, borrowed by the City from the New Mexico Finance Authority. These loans are being repaid through SFRCC's rent to the City, and will be fully repaid by 2027.
- \$3 million in offsite improvements paid by the City of Santa Fe through a capital improvement general obligation bond.
- \$2 million in archaeology and environmental work paid by the City of Santa Fe from its general fund.
- There has also been a great deal of financial commitment by the non-profit Trust for Public Land over the last 26 year. Their financial contribution is detailed below.

The estimated project cost for construction of the Railyard Park, Railyard Plaza and Alameda has a budget of \$13.5 million with \$12.8 million spent to date: \$400,000 for planning, \$1.1 million for design and engineering, \$10.5 million for construction, and \$1.5 million for administrative costs. Of that, the Trust for Public Land has raised to date \$12.8 million from the following sources:

- \$3.1 million in state legislative appropriations;
- \$2.4 million from federal transportation funds;
- \$1.3 million from City capital improvement bonds;
- \$600,000 from City and County gross receipts taxes;
- \$2.3 million in a private gift from the Santa Fe Southern Railway; and
- \$3.1 million in private fundraising.

Due to the current nationwide economic depression, TPL and the Railyard Stewards have chosen to wait for a future date to raise funds for the remaining aspects of the project budget, such as additional landscape trees, additional tot features, signage for the Park and administrative endowment support for the Stewards.

Operating Costs

SFRCC has an operating budget of approximately \$1.4 million, all of which is generated through the City of Santa Fe for the Railyard. Almost all of their income is generated from tenant leases, including fees for maintenance of common areas; about \$60,000 is generated in event license fees. Major expense categories include land debt service through the year 2012 (\$700,000), payroll (\$320,000), and maintenance and repairs (\$130,000).

An important part of SFRCC's operations is its management of the ground leases for all tenants. In an arrangement unusual for a major development parcel, the City of Santa Fe retains ownership of all land in the Railyard (including the 13 acres controlled by the con-



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servation easement held by TPL). On the development parcels in both the North Railyard and the Baca District, developers are given a long-term ground lease; the initial lease is typically 50 years, but with renewal options it can be as long as 90 years for some tenants who had existing businesses in the rail yard area (both for profit and nonprofit). Developers own the buildings they erect on their lots, and the leases also outline their responsibilities as far as maintenance of their parcel and adjacent public ways. All nonresidential subtenants and/or assignees of the tenants must be approved by SFRCC in accordance with the provisions of the Mater Plan. This will allow SFRCC to continue focusing on local business versus national retailers.

The Railyard Stewards have an operating budget of approximately \$146,000, the vast majority of which goes toward permanent and contract staff who run the Railyard's programs (including a full-time Executive Director and a contract Horticultural Director). Of their revenue, \$95,000 is raised through corporate, foundation and individual contributions, and \$51,000 comes from program revenue, 1/2 of which is from their contract with the City of Santa Fe for enhanced maintenance of the Railyard Park.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Intergovernmental Partnerships

The Railyard redevelopment required coordination among local, state and federal agencies, not only for funding but also for planning, construction and ongoing operations. Key interactions included federal and state support of the project through transportation funding; financing arrangements between the New Mexico Finance Authority and the City of Santa Fe; and the partnership with the Mid-Regional Council of Governments, the City of Santa Fe and SFRCC to make active rail operations and bus connections work for the Railyard.

Multi-Sector Partnerships

The Rail Runner service illustrates another of the many multi-sector partnerships among government, nonprofits and private businesses that were instrumental in bringing the Railyard to fruition. The partnership between TPL and the City of Santa Fe to acquire the property from Catellus made the Railyard possible; this partnership continued throughout the entire planning and design process. When SFRCC and the Railyard Stewards were formed to handle various parts of Railyard development and operations respectively, they also became partners with the City. Finally, SFRCC and private business tenants work together to maintain and activate the buildings and spaces throughout the Railyard.

"Volunteers help to monitor and care for plantings; tend community gardens; and support youth work projects and community events."

Developers in the Railyard appreciated the partnership with SFRCC but also mentioned that the multiple levels of government, nonprofit and private interaction can be difficult to navigate. As an example, although a City department would normally handle permitting for development in Santa Fe, the State of New Mexico handles development permitting on City-owned land. For early developers on the site, the State and City had not fully worked out the details of the process, and SFRCC was essential in identifying the right agencies to work with on particular issues.

Community Leadership, Engagement and Involvement

Citizen advocates have been a driving force behind the Railyard project from start to finish. Beginning with their initiation of the project, as well as their activism to defeat the Catellus development plan, citizen leadership and engagement have spearheaded the creation of a new vision for the rail yard area. Citizens were central to the planning for the land acquisition and created the community planning process that culminated with the City, TPL and AIA R/UDAT, and leaders like Mayor Jaramillo were strong advocates for the importance of community engagement.



After the initial community planning phase, citizens created SFRCC and the Railyard Stewards to develop rail yard area Master plans to assist with development and management. Citizens continued to be engaged by the City of Santa Fe and TPL in the Master Plan process and the design competition for the Railyard's public spaces, as well as initiating the Public Policies and Procedures for the Railyard, which were adopted legislatively by the City Council. TPL's Railyard Advisory Committee evolved into the Railyard Stewards, who have continued the tradition of extensive community engagement by bringing in volunteers to help manage the horticultural care of the Railyard Park. Volunteers help to monitor and care for plantings; tend community gardens; and support youth work projects and community events. Youth and adult community members also participate in a variety of educational and training programs. Beyond the Railyard volunteer programs, community engagement is mostly through events and use of the Railyard as visitors and consumers. Board members of both organizations are volunteers and are not

compensated for their time. Community members also serve on the boards of SFRCC and the Railyard Stewards, maintaining a community presence in the operations and management of the project.

Despite the active involvement of many community members and Santa Fe-based design and planning consultants, some groups of community members feel that the end result of the Railyard project does not adequately reflect the community goals outlined in the initial Community Plan. One of the main critiques has to do with the Railyard's affordability for potential users and potential tenants. Although the Railyard hosts many free public events throughout the year, a perception persists among some residents that the high-end art galleries and higher-priced restaurants are oriented more to tourists than locals. A few interviewees also noted that leases in both sections of the Railyard can be prohibitive for small start-up businesses and are more appropriate for established entities, eliminating the low-rent incubator space for which the rail yard was previously known and conceived as.

FUTURE PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Future Development Plans

SFRCC's future development plans focus largely on the full lease-out and build-out of remaining parcels in the North Railyard and Baca District. Major planned projects in the North Railyard include the cinema next to Market Station and the parcel next to the Art-yard Lofts. In the Baca District, a few housing projects are underway, and additional ones are proposed. Tenants such as the Farmers Market Institute and the developers of Market Station are also hoping for improved economic conditions in order to fully lease their buildings.

Multiple interviewees remarked that the national economic downturn stalled development in the Railyard just as it opened in October 2008, but most remained optimistic about a recovery. According to comments by SFRCC and Railyard developers, local businesses in the Railyard are holding their own. The entire project is 86% leased from SFRCC's point of view, with more parcels available in the Baca District than the North Railyard. Building managers with subtenant spaces, such as Railyard Company LLC or the Farmers Market Institute, report being 30-45% leased. Most interviewees attributed leasing or development delays to the overall economic situation rather than the specific mix of local to national businesses.

The Railyard Park is still maturing as far as its plantings; recent construction has now provided restroom facilities, office space and a

community meeting room in two buildings just north of the performance green. Beyond some signage and the construction of the building trellis, the Facilities park construction is almost complete. Additional landscape plantings will continue into the future.

Financial Sustainability

SFRCC has a strong income stream as the City's developer and manager of the project, and this income has remained stable despite the wider economic conditions. SFRCC currently has two financial arrangements with the city. In the first relationship, the city reimbursed SFRCC for approximately \$8 million spent by SFRCC to perform work related to the project; no reimbursement was paid initially for staff time, and administration. In the last year, however, the city has paid SFRCC a small stipend for administrative costs—only \$65,000 on \$8 million of work over 5 years, as opposed to a standard 5% or \$400,000. In the second relationship, SFRCC pays rent to the city for master leasing all of the land, except for the park. This income will compensate the city for expenses incurred in infrastructure development for the project. Their budget includes appropriate coverage for debt service, maintenance, and routine operations.

The Railyard Stewards face more financial challenges, and because they raise 2/3 of their revenue from corporate and individual donors, their income is not yet as stable. Their contract with the City of Santa Fe is also new; the City did not provide funding support in



the first year of the Stewards' operations. The Stewards do not yet benefit from SFRCC's financial arrangements with the City of Santa Fe, though they are currently in negotiations with the City to institutionalize City financial support. Both Stewards' staff and board members are aware of the need to find stable revenue streams and are pursuing support from organizations and individuals with local ties and interest in their mission.

It is also important to note that after the acquisition in 1995, the city wide community design process ran pro formas to weigh the revenue from different levels of development density against the obligation to pay a reasonable percentage of the acquisition debt. If the community had chosen more density, the increased revenue could have gone to pay a higher percentage of the debt and/or toward a fund for the park design, construction and maintenance. At the chosen development density, the city would not be able to fund the park but was able to pay off the acquisition debt in 2010.

Play area for toddlers, with scent garden nearby

The financial tension the SFRCC has always dealt with is how to redevelop the Railyard as a community asset – to keep the old industrial buildings, the legacy tenants, the four community non profits, attract local developers onto long term ground leases – and to generate enough revenue to pay the acquisition debt and then the infrastructure debt. The legacy tenants and non profits have substantially below market ground lease rates because their presence was seen as the “good bones” on which to build the infill sites. It is a very tight fit, especially during the last few years as the SFRCC has had to restructure several leases and adjust their payments to the city.

Financially, SFRCC is a pass-through, collecting revenues from ground leases, licenses agreements and events fees, deducting our operating expenses and forwarding the balance to the city. All the revenue from the developments on the Railyard is dedicated to the repayment of those debts for another 15 years. Then there will be significant, unencumbered revenue in perpetuity, half of which must be given to the city general fund and half to be spent on the Railyard. This reflects the city’s capacity to acquire long term financing to pay for long term public benefits. The fact that the Trust for Public Land stepped up to raise the money for the design and construction of the park, alameda and plaza is described by SFRCC leadership as, “the only way it would have gotten done at that time and we are eternally grateful.”

Operational Sustainability

The multiple partnerships for maintenance and operations of the Railyard are complex, but effective. The City, TPL, SFRCC and the Railyard Stewards all reported a high level of satisfaction with their working relationships and a commitment to ongoing collaboration with each other. The organizations continue to work out operational details such as parking, event management, and encouraging program collaborations among tenants.

Public space maintenance responsibilities are shared among the City of Santa Fe, SFRCC, Railyard Stewards and tenants. A map of jurisdiction areas clearly indicates the bounds of each entity’s maintenance duties. In general, the City is responsible for maintenance of streets, the conservation easement, and most parking lots, the Railyard Stewards horticultural maintenance; SFRCC is responsible for perimeter areas around and islands within parking lots; and tenants are responsible for their lots and the sidewalks immediately adjacent. As far as use of the public space for events and tenant activities, this is primarily coordinated by SFRCC staff with support of City and Railyard Stewards staff. The organizations work together on policies, scheduling and logistics; however, SFRCC is responsible for handling event fees.

The Railyard Stewards are defining the financial challenges affecting their planning for programs and operations. The funding from the City this year supported the Executive Director position full-time, and they were able to grow participation in their programs by more



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than 300%. The Railyard Stewards is a volunteer-reliant organization. They currently have a very strong and active base of volunteers assisting with Park maintenance and educational programs; however, their capacity will vary with the depth and commitment of that volunteer pool.

PROJECT IMPACTS

Conservation and Preservation

- The Railyard redevelopment enabled the City of Santa Fe and its citizens to retain control over the largest development area in the downtown, conserving a significant portion of the area as public open space.
- The project preserves an important aspect of Santa Fe's architectural and economic history that might otherwise have been eliminated in favor of Santa Fe style architectural revisionism for the sake of tourism.

- The project reclaimed an important area of the city that had fallen into decline, and restored it as a center of social, cultural and economic activity.

Community Engagement and Capacity-Building

- The community planning process helped a city that tends to focus more on its past than its future to establish an important part of its vision for ongoing development.
- The project illustrated that citizens, government agencies at all levels, nonprofit and community-based organizations, and private businesses – partner well together to bring a community vision to fruition.
- The leadership and involvement of Santa Fe residents both during the planning process and after the project's completion demonstrated citizens' ability to successfully mobilize around shared priorities and values even when they disagreed over how much or how little was developed

Civic, Social and Cultural Space

- The project created new space in the city for civic, cultural and social events that are free and open to the public, establishing a new center for cultural activity.
- The Railyard's focus on accessible community space allows a diverse mix of Santa Fe citizens to meet and interact with one another through events and casual use.

Transportation

- Although the Rail Runner will not replace regional vehicle traffic, managers from the Mid-Regional Council of Governments reported that the commuter rail has reduced congestion pressure and pulled some cars off the road.
- The Rail Runner provides a viable transportation alternative that can be part of a long-term culture change toward more use of public transit.



Assessing Project Success

SUCCESS IN MEETING PROJECT GOALS

- *To become a community asset that emphasizes local artists, local businesses and local cultures.*

The Railroad project's commitment to be a community asset, not a development project, emphasizing local artists, local businesses and local cultures, has proven to be successful, though continually difficult in this hard national economic downturn. The citizens are pleased the property was preserved for their long term goals.

- *To preserve the history and continuing use of the Railyard as a transportation center.*

The project planning and development team, the New Mexico Department of Transportation and the Mid-Regional Council of Governments (MRCOG) all viewed development of the Railyard and the restoration of passenger rail service to Santa Fe as mutually dependent; the groups worked to ensure that the Railyard and the Rail Runner service would function well together. Although the Railyard no longer serves as a freight transportation center, it is a growing passenger and excursion hub.

- *To focus on economic development opportunities for local businesses whose interest and investments would remain in Santa Fe.*

The priority given to local businesses in leasing clearly illustrates the Railyard's focus on opportunities for local business. SFRCC has had to manage community expectations in this regard; although the North Railyard may be less expensive than the Plaza or other downtown areas, it is not the same kind of highly affordable, largely unimproved space that businesses could find in the rail yard prior to redevelopment. The Baca District offers more affordability than the North Railyard, but is still primarily accessible to established small businesses rather than start-ups.

- *To ensure that existing community-based nonprofits could remain in the Railyard through rent reduction.*

The four primary nonprofit tenants – SITE Santa Fe, Warehouse 21, the Farmers Market Institute, and El Museo Cultural, and the fifth for profit SFSR is struggling to remain on the Railyard, though all are still on-site in new or renovated space. See section in main text for ongoing opportunities and challenges.

- *To respect and maintain the vitality of the deeply-rooted neighborhood by keeping development consistent with the historical context and industrial architectural character of the site.*

The design guidelines in the Master Plan outline in detail the types of architectural and landscape elements (forms, materials, equipment) that are permitted to maintain consistency with both the surrounding neighborhood and the particular character of the Railyard. While

not all buildings are aesthetically pleasing, new buildings and building renovations are consistent with the architectural character and respectful of the scale of the neighborhood.

- *To provide affordable activities for the community in beautiful, welcoming public spaces that offered social vitality, healthful activity, and vibrant artistic elements.*

The conservation easement requires that public events in park spaces be free and open to the public, which keeps activities affordable, and for-profit as well as nonprofit businesses are encouraged to give back through community events (for instance, the cinema, when developed, would be asked to provide space for local film festivals). The public spaces are well-maintained and attractive, although much of the landscaping is not yet mature. It was difficult to fully judge social vitality during our visit due to winter weather conditions; however, the site was active during planned events, and consistently if sometimes lightly used at other times. SFRCC indicated that the space is fully booked for events during the high season, and those events are well attended. See main narrative for additional details of programming and activity.

- *To create a sustainable park appropriate for New Mexico's arid high desert climate.*

In the Railyard Park and other public spaces, plantings are often selected to be drought-resistant or drought-tolerant, and to require some regular but limited irrigation. Plantings are not exclusively native, but are all intended to be climate-appropriate. The Railyard

Park uses traditional New Mexico irrigation systems such as the Acequias in combination with drip irrigation to support efficient and effective plant maintenance. The Railyard also collects rainwater from building roofs for storage in the water tower.

The process and final project are responsive to the vast majority of community concerns that prompted the rejection of the Catellus plan and were expressed throughout the community planning process. The development relates to the architectural heritage of Santa Fe, and the architectural character of the Railyard was maintained while allowing for compatible new development. The presence of a working commuter rail as well as the excursion trains keeps the transportation aspect of the site oriented toward the daily needs of residents and workers.

The project has provided an important place for community social, cultural and economic life. SFRCC and its tenants appear to be managing the economic downturn prudently, if not as successfully as they would like. Although we did not see the project in full use or bloom, it is a well-used, well-designed, and well-cared for community-based development.

SELECTION COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The Committee noted that Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment offers Santa Fe an ambitious and well scaled project, defining new roles and relationships for the city, incorporating aggressive public engagement and ultimately, broad public ownership of the project by the community. The project announces what could well become a national resurgence in rail and multi modal transportation, and it offers an armature for what is becoming a significant addition to the public realm of the city.

They also credited The Trust for Public Land, whose conservation easement was a critical part of the land acquisition in the project and was well received as an urban intervention by the city and the non-profit organization. However, the resulting park design was the subject of mixed reviews by the Committee. Several members felt the park itself was not well integrated into the fabric of the redevelopment. The linear ramada in the park, for example, doesn't appear to serve as either a destination or a route that connects key project elements. Some Committee members felt there was confusion between the typology of a large urban park, and the redevelopment of the Railyard.

The committee also debated the relative merits of the lack of a defined edge to the development, concluding that the porous edge was successful and much preferred to any gateway conditions that might have been devised. Overall the consensus was that the effort is still a work in process and the organic nature of its evolution is both readable and convincing. The Committee was impressed with what they described as the civic and cultural consciousness of the project.

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Partnership Strategies and the Public Realm: Lessons and Questions

It is not easy serving on an RBA Selection Committee. The initial discussions among Committee members almost always begin with a search for a familiar way to choose winners from an excellent group of applicants. The criteria for eligibility, however, require only that the project be a real place, not a plan or a program, and that it be sufficiently “mature” that its impacts can be observed. The Selection Committee members, therefore, are asked to find persuasive aspects of excellence within the projects in lieu of judging projects on a pre-determined set of measurements.

This approach does not favor large projects over small ones; it does not privilege the well-financed project over those that struggle for budget; and it is not fundamentally about any single discipline prevailing over all others in the making. More often the discussions in both the initial round of work and in the final debate leading to the designation of a Gold Medal winner revolve around the ways in which excellent projects must be responsive to a wide variety of urban, social, demographic, architectural and contextual factors.

It is inevitably a part of such discussions to look at both the range of constituents influencing the development of each new project, and the ways in which each new place will effect the urban built environment and its many stakeholders. As the complexity of place-making is revealed, the difficulty of managing a series of complex relationships in a manner that results in well-made and sustainable places becomes increasingly clear. Innovative partnerships played a key role in the 2011 winners, and the range of partnerships in the

five projects was notable. There were a total of 23 municipal or public agencies weighing in across the projects, as well as 18 private sector interests and over 30 not-for-profit organizations including philanthropic groups. The level of partnering does not appear to be directly related to the dollar value of projects or their overall physical complexity.

The case histories reported in this cycle of the Rudy Bruner Award all involve core responsibilities that might traditionally be understood as the purview of the public sector: public parks, schools, youth centers, and facilities for distressed populations. In these cases the public sector worked closely with non-profits, and citizen groups to achieve optimal outcomes for the public good. In challenging economic times, urban development includes an increasing number of such partnerships, and leads to new and innovative visions of place. In considering the 2011 winners we find some lessons and still more questions relating to these new models of partnership. Yet it seems that despite the questions raised along the way, capable partners working together can achieve results that would not otherwise be possible.

The 2011 winners include two urban parks, a school and related after-school programs in a youth center, a comprehensive program of services related to an urban homeless population, and the re-use of a railroad yard as both an urban park and development site. All of these projects involved challenges to conventional financing, required innovative partnering strategies and resulted the creation

of new public space. None of these projects would have been successful without the partnerships that overcame initial resistance to development and incorporated disparate points of view. These inclusive strategies ultimately enhanced the public's capacity to perform, improved the quality of public and private services delivered, added quality space to the urban built environment, and improved the climate for business interests.

The significant role of citizens who were initially opposed to early project plans cannot be overstated. Dialogue with these groups, and ultimately partnerships formed with them resulted in projects that were far superior to those offered in the initial development plans. In Santa Fe citizen opposition to conventional development lead to a partnership among the Trust for Public Land, the City of Santa Fe, a private non-profit "friends" type organization, the Railroad and a private non-profit community development corporation who, working together, re-envisioned the project. The Brooklyn Bridge Park also has its origins in such resistance— in this case it was the struggle between municipal perceptions of how development should occur at the edge of the park, and how citizens choose to address park planning and development. Both of these projects demonstrate the importance of an informed and vocal citizenry, and also exemplify how such conflicts can be the basis for new and productive collaborations.

The projects in Phoenix, Dallas, and Chicago reveal other forms of partnering, also framed by discreet but influential acts of resistance and some extraordinary cooperation among municipal agencies, non-profit institutions, and private philanthropic activity. These strategies suggest a role for the private sector in the transformation of K-12 education, the elimination of homelessness, and in the transformation of urban cores. These cases struggled with conflict as part of project evolution but ended with collaborations that provided a foundation of trust and a renewed capacity to move forward.

THE SANTA FE RAILYARD REDEVELOPMENT

Imagine the citizens of the Guadalupe District in Santa Fe organizing a popular resistance to a conventional development plan that was embraced by municipal government, environmental groups, the business sector, as well as professional, and neighborhood constituencies. Despite long odds, however, their efforts were successful and the revised participation led to a very popular development viewed by many as a victory for a grass roots community of Santa Fe. The collision of interests within the development community, versus the aspirations of the City for a public realm less dominated by Santa Fe's tourist economy, led to a new ten acre park. The same confluence of development aspirations and the interests of non-profit organizations like El Museo Cultural, Warehouse 21, the Farmers Market, Site Santa Fe, resulted in a mix of uses in the Rail-

yard project that was not part of the original development scheme but clearly added to the vitality and richness of the opportunities in Santa Fe.

The grassroots process employed after the large development proposal failed in Santa Fe led to an unusual alignment among diverse partners and a new role for the City that enabled much of the public space to be developed and maintained with private money. The irony in this story is that following the RBA site visit and reporting, the 2011 Occupy Wall Street movement moved into the Santa Fe Railyard and faced opposition from a sympathetic but concerned Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation. The occupants apparently knew little of the history of the popular roots of the Corporation and were actually protesting against the rules of Railyard and park uses



that the Community Corporation and their expansive grassroots constituencies had developed years earlier.

There were strenuous efforts by the City and the Community Corporation to work through the controversy created by the 2011 Occupy Wall Street movement as it established residence in the park. There were multiple meetings with discussions about the rules of occupancy, debates about how best to protect the site and the occupiers, even as the protest was encouraged to run its course. The struggle began to feel like a conventional head-to-head of corporate interests versus the use of the public realm for public ends. But the discussion allowed the City and Community Corporation to tell the story of their work again, decades after their initial struggle, to a new generation of Santa Fe residents. In so doing there was a renewed enthusiasm for the origin story and a way to refresh memories of the public intention in resisting the initial corporate proposals for the site. It reminded the people of the human and social purposes behind the public-private partnership that created the development.

BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK

Parks are a civic responsibility, or so our common understanding of municipal finance suggests. But the scale and potential significance of Brooklyn Bridge Park is in many ways unique. The capital costs were financed with public money, yet the ability to maintain it over



time is vested in a public/private “business model” that calls for some perimeter property farthest from the water to be privately developed and to generate revenue for Park operations. For some this is an inappropriate compromise on what should be entirely a public responsibility, while for others it is a creative solution to limited public resources for Park operations. In fact, the Brooklyn Bridge Park Defense Fund went to court to challenge the legality of funding the Park through housing revenues internal to its borders. The 2006 court decision affirming its legality has done little to quash the concerns about this blending of public and private responsibilities and the way in which the Park will be sustained remains hotly debated.

Other more modest partnerships involve not-for-profit locations for activities in the Park. While coordinated by the Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation and the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, these organizations are seen to be part of the life of the Park, feeding its largely free programming with everything from kayak instruction and

sport events, to movies, theatre productions, opera, and concerts. Still another layer of educational programming occurs through the Bridge Community Council which has reached out to public and private schools, recreation organizations, and arts groups that now routinely use the Park. All the partners, some large and others very small, contribute to its vitality.

CIVIC SPACE PARK

Like Brooklyn Bridge, Civic Space Park used city funds to support much of the initial capital cost, and relies upon a municipal agreement with Arizona State University that allows ASU to operate and maintain the Park. The resistance to this project came from those who thought University maintenance and operations would privatize the Park and incorporate it into the ASU campus. In order to address the concern about the loss of full public use, a cooperative agreement between the University and the City was put in place with safeguards on access and use. In addition the symbolic naming, "Civic Space Park," suggested strongly the intention to create a park that was a true public amenity.

In order to ensure full activation of the Park as an urban amenity, and thus more fully revitalize the downtown, the City of Phoenix also sold bonds supporting the construction of student housing, recreation facilities, and academic buildings on the periphery of Civic Pace Park. The planning for the Park and the ASU downtown



campus has focused on creating a destination surrounded by campus activity, filled with programmed events for the general public, as well as offering a variety of passive spaces. The Park benefits from its location as a route between various points on its periphery, as well as the downtown. The program for Civic Space Park is still emerging and it remains to be seen if the programming partnership between the University and the City will fully activate the space.

GARY COMER COLLEGE PREP AND YOUTH CENTER

Charter schools everywhere have become part of the debate over how to improve upon the efficacy of public schools. In many states the charter schools utilize public school resources and are seen as an alternative to failing public education. And in many cities, charter schools have become a very significant new paradigm for public-private partnership.



At Gary Comer College Prep the program went beyond state funding formulas in their partnership, utilizing private funds to augment the public school mission. This funding allowed creation of Gary Comer College Prep, creation of a peer tutoring program at nearby Paul Revere Elementary, and development of a major new youth center offering a safe after school site for students in the neighborhood. The program for both GCCP and Youth Center were derived in breakfast conversations in the public school. The origin story of the project has its roots in contributions through the Comer Science and Education Foundation which discovered that the support it offered to the early years of public schooling had not resulted in increased student success in the public high school system. The result of their rethinking their intervention is the GCCP that is both an alternative to the traditional public school and a potential new model for helping public schools to succeed.

Another partner strategy employed in the College Prep and Youth Center was to align itself with the very successful South Shore Drill Team. By providing space for drill in the youth center the total complex has come to symbolize the potential for individual success and embodies a significant source of community pride in the otherwise grim social and economic conditions of Chicago's south side.

While it is necessary to provide tight security for GCCP due to crime concerns in the neighborhood, the program has extended itself outside the bunker to the community garden, the new public library, and newly renovated housing nearby. As a result new construction is now increasing near the school. All of this speaks well of the evolution of the partnership between the Comer Foundation, the Chicago school system, the Mayor and the Fifth Ward Alderman, and is seen to contribute substantially to a more positive attitude about the conditions of the Grand Crossing neighborhood.

THE BRIDGE

The Bridge is a story of how cities should never waste a good crisis. The human and economic cost of over six thousand homeless people on the streets of downtown Dallas had reached what several called crisis proportions. The business community simply wanted the problem to go away. They raised \$160,000 to try to defeat the proposed downtown location for a homeless shelter, fearing that proximity of the homeless population would further threaten the

downtown environment. The coalition that worked to build the Bridge pushed back and successfully acquired their downtown site and permission to proceed. In the long run these warring factions came together to create a project that is making new inroads in the national problem of homelessness.

The Bridge not only overcame resistance to its development, but partnered with downtown interests to ensure the effectiveness of their project. The Bridge now raises over one third of its annual operating funds from private sources. These funds come from a wide array of businesses, individuals and organizations that would otherwise be burdened by more costly engagements of the Bridge populations as well as from a large cast of social support networks often engaged in such work.

The Bridge also enjoys support and recognition from the art community and related philanthropies that are appreciative of its award winning architecture. Partners come with a variety of motivations, and the Bridge constituencies have leveraged them to move on to a program of future expansion.

WORKING THE EDGES

There was a good deal of discussion among Selection Committee members about the design of edge conditions of each project. Civic Space Park was conceived as a seamless part of the urban fabric,



and concept diagrams demonstrate the continuous circulation patterns through the park and into the surrounding street grid. The soft edges appear to intentionally lack definition and minimize any thought of ceremonial arrival in the park. This was done in deference to the goal of weaving a site at the edge of downtown into the fabric of the city. The Santa Fe Railyard, like Phoenix's Civic Space Park, is also located at the edge of downtown, and aspired to be integrated into the surrounding neighborhood street pattern. This development also tended to express such integration by avoiding sharp definitions of the project's edge, and establishing porosity and multiple points of entry and exit.

Brooklyn Bridge Park, by contrast, was industrial. It was a site already set apart from the neighboring urban fabric both by use and by location. It is sandwiched in between the highway and the waterfront

with only a narrow throat on each end connecting it to the surrounding neighborhood. Even in this case, however, where a clearly defined arrival was possible, the designers choose to create softer links to its neighbors, through a bridge, and other street level access points, almost a feathering of the park's edge into the adjacent street pattern. In all three cases the definition of edge conditions was soft. To some of the members of the Selection Committee this was negative, "ill defined," while others argued it afforded a good expression of connection.

The design of the Bridge in Dallas and the Comer College Prep and Youth Center also struggled with boundary conditions. The Bridge was bounded by the expressway on one side and downtown on the other. And Comer College Prep and Youth Center was at the intersection of three separate communities joined by arterial roads. These facilities were both envisioned as healing the physical and social fabric of their community even as they sought to protect occupants from dangers lurking within these communities. The result is that these facilities had to embrace stringent security, even as they were also "beacons" of light and symbols of hope. The contradictions are evident. The street pattern is sustained through the Bridge but the complex is also fenced, blocking through traffic. The protection from street level gun fire at the school and youth center is clearly not the public expression of open to the neighborhood that, for example, the nearby library or gardens illustrate.

Neither the Bridge nor the Comer College Prep and Youth Center programs really had a choice. The school and youth center needed to be a safe haven in the roughness of South Chicago, and the clients of the Bridge needed protection from influences outside the control of the service providers in the facility. Both facilities address the opposing goals with sharp boundary conditions.

The open question for all five projects in this cycle of the Award is about the nature of boundary or edge. Are they in service of integration, functional separation, or both? Does a soft edge defeat a clear entrance condition? Does a hard edge defeat integration? In urban design terms the choice is likely a false one. Designers always aspire to do both by clearly identifying the order of the functional separation and their relationships, each to the others. This is where the architecture expresses its voice, establishing the landmarks and nodes that mark destination and the edges and districts that announce critical transitions.

WHO WINS AND WHO LOSES?

Who wins and who loses may be the central question when we blur distinctions between the legitimate interests of the general public versus those of smaller more identifiable constituencies. The passionate defense of public interest over commercial interests in park management at Brooklyn Bridge Park, or in the resistance to University management of Civic Space Park are grounded in a perception

of the loss of public control. When “Occupy Santa Fe” takes over the Railyard Park and is resisted by the Railyard Community Corporation with legitimate commercial interests in the park, how do we identify the tipping point when the commercial interests have gone too far in control of public space? The economic arguments that suggest private commerce (even non-profit interest) or University management over public space necessarily have to be balanced with the public realm.

The use of new institutional arrangements in making places, however, does have a profound influence on the nature of the places we make. The partnership with The Trust for Public Land that enabled the purchase of the site also delineated a strong functional separation on the site. The easement placed by the Trust during the land transfer became the vehicle that defined the park as a single use zone, enabling development of the park and framing its geometry. Brooklyn Bridge Park introduced private development at the edge to the Park farthest from the water, leaving water’s edge and the many acres of open space behind it available to the public.

As semi-private charter schools utilize public resources to operate have they actually lessened the potential for success for public education, or are they providing new models that will benefit the broader system? As we raise private money to address the needs of the homeless have we weakened the ability of the public to meet its obligations to its citizens, or have we enabled the discovery of new models that will make public efforts more effective in the

future? In times of tight resource constraints in the public sector, it is imperative that government avail itself of other sources of funds, as long as private funding does not interfere with government’s most important mandate, to provide for the larger public good. Private funding sources also have the potential to relieve the public sector of responsibilities that have traditionally been theirs but that may no longer be affordable.

Previous RBA winners such as Chicago’s Millennium Park and Yerba Buena Gardens in San Francisco join this year’s winning projects in offering innovative models for how the public can leverage private interests in the public realm. Each story is unique and each raises its own set of questions about the relative benefits and constraints inherent in these public/private partnerships. The power of the stories in this year’s Rudy Bruner Award demonstrates the fact that these issues remain controversial. They also embody new forms of partnership that grow out of the unique physical, economic, social and financial attributes of each urban setting. We salute this year’s winners for a series of creative partnering strategies that engage an ongoing debate, and in so doing, have created a group of places that make a major contribution to sustaining the vitality of the public realm.

2011 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence

The Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence is dedicated to discovering and celebrating urban places that integrate effective process, meaningful values, and good design. These special places are also distinguished by their social, economic and contextual contributions to the urban built environment. Rudy Bruner Award winners transcend the boundaries between architecture, urban design and planning, and are often developed with such vision and imagination that they transform urban problems into creative solutions that can be adapted to cities across the country.

This book presents five outstanding projects which comprise the 2011 Rudy Bruner Award winners. They offer creative approaches to urban placemaking in a variety of settings. Each of the projects reflects a deep commitment by groups of citizens, public agencies and individuals who dedicated themselves to making their cities better places to live and work. We salute their efforts.

2011 WINNERS:

Gold Medal: BRIDGE HOMELESS ASSISTANCE CENTER
Dallas, TX

Silver Medal: BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK
Brooklyn NY

GARY COMER YOUTH CENTER/GARY COMER COLLEGE PREP
Chicago, IL

CIVIC SPACE PARK
Phoenix, AZ

SANTA FE RAILYARD REDEVELOPMENT
Santa Fe, NM

The Rudy Bruner Award is biennial. The Gold Medal winner receives \$50,000, and each Silver Medal winner receives \$10,000.

For case studies on every Rudy Bruner Award winner, images of current and past winners, information on our award process and Selection Committees, and much more, please visit us online at:

www.brunerfoundation.org/rba