

Implementation Plan

May 2014

Community Dreaming



Community Dreaming Old South Baton Rouge is a project of the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge (ACGBR) and Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX), funded by JP Morgan Chase, the Kresge Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts, to use the arts as a tool for regenerating economic development and civic engagement within the Old South Baton Rouge community. By preserving the community's cultural heritage while providing resources for economic and quality of life opportunities, the project will build on revitalization efforts currently in progress.

Lord Cultural Resources

Lord Cultural Resources is a global professional practice dedicated to creating cultural capital worldwide. We assist people, communities and organizations to realize and enhance cultural meaning and expression through visioning, planning and implementation.

We value and believe in cultural expression as essential for all people. We conduct ourselves with respect for collaboration, local adaptation and cultural diversity, embodying the highest standards of integrity, ethics and professional practice.

Mosaic Urban Partners

Mosaic Urban Partners is a real estate development and advisory services firm headquartered in Washington, DC. Our core purpose is to transform urban communities. We leverage our passion for public private partnerships to solve complex urban redevelopment problems. Our commitment to transforming urban communities is more than just a focus on the revitalization of a community's physical environment. Our approach also seeks to create beneficial economic development outcomes in urban areas. Mosaic's efforts will positively impact the people who live, work & play in the communities we transform.

Mosaic's staff has served in the public and private sectors on redevelopment projects in a number of cities – therefore we are able to advise clients based on best practices used in multiple jurisdictions. Unlike

many advisors, we understand the unique political, legal, community and bureaucratic considerations of public-private development because we have faced these considerations from both the public and private sector sides of the table. Our experience allows us to provide you soup-to-nuts support from the initial market and project feasibility analysis to the selection of private bidders through final project negotiations.

James Lima Planning + Development

James Lima Planning + Development is a strategic planning and development advisory firm providing an array of public and private sector clients with real estate consulting services to advance their mission and enhance community quality of life. JLP+D specializes in interdisciplinary master planning, real estate value creation, public-private partnership structures, and implementation strategies for large-scale, mixed-use urban revitalization projects, often involving significant early investments in the public realm and the arts.

Franklin Associates, LLC

Franklin Associates, LLC specializes in public relations, project management, and planning. We're a team who puts our talent, our passion and our energy into standing by our word. The first priority of our professionals is to put people first in the belief that our community's human resources are our most critical resources. Exceeding client expectations is our trademark, because every project we take on represents a commitment to effecting positive outcomes – on time, every time.

Many of the images in this Implementation Plan illustrate the variety of youth, adult, and family programming already being offered in the OSBR area. Few of these programs, though, are available on a consistent basis. This Plan provides ways to offer cultural, housing, and economic opportunities on a more regular basis.

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OSBR STAKEHOLDERS AT-A-GLANCE

OSBR is served by a variety of stakeholders who have an active interest and important role within the neighborhood. Throughout the **Implementation Plan**; the **Lincoln Theater Feasibility Study**; and the **OSBR Market Analysis**, these stakeholders, listed alphabetically below, are identified as current and future contributors to OSBR’s growth and renewal. This list is provided as a quick reference guide to acronyms as well as descriptions of the groups and organizations:

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

- **Community residents:** Approximately 11,000 people live in OSBR. These residents have a strong loyalty to their neighborhood, pride in the neighborhood’s past, and an interest in revitalizing OSBR while staying true to its character.
- **Community leadership:** OSBR boasts a range of current and past residents with strong community ties that remain active and invested in neighborhood affairs.
- **Political leadership:** OSBR has strong political advocates including District 10 Councilwoman Tara Wicker (who also leads the SBR Civic Association) and Louisiana State Representative Patricia H. Smith.

NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED COMMUNITY, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

- **Baranco Clark YMCA:** Located on Thomas Delpit Drive, the YMCA serves as a community gathering space, recreational venue, and landmark.
- **Baton Rouge Gallery - Center for Contemporary Art:** Located in BREC’s historic City Park Pavilion exhibits contemporary art exhibitions and featuring professional local and national artists. Also offers special performances and spoken word, film, poetry, music, and dance programs.
- **BREC’s Magnolia Mound Plantation:** Owned by the city of Baton Rouge, maintained by its Recreation Commission (BREC), and located in OSBR, this historic house and site is a demonstration of early plantation life in south Louisiana, for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations.
- **Butler Center—Dr. Leo S. Butler Community Center:** Located on E. Washington Street, the community center serves the residents of South Baton Rouge in their social, civic, medical, cultural, recreational, and spiritual pursuits. Offerings help uplift lives in a positive way including health and wellness; education programs for youth and lifelong learners; and other free services. The center also serves as a host for the Senior Employment Program, City of Baton Rouge Court Services Program

and the Louisiana State University and Southern University Community Service program.

- **Circa 1857:** Former site of Griffon's Drug Store, the rehabilitated building is located on Government and 19th Street and serves as a home for over 100 local artists and artisans.
- **EBRPL— East Baton Rouge Parish Library:** Provides all residents of the parish with access to educational, informational, recreational, and cultural center through a wide variety of resources, services, and programs. Consists of 13 local libraries throughout EBRP; the **Carver Branch Library is located within OSBR.**
- **Freeman/Matthews Head Start Center:** Located on Napoleon Street in the heart of OSBR, the center provides comprehensive programs relating to health, disabilities, education, and family services to eligible low-income families and their children.
- **LBHFF—Louisiana Black History Hall of Fame:** Current owner of the Lincoln Theater. Dedicated to honoring African Americans who have achieved distinction in their fields, the organization has pursued developing an exhibition room and gallery at the Lincoln Theater in OSBR.
- **McKinley Alumni Center:** The center provides kitchen space and a multipurpose room for community functions and organizations such as Early Childhood Support Services, the Serenity 67 Community Center, the Department of Social Services, and much more.
- **MoPA—Museum of Public Art:** Located on the corner of Myrtle Walk and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive opposite the Lincoln Theatre, the Museum of Public Art has converted a vacant building into an evolving series of community-inspired murals. The museum strives to generate positive community development through arts creation and education programs.
- **North Gate Merchant Association:** This nonprofit works to strengthen links between LSU and the North Gate community at the southern end of OSBR. Specifically, the association aims to better attract university students and faculty to Highland Road, W. State Street, Lake Street, and W. Chimes Street, adjacent to LSU campus.
- **Odell S. Williams Now and Then African- American History Museum:** Showcases faces of African American contributors in various fields, rural artifacts, African Art, and minority inventions, and is the Juneteenth archive site.
- **OSBR Sensational Seniors:** A group of active seniors in OSBR that helps the sizeable elderly population engage in neighborhood affairs.
- **Places of Worship:** OSBR has a strong network of religious leadership, including Shiloh Baptist Church, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church; Wesley United Methodist Church and the Islamic Cultural Center. ***Shiloh Baptist Church, while not physically sited within the OSBR district, is located nearby and has a foundation arm that has an interest in supporting projects near the Lincoln and operates a thrift store in the neighborhood.*** Additional places of worship located in OSBR are as follows: Chapel of the Cross Lutheran Church; Church of God in Christ;

OSBR STAKEHOLDERS AT-A-GLANCE

CONTINUED

Ebenezer Baptist Church; Friendship Church; Good Hope Baptist Church; Greater Antioch Baptist Church; Greater Beulah Baptist Church; Greater Mount Gideon Baptist Church; Greater Saint Johns Baptist Church; Heard Chapel AME Church; House of Refuge Ministries; Israelite Baptist Church; Liberty Chapel Baptist Church; Little Rising Sun Church; Living Word Church; Magnolia Baptist Church; McKowen Baptist Church; Mount Calvary Third Baptist Church; Mount Zion First Baptist Church; Neely United Methodist Church; New Ark Baptist Church; New Bethel Baptist Church; New Canaan Baptist Church; New Jerusalem Baptist Church; New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church; New St. Luke Baptist Church; Pine Prairie Church of Christ; Pleasant Green Baptist Church; Progressive Baptist Church; Saint Clair Spiritual Church; Saint Joseph Baptist Church; Saint Paul Missionary Baptist Church; Saint Raymond Divine Spiritual Church; Seltus Lazardus Memorial Temple; Southern Christian Leadership; St. Judes United Spiritual Church; St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church; Star of Bethlehem Baptist Church; Sweethome Baptist Church

- **SBR Civic Association—South Baton Rouge Civic Association:** The neighborhood advocacy group, led by city Councilwoman Tara Wicker, serves as one of the strongest voices on behalf of the community.

CITYWIDE AND NEIGHBORHOOD-SPECIFIC AGENCIES:

- **BREC—Baton Rouge Recreation Commission (BREC):** Operates public parks, recreation facilities and programs throughout East Baton Rouge Parish. Parks and Recreation Centers in OSBR: Alaska Street Park, City-Brooks Community Park, East Polk Street Park, Expressway, Park, Roosevelt Street Park, Terrace Street Park and Recreation Center.
- **City of Baton Rouge:** The Office of the Mayor-President (Mayor-President Melvin “Kip” Holden) has expressed interest and support for the redevelopment of the OSBR neighborhood. City departments such as the Office of Community Development, Office of the Planning Commission, and Office of Neighborhoods provide housing and economic development resources that are available to the neighborhood.
- **DDD:** Downtown Development District initiates and supports partnerships that develop and enhance Downtown Baton Rouge. Projects include the development of a downtown “Cultural Product District”

exempting original works of art sold within the district from sales taxes and offering tax breaks on the renovation of historic buildings.

- **MCRA: Mid City Redevelopment Alliance:** The alliance promotes the growth and renewal of the Mid City region of Baton Rouge—overlapping with the northeast portion of OSBR, including the Lincoln Theater—by attracting new and retaining current residents and businesses. Programs include homebuyer counseling and education programs, façade improvement grants, and neighborhood improvement grants.

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH A ROLE IN OSBR:

- **ACGBR—The Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge:** Founded over 40 years ago, works to improve quality of life through the arts. The nonprofit provides grant support for art exhibits, theater productions, dance, music, festivals, literary works, media, folklife, and design arts throughout the 11-parish region, including support for this Cultural Placemaking and Economic Development Strategy.
- **BRAF—Baton Rouge Area Foundation:** The community foundation provides two essential functions for the capital region—it connects philanthropists with nonprofits to make sure community needs are met and manages civic leadership projects.
- **CPEX—Center for Planning Excellence:** Provides planning models and technical assistance to communities throughout Louisiana that wish to create and enact master plans dealing with transportation and infrastructure needs, equitable

housing opportunities, environmental issues, and quality design for the built environment. CPEX is managing this Cultural Placemaking and Economic Development Strategy.

- **EBRMFA— East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority:** Provides mortgage financing to moderate- and low-income first-time homebuyers throughout East Baton Rouge Parish.
- **EBRPHA—East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority:** Provides housing and rental assistance through Public Housing and Assisted Housing (formerly Section 8) programs, and currently serves approximately 3,634 families throughout the East Baton Rouge Parish.
- **RDA—East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority:** Created in 2007 by the Louisiana State Legislature, the organization serves to revitalize blighted properties, foster redevelopment through partnerships, create vibrant communities, and preserve neighborhood character. The RDA has helped redevelop properties near OSBR along Government Street to the north, and has reservation rights of seven tax adjudicated parcels within the OSBR neighborhood near the Lincoln Theater site.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:

- **LSU—Louisiana State University:** A 30,000-student flagship public university for the state of Louisiana. LSU is located directly to the south of OSBR. The university promotes investment in OSBR through the Community-University Partnership.

OSBR STAKEHOLDERS AT-A-GLANCE CONTINUED

- **LSU-CUP—Louisiana State University Community-University Partnership:** Builds partnerships in the OSBR community, the metropolitan area, and beyond to implement community programs and initiatives.
- **Southern—Southern University and A&M College:** A historically black college, located in the northern section of the City of Baton Rouge. It was founded in 1880 and offers four-year, graduate, professional, and doctorate degree programs.
- **BRCC—Baton Rouge Community College:** The OSBR Campus is an open admissions, two-year post-secondary public community college. Established in 1995, the college currently enrolls more than 7,000 students.
- **Other educational institutions:** A variety of additional educational institutions serve OSBR including Buchanan and Polk Elementary School, McKinley Academic Middle Magnet School (which has a leading arts program), McKinley High School, the McKinley Adult Learning Center, St. Francis Xavier School, Foreign Language Academic Immersion Magnet (FLAIM), and University Terrace Elementary

01 INTRODUCTION

Old South Baton Rouge (OSBR), a community of homes, places of worship, and businesses, connects two prominent city landmarks: Louisiana State University (LSU) and Downtown Baton Rouge. Once the southernmost point of the city and popular in the mid-20th century as a predominantly African-American enclave where people of all races operated businesses, socialized, and lived, the community was dubbed “Old” South Baton Rouge by community organizers to distinguish the celebrated neighborhood from the newer areas developing south of the city.¹

More than fifty years later—the community’s rich heritage, centered around the arts and public service—from film, live music, fine art, and great food to the seminal and early role played by OSBR leaders in the national civil rights movement and other social justice advocacy—has become the foundation of an initiative to improve quality of life and inspire reinvestment in OSBR.

Recognizing the historical and cultural importance of the area to the city of Baton Rouge, Derek Gordon, an OSBR native son and past director of the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge (ACGBR), conceived the idea to create a Cultural Placemaking Plan for the OSBR community to explore the use of arts and culture as tools for regenerating community identity, economic development, and civic engagement. In 2012, ACGBR received funding from the Kresge Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to create the Cultural Placemaking Plan as envisioned by Mr. Gordon and the OSBR community.

Three documents are the result of this vision; this Implementation Plan, a Feasibility Study for the Lincoln Theater, and an OSBR Market Analysis and are intended to be used as blueprints for bringing Mr. Gordon’s dreams to life.

¹ *Old South Baton Rouge as a geographical term is credited to Colonel Harold Webb, executive director of the OSBR Community Development Corporation. Source: Councilwoman Tara Wicker, District 10.*

“ Family heritage is at the heart of South Baton Rouge – this is what keeps people there and brings people back. ”

MCKINLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT AND WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT



Photo courtesy of Perry Franklin, Franklin Associates

A Cultural Placemaking Plan allows a community to create its own identity through cultural expression.

WHY CULTURAL PLACEMAKING IN OLD SOUTH BATON ROUGE?

Arts and culture are already an integral part of the reinvigoration of the OSBR community. Many organizations are making a mark on the community through murals, like those created by the Museum of Public Art (MoPA); community gardens, like those spearheaded by the Center for Planning Excellence; Love Our Community, the summer youth employment program supported by the Office of the Mayor-President; and the Neighborhood Art Project sponsored by the LSU Museum of Art. For the people of OSBR, culture is the fabric of the community's unique identity.

A Cultural Placemaking Implementation Plan for OSBR articulates a clear, coordinated roadmap to build on that uniqueness. It identifies community priorities for redevelopment and enhancement, providing a schedule, partners, and leaders for the implementation of the Plan.

This Plan is designed to:

- Leverage the cultural and heritage assets of OSBR to propel economic, physical, and educational prosperity in the community;

- Network partners, resources, and previous planning processes;
- Support culture as an engine for a creative economy, attracting and retaining a new generation; and
- Attract and nurture the future cultural leaders, artists, volunteers, and audiences.

This Cultural Placemaking Implementation Plan is the result of extensive research and community engagement, incorporating feedback from community stakeholders, pastors, business owners, service providers, residents, public officers, and partners. Ultimately, the Plan is intended to be shared—and built upon— by all of Baton Rouge's community leaders, creative people, residents, and institutions, and to serve as a living document.



WHY CULTURAL PLACEMAKING IN OSBR?

ARTS AND CULTURE BREAK DOWN BARRIERS.

Murals replace graffiti as a neighborhood's identifier. Culture enables neighbors to express shared pride in their local culture.

ARTS AND CULTURE BREED POSITIVE STREET LIFE,

transforming the lives of marginalized youth and many others. Culture combats the anonymity that drives communities apart.

CREATIVE THINKING LEADS TO NEW BUSINESS MODELS AND PROBLEM SOLVING.

Design and technology uncover new uses for ordinary or obsolete things.

CULTURE REVITALIZES AND SUSTAINS PROPERTY VALUES,

and attracts visitors regionally and globally, directly contributing to the local economy.

THE POWER OF ARTS EDUCATION TO TRANSFORM AT-RISK YOUTH AND ENHANCE JOB SKILLS



Source: LSU Reveille

At-risk youth who have access to the arts in or out of school tend to achieve better academic results, obtain better workforce opportunities, and be more civically engaged. Students who have a history of in-depth arts involvement demonstrate:

- Better academic outcomes: 15% more likely to enroll in a highly or moderately selective four-year college.
- Higher career goals: Highest rates of pursuing a major that aligns with a professional career; those with an arts-rich background are more likely to work in a profession such as law, medicine, education, or management.
- Higher rates of civic engagement: More likely to read a newspaper at least once a week, have higher volunteer rates, and be engaged in the national election.¹

¹ National Endowment for the Arts; *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies*

02 FULFILLING THE NEEDS OF OSBR TODAY

Today, OSBR is home to many culturally significant places and institutions that have shaped and strengthened the lives of its predominantly African-American community for generations. Despite dramatic physical, social, and economic change, a strong OSBR community identity remains, rooted in the homes and churches, community centers and schools, and a web of relationships among its families.



Source: 2dots-era.com

Through parallel tracks of inquiry focused on public engagement and research, the cultural placemaking process identified key needs to be addressed and opportunities to be explored, underscored by the following major themes:

AFFIRM OSBR'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

while creating vibrant civic places for the community to come together. Bring OSBR's distinctive heritage to life through interactive programming, while ensuring its relevance by connecting to contemporary issues. Fill unmet demands—and create new demand—in the cultural landscape by activating the Lincoln Theater with sustainable cultural programs to attract visitors and outside investment to the area, and provide arts and culture programming not consistently offered in Baton Rouge or easily accessible to residents of OSBR.



SUPPORT QUALITY-OF-LIFE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE OSBR COMMUNITY

by improving job skills; providing after-school and evening arts programming for teens, adults, and seniors; and coordinating neighborhood improvement projects. Engage existing institutions and programs as partners to broaden engagement with and support for the residents of OSBR in improved civic places to allow a diverse community to come together to celebrate, inspire and be inspired, learn, and discover and gain greater access to economic opportunity.

BUILD LOCAL ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND LEADERSHIP

to oversee and maintain these investments. Today, there is an opportunity for the local community to join with public, private, foundation, and other partners to honor and celebrate OSBR's history.



METHODOLOGY

In May 2013, ACGBR, working with the Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) and OSBR community stakeholders, engaged a team led by Lord Cultural Resources and including Baton Rouge-based firm Franklin and Associates, James Lima Planning + Development, and Mosaic Urban Partners, to provide a Cultural Placemaking Implementation Plan that best reflects the assets, existing conditions, realities, and opportunities of the OSBR neighborhood. The team engaged the community using a three-phased approach:

PHASE 1: NEEDS IDENTIFICATION, PLANNING, AND RESEARCH:

A comprehensive review of the cultural environment in OSBR. This phase developed insights and produced data to support Phases 2 & 3.

Background Data and Precedent Research:

A thorough literature review of previous and existing cultural and municipal studies and research on cultural placemaking best practices (including national and international trends).

Kick-Off Meeting: Defining the Vision for Place (Vision and Goals): The consultant team's official kick-off of the project:

- Met with project managers and key stakeholders to set the vision and goals of the project.
- Visited cultural organizations in OSBR and met with key stakeholders to initiate a cultural asset inventory, identify community assets and needs, and study the existing cultural landscape.

Survey of Arts and Cultural Heritage Stakeholders in OSBR and Greater Baton Rouge:

The team created and distributed a survey to the greater OSBR community to understand attitudes towards cultural activities and general awareness of current cultural offerings in OSBR.

OSBR Cultural Asset Inventory: The cultural assets revealed in the engagement process and survey were translated into a detailed inventory and map using GIS.

Public Involvement and Stakeholder Outreach Plan:

- A series of planning workshops with community stakeholders, artists, and arts organizations (2 total)
- Key stakeholder interviews (over 30)

Creation of a Graphic Identity for the Project:

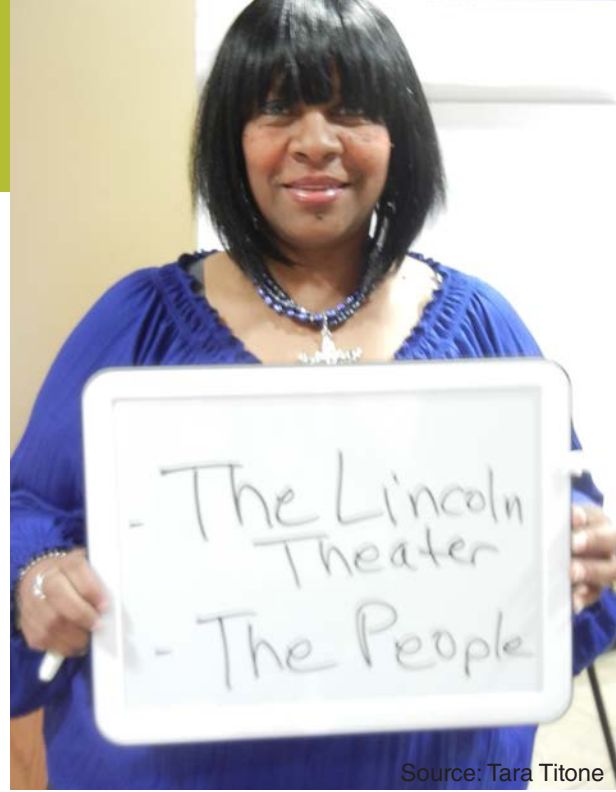
- A “Tagging” Contest with McKinley High students; entries for this project naming contest were submitted by students
- Launch of the OSBR Community Dreaming website

OSBR State of Culture Report: Inclusive of a summary of research and findings and recommendation of priorities to guide Phase 2.

PHASE 2: OUTREACH AND FEASIBILITY STUDY

Cultural Placemaking and Economic Development Strategy: The creation of a strategy defining arts, retail, entertainment, and cultural amenities, range of public and private investments, appropriate mix of housing, financial feasibility, and identification of sources of funding for preferred scenario. This study consisted of:

- **Priority Setting:** Workshops with community groups, artists, and arts organizations inclusive of visioning exercises to explore potential partnerships
- **Market Scan by Sector** (Cultural Arts, Residential, Commercial Retail, Commercial Office, Industrial, Other)
- **Lincoln Theater Operational Assessment**



- **Redevelopment Scenarios** including development of land assembly strategies (e.g. artist live-work)
- **Development Program and Plan** including land assembly strategies

PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- **A Community Implementation Charette:** Funding & partnerships meetings
- **Confirmation meetings** with community leaders and potential funders
- **Cultural Placemaking Master Plan & replicable community model**

This plan includes the input of over 300 OSBR residents, cultural organizations, workers, businesses, service providers, and artists. A detailed report from this process together with research and findings from each phase can be found in the OSBR Market Analysis.



Source: BREC

USING THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Priorities and Actions

Implementing a creative placemaking plan requires organization. The content and recommendations of this Plan are organized as follows:

Priorities: Specific goals that the Plan must address to achieve a culturally vibrant OSBR.

Actions: Potential programs and actions both large and small.

Seven priorities describe the top-line needs that must be addressed for the community to realize its cultural vision.

All seven priorities are considered equally paramount. Forty actions are proposed as potential ways to achieve these priorities. These tangible actions can be scheduled, budgeted for, and, ultimately, launched. The Plan reflects many of the creative and resourceful ideas that participants discussed in the public process. Potential actions are not a final to-do list of creative placemaking for OSBR, but rather serve as suggestions for how to accomplish these priorities.

Each priority begins with a name, description, and objective. Next, a chart details the Actions that will make the priorities real. In order to promote actionable strategies that have a high likelihood for success, many of the Actions do not involve generating new programs or competing with other local organizations for limited resources. *A quick reference chart details the Priorities and Actions that will make the priorities real in Chapter 4.*

Many of the actions in this Plan already have momentum, and indeed will happen. Others are long-range aspirational ideas that may take years to accomplish. All have value and are presented without bias, rank, or order of importance. What one stakeholder deems essential today may become moot in the not-so-distant future. While these priorities are listed numerically, this order does not reflect the recommended timeline for implementation. This can be found in Section 4 of this Plan: Implementation Tables, which include an estimated timeline and funding required for each action.



Source: BREC

HOW WILL CULTURAL PLACEMAKING IMPACT OSBR?

OSBR remains a community of front porches and homes nestled close to the street in a historically walkable neighborhood. Drawing from the strength of character of this place, and its people, this Plan—through a distinct focus on opportunities for new arts and cultural initiatives for cultural and community regeneration—provides greater access to economic opportunity for everyone, young and old. Summarily, the Implementation Plan:

- Preserves and celebrates the community’s cultural identity and African-American heritage;
- Develops a long-term blueprint for arts, culture, and heritage projects and capital enhancements in the OSBR Cultural District;
- Identifies and cultivates resources for economic and quality-of-life opportunities;

- Supports existing neighborhood institutions and builds on revitalization efforts currently in progress by the Office of the Mayor-President and Metro Council members; and
- Supports the role of artists, arts organizations, and creative experiences in the community.

This Plan reaffirms the power of this place.



Source: BREC

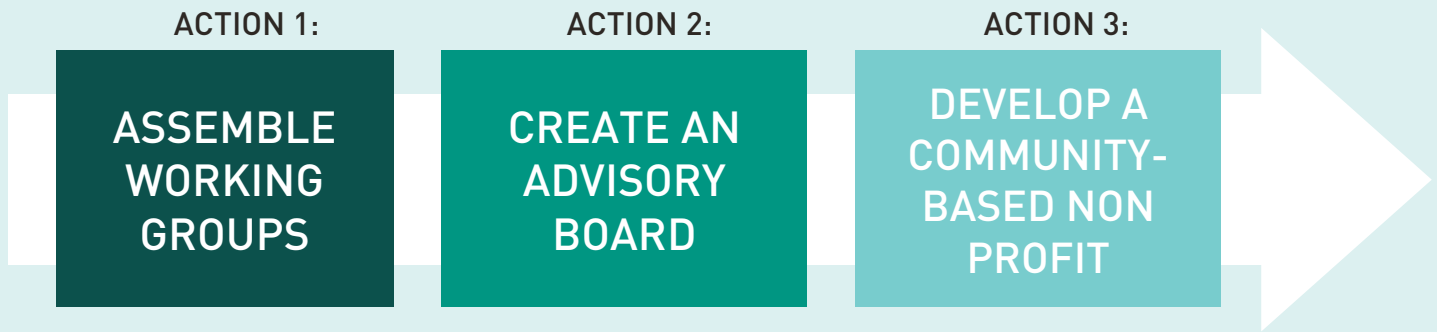
03 OSBR FUTURE: PRIORITIES AND ACTION



PRIORITY 1: ENHANCE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND STAKEHOLDER CAPACITY

Old South Baton Rouge has a mixed history of stakeholder organization success. The actions in this priority address a perceived lack of leadership and unified voice in OSBR by creating an **immediate process** to assist the community in identifying leaders and enabling existing stakeholders to adopt, manage, and execute this Plan. This process **provides a feasible framework for the community to create, over time, a sustainable, credible, high-capacity community organization that is both for the people and by the people.**

This Plan recommends that stakeholder capacity be enhanced by coordinating existing organizations and helping each to leverage their own areas of expertise while working together toward a shared vision.



Moving from Action 1.1 to Action 1.2 can take anywhere from a year to two years; if movement from Action 1.2 to Action 1.3 is desired, this can take anywhere from two to five years or more.

- **Action 1.1: Assemble Community Working Groups** composed of community stakeholders to implement recommendations within this Plan and cooperate in addressing other neighborhood needs. These Working Groups can include: Civic Leadership Group; Arts and Culture Group; Family and Community Services Group; Senior Community Group; Youth Community Group; Pastoral Group; Housing and Business Resource Group; and Land Redevelopment Group.

Final representation should be determined by the interest and availability of existing community leaders. Once the Working Groups have established a diverse group of invested leaders who gather on a regular basis and have successfully accomplished some project objectives, it is recommended the groups form an Advisory Board.

- **Action 1.2: Form an Advisory Board** to coordinate among the working groups, lead the implementation of this plan, promote continued stakeholder cooperation, and retain a unified community voice for years to come. Upon formation, the Advisory Board does not require its own staff or funding stream. It is simply a volunteer group composed of existing community leaders who have participated in the working groups or have overseen successful accomplishments within the neighborhood. These leaders will help coordinate OSBR stakeholder organizations and resources and maximize their collective capacity. The Advisory Board should include a volunteer representative from each of the working groups. Each representative serves as a conduit between the Advisory Board and the type of stakeholder organization he or she represents. It is recommended that a chair be elected on a volunteer basis to lead coordination efforts based on a vote of the Working Group representatives.

- **Action 1.3 Form a community based non-profit.** Once the Advisory Board has established its mission, leadership structure, community support, and, most importantly, a track record for successfully implementing local programs, it is recommended that the organization file for non-profit status. The organization can then better compete for financial resources that will allow it to develop a budget and expand its capacity and role within the community.

Desired outcomes:

- o Provide a feasible framework for the community to create, over time, a sustainable, credible, high-capacity community organization that is both for the people and by the people.
- o Empower local stakeholders to play a large role in reactivating the Lincoln Theater, providing additional cultural programming and facilities and improving the built environment in OSBR.
- o Enhance OSBR leadership and advocacy and develop capacity to guide the community in achieving neighborhood goals.
- o Empower local stakeholders to lead the recommendations in this plan that enhance the arts, cultural heritage, and placemaking in OSBR.
- o Empower local stakeholders to connect residents and investors to available homeownership, home rehabilitation, and other resources, and advocate for local housing programs.
- o Empower local stakeholders to connect current and prospective business owners to available business resources, and advocate for business development programs.

Critical success factors include:

- Widespread community buy-in and representation from all stakeholder types, as well as
- A universal willingness to cooperate and act for the greater good of the neighborhood.

Success Factors: Leaders within the Working Groups – and later, the Advisory Board and neighborhood nonprofit – must have a credible and established voice within the community, a track record of neighborhood-serving accomplishments, and a strong relationship with community residents, the regional philanthropic community, and political leadership. The neighborhood nonprofit, once developed, will need community buy-in, political support, management from experienced professionals who have the necessary time and capacity, and sustainable funding streams to support organizational costs.



PRIORITY 2: REACTIVATE THE LINCOLN THEATER

Source: publicprivatepassion.com

The Lincoln Theater is the critical cultural asset in OSBR, representing the cultural, civil rights, and everyday history of the African-American community. It is a central opportunity for spurring regeneration to benefit the local community, first and foremost. Achieving economic sustainability for “the Lincoln” will take the support of the whole community and a wide array of stakeholders and innovative partnerships. Creating a sustainable model means achieving several things at once:

- Drive “consumer” demand through relevant program offerings.
- Structure capital investments to ensure there is no debt burdening the owner/operator.
- Identify creative expertise to unlock the possibilities of this unique community asset.
- Identify partnerships that will build the capacity of the Louisiana Black History Hall of Fame (LBHFF) leadership and provide for the highest-quality professional management of the operation.
- Ensure a realistic operating budget—robust enough to activate the community asset, with financial supporters identified in advance.

A detailed model for the Lincoln Theater can be found in the Lincoln Theater Feasibility Study.

LINCOLN

	THEN	COMING SOON
CULTURE	Performing Arts	Performing Arts
	Film	Film
		Festivals & District Programming
SERVICES	Barbershop	Performing Arts & Film Education
	Laundromat	Entrepreneurship & Workforce Development
	Offices	Teen Creative Center
	Pharmacy	Event Space & Community Rooms
	Dentist	Café
	Civil Rights Hub	Social Justice Exchange (The Barbershop)
		Louisiana Black History Walk of Fame
ACTIVISM		Volunteer Center

Precedent: INSPIRATION KITCHEN, Chicago, IL

Inspiration Kitchen is a restaurant skills training program launched in 2001 through Inspiration Corporation.

The program aims to provide essential skills to Chicagoans hardest hit by homelessness and poverty, and tries to inspire these participants, including convicted felons, to take action to improve their own lives. At Inspiration Kitchens, individuals gain valuable skills and experience that lead to employment in the food service industry.

The program has grown into two freestanding restaurants, in Garfield Park and the Uptown neighborhood, where the students put what they've learned into practice serving the general public.

Learn more: <http://www.inspirationkitchens.org/about/>

Success Factors: As seen with other historic theaters around the country, redevelopment of the building will require an initial significant infusion of financial support from public and private sources. Subsequently, long-term financial sustainability will depend on an annual, solid combination of:

- Private giving from those who support the Theater's social and educational impact; and
- Earned income, which in turn depends on successful audience development over time –a cornerstone of the recommended approach.

Objective: Create an active community commons with programs inspired by the building's legendary history, but freshly relevant to evolving community needs.



Action 2.1 – Confirm and formally adopt the proposed concept and the Reactivation Strategy for the Lincoln Theater

Responsibility: LBHHF Board

The basic premise for the proposed model in the Lincoln Theater Feasibility Study is that the Lincoln will once again play the role of “Community Plaza,” where community needs can be addressed and the potential of OSBR residents can be fully realized.

Action 2.2 – Create a Master Plan to transform the Lincoln Theater into a Creative Community Commons (including partnership development and a fundraising feasibility study that engages national figures connected to Baton Rouge).

Responsibility: LBHHF Board and Staff

The New Lincoln Theater: A Creative Community Commons. The **proposed mission** for the New Lincoln Theater links its distinctive past with a promising future: *The Lincoln Theater is a center for community activism through the arts. Our programs and people spark creativity, cultivate talent, and improve the quality of life in Old South Baton Rouge.*

Programming Goals and Framework: In order to attract people to the Lincoln, offerings should have value—educational, recreational, or both. This will also mean more ease in aligning with philanthropic funders who want to know that their investment will have impact.

The ideal Lincoln program would combine all of the following programming goals:

- Encourage creativity.
- Enhance job skills.
- Promote social justice.
- Just have fun!

Action 2.3 – Assess range of options for partnerships and engage lead strategic partners

Responsibility: LBHHF Staff working with a master planning consultant

Built into the Plan is alignment with many organizations and initiatives that are of specific interest in Louisiana or Baton Rouge:

- Southern University College of Arts and Humanities
- LSU College of Art + Design
- LSU-Community University Partnership
- Volunteers of America Greater Baton Rouge
- OSBR Kiwanis Club
- State tourism initiatives that reach out to young people and the African-American population
- Baton Rouge Area Chamber’s Creative Capital of the South initiative
- Tipitina’s Foundation (with a workforce development office already located at 2600 Government Street)
- George Rodrigue Foundation of the Arts
- Louisiana Film and Entertainment Commission/Baton Rouge Film Commission (investing in developing local production skills and talent and live entertainment venues)
- MoPA

Action 2.4 – Establish a Social Justice Exchange at the site of the old barbershop

Responsibility: LBHHF Staff working with the Youth Community Working Group and project based educators and curators.

The Barbershop: a community meeting place and exhibition space to promote dialogue on local culture and development.

Barbershops have always been at the heart of communities, particularly African American communities. They are an intimate alternative to a public plaza, where people come together to share, debate, and bond. In this case, The Barbershop at the Lincoln Theater would not serve as a real barbershop, but as a curated creative community space where the future of OSBR could be explored. All would be welcome.



Source: publicprivatepassion.org

Program building blocks would include:

- Commissioned artworks that promote social engagement (a la Mel Chin's Operation Paydirt/ Fundred Dollar Bill Project, a nationally touring activist art project to combat lead poisoning in children, based in New Orleans).
- Professionally curated art exhibitions inspired by the history and culture of OSBR, featuring local artists alongside nationally and internationally known artists. Interactive programs such as roundtable and panel discussions, film/performance talkbacks, and artist Q&As.
- Educational programs that engage children and teens to promote understanding of the arts, inspire creativity, foster critical thinking, and improve communication skills.
- Partnership programs with local social service organizations, formal and informal arts groups, other regional arts councils, galleries, museums, libraries, local businesses, and schools, including institutions of higher education.
- Capacity building for local artists through exposure to nationally and internationally recognized artists, curators, and arts professionals.

**Because of its history,
The Barbershop is a
logical place to launch the
first fruits of the OSBR
Cultural Initiative.**

A meaningful, multidimensional, social venue is needed to promote cultural exchange and nurture personal creativity. **Reimagining and reopening The Barbershop presents the opportunity to:**

- Definitely signal the importance of OSBR's authentic history and culture;
- Create a forum for engaging the community around the future of arts and culture in OSBR;
- Provide a place to inspire creativity and critical thinking, especially in children and youth; and
- Establish a home for new types of programming and partnerships that blur the boundaries of artistic practice and social engagement.
- Commission artworks that promote social engagement.
- Exhibit professionally curated art exhibitions inspired by the history and culture of OSBR, featuring local artists alongside nationally and internationally known artists.
- Create interactive programs such as roundtable and panel discussions, film/performance talkbacks, and artist Q&As.
- Create educational programs that engage children and teens to promote understanding of the arts, inspire creativity, foster critical thinking, and improve communication skills.
- Create partnership programming with local organizations, arts groups, regional arts councils, libraries, local businesses, and schools, including institutions of higher education.
- Build capacity for local artists through exposure to nationally and internationally recognized artists, curators, and arts professionals.



Source: publicprivatepassion.org

Action 2.5 – Develop a leadership, communication, and capacity-building plan for LBHFF that aligns with the Lincoln Theater Master Plan

Responsibility: LBHFF Board and Staff working with a consultant

Create a strategy to effectively communicate the changes that will take place as the Lincoln Theater moves to its new positioning as the community commons.

- What will happen to the building?
- What programming will be offered?
- Who are the partners?
- How will the OSBR community directly benefit?

After plans are fully detailed, it will be critical to determine precisely the way that the LBHFF Board will build its capacity to undertake a project of this magnitude.

Action 2.6 – Relaunch the Capital Campaign

Responsibility: LBHFF Board working with an experienced capital campaign consultant

It will take time to plan and launch a fresh capital campaign once several factors are in place:

- The community understands how it will benefit from the new Lincoln Theater;
- Funders and partners see a credible Master Plan (including business plan); and
- The LBHFF has proven they have the capacity to execute and operate such a project.

At this time an experienced, proven capital campaign consultant should be engaged to work with LBHFF development staff to create an optimal strategy for developing, launching and executing new campaign.

Action 2.7 – Align with potential government, foundation, and private support

Responsibility: LBHHF Staff

Building a strategy that aligns with the funding interests of government, foundations, and private donors is critical to the long-term sustainability of the Lincoln Theater. The proposed programming strategy therefore focuses on several fundable “crossover” areas:

- Education (especially for at-risk youth)
- Workforce development
- Community development
- Social services
- Social justice

These subject areas offer larger or more accessible pools of funding than what is available in the super-competitive traditional arts landscape; and clever programmers will understand how to leverage the arts as a tool for achieving dual goals.



Source: Flickr - Beast of Traal



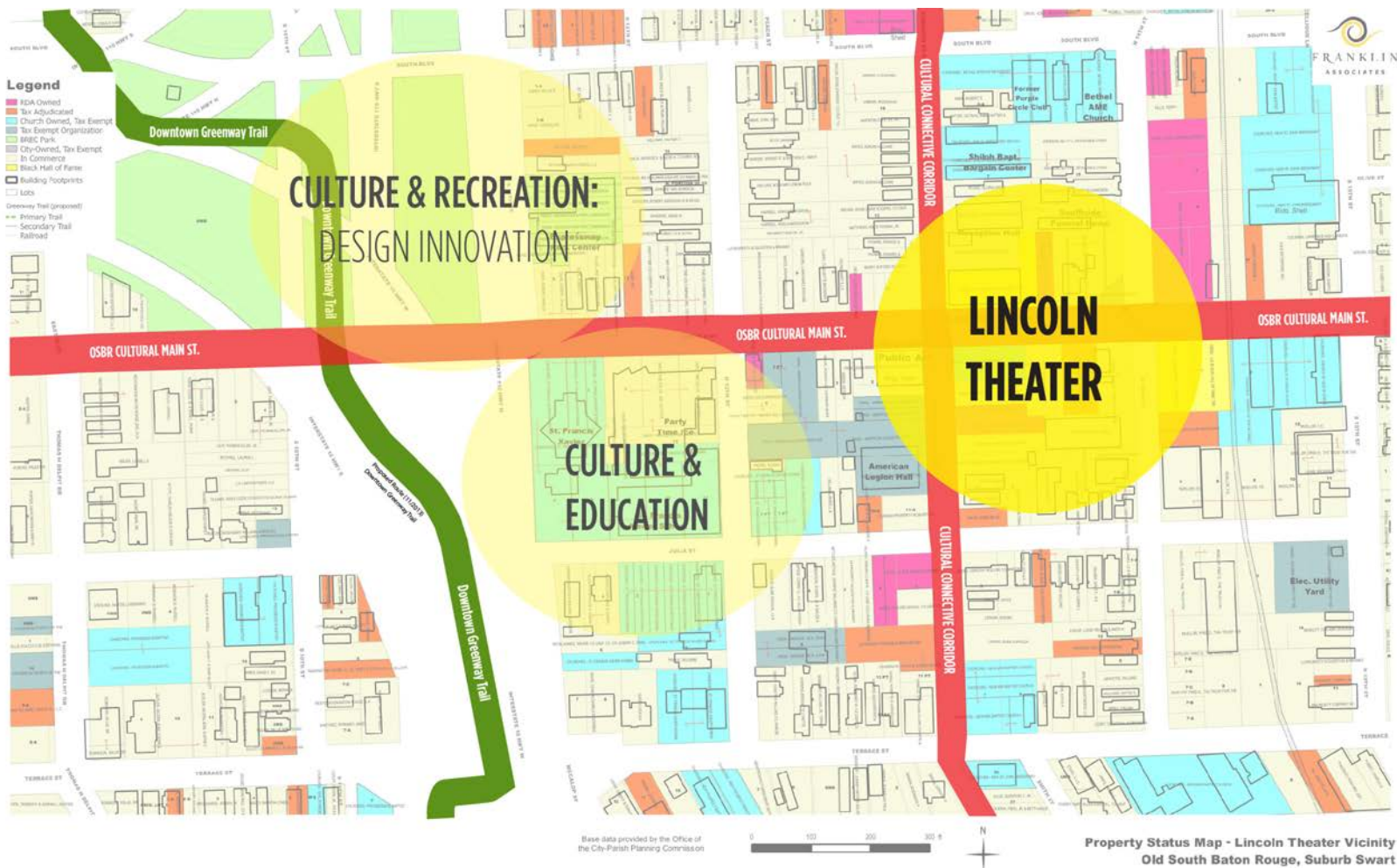
PRIORITY 3: ENLIVEN OSBR CULTURAL CORRIDOR PROGRAMMING & FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

Source: Franklin Associates

Based on the needs identified through the planning process (found in the OSBR Market Analysis), this Plan identifies a focused investment area surrounding the Lincoln Theater. As indicated in the map below, this area contains many of the major neighborhood assets, strong connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods, and the strongest opportunity for near-term investment. Consolidating resources in this geographic area will not only lead to improvement internally, but can also have a catalytic effect throughout the OSBR 'Cultural District' designated by the State of Louisiana's Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. Such efforts align with the goal of the OSBR Cultural District initiative which is to spark community revitalization based on cultural activity through tax incentives.

To create a vibrant, multicultural arts corridor in the OSBR neighborhood, regenerative efforts should center around revitalizing the historic Lincoln Theater ("the Lincoln") and transforming Myrtle Avenue into a strong "spine street." Myrtle Walk will create a unified "Cultural Main Street" or "OSBR Cultural Corridor" identity along a seven-block area between the railroad line just east of South 14th Street and Thomas H. Delpit Drive to the west. The OSBR Cultural Corridor will encompass:

- The Lincoln, which will once again be a center for an array of arts programming and civic activism.
- The ambitious and widely anticipated Downtown Greenway connecting LSU with Downtown and incorporating a "Lincoln Trail" spur extending east along Myrtle Walk to connect the Greenway with the Lincoln.
- A revitalized Expressway Park modeled on Buffalo Bayou in Houston.
- MoPA, which continues to set a very high bar for the quality of the murals it commissions.
- The St. Francis Xavier church properties, including the St. Francis Xavier School.



An important cross-axis for the OSBR Cultural Corridor, Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive can be a “Cultural Connective Corridor” extending from Julia Street to the south to Government Street to the north and to the well-established arts hub along Government Street, anchored by businesses such as Circa 1857. The crossroads formed by Myrtle Walk and Eddie Robinson will be the focus of new OSBR Cultural Corridor investments that will strengthen the creative community presence in OSBR and build on existing cultural assets and their proximity to current and proposed investments along Government Street immediately to the north of OSBR.

Success Factors: The implementing partner for this priority should have an established history of convening community organizations, working with arts organizations, and seeking financial partners. The leading partner must have a vested interest in creating a stronger identity for OSBR and take the initial steps necessary to help increase and enable overall community growth.

Objective: This activated district will attract visitors to meaningfully connect with OSBR and its cultural resources and inspire community pride.



Precedent: THIRD WARD ARTS INITIATIVE, Houston, TX

A public-private partnership led by the University of Houston funded and implemented a series of public art installations, new media initiatives, and cultural activities at the Park at Palm Center—a former vacant lot in the middle of a public housing project. The site was transformed with a range of physical elements, including an orchard, barbeque area, splash park, vegetable garden, and space

for local events and productions. The park also features a Wi-Fi hotspot and learning stations for visitors. The project was funded by an initial \$100,000 grant from the NEA Our Town program, with subsequent local fundraising for ongoing programs.

Learn more: http://www.streamlynedesign.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/2010Community_Engage_Final_LowRes.pdf

Action 3.1 – Launch an annual heritage festival of ideas and performance

Responsibility: Arts and Culture Working Group

An OSBR cultural heritage festival would focus on local talent, food, and storytelling. It would be not just a neighborhood festival, but an event with big ideas and cultural offerings, compelling enough to draw people from and all of Baton Rouge, including LSU and surrounding universities.

Opportunities could be explored working with BREC’s Magnolia Mound Plantation, LSU-CUP, LSU theater, music, and dance programs; and Swine Palace Productions and New Venture Theatre, which have a special interest in social justice programming. The many programming possibilities that could distinguish this festival include, but are not limited to, the debut of a new relevant play each year, emerging local musicians, a teen talent showcase, storytelling, an intergenerational oral history booth, a children’s parade, and the premiere of new multimedia content developed through the Lincoln Theater’s Social Justice Exchange. Food for the festival could be arranged as a “BR Wroundup,” whereby food trucks would supplant the need for expensive temporary tents.

Intended Impact: Activate the district, attract visitors to meaningfully connect with OSBR and its cultural resources, inspire community pride.

Action 3.2 – Establish the Louisiana Black History Walk of Fame and Archive

Responsibility: LBHHF in partnership with the Carver Library and the Downtown Greenway

Walks of Fame serve a variety of purposes. They promote community pride and understanding of history; enhance physical appeal and the value of a place; and provide an additional experiential dimension to attract visitors to an existing place.

They also provide an excellent, sustainable alternative to immediately launching the LBHHF, since the proposed building project is likely to require many more years of planning and fundraising. Working with the Louisiana Black History Hall of Fame, T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History, and the Carver Library, the Walk of Fame may consist of:

1. A series of “tiles” featuring the names of notable people with additional information such as key accomplishments, lifespan, or profession.
2. A cohesive meaningful route that connects to the Downtown Greenway, which is paramount to ensuring that the Walk of Fame has a profile among the largest possible audience.
A website (or other mobile portal) that provides basic information on the route, inductees, and sponsors and the option for expanded online programming. Such programming would include educational materials that support the LSU history curriculum, a forum for curated dialogue on specific topics of interest, and fun family activities that would reinforce interest in the Walk of Fame and proximate facilities.
3. A sponsored annual awards ceremony and/or community festival to celebrate new inductees.
4. Ongoing public programming that links the accomplishments of inductees to issues of interest in the region and OSBR. These programs would be critical to maintaining the relevance of, and interest in, the Walk of Fame. They would most likely be executed with partners such as the Carver Library, LSU, MoPA, and the proposed Barbershop, to name a few possibilities. Some programming may be exclusively online but would still require significant promotion.

An OSBR oral history collection currently exists at the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History at LSU Libraries. Special Collections Expanding that collection to include an intergenerational oral program will help to document the stories of the people of OSBR while serving the secondary purposes of engaging young people in the history of their neighborhood and skills building in video production.

Intended Impact: Renew connections with those who have left OSBR; signal change that is coming to the District; enable residents and visitors to meaningfully connect with history; inspire community pride; link to the Downtown Greenway.

Action 3.3 – Capture the Power of Place

Responsibility: Pastoral Working Group

Consider reestablishing a “Black House” in OSBR based on the communal art center that operated in the 1970s and 1980s on Maximillian Street. Within such a venue, organize powerfully communal and intergenerational “maker” spaces and programs where traditions in OSBR are celebrated and passed down not only within families but among a larger and expanding OSBR “family.” This might involve an artist-in-residence conceiving of and overseeing the work of community-based craft groups that together work on such diverse projects as sewing quilts that tell a history of OSBR, making holiday gifts, knitting and sewing clothes, or cooking meals for the needy in a shared commercial kitchen. Food culture, local traditions, and new twists on these could be explored, again among an intergenerational, multicultural audience, through cooking classes and skills-building courses for small food service businesses.

- Coordinate an OSBR “Extreme House Makeover” for broadcast on cable television, providing a hopeful rebirth and renewal story of grassroots engagement in rebuilding OSBR and highlighting the beauty and special character of OSBR’s vernacular architecture and its strong sense of community.



Source: Baton Rouge Digital Archive

East Baton Rouge Parish Library Digital Archive



Action 3.4 – Create and fund the “Art for Change Partnership”

Responsibility: Arts and Culture Working Group in partnership with LSU College of Art + Design and ACGBR

The success of public art depends on the community’s level of support and involvement. In a neighborhood like OSBR, where so many basic services are needed, public art will have a greater impact if it does more than decorate a square. In recent years, as socially engaged artists have moved to the fore, new models for the development of public art have emerged. These models involve the expertise of a professional artist to lead the community in the development of a project that is meaningful to them, resulting in a level of ownership and pride that is absent from top-down or developer-driven public art projects.

Creating a structure to ensure that public art is both high quality and relevant to the community is a unique opportunity in OSBR. MoPA has transformed the corner of Myrtle Avenue and South 13th Street through its public art mural exhibitions and in Spring 2014, the LSU College of Art + Design named New York based sculptor and nationally recognized leader in socially engaged practice, Nari Ward, as Nadine Carter Russell Chair visiting artist/professional.

To continue this practice, it is recommended that each year a non-local “public art producer” be identified and granted public works funds to carry out improvement projects over the course of five years. They would be responsible for working with the community to identify local artists, community groups and members, and other resources that would facilitate the conceptualization, planning, production, activation, and maintenance of public works, and perhaps also other



Source: Baton Rouge Digital Archive

communal art and craft making. In other words, these works would not simply be sculptures or installations to be observed, but could include anything from the repurposing of properties to social service projects or performance events.

This concept could be expanded to run multiple initiatives, consolidating a funded suite of improvements through a national selection process or in partnership with curators or designers experienced in public art. Examples of projects that could be carried out in this manner also include:

- Design and oversee a public street painting event to clearly and whimsically “tag” this public realm as a place where design innovation and civic moments are possible. An excellent media moment to help launch the OSBR Cultural Corridor, the event plants the flag of arts and culture at the proposed Cultural Corridor crossroads, running along Myrtle Walk and coordinated with the Downtown Greenway’s “Lincoln Trail” spur from Expressway Park to the Lincoln, and a shared pedestrian way and bikeway.
- Redesign property into a community operated Teen Community Media Arts Center or a children’s reading room, with a programmatic connection with the Carver Library. Site at or near St. Francis Xavier School.
- Design unique street furniture or other features that would be repeated along Myrtle Walk and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive to help create a legible district identity around the arts.
- Oversee OSBR children and family participation in the design of playgrounds and recreation spaces.
- Organize an annual Street Chalk Art Festival along Myrtle Walk.

Intended Impact: Break down barriers and emphasize community. Engage community residents in the planning and execution of collaborative public art projects and craft programming that will improve the quality of life in OSBR; community buy-in to create and maintain neighborhood improvements.

Action 3.5 – Develop Young Designers Fashion Expo and Costume Shop in partnership with the Shiloh Baptist Church Bargain Center

Responsibility: Youth Community Working Group in partnership with Shiloh Baptist Church

Theaters need costume shops. Young designers need fabric. Thrift shops generally have more clothes than they can sell. This project proposes two practical, innovative collaborations for the Shiloh Baptist Church Bargain Center. It is understood that the Church parishioners and others rely on the Bargain Center for affordable clothing, but an additional possibility is a collaboration to collect more clothes than the Center would typically take so they may be shared with teens and young adults interested in fashion design as well as theater program participants at the Lincoln (or other theater programs). Sponsorships from fabric wholesalers may also be pursued. Two small shops—each with a manager plus volunteers—would be set up for the public. One would showcase the clothing created by young designers from Baton Rouge, each featured in their own section with their own racks, advertising, and pricing. The second shop, possibly in a co-located space, would repurpose clothes into costumes for the theaters in town. A site should be identified based on a survey of property ownership near the Bargain Center, existing tenancy, legal status, and discussions with private owners.

Intended Impact: Provide income to, and develop the entrepreneurial skills of young fashion and costume designers.

Action 3.6 – Organize and deploy after-school teen volunteer corps, a Lincoln Theater Program in partnership with LSU-CUP

Responsibility: Youth Community Working Group in partnership with LBHMF, Office of the Mayor-President, and LSU-CUP

To run this collaborative program, the Lincoln Theater would provide a volunteer coordinator and office to support OSBR public art and environmental beautification projects. This would be related directly to the Teen Center and may even be funded through a combined multi-year grant or corporate sponsorship. In addition to projects like creation and regular maintenance of art installations, murals, and other projects that the teens themselves would identify, community service contests and beautification/neighborhood clean-up days would be launched and coordinated through this office.

Intended Impact: Provide after-school activities that promote civic engagement for teens; develop a resource center to support the implementation of a diverse suite of OSBR art and beautification projects.

Action 3.7 – Link the Lincoln Theater and the OSBR Cultural Corridor to the annual Mid City Art and Design Cultural District’s “White Light Night” events.

Responsibility: Arts and Culture Working Group, Housing and Business Resource Working Group, and the Mid-City Redevelopment Authority

Each year, the Mid-City Merchants host a fall art hop, “White Light Nights” to kick-off the Christmas season. This incredibly successful event draws hundreds of Baton Rouge residents and tourists to view and purchase art by local artists at participating mid city businesses and experience shopping, entertainment, food, and wine. Participants walk or take designated shuttles along Government Street and should be attracted down Eddie Robinson, Sr. Boulevard to Myrtle Walk with events and quality vendors along the route ending with a signature event at the site of the Lincoln Theater.

Intended Impact: Drawing visitors from around the city for art gallery hopping, shopping, entertainment, food, and spirits, forming this link will create greater awareness of and excitement about the new energy and “cultural placemaking” while connecting to an established and popular arts cluster to the north of the new Cultural Corridor, along Government Street.

Action 3.8 – Build upon the successes of the Community Gardens Initiative

Responsibility: Civic Leadership Working Group in partnership with CPEX

In June of 2010, CPEX began its Community Gardens Initiative, which includes gardening classes, community garden implementation, and youth development. This initiative has been a collaborative effort among CPEX, LSU-CUP, student organizations such as the South Garden Project, LSU AgCenter Extension, Baton Rouge Master Gardeners, the SBR Civic Association, and local churches and schools.

The Community Gardens Initiative reimagines a community’s vacant lots by planting a productive garden through the engagement of community groups and stakeholders. Transitioning vacant land back into productive use reduces both the environmental issues associated with unmanaged vacant lots, such as blight, noxious toxins, and illegal dumping, and the community development issues, such as unwanted uses, lowered property values, and lack of physical investment.

Adding greenhouse facilities, composting, and other shared support facilities should be pursued, perhaps near communal areas where in the future youth populations are expected to congregate, such as near Expressway Park and the BREC Recreational Center, as well as St. Francis Xavier School. Reclaiming spaces at or near Expressway Park will allow opportunities



Source: <http://www.wbrz.com/images/news/2013-06/g2pic.jpg>

for partners to help educate residents and operate gardens that weave throughout the neighborhood, providing valuable experience and healthy food sources to an underserved area.

Intended Impact: Increase civic engagement, food security, wellness, access to fresh food, leadership.

Action 3.9 – Create a new arts and leadership and/or arts and technology-themed charter school

Responsibility: Family and Community Services Working Group in partnership with Manchester Bidwell Schools

Extensive interviews with OSBR stakeholders indicate that there is interest in creating a new charter school within OSBR. The creation of a themed-curriculum school focused on arts and leadership and/or arts and technology proximate to the reactivated Lincoln Theater can leverage the energy and programming proposed for the area to support and develop career and technical education for local youth. One potential site that has been under consideration for a new charter school is the St. Francis Xavier “campus” of 18 parcels just blocks to the west of the Lincoln along Myrtle Avenue.

In recent years when its financial situation was somewhat tenuous, St. Francis Xavier was considered a potential facility that could be refashioned to mirror the widely noted success of the Manchester Bidwell Corporation’s programs in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, around youth leadership, arts, and technology, all with a focus on career and technical education (CTE). A school with such a themed curriculum and mandate, at that location in close proximity to the Lincoln, could be synergistic with the Lincoln’s proposed programming and mandate as a community center for culture and civic engagement.

Intended Impact: Leverage the proposed cultural investments to support the education and leadership development of local youth.



PRIORITY 4: ACQUIRE AND REPURPOSE PRIVATE PROPERTIES TO ADVANCE CULTURAL PLACEMAKING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Source: Franklin Associates

Address the significant vacant and underutilized sites and buildings throughout OSBR that contribute to the perception of a lack of safety and activity. Repurposing these sites into cultural spaces with active programming, such as affordable live-work spaces for artists, and with other mixed uses, will stimulate other economic investments in the area and advance shared community regeneration objectives. Business investment should be concentrated along Thomas Delpit Sr. Drive between Terrace Avenue and East Washington Street, and near the Lincoln Theater at the intersection of Myrtle Avenue and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive.

A designated Working Group and/or partner(s) will need to acquire properties along Thomas Delpit Sr. Drive between Terrace Avenue and East Washington Street, and near the Lincoln Theater at the intersection of Myrtle Avenue and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive. Action should take place immediately, before property values and/or asking prices for such properties in and adjacent to the targeted investment areas escalate based on actual and/or perceived increased market demand. Particular attention should be paid to acquiring parcels that are of strategic future value to enhance street frontage, visibility, servicing/loading capabilities, and parking, and to create parcel sizes and configurations that permit efficient new development.



**Precendent: STOREFRONTS SEATTLE,
Seattle, WA**

Storefronts Seattle was launched in 2010 as a neighborhood support program, designed to fight the urban blight that had attacked Seattle's historic retail core. The arts were seen as the tool with which the program could effect change on the streetscape and could help buoy a teetering local economy.

The program brings artistic activity to vacant retail spaces in several neighborhoods through art installations and pop-up projects that draw and engage audiences, which, in turn, drives economic development in neighborhoods in need of retail activity. It injects art into people's everyday walking experience, and supports property owners and neighboring business.

The program was initiated by Shunpike, which fuels innovation in the arts by building productive partnerships, cultivating leadership, and providing direct services to arts groups of all kinds.

Learn more: <http://storefrontsseattle.com/>

In addition to design, development and construction expertise, the implementing partner and/or Working Group should have an inclination to pursue design and construction excellence and innovation. Design should result in a high-visibility, signature, adaptive use and/or new construction projects that accommodate cultural art-related uses, including artist studios, galleries, and artist housing.

Success Factors: An entity involved with implementing this priority should have expertise in real estate finance, law, brokerage, due diligence, and construction and property management, and the financial resources to negotiate purchase and option agreements from a position of strength and to move quickly to execute such transactions.

Objective: Address the significant vacancy and underutilization of sites and buildings throughout OSBR that contribute to the perception of a lack of safety and activity. Repurposing these sites into cultural spaces with active programming, such as affordable live-work spaces for artists, will stimulate other investment.

Action 4.1 – Create an OSBR Acquisition Fund to provide a nimble source of funding

Responsibility: Land Redevelopment Working Group in partnership with a CDC consortium (to be determined)

The reactivation of the Lincoln Theater and introduction of cultural programming will have a transformative impact on OSBR's social and economic condition. There are also opportunities to facilitate additional physical redevelopment to return OSBR to a healthy state for those who live, work, study, and visit there. Specifically, there are areas that will benefit from adding adjacent parcels to create more financially feasible sites for community development. These ready-to-use sites will help guide the implementing entity in development for uses such as housing for seniors, schools, cultural amenities, artist housing, commercial spaces, and other development types that support local community development objectives. Doing so will:

- Maximize public benefit by dedicating a greater portion of the physical environment to community revitalization efforts, allowing for maximum alignment.
- Capture future value created by early investments in placemaking, public realm improvements, and core infrastructure investments and reinvest that captured value back into area revitalization.

Pursuing a site assemblage needs to be strategically focused to attract new investment. Focusing on properties and redevelopment in and around the Lincoln Theater should be made a priority in order to maximize the impact of the limited financial resources and time. The RDA has reservation rights to seven tax adjudicated properties, but title clearing and other expenses would be required.

A nimble source of funding should be created to acquire and maintain vacant properties that can be used for OSBR cultural placemaking-related development when timing is appropriate. Proposed acquisition is meant to “round out” these properties to make them more financially viable in a weak market area where financial viability of new community investment is a struggle. An acquisition strategy should focus on acquiring and developing parcels along the proposed Myrtle Walk, particularly near the intersection of Myrtle Avenue and South 14th Street, where there is current and potential public ownership. Use and leverage of existing public ownership, potential public acquisition of adjudicated parcels, and investment in the Lincoln Theater will create critical mass.

Some of the potential sites to be strategically repurposed include properties that may require acquisition, while others are already owned by partners in this effort.

Acquisition

- Northeast corner of Myrtle Avenue and South 14th Street. A potential assemblage of nearly an acre with the potential to encompass an entire block by combining RDA reserved tax adjudicated parcels. This is a very large site relative to a number of smaller ones in the area, and its proximity to the Lincoln Theater could provide much-needed convenient parking for patrons and visitors to the area's cultural offerings.
- Along Myrtle Avenue immediately south of the Lincoln Theater, between Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive and South 14th Street. Expanding the property to include adjacent out-parcels at the corner of Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive and Myrtle Walk could enhance the connection to the proposed Myrtle Walk Cultural Corridor and increase the impact of activity on the site. The dimensions of the assemblage make it suitable for a multifamily, mixed-use building in the long term, with ground floor uses such as restaurants, cafes, or galleries that can reinforce the Cultural Corridor.
- Infill tax adjudicated parcels on Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive between Myrtle Walk and Julia Street and on the northeast and southwest corners of Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive and Julia Street. At the southwest corner and toward the middle of the block on Julia Street, there are two adjudicated properties that have the potential to create a parcel with more than 27,000 square feet.

Potential for Reuse Without Acquisition

- Southeast corner of Myrtle Avenue and South 14th Street. Two parcels totaling approximately 15,000 square feet could be repurposed in partnership with the LBHFF, who owns the parcels. Utilization of these parcels would require partnership with its owner rather than acquisition.

Intended Impact: Proposed acquisition is intended to make ground-up development in OSBR more financially viable by assembling sites that are efficient in configuration and have suitable street frontage and accessibility.

The targeted site assemblage maximizes public benefit by placing strategically located sites in the control of OSBR redevelopment entities, dedicating a greater portion of the physical environment at these key locations to create transformative new investments.

Action 4.2 – Develop affordable artist housing and commercial arts spaces in underutilized and vacant parcels and buildings

Responsibility: Arts and Culture Working Group in partnership with ACGBR and one or more nonprofit housing developer/owner/operator (to be determined)

Partner with one or more experienced nonprofit developers of artist housing and cultural facilities to develop affordable artist living and work spaces. The goal is to retain and attract resident and visiting artists to OSBR, without displacing current area residents. Potential programs for consideration should include artist housing and live-work space, exhibition space, artist work and studio space, arts-oriented commercial spaces such as work/sell/exhibit spaces, and artist-in-residence quarters. Potential models could range from an artist equity-building model—where a local group purchases low-cost homes in need of rehabilitation and resells them to artists with deed restrictions and rehabilitation requirements—to a more managed programmatic model, in which an experienced organization such as Artspace.¹

Another model would be a small artist-in-residence quarter, in which the ACGBR or other local group could purchase several homes to be offered as free housing to recipients of an annual competitively awarded and prestigious visiting fellowship. The recipients would, in turn, contribute to the community.

Intended Impact: Repopulate and activate the blocks proximate to the Lincoln Theater; link conspicuous revitalization of private properties in the focus area with the renovation and rebirth of the Lincoln; enhance the cultural richness of the community and investments in cultural facilities and assets.

¹ *A national leader in developing and operating affordable arts facilities who owns and manages artist housing, live-work, shared studio, and other space.*³⁵



Source: Franklin Associates



Source: Franklin Associates

Action 4.3 – Convert vacant lots adjacent to the Lincoln Theater into attractive, usable, and safe public spaces that can be utilized for interim community programming

Responsibility: Arts and Culture Working Group

Vacant lots for community events can complement the offerings at the reactivated Lincoln Theater. There are both public and private owners of various vacant lots near the Lincoln Theater. Some sites would not warrant acquisition, but rather temporary use agreements with existing owners. Sites owned by any of the entities partnering or collaborating in OSBR revitalization efforts could be improved with a set of temporary investments to make them suitable for interim programming uses, and would provide a safe, attractive, and inviting environment for both daytime and nighttime events. In the near term, the area immediately to the south of the Lincoln Theater along Myrtle Avenue, between Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive and South 14th Street, should be considered as the first of such lots to be converted to an interim programming location. The provision of power for night lighting and potentially water supply to support pop-up markets or performance events at this or other key programmable sites should be investigated.

Intended Impact: Enhance the attractiveness and safety of currently underutilized properties in the focus area.

Action 4.4 – Develop quality affordable senior housing that addresses the needs of senior citizens in OSBR, and allows long-standing residents of OSBR to remain a part of the community

Responsibility: Pastoral Working Group and Senior Community Working Group in partnership with the EBRHA

Many community members have noted the concern that seniors in OSBR are a vulnerable population that is at risk of displacement and/or lacks access to quality housing and necessary social services. A multifamily senior housing facility should be developed in a location that is well served by transportation/transit and allows residents to access the cultural and other amenities of the community.

A potential funding source for building new housing for low income seniors is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD provides interest-free capital advances to private, nonprofit sponsors to finance the development of housing for seniors. The capital advance does not have to be repaid as long as the project serves the very-low-income senior population for 40 years. Funding through HUD's Section 202 senior housing program is highly competitive. Successful funding applicants are generally those that have a ready-to-go development site, demonstrate community and political support, and have secured a qualified local private nonprofit senior housing owner/operator.

Intended Impact: Provide housing options for seniors in the community who can no longer maintain single-family homes, while retaining population and activity in the area.

Action 4.5 – Create a parking facility and outdoor activities space proximate to the Lincoln Theater

Responsibility: Land Redevelopment Working Group

As discussed in Priority 2, given the difficult economics of market-based development in the near term in OSBR, interim programming of vacant parcels can provide much-needed activation in the community in a cost-effective manner. In order to compete with other entertainment locations elsewhere in Greater Baton Rouge, particularly suburban locations, the Lincoln Theater and cultural destinations in OSBR must provide the amenities that visitors value—convenient parking, a sense of safety, and a variety of opportunities and attractions.

Parking is critical to any cultural, entertainment, or retail use as Baton Rouge is primarily an automobile-oriented city. A programmed parking facility should be created in order to provide ample parking options for patrons and visitors to the Lincoln Theater. A parking facility can form the foundation to build a bigger and broader customer base.

A potential location for this facility is the set of parcels bounded by Myrtle Avenue to the south, South 14th Street to the west, South Boulevard to the north, and the train tracks to the east—creating a strong physical nexus to the Lincoln and anchoring the eastern end of the proposed Myrtle Walk Cultural Corridor. Given that there is broad agreement that safety concerns are among the most significant threats to the successful revitalization of OSBR, this customer parking facility must be extremely well designed and well lit, and must feel safe in order to contribute to the success of attracting new and repeat visitors to the Lincoln Theater and other district attractions. Careful attention must be paid to night lighting for public safety, clear wayfinding, improved sidewalks, as well as operational issues at this lot, particularly during peak attendance events. If the three remaining parcels within this area were acquired, there would be just shy of an acre of land available, which could support a range of approximately 75 (self-park) to 150 (special-event valet) parking spaces in a surface parking format.

As market economics improve with the proposed investments, and should demand warrant it, the surface parking facility could be converted to a two-level (single deck) parking structure designed to enhance the street and adjacent uses.

Intended Impact: Provide much-needed safe and accessible parking for the Lincoln Theater and surrounding Cultural Corridor, improving the area's ability to compete for customers/visitors arriving by car, while enhancing the attractiveness and safety of currently underutilized properties in the focus area.



Action 4.6 – Encourage mixed-income multifamily development in the long term

Responsibility: Pastoral Working Group in partnership with the Land Redevelopment Working Group

Findings from market research and analysis indicate mixed-income/mixed-use development is not economically viable in this district in the near term. Market demand for residential and retail uses in the focus area is not sufficient to support private financing or provide reasonable returns on investor equity. Development of this type is currently more viable on Nicholson Drive to the west or along Government Street to the north.

However, undertaking a medium-density multifamily mixed-use and mixed-income development should be a longer-term goal (5+ years), particularly on the relatively large potential property immediately to the south of the Lincoln along Myrtle Avenue, between Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive and South 14th Street. This is assuming short- and medium-term investments in the Lincoln Theater and its surroundings are successful in creating new activity and market interest in the community, and this parcel can be assembled.

Intended Impact: Enhance economic development of OSBR with new market-supportable real estate.



Action 4.7 – Convert scattered vacant lots into attractive, usable, and safe public spaces that can be utilized for interim community programming

Responsibility: Pastoral Working Group in partnership with the Land Redevelopment Working Group and the Arts and Culture Working Group

Vacant lots and empty spaces scattered throughout the area, in particular those surrounding the Lincoln Theater and surrounding geographic focus area, are an important opportunity for low-cost, high-impact public realm upgrades. Under the direction of ACGBR, these spaces can be reimagined as empty stages that can be programmed to complement and support nearby cultural, educational, and community facilities. Installing simple infrastructure, with a basic district-wide maintenance plan, can turn vacant lots into places for impromptu performances and community gathering. Others can be reprogrammed as community gardens, engaging local residents and students in processes that increase social capital while beautifying the public realm.

Improvements that require some capital investment (such as stubbing up power and/or water for a performance space or pop-up market on a vacant lot) should be considered for parcels under public ownership; these lots can later be converted to more permanent uses as dictated by future demand. Privately held parcels that are not slated for future acquisition can then be converted to community gardens by utilizing a simple set of incentives, such as free or low-cost starter plantings and free summer training programs. The net effect of these changes is to reimagine empty space as places filled by programming, activity, and social life that complement the more formal work happening in cultural and educational institutions and give residents, volunteers, and visitors stronger ownership over the public realm.

Intended Impact: Create a transformative arts-oriented effect throughout the district that engages the local community, reinforces Plan's objectives, garners positive media attention for the district, and attracts greater interest and ownership in OSBR's success.



PRIORITY 5: BEAUTIFY PUBLIC SPACES THROUGHOUT OSBR

Source: BREC

Undertake high-impact and quality improvements to lighting, landscape, streets and sidewalks, parks and open space, and wayfinding. Make these public realm investments and incorporate marketing elements such as seasonal/special events, banners along the streets and on lamp posts, and lighting strategies to create a unified OSBR Cultural District identity. Initiate cultural programming and public art installations within these public spaces.

Leverage the "power of place" and the assets that already exist to enhance neighborhood character, quality of life and create a positive identity for OSBR. Shift public perception away from thinking of OSBR as an unsafe area in decline to seeing at a place where exciting, positive new cultural activities are occurring, investments are being made, and civic spaces are relevant to both those who live in and outside the local community. Create attractive and amenitized public streets and spaces that become the new organizing elements—the appealing “front door address” of future investment in new housing, retail, and cultural arts-related uses.

Beautification efforts can happen at a broad range of scales and scope, from major capital projects to reconstructing streets to securing a corporate sponsor to design and install special event or other promotional banners along the Cultural Corridor thoroughfares.



Precedent: THE TRINITY SESSION: Community-Driven Public Art Facilitated by Professional Artists, Johannesburg, South Africa (2012-2013)

Directed by artists Stephen Hobbs and Marcus Neustetter, The Trinity Session is a contemporary art production team defined by community exchanges. Key activities include temporary interventions and performances, in addition to producing and curating large-scale public art programs.

Recent projects include a major work in Diepsloot, a post-Apartheid township. The project was a phased environmental upgrade funded by the Johannesburg Development Agency and facilitated by The Trinity Session and Sticky Situations. This process proved unique, as poetry was used to drive performance in the first phase of the upgrade in June 2011. "I Love Diepsloot," a poem written by a young girl during the first workshop, brought the streets of the township to life as dogs, chickens, owls, rabbits, and more poignantly illustrated the reality of living in Diepsloot. The second phase of the upgrade saw the poem and performance as bases for sculpture. Here the chickens, rabbits, butterflies, etc., physically manifested as large-scale sculptures adorning the entrance to the Muzomuhle Primary School.

Learn more: <http://www.onair.co.za/broadcast>

Success Factors: Achieving the Plan's redevelopment goals is much more likely when there is a single entity (often a public works agency) in charge of building capital projects such as new streets and sidewalks and major public works like water and sewer system upgrades. For successful day-to-day operations in a targeted revitalization district, it is necessary to have leadership from an entity with urban district management expertise who can act as an effective bridge and coordinator between public and private sectors to help achieve district-wide marketing, promotional, fundraising and other district service improvement goals. These often involve coordination with an array of agencies such as sanitation, transportation, police, etc.

Objective: Leverage the "power of place" and the assets that already exist within OSBR to enhance neighborhood character and quality of life. Create an identity for the neighborhood through improvements to lighting, landscape, streets and sidewalks, parks and open space, wayfinding, interim programming, and public art.



Action 5.1 –Establish Myrtle Walk and Connective Streetscape Improvements

Responsibility: LBHHF in partnership with the Arts and Culture Working Group and the City of Baton Rouge Department of Public Works

The establishment of a Myrtle Walk of Fame presents an opportunity to implement a series of streetscape improvements that, complemented by the Louisiana Black History Walk of Fame and Downtown Greenway improvements, invite increased investment in Myrtle Walk as a cultural center of gravity in the years to come. A Walk of Fame, executed through in-sidewalk plaques or standing signage, would draw visitors and bring to life again a critical moment in the history of Baton Rouge and the American South. This open-air history walk can be made more comfortable by the addition of street trees, attractive sidewalk paving materials, low-maintenance landscaping, and traffic-calming measures. Sponsorship for components of the Walk of Fame project is a small-scale program that opens a pathway to broader civic and philanthropic commitment around a larger, more complete cultural planning scheme centered on Myrtle Walk.

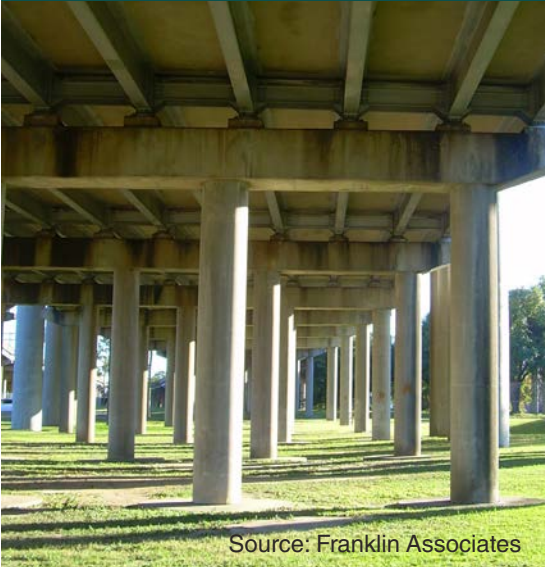
Public space improvements should be of a consistent identity along Myrtle Walk as well as Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive, which intersects Myrtle Walk in a north-south direction and serves as a Cultural Connective Corridor¹ to the arts cluster along Government Street to the north. These two spine streets should, at minimum, incorporate the following improvements:

- **Enhanced lighting for safety and attractiveness.** A lighting strategy that makes it safe and comfortable to program nighttime events in buildings and makes for an enjoyable walk between buildings and parking lots. See Action 5.2, below, for additional details on night-lighting strategy. Also see Priority 7: Enhance Safety and Reduce Crime, which provides additional rationale for lighting to address and shift perceptions of safety in OSBR.
- **Landscape enhancements.** Street trees, low-maintenance plantings, and small pocket parks in vacant lots to create an environment that invites year-round walking, lingering, and engagement in the public realm. A cohesive street and landscape plan should direct improvements toward places targeted for pedestrian use, while pocket parks can improve less prominent public and private parcels.² Along Myrtle Walk and the business corridor along Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive.⁴¹
- **Street and sidewalk improvements.** Repair sidewalks and install bicycle lanes and signage, increasing the bicycle and pedestrian friendliness of OSBR while still maintaining critical access for automobiles. Directing funds for maintenance and rebuilding of sidewalks is an important early step for inviting public and private reinvestment in a broader neighborhood and cultural revitalization effort.
- **Wayfinding.** Unified, friendly, and legible signage that helps guide residents and visitors between anchors such as the Lincoln Theater, the proposed Black History Walk of Fame, the proposed themed charter school at St. Francis Xavier, and MoPA. Signage should also connect to the Downtown Greenway, Expressway Park, and further to the planned art- and design-focused improvements along Government Street.

Intended Impact: Establish a level of quality and character in the public realm that reflects the historic significance of OSBR, attracts wide attention for its positive transformative effects, generates visitation, and ultimately catalyzes new private and other investment in the arts sector, housing, education, and small businesses along the Myrtle Walk.

¹ Along Myrtle Walk and the business corridor along Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive.

Action 5.2 – Integrate plans for Expressway Park with plans for the Downtown Greenway



Source: Franklin Associates

Responsibility: Land Redevelopment Group in partnership with BREC and DDD

A revitalized Expressway Park, modeled after successful transformed spaces such as Buffalo Bayou in Houston and Underpass Park in Toronto, can be an important community gathering place for OSBR, an anchor along the easterly end of the Cultural Corridor.

In a reversal of local history, the very highway viaduct that tore the OSBR district in two over twenty years ago can now become an important center for community convening.

Valuable and necessary improvements to Expressway Park are complementary to those already suggested for the Myrtle Walk streetscape. An "ideas competition" can showcase the value of innovative design and programming for public spaces, and reinforce a new energy and vitality led by the arts-oriented approach to economic revitalization, generating local and regional media attention and engaging local talent and community stakeholders in a public realm conversation. The outcome of that competition can inform improvements and investments in Expressway Park, including lighting, structural upgrades, landscaping, and innovation in design—amenities that attract users to this central green space for recreation and exciting events both day and night. A high-quality and intuitive connection between the Greenway at Expressway Park and the proposed Cultural Corridor via Myrtle Walk is known as the "Lincoln Trail."

A funded capital project (\$112,000 in Louisiana Recreational Trails funding) is in the design stage; it will extend to the east just beyond South 14th Street and will consist of an eight-foot-wide shared bikeway and pedestrian way. The Lincoln Trail will parallel the Walk of Fame and other connective streetscape improvement areas along the Corridor. It is an encouraging first step in the public placemaking process for OSBR that the momentum, funding, and political support organized today around the Downtown Greenway effort are also being extended along Myrtle Walk to connect the proposed Cultural Corridor with the city's two principal economic drivers, Downtown and LSU.

Intended Impact: Leverage current momentum of investments to establish and/or strengthen connections between primary spines and activity nodes within OSBR and beyond to Downtown and LSU.



PRIORITY 6: PROVIDE ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

Source: LSU.edu

By helping people rehabilitate or maintain properties, become owners of their own home, develop pride in their neighborhood, and improve the aesthetics of a business corridor, value is created not only for that property or person, but also in the surrounding properties. Addressing this priority will connect community residents and business owners with available resources, while also encouraging the organizations that provide these services to become more engaged in OSBR.

A “Housing and Business Resources Working Group” should take the lead in connecting local residents and business owners with available support services, financial programs, and building rehabilitation resources.

- Empower local OSBR leadership to connect residents and business owners to existing resources and partners.
- Support local businesses located along Thomas Delpit Drive—a formerly thriving commercial corridor with African-American-owned businesses.
- Support homeownership, upkeep, and maintenance by local residents by connecting residents to available resources.
- Connect current and prospective business owners to available resources and advocate for business development programs.

This priority should be led by members of the Housing and Business Resources Working Group, which should ideally comprise some of the following organizations, as well as any other interested local leaders: City Office of Community Development; City Office of Neighborhoods; East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority; East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority; The Law Clinic at LSU; and the North Gate Merchants Association.

Success Factors: Leaders for this priority should have a strong knowledge of the local housing and business landscape, a vested interest in Old South Baton Rouge, the time and capacity to manage and support efforts to assist neighborhood residents and businesses, and the backing of neighborhood residents and the Baton Rouge political community.

Objective: Connect community residents and business owners with available resources, while also encouraging the organizations that provide these services to become more engaged in OSBR. By helping people rehabilitate or maintain properties, become homeowners, develop pride in their neighborhood, and improve the aesthetics of a business corridor, value is created not only for that property or person, but also in the surrounding properties.

Action 6.1 – Concentrate business investment along Thomas Delpit Sr. Drive between Terrace Avenue and East Washington Street, and near the Lincoln Theater at the intersection of Myrtle Avenue and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive



Responsibility: Housing and Business Resource Working Group

Thomas Delpit Sr. Drive has a supply of commercial buildings and a history as a thriving commercial corridor. The Lincoln Theater has a history of housing neighborhood-serving businesses on the ground floor. Reactivation of these areas could create an attractive mix of land uses, drawing residents and visitors to the Lincoln Theater.

Intended Impact: Understand where commercial properties are situated; allocate business resources where they will have the greatest impact.

Action 6.2 – Select the local stakeholder(s) or stakeholder organization(s) who will coordinate oversight of commercial uses in OSBR and connect area businesses to available resources



Responsibility: Housing and Business Resource Working Group

The Housing and Business Resources Group within the OSBR Advisory Board should lead the effort in supporting local businesses and helping them apply for business loans, technical assistance, building improvements, and other resources. See Priority 1 in this section for details on the creation of the OSBR Advisory Board. The stakeholders who will ideally assist with business support services include:

- City Office of Community Development
- City Office of Neighborhoods
- North Gate Merchants Association
- Downtown Business Association

These organizations should consider doing the following:

- Develop a work plan to provide technical assistance to business and property owners in facilitating development approvals, securing needed licenses, and obtaining funds for physical property improvements.
- Develop a work plan to provide cleanliness and safety services along Thomas Delpit Sr. Drive and in the area around the Lincoln Theater.
- Develop a marketing and branding strategy specifically catered to OSBR.
- Consider applying to develop a Main Street program through the National Trust for Historic Preservation, covering the jurisdictions outlined in Action 6.1 (above).
- The Main Street program encourages preservation-based economic revitalization and helps communities to organize themselves, improves the design of their neighborhoods, promotes their district, and enhances the economic base of a community.

Intended Impact: Designate leadership to oversee commercial support and revitalization.

Action 6.3 – Develop, maintain, and distribute a resource guide to help businesses understand and access available resources

Responsibility: Housing and Businesses Resource Working Group in partnership with the Office of the Mayor-President and LSU-CUP

The Housing and Business Resources Group should develop and distribute a resource guide to businesses in OSBR that highlights available technical assistance and funding opportunities and helps businesses through application processes. The Group should also update the guide on a yearly basis to ensure that the content remains current.

Intended Impact: Educate businesses regarding the types of available resources and help guide them through the application process.



Source: Franklin Associates

Action 6.4 – Identify one or multiple stakeholder organizations to act as leads for assisting residents with real estate questions or issues, and to act as conduits to encourage local renters and owners to rehabilitate and/or purchase their homes

Responsibility: Housing and Businesses Resource Working Group in partnership with the Office of the Mayor-President and LSU-CUP

The Housing and Business Resources Group within the OSBR Advisory Board should lead the effort in helping OSBR residents understand available opportunities to own a home, rehabilitate their home, and deal with taxation or title issues and other types of housing resources. The stakeholders who will ideally assist with housing support services include the:

- City Office of Community Development
- City Office of Neighborhoods
- East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority
- East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority
- The Law Clinic at LSU

Intended Impact: Designate leadership to oversee housing education and investment.

Action 6.5 – Support and create housing programs that facilitate homeownership, promote property maintenance and rehabilitation, and maximize the use of blighted, vacant, and adjudicated properties

Responsibility: Pastoral Working Group and the Housing and Business Resources Working Group

Support maintenance of the following programs:

Homeownership

- Consider the use of a three-year lease/purchase program for first-time homebuyers with marginal credit, as suggested in the 2006 OSBR Neighborhood and Economic Revitalization Strategy (see Market Analysis for details).
- Consider funding the RDA's community landbank to hold blighted properties for title clearance, then making those properties available to local renters who are interested in purchasing a home, understanding that properties funded with federal dollars require development or occupancy within twelve months of closing on the property.
- Communicate available resources such as mortgage assistance programs and first-time homebuyer programs to residents utilizing the housing resource guide in Action 6.2.

Housing Rehabilitation

- Continue implementing and promoting the Home Rehabilitation Grant Program, which provides grants of up to \$25,000 to low-income elderly homeowners to make and maintain home improvements.
- Consider supporting a housing rehabilitation program for elderly residents that would defer repayment of rehab funds until death or transfer of property, as suggested in the 2006 OSBR Neighborhood and Economic Revitalization Strategy.

- Maximize the use of blighted, vacant, and adjudicated properties (see Market Analysis for more details).
- Develop a process to expedite the transfer of adjudicated properties and educate local residents as to the process of obtaining free and clear title. Coordinate an effort to provide legal assistance related to property ownership issues, potentially in partnership with LSU.
- Support the City of Baton Rouge's stricter residential building code enforcement to incentivize the upkeep and repair of homes in OSBR.
- Support an expedited entitlement process for residential projects throughout OSBR, including proposed development on Nicholson Drive.

Intended Impact: Maintain the range of available housing support services.

Action 6.6 – Develop, maintain, and distribute a resource guide to help residents and local stakeholder organizations understand opportunities relating to land subsidy, mortgage subsidy, and loans, rehabilitation/renovation funds, legal assistance, housing education, and other types of assistance

Responsibility: Housing and Business Resource Working Group

The Housing and Business Resources Group should develop and distribute a resource guide that summarizes the types of housing assistance available to existing or prospective residents of OSBR to community members and stakeholder organizations within OSBR and assist residents as needed with their housing questions or concerns. The Group should also update the guide on a yearly basis to ensure that the content remains current.

Intended Impact: Promote housing ownership and property maintenance by helping residents understand opportunities to purchase a home, rehabilitate their home, reduce their mortgage or rent, and deal with tax or legal issues.

Action 6.7 – Strengthen existing mechanisms to support home and business improvement

Responsibility: Housing and Business Resource Working Group in partnership with CPEX

As an outcome of the 2006 OSBR Neighborhood and Economic Revitalization Strategy, the Center for Planning Excellence implemented two programs aimed at improving the condition of privately owned sites, both of which were completed in 2012:

- Home Rehabilitation Grant Program, which provided grants of up to \$25,000 to low-income, elderly homeowners to make and maintain home improvements to bring homes back up to code. Twenty projects have been completed using this program.
- Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program, which provided reimbursable matching grants of up to \$7,500 to owners of buildings and businesses to make qualified façade improvements. Fifteen businesses took advantage of this program.

Both of these successful programs have been completed. Consider finding the funding to re-create the programs into revolving rehabilitation loan and façade improvement loan programs, in order to maximize the number of projects that can be completed over time.

Intended Impact: Improve the condition of privately owned sites, raising the overall standard of streetscapes and providing opportunities for property owners, business operators, and residents to participate directly in the revitalization of their neighborhood.



PRIORITY 7: ENHANCE SAFETY AND REDUCE CRIME

Source: <http://inourwordsblog.com/>

Reducing crime and the perception of crime in OSBR through community activism, safety programs, and improved lighting is imperative to attract and retain residents, businesses, and visitors. The appropriate Working Group should partner with the Baton Rouge Police Department to implement the BRAVE project as well as other applicable crime prevention programs in the OSBR neighborhood.

The outcome of this priority will:

- Make public spaces, streets, sidewalks, and parks feel safer via improved lighting.
- Signal the unique, artistic nature of the neighborhood through creative lighting design.
- Enhance property values by reducing crime and improve neighborhood perception.
- Reduce the threat of retail theft and encourage more traffic through improved neighborhood perception.
- Empower local stakeholders to lead on the planning and implementation of safety programs.
- Generate a family-friendly feel for the community by improving the neighborhood's perception as a safe place to live and visit.



Safety and crime programs should be overseen by some of the following local organizations, as well as other interested parties in the neighborhood: LSU Community University Partnership; Dr. Leo S. Butler Community Center; Carver Library; local schools and educational anchors including Polk Elementary School, McKinley Middle School, McKinley High School, University Terrace Elementary, FLAIM, St. Francis Xavier School, and the McKinley Adult Learning Center; Baranco-Clark YMCA; McKinley Alumni Center; Freeman/Matthews Head Start Center; Sensational Seniors; and youth leadership and faith-based community leadership groups.

Success Factors: Leaders for this priority should have a vested interest in addressing safety in OSBR, the time and capacity to manage and support safety efforts, and the backing of neighborhood residents and the Baton Rouge political community.

Objective: Generate a more family-friendly feel to the neighborhood increasing land values and improving neighborhood perception as a safe place to live and visit. Reduce crime and the perception of crime in OSBR through community activism, safety programs, and improved lighting.



Action 7.1 – Select the local stakeholder(s) or stakeholder organization(s) who will take ownership of addressing crime and safety on behalf of the OSBR community

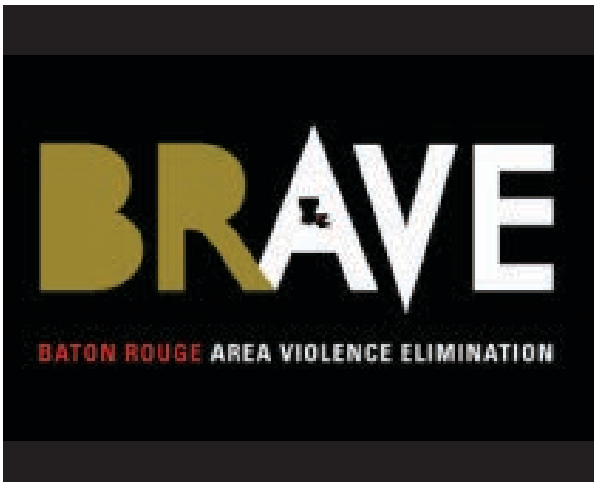
Responsibility: Pastoral Working Group and Family and Community Services Working Group

The Family and Community Services Group within the OSBR Advisory Board should lead the effort in addressing crime and safety in OSBR, and implement the Action steps within this section of the Plan. See Recommendation Section 5.5: Recommend Methods for Strengthening Local Stakeholder Organizations, for details on the creation of the OSBR Advisory Group. The stakeholders who are ideally represented in the Family and Community Services Group include:

- LSU-CUP
- Butler Center
- Carver Library
- Buchanan Elementary School, McKinley Middle School, McKinley High School, and the McKinley Adult Learning Center
- Thomas Delpit Drive YMCA
- McKinley Alumni Center
- Freeman/Matthews Head Start Center

The Civic Leadership Group and the Pastoral Community Group may also be able to assist in helping to implement the Action steps associated with crime reduction in this Plan.

Intended Impact: By identifying safety and crime as a fundamental charge of the OSBR Advisory Board and a target for organizational resources, the organization will be empowered to lead the Action items below.



BATON ROUGE AREA VIOLENCE ELIMINATION (BRAVE)

The Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination project aims to eliminate violent juvenile crime in the zip code areas of the city in which the most crime of this kind occurs. The BRAVE administration involves a strong collaboration of the mayor, the district attorney, the police chief, the sheriff, the school superintendent, and LSU.

The BRAVE project is based on the "Project Ceasefire" model. The project hopes to change community norms, provide alternatives to gang and group violence participants, and increase awareness among group or gang members that the risk of being arrested, convicted, and heavily sanctioned has grown significantly. These goals will be accomplished through engagement and educational activities that will increase the social cohesion of the community and forge an authentic community-police partnership, along with coordination of social service and educational partners who will help youth and assist in implementation of a focused deterrence approach to community-based policing.

Learn more: <http://www.bravebtr.com/>

Action 7.2 – Partner with the Baton Rouge Police Department (BRPD) to implement the BRAVE project and/or other applicable crime prevention programs in the OSBR neighborhood

Responsibility: Pastoral Working Group and Family and Community Services Working Group

The City of Baton Rouge has recently implemented new crime prevention and reduction programs that have seen success in a variety of neighborhoods. The Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination project (BRAVE) was initiated in 2012 and has received critical acclaim. The initiative has a track record of success backed by statistical analysis. It also coincides with OSBR redevelopment principles, as it empowers community stakeholder organizations to lead the charge in identifying and assisting community members who are at high risk of beginning or continuing illegal behavior. In addition, BRAVE leverages statistical analysis completed by LSU, an important stakeholder for OSBR. BRAVE recently increased in budget and is expanding to new zip codes, and the Baton Rouge Police Department encourages representatives from

city neighborhoods to contact them regarding partnership opportunities (see above sidebar for additional details on BRAVE).

There are multiple steps that should be undertaken to implement BRAVE or other city safety programs in OSBR:

1. Understand existing crime conditions. The Family and Community Services Group of the OSBR Advisory Board should identify what types of crimes are most common in the neighborhood, where the problem areas are located, and what the community sees as the biggest threats.¹
2. Develop local partnerships. Reach out to community stakeholders about partnering to address crime. BRAVE trains and equips community partners to assist in crime prevention. Before that can happen, willing community partners must be identified. Many of the most likely community partners are in the Family and Community Services Group.
3. Contact the Baton Rouge Police Department. The BRPD can identify opportunities to partner on BRAVE and other crime programs, as well as connect OSBR with other support organizations and resources. In addition, the BRPD recommends contacting citywide crime specialists in each crime division (burglary, property crime, etc.) for additional, specialized assistance with crime prevention.
4. Build community support and understanding. Greater community buy-in strengthens the ability of crime prevention programs to be successful. It is important that the Family and Community Services Group and other stakeholders communicate the benefits of partnering with the BRPD and educate residents about what this process will look like. Once an initiative is underway and resulting crime data have been made available, program successes should be widely communicated to start changing the perception of the neighborhood and develop further community support.

Intended Impact: Implementing and communicating a crime reduction partnership between local stakeholders and the Baton Rouge Police Department will reduce the real and perceived threat of crime and violence in OSBR.

¹ The Baton Rouge Police Department website updates crime statistics on an annual basis and is a good resource for understanding crime issues in OSBR: <http://brgov.com/reports/public/pmapsel.asp>.

Action 7.3 – Enhance and improve lighting and add additional street, sidewalk, and park lighting in these locations

Responsibility: Family and Community Services Working Group in partnership with BREC and the DDD

It is recommended that the Family and Community Services Working Group of the OSBR Advisory Board identify areas of the neighborhood that need additional street, sidewalk, or park lighting. There may be an opportunity to combine lighting enhancement within OSBR with infrastructure improvements associated with the implementation of the Downtown Greenway—the pedestrian and bike path being developed by the DDD that will extend through OSBR.

There is an opportunity to link OSBR lighting improvements to the neighborhood's, history, branding, and artistic nature by conducting a lighting design competition. Local residents would participate in selecting the final design. Grant support would be required to fund an award for the winning designer as well as cover construction costs above the amount of money it would take the City to provide standard lighting throughout the neighborhood.

Intended Impact: Reduce crime, improve the perception of safety, and help brand OSBR while engaging the community in design efforts.

Action 7.4 – Enhance and improve traffic, bike, and pedestrian conditions through infrastructure improvements

Responsibility: Family and Community Services Working Group in partnership with the DDD

Identify problem areas where it is unsafe or difficult to cross the street on foot or by bicycle. Identify key pedestrian and bike thoroughfares—particularly along Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive, Myrtle Walk, and Thomas Delpit Drive—that have strong connectivity and provide safe travel for walkers and bikers alike.

The DDD may be a potential partner as the Downtown Greenway will provide pedestrian and bike trails through the OSBR neighborhood. The opportunity to enhance pedestrian and bike accessibility and link OSBR to the Downtown Greenway is discussed in Priority 5 of this section (above).

Intended Impact: Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in OSBR.

Action 7.5 – Develop a district-wide night-lighting strategy to unify the streetscape and parks, enhance safety, and reinforce the arts and cultural identity



Responsibility: Arts and Culture Working Group in partnership with ACGBR

As cultural programming welcomes visitors and activity day and night, it will be imperative to conceive and execute a district-wide approach to lighting that assesses current needs and directs investment toward nodes of activity and dark spots where positive impact will be felt most strongly.

Assessment of lighting needs can be an engaging community activity; a program such as NightSeeing, led by ARUP Lighting Designer Leni Schwendinger, facilitates night walks through urban districts to better understand the current lighting environment and envision how innovations in lighting can improve the nighttime experience. These findings, which also bring to the surface important underlying perceptions about safety and security, can inform a district-wide lighting strategy that applies limited resources in a way that responds directly to those perceptions. While effective night lighting improves actual and perceived safety as a baseline impact, a design strategy for lighting can reinforce the identity of OSBR, particularly Myrtle Walk, and make clear the connections between it and Expressway Park, the Downtown Greenway, and other district-wide activity nodes and corridors. As nighttime events will become a foundational strength, a unified lighting strategy is one essential tool to establish cohesion and a shared identity as this activity node evolves.

Intended Impact: Create a transformative light-oriented effect throughout OSBR that establishes a new vibrancy and district identity, signals that safety concerns are being addressed, garners positive media attention for the district, and attracts new and broader audiences/customers to the community.

04 OSBR FUTURE: IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIORITIES

PRIORITY 1: ENHANCE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND STAKEHOLDER CAPACITY

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 1.1 Conduct a series of workshops for OSBR stakeholders to discuss neighborhood stakeholder coordination and implementation of this planning effort	x			No cost	
Action 1.2 Create committees composed of selected community stakeholders to implement priorities and address other neighborhood needs	x			No cost	
Action 1.3 Form an Advisory Working Groups from the seven stakeholder groups identified in Action 1.1	x			\$20,000 - \$25,000	An estimated range of annual stipend for the Advisory Board to cover all administrative costs to assist with manpower, marketing and communication, etc. The Advisory Board is a volunteer group that leverages existing resources. There may be an opportunity to expand and develop a budget or staff.

Micro (0-18 months)

Short Term (18 months - 5 years)

Macro (5 years +)

PRIORITY 2: REACTIVATE THE LINCOLN THEATER

Action	Timeline			Funding
	Micro	Short Term	Macro	
Action 2.1 Confirm and formally adopt the proposed concept and the Reactivation Strategy for the Lincoln Theater	x			LBHHF Board and Staff Responsibility
Action 2.2 Create a Master Plan to transform the Lincoln Theater	x			\$150,000
Action 2.3 Assess range of options for partnerships and engage lead strategic partners	x			LBHHF Administrative Time
Action 2.4 Establish a Social Justice Exchange at the site of the old barbershop	x			\$25,000/year
Action 2.5 Develop a leadership, communication, and capacity-building plan for LBHHF that aligns with the Lincoln Theater Master Plan	x			\$15,000 - \$25,000
Action 2.6 Relaunch the Capital Campaign		x		TBD

PRIORITY 3: ENLIVEN OSBR'S CULTURAL DISTRICT PROGRAMMING & FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 3.1 Launch an annual heritage festival of ideas and performance		x			\$35,000-\$50,000 per year
Action 3.2 Establish the Louisiana Black History Walk of Fame and Archive	x			Capital cost: \$89,000 Annual operating cost: \$50,000	Capital cost for initial installations through DDD available for a Lincoln Trail offshoot of the Greenway.
Action 3.4 Create and fund the “Art for Change Partnership”	x			\$25,000 - \$250,000 per year	Funding depends on the scale of the projects pursued; create maintenance fund.
Action 3.5 Develop Young Designers Fashion Expo and Costume Shop		x		\$75,000-\$100,000 per year	For salaries, occupancy costs, displays, and materials, the shop would function like an art gallery (assuming shops are co-located): 50% of the revenue would go to the designers; 50% to the shop. Materials could be made available to designers for free or through a corporate sponsorship or stipend. Note: This is an incubation model—not a business model—and is not anticipated to break even or be profitable for many years.

PRIORITY 3: ENLIVEN OSBR CULTURAL CORRIDOR PROGRAMMING & FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT, CONTINUED

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 3.6 Organize and deploy an after-school teen volunteer corps	x			\$75,000	For coordinator salary/benefits and operating budget.
Action 3.7 Link the Theater and the Myrtle Walk Cultural Corridor to the annual Mid City Art and Design Cultural District’s “White Light Night” events	x			\$10,000	For promotional and security expenditures.
Action 3.8 Build upon the successes of the Community Gardens Initiative	x			\$20,000 - 30,000	For new greenhouse and utilities and site improvements.
Action 3.9 Create a new arts and leadership and/or arts and technology-themed charter school		x (Partnership)	x (School)	TBD	Funding sources are likely to include local and state education funds and federal, state, and philanthropic grants.

Partnership in the short term to medium term (0-5 years).
Open school in medium to long term (3-7 years).

PRIORITY 4: ACQUIRE AND REPURPOSE PRIVATE PROPERTIES TO ADVANCE CULTURAL PLACEMAKING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 4.1 Create an OSBR Acquisition Fund		X		\$85,000 - \$175,000 per acre of land acquired	The acquisition fund can be funded using primarily philanthropic sources.
Action 4.2 Develop affordable artist housing and commercial arts spaces in underutilized and vacant parcels and buildings	X (Engage partners, complete area survey and property acquisition plan)	X (Renovate 10-20 vacant houses/properties)		TBD	Limited local public sector costs. Most planning costs and all development costs should be borne by the private or nonprofit partner, likely utilizing philanthropic and federal grants.
Action 4.3 Convert vacant lots adjacent to the Lincoln Theater into attractive, usable, and safe public spaces that can be utilized for interim community programming	X (Planning for site programming)	X (Complete infrastructure investment)		\$50,000 to \$100,000	
Action 4.4 Develop quality affordable senior housing that addresses the needs of senior citizens in OSBR, and allows long-standing residents of OSBR to remain a part of the community		X		\$15 million for a 75-unit complex	Timeline based on competitively awarded federal HUD grant funds for development and may extend into long term.

PRIORITY 4: ACQUIRE AND REPURPOSE PRIVATE PROPERTIES TO ADVANCE CULTURAL PLACEMAKING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES, CONTINUED

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 4.5 Create a parking facility and outdoor activities space proximate to the Lincoln Theater	X (Planning process)	X (Complete infrastructure)		\$85,000 - \$175,000 per acre of land acquired	The acquisition fund can be funded using primarily philanthropic sources.
Action 4.6 Encourage mixed-income multifamily development in the long term	X (Site assemblage)	X (Site development)		TBD	Limited local public sector costs. Most planning costs and all development costs should be borne by the private or nonprofit partner, likely utilizing philanthropic and federal grants.
Action 4.7 Convert scattered vacant lots into attractive, usable, and safe public spaces that can be utilized for interim community programming	X			\$50,000 to \$100,000	

PRIORITY 5: BEAUTIFY PUBLIC SPACES THROUGHOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 5.1 Establish Myrtle Walk and Connective Streetscape Improvements	X (Planning)	X (Implementation)		\$1.25 million	
Action 5.2 Integrate plans for Expressway Park with plans for the Downtown Greenway	x			\$300,000	Utilizing portion of State Greenway funding allocated for "spur" along Myrtle.

PRIORITY 6: PROVIDE ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 6.1 Concentrate business investment along Thomas Delpit Sr. Drive between Terrace Avenue and East Washington Street, and near the Lincoln Theater at the intersection of Myrtle Avenue and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive	x			None	See Action 6.3 below for a list of potential resources for current or prospective businesses in OSBR.
Action 6.2 Select the local stakeholder(s) or stakeholder organization(s) who will coordinate oversight of commercial uses in OSBR and connect area businesses to available resources	x			None	In the near term, any actions requiring costs should come from existing budgets of organizations within the Housing and Business Resources Working Group. A marketing and branding strategy will cost between \$20,000 and \$30,000.
Action 6.3 Develop, maintain, and distribute a resource guide to help businesses understand and access available resources	x			None	No associated cost, as Working Groups should develop the resource guide on a volunteer basis. Potential local business resources may include, but are not limited to the CPEX Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program and Small Business Training Program; Mid City Redevelopment Alliance façade improvement grants; and the RDA business improvement grant, gap finance for commercial development, fresh food initiative, property evaluation tool, and land banking.

PRIORITY 6: PROVIDE ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES, CONTINUED

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 6.4 Identify one or multiple stakeholder organizations to act as leads for assisting residents with real estate questions or issues, and to act as conduits to encourage local renters and owners to rehabilitate and/or purchase their homes	x			None	Any actions requiring costs should come from existing budgets of organizations within the Housing and Business Resources Group.
Action 6.5 Support and create housing programs that facilitate homeownership, promote property maintenance and rehabilitation, and maximize the use of blighted, vacant, and adjudicated properties	x			None	Minimal increase in annual funding. Resources: RDA land bank and existing city programs.

PRIORITY 6: PROVIDE ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES, CONTINUED

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 6.6 Develop, maintain, and distribute a resource guide to help residents and local stakeholder organizations to understand opportunities relating to land subsidy, mortgage subsidy, loans, rehabilitation/renovation funds, legal assistance, housing education, and other types of assistance	x			None	Working Groups should develop the resource guide on a volunteer basis. Potential residential resources may include, but are not limited to, Institute for Community Economics land trusts, mortgage subsidy programs, HUD homebuyer programs, Tenant Opportunity to Purchase programs, the CPEX Home Rehabilitation Grant Program, home improvement grants and homebuyer counseling and education via the Mid City Redevelopment Alliance, and resources from the Baton Rouge Office of Neighborhoods, the EBRPHA, EBRMFA, and RDA, and the following programs within the Baton Rouge OCD: homebuyer's assistance program, homeownership center, housing rehabilitation contract opportunities, housing rehabilitation grants and loans, lead-based paint information and removal programs, new housing development program, rental housing rehabilitation loans, sewer line assistance programs, volunteer housing programs, and weatherization assistance programs.
Action 6.7 Strengthen existing mechanisms to support home and business improvement	X (Ongoing)			None	New costs should be limited.

PRIORITY 7: ENHANCE SAFETY AND REDUCE CRIME

Action	Timeline			Funding	Explanation
	Micro	Short Term	Macro		
Action 7.1 Select the local stakeholder(s) or stakeholder organization(s) who will take ownership of addressing crime and safety on behalf of the OSBR community	x			None	Addressing safety will be a primary charge of the OSBR Advisory Board.
Action 7.2 Partner with the Baton Rouge Police Department (BRPD) to implement the BRAVE project and/ or other applicable crime prevention programs in the OSBR neighborhood	x			None	No direct cost. Safety partnership programs with the Baton Rouge Police Department, including BRAVE, require volunteer time and utilize existing resources.
Action 7.3 Enhance and improve lighting and add additional street, sidewalk, and park lighting in these locations		x		TBD	Depends on project scale and role of the Department of Public Works.
Action 7.4 Enhance and improve traffic, bike, and pedestrian conditions through infrastructure improvements		x		None	Associated costs are included within the scope of recommendations in Priority 5.
Action 7.5 Develop a district-wide night-lighting strategy to unify the streetscape and parks, enhance safety, and reinforce the arts and cultural identity	x			Approximately \$75,000	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CLIENT TEAM

The Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge

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Kathy Scherer

Center for Planning Excellence

Rachel DiResto
Elizabeth “Boo” Thomas
Tara Titone

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Ralph Stevens
Sarah Vandersypen

Ascension Christian Theatre

Alicia Morton

Baranco-Clark YMCA

Bob Jacobs
Eddrick Martin

Baton Rouge Area Foundation

John Carpenter
Jessica Foley
John Spain

Acknowledgements

Baton Rouge Community College

Gerri Hobby

Baton Rouge Music Studios

Doug Gay

Baton Rouge Police Department

Chief Carl Dabadie

Bethel AME

Rev. Dr. Herman O. Kelly Jr.

BREC

Angela Harms

Ted Jack

Patricia McCarthy

Leigh LaFargue

BREC Magnolia Mound Plantation

Mary Merchant

Pauline Poole

John Sykes

BR Walls Project

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Capital One

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Center for Planning Excellence

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City-Parish Office of Neighborhoods

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DNA Workshop

Dyke Nelson

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Brandon Reilly
Emilie Smart
Mary Stein
Spencer Watts
Melissa Eastin

Elevator Projects

Raina Wirta

Engle Realty

Daniel Engle
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Forward Arts

Chancelier “Xero” Skidmore
Anna West

Foundation for Historical Louisiana

Carolyn Bennett

Greater Beulah Baptist Church

Reverend Michael Mallet

Gulf Coast Housing Partnership

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Kiwanis Club of South Baton Rouge

Bridgette Hardy

Knock Knock Children’s Museum

Staci Duhe, Board
Kelli Stevens

Kress Gallery

Christopher Turner

Louisiana Black History Hall of Fame

Dennis Blunt
Irma Briggs, Advisory Board
Louis H. Briggs, Advisory Board
Brenda Perry

**Louisiana Department of
Environmental Quality**

Loretta Deggins

Louisiana Division of the Arts

Gaye Hamilton
Cathy Hernandez
Maida Owens

Louisiana International Film Festival

Missy Crews
Chesley Heymsfield

Louisiana Office of State Parks

Michael Domingue,
Recreational Trails Program

Louisiana House of Representatives

Pat Smith

Louisiana State Senate

Yolanda Dixon

Acknowledgements

LSU

Dr. Katrice Albert

Marybeth Lima, *Center for Community
Engagement, Learning, and Leadership*

Kitty Phenev, *School of Art*

LaKeitha Poole, *LSU African American
Cultural Center*

Brandon Smith, *LSU Community
University Partnership*

Nari Ward, *Artist-in-Residence*

LSU Museum of Art

Fairleigh Jackson

Lucy Perera

Dr. Jordana Pomeroy

Mabel's Flowers and Gifts

Joel Thomas

Manship Theatre

Renee Chatelain

McKinley Alumni Center

Garrick Mayweather

McKinley Middle Magnet

Suguna Mayweather

Mid City Merchants Association

Laurie Chapple

Mid City Redevelopment Alliance

Samuel Sanders

Anna Snyder-Kelly

MoPA

Kevin Harris

Cedric Patin

National Housing Consultant Services

Helena Cunningham

New Venture Theatre

Greg Williams Jr.

NuNu Collaborative

Jill Hackney

Office of Community Development, City of Baton Rouge

Gail Grover

Office of the Mayor-President

Kia Bickham

Gwen Hamilton

Melvin "Kip" Holden

John Price

Old Book and Bible Center

Anthony Kimble

PICO Louisiana

Jennifer Jones Bridgett

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Rene M. Smith

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St. Francis Catholic Church

Reverend Edward Chiffriller

Theatre Baton Rouge

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Daniel Rutledge

Darren Rutledge

Casey Stikes

Mia Upshaw

Rowaida Yahya

Acknowledgements

OSBR Sensational Seniors

Rita Allen
Simpson Anderson
Mildred Coats
Georgia Chombers
Earlean Coleman
Gloria J. Dodson
Eula Franklin
Rosemary Glynn
Sasha Guidry
Gloria W. John
Divia Laurire
Lillie Leste
Carol L. MaMotte
Gloria McGee
William Perken
Rosie M. Polk
Lois Ponds
Rosa S. Pugh
Scherelyn Sazlou
Carmencita Williams
Carolyn Williams