

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



BUILD  
BATON ROUGE

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# FROM THE MAYOR



On behalf of the City of Baton Rouge - Parish of East Baton Rouge, I am excited to introduce Build Baton Rouge's 2019 Annual Report. This report not only marks the tremendous progress made over the past year, but it also recognizes a decade of redevelopment activity sparked by the initiative, commitment, and vision of the Build Baton Rouge Board and staff. BBR's work is an essential component of how we achieve my vision of peace, prosperity, and progress. Residents from all over the City-Parish are longing for action to turn the tide of blight and disinvestment that plagues our most challenged neighborhoods. I'm proud of the progress that we're making and appreciative of BBR's leadership.

Too many in our community often wonder whether enough is being done to create opportunities in our disinvested neighborhoods. They are right to demand that we work expeditiously to ensure development happens equitably and with the full engagement of the community. In this annual report BBR looks back on the decade of work that preceded the recent breakthroughs at Electric Depot, Ardendale, and the Plank Road corridor. The revitalization of our city's first power plant, the \$30 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Choice Neighborhoods grant award, the \$15 million U.S. Department of Transportation bus rapid transit matching funds award, and the Imagine Plank Road Plan for Equitable Development did not happen overnight. Rather, they are the result of a decade of investment, innovation, and commitment on the part of BBR and many others. This annual report calls on us to reflect on the work that has been done and the progress we are making. When we take in the fullness of the seeds that have been planted, it is easy to embrace bold visions for our future possibilities.

In the first year of my administration I recommitted the City-Parish's support for Build Baton Rouge. That support not only included an infusion of operating funds, but also new responsibilities to administer our federal community development funding. This decision was pivotal — for the first time in our history we have alignment between our redevelopment planning and our federal community funds deployment. BBR is administering community improvement projects with our neighborhood community development organizations, repairing roofs through our home repair program, and supporting our nonprofit partners in delivering essential social services. We will continue to explore ways to streamline how we utilize federal, state, and local funds to transform the quality of place and quality of life throughout the City-Parish.

Lastly, this annual report honors BBR's founding Board Chairman, John Noland. I join the chorus of Baton Rouge residents and community leaders in saluting John's tireless commitment to community development. BBR would not exist if it were not for John's vision, determination, and philanthropy. I know he has much more to offer Baton Rouge and continue to count on his sage advice and advocacy.

Congratulations to the Board and staff of Build Baton Rouge. We look forward to the next decade of innovation and service.

Yours in partnership,

Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome

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## BOARD MEMBERS

### BUILD BATON ROUGE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

- Mr. Rodney Braxton - *Chairman*
- Mr. Brian Haymon - *Vice Chairman*
- Mr. Theodore Major - *Secretary*
- Mrs. Suzanne Turner - *Treasurer*
- Mr. Charles Landry

### EBR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ENTITY, L.L.C. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Mr. Brian Haymon
- Mrs. Erin Monroe Wesley
- Mr. Theodore Major

### EBR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ENTITY, L.L.C. ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Mr. Rodney Braxton
- Rev. Leo Cyrus
- Mr. Byron Turner

01

LETTER

PAGE 1

02

OUR STORY

PAGE 3

03

BY THE NUMBERS

PAGE 15

04

WHAT WE DO

PAGE 19

05

JOHN NOLAND

PAGE 27

06

PARTNERS/SUPPORTERS

PAGE 29



# LETTER





# FROM THE BOARD CHAIRMAN AND THE PRESIDENT & CEO

It is our pleasure to present Build Baton Rouge's 2019 Annual Report. This year we marked 10 years of working to promote equitable investment, innovative development, and thriving communities across all of Baton Rouge. Inside you will learn how we are revitalizing disinvested areas in ways that improve lives, transform neighborhoods, and fortify the bonds of community essential to advancing opportunities for everyone.

As we step into a new year and a new decade, BBR is hard at work on several initiatives that represent unprecedented opportunities for Baton Rouge:

- Our decade-long efforts at Ardendale have earned the city a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and work is underway.
- Electric Depot is breaking ground on its second phase and continues to catalyze development in the Government Street corridor and the neighborhoods of Downtown East.
- The Plank Road master plan is generating excitement and action among North Baton Rouge residents and many others who have longed to see an end to the area's blight. Moreover, the recently awarded \$15 million U.S. Department of Transportation grant for bus rapid transit will not only give Baton Rouge the distinction of having the state's first bus rapid transit line, but ensure that Plank Road is revitalized in accord with transit-oriented development principles.

We continue to grow our land bank as we work with community developers, businesses, and philanthropy to enhance the quality of life in our disinvested neighborhoods while creating a strong quality of place. As we reflect on 10 years of service to Baton Rouge, we are also boldly looking ahead to a bright future. Over the past year our Board, staff, and community partners engaged in a multidimensional strategic planning and branding effort that resulted in the adoption of a new mission, vision, values statement, and – most importantly – a new name. “Build Baton Rouge” captures the possibilities of the next chapter of our work and reflects the holistic approach to community development that Baton Rouge deserves.

Our 2019 Annual Report also includes a tribute to our Founding Board Chairman, now Chairman Emeritus, John Noland. No other business leader has been as committed to community development as John. His decades of leadership, philanthropy, and service led to the establishment of BBR and his influence can be seen in every current endeavor. We know John has much more to give to Baton Rouge and the work of BBR, but we wanted to mark this first decade with a recognition of his immeasurable impact and monumental example.

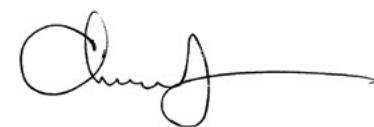
The Board and staff of BBR believe there is not a single square inch of Baton Rouge that is disposable. All of our city's neighborhoods, communities, and places deserve the best of our resources, commitment, determination, and political will. We've created a strong foundation and have marshalled the tools necessary to pursue new opportunities. We know that our vision for Baton Rouge is attainable – if we work together.

Will you build with us?

Sincerely,



**Rodney Braxton**  
Board Chairman



**Christopher J. Tyson**  
President & CEO

A group of diverse people, including men and women of various ages and ethnicities, are seated on a bus. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The bus interior is visible, with windows and overhead handrails. A blue overlay covers the entire image. The text "OUR STORY" is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center. A large, dark blue, stylized graphic of a person's head and shoulders is positioned on the left side, partially overlapping the text.

# OUR STORY

# A MORE VIBRANT BATON ROUGE FOR EVERYONE

## VISION

Bringing people and resources together to promote equitable investment, innovative development, and thriving communities across all of Baton Rouge.

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## VALUES

### INNOVATION

We embrace an entrepreneurial approach to community development and the transformation of the built environment.

### SERVICE

We support partnerships, opportunities, and developments that build the leadership capacity of all members of our community.

### EQUITY

We celebrate the success of our city while recognizing its history and the need to expand access to the resources, opportunities, and influence necessary to live, work, and thrive.

### INCLUSION

We promote authentic and empowered participation, where all people feel they are heard, respected, and belong.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

We prioritize community voice and participation to inform and guide our work.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

We approach our work with transparency and integrity to establish and uphold public trust.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Develop and revitalize  
disinvested areas

Drive economic impact through  
equitable investment

Advance partnerships to build  
community-wide capacity

---

## HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THIS?

- We work to transform all of Baton Rouge into a thriving economic center through the elimination of blight and support of business growth and expansion.
- We convene and collaborate with our city's residents to plan and build a Baton Rouge that has abundant linkages to resources and services, affordable housing, job opportunities, and accessible transportation.
- We foster partnerships to ensure that the gains from economic growth and development benefit all communities. These strategic collaborations build the capacity and leadership of our partners and residents.
- We provide guidance and support for the financing of equitable development projects throughout Baton Rouge.
- We uplift place-making and place-preservation opportunities that draw families, businesses, and culture bearers to live, learn, and stay in Baton Rouge.



# HISTORY

Build Baton Rouge's (BBR) roots date back to 2007 when the Louisiana Legislature established the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority. The Authority began operating two years later, with the goal of leveraging public and private resources to eliminate and prevent the spread of blight, encourage rehabilitation, and revitalize disinvested areas.

BBR got off to a strong start, setting the foundation for transformative initiatives that are still unfolding today. With an award of more than \$60 million in federal New Market Tax Credits, the agency spearheaded major developments in its first five years, including the ExxonMobil YMCA on Howell Boulevard, the downtown Hampton Inn and Suites, and the Emerge Center on Innovation Park Drive. It facilitated community improvement plans for five North Baton Rouge neighborhoods and helped finance the mixed-income Elysian I and II apartments as well as the Autumn Place and Willow Creek townhomes.

Even as funding dried up in later years, BBR maintained its relevance and commitment to the community. Early initiatives, including Ardendale planning, business façade improvement grants, and gap financing for affordable housing, continued to move forward, while the agency supported new projects such as planning for the revitalization of the Entergy power plant and the proposed Baton Rouge to New Orleans inter-city rail. When Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome took office in 2017, she recommitted funding to BBR and, for the first time, aligned redevelopment planning with federal funding administered through the City-Parish Office of Community Development. The new arrangement expanded BBR's role to include oversight of the City-Parish's Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) programs awarded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Today, Baton Rouge is seeing the early fruits of BBR's decade of labor, as years-long projects come to life. Ongoing initiatives all trace back in some way to BBR's beginnings and the needs long ago identified as key to cultivating an equitable, prosperous, and vibrant future city.

# MAJOR PROJECT TIMELINES

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

1

2

## IMAGINE PLANK ROAD

The vision of a revitalized, transit-oriented Plank Road corridor dates back to several developments, including the Capital Area Transit System's (CATS) pursuit of federal matching funding for bus rapid transit; the adoption of FUTUREBR, the city's comprehensive land use plan; and the efforts of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation (BRAf) to promote a light rail south of downtown. Build Baton Rouge leveraged all of these efforts when it launched the Plank Road master plan, a transit-oriented equitable development plan centered around a \$50 million bus rapid transit (BRT) project.

### 2006-2016

CATS and the City-Parish apply for federal transit funding to support BRT in Baton Rouge but lack the requisite local match to pursue implementation.

### 2012

In conjunction with the Water Campus, the BRAf begins planning a three-mile light rail line on Nicholson Drive connecting downtown and LSU.

### 2016

As part of FUTUREBR, Fregonese Associates releases a Florida-Plank Corridor Study calling for BBR, CATS, the City-Parish, and others to collaborate on transit-oriented development, specifically a BRT line.

### 2017

Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome takes office and advocates for an expansion and re-envisioning of the light rail project to include North Baton Rouge.

### JANUARY 2018

BBR convenes CATS, the City-Parish, and DOTD to begin planning a 10-mile BRT service including both Plank Road and Nicholson Drive and leveraging the investments made in the previous light rail project.

### OCTOBER 2018

The Metro Council approves the expansion of BBR's land bank with 86 vacant, adjudicated properties within the Plank Road corridor. BBR raises over \$200,000 in private contributions for planning and community engagement.

### JANUARY 2019

BBR launches a comprehensive master plan process and engages Asakura Robinson for community and economic development planning for the corridor and greater North Baton Rouge.

### MARCH-AUGUST 2019

BBR hosts a series of experientially based engagement activities to promote a community-led revitalization effort.

### JULY 2019

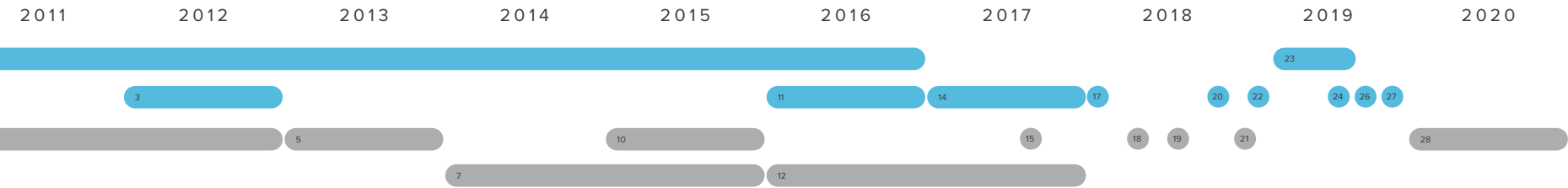
CATS and the City-Parish apply for matching funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation for the BRT line.

### SEPTEMBER 2019

BBR secures a line of credit from the Capital Area Finance Authority to support land development efforts along the Plank Road corridor in conjunction with the master plan.

### NOVEMBER 2019

BBR unveils the Imagine Plank Road Plan for Equitable Development, and the City-Parish receives a \$15 million federal matching grant to implement the BRT project – the first in Louisiana.



# ELECTRIC DEPOT

Redevelopment efforts for the old Entergy power plant on Government Street date back to 2010, setting in motion what would become a \$20 million mixed-use redevelopment project in Downtown East.

## 2010-2012

BRAF and BBR collaborate on due diligence efforts for the acquisition of the six-acre former Entergy site.

## 2013

Entergy donates the property to BBR.

## 2014-2015

BBR secures a Brownfields grant from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and addresses site remediation.

## 2015-2016

BBR begins pre-development planning process with a grant from the Louisiana Office of Community Development. BBR hires Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company as the lead planner.

## 2016-2017

BBR hires Fregonese Associates to create a site-specific pre-development study. BBR enters into a ground lease and development agreement with Weinstein Nelson, the lead developer for the six-acre site.

## AUGUST 2017

BBR secures a planning grant from the Federal Railroad Administration to study the area surrounding the Entergy site as a rail station location for the proposed Baton Rouge-New Orleans passenger rail.

## APRIL 2018

Phase I of Electric Depot opens with the completion of the entertainment venue Red Stick Social.

## JULY 2018

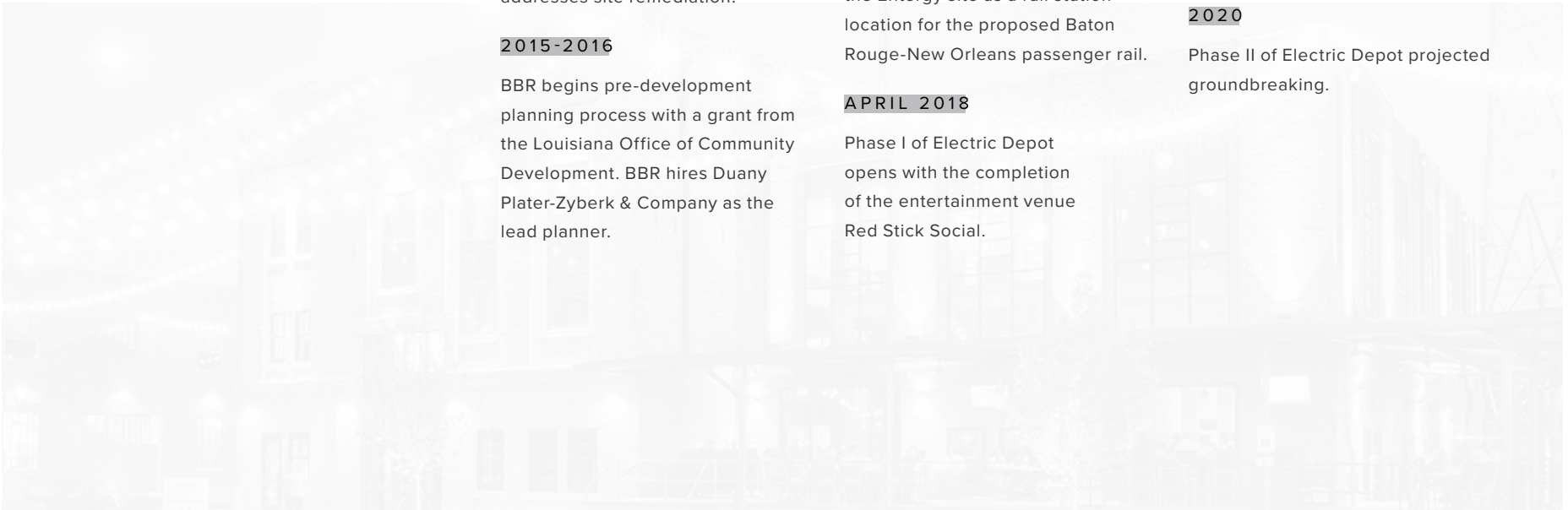
Electric Depot begins generating rent payments for BBR, constituting a recurring revenue source to support additional BBR redevelopment activities.

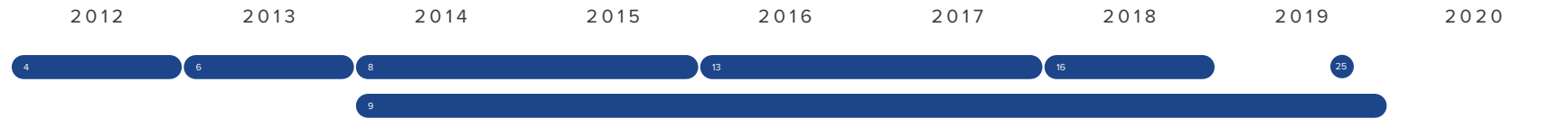
## DECEMBER 2018

BBR delivers the Rail Station Masterplan which articulates a transit-oriented development vision for the areas surrounding Electric Depot.

## 2020

Phase II of Electric Depot projected groundbreaking.





## ARDEDALE URBAN VILLAGE

Plans for a 200-acre urban infill development began in 2012 with land assembly efforts, leading to what would become Ardendale, a plan for a revitalized community in the Melrose East and Smiley Heights neighborhoods.

### 2012

BBR completes an environmental review and acquires the Ardendale site with \$1.5 million in CDBG Disaster Recovery funds via the City-Parish Office of Community Development.

### 2013

BBR secures a HUD Choice Neighborhoods planning grant in partnership with the City-Parish, the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority (EBRPHA), and LSU to study Smiley Heights and Melrose East community needs. BBR hires Architects Southwest to initiate a master plan for Ardenwood Village.

### 2014-2015

Twenty-four acres are transferred to Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) to begin construction of the BRCC McKay Automotive Training Center. BBR submits a transformation plan to complete the HUD Choice Neighborhoods planning grant.

### 2014-2019

BBR conducts site pre-development and due diligence activities, explores wetlands mitigation, ensures federal grant compliance, and coordinates with partners for future development.

### 2016-2017

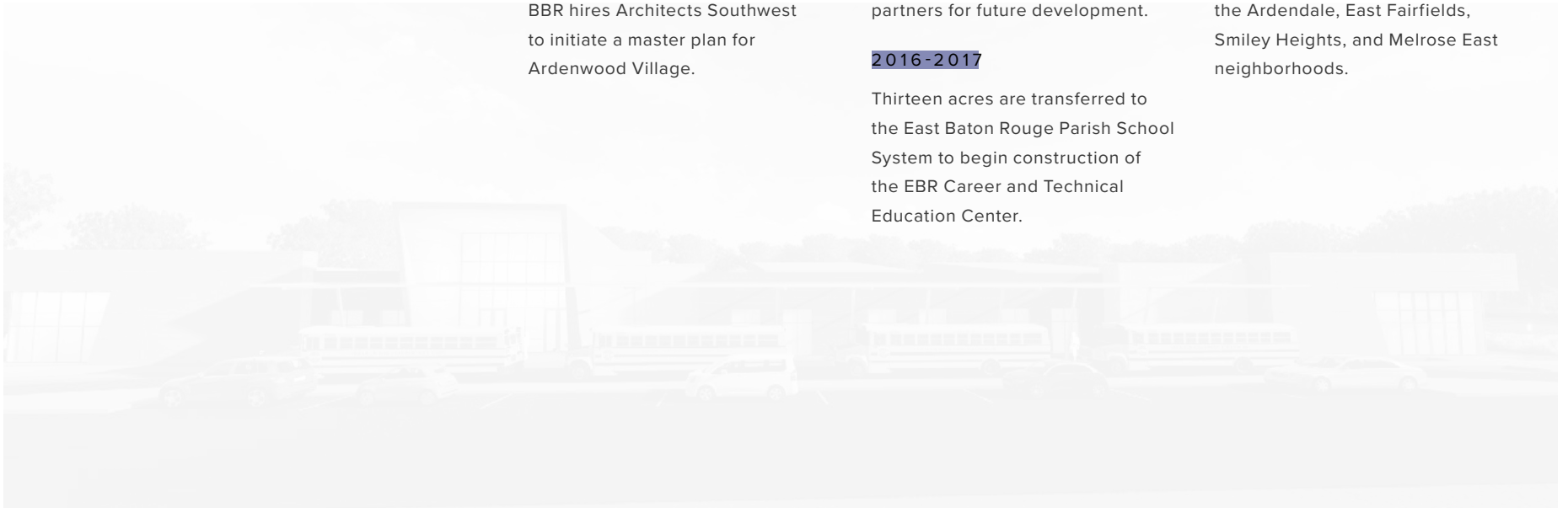
Thirteen acres are transferred to the East Baton Rouge Parish School System to begin construction of the EBR Career and Technical Education Center.

### 2018

City-Parish voters approve the MoveBR road improvements program, which includes funds for a connector road between Lobdell Boulevard and Ardenwood Drive. BBR collaborates with the City-Parish and EBRPHA to prepare a HUD Choice Neighborhoods implementation grant.

### SEPTEMBER 2019

HUD awards the City-Parish and EBRPHA a \$30 million grant to implement the BRChoice Neighborhoods plan to revitalize the Ardendale, East Fairfields, Smiley Heights, and Melrose East neighborhoods.





## IN FOCUS / WHAT'S IN A NAME?

This year, the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority became Build Baton Rouge.

While “RDA” rolls easily off the tongue of those familiar with the Authority, the name lacked many of the core elements of a strong brand. As the Authority transitioned from a period of diminished capacity into a relaunch phase, it seized the opportunity to reintroduce itself to the community. Working with local stakeholders, the Board and staff reconsidered the mission, vision, values, and key messaging for the Authority. There was broad agreement that the name was worth changing and “Build Baton Rouge” was born.

Build Baton Rouge thematically, stylistically, and rhetorically advances the Authority’s brand. Thematically, it is in keeping with similar efforts in cities across the country to rename redevelopment authorities in ways that remove “Redevelopment Authority” from prominence. This reflects a departure from 20th-century thinking about how best to address urban disinvestment. Moreover, the word “redevelopment” is implicitly deficits-based in its concern for doing something over. While redevelopment authorities remain committed to improving the built environment, the word “build” better captures the essence of the Authority’s core concerns. “Build” is inherently forward-looking, conveying a constant focus on the future.

With 10 fewer syllables, Build Baton Rouge is shorter than the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority, making it stylistically a more punchy, direct, and concise identity. It also employs alliteration, which is common among successful brands (i.e., Best Buy, Coca-Cola, and Dunkin Donuts) as well as Portland’s renamed redevelopment authority, Prosper Portland. It also lends itself to the memorable shortened form of “BBR”.

Rhetorically, “build” is a word that transforms the Authority’s name into a call to action - one that resonates as Baton Rouge looks to rebuild flood-damaged homes and disinvested neighborhoods, while building inclusive communities and a strong quality of place. By highlighting “Baton Rouge,” the name further establishes the city as a metropolitan identity. This is important as the Authority seeks to raise Baton Rouge’s profile in a global marketplace where midsize metropolitan areas struggle to gain attention and where investors and entrepreneurs are increasingly looking for new cities to serve as laboratories for urban innovation.

The name change to Build Baton Rouge allows the Authority to mark its 10th anniversary with a bold, future-focused, positive rebrand that honors the enthusiasm and hopefulness expressed throughout the community.



# TEAM



**BRYANT  
CLARK**

Grants Program  
Manager II



**JACQUES  
HAWKINS**

Intern



**MATTHEW  
JOHNSON**

Staff Attorney



**VASHTI  
LITTLE**

Grants Program  
Manager II



**GENO  
MCLAUGHLIN**

Community  
Engagement  
Specialist



**MARLA  
MUSE-MORRIS**

Grants Accounting  
Manager



**TASHA  
SAUNDERS**

Grants Director



**REBEKAH  
STRICKLAND**

Administrative  
Assistant



**TARA  
TITONE**

Chief Operating  
Officer



**CHRISTOPHER  
TYSON**

President & Chief  
Executive Officer



**ASHLEY  
VAUGHN**

Grants Program  
Manager I



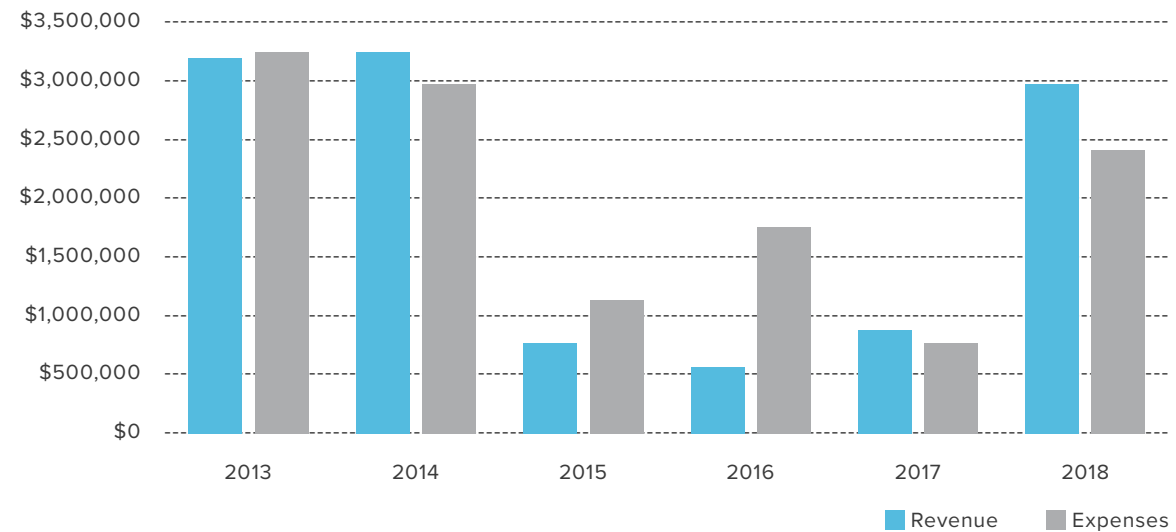
**VALLORIE  
YOUNG**

Grants Senior  
Program Manager

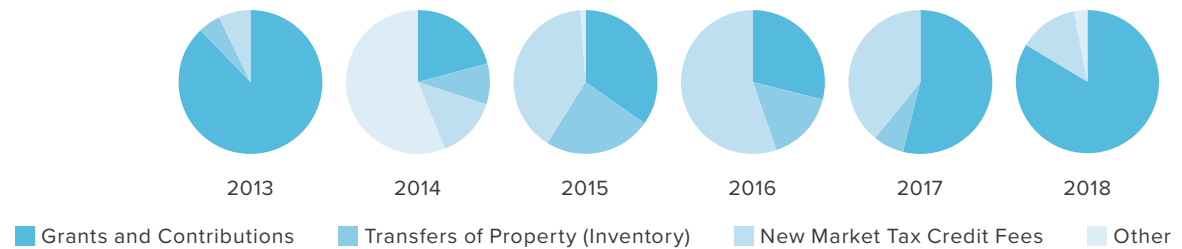
# FINANCES

Build Baton Rouge's financial history tells the story of an agency that has done a lot with little. Over the years, BBR has had to operate with limited and varied resources, celebrating any and all support that comes its way in the form of contributions, property transfer income, grants, and New Market Tax Credit management fees. Despite a lack of consistent funding, BBR has never wavered in its commitment to carrying out its revitalization goals throughout Baton Rouge.

## REVENUES VS. EXPENSES



## REVENUE BY SOURCES



## TACKLING BLIGHT AND THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF LAND BANKING

A key feature of Build Baton Rouge's statutory authority is its ability to acquire tax-adjudicated properties at no cost via direct transfer from the City-Parish and to hold them in its land bank. Land banks are governmental or nonprofit entities organized to convert vacant, abandoned, and tax-delinquent properties into productive use. These distressed properties destabilize neighborhoods, create safety hazards, drive down property values, and drain local tax dollars. To date, BBR has acquired over 200 tax-adjudicated properties through direct transfer from the City-Parish.

Land banks leverage the tools of real estate development, public finance, and community engagement to develop or transfer distressed property for purposes consistent with community-based plans. These properties are often blighted, which makes land banking a powerful blight remediation tool. Louisiana law defines blighted properties as "vacant, uninhabitable, and hazardous" properties "declared to be a public nuisance by a court." Colloquially though, "blight" encompasses not only those few properties ever declared "blighted" by a court, but all distressed property.

While blight and tax adjudication are often associated, not all owners of blighted property fall behind on their taxes and not all tax-adjudicated properties have fallen into physical disrepair. Addressing blight has been a struggle in Baton Rouge for a few reasons. First, ordinance violations have not been systematically enforced, allowing blighted properties to slip through the cracks. Second, current Louisiana law makes it difficult to clear title to property held by multiple property owners who have an undivided interest but are unwilling or unable to pay for regular maintenance and property taxes. Third, fines that are assessed for blight have traditionally been added to the property tax bill instead of being separately enforced as individual liens.

In 2019 BBR joined others in championing Act 384 of the Louisiana Legislature, which clarifies the requisite procedures for future tax sales. However, a backlog of properties with questionably valid tax sales remains. These properties often lack an identifiable owner to hold accountable, making them risky to develop and susceptible to falling into disrepair and distress. They require more individualized solutions for returning to commerce and are ideally suited for BBR's land bank, provided funding can be identified for maintenance, insurance, and clearing title once transferred to BBR.

Land banking makes possible revitalization efforts that prioritize community needs and marshals public finance and philanthropy to create catalytic development. In other municipalities, redevelopment authorities and land banks coordinate resources to return neglected properties to commerce. Successful redevelopment initiatives across the country point to land acquisition and site control as the primary implementation action. Low-cost site acquisition and the clearance of abandoned properties is a key factor in spurring development in neighborhoods long ignored by private investment and stigmatized as risky and unprofitable.

With its redevelopment and land banking functions under one roof, a well-resourced BBR could effectively address blight while enhancing the quality of neighborhoods, using the land bank to stimulate new development. In peer agencies, thousands of properties are held in land banks, generating economic activity that ultimately benefits their bottom lines. Additional funds are generated for more redevelopment activity and the cycle continues. With only 115 properties currently in its land bank, however, Baton Rouge has yet to leverage the full power of land banking to address blight and systemic disinvestment.

**BATON ROUGE HAS YET TO LEVERAGE THE FULL POWER OF LAND BANKING TO ADDRESS BLIGHT AND SYSTEMIC DISINVESTMENT.**



## DEVELOPER SPOTLIGHT / AFFORDABLE HOUSING

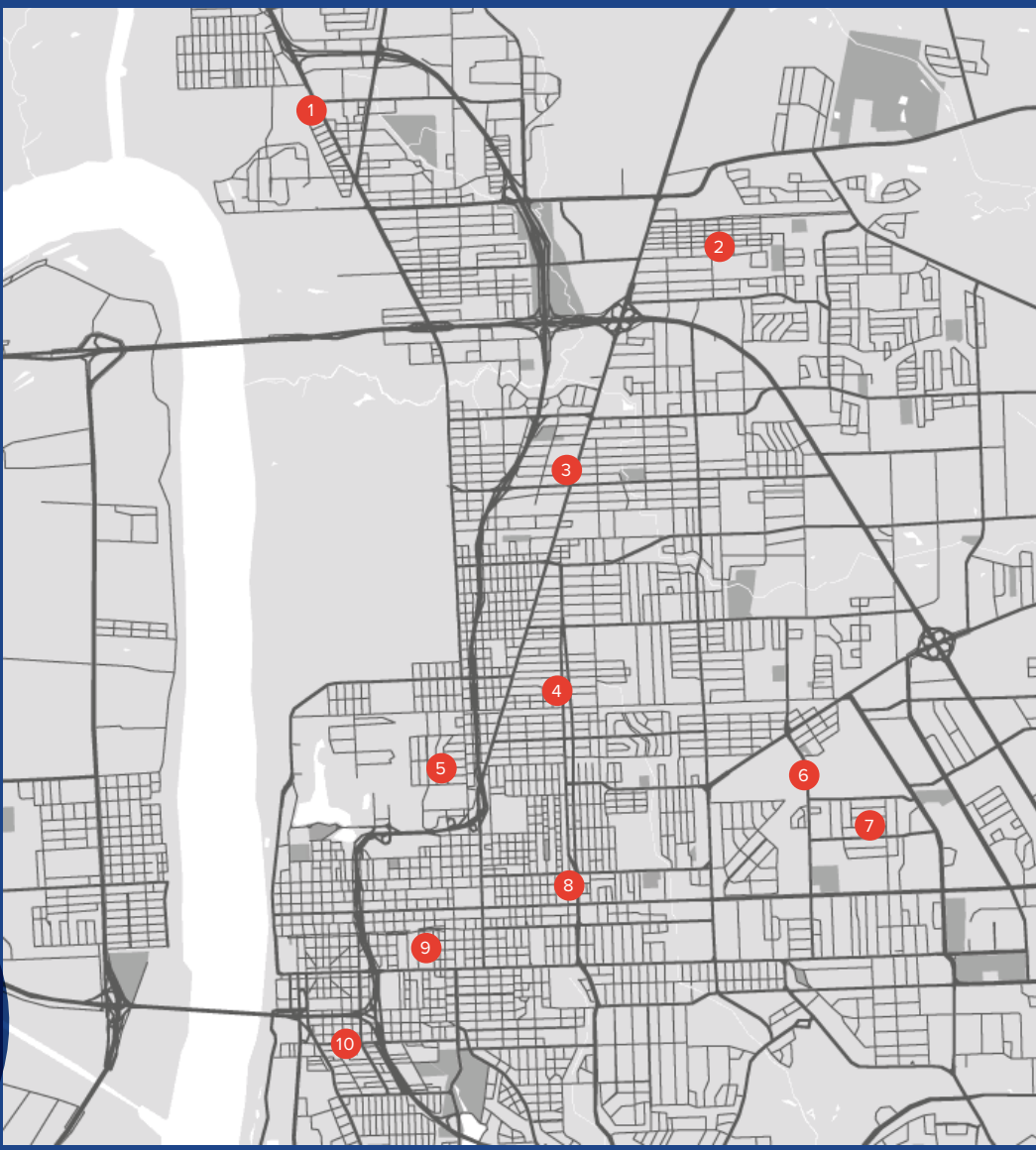
For more than 23 years, LaFleur Industries has been in the real estate development business, supporting the needs of the affordable housing market throughout Louisiana. In Baton Rouge, LaFleur has partnered with Build Baton Rouge and the City-Parish to develop 21 single-family housing units in North Baton Rouge with CDBG and HOME funding. Another 10 units are underway, also with the assistance of HOME funding.

“We are committed to making a difference in communities that are often ignored,” owner Brian LaFleur said. “What sets us apart is that we actually care about the individuals and communities we impact with our developments. From the tenants who will live in our units to the local citizens who will benefit from our investment to positively stimulate the local economy through new design and construction-related activities – We care.”

- LAFLEUR INDUSTRIES



# BY THE NUMBERS



# THE MULTIPLIER EFFECT

**\$10,000,000**

BELOW-MARKET-RATE  
FINANCING AWARDED



**334**  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
UNITS DEVELOPED

**\$460,000**

COMMERCIAL FACADE  
IMPROVEMENT GRANTS



**61**  
LOW-INCOME  
AREA RENOVATED  
STOREFRONTS

## CIPS IN FIVE URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

In 2011, Build Baton Rouge created Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) for five districts in East Baton Rouge Parish. These plans were community-driven, with residents and stakeholders providing input to guide future reinvestment and development in their communities. The plans provide action-oriented strategies to improve the targeted communities and build upon the momentum of other revitalization efforts underway. BBR continues to focus on the CIP recommendations as a basis for its work in these communities:

- 1 Scotlandville
- 2 Zion City / Glen Oaks
- 4 Choctaw Corridor
- 5 Northdale & Standard Heights
- 7 Melrose East

## CITY-PARISH AND BBR TARGETED AREAS FOR REDEVELOPMENT

While a significant planning effort, the CIPs lacked any accountability feature to ensure their implementation. In 2018, BBR amended its land banking cooperative endeavor agreement with the City-Parish to codify accountability to the community for the redevelopment plans BBR develops. In doing so, BBR expanded its focus to nine targeted areas reflecting the CIP efforts and existing investments in other neighborhoods. These nine target areas are priorities for eliminating blight and encouraging revitalization:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 2 Zion City / Glen Oaks  | 7 Melrose East   |
| 3 Plank Road   | 8 Florida Boulevard                                      |
| 4 Choctaw Corridor   | 9 Mid City ( <i>Entergy site and surrounding areas</i> ) |
| 5 Northdale  | 10 Old South Baton Rouge                                 |
| 6 Ardendale ( <i>HUD BRChoice Neighborhoods plan footprint</i> ) |  |

As administrator of the City-Parish's HUD funding, BBR can align redevelopment planning with the deployment of federal community development funds. In 2019 BBR allocated over \$130,000 in HUD grants to community development corporations in five of the targeted areas.

## OVERSIGHT OF HUD FUNDING

2018

**\$3,883,226**

2019

**\$4,603,104**

17

**100+**

COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
AND STAKEHOLDERS  
ACROSS BATON ROUGE

**115**

CURRENT LAND BANK  
PROPERTIES

**\$700,000**

LOAN TO MODEL BLOCK  
GAP FINANCING  
FOR COMMERCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM





## NEW MARKET TAX CREDIT BENEFICIARIES

- Exxon Mobil YMCA
- Americana YMCA
- Downtown Hampton Inn & Suites
- Honeywell
- The Emerge Center

## MINORITY- AND WOMEN-OWNED FIRMS RETAINED BY BBR\*

- VGraham, LLC
- Robillard's Lawn Service
- Franklin Associates, LLC
- 4th Floor, Inc.
- Leslie Rose
- Converge Consulting
- Asakura Robinson
- Studio Zewde

\*Includes minority and women-owned businesses BBR contracted with for more than \$5,000 in services in 2019



The background image shows a two-story building with a light-colored facade. The building's exterior is covered with numerous small, square portraits of people, creating a mosaic effect. A large, stylized graphic of the number '4' is superimposed on the right side of the image. The entire image is overlaid with a solid blue color. In the center, the text 'WHAT WE DO' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**WHAT  
WE DO**

# DEVELOP AND REVITALIZE DISINVESTED AREAS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

BUILD BATON ROUGE

## A PLACE TO CALL HOME

We are dedicated to making all of Baton Rouge a great place to live and work. Much of Build Baton Rouge's work focuses on creating plans for community growth and resilience, developing affordable housing, reducing blight, and increasing property values. When these efforts come together, they stimulate development in areas that have lagged in growth and investment. Over the past 10 years, BBR has facilitated the development of hundreds of affordable housing units in distressed areas as well as commercial and retail development that has revived neighborhood commerce.

More residential and commercial developments are in the pipeline. The \$30 million HUD Choice Neighborhoods grant will be used to redevelop the Ardenwood Village apartments, build over 500 units of mixed-income housing, and construct a YWCA Early Childhood and Women's Center – all on the Ardendale property. Affordable mixed-use development is also underway at Electric Depot and in the Plank Road corridor.

20



2019 ANNUAL REPORT



## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT / AFFORDABLE HOUSING REHABILITATION

As administrator of the City-Parish's HUD community development funds, Build Baton Rouge manages the Home Rehab and Roof Reset repair programs. The BBR team and its partners completed a \$12,000 home rehabilitation in October 2019 for Ms. Augustine Walker on Elgin Street. The project involved interior upgrades and modifications to the home, allowing greater mobility and access for Ms. Walker, a retiree awaiting hip surgery. Following the completion of the project, Ms. Walker penned a letter to BBR and the City-Parish expressing her appreciation.

“First and foremost, I would like to thank God for the City-Parish employees... Everyone was so respectful and extended their kindness towards me. It is the small things that show an act of kindness, such as taking my garbage trash cans out for pick up and bringing them back in. I’m truly blessed to be selected [for the BBR housing rehab program]. I’m very grateful for this program and I love the upgrade.”

- MS. AUGUSTINE WALKER



# \$4,622,125

AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
DEVELOPMENT  
FINANCING AWARDED

# 164

AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
UNITS COMPLETED

# \$547,212

HOME REHABILITATION  
AND ROOF RESET  
PROGRAMS FUNDING  
EXPENDED

# 20

HOMES  
REHABILITATED

# 41

ROOF RESET  
PROJECTS  
COMPLETED



## IN FOCUS / THE ELYSIAN

Following the revitalization of downtown Baton Rouge, community leaders turned their focus to Downtown East, the neighborhoods between downtown and Mid City. Build Baton Rouge set out to help develop housing in the area, eyeing a strip of Spanish Town Road littered with empty lots. BBR provided gap financing for The Elysian, an apartment complex developed by Gulf Coast Housing Partnership. The 100-unit complex opened in 2013 with a mix of affordable and market-rate housing. The development maintained 100 percent occupancy in its first years, leading to the development of a second phase with another 100 units in 2015. A third phase is slated for construction in 2020, adding another 42 units to the residential development.

## THE ELYSIAN

- 100 units
- \$14 million project
- \$841,000 in BBR gap financing
- completed in 2013

## THE ELYSIAN II

- 100 units
- \$17 million project
- \$806,000 BBR gap financing
- completed in 2019



“Everyone deserves to live in a safe and prosperous community. The neglect must be addressed, and investments must be made.”

- MAYOR-PRESIDENT SHARON WESTON BROOME

# DRIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT THROUGH EQUITABLE INVESTMENT

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

## MAKING A LIVING

By promoting equitable investment and innovative development across all of Baton Rouge, Build Baton Rouge helps communities retain and support local jobs as well as provide business assistance to help expand entrepreneurship and business growth. Commercial projects BBR has supported include Istrouma Mattress on Plank Road, the Tessier Building downtown, Broadmoor Shopping Center, and Choctaw Village. New Market Tax Credits are also a powerful tool BBR has leveraged to support developments such as the ExxonMobil YMCA, Hampton Inn & Suites downtown, and the Emerge Center.

Larger-scale projects underway, including Electric Depot in Mid City and Ardendale near Florida Boulevard, also have major impact on economic activity in their respective neighborhoods and for the city as a whole. These projects not only create jobs and generate economic activity, they also expand training and educational opportunities as is the case at Ardendale's automotive training center.



23

## BUSINESS FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANTEES

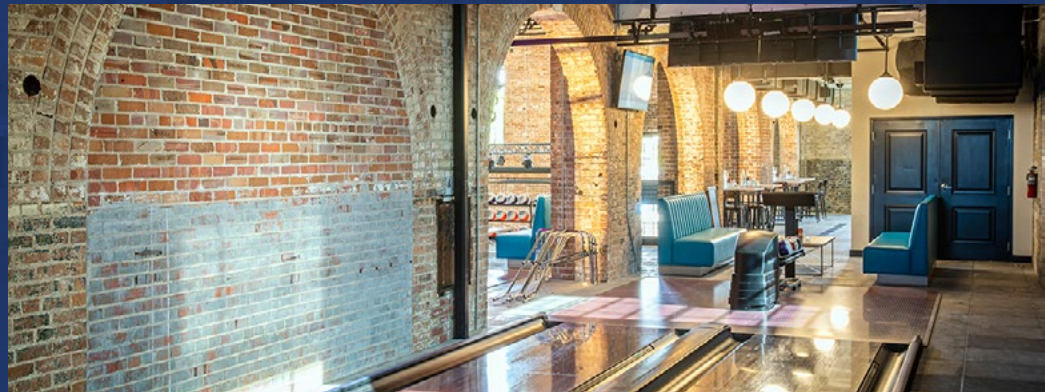
- All in Favor
- Istrouma Mattress
- College Barber Shop
- Tessier Building
- Ogden Park Market
- JSALE Properties
- The Renaissance Center
- Colonial Shopping Center
- Choctaw Village
- Buddy Stewart Music Foundation
- Model Block/Darensbourg Building



## IN FOCUS / **ELECTRIC DEPOT**

The old Entergy power plant at 1509 Government St. opened in 1916 as the city's first power plant. As the city grew and expanded, the Entergy facility and the neighborhood surrounding it began to languish. City leaders began exploring redevelopment options for the historic site in 2010 and Entergy donated the property to Build Baton Rouge in 2013. In the years that followed, BBR partnered with firms and community organizations to transform the development into a mixed-use entertainment destination with a new name: Electric Depot.

The redeveloped site opened its restaurant and entertainment venue, Red Stick Social, in 2018. A coffee shop, City Roots, opened at the end of 2019. Additional food retail concepts are in the works, and the second phase of Electric Depot will launch in 2020 with plans for a 100-unit, mixed-income apartment complex. The impact extends beyond this one project. Electric Depot has stimulated interest in burgeoning Downtown East, helping to return the community to its former glory.



# ADVANCE PARTNERSHIPS TO BUILD COMMUNITY-WIDE CAPACITY

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

## A TEAM EFFORT

From national agencies to local nonprofits, private sector partners, and community leaders, our list of supporters over the past 10 years is long and growing. Build Baton Rouge is committed to advancing these relationships, sharing knowledge, and expanding the resource base necessary to effectively address disinvestment and blight in Baton Rouge. The power of these partnerships shines in our large, multifaceted planning and community development efforts.

## 2019 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

In 2019 BBR expanded its community engagement efforts with the addition of a full-time Community Engagement Specialist and four Community Ambassadors. These individuals help solidify our commitment to authentic and sustained public outreach and engagement.

# 100+

COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
AND STAKEHOLDERS  
ACROSS BATON ROUGE

# 125

COMMUNITY EVENTS  
AND ENGAGEMENTS  
HOSTED AND SUPPORTED

# 2,500

ATTENDEES AT BBR  
EVENTS AND MEETINGS

## IMPACTFUL INVESTMENTS

The Imagine Plank Road Plan for Equitable Development features a variety of partners and donors who are making the planning, community engagement, and implementation effort possible.

- \$100,000 JPMorgan Chase planning grant
- \$15 million Better Utilizing Infrastructure to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation grant
- \$15 million in MovEBR road improvement program funding
- \$50,000 Baton Rouge Area Foundation grant
- \$50,000 Co-City Project grant funding for community engagement support
- \$25,000 John and Virginia Noland Fund donation
- \$42,500 in combined private donations from area businesses
- \$865,000 Capital Area Finance Authority line of credit for land bank expansion



## IN FOCUS / IMAGINE PLANK ROAD

In 2011, the City-Parish adopted a 20-year master plan, FUTUREBR, spearheaded by Portland-based Fregonese Associates. The plan identified the Plank Road corridor among areas most in need of new transit investments, sparking a conversation around a long-term redevelopment vision with a focus on bringing bus rapid transit to the corridor. An ambitious alliance of local and national grantmakers, neighborhood community partners, and citizens from North Baton Rouge and beyond participated in the planning and outreach efforts. In November 2019, Build Baton Rouge released the Imagine Plank Road Plan for Equitable Development, a comprehensive corridor masterplan of unprecedented scope and breadth. Both the process and the plan open a new chapter for North Baton Rouge.

For the past two years BBR has worked with CATS, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, the City-Parish, BREC, and others to pursue an interdisciplinary approach to the corridor's revitalization. BBR also made authentic and sustained community engagement the centerpiece of the effort. More than \$50,000 was spent on neighborhood businesses and contractors as well as experientially based engagement activities. These efforts highlighted Plank Road's assets and invited people to spend time on the corridor. They helped affirm the businesses and residents who never left and showcase the corridor's potential to everyone committed to making all of Baton Rouge better.



“The strong partnership between the City-Parish, CATS, Build Baton Rouge and other supporting stakeholders for this project ... should serve as a shining example for future infrastructure projects in Baton Rouge.”

- CATS CEO BILL DEVILLE

JOHN  
NOLAN



VISION  
AND

PERSISTENCE

# FORMER BBR BOARD CHAIRMAN AND BUSINESSMAN

Perhaps no other individual has had a greater impact on Build Baton Rouge than businessman and former volunteer BBR Board Chairman John Noland. John stepped down in late 2019, but he has created a legacy that has forever changed Baton Rouge for the better.

A pioneer of Baton Rouge's urban revitalization efforts, Noland was a key figure in the creation of BBR in 2007. Since then, he has generously devoted his time and resources to the Authority's mission. Noland played an integral role in the years-long work it took to implement major BBR initiatives, such as Ardendale and Electric Depot, and has been an outspoken advocate for an increase in public and private funding of community development.

From years when the Authority was flush with federal dollars to the years when it had to operate on a shoestring budget, Noland remained a consistent face and voice of the organization. He has worked alongside some of Baton Rouge's most influential community leaders, rallying them around a central cause.

"For more than three decades, John Noland has persisted in trying to solve a complex problem – how to reclaim the disadvantaged areas of our parish," said John G. Davies, President and CEO of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, a supporter and partner of BBR. "He has explored ideas and created organizations to implement them, and finally arrived at the success that is Build Baton Rouge."

Those who have worked closely with Noland recall not only his contributions to Baton Rouge redevelopment efforts, but also his great devotion to fairness and moral integrity – which inspired those around him.

"What stands out most about John is his passion for doing what is right whether it is popular or not," said his former business partner, Matt McKay, the Chairman and CEO of All Star Automotive Group. "He has an unbelievable sense of fairness in everything he is involved in. The biggest and most important lesson that he taught me is that, 'To whom much is given, much is expected.'"

BBR partner Pat LeDuff describes Noland as someone whose actions speak for him – and by that, she means he does "less talking, more walking." Some 30 years ago, LeDuff recalls, Noland took redevelopment officials on a trip to Kansas City to see the revitalization possibilities underway by similar groups. The experience forever changed her approach to community development and continues to motivate the work LeDuff does to improve the Scotlandville community in North Baton Rouge with the help of BBR.

"John Noland is an icon and our unsung hero," LeDuff said. "Thank you, John, for believing life can and will one day be better for all."

Long-time BBR Board Member Suzanne Turner echoes the sentiment, calling Noland a "champion for elevating conditions in disenfranchised neighborhoods of Baton Rouge" for decades, which has, at times, been a difficult and lonely job.

"He has, sometimes single-handedly, kept the conversation alive to bring attention and resources to the challenge of redevelopment," Turner said. "It was his vision for a more equitable community that inspired the creation of the RDA, now Build Baton Rouge, and his leadership that has sustained it."





# PARTNERS/ SUPPORTERS



## GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES AND PUBLIC BODIES

- Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome
- East Baton Rouge City-Parish Government
- Healthy BR
- Geaux Get Healthy
- Capital Area Transit System (CATS)
- East Baton Rouge Council on Aging (EBRCOA)
- East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority (EBRPHA)
- BREC
- Impact North Baton Rouge
- Capital Area Finance Authority (CAFA)

## BUSINESSES AND INSTITUTIONS

- LSU
- Southern University
- Emergent Method
- HNTB
- Asakura Robinson
- Studio Zewde
- Cristo Rey
- Top Box
- ExxonMobil
- Coca-Cola Bottling
- Investar Bank
- J.P. Morgan Chase & Co.
- General Informatics
- Georgia-Pacific

## NONPROFIT AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

- The Walls Project
- NAACP, Baton Rouge Branch
- Co-City Project (LabGov/Marron, NYU, Georgetown)
- Urban League of Louisiana
- Humanities Amped
- Metromorphosis
- Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center
- Charles R. Kelley Community Center
- Red Stick Arts
- Baton Rouge Area Foundation (BRAAF)
- Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce (BRAC)
- The Bridge Agency
- Baton Rouge Green
- Audubon Society
- Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

- Communities Against Drugs and Violence (CADAV)
- South Baton Rouge Civic Association
- Old South Economic Development Group
- Mid City Redevelopment Alliance (MCRA)
- Housing Louisiana
- Melrose East Community Association (MECA)
- Scotlandville Community Development Corporation (SCDC)
- Glen Oaks/Zion City Community Development Corporation
- NBR Now Blue Ribbon Commission

BU

BATON





LD

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