

MERIT AWARD

Creating a Gateway in Boca Raton



The before-and-after photos of the Pedestrian Promenade and Sanborn Square Arches in Boca Raton, Florida, are striking. Previously empty tree boxes are now filled with colorful plantings and majestic palm trees. Car-centric design gave way to pedestrian-friendly spaces safer for children, cyclists and shoppers. Gateway arches welcome everyone to the center of downtown.

Consistent with the Downtown Master Plan vision, the Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency's (CRA) goal for the Pedestrian Promenade and Sanborn Square Arches was to create a comfortable and visually engaging pedestrian-scale environment connecting all of the parts of downtown, while still accommodating vehicles. Elements of the improvements included a curbsless street and flexible spaces with open, walkable public areas and pedestrian crossings in the two sections connected by the Promenade. Adjacent to Sanborn Square Park, the Pedestrian Promenade serves as the north-south link in downtown Boca, while the arches at the two entrances to this area serve as landmark guideposts.

Communities with aged infrastructure and older downtown designs that do not support pedestrian interaction and walkability could benefit from the achievements of this public space beautification project. The completion of the project resulted in a safer, more efficient pedestrian and vehicular flow between adjacent downtown businesses, and served as a catalyst for downtown redevelopment and economic development. In short, Downtown Boca is now a more beautiful, walkable, convenient, social and engaging destination the whole community has come to love.

Congratulations to the City of Boca Raton/Boca Raton Community Redevelopment Agency for winning a Downtown Achievement Awards in Public Space for the Pedestrian Promenade and the Sanborn Square Arches.



The Boca Raton CRA named recipient of a 2015 Downtown Merit Award by the International Downtown Association for its Brazilian Beat Festival

For further information contact:

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For Immediate Release:

San Francisco, CA. October 2, 2015 --- During its 61st Annual Conference and Tradeshow, the International Downtown Association recognized the Boca Raton CRA with a Downtown Merit Award for its work and initiatives related to its annual Brazilian Beat festival.

The festival – which is a cultural celebration of Brazilian Independence Day and brings together the art of music, dance and cuisine in one memorable evening – was among 14 qualified entries in the category of Events and Programming. Submitted projects and initiatives in this category come from those organizations working to further their city centers by completing the following:

- Focused on programs and events that improved the image and vitality of downtown with events that promote downtown and attract visitors.
- Delivering projects that communicate the vision, mission, function, and achievements of the downtown or business district association.

“Brazilian Beat brings our community together in one exciting celebration of culture, music and dance, reaching Boca and beyond,” Ruby L. Childers, Downtown Manager of the Boca Raton CRA said in the news release.

“The Boca Raton CRA’s project received the IDA Merit Award for delivering excellence in downtown management”, said David Downey, IDA President and CEO. “Each year the IDA Awards Jury recognizes organizations that utilize best practices in our industry. The Brazilian Beat festival is a shining example of excellent downtown management delivering real value to the city.”

The Washington, D.C. based International Downtown Association (IDA) is a champion for vital and livable urban centers and strives to inform, influence, and inspire downtown leaders and advocates. With 500 member organizations and thousands of professionals, IDA is a guiding force in creating healthy and dynamic centers that anchor the well-being of towns, cities, and regions.

The Boca Raton CRA is the advocacy and management organization representing the interests of property owners in downtown Boca Raton and is a member of the International Downtown Association.

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The downtown beautification project – which created a strong pedestrian friendly area that allows for greater public gathering and interaction while showcasing architecturally relevant landmarks – was among 16 qualified entries in the category of Public Space. This category recognizes capital improvements that enhanced the urban design, physical function, or economic viability of downtown and the community.

“The Pedestrian Promenade and Arches succeed in connecting the north and south areas of Downtown Boca, creating a people-friendly space and adding architectural charm.” Ruby L. Childers, Downtown Manager of the Boca Raton CRA said in the news release.

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