

2016 IDA Awards Submission – Public Space
The Loop at Pine + Ocean
Downtown Long Beach Associates



Overview

The corner of Pine Avenue and Ocean Boulevard in Long Beach, CA, once home to the grand Jergins Trust Building, left vacant and in a state of decay for over 25 years, is now home to a bold, effervescent, community engaging, public open space. The Loop at Pine + Ocean: an urban activation platform bringing together the latest in building technology, programmatic activation, and visual impact to create a one of a kind urban oasis.

Initiated through a partnership between the Downtown Long Beach Associates (DLBA), Long Beach Downtown Development Corporation (DDC), the City of Long Beach, and Vice Mayor Suja Lowenthal, The Loop at Pine + Ocean was the result of a desire to reclaim a forgotten public space, enhance the opportunities for civic engagement, and utilize the newly formed DDC with the intent to pursue new public-private partnership opportunities.

Process and Partnerships

In 2014, following goals outlined in its Strategic Plan, the DLBA commissioned the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to study pedestrian connectivity between the waterfront and the Downtown core. After interviewing over two dozen key stakeholders and hosting a community forum attended by over 200 residents and business owners, one of the actions identified by ULI was the activation of the southeast corner of Pine Avenue and Ocean Boulevard. In May of 2015 the DLBA commissioned a report titled “Revitalizing the Southeast Corner of Ocean and Pine: Activating Victory Park” that looked at the possibilities for transforming the corner into a community gathering space. Leaning on both DLBA commissioned studies, in June 2015 the Long Beach City Council unanimously approved a motion by Vice Mayor Suja Lowenthal and First District Councilwoman Lena Gonzalez to formalize a partnership between the City and DLBA to identify ways to activate the corner.

In September 2015 the DLBA released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the design and construction of a 7,700 sq. ft. temporary outdoor public space on the aforementioned corner with the understanding that longer-term improvements to the site would occur in tandem with future development on the adjacent Jergins Trust Building parcel. The DLBA and Vice Mayor envisioned the site as a space for community gathering with micro-retail opportunities where residents, tourists, and Downtown employees could relax and enjoy southern California’s year-round temperate climate.

On November 18th a selection panel made up of Downtown stakeholders and City of Long Beach and DLBA Staff chose Stereobot, Gensler, and Brightview Group as its preferred team to proceed with the design and construction of the project. The proposed design set out to re-imagine the possibilities of public open space by functioning as equal part oasis, urban connector, and community platform.

An Urban Oasis is Born

With the design team in place, the newly formed DDC (a 501(c)3 non-profit) entered into a lease agreement with the City giving the DDC control of the 7,700 square foot space. Led by the DLBA, on behalf of the DDC, the project team consisting of Stereobot, Gensler, Brightview Group, local construction management firm JR van Dijns, and the City began work on design development in January 2016. With an expedited City review process, the project was realized in under four months’ time and opened on April 15, 2016.

2016 IDA Awards Submission – Public Space
The Loop at Pine + Ocean
Downtown Long Beach Associates



The Loop is organized around two large gathering areas linked together by central oasis garden. A brightly colored sculptural space-truss gives form to the site while also acting as a secure railing system. Internal speakers playing music on a daily basis reinforce the oasis in a City atmosphere. Over 80% of the existing hard surface area was maintained and an existing driveway was filled in with decomposed granite to provide a level ADA compliant surface. Five existing trees on site were preserved, with new drought tolerant landscaping used to provide accent. A central portal overlooks the waterfront and provides a unique vantage point to seasonal sporting events including the Long Beach Grand Prix. At night the park is activated by a series of unique light and sound choreographies designed to for each day of the week with the aim of extending the use of the park beyond sunset and creating a vibrant night atmosphere.

A pending addendum to the lease between the City and DDC will give the DDC flexibility and authority to manage all events and concessions independent of City control. All revenues obtained from event space rentals, concessions, and sponsorships are invested back into the maintenance, security, programming, and capital improvement of the space. The DDC, in partnership with the DLBA, is responsible for the operation, programming, and maintenance of The Loop.

Programming and Activation

Ongoing site programming is key to ensure the space is a safe and attractive place for residents and visitors. To date the space has been host to variety of events including [Live After Five](#), donation-based fitness, and dog-training classes. Future planned programming includes yoga, lectures, and movie screenings as well as events associated with the Long Beach Convention Center.

The inclusion of a tasteful economic element, such as a coffee kiosk or newsstand, will also be a key element in the continued activation of the space. The DDC and DLBA are in the process of identifying an appropriate concessionaire that would sell a small menu of to-go café items and coffee.

The marketing campaign for the space includes a dedicated website (theloopdtlb.com) that has a calendar of events, photos, site information, and information on how to reserve or use the space. Additionally the DLBA will use its successful social media presence to share updates and promote events at the space via its [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.

Daily security and maintenance are provided by the DLBA's Clean and Safe Teams. A staffed information kiosk is located at the site on weekends and during major events and conventions. Quarterly maintenance of the fabric cladding is under contract by Stereo.Bot and the City of Long Beach covers the cost of electricity for on-site lighting and music.

Results

The Loop at Pine + Ocean now functions as a dynamic activation stage, hosting weekly and seasonal events including leisure and health activities as well as art and cultural happenings. The project is an example of community partners working together to promote design and culture as a part of an innovative, tactical approach to community building. The Loop at Pine + Ocean has: Provided a needed public gathering space for residents, workers, and visitors to relax and enjoy the Long Beach lifestyle; Increased pedestrian traffic and economic activity from the Convention Center and Waterfront to destinations north of Ocean Boulevard; and Introduced an iconic destination that attracts visitors and has become a social media spot.