



**INSPIRED LEADERS
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IDA Awards Top Industry Honor to Five Organizations

IDA Presents Awards Recognizing Innovative Achievement in Urban Place Management

Washington, DC – The International Downtown Association (IDA) recognized 23 outstanding projects as winners of the Downtown Achievement Awards which identify improvements to urban centers by dedicated organizations around the globe. The winning organizations represent 20 cities in the United States and Canada. The top five projects received Pinnacle Awards, the industry’s highest recognition, representing the most creative and inspiring innovations in urban place management.

Urban place management organizations are on the front lines of solving challenges related to placemaking, economic development, urban planning and branding. These organizations activate public spaces and make cities vibrant, healthy places for everyone. During a comprehensive review, this year’s projects were awarded by a jury of IDA members in the following categories: leadership development; economic development; marketing, communications and events; planning, design and infrastructure; policy and advocacy; and public space management and operations.

“These innovative projects received the IDA Pinnacle Award for setting the new standard for improving cities worldwide,” said David Downey, IDA President and CEO. “Each award-winning effort has made an impact on its city and the people who live, work and play in the community, and displays the continued commitment to champion livable, vital and thriving urban centers.”

Winners of this year’s Pinnacle Awards are:

- *Alabama’s Oldest School Becomes Its Newest*
Downtown Mobile Alliance, Barton Academy Foundation, Mobile County Public School System – Mobile, AL
Established in 1836, Barton Academy is considered the birthplace of public education in Alabama. Mobile County’s Public School System supported converting this significant historic building into a school for advanced world studies. The newly formed Barton Academy Foundation worked tirelessly for eight years to raise the \$14 million necessary for the building’s restoration. On August 11, 2021, two hundred students of Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies were welcomed to campus. For the first time in 60 years, students walked the halls; for Black students, it was the first time ever.
- *Building Downtown: DEI Toolkit for Commercial Development*
Downtown Memphis Commission – Memphis, TN
The Downtown Memphis Commission believes that a downtown for everyone must be created by everyone. Therefore, they established an innovative set of policies and programs designed to proactively invite women and people of color into the process of building downtown and tackling commercial development projects. Their incentive toolkit was revised and expanded in several

key ways in an organized effort to ensure that the people engaged in this work reflect the full spectrum of the community, proving diversity doesn't happen by accident.

- *Gilbert Heritage District Design Guidelines*
City of Gilbert, AZ
Gilbert's Heritage District serves as the community's cultural, historical, and entertainment center. In 2010, guidelines were developed to foster design excellence that encouraged a dense, pedestrian-oriented, and adaptive environment. The guidelines helped the City of Gilbert to maintain and build upon the city's unique sense of place and character. To align with the 2018 Redevelopment Plan, the city initiated a guidelines review to ensure they synced with the new plan while also being comprehensive, easy to navigate and efficient.
- *Parramore Asset Stabilization Fund*
City of Orlando, FL; Downtown Development Board and Community Redevelopment Agency
In 2018, the Parramore Asset Stabilization Fund was formed with the goal to transform affordable rental housing into sustainable quality homes through an \$8 million investment. The Fund purchased 83 residential units across 44 properties in Orlando's African American Parramore neighborhood, with a commitment to renovate units and keep rents affordable for existing tenants. While delayed due to COVID-19, the project was successfully completed by December 2021. Major renovations include new roofs, floorings, and HVAC systems and, after 10 years, residents have the option to purchase their home.
- *Rapid Recovery Planning Program*
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with support of Streetsense
Washington, DC
The Rapid Recovery Plan program distributed nearly \$10million across 124 communities throughout Massachusetts to assess impacts from COVID-19 and develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges in downtowns, town centers, and commercial districts. More than a planning effort, the program provided direct technical assistance through facilitators and experts assigned to each community, as well as one-on-one consultations that helped guide and refine project recommendations that were aligned with their area of expertise.

In addition to the above Pinnacle Award winners, 18 projects were awarded an Excellence Award for their outstanding response to an industry challenge.

IDA's members have a proven track record of creating collaborative public-private partnerships to tackle weighty issues. More than 2,500 downtown management districts exist in cities throughout the U.S. and Canada. Place management organizations affect significant change in every major metropolitan area throughout North America in an industry that is growing rapidly around the globe. Place management work touches every discipline of city building, including economic development, leadership, marketing, events, public space management, policy, planning and infrastructure.

Additional information on the Pinnacle award winners can be found online at [downtown.org](https://www.downtown.org).

About IDA

IDA is the premier organization for urban place professionals who are shaping and activating dynamic city center districts. Our members are city builders and downtown champions who bring urban centers to life, bridging the gap between the public and private sectors. We represent an industry of more than 2,500 place management organizations, employing 100,000 people throughout North America and growing rapidly around the world. Founded in 1954, IDA is a resource center for ideas and innovative best practices in urban place management. For more information, visit www.downtown.org.