

Public Space in Business Improvement Districts (Detroit, 25–26 Mar 22)

Detroit, MI, Mar 25–26, 2022

Deadline: Oct 8, 2021

emergingpublicrealm.org

Tricia Meehan

Reinventing Public Space in Business Improvement Districts

Over the last two decades, public space renewal in downtown Detroit has undergone phases of experiments in response to emerging phenomena that put pressure on existing governance models. This includes most notably “metropolitanization,” referring to increasing geographical scales of interdependence in conjunction with the stalemate coming from partisan bickering and shrinking subsidies that negatively impact the provision of public services at local levels. New public space governance models based on partnerships have emerged in Detroit and elsewhere in response to the need to reimagine urban identities, which are critical in ensuring global competitiveness. The introduction of business improvement districts (BIDs) has been key in creating an armature for diversifying the principle urban actors and financing sources involved in public space renewal and creation. BIDs are therefore an interesting case study for investigating the potentials and limits of governance model shifts in the renewal of downtown public spaces.

This call for proposals is soliciting contributions from public space researchers, professionals and designers to participate in a one-day symposium that will take place in Detroit, Michigan on March 25, 2022. Through presentations and lightning talks the symposium will share knowledge and discuss best practices and innovative ideas for central public space governance, programming, and design within business improvement districts/zones/areas. Additionally, the symposium will help identify the historic influences which have shaped the current trend of public-private public realm development in the U.S. and elsewhere. The gathering will create a space for exploring:

- > How have new governance models of public space shifted the development process and shaped the design and programming of public space?
- > How are public space development decisions made regarding programming and design?
- > What are best practices cities and organizations should adopt to ensure the continued fair and just availability of public space to all?

Schedule:

Call for proposals opens: August 30, 2021

Deadline for proposals: October 8, 2021

Announcement of decisions: November 15, 2021

Submission of presentations: March 18, 2022

Symposium: March 25, 2022

Peer-reviewed submission areas include presentations and lightning talks. The presentations are geared toward sharing ideas and projects around the above themes and generating discussion. Each presentation is allowed 20 minutes. The lightning talks are intended to highlight one or more themes in the format of short, thought provoking, visual presentations. Each lightning talk presentation is allowed 20 slides/5 minutes and will be timed/advanced automatically.

Submissions, in English, should include an abstract (maximum 500 words) accompanied by a bibliography of five articles, books, or archival sources, as well as an author's biography (maximum 100 words). Submissions should be submitted by October 8, 2021 before midnight EST in one of two ways:

- Submission form: <https://emergingpublicrealm.org/>
- Word or PDF file at reinventingpublicspace@gmail.com. Please submit all elements as a single Word or PDF file, labeled as follows: LAST NAME_resume.doc (or .pdf).

Symposium Sponsors:

University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture and Community Development and École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Normandie

For further information please see the symposium website: <https://emergingpublicrealm.org/> or contact the Steering Committee at reinventingpublicspace@gmail.com.

Reference:

CFP: Public Space in Business Improvement Districts (Detroit, 25-26 Mar 22). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 17, 2021 (accessed Jul 12, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/34779>>.