



Spring Street Park

Designer: Lehrer Architects | Location: Los Angeles, USA



1. Looking southwesterly down Red Path toward Old Bank District
 2. Converging paths. Looking northeasterly up diagonal Red Path, and Striped Plaza at left, toward residential lofts and the Great Lawn. A clear distinctive path transitioning visitors from urban streetscape to greenery



Background

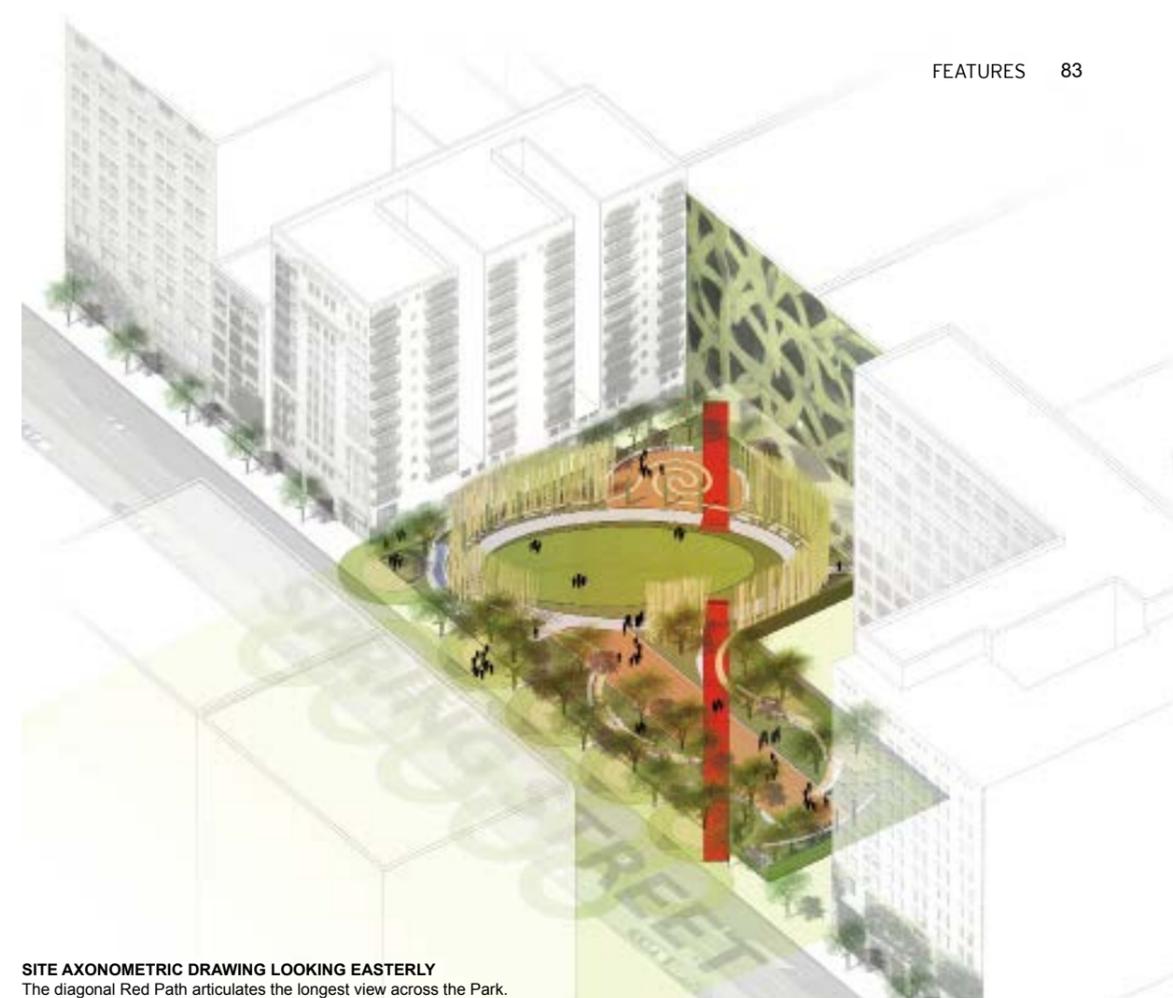
Lehrer Architects was selected to provide design leadership for the landscape architects of the City’s Bureau of Engineering in an experimental public/private partnership. Lead by Michael Lehrer, the architectural firm delivered a bold design with an agile approach to urban public use development. The City brought landscape expertise to the design and implementation for a low-maintenance, durable valued urban park.

SITE PLAN WITH EARLIER DESIGN ITERATIONS IN UPPER RIGHT

Each corner of the Park is articulated: the elliptical Great Lawn is in the sunniest part of the site with the Fountain, northerly; the Red Path easterly and westerly; and the long Striped Plaza northeast southwest. Ribbon benches are lined with ribbon benches.

Project Name:
Spring Street Park
Completion Date:
2013
Design Collaborators:
Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works
Structural Engineer:
John Labib and Associates
Lighting Designer:
John Brubaker
Water Engineer:
Pace Water
Electrical Engineer:
Donald Dickerson and Associates
Client:
The City of Los Angeles
Construction Budget:
\$ 1.45 million
Site Area:
2.83ha (0.7acre), L-shaped lot
Awards:
Nominated for Smithsonian’s Cooper-Hewitt 2013 People’s Design Award, Nominated for Interior Design magazine’s “2013 Best of Year”

1. Site view, looking southerly. Park and private balcony at the bottom, a long view down Spring Street at the right
2. Site view, looking southerly. Orthometric photograph with Park at the bottom, Spring Street at the right
3. People gathered for Spring Street Park’s ribbon cutting ceremony led by the Mayor of Los Angeles (Photo Credit: Gary Leonard)



SITE AXONOMETRIC DRAWING LOOKING EASTERLY
The diagonal Red Path articulates the longest view across the Park.

Design Challenges

Reclaiming two parking lots, emblematic of the 50-year degradation of the Historic Financial Center on Spring Street, and transforming them into the centerpiece of the new passionate, nascent, important mixed-use residential heart of old/new downtown Los Angeles.

Seeking approval for a bold, transformative design, with disparate public, private, and governmental stakeholders to reach consensus for the benefit of the community.

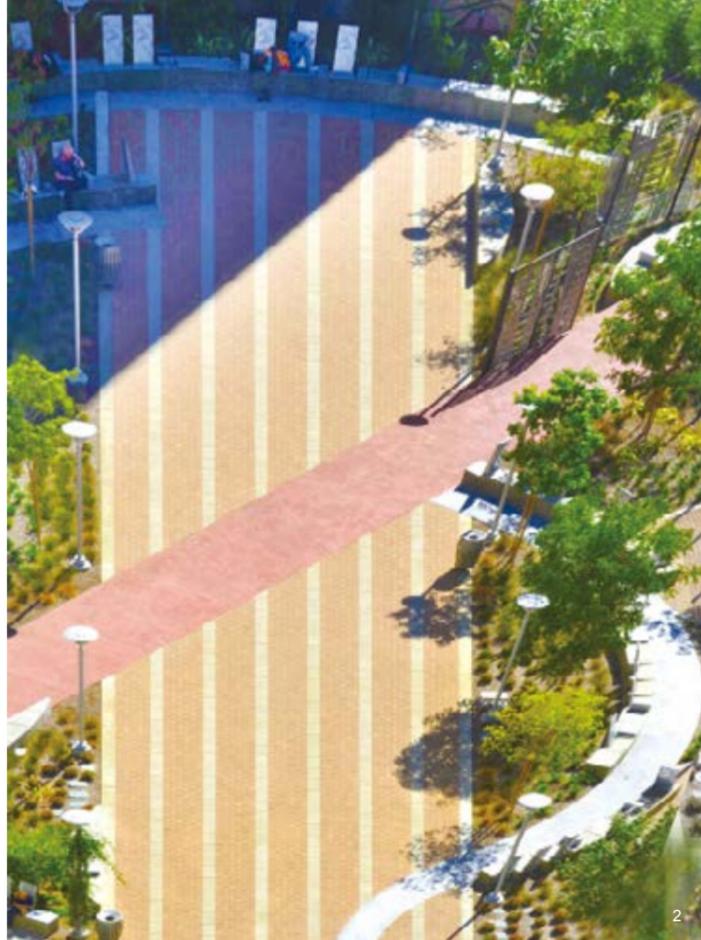
Relevance

Spring Street Park embodies the idea of “thrivability” evident in the best placemaking and sustainable practices of minimum lawns, low maintenance, low water planting which captures and cleanses all site water before returning it to the storm drain.





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Design Details

Located in a renewed and emerging historic context, Spring Street Park is designed to acknowledge and respond to the street, and the surrounding residential buildings with their new big residential windows and balconies to create a recreational destination for the full range of community. The 64 bespoke Spring Street Bench Chairs, designed by Lehrer Architects, populate the Park when people aren't there, and are used to create places for one, for two, for several, or for the hundreds to see art displayed and performed during the monthly Downtown Art Walk. The aluminum seat backs perform constant light play with sun's reflection, creating shadows as light filters through perforated aluminum bamboo patterns.

A bold diagonal (but almost true east-west) red concrete path cuts the longest path through the Park connecting a vibrant Spring Street to an in-the-future vibrant alley.

In this modernist plan, the elliptical Great Lawn is used succinctly as a classical urban room, on the sunniest part of the site. It is surrounded by an ellipse of vined green-screen columns (many are lit). The ellipse is largely surrounded by a newly planted bamboo hedge, which will grow up to 9m (30').

A continuous narrow paved path designed for children on bicycles, adults with strollers and leisure pedestrians circumnavigates the Park. A fountain, located at the street end of the Great Lawn, adds visual and acoustic interest enjoyed from the street and the Park.

The entrances to the Park are highlighted with aluminum screens reiterating the bamboo ellipse.

1. The bespoke Spring Street Bench Chair that Lehrer Architects created, populates the Park when people aren't there, and is used to create places throughout the Park for one, for two, for several, or for the hundreds to see art displayed and performed during the monthly Downtown Art Walk
2. Orthometric photographic view of the Striped Plaza from above
3. View looking northerly at Striped Plaza
4. Fountain, Street Bench, Great Lawn and bench from above
5. The Fountain, designed to be fountain, bench and fence simultaneously
6. Spring Street Bench Chairs. Aluminum seat backs perform constant light play with sun's reflection, creating shadows as light filters through perforated aluminum bamboo patterns
7. Converging paths. The Children's Playground, the Red Path and the Great Lawn



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