

New Look for Historic Park

August 17, 2010 2:45 AM Kathryn Hobgood Ray
khobhood@tulane.edu

Tulane City Center has announced that Tulane architects will assist in the pro bono design of new infrastructure for the A. L. Davis Park, a Central City venue that has long served as a meeting place for uptown Mardi Gras Indian tribes and brass band parades.

The outreach arm of the School of Architecture, Tulane City Center oversees numerous design partnerships that bring together students, faculty and community partners to help revitalize neighborhoods.

Cordula Roser Gray, professor of practice, will direct the A. L. Davis Park enhancement project in conjunction with the [New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative](#). Roser Gray also helped develop the master plan for the [Hollygrove Market and Farm](#), a nonprofit retail store that sells locally grown and organic produce and offers training to residents interested in urban farming.

"In Hollygrove, we developed a master plan that dealt with making a derelict urban site accessible and usable to the surrounding neighborhood," says Roser Gray. "A. L. Davis Park seems to face similar challenges."

A. L. Davis Park was the heart of the Magnolia and C. J. Peete housing developments, which were razed to make way for new mixed-use and mixed-income housing. Roser Gray's team is seeking input from community residents about how they'd like to see the park enhanced.

"We are very conscious of the fact that this park carries a lot of history and memory," she says, adding that she anticipates the visioning document will be completed by the end of the fall 2010 semester, and that a building phase could begin next year.

The project is possible due in part to a \$1 million [anonymous gift](#) to Tulane City Center that was announced earlier this year. The grant is paid in annual installments

of \$100,000 and supports two university/community design partnerships each year.

The second project selected for 2010 is the [Guardians Institute Cultural Arts and Community Center](#) in the Ninth Ward. Scott Ruff, associate professor of architecture, is working with the Guardians Institute on planning their facility, which will provide a safe haven for neighborhood children to read, explore cultural traditions and pursue physical fitness.