



DESIGN PERSPECTIVES

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And Now Presenting...A Theme!

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EDITOR

Since the beginning of this publication in 2002, we have never tried to develop any single edition based on a theme, like education, downtown development, or energy conservation. The topics we wanted to present at any given time simply seemed too diverse. So, during the development of this Summer 2008 issue, our committee enjoyed a rare “AHA! moment” when we discovered a theme weaving together our various articles and submitted projects.

Our feature article is an interview with Jack Crowley, currently an adjunct professor at the Urban Design Studio of the University of Oklahoma at Tulsa, and hired by the Mayor to direct and oversee the development of a new comprehensive downtown master plan. Our article “The Value of Hiring an Architect” by 2008 Eastern Oklahoma AIA President Janet Selser, AIA, presents the arguments of this ever-relevant issue in a plain spoken, logical perspective of tangible value received by both clients and the greater public. Molly A. Jones, AIA, LEED AP, NCARB, chairperson of our Committee on the Environment (COTE), writes a thought provoking piece on the indisputable impact of human activity on the ongoing degradation of our planet, and how we can be instruments of positive change.

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And, our On the Boards section highlights a mix of soon-to-be-constructed project types that include *education*, (a new natatorium complex for the Jenks Public School system, and a new Clinton Middle School); a *museum* (the downtown facility to house the Philbrook Museum of Art's Eugene B. Adkins collection of Southwestern American art); *public infrastructure improvements* with an historic twist (Route 66 gateways at the east and west entrances into Tulsa); and, *urban infill* (a fully landscaped "green roof" atop a new office condominium building, as well as a two unit condominium loft near the proposed new ballpark).

So, what could possibly be a theme connecting this seemingly disconnected array of subjects and buildings, you ask? Simple: *Progress*. In a community where the current topics of discourse and debate include a completed 18,000 seat downtown arena, and a new downtown ballpark in the works, the topics we've highlighted above, and many others still, there is progress afoot. Maybe not afoot as fast as some of us would like, but given the deepening national mortgage crisis with painful repercussions running through banks,

savings and loans and millions of American homes, as well as a looming recession, and many US communities in serious economic trouble, our little city has been relatively insulated and unscathed by these current disasters. In Tulsa, all things considered, we are doing OK – even pretty good (my deeply ingrained Midwestern caution against prideful boasting kicks in here).

So, you have in your hands a local design publication with the theme of local progress, courtesy of AIA Eastern Oklahoma. And with regard to any articles in this issue that do not seem to support our theme, well, we don't want to pen ourselves into a theme **too** much. That would be far too rigid. Besides, we didn't know we had a theme in the first place.

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and educate the public on the importance of
good design and its contribution to
the quality of life.

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