

## Charles A. LANDRY



As a former managing partner at the Baton Rouge office of the state's largest law firm, Charles Landry is at first glance the consummate lawyer. He has been listed in "The Best Lawyers in America" since 1993. In 2005 he was named one of America's "Leading Business Lawyers" for real estate law by Chambers USA. And this year he's added the title of "Super Lawyer" from Super Lawyers 2007 to his professional vita.

But Landry is more leader than litigator, and you're more likely to see his influence at work on the construction site than in the courtroom. "At my core, I'm a builder," he says. "I like to see things accomplished."

But if he's a builder at his core, his head is all business. He has become the preeminent real estate attorney in Louisiana not because of his ability to draw up contracts but because of his virtuosity in making deals happen, an ability that also helped earn him the 2006 Businessperson of the Year award from *Business Report* and Junior Achievement.

"I'm much more focused on the business aspects of the deal than the legal issues," Landry says. "You have to get the deal done—you have to finish."

And he has, changing the landscape and the economy of Baton Rouge by finishing some of the biggest and most complex development deals ever struck in the region: Capitol Park, Baton Rouge Community College, the Louisiana Technology Park and the Shaw Center for the Arts.

Landry not only helped secure the land for the Shaw Center, dealing with a variety of owners and issues, but he also worked with the center's board over a period of years, putting together a complicated management structure that brought together the state, LSU, the Autohotel, local art groups, the City of Baton Rouge and the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

"Charles got us to work together in a cooperative agreement, perhaps the most complicated deal that the State of Louisiana has ever had," said former Commissioner of Administration Mark Drennen. "I just don't know how we would have done it without him being at the table for years. Charles got us all to work together in a way thought impossible."

In doing so, Landry changed the face of downtown, and today he's working on a larger problem: changing the face of growth

in Louisiana. Over the last three years he's become a student of "smart growth" and begun helping parishes and municipalities see how they can revise building and zoning codes in a way that is good for growth, good for developers, and good for quality of life.

He wrote a traditional neighborhood development (TND) ordinance for the city of Thibodaux that facilitates the development of TNDs—a type of community that mixes residential, business and work spaces in a configuration that reverses the elements of sprawl. That ordinance has since served as the model for TND ordinances in West Baton Rouge and Ascension parishes, and Landry hopes more are on the horizon. He sees it as a move toward "an integrated regional planning model" that would at once facilitate development and make it better for almost everyone—government, developers, neighbors, and neighboring jurisdictions.

The lawyer is still at work—drafting what he calls "regional land use ordinances" that may one day make development laws more consistent across the entire state—but at the core you'll still find a builder closing deals. Says Landry, "We want to build communities." \$\$\$

### THE LANDRY FILE

**BORN:**  
1953, Crowley, LA

**EDUCATION:**  
B.S., LSU  
J.D., LSU

**KEY BOARDS:**  
LSU Foundation, Chairman Elect  
Pennington Biomedical Foundation  
EBR Parish Planning Commission  
Zoning Ordinance Task Force  
Mayor's Smart Growth Task Force

America's Initiative, Inc.  
Council for a Better Louisiana  
Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities  
LSU Swine Palace Theater  
Forum 35 Advisory Board

Story by Jerry Martin • Photo by Marie Constantin