Downtown designs

Acadiana Arts Council Director Buddy Palmer, left, along with Vickie Smith, center, with Eskow, Dunea, Riggle Architects, and Larry Broussard, with Lafayette Consolidated Government, go over a list of projects Tuesday after touring the new Acadiana Center for the Arts in downtown Lafayette.

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LAFAYETTE — A new world-class art museum — the Acadiana Center for the Arts — will be open for business Oct. 18 in downtown Lafayette.

Acadiana Arts Council Executive Director Buddy Palmer said his staff plans to move into administrative space next week. A grand opening is planned for Oct. 18.

With the grand opening, Lafayette will boast of two top-rated art museums. The new University Art Museum of 93 Lafayette opened in April. Downtown Lafayette also offers a new university art gallery and visitor center, History Museum and Planetarium and Acadiana Children’s Museum.

"It ends one phase but begins a more exciting and more challenging phase," Palmer said.

The Acadiana Center for the Arts is the corner of Vermilion and Jefferson streets will feature a 5,000-square-foot main art gallery that meets national and international standards, a secondary gallery and artist studios.

The second phase of renovations, which will begin in spring 2008, will create a new performing arts theater that should be open in fall 2009, Palmer said.

The arts center has been a collaboration of city and state funding, and arts council efforts.

The Lafayette Public Trust Financing Authority financed $275,000 of the

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Buddy Palmer, left, director of the Acadiana Arts Council, gives a tour of the main gallery to Louisiana Folk Roots employees Tuesday. Palmer was there to inspect the new Acadiana Center for the Arts building with the architect and contractor.

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Museum

The purchase of the property for the
beneficiary, Lafayette Consolidated Government. The Legis-
lature approved the acquisition of the property, and the
Acadiana Arts Council has retained two phases of renovation.

The Lafayette Downtown Development Authority
agreed to underwrite, in part, the cost
for the first two years.

Palmer said

The long-term funding for pro-
grahming, such as art
exhibits, is pending, but the
arts council is constructing a
consensus, Palmer said.

A small amount of pro-
grahming money is available
for the opening exhibit, which
will be "A Celebration of
Home," featuring work by Ac-
dian artists pulled from the
permanent collection of the
Dugas Museum of Southern

Art in New Orleans and local
galleries and artists studios.

Palmer said. Programming in the
future will depend upon
the availability of funds, he
said.

City-Parish President Joey
Durel's proposed 2004 bud-
get allocates an additional
$300,000 to arts and culture.

"We are the number 2 desti-
 nation in Louisiana for

A near metropolitan area that
receives tourism. We are the
only near metropolitan area in
Louisiana," Durel said.

.Those things can't
influence to why people want to visit
here and live here. I see

the arts as an investment just
like infrastructure is an invest-
ment.

"The City-Parish Council will discus
the arts budget at 2:30 p.m. Aug. 30 at 250 W Uni-
versity Ave."