

## **Interactive River Walk Tour selected for International Downtown Association Merit Award**

The City of San Antonio was recognized with the International Downtown Association's (IDA) Downtown Merit Award for its work on the Historic Hugman River Walk Tour. The free, interactive initiative allows the public to explore the River Walk's history while using emerging technology.

Designed by Robert H.H. Hugman and Edward P. Arneson in 1939, the San Antonio River Walk has welcomed millions of visitors since it opened in 1941; however, sharing its history was a challenge because of strict signage limits. The City's Downtown Operations Department, in partnership with the Downtown Alliance, San Antonio Convention and Visitors Bureau, Capital Improvement Management Services and the Office of Historic Preservation, developed an innovative, low cost way for visitors to learn about the River Walk through a self-guided tour. Visitors can access the tour free of charge by scanning a quick response (QR) code with a smart phone or pad device. The tour's QR codes are found on River Walk interpretive signs, on [www.HugmanTour.com](http://www.HugmanTour.com) or on a rack card available at the City's Visitor Information Center, located at 317 Alamo Plaza, across from the Alamo. The tour application features photos and history provided by Lewis F. Fisher, author of *River Walk: The Epic Story of San Antonio's River*. Every time a QR code is scanned, visitors receive historic information and photos on that particular location.

The QR Tour solution included a combination of technologies that were implemented by the mobile software developer and designer BiBiSi, LLC., who created the website, podcast and QR app.

"This new technology allows us to provide guests a living history of the River Walk and how it's evolved," said Paula Stallcup, director of the Downtown Operations

Department. “It’s free to the public and is really a low-cost tool for us that can be easily maintained. We can continue to enhance it with fresh content as needed.” Since its launch in May, the tour has been well-received with 5,172 iTunes downloads, 9,874 unique QR Code scans, and 3,784 unique visitors to the web site. The mobile site received 8,993 unique visitors and the iPad site received 1,318 unique visitors.

The Washington, D.C.-based International Downtown Association (IDA) is a champion for vital and livable urban centers and strives to inform, influence, and inspire downtown leaders and advocates. With 550 members and thousands of friends, IDA is a guiding force in creating healthy and dynamic centers that anchor the well-being of towns, cities, and regions.

For more information on the Hugman River Walk Tour, visit [www.HugmanTour.com](http://www.HugmanTour.com).