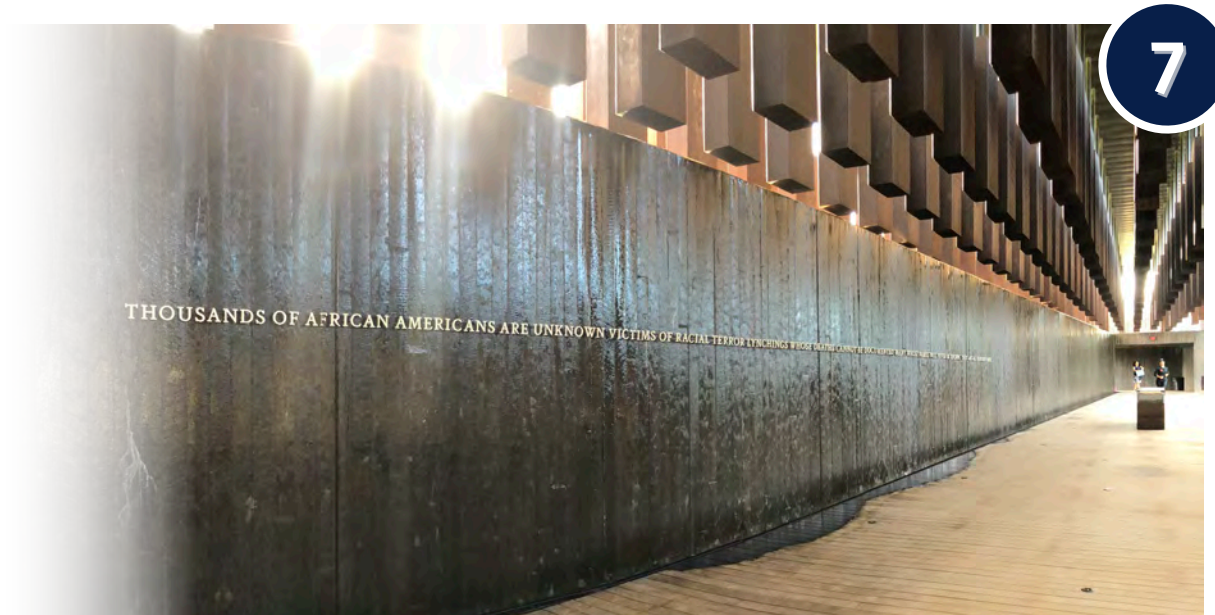




*Capitalizing on our...*

# ASSETS & AMENITIES

The Assets & Amenities chapter contains the findings and recommendations pertaining to historic preservation, arts, and cultural assets. There is enormous potential to further capitalize on the existing set of community assets and amenities while also investing in new opportunities to improve visitor's experience and, most importantly, resident's quality of life. The goal, stated right, is supported by a series of objectives.



## Goal

***A place that embraces and protects its special history, while investing in new amenities that keep Montgomery unique, lively, and fun.***

## Objectives

- ★ Identify and celebrate historical and cultural assets
- ★ Align landmark preservation with government initiatives
- ★ Promote a sense of cultural community placemaking
- ★ Encourage local representation and attraction by enhancing community experience

## KEY FINDINGS & OPPORTUNITIES

The following items represent the key findings and opportunities related to the Assets & Amenities topics including historic preservation, arts, and cultural assets. These findings emerged from the research and analysis of the planning team and the input of stakeholders and the public overall. The following is not exhaustive, however, and for a full report on the existing conditions and trends, please refer to the document appendix.

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Montgomery's 200 year story echoes much of the American experience. From its pre-history and founding, the civil war and reconstruction, and through the civil rights movement, this community has been witness to landmark events, moments and people. These stories are best captured in the architecture and the built environment. Whether you're walking along the Selma to Montgomery trail, or past the Winter Building, the history in Montgomery is impossible to ignore. To protect this legacy and ensure Montgomery's story survives for generations to come, the city has pursued a number of efforts to preserve its historic assets. The following section highlights several of the contributing eras to this history and the physical artifacts and architecture they left behind.

#### Highlights from Montgomery's Story

The following provides a selection of some of the most important moments from the history of the city of Montgomery. The City's full list of historic moments, locations and people have been well document by other, external studies including most recently with the *Historical Narrative, Spatial Power,*

*and Social Justice Study* completed by the Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation in 2018.

#### PRE-CIVIL WAR HISTORY

The native American history of Central Alabama, including the Montgomery Area, can be traced back to Paleoindian period, which was more than 10,000



Montgomery was a hub for the slave trade because of its access to Mobile through the Alabama River and its location within the "Black Belt", a productive band of soil wrapping across Mississippi and Alabama.

years ago. The Montgomery Area was an important crossroads of major Native American trade routes that merged with the river networks. The area was occupied by several tribes, including the Alabama, Coushattas, and Creek tribes. In the 1540s the lives of the Native people changed forever when they encountered the Spanish explores led by Hernando de Soto, passing through the land. This first encounter is said to have lasted a week and included the taking of slaves and the spreading of new European diseases. By 1700 foreign settlement had begun in the area, and was seemingly unobtrusive to the native people. However over the next 115 years, increased settlement, war, and treaties eventually severed the long relationship between the Montgomery Area and its native people.

For much of the 1800's Montgomery was a principle slave trading center in Alabama; as slave trade increased, Montgomery's prominence grew. In 1859, Montgomery had as many slave depots as it did banks and hotels. By the start of the civil war, Montgomery's slave population was larger than Mobile, New Orleans, and Natchez, Mississippi. During these years the slave trade dominated



An early map of Montgomery from the 1830's.

downtown streets (today's Dexter and Commerce Streets). The slave market was held in the city's most prominent public space: Court Square. When they arrived in Montgomery, most enslaved individuals were chained and marched from the docks and train yards down commerce street to the slave market (or one of the City's six major slave depots). Today, historic markers can be seen at these prominent locations. Recently, not-for-profit organizations have made large strides in telling the story and how Montgomery played a role.

#### CIVIL WAR: CAPITAL OF THE CONFEDERACY

Montgomery played a large role in events leading up to the start of the Civil War as the state capitol and home to William Lowndes Yancey. Yancey lead Alabama and the south with his advocacy for states' rights focused on slavery and secession. In 1861, Yancy and representatives from around the south convened at the State Capitol Building

in Montgomery to form the Confederate States of America.

Montgomery was named the first capitol of the Confederacy and Jefferson Davis was inaugurated on the steps of the State Capitol. Early in the Confederate government, operations were conducted at the Exchange Hotel (on the corner of Commerce and Montgomery Street), where Davis gave his first speech as president. The home of Davis and his family (while Montgomery was capital of the confederacy) is located at 644 Washington Avenue, and is known as the first white house of the confederacy.

In 1861, Confederate Secretary of War Leroy Pope Walker made the order to fire on Fort Sumter by telegraph. This telegraph sparked the beginning of the Civil War. Walker's telegraph was sent from the Winter Building (located on Dexter Avenue near Court Square).

Yancey, Robert Toombs, Alexander Stephens, and other southern leaders commonly spoke to packed crowds to drum up support leading up to secession. The venue that hosted these events, and almost all other significant social and cultural events between 1860 and 1907, was the Montgomery Theater. This building, that would later be known as the Webber building, was at the corner of Monroe Street and North Perry Street. This significantly historical building partially collapsed in 2014 and was completely demolished in 2017.

#### CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN MONTGOMERY

Montgomery has played a pivotal role in the advancement of the Civil Rights Movement in America.

On December 1, 1955, after a day of work at Montgomery Fair (Montgomery's largest department store at the time, at 29 Dexter Avenue) as a tailor's assistant, Parks boarded the Cleveland Avenue bus for home at 634 Cleveland Court. As customary, Rosa Parks entered the front of the bus to pay for the ride, and walked back outside to the rear door of the bus to board and find a seat in the "colored" section in the back half of the bus. As the bus continued its route, the white section became full. The bus driver stopped the bus and moved the sign marking the row beginning the segregation one row back. By doing so, four black passengers were asked to give up their seats to the four white passengers in the aisle of the bus. Three of the black passengers complied, but Parks refused and remained seated. According to the arrest report, Rosa Parks was arrested at 214 Montgomery



Montgomery was home to several critical moments in the American Civil Rights Movement including the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Selma to Montgomery march and many others.



Street “in front of the Empire Theater”. This act of moral defiance sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which is regarded as the first large scale demonstration against segregation in the United States.

After Park’s arrest, the leaders of the African American community began to organize for a potential boycott. Under the leadership of Edgar D.

Nixon, mostly known as E.D. Nixon and Ralph Abernathy, a group of local ministers convened to lead and sustain a boycott. The organization would become the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA). The organization was born at an evening meeting at the Mt. Zion Church at 657 South Holt Street.



Nixon and Abernathy decided to appoint the new minister of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church as leader. Martin Luther King Jr., a 26-year-old minister, who had been a minister in Montgomery for about a year, would solidify his role in changing the world through his leadership of this prolonged bus boycott. The boycott would officially begin on December 5th 1955, the day of Park’s trial. The MIA developed demands for the end of the boycott, including the removal of the segregation of the system, and the hiring of African American drivers. A lawsuit was also filed to challenge the constitutionality of the systems segregation. On that same night, King gave the first speech of the Boycott to 5,000 people at the Holt Street Baptist Church at 903 South Holt Street.

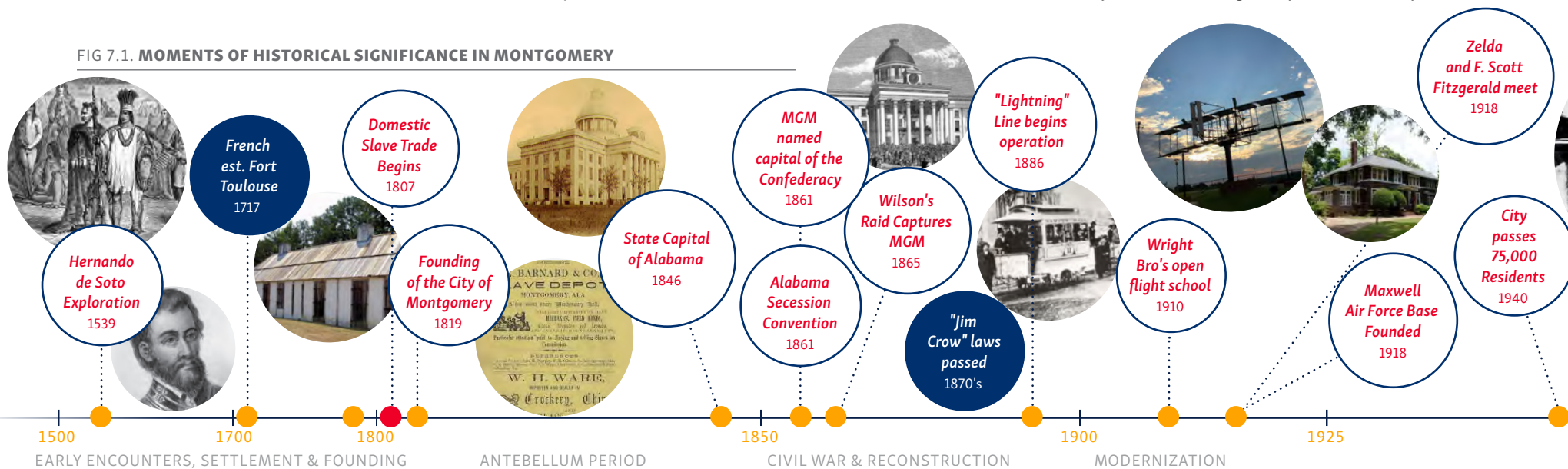
During the 381-day boycott, Montgomery's population of 40,000 African Americans car-pooled, walked, and used African American cab

services. On December 21, 1956, the MIA voted to end the boycott after the Supreme Court upheld the lower court decision that the segregation of the Montgomery Bus System was unconstitutional. With the success of the boycott, King became a national figure for his leadership, and organization of the effort.



Both during and after the boycott, the African American community faced coordinated efforts, even violence, to end the resistance. Early in the boycott, King’s home, the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church Parsonage at 309 South Jackson Street, was bombed on January 31, 1956. The house was repaired, but the home’s concrete front porch still has an indentation from the bomb. On the night of January 21, 1957, Montgomery was rocked by six

FIG 7.1. MOMENTS OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN MONTGOMERY



Source: Historical Narrative, Spatial Power, an Social Justice Study, Planning Team Research

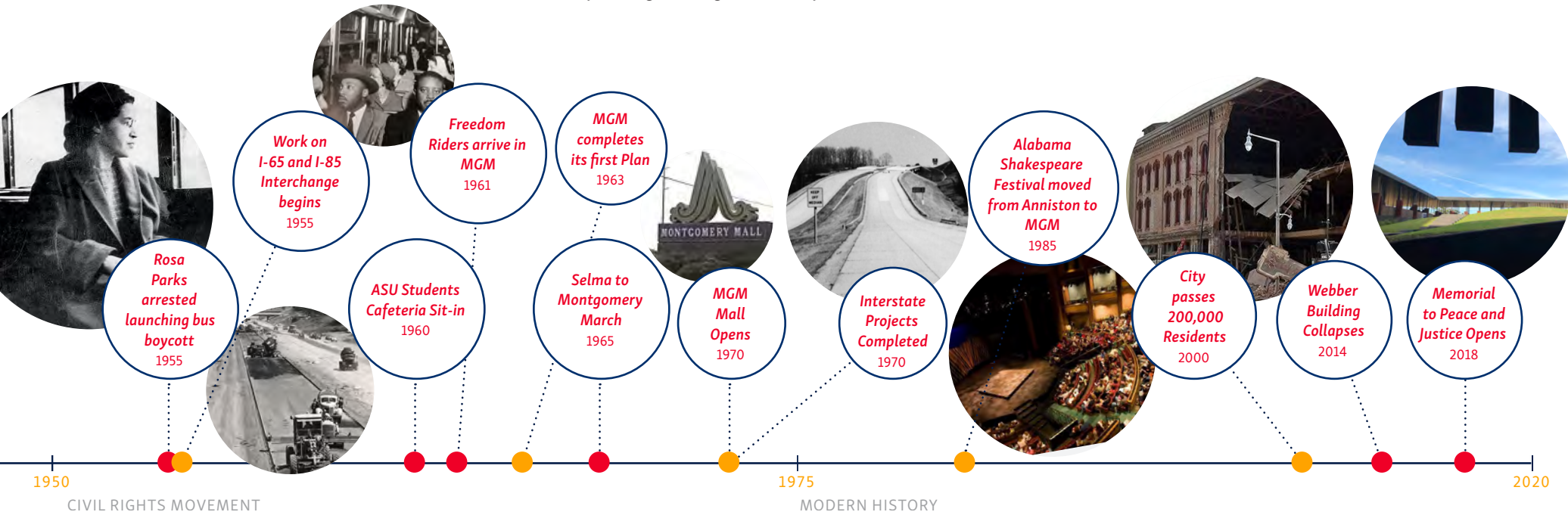
bombings. That night would become known as Montgomery's Night of Terror. Abernathy's home at 1321 Harris Way was bombed. Minister of the Trinity Lutheran Church, Robert Graetz's home was bombed. The Bell Street Baptist Church, Mt. Olive Baptist Church, and Hutchinson Baptist Church were bombed. The First Baptist Church at 347 North Ripley Street was also bombed that night.

On March 24, 1965, thousands of people marched into Montgomery, the culmination of the 54-mile journey from Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge. The march, lead by King, was to raise awareness of African American voter disenfranchisement.

This march was the third effort to march from Selma to Montgomery; the first effort ended by violent attacks from state troopers on the peaceful marchers. The Bloody Sunday Attack, was broadcast on national television, and impassioned thousands of people across the country to travel to Selma to join the march. After days of marching, thousands of marchers reached the final campsite at Montgomery's City of Saint Jude at 2048 West Fairview Avenue. That night, a rally and concert were held at the camp as thousands of people continued to arrive to participate in the last leg to the march to the Alabama State Capitol Building.

The next day, 25,000 people walked through African American neighborhoods of Montgomery - those integral to the Civil Rights Movement ten years ago during the bus boycott. Once downtown

the marchers turned at Court Square where, less than one hundred years ago, was the home of one of the most prominent slave markets in the country and the bus stop where Rosa Parks boarded the bus. Then, up Dexter Avenue, King lead the marchers to convene at the Capitol to formally deliver a voting rights petition to Governor Wallace. As state troopers barricaded the steps of the Capitol building, King gave the speech *How Long, Not Long* to the large crowd and the nation.





### Preservation Efforts Today

The City of Montgomery currently has two preservation-oriented entities: The Historic Preservation Commission and the Architectural Review Board.

The Historic Preservation Commission's mission is to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the City of Montgomery through the preservation and protection of buildings, sites, structures, areas and districts of historic significance and interest; through the preservation and enhancement of local historic, architectural and aesthetic heritage found in the City of Montgomery; through the maintenance of the distinctive character of Montgomery's historic areas; and through the promotion and enhancement of the City of Montgomery's historic and aesthetic attraction to tourists and visitors.

The Architectural Review Board's mission is to review all requests for exterior changes to historic structures and surface improvements to historic properties to ensure the planned improvements are consistent with the architectural and historical character of the individual structure and the neighborhood in which it is located. Montgomery also provides historic preservation to independent properties that have cultural or architectural historic significance that are not necessarily within the boundary of its nine official historic districts. In all, Montgomery's historic preservation covers more than 2000 properties within Montgomery's built environment.

### LOCAL PRESERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

One of the biggest existing gaps in Montgomery's local preservation districts is within the Centennial Hill neighborhood. Centennial Hill was a prosperous African-American neighborhood in the early twentieth century and remains predominantly African American. This neighborhood is home to the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church Parsonage, the home of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his family when the attempted bombing took place. The neighborhood is represented in the local preservation efforts, but it is not considered part of a district. Instead, the neighborhood is partially covered by local preservation through individual properties scattered throughout the neighborhood. One important structure in the neighborhood that is not currently protected is the Ben Moore Hotel. This hotel was an anchor of this African-American business district and was an important meeting place for black leaders

throughout the Civil Rights Movement. The once critical hotel is now in a state of risk. Another specific structure that was important to the Civil Rights Movement that is not currently locally protected is the former Holt St. Baptist Church which is currently boarded up.

Montgomery is also not currently one of the twenty-nine Certified Local Governments in Alabama. Certified Local Governments are cities that have established local historic preservation commissions that meet Alabama Historic Preservation Commission and National Park Service standards. Benefits to Certified Local Governments include historic preservation grant funding. Of the ten largest cities in Alabama, Montgomery is the only one that is not a Certified Local Government.



Sources: History of the Webber Building by Rick Harmon, the Advertiser; Historic Webber Building in downtown Montgomery to be demolished by John Shryock, WSFA12 News

#### Webber Building (Formerly the Montgomery Theatre)

The Webber building has a long lineage of significant historical events connected with the Civil War and early Civil Rights connections. First Commissioned by railroad magnate, Charles Pollard in the 1850s, the theatre opened its doors on October 22, 1860. Since its opening, the theater hosted performers including John Wilkes Booth, the Bryans Minstrel Show and Sarah Bernhardt. Minstrel's singing group, Dixie rehearsed the song they played at the inauguration of Jefferson Davis in Court Square on Feb. 18, 1861. After the federal government passed the Civil Rights Act of 1875 a group of African-Americans attempted to test the 1875 Civil Rights Act by purchasing tickets to the area reserved for "whites only" rather than sitting in the gallery reserved for black theater-goers. By 1907 the theatre closed down and became a department store, which was purchased by the Pelzer Family in the mid-1930s.

Like other historical buildings in the City, the Webber building was not locally protected. Unfortunately, in 2014 The building partially collapsed while undergoing a \$3 million dollar renovation to accommodate commercial and residential uses.

## ARTS & CULTURAL ASSETS

Montgomery is one of the State's leading cultural centers. Its artistic milieu encompasses many disciplines, cultures, individuals, and organizations. Recently the city had great success connecting its cultural arts efforts to its rich cultural heritage. Montgomery is home to one of the south's premiere professional theatres, the Museum of Fine Arts, the Symphony and Ballet, a new performing arts center, several historic theaters, and many cultural museums.



### ARMORY LEARNING ARTS CENTER

The center's mission is to provide an opportunity for Montgomerians of all ages to discover the joy of arts, music, and gymnastics. The center is home to an art studio and art and music workshops. The center is also home to the Alabama Dance Theater and the Arts Council of Montgomery. The Arts Council of Montgomery is a non-profit that sponsors a number of annual programs focused on instructing and rewarding students in visual, performing and literary arts.



The Shakespeare Festival is one of the largest regional theaters in the Southeast.

### ALABAMA SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

The Alabama Shakespeare Festival (ASF) is one of the largest regional theaters in the southeast and one of the largest Shakespeare festivals in the world. ASF produces classic, contemporary, and southern-focused plays and musicals year-round. The Shakespeare festival also promotes cultural arts activities and education. With its matinees program, ASF performs for 50,000 students a year. Every year, ASF hosts a Southern Writers Festival to nurture the art of writing in the south. Camp Shakespeare is a camp ASF offers every summer to teach stage acting to children of all ages. ASF also offers acting classes to both students and adults, and through a partnership with the Montgomery School System, ASF actively engages schools with acting opportunities and in classroom workshops.

### MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) is the oldest museum in Alabama. It features several rotating and permanent collections in many artistic mediums. MMFA offers an exceptional youth program (ARTWORKS) that includes an interactive gallery

along with workshops and classes. The museum also boasts an art reference library and a performance facility. Annual attendance is about 160,000 visitors. The MMFA also partners with the Montgomery Public Schools to provide workshops, events, and after-school programs.

### MONTGOMERY SYMPHONY AND BALLET

The Montgomery Symphony is comprised of regional volunteers whose mission is to simply offer orchestral concerts. The Symphony offers events throughout the year and a number of youth programs including a full performing youth orchestra, classes, camps, and contests.

The Montgomery Ballet is a professional ballet company that offers performances and events for Montgomery and the River Region. The ballet also operates a comprehensive ballet school serving both youth and adults at all skill levels. The annual budget of the ballet relies on corporate sponsorships.



## PUBLIC ART

In 2011, the city developed a public art task force which led to the adoption of the Public Art Strategic Plan. The plan's focus was to document existing public art and to guide future public art installations. From this planning effort, the City established a Public Art Commission in 2013 to coordinate and promote art in public places. The commission's primary goal was to have a systematic, but flexible approach to identify suitable locations for public art, evaluate the aesthetic value of proposed art, and make informed decisions on maintenance needs, either by the city or through private partnerships. Public art plays a unique role in placemaking. The city's existing pieces (several pictured right) depict various interpretations of the city's history and history makers.



## Major Challenges & Opportunities

The research and analysis, coupled with the intuition from the community reveal a series of key challenges and opportunities to be addressed by the Assets & Amenities Action Agenda. These include:

- ★ Create a stronger connection with Montgomery's Historical Events and its built environment.
- ★ Develop a deeper appreciation and protection of Montgomery's historical resources, and the economic opportunities that those historic assets offer.
- ★ Continue to increase local preservation of Centennial Hill, and other historic African-American districts.
- ★ Increase Downtown's local preservation.
- ★ Further develop downtown Montgomery as a hub of cultural arts.
- ★ Nurture a sense of place around Montgomery through public art.



**Want to find out more from the research and analysis?** A corresponding memo for each of the topics is included in the document appendix. These reports include the full set of findings and conditions along with other visuals like maps, graphs and tables.

# OBJECTIVES

The following statements define the community's values related to preserving and enhancing its assets and amenities. Collectively, they express when, where and how the city of Montgomery and its partners invest in the future. The objective statements were derived through careful consideration of the most pressing conditions and trends and a discussion with the community and stakeholders. They are organized around two topics from the chapter : Historic Preservation and Arts & Cultural Assets.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1. **Identify and celebrate historical and cultural assets.** The City of Montgomery's rich history of places, people and events is recognized both at a local and national level. Major historical turning points such as the civil and cultural movements represent unique assets that are still present in the community today. To embrace its legacy, the city will seek to remember the historical and cultural assets of the people, places, and events that have influenced change throughout the U.S. These assets will be celebrated by highlighting their significance in the community and correlation with major movements. In doing so, the city will acknowledge the sensitive significance of their impact on society while conveying aspiration for future experiences.
2. **Align landmark preservation with government initiatives.** The city will seek to provide the necessary support and resources to maintain, enhance, and protect Montgomery's numerous landmarks. This will involve a balance of regulatory measures and administrative review that ensures appropriate preservation of historic and cultural structures or places. The city will actively support continued preservation efforts while seeking alternative opportunities to build upon Montgomery's heritage.

## ARTS & CULTURAL ASSETS

1. **Promote a sense of cultural community placemaking.** To promote an inclusive community, the city will highlight its diverse cultural background. Recognizing and integrating the various cultural characteristics in events, activities and experiences, for example, are important in achieving cultural diversity and empowering culture throughout the city. As well, these initiatives will further define Montgomery as a hub of cultural diversity.
2. **Encourage local representation and attraction by enhancing community experience.** The city will support local organizations and businesses by developing community experiences that represent Montgomery's unique heritage. Residents will be provided with ample opportunities to elevate their cultural influence through public activities and social events. Montgomery will strive to create a vibrant, active community of celebratory experiences that blend local qualities with world customs.

### What is an objective?

An objective is a desired outcome that is more specific than a goal and is also measurable. Each chapter in the Comprehensive Plan includes a series of objectives that relate to specific targets for the related action agenda.



# ACTION AGENDA

The following projects, policies and programs support the goal of the Assets and Amenities chapter. These actions have been organized by the various objectives they support. A more detailed implementation framework has been included in the Realizing the Vision chapter at the end of the plan.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

### Principles

- ★ Identify and celebrate historical and cultural assets.
- ★ Align landmark preservation with government initiatives.

## CULTURAL ASSETS

### Principles

- ★ Promote a sense of cultural community placemaking.
- ★ Encourage local representation and attraction by enhancing community experience.

### *Identify and celebrate historical and cultural assets*

The City of Montgomery's rich history of places, people and events is recognized both at a local and national level. Major historical turning points such as the civil and cultural movements represents unique assets that are still present in the community today. To embrace its legacy, the city will seek to remember the historical and cultural assets of the people, places, and events that have influenced change throughout the U.S. These assets will be celebrated by highlighting their significance in the community and correlation with major movements. In doing so, the city will acknowledge the sensitive significance of their impact on society while conveying aspiration for future experiences.

### AA 1.1

### *Develop a cohesive cultural tourism marketing plan*

Montgomery should continue to connect its past with future opportunities through cultural experiences. The city has become a cultural tourism designation and the city needs to nurture that budding experienced-based economic engine through the development of a cultural tourism marketing plan. The purpose of a cultural tourism marketing plan is to increase tourism and spending in Montgomery through creating new experiences based on Montgomery's historical assets and activity.

### TACTICS

- ★ Develop a wide range of stakeholders to provide direction on the goals and challenges of improving cultural tourism in Montgomery.
- ★ Develop a Request for Proposal, or establish a local department to organize and create a cultural tourism marketing plan that should establish a clear direction for the City to continue to market itself as a cultural destination.

MAP 7.2. POTENTIAL ROUTE FOR THE SLAVERY TO CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL



Source: Historical Narrative, Spatial Power, and Social Justice: The Role of Memory in Shaping the Urban Landscape of Montgomery, Alabama



## AA 1.2

### Develop a Slavery to Civil Rights Trail in Downtown Montgomery

Downtown Montgomery was an important host to many era's and events that need to be remembered and reflected in a creative way. Eras like Slavery, Emancipation, Jim Crow Era, to the Civil Rights have strong connections to downtown Montgomery, but this connection is not strongly

represented in downtown's landscape. This history needs to be preserved through an interpretive trail that includes public art, creative spaces, and locational historic information. This interpretive trail could connect the riverfront to Court Square, and to the capital by Commerce Street and Dexter Avenue.

#### TACTICS

- ★ Develop a partnership with adjacent property owners and business owners along the proposed trail, and with public and private organization across the city and region.
- ★ Hold public workshops to develop opportunities and implementation strategies along the trail. Develop a detailed plan of the trail to garner public and private support.
- ★ Apply for federal and state grants to receive funding to implement the proposed trail.

## AA 1.3

### Initiate an endangered places list

Montgomery has lost a number of its historically significant buildings and places due to demolition, long-term deterioration, or vacancy. These lost historic assets and those that are currently in danger of being lost are important to the overall history of Montgomery, and the character and identity of Montgomery. Buildings and places around the City that are in danger of decay or demolition should be identified on Montgomery's most endangered places list. Through this process these places will be honored, advocated for, and marketed as a potential unique investment opportunity.

#### TACTICS

- ★ The Historic Preservation Commission should initiate the process of an endangered places list for the city, through staff, stakeholders, public input, and the State.
- ★ An event can be held every year to reveal the updated list of endangered places, while honoring the importance and successes of the City's preservation efforts.



## Landmark preservation will align with government initiatives

The city will seek to provide the necessary support and resources to maintain, enhance, and protect Montgomery's numerous landmarks. This will involve a balance of regulatory measures and administrative review that ensures appropriate preservation to historic and cultural structures or places. The city will actively support continued preservation efforts while seeking alternative opportunities to build upon Montgomery's heritage.

### Certified Local Government Advantages

Local governments in Alabama can strengthen their historic preservation efforts by achieving designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG). There are currently 29 cities in Alabama that are receiving numerous benefits from becoming CLGs. CLGs have access to a special pool of funds from federal allocations to the Alabama Historical Commission. These grants often attract additional funding from other sources and help legitimize historic preservation efforts as a function of local government. CLG grants can be used to fund a wide variety of local historic preservation projects and programs. In 2014, Mobile was awarded \$10,000 to complete a survey of Hank Aaron Loop and register Automobile Alley as a historic district. The same year they were awarded an additional \$5,000 to create a historic properties website.

## AA 2.1

### Become a Certified Local Government

The City of Montgomery should strengthen their efforts of historic preservation and the community's benefits associated with historic preservation by becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG). The Certified Local Government status is achieved through working with Alabama's State Historic Preservation Office and the National Parks Service. The benefits of becoming a CLG include numerous small grants that reinforce local preservation efforts and successes, and CLGs are provided with technical assistance from state and federal preservation organizations. As a CLG Montgomery will also further legitimize historic preservation efforts by creating a stronger connection between preservation of assets and land use planning.

#### TACTICS

- ★ In order to become a Certified Local Government a city is required to adopt a historic preservation ordinance, enact a local preservation commission, and meet minimum standards as determined by the Alabama Preservation Officer.
- ★ Montgomery should continue working with Alabama's Preservation Officer and complete the CLG application process.

## AA 2.2

### Support the work of existing design review committee for downtown and the surrounding historic neighborhoods

Development design committees provide oversight to all new development and major property changes for downtown Montgomery and its surrounding neighborhoods that strongly considers historic value, as well as modern aesthetics. As downtown and surrounding neighborhoods redevelop, a design review committee should not only preserve the redeveloping areas but also foster quality traditional district assets to support Montgomery's historic assets.

#### TACTICS

- ★ The planning department, Historic Preservation Commission, Architectural Review Board and the planning commission should develop and adopt a city ordinance that allows the formation of a Montgomery design review committee overseeing downtown and the adjoining districts and neighborhoods that the city and the citizens see fit to include.
- ★ The City should appoint local design professionals and developers to serve on the board that is served by Planning Department Staff.
- ★ The Board should regulate all substantial changes to the area's structures and landscapes visible from the right of way while providing expert opinion and oversight for (not in lieu) existing zoning and historic preservation committees.
- ★ The Urban Design Planner should review all Development Plans in Smart Code Areas, and/or other Design Review areas to ensure compliance with design goals.

## Promote a sense of cultural community placemaking

To promote an inclusive community, the city will highlight its diverse cultural background. Recognizing and integrating the various cultural characteristics in events, activities and experiences for example, are important in achieving cultural diversity and empowering culture throughout the city. As well, these initiatives will further define Montgomery as a hub of cultural diversity.



### AA 3.1

## Become a City of Service

Cities of Service is an organization of cities around the country focused on strategies for enhancing quality citizen engagement and action. The non-profit organization helps mayors nurture a working relationship between local governments and their citizens. Specific benefits of becoming a City of Service include: technical assistance, grant and funding opportunities, and national partnerships.

### TACTICS

- ★ The Mayor of Montgomery can directly join Cities of Service by signing a declaration of service, or an interested citizen can follow a guide provided by cities of service to recruit the city's mayor.



### AA 3.2

## Develop a race and ethnicity portal

A race and ethnicity portal will act as a clear indication of Montgomery's efforts to grow with all of its populations, and to honor and provide an active understanding of its diversity through an online website portal. The portal should provide further understanding to the community and its citizens of the community's past while also focusing on the current challenges and future opportunities of all of the community's populations through population, economic, and health statistics on an online portal.

### TACTICS

- ★ A race and ethnicity portal can be created through the Montgomery Planning Department, the information department, and an online management company.
- ★ The portal should be developed and published with outreach to citizens.

### Race and Ethnicity Portal

Durham, North Carolina, partnered with Open Data to create a web-based portal that shows Durham's current racial and ethnic makeup as well as several key moments in their city's history. The portal acts as a continually updated snapshot that shows visualizations of demographic and other key data points as well as narrative events that have had a significant impact on the community. As Montgomery continues to grow and become more diverse, creating a similar site could be a useful tool for leaders and decision-makers to look at and see an accurate representation of Montgomery and its people. The site could also highlight important moments

### AA 3.3

## Create an arts and culture staff and board

Create a dedicated arts and culture staff and board to consolidate efforts and funding aimed to make Montgomery a destination for art, culture, and creativity. The arts and culture board should work closely with the existing artistic and cultural organizations and efforts in the city to create new opportunities for Montgomery to nurture and grow its unique culture.

### TACTICS

- ★ Develop a steering committee to advise the creation of an arts and culture board made up of representation from the city's active arts organizations
- ★ Staffing selections should be handled by the absorbing city department.
- ★ The board and staff should proactively develop new opportunities to advance partnerships, events and installations highlighting all of Montgomery's cultural communities.

in Montgomery's history that help connect the past and present. Durham's site was built by the City of Durham and Durham County's GIS department, using American community survey data from 2013-2017. The American Panorama Project allowed Durham to use existing data that they had collected to display on their website. Montgomery also has existing data collected by the project that could be utilized to help illustrate similar discussions around race and equity. This portal could be housed on the Envision Montgomery 2040 website so that it is easily accessible to all.



## Encourage local representation and attraction by enhancing community experience

The city will support local organizations and businesses by developing community experiences that represent Montgomery's heritage. Residents will be provided with ample opportunities to elevate their cultural influence through public activities and social events. Montgomery will strive to create a vibrant, active community of celebratory experiences that blend local qualities with world customs.

### AA 4.1

#### Support the work the Public Art Commission

In urban, suburban, and rural settings public art creates landmarks, build civic pride, induces tourism, and creates a stronger connection to a community and its citizens. The city's Public Art Commission is a unique and effective organization charged with supporting, directing, and expanding the presence of the public art across Montgomery. This group should be supported with the intention of expanding access and participation in public art installations and initiatives across the city's 200 neighborhoods and especially in downtown.

##### TACTICS

- ★ Membership in the commission could be reviewed to ensure equitable representation with respect to the city's geography and demographics.
- ★ Simple policies should be written to guide murals and installations throughout the City, and financial support of the commissions work. A streamlined review process will reduce lag time in projects.

### AA 4.2

#### Create an outdoor farmers market downtown

Opportunities for an outdoor farmer's market will assist in the reestablishment of cultural events in the downtown. Farmer's markets can provide many local urban and agrarian outlets, stimulate the local economy, increase access to local products and provide event opportunities for the residents, while fostering cultural assets and growth.

##### TACTICS

- ★ A downtown farmers market should be developed by stakeholders from the existing Eastchase Farmer Market, the Downtown Business Association, the State Farmers Market, and EAT South.
- ★ The market should be a regularly occurring event on a street in downtown Montgomery that is coordinated with the Montgomery Police Department and the City's transportation department.



#### Benefits of Public Art

Montgomery is one of the State's leading cultural centers and has shown its dedication to public art with the appointment of a public art task force in 2011 and the adoption of the Public Art Strategic Plan. The benefits of a strong, identifiable public arts program can be fruitful both culturally and financially. In Nashville, TN murals are spread throughout the city that offer unique visual insights to the history and culture of the community. Most notably, Kelsey Montague's #WhatLiftsYou angel wings mural has become a hot spot for tourists and locals who wait for up to an hour to take a picture in front of. Creating "Instagrammable" spaces can boost economic activity. The crowds who wait their turn for a photo are also spending money in the area on things like parking, meals, and shopping. Americans for the Arts found that every dollar invested into nonprofit arts (such as murals) generates \$6 in taxes.