

MONTGOMERY  UNITED

THE TRANSITION COMMITTEE FOR MAYOR STEVEN L. REED



TRANSITION REPORT

A Blueprint for a New Montgomery
Submitted to Mayor Steven L. Reed



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LETTER FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

The Honorable Steven L. Reed
Mayor of Montgomery
City Hall
103 N Perry Street Montgomery,
Alabama 36104

Dear Mayor Reed:

We are pleased to submit this final transition report on behalf of our fellow Montgomery United Transition Team members and the hundreds of citizens who participated in our discussions. Over the past several months we have had the opportunity to examine some of the most pressing issues facing our city. We have heard from subject matter experts, discussed research findings and national best practices, and we have conferred with many of the city's senior administrators. We appreciate the responsiveness of the city officials and employees who provided countless documents, made thoughtful presentations and engaged with us as we sought to develop meaningful and actionable recommendations.

Throughout our deliberations we considered only those matters over which you have authority and we were mindful of the financial constraints that the city currently faces. We want this document to be a roadmap for your Administration and for our community. And we understand that success will come only if we all do our part to create the change that we want to see for our city. Thanks to your leadership, we are Montgomery United; and we stand ready to assist you in the implementation of these recommendations. The enthusiasm of the committee members and the hopefulness with which members of the public made proposals gives us tremendous optimism for the future of our city.

We are honored that you chose us to lead this historic endeavor which has brought together an amazingly diverse group of citizens to offer to you our perspectives on how we can support your vision of a more equitable and inclusive Montgomery. We look forward to working with you in the years ahead to make this vision a reality.

Sincerely,

John Mazyck

Vanzetta McPherson



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On October 8, 2019, the voters of Montgomery made history. We used our voice, passion and vote to decisively elect Steven L. Reed as our next mayor. We, the people of Montgomery, decided that everyone would get a seat at the table, everyone would be heard, and everyone would have the opportunity to grow and flourish. We decided, as Montgomery approached its bicentennial, that we will be “Montgomery United.”

Mayor Reed ran a campaign that was positive, inclusive, and focused on the people of Montgomery. Immediately after his historic win, and before he took office, Reed worked diligently to begin a transition that would create a platform for our community to engage in meaningful conversations about how we unite across parties, economic status, neighborhoods, and points of view to move Montgomery into the future - together. Less than a week after he took office, Mayor Reed held a press conference where he announced the leaders of his Transition Team, John Mazyck and The Honorable Vanzetta Penn McPherson. He charged his Transition leaders, and ultimately the scores of volunteers who comprised the transition committees, to develop a set of actionable recommendations that he could implement during his first term in office.

The work of the Montgomery United Transition Team was not to reinvent the wheel, but to build upon all of the comprehensive and master planning work previously done. Ultimately, Mayor Reed tapped more than 70 volunteers to serve on six committees: Public Safety & Thriving Neighborhoods; Education; Economic Development; Infrastructure & Transportation; Cultural Arts & Entertainment; and Health & Human Services. On Monday, December 16, 2019, the Montgomery United Transition Team committees began the process of visioning a new Montgomery and charting the course to actualize that vision during the mayor’s first term.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY *(cont'd)*

Montgomery is Talking

For three months, each committee conducted six meetings to discuss the issues, brainstorm solutions, vet ideas, hear from the public and, ultimately, develop a set of recommendations. These recommendations were also informed by feedback from the public that was received both formally, through a Municipal Assembly attended by more than 300 citizens and during the committee meetings, and informally through small group meetings, charettes, and conversations over coffee.

The committees and the public had some very difficult, but necessary conversations about equal access, disparity, proportion, neglect, disinvestment, procurement, and division. There was a consistent call for Mayor Reed to move Montgomery beyond the politics of race and separation and put policies and practices in place that include the westside as well as the eastside. Citizens spoke passionately of the need to return to a sense of community – to restore the village for our youth and families.

- Small and minority business owners are desperately seeking opportunities to grow and do business in Montgomery and not have to leave the city they love just to make a living.
- Neighbors want healthy relationships with law enforcement.
- First responders want the tools and resources to deliver high quality service on every call.
- Residents want to see action on blighted properties and litter.
- Parents want options to disrupt negative influences and expose their children to productive outlets.
- Seniors want to age gracefully and be able to obtain information and move around the city with ease.

Everyone wants a cleaner, safer, accessible city with solid infrastructure, a highly skilled workforce, reliable transportation system, thriving economy, top rated public education, and a local government that empowers each citizen to enjoy a healthier and higher quality of life. The core advantage of the transition process, as stated by an Education Committee member, was that, "Montgomery is finally talking." While there was certainly acknowledgement of the issues and how we arrived at this state, the Transition team considered those conversations while researching national best practices and model cities. The Team skillfully molded those issues into this body of recommended solutions that will begin to create the Montgomery that we all seek.

"Our vision for a new Montgomery calls for creating opportunity for everyone in our community—a place where everyone has the freedom to live, learn and earn."

-- Mayor Steven L. Reed

3 LIVE. LEARN. EARN.

INTRODUCING THE TEAM.



Montgomery United, the transition organization of Mayor Steven L. Reed, was led by a dynamic and diverse group of citizens who were selected by the Mayor to review the status of various government agencies, review national best practices and develop local solutions to solve some of the lingering, persistent problems facing our city.

JOHN MAZYCK, CO-CHAIR



John Mazyck is principal and owner of The Frazer Lanier Company. A graduate of Woodberry Forest School, Vanderbilt University (BS) and Auburn University at Montgomery (MBA), John's experience includes leadership roles on several boards, including the Business Council of Alabama, the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce, the Committee of Control of the Committee of 100, the Jackson Hospital Foundation, Peabody College (Vanderbilt University), and the Montgomery Community Development Foundation. In 2019, John was elected to serve on the Board of Inlet Beach Water System, Inc. John is a graduate of Leadership Alabama.

VANZETTA PENN McPHERSON, CO-CHAIR



Vanzetta Penn McPherson retired from her merit appointment as a United States Magistrate Judge in 2006. During her active service in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Alabama, Judge McPherson managed civil and criminal caseloads as well as prisoner and social security cases. An honor graduate of Howard University and a graduate of Columbia University and Columbia Law School, Judge McPherson began law practice at the New York office of Hughes, Hubbard & Reed, followed by two years as an Alabama Assistant Attorney General, and 16 years in solo practice in Montgomery. Her private practice focused on constitutional and employment litigation in the federal trial and appellate courts and domestic litigation in the Alabama state and appellate courts. She is a former president of the Alabama Lawyers Association and the Montgomery Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. She presently serves on the Montgomery Advertiser's editorial board and the boards of the Alabama Heritage Foundation and the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. She is a member of Class I of Leadership Montgomery (whose Steering Committee she chaired in 1986) and Class XX of Leadership Alabama.

JAKE ARONOV



Jake Aronov serves as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Aronov Corporation, a diversified company whose principal activities are the development, ownership and management of real estate properties in 14 states and include retail centers, apartment communities, high rise condominium buildings, offices and warehouses, and in Montgomery the development of residential areas housing over 10,000 families. Through its subsidiaries, the company also brokers the sale and rental of commercial and residential property and provides risk management services through Aronov Insurance, Inc. and the Alabama Insurance Alliance. Mr. Aronov has served as a board member or as an officer of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Regions Bank-Central Alabama, Landmarks Foundation, Emory University Board of Visitors, University of Alabama President's Cabinet, the National Symphony, AIPAC National Council, Atlanta Scholars Kollel and Congregation Agudath Israel-Etz Ahayem.

JOHN BAKER



John L. Baker is a native of Montgomery, Alabama. He served three years in Vietnam receiving a Purple Heart, U.S. President's Unit Citation Award and Combat Action Ribbon. After his tour of duty, he attended Alabama State University earning a bachelor's degree in business administration. He was later appointed as Montgomery City Clerk, where he served for twenty-two years. After retirement, he worked for five years as the office manager at Thomas, Means and Gillis, PC. He was appointed by Gov. Don Siegelman as Secretary to the Governor. He later pursued his dream of becoming the owner of a John Baker Realtor, LLC. John serves or has served on several boards including the Salvation Army, March of Dimes and Baptist Health Foundation. He is also a member of Metropolitan United Methodist Church; President of the Alabama National Fair; Chairman of the Baptist Health Foundation; Chairman of the Montgomery Area March of Dimes; a member of the Jaycees Club of Montgomery; a member of the Kiwanis Club of Montgomery; and a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc..

LORI DAVID BOONE



Lori David Boone is a graduate of the University of Montevallo where she majored in English and Journalism. She received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Alabama School of Law. After becoming a member of the Alabama State Bar in 1996 she worked in both the private and public sectors. She is currently a realtor in the River Region area. Lori is a philanthropist who supports local 501(c)(3) organizations that focus on education through the Lori and LaBarron Boone Education Foundation. She is married to Attorney LaBarron Boone. They are the proud parents of two teenagers, Micah and Logan, who are both students at LAMP High School.

KATIE BOYD BRITT



Katie Boyd Britt attended The University of Alabama and earned a B.A. in Political Science and Blount Liberal Arts. Katie earned her law degree from The University of Alabama School of Law. Katie practiced law at Butler Snow in both Birmingham and Montgomery, Alabama, and is the former Deputy Campaign Manager and Communications Director for Senator Shelby's most recent re-election campaign. In 2016, Katie became Chief of Staff to Senator Richard Shelby. In 2019, Katie was selected as President and CEO of the Business Council of Alabama, where she builds coalitions and promotes unity among the Alabama business community. Katie resides in Montgomery with her husband, Wesley, her daughter, Bennett (10), and her son, Ridgeway (9). She serves as President of the Community Affairs Board of Advisors at the University of Alabama and is the former President of the Student Affairs Leadership Council and a former member of the Blackburn Advisory Board.

BRIAN C. GARY, MD, FACS



Brian C. Gary, MD, FACS is a native of Montgomery. Born and raised in the River region, he is a product of the Montgomery Public School System, where both of his parents were educators. Dr. Gary is a graduate of Tuskegee University and Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee. He received his surgical training at the Medical University of South Carolina. Dr. Gary moved back home to Montgomery, Alabama bringing all of his years of education and training to serve the Capital City community. He has been on staff at Jackson Hospital since 2006 where he has served in many capacities, including former Chief of Surgery, and currently, Chief of Robotic and Minimally Invasive Surgery. He is a board certified general surgeon and a fellow of the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Gary serves on the Alabama State Board of Prosthetists and Orthotists, as well as the Board for the Masters level program at Alabama State University. He is involved locally with the YMCA, Bridge Builders, Valiant Cross Academy, and The Montgomery Academy. Gary is a member of Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church where he serves as a Deacon and member of the usher board. He is also a life member of Kappa Alpha Psi, Fraternity, Inc. Dr. Gary's wife of 17 years is Helen, and his two children are Claire Elise (13) and Brian (Deuce) Jr. (9).

LANCE HUNTER



Lance Hunter has been CEO of Hodges Warehouse & Logistics for 19 years, where he has expanded the company from a real estate investment firm to a major logistics and trucking firm in Central Alabama. The company was recognized as Service Supplier of the Year by the Alabama Automotive Manufacturers Association. He received a BS degree in Accounting from University of Florida and an MBA from Harvard Business School.

ASHLEY JERNIGAN



Ashley Jernigan is founder and principal of JDB Hospitality, LLC; a hospitality and public relations firm specializing in building the brands of people, places, and products through event management, marketing, and media development. Currently, she serves as the project manager for the state of Alabama's Bicentennial celebration and the opening of Montgomery's Voting Rights Interpretive Center coming in 2020. Ashley is a faculty trainer for Troy University's Continuing Education and Outreach program teaching courses on diversity, interpersonal communication, management and leadership. Ashley obtained her bachelor's degree in public relations from Alabama State University and earned her MBA from Georgia State University. From 2012 to 2018 she directed marketing and community relations efforts for one of the largest restaurant and property management companies in the River Region. She serves on the board of Alabama's Tourism Department, Central Alabama Community Foundation, Downtown Business Association, Montgomery Public Arts Council, and the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama Roundtable.

TOM METHVIN



Tom Methvin is managing attorney of the Beasley Allen Law Firm. Born in Eufaula, Alabama, Tom graduated from the University of Alabama with a degree in corporate finance. He is also a graduate of Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham, Alabama. Tom is an active member of the Alabama State Bar Association, serving on the Board of Bar Commissioners for nine years and the Executive Council for two years. He is the former president of the Alabama State Bar. Tom is a member of the Alabama Alumni Association, the Montgomery-Lowndes County Chapter of the Alabama Alumni Association and the Capital City Crimson Tide club. Tom is president of the local chapter of the Commerce Executives Society. He has served on the Cystic Fibrosis Advisory Panel. He received the 2009 Sheena Diane Ayers Humanitarian Award for his longtime service and support for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. He also is a member of the River Region United Way Tocqueville Society. Tom also serves on the Board of the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce and is a graduate of Leadership Alabama Class XVIII.

BOYD STEPHENS



Boyd Stephens has launched and sustained a series of Alabama-based technology firms, including his primary focus on the operations and day-to-day activity of Netelysis, a tech company in the internet networking data analytic space. From 2014 to 2018, Boyd was part of a team that conducted a series of entrepreneurial/tech start-up community-building experiments, which led to over 250 entrepreneurs being trained and mentored. This led to Boyd co-launching the I-85 Cyber Corridor Initiative, which helps create and sustain the systems, services, infrastructure and relationships necessary for a robust tech start-up and entrepreneurial ecosystem in Central Alabama.

DR. CARL A. STOCKTON



Dr. Carl A. Stockton is the sixth Chancellor of Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM), having assumed the office July 1, 2016, at the invitation of the Auburn University Board of Trustees. In his 35 years in higher education, as both administrator and faculty member, Dr. Stockton has raised more than \$100 million in grants and capital support. His leadership and support have increased degree offerings for students and research and professional development opportunities for faculty as well as cultivated partnerships with industry and international universities. While serving as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University of Houston-Clear Lake, Dr. Stockton grew enrollment by 18 percent, a university record. He also led the university to earn the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Community Engagement Classification in both Curricular Engagement and Outreach Partnerships and membership on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. He has also encouraged and facilitated faculty engagement with the Fulbright Scholars Program. He has served as a board member for a variety of nonprofits in Alabama's River Region, including Child Protect, the Children's Advocacy Center, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and the YMCA Metro. Dr. Stockton holds a B.S. and Master of Arts in Health Education from the University of Florida and a Doctor of Philosophy in Health Education from the University of Tennessee. He and his wife, Elaine, have one daughter, Taylor.

Laurie Jean Weil, D.V.M.



Laurie Jean Weil, D.V.M. is a native of Montgomery and a graduate of Smith College and Tuskegee University's School of Veterinary Medicine. She and her husband, Dr. Tommy Wool, have five children and three grandchildren. Laurie founded Camp Sunshine for Girls. With Kathy Sawyer, she directed Camp Sunshine for Girls for 29 years and co-founded Camp Sunshine for Boys. Laurie trained with the National Coalition Building Institute to work with groups on welcoming diversity. With Sophia Bracy Harris, she co-founded Interchange, a community-building process sponsored by Leadership Montgomery. She was a member of Leadership Montgomery Class III and Leadership Alabama Class III. Laurie has served on the boards of the Central Alabama Community Foundation, Dexter Avenue King Memorial Foundation, Envision 2020, Family Sunshine Center, The Montgomery Academy, Tukabatchee Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America, and River Region United Way. She is a founding director of the Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr. Institute. Laurie recently served a 5 year term as Chairman of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival Board and has served as the chairman of the Jewish Federation of Central Alabama, Leadership Montgomery, Huntingdon College and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts.

DAVID WHITLOW



David Whitlow is the 66th President of the Alabama State University's Student Government Association. Born in Montgomery, Whitlow spent much of his childhood in Detroit, Michigan, but he was born in Montgomery and graduated from Jefferson Davis High School as a dual-sport athlete. Whitlow is currently a senior at ASU studying English and Secondary Education. Prior to being elected SGA President, Whitlow was a quarterback on the ASU football team for three years and served as Marketing Coordinator at Aramark on the ASU campus. Upon graduation in the spring of 2020, Whitlow plans to become a high school English instructor and dual sport coach on the high school level. He ultimately wants to become an ESPN sports analyst. Whitlow is also a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

LIVING OUR CREED.



Loyalty, faith and **PERSERVERANCE** are the pillars that have built this community. Let us mark this day in remembrance of who we are and how far we've come. We have a duty to ourselves in this society. This is the meaning of living our creed.

-- Mayor Steven L. Reed

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Throughout the conversations, both in committee meetings and at the Municipal Assembly, there were several themes that consistently emerged as important topics of discussion. These cross-cutting themes serve as a foundation on which most of the recommendations are built. Whenever possible, Mayor Reed should consider these themes as the lenses through which all policy and programmatic recommendations should be viewed, and make intentional strides to include elements of these themes in his initiatives.



EDUCATION

The lack of adequate investments in public education can impact Montgomery in many ways. Business attraction is impaired if there is not a ready workforce. Public safety is at risk if there is high truancy and high recidivism among juvenile offenders. Talent attraction, with business, the military and entrepreneurs, is impacted if families are not willing to relocate to Montgomery due to underperforming public schools. The community wants to see greater utilization of libraries, retired educators and community volunteers, especially as reading proficiency requirements are looming. There is tremendous opportunity to partner with colleges and universities to provide training and support programs and resources for teachers as well as parents and students. The overwhelming consensus among all the committees is that everything starts with Montgomery's education system, and the city's progress into the future will be hindered if our education system does not accelerate.



EQUITY

Equality, in principle, is equal treatment for everyone. While a noble gesture, equality does not consider past acts of inequality, nor does it evaluate privilege born from centuries of inequality. *Equity*, in comparison, provides everyone with what they need to be successful. There were many uncomfortable conversations about the history of inequality, the need for equity, and the desire of some for intentional investments that will create a more equitable Montgomery. From contracting with minority businesses to small business incubation to investing in arts and cultural programs across the city to investing in public facilities in low-income neighborhoods, there was a consistent desire throughout the discussions to create not just a seat at the table, but to create opportunities that meet citizens and businesses where they are.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES



RE-OPEN COMMUNITY CENTERS

There is broad support for the city to find ways to invest in renovating, reopening and staffing many of the community centers that are currently shuttered. This concept was discussed by several committees where committee members and members of the public reminisced about how youth mentorship and crime prevention programs used to take place inside of those facilities and the desire that exists to bring those back. Community centers can be used to provide more access to health and wellness programs. The centers could house arts programs for youth and incubation/shared spaces for the creatives to have access to equipment and space to hone their crafts. There were also conversations about the possibility of creating public private partnerships with non-profits and community-based organizations to assist with staffing the facilities to ease the financial burden on the city.



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

There was a general consensus that there is inadequate marketing of city programs, initiatives and services, ineffective outreach to make citizens aware of these valuable municipal offerings and the need for a centralized platform that makes these offerings accessible to the public. Health and Human Services believes that the city should do a better job of bringing to light health issues and resources that are available to address them. They are recommending a multi-year marketing and information campaign to address this. Economic Development sees an opportunity to improve marketing of the city to passersby on the interstate routes and desires, among other things, for there to be a targeted campaign to lure travelers off the highways and into the city to visit. Cultural Arts & Entertainment wants more robust and well-marketed communications tools that will inform visitors and citizens alike of all the various events and cultural opportunities that exist in Montgomery on any given day. The Public Safety Committee also discussed the need to invest in promotional campaigns to assist with recruiting police officers.



OUTSIDE FUNDING

There was an acute awareness in most of the committees that the City of Montgomery does not have the financial resources to fund all the initiatives within these recommendations. Committee members were generally realistic about what it would take to implement their recommendations and certainly would not want to compromise the Mayor by creating a set of unactionable recommendations. Within this context, there were frequent discussions about the history of the city not pursuing outside funding, especially from the Federal government. There is broad support for the city taking on a more aggressive posture in pursuing both philanthropic and Federal funding to enable the Reed Administration to implement these recommendations.



RECOMMENDATIONS

“Our goal is to continue investing in innovative solutions that can cultivate an equitable city and result in quality-of-life transformations touching everything from public safety and thriving neighborhoods to education.”

-- Mayor Steven L. Reed

EDUCATION

Preparing Our Community for Success

The Education Committee's charge was to develop recommendations to increase investments in universal all-day pre-k and our public-school system. This committee was also to recommend strategies to strengthen ties between municipal government and our higher education community; to expand apprenticeships and workforce development opportunities; and to create an education ecosystem that values educators, prepares our youth, provides opportunities for lifelong learning and delivers a ready workforce that will enhance business attraction and economic development efforts.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Lori Boone, Co-Chair
Dr. Carl Stockton, Co-Chair
Shelia Austin
Anthony Brock
Dr. Farrell Duncombe
Cheryl Fountain
Justin Hampton
John McWilliams
Allison Muhlendorf
Carey Owens
Ada Katherine Van Wyhe

A culture shift is taking place in the way Montgomerians approach and invest in educating the youth. For far too long, the public-school system, governed by an elected, seven-member Board of Education, has been underfunded and underserving students. In a city that is positioning itself to be a technology hub and looking for ways to retain our graduates for the local workforce instead of losing them to neighboring cities and states, we must not only take a closer look at STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) proficiencies but also reading proficiencies. We must start at home and find ways to empower teachers and parents and provide them more support while encouraging more community engagement with students and volunteerism within schools. A broken education culture that is underserving students and overwhelming teachers directly impacts retention and educational gains. If the local funding model does not change drastically, Montgomery risks investing in preparing students from birth to five for success and then failing them just a few years later. This is a vicious cycle that creates a pipeline



This is an important moment because the solution is in the community. There have to be solutions and programs that spring up from the grassroots. The solutions are not all top down and it's important that the community is engaged and involved."

*Education Committee
comment during
January 9, 2020 meeting*

of students who are neither college nor career ready and a city ill-prepared for the workforce demands of business and industry. Indicators such as kindergarten readiness and third grade reading have a direct and cumulative impact on student achievement and later workforce success. As the passing rates of both students and public schools improve, the perceptions of the school system will improve. Without this goal, the image of the school system and/or support for funding will not change. We must re-envision public school education in Montgomery and empower and support our students, teachers, and parents to achieve more.

The Education Committee understands that while the operation and structure of Montgomery Public Schools (MPS) is outside the mayor's authority, these recommendations will empower the mayor to have influence with MPS through coalition building, establish networks of stakeholders, promote legislative engagement, and leverage national attention to pool resources for a greater impact on education. The mayor's push must be from the outside while the public and other local and state stakeholders take ownership of the need for increased funding and other improvements inside MPS.

1. Issue a community call-to-action and launch a community-wide framework to create a holistic education ecosystem that synergizes education and support services for every student and educator in Montgomery. The vested stakeholders should include MPS, Montgomery County PTA, higher education, Maxwell-Gunter AFB, business, philanthropic, nonprofit, civic organizations.

There is not a more critical issue than education. Successful models from other communities around the nation, have used the office of the mayor to bring together leaders throughout the community to find creative ways to support education from cradle to career.

Increasing pre-K and public education investments, providing a coordinated approach to education, building stronger ties among municipal government, the military, schools and higher education, and increasing workforce readiness and placement into higher wage jobs requires stakeholders to organize a push from the outside. Multi-faceted community efforts must be coordinated and intentional and should include:

- support for parents of infants and small children;
- support for pre-K and kindergarten enrollment;
- support for MPS students through after-school and summer programming;
- college counseling or career training; school safety; and
- connecting public school educators, students, parent, and community partners around public health services including mental health/trauma service providers.

2. Create a new education culture by establishing an Education Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Mayor's Office, MPS and local institutions of higher education and establish a Montgomery Accountability Pact among the city, county and citizens.

This paradigm shift is necessary to change the negative narrative around education in Montgomery.

Joint Commitment to Improve Education Outcomes Through Equity

Jefferson County (Kentucky) Public Schools and the Louisville, KY Metro Government established a "Joint Commitment to Improve Education Outcomes Through Equity" agreement. This joint compact had the goal of ensuring that more children are ready for school, successful in school, and prepared to succeed after graduation. Each entity agreed to a specific focus: Louisville Metro Government will work every day to raise educational attainment and build a college-going and college-completing culture. Jefferson County Public Schools will focus on the goals and strategies that will best prepare all its students for college, career and life in a globally competitive environment. Louisville considers this work to be equity work. A focus on racial, economic, and social equity is the foundation of their collective work to improve outcomes for their children.

An MOU between the City of Montgomery and Montgomery Public Schools that establishes a joint plan and commitment to improve education outcomes is a necessary tool to formalize a new collaborative culture and to provide an accountability tool for all stakeholders. Similarly, an accountability pact gives the city, MPS, higher education, and citizens an opportunity to start with a clean slate and agree to invest in one another and move forward together. This step can also serve to build confidence within the economic development/business community that Montgomery proper is a place to relocate a workforce and raise families.

3. Develop a ‘Read with Reed’ reading initiative that is responsive to the mandates and timelines of the Alabama Literacy Act and collaborate with the Alabama Dept of Early Childhood Education’s Born Ready initiative to help increase reading proficiency.

The Alabama Literacy Act passed the Alabama Legislature in 2019 and will begin in 2020-21. Students who still have a significant reading deficiency at the end of their third grade year are going to be retained in third grade starting in 2021-22. Time is of the essence to avoid a possible domino effect that could occur if large numbers of third graders are held back under the new law, including the potential for overcrowding and behavioral problems resulting from the stigma attached to repeating.

As the central political figure of the city, the mayor should stand prominently behind the development of reading skills that will seek to close the gap in skills development that often impacts our young people. Adequate communication between MPS and the city, as well as trained professionals who are, or can be, reading coaches can stay one step ahead of what the Alabama Literacy Act demands. A strong push to have students prepared to meet the objectives of the new law, by the end of the second grade, can be established through after school and summer programs designed to bolster reading skills prior to students entering third grade. Not only would it be good for the students, it would be a strong, positive impact for the mayor to be engaged with the politics of education and investing time and effort in the

youth of the city. Efforts to increase reading proficiency should include current and former/retired teachers, principals, parents, nonprofits, community volunteers and specialists/reading coaches particularly experienced in tutoring students with Dyslexia, limited English proficiency and disabilities.

4. Support and actively advocate a substantial millage increase and seek other sources of funding for public education.

As education improves, so do the economic development and safety of our community. Funding is the most critical issue facing Montgomery Public Schools. MPS is severely underfunded, receiving the lowest in local funding among the top three large cities of Montgomery, Birmingham and Huntsville. Lack of funding compromises the system’s ability to attract and retain teachers, maintain and upgrade facilities, and invest in technology, equipment, and resources that will boost the quality of education and provide an environment conducive for learning.

5. Leverage state and local funding sources to expand pre-K programs.

Increased investments in pre-K expansion will ensure that more than 40% of Montgomery’s four-year-olds have access to the nation’s highest quality, state funded pre-kindergarten program, Alabama First Class Pre-K, in the 2020-2021 school year.

6. Work with the City Council and other stakeholders to establish a scholarship program that will help local graduates of MPS attend public higher education institutions in order to earn a post-secondary degree.

For the mayor to assist in changing the perception of the school system, innovative partnerships and future-facing initiatives are imperative. The city needs to help motivate parents and students in MPS to stay in school and graduate college-ready in order to have the opportunity to earn a post-secondary degree. Post-secondary accomplishments along with an intentional program to expose students to various career opportunities needs to be part of the equation if the perception of Montgomery is going to change.

7. Establish the Mayor's Initiative on Apprenticeship and Workforce Development (or an Office of Apprenticeship and Workforce Development) to include an intern and summer jobs program for youth and young adults ages 16-24. Further, and where applicable, Mayor Reed should make certification through the Montgomery Public Schools Career Technical Center (CTC) a preferred qualification on all city-issued tech job openings and incentivize local businesses to hire MPS grads with CTC certifications.

A February 2020 report shows that on average 35 percent of high school seniors in non-magnet schools in Montgomery County are not college or career ready. There is clearly a significant gap in workforce readiness and an opportunity to partner with universities to help provide training opportunities for Montgomeries to gain skills and certifications needed in higher wage jobs. One solution to developing workforce pipelines could begin in city government through the creation of a robust internship program.

“We must invest in programs like this [pre-K] and expand the existing footprint so that all four-year-old children living in Montgomery County have access to Alabama’s First Class Pre-K.”

-- Mayor Steven L. Reed



PUBLIC SAFETY & THRIVING NEIGHBORHOODS

Creating a Safer, Stronger Montgomery

The charge of the Public Safety Committee was to develop recommendations to transform the Montgomery Police Department and other relevant departments into modern, data-driven, high performing departments that will effectively engage citizens and secure a better quality of life. The Committee was to consider the recruitment, retention and deployment of first responders; innovative solutions and technologies to improve operations and incident response; improving relationships and perception within neighborhoods and communities across the city; violence reduction strategies and programs to reduce the number of handguns in our communities.



PUBLIC SAFETY & THRIVING NEIGHBORHOODS COMMITTEE

Tom Methvin, Co-Chair
David Whitlow, Co-Chair
Jennifer Adams
Larry Armstead
Craig Boykin
Victorrus Felder
Tony Garrett
Courtney Meadows
Kevin Murphy
Ashley Roseboro
Andrew Skier
Haley Steelman

The 2018 crime rate in Montgomery, AL was 401 per 100,000, which was 1.5 times greater than the U.S. average and higher than in 91.6 percent of U.S. cities. The City of Montgomery's overall crime rate remained virtually unchanged between 2014 (400.6 per 100,000) and 2018 (401.5 per 100,000). However, violent crime rose significantly from 296.2 per 100,000 in 2014 to 337.8 per 100,000 in 2018, an increase of 14 percent. The increase in violent crime rates was offset by a decrease in property crime rates. Notably, the number of homicides in 2018 stood at 29, which was a decrease of nine (or 24 percent) compared to 2017. According to the Montgomery Police Department, increased community engagement and partnerships led to six percent lower Part I crimes (murder and nonnegligent homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, larceny-theft, and arson).



[W]hen you're playing defense you have to react to what the offense does, most of the time, anyway. But I think as a city, our public safety department has to go on offense. We have to build relationships with the community to give them a sense of who we are and what we're trying to do. And I believe with overwhelmingly most residents understand and appreciate that."

-- Mayor Steven Reed

1. Eliminate the Department of Public Safety and its positions to permit the Police Chief, Fire Chief, and other public safety managers to report directly to the mayor.

The Montgomery Department of Public Safety (DPS) is the parent agency for all safety-related operations in the capital city. The department was formed in 2010 to streamline public safety services, increase efficiency, and better serve the public. DPS initially included Fire/Rescue, Police, and Emergency Communications; in 2012, it incorporated the City/County Emergency Management Agency, as well. Each agency is led by a chief or director whose work is coordinated through the leadership of the DPS director. There was significant discussion about the current organizational structure, both within the Department of Public Safety and the Montgomery Police Department. The current structure impedes direct communication between the mayor and his public safety leaders. It is important that the city's public safety leadership team have a direct reporting relationship to the mayor, particularly the Police Chief and the Fire Chief.

2. The Montgomery Police Department (MPD) should hire and retain at least 50 more police officers to expand coverage of and hasten responses in neighborhoods, facilitate greater and more effective community policing, facilitate the establishment of additional precincts, and enhance public safety in the city.

The patrol fleet is well maintained and replaced on a three-year cycle. The Police Department is funded for 510 sworn officers, but currently has 491 – 40

percent white males, 35 percent black males, 18 percent black females, 5 percent white females. All other demographic groups make up less than two percent cumulatively. They have requested a \$1.9M budget increase to fund 25 additional officers and the uniforms, equipment and vehicles necessary for those officers. There are also 160 funded civilian positions of which 138 are filled. The Police Department's current priorities are reducing gun violence and other violent crime, re-establishing a juvenile crime unit, and improving morale to retain officers.

Recently, the Montgomery Police Department requested funding for motorcycles and crisis intervention training. The Montgomery Police Foundation was established in 2019 to leverage public-private partnerships to support the Montgomery Police Department. The Montgomery Police Foundation works to secure private resources to fund youth and community outreach initiatives, officer training and continuing education, and enhanced technology to prevent and reduce crime.

Additionally, MPD should also consider a Departmental re-organization to deploy manpower more effectively and other resources and strengthen the supervision of patrol officers. Recruiting the most qualified and ethical members of the community to become Montgomery police officers and retaining those officers is paramount to establishing an agency that possesses members who are educated, skilled and experienced in the complex and ever-changing field of law enforcement. As a part of its retention and professional development efforts, MPD should

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-- Mayor Steven L. Reed



establish a tailored training program that develops leaders within the department.

3. The Mayor should advocate to the City Council, Alabama Legislature, the philanthropic and business communities, and others for additional public and private funding to facilitate collaboration among Montgomery Public Schools, private schools, the medical community, social service providers, and mental health agencies to address mental and behavioral health issues, reduce violent and anti-social conduct, and to rehabilitate offenders.

According to the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama, state and local governments in Alabama collect less in taxes per capita than state and local governments in any other state. Consequently, investments in public safety, social services, and rehabilitation services will require raising additional funding. The Evidence-based Prevention & Intervention Support Center of Pennsylvania State University estimates that prevention programs represent a return of \$5 to \$25 for each dollar invested.

The additional funding could support a formal Municipal Court pre-trial diversion and/or mediation program, increase community policing initiatives, implement and expand youth development and crime prevention programs, and/or provide services that treat the root causes of criminal behavior and recidivism.

In order to address the critical needs of a large metropolitan area, MPD requires technology that aids law enforcement in the delivery of public safety to those who live, work and visit the capital city. Full utilization of surveillance technology enhances MPD's capacity to monitor, detect, deter, and address criminal acts – past and ongoing – to reduce the number of illicit handguns, and to minimize the perception of danger in our city. Adoption of surveillance technology

should be coupled with policies that govern how the technology is used, how the data is managed, and how the use of the technology is overseen.

MPD should increase the River Region Strategic Technology and Resource Center's (STAR) capabilities by adding additional automated license plate readers, gunshot detection (i.e. ShotSpotter), surveillance cameras, investigative software, and/or other technology and the supporting staff. Additionally, MPD should continue to promote the STAR Watch program, a police-community partnership that allows businesses, citizens, schools, and neighborhoods to share cameras with the STAR Center. MPD should also ensure that every officer that regularly interacts with the public has working body and dash camera systems that record and retain sufficient video.

4. MPD should dedicate officers to building and maintaining strong personal relationships between the MPD and community residents, especially youth, to increase police legitimacy.

Public safety cannot be achieved in isolation – mutual respect between the police and the community is vital. According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, support for and confidence in police depend on perceptions of police officers' motives and legitimacy. However, the disconnect between communities and the MPD and its officers is widening. Greater police legitimacy encourages crime reporting, heightens the MPD's ability to deter and prevent crime, and positions police officers to mentor youth. Poor police-youth relationships impede the willingness of youths to cooperate with and support the police, which negatively affects law enforcement's ability to be effective at violence prevention. MPD must continue its dedication to establishing relationships with all community members in order to create an environment of trust and understanding so that Montgomery is a safe and growing city. These officers should not be in the Juvenile Unit. Dedicated community relations officers could also sustain the bonds that are formed by the Junior Police Academy and School Resource Officers.

5. The City of Montgomery should expand the capacity of community-based programs that help individuals returning to Montgomery from prisons get stable housing and employment and receive mental health and substance abuse treatment.

Reentry programs that help individuals adopt pro-social mindsets and behaviors, rebuild positive community relationships, and attain economic security are key to a safer Montgomery. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, more than three quarters of State offenders are re-arrested within five years of release. However, the Council of Economic Advisers estimates that programs need only reduce recidivism by about two percent in order to recover costs.

6. Provide more youth development programming and family support services in local neighborhoods.

Positive youth development contributes to positive outcomes by engaging youth, building on their strengths, fostering strong relationships, and supporting youth leadership. According to the U.S.

Department of Health & Human Services, positive youth development can prevent a variety of risky behaviors, including delinquency. Previously, the City of Montgomery made investments in community centers that housed a variety of programs for youth and families. Over the past decade, several of those centers have either closed, or the programming within them has been virtually eliminated.

7. The City of Montgomery should reopen community centers as the focal points of youth development programming and family support services in local neighborhoods.

The Parks & Recreation Department, in partnership with community-based nonprofits, should ensure that the programming at community centers emphasizes building on youths' strengths and providing supports and opportunities that will help them achieve goals and transition to adulthood in a productive, healthy manner. Additionally, community centers should provide services that strengthen parenting practices and families' economic security.

According to the 2010 census report, the city had a population of 242,803, making it the second most populous city in the state behind Virginia Beach, Virginia. The city has a total area of 96 square miles (250 km). Norfolk's poverty, unemployment, income and high school graduation attainment rates are within 7% of Montgomery's rates. However, Norfolk's overall crime rate is 15% less than Montgomery's rate and Norfolk's violent crime rate is 20% less than Montgomery's rate. Between 2014 and 2018, Norfolk, VA saw a five-year overall reduction in property and violent crime, while also experiencing steady economic growth including job sector growth, annual per capita personal income growth and significant gains in unemployment rates. The 2018 crime rate in Norfolk, VA was 321 per 100,000, which was comparable to the U.S. average. The 2018 Norfolk crime rate fell by 13% compared to 2017. From 2014 to 2018, the overall crime rate for Norfolk decreased from 353 per 100,000 to 321 per 100,000 which is a reduction of about nine percent. From 2014 to 2018 Norfolk had a violent crime decrease from 302.5 per 100,000 to 278.1 per 100,000, a reduction of eight percent. Strikingly, from 2016 to 2018, Norfolk saw a 27.5% drop in violent crime.

The Norfolk Police Department's budget for 2020 is \$77,618,592 which funds 741 sworn personnel. In comparison, the Montgomery Police Department's budget for 2020 is \$49,303,904 which funds 510 sworn personnel. Norfolk's crime prevention programs include:

- Crime Prevention Programs for Youth: Police-Youth engagement programs (T.R.U.E. & Five-O and Fades) which are funded by corporate philanthropy, Youth Gang Prevention Awareness, Eddie Eagle GunSafe, Computer/Cyber Safety, and Youth Leadership Program
- General Crime Prevention Programs: Community Walks, neighborhood watch programs (Virtual Neighborhood Watch, Meeting the Challenge), and HEAT (Help Eliminate AutoTheft)
- Crime Prevention Programs for Seniors: Sheriff's Senior Watch, Lecture Series
- Re-entry Programs: Priority Inmate Technician Training Program, Juvenile Re-Entry Committee, Hampton

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Toward Economic Opportunity for All

The charge of the Economic Development Committee was to develop actionable strategies to grow new jobs, retain existing jobs and businesses, and promote small businesses and entrepreneurship in Montgomery by preparing our citizens for future advancement. The committee was to identify opportunities that are aligned with industry needs and trends which present the greatest impact for success here at home. They assessed best practices in workforce development, as well as recommended clear guidelines that will provide equitable access to any incentive provided by the City.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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Montgomery is at a crossroads. Building upon its rich history that changed the world; Montgomery residents have decided that it is time to change the city itself. The Montgomery United Economic Development Committee felt strongly that by choosing to elect Steven L. Reed as mayor, the citizens of Montgomery were making a bold choice to move the city in a new direction. It is imperative that the City of Montgomery seize this opportunity and move aggressively to leverage recent investments in infrastructure and tourism to spur continued economic development and job growth.



[T]here are some opportunities that we have to capitalize on as a community in order to be a place where people really want to build their homes, grow their businesses, start a family and live a great life"

-- Mayor Steven Reed

1. The City should play a leading role in increasing activity in the downtown area and should develop and deploy strategies to proactively increase the human presence downtown.

Downtown Montgomery is beginning to experience a renaissance. The recent opening of The Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice by the Equal Justice Initiative has had a tremendous impact on tourism and is beginning to spark development in the downtown area. Cities with thriving central business districts (CBDs) are those where there is significant human activity (foot traffic, residential living, entertainment/events). This activity lures investments in commercial activity. Montgomery has yet to reach the critical mass of human activity in the downtown area to attract substantial retail. The Reed Administration should deploy a variety of tactics to increase activity in the downtown core.

2. Create a vision and a tactical plan to develop the city center as a catalyst for tourism, entertainment, residential and retail. There should also be a plan to develop entrepreneurship and technology innovation around military and Department of Defense contracting opportunities on the secondary and tertiary corridors in the Central Business District.

The Economic Development Committee concurs with Envision Montgomery 2040 plan and reco-

mmends that the Reed Administration immediately update and implement the City's Downtown Master Plan to expand tourism and create an innovation/entrepreneurial district that makes Montgomery a desirable location for small businesses, especially those in the emerging defense contractor base.

Updating the Downtown Master Plan should be a two-part process with both parts running concurrently. The first part should be a formal master planning process which updates the existing Plan. The second, more immediate part, should involve the study downtown streetscapes, block-by-block, to determine areas that currently offer the greatest opportunity for development. Both plans should identify elements which would improve the pedestrian experience; plan the location and financing of parking facilities to accommodate future downtown development; and consider economic incentives or City participation to encourage desirable uses. The short-term plan should focus on identifying projects and improvements that can be undertaken in the near-term, while the master planning process runs its normal course. The planning processes should align with other existing plans, especially the City's Master Plan and TechMGM. The updated Downtown Master Plan should create a true expanded innovation and entrepreneurial district in locations that are compatible with other important uses in the downtown district. This latter element of the plan could be a tool for talent recruitment and should be linked to a thoughtful workforce pipeline and housing plans.

“[T]here are some opportunities that we have to capitalize on as a community in order to be a place where people really want to build their homes, grow their businesses, start a family and live a great life”

3. The Reed Administration should conduct a housing needs assessment that examines the critical mass of housing needed in the downtown area to spur additional retail attraction and economic development.

In order to understand the downtown housing needs and increase human activity in the downtown core, the assessment should determine whether there is a need for additional workforce and affordable housing, particularly within the context of our growing tourism industry and the transportation system deficiencies.

4. The Reed Administration should develop and implement a place-based strategy for the incubation of businesses in neighborhoods across the city that builds upon the lessons learned from the Department of Economic and Community Development's Retail Initiative and the Placemaking and Livability Initiative.

The Committee recommends that to stimulate an entrepreneurial culture and additional small business formations, the City's small business program should be expanded to include entrepreneurial and small business incubators that could provide physical space, access to capital and financing assistance through planning, mentoring, access to networking opportunities and training. The expansion of entrepreneurial and small business development should not be limited to the Downtown Core, although the Committee does recommend that technology and defense contracting small businesses and entrepreneurs be concentrated there. The Department of Economic and Community Development should employ the lessons learned from the Retail Initiative and work with public and private partners to develop a sustainable model for small business incubation. The initiative should include makers, creatives, retail and minority owned businesses clustered in key priority neighborhoods and corridors.

5. The Reed Administration should transform the city's priority gateways and corridors to create an inviting sense of arrival and presence that reinforces the economic and tourism strategies and creates a sense of pride for residents and commuters.

As the City prepares for growth in tourism in the downtown core and in priority neighborhoods and corridors, it is critical that the City undertake an ongoing, citywide civic beautification project. During the visioning process in the Committee's first meeting, there was substantial discussion about image and perceptions. During those honest discussions, committee members acknowledged that some of the city's image problem is self-inflicted and has been internalized by citizens. The Committee agreed that there is a need for both better marketing of Montgomery and its assets, as well as improved community morale regarding the image of the city. Some of the challenge is in how others see Montgomery. But the Committee agreed that much of the challenge is in how Montgomery sees itself. The City must invest in marketing and improving the city's image.



The City should make short- and long-term investments in beautifying the gateways and major corridors of the city. The gateways leading to downtown should be tied to tourism products and the visitor experience. Other corridors should be prioritized by traffic flow or possible investments needed to support business growth and development in those areas. In the short-term, the Reed Administration could host community clean-up days to remove litter, graffiti and illegal dumping. In the long-term, the initiative should include designing and deploying visually appealing way making signage, markers and streetscapes to both welcome visitors and improve the quality of place for our residents.

6. The Reed Administration should improve the quality of place and spur economic growth in Montgomery through arts, culture, innovation, entertainment and the creative use of public spaces.

The City should leverage Montgomery's rich history and intriguing narrative to establish the city as a national benchmark for an authentic, diverse community. The combination of our deep history, the new Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, and Mayor Reed's election provides a real opportunity to be "on the map." Investments in technology tools, apps and maps should center around a concentrated effort to connect the city's history with the abundance of cultural and community opportunities that exist. Said investments should include a complete rebranding of the city with an emphasis on tourism and the dynamic growth that can be achieved.

Change requires a multi-pronged approach, but one of those prongs must include investments to elevate tourism and the building of a robust tourism infrastructure to support future growth. We must take hold of the momentum that was spurred by the opening of the Legacy Museum and own the growth of tourism in Montgomery.

7. The City should continue its relationship with the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce while it simultaneously redesigns and refocuses the work of the Department of Economic and Community Development.

As the City of Montgomery repositions itself for future growth, galvanizing all the partners in the city's economic development ecosystem and focusing them

on key priorities is an effort best led by Mayor Reed. Most the City's economic development functions are outsourced to the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce. There is minimal coordination between the City's Department of Economic and Community Development and the Chamber, particularly around the areas of downtown planning and development, retail development, small business development, and place-based economic development. It is the recommendation of this Committee that those aforementioned areas be elevated in priority by the Reed Administration. The Department of Economic and Community Development should provide leadership in those areas and collaborate closely with local partners, both public and private (including Montgomery County), to expand services, develop and implement strategies, and encourage equitable economic development activity across the city. This redesign would allow for Mayor Reed to more strongly influence the vision and policy related to economic and community development.

8. It is recommended that the City create an Office of Business Services within the Department of Economic and Community Development to accelerate business formations and expansions by removing barriers to accessing City services and providing technical assistance to small business owners and entrepreneurs.

The restructure of the Department of Economic and Community Development would create an opportunity for the City to enhance its service delivery, particularly for local small businesses. The Office of Business Services would operate as a concierge for small businesses that integrates all City permitting and approvals, licensure, etc. into a one-stop shop for small businesses. Staff in the Office should navigate with the



authority of the Mayor and with a sensitivity towards the unique needs of small business owners and entrepreneurs. This would fill a major gap in Montgomery's entrepreneurial ecosystem. The staff within this Office should be able to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses with business development, create and market business incentives, usher small business owners/representatives and entrepreneurs through the licensing and permitting processes, and collaborate with the Alabama State Small Business Development Office and the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce Small Business Resource Center to provide the necessary supports to enhance the ability of entrepreneurs and small businesses to grow.

9. Support the growth of local, small and minority owned businesses by expanding and promoting procurement policies that level the playing field, offer greater transparency and access to business opportunities, and establishes targets for local government contracting.

Mayor Reed should leverage the City's contracting opportunities to create access to opportunity for local, small and minority owned business enterprises. To this end, the Committee recommends that the Reed Administration update, codify, implement and ensure compliance with the Small & Minority Business Initiative. The existing Small & Minority Business Initiative needs to be redesigned to include targets, performance metrics, compliance functions and incentives for participation.

In addition to leveraging public dollars to stimulate small business growth, the Mayor should also look to the private sector for investments in business acceleration. The Committee recommends that the Reed Administration work with private sector investors to create a public private partnership (P3) to invest in emerging and expanding small businesses in the technology and defense contracting industries. The City could secure the loans from the private sector through a Section 108 Loan using Community Development Block Grant funding, or through other creative avenues.

10. The City of Montgomery and all its partners must develop a more strategic federal agenda that supports the growth of businesses and industry currently invested in our community, aligns with military priorities, and aggressively pursues Department of Defense opportunities for economic and talent growth.

While it is imperative that the City of Montgomery continues to evolve and attract new business, it is also important that the City supports the growth of the businesses and industry currently invested in our community. Locally, the Department of Economic and Community Development could work with the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and other partners to discuss various incentives that would accelerate growth, creating a more friendly business environment, and preparing a ready workforce that is prepared to support job growth. On the Federal level, the City should support the efforts of local businesses to expand trade opportunities and in seeking Federal funding.

The City also has an important role to play in supporting the needs of our military community. The City must create a community infrastructure to help protect against any future base realignment and closure (BRAC) and continue to forge meaningful relationships between the base and the community. The Reed Administration should also work to attract U.S. Department of Defense and support jobs to the River Region that strengthen the military's ties to the area. While acknowledging there are differences in the two communities, the model that Huntsville has used to plan, organize and ultimately make great strides in this area needs be reviewed and used as appropriate. It is essential to keep the community engaged year-round. Finally, the Administration should also support the work done by the Military Stabilization Commission as they work to make Alabama the best place for military servicemembers and their families in America.

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

Improving Accessibility and Mobility

The charge of the Infrastructure and Transportation Committee was to evaluate the current state of the city's infrastructure and make recommendations to expand access to broadband, improve public transportation and identify sources to invest in better drainage, as well as surface and subsurface infrastructure needs.



INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

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Pep Pilgreen
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John Steiner
Marshall Taggart
Eddie Welch

Montgomery's infrastructure systems consist of everything from the pipes below the surface, to roads and sidewalks, to the transportation and technology networks that allow residents to move around the city and into cyberspace. Citizens are impacted daily by the city's infrastructure and the need for significant infrastructure improvements is without question. A thriving city starts with a strong infrastructure and Montgomery must remain committed to making strategic investments that will improve the quality of life for all residents.

There is a need for the city to facilitate ongoing engagement of and connection to the community and increase transparency around infrastructure issues such as paving, lighting, signage, traffic engineering, drainage, and neighborhood connectivity. Additionally, there is a universal call from the citizens for the city to prioritize upgrades



**Public
Transportation
access and usage
was the impetus
that led to the
start of much of
the Civil Rights
struggle. Yet in
terms of service
and accessibility,
Montgomery's
bus system does
not appear to
have advanced far
beyond the initial
system of the
1950s."**

-- Alma Sankey
December 17, 2019

to existing community facilities and expand library and community center services into underserved areas of the city. There are some aspects of infrastructure and transportation that are completely outside the purview of the mayor and the committee was mindful of those limits while considering the specific policy recommendations that would address the charge.

1. Regularly convene an infrastructure roundtable with the heads of Montgomery Water Works, Alabama Power, Alabama Department of Transportation, Montgomery Regional Airport, Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base, and Montgomery City Services, Leisure Services, and City Planning departments to assess and address immediate infrastructure concerns, establish goals and priorities for the city, and develop short and long-term steps needed to advance the comprehensive plan.

The Envision 2040 Draft Comprehensive Plan outlines several infrastructure issues and improvement goals that will require the development of short and long-term implementation plans. The Infrastructure and Transportation Committee's discussions revealed that there needs to be more citizen-level clarity around addressing and mitigating drainage and other infrastructure issues such as water quality and sanitation. There is frustration among some Montgomeriesians who are experiencing a disconnect between reporting infrastructure issues and when and what actions they should expect the city to take to resolve them. Specific attention to strategically planning, coordinating and publicly reporting the timing, progress, and success of infrastructure projects will build confidence and trust between the city and the community.

2. Coordinate with the Montgomery Public School System, the city's Public Safety agencies, and county government stakeholders to add expanded data sets to the MGM Open Data Portal.

Expanded data sharing and public use of the open data portal will more easily connect citizens to public services such as up-to-the-minute bus schedules, information on open City Services tickets, constituent complaint tracking, and even drainage alerts. Partnering with other agencies to open specific sets of data would allow more transparency into the day-to-day operations of the entities that provide public services and receive local funding. The citizens of Montgomery want better accountability and assistance in addressing problems within the region.

3. Launch an aggressive awareness 'Did you know?' campaign to expose all Montgomery citizens to the advantages associated with the use of Open Data Portal and how its use can improve infrastructure, transportation, economic development, public safety, education, and health/human services.

It is of utmost importance to present uniform, clear information for the citizens of Montgomery. There have been far too many instances in which people did not know who to call in the event of an occurrence or did not know where to go. Montgomeriesians are too often frustrated by lack of understanding of how the city functions and the citizens crave clear guidance on how it does in fact work. By exposing all citizens to the Open Data Portal all will be empowered to be a part of identifying issues in a timely manner, which is paramount in becoming a more equitable and efficiently run city. The Open Data Portal is under-utilized. Once its availability and capability are fully known among residents, the portal's full potential can

“In the long term, the smart city concept could be a major component in taking Montgomery to a new level of technological innovation that could enhance the daily lives of Montgomery citizens while making the city more attractive to technology firms and positioning ourselves for future growth and amazing opportunity for our own young people and other bright young minds looking for a community that is firmly committed to being on the leading edge of high tech innovation.”

-- Mayor Steven L. Reed

be maximized.

4. Facilitate dark fiber leases to commercial, industrial, MUSH (Municipalities Utilities Schools Hospitals) and fiber providers in 2020 and work to bring more Internet Service Providers to the area to provide affordable residential and commercial internet service by next year. The city should extend the MG Mix (Internet Exchange) to a series of physical locations that are more business friendly to locally- and regionally-owned telecommunication companies/internet service providers than the services currently offered.

Montgomery needs to provide adequate and affordable internet to conduct business and satisfy residents. This is important because digital equity is a necessity to competing in the 21st century economy. Expanded broadband connectivity not only impacts the business community, but could improve outcomes across all areas. Additionally, digital connectivity is an economic development and workforce development tool to attract and retain companies and talent.

5. Work with the Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders on maintaining the existing Public Wi-Fi Networks offered in the Central Business District, Riverfront, parks and other significant points of interest in the community and begin planning for expansion to promote connectivity and smart city efforts.

Offering free, public Wi-Fi enhances connectivity and furthers smart city goals. Wi-Fi is a communication tool for citizens and an asset to backhaul smart city devices. The Chamber of Commerce stood up a Public Wi-Fi Network in the Central Business District as a resource for businesses, residents and visitors. The city should maintain the investment made in smart city and connectivity efforts to provide access to the internet and other smart services.

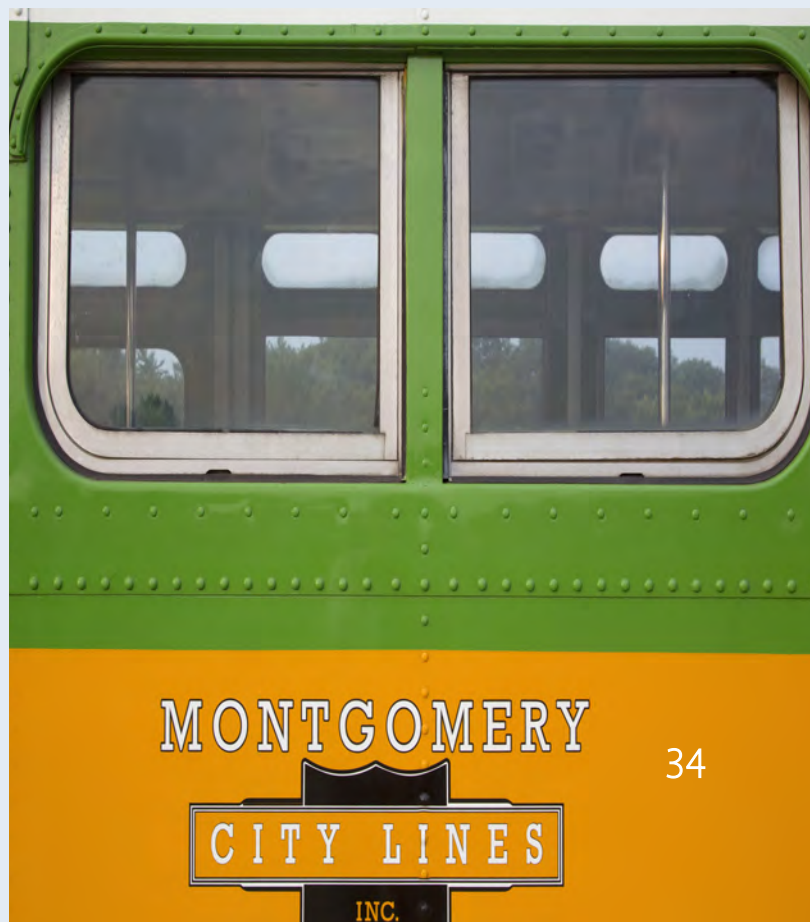
6. Assemble an organization that will serve as the coordinating hub of the broadband ecosystem that exists outside City Hall.

If Montgomery is to become a true smart city, it is imperative that there is seamless and intentional

coordination of the city's information technology/smart city efforts with the work of external providers and partners. The external smart city ecosystem must have clear and defined leadership with a direct line of accountability to the mayor's office. Without a champion of this ecosystem, the city risks having an uncoordinated and ultimately ineffective smart city effort.

7. Lobby the Alabama legislature for a general fund appropriation to the Transportation Trust Fund and expand other public-private partnerships to generate and increase revenue and matching funds for infrastructure investments.

Montgomery is the capital of Alabama and thus a destination city in the heart of state government. In order to make the necessary financial investments in Montgomery's infrastructure, broadband and a transportation system that is severely underfunded, it will take collaboration from city, state, and federal partners. It is the city's duty to identify cost savings and efficiencies within city government while exploring community benefits agreements and forming alliances with external stakeholders, including our military partners, to increase revenue generating options.





8. Reconfigure the current public transit and transportation model and implement a model that makes Montgomery a true gateway city with transportation modes that are intracity-efficient and attractive (for residents, tourists, students) and regional transit-friendly (airport, rapid transit, trucking).

Cities are often judged by the viability of their public transit and transportation systems. Revitalizing our transit system will be beneficial to making our city more attractive to outside businesses and tourists and more convenient and accessible for residents. The city must renew the faith of the citizenry in the transit system. We must thoroughly identify and address the impediments to transportation and the transit system and redesign the model to look like the future of Montgomery as a tourist destination and technology hub, instead of a city stuck in the status quo. Montgomery must align the need to attract and transport tourists to attractions and special events such as the museums and waterpark (i.e. airport, shuttles, trolleys), with the needs of the workforce and commuters (i.e. rapid transit and dedicated bus lanes, access to business districts and industrial parks) and the needs of citizens who may be economically disadvantaged or with limited mobility (para-transit, ride-sharing, micro-transportation). There must be a complete shift in Montgomery's approach to transportation and public transit from where we are now to more innovative and efficient solutions that meet the needs of all Montgomerians.

9. Re-bid the bus management vendor contract via a competitive process. This must result in a contract that includes measurable transit objectives, performance-based incentives and penalties, and an annual review process that includes an assessment of rider experience in addition to data on performance.

For 20 years, one company has served as the contracted vendor to provide management of the city's transit system. The original bus management contract was awarded in the year 2000 for a 10-year term. The 2010 performance-based contract amendment was eligible for renewal for each subsequent year following a review of performance and management of the transit system and expires on September 30, 2020. The contract has not been competitively rebid in two decades and there is an immediate need to address reduction in headways (wait times between buses) and travel time from west to east, installation of bus shelters, signage, medical transport, and innovation to include transport for tourism and cultural arts destinations.

10. Launch a marketing campaign to encourage residents to 'ride with pride' to combat the stigma of public transportation. Encourage residents to reduce their carbon footprint by utilizing alternative modes that alleviate congestion and improve health and environmental quality.

Public transit should be a viable option for all citizens to "Ride with Pride" but there is a stigma associated with public transportation, particularly with the bus. Montgomery has a proud history of challenging the status quo and addressing inequality during the Civil Rights Movement, yet the city seems to have stalled in its efforts to advance on those gains. The perception that public and/or non-motorized transit is for "the other 1%" (i.e. people who are poor, homeless, or otherwise disadvantaged) must be eradicated. Ridesharing, bike-sharing, buses, etc. have economic and environmental benefits to both the city and citizens. An efficient public transit system should provide an accessible option for seniors, a timely option for the workforce, and a safe option for families and tourists.

Health & Human Services

A Community That Lives Well


The charge of the Health and Human Services Committee was to develop a set of recommendations that will encourage and empower the citizens of Montgomery to live well. The recommendations should include strategies to address mental health challenges, the growing homeless population, and focus on identifying affordable housing options and increasing home ownership. This Committee also examined how we can leverage opportunity zones to eliminate food deserts, advance investment and reinvestment initiatives, and support a green-built environment that encourages stability.



HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

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Caylor Rolling

A 2020 report named Montgomery as one of America's unhealthiest cities, with only 5 of 173 other cities lagging behind the capital city. Health and wellness outcomes in Montgomery, Alabama are striking. Montgomery suffers from worse health outcomes in nearly all categories compared to the national average. One manifestation of this is that life expectancy, or how long an infant born today would be expected to live given current health trends, was 75.8 years in Montgomery, compared to the national median of 79 years. Montgomery carries a 19.6 percent smoking rate, compared to the national median of 15.6 percent. Obesity and diabetes prevalence are among the highest in the nation. Obesity prevalence in Montgomery is over eight percent higher than the national median. Likewise, diabetes prevalence is almost three and a half percent higher than the national median. As it relates to local food outlets,



[Mayor Steven Reed's] contribution toward the creation of the Alabama Healthy Minds Network has helped hundreds of people get the treatment and services they need instead of spending time in jail. He has made drastic improvements to mental health services and other areas in his administration.

-- City of Montgomery website

Montgomery has more than 50 percent less outlets per capita than the national median. Almost all health and wellness statistics about Montgomery point to the same fact: health outcomes in Montgomery are worse than they should be.

Healthy people live in healthy communities, and the statistics show that Montgomery has a key opportunity to provide a healthier community to its citizens. The Health and Human Services Committee focused its efforts on developing recommendations that provide a framework for Mayor Reed to deliver a healthier Montgomery. Changing the trajectory of the health and quality of life of Montgomerians will require unprecedented innovation, coordination and commitment on the part of the municipal government in the following areas:

- (1) Consistency and continuity in long-term planning;
- (2) Access and awareness; and
- (3) Public-Private Partnerships.

1. Establish a Mayoral Health and Human Services Commission charged with working with all City of Montgomery departments, multi-sector agencies, and key stakeholder organizations to begin implementation of the Health and Human Services Committee's recommendations.

Changing health outcomes in Montgomery will make health and wellness a long-standing priority. The Mayoral Health and Human Services Commission would be charged with working with all City of Montgomery departments, multi-sector

agencies, and key stakeholder organizations to develop a clear plan with measurable progress goals that lead toward reducing the most difficult public health challenges the City of Montgomery faces, including, but not limited to: obesity, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, homelessness and workforce housing. The Commission would report annually to the Mayor on progress toward reducing specified health and human services related challenges.

2. Create a cabinet level role (i.e Health Commissioner) for public health advocacy and problem solving within the Mayor's Office that will be responsible for coordinating transformation efforts across the City's public health and healthcare system, and ensuring that agencies serving the city's most vulnerable populations are operating compassionately, collaboratively, equitably, and effectively.

The lack of consistency and continuity in a health and wellness strategy for Montgomery has resulted in ever-shifting priorities and policies, and an inability to articulate a long-term plan to improve health outcomes for Montgomery residents, particularly those in underserved communities. Parallel with the work of the Mayoral Health and Human Services Commission, it is critical that Montgomery utilizes a role-based model for public health advocacy and problem solving that addresses the lack of visibility of existing health programs and services in the City of Montgomery and limits organic information sharing and amplifies community apathy. The purpose of this recommendation is to have a highly visible, formal mandate to integrate Montgomery health initiatives with inter-departmental, inter-governmental, public

“[T]here are some opportunities that we have to capitalize on as a community in order to be a place where people really want to build their homes, grow their businesses, start a family and live a great life.”

-- Mayor Steven L. Reed



private, academic, and other non-governmental organization efforts in order to eliminate gaps in service linkage, continue collective needs, and decrease wasteful spending and resources from taxpayers and/or grants. This role will also be responsible for overseeing and driving the work of the Mayoral Health and Human Services Commission.

3. Conduct a comprehensive study of the state of health and wellness in the City of Montgomery.

The work of the Mayoral Health and Human Services Commission and the Health Commissioner must begin with a comprehensive citywide accessibility assessment and resource mapping of health, human, and social services resources, and programs within the city of Montgomery to ensure universal access. This assessment should also identify gaps and opportunities in existing public service and education campaigns that highlight public health resources and promote healthy behavior. Montgomery's outcomes have been reported through various agencies and reports, but the City of Montgomery has never conducted a comprehensive assessment to under-

stand its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as it relates to health and wellness. The findings and recommendations coming out of the assessment should drive the City's public-private partnership with health and healthcare stakeholders to develop an equity impact assessment tool that will enable decision makers to intentionally focus and align policies and strategies to reduce health disparities.

4. Expand the use of City facilities, including community and recreation centers, to include health and wellness hubs where a variety of programs and services can be obtained, and where Montgomerians can learn and be referred to other health and wellness resources.

Equitable access to health care and related resources is a driver of the negative outcomes that Montgomery has historically produced. Yet, Montgomery has many untapped City-owned resources that could be utilized to increase Montgomerians' access to health and wellness resources. Reopening the City's closed recreation centers could provide health and wellness hubs for after-school programming, health services, physical exercise, adult education, and other services that improve health, public safety, and community cohesion.

5. Develop and launch a multi-year marketing and information campaign on issues related to access to care, mental health, substance abuse and other prevalent health and human services issues that impact the City of Montgomery.

In addition to providing access equitably across all Montgomery neighborhoods, there is a need to increase awareness of prevalent health and human services issues. Identifying and securing funding for staff support to design and launch a multi-year marketing and information campaign is critical to promoting healthy behavior and educating Montgomery residents about the resources already available to them, as well as those that will be launched during the Mayor's tenure.



“We have a lot of room to make changes. So, we investigate and research national best policies because we cannot and should not recreate the wheel. We want to give the mayor something that he can visually see the city going forward. We should be free to use this [committee] as a platform to make change. We are collectively different, but hope to provide solutions that affect change for all.”

-- Dr. Brian Gary, Co-Chair, Meeting #1

CHANGE FOR ALL. ⁴⁰

6. Implement a health and wellness case management system that is integrated with the city's health and wellness hubs, Jackson, Baptist and Health Services, Inc.

The City's hospitals – Jackson, Baptist and Health Services, Inc. – continue to play an indispensable role by providing healthcare to most un- and under-insured residents in Montgomery. However, these institutions, each of which receive significant financial support from the City, continue to lose money, which threatens their ability to continue to provide care to some of the city's most vulnerable residents. There is great value in a coordinated approach whereby the City can implement an integrated case management system that will include case managers throughout each district. These case managers should work with the various health agencies and hospitals to employ a pro-active approach to providing or connecting Montgomery citizens with health and human services. Doing so would allow providers to identify those among us most vulnerable to becoming at risk before they experience issues.

7. Address homelessness by assembling a Homelessness Strategic Planning Committee that would be comprised of providers of homeless services, nonprofit organizations, community groups, faith communities, concerned residents, private businesses and foundations.

As of January 2019, Alabama had an estimated 3,261 residents experiencing homelessness on any given night, as reported by Continuums of Care to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Montgomery region accounts for approximately 25 percent of the state's homelessness count, with over 800 homeless individuals on any given night. Eradicating homelessness requires the development of solutions for ongoing challenges as well as strategies to prevent homelessness. The Strategic Planning Committee should be charged with developing a strategic plan that will: (i) integrate and

promote best practices across housing and service interventions; (ii) identify new partners, in new areas, to help seize critical opportunities; (iii) leverage more support for the homeless system; and (iv) make specific recommendations for targeting resources to those most in need and likely to benefit through coordinated assessment, written standards, and prioritization of resources.

8. Avoid duplication of efforts by creating opportunities for the newly formed Homelessness Strategic Planning Committee to partner with the Mid-Alabama Coalition for the Homeless and other agencies to tackle chronic problems related to homelessness, including homeless encampments and the need for emergency housing for elderly people and women.

Across the city, there are existing agencies that are doing note-worthy work on behalf of the homeless population, however further cooperation is needed. The collaborative work of the City and partners like the Mid-Alabama Coalition for the Homeless should focus on: (i) crafting an agenda that makes the connection between homeless services and job opportunities explicit, (ii) facilitating the transition for families and individuals from homelessness to permanent housing, stable employment, and economic stability and (iii) lowering or removing barriers – such as sobriety and credit history—to place those experiencing homelessness directly into living situations with wraparound support services, rather than moving them through different levels of transitional housing.

9. Issue a call to action to promote and advance the availability of workforce housing in the city by: (i) creating inclusionary zones, (ii) developing incentive programs for developers who set aside a percentage of housing units to be sold or rented at below-market prices; and (iii) launching an online platform that connects residents with workforce housing opportunities and related services.

According to the 2007-2009 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, nearly one-third of all Montgomery households live on less than \$25,000 per

The situation is particularly acute for many black residents, including black families and senior citizens. Data from 2007-2009 shows that there is a significant racial disparity in income, employment, educational attainment, and poverty rates. The median household income for blacks was only 54.7 percent of that for whites. The poverty rate for blacks was 3.9 times higher than for whites. Employment in professional and managerial occupations was 26.5 percent for blacks, but 45.9 percent for whites. All these indicators are a contributing factor to the workforce housing crisis that Montgomery faces, particularly for people and communities of color.

As part of this call to action, the City of Montgomery should take necessary steps to:

- Complete a study of housing development and develop appropriate guidelines for the development of market-rate, mixed-rate, and other community development programs;
- Engage local housing development partners and property owners;
- Consider zoning ordinance changes to diversify housing options and incentivize workforce housing and mixed-income communities;

- Study zoning changes and consider allowing accessory dwelling units (including Tiny Houses and bungalow courts); reducing parking requirements; promoting inclusionary zoning, set asides, and land trusts; and reassessing building height and density requirements;
- Realign building codes to incentivize workforce construction opportunities;
- Concretize a strategy to move housing development projects forward in ways that foster vibrant mixed-income communities downtown and in each neighborhood; and
- Invite anchor institutions to revamp homeownership programs to help meet the need for workforce housing via a focus on multifamily owner-occupied units in targeted neighborhoods.

Additionally, the Reed Administration should develop and launch a system that will include all workforce housing in the City of Montgomery, allowing residents to find homes and access government resources to get and stay in those homes. This system will ensure that housing units subsidized by the City, including those built on public land or required by inclusionary zoning regulations, and the application requirements are easily accessible. The search tool should be made



available across the city at resource hubs, libraries and recreation centers, but should also be accessible by phone.

10. As part of a long-term strategy, launch a Green Business Initiative that: (i) establishes a system for assisting all businesses in the City of Montgomery to “go green” by improving their environmental performance in ways that may also improve their financial performance over the long run; and (ii) includes a requirement for Greening Initiatives in all new economic development proposals.

For far too long, some have considered having a healthy environment to be incompatible with a healthy economy. However, evidence has shown that having a healthy environment can drive economic growth. At the national level, the U.S. environmental technologies and services industry supported 1.7 million jobs, generated approximately \$300 billion in revenues, and exported goods and services worth \$44 billion, more than six years ago.

Green initiatives are not just necessary for the City and businesses to employ. It is critical that the Reed Administration secure grant funding and collaborate with other organizations to advance a Green and Healthy Homes Initiative that will cultivate formal partnerships to promote healthy living and healthy food, establish educational workshops around health and nutrition, develop effective strategies to eliminate food waste, and encourage the creation of farmers markets in all neighborhoods, especially those in food deserts.

11. Embed food insecurity strategies in larger efforts, using collective impact approaches that bring together community representatives to work across silos, maintain accountability, and address community-level challenges, including chronic disinvestment.

While it may seem counter-intuitive – food insecurity, lack of green initiatives, poverty, obesity and diabetes have frequently been identified as being closely interrelated. A considerable amount of research demonstrates that people living in or near poverty have disproportionately worse health outcomes and less access to health care than those who do not. In addition, neighborhoods with many poor or low-income residents often have fewer resources that promote health (e.g., full-service grocery stores offering affordable and nutritious foods, parks and recreational facilities that encourage physical activity) and have more environmental threats that harm health (e.g., poor air and water quality, poor housing conditions) compared to higher-income neighborhoods. The challenge of food security is multifaceted, and the Reed Administration should look at diverse solutions, from addressing poverty, to promoting healthier and sustainable diets, to empowering people through building their awareness and skills by employing a collective impact approach that is inclusive of community-based, local, state and federal partners and stakeholders.

Cultural Arts & Entertainment

A City Thriving in Arts and Culture

The charge of the Arts and Culture Committee was to develop recommendations to bolster existing arts and cultural assets and support a growing local arts economy. As Montgomery is a destination city, known for its historic museums, the Cultural Arts and Entertainment Committee focused on how existing assets can serve as a catalyst for growth opportunities, and explored new priorities that articulate the role that arts and culture will play in the City of Montgomery. Recommendations consider the City's role in sustaining arts and culture through an active entertainment district and tourism.



CULTURAL ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE

Ashley Jernigan, Co-Chair
Dr. Laurie Weil, Co-Chair
Dr. Felicia Bell
Paul Davis
Rick Dildine
Kalonji Gilchrist
Kevin King
Jaylon Pickett
Ashley Ledbetter
Perry Varner
Ted White

Montgomery has no shortage of cultural assets. Montgomery's museums, festivals, culturally cultivated hotels and entertainment scene have made it a destination city. A 2019 Forbes article noted that, "Were the Alabama capital's excellent arts museum located in a small country, it might well be the prime attraction." Without question, Montgomery has spoken truth to the transformative power of the arts. However, the success of Montgomery's priceless cultural assets has in many respects been made in silos. The City of Montgomery has a unique opportunity to tear down these silos and support both existing arts and cultural assets, as well as support a growing local arts economy through an equitable collective impact model.

Research has shown that the role of arts and culture in cities and neighborhoods is often equated with bolstering the tourism economy. Cultural



Thomas Wolfe said, 'Culture is the arts elevated into a set of beliefs.' So, I want to thank you all for elevating the arts to be a part of our culture ... It creates a unity among the community, and that's something that's so important to us."

-- Mayor Steven Reed



tourism definitely has its benefits, but the arts provide so much more than an authentic experience for travelers. Montgomery should embrace the equally significant role that artists and the creative community should play in remaking and re-envisioning of neighborhoods across Montgomery, and, perhaps more importantly, connecting the people that make these places worth inhabiting. In defining how the role of arts and culture should shape Montgomery, the Cultural Arts and Entertainment Committee focused its efforts on developing recommendations that provide a framework for Mayor Reed to deliver a model that embodies the phrase “stronger together,” with a deliberate focus on accountability, equity, awareness and access.

1. The Reed Administration should create a stronger and adequately staffed Office of Cultural Arts and Entertainment that will include cultural arts and special events.

The City must be more intentional about elevating the arts by cultivating the cultural arts and entertainment community from within City Hall. Currently, the role of Cultural Arts Director exists under the Leisure Services department. This role needs to be elevated from under Leisure Services into having its own independent presence in City government and should be charged with the following:

- Play a central leadership role as convener, knowledge provider, and network builder to strengthen communities through arts, culture, and heritage activities;

- Develop a comprehensive plan for municipal support of the cultural arts and entertainment, with a goal of focusing existing resources where they can provide maximum benefit;
- Fundraise from federal and state sources to augment City support for arts and culture in collaboration with the Arts Council;
- Create a catalogue of all cultural arts and entertainment organizations;
- Develop a centralized hub for information about arts organizations, arts and entertainment events in all districts, museums, libraries, restaurants, historic sites, hotels, etc.;
- Encourage collaboration between for-profit and non-profit providers; and
- Facilitate residents’ engagement with the rich artistic and cultural offerings at the elementary, secondary, collegiate and university level.

2. The Reed administration should create an equity framework that will provide efficiencies, accelerate accomplishments and thrust Montgomery’s cultural arts community forward.

With a General Fund of approximately \$259 million annually, Montgomery currently allocates at least three percent of its budget to the arts through anchor institutions such as the Library, Museum, Zoo and Shakespeare Festival. There is a consensus that these City-supported institutions are worthy of the City’s support. In fact, the City should consider the cost-benefit of increasing its investment of these cultural pillars provided that it is done with a lens of equity and

accountability. There exists an opportunity for greater collaboration and more equitable investments in cultural arts institutions and organizations. Very little is understood about the City's opportunities to grow, collaborate and leverage the benefits of a collective impact model for cultural arts. The proposed equity framework should include a review of the measurable objectives of all City-supported cultural institutions to ensure that outcomes are aligned with the City's cultural needs. The framework should be coupled with a comprehensive and inclusive assessment and cultural-planning process to address the disparities that have stunted Montgomery's growth.

1. The Reed Administration should consider the impact of placemaking in its cultural-planning process to determine how cultural arts can be used to revitalize Montgomery, including its neighborhoods that are most challenged and underserved. The Reed Administration should also consider spurring creative placemaking through the creation of a Mayoral Cultural Economy Grant Program to support creative placemaking through the City's general fund.

It has been well documented that cultural arts and entertainment can revitalize distressed communities. Cities like Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and Pittsburgh have all realized outcomes around property investment and community building through creative placemaking and the use of arts and culture strategies on vacant properties. When you walk past a vacant house, you are likely to speed your steps and pass it quickly. Vacant, blighted properties, especially those that are long vacant, can feel unsettling and unsafe. They detract from the appearance of the neighborhood, can attract crime and, as they deteriorate, lead to unsafe conditions and bring down surrounding property values. They also cost municipalities significant amounts of lost tax revenue, and code enforcement and public safety headaches. When these properties are present in large concentrations, as has happened in many American cities and towns in the wake of the Great Recession and foreclosure crisis, it can have a staggering effect on the surrounding neighborhood. Seven and a half percent of Montgomery's homes are standing vacant, with much of the vacancies concentrated on Montgomery's west side.



MONTGOMERY'S CULTURAL ASSETS: HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

During its second meeting, the Cultural Arts and Entertainment Committee challenged members and other present to consider Montgomery's cultural assets. Of course, there were some of Montgomery's well-known assets that made the list, but there were many assets that are undeniably hiding in plain sight for lack of opportunity or resources. It's time to bring them all to the light -- working together! Montgomery is more than what you see!

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1977 Books | Boys and Girls Club | Montgomery and Lee Street Mural |
| 21 Dreams | Booker T. Washington, Baldwin, Floyd and
Carver Elementary Schools | Montgomery Art Guild |
| 5 Points Sculpture | Capitol Sounds Concert Band | Montgomery County Historical Society |
| A.S.U. Theatre | Capri Theatre | Montgomery Main Library (Reference Desk) |
| A.U.M. Theatre | Cloverdale Playhouse | Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts |
| ALA Arts Alliance | Common Ground Montgomery | Montgomery Performing Arts Centre |
| ALA Writer's Forum | Connecting Life Center | Montgomery Symphony |
| Alabama Dance Theatre Pre-professional
Dance Company | Crump Community Center | Mooseum |
| Alabama Department of Archives and
History | Daedalus Sculpture | Music Education on Wheels |
| Alabama Indigenous Coalition | Dexter Parsonage Museum | Nat King Cole Mural |
| Alabama Institute for Education in the
Arts | Etiquette Classes-Sheyann Christburg | New South Books |
| Alabama Shakespeare Festival | Equal Justice Initiative | Old Alabama Town |
| Alabama State Capitol Grounds | Expose Art House | Peacock Tract Cultural Arts Alliance |
| Alabama State Council on the Arts | Faulkner University Sculptures | Places that open late night |
| Alabama State University - Tullibody Fine
Arts & Music Building | Fitzgerald House | Rainbow Soldier/Union Station |
| Alabama State University Sculptures | Frederick Douglass Community Choir | Rosa Parks Museum |
| Albania Dance Theatre | Freedom Riders | Rosa Parks Statue |
| Archives | General Richard Montgomery | RSA Tower and Plaza |
| Armory Learning Arts Center | Georgine Clarke Alabama Artists Gallery | Sidewalk Riverfront Quotes |
| Art Time Studios | Graffiti Park | St. Jude Sculpture |
| Arts Council of Montgomery | Jasmine Hill Gardens (Elmore Co.) | Stonehenge Gallery |
| ASF | Keep Productions Youth Development
Program | Street Pianos |
| ATRIUM, a Arts Facebook Group | Kress Community Room | Tara Satarious' Art Installation at
Riverfront & Buck |
| Auburn Univ. at Montgomery Sculptures | Landmarks Foundation | That's My Child Mural |
| Bill Ford's Mural-Rufus Lewis Library | Maxwell Air Force Base - Wright Brother's
Park | The King's Canvas |
| Book Benches (12 locations) | McIntyre Community Centre | The Montgomery Chorale |
| | MEOW Academy | The Sanctuary |
| | MMFA Sculpture Garden/Fountain | TheMontgomery.blogspot.com |
| | | Think All Be All Arts Incubator |
| | | Urban Dreams Mural |



4. The Reed Administration should promote existing cultural arts and entertainment events in a more cohesive and strategic way by: (i) enhancing the City's website to include calendar of events; (ii) utilizing inventive social media platforms and outreach strategies; (iii) engaging cultural ambassadors who will serve as champions for their existing communities and will engage citizens' participation in cultural arts and special events; and (iv) facilitate resident engagement with the rich artistic and cultural offerings at the elementary, secondary, collegiate and university level.

Awareness of and access to Montgomery's cultural and entertainment offerings consistently emerged as a conversational theme of the Cultural Arts and Entertainment Committee. Even with a room filled with a group of culture bearers, it was clear that many had never met one another, nor did many of them have any awareness of the value each of them, respectively, bring to Montgomery's cultural arts and entertainment community. There is a lack of connectivity among cultural arts and entertainment organizations.

5. The Reed administration should develop an inventory of public spaces, private spaces and creative incubators that can serve as affordable and innovative community spaces for artists and cultural groups to rehearse, exhibit, develop and perform. Once the inventory is complete, the Reed Administration should highlight the local artist workforce through exhibitions in Montgomery City Hall and other City real property assets, including buildings, parks and community centers.

The City also has a unique opportunity to raise awareness of local artists by utilizing its physical assets as a canvass for Montgomery. These types of initiatives are a win-win for Montgomery raising the community's cultural awareness and granting cultural artists and entertainers with a new and unprecedented level of exposure and access to City resources.



TRANSITION COORDINATOR



Irva Reed, CPA, SPHR has served in corporate managerial and leadership positions for several Fortune 500 companies. She has worked and traveled throughout Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia, and Latin America. Irva has led large-scale change initiatives and process/workflow efficiency efforts, and is a frequent contributor to organization taskforces, identifying and implementing best practices and performing due diligence. Ms. Reed graduated from Howard University and earned her MBA at Interamerican University in San Juan, PR.

TRANSITION CONSULTANT

The Thomas Consulting Group (TCG), a boutique consultancy that specializes in mayoral transitions and change management, served as the consultants throughout the transition. TCG has supported the transitions and administrations of several local leaders in the Deep South including Mayor LaToya Cantrell of New Orleans, Mayor Adrian Perkins of Shreveport, and Mayor Chokwe Lumumba of Jackson, Mississippi.



TRANSITION INTERNS



Katie Shultz, Andrew Bentley and Simon Borumand, students at the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government participated in a two-week fellowship in support of the transition activities.

The fellowship program, of the Taubman Center for State & Local Government at Harvard Kennedy School, provides students with training on providing policy, advisory and technical support to new administrations.

