

Forest to Zelda Planning Area



The Neighborhood Plan

Neighborhood Plan

Neighborhoods are the building blocks of healthy cities and towns. Neighbors know each other and take a special pride in their homes and community. In a well designed neighborhood, the residents can walk safely to nearby shopping, schools and parks. Public facilities serve as points of interest and provide a variety of activities for the area. A broad range of housing options allow a mix of family sizes, ages, incomes and cultures to live together. Transit service is convenient to the neighborhood to reach jobs and connects the neighborhood to the larger community. Using SmartCode or New Urbanist theories to direct the community can help to reestablish the former neighborhood fabric to the Forest to Zelda Neighborhood Planning Area.

It is important to remember that restoring the community is a multi-faceted task. The following strategies should all be considered as part of the total renovation of the area. Not any one thing can restore the community, but the city and the neighborhood should recognize the numerous components of a community as equally important and all components are part of

the solution.

The Forest to Zelda Neighborhood Plan addresses the concerns and desires of the citizens as expressed in a series of community meetings. These concerns and goals were translated into goals and objectives to drive various strategies to use for implementation. The strategies are divided into the following eight areas:

- Community Organization
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Land Use, Zoning, and Landlord Ordinances
- Education
- Public Facilities
- Historical Preservation
- Public Safety

Community Organization:

- Develop community watches
- Plan community clean-up dates
- Plan community social activities
- Build community leadership
- Strengthen community identity
- Monitor and evaluate implementation of community goals

Economic Development:

- Redevelop some commercial areas
- Increase number and diversity of businesses and services in the area
- Encourage a “Main Street” historic preservation model for area businesses
- Attract people to move into the neighborhood
- Create opportunities for more jobs
- Realign Mulberry Street with Narrow Lane Road to facilitate traffic flow

Education:

- Provide financial education for residents to prepare them for homeownership
- Awareness of Montgomery’s programs for down payment assistance and home repairs
- Promote educational and job training opportunities
- Tutoring resources for youths

Historic Preservation

- Restore and preserve the historic period architecture of the area
- Maintain historic purpose of the neighborhood to house middle and lower income families
- Encourage a “Main Street” historic preservation model for area businesses (See Economic Development section for explanation of this model)

Housing:

- Promote rehabilitation of housing stock
- Maintain affordable aspect of neighborhood housing
- Encourage infill development on vacant lots and reuse abandoned buildings
- Attract mixed income residents
- Increase percentage of homeowners

Land Use, Zoning and Landlord Ordinances:

- Change zoning to encourage development of mixed neighborhoods to attract commercial and residential infill
- Change zoning to allow smaller lot sizes and higher densities where possible to help affordability of housing
- Amend City of Montgomery Zoning ordinance to ensure better design standards,
- Support legislation that would strengthen landlord-tenant contracts to protect both the tenant, the landlord, and the community from currently experienced abuse and deterioration

Public Facilities:

- Provide more public green space
- Promote development of recreational and social activities for children
- Public access to computers
- Opportunities for Senior citizens

Public Safety:

- Increase neighborhood coverage by Neighborhood Watch
- Increase crime prevention measures
- Eliminate vacant lots and houses that encourage criminal activities and other types of vermin
- Increase opportunities for safe walking and biking through the area

The Neighborhood Meeting identified the assets, liabilities, opportunities and constraints that led to the enumeration of these strategies. At the meeting it was clear that the residents were involved and committed to the fact that they must be realistic about the present conditions and take responsibility for their own issues. This level of commitment is a tremendous asset that will carry the residents and land owners through the time and effort necessary to implement the adopted strategies.

The City of Montgomery has committed the time and resources that it has to offer to help the neighbors in meeting their goals. The City can apply for various grants that could be of use to the Forest to Zelda Planning Area such as the Alabama Power Company Tree Grant, transportation enhancement grants, green-way grants, and others. The Planning and Development Department is committed to helping define an action plan for approaching each strategy and helping with implementation to aid the neighbors meet their goals. The following section will outline numerous suggestions for implementing each strategy and individual goal. It will be necessary to evaluate the process frequently and measures will be suggested to help with evaluation in order to determine when and what changes need to be made to stay on track.

Community Organization

People are any community's best asset. The strength and sustainability of any community growth is spearheaded by the people. In order to nurture, maintain, and support the community, many people will play important roles. Currently, many of the Forest to Zelda residents are working to make changes or maintain the appearance in the various neighborhoods that make up the Forest to Zelda Planning Area. Change takes time and it is important that neighbors not only see results but have help. More people will be needed to bring about all the changes that the neighbors desire and over a period of time it will require that new volunteers step up to responsible positions. With this in mind, community organizations must be in place to develop and nurture community actions. These organizations will do the work of the community. Some of the needed community organizations include:

- **Community Watches:** Since crime is an issue in parts of the neighborhood, it is important that the residents do all they can to help report incidents to the police. This reporting supports neighbors and contributes to the health of the area. Reporting is anonymous and safe for every caller and is the only way the police can have eyes on the street. It is impossible for the police

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

to be in the area all the time, and the neighbors may help by reporting incidents or suspicious activity.

- **Community Clean-ups:** As residents and visitors understand that litter will not be tolerated, then fewer clean-ups will be necessary. While area-wide cleanups are not needed at this time, this can be considered for areas that would benefit from the extra attention. As the neighbors take charge of the physical appearance of the area, visitors will also respect this. The City should support volunteer efforts by enhanced code enforcement. The Community can help by reporting these offences as well. Once a neighborhood takes back its ownership from those who abuse it, crime will decrease and problems will diminish, and the beauty of the neighborhood will be restored.

- **Plan Social Activities:** As hard as you work, play together as well. Reach out to neighbors who have not participated, meet new people, encourage friendly gatherings and celebrate the neighborhood. The times spent

relaxing and enjoying the neighborhood is important to building a strong and positive feeling for the area and teaches children that home is more than just the place they sleep.

- **Build Community Leadership:** It will require time and energy for the Forest to Zelda Planning Area to continue to grow and thrive. It is important to share the leadership responsibilities and encourage new people to join in the community activities and decision making. It will take developing leadership over time to maintain this work that

is beginning today. The more people that are involved in the process of the neighborhood growth, the better satisfied everyone will be and the stronger the neighborhood will become. It would be wise to encourage youths in the area to become involved with their neighborhood as well.

•Strengthen Community Identity: Working together to determine neighborhood policy is important and requires as many neighbors as possible. Neighborhood identity reflects the spirit and values of the neighborhood and announces to all visitors that this is a unique area. Several projects could be undertaken to put into visible symbols or graphics exactly what this neighborhood stands for. Gateways, entrances into the area, should carry these symbols, signs for businesses in the area could carry the symbol, and main road through the area should have signs letting all who pass through that this is a special community.

These symbols could be developed in the neighborhood or a professional could design them. Perhaps a contest for children to be involved or for interested citizens to participate in. A flag could be made carrying the symbol. Any number of opportunities for designing and displaying the symbol are possible depending upon the desires of the community. Different neighborhoods within the Forest to Zelda area may wish to have separate symbols.

•Monitor and Evaluate Implementation of Community Goals:

As is the case in implementing any plan, some of the steps to implementation may result in unanticipated consequences. Therefore, as the implementation proceeds, residents need to be aware of the implementation and monitor that the realized outcome is the desired outcome. Any unexpected variation in outcome should be reported to either the City Planner or the Neighborhood Organization Chair in order that problems may be addressed as they arise. The various steps of implementation to address specific goals should, in most cases, have measurable outcomes that will

be used to check progress. These measures will be identified in the plan.

Public Art projects like the one below from the Museum of Cultural Arts, Houston are great for bringing neighborhoods together: a joint effort, boost community spirit, and unique expression of neighborhood pride.



Economic Development

This strategy is also multifaceted and has links to all the other strategies. None of the strategies actually stand alone, but all interact with the others and enhance the outcome. Increased economic development in the area will offer increased retail and service opportunities for area residents, as well as job opportunities. As businesses increase in number and diversity of products and services, this will also attract more shoppers and eventually more residents to the area. The maps on pages ? and ? illustrate the proposed zoning changes that may facilitate the desired development for the neighborhood.

1. The Charrette (summer 2007) sponsored by the local AIA, Architects Association and Friends of the Mulberry Street Business District, addressed the commercial area centered around Mulberry Street from Carter Hill Road to I-85 and the adjoining streets. This Charrette incorporated suggestions from neighbors' comments, the City Planning Department Comments, and the Architects' experiences with commercial development. The recommended redevelopment was centered around the **realignment of Mulberry Street and Narrow Lane Road** to facilitate traffic flow, add crosswalks to encourage pedestrians, and create a new look.



Drawing by Tom Kaufman, Mulberry Charrette



Intersection of Mulberry and Carter Hill Road

The illustration above shows how the Narrow Lane/Carter Hill/Mulberry streets might look after realignment. This would eliminate one traffic signal, the current 'dog leg', and the resulting traffic snarls. Moving the store fronts to the sidewalk edge would offer passersby a pleasant visual image and pedestrians would have easy access to the businesses. The parking lot would be placed behind the stores and entrance/exit to the parking would be a little further from the traffic signal to help relieve congestion. There would also be an entrance into the stores from the parking lot.

2. **Recruiting new businesses and services to the Mulberry Street shopping area** would both attract more customers and add to opportunities available to area residents. This would also help to fill vacancies currently existing in

3. **'Main Street' type businesses** are similar to the ones in the above illustration. The National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.mainstreet.org) advocates a comprehensive program for revitalizing commercial corridors and areas. The eight principles and the advocated approach are included in the Appendix. Basically, this as a strategy for economic development that stresses four main elements: **organization** of existing businesses and government representatives to identify goals and the steps to attain the goals. **Promotion** of the unique qualities of the area through marketing, special events, signage unique to the area, etc. Area **design** should capitalize on the unique architecture of the area and attention to details creates an inviting atmosphere throughout the commercial area. This refers to building improvements and parking areas but also includes things like window displays, street furniture,

landscaping and lighting **Economic restructuring** can be used to strengthen the community's existing assets but will also seek to expand and diversify the area. Converting the unused and under-used elements in the area will help to boost the surrounding appeal as well. Big box stores with tens of thousands of square feet are not appropriate for this area. The grocery store will still be an important member of this community and will be incorporated in the redevelopment.

4. The redevelopment will attract both residential, commercial, and office uses. The addition of **crosswalks**, also a public safety strategy, will facilitate local residents efforts to enjoy their neighborhood and walk to stores and entertainment. Crosswalks are needed on Carter Hill at Mulberry, and also on the Carter Hill/Felder and College intersection. Mulberry Street will probably require two or three cross-walks.

5. The area between Forest and Zelda was once a primarily residential

neighborhood. Today this area is a mix of residential and commercial uses but all located primarily in houses. There are numerous vacant houses and the area appears to be in some confusion. Forest Avenue is anchored by the newly restored Forest Avenue Magnet School, but Forest also has

mixed use business and residential in houses plus some light industrial/construction businesses, medical offices, and a drug store.

One suggestion was to encourage development of an artist complex in order to try to preserve the existing houses in order to maintain the 'small town' atmosphere that is currently there. This would allow artist to live and work in the same building which in turn would add residents to the area, and stimulate the establishment of more restaurants, and small shops. The proximity of I-85 would be an asset as visitors would have easy routes to travel to the Forest-Mulberry area.

6. Zelda Street, on the eastern boundary of the planning area is a busy commercial street with some areas that have recently been redeveloped. Zelda offers a wide range of retail and commercial and numerous places to eat.

There are pedestrian opportunities within the various shopping areas, but the volume of traffic and types of businesses don't necessarily encourage pedestrians to cross Zelda. If there is a demand for this, there could be a study made to determine type and position for designated pedestrian crossings.



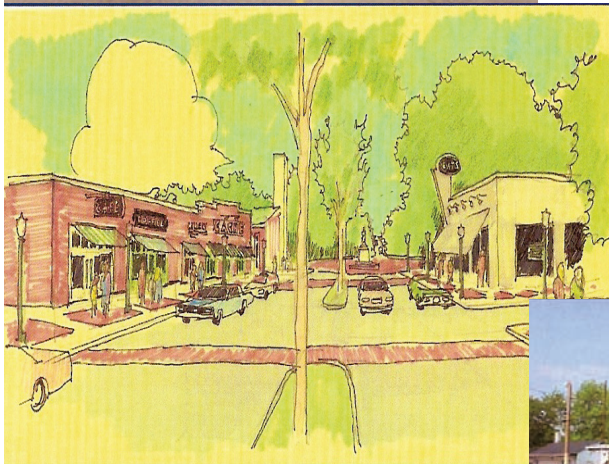
Education

Youths under 18 years old make up almost one fourth (24.4%) of the population in the Forest to Zelda Planning area. Education is an important concern. Forest Avenue School is located in the planning area, but because it is a magnet school, the area children are actually zoned for a different school. Most of the area attends Dannelly Elementary, Houston Hills Junior High and Jeff Davis High School. However some children are zoned for Highland Avenue Elementary, Capitol Heights Junior High and Lanier High School. It is possible to check school zones on the Montgomery Public School website: www.mps.K12.al.us

Citizens of Montgomery, not just those in the Forest to Zelda Planning Area, recognize the importance of our school system for the future of our children, and for the future of our city. We value the educational opportunities we have and encourage every child to obtain the best schooling and job training available. The Montgomery School system is under the direction of the County School Board. The City of Montgomery contributes financially to the school system and urges all citizens to support the schools as well.

Support for academic excellence is important to the growth and development of the area. Our citizens must have good education and job training in order to obtain adequate employment in the future.

Historic Preservation



All the pictures and drawing on this page were generated by the architects volunteering at the Spring 2007 AIA Mulberry Charrette

A goal of the area citizens is to reinforce the neighborhood quality that once existed in the area around Mulberry Street. As mentioned in the Economic Development goals, the charming atmosphere of years gone by still exists to a large degree. This can be cultivated by adopting design standards and some thoughtful planning for restoring the ambience of the neighborhood streets. Architects attending the Mulberry Charrette provided several excellent examples of what the area could look like without tearing buildings down and starting over, but rather, some cosmetic work and attention to some details



Housing

Most of the housing in this planning area is in good condition. There are several neighborhoods within in this area. The homes have an attractive style and well maintained yards. The area gives a pleasant and welcoming appearance as one drives around this area.



In many areas the housing is primarily owner occupied. Over the last ten years, the houses in the area historically referred to as Oak Park (streets numbered 2nd through 6th) have increasingly become rental properties. Unfortunately, as the owners of these rental properties are increasingly from out of the state of Alabama, some of these properties are not carefully watched or maintained in good condition.

The current property appraising system uses comparable property as a base for home loans, when an area is neglected, or owners are not able to maintain

the upkeep and repairs, it often becomes difficult for the whole neighborhood to sell their homes for its value, and it is difficult to obtain loans for making needed repairs.

- **Rehabilitation for homes** in the area that need it. Fortunately, the majority of the homes in this planning area are in good condition. Over eighty percent of the homes are in good shape, 17% need minor repairs, 2% appear to need moderate repairs and less than 1% were undergoing some type of construction at the time of observation. This is not a huge problem, but given that most of the homes requiring some attention are located rather close, this issue is accentuated in that locale.

Help to rehab homes in this area may first need to be referred to Housing Codes if there are any violations in order to get the owners' attention. The City of Montgomery's Community Development Division in the Planning Department and Alabama State University's Home Rehabilitation Program both have home rehab programs for home owners who qualify.

Rebuilding Together and many area churches also have programs for people needing aid. They are especially good for these minor type repairs, as they depend on volunteer help with professional supervision. Contact numbers for these programs can be found in the Appendix. Also, a neighborhood "Repair Day" might bring

neighbors together to help each other fix these problems and build social capital as well.

- This planning area offers a range of good housing in a variety of prices. This is very important to a city the size of Montgomery. **We need to preserve diversity in housing** and this area is a fine example of how a variety of housing types can be mixed to provide a sound neighborhood. One way to help preserve this is to address the comparable loan methods, perhaps by involving the Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac federal loan programs.

- There are a few areas, notably the blocks between Mulberry and Forest, where there are numerous vacancies: vacant land and vacant buildings. These **vacant properties offer areas for new buildings**. Currently the area between Mulberry and Forest has mixed use and ideally this should remain the case.

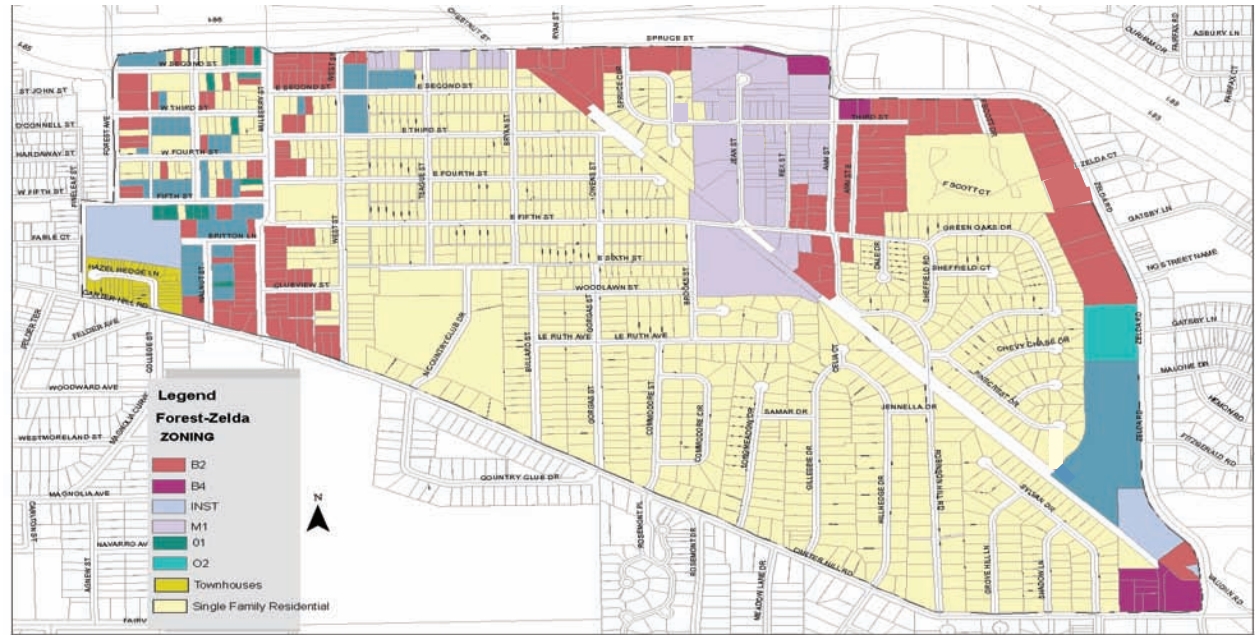
- Generally it is thought that homeowners invest more time and money in the upkeep of their property than a renter. While it is important to have rental property available, if possible, it could serve the overall stability of the area to increase home ownership. The City's Community Development Division of the Planning Department has a Program to assist first time buyers with down payment assistance.

Land Use Zoning, and Landlord Ordinances

These three issues are linked together because they are things the government must address. Zoning is an important tool for redevelopment and preservation in this area. This Plan does not recommend using the SmartCode Overlay, a form-based code, but rather use the traditional zoning code of B-1-b to allow mixed use along the eastern and western edges of this planning area (colored in orange on the map, page 41). Carter Hill, between West Street and Old Farm Road should remain residential. The properties bordering I-85 should remain commercial in nature.

1. There are few zoning changes in the area, except for the area between Mulberry and Forest. At the present time is is a mix of office, commercial and office. The proposed mix-use (B-1-b) is an effort to stimulate more residential use of the area. Historically this was a residential area. The present vacancy rate indicates that there is not much confidence about what is going on for either businesses or residences to thrive.

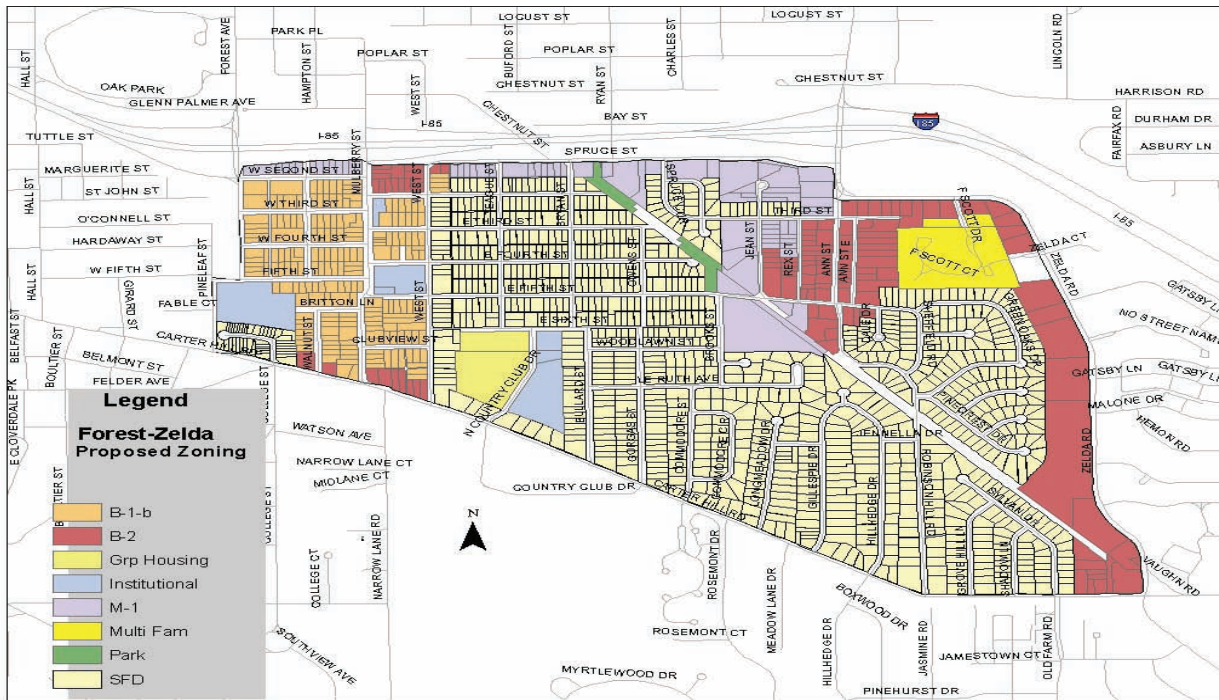
The shopping area along Mulberry offers a variety of diverse shops and a few places to eat. The goal of the Mulberry Business District is to enhance the shops'



presence and increase the size to attract more shoppers. Attractive, design sensitive buildings that resemble houses or townhouses that possibly have retail or offices on the lower floor, could provide housing on the second floor. Encouraging more residential use would restore people to the area and it would no longer appear so vacant. The photo on the right was an illustration by Dover Kohl and Partners for a plan in

Alameda, Colorado.





2. Another change in zoning would place a narrow park along the abandoned railroad at the eastern edge of Second through Sixth Streets. Some of this land has been absorbed by local businesses, but a park would provide some needed play space for area children.

3. The City of Montgomery is in the process of rewriting the traditional zoning code to update the current zoning and to use a contextual zoning to include signage, landscape, and design standards that recognize the uniqueness of our area neighborhoods and thus provide a mechanism to ensure the neighborhoods may preserve their historic characteristics. This is very important to our city's ability to grow

yet respect the historic characteristics that make all of Montgomery so special. Signs noting the Mulberry shopping district could play a role in attracting and directing shoppers and visitors to the area.

4. Putting zoning in place is an initial step the government can do to help, but finding developers to take risks to be the first to work in the redevelopment may also be something the government can do. A variety of incentives could be proposed to develop in this area.

The City could possibly offer some or all of the following incentives to ensure a project could be built: (1) offer credit assurance, (2) equity investment in the project,

or (3) a soft second loan to the developers. Other avenues of support could come from extending partnership to an established local developer, grant money from a foundation, the State Pension fund, or a federal grant.

Another possibility would be for a multi-partnership, that is several entities could come together with each responsible for only a small portion of the over all project. New Market Tax credits and housing credits could possibly be considered, depending on the project.

5. The Landlord/Tenant situation in Montgomery has some major issues that beg reform. A strong contract outlining owner and tenant responsibilities could be a starting point. This will require legislative action and legal counsel. This needs to be looked into for the sake of the tenant, owner, and the neighborhood. Strict enforcement of housing codes can help to address problems with buildings that are neglected and owners that a lax in responding to appeals by the neighbors.

6. Legislation will also be required to facilitate processing abandoned lots and buildings that have delinquent fines or taxes. This is not a particular problem to the Forest to Zelda Planning Area at this time, but does play a role in the City's ability to help neighborhoods struggling with such properties.

Public Facilities

The Forest to Zelda Planning Area is adjacent to numerous public institutions in the form of churches, government services and schools. Oak Park, one of the City's largest parks, which offers a wonderful green space with a variety of activities for all ages is within walking distance of part of this planning area. There is abundant shade, some picnic areas with tables shelters, playground equipment and the Planetarium.

Oak Park has a long history in Montgomery, having been built in the 1880s, and the open space is a tremendous asset to the area. There may be ways to renovate the park that would encourage its use. Linking the park to pedestrian and bike trails has been requested by several surrounding neighborhoods.

Alabama State University is immediately west of this planning area and offers educational programs for all ages in addition to the college courses. There



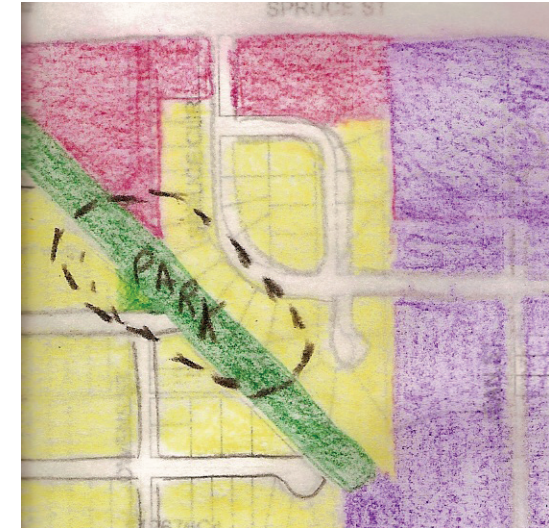
is a summer program for youths and the theatre performances throughout the year are excellent. In addition, the university is a CHODO (Community Housing Development Organization) and does rehabilitation and construction in a variety of neighborhoods.

Even though Oak Park is close to the Forest to Zelda Planning Area, there are no small parks or green spaces in the areas within the neighborhood for recreation or for neighbors to gather informally. Since there are few sidewalks, some small pocket parks or greenspaces would provide

a place for children to play and not be in the streets.

1. There is some space available for this type park development along the abandoned railroad tracks at the east-

ern edge of the numbered streets. A **linear park** that offers public access could possibly be located on the northeast portion of the residential area of the planning area. At the eastern end of Third Street there is a vacant lot that is contiguous to the abandoned railroad property that would offer a nice space for a small neighborhood park.

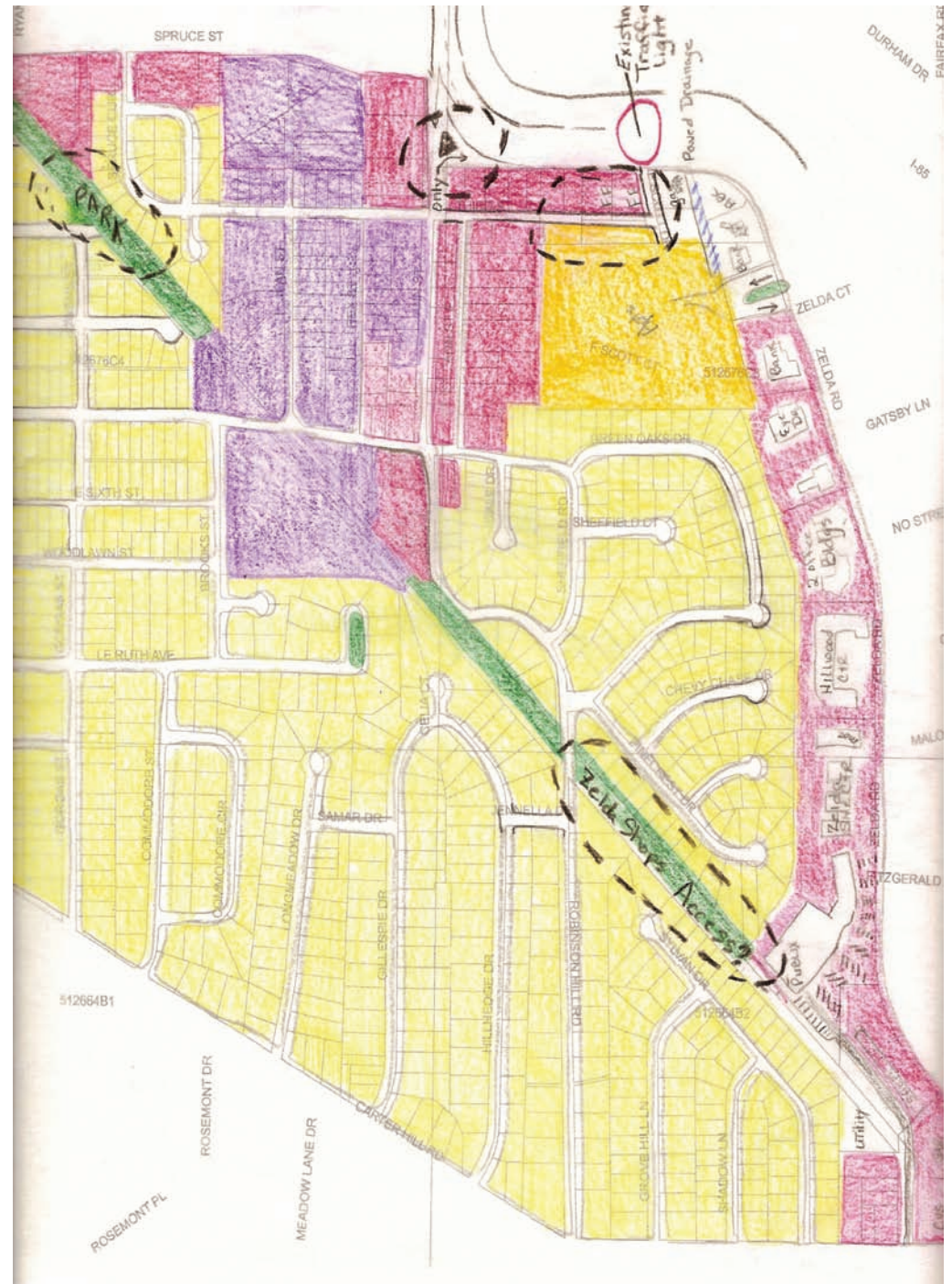


Renovation of Oak Park might include a water facility to offer a cool spot in the hot summer

2. The map on the right has four areas outlined (- - -) to indicate projects to improve the area. The park at the end of Third Street; the **triangle shaped island to block left turns** at the intersection of Ann and Zelda, when combined with continuation of East Third Street to F. Scott Street creates an **opportunity for safer left turns onto Zelda Road**. This intersection was marked at the community meeting by the neighbors as being the most troublesome spot in the entire Planning Area. It has been studied for years and it does have the attention of the Traffic Engineers.

3. The fourth outlined area, located on the bottom right of the map indicates a possible **neighborhood entrance to reach the shopping** along Zelda Road without having to drive on Zelda. This part of the abandoned railroad is not currently used, nor is it particularly attractive as it cuts through this area. A road to the shops along Zelda could serve most of the nearly 300 residential parcels immediately in this area. It would also alleviate traffic on Zelda.

The Montgomery Area Transit System (MATS) of buses also serves the area with access to the entire city.



Public Safety

Some neighbors reported issue with crime in their areas. It is important for the various areas within the Forest to Zelda Planning Area to form Neighborhood Watches. The Police Department appreciates the help these watches provide in monitoring the streets and the lower crime rate that results when neighbors help take action against crime.

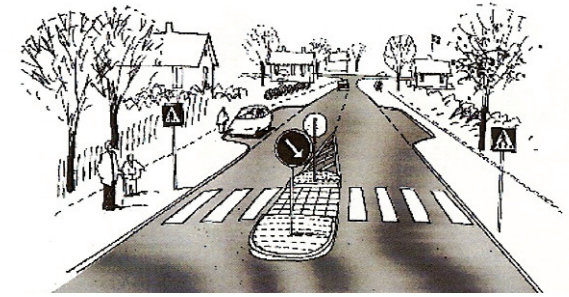
Literature has shown that when neighborhoods begin to become run down and the neighbors allow trash to accumulate, and vacant and dilapidated houses are allowed to remain in poor shape, then the “Broken Window” Syndrome of increased crime occurs. The “Broken Window” Syndrome can be cured by the neighbors taking back their neighborhood with clean-ups, Neighborhood Watches, and taking a strong stand that the neighborhood belongs to the residents, not the thugs.

1. All parts of the Forest to Zelda Planning Area must be covered by an active **Neighborhood Watch** system. The police must be called every time illegal activity is observed. The neighbors must back each other up and be united against the criminal activity. The neighbors must work with the police to determine the best methods to

clean up area crime.

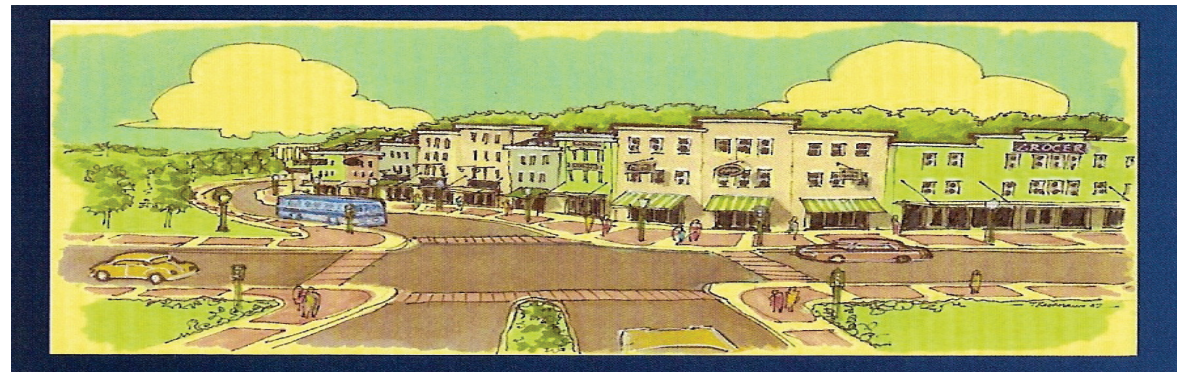
3. Vacant housing must be dealt with to eliminate opportunities for illegal activities. Houses that have code violations should be reported to Housing Codes. **Strict housing code enforcement** is also necessary. Neighbors must be vigilant and help these inspectors by calling in any new infractions. Houses that must be boarded up must be solidly sealed to prohibit entrance.

4. Looking at **pedestrian and cycling opportunities**, there are few sidewalks for pedestrians. If the neighbors are interested in considering some options for safe routes to school and for general walking and cycling in the area, one suggestion would be to identify appropriate and convenient bicycle routes and stripe them and put up cyclist awareness signs. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has begun a bicycle route program in it’s Long Range Plan and the MPO could study the surrounding neighborhoods for possible inclusion as the MPO enlarges its bike route program.



Two examples of marking crosswalks

5. **Crosswalks** are much needed on Carter Hill and Mulberry. The drawing at the bottom of the page shows the future of Narrow Lane/Mulberry framed by crosswalks. In the meantime, crosswalks are needed along Mulberry and Carter Hill to facilitate safely crossing these busy streets.



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

has become a popular topic in the news. Terrorism, natural disasters, and the politics of fear in general have taken over as a crisis issue for our nation, as well as for the world. It is widely felt that informed, involved citizens are better prepared physically and emotionally to cope with any situation that may present itself.

In that light, each City neighborhood has the opportunity to take part in FEMA's Community Emergency Response Team Training. This class is free to as many individuals as would like to participate. Arrangements for an entire neighborhood or just a few individuals may be made by calling the Director of Montgomery's Emergency Management Department at 334-241-2022.

If a neighborhood association or any individual wishes to access this information for themselves, it is available in training modules on the FEMA website at: www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/is317.asp The neighborhood could develop a local triage plan that could assist the city by assessing local, neighborhood damage and needs and helping to shelter area residents in intact churches, homes, etc. as needed.

Again, the best way to deal with situations that induce fear is to have an educational program and empower citizens that they can make a difference and help themselves and their neighbors in time of need. If there is interest from the neighbors to have outside assistance to develop a plan for an emergency, contact the Emergency Management Department (334-241-2022) or Planning and Development (334-241-2066)

Implementation

IMPLEMENTATION CHART

Community Organization

GOAL	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
Cover neighborhood with a "Watch" system	Enlist resident co-operation to report criminal activities to police	Neighborhood Organization/Community Policing Department	Safer neighborhood	Decreased crime, increased reporting of incidents
Active Neighborhood Organization	Using existing groups, broaden activities and include social events to reach out to neighbors	Existing neighborhood organization with help from Bonds and City staff as needed.	Residents involved in neighborhood progress; more opportunities to join together for social and diverse activities	Number of neighbors involved in neighborhood groups increase
Develop a strong, positive community spirit	Use activities such as clean-ups, support for local projects, picnics and neighborhood reunions to share stories and history with youth and new neighbors	Neighborhood organization, help from City Planning staff and BONDS	Positive feeling for area increases, more willingness to reach out to neighbors	Subjective, difficult to measure but greater contentment, working together and active neighborhood life
Build Community Leadership	Share responsibilities for various projects and events, encourage new and different neighbors to be involved in decision making	Current leadership of the Neighborhood Organizations	There will be capable and willing leadership for years that is necessary to maintain the momentum of growth and improvements	Board of neighborhood organizations will change at regular intervals and people will be willing to share in leadership roles

(Community Organization Continued)

GOAL	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
Strengthen community identity	Public art, local history, signs, a flag or banner, and attractive landscaping to make visible entrances and gateways for the neighborhood. Possibly use the flag in city parades and well advertised effort to share community spirit	Neighbors, City Planning staff, BONDS and any private partners identified that partner to work in the neighborhood. Neighbors should make a concerted and well advertised effort to include as many residents as possible in the decision process for symbols defining the area.	A strong neighborhood identity strengthens pride, reduces crime, has positive appeal for new residents. Neighborhood boundaries are clearly marked by signs, landscaping, flags, art, or any specific method desired by the community	Physical 'signs' will appear in area that identify these unique areas; the identification of entrance into this special neighborhood is apparent and easy to recognize
Monitor and Evaluate implementation of Community Goals	Committees should be formed of interested citizens to prioritize implementation of Plan elements and monitoring progress	Neighbors, City Planning staff	Plan goals are set that are most important to neighbors; progress is monitored to maintain momentum and discern unanticipated outcomes and alter approach	Presence of active committees and progress in meeting goals

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
Continue the growth and refurbishing of the Mulberry Street commercial area	Form BID; remove old, unused signs; develop sign ordinance; do landscape plan for beautification	Business owners; City Planning Staff, public and private partners	Attractive and prosperous commercial area to provide area needs and services	Growth in business and improvement of appearance of existing commercial properties
	Use the National Historic Preservation's "Main Street" program	Existing businesses, City staff, private entrepreneurs	Attract small, local businesses	More small businesses in the area
	Provide adequate parking	Business owners and City working together	There will be discrete, off-street parking	Available parking
Facilitate safe pedestrian crossing of Carter Hill Road and Mulberry Street	Install crosswalks along Carter Hill and Mulberry Street	Residents for placement and City to consult on placement and to build	Pedestrians will be safe and feel comfortable crossing the streets - more people will walk through the area	Crosswalks are built

EDUCATION

GOAL	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
Develop the best educational system for the children of the neighborhood	Work with school system; support the neighborhood schools	Neighbors, County School System, City Planning Staff as needed	Children better prepared to enter their adult life; more stable neighborhood	Increase the percentage of children staying in the educational system; more going on to higher education and vocational training
Increased opportunities for children to get good education	More activities for area children	Area residents, local organizations	More after school hour activities for children to participate	Fewer children idle on local streets

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

GOAL	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
<p>Preserve and commemorate the neighborhood's historic style</p>	<p>Encourage appropriate development of the numerous sites and buildings</p>	<p>Public and Private partnerships</p>	<p>Property is restored, not blighted;</p>	<p>Building and restoration of housing and appropriate commercial ventures</p>
	<p>Encourage use of contextual zoning</p>	<p>City Planning Department Zoning Code</p>	<p>Appropriate decisions as to infill and change will be made</p>	<p>Neighborhood will regain and retain its historic appearance</p>

HOUSING

GOALS	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
Preserve affordability	Change zoning to allow existing narrow and smaller sized lots	City Planning Staff, Planning Commission	Small lots allow for smaller houses, not required to purchase 2 or more to build new	Existing zoning will be amended
Preserve affordability	Establish a Land Bank or Land Trust (or both, as needed)	City of Montgomery or Housing Authority (some government entity) or a non-profit	Some parcels of land will be placed in trust for specific purpose of affordable housing. The Land Bank is also a vehicle for land donation and reuse for affordability	Land Bank and/or Land Trust legally established
Develop a mixed income, mixed use infill	Area between Forest and Mulberry to contain mixed land use	City, residents, redevelopers	Increase residential use along Mulberry	Housing and commercial properties built as infill project
Increase rate of homeownership	Encourage those interested in home ownership to apply for HUD funds to help first time home buyers	Citizens apply to City Community Development Office and participate in home ownership classes	Typically home owners take better care of their property and it is more affordable than renting; ownership a way to build wealth	Increase homeownership rate in the area
Rehabilitate existing housing stock	Rehab homes to provide sound housing stock for the area residents	Property owners, public and private partners; City's and Alabama State's HOME programs	Safe and attractive housing	Housing stock improved

LAND USE, ZONING, AND LANDLORD ORDINANCES

GOALS	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
Zone to encourage traditional neighborhood development	Institute SmartCode or change specific corners and along some major streets to a Euclidian Zone of B-1-b to allow mixed use	Adoption of the Plan and passage by Planning Commission and City Council	Mixed developments can occur, residences may be above commercial	Plan and zoning recommendations passed by City Council
Eliminate large lot size currently required by zoning	Amend existing zoning code	City Planning Dept, Planning Commission, City Council	Building may take place on the parcels as they are platted now, (some being only 40 feet wide)	Existing Zoning is amended
Use Zoning to encourage affordable housing	Allow higher density in areas closest to downtown and some specific areas in neighborhood (see proposed zoning map)	City Planning Staff, City Council, with neighbors in approval	Infill development in the area can accommodate mix of incomes, be affordable	Infill building and stock of affordable housing increases
Infill building is attractive, of good quality, and retains historic character of area	Design, landscape, and signage ordinances that encourage preservation of the neighborhood character	This Plan, citizen support, City council adopt contextual zoning	Development will restore and maintain historic character of area and offer enforcement for disregarding ordinances	Appearance of new development in appropriate architectural style
Encourage infill development	Encourage public and private developers	City officials, private citizens, City Planning and Development CDBG funds; needs creative innovation	Infill development occurs	The vacant lots begin to be built upon

Ordinances, continued

GOAL	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
Equitable Landlord and tenant rights	Reform legislation	State legislators, citizens grassroots effort, City Planning staff and City Council help	Protection and recourse for both tenant and land lord	New legislation to establish equitable lease contracts
Facilitate and expedite processing of abandoned property	Reform tax structure and ability for clearing title to abandoned and heir property	State legislation; possibly tax issue by City Council	Abandoned properties do not stand idle for many years; easier to clear title	Length of time required to occupy vacant property is shortened and there are fewer vacant properties

PUBLIC FACILITIES

GOALS	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
Increase “green space” in neighborhood	Identify areas for smaller ‘pocket parks’	Since the City currently has a very large part of the budget committed to Park maintenance, care for these new parks will be a neighborhood commitment	Scattered ‘green spots’ offer beautification, a place for children to play, a place for neighbors to gather	Green spaces created
Increased opportunities for youth: play, learn, work	Develop a network of private/public sponsors	Neighbors, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, Churches, public/private partnerships	Youth have more opportunities for learning, play and jobs	Fewer idle youths with nothing to do
Long Range Plan for City-wide bicycle route	Planning by Metropolitan Planning Organization to develop bike routes as part of the overall transportation plan for the City	MPO and public/private partners	Safe bike routes that could be used for fun, exercise and even as transportation to work	Identifiable bike routes through area; rails-to-trails
Safer Left turn from Ann Street extension on to Zelda	Change intersection at Ann and Zelda	City and MPO planning	Existing unsafe situation will be eliminated; there will be a safe place to turn left	New intersection
Facilitate easier access for adjacent neighbors to reach Zelda shopping area	Neighborhood entrance behind shops on Zelda	City, possibly shopping developers	Less time and energy spent to reach shops; traffic on Zelda is less	Local entrance added to rear of shopping area

PUBLIC SAFETY

GOAL	STRATEGY	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT
Decrease crime	Maintain coverage over entire area by Neighborhood Watch system	Neighbors	Safe, pleasant area	Neighbors feel comfortable and enjoy walking or being out and around the area
	Work with police department to identify best methods to control crime	Neighbors and police	Safer neighborhood	Decreased crime rates
	Remove/demolish/refurbish dilapidated property	Housing Code enforcement, public/private partnerships	Blight removed; fewer hiding places for crime	Unsightly and dangerous structures no longer in area
	Drug awareness and dependency education and programs	Residents, schools, police, churches, families	Tragedy of drug addiction could be diminished	Fewer addicts and drug related crimes
Emergency Preparedness Plan	Training for neighbors and a plan developed to handle a variety of emergencies	Residents, City Emergency Management Department, FEMA online training (see pg. 51)	Prepared for emergencies; less panic; quick relief for victims.	Neighbors know how to respond to various emergencies if they occur

Appendix

Community Support Opportunities

The Montgomery Area has a myriad of services for our citizens that can be accessed by calling 211. Everything from adoption, emergency shelters, employment, legal help, drug treatment, medical care, and youth services. The following services are primarily provided by the City of Montgomery or the Montgomery County School System.

Animal Control 334-241-2970

To report stray animals. Also, the Humane Shelter, 334-409-0622, for adopting or getting help with animals and a great place to offer your volunteer services is available on John Overton Drive across from Gunter Air Force Base. To report a dead animal for removal, call 334-241-2515.

BONDS (Building Our Neighborhood for Development and Success) 334-264-6223

Organization helps to organize, train and revitalize neighborhood community groups which in turn brings neighbors together for the health of the neighborhood, to do programs, socials, and address individual neighborhood concerns.

Chemical Addictions Program 334-265-4544

1153 Air Base Blvd. 36108. Provides chemical dependence treatment for persons lacking insurance or other resources to obtain treatment through the private pay sector. Serves south-central Alabama

Clean City Commission 334-241-2175

Helps with organizing and sponsoring various clean-ups around town; runs the recycling programs, and good source of information concerning these activities

Community Development Department 334-241-2997

This City Department administers HUD funds: HOME funds for low income housing and a First-Time Home Buyers down payment assistance program. Once a year applications are accepted for Commu-

nity Development Block Grant (CDBG) money – the applications must be specific as to the project and the project must be approved by HUD (federal Department of Housing and Urban Development). There are information and training meetings given by the Community Development Department to help citizens understand this process.

Community Policing 334-241-2700

This division of the Montgomery Police Department, located on Fairwest Drive, works in neighborhoods to help with specific neighborhood issues.

Garbage Pick-Up and Recycling 334-241-2750

Montgomery provides twice weekly garbage pickups, once a week curbside trash (like tree limbs and yard debris), Saturday drop off anything at specific school locations, and once weekly recycling collection for \$12.00 a month, billed through the Water Board with the water bill. Call to set up account and get the garbage container delivered to your residence or call to request special pick up needs like large limbs or unwanted furniture, etc.

Free School Lunch/Breakfast 334-269-3817

Montgomery County School System has free lunch and breakfast program for income-qualified persons. Parents must call to register their children.

Historic Properties 334-241-2722

For information concerning the local designation of historic properties and for the specific qualifications and responsibilities of these properties.

Lunch Trolley Express www.lunchtrolleyexpress.com

The city provides trolley service downtown free during the hours of 11:00am – 2:00 pm. This helps connect downtown parking lots, offices and places of employment with the various restaurants in the downtown area. The trolleys run continuously and one should be along every 10-15 minutes.

MATS (Montgomery Area Transit System) 334-241-2249

Call for regular bus scheduling, routes and times or check the web page

at www.montgomerytransit.com ; if there is a need for specific need for door to door service due to a disability, the MAPS (Montgomery Area Paratransit) service is available for those who qualify, but medical records and a doctors request must be on file to access this service. Braille and audio instructions for the bus service is also available. For special services, please call 240-4691.

Neighborhood Traffic Problems 334-241-2670

Neighborhood Watch 334-240-4800
To get a Neighborhood Watch established in your area or call for information as to an existing one?

Nuisance Reporting:

- Abandoned vehicles 334-241-2069, 241-2086
- Abandoned and derelict house 334-241-2069, 241-2086
- Noise Complaints 334-241-2669
- Vehicle Parked in yard 334-241-2069, 241-2086
- Weeds overgrown, trash 334-241-2069, 241-2086

Parks and Recreation 334-241-2300

The City of Montgomery has many parks and recreational facilities around the area. There are numerous activities and lessons (crafts, swimming, tennis, etc) available through this department for all ages. There are also summer jobs for youths but these opening are filled quickly, so call early in spring to get on their list.

Sidewalk Repair 334-241-2880

Report badly broken sidewalks in front of your house to the City Maintenance Department. The City now makes hexagonal pavers for use in historic districts that have this older type of sidewalk.

Stop Signs and Street Lights 334-241-2910

This number can answer your questions about how to have your area evaluated for additional stop signs or street lights. If street lights are burned out, please call Alabama Power: 800-245-2244.

The Main Street Four-Point Approach™ to commercial district revitalization

The National Trust Main Street Center offers a comprehensive commercial district revitalization strategy that has been widely successful in towns and cities nationwide. Described below are the four points of the Main Street approach which work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.



Organization involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human

and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program. A governing board and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of the volunteer-driven program. Volunteers are coordinated and supported by a paid program director as well. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the Main Street district. By marketing a district's unique characteristics to residents, investors, business owners, and visitors, an effective promotional strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in the district and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets — such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets — is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere, created through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping, conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include instilling good maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.

Economic Restructuring strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The Main Street program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers' needs. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district.

Coincidentally, the four points of the Main Street approach correspond with the four forces of real estate value, which are social, political, physical, and economic.

EIGHT PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS

The National Trust Main Street Center's experience in helping communities bring their commercial corridors back to life has shown time and time again that the Main Street Four-Point Approach succeeds. That success is guided by the following eight principles, which set the Main Street methodology apart from other redevelopment strategies. For a Main Street program to be successful, it must whole-heartedly embrace the following time-tested Eight Principles.

- **Comprehensive:** No single focus — lavish public improvements, name-brand business recruitment, or endless promotional events — can revitalize Main Street. For successful, sustainable, long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach, including activity in each of Main Street's Four Points, is *essential*.
- **Incremental:** Baby steps come before walking. Successful revitalization programs begin with basic, simple activities that demonstrate that “new things are happening” in the commercial district. As public confidence in the Main Street district grows and participants' understanding of the revitalization process becomes more sophisticated, Main Street is able to tackle increasingly complex problems and more ambitious projects. This incremental change leads to much longer-lasting and dramatic positive change in the Main Street area.
- **Self-help:** No one else will save your Main Street. Local leaders must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources and talent. That means convincing residents and business owners of the rewards they'll reap by investing time and money in Main Street — the heart of their community. Only local leadership can produce long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.
- **Partnerships:** Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the district and must work together to achieve common goals of Main Street's revitalization. Each sector has a role to play and each must understand the other's strengths and limitations in order to forge an effective partnership.



- After years of being closed, the Lyric Theater, Harrison, Ark., was rehabilitated and turned into a community theater through the leadership of Main Street Harrison.

Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets: Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique. Every district has unique qualities like distinctive buildings and human scale that give people a sense of belonging. These local assets must serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization program.

- **Quality:** Emphasize quality in every aspect of the revitalization program. This applies to all elements of the process — from storefront designs to promotional campaigns to educational programs. Shoestring budgets and “cut and paste” efforts reinforce a negative image of the commercial district. Instead, concentrate on quality projects over quantity.
- **Change:** Skeptics turn into believers and attitudes on Main Street will turn around. At first, almost no one believes Main Street can really turn around. Changes in attitude and practice are slow but definite — public support for change will build as the Main Street program grows and consistently meets its goals. Change also means engaging in better business practices, altering ways of thinking, and improving the physical appearance of the commercial district. A carefully planned Main Street program will help shift public perceptions and practices to support and sustain the revitalization process.
- **Implementation:** To succeed, Main Street must show visible results that can only come from completing projects. Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding. Small projects at the beginning of the program pave the way for larger ones as the revitalization effort matures, and that constant revitalization activity creates confidence in the Main Street program and ever-greater levels of participation.

From: www.mainstreet.org/