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March 2008

Downtown Details

The Latest News about Downtown Mobile

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Dear Carol,



Things are truly looking great for Mobile -- from spring flowers (check out the new plantings at **NoJa**) to the latest economic news. Sometimes we wonder how much more can our fortunes improve? Last year the Battle House-RSA project came on line and ThyssenKrupp announced its plans to locate in Mobile County. Now the Air Force has selected Northrop Grumman and EADS to build its refueling planes right here at Brookley Field.

It does seem as if Mobile has won the trifecta, but there is reason for caution. Our infrastructure must be improved in order to handle the additional housing, school students and traffic or else the quality of life that attracted these opportunities in the first place will begin to decline. Our leaders have been, and must continue to be, dedicated to preserving and improving our parks, green spaces, festivals and the arts--the amenities that make us a world-class city and help land such developments. These issues and others are being addressed as the city's master planning process moves forward, and not a moment too soon.

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Join

Downtown Developments



The Creative Class, recognized by many to be the key to any successful revitalization effort, is alive and well and growing in downtown Mobile. **HM Companies**, which handles advertising, event management, web design and sports marketing, recently completed renovation of space at 105 N. Conception Street. The firm, which moved downtown from west Mobile, now occupies 2000 square feet and has six employees.

Also, a long-established advertising agency will soon be open for business in fabulously renovated space at 202 Government Street. **Red Square** (formerly Sullivan-St. Clair) is relocating from Midtown and is sure to add energy to a long-vacant section of Government Street.

In other development news:

- Even though the original high-rise residential and retail project known as **Water Street Landing** may never be realized, the much-discussed land just south of the Convention Center may still be developed. The property is on the market and the developer has one offer in hand and is expecting to receive a second one soon.
- The **Park at Bienville** building, at the corner of Dauphin and Conception Streets and home to Malcolm Pirnie and Woodlands bank has been sold to a Jackson, Alabama based couple, Carl and Denise Flowers.
- Even though experts recommend we limit caffeine late in the day, that's no reason to stay away from **Serda's Coffee Company**, downtown's newest gathering spot after work. Serda's, located at 3 South Royal Street, has a liquor license and offers a full bar until 9:00 p.m. Monday - Thursday and 10:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday. And if you like a little live music with your panini, stop by at lunch for live jazz from 11:00 to 2:00.
- The sounds of power saws and hammers will soon fill the **Church Street East** neighborhood as the Mobile Housing Board begins construction on 12 new houses in the historic district. The homes will be about 1500 square feet and range in price from \$175,000 to \$250,000. Six of the houses will be sold at market rates, while buyers of the other six will receive down payment assistance.
- **Cathedral Square Gallery** will be moving from 260

Dauphin Street to the west end of LoDa at 612 Dauphin (formerly Courtyard Candle Company). The new building gives the gallery more space for its ever expanding roster of artists and will provide a new kind of energy for an already lively part of downtown.

[Find Out More](#)

Mobile Fights for America's Tanker

When the Air Force announced Northrop Grumman/EADS had been awarded the contract to build the next generation of refueling tankers, it put Mobile



on the map in ways we might never have imagined! Across the country pundits and politicians are discussing the merits of the decision and questioning the ability of Mobilians to build the plane. Never mind that we have been building planes and ships for the military since World War II, the fact of the matter is that Mobile has long had a dedicated, highly skilled work force and will turn out the finest plane in the world, if for no other reason than to prove all the doubters wrong.

It won't happen without a fight, however, and now is the time to stand up (or click) and be counted. Politics has a way of overturning sound decisions and those in a position to shift the contract away from Mobile must know how we feel. Click on the link below to learn more about the contract and be sure to vote to support America's tanker.

[Vote to Support the KC-45](#)

GreenCoast Conference Next Month

Discover the latest trends in "Green" building



These days it seems everyone wants to learn about how to live in more sustainable and environmentally friendly ways. The "Green" movement and how humans

can minimize their impact on the planet is one of the most powerful forces shaping our future. Though the green concept was initially embraced more fully on the East and West coasts, it is now sweeping through the Gulf Coast.

Hundreds of developers, designers, educators and regular citizens are expected to hear the latest in green trends at the Northern Gulf Coast's first "green build" conference. The two day event, April 9-10, will be held at the Mobile Convention Center and will offer dozens of sessions featuring topics from green construction to the health benefits of green living. Participants may register for one or both days. Click on the link below for more information about the conference.

[Learn more about GreenCoast 2008](#)

Public Meetings Huge Success

The three public input meetings for the New Plan for Old Mobile were extremely well attended with no shortage of ideas for a new vision for downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods. Almost 1000 people



participated in the process and gave the urban planning firm EDSA much to work with over the next couple of months. The design team will be back in Mobile in June with preliminary plans for community review.

Financial support for the plan has also been encouraging. To date almost \$50,000 has been raised toward our goal of \$100,000. If you'd like to join in this important endeavor, please contact Elizabeth Sanders at 251-434-8498 or esanders@downtownmobile.org.

Many thanks to those who have already made donations or pledges:

Platinum Investors

- Alabama Power Foundation
- Hearin-Chandler Foundation

Gold Investors

- A.S. Mitchell Foundation
- Ben May Charitable Trust

Silver Investors

- Christ Church Cathedral

- Church Street East Historic District
- Committee for the Restoration of Historic Monroe Park
- Gulf Coast Multiple Listing Service
- Keep Mobile Moving
- MLK, Jr. Avenue Redevelopment Corp.
- Mobile Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Oakleigh Garden District Society
- Sybil H. Smith Charitable Trust

Friends of Planning

- 219 Restaurant
- AT&T
- DeTonti Square Neighborhood Association
- Hummingbird Ideas
- Mobile Bay Transportation Company
- Spot of Tea

For more on the Plan

Downtown Mobile Alliance Membership Growing



The early response of businesses and organizations to joining the Downtown Mobile Alliance has been very encouraging and promises to greatly advance our plans to continue downtown's revitalization. The Alliance is a membership organization whose primary role will

be marketing downtown to potential retailers, residents, professional offices and customers. The Alliance supports the work of the Business Improvement District and Main Street Mobile in their efforts to transform downtown into the premiere urban center on the central Gulf Coast.

Many thanks to the following businesses that recognize the value of a vibrant city center, and for anyone who'd like to be part of the process, please contact Susan Daniels at 251-434-8498 or sdaniels@downtownmobile.org.

Leadership Circle

- Regions Bank
- Hargrove & Associates
- Armbrrecht Jackson LLP

- Alabama State Port Authority
- Gayfer Ventures LLC

Leadership Council

- RBC Bank
- Dauphin Realty

Business Advocate

- Hand Arendall, LLC
- The Guarantee Title Company, LLC

Business Supporter

- HM Companies, LLC
- Jordan Management
- Legal Imaging
- Paymaster
- Richardson, Spear, Spear Hamby & Owens, PC,
- The Bellwether Group
- Bay Bank
- Robert S. Edington Law Office
- Herndon Inge III, LLC
- McElhaney State Farm Insurance
- Cowart Hospitality Services, LLC
- Aloha Hospitality International
- Craftmaster Printers, Inc

New Businesses

- Serda's Coffee Company
- Paradise Popcorn and Snacks
- Bacchus
- The Battle House Hotel

Not-for-Profit

- Christ Church Cathedral
- The Community Foundation of South Alabama
- University of South Alabama Foundation
- Waterfront Rescue Mission
- Mobile Symphony
- Gulf Coast Exploreum
- United Way of Southwest Alabama
- South Alabama Regional Planning Commission
- W. T. Neal Trust
- Drug Education Council, Inc.
- Wilmer Hall
- Historic Mobile Preservation Society

- Home Builders Association of Metro Mobile
- Mobile United/Leadership Mobile
- Mobile Opera, Inc.
- Mobile Carnival Museum
- National Maritime Museum of the Gulf of Mexico

Discover Dauphin Historic District

Take a Walk Back in Time

Several times a week during peak tourist seasons, visitors will walk into our office and ask about the historic sites in downtown. The Alliance has a wonderful brochure, the Dauphin Street Historic District Walking Tour, and armed with this guide they head off to discover the delights of our architectural past. As is the case in most cities, visitors to Mobile often experience more local history than locals themselves!



Each month we'll be featuring a stop on the walking tour so you'll be able to explore downtown's history without ever leaving your computer - but we think you'll find that the more you know about our past, the more you'll want to get out and walk back in time on your own.

Daniels, Elgin & Co. Building, circa 1860 - 2 South Water Street. The front of the Elgin Building is one-of-a-kind in Mobile. It is a cast iron façade ordered from the catalogue of the Badger Iron Works Co. in New York and installed on a brick building. The façade was designed by T.H. Giles and is based on the waterfront palazzos of 15th and 16th century Venice. The strong euro may postpone a trip to Italy in the near future, but visit this building and just imagine gliding down the Grand Canal in a gondola!

[Take a virtual tour](#)

GO Zone Bond Rates Drop

Deadline to apply quickly approaching

If you've been considering a downtown project using Gulf Opportunity (GO) Zone financing, time is running out. \$44 million in the special low interest loans has been set aside for Mobile, but the loans must close by July 18, 2008. The good news is that rates for bond financing have dropped in recent weeks, with the floating weekly rate at 3.23% (as of Feb. 13, 2008).



The first round of closings, involving 3 to 5 projects including the Crescent Theatre and Veets, will occur in the next couple of weeks, but at least \$20 million in financing is still available. If you'd like more information on GO Zone money, contact Denise Browning at db@hunterventures.com.

Downtown Doings

Some upcoming events in downtown Mobile



Our Body: The Universe Within - Through May 11th, Gulf Coast Exploreum. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to witness the elegant design of the human body's form and function up-close in an artful, compelling and dignified environment. The inspirational

human anatomy lesson is comprised of more than 11 actual human whole-body specimens and 75 anatomical displays that have been preserved through polymer impregnation. For more information please call 1(877)625-4FUN or visit the www.exploreum.net

Med School Cafe - Wednesdays, March 26, April 23 at noon, Gulf Coast Exploreum. During the run of **Our Body: The Universe Within** the University of South Alabama Physicians Group will be holding a community lecture series. Topics will cover everything from the latest in stroke treatments to understanding how cancer develops and spreads. Attendees are eligible for a discounted ticket to

Our Body: The Universe Within. Lunch and the lectures are free, but reservations are required. Call 251-460-7770.

We Remember - Through May 26th, Museum of Mobile
This moving exhibition features seventy-five black and white photographs offering a glimpse into life during World War II. From the battlefield to the home front, this exhibit creates windows back to the people and events that shaped history and the modern world. For more information please call (251)208-7686 or visit www.museumofmobile.com

Among the Ruins, through May 4th, Space 301 Off Centre. Re-imagining architectural destruction and decay, **Among the Ruins** brings together work by contemporary artists who have engaged architectural ruin in ways both innovative and thoughtful. www.space301.com

Azalea Trail Run, Mar 29th, 2008. The 31st Annual Azalea Trail Run, one of the premier 10K road races in the United States, will fill the streets of Mobile with racers of all types and ages on March 29. There is a two-mile Fun Run and a variety of other entertaining activities. For more information, please visit online or call (251)473-7223. www.pcpacers.org

Mobile Alabama PrideFest 2008, Apr 4th, 2008-Apr 6th. A fun filled celebration of the GLBT community. Everyone is encouraged to come help celebrate!!! Friday night is the PrideFest Kick Off Party. Saturday and Sunday feature vendors, food booths, arts, nationally known entertainment and the biggest Pride Parade in Alabama. For a detailed schedule or more information please visit the website listed below, or call (251)431-9002. www.mobilealabamapride.com/pridefest.htm

Spring Garden Party at the Richards DAR House, Apr 6th. Come celebrate Spring! The azaleas should be in full bloom. Good company, delectable hors d'oeuvres, desserts, and tea party faire will be featured in the dining room of the Richards DAR House from 1pm-6pm. For more information or tickets please visit the website below or call 251-473-6400. www.richardsdarhouse.com

Arts Alive! - A Three Day Festival, Apr 11th - Apr 13th. Arts Alive! takes place in the Cathedral Square Arts District in downtown Mobile. Festival hours are Friday, 5-9pm; Saturday 2-9pm and Sunday Noon-5pm. Admission is free for the entire festival. Friday's activities will be in concert with the City's LODA Artwalk and Friday's @ 5 music series. We will be centered around Cathedral Square featuring a local film makers "scramble" competition and a Spoken Word "poetry slam". Saturday's schedule keeps its traditional focus on "hands-on" and "interactive" art venues: pottery, music, painting, theater, dance and more.

Surrounding all of these exhibits, some of the best local and regional art will be on display in the Festival's Juried Art Show. Saturday's festivities conclude with a concert under the stars by the US Army Signal Corps Band performing tunes from big band to jazz to contemporary hits. The Juried Art Show continues as do musical, dance and theatrical performances in the Square. The "hands-on" venues are replaced with the recycled fibers fashion show, an electrifying drum circle and architectural and historical tours of downtown. For more information please visit the website below or call (251)694-0457
www.artsalivemobile.com

Volunteer Mobile's 5th Annual Shrimp Cook- Off, Apr 19th. This event features shrimp prepared in every way you could possibly imagine. From grilled to gumbo and bisques to boils, you can taste the best shrimp on the coast. Cook-Off is held in **Bienville Square** in Downtown Mobile in the late morning to early afternoon hours. For more information, please call (251) 433-4456.
www.volunteermobile.org

Oakleigh Garden District Black & Blue Dinner, April 12, 6:00 p.m., Washington Square. Dress in "black tie and blue jeans for this annual In the Park and For the Park fundraiser. Catered by Guidos, \$50.00/person. Call 251-432- 7348 for reservations.

Watercolor Painting Workshop - Tuesday- Saturday, March 25-29, 450 Dauphin St. This will be a complete workshop, with a full sheet demonstration painting each morning, plenty of time for you to paint in the afternoon, and a critique at the end of the day of all work done that day, each day. Many students have said they have learned more in one day at one of these workshops than in four years of art school! Tutition is \$375 for the course.

10th Annual Business Expo/Jobs Fair Friday, May 2, 9:00 am-2:00 pm - Free Admission for the general public, businesses may register for \$325 until March 31st and \$375 after March 31st. 100+ Businesses!!! For more info please call: South Alabama Regional Planning Commission 251.652.0585 or 251.433.6541 or visit www.sarpc.org.

Saenger Theatre Events www.saengermobile.com for more information

- ***Mobile Symphony Presents "The Story Of Mobile"*** Saturday, April 5, 2:00 pm & 8:00 pm - The Mobile Symphony is proud to present the first major work composed especially for us: Kenji Bunch's Second Symphony. This is the culmination of his three years as one of our Composers-in-Residence. For a little healthy competition, we also perform the Second

Symphony of Johannes Brahms, presenting the composer in his most relaxed, "unbuttoned" mood.

- ***Buddy Guy Thursday, April 10, 8:00 pm*** - Tickets are \$45.50 / \$34.50 / \$30.50 (plus service charge) Tickets go on sale to the public Friday February 29 at 10:00 am.
- ***Forever Tango From The Shubert Theatre On Broadway, Wednesday, April 23, 7:30 pm*** - Tickets will be \$40 / \$35 / \$30 (plus service charge) Tickets on-sale to the public Friday February 8th at 10:00 am.
- ***Mobile Symphony Presents Classical Fire, Saturday, April 26, 2:00 pm & 8:00 pm*** - Pablo Sainz Villegas, guitarist Kevin Puts, Music Alive Composer-in-Residence Spanish Guitarist Pablo Sainz Villegas joins the Mobile Symphony Orchestra for Rodrigo's passionate Guitar Concerto, along with Pyotr Tchaikovsky's thrilling and masterful meditation on fate. Also, Kevin Puts, one of our talented Composers-in-Residence, lends his lyrical style to a brand new horn concerto!
- ***The Fab Four Sunday, May 18, 7:00 pm*** - Back for the third time!!!! Don't miss this wonderful show when it returns in '08. Tickets will be \$33 / \$23 / \$15 (plus service charge) Tickets go on-sale Friday February 1st at 10:00 am to the public.

Civic Center Events www.mobilecivicctr.com for more information

- ***Lil Wayne & Friends Saturday, April 12, 8:00 pm (doors open at 7:00 pm)***. Lil Wayne and Friends will perform live in the Arena and the show includes Juvenile, Fox, Crime Mob, Shay, Lue Cane, and Yung A, along with Lil Wayne. Tickets will go on sale Friday, March 14 at 10:00 a.m.
- ***Disney's High School Musical: The Ice Tour April 26-27, Saturday shows at 11:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. Sunday shows at 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.*** Get ready to rock the ice at Disney's High School Musical: The Ice Tour! The one and only live celebration of High School Musical and High School Musical 2 features the songs and dances from both smash hit movies and a cast of world-class skaters. The ultimate High School Musical Mega-Mix is here - Disney's High School Musical: The Ice Tour! Tickets can be purchased at the Mobile Civic Center Box Office (open Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) and all Ticketmaster outlets. To charge by phone, call Ticketmaster at 251-434-0033 or purchase online at www.ticketmaster.com. For more information, call 251-208-7261 or visit

www.mobilecivicctr.com.

[For a complete list of events...](#)

Help Reduce Number of Stray Cats



Stray cats seem to be a problem in every urban center around the world, but a group of volunteers has come together in Mobile to help limit the population locally. The Azalea City Cat Coalition follows the protocol of TNR (trap neuter return), which may not be a perfect

solution, but certainly is an improvement to a situation that gets worse by the year.

If you have a problem with stray cats on your property, or know of an area where strays frequently wander, you're encouraged to call the Coalition at 251-648- 7582.

[Find out more...](#)

The Downtown Mobile Alliance exists to support the development of downtown through marketing, advocacy and the management of BID services.

Sincerely,

Carol Hunter
Downtown Mobile Alliance

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web: <http://www.downtownmobile.org>

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