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May 2007

## Downtown Update

The Latest News about Downtown Mobile

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Dear Carol,

As temperatures begin to rise in the Port City, activity generally begins to slow down, but that does not seem to be the case in downtown Mobile this year. The pace of things is actually speeding up, so much so that it's difficult to keep up. We try to note all the new businesses and projects that come on line each month, but if you know of one we miss, please let us know. We want folks to be aware of all the great things happening during this most exciting time in Mobile.

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### Development News



The Battle House Hotel and RSA Tower had a formal debut last week that included both a nod to the past and a view to the future. The historic hotel has been lovingly restored to the grandeur of Mobile's golden age and the ultra modern tower is serving as a beacon to draw new business and development to the Alabama Gulf Coast.

The \$200-million Battle House-RSA Tower project is the largest to open this month, but it is by no means the only new project to announce. Others include:

- Crescent Theatre and Banquet Hall - JSMM, LLC has just purchased 210 and 212 Dauphin, in addition to 208 Dauphin which is already under development as

the Cresnet Theatre. The complete project will feature 4 residential units, a theatre and banquet hall

- Mobile Arts and Sports Association has purchased 151 and 153 Dauphin Street and will renovate the building for its Senior Bowl offices and a Senior Bowl Hall of Fame Display.
- The Staples-Pake Building at 80 St. Michael Street has been purchased by Royal and Michael, LLC. Plans for redevelopment are being formulated
- Hancock Bank is now open on the first floor of St. Emanuel Place
- International Shipholding has completed the relocation of its headquarters from New Orleans to the RSA Battle House Tower
- New downtown businesses include The Blind Mule, restaurant and live music; River City Granite; and the Bizmark Saloon.

[Find Out More](#)

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### Realtors Preview New Residential Opportunities

It started slowly - a second floor apartment here, a duplex there. But suddenly anyone looking for downtown housing has all sorts of options. Luxury condominiums anchor the western end of downtown, funky loft apartments populate the east end, and single family homes fill neighborhoods to the north and south.

Much of that new housing is still under construction and will be coming on line in the coming weeks and months, but about 100 Realtors previewed several of the units on May 17th. Traveling through downtown on moda! trolleys, the Realtors stopped at a dozen projects representing more than 100 total units.

After the tour ended one of the Realtors remarked, "I haven't sold any downtown property yet, but I'm going to soon!" Many thanks to the sponsors of the tour: Dauphin Realty, Guarantee Title Company, RBC Centura Bank, Roberts Brothers Realtors and Wells Fargo Home Mortgage. Thanks also to our donors: Surety Land Title and LLB&B.

[Find Out More....](#)

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### Parking Survey Underway

Few downtown issues inspire lively discussion quite the way parking does. To help improve the overall parking picture for everyone who visits, lives or works in our city center, the Downtown Mobile Alliance is undertaking an examination of the current parking situation.

An on-line survey was sent to about 500 people, and responses have been pouring in. If you haven't taken the survey yet, go to the link at the end of this article and share your opinion. The survey will close out on May 20.

A parking consultant with Urban Places is conducting a Parking Management Analysis of Mobile's public street parking and private parking lots. The consultant is finalizing recommendations and will present the findings to Mayor Sam Jones and other city leaders in a few weeks.

The goal of the Alliance's Parking Task Force is to create a system that is convenient, affordable, based on customer service and encourages economic development.

In the meantime, take advantage of the meter keys available at the Central Parking offices at 300 Dauphin Street. And if you feel you've gotten a ticket in error, forms to appeal the citation are available at the Alliance office at 261 Dauphin Street or at 300 Dauphin Street.

**[Tell us about your parking experience](#)**

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### Handling Panhandlers

There's a chance you'll run into panhandlers in any busy city just about anywhere in the world, and Mobile is no exception. But what's the best way to handle it? When someone comes up to you on the sidewalk and asks for some money "to get something to eat," do you avoid his gaze, shake your head and walk away feeling guilty? Or do you give her some spare change and quickly go on about your business? According to Dan Williams, Executive Director of the Homeless Coalition of the Gulf Coast, you shouldn't do either.

"We want to discourage panhandling," Williams says. He feels it isn't necessary and only encourages continued life on the streets. Instead, Williams suggests you respond to a request for money by saying, "You can get a hot meal at 15 Place on Jackson Street." 15 Place is a day center at 15 North Jackson Street offering services for the homeless including meals, showers, laundry and most importantly, case management.

15 Place is open until 4:00 p.m., at which time it offers transportation to overnight shelters. The newest facility is McKemie Place, a shelter for unaccompanied, single women. Williams says for the first time, such women now have a safe place to stay at night. He adds, "The number of homeless, single women on the street has been reduced since McKemie Place opened just last month.

If you'd like a complete list of locations that provide services for the homeless, go to the link at the end of this article. You can even print the flyer and distribute it to others in your office who would like to know the best way to handle panhandlers.

[Help for the Homeless](#)

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### **Downtown Presentations Available**

*Have your organization learn more about downtown*

Be the first to know what's new in downtown Mobile! The Downtown Mobile Alliance offers presentations for clubs, organizations or employee groups. Even if you've worked downtown for years, you just might learn something new. Call Carol at 434-8498 to book a date.

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### **New Plan for Old Mobile Taking Shape**

*Master Plan Proposals Due Soon*

Mayor Sam Jones and the City of Mobile are undertaking a new master plan for downtown and many of the historic and heritage neighborhoods surrounding it. The existing master plan is more than 10 years old and has little relevance to a city that has gone through such monumental change in the past decade.

A good master plan will guide city leaders as they make decisions about the direction of the city and how limited resources should be used for the greatest benefit of the citizens. Several planning consultants have been on the ground in Mobile collecting information for their proposals, which are due May 24th.

[Review the Master Plan RFP](#)

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**Downtown Doings***Some Upcoming Events*

**Through April 20 - GREEN SPACE: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS IN CONTEMPORARY ART** curated by David McCann. Space 301 Off Centre (6 S. Joachim St.) Through Sun, Jun 24. Wed - Sat, 10 - 5 PM; Sun, noon - 5 PM. Centre for the Living Arts members/free; nonmembers/ \$5. Contact: 251-208-5671/ [www.space301.com](http://www.space301.com)

**Through June 3 - A DAY IN POMPEII** Gulf Coast Exploreum (65 Government St.) Through Sun, Jun 3. Mon - Sat, 9 - 5 PM; Sun, 11 AM - 5 PM. Adults/ \$18.25 (+ IMAX/ \$22.25); senior citizens (60+) and youth (13 - 18)/ \$17.25 (+ IMAX/ \$21.25); children (2 - 12)/ \$11 (+ IMAX/ \$15); groups/ special rates available.

**Through September 3 - CAPTIVE PASSAGE: THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE AND THE MAKING OF THE AMERICAS** The Museum of Mobile (111 S. Royal St.) Mon - Sat, 9 AM - 5 PM; Sun, 1 - 5 PM. Adults/ \$5; senior citizens/ \$4; students/ \$3; children under six/ free; groups and active military/ \$1 off admission category. First Sunday of each month/ free. Contact: 251-208-7569

**Saturdays through April 28 - Market on the Square** This farmer's market opens and continues each Saturday, 7:30am-11:00am, in Cathedral Square. Get the freshest, locally grown and produced goods, including: tomatoes, cantaloupes, peaches, honey, breads, cut flowers, baked goods, plants, seafood, watermelons, okra, and much, much more! The public is welcome to come and shop, cobblesquat in the Square, play in the fountain and enjoy live music, cooking demonstrations and more.

**Through Thursday, May 31, 2007 - Celestial Art Show at Chesser Gallery.** New works by Bertice McPherson, Wayne McNeil and Jerry Childers are on display at Chesser Gallery (306 Dauphin St.) Business hours are Tue - Thu, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Sat, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.; by appointment. Free admission. For more information contact 251-591-7877. [www.chesserartgallery.org](http://www.chesserartgallery.org)

**Thursday, May 17, 2007 - Show Tunes and Classics A** one-hour concert that includes Wagner: Rienzi; Overture; Ungar: "Ashokan Farewell;" "Londonderry Air" and "Granada." Bay Area Strings Community Orchestra will perform with Conductor Scott Wright. Concert begins at 7p.m. at Larkins Music Center (257 Dauphin St.). Admission is free. For more information call 251-432-2064/sarah@mobilesymphony.org (Sarah Wright, Education

Director, Mobile Symphony).

**Trough Thursday, May 31, 2007 - The Little House: A Preservation Tale** Paintings by Dawn Davis' third graders from Old Shell Road School of Creative and Performing Arts, in observance of National Preservation Month; inspired in part by Virginia Lee Burton's classic picture book The Little House. Sponsor: Mobile Historic Development Commission. ALSO: WINNERS OF TWO STUDENT ART COMPETITIONS and WORK BY STUDENTS OF BAY AREA ART EDUCATORS. Mobile Arts Council (318 Dauphin St.) Open Mon-Fri, 9a.m. - 5p.m. and Sat, 8a.m.-2p.m. Admission is free. For more information call, 251-432-9796 [www.mobilearts.org](http://www.mobilearts.org)

**Through Thursday May 31, 2007 - Pastels: Subtle Colors Reflect the Softer Side of Life** The work of 50 local and regional artists in all media and styles is showcased at Cathedral Square Gallery (260 Dauphin St.). Open Mon - Sat, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, call 251-694- 0278/[lhall699@aol.com](mailto:lhall699@aol.com)(Linda Hall Tenhundfeld).

**May 31, 2007 - Barton Academy Open House** The public is invited to attend the event held by the Mobile County Public School System from 4-6 pm. The Historic Mobile Preservation Society will be giving tours of the Barton Dome for a small donation to the Save Barton Academy Fund.

**June 9, 2007 - Davis Avenue Arts Festival.** The Davis Avenue Arts Association Inc. is presenting a festival designed to bring together all the many facets of the community: the arts, culture, history and religion. Starts at 11:00 a.m. at the Dearborn YMCA. Free Admission. [www.FreeWebs.com/DavisAve](http://www.FreeWebs.com/DavisAve).

**For a complete list of events**

The Downtown Mobile Alliance is a non-profit partnership between the Downtown Mobile District Management Corporation and Main Street Mobile, Inc., whose purpose is to create more exposure for downtown redevelopment efforts, both within the downtown community and throughout the city at large.

**Sincerely,**

Carol Hunter  
Downtown Mobile Alliance

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