A NEW OPPORTUNITY
Director’s Opening

A NEW TEMPLATE
Building

NUMBERS & STATS
Building

DISTRICT VISIONING
Leading

A LOOK FORWARD
Growing

STAFF & BOARD
Leading

OUR PARTNERS
Growing
We are extremely proud to be a part of the Historic 4th Avenue Business District and the Birmingham Civil Rights District family. This was truly a breakout year for the agency, as we developed unprecedented partnerships and new programs for small businesses. A great portion of our work focused on community engagement, collaborative building and planning efforts for the area in and surrounding the new minted Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument. This work will lead to a district strategic plan and ultimately input into the city’s master plan. Through our community engagement our beliefs were confirmed, that there is a deep passion and desire for the district to be revived as the international African American market place and an innovative hub for social and economic advancement. The product of our work transforms minds, which enriches ideas that leads to opportunity. This could not have been possible without the support of our community, many partners, stakeholders and friends. On behalf of our Board of Directors I thank you for your support and look forward to the progress forward.

Ivan W. Holloway
Executive Director
A NEW TEMPLATE

In November of 2016, members of the Urban Impact, Inc. (UII) team, along with various board members worked to develop a strategic framework as the guiding theme for our agency. This is driven by our core values and our desire to systematically position the agency to meet the reinvestment and development needs of the District. This framework is designed to re-position UII as the lead agency to advance a new economic and community development vision and focus for the District. In July of 2016, the UII embarked upon the first phase of re-branding, updating its logo and tagline, relocating its offices, launching a new website and several social media sites.

In July 2017, Urban Impact, Inc. acknowledged its thirty-seventh-year anniversary and celebrated the city’s successful designation of the District as a National Monument by President Barack Obama. As a result, the agency asserted a refreshed leadership in the district and charted a new organizational direction.

WHO WE ARE

MISSION

Our mission is to promote economic development; build relationships with community stakeholders; preserve the historical integrity of the community and provide quality services that will enhance the quality of life for area businesses and residents.

STRATEGIC VISION

Urban Impact will lead efforts to link the Historic 4th Avenue Business District (4ABD), Historic Birmingham Civil Rights District (CRD) and the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument District (BCRNMD) into one cohesive growth community. The combined area will become a vibrant, safe, and economically sustainable community with rising incomes, revenues and property values that are attractive to families of mixed incomes, businesses, and entrepreneurs. It will become a community of choice and opportunity where people live, work, shop, learn, play and experience history.

KEY FOCUS AREAS

- Integrate workforce development with catalytic development
- Focus on entrepreneurs through specific training and technical assistance (short term), business incubation and accelerators (long term)
- Develop and leverage smart investment opportunities with banks, along with local, regional and national community development financial institutions (CDFIs) and Community Development Entities (CDE)s
Data is critical to organizational success. In our quest to become a more metric driven organization, we conducted a Community Needs Assessment and Inventory in April of 2017. The survey was completed July 2017 with a representative sample and a response rate of 23%, concurrent with industry standards. Before the assessment, there was not a comprehensive baseline of data regarding businesses, community assets, properties or contact information. Now that we have essential data for the development district, it allows UII to effectively develop programs and partnerships.

47% of respondents wanted business and property development planning assistance

35% of respondents considering building improvements

Our development district is comprised of a series of districts which have 28 historic contributing structures and objects listed on the National Register of Historic Places and Landmarks. Most of the district consists of microenterprises (usually employing 1 – 5 people, with the exception of a few midsized and corporate headquarters [Gray Construction, Atlas RFID, Alabama Power, O’Carrs, Studio 2H Design, Etheridge Brothers Car Wash, Citizen’s Trust Bank, and Green Acres Café]).

According the business intelligence collected by the team, many of the businesses could benefit from 1) professional accounting services; 2) business and personal credit demarcation; 3) reduced merchant fee deposit accounts; 4) bridge financing (as evidenced by participation in cash flow loans from merchant services accounts); 5) building redevelopment fund and; 6) pipeline lending strategies to include CDFI’s to build capacity and move toward competitive bankability.
83% of Historic 4th Avenue Business Corridor, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is owned by African-Americans.

70% of the businesses in the 4th Avenue Commercial Revitalization District are African-American owned.
10 legacy Families have been operating businesses in the district for 50 or more years. Green Acres Cafe is celebrating their 60th year in business and Nelson Brother Cafe is celebrating their 75th.

9% of our commercial mix is comprised of retail and restaurant businesses. Growing eateries and retail is a part of our strategic business development plan.

74 is the number of businesses located in the 4th Avenue Commercial Revitalization District (4CRD) which is 5th Avenue N. to 2nd Avenue N., 15th St. N to 18th St. N.

100+ entities from the private, nonprofit, and governmental sectors call the UII development district home.
On par with national trends, women-owned businesses makeup approximately 33% of our commercial mix. Excitingly, the last four (4) businesses to move into the district have been women-owned.

40% of survey respondents indicated that they needed $5,000-$20,000 for building improvements.
BENCHMARKING

The UII Staff visited Nashville, Atlanta, Chicago, Washington, D.C. and Indianapolis in order to benchmark best economic development practices in historic African-American commercial districts. As a result of the team’s travels, we have been able to gain partnerships with national developers and preservationists.

COLLABORATIVES

Mr. Holloway meeting with BCRI CEO, Andrea Taylor

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Participants of our Partner and Stakeholder Conversation

COMMUNITY VIBRANCY

The Taste of 4th Avenue Jazz Festival remains a mainstay in the cultural landscape of Birmingham. In its 14th year, 2017’s iteration saw over 1,800 attendees. It continues to be staple of vibrancy in the district.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

FY 2018 saw the evolution of our technical assistance (TA) strategies to include more targeted entrepreneurial support. Rae’Mah Henderson, finalist in PNC’s 2017 Big Pitch, was one of the first recipients of the new (TA) platform.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Through our partnership with the City of Birmingham, we package the Business Development Loan Fund. We packaged the Lakeview Green Project, which was funded by the City of Birmingham in May 2018. The development is projected to create over 200 permanent jobs.
To date, there has not been a comprehensive development plan for the Birmingham Civil Rights District. Given the platform that the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument gives our development district, it is critically important to have a strategic plan that guides intentional, unique, equitable development.

In January of 2018, the office of UII began building collaboratives with “working committees”. Working committees are intra-district work groups designed to solve community needs. The first working committees, History and Young Professional (YP), were launched in first and second quarter, respectively. Emerging from the focus groups, more working committees will be launched in FY 2019.

Continuing our strategic efforts, the office of UII, in partnership with Alabama Power Company, disseminated a Commercial Development Strategy Study in February of 2018 that represents the first piece of our market analysis for the district. The second iteration of the market analysis will focus on potential economic impact and will be completed in conjunction with the University of Alabama’s Center for Business and Economic Research.

March 2018, the staff of UII held a Community Conversation with stakeholders to begin a series of community input meetings around various issues and district visioning. In June of 2018, the office of UII conducted focus groups to further ossify community visioning and to codify community input in preparation for the Birmingham City Center Master Planning Process to commence Fall 2018.
growing

A LOOK FORWARD

Investment - We identify, organize, attract and channel investment opportunities for traditionally undeserved groups and communities. We orchestrate strategic, longitudinal investment for catalytic community development projects. We seek to deploy affordable capital in order to realize the fullness of our target communities’ economic potential.

Merchant Success & Management - Community merchants are the DNA of a neighborhood. We work closely with local merchant’s associations to co-program community vibrancy events and to collaboratively solve business retention issues.

Preservation - Historic Preservation greatly informs our place-based strategy for redevelopment. In particular, we strive to preserve historic African-American places and rejuvenate them through adaptive reuse strategies.

Assistance - We provide tangible and targeted technical assistance to our neighborhood entrepreneurial ecosystems and to the Greater Birmingham community of individuals seeking to build assets and gain access to the modes of economic opportunity.

Community Development - Grounded and governed by the community, we actively integrate community benefit such as job creation, affordable housing, and workforce development into our programmatic philosophy.

Tourist Experience / Talent Development - The Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument District is a premier destination district worldwide, and we seek to cultivate a unique experience. For our neighboring communities, we seek to transform blighted spaces into hubs of skill development and attainment.

FY 2019 AGENDA

• Catalytic Project Management
• Property Acquisition
• Development Program Launch
• Resource Development
• Participation in City Center Master Plan
STAFF

Ivan W. Holloway, MURP - Executive Director
Darryl Washington, MPPM - COO
Carla Youngblood, CPA - Financial Consultant
Octavia Grady, MA - Community Relations and Partnerships Officer
Elijah E. Davis - Business Development Officer
Niya Davis - Office Assistant

Interns and Research Assistants: Marley Hicks, Veronica Challenger, John McCall-Pitts

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Charles Ball
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Elijah Davis
Greg Gratton
Ivan Holloway
John Whitman
Milo’s Tea Company, Inc.
We lead, build, and grow traditionally underserved and historic African-American commercial districts and neighborhoods.