



Bringing Back Birmingham: *From Steel We Forge Ahead*

An exploration of the rise, fall, and future of Birmingham, Alabama

Key finding: *Birmingham's history has prioritized non-local business interests, and has often relied on policies that result in racist outcomes to achieve this end.*

Agenda:

- Basis of Formation
- Rise & Decline
- Efforts to Address Decline
- Repositioning Birmingham
- Mitigating and Accelerating Factors



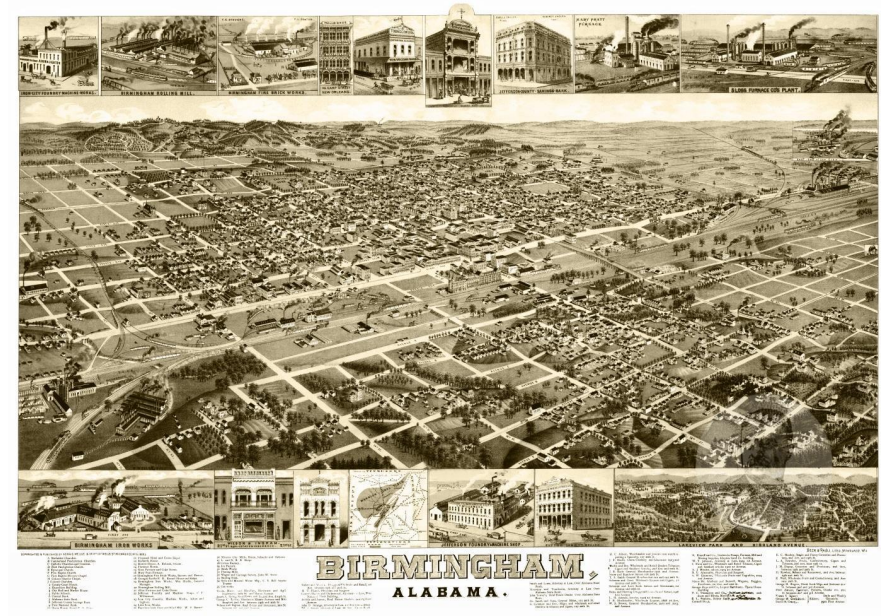


Chapter I: *Basis of Formation*

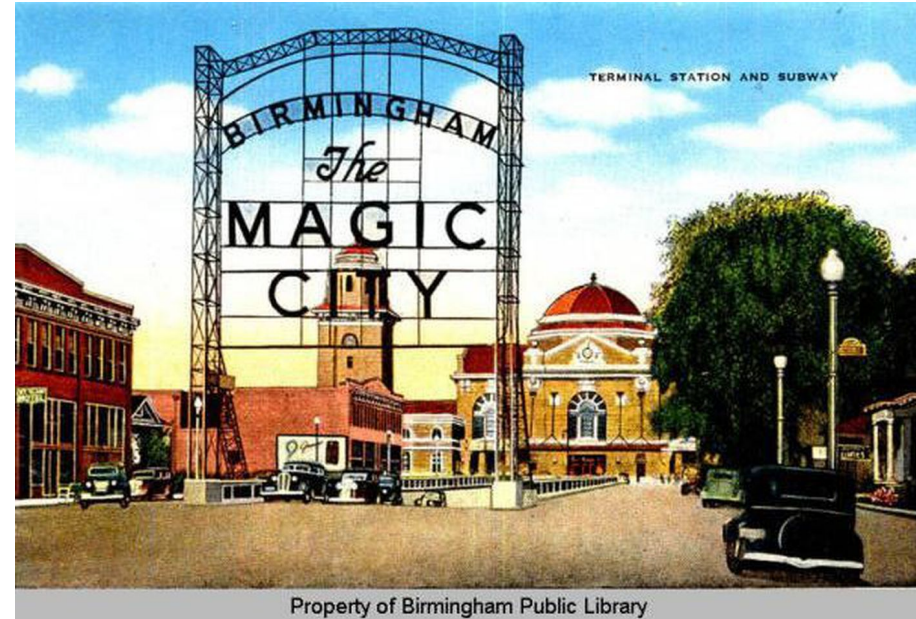
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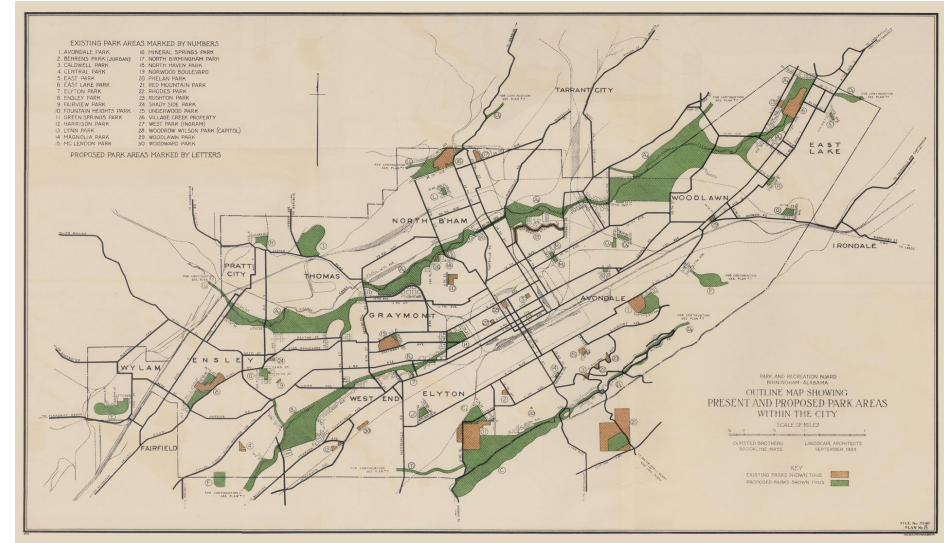
- **Birmingham** - an unfortunate “planned” journey
- **Intentional exploitation** of land and its people by BIG corporate America.
- Nearly every generation experienced **lost opportunities** to improve their lives, foster equity, and implement plans for future generations.
- In each step of development, outside businesses convinced local leaders to **exchange equity, justice, and ethics** for the promise of **short term economic viability**.



- Founded in **1871**
- Focus on **Labor and Industrial Specialization**
- **Unusual and bountiful** natural resources
- Easy **expansion of rail transportation system**
- Elyton Land Company - “**Duke of Birmingham**”
- **Rapid growth = Magic City**



- **Olmstead Brothers** - A developed plan for **City growth**
- Substantial private infrastructure development to **feed the industrial engine**
- **Cheaper labor = economic advantage**





Chapter II: *Decline*

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Key Factors Leading to Birmingham's Decline

1. Racial segregation intertwined with development history
2. Lack of development trends
3. Lower educational attainment



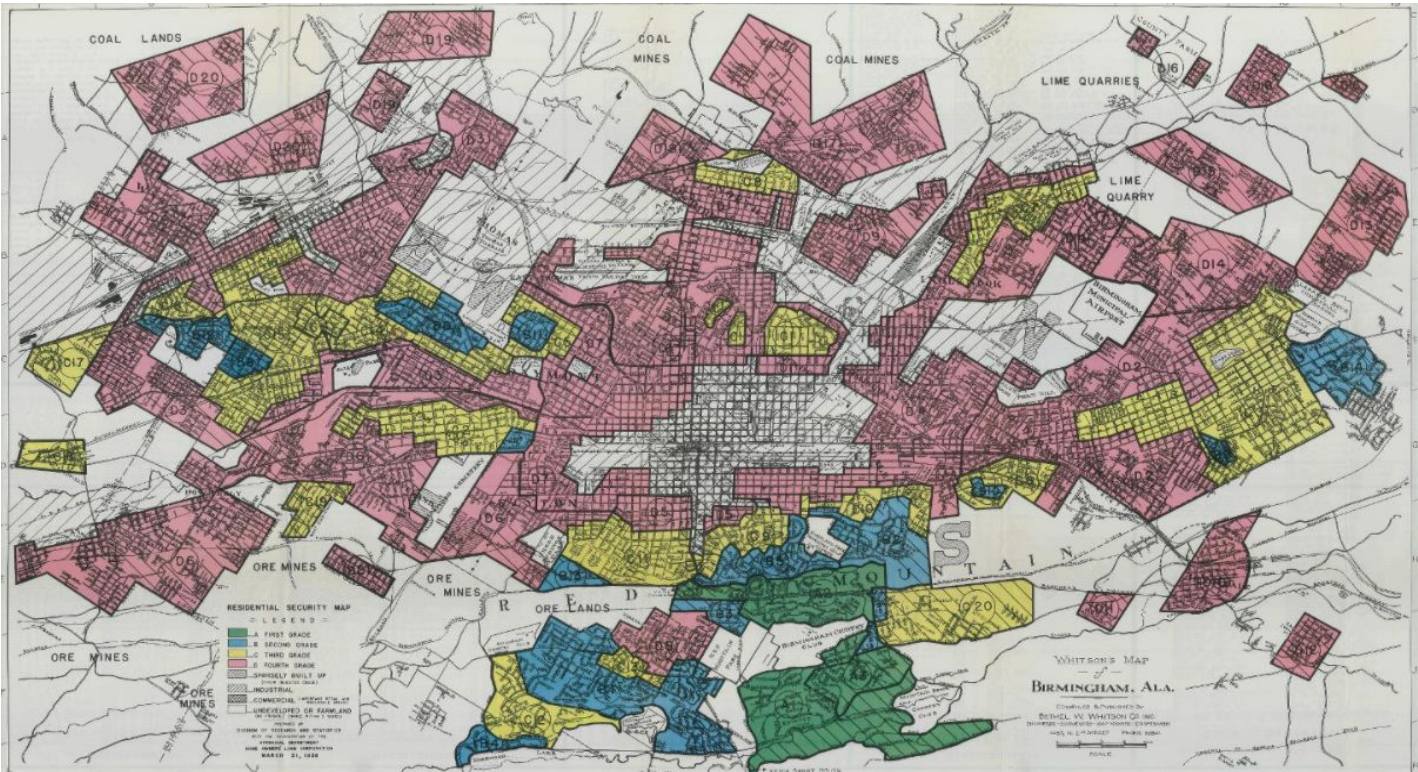
- Reputation in Shambles
- Brutal Treatment of Freedom Riders



- Less Desirable
 - Along railroad lines
 - Industrial area
 - Lacked infrastructures
 - Unsanitary
- Over the mountain = White Elites
- “Dynamite Hill” Bombing



Redlining map of Birmingham, made by the HOLC 1936



- Many Brownfield Sites
- Vacant Properties
- Older Community experienced Disinvestment
- Blight areas near attractive areas



About 8,000 housing units are vacant and out of the housing market, and there are thousands of vacant lots in residential neighborhoods.

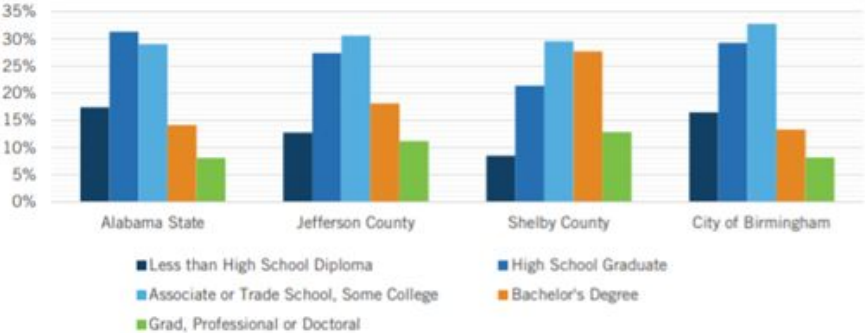
Large vacant or underutilized sites remain as a legacy of Birmingham's mining and industrial history.



- Income Disparity due to lack of education
- Under-represented groups earn less and high poverty rates
- Under-represented groups hold lower skill jobs because of lack of skills
- Least number of Degree holder than other city

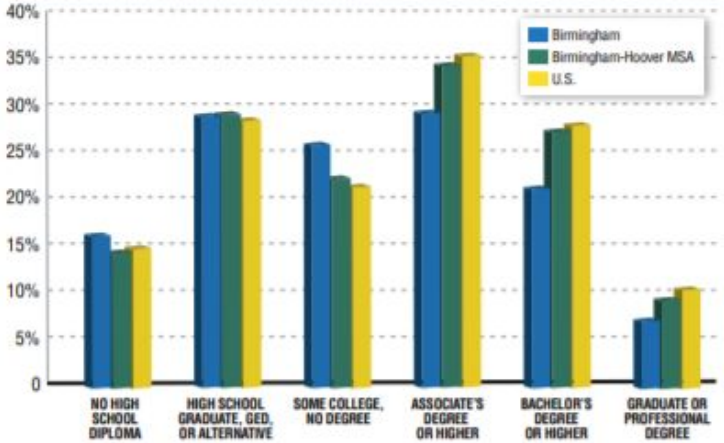
CITY OF BIRMINGHAM HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY

Figure 30: Educational Attainment



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2008-12 5-Year Estimates.

FIGURE 3.33: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR POPULATION, 2009: BIRMINGHAM, BIRMINGHAM-HOOVER MSA, AND U.S.



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2009



Chapter III: *Efforts to Address Decline*

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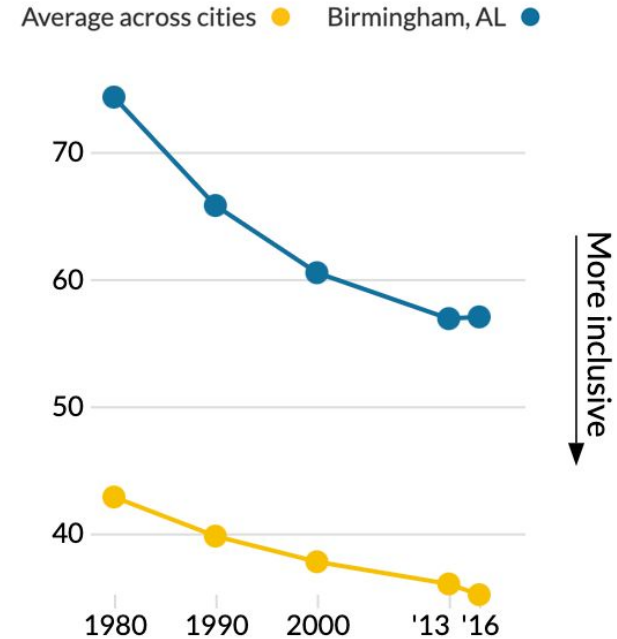
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- Neighborhood Housing Services of Birmingham
- Shape Bham neighborhood planning initiative
- Community groups addressing related issues
- Federal legislation



Racial Segregation in Birmingham

Index of neighborhood versus city-wide demographics

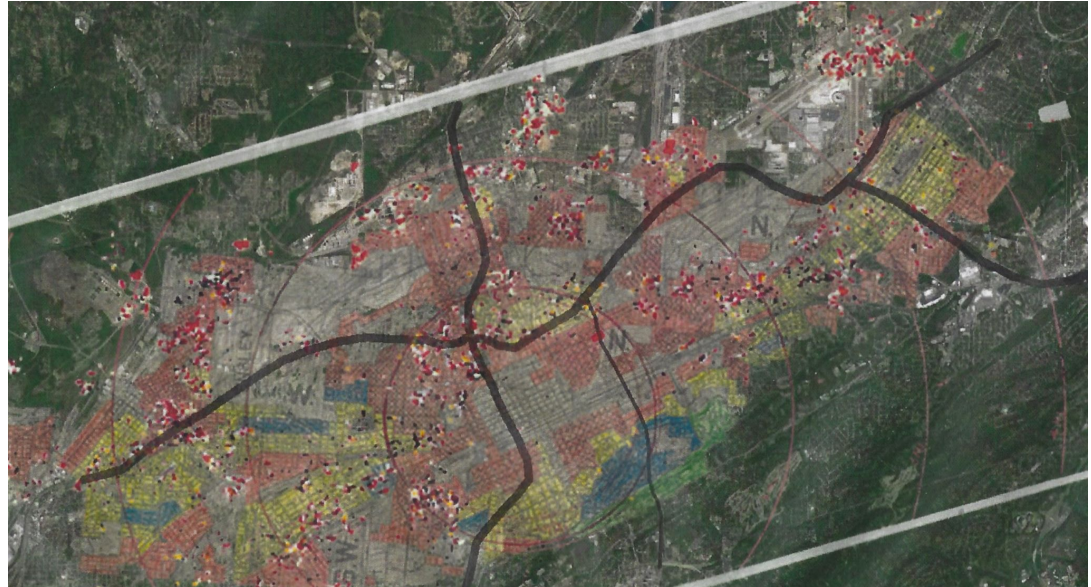


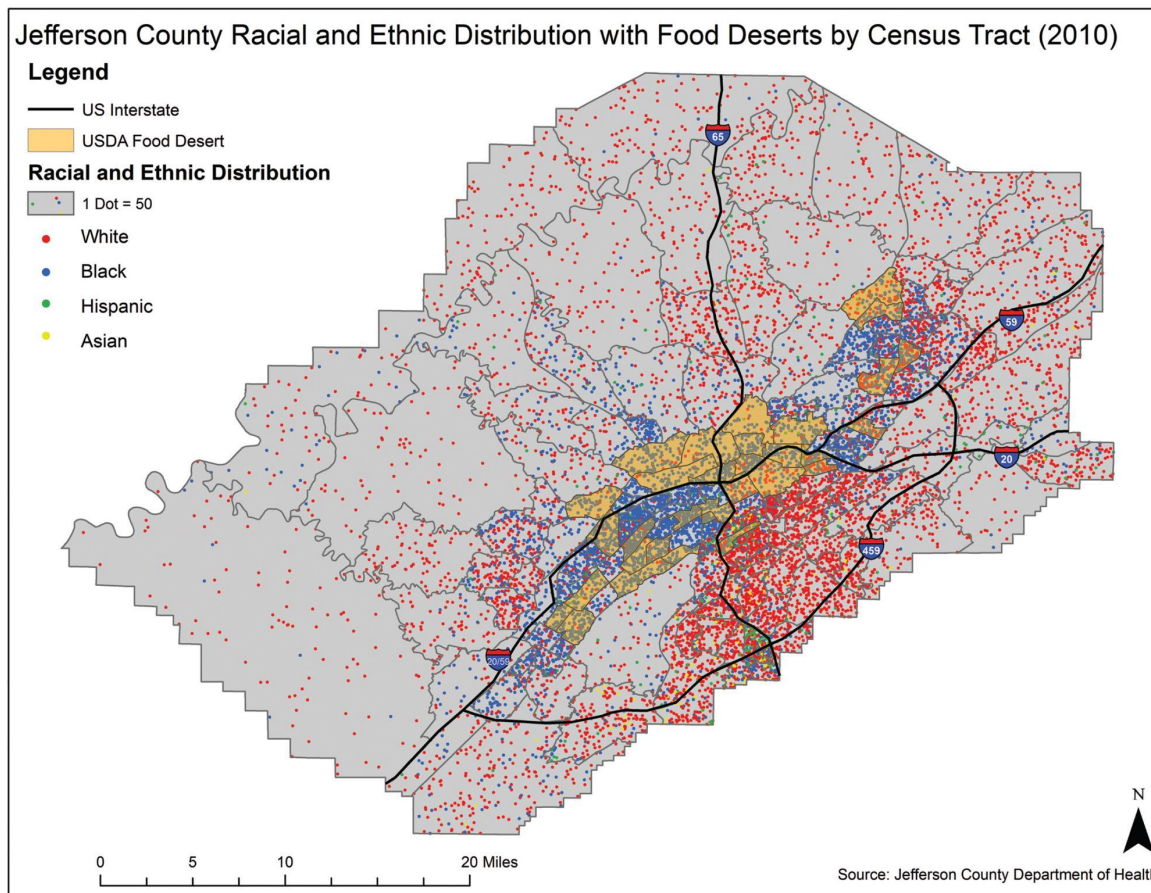
Source: "Measuring Inclusion in America's Cities," Urban Institute, last updated September 15, 2020.

However...

Racial segregation persists

- 2010 audit revealed HUD's 1968 FHA virtually useless due to lack of enforcement
- 78,000 residents in formerly redlined areas, 85% are Black or African American
- Interstate 20/59, built in 1973, bisected predominantly Black neighborhoods





- Prioritization of neighborhood revitalisation efforts
- Citywide Rehabilitation Program via Neighborhood Revitalization fund
- Opportunity Zones Program
- REV Birmingham PPP



However...

- 1996 Drug Nuisance Abatement Act enforcement
 - Goal: deter crime, combat safety and health code violations, address decreasing property values linked to illegal drug use, sale, manufacturing
 - Questionable development method

- Renewing Downtown Birmingham and 2021 World Games
 - State of the art cultural institutions
 - Set to host the 2021 World Games (must be done right)



- Increased the number of institutions in the area
 - medicine, dentistry, OT, PT, optometry, pharmacy, nursing, law, engineering, liberal arts
- Establishment as a hub for medical training and research
- Birmingham Promise program
- Local partnerships and small business investment



Racial Segregation

1. Neighborhood Housing Services of Birmingham: homeownership counseling, support
2. Shape Bham equity-driven neighborhood planning initiative to rectify segregation
3. Community groups addressing health disparities, urban food deserts, other negative impacts caused by racially segregated development, redlining

Lack of Development Trends

1. Prioritization of neighborhood revitalisation efforts
2. Citywide Rehabilitation Program
3. Opportunity Zones Program
4. REV Birmingham PPP
5. Drug Nuisance Abatement Act enforcement
6. Renewing Downtown Birmingham and 2021 World Games

Lower Educational Attainment

1. Increased the number of institutions in the area
2. Establishment as a hub for medical training and research
3. Birmingham Promise program for post-secondary career development
4. Local partnerships and small business investment



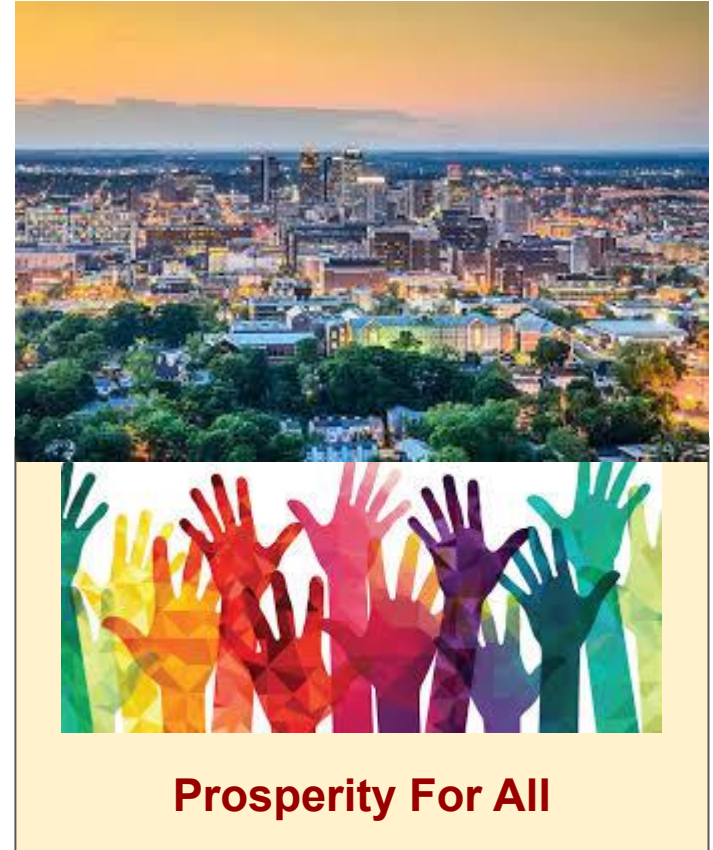
Chapter IV: *Repositioning Birmingham*

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Our Goal and Shared Vision:

- Diversity
- Social Inclusion
- Community Participation
- Transparent & Accountable
Government
- “Put People First”
- Economic Prosperity





Medical Labs & Research Facilities



Drone Training Facilities

Birmingham can be know for:

- Medical Labs & Research
- Virtual Reality Facilities
- College Sports Town
- Hosting 2021 Word Games
- Hotels and Tourism
- Homeless Shelters / Public Services



Indoor Sports Facilities



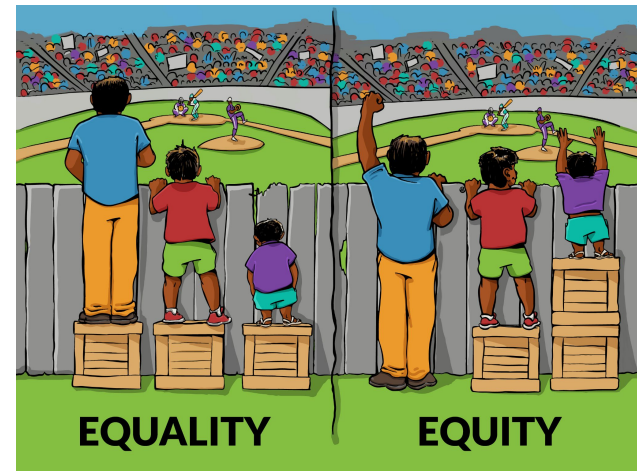
Indoor Gaming Facilities

Address social inclusion and diversity

1. **Homeownership** support
2. **Education**
3. General **Planning**
4. Community **organizing** groups

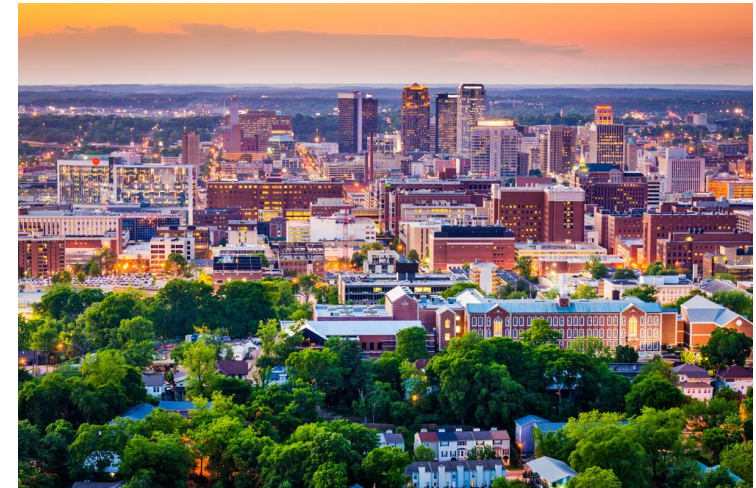
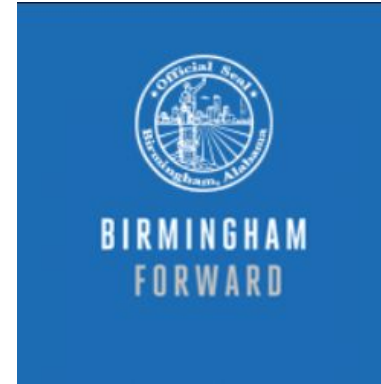


**WHEN THERE IS A WILL...
THERE IS A WAY!**



Focus Downtown Birmingham - Central Business District

- **Opportunity** Zones Program
- **Historic** Districts
- **Overlay** Zones
- **Form-Based** Zones
- **Green** Zones
- **Mobility** Action Plan



Encourage economic development and attract new businesses and revenue streams

- REV Birmingham PPP
- Land value tax within redevelopment zones
- Linkage fees and inclusionary zoning
- Minimum 10% affordable housing stock
- Protect against gentrification
- Tax breaks and incentives





Chapter IV-b: *Mitigating and Accelerating Factors*

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Social Inertia

- Racism
- Education
- Health

Governance Issues

- No champions
- Political quagmire
- Few institutions
- Fragmentation



State Policy

- No fiscal straitjacket
- Business friendly
 - Minimum Wage
 - Tax friendly
- Social Issues may turn businesses away





Concluding Thoughts

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Thank You So Much!!

If You Have Any Questions, Comments, Recommendations,

Please Share It In The Comments Section

Feedbacks Will Be Greatly Appreciated!!

