

Good Afternoon and Happy Friday, Memphis!



Before we delve into the first recap of the year's final month, I want to take a moment to recognize the eightieth anniversary of the Pearl Harbor tragedy. December 7, 1941 will forever be remembered as one of the darkest days in American history. However, those who lost their lives on that day did not perish in vain. Rather, the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice so many years ago brought about our renewed strength. Their hard-fought contributions secured our nation's ability to serve as a beacon of freedom and democracy around the world. Throughout the remainder of this week, join me in honoring the brave souls who defended our country at all costs, as well as those who continue to do so in the present day.

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In addition to spotlighting Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, on Tuesday your Memphis City Council met to discuss measures focused on moving Memphis forward in the areas of capital improvements, economic development, public libraries, and planning and zoning. If you were not able to virtually participate in the meeting via in-person attendance, live-stream on the Council website, YouTube, or 88.5 FM (WQOX), a full review is provided, [here](#).

Welcoming an Update on Accelerate Memphis:

Although I enjoy offering a rundown of the most recent Council Tuesday voting actions, I would be remiss if I did not first speak glowingly of Accelerate Memphis and its ongoing progress.

Looking back, on January 21, 2021, Mayor Strickland unveiled a proposal for “the largest city investment in neighborhoods and city facilities in the history of the city of Memphis.” And by the numbers, the Administration is correct. With \$200M in bonds being issued to “facilitate catalytic community projects intended to accelerate local growth by improving quality of life, driving equity and inclusion, improving connectivity, and solving stubborn problems that are deeper than any single capital budget can solve,” Accelerate Memphis will effectively transform our community by taking our neighborhoods to the next level for the benefit of every citizen.

With these advancements in mind, on Tuesday the Council welcomed City of Memphis Chief Operating Officer Doug McGowen and Finance Division Chief Shirley Ford; together they provided an Accelerate Memphis Update during the [morning Budget committee](#).

Specifically, Chiefs Ford and McGowen highlighted citywide improvements currently taking place, as well as those planned to begin by December 2023.

As presented in the update, Accelerate Memphis projects are centered on three cornerstones: (1) Activating Memphis 3.0, (2) Improving Memphis parks, and (3) Revitalizing citywide assets.

However, what will that look like over the next 24 months?

Well, let’s dig in:

Activating Memphis 3.0 via \$75M

As the City’s comprehensive plan guiding growth, development, and planning policy over the next 20 years, Memphis 3.0 aims to *Build Up, Not Out* – leveraging existing land, connected communities, and ongoing investments to build a more prosperous Memphis.

With Accelerate Memphis offering \$75M worth of investment, the funds will activate Memphis 3.0 projects in the following manner:

\$13.6M dedicated to investments in 34 neighborhood anchor areas with actions that may include street recovering, bus shelters, light pole banners, crosswalk/sidewalk improvements, repurposed vacant land as civic space,

closed curb cuts, signage improvements, street trees and street furniture, streetlight upgrades, public wi-fi, and road diets;

\$37.4M dedicated to large scale, targeted investments in nine anchor areas with planning efforts that may include public promenades and plazas, neighborhood squares, landscaped medians, and new community buildings;

\$9M dedicated to safety improvements across eight priority anchor areas or corridors with actions that may include intersection redesign, improved lighting, signal upgrades, crosswalk/sidewalk improvements, bike lanes, traffic calming, and ADA improvements;

\$7.5M dedicated to closing the digital divide by way of expanded broadband infrastructure, and

\$7.5M dedicated to investing in housing opportunities, notably using funds in support of affordable housing.

Improving Memphis Parks via \$75M

Responding to citizen calls for the need to upgrade existing parks, Accelerate Memphis is directing \$75M toward enhancements which will include, but not be limited to:

\$35M dedicated to investing in deferred maintenance, and

\$40M dedicated to investments in entirely new amenities or significant renovations to existing facilities; by doing so, citizens will be able to enjoy newly installed or improved fitness centers, elevated walking paths, outdoor walking trails and green lines, splash pads, playgrounds, multipurpose rooms, and community gathering spaces.

Revitalizing City-Wide Assets via \$50M

Lastly, addressing the need to repair or renovate common community assets, Accelerate Memphis is on track to invest \$50M in the following manner:

\$10M dedicated to the Liberty Park youth sports complex,

\$4M dedicated to the rehabilitation of Mud Island River Park,

\$10M dedicated to the AutoZone Park Capital Repair Fund,

\$10M dedicated to the FedEx Forum Capital Repair Fund,

\$10M dedicated to the 100 North Main remediation,

\$10M dedicated to funding a state-of-the-art library, and mixed-use, senior housing development at Melrose School in Orange Mound, and

\$1M dedicated to conducting underpass improvements related to cosmetic, safety, and lighting repairs needed to ensure pedestrian well-being along our thoroughfares.

Altogether, the work to *activate, improve, and revitalize* our beloved Bluff City will begin on the neighborhood level, where tangible changes will be most visible and enjoyed by residents of every stripe.

See the comprehensive plan at acceleratememphis.com

For details regarding project timelines, click [here](#).

Considering the Creation of the Peabody Hotel Tourism Development Zone:

As we maintain our aim to positively transform our communal spaces, the Council also seeks innovative methods of furthering the redevelopment of Memphis' most-iconic attractions.

With that in mind, during Tuesday morning's [Economic Development, Technology, and Tourism committee](#), we considered an ordinance that, if approved over the course of three readings, would establish the Peabody Hotel as a tourism development zone (TDZ).

As a bit of background, having previously renovated the site, the hotel's tenant now proposes to make capital investments totaling \$125M over the next 30 years. However, to ensure that long-term redevelopment and preservation efforts are successful, the TDZ is now being sought to allow the Peabody Hotel to assess a tourism surcharge of up to 5 percent on all goods and services within the hotel.

In practice, the TDZ would allow revenues generated from the tourism surcharge to pay or reimburse costs, or indebtedness incurred, related to the site's construction, renovation, equipping, and thus, redevelopment.

If established, the designation is projected to generate approximately \$130M in proceeds, which would then be applied to facility improvements, as outlined above.

Although the proposed ordinance received a positive committee recommendation, a final decision is pending. Stay tuned in the weeks ahead as the Council determines a course of action in the effort to enhance the *South's Grand Hotel* for continued use, and recognition, on the world-stage.

Funding Memphis' Public Libraries:

By the same token, as we build a city of Memphis capable of not just reaching, but also surpassing its potential, it is vital that we direct equal attention to resources that are conducive to personal and educational empowerment.

To that end, on Tuesday we approved a resolution accepting, allocating, and appropriating grant funds in the amount of \$63,315. Specifically, the dollars will be used to purchase program and COVID-19 enhancement supplies for Memphis Public Libraries. Ultimately, this action will ensure that our award-winning public library system continues to thrive for the benefit of each citizen in the long-term.

Honoring Citizens Who Have Served the Memphis Community – Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated:

When worthy circumstances arise, the Council has seen fit to recognize Memphians who have served our community. This week, **Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated** was honored for their work to promote civic involvement and community outreach.

Upon review, the organization has exhibited a tireless commitment to addressing critical health issues impacting women across the Mid-South. In doing so, the local **Memphis Metro Graduate Chapters** have routinely championed breast cancer awareness and prevention, heart health, nutrition, and most recently, COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

With these past, present, and continued works in mind, on Tuesday the council recognized **Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated**, underscoring our appreciation for their dedication to the wellness of citizens near and far.

Honoring Citizens Who Have Served the Memphis Community – Young Dolph:

Similarly, the Council from time to time has moved to honorarily name certain public roads for citizens who have served this community. This week, **Adolph "Young Dolph" Robert Thornton, Jr.** was posthumously recognized with an Honorary Street Name.

Young Dolph was a musical powerhouse, who even after reaching international fame maintained his sense of love for Memphis and its residents. At his core, he possessed a generous heart and valued opportunities to provide for the underserved.

Unfortunately, due to an inexcusable act of violence, Young Dolph departed this world too soon on November 17. With the sadness of his passing still present, and the totality of his contributions in mind, on Tuesday the Council honored Young Dolph's spirit of altruism by designating Dunn Avenue between Airways Boulevard and Hays Road as "**Adolph 'Young Dolph' Thornton, Jr. Avenue.**"

As we contemplate the impact of another life senselessly lost, the Council reiterates its call to **end gun violence now.**

Bidding farewell to our Chief of Staff, Ms. Brooke Hyman:

Finally, Ms. Brooke D. Hyman, Memphis City Council Chief of Staff, is departing the Council Office to accept a new role with the City of Memphis as the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer. Ms. Hyman joined the Council team in 2016 and was instrumental in our collective success over the last five years. Although we will miss her expert analysis and magnetic leadership, we look forward to watching her continued success in the years ahead.

Please join me in bidding farewell to Chief Hyman.

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Looking Forward:

As always, I am honored to serve you each day as part of a thirteen-councilmember team working to transform our city into a place of opportunity for all. Stay tuned for future Council updates as we keep you informed regarding the activities taking place here at City Hall.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Colvett, Jr.", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chairman Frank Colvett, Jr.
Memphis City Council
District 2