



**The ONB Public/Private Partnership's
Record of Accomplishment 1957-2009**

For almost fifty-two years, the ONB public private partnership between the City and the business community has served a unique role in creating jobs, increasing City Center property values and increasing the tax base.

Operation New Birmingham:

- Brings together the City, County and business community to focus on economic development in downtown.
- Mediated racial issues since 1963 and continues promotion of racial harmony in the community.
- Led renovation of 20th Street as Birmingham Green.
- Pioneered lofts, apartments and condos beginning in 1983 that will result in about 4,000 downtown residents by 2010.
- Expanded City parking decks for growing office market.
- Coordinated acquisition of site for UAB's Kirklin Clinic.
- Played a key role in bringing the McWane Science Center downtown.
- Proposed financial incentives , including the establishment of the TIF District and City of Birmingham Economic Stimulus Loan Program.
- Facilitated the use of Federal Historic Tax Credits for renovation of more than 70 downtown historic buildings.
- Spearheaded the creation of the City Action Partnership (CAP).
- Led the effort to locate the headquarters of the Social Security Administration, FBI and ATF/DEA in the City Center.

About ONB

- ONB is a non-profit public/private partnership between the City of Birmingham and the private sector business community founded in 1957.
- It's primary mission is to make the City Center the #1 choice for business, living, healthcare, higher education and the arts and entertainment and to promote racial harmony throughout the community.
- ONB is the *only* economic development organization that focuses exclusively on the City Center. Why?
 - 80,000 people work in the 365-block City Center.
 - The City Center is only 2% of the land mass of the City of Birmingham but generates 35% of all tax revenues collected by the City.
 - The City Center skyline is the Signature of Birmingham.



ONB Has Four Distinct Roles

#1 Urban Planning

- Integral part of the planning teams for the 2004 City Center Master Plan.
- ONB President Michael Calvert helped develop the 1981 and 1991 Master Plans, providing continuity and institutional memory.
- Currently preparing plans for the area near the new Social Security building, the area south of the Railroad Park and the Entrepreneurial District.
- Currently involved in planning studies with the City of Birmingham, Jefferson County, the Regional Planning Commission, and UAB's Campus Planning Office. Projects include:
 - Mass transit proposals
 - Conversion of certain one-way streets to two-way
 - Expansion of the UAB campus and new Children's Hospital
 - BJCC multi-purpose facility.
- Assist developers with issues regarding zoning, planning and other regulations and arrange preliminary walk-thrus for developers with buildings inspectors and fire code officials.

#2 Information Clearinghouse for Developers and Businesses Considering Investment in the City Center

- Maintain office occupancy statistics, rents and lease-term information.
- Maintain parking availability and cost data.
- Maintain a searchable database of all City Center available buildings with pictures, size and contact information on realtors and planners.
- Maintain extensive market data on lofts, apartments and condominiums.
- Provide beginning to end assistance for developers from site identification to coordinating ground-breakings.

#3 Financial Incentives

- Provide business and developers access to a wide array of incentives for projects.
- Proposed the City Economic Stimulus Loan Program. Package Economic Stimulus Loans and CDBG short-term low interest loans for the City of Birmingham.
 - Since 2005, CDBG loans have leveraged \$59.5 million in private investment and created or retained 239-264 jobs.
 - \$3.3 million in Economic Stimulus loans have leveraged \$85 million in private investment and created or retained over 300 jobs.
- Assist developers in qualifying projects for federal historic tax credits and coordinate other tax benefits. ONB has helped qualify over 70 buildings for historic tax credits, including the iconic John Hand Building, the Clark Building and the SH Kress Building.
- Completed the work necessary to designate several areas of the City Center and the Ft. Heights and Norwood neighborhoods as historic districts.
- Applied special incentives such as sharing future revenues with developers, parking discounts and other custom- designed solutions to move projects forward.

#4 Promotion of the City Center

- ONB works with *The Birmingham News*, *the Birmingham Business Journal*, TV stations, and other media to encourage coverage of progress in the implementation of the City Center Master Plan as well as new projects.
- ONB relentlessly seeks favorable publicity about the City Center through aggressive public relations efforts, its monthly *Synergy* newsletter and Breakfast Briefings, and presentations to groups throughout the metro area.
- An image featuring topics like City Center safety, new businesses, and successful investments encourages entrepreneurs and developers to explore development opportunities in the City Center.

Results: A Healthy Vibrant City Center

- Property values in the City Center have increased by 67% since 1998.
- Total investment in the City Center in 2008 was over \$950 million;
- Office market occupancy now stands at 93%, the residential market is 94% occupied;
- ONB expects 4,000 people to be living in the City Center by the end of next year;
- The number of vacant buildings in the City Center has decreased from 245 in 1995 when ONB began its Available Buildings Program, to 71 now;
- Since the City Action Partnership's (CAP) founding by Operation New Birmingham in 1995, crime has decreased by 52% in the 85-block CAP District, making it one of the safest places in the entire metro area. ONB and CAP work together closely to combat misperceptions about City Center safety.



ONB coordinated the effort that resulted in new headquarters buildings for the SSA, FBI and ATF/DEA in downtown. These privately developed buildings pay more than \$2.5 million in City, County and School Board taxes.