

Awards of Excellence

Presented by



UB Community
Development



WALKER AREA
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
RESPONSIBLE GIVING RESULTS



August 21, 2025



Awards of Excellence



Each year, Main Street Alabama commissions a talented Alabama artist to craft a one-of-a-kind piece for the Awards of Excellence. This year's artist is Chris Wells, a Huntsville-based woodworker who has been creating with wood since he was old enough to swing a hammer. Over the past five years, Chris has explored the art of fractal burning, using electricity to etch intricate, unpredictable patterns into wood. He says the most exciting part is watching how the electricity shapes each unique piece.

Alice Bowsher Main Street Alabama Leadership Award

Award given in recognition to an individual or organization who has made an outstanding leadership contribution on a statewide basis.



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

**ENERGY
SOUTHEAST**

 **UB Community
Development**


WALKER AREA Community Foundation
RESPONSIBLE GIVING RESULTS

Congressman Mike Rogers



We are proud to celebrate an exceptional year for **AL Spark**, Main Street Alabama's newest initiative designed to energize and support emerging and growing businesses in designated Main Street districts across the state. Made possible through a Small Business Administration appropriation, AL Spark focuses on empowering local business development and driving long-term growth.

Over the past eight months, more than **300 businesses statewide** have received funding through this program, an incredible milestone for our downtowns and commercial districts. We extend our deepest gratitude to Congressman Mike Rogers, whose leadership and support were instrumental in securing the funding that launched this effort.

In recognition of his role, Congressman Rogers was presented with the **Main Street Alabama Leadership Award**. Click to read the [full release](#).



Awards of Excellence
Presented by



Excellence in Fundraising

Award recognizes a Main Street program for outstanding local fundraising activity or campaign; displaying creativity and success in securing funds for the district, program, or specific project.

Alexander City – Cars & Cocktails



Held at the **Wellborn Muscle Car Museum**, this inaugural event offered a fresh and engaging way to connect with the community, highlight Main Street's ongoing revitalization efforts, and drive both funding and membership growth. The unique venue provided a lively, upscale atmosphere where attendees could enjoy a memorable night out while learning more about downtown projects and future initiatives.

Cars & Cocktails generated a **300% increase in community memberships**, greatly expanding the program's local support network. It also raised a **net total of \$9,360**, providing vital funding to advance Alexander City's downtown revitalization initiatives.

Beyond the financial success, the event elevated the visibility of Main Street's work, strengthened relationships with residents and local partners, and helped restore a renewed sense of pride in the district.

Demopolis – Bark in the Park



Bark in the Park, held in September, combined live music, food trucks, and a community celebration of beloved pets, all centered around a lighthearted “doggy pageant” to crown **Main Street Demopolis’s Best Friend**. In 2024, organizers introduced an innovative social media voting campaign where supporters could nominate their favorite dogs and cast votes for \$1 each. The friendly competition quickly gained traction, generating excitement and engagement well beyond expectations.

The event raised **\$6,351 in total contributions**, resulting in a **net profit of \$4,661**—far surpassing its original goal of simply covering entertainment costs. The campaign also attracted significant attention online, growing Main Street Demopolis’s following by more than 500 people and sparking spirited community involvement. Local businesses joined the fun as well, with one veterinarian adding a generous \$1,500 donation in support of the cause.

Jasper - Welcome Center



Jasper Main Street is being recognized for fundraising efforts for the **official Jasper Welcome Center** and new home to Jasper Main Street's office. The welcome center is the only one along I-22 between Birmingham and Tupelo, and is the key hub to provide travel information, promote local businesses, and welcome visitors to Walker County.

Jasper Main Street secured over **\$320K** and was powered by strong partnerships with the City of Jasper, Alabama Tourism, Walker Area Community Foundation, Walker College Foundation, local businesses, civic leaders, and dedicated donors, all rallying behind the vision to enhance the downtown visitor experience.

LaFayette - Miss LaFayette Main Street Pageant



The Miss LaFayette Main Street Pageant brought together over 40 participants, a large audience, and strong local business involvement to raise funds while showcasing leadership, empowerment, and community pride.

The event exceeded expectations, raising **\$7,000 net-more than double its \$3,000 goal**-through contestant registrations, admission tickets, a people's choice competition, local floral sales, concessions, and sponsorships. Local businesses contributed gifts, services, and support, ensuring the pageant not only supported LaFayette Main Street's revitalization efforts but also boosted the local economy.

Titleholders have since represented LaFayette Main Street at parades, holiday events, and even visits to state legislators.

Leeds- Mardi on Main



Mardi on Main Casino Night was a lively fundraising event that brought new energy and resources to downtown revitalization efforts. This first-time celebration transformed the heart of Leeds' historic district into a festive Mardi Gras-themed venue, complete with catered food, drinks, live music, a 360 photo booth, fire pit lanterns, and casino-style games hosted in the city's historic Train Depot.

The event delivered **\$8,000 in net proceeds**, after \$4,000 in expenses, providing vital funds to advance Main Street programs and initiatives.

Monroeville - Leveraging GAMSA



MONROEVILLE MAIN STREET
Monroeville's Main Street
2024 Vision

MEMBER AND SPONSOR OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE FOUND AT MONROEVILLEMAINSTREET.COM

2024 - 2025 Projects & Events
2024 Great American Main Street Award
Courthouse Square Banners
4th Mural on the Small Box Shop
June 16 Monroeville Main Street Month
10th Anniversary Celebration - June 2024
9th Annual Farm to Table Dinner - June 2024
Host Community for Downtown Mini Lab & Main Street Alabama Awards of Excellence Dinner
August 14-16, 2024
24/25 BUOY Class
Second Saturday 2024 - April - October
Art Abandonment Project with MC Public Library
Main Street Story Trail (New Stories monthly)
Small Box Shop - Pop Up Shop
Monroe Council for the Arts
District Marketing Grants (coming this fall)
Caprese & Cocktails with the MC Public Library
West Claiborne Improvement Project (with City, JPL, Investment Properties, & Monroe Economic Dev)
8th Annual Preservation Party
5th Point the Towns Point Out - March 2025
2nd Annual Book II 5K Run/Walk - May 2025

2014-2023 Highlights
Second Saturdays On the Square
B.U.O.Y. - Youth Entrepreneur Program
Monroeville Main Street Advisory Board
Paint the Town Point Out
Pop-Up Art Gallery
Christmas Joy Project with M.E.S.
Small Box Production Workshop
smART Moves in Monroe County Mural Trail
Literary Giants Mural
Community Mural Project with Rotary
2 Downtown Tourism Kiosks
Downtown Map Project with M/MC CoC
ALA TOM 929 Council Grantee
Daniel Foundation Grantee
2021 & 2022 AARP Community Challenge Grantee
Self-watering Planters
2019 Partners in Preservation Grant
Literary Capital Sculpture Trail
Christmas Memory Mural
Downtown Welcome Banners

CONTACT INFORMATION
251-373-1457
monroevillemainstreet@gmail.com

MAILING ADDRESS:
Post Office Box 1243
Monroeville, AL 36481

PHYSICAL ADDRESS:
84 N Alabama Ave.
(Inside the Chamber of Commerce)

2024-2023 Board of Directors
Dr. Todd Cunningham, President
Jan Martin, Vice President
Linda Ruffolo, Treasurer / Secretary
Randy Robinson / Ex-Officio
Jeff Bouchie, Executive Board Member
Kassandra Braggins, Josh Chambers
Rachael Cantel, Chuck Downing
Wendy Johnson, Tony Johnson
David H. Jones, Brad Truhler
Anna Marie Ryan, Executive Director
Mary Taylor Moore, Senior Marketing & Communications Assistant

WWW.MONROEVILLEMAINSTREET.COM

Monroeville Main Street leveraged their national recognition for its fundraising campaign. Following its Great American Main Street Award win in 2024, the organization launched a strategic outreach effort that resulted in an impressive **86% increase in membership and sponsorship dollars**.

Every board member played an active role, personally reconnecting with lapsed donors, cultivating new partnerships, and presenting to local organizations. The campaign secured multi-year commitments from major contributors including the **Monroe County Industrial Development Authority** and **JWJ Investment Properties**, the latter tripling its previous level of support.

The increased funding allowed Monroeville Main Street to move from a shared space inside the Chamber of Commerce into its **first professional office**, creating a more visible, functional hub for operations, volunteers, and meetings.



Awards of Excellence
Presented by
by



Excellence in Public / Private Partnerships

Award recognizes outstanding local partnerships between the local Main Street organization and another community entity or entities (public or private).

Atmore - Alley on Main

The Alley on Main project was a transformative collaboration with the City of Atmore that turned a long-neglected downtown alleyway into a vibrant public destination.



Building on years of strong partnership, **Main Street Atmore and the City** joined forces in 2023 to launch this ambitious placemaking effort, following the city's designation of a new Arts & Entertainment District. With city funding for key infrastructure elements and Main Street Atmore's leadership in design, planning, and grant procurement, the project successfully raised over **\$200,000** through a mix of **public investment, grants, and in-kind contributions**.

The revitalized Alley on Main now features brickwork restoration, enhanced lighting, colorful umbrella installations, seating, birdhouses, trees, pollinator-friendly landscaping, interactive murals, and more. Completed under budget and with widespread community support, it has quickly become a cherished landmark for residents and visitors alike.

Montevallo - K.A.S.H. Market



The K.A.S.H. Market (Kids' Action Side Hustle), a collaborative effort designed to inspire entrepreneurship in young people ages 5–18.

Launched in 2024 through a partnership with **Alabama Public Television (APT)**, the **Montevallo Chamber of Commerce**, **Parnell Memorial Library**, and **IMPACT Montevallo**, the K.A.S.H. Market offers aspiring young entrepreneurs a hands-on opportunity to learn the fundamentals of running a business. Participants attend a one-hour business workshop, take part in a creative poster-making session, and then put their new skills to the test as vendors at a special edition of the Montevallo Farmers' Market—all at no cost to their families.

The program saw **14 vendors in its first year and 18 in its second**, with overwhelmingly positive feedback from parents who praised the experience for building confidence, teaching customer service, money management, and instilling a strong work ethic in their children.

REV Birmingham - Road Diet

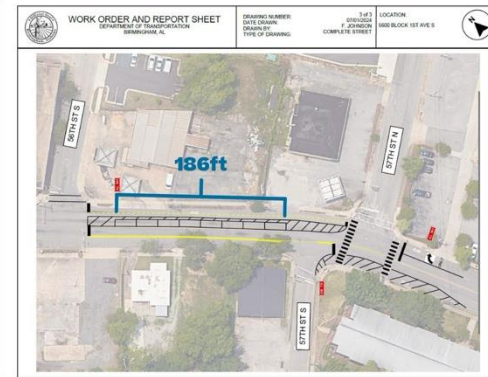
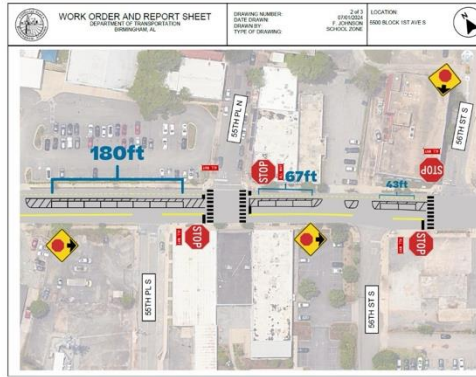
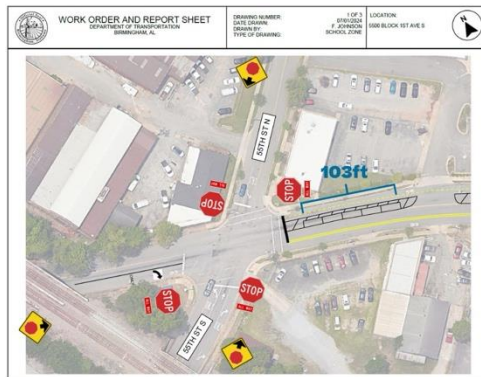
Total ft Parking/Bike Lane - 579'

One 5" Flat Side Curb per 10' section (3' curb/7'space) = 58 Curbs

Cost = \$5,269

Woodlawn Road Diet

*Remaining \$1658.34 to be spent on 15 3" Rounded Delineators and Shipping



The Woodlawn Road Diet was a collaborative traffic calming project that transformed 1st Avenue South into a safer, more people-friendly corridor. Partnering with the **City of Birmingham's Department of Transportation** and the **Alabama Urbanist Coalition**, REV led the effort to improve pedestrian and cyclist access through Woodlawn's historic commercial district.

The project replaced traffic signals with four-way stops, added a multiuse path and parallel parking, and reduced crossings from four lanes to two. Originally rated 4/10 for safety by residents, post-project surveys show marked improvement. Beyond safety, the redesign invites everyday use—students walking to school, neighbors grabbing coffee—and affirms Woodlawn as a destination, not just a thoroughfare.



Awards of Excellence
Presented by



Excellence in Volunteer Development

Award recognizes outstanding local
Main Street program volunteer
recruitment, training, and
recognition.

Anniston – Cook Out



The Volunteer Sign-Up and Cook-Out was held downtown during the lunch hour and offered grilled hotdogs, music, and easy conversation, providing a relaxed setting for potential volunteers to learn about Main Street's mission and get involved.

Board members shared personal stories, answered questions, and helped attendees match their interests with committee opportunities. The laid-back approach resonated—**over 30 people** signed up that afternoon, with many expressing interest in Promotions, Design, and Economic Vitality committees.

Beyond new recruits, the cookout deepened community relationships and raised awareness of revitalization efforts.

Athens - Hype Team



Athens Main Street is being recognized for its **Hype Team** initiative, designed to expand volunteer engagement, enhance event hospitality, and amplify the voice of downtown Athens through social media storytelling.

Launched in early 2025, the Hype Team, inspired by NewTown Macon's volunteer program, **recruited 25 enthusiastic community members** to serve as ambassadors for downtown. Volunteers participated in a two-hour orientation that covered Main Street's mission, hospitality skills, and best practices for creating engaging social media content. Each member committed to supporting at least four annual events while helping share the vibrancy of Athens through their own unique perspectives online.

By empowering residents to take an active role in promoting their downtown, the Hype Team has not only bolstered volunteer participation but also created a sustainable way for people to show civic pride and contribute meaningfully to the revitalization of Athens' historic core.

Centreville – What is Your “Why”?



“What is Your Why?” – A Community Building Dinner was a steak dinner that gathered city leaders, business owners, volunteers, and residents to hear personal testimonials from board members about their passion for revitalizing downtown Centreville.

These heartfelt stories created emotional connections that inspired attendees to see Main Street as a long-term movement—not just a program. The event sparked **new volunteer interest, deepened ties with the City Council and local businesses, and united the community around a shared vision for the future.**

Its success laid the groundwork for sustained civic pride and volunteer engagement, and Centreville Main Street now plans to make this dinner an annual tradition.



Awards of Excellence
Presented by
by



Montgomery – Pints & Plans



Pints & Plans, a town-hall style gathering, was held at Ravello Ristorante and welcomed **more than 60 community stakeholders**—including business and property owners, realtors, tourism advocates, faith-based leaders, and local residents.

Attendees enjoyed drinks, networking, and a presentation outlining Main Street Montgomery's vision for downtown revitalization, along with an open invitation to get involved. The approachable format sparked strong engagement, resulting in **30 new volunteer sign-ups** across four newly restructured committees.

Pints & Plans successfully reintroduced the program to the community, deepened relationships with downtown partners, and set the stage for an ongoing tradition that will continue to fuel volunteerism and progress.

Excellence in Promotion

Award recognizes outstanding special events/activities that promote the Main Street district by creating a quality authentic event which generates traffic for the district.

Enterprise – Nook @ Night Series



Nook @ Night Concert Series, is a vibrant summer-long event that energizes downtown every Friday night. Centered around The Nook, a newly developed public space, the free series featured live music, food trucks, and a welcoming atmosphere that encouraged repeat visits and boosted foot traffic for local businesses.

Led by the Promotion and Young Main Street Committees, the team created eye-catching graphics, promoted events on social media, and engaged businesses directly. Local shops responded by extending hours, offering specials, and helping spread the word.

With only \$220 in expenses—used for stage lights—**the** series delivered big returns. Restaurants and bars reported **increased patronage**, musicians gained new exposure, and The Nook became a sought-after **event space**. The success even attracted sponsorship from food truck Kritter's, allowing the concerts to continue into the colder months.

Montevallo – Backyard Book Fest



Backyard Book Fest was a creative literary celebration that brought new energy and visitors to downtown. Held in the Pecan Grove behind Parnell Memorial Library, the event welcomed **54 vendors** from across the region, including authors, artisans, and food trucks.

The all-ages festival featured story times, trivia, workshops, and costume contests—all promoting reading, supporting the library, and showcasing Montevallo's charm. A partnership with the Parnell Memorial Library Foundation, the event was marketed through social media, news outlets, and book events statewide.

With expenses just over \$2,000 and revenues topping \$7,000, the festival netted **\$5,026.65** while drawing out-of-town visitors, building business partnerships, and positioning the Pecan Grove as a premier event venue. Over **96% of vendors** said they'd return, confirming the event's success in growing Montevallo's reputation as a destination for creativity and community.

Netumpka – Broomsticks & Brews



Broomsticks & Brews – Sip, Shop, Stroll, is a Halloween-themed event with locals and visitors dressed in witchy attire to enjoy a festive evening of shopping, sipping, and strolling.

More than 10 businesses joined the Witches' Potion Hunt, offering themed drinks, treats, discounts, and extended hours. Storefronts were decked out in whimsical, social media-worthy displays, adding to the night's charm and visibility.



Backed by strong multimedia marketing and just **\$500 in expenses covered by sponsorships**, the event sparked significant buzz and increased foot traffic with no cost to Main Street. The debut's success has already inspired a larger version for 2025.

Excellence in Marketing

Award provides recognition for outstanding efforts by a local Main Street organization to promote the entire district as a destination or a branding or image development campaign.

Calera – Creating the Destination



Completed by April 2025, Calera Main Street introduced four unique events—**Festival of Trees**, a **New Year's Eve fireworks celebration**, **Calera Nerd Fest**, and a sold-out **Micro Wrestling Federation** show—all designed to activate underused downtown spaces and attract new audiences.

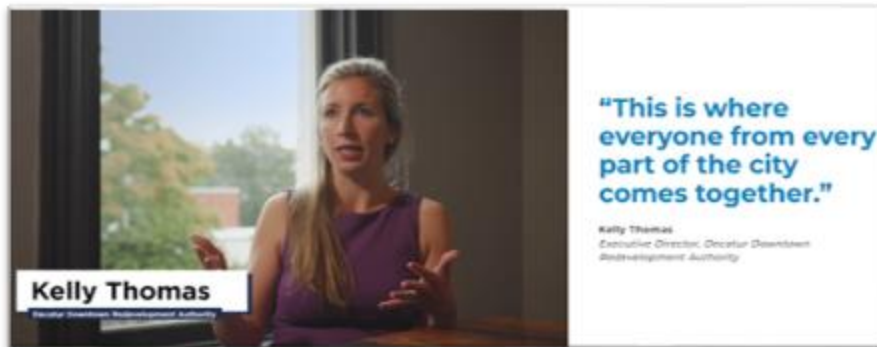
With a \$20,000 investment from the City of Calera, the events generated over \$10,000 in new revenue and brought total income to **\$25,442**. Calera Main Street led creative planning and marketing, while downtown businesses contributed through themed programming, sponsorships, and in-kind support.

Decatur – Positively Decatur



Positively Decatur is a city-led storytelling campaign launched under the “One Decatur” plan. Created to counter negative online rhetoric and strengthen civic pride, the campaign showcases authentic stories of the people, places, and progress shaping the city—especially in its downtown district.

Monthly **video spotlights**, **digital stories**, **branded merchandise**, and dynamic **social media content** highlight community assets like the Princess Theatre, Cook Museum, and downtown events such as 3rd Friday and Día de los Muertos. Local leaders also shared their love for Decatur, helping shift public perception.



Funded with a \$199,000 city investment, the campaign includes strategic planning, ads, content creation, and newsletters. Results speak for themselves: 17,000+ new website users last quarter, a 5.12% Google ad CTR (above industry average), a 3.55% social ad CTR (more than double the benchmark), and 80% growth in newsletter subscribers since February.

Gadsden - Banner Project



Gadsden's **Banner Project** creatively branded Broad Street by assigning each of its six blocks a unique color. Inspired by the 2024 aLABama Conference, the project used the “Rainbow Song” as a guide to install six-foot custom banners from 1st to 7th Streets.

Merchants helped select each block’s color based on symbolism and local relevance—like yellow for sunrise in the east and orange for sunset in the west. Funded by proceeds from the 2024 Sunset Sips event, the \$9,700 project installed **78 banners** and hardware, improving wayfinding, building block identity, and sparking merchant camaraderie.

The colors have become a shared language among business owners, enhancing both navigation and district pride. A color-coded postcard campaign is already in the works, further amplifying the district’s visual identity.

Opelika – Reintroducing Opelika Main Street



The **Reintroducing Opelika Main Street** campaign increased community awareness and reestablished the organization as a trusted, collaborative force for downtown revitalization.

Launched in early 2025, the campaign combined social media outreach, updated print materials, a refreshed website, and a well-attended Meet & Greet mixer with about **60 community members**. Attendees were surprised by the program's broader network and left eager to get involved. With just a \$500 budget, the effort leaned on in-kind donations and reused supplies to maximize reach.



The campaign boosted website traffic, sparked new interest in volunteerism and partnerships, and renewed enthusiasm among local businesses.

Excellence in Business Promotion

This award recognizes local promotions, events and activities that result in increased sales or the development of an effective retail promotion(s) in conjunction with district merchants.

Anniston – Main Street Hop & Shop



Main Street Anniston is being recognized with the 2025 Excellence in Business Promotion Award for its wildly successful Easter-themed event, **Hop & Shop**. Held on April 25, 2025, the interactive downtown experience featured clue-based egg hunts across more than **25 participating businesses**, each offering prizes, discounts, and extended hours.

With just \$15 in expenses, the event attracted over **400 attendees** and drove sales increases of **20–30%** for many shops compared to a typical Thursday. It also boosted social media engagement and reinforced downtown Anniston's reputation as a vibrant, family-friendly destination. Hop & Shop proved how creativity and collaboration can turn a small investment into big results.

Calera - Streaming Main Street



Calera Main Street is being honored with the 2025 Excellence in Business Promotion Award for its creative and consistent “**Calera Living**” video series. Produced by Video Visions and coordinated by Main Street, the weekly series spotlights downtown businesses, events, and community happenings, earning strong social media engagement and averaging over **1,000 views** per episode.

Funded by a \$6,000 annual sponsorship from Central State Bank, Calera Living has promoted 25+ businesses and sponsors at no cost to merchants. It has driven a **55.8%** increase in engagement, added **350 Facebook** followers, and inspired replication in other Main Street communities—solidifying Calera’s reputation for innovative promotion and strong community connection.

Enterprise – Gilmore Girls Crawl



Main Street Enterprise is being recognized with the 2025 Excellence in Business Promotion Award for the **Gilmore Girls Downtown Crawl**—a wildly popular, themed event series that brought small-town charm to life. Created by Sixtel Bottle & Growler House and supported by Main Street Enterprise, the crawl featured **14** participating businesses transforming into Stars Hollow favorites.

The series sold out eight times, drew **320+ attendees** from multiple states, and generated over **\$18,000 in ticket sales**. Businesses saw a **30–40% sales** boost, welcomed new customers, and created unforgettable experiences like candle-making and photo ops. With seasonal spin-offs already in motion, the Gilmore Girls Downtown Crawl has become a standout example of creativity, collaboration, and economic impact.

Excellence in Business Development

Award provides recognition for outstanding efforts by a local Main Street organization to improve the business climate, support, strengthen, retain, and attract businesses in the district.

Anniston - GETUP Anniston



Main Street Anniston is being honored for its **GETUP Anniston** (Growing Entrepreneurs Through Unique Partnerships) program—a free, accessible 10-week initiative developed to help aspiring entrepreneurs turn ideas into real businesses. Created in partnership with Jacksonville State University’s SBDC, local banks, city leaders, and others, the program offers hands-on guidance, mentorship, and connections to storefronts and seed funding.

The impact is clear: **11 of the first 25 graduates have launched businesses**—many downtown—and alumni are now returning as mentors. GETUP Anniston is not just a training program; it’s a grassroots effort fueling long-term revitalization through homegrown talent.

Athens - Business Interruption Grants



Athens Main Street launched the **Business Interruption Grants Initiative** after an EF-1 tornado hit downtown on December 28, 2024. The organization raised **\$21,250** to support four impacted small businesses—CEI Bookstore, Bennett's Clothing, Southern Throne Boutique, and Broken Brush Art Studio.

The initiative offered timely financial relief when insurance coverage fell short, strengthening local partnerships, boosting community trust, and laying the groundwork for long-term recovery efforts like the Courthouse Grounds Restoration Fund.

Monroeville - AL Spark Plus



Building on Main Street Alabama's original AL Spark framework, Monroeville secured funding from United Bank, an anonymous donor, and its board to provide **\$15,000** in Bright Ideas grants and **\$6,000** in Illuminate marketing grants to eight businesses. Participants also received business coaching, access to Monroeville's B.A.I.L. Team (Banker, Accountant, Insurance, Legal), and support in business planning.

The impact was immediate: Hairvana launched Monroeville's first "Head Spa," generating \$2,000 in its first month; Reed's Grill streamlined operations and boosted sales with a new POS system.

Scottsboro - Bingo & Biz



Bingo & Biz is a quarterly mixer series that has strengthened community ties among downtown business owners while supporting local commerce.

Launched in response to business owners feeling disconnected, Bingo & Biz created a fun, low-pressure space to gather, share experiences, and build relationships. Rotating among local storefronts, the events featured bingo, trivia, and gift card prizes boosting mutual support and foot traffic.

More than **20 business owners** participated, reporting stronger peer connections and appreciation for the chance to welcome new businesses, share updates, and stay informed on Main Street programs.

Excellence in Placemaking

This award recognizes outstanding local efforts that capitalize on local assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promotes people's health, happiness, and well being.

Alexander City - Historic Downtown Doorway



Main Street Alexander City transformed a controversial demolition site into a beloved public landmark—the **Historic Downtown Doorway**.

After the difficult decision to demolish the old police station, a key piece of downtown history, one architectural element was saved: a single doorway. Rather than letting it fade from memory, Main Street Alexander City turned it into a community centerpiece.

Now located in the heart of downtown, the doorway is seasonally decorated with support from volunteers and local businesses. It's become a recognizable photo spot, drawing visitors and increasing foot traffic.

Anniston - Chief Ladiga Trail



Completed in April, the 7.1-mile **Chief Ladiga Trail extension** connects neighborhoods, parks, and downtown businesses, ending at the Multimodal Amtrak Station. The **\$7.2 million project**, funded by CDBG, city funds, and federal transportation grants, represents a major investment in public space and sustainable development. A 2023 JSU study projects **\$2.2 million** in annual tourism revenue.



Local merchants embraced the trail's launch—**15+ businesses** joined events, offered promotions, and saw increased foot traffic. Trail usage now exceeds 600 weekly visitors, with data showing a clear boost in downtown activity.

The project has also spurred new development, including a skate and pump track, restored walking trails, and early plans for the “Foundry District”—a future destination with an amphitheater, nature play, and curated retail.

Wetumpka - Fall Line Overlook



The **Fall Line Overlook** transformed an underused space into a multi-level terrace with seating, native landscaping, interpretive signage, and panoramic views of the Coosa River. As the fourth installment of the Tulotoma Snail Trail placemaking series, it blends history, science, and public art.

Funded entirely through donations, grants, and in-kind support—including a **\$134,000** engraved paver fundraiser—the project saw strong community buy-in from donors like the City of Wetumpka, Alabama Power Foundation, Wind Creek, and local businesses. Merchants extended hours for events, promoted the project, and encouraged visits.

Since opening, the Overlook has hosted community events like an Arbor Day dedication and live music night, and has become a regular gathering spot for residents and visitors alike. The project also fostered new local partnerships, including Turner Fabrication, River Region Sports Fields, Precision Floor Care, and volunteers from First Baptist Church.

Excellence in Building Design (Non-Historic)

Award recognizes outstanding completed non historic design projects including façade renovation and/or interior renovation efforts and infill construction.

Enterprise – Par & Pour



Located in the heart of Enterprise, **Par & Pour** reimagines an outdated space into a gathering place featuring Golfzon simulator bays, lounge-style seating, and a full-service bar. The adjacent lot, once overgrown and unused, became *The Yard*—a lively outdoor patio with café lighting, games, a food truck zone, and a performance stage. The project even preserves local history by incorporating Enterprise’s original jail as a conversation piece.



The space features an open floor plan, four high-tech golf bays, updated HVAC and electrical systems, ADA-compliant restrooms, and gig-speed internet. The improvements extend outside, allowing for year-round events and community gatherings.

Since opening, *Par & Pour* has **created 10 new jobs** and activated a formerly quiet side street.

Fort Payne - Blue Charm & Orbix



Once covered by a dated 1960s aluminum façade, the 1930's era building had housed various businesses, most recently a health food store and vape shop. In 2023, local investor Mary Reed purchased the property and envisioned a bold renovation that would revitalize the space and the block.

The project included **complete rewiring** and **updated lighting**, **new flooring**, **fresh interior and exterior paint**, **layout changes**, and a dramatic **exterior facelift** that restored the building's historic charm and curb appeal.

The Blue Charm Boutique relocated from the edge of town into the south storefront alongside Orbix Hot Glass Gallery.

Gadsden – Mary G. Hardin Center



Mary G. Hardin Center for Cultural Arts was once home to the Princess Theatre and later Belk-Hudson, before becoming the Center in 1990. Under Executive Director Tom Banks, the 2023–2025 renovation aimed to increase visibility, improve safety, and elevate the Center’s cultural and economic impact.

Key upgrades included relocating the art exhibits and 72-foot Coosa Valley Model Railroad to the first floor for better public access and visibility from Broad Street. Reflective windows were removed to create open gallery views, and enhanced lighting activated the streetscape at night.



The corner façade was refreshed by revealing and repainting original metalwork and adding new Arts District branding. Interior improvements included a safer layout with upper floors reserved for 600+ annual dance, music, and art students—many on scholarship.

Jasper - The Sanctuary



Originally built as the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ (1922), the structure had served several congregations before falling into disrepair. Purchased in 2022 by Nina Soileau, with Kendra Brown as managing partner, the building was nearly unusable. Together, they envisioned a bold project that would preserve its legacy while meeting downtown Jasper's need for boutique lodging and event space.

With a **\$700,000 investment**, the team preserved the building's exterior charm while fully reconfiguring the interior. The Sanctuary now includes sleeping space for eight, two bedrooms, three full bathrooms, a full kitchen, wet bar, laundry room, open-concept living area, outdoor entertainment space, custom signage, and enhanced landscaping.

Since opening in July 2024, it has hosted **over 30 private events and 10 short-term stays**—bringing new visitors, activity, and revenue downtown.



Netumpka - WOW on Bridge Street



Originally built as a pharmacy and later home to the Elmore County Board of Education, the building sat unused for years. Though structurally sound, it required a complete interior overhaul. Owners Freddie Lynn, an architect, and Webb Smith, a general contractor, led the redevelopment—first opening **six upper-level short-term rental lofts and one ADA-accessible ground-floor unit in 2022.**

The final phase launched in August 2024 with the opening of the restaurant and catering business, *WOW on Bridge Street*. The build-out included a custom commercial-grade kitchen, high-capacity ventilation and fire systems, two roll-up garage doors for indoor-outdoor dining, a full bar, and custom booth seating. The design preserved the building's original character while adding energy and functionality.



Awards of Excellence
Presented by



Excellence in Planning and Public Spaces

Award recognizes outstanding planning projects and quality, completed design improvement projects such as streetscape, public spaces, etc.

Athens - Athens Farmers Market



The **\$800,000 Athens Farmers Market** at Doug Gates Park revitalization project began in 2023 and was dedicated in October 2024. Phase I refurbished the aging 1984 pavilion with a new roof, lighting, paint, and expanded vendor space. Old restrooms and an enclosed office were removed for a more open layout. Phase II addressed drainage, elevation, and accessibility challenges, making the site fully ADA-compliant. A 60/40 EPA grant through ADEM funded porous, water-filtering asphalt—the first in Limestone County—along with a new paver plaza and improved pedestrian access.

Phase III added an entertainment and education pavilion with a stage, colorful sunshades, gathering and youth spaces, and vibrant landscaping. Athens Master Gardeners expanded children's programming, and three new murals highlight agriculture, pollinators, and the arts. A custom honeycomb donor wall honors community contributors.

With **over \$662,000 in direct investment and \$300,000 in in-kind contributions** from public and private partners, the project fulfills an Athens 2040 Master Plan goal and expands the Main Street footprint.



Awards of Excellence
Presented by



Calera - Becoming the Heart of Downtown



Completed in September 2024, the **Calera Courtyard** features a landmark welcome arch, custom mural walls, dynamic lighting, public restrooms, ample seating, an event pavilion, and the region's first sensory-friendly, inclusive playground designed for children of all abilities.

The two-year, multi-phase effort was led by **Calera Main Street and the City of Calera**, with Main Street spearheading visioning, design, fundraising, and engagement—including commissioning the signature arch by Sloss Furnaces Foundation and investing **\$50,000** to help bury overhead utilities. The city oversaw infrastructure, construction, and property acquisition, with support from Shelby County, Giffen Recreation, Unlimited Play, Main Street Alabama, and the RPCGB. The playground alone cost over \$500,000, half funded by **Shelby County**, and follows best practices in universal design.

What began as an alley activation became a master-planned civic anchor supporting rear façade improvements, connectivity, and long-term revitalization. With over **\$6 million invested** by the city and additional funding from Calera Main Street, the project is boosting business visibility, drawing families downtown, and redefining public space.



Decatur – Morgan County Farmers Market



Originally envisioned by the **Farmers Market** Board Chair, the project was the result of a five-year collaborative effort with local, county, and state officials, supported by businesses, civic leaders, and volunteers. While the initial estimate was \$5 million, thoughtful design adjustments and value engineering brought the final cost to **\$3.25 million**.

The DDRA led the project's design and implementation—coordinating fundraising, securing sponsors, and partnering with the Market Board to shape event pricing and operations. The team also included Councilman Pike, BCA General Contractors, and Silo Design Build.

Construction began in early 2024 with the demolition of the original structure. The new market, which officially reopened on in April, now features a cathedral-style roof with timber beams, a public stage and adjacent green space, a 60-foot concrete seating wall, column seating, outdoor furniture, café lights, fans, heaters, modern public restrooms, public art installations, and refreshed landscaping and paving.

The space has quickly become a vibrant community hub—hosting events, supporting local growers and artisans, and drawing visitors downtown.

Excellence in Historic Rehabilitation

Award recognizes outstanding historic rehabilitation projects that continue the economic use of the building. The project is located in the district and includes exterior rehabilitation work or both interior and exterior work and meets Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

Anniston - Anniston City Hall



Originally built in 1906, with additions in 1934 and 1964, the former **historic courthouse** building has long stood as a civic and architectural landmark. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1976, its transformation ensures its legacy for generations to come.

Completed in February 2025 after a **30-month, \$6+ million** process, the project included extensive interior and exterior upgrades. **Exterior work** involved roof repairs, façade cleaning, window restoration, caulking, and painting. **Interior improvements** included a new elevator, partitions, ceilings, finishes, and upgraded HVAC, plumbing, and electrical systems—all while preserving original details like plaster cornices and trim, in line with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.



Funded through municipal capital improvement and general funds, along with bond revenue, the project reflects the city's deep commitment to preservation and public service. The restored building is now the home of **City Hall**.

Foley - Historic Bakery Building



Built in 1925, the **Bakery Building** is a Mission Revival-style gem with a distinctive shaped parapet, limestone lintels, and original brickwork. After a fire in 2007 left it vacant and deteriorating, it became a symbol of downtown decline. That changed when developers Mark Wright and Jeremy Friedman, with architect Sted McCollough, stepped in to restore its historic charm and redefine its use.

The project was a strong public-private partnership. The City of Foley purchased and stabilized the fire-damaged building with a new roof, later selling it to the developers for **\$100,000**. Foley Main Street secured a **\$20,000** façade grant, and the Foley Historic Commission ensured all design elements maintained historic integrity. Riviera Utilities and city staff also upgraded electrical and sewer infrastructure.

Restoration efforts included repairing the brick façade, replacing all windows and doors with historically appropriate materials, and adding period-style lighting and signage. Inside, the first floor was transformed into a Southern barbecue restaurant and bar with handcrafted woodwork, an open kitchen, and ADA-compliant restrooms. The second floor became four apartments, blending exposed brick and original features with modern systems.

The **\$2.62 million** investment, including **\$120,000** public support, transformed a blighted property into a downtown anchor.

Jasper - Sherer Auditorium



Long hidden behind 1970s-era aluminum panels, the once-vacant **Sherer Auditorium**, a 1938 WPA-era landmark, had faded from view—until Mayor David O'Mary and the City of Jasper led a bold effort to reclaim it. The project revealed the original stone façade, restored historic architectural features, and reconfigured the interior for modern municipal use as Jasper's **City Hall**.

Restoration included repointing and cleaning the WPA stone exterior, preserving and replicating original wood trim, terrazzo flooring, auditorium seating, and light fixtures, as well as upgrading HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and accessibility systems. New service counters, offices, and council chambers were added, along with landscaping, signage, and ADA-compliant entrances. All work followed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, with reversible interventions and careful documentation led by Birmingham-based preservation experts.

Funding sources included **\$3.5 million** from city capital funds, **\$1.2 million** in federal historic tax credits, **\$750,000** in state economic development grants, **\$850,000** from private donors and foundations, and **\$700,000** in Community Development Block Grants.

Oxford - Railway Depot to Spring Street Station



Once a vital stop for the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railway, the **1884 Oxford Railway Depot** sat vacant for over a decade before local entrepreneur Charlotte Hubbard acquired it in 2022. In partnership with Historic Main Street Oxford and the City of Oxford, she launched a thoughtful restoration that adhered to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The project included full replacement of mechanical systems (electrical, plumbing, HVAC), installation of energy-efficient insulation, restoration of deteriorated exterior features, and a reimagined interior with a commercial kitchen, ADA-compliant restrooms, and flexible dining and event spaces. Following a groundbreaking in February 2024, the depot officially reopened in December as Spring Street Station.

The **\$1.2 million** investment included **\$900,000** in qualified rehabilitation expenses, making the project eligible for **\$225,000** in Alabama Historic Tax Credits. Funding came from private investment, tax credit equity, and support from Opportunity Alabama, Southern Development Council, and Southern States Bank.

Wetumpka - Elmore County Museum Windows



Main Street Wetumpka is receiving the 2025 Excellence in Historic Rehabilitation Award for the careful restoration of the original **90-year-old wood windows** at the Elmore County Museum, a beloved community landmark located in Wetumpka's historic former Post Office.

Built in 1937, the Museum, formerly the historic Post Office, is a contributing structure within the city's historic district and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The restoration project of restoring the 90 year old windows was completed in May 2025 by MAK Environmental. The **\$61,700** project followed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and was funded in part by an Alabama Historical Commission grant, with a **20% match** from the City of Wetumpka. Restoration efforts included the removal and off-site repair of the original window sashes, asbestos and lead paint testing and abatement, on-site repair of window jambs and trim, and the careful reinstallation of original glass and hardware. Sashes were rebalanced, and historically accurate repainting methods were used to ensure authenticity.



Awards of Excellence
Presented by



Excellence in Public Art

This award recognizes public art - Sculptures, murals, street installations, interactive pieces, and light displays. Public art is often tied to the local community's culture and historical background.

Gadsden – Pitman Hands Mural



Designed and painted by local artist **Bill Beebe** of Art for the Walls, the **Pitman Hands Mural** was inspired by a conversation with DGI Director Kay Moore, who envisioned a symbol of community. Featuring interlocked hands and background text representing the spirit of historic downtown Gadsden, the mural reflects local pride and identity.

The project came to life through collaboration with business owners along Broad Street, the Gadsden Museum of Art, the Hardin Center for Cultural Arts, the Gadsden Arts Council, and city council members. Beebe donated his supplies, and the City of Gadsden contributed a bucket truck—keeping total costs just over **\$15,000**.

Completed in February 2025, the mural quickly became a landmark. Nearly **1,000 photos**—from prom shots to tourist selfies—have already been taken at the site. Its inclusion on the North Alabama Mural Trail has increased visibility and foot traffic for nearby businesses in a once-overlooked corridor.

Heflin – Open Space Perfect Pace Mural



The **Open Space, Perfect Pace** mural is a vibrant downtown installation that celebrates Heflin's welcoming spirit and small-town charm. The project began when **Cleburne Pharmacy** owner Fran Tant envisioned a mural that would reflect the heart of the community. Partnering with local **artist Daniel Seymour** of Outer Limits Art & Media and the Heflin Main Street Design Committee, the mural was brought to life after a collaborative planning process that also led to the adoption of a citywide mural policy. Completed in July 2024 and funded through private investment and grants from Alabama Power and Coosa Valley RC&D, the mural has quickly become a popular photo backdrop and symbol of local pride. Solar-powered lighting donated by Littleton Electric ensures the mural remains a striking feature even at night.

LaFayette - Welcome to LaFayette Mural



The **Welcome to LaFayette mural** is the city's first downtown mural in more than 30 years. Located in front of the historic courthouse, the mural was designed to boost tourism, energize small businesses, and inspire community pride. The project came to life through strong public-private partnerships, including the generous donation of wall space from a local business and full funding from the Alabama Department of Tourism and the East Alabama Community Foundation.

Completed in December 2024, the mural became an immediate focal point for downtown events like food truck festivals, trunk or treat, and Easter celebrations. The mural has helped attract over **5,000 visitors** so far and continues to bring in new audiences—from alumni groups and regional leadership programs to families and photographers. It has gained media attention and been featured as the cover photo for the Murals of Alabama Facebook page, while also becoming a favorite backdrop for senior portraits and community photos.



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

**ENERGY
SOUTHEAST**

**UB Community
Development**



Montevallo – Bienvenidos A Montevallo Mural



The **Bienvenidos A Montevallo** mural is a striking tribute to the city's growing Hispanic and Latino community. Created by muralist **Enrique Lopez** ("El Vrt"), the mural features a vibrant Catrín and Catrina and was unveiled during the Día de los Muertos Festival in November 2024.

Located on the wall of **Su Casa Real Estate**, the city's only bilingual real estate office, the mural was supported by the property owners with help from the Main Street Alabama Project Grant. It quickly became a symbol of inclusion, boosting tourism, foot traffic, and engagement with Hispanic-owned businesses.

Montgomery – Conference of the Birds Mural



The **Conference of the Birds mural** is a large-scale public art installation created by French artist duo Monkeybird. Inspired by a 12th-century Persian poem, the mural was painted on a blank wall on Lee Street and aimed to spark beauty, cultural reflection, and unity in the heart of downtown Montgomery.

The 12-day initiative engaged more than 1,000 people through live mural painting, school visits, artist talks, and a lively micro-festival featuring 30+ local vendors. Over **40 businesses** participated, providing food, venue support, and vendor booths, while some donated portions of sales to nonprofit MAP360, the project's organizer.

Funded through a blend of private donations, arts grants, and foundation support, the project was a true community effort with a **\$127,000 budget**.

Excellence in Signage and Wayfinding

This award recognizes the importance of creating clear, intuitive, and accessible systems that inform and guide people through spaces.

Enterprise - The Rawls Signage



Drawing inspiration from a 1936 photograph, the Gay family, current owners of the **Rawls** built in 1903 as a hotel, sought to replicate the **original sign** as closely as possible, adjusting only the wording to reflect the building's modern use as a restaurant.

Working with sign designer Patrick Walding of Brand Builder Signs, the project followed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. After acquiring city permits, Walding developed detailed engineering plans to bring the sign to life, including structural framing, mounting hardware, and lighting. The **\$47,000 project** was entirely funded by the property owners.

The new vintage-inspired sign not only reflects the building's historic character but has become a major visual asset to downtown Enterprise. At night, it draws attention and adds charm to Main Street, boosting foot traffic and becoming a recognizable local landmark.

Eufaula - Welcome Signs



Welcome to Eufaula signage features two large, custom-designed signs located just outside the historic districts. The installation captures the essence of the community with two key visuals: a towering bass to represent Lake Eufaula and stately columns to reflect the city's 700+ historic structures.

Designed to grab the attention of visitors and passersby, the signs promote Eufaula as a destination worth exploring—whether for a weekend or a lifetime. Over **35,000 people** see the signs each day, and their popularity as selfie spots has helped boost interest in local tourism and small business discovery.

The **\$44,500 project** was funded through a combination of an Alabama Power Gateway Grant, a State of Alabama Tourism Grant, and support from the City of Eufaula. Replica Plastics, a local company made the signs.

Foley - Placemaking with Signs



Launched in 2020 with a **\$60,000** budget, the placemaking signage project began with redesigned street signs and custom banners that reflected the newly adopted **downtown branding**. Over the following years, Foley Main Street worked with multiple city departments—including Public Works, Engineering, Beautification, Marketing, and the Historic Commission—to expand the signage effort to include seasonal banners and innovative wayfinding map signs.

After an initial flat-sign design was rejected by the Planning Commission, the team reimagined the wayfinding signs as custom 3D displays featuring QR codes that connect to Google Maps. This allowed the signage to remain current without needing to be updated each time a business changed. The final signs were placed in key downtown locations with input from a cross-departmental team during a hands-on site walk. With support from private property owners and extensive city coordination, eleven signs were fabricated by Idea Signs & Graphics and installed by city workers in February 2025.

Fort Payne – Main Street District Map



The **Main Street District Map** was designed to promote the entire downtown as a destination. Developed in partnership with Accel Graphics, the full-color map highlights all businesses and restaurants in the district and is used in both printed and digital formats to reach residents and visitors alike.

Two large maps were installed at key locations—Pete the Cat Alley and the EV Charging Station next to the Main Street office—while **11" x 17"** map pads were distributed to hotels, retreats, businesses, and regional tourism hotspots including the State Park and Little River Canyon Center. The effort ensured that all businesses were accurately represented, with each invited to review and confirm their listings prior to finalization.

With a budget of just **\$1,500**, the campaign proved highly effective. Businesses reported that about **80%** of their customers were tourists, many of whom referenced the map as their guide to exploring Fort Payne.

Up and Coming

This award recognizes an emerging district's effort to build their long-term capacity and value to the district.



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST

 **UB Community
Development**


WALKER AREA Community Foundation
RESPONSIBLE GIVING RESULTS

Russellville - Fifth Fridays



Russellville Main Street launched **Fifth Fridays** to boost downtown sales and community engagement. The inaugural May 2025 event brought **800–1,200** attendees, featured artisan vendors, food trucks, live music, kids' activities, and store specials, with 10 businesses participating and reporting strong sales - some their best of the year. With a modest \$440.83 expense and \$1,679 net gain, it also attracted first-time visitors, new sponsors (TVA/REB, CB&S Bank), and growing merchant enthusiasm, leading to future events like a holiday market and themed fall festival.

Excellence in Reinvestment

Beginning in June of a communities' designation as a Main Street Alabama program, programs collect and submit the economic impact within the district. Main Street Alabama utilizes those reports to track grand totals for each district and the state as a whole. Now we will recognize Main Street Alabama programs that have reached major milestones in reinvestment.

Over \$1 Million

Centreville
(pop. 2,792)

\$1,111,004

Since 2023

LaFayette
(pop. 2,922)

\$1,067,958

Since 2022



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST

UB | **UB Community
Development**



Over \$5 Million

Columbiana
(pop. 4,263)

\$6,960,093

Since 2017

Montgomery
(pop. 195,818)

\$9,916,350

Since 2024

Scottsboro
(pop. 15,640)

\$5,086,150

Since 2018



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST

UB | **UB Community
Development**



Over \$10 Million

Atmore

(pop. 8,542)

\$10,513,633

Since 2020

Calera

(pop. 17,414)

\$10,076,547

Since 2019

Netumpka

(pop. 7,190)

\$14,112,086

Since 2016



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST



**UB Community
Development**



Over \$20 Million

Foley

(pop. 17,607)

\$21,419,176

Since 2018

Fort Payne

(pop. 14,834)

\$20,364,285

Since 2015



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST

UB | **UB Community
Development**



Over \$40 Million

Jasper
(pop. 14,354)

\$43,720,408

Since 2015



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST



**UB Community
Development**



Over \$50 Million

Historic 4th Ave

(pop. 196,357)

\$55,561,224

Since 2019

Opelika

(pop. 34,000)

\$57,844,380

Since 2014



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST

UB | **UB Community
Development**



Over \$70 Million

Anniston
(pop. 21,287)

\$70,318,263

Since 2014



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST



**UB Community
Development**



Over \$150 Million

Decatur
(pop. 57,804)

\$153,007,282

Since 2014



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST

UB | **UB Community
Development**


WALKER AREA Community Foundation
RESPONSIBLE GIVING RESULTS

Over \$225 Million

South Huntsville

(pop. 216,963)

\$247,623,068

Since 2018



Awards of Excellence
Presented by

ENERGY
SOUTHEAST

UB | **UB Community
Development**



Excellence on Main Street Summit 2026

Enterprise, August 19 – 21, 2026



Awards of Excellence
Presented by



Special Thanks to our LAB Sponsors



WALKER AREA Community Foundation
RESPONSIBLE GIVING RESULTS



MIKE & GILLIAN GOODRICH
FOUNDATION



BlueCross BlueShield
of Alabama



Awards of Excellence
Presented by



WALKER AREA Community Foundation
RESPONSIBLE GIVING RESULTS