



EXPERIENCE THE  
AFRICAN AMERICAN  
JOURNEY

[www.memphisheritagetrail.com](http://www.memphisheritagetrail.com)

THE  
COLLECTIVE  
STORY

**MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL**  
**THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**3**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The heritage of African American achievements in Memphis.

**4**

**INTRODUCTION**

A placed-based cultural tourism approach to history.

**5**

**MISSION, VISION,  
GOALS, TARGET  
AUDIENCES**

**6**

**THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

Revitalizes, Reuses, and Reimagines neighborhoods and public places.

**12**

**MARKETING AND  
PROMOTION**

Experiencing the African American journey.

**14**

**COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**

Engaging believers in the mission.

**15**

**STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIPS**

Successful together.

**19**

**COST AND TIMELINE**

Planning, Implementation and Sustaining.

**21**

**CONCLUSION**

Opportunities for growth and expansion.

Jim Strickland,  
Mayor



Paul Young,  
Director

## **MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL** **THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Memphis Heritage Trail (MHT)** is a cultural district and an expansive community redevelopment plan to celebrate the rich business, cultural, and musical heritage of African American achievements in Memphis, Tennessee.

MHT covers a historic 20-block redevelopment area in South Memphis and also has nodes of linkage to the historic Orange Mound and the Soulsville USA communities. Encompassing the area is the southern quadrant of downtown and the South City redevelopment area. MHT has more than 60 cultural assets that include: I AM A MAN Plaza, MLK Reflection Park, Withers' Gallery Collection and Museum, Clayborn Temple, Universal Life Building, Rock 'n Soul Museum, Blues Hall of Fame, and the National Civil Rights Museum.

The project spotlights and fosters awareness around cultural focus points that have significant value to the history of the city of Memphis, as the area is considered the epicenter of African American history and culture.

Memphis Heritage Trail debuted in 2018 with newly installed wayfinding signage, a user friendly mobile application, beacon technology, art installations, historical markers, a driving brochure and walking map of the trail.

This project brings heritage tourism, urban redevelopment and citywide pride to important public spaces that chronicles the African American journey. It aims to educate and promote an appreciation for diversity, history, and culture to a global audience through authentic interactive experiences that create community investments and economic opportunities.

In addition to recognizing the significant contribution of African Americans, MHT is designed to promote civic pride, strengthen neighborhoods, revitalize, repurpose and reimagine physical structures and spaces, stimulate the economy, and improve the overall quality of life of residents.



## **MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL**

### **THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

# **MISSION, VISION, GOALS**

## **Mission**

To recognize the significant contributions of African Americans who helped shape the rich business, cultural and musical heritage of the city.

## **Vision**

To educate and promote an appreciation for diversity, history, and culture to a global audience through authentic, interactive experiences that create community investments and economic opportunities.

## **Goals**

1. To promote cultural assets and celebrate contributions of Memphians through physical and visible reminders of history
2. To create a positive sense of place by promoting neighborhood pride and engaging residents
3. To develop cultural tourism as a mechanism for economic development

## **TARGET AUDIENCES**

The Memphis Heritage Trail Program has a diverse audience focus. The foundation of MHT is for everyone who is interested in learning about the African American experience in Memphis to have the chance to learn through various avenues. The project is for educators, community leaders, business owners, philanthropic organizations, tourists, civil rights and music enthusiasts.

# INTRODUCTION

**When you think of Memphis** you think of industry, food and history. Memphis is known worldwide for BBQ, Graceland the home of Elvis Presley, Beale Street, Blues music, FedEx, the Church of God In Christ headquarters, and the death place of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memphis is so much more and has a lot more to offer. Memphis' tourism is staked on attractions-based cultural tourism, focusing on the attractions to the point that Memphis (the place) is almost incidental.

Memphis Heritage Trail is about shifting this paradigm and employing a placed-based cultural tourism approach.

Globally, renown places embrace a holistic approach as a basis for cultural tourism and do not cling to conventional, attraction-based approaches. When one thinks of popular places, a picture usually comes to mind. Each of these places do a great job of selling their culture extremely well to the world. To illustrate this example, we can look to cities such as New Orleans known for Mardi Gras, Cajun Food and Jazz; New York is the melting pot of the world, Broadway, Lady Liberty and the Empire State Building; and Washington, DC the nation's capital, Smithsonian Museums, Lincoln Memorial, National Mall, Dr. King Monument, and National Monument.

In 2019, Memphis commemorated 200 years of existence. The theme for the next century is themed as the "Century of Soul" and challenged constituents to "bring the soul".

MHT is highlighting the collective soul and essence of the people who shaped the city and the collection of the places that shaped experiences. Some individuals of note include civil rights activist and journalist Ida B. Wells, who started her first newspaper in the MHT district and the Hooks Brothers Photography that at the time was the second oldest African American business in Memphis.

Preservation, conservation and revitalization are what we are envisioning for the Memphis Heritage Trail project to promote the collection of cultural assets to the world.

# MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL

## THE COLLECTIVE STORY

**Memphis Heritage Trail (MHT)** is a community development initiative that revitalizes, reuses, and reimagines the original character of neighborhoods and public places. It promotes African American history and cultural heritage in Memphis, TN. The MHT trail is intended to enhance and help grow the tourism industry and provide support for economic growth for the City of Memphis. History can be both legacy and industry.

Cultural Planner Chris Murray promotes “taking neighborhoods out of the cycle of ‘urban problem’ [and] rethinking them as special, individual cultural centers that are the life’s blood, the atomic nuclei of cities.” All urban neighborhoods have the potential to become “cultural hubs,” says Murray, but not without coordinated action.

In 2008, the City of Memphis - Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD) realized the need to acknowledge and recognize the contributions of local African Americans. At the time, it was noted that although Memphis has long been a city where the majority of residents are African Americans, there was no visible evidence that they had ever lived in the city or made contributions to the betterment thereof. There is a brief mention of Memphis African American history at the National Civil Rights Museum, but Memphis needs more.

During the planning phase (2008-2016) of Memphis Heritage Trail (MHT), HCD facilitated over 100 meetings and community conversations with diverse stakeholders representing various sectors of greater Memphis. They were keenly interested in creating a trail reflective of the heritage and history of the designated area with culturally-relevant content and untold narratives. In 2014, the City was awarded a grant from the national endowment for the arts to develop a master plan for the renaissance of African American cultural heritage expressed through the MHT. This involved creating several advisory committees, hosting public meetings, charrettes, and engaging historians on this promising project.



## MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL

### THE COLLECTIVE STORY

The trail includes the southern quadrant of downtown but is mostly situated in south Memphis, an area of the city where African Americans settled during the Civil War and following emancipation. These early contraband and free communities represent the beginnings of African American place-making in Memphis. By the end of the war, approximately 17,000 African Americans had settled in the city. They founded neighborhoods and built homes, churches, schools, and social institutions. Some of those individuals include millionaire Robert R. Church, musical child prodigy Julia B. Hooks, civil rights activists and writer Ida B. Wells and banker Jesse Turner Sr. The growth of south Memphis paralleled greater Memphis with African Americans creating similar, though racialized, ways of life and community building.

Memphis Heritage Trail officially launched in April 2018 during MLK50, a citywide initiative to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. MHT consists of four loops: Civil Rights, Entertainment, Commerce, and Residential. For MLK50 the Civil Rights Loop was opened. The subsequent phases are being launched annually with a strong focus on the integration of technology.

MHT is a 20-block, 8.2 mile area of historical and cultural assets situated in south Memphis. MHT core area is the South City neighborhood. The main project boundaries are Beale Street on the north, Main Street on the west, E. H. Crump Blvd. on the south, and Walnut Street on the east. The area reflects the nexus of African American culture, civil rights advocacy, entrepreneurship, intellectualism, and musical innovation.

MHT encompasses over 60 sites including the following anchors: Clayborn Temple, I AM A MAN Plaza, National Civil Rights Museum, Historic First Baptist Street Church, Martin Luther King, Jr Reflection Park, Beale Street, W. C. Handy House Museum, Robert Church Park, Handy House, Withers Collection Museum and Gallery, Universal Life Insurance Building, Booker T. Washington High School, and Mason Temple.

Additionally, MHT is linked to African American sites in other neighborhoods that are slightly beyond the trail - Uptown, Soulsville USA, and Orange Mound. Cultural assets within these neighborhoods include Slave Haven Underground Railroad Museum, Four Way Restaurant, Stax Museum of American Soul Music, LeMoyne Owen College, Historic Melrose High School, Walker House, and Zion Christian Cemetery.

In addition to recognizing the significant contributions of African Americans, MHT is designed to strengthen the neighborhood, revitalize physical structures and spaces, stimulate the economy, create innovative ways for the cultural-bearers and creatives (visual, vocal and musical artists) to render expressions, and improve the overall quality of life.

Similar to the African American Trail in Washington DC, the Civil Rights Trail in Alabama, and the Black Heritage Trail in Boston, MHT is a cultural tourism destination. However, the destination itself is the tourism product, composed of all its' cultural tourism experiences. Simply put, "the place is the product".

## MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL

### THE COLLECTIVE STORY



## PLACE-BASED CULTURAL TOURISM

The essence of cultural tourism is about encountering a destination's history and heritage, its stories, its people, its landscape, its culture. It is about discovering what makes a destination distinctive, authentic, and memorable. It is about the experience of "place".

According to the world tourism organization, cultural tourism is growing globally at a rate of 15% a year, while 37% of all trips are now having a cultural component. In the United States 21% of all domestic trips taken by Americans include cultural experience. Of this number 17% report the historic site museum and art galleries were the primary motivation for at least one trip taken during the past two years.

Place-based cultural tourism attempts to rescue us from the unattractive and homogenized "sameness" - which has little appeal to tourists or residents. It identifies, and then capitalizes on, the unique cultural character and 'sense of place' that distinguishes one place from another. By using a place-based cultural tourism strategy Memphis can sustain, preserve, and steward the cultural assets most valued.

*(Source: Cultural Tourism a Place-Based Approach. Creative City Conference 2019).*

# **MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL**

## **THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

### **NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION**

One of the primary goals of the Memphis Heritage Trail project is to revitalize areas that were once thriving African American communities. In 2015, the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development in collaboration with the Memphis Housing Authority and McCormack Barron secured \$30 million with a total investment of more than \$250 million from the HUD-funded Choice Neighborhoods Grant to infuse in the Memphis Heritage Trail area for the South City project.

The South City-Foot Homes CNI Project is now known as Foote Park. The city is transforming the once 420-unit housing project into 712 new mixed income units (600 on-site and 112 off-site). This project is underway, existing dwellings have been demolished at the Foote Homes site and replaced with improved parking, parks and green space, community facilities, library, neighborhood retail, and comprehensive support services and programs. There will be other neighborhood investments in several phases. The total project cost is \$220 million.

The Cleaborn Pointe at Heritage Landing HOPE VI Redevelopment project is a revitalized development in the southern part of Downtown Memphis located directly across the street from Foote Park in South City. A 362 unit development that includes an 84 unit senior facility and another 278 family rental units was built in 2015. Some of the site amenities include a new clubhouse with meeting space and an exercise facility, an area park and recreational facilities and greenways to connect the community. This project helped increase local and minority business development, implemented a plan for early childhood education, a comprehensive case management and supportive services program to support resident self-sufficiency. This project cost \$90 million.

The Church of God in Christ is one of the oldest African American international religious denominations that was founded in Memphis, TN. The headquarters is located in South Memphis. Other buildings include the historic Mason Temple, the location that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr gave his final speech, "The Mountaintop", and also a senior citizens residential property COGIC Mason Village. This partnership with the City of Memphis helped jumpstart redevelopment in the area. There are more than 80 apartments and townhouses, Mason Village transformed two city blocks of vacant land, complementing Patterson Pointe. This development cost \$12.5 million.

The redevelopment of these areas have given life to areas of the city that have been neglected for years. These projects have brought housing, new business opportunities and jobs to areas that have needed this type of investment for decades.

# **MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL**

## **THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

### **ECONOMIC IMPACT**

The economic impact of the Memphis Heritage Trail has the potential to be a major economic driver for the city. An early study estimated that upon completion the city could reap up to \$84 million annually. This would be attributed to an influx of half a million new visitor days, and has the potential to create 100 new jobs.

#### **Other factors include:**

- Memphis has more than 60 cultural assets and three of those are on the National Civil Rights Trail
- MHT is working with Memphis Tourism to increase the visibility of the MHT project in their promotions and marketing to promote the trail as an African American cultural journey that everyone should experience
- South City is in the catchment area of downtown and redevelopment for residential and commercial properties is taking place in the area
- The National Civil Rights Museum, Beale Street, and Soulsville have more than 6 million visitors annually
- National Civil Rights Museum is a candidate for designation as a World Heritage Site
- Orange Mound is one of the first African American developments in the United States and in 2016 was named a Preserve America Neighborhood
- The Church of God In Christ is an African American religious denomination headquartered in Memphis. Their annual convention is moving back to Memphis in 2021.
- The Memphis Heritage Trail connects with the Blues Trail. It starts in Memphis and travels through Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas. This trail allows visitors to explore the rich musical heritage, culture and contribute to the local economy as a part of the tour.

A primary goal of the redevelopment plan is to broaden the economic impact for neighborhoods by building public private partnerships and expanding opportunities for new development. Once these areas are enriched with new assets, the local community will further prosper from growing tourism, job growth, and interest in new investments.

In terms of the Memphis Tourism industry, it continues to play a fundamental role in economic development for the city. According to the most recent figures released by the U. S. Labor of Statistics,

## MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL THE COLLECTIVE STORY



the hospitality and leisure industry in Memphis and Shelby County paid over \$1.13 billion in wages to local employees, most of which gets reinvested back into the local economy. These wages have consistently grown overtime, increasing over 8% in recent years.

Tourism in Shelby County also generated over \$98 million in local tax collections, according to the most recent U.S. Travel Association analysis. That's an increase of 3.1% over the prior year's tax collections. The hospitality and leisure industry is a vital part of the success of our local economy.

### **Here are some additional statistics focused on Memphis Tourism:**

- According to the U.S. Analysis, domestic visitors spent over \$3.5 billion in the Memphis local economy.
- Memphis visitors supported more than 2,000 businesses in the hospitality and tourism industry.
- There are over 48,900 hospitality and leisure industry jobs in Memphis and Shelby County. For every 1,000 invested in Memphis Tourism, three local jobs are sustained.

*(Source: Memphis Tourism Annual Report 2018)*

## **MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL**

### **THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

# **MARKETING**

## **AND PROMOTION**

**Memphis is already a destination** location due to the number of cultural assets we have in the area. The Memphis Heritage Trail team has worked with partners to make sure that visitors have an opportunity to experience the African American journey through the MHT. The team has an aggressive marketing and public relations approach that includes strategies developed and executed by the City of Memphis Communications Department and the Division of Housing and Community Development.

The Integrated Marketing Communications Plan (IMPC) includes public relations, marketing, advertising, social media, website, mobile app, community engagement, special events, sponsorships and partnership development. This plan is an active plan in various phases of implementation.

MHT has been very fortunate in receiving positive public relations on the project. Over the life of the project news releases were created inviting the community to become involved in changing the name of the project to Memphis Heritage Trail to the official project launch. Public relations is currently used to update the public on new or updated parts of the program. A part of the strategy includes promoting the project to tourism journalists in the United States.

Another part of the plan includes marketing the project within the city and nationally. As mentioned earlier there are so many cultural assets in the region, researching the competition and marketing yourself as a unique asset has been the strategy for MHT. This project's tagline is "Experience the African American Journey" focused on those individuals, organizations and events that are distinctly Memphis African American history.

One example of the success the project has had with marketing is the MHT Teachers Institute. This project was developed to provide a framework and curriculum for educators to learn about Memphis' African American history in which they can share with their students. This was promoted on [www.memphisheritagetrail.com](http://www.memphisheritagetrail.com), through public relations, social media and through the Shelby County School system. To date there have been 2 cohorts with 75 participants.

One of the goals is to work with project partners and leverage advertising through those relationships. Advertising is important to the growth and awareness of the project. Partnerships and sponsorships are key to promoting all of the assets of the Memphis Heritage Trail. The team will look for ways to cross-promote with various partners as well to share information about their cultural assets, while they share information about MHT.

The website is a primary source of information about MHT's programs, partnerships, and historical individuals and locations. In phase two, the website will receive a refresh, adding archival project documents, and updates from the upcoming phase.

## MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL

### THE COLLECTIVE STORY

MHT has a robust social media program across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter platforms. A goal is to continue to develop posts about the project and relevant tourism projects in regionally, and nationally. An example is an activity with the Blues Trail in Mississippi or the Delta Music Festival. Promoting these projects will offer their followers opportunities to come to tour our assets and then visit other cultural assets in the region.

The MHT APP is a tool that houses a wealth of information on African American history in Memphis. This technology hosts audio files, unlimited GPS-enabled maps, push notifications, mobile giving and fundraising options, multi-language support, surveys, photo gallery, and videos.

Visitors can download the MHT APP on their cell phone or mobile device as they walk the trail. When a tourist arrives at a historic location, alerts will pop-up on the visitor's phone where a beacon is located. The alerts through the beacon will take a visitor to the page on the APP that details information about the location. The APP is available at the APPLE Store and GOOGLE Play Store.

Memphis Heritage Trail has a YouTube channel that hosts all of the videos created about the project. It includes an overview on MHT, civil rights, Beale Street, South City, Orange Mound, Soulsville and videos about Trailblazer honorees.

When creating the Memphis Heritage Trail, technology was a significant part of the plan. From the website, [www.memphisheritagetrail.com](http://www.memphisheritagetrail.com), the APP, social media platforms, and YouTube Page capturing all the project videos for someone interested in learning more about MHT.

As a part of the planning phase, through charrettes, stakeholder meetings, and surveys gave the MHT a well-rounded opinion on what the public thought about the project through the community engagement process. MHT has an advisory committee of a cross-section of community members who have a history of supporting African American history.

The City of Memphis and the Division of Housing and Community Development search for corporations that are supportive of the city's projects to invest in through sponsorships.

Some examples include sponsorships of the following projects include the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Reflection Park that is sponsored by FedEx, Methodist Healthcare and others. The I Am a Man Plaza that is sponsored by the City of Memphis and the Plough Foundation and the Memphis Heritage Trail APP that is sponsored by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The Memphis Heritage Trail project has more than 20 partnerships that help support the initiative through cross promotion and engagement. Current partnerships are with City of Memphis Housing and Community Development, The Carter Malone Group LLC, ARTUP, Cynthia Sadler, PhD., Urban Art Commission, Communities Unlimited, Inc., MEMshops, Withers Collection Museum & Gallery, Explore Bike Share, MATA, Cornelia Greshaw Library, Memphis Airport Authority, Downtown Memphis Commission, Orange Mound Historical Preservation Society, Soulsville Neighborhood Association, SCORE CDC, Knowledge Quest, Booker T. Washington High School and Resource Center, Shelby County Schools and the Tennessee Woman Suffrage Heritage Trail.

## MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL THE COLLECTIVE STORY

### SPECIAL EVENT – Trailblazer Award

Memphis Heritage Trailblazer Awards is conferred upon individuals and organizations who have demonstrated innovative contributions to underserved populations through intellectual courage, written and verbal communications, business, or creativity in the arts. The Trailblazer Award also recognizes and thanks individuals and organizations who have demonstrated passion and commitment to service and the preservation of Memphis history, culture and rich heritage for future generations of residents and travelers to experience and appreciate. To be nominated for a Trailblazer Award you must live or have resided in Memphis, TN.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**Community engagement is a major part** of the Memphis Heritage Trail initiative. It started with convening an advisory board to help guide the planning process. The members are community leaders in different disciplines that have influence in a field of interest (e.g. arts, history, culture), community development, fundraising and government. They are believers in the mission of the Memphis Heritage Trail and committed to the project. The primary responsibilities of the advisory committee is to elevate MHT's profile among potential supporters and partners and to guide the project moving forward.

MHT's quarterly meet and stakeholders participate in seven work groups. The groups are Arts and Education, Heritage and Tourism, Community Engagement, Funding and Leveraging, Economic Development, Physical Environment and Technology. These workgroups were responsible for planning as it relates to enhancing sustainable development with the support of tourism; developing a tourist attraction market; increasing hospitality conditions; developing human resource management; establishing an efficient operative system for the Memphis Heritage Trail.

Some of the community stakeholders include businesses, churches, nonprofit organizations, neighborhood residents, parks services, and public housing residents. The project team identified key stakeholders who had an immediate impact and influence on MHT. The project team meets with members from entities associated with South City, Orange Mound and Soulsville as a part of stakeholder outreach. Team members have conducted workshops, hosted special events, and facilitated presentations to public and private sector audiences. For example, the MHT project team participated in the Neighborhoods USA 2016 National Conference in Memphis. The team's participation included a workshop, exhibit space, and a bus tour of the MHT and Soulsville neighborhoods.

**MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL**  
**THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The success of the Memphis Heritage Trail is due to research, planning, community input and amazing partnerships.

**Phase I** the focus was on the civil rights and entertainment loops. The partners in Phase I of the project include: A Schwab, A Tour of Possibilities, Blues City Cultural Center, Blues Foundation, City of Memphis, Division of Housing and Community Development, Collage Dance Collective, Community Capital, Community Lift, Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau, Communities Unlimited, Downtown Memphis Commission, First Baptist Church Lauderdale, Hattiloo Theatre, Heritage Tours, Memphis Black Arts Alliance, NAACP Memphis Branch, Memphis Grizzlies, Memphis Housing Authority, Mount Nebo Baptist Church Mt. Olive CME Church, National Civil Rights Museum, Orange Mound/Melrose Center for Cultural Enrichment, Pennrose Properties, Prodigy Arts, Rhodes College, Soulsville USA, Self + Tucker Architects, Shelby County Historical Commission, Temple of Deliverance Church of God In Christ, The Carter Malone Group LLC, The University of Memphis, UrbanArt Commission, Urban Strategies, Withers Collections Museum & Gallery, WMC-TV Channel 5 and the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis.

**Phase II** focuses on residential loops in Orange Mound, Soulsville and South City Neighborhoods. The partners in this phase include: City of Memphis, Housing and Community Development, The Carter Malone Group LLC, ARTUP, Cynthia Sadler, PHD, Urban Art Commission, Communities Unlimited, Inc., MEMShop, Wither's Collection Museum & Gallery, Explore Bike Share, Memphis Area Transit Authority, Cornelia Crenshaw Library, Memphis Airport Authority, Downtown Memphis Commission, Orange Mound Historical Preservation Society, Soulsville Neighborhood Association, SCORE CDC, Knowledge Quest, Booker T. Washington High School and Resource Center, Shelby County Schools, Tennessee Woman Suffrage Heritage Trail.

**Phase III** will focus on the build out of technology platforms.

MHT also partners with resident groups in the targeted groups in the targeted neighborhoods: Orange Mound, South City and Soulsville. They are critical to the success of this project.

## MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL

### THE COLLECTIVE STORY



(Orange Mound Mural)

### PUBLIC ART

Art is a big part of African American culture in Memphis and as a part of the Memphis Heritage Trail project it is a bridge that brings cultures together. Non-profit partners such as the Urban Art Commission and ArtUp are helping to create opportunities for artists and neighborhoods to connect and create art in public spaces.

Public art projects within the MHT areas include the Orange Mound Mural (Orange Mound), I AM A MAN Project (Downtown), Heritage Landing (South Memphis), Memphis Upstanders (Downtown), Army Navy Park (Downtown), Star Kids (Downtown), Road to Success (Downtown), I Love Memphis Mural (Soulsville), Tom Lee Park (Downtown), A Journey Through Greatness (Orange Mound) and Soulsville Gateway (Soulsville).

### SIGNAGE

Critical to the success of the Memphis Heritage Trail is identifying historical locations and explaining their significance. Wayfinding signage is a part of the walking tour for the trail. Visitors have an opportunity to stop at the respective sign to get directions and learn about identified properties that have cultural and historical meaning as a part of the African American journey in Memphis. Each sign is unique and showcases photographs that are relevant to the historical location on the marker.

## MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL

### THE COLLECTIVE STORY



(MHT Map)



(MHT Brochure)

### MAP

A self-guided tour map was created for those interested in the Memphis Heritage Trail. This map has more than 96 locations, wayfinding signs, and parks for those interested in exploring the trail. You can walk, bike, drive or ride the trail and utilize this map for easy access. This are available at local tourist locations and the Memphis Visitor Centers.

### BROCHURE

The Memphis Heritage Trail Experience the African American Journey brochure was developed by Middle Tennessee State University Center for Historic Preservation. The eight-page brochure shares information on more than 50 historic locations in Memphis and other sites of interest.

### TEACHER'S INSTITUTE

To share as much information about the rich African American history in Memphis, MHT targeted the education community through the Memphis Heritage Trail Teacher's Institute. The MHT Curriculum for K-12th grades focuses on four areas – creative writing, art, graphic design, and music.

The learning guide highlights African American figures and events in Memphis. The MHT Teachers Institute was born from this work. MHT created this learning vehicle to broaden the scope of educating youth on the rich African American history in Memphis. The City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development received a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior and the National Park Service for \$50,000 to conduct the MHT Summer Teachers Institute. Other grant funding to date include URC, NPC, CIP and NPS-AACR.

# IMPORTANCE OF THE MHT

**Memphis Heritage Trail is a walking museum**, unlike many other cities around the country, to-date Memphis does not have a museum focused on its African American residents or the city's history. MHT is a solution.

MHT's value-added because the project serves as a cultural advocate: making sure that the city is considering cultural and historical factors as it redevelop and revitalize communities and act accordingly from a point of knowledge. As communities undergo transformation, it is pivotal that the soul and essence of what makes it unique and authentic and its character is left intact.

Working from an advocacy vein lends itself to being able to influence decisions within the political, economic and social systems, institutions and budgets by using facts, relationships, and messaging strategies.

MHT is about supporting the assets for the benefit of the collective impact that has the potential to be of value to all of the assets, especially those that are cultural anchors because they have individual pull.

Using a triangulated methodology of historians, residents: and key stakeholders to ensure accuracy and support in the local story that is being presented.

**MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL**  
**THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

**COST & TIMELINE**

Planning (2008 to 2016)

**\$552,750**

Implementing (2017 - 2021)

**\$397,690**

Sustaining (2022 and beyond)

**\$600,000 Annually**

**Expenditures \$600,000  
(Annual)**

Operations: **\$250,000**

Programming: **\$150,000**

Maintenance/New Installations:  
**\$200,000**

**Proposed Revenue Sources  
(Annual)**

**\$0.03/\$1.00** from Hotel/Motel Revenue

Annual Memberships

Donations

Grants

City of Memphis

Shelby County Government

State of Tennessee

# CONCLUSION

## FOR THE MHT

**This is an important time** in the history of the Memphis Heritage Trail project. As more people are discussing issues around the African American experience in this country, people are growing more interested in learning about the history of African American culture. This project was born and still resides within the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development. There is a case to be made that in order for MHT to continue to grow and become sustainable, it should probably be non-profit organization outside of the City of Memphis.

How do we make Memphis Heritage Trail sustainable? Keep the foundational support from the City of Memphis, and look for long-term grants, corporate sponsorships, and support from Memphis Tourism (MT). Memphis Tourism is responsible for marketing Memphis to the world and has a revenue

## **MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL**

### **THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

stream from the hotel & motel tax which generates millions of dollars. A goal would be to approach Memphis Tourism to consider being a line-item in their annual budget. A new economic impact study will assist with justification the project being sustainable.

Additional potential income streams to support MHT include selling Memphis Heritage Trail merchandise including t-shirts, coffee cups, etc. on-site or online.

The Memphis Heritage Trail is a historic district that is being redeveloped to shine the light on unknown or rarely discussed African American history in Memphis. The Memphis Heritage Trail project has so many opportunities for growth and expansion in Memphis. African American history in Memphis is rich and expansive. The City of Memphis and the Division of Housing and Community Development has invested in this trail giving the nation another cultural asset for the Memphis, the region and the world to tour.

**MEMPHIS HERITAGE TRAIL**  
**THE COLLECTIVE STORY**

EXPERIENCE THE  
AFRICAN AMERICAN  
JOURNEY



**Presented by the City of Memphis -  
Division of Housing and  
Community Development**

For more information visit - [www.memphisheritagetrail.com](http://www.memphisheritagetrail.com)

Follow us

