

MEDC 2021 Goals in Review

1. Continue Work on Downtown Development Planning. The work on the Downtown Master Plan with Gunda Corporation was completed late in the year. The plan was completed after more than a year of work was put into it by the MEDC, Gunda Corporation and City staff. The Plan was adopted by both the MEDC and the City in November 2021.
2. Be able to participate in utility and road extensions, and similar projects. The MEDC contributed \$160,000 towards the work on the downtown waterline upgrade and expansion project. This work adds to the ability to move water across the City, primarily from east to west, and serves helps to support water pressure levels in the water supply lines.
3. Develop Calendar of Events for 2021. After a limited event schedule in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 became a bounce back year. Charlie Diggs Entertainment got the events off to a big start in March 2021. After that, events began to return to a more normal part of our 2021 life. Previous events like the Water Party happened and were well attended. Charlie Diggs Entertainment's new Fall Festival brought a lot of Life—and people—to the downtown area in October. I think the highlight of events was having both the Christmas Parade and the Snow Party on the same day in December, thus creating an all-day event along with the events of the Montgomery Historical Society. One item to specifically note is the Fall Festival in which the MEDC sponsorship included a formula for a financial return to the MEDC. I think this is something that should be considered for greater future use.
4. Respond to a changing environment with regard to marketing and tourism. 2021 saw a continued move away from print materials and towards social media advertising. The City's social media accounts continue to expand, with the City's primary Facebook account being followed by over 8,600 people, and several smaller City Facebook accounts also running. The City's events began to utilize QR codes in multiple ways to help limit costs and help with streamlining data collection. At the Snow party the QR codes were used to register participants in a paper-free manner. The MEDC also began contracting services with its current event planner to support MEDC and City event activities. I think one of the high points for the social media were the posts related to the freezing weather associated with Winter Storm Uri in February 2021. Those posts informed people how to turn off their water to prevent addition damage from pipe bursting leaks, provided information on how to reach out for help and passed along information on local shelter space organized by the City and MISD.
5. Training Opportunities. Several attended training on the use of sales taxes in 2021.