



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Birmingham Civil Rights
National Monument
1914 4th Ave. North
Birmingham, AL 35203

www.nps.gov/bicr

Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument News Release

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Contact: [Kathryn Gardiner](#), 205-568-3963

National Park Service invites public input on planning document for Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument

Public comment period runs October 21 – November 21

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – Today, the National Park Service (NPS) began seeking public input on the [General Management Plan \(GMP\)](#) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for the [Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument](#). The anchor property of the national park in downtown Birmingham, established in 2017, is the A.G. Gaston Motel which is owned and managed by NPS, in partnership with the City of Birmingham. Affiliated sites include 16th Street Baptist Church, Historic Bethel Baptist Church, Kelly Ingram Park, St. Paul United Methodist Church, the Masonic Temple Building and Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

“General Management Plans set the long-term direction of a national park while defining the conditions necessary to optimally preserve resources, manage operations and provide for visitor use and enjoyment,” said Kristofer Butcher, Superintendent at Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument. “Your comments and input are fundamental to our planning and environmental review process.”

A comprehensive GMP establishes a management philosophy and framework for future decision-making at the park. The GMP incorporates recommendations for use of the A.G. Gaston Motel for NPS operations and visitor services; addresses future development needs; and serves as the implementation plan for the desired conditions and management strategies identified during the plan development process. Furthermore, the national park has multiple community partners and sites, many of which are part of the national monument but remain under private ownership. The document presents a range of management strategies for the NPS to support partner organizations in restoring, maintaining, and providing interpretation and visitor services at sites throughout the monument boundary.

The NPS is soliciting feedback on the GMP and associated EA, which addresses the alternatives considered in the planning process and potential environmental impacts of the agency preferred alternative.

Written comments may be submitted:

Online (the preferred method)

Visit <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/BICRFINALGMP>

Select “Open for Comment” on the left menu bar, open the folder with the GMP, EA and newsletter, and click on the green “Comment Now” button to access the online commenting form; or

By Postal Mail, send comments to:

Superintendent Kristofer Butcher

Attn: Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument General Management Plan

National Park Service

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Additional information about the GMP is available online via the GMP project website at: https://parkplanning.nps.gov/BICR_GMP.

For more information, please email BICR_Information@nps.gov.

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In 2017, [Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument](http://www.nps.gov/bicr/) was created to collaborate with local organizations in commemorating the nonviolent struggle to dismantle racial segregation and discrimination in Birmingham, AL, during the 1950s and 1960s. Budding direct action movements, such as sit-ins and marches, inspired individuals such as Fred Shuttlesworth, a local Birmingham Reverend and civil rights activist. He invited Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to co-lead a similar movement in Birmingham during the spring of 1963, which they called Project C. Images of snarling police dogs unleashed against non-violent protesters and of children being sprayed with high-pressure hoses appeared in print and television news around the world. The episode sickened many, including President John F. Kennedy, and elevated civil rights from a Southern issue to a pressing national issue. These efforts paved the way to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a huge victory towards leading the nation to better living up to its promise of liberty and justice for all. Within the monument are several prominent historic places. Of these, only the A.G. Gaston Motel is directly managed by the National Park Service. The National Park Service owns one half of the motel complex and manages it in partnership with the City of Birmingham, which owns the other half. Other related and integral places to telling this civil rights story include the 16th Street Baptist Church, The Historic Bethel Baptist Church, St. Paul United Methodist Church, Kelly Ingram Park, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and the Masonic Temple Building. Learn more at www.nps.gov/bicr/, and on [Facebook](#).

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