

## CITY OF MEMPHIS

# National Civil Rights Museum is expanding its legacy — Legacy Building, that is

By Alicia Davidson, Daily Memphian

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**The Legacy Building, which will begin its renovation in May, is located across Mulberry Street from the Lorraine Motel and includes the location where Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassin fired the shot that took his life April 4, 1968. (Credit: National Civil Rights Museum)**

The National Civil Rights Museum will break ground May 16 on the expansion of the museum’s Legacy Building.

The Legacy Building is located across Mulberry Street from the Lorraine Motel and includes the location where Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassin fired the shot that took his life April 4, 1968.

Tiffany L. Graham is chief marketing and development officer for NCRM. Graham said the project includes an expanded full first-floor space which will accommodate larger groups of visitors and museum content focusing on civil rights efforts and icons since King's 1968 assassination.

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### Experts discuss solutions to systemic racial violence at NCRM

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“Our intention with the Legacy Building is to really answer the question, ‘Where do we go from here?’ which is actually the title of Dr. King’s last book,” Graham said. “We want to be able to answer the questions of what happened after 1968, and how are we continuing to inspire people to be catalysts for social change, which is part of our National Civil Rights Museum mission.”

Graham said the goal of the renovation is to not only expand the museum but to focus on how the Civil Rights Movement has evolved in the 55 years since King’s death.

The building will have an expanded first floor; it’s currently 17,980 square feet including the tunnel entrance. Following the renovation, the building will expand to 22,600 square feet.

Founder’s Park, which is adjacent to the Legacy Building, will also undergo a renovation. While Graham said she cannot reveal specific details about the park renovations at this time, it will be a space for visitors to gather and reflect on their museum experience.

The renovation adheres to the South Main design guidelines, according to a report by the Memphis and Shelby County Division of Planning and Development. The renovation is slated for completion in 2025.



**The building will have an expanded first floor; it’s currently 17,980 square feet including the tunnel entrance. Following the renovation, the building will expand to 22,600 square feet.** (Credit: National Civil Rights Museum)

The project will be completed by Self Tucker Architects, Howard Revis Design and Flintco Construction.

**“** *Our intention with the Legacy Building is to really answer the question, ‘Where do we go from here?’* **”**

**Tiffany L. Graham**

Chief marketing and development officer for the National Civil Rights Museum

Funding was provided in part by a \$10 million investment the museum received from the State of Tennessee in 2022 and more than \$1 million in gifts from corporate partners in support of the initiative.

Graham said NCRM is currently undergoing a project to digitize 11,000 items in the museum collection that will expand the ability to educate the public about the Civil Rights Movement through increased accessibility. Any museum items in the Legacy Building that do not stay after the renovation will go into the collection and be part of the digitization project.

“There are so many interviews and oral histories of famous people but also people that you don’t know,” said NCRM president Russ Wigginton on WKNO-TV’s “Behind the Headlines” program in January. “Imagine when that renovation is complete, the ability to be exposed to even more people.”

The last day for visitors to experience the current Legacy Building is Monday, May 1.

#### TOPICS

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**Alicia Davidson**

Alicia Davidson is a lifelong Memphis resident and graduate of The University of Memphis College of Journalism and Strategic Media. When not scribbling about the latest Memphis news, you will find her reading historical biographies, cooking Italian cuisine and practicing vinyasa yoga.

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