

Considering the weight of the items that were on the agenda today, we decided to hold off on our weekly preview and post now sharing some of the more interesting parts of today's meeting. As the post title says, two items before the council during today's meeting may breathe new life into two historic buildings in the Magic City - the [Ramsay McCormack building](#) in downtown [Ensley](#) and [Quinlan Castle](#) on the city's Southside.

The council unanimously approved a plan that could potentially give the tallest building on the city's West side new life. Ensley Centre, L.P. will purchase the Ramsay-McCormack Building in Ensley for a price equal to its appraised value and will redevelop the building for residential use that could contain as many as 46 rental units for low and moderate income senior citizens (subject to securing the financing for the project). Mayor Langford was also authorized to execute a 50 year ground lease with Ensley Centre at a rate of \$10/year for the adjacent property 1819 Avenue E Ensley, allowing them to purchase the property after that period.

The other large structure receiving attention at today's meeting was Quinlan Castle on the city's Southside. The Birmingham News and the Birmingham Business Journal reported earlier that [Southern Research Institute](#) was the mayor's choice to receive the building, which is located right next to the Institute's campus. According to the details shared of the plan approved at today's meeting, SRI will have to bring any plans for redevelopment before not only the city's [Design Review Committee](#) but also the City Council for approval. They must also clean, clear and secure the Castle within 271 days and they have 5 years to figure out what they want to do with it (and the option to receive extensions for up to five more years if needed).

The proposal submitted during the bid process included potential use of the Castle for office and research facilities. Another proposed use would use the facade of the building to hide a steam plant that may become necessary depending on UAB's plans to replace their source of steam now that [Alabama Power](#) has announced their intention to discontinue the service.