

# Heroes Experience

Pelham, Alabama

**Role:** Architect and Museum Planner for Comprehensive Museum Plan and Architectural Services; collaborated with exhibit designers (BRC Imagination Arts).

**Program:** Interactive exhibits, 911 call center, lobby, cafe, gift shop, function spaces, classrooms, exhibit support, and offices

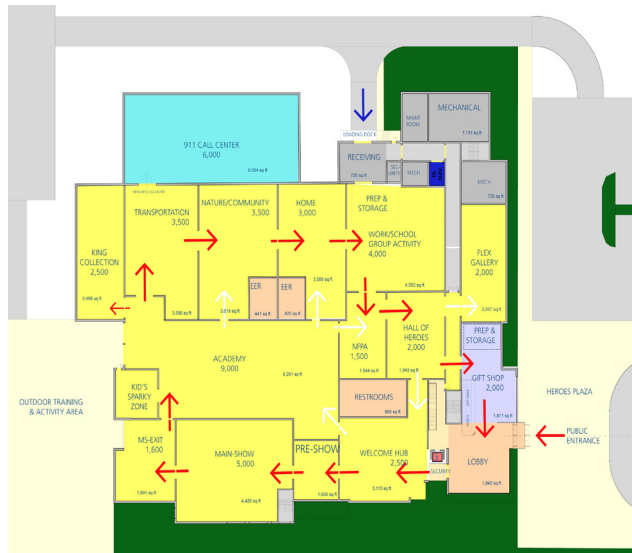
**Building Area:** 92,000 sf

**Status:** Early design phases and fundraising stage

**Description:** What began as a plan supported by the Shelby County Commission to display a private collection of fire fighting antiquities has evolved into a national attraction far more purposeful than originally imagined.

Alabama suffers from one of the country's highest death rates by fire. Yet the tragedy of these deaths is worsen by how easily many could have been prevented. The new Heroes Experience is envisioned to be a powerful immersive experience museum dedicated to educating the public on all-hazards safety, prevention and responders. It promises to become a national resource whose underlying message includes expanding what it means to be a hero. By inspiring and educating visitors of all ages on how to avoid accidents and live responsibly, they will be transformed from passive observers to active heroes. Visitors will walk away with the clear message, "Be responsible. Be a hero."

The architectural concept design was inspired by the "Quint," a fire engine and ladder truck whose highly recognizable aerial ladder on top is a true iconic symbol for "saving lives." Like the vehicle, the building will be a solid metal structure comprised of multiple large volumes that are tied together by a giant truss "ladder" spanning the length of the building. Its "raised" angle will be illuminated at night with color-changing lights as





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a beacon on the landscape visible from a great distance along highway I-65.

The iconic structure will be set in a 25-acre park located directly between I-65 and a beautiful forested mountain backdrop.

Outdoor areas for demonstration, events and festivals are included within the park, along with lush landscaping surrounding a newly-created pond and existing stream.