



AUGUST 21, 2024

Dear Residents of District 2,

On August 20, the City Council held an Entitlement Committee meeting to discuss the affordable housing crisis throughout our city.

Affordable housing is a critical issue for the City of Mobile and plays a vital role in our efforts to revitalize neighborhoods. I want to take this opportunity to expand on and clarify some points discussed earlier yesterday regarding the affordable housing initiative. There have been some misunderstandings about the powers of the proposed cooperative district, and I would like to address them:

- **Eminent Domain Restrictions:** Under Alabama law, and as specified in the capital cooperative district statutes enacted by the state legislature, the use of eminent domain by local governments, including any cooperative district, is strictly limited to distressed or dilapidated properties. This power would only apply to vacant residential lots or uninhabitable houses, and its purpose is to clear titles for redevelopment. All stakeholders, including property owners, heirs, and any governmental entities with liens, would be compensated fairly and equitably.
- **Bonding Authority:** The cooperative district, as currently proposed, will include a restriction in its organizing documents that prevents it from exercising any bonding authority granted by the state. Even if this restriction were lifted in the future, without a guaranteed governmental or tax/revenue-based funding stream, the district would still be unable to issue bonds. Neither the City of Mobile, Mobile County, nor any other entity would be liable for any bonds or legal obligations the district might undertake unless they explicitly and separately guarantee those liabilities.
- **Subversion of Voter Authority:** Concerns have been raised about the cooperative district being a "subversion" of the will of Mobile County and City of Mobile voters. This is a misunderstanding. The Alabama Legislature specifically

empowered municipalities and counties to create districts like this for targeted development purposes, such as financing and building housing. The board of directors for any such district would be appointed entirely by the governmental entities that authorized its creation. Any changes to the district's articles of incorporation would require authorization from every entity involved. This is not a subversion of voter will, but rather a tool provided by the legislature to support specific community development goals.

- Backlog of CIP Projects in the City of Mobile: While the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is essential and appreciated, it currently faces a two to three-year backlog. The CIP requires extensive administrative oversight and council ratification, which can delay projects. The proposed capital cooperative district is intended to be a more agile tool, focused solely on neighborhood revitalization projects. With funding secured, the district can expedite projects without the delays associated with the broader CIP.

I want to emphasize my commitment to transparency and to ensuring that these initiatives serve the best interests of our community. If you have any questions or concerns about this initiative, please feel free to contact me directly at [council2@cityofmobile.org](mailto:council2@cityofmobile.org).

***It's a pleasure to be your public servant,***

**Councilman William Carroll**  
**Mobile City Council**  
**District 2**