

December 20, 2019

To: Mayor Jordan & City Council

Dear Mayor Jordan,

We are in receipt of City Attorney Kit Williams' memo regarding legal issues around purchasing private land using bond revenue for replacement parking deck, dated December 19, 2019 and, based on what we read, this seems like a great opportunity to clarify some misconceptions.

The Fayetteville Housing Authority's mission statement is to provide safe, quality, affordable housing as a basic human right to build community resilience, improve intergenerational public health outcomes, and increase equitable opportunities.

We are engaged in this discussion as both a policy making body and as an anchor institution that occupies an entire city block in the middle of the proposed Cultural Arts Corridor.

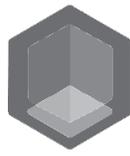
We first entered the Cultural Arts Corridor conversation at the request of the City in the context of a request to purchase an easement on the West Avenue and Meadow Street sides of our Hillcrest Tower property. As the discussion evolved, the Garver Engineering recommendations for possibly locating the CAC parking garage at the Nadine Baum Center came to our attention and, therefore, we agreed to take a broader look at whether our institution could possibly bring any additional resources to help our community and the City leverage resources to maximize our public investments on public lands for public benefit.

The Fayetteville Housing Authority is in a unique position to use our non-profit, FHA Development, Inc. to bring low cost capital and innovative mixed income housing infill opportunities to the Cultural Arts Corridor. We are proposing to work with our institutional partners in the context of a ground lease on the West Avenue portion of the Nadine Baum Studios lot. On that portion, we would create liner buildings that would have commercial space, creative maker space (ideally for Community Creative Center), and 52 mixed-income housing units, not public housing.

It is critically important as this conversation moves forward that we all understand that the Fayetteville Housing Authority is neither suggesting nor requesting that the City of Fayetteville use any bond revenue to support public housing. "Public housing" is a very specific program definition within the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD will not allow creation of new public housing so it is neither applicable nor allowed in this scenario.

To be very clear, we are offering to take the burden of replacing the NBS building out of the equation for the City's consideration of the deck location. We would use the revenue generated from the commercial and residential space to repay the debt used to build the building.





FAYETTEVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

We hope this clarifies any confusion about our position and we look forward to working with all of our partners as this conversation moves forward. We are encouraged by your request for a public meeting with the University of Arkansas, City of Fayetteville, Fayetteville Housing Authority, and the Walton Arts Center to discuss this issue further.

Last year our organization faced the bleak situation at Willow Heights, with your support and encouragement, we witnessed how the community working together in collaboration to create a tremendous opportunity to make Fayetteville stronger. We want to leverage that spirit of collaboration for the best possible scenario for the Cultural Arts Corridor.

Warm regards,

Angela Belford

Executive Director

On Behalf of the Board of Commissioners

