



CITY OF ANNISTON
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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
JACK DRAPER

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June 18, 2020

Mr. David C. Young
Multifamily Administrator
Alabama Housing Finance Authority
7460 Halcyon Pointe Drive, Suite 200
Montgomery, AL 36117

Re: Engineered Environmental Solutions

Dear Mr. Young:

As Mayor of the City of Anniston, I am writing to request that the Alabama Housing Finance Authority permit funding for affordable residential projects with environmental conditions that utilize engineered solutions that have been reviewed and approved by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

The City of Anniston, like many cities in our state, has a heritage that includes industrial and manufacturing activities. Unfortunately, whether by negligence or intentional misconduct, environmental problems often resulted from these activities and the impacts were felt in adjoining neighborhoods. These neighborhoods were often lower-income, working class neighborhoods, and many were predominantly minority communities. As a result, these communities are now struggling to redevelop but these efforts are hampered or barred by the environmental conditions that were created decades ago.

Redevelopment is vitally important and the City of Anniston has not abandoned these neighborhoods and neither should the State of Alabama. Cities like Anniston need to be able to access the resources made available by the Alabama Housing Finance Authority to support such efforts. However, by barring use of engineered solutions to environmental conditions, the AHFA has essentially redlined many of our neighborhoods and areas of our City by making redevelopment financially unfeasible in many cases.

The City of Anniston certainly does not want any residents to be housed in complexes with unsafe conditions but a rule that a site can only receive AHFA resources if it is essentially a greenfield site is not a realistic policy for cities such as the City of Anniston. The AHFA should rely on ADEM to determine appropriate standards to allow for residential endues, including a full range of engineered solutions. If ADEM has thoroughly reviewed a proposed engineered solution and approved it for residential use, AHFA should rely on this approval and not withhold critical AHFA funding for residential redevelopment projects. Since HUD and other federal agencies do permit such redevelopment with engineered solutions, such residential uses should be appropriate for the AHFA.

I request that the AHFA amend its Qualified Allocation Plan to permit appropriate flexibility in the use of engineered solutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sonny McMahon", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cc: The Honorable Del Marsh, Alabama State Senate
Sonny McMahon, Anniston Housing Authority