

May 29, 2020

**Re: Preserve the Eastside TAD**

Dear Atlanta City Councilmembers:

We, the undersigned, are united in our support of the Eastside TAD and its role in bolstering the legacy of the historic Sweet Auburn corridor. It is imperative that this tool remain intact, now more than ever.

We are acutely aware of the economic realities our City now faces, bearing witness to the far-reaching impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic as they ripple through our own congregations. However, these burdens cannot be borne solely by one neighborhood but rather must be shared collectively and equitably, citywide.

Since its creation in 2003, the Eastside TAD has faced many funding and legal challenges that left it largely untouchable for the better part of the last decade. It was only recently that the Eastside TAD was made available again – and upon this decision, work quickly commenced on furthering projects within the Sweet Auburn neighborhood. Only 20% of all Eastside TAD funding to-date has been awarded to projects within Sweet Auburn. In addition, there are approximately \$480 million worth of potential projects within the neighborhood, all of which would facilitate new affordable housing, small business development, blight remediation, and tax base growth for the City of Atlanta. In the absence of community development tools like the Eastside TAD, our most historic and beloved community assets stand to face continued decay and disinvestment.

There is still great need and opportunity to invest in Sweet Auburn, and the Eastside TAD is a fundamental tool needed to accomplish this vision. **The work on this front – although advancing - is far from complete.** We implore you to preserve this essential resource for our community, particularly in a time where economic resiliency is of utmost importance.

Thank you,

Auburn Avenue Church Collaborative

Rev. John Foster, Ph.D., Senior Pastor, Big Bethel AME Church  
Rev. Raphael G. Warnock, Ph.D., Ebenezer Baptist Church  
Rev. Dwight Andrews, Ph.D., Senior Minister, First Congregational Church  
Rev. Jeffery M. Ott, O.P., Pastor, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church  
Rev. Vincent Jones, Executive Pastor, Wheat Street Baptist Church  
Rev. Bobby Lee Graham, Jr, National Divine Spiritual Church