

On January 26, 2016, the City Council adopted the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Zoning Ordinance provides as follows:

"The Core Area, Downtown, as defined in Section II of the City of Mobile Zoning Ordinance, and all residential development within the Hank Aaron Loop, shall be exempt from the off-street parking requirements."

WHEREAS, the "Core Area, Downtown" is defined in the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

"Also known as the Central Business District, the area is bounded on the North by St. Anthony Street from the Mobile River to Claiborne Street, then by St. Michael Street from Claiborne Street to Washington Avenue; on the West by Washington Avenue; on the South by Government Street from Washington Avenue to Claiborne Street, then by Church Street from Claiborne Street to Conception Street, then by Canal Street from Conception Street to Water Street; and on East by Canal Street to the Interstate 10 tunnel, then by the Mobile River."

WHEREAS, the "Hank Aaron Loop" is defined in the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

"Area within and bounded by Water Street on the East, Beauregard Street on the North, Broad Street on the West, and Canal Street on the South, in addition to all lots having real property frontage on the north and west sides of Beauregard/Broad streets from North Lawrence Street to Canal Street."

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Mobile desires to expand the area that is exempt from the off-street parking requirements to include the area between the Mobile River and Water Street north of the present boundary (St. Anthony Street) to Beauregard Street.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MOBILE, ALABAMA,

that the Council does hereby request that the Planning Commission forthwith make a recommendation as to whether and how the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to expand the area that is exempt from the off-street parking requirements to include the area between the Mobile River and Water Street north of the present boundary (St. Anthony Street) to Beauregard Street.

After receiving the Resolution, staff began review of the request and maps of the surrounding area. Staff also considered the requirements of the Downtown Development District Code because upon its adoption, it became the sole zoning code for properties within the Downtown Development District (DDD), thereby effectively eliminating the designation "Core Area" and the parking exemption.

In reviewing the area described in the Resolution, staff took a broader view at the properties located along Water Street. After researching property ownership, common ownership of contiguous properties, size of properties, and access; it was determined that there were relatively few properties under private ownership from Beauregard Street to Eslava Street, and that creating a parking exempt district for that area may be an appropriate consideration if the City wishes to encourage development in that area. Also, given the proposed improvements to Water Street, access to parking and other amenities on the East side of Water Street will be more easily accessible.

Based on the above information a parking exempt area was defined as “The area bounded by Beauregard Street on the North, the Mobile River on the East, Eslava Street on the South, and Water Street on the North.” In preparation of this report it was discovered that there was a typo in the description, which should read ..., and Water Street on the **WEST**. The staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider and approve the change to the parking exempt area as proposed.

Since the Call for Public Hearing, staff has been contacted by a few individuals inquiring about increasing the area to include the GM&O Building and the adjacent (on the same parcel) Norfolk and Western Railway building. Staff has advised those individuals that if a formal request is made to the Commission at the Public Hearing, staff would support the request.