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March 27, 2020

Salt Lake City Housing & Neighborhood Development Division
ATTN Jennifer Schumann
451 S State St Rm 445
PO Box 145487
Salt Lake City UT 84114-5487

Dear Jennifer,

It is my pleasure to submit this letter on behalf of the Glendale Community Council. After our extensive review, we would like to express our enthusiastic support for the 2020-2024 Salt Lake City Consolidated Plan. We appreciate the opportunity to review the plan and to comment on the importance of investing in the Glendale community.

Included with this letter is a detailed review and response to the draft plan and requests from our community for incorporation in city planning exercises. Our feedback is based on the successful community mapping exercise that our community has been engaging in since last year (Salt Lake County Health Department, 2020). As the COVID-19 crisis unfolds, it is important that the needs of our neighbors, especially those who are vulnerable, be taken into account in planning at all levels of government.

The proposed plan is strong, and we seek to be engaged partners in its implementation in our neighborhood. We hope that the plan will act as an anchor to bring much-needed civic engagement and community-building to the Glendale neighborhood. Together, we can work to tie our neighborhood – and the city more broadly - together in a more cohesive manner.

Thank you,

Turner C. Bitton
Chair, Glendale Community Council
chair@glendaleutah.org
(801) 564-3860

Glendale Community Council
1375 S. Concord Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84104



In order to make our comments and feedback easier to digest, we have organized this letter in a format that closely mirrors that of the plan. We hope that this makes it easier to review and understand our comments. I would be more than happy to further explain or expand upon any of the contents of this letter, please feel free to contact me if you would like me to do so.

Comments on Objectives and Outcomes

Housing

The goals outlined in this section are solid. We recognize that greater density is the future of the Glendale neighborhood and we encourage the city to enact policies that will give us opportunity to meet new neighbors and see our community's character reflect the need for more sustainable, inclusive, and welcoming development.

As Salt Lake City grows, Glendale will grow and we encourage you to adopt inclusive zoning standards that will ensure future development is reflective of the changing desires, needs, and expectations of new residents.

Request 1: Increased Density

Residents expressed overwhelming support for increased density and viewed this as a critical way to meet the housing goals outlined in the plan. When there isn't land to develop housing, housing options are pushed further away from resources (reduced housing density). This creates a vicious cycle that won't be broken without intervention and we are committed to working together with you to determine the best path forward.

Request 2: Design Standards

We would like to work with you to develop progressive, forward-thinking design standards for our community. We encourage new development and believe that we can improve the quality of life of all residents by strengthening the identity of our community. We believe the rich multicultural heritage of Glendale should be reflected in future development and we are eager to do our part to support you in this effort.

We believe that a strong community identity can act as an anchor for the other goals. We ask that you support our efforts to strengthen our vibrant, inclusive community identity as a means of achieving the other housing goals of the plan.

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Request 3: Tenants Rights

We would also like to request that you explore ways to improve and enhance the rights of tenants throughout the city. As we have spoken with residents about the plan, a recurring theme has emerged. Many of our neighbors are vulnerable to exploitation or abuse and given the large number of rental properties, many residents expressed concern about the perceived lack of rights and process when facing eviction. As our neighborhood develops, we must ensure that the rights of all residents – whether homeowners or renters – are vigorously protected.

Request 4: Community-based Planning

Too often the voices of a few have overshadowed the voices of other neighbors – particularly those of working families, immigrants, people with disabilities, and young people. We are committed to working with you to break this cycle.

We request a robust community-based planning that can precede zoning. We particularly encourage you to work with community boards, community-based development organizations, environmental justice organizations, and local community leaders to undertake:

- An intensive and expedited community-based planning process that could lead to identification of local affordable housing opportunities, retention and enhancement of a community's existing stock of affordable housing and its commercial corridors, and reinforcement of the area's cultural identity.
- We would like to work with you – and the groups outlined above - to identify needed infrastructure investment that could enhance the area's ability to retain and expand its supply of affordable housing and provide economic opportunities to bridge the economic divide that exists between Glendale and other parts of the city.

Many residents expressed concern about the lack of perceived “safe spaces” to discuss difficult topics such as housing. We are committed to working with you to develop this type of safe space to establish consensus on the goals of the Glendale community.



Transportation

We support and appreciate the transportation goals set forth in the plan. As we discussed the issue of transportation with residents, several themes emerged. Among the most importance was the promotion of walkability and accessibility. Many residents expressed concern about the seeming disconnect between the amenities with and design of our neighborhood.

Request 1: Establish specific goals related to accessibility and walkability for residents with disabilities.

Glendale is home to many residents with limited mobility and/or disabilities that make accessing amenities and transportation systems more difficult. Residents expressed that the neighborhood often feels hostile to individuals with disabilities because they are required to cross busy streets.

Request 2: Include specific goals related to walkability.

Residents expressed a preference for walking or commuting by bicycle as the most inexpensive form of transportation. The experience of poor walkability was reported as a reason for residents moving out of the neighborhood and viewing the neighborhood as less desirable.

There was a widespread belief that California Avenue from 7th West to Redwood Road should have the speed limit reduced with more crosswalks and permanent infrastructure to protect pedestrians and cyclists. Residents pointed to the lack of a crosswalk at the intersection at Concord and California Avenue as a major concern. For example, if a resident exits the bus at the station located at this intersection, they have to walk either West or East to access a safe crosswalk. Many residents expressed concern that this is unnecessary and leaves children vulnerable to accidents.

In addition, the western part of our neighborhood does not have sidewalks or has poorly maintained sidewalks that make walking to work in the industrial/business area of the neighborhood unsafe or simply impossible. Several residents who live in the Glendale neighborhood and work west of Redwood Road expressed that there is no safe way for them to get to work by any mode other than a personal vehicle.



Economic Development

Discussion of economic development resulted in broad consensus among residents that Glendale needs a “main street” or a central entrance. There is widespread aspiration toward entrepreneurship among residents.

Request 1: Placemaking in Glendale

Residents expressed that they don't feel they could operate a business successfully in Glendale due to the lack of a core economic area. Residents expressed that California Avenue could have restaurants, businesses, and other amenities but there is no space for new businesses. New storefront space and gathering spaces would be needed to support such business. We encourage you to create a plan to establish an “entrance” to Glendale along California Avenue to provide for residents to walk to businesses and amenities in the neighborhood. As stated above, walkability remains among the highest priorities of Glendale residents from a quality of life and economic standpoint.

Request 2: Address Seven Peaks Water Park

Residents overwhelmingly expressed that the closure of Seven Peaks Water Park has had a negative impact on the community. Its closure has left the area vulnerable to vandalism and has left nearby residents concerned with the safety of the area. We request that this issue be included in all community planning exercises undertaken in Glendale.

Homeless Services

Residents expressed concern about the increase in homelessness in the area after Operation Rio Grande. They further expressed support for the new model of services being administered citywide. Residents feel that as the cost of housing goes up, residents can't keep up with rent or maintenance and get pushed out of the neighborhood. This opens the door to gentrification.

Recommendation 1: Set Goals for Wage Growth and High-Quality Benefits in Planning

Residents agreed that when wages don't increase, it becomes more difficult for families to maintain housing. This instability makes it challenging to do the things necessary to increase earning potential. Several residents reported that there is an imbalance of priorities that has led to people they know experiencing housing instability. For example, a resident told us a specific story about a parent who wanted to get a job, but as soon as they get one, they are no longer



eligible for assistance. Losing their assistance means they can no longer afford childcare and must quit their job and go back on assistance. This created a cycle that left the parents vulnerable and eventually, they ended up homeless.

There was also broad agreement that low-wage jobs with no health benefits create a sick workforce that is unable to access opportunities for improvement. They expressed that the city should work with employers to improve the quality of benefits and increase wages.

Behavioral Health

Residents largely agreed about the lack of behavioral health support available in the neighborhood. We support the goals as outlined and would encourage you to continue to engage with our residents on the issue of behavioral health.

Request 1: Include Specific Goals for Community Health Workers and Peer Supports

There was broad agreement that people fear what they don't understand and respond with unhealthy behaviors. Many residents expressed that language and cultural barriers made finding behavioral health support very difficult. Many expressed that there are existing structures – i.e. church networks, cultural groups, informal social networks, etc. – that could benefit from investment and support.

Residents expressed that these networks could reduce barriers that cause isolation and poor mental health. As the level of connection increases, individuals and families would have more capacity to engage which increases the strength of networks for support and connection for the community.

This type of support is especially important for members of large families, which Glendale has a large number of. Many residents expressed that community-based resiliency trainings facilitated by peer networks, older children, or parents could have a large impact on well-being of residents.

Miscellaneous Comments

On **page 126** it is stated that “Seven Peaks Water Park... is located within the target area and attracts residents from across the Salt Lake Valley.” This is not true as the waterpark has been closed for several years. Residents expressed that the closure of this park had a detrimental effect on the neighborhood and the decline has impacted residents.



On **page 156** references are made to several community-based substance use and behavioral health providers. We recommend that you engage and include the Utah Harm Reduction Coalition in future planning stakeholder meetings. This organization provides significant benefit to our community and has positively impacted the lives of several residents through their harm reduction services and outpatient treatment services. You can find additional information about them at utahharmreduction.org.

On **page 182 through 186** there is reference made to the public notice mechanisms included in the Citizen Participation Plan. We request that anytime a public notice is given for any community in the zip codes of 84116 or 84104, that The West View - our community paper – be included. You can reach them at westviewmedia.org.

Also, on **page 186** the plan states that Public Notices are provided in English and Spanish. We are incredibly grateful for the inclusion of our English and Spanish-speaking neighbors. Given the incredible diversity of Glendale, we would request that efforts also be made to provide notices in other languages according to city data including but not limited to Somali, Arabic, Farsi, Vietnamese, Tongan, and Samoan. When these types of services are offered “up request” residents are not likely to feel welcomed to the space. When language is included in marketing materials, there is an understanding that the city values and invites participation from a specific community. We recommend working with University Neighborhood Partners to identify the capacity to accomplish this goal.

Closing

Thank you for the opportunity to review the plan. We sincerely appreciate the hard work and dedication of all the staff who work so hard to make Salt Lake City the great place it is. We would love to extend our sincere gratitude to each of you. Thank you.

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