

June 27th 2024



To whom it may concern,

Downtown Community Council was born in the shadow of the historic Rio Grande Depot as a voice for our homeless neighbors living on the streets and in the shelters of our neighborhood. From our humble beginnings representing the unrepresented, our mandate grew as more people moved Downtown. Twenty years ago, there were barely 1,100 people in the handful of residential buildings in our Council area, and today there are now more than 11,000. And the number continues to grow. We are proud to have been active participants in the renewal of Downtown. Our community council was once called the Pioneer Park community council... And the name, though retired, is still appropriate, as we are pioneers. Our Board is unafraid to speak boldly on behalf of our constituents and to bring together likeminded Salt Lakers to speak out on issues of concern to the City at large.

It is in that pioneering spirit of boldly speaking, that we lend our full-throated support to the Rio Grande Plan, a citizen-authored initiative to grade-separate the railroads that divide downtown Salt Lake City and to reactivate the historic Rio Grande Depot as the city's central train station.

When Salt Lake Central Station was being planned, our Board registered our concerns about its out-of-the-way placement and the failure to use the costly project to actually stimulate redevelopment of the Rio Grande depot and the valuable property to its west. It is heartening to see the Rio Grande Plan gaining the attention and the support it deserves, as it will finally tackle so many of the issues that have plagued the west side of our council area:

- Moving rails below-grade, eliminating conflicts among trains, vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists
- Increasing the efficiency of passenger rail across the entire Utah network
- Further reduce the East–West divide
- More fully integrate this important rail hub into the Downtown Core
- Return the historic Rio Grande depot to its intended use
- Offer a truly world-class entrance portal to the Utah capital
- Fully open up more than 200 acres of land to proper urban development

With the Olympics coming in 2034, now is the time to take action.

Warm regards,

Downtown Community Council Board