

March 17, 2023

Dear Committee Members,

By re-imagining Salt Lake City's ballpark as a multi-use hub and home for women athletes and their teams, our city can assume a global leadership role in the empowerment of women through sports. We can revitalize an area that has long suffered from a lack of year-round activation of its stadium. And, alongside the development of five acres immediately west of the stadium that members of our team intend to build in concert with this vision, we can catalyze a vibrant district where current business owners and underrepresented entrepreneurs from our community will be celebrated, supported, and put on a trajectory to thrive.

This is a proposal rooted in equity and opportunity. Salt Lake City has invested tens of millions of dollars into a stadium that has been used almost exclusively by a men's minor-league sports team. But, like every other city that has made these sorts of investments, we have not made a remotely similar show of support for our community's best women athletes. There can be no honest conversation about why women's sports trail so far behind men's in revenue, attendance, pay, and media attention if that discussion does not include the stark reality of systemic inequity. Today, teams such as the two-time national champion Utah Falcoz practice in city parks with no locker rooms. The Utah Vipers, who compete in the nation's top division of women's rugby, have ceded the right to host playoff games for lack of a stadium at which to play. These and other women's sports organizations in our community also lack space for training, offices, and storage. They may have a league of their own, but they do not have a home of their own.

Our city can take a historic step toward addressing this disparity through the realization of a **creative yet feasible** vision. A field suitable for soccer, rugby, ultimate, and football would fit in the existing field footprint with only minor initial renovations, with virtually no period of inactivation of the stadium after the Bees depart. Further renovation to improve stadium sightlines, adjust seating, and incorporate peripheral micro-retail spaces could happen in phases as demonstrated by similar conversions of stadiums previously used for baseball. Although these teams already train and play year-round, retractable roofing or removeable doming could create more opportunities for wintertime use. While the parking lot could retain its current function, investment in a decked lot would offer opportunities to incorporate more greenspace, street sport courts, food truck lots, and festival space.

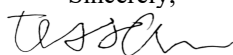
This **investment in people** would showcase traditionally underrepresented athletes' talents, nurture their dreams, and create a training pipeline for their teams. Existing offices could be divided to serve multiple women's sports organizations, with additional space to be utilized as a child care facility for athletes and community members. To broaden stadium revenue, some of the concession spaces currently only utilized on game days could be converted for use as commissary kitchens for start-up restaurants and food trucks, and kiosk space could house underserved local artists and businesses. To lower barriers of entry and ensure success, these entrepreneurs, tenant teams, and neighborhood businesses would be offered support from the Minority Business Development Agency, Mill Entrepreneurship Center, and capital investors who have already expressed enthusiasm for this vision.

We have also set the stage for other potential **partnerships near and far**. Representatives from the Falcoz, Vipers, Utah Wild pro ultimate team, and Utah Girls Tackle Football League are among those eager to share resources and build community. That desire is shared by the Women's Premier Soccer League, which has several pro-am teams in our community and intends to have a Utah-based squad as part of a fully professional league it will launch in 2025. We also envision the stadium as a place the Utah Royals may choose to utilize for many of their events. Local, regional, and national tournaments could be hosted in an iconic facility in our city. Concerts, artistic exhibits, and cultural events—including those organized by the nearby Urban Indian Center—would contribute to a schedule that would bring people to the stadium and surrounding community nearly every day and night of the year.

Vitaly, this proposal keeps a ballpark at the heart of the Ballpark neighborhood, one of the key **community goals** we heard from neighborhood residents and business owners. This desire is further reflected in the Downtown Master Plan, the Ballpark Station Area Plan, the State Street Project Area Plan, and the Life of State Implementation Plan, all of which were built on the premise that the stadium would be anchoring commerce and culture in this neighborhood for decades to come. But while the team that was intended to be the stadium's tenant activated the stadium and surrounding neighborhood for about 75 nights and some weekend afternoons each year, this plan would provide year-round, morning-to-night activity, an essential attribute of any thriving business district.

The aforementioned plans were all created to **connect the dots** for public transit and improved walkability, a goal that would be accentuated by footbridges over 1300 South and West Temple, the latter of which would help connect the stadium to the adjacent properties that Maven District, Colmena Group, and Kimball Investment Company intend to develop as a mixed-use "grand gathering area" that maximizes pedestrian flow to the stadium from the nearby TRAX station, and which would nurture ground-floor businesses owned by underrepresented entrepreneurs. We believe that the combination of our investment in this neighborhood, and the reimagining of the city's stadium as a world-class center for women's sports, would provide not just an anchoring feature but a coalescing principle that will help drive the rapid and energetic creation of even more "brave and safe spaces," both inside and outside of the stadium's walls—creating a place that all of us can cheer for.

Sincerely,



Tessa Arneson | Proposal Lead