



RISE UP BELLTOWN

BOAT
Belltown Oversight & Advisory Team

January 31, 2019

Councilmember Sally Bagshaw
600 Fourth Ave, 2nd Floor
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Bagshaw,

We submit this **open letter on behalf of over 150 individual stakeholders**, including nearly [two dozen local businesses](#), who comprise the [Belltown Oversight & Advisory Team](#). We are requesting your help with the ongoing economic displacement of our residents, our workforce, and our local businesses. It is tearing at the fabric of our community and weighing upon the hopes and aspirations of our residents and workforce.

Yesterday, just one day after our winter community benefit event, it was [reported in the Daily Journal of Commerce](#) that there is again a plan underway to demolish the affordable housing and cultural heart of Belltown. **We believe that growth and density are essential to the longterm health of Seattle**, but we also know that Belltown can grow and densify without economically evicting the cultural and commercial heart. And we believe property owners need not suffer economic loss, in the process of protecting community assets.

We understand these are complicated issues, but we are also bringing [viable policy options](#) to the discussion. As our District 7 representative, **we are asking for your help in building coalitions**, and in exploring innovative policy approaches, to arrest the displacement of our most vulnerable populations. Even our community center has been lost to rising rents. We believe that there is ample time to explore alternative approaches, but we may need your assistance with ensuring that the public is given the appropriate time to engage in those discussions.

It is our understanding that the properties in question (including Tula's Jazz Club) must be reviewed for possible landmark nomination under existing city code. **We would like your assistance in ensuring this code is complied with**. Our fear stems from the recent demolition of a historic building immediately opposite from Tula's, which we understand to have been classified as a "remodel" by the Department of Construction and Inspection. We believe this was an inappropriate interpretation of the city code, and fear that this or similar loopholes will allow the premature, effective demolition of these significant buildings without any public notice.

We would like help with ensuring that no such, or similar, development loopholes allow premature demolition of the buildings in question prior to a public dialogue about potential landmark designation, to which we believe the public is entitled, as both buildings are greater than 25 years old. Thank you for your time, and attention to our concerns. And thank you for your longstanding public service to District 7 and to Seattle.

Sincerely,

Belltown Oversight & Advisory Team
Rise Up Belltown

CC: Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board