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Mayor and Council
255 W. Alameda St.
Tucson, AZ 85701

DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY

Dear Mayor Romero and Council Members Santa Cruz, Cunningham, Durham, Lee, Fimbres and Kozachik:

Recently, plans to expand the Zoo into a beloved area of Reid Park with funds from Prop 203 have surprised the community. Prior to Council approval of the Zoo Management Agreement between the City and the Reid Park Zoological Society (RPZS) non-profit in 2018, public outreach to understand the proposed change in use of 3.5 acres of public Reid Park land was not apparent. For example, adjacent Neighborhood Associations were not directly contacted during this process, nor do residents recall media or public meetings.

We recognize that there have already been substantial investments in pre-construction work for the expansion slated to begin in early 2021, making this a difficult and complex time to reopen land use decisions. Similarly, creating ill-will in the community about the Zoo on the heels of the public support of Prop 203 will have long-lasting impact on the community and on the Zoo's future.

A survey was run across neighborhoods to help inform the Neighborhood Associations, Mayor and Council. In that survey (attached), there has been sufficient concern about the use of land in the proposed Zoo expansion that we, as adjacent Neighborhoods, respectfully request a pause on expansion activity at the Zoo until there has been an opportunity for a public process on the repurposing of Reid Park land for the zoo expansion.

The outcome of that public conversation could yield a range of solutions:

1. Find a new location for zoo expansion (not Barnum Hill or southern Duck Pond) along 22nd, Reid Park Golf Course, NW of Duck Pond, Zoo parking lot, or other possibilities that have likely been reviewed in prior planning discussions
2. Expand zoo to Barnum Hill and southern Duck Pond as planned, but find a new location for a new "Barnum Hill" (recognizing that it will take decades for new trees to mature) and the southern Duck Pond close to the existing larger Duck Pond

3. Continue with the existing plan to expand the zoo into Barnum Hill and southern Duck Pond

The signatures here reflect associations that have been able to meet and debate support/opposition. The survey results from 636 residents warrant consideration alongside our request. Thank you for your consideration of our request to pause for public input on this important matter.

Sincerely,

James Wolfe, President
Broadmoor-Broadway Village NA
January 21, 2021

Mark Mayer, Co-Chair
Julia Naylor NA
January 21, 2021

Silvia Valdillez, President
Barrio Centro NA
January 21, 2021

Josephine Wilson, President
Sam Hughes NA
February 17, 2021