

To: University City Council

Date: August 7, 2020

Subject: What I value most about living at the Crown Center in University City

Grumpy old men (and women)? Not at the Crown Center!

What I like best about living at the Crown Center for Senior Living is the community of caring established and fostered by the staff. It starts when we first move in — someone is assigned to be our ambassador, ready to help us learn about our new place. This accomplishes two things — (1) we have the beginnings of a possible new friendship, and (2) we quickly learn about activities being offered and where to find things like our small in-house library, the fitness center, and the trash chutes.

Among the optional activities (before the pandemic shutdown) was going out for lunch and/or shopping on the Crown Center bus, getting out into the area around us. I like being able to visit the Loop for the ambience (the atmosphere and character) of the restaurants, the bookstores (Half Price near us and Subterranean in the Loop), and the U-City library with its delivery of books to homebound patrons. I like that we have a grocery store within walking distance (one block).

Best of all, I appreciate that the Crown Center quickly jumped into action when we first heard about COVID-19 and closed all public spaces within our buildings. Because of that and requiring that we all wear masks and socially distance ourselves, no elderly resident here has contracted the virus. To counteract our loneliness, Crown has delivered meals to our apartments five days a week, if we wish, and has sent care packages to each of us with ideas for activities.

Both staff and residents have been calling to check up on people and figuring out ways to "gather" via Zoom and conference calls. I like that Crown invites any senior in the neighborhood to participate in meals and other activities. I like that we're all in this together. This is the best place I've ever lived.

Sincerely,

Bonnie S. Jacobs
8350 Delcrest Drive
Apartment 605
University City, MO 63124



The Oasis Institute
11780 Borman Drive
St. Louis, Missouri 63146
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August 4th, 2020

University City Council Members
City of University City
6801 Delmar Boulevard
University City, MO 63130

Dear Council Members:

With this letter I would like to formally express my support for the application by Crown Center for Senior Living in University City (8350 Delcrest Drive) to receive tax abatement for their new building project.

This project, when implemented, will greatly enhance the lives of hundreds of older adults in University City who have limited resources. Plans for the building have been submitted to the Council.

Crown Center has provided compassionate and comprehensive affordable housing and supportive services for low income senior adults in and around University City since 1967. Today, Crown Center is home to 275 older adults, all of whom qualify as having low, very low, or extremely low incomes as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Weinberg Building, built in 1995, is home to about 150 low and extremely low income seniors. In addition to housing, a distinct not-for-profit entity, Crown Center was created to provide social and nutrition services, transportation, education, and social and wellness programming to residents of Crown Center and of the surrounding community.

As the leader of a national organization with a "successful aging" mission, and a long standing program partner with Crown Center, I have a clear sense of how valuable an exceptional affordable housing provider can be to a community. Crown Center not only provides housing for their residents, but executes on core values of aging with dignity, purpose, and a sense of community. The program partnership with Oasis brings exercise, music, and lifelong learning programs into Crown Center, and the Crown Center community of seniors are not just "aging in place" they are thriving in a supportive and stimulating environment that is truly a model for how to make low income housing more than just a basic need, Crown Center provides a home and a community for their residents.

This application is crucial for our shared community. I encourage you to look favorably on this application from Crown Center for Senior Living (8350 Delcrest Drive).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Weiss".

Paul Weiss, Phd.

President

The Oasis Institute

pweiss@oasisnet.org



August 6, 2020

University City Council Members
City of University City
6801 Delmar Boulevard
University City, MO 63130

Dear Council Members:

With this letter, I would like to formally express support for the application by Crown Center for Senior Living in University City (8350 Delcrest Drive) to receive tax abatement for their new building project which has been submitted to the Council. This project, when implemented, will greatly enhance the lives of older adults in the University City community, particularly those with limited resources.

Crown Center is committed to creating a vibrant and engaged community in which all seniors thrive. They have provided compassionate and comprehensive affordable housing and supportive services for low-income senior adults in and around University City since 1967. Their mission includes services that reach beyond their residents. They offer programming and services, free or at nominal cost, to seniors throughout our geographic area.

COCA – Center of Creative Arts - has partnered with the Crown Center for several years, to provide arts programming as part of their offering of social and wellness services. The Crown Center is vital to our community, especially our senior citizens.

This application is crucial for our shared community. I encourage you to look favorably on this application from Crown Center for Senior Living (8350 Delcrest Drive).

Sincerely,

Kelly Pollock, Executive Director

Dear University City Council,

I'll like to start by saying I have always cherished living in University City. I first set up residence in 1976 and had the opportunity to raise 5 amazing kids in this diverse community. I moved away for 10 years. I returned in 2004 and became a resident of Crown Center Senior Living.

My stay at Crown Center has truly been a blessing. I love staying at Crown Center because of the diversity of the residents. It is truly affordable and offer a wide range of activities. The staff is remarkable. They do an excellent job in assisting the residents in many needed programs.

I am a diehard of a city that I love which is U City. As well as that, I the love Crown Center and the residents of Crown Center.

Sincerely

Genies Jordan
Crown Center resident
8350 Delcrest Drive, Apartment 1005



Dear City Council,

One of my most difficult (but best ever) decisions has been to move to Crown Center, a very special place in University City.

The location is ideal, and so convenient for stores, restaurants, parks, and transportation. And what a bonus to be able to safely walk the Centennial Greenway.

I especially appreciate the diversity and friendliness of my fellow residents, which incidentally closely mirrors University City itself.

The very caring support staff provide numerous programs on a variety of topics: fitness, music, art, cooking, etc. and also regular bus trips.

Crown is a very caring community, and particularly in these pandemic times I've come to appreciate the staff more than ever for the excellent job they are doing, especially to keep us all safe.

Although they are currently working off-site, there is no feeling that we have been abandoned or neglected. There are constant letters, care packages, books, puzzles, and the knowledge that the staff members are just a phone call away.

Yes, certainly one of my best ever decisions. Viva Crown!!

Miriam Roth
Crown Center
8350 Delcrest Drive #1002

August 5, 2020

Dear Members of the City Council of University City,

I encourage you to support the tax abatement proposal for Crown Center Senior Living which is to be discussed at the next Council meeting.

I have lived at Crown Center since 2016. Without Crown Center I would definitely be struggling to find housing security for my senior years. Crown Center is exactly the type of housing that should be offered across the nation—I guess it's not surprising that such a remarkable place is in University City.

Here at Crown Center I participate in two book discussion groups and use our library often; I am able to enjoy a meal in the café with my fellow residents; in the activity center I use the exercise equipment no matter what the weather conditions are. Although I am still quite independent, I know that in the future Crown Center will help me maintain my independence as long as possible. I am tremendously grateful to be a Crown Center resident.

The staff know how to provide programs, services, activities, and special events without “blowing the budget”, which in turn makes me more financially secure. As a member of the Resident Council Board I can depend on the staff to support our events. The buildings are well-maintained and clean, special events are delightful, and services are thorough and easy to get. Crown Center is the common-sense housing solution for seniors. It truly is an outstanding community and organization.

You can be confident that the Board, staff, and residents of Crown Center will be grateful for your support of the tax abatement proposal--the benefits that the new building will provide will be an asset for the entire University City senior population. I take great pride in telling people that I live in University City, and Crown Center contributes to that pride.

Thank you for your careful consideration of the proposal.

Yours truly,

Rise Gilliom

8350 Delcrest Drive Apt. 801

University City, MO 63124

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AW HEALTH CARE
healthy mind. healthy body.

August 4, 2020

University City Council Members
City of University City
6801 Delmar Boulevard
University City, MO 63130

Dear Council Members:

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This application is crucial for our shared community. I encourage you to look favorably on this application from Crown Center for Senior Living (8350 Delcrest Drive).

Sincerely,

Irian Bursak
Administrator
AW Health Care

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August 7, 2020

Dear University City Council:

Crown Center has felt like home to me from the moment I met with Randi to apply to live here. I had been away from my hometown for ten years and when I decided to move back, I needed an affordable home since I am on social security. I was advised to look into Crown Center mainly because it was close to Overland, where I grew up. I always considered University City to be a family-oriented, people-focused place to live, so I checked into Crown Center first. Since that first meeting I knew Crown was where I was meant to be. Diversity is so important to me and the caring, friendly nature of the staff is unparalleled in my experience. When I have a concern, a solution is worked out. We celebrate our joys and share in the sorrow of our losses. Losing one of our community is the worst part of living here, but the peace we find when we come together to celebrate those whom we have lost is one of the best parts. Since the pandemic, various staff have been in regular contact with residents, making sure we are doing okay and asking how they can help us cope and stay active.

Crown Center offers so many rich opportunities/activities to connect with others and to enjoy hobbies they love. There are opportunities to garden, both individually and collectively; there are opportunities to enjoy jigsaw puzzles, word games, adult coloring sessions, exercise sessions, arts and crafts activities, book clubs, etc. We have trips to museums and theatre, the Botanical Gardens, restaurants. We have student groups and community groups presentations and activities. We have in-house opportunities for discussions of topics of interest to seniors. Nikki holds "Nosh with Nikki" every few months to keep us informed of goings-on at Crown. We have the Circle@Crown Café for residents and community members to meet and enjoy activities and conversation, the Culinary Kitchen for regular cooking demonstrations, Saturday movies in the Theatre room.

We have ways to volunteer and give back through time at the Welcome Desk during office hours, to keep our small library updated with book donations, to host the monthly birthday bash, to serve during the weekday meals for our meals program. And that is just the tip of the iceberg.

We have partnerships with Oasis and other groups. The University City Library has home delivery every three weeks, Royal Bank comes weekly to take care of our banking needs. Until this year, Crown Center was our polling place for two precincts.

We are within walking distance of Walgreens, Schnucks, and the stores at Ladue Crossing, Half Price Books, Jilly's, House of India, and Pasta House. We are down the street from the Loop, Dewey's, Frida's, and Starbucks.

With all this happening daily, I wouldn't want to live anywhere else. I am home. I hope the Council will make sure our new building plans can happen, so that Crown Center's mission of serving the senior community can continue.

Sincerely,

Donna M. Carey, Crown Center resident
8348 Delcrest Drive, Apartment 1F

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