

Honorable Mayor Jordan and City Council Members,

George's Majestic Lounge opened in 1927 and is in its' 93<sup>rd</sup> year of business. My wife Day and I are in our 17<sup>th</sup> year as owner / operators being only the fourth owner in 93 years. George's is part of the cultural fabric of Fayetteville and especially in our arts and entertainment district. We are the book ends of the north side of our soon to be Cultural Arts Corridor with Walton Arts Center. George's is truly an arts presenter and only open when we have shows or special events. George's is not just beloved locally and regionally it is a nationally recognized venue in the industry. In 2016 Consequence of Sound named George's one of the 100 Greatest American Music Venues in the United States alongside venues like The Ryman in Nashville and Hollywood bowl. We have been nominated for an academy of country music award, been featured in the New York Times Travel and Leisure section and in 2019 received the Henry Award for Arkansas Heritage from the state department of tourism. I share this with you all as some of you may not know the history and accolades of George's. My wife and I have been proud to be a part of our great community and to be able to have George's be a venue that supports our community. Not just with concerts as we also have hosted countless charity events, memorials and private functions over the years. We have had a robust internship program with U of A students for years giving them real world educational opportunities. But ...the heart of George's Majestic Lounge is live music. We are the heartbeat and nucleus of the live music scene in our region. Live music feeds the soul and I have been blessed to make a living in the live music industry for over 30 years. My wife and I are blessed to be the curators of George's during our time as owners. We have been blessed to run a vibrant business for many years that feeds the soul of our community.

Then came March 13<sup>th</sup>. The mayor declared a public health emergency and we voluntarily closed our doors that day. We were heading into a sold out three night run of shows and fully stocked with product, but there wasn't a question what the right thing to do was and we closed. The safety of our staff, patrons and artists comes first. We paid our staff in full through the end of March including estimated lost tips and told our George's family to hold on to each other. My wife and I were committed to only reopening when we felt it could be done safely and morally that we felt ok. On March 13<sup>th</sup> we went into the 100% expense business. George's doors remained closed for almost 150 days. We are after all in the business of gathering people to socialize and enjoy live music indoors. Science tells us outdoors is safest. So, on August 2<sup>nd</sup> we started experimenting with concerts on our parking lot to a very limited number of patrons. Socially distanced tables and the stage at least 12' from the patrons. We found that folks liked it and felt comfortable. That leads us to where we are with the land purchase request. It would allow us to put a cool stage / deck under the tree canopy off the southside of our property. We could expand our capacity which will allow us to keep bands and employees working and maybe see what resembles cash flow again. There is no silver bullet for the live music industry during this pandemic. That would be a vaccine. Until then we are looking for a way to expand our outdoor lifeline as we try to survive this as a business. When we do survive and get on the other side of this tragedy that is the pandemic the new stage under the trees will be a great fit next to our new amazing municipal space that is part of the CAC. I could envision putting a band on the new stage and have them perform to the trail and the new CAC space as part of a special event. The new land won't guarantee our business's solvency, but it sure would let us try some more and bigger things. Thank you for your consideration to sell this small piece of land to us.

Respectfully and humbly,

Brian & Day Crowne