



An artist's rendering shows a concept for the downtown Salt Lake City sports and entertainment district, anchored, at top, by a renovated Delta Center.

but it is for some of city's residents

District

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It comes to a significantly large tax increase for Salt Lake City residents.

The sales tax, he said, is extremely regressive, meaning low-income people end up paying a larger percentage of their income than wealthier households.

"It's going to hit low-income

families harder," he said. "Using the sales tax, even though it's the only real tool available to Salt Lake City, really does have an impact on lower-income families."

He is also concerned about how much the investment in the downtown district will actually benefit the community — whether there will be a focus on affordable housing and whether the labor force working at the arena will actually

be able to make a livable wage.

"To me, that's the key thing. Is it actually going to be gentrifying or is it revitalizing and bringing families back into the community and providing affordable housing, etcetera, etcetera," he said. "All of these things should be part of the conversation if it truly is revitalization."

Likewise, Tibbitts, in his role as advocate for low-income Utahns, is watching to see if the city will stick

to a Community Benefit Policy it put in place in March designed to ensure that, when the city approves higher density, it ensures a portion of the new units are affordable to lower-income residents.

Otherwise, he said, the city runs the risk of making the already challenging housing costs even more unaffordable.

"For the people we serve in our food pantries, it's a struggle

to have enough money to put gas in your car; it's a struggle to have enough money for a bus pass; and it's a struggle to pay all the different bills," he said. "One of the things we do is help a few families each month keep the power on in their home. Over the course of the year, the type of money you're talking about [with the new tax] is enough to pay a couple months' heating bills."

"Engaging in activities devoid of difficulty, lounging in risk-free zones, is life without great meaning."

— Jon M. Huntsman Sr.

DARE MIGHTY THINGS

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