

October 10, 2022



To Whom It May Concern,

Greenwood Rising is, in short, a museum dedicated to telling the once silenced story of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Our building sits on hallowed ground, Greenwood Avenue in Tulsa, Oklahoma - the home of what was once a thriving Black Wall Street. While we work to remember the victims and survivors of the massacre as well as create an environment conducive to learning about the racial violence we must admit to one indisputable fact: the crime scene is still active.

Years after the physical burning of Greenwood, the community rebuilt the district. Homes and businesses stood up again and the neighborhood flourished for decades. However, a second, more persistent destructive force emerged: the I-244 and US 75 sections of Tulsa's Inner-Dispersal Loop (IDL) that were designed to displace the Greenwood neighborhood once more.

On May 4, 1967, an article in the Tulsa Tribune commented on the impact that the IDL would have on the district, stating: *"The Crosstown Expressway slices across the 100 block of North Greenwood Avenue, across those very buildings that Edwin Lawrence Goodwin, Sr. (publisher of the Oklahoma Eagle) describes as 'once a Mecca for the Negro businessman—a 'showplace.' There still will be a Greenwood Avenue, but it will be a lonely, forgotten lane ducking under the shadows of a big overpass."*

Greenwood Rising sits less than a city block away from that overpass, stirring beneath the noises of traffic that the concrete pillars echo. Block letters adorn the northwestern side of our building, facing the IDL, with this quote: **"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced"** - James Baldwin.

I fully support the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's decision to pursue the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) discretionary grant funding and believe that it will allow us to take first steps towards that change. I hope you join us in our effort to reunite our community and end the ongoing destruction that this highway causes. I hope you join us in ensuring that Greenwood is never a "lonely, forgotten lane."

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Phil Armstrong', is written over a horizontal line.

Phil Armstrong
Director, Greenwood Rising