

## Bankers Hill/Park West Neighborhood Plan and Density Bonus

### Background

From 2009 to the present there have been many public meetings on the Update to the Uptown Community Plan. Numerous Community related issues regarding growth and the Community's vision for the Bankers Hill/ Park West neighborhood were discussed. Residents, developers and business leaders came together, and using the City Staff's Proposed Uptown Community Plan dated 7/11/2012 they modified it to be a true "Smart Growth Plan."

The Bankers Hill/Park West Neighborhood Plan was endorsed by the Metro CDC in September of 2012, and was approved by Uptown Planners on 10/2/2012. The Bankers Hill/Park West Neighborhood Plan recommended stepping up the density in opposition to the City Staff's plan on the East side of the community. Thus, increasing growth along the major traffic corridors of Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Avenues in Bankers Hill/Park West, and notching down the density on the West side of the community to protect the residential and historic community West of Fourth Avenue. Additionally, it was recommended to notch down the residential and business density under the airport overlay zone for issues of safety, noise and air pollution.

### Current Situation

In September of 2014 City Staff released a Draft Proposed Land Use Map and a Proposed Bonus Density Map. The Proposed Land Use Map differs from the Bankers Hill/Park West Neighborhood Plan in two significant areas. The area under the airport overlay zone was not moved down to the levels requested by the Community and density was increased in the area North of Maple between Second Avenue and Fourth.

### Airport Overlay Zone

The change of density from the Bankers Hill/ Park West Neighborhood Plan presents safety issues around the residential and business community under the airport overlay zone. The Community requested this area be moved to residential 10-14 dwelling units/acre. The Draft Map of September 2014 sets density at 15-29 dwelling units/acres.

## Bonus Density

The Bonus Density concept negates the intent of the Community and fails the Land Use Element Goals set forth on Page LU (Land Use) 21:

The Density Bonus in Bankers Hill/Park West fails bullet point 2. It would NOT provide “Residential densities appropriate to each Uptown neighborhood.”

The Density Bonus in Bankers Hill/Park West fails bullet point 7. It would NOT provide “Adequate transitions between new and existing development.”

The Density Bonus in Bankers Hill/Park West fails bullet point 8. It would NOT provide “Preservation of natural hillsides and canyons as Open space.”

The Density Bonus in Bankers Hill/Park West fails bullet point 9. It would NOT provide “Compatibility of uses within established neighborhoods.”

The Density Bonus in Bankers Hill/Park West fails bullet point 10. It would NOT provide for the “Preservation of structures with potential historic significance.”

The Density Bonus in Bankers Hill/Park West fails bullet point 13. It would NOT provide for the “Retention of residential neighborhood character.”

The Bonus Density Plan negates the Community process and the intent of the Community. In September 2012 City Staff first discussed its plan with the Community. The discussion was not specific or vetted by the Community. Adding the bonus density under the airport overlay zone would increase the density above current unacceptable levels and decrease the safety to residents, businesses, and air traffic in the area. Every area that was moved down a notch in density in the Bankers Hill/Park West Neighborhood Plan has been selected for increase by the Density Bonus Plan by approximately 50% or more above the Community’s desire. This exposes the historic residential area around Second Avenue and the historical residential areas West of First to unacceptable density levels.

## Inadequate Public Facilities

Bankers Hill/Park West has inadequate public facilities to the point where Staff is suggesting a system of equivalencies to give the appearance of meeting the goals set forth in the General Plan.

The current Park and Recreational Space Plan has a deficit of 100 acres in Uptown. Even using a system of equivalencies, and the problem with “double counting park space” the recreational requirements cannot be met for the increase in growth City Staff proposes.

Traffic congestion is an ongoing problem. The through corridors on the East side and First Avenue on the West were not designed to be a major thoroughfare between Interstate Eight and downtown. While streets and sidewalks are slowly repaired there are numerous streets in need of major refurbishing. Our infrastructure is in poor condition and many issues have not been adequately addressed. These problems need to be solved before an increase in population.

### In summary

The Bankers Hill/Park West Neighborhood Plan is the only “Smart Growth Plan” offered to date in the Bankers Hill/Park West Neighborhood. The Staff’s Plan is a Growth Plan, not a “Smart Growth Plan.” The Draft Plan and the density bonus increase growth to the point where our infrastructure deficit will increase. The City Plan doesn’t meet the guidelines set forth in the Draft Land Use Element.

Staff’s plan presents problems for the Community and developers. It leads to uncertainty for both developers and the Community. Neither party wants endless debate with the potential for lawsuits on projects within Bankers Hill/Park West.

I urge Uptown Planners to reaffirm its support for the Bankers Hill/Park West Neighborhood Plan and reject any density bonus.