

## Dale Helvig

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July 13, 2020

Chairman McLoughlin and Planning Commissioners

City of Santa Ana

Santa Ana CA 92702

### **Subject: July 13<sup>th</sup> Work Study Item**

This item was presented at the last City Council Meeting as a “receive and file” item. As I said then, I was taken aback when I read agenda item. It was reported then that over 300 participants attended the focus area workshops and the survey tool produced over 650 responses citywide. Due to time constraints I will only comment only on the Grand Ave/17<sup>th</sup> St focus area shown on slide 9.

Public comments were not taken into consideration. In fact the focus area has more than doubled in size since it was first presented to the public in 2019. If one were to look at the comments received, the general consensus of the public was not favorable. I recommend the Planning Commissioners request to see these comments in future presentations. The five focus areas do nothing but replace **General Commercial** and **Professional / Administrative Office** zoning with District Centers. I think it is safe to say this is one step closer to adding high-density housing to the focus areas. For a vision of the City it lacks any consideration for open space/parks that are desperately needed.

These proposed changes to the General Plan Land Use Element do not agree with the General Plan Core Values listed in the staff report for the five focus areas that are discussed. From the staff report:

“The five focus areas were selected based on input from the General Plan Advisory Group (GPAG); the presence of existing and new high - quality transit areas such as the OC Streetcar line; opportunities to connect key development areas; and, consistency with the following principles that align with General Plan Core Values:

- Protect and enhance our cultural and community assets
- Create a land use pattern that promotes healthy and active lifestyles
- Ensure equitable outcomes and land use distributions
- Create a sustainable and livable city
- Promote lifelong education and prosperity”

For the most part the changes will convert existing zoning from **General Commercial** and **Professional / Administrative Office** to District Centers, thus making it easier for developers to purchase these newly rezoned areas and convert the area from commercial property to high-density housing at a density of 90 dwelling units per acre. This is a windfall to developers and a huge loss to the identity of the City. Santa Ana will no longer be known as education first, the Golden City or any other

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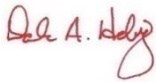
positive catch phrase the City comes up with to put a positive spin on the City. What it will be known for is the City of high-density living. One will know when they enter the City by the height of the apartments. Look at where the City is headed: high-density housing at many entrances to the City.

**Dyer & Redhill:** The Heritage; **1<sup>ST</sup> and Tustin:** Metro East Senior Park and the AMG Family Affordable Apartments; **Harbor and Westminster:** The Charlie; **5<sup>th</sup> Street:** The Willowick area; **Harbor Blvd.** And now you want to include **South Main St., North Grand Ave., 17<sup>th</sup> Street, South Bristol, Santa Ana Blvd.,** and **Santa Ana east of the 55 freeway.** When does it stop? Where is the open space for the densest City in Orange County?

While I agree the City needs revenue, we cannot continue down this path of constantly increasing the density of the City. The COVID pandemic highlights the negative effect high density has on the spreading of viruses. Where do you want the City to be when the next pandemic occurs?

Thank you for your time. Stay safe, stay healthy.

Respectfully,



Dale A Helvig  
Resident, Santa Ana

cc: Kristine Ridge  
City Manager, Santa Ana

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Executive Director, Planning

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Manager, Planning