

**United Neighborhoods for Reform**  
**Talking Points**  
**Portland Residential Infill Project**  
**7/17/16**

**The Residential Infill Project**

- The Residential Infill Project (RIP) was initiated by Mayor Hales because of the following concerns of residents, none of which are adequately solved by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) proposal resulting from this project:
  - Demolitions of viable, relatively affordable houses.
  - Construction of large, out of context, expensive replacement houses.
  - Lot divisions that result in demolitions and the replacement by two or more out of scale houses.
  - Threatened loss of cherished neighborhoods.

**The RIP Process**

- The RIP Stakeholder Advisory Committee was supposed to be a balanced group representing varied interests. Instead, the RIP scope/process was hijacked by developers, “housing advocates” and moneyed interests who used it as a platform to create more opportunities to pad their profits by encouraging demolitions and building many more homes unaffordable to the majority of Portlanders.
- The city promised modeling and economic analysis would guide zoning and development standards. This critical analysis and modeling to predict the economic, neighborhood and significant environmental impacts of the proposal has not been done. There is no objective proof that any part of the BPS plan would produce the original/initial desired results.
- Adequate infrastructure of streets, sidewalks, sewers, public transportation and traffic management does not exist to support the proposed increased density. The RIP process is seriously flawed by not including any publicly available analysis from transportation, environmental services and other city staff responsible for infrastructure planning.

**“Affordable” Housing**

- There is no evidence that the proposed plan will result in “affordable” housing and reduce displacement. In many neighborhoods recent new construction is at least two times more expensive than the demolished existing houses.
- Stating that more construction will result in “affordable” housing is a smoke screen created by developers looking for more construction opportunities and profits.
- Truly affordable housing for those with lower incomes requires ongoing governmental subsidies. This BPS plan will not solve the current Portland housing crisis.

### **Increased Density**

- The BPS proposal to open up huge areas of the city to radically increased density (density that is greater than currently allowed in zone R2) without any modeling is irresponsible. Increasing density a quarter-mile from Centers, Corridors and frequent transit and Max stations includes most of the city and is not necessary.
- Indiscriminate infill density increases will greatly accelerate the demolition trend, resulting in the loss of many additional viable, relatively affordable houses.
- The city's own Growth Scenarios Report states there is adequate vacant and undeveloped land to meet the city's projected growth needs twice over until 2035 without increasing density in existing stable neighborhoods.
- If the city wants to increase density in single-family residential neighborhoods a zone change and proper public input/process is required.

### **Lot Divisions**

- Lot divisions involving historic narrow lots should be allowed in R2.5 only.
- Allowing lot divisions throughout the city will stimulate many more demolitions of viable houses.

### **UNR Recommendations**

- The only portion of this proposal we can support is the plan for substantially reduced house size based on the size of the lot, using the tool of Floor Area Ratio (the total square feet of the building related to the total square feet of the lot).
- An improvement to this proposal would be: house height, size and setbacks to be determined by the local neighborhood context, in contrast to the one-size-fits-all neighborhoods concept proposed by this plan. One zoning code does not fit all the varied areas of the city.
- Opening up vast tracts of single-family neighborhoods to very dense development is irresponsible. It is reasonable to try increased development for density in very limited areas, do careful analysis of the results and then move forward based on the observed outcomes.

### **Preserve Portland**

- The BPS proposal to open up vast areas of Portland's neighborhoods to developers without thoughtful analysis of possible outcomes is reckless. At this point BPS shows no evidence that they know what is right for the city. Developers will make decisions based on the bottom line, not on what is best overall for the city.
- Many of our neighborhoods are vibrant, walkable, healthy places to live - the reason so many people want to live in Portland. Why destroy these neighborhoods in the name of density and developers' profits?