

## **Iraheta, Alba**

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**From:** Colleen Carey <ColleenC@cbcnco.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 11:00 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Cc:** DPNAlist@gmail.com  
**Subject:** General Plan

To All Members of the Pasadena City Council:

I understand the council will be entertaining discussion of the General Plan in its meeting tonight and over the next few weeks. Please know that in regards to the GENERAL PLAN, I support the Downtown Pasadena Neighborhood Association's request to continue the transformation of the Central District and South Fair Oaks into a WALKABLE URBAN neighborhood.

Please increase the CD & SFO development levels and FARs so that we can realize the power of nearness: people living close to where they work, shop, or play.

I live in the Madison Heights neighborhood and enjoy the opportunity to walk to restaurants and entertainment venues in both the Playhouse and the South Arroyo and Fair Oaks areas. And I particularly enjoy being able to leave the car in my garage when I travel and take light rail to the FlyAway bus at Union Station—arriving at LAX in almost the same time as I could in my own car! I support more dense development in these areas as it allows for our city to thrive and prosper and hope we continue to support development as well as urban transit programs in these areas.

Note: We've moved. My new contact information is below.

**Colleen Carey | Senior Vice President**

**Commercial Properties**  
**Coldwell Banker Commercial North County**  
**701 North Brand Boulevard | Suite 850**  
**Glendale | CA 91203**  
CA DRE Lic. No. 01258120

**Tel 818.334.1920 or 626.696.1202**  
**E-Fax 818.649.3996 Cell 626.676.1932**

**Email: [colleenc@cbcnco.com](mailto:colleenc@cbcnco.com)**

**Websites: <http://www.cbcnco.com/> <http://www.cbcnorthcounty.com/>**

CA DRE No. 01786868

[Click Here To View All My Listing](#)

Linked In Profile: <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/colleen-carey/8/394/51a>

**Iraheta, Alba**

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**Subject:** FW: Agenda Item 20, April 8th

**From:** "smchu@juno.com" <smchu@juno.com>  
**Date:** April 7, 2013, 9:36:57 AM PDT  
**To:** <bbogaard@cityofpasadena.net>  
**Cc:** <mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net>  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 20, April 8th

Hello,

As a resident of East Pasadena Foothill/Sierra Madre Villa area, I strongly object to the promotion of higher density development in our area. There is already too much traffic without the necessary City support (we still lack a stoplight at Electronic and SMV, for example). Residential neighborhoods on the east side should not be bled for general revenue.

Regards,

Susan Chu  
585 Avocado Ave  
91107

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<http://thirdpartyoffers.juno.com/TGL3141/5161a0c4abf3320c45b8fst04vuc>

# TRANSFORMATION OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT & SOUTH FAIR OAKS SHOULD CONTINUE



## DOWNTOWN PASADENA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 967  
Pasadena, CA 91102  
626-539-3762  
DPNAlist@gmail.com

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Brian Wallace

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Mary Wynton

Karen Yook

Sunday, April 07, 2013

Mayor Bill Bogaard  
Pasadena City Council  
Jacque Robinson  
Vice Mayor Margaret McAustin  
Joel Bryant and John J. Kennedy  
Gene Masuda  
Victor Gordo  
Steve Madison  
Terry Tornek  
City Manager Michael Beck  
City of Pasadena Planning Department  
Vince Bertoni  
Scott Reimer  
Director of Public Health, Dr. Eric Walsh  
Principle, The Planning Center, Woodie Tescher

The Downtown Pasadena Neighborhood Association (“DPNA”) has been following with great interest the revision of the General Plan. Our neighborhood is at stake.

The 1994 General Plan set into motion a transformation of our neighborhood that is less than halfway complete. We believe that areas of Downtown Pasadena are under-performing in terms of contributing to an active, vibrant urban pedestrian neighborhood. They hold great potential to be transformed.

The DPNA’s core values fully support that transformation:

- Walkability — a sustainable city designed for pedestrians, cyclists, and public-transit users.
- Urban Revival — a return to a traditionally dense “downtown” City Center as the place of greatest vitality & activity.
- Economic Vitality — In an urban setting, local businesses function as public space, as an extension of residential private spaces. Therefore, the economic vitality of local businesses directly impacts residential quality of life.
- Commercial & Residential Coexistence — Downtown Pasadena is both a residential and a commercial area, and a mix of uses in proper balance is desirable.
- Great Public Spaces — a public built environment (including privately-owned businesses) that engages people in *activities*, encourages *social interaction*, is *accessible*, and is *comfortable & pleasant*.
- A Sense of Place — a city with a unique identity, firmly grounded in respect for its history, with a clear vision and resolve for continued *bold progress*.

However, while this 2013 draft revision reaffirms that transformation *in principle*, the proposed development levels are less than in 1994, some FARs are too low, and the result is a plan that may be insufficient *in practice*.

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By curbing urban revitalization through insufficient development levels in the Central District and South Fair Oaks, and by designating some areas as “medium-density” when they should be “high-density,” the Draft General Plan does not go far enough in encouraging and promoting urban regeneration that is consistent with a pedestrian-oriented and sustainable neighborhood.

### **RECOMMENDATION: Increase development levels & FARs in the Central District & South Fair Oaks.**

We should not stop or slow the transformation of our Downtown neighborhood by unnecessarily limiting positive change.

Therefore, in order to support the core values of the DPNA as stated on pg. 1, we urge that:

1. The EIR study development levels that are significantly higher (both residential and commercial) in the Central District.
2. The proposed FARs in the Central District not be lowered except within 500 feet of the 210 Freeway. Any decreases should be offset with increases elsewhere in the CD.
3. The EIR study a substantially greater increase to the number of residential units and commercial space in the South Fair Oaks Specific plan, and an increase of FARs to 3.0.
4. A definite commitment be made to implement a Form-Based zoning code for the Central District by including it in the Implementation Section of the General Plan.

### **RATIONALE: Why do we think that the proposed development levels and FARs are too low? Against what indications are we comparing them to?**

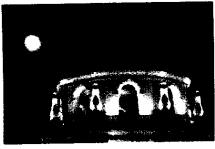
1. **Because the proposed development levels are lower than they were in 1994.**<sup>1</sup> We believe that the transformation of our neighborhood is at the less than halfway point. Development will continue to be the transformation engine, tempered by a Form-Based Code, that will produce desired change.
2. **Because reducing allowable development shows a diminishing commitment to actually achieving** the goals and principles that were so clearly affirmed by the community.
3. **Because commercial development is on its way to reaching its limit within the first 5-8 years of a proposed 20-year plan.** This has been determined by simply adding up the projects that are already proposed and in progress, and then comparing that total to limit of 3,100,000 commercial square feet. By way of example, a *single* project that is currently under consideration at the Parsons site would consume a full 1/3 of the 20-year commercial allotment for the entire Central District.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1994: 5,395 Residential Units in CD+SFO; 7,767,000 Commercial Sq Ft in CD+SFO.  
2013: 4,350 Residential Units in CD+SFO; 3,100,000 Commercial Sq Ft in CD+SFO.

<sup>2</sup> The Parsons infill project will likely consume 1,000,000 square feet.



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4. **Because the proposed development levels will degrade the jobs/housing balance in the Central District.** Academics have pegged the ideal balance of jobs-to-residential units as 1.50.<sup>3</sup> Aberrations from that balance will limit the achievement of the core values listed on pg. 1. Increased commuter traffic congestion and pollution will result. **Too many daytime office workers and not enough residents mean that the streets and sidewalks will be bustling during the daytime, but empty, unwelcoming, and possibly unsafe after 6 p.m.** Rationale #3 above argues that commercial opportunities and development levels may be artificially low; this point implies that residential levels must be increased 2 or 3-fold in order to maintain the right balance between jobs and housing.<sup>4</sup>

5. **Because of the economic and fiscal impact analysis.** Do the city's fiscal obligations exceed the economic benefits produced by the development levels that have been proposed?<sup>5</sup> Given shortfalls in General Fund revenue over the past several years, the City will benefit by replacing sales & property tax revenues that have been lost.<sup>6</sup> Those tax revenues fund services for all its citizens, including police, fire, libraries, parks, tree trimming, street cleaning, road repair, etc. The economic analysis that the planning department conducted determined that General Plan scenarios with higher development levels yield higher net surpluses for the General Fund.

Land use decisions and development levels should not be made for the *sole* purpose of yielding surplus funds for the budget. However, it would be imprudent to **prematurely foreclose** at this EIR stage economic benefits that would be obtained through higher development levels and FARs. Moreover, higher development levels are expected to have multiple benefits such as furthering the walkability and place-making core values as outlined on pg. 1.

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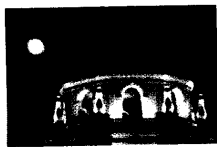
<sup>3</sup> Los Angeles Business Council Institute, "*Building Livable Communities - Enhancing Economic Competitiveness in Los Angeles.*" 2012, pg. 10.

<sup>4</sup> For more on the jobs-housing balance, see the letter submitted by Marsha V. Rood to the Pasadena City Council, dated April 3, 2012. According to Stanley R. Hoffman's report, "*Projected Fiscal Impacts, Pasadena General Plan Update,*" commissioned by the City of Pasadena, dated 10/10/2012, the development levels proposed by staff will degrade the jobs/housing balance from 1.87 to 2.10.

<sup>5</sup> Stanley R. Hoffman's report, "*Projected Fiscal Impacts, Pasadena General Plan Update,*" commissioned by the City of Pasadena, dated 10/10/2012, projected that the recurring annual surplus for the Proposed General Plan is \$13,150,000 in year 2035.

<sup>6</sup> According to the Economic Development Strategic Plan, the city lost 11 auto dealerships over the past 10 years, and has seen the "Destination Retail" status of Old Pasadena threatened by the emergence of copycat "Lifestyle Centers" such as The Grove, The Americana at Brand, the addition to the Arcadia Westgate, etc. The effect of this emerging competition on sales tax revenue may be reflected in the chart labeled "Sales Tax Growth Rates" (pg. 6), which shows that Pasadena's emergence from the recession has lagged significantly *behind* the county and state growth rates, particularly in the last 6 quarters. Recently, the closure of the Avon distribution plant in East Pasadena also significantly worsened the sales tax revenue situation.

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Because walkable urban neighborhoods with an authentic sense of place are *desirable* and increasingly in *demand*,<sup>7</sup> improving walkability and transforming our streets and blocks into great “Places” will provide a substantial economic benefit which, in turn, will redound to the General Fund. This will happen most effectively if the development levels and FARs, in combination with creating a quality built and natural environment, are sufficient.

6. **Because the City Council is the only body charged with responsibility for the city’s fiscal health.** All the advisory bodies that have weighed in on the General Plan (e.g. ---the Planning Commission, GPUAC, and the Transportation Advisory Commission) do not have the city’s fiscal health within their purview. Therefore, the City Council should take their recommendations into consideration in view of its responsibility for the city’s fiscal health.

7. **Because the proposed development levels and FARs lag behind historical growth rates and statistical predictions.** A study that was specifically commissioned for this General Plan update revealed that all the development levels and FARs that were ever proposed<sup>9</sup> lag behind both the SCAG and the 40-year historical job growth rate predictions.<sup>10</sup>

8. **Because the proposed development levels and FARs lag significantly behind case studies of similar cities that are transforming their city centers based on planning for people and places.**<sup>11</sup> In spite of numerous planning documents and policies over the past two decades, Pasadena continues to implement an auto-oriented infrastructure for our Downtown/Central District, creating a pedestrian-hostile environment.

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<sup>7</sup> See Leinberger, Christopher and Doherty, Patrick C., “*The Next Real Estate Boom.*” The Brookings Institute, November 2010, <http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/2010/11/real-estate-leinberger> and Becker, Sofia, Bernstein, Scott, and Young, Linda. “*The New Real Estate Mantra: Location Near Public Transportation.*” March 2013. Report commissioned by the American Public Transportation Association in partnership with the National Association of Realtors.

<sup>9</sup> During the early stage of the General Plan Update, four alternatives were developed. *All four alternatives* proposed commercial development levels that were insufficient and stunted in comparison with historical growth rates, SCAG predictions, and case studies. The relative difference between Alternative “B” and “D” was insignificant; it was a false comparison. See appendix B for a demonstration of that fact.

<sup>10</sup> Pg. 46, Exhibit II-7. *Market and Fiscal Impact Evaluations of Proposed General Plan Growth Alternatives, Pasadena Central District*, report conducted by Robert Charles Lesser & Co and Christopher B. Leinberger of the Brookings Institution, January 20, 2012.

SCAG County Job Growth Rate:

**8,518** Residential Units in CD+SFO; **3,407,000** Commercial Sq Ft in CD+SFO

40-year Historical County Job Growth Rate:

**14,918** Residential Units in CD+SFO; **5,962,000** Commercial Sq Ft in CD+SFO

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

Arlington, Virginia analog:

**19,318** Residential Units in CD+SFO; **13,360,000** Commercial Sq Ft in CD+SFO

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9. **Because the Greater Los Angeles region is rapidly improving its regional rail network.** Pasadena should not ignore its context within the greater Los Angeles region, particularly in regards to transportation. **Greatly enhanced Gold Line connections will come on-line during the life of this General Plan** (e.g. extension of the Gold Line eastward, the Downtown Connector, LAX connections, the Expo Line, the Purple Line, and other Measure R projects). The proximity of the Central District and South Fair Oaks to its **increasingly viable** (and therefore valuable) four Gold Line Stations demands **increasing the opportunity** to build for living, working, and playing next to these Gold Line stations.

In addition to advocating increased development levels and FARs, the DPNA urges the implementation of **Form-Based Code**. Pedestrian activity—the vitality of people—is extremely sensitive to good *design*. Just adding buildings or people where there are parking lots is not sufficient; those buildings must be designed so that they relate to the street and to the surrounding buildings in a manner that encourages pedestrian activity and compatibility. For this reason, the DPNA also advocates for a Form-Based Zoning code and other tools and policies that foster good *design*. The General Plan should go beyond simply “exploring” the possibility of Form-Based Code. It should *commit* to actually *implementing* it.

Sincerely,

Downtown Pasadena Neighborhood Association

Attached:

**Appendix A:** A demonstration that the transformation of our neighborhood is less than half-way complete. Photos of areas in Downtown Pasadena that should be incentivized for pedestrian-oriented infill development. To zoom in on photos, or to view in color, please go to:  
<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.346850245384307.71499.207126989356634&type=1&l=bf467c2ae3>

**Appendix B:** Excerpts from the RCLCO/Christopher Leinberger report.

TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD  
ARE LESS THAN HALF-WAY COMPLETE

## **APPENDIX A**

**Photos of areas in Downtown Pasadena that should be incentivized for  
pedestrian-oriented infill development**

TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD  
ARE LESS THAN HALF-WAY COMPLETE

## AREAS WHERE TRANSFORMATION AWAITS

### PARSONS AREA



**Walnut & N Fair Oaks** – Looking North. This parcel is within 500 ft. of the 210 Freeway and should be designated for commercial, not residential development. The Residence Inn proposed for the right side of this parcel is acceptable (if the design for the ground floor is modified to better engage pedestrians) but not ideal.



**Parsons lot at Walnut & Fair Oaks** – The proposed project for this single site would consume 1/3 of the 20-year development level for the entire Central District, unless the development levels are increased per our recommendation.



**Walnut & Raymond** – Midblock, looking NW toward St Andrews. Marston's is to the right; Memorial Park is across the street.



## TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD ARE LESS THAN HALF-WAY COMPLETE

### WALNUT



**N Marengo Ave** (between Corson and Walnut) – Opportunity for a high density office complex with neighborhood services such as dry cleaning, insurance office, etc. on the ground floor. Freeway adjacent.



**Intersection of Walnut & Los Robles** – The north half of this intersection, which consists of the pictured Arco, and, on the northwest corner, a large surface parking lot and parking garage for Kaiser Permanente, deadens and negates the attractive Congregational Church and Westin hotel, which lead into the Fuller Seminary and the Civic Center.

**Marengo & Los Robles are “gateways” to Downtown Pasadena.** These streets are natural entry points for residents who live in the Villa Park area, north of the 210 freeway, to walk to destinations within Downtown Pasadena. Input from the community emphasized that the 210 freeway acts a ‘dividing line’ that should be mitigated. That “210 barrier” is not simply a function of the freeway; it is also due to the poor building and street design of the corridors between Walnut Ave and the 210 Freeway. All the streets with bridges crossing the 210--Fair Oaks, Marengo, Los Robles, El Molino, and Lake Ave--are hostile to pedestrians and cyclists because of high traffic volumes and generally uninteresting building facades or parking lots that are oriented to cars, not people.



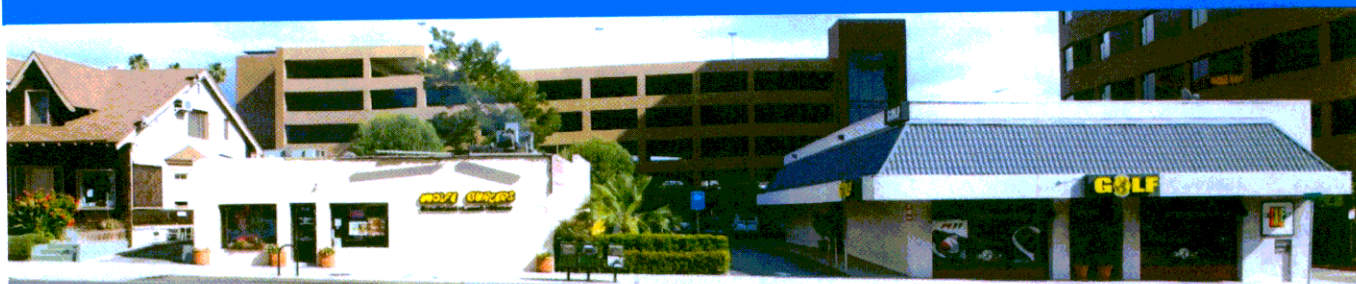


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Walnut & Madison

LAKE AVE AREA



Lake & Colorado – Midblock, looking east.



Lake & Union – Looking South towards Colorado Blvd. This pedestrian-hostile route is the one that Gold Line riders who use the Lake Ave station are forced to endure.

## TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD ARE LESS THAN HALF-WAY COMPLETE



**Lake & Walnut** – Looking West. These single-story shops are pedestrian-orientated and engage the sidewalk correctly but, since they are near the Lake Ave Gold Line station and are not architecturally significant buildings, they could be replaced with or adapted into multi-story mixed-use buildings that would add residents or workers who would generate more activity on the sidewalks, and yield greater benefits to the city.



**Lake & Walnut** – Looking east (top) and north (bottom). The Ralphs grocery store is an important amenity for the neighborhood, but the large surface parking lot that faces the sidewalk is oppressive.



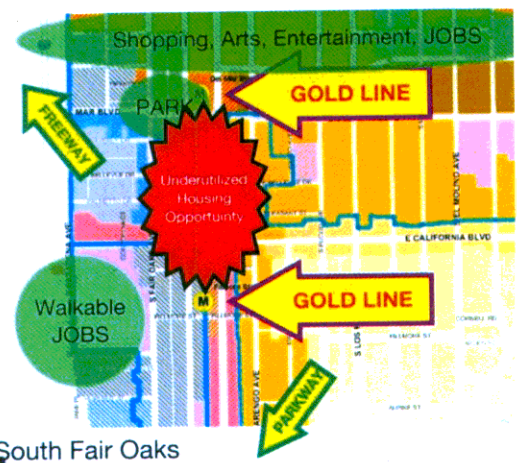
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### SOUTH FAIR OAKS / CENTRAL PARK / ARROYO PARKWAY / RAYMOND AREA



**Arroyo Parkway & Pico** – The strip malls that line Arroyo Parkway should be replaced with multi-story mixed-use buildings.

The incredible potential of South Fair Oaks Situated between **two** closely-spaced Gold Line stations, Fillmore and Del Mar, and with easy on/off access to both the 110 Freeway and the 134/210 Freeways, the South Fair Oaks / Central Park / Arroyo Parkway / Raymond corridor is the area of Pasadena (and perhaps the entire San Gabriel Valley) that is most connected to the entire Southern California transportation network. In addition, it is surrounded by Trader Joes, Whole Foods, Vons, Huntington Hospital, and a host of other neighborhood amenities, with Central Park, Del Mar Station, and Old Pasadena directly to the North. Furthermore, the South Fair Oaks/Central Park/Arroyo Parkway/Raymond corridor has many vacant and underutilized properties, with some key historic buildings (i.e. Royal Laundry, antique stores, the Union Garage Building/former Maserati dealership), which provide great infrastructure for creative development and reinvestment. And, poor air quality is not a concern, since the freeway access points are both terminal and therefore do not generate freeway-quantities of smog. Therefore, this corridor is a prime location for residential living.



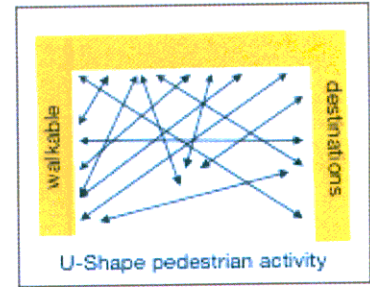
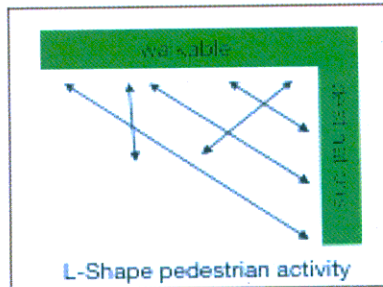
South Fair Oaks

While there is potential with the right planning and investors, currently SFO comes nowhere near its full potential, especially with respect to attracting higher level of use by residents & visitors. The existing self-storage, cold storage, antique shops, and low-density office & industrial buildings, of great opportunity for adaptive reuse and re-imagining. The “suburban” strip-malls need to be completely reconfigured or demolished, offering opportunities for the highest density. If this area were filled with high quality, higher-density residential properties (for all income and demographics) and workers, that would generate positive economic benefits and pedestrian street life that would benefit all of Downtown Pasadena, with fewer negative impacts than if growth were placed elsewhere.



## TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD ARE LESS THAN HALF-WAY COMPLETE

**Why South Fair Oaks and the Central District are inter-related.** Creating more “walkable destinations” in South Fair Oaks would transform the primary commercial zones in Downtown Pasadena from an “L-shape” (Colorado Blvd + Lake Ave) to a “U-shape” (Arroyo Pkwy/Fair Oaks + Colorado + Lake Ave). A U-Shape promotes pedestrian street life by providing “destinations” in all directions, rather than in an L-shape. The activity created by residents & workers who would likely walk up Raymond Ave in order to get to destinations within Old Pasadena, would be particularly beneficial to Central Park, which currently feels deserted and unsafe at night.



**Arroyo Parkway & Fillmore** – Prime location for very-high-density mixed-use residential/office, as this location is literally <100 feet from the Fillmore Gold Line Station. FARs should be increased to 3.0.



**Arroyo Parkway & Del Mar**—The retail establishments storefronts should be brought to the sidewalk, with 5+ stories of offices or residential units above. Activating the pedestrian traffic on the Arroyo Parkway sidewalks should encourage the ground-floor units of the former-Archstone complex, which were intended to be “Live/Work” units to actually be used as such (with attorneys/CPAs/other professionals hanging a ‘shingle’ outside their units and inviting walk-in traffic). This may also be an opportunity to re-design this project, which is now acknowledged to have many design flaws.



## TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD ARE LESS THAN HALF-WAY COMPLETE



**Arroyo Parkway & Cordova**—A pedestrian & bike right-of-way/easement should be created between Arroyo Parkway and Raymond Ave, at Cordova, since Cordova is being designated as bike thoroughfare, so that pedestrians & cyclists can go directly into Central Park, rather than making a detour down to Del Mar or up to Green Street. The Public Storage building offers a great opportunity for adaptive re-use and a higher use (an addition of upper floor residential, creative office space, or flex space). Its current use is a poor use of land in our urban core, which is so close to the activity in Old Pasadena and the public amenity of Central Park. We must incentive change on these parcels.



**Arroyo Parkway & California**—Pasadena should prepare for a future in which people may have to ration resources in ways that are very different than the era of cheap and abundant fossil fuels. The rise in gas prices and advent of the electric car will likely free up many busy intersections as fewer gas stations are needed. It also seems possible that automated/driverless cars may become commonplace over the next 20 years, the lifespan of the General Plan. Driverless cars could have a radical impact on our land use, because the ability to “whistle” for a car at the time of need will greatly decrease the need for large parking lots. Changes in Energy Supply/Demand plus Technology advances all point to more compact land use than we currently have.



## TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD ARE LESS THAN HALF-WAY COMPLETE

For further reading on driverless cars and the implications for land use, please see:

- The Atlantic: *"Driverless Cars Would Reshape Automobiles \*and\* the Transit System"*  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/09/driverless-cars-would-reshape-automobiles-and-the-transit-system/262953/#>
- Robocar Parking: <http://www.templetons.com/brad/robocars/parking.html>



**Arroyo Parkway & California**—FARs should be increased to 3.0.



**Raymond Ave & California**—FARs should be increased to 3.0.



**Raymond Ave & California**—Looking north. At the right of the photo is the Disney Story/Royal Laundry building. The U-Haul lot and storage facility is across the street.

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**Raymond Ave & California**—Looking south. FARs should be increased to 3.0.



**Raymond Ave & California**—Looking east.



**Raymond Ave**—South of California. Despite being adjacent to the Fillmore Gold Line station, these properties are industrial. The “Bio-Tech” vision of the last several decades never emerged.



TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD  
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**Raymond Ave**—Looking north from Fillmore Ave.



**Raymond Ave**—This dilapidated property is immediately adjacent to the Fillmore station.



**Fillmore Ave**—Facing S Fair Oaks Ave.

TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD  
ARE LESS THAN HALF-WAY COMPLETE



**Fair Oaks**—The Playfair lot and adjoining property which face S Fair Oaks Ave.



**Fair Oaks**—Burger King facing Fair Oaks. North of this property is the former Monty's (now a parking lot) and Grandview Palace, which will likely be a medical office building at some point.

TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD  
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## APPENDIX B

EXCERPT/ADAPTATION FROM the RCLCO / LEINBERGER REPORT  
Updated to reflect April 2013 Development Levels in Draft Plan

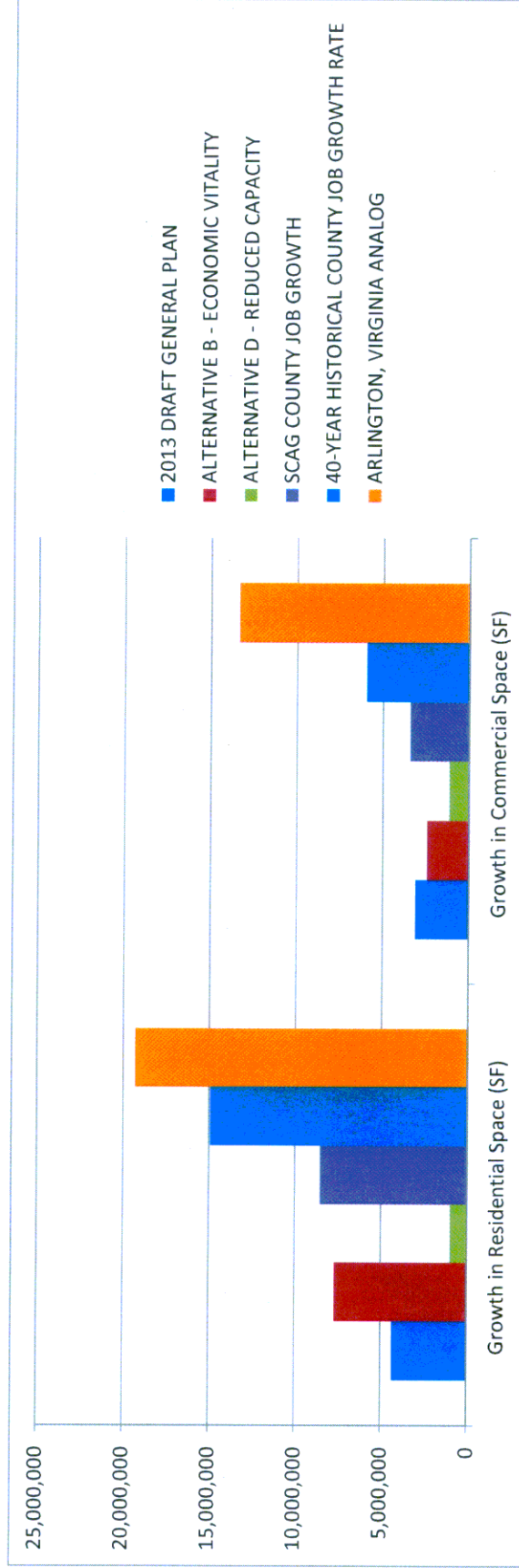
*Market and Fiscal Impact Evaluations of Proposed General Plan Growth Alternatives, Pasadena Central District*, report conducted by Robert Charles Lesser  
& Co and Christopher B. Leinberger of the Brookings Institution, January 20, 2012.  
Commissioned by the Old Pasadena Management District and the Playhouse District Association.



TRANSFORMATIONS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD  
ARE LESS THAN HALF-WAY COMPLETE

# STATISTICAL COMPARISONS & ANALYSIS

Exhibit II-7  
COMPARISON OF PROJECTED INCREMENTAL GROWTH, 2010- 2035  
TREND-BASED GROWTH VS. GENERAL PLAN GROWTH ALTERNATIVES CBD AND SOUTH FAIR OAKS SPECIFIC PLAN AREAS,  
PASADENA, CA DECEMBER 2011 [updated by DPNA April 2013 to add 2013 Draft General Plan data]



	2013 DRAFT GENERAL PLAN	ALTERNATIVE B - ECONOMIC VITALITY	ALTERNATIVE D - REDUCED CAPACITY	SCAG COUNTY JOB GROWTH	40-YEAR HISTORICAL COUNTY JOB GROWTH RATE	ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA ANALOG
New Residential Units	4,350	7,693	969	8,518	14,918	19,318
Growth in Residential Space (SF)	4,350,000	7,693,000	969,000	8,518,000	14,918,000	19,318,000
Growth in Commercial Space (SF)	3,100,000	2,428,000	1,157,000	3,407,000	5,962,000	13,360,000

NOTE: Assumes an average size of 1,000 square feet for the residential units. SOURCE: City of Pasadena; RCLCO  
Adapted from chart / table on pg. 46 of the original report.

**Subject:**

FW: General Plan Update Concerns - Agenda Item 20

**From:** Laura Ellersieck <eewna@earthlink.net>  
**Date:** April 7, 2013, 6:16:15 AM PDT  
**To:** Bill Bogaard <bbogaard@cityofpasadena.net>, "Masuda, Gene" <gmasuda@cityofpasadena.net>, Jacque Robinson <jacqueroobinson@cityofpasadena.net>, Margaret McAustin <mmcaustin@cityofpasadena.net>, Victor Gordo <vgordo@cityofpasadena.net>, "Madison, Steve" <smadison@cityofpasadena.net>, "Tornek, Terry" <ttornek@cityofpasadena.net>, "Jomsky, Mark" <mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net>  
**Subject: General Plan Update Concerns - Agenda Item 20**

Honorable Mayor and Council members,

I am located in the East Eaton Wash Neighborhood, which is directly west of Sierra Madre Villa and north of Foothill. Surrounded on three sides by the East Pasadena Specific Plan area, we are the most immediately affected neighborhood by whatever happens in it.

1. I would like clarification of the following issue -  
Will these General Plan designations essentially dictate that the Specific Plans must provide heights, setbacks, etc to allow for the maximum specified FAR of each area to be reached?

Or are these designations just providing a maximum for the Environmental Impact Report to evaluate, which will aid the Specific Plans in refining to a designation within that range?

It is important to know whether this General Plan process has essentially usurped a key element of what otherwise would have been left to the Specific Plan process to determine.

2. Another issue, raised by the published correspondence, also concerns me. That is the state law giving developers the right to exceed local zoning restrictions if they include a certain amount of (so called) low and moderate income housing. That really needs to be factored in to how parcels are designated.

3. A major concern for me is the proposed increased intensity of area EP-4, sometimes referred to as "The Triangle", to Medium Commercial with a maximum FAR of 2.0. EP-4 is immediately east of the northern portion of my neighborhood.

According to the "Change Map - East Pasadena" on the General Plan Update web site, this area is currently specified with a maximum FAR of 1.2. So an increase to 2.0 would be major.

This proposed upward revision is in spite of verbal suggestions early in the General Plan process that the potential intensity for this area would be reduced in recognition that it was already excessive.

Although at community meetings a 2.0 FAR was equated with 2-3 story buildings, to accomplish

that it seems it must be necessary to put buildings on every square inch within the setbacks. In June of 2007, the owners of the two parcels which cover all but the northern point of the "triangle" put forth a proposal to mow down all but the southernmost existing building, and all the trees, and landscaping, and build six buildings of 3 and 4 stories (plus mechanical screens) with all the unrealistically limited parking underground. That plan was maximizing all the currently allowed limits, but did include some pathways with landscaping between buildings. So it seems to reach a 2.0 FAR would require even higher heights or eliminating all landscaping. (Thankfully, the Preliminary Plan Review that appeared on the Council agenda for June 18, 2007 was withdrawn by the developer at the last minute, never to be heard of since.)

Just south of EP-4, Staff has compromised with the Planning Commission's request to reduce the Mixed Use area FAR from a maximum 2.25 by proposing a 1.75 FAR along the western edge. So why is a greater intensity considered OK for "The Triangle", which is on higher ground and currently much less overdeveloped (aka ugly heat island) than Hastings Village shopping center is?

4. With regard to the proposed residential development level in East Pasadena, the now proposed 850 is far more reasonable than the ridiculous 1250 previously proposed. It still is an awful lot.

Remember that although it is claimed the current cap of 400 is "used up", in reality the majority of that has not yet been built (210 units approved for the SE corner of Sierra Madre Villa and Foothill, but stalled for years). Considering how congested traffic is already during rush hours, and the fallacious notion the new residents will mostly take public transit, this is likely to have a huge impact on already increasingly congested intersections and spillover into adjacent neighborhoods.

5. All the shopping areas north of Foothill and low offices on the east side of Halstead are proposed to be Mixed Use with vastly increased density. This implies a potentially huge change in the character of these areas from one and two story buildings with significant open space (it may be parking lots, but at least it is open) to a higher, bulky, and congested feel. We like our suburban feel in East Pasadena and don't wish to urbanize. Up against the freeway, which already feels claustrophobic and closed in, height and density is not as obvious though traffic impacts may be even greater. But north of Foothill, it really is.

6. I would also like to note that the results of the 2011 survey of the community show that a full 33% of respondents from zip code 91107 (which correlates to the larger East Pasadena area) chose Alternative D. No other response came close.

The description for favorite Alternative D stated that building heights would be limited to two stories north of Foothill Blvd and two to three stories south of it. The existing housing capacity would not be changed. The commercial capacity would be reduced some. The Hastings Shopping area would continue to focus on enhancing existing stores.

Instead, the proposed General Plan for East Pasadena seems to be in line with Alternative C, the barely favored choice of much of the rest of the city. It seems entirely reasonable that the wishes of East Pasadenans be given greater weight in their own area and proposed densities toned down.

7. Regarding Attachment A7 - Staff Recommended Land Use Diagram:

1. The lack of specific plan parcel designations on this map makes it much more difficult to follow the references in other documents.

2. It appears an error was made in changing the western part of EP-5 to the new "Low-Med Mixed Use" pattern. The new pattern is misplaced significantly north, crossing over Electronic Drive and into the EP-4 "triangle" area.

Thank you for your consideration,

Laura Ellersieck

April 7, 2013

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Mayor Bogaard, Vice Mayor McAustin, and Councilmembers:

RE: Agenda Item #20, General Plan Update

Thank you for the opportunity to be able to comment on the Staff Report and supporting documents for the General Plan Update. As I am unable to testify in person due to a simultaneous Design Commission hearing, I am submitting my comments for the record via this letter.

The staff has worked diligently and effectively to summarize both community and commissioner input, and has my thanks for their comprehensive and knowledgeable report of recommendations. I would also like to thank my Planning Commission (PC) colleagues for the thoroughness, care, and seriousness of discussion—during our numerous long meetings, workshops, and community outreach sessions—to insure that a balanced and equitable plan was put forth.

At this time, I would like to submit the following items for your consideration and approval:

**1. Guiding Principle 2 (Attachment B3)**

The Planning Commission's recommended wording seeks to provide a balance that bridges the diverse points of view represented by the community and commissions. The version in the Staff Report in Attachment B3 does not provide clarity. After much discussion and review of the versions submitted by the Historic Preservation Commission, GPUAC, Pasadena Heritage, Planning Staff, and hearing public testimony, the Planning Commission re-tooled the wording of the principle to ensure protection of historic resources as well as provide for reasonable development, with a logically precise statement subject to less ambiguity.

**2. Development Levels and Caps (page 3 and page 15 of the Staff Report)**

The Planning Commission supported Staff's specified levels of development and recommended that caps be maintained. However, the suggested modification to make changes to caps by allowing amending the General Plan with a simple vote rather than a General Plan Update is at odds with the intent and value of caps. In effect, the ability to amend development caps at will with minimal public hearing negates the purpose of having caps in the first place.

**3. New Policy Topic Areas—Topic Area #2—Urban Design, Historic Preservation & Arts and Culture**

The PC heard consistent community disappointment and feedback regarding current disregard for contextual and quality design. After careful consideration of alternatives, the PC recommended four measures (items P-10 through PC-13, p. 3 of comparison table) to mitigate and/or moderate this trend. Of special note is PC-11, which recommends—as a starting point—the *adoption of form-based code for the Central District*.

04/08/2013  
ITEM 20

### **3. Land Use Diagrams**

The Commission deliberated this item at several long meetings, carefully weighing the pros and cons of alternatives, and the ramifications on adjacencies (neighborhoods, business districts, walkability, historic resources, potential development, etc.) prior to choosing best alternative that responded to the largest number and severity of concerns. The choices were not made lightly or in isolation. In some instances, the PC introduced hybrid development levels and modified boundaries to ensure that the most evenhanded and responsive alternative was adopted for the specific area. For these reasons, it is my hope that the Council agrees to the PC's recommendations for the Land Use Diagram.

The staff has outlined a sound roadmap for the Environmental Impact Report. I concur with the study areas and process and anticipate that the EIR will be complete and thorough.

I thank you for your review and consideration of the points above, and urge the adoption of Planning Commission's recommendations as detailed above.

Respectfully yours,

Mic Hansen  
Member of Planning Commission  
Member of Design Commission (PC representative)

cc: Dante Hall, Chair, Planning Commission  
Vince Bertoni, Director of Planning and Community Development  
Scott Reimers, Planner, General Plan Team Leader  
Mark Jomsky, City Clerk

## **Iraheta, Alba**

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**From:** lois harrison <loiswardharrison@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 8:29 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support for Tonight's Meeting

I'm a new resident of Downtown Pasadena . . . purchased a condo in the Playhouse District. I moved here for the walkability and quality of life in downtown Pasadena . . . I've noticed that I usually don't use my car now two days

a week. I use businesses in this area more often, and I support DPNA's efforts to encourage and improve walkability in Pasadena.

Thank you for all your work on behalf of the Pasadena as well!

In case I am unable to attend tonight's meeting, I am expressing my support in this manner.

Lois Harrison

700 E. Union Street,  
Pasadena, CA 91101

## Iraheta, Alba

---

**From:** Marjorie Lindbeck <margiel@pacbell.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 11:54 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Cc:** DPNAlist@gmail.com  
**Subject:** general plan

I plan to attend tonight's meeting, but I am a downtown resident, homeowner in the Playhouse District, and I want to urge support of the Downtown Pasadena Neighborhood Association's request to continue the transformation of the Central District and South Fair Oaks into a walkable urban neighborhood. Please increase the CD & SFO development levels and FARs so that we can realize the power of nearness: people living close to where they work, shop, or play.

I take advantage of theatre, restaurants, stores, amenities -- even walking to City Hall or the Library, and I never thought I would. When I started walking to the Paseo when we moved downtown, instead of driving there, it was a completely different and wonderful experience. I believe that this is going to be the trend, and it is definitely healthier for ourselves, our city and our planet to get more people walking. It will be vital to have the right balance of people and amenities to make this an even greater city, and we simply don't want to hamstring the process by an unrealistic cap.

Thank you as always for your thoughtful consideration of these important issues.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Lindbeck



## **Iraheta, Alba**

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**From:** jplloyd@roadrunner.com  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 8:08 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Pasadena General Plan

Dear Pasadena City Council members:

I understand that discussion of Pasadena's proposed general plan is scheduled for today's City Council meeting (4/8/13). I have participated in earlier public discussions of the plan and provided my feedback to city staff on those occasions. I would like to urge the council members to support the proposed general plan, insofar as it creates a healthier, more walkable and bikeable city. As a person who frequently commutes by bike from Sierra Madre to Pasadena, I especially support the addition of bike lanes called for in the city's plan. I believe these bike lanes will make city streets safer and overall the plan will encourage more people to bicycle, walk, or take transit instead of driving their cars. This will help the city meet its goals of reducing its carbon footprint and improving public health and safety.

Sincerely,

John Lloyd  
Sierra Madre, CA 91024  
(626) 355-4654

**Subject:**

FW: April 8 City Council Meeting - General Plan Update

**From:** Audrey O'Kelley <aokelley@msn.com>

**Date:** April 8, 2013, 10:13:30 AM PDT

**To:** "Madison, Steve" <smadison@cityofpasadena.net>, <smadison@ci.pasadena.ca.us>, "Robinson, Jacque" <jacqueroobinson@cityofpasadena.net>, "McAustin, Margaret" <mmcaustin@cityofpasadena.net>, Joel Bryant <jbryant@trademarkdevelopment.com>, <Gmasuda@cityofpasadena.net>, <vgordo@cityofpasadena.net>, ttornek <ttornek@cityofpasadena.net>, bbogaard <bbogaard@cityofpasadena.net>

**Cc:** mjomsky <mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net>

**Subject:** April 8 City Council Meeting - General Plan Update

Dear Mayor Bogaard and City Council Members,

I regret that I am unable to attend this evening's city council meeting. For the public record, I am writing to ask that you uphold the following three recommendations made by the City's Planning Commission.

- 1) Keep the current process for setting and maintaining density caps which is through a compressive General Plan update.
- 2) Retain Guiding Principle # 2 as follows: "Pasadena's historic resources will be preserved. Citywide, new development will be in harmony with and enhance Pasadena's unique character and sense of place. New construction that could affect the integrity of historic resources will adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's standards." Adhering to the Secretary of Interior's standards will avoid any ambiguity in protecting historic resources.
- 3) Repeal of the West Gateway Specific Plan.

Thanks to staff and commissioners for their hard work on this.

Thank you,

Audrey O'Kelley  
Resident  
Pasadena

## **Iraheta, Alba**

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**From:** Renee Roederer <renee.roederer@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 1:08 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Tonight's General Plan Vote

Dear Clerk and Council Members:

I am Pastor Renee Roederer from Pasadena Presbyterian Church, and as a resident and local leader, I strongly support the DNPA's position and efforts to improve urban walkability. My thoughts will be with you as you vote tonight.

Sincerely,  
Rev. Renee Roederer  
Pasadena Presbyterian Church  
[www.ppc.net](http://www.ppc.net)

## Iraheta, Alba

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**From:** Erik Shirokoff <erik.shirokoff@caltech.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 1:41 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** the GENERAL PLAN and a walkable downtown pasadena

Dear City Clerk,

My name is Erik Shirokoff, and I'm writing to let you know that as a someone who lives and works in the city of Pasadena, I strongly support the Downtown Pasadena Neighborhood Association's positions on walkability and urban living.

In regards to the GENERAL PLAN, I support the DPNA's request to continue the transformation of the Central District and South Fair Oaks into a WALKABLE URBAN neighborhood.

The Los Angeles region is littered with indistinguishable suburban neighborhoods whose residents travel to other cities in order to earn and spend money; but Pasadena has the unique advantages. With convenient and central light rail service, an already walkable historic core, and a history of bold and progressive urban planning, we have the opportunity to turn Pasadena into a city people \*go to\* rather than one they \*return to.\*

As a pedestrian, bicyclist, and public transit user, I'm happy to have found a city where I can walk to work and ride a bicycle to shopping, dining, and entertainment. But, we can do much better. Today, navigating much of our city without a car means crossing vast non-commercial dead zones to accomplish basic tasks and braving treacherous streets designed only for cars. I'm constantly told by colleagues and friends that they'd love to leave their cars at home, if only it weren't so far to the grocery store and so dangerous to ride a bike on our streets.

Please increase the CD & SFO development levels and FARs so that we can realize the power of nearness: people living close to where they work, shop, or play.

Sincerely,  
Erik Shirokoff

--

Dr. Erik Shirokoff  
[erik.shirokoff@caltech.edu](mailto:erik.shirokoff@caltech.edu) MC 301-17  
voice: 626-395-4605 1200 E. California Blvd  
Office: 309 Cahill Pasadena CA 91125  
<http://www.astro.caltech.edu/~shiro/>

**Iraheta, Alba**

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**From:** Russell Singer <russell.m.singer@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 8:37 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** General Plan

City of Pasadena,

My name is Russell Singer, I'm writing to let you know I am in support of DPNA's positions on walkability, FAR, and urban living in general.

I am a student in Art Center's Graduate Transportation Design program, and for the last year we've been studying and doing first hand research on the transportation problems and issues that affect student life at Art Center. We have done countless interviews with students, staff and faculty at the school, as well as industry experts on urban planning, transit, and sustainability. I cannot speak in an official capacity for the school itself, but individuals here nearly unanimously express a desire to live closer and drive less.

Our program has been tasked with improving student life at the school by handling our drastic transportation situation. We are choked with cars, students are scattered, and getting to school for many is heavy burden in cost and time. Our problems with transportation have bled into community issues with our surrounding neighbors, and the environmental implications of our current system are in need of attention. Our administration is committed the solving the problem, and has already implemented a shuttle system with future plans to shift more classes to its South Campus location on Raymond Avenue.

The most important thing we've found from our research is that there's no silver bullet to solving our problems, but the most effective solution doesn't fix symptoms (eg. parking) but addresses the cause by simply requiring people to move less. The housing department has plans to encourage more students to live in the Pasadena area, and the school is exploring permanent housing options near Raymond as well. Every added bit of walkability means students will have a better opportunity to enjoy car-independent living.

I urge the city to continue pursuing the "complete streets" model with additional bike lanes and more pedestrian-friendly affordances. A repurposing of the underutilized lanes on S Raymond Ave could have a tremendously positive effect on future mixed-use development in the area. Additionally, bringing vehicle-share options like electric bike rental stations or ZipCar into the city can drastically lower the number of vehicles on the road and provide commercial benefits for the retailers. I would also encourage you to briefly check out [this short article](#) from [WalkScore](#) on walkability and property value.

Thank you for your time,

Russell Singer

**Iraheta, Alba**

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**From:** Wafic K. <wafic\_k@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 12:27 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Cc:** DPNAlist@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Re: Pasadena's General Plan

To: the City of Pasadena.

From: Wafic Khalil.

Regarding your "General Plan", I strongly support the Downtown Pasadena Neighborhood Association's request to continue the transformation of the Central District and South Fair Oaks into a WALKABLE URBAN neighborhood

Please increase the CD & SFO development levels and FARs so that we can realize the power of nearness: people living close to where they work, shop, or play.

Walk-ability means residents having a better opportunity to enjoy car-independent living.

Thank you,  
Wafic

**Iraheta, Alba**

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**From:** Fried Wilson <friedwilson@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 11:50 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Cc:** DPNAlist@gmail.com  
**Subject:** General Plan Recommendation

April 9, 2013

To the Pasadena City Council:

I am writing to voice my support for the Downtown Pasadena Neighborhood Association's request to continue the transformation of the Central District and South Fair Oaks into a **walkable, urban** neighborhood. Please increase the CD & SFO development levels and FARs so that we can realize the power of nearness with people living close to where they work, shop, or play.

I have been a resident of the central district for thirty years and have seen a number of positive changes with the rejuvenation of Old Pasadena and the work that has been occurring over the last few years in the Playhouse District and the South Lake area. I enjoy the walkability within the Central District and the ease of getting around without depending upon an automobile; so much so that I decided to give up maintaining a car several years ago.

I am pleased that past city councils have had the foresight to begin developing the central district as a walkable and sustainable urban area with great shops, restaurants and entertainment. I hope that the present city government will continue this urban development. Now is not the time to retreat, now is the time to boldly move forward and continue this logical evolution.

Thank you.

Fried Wilson

1000 Cordova Street, unit 201, Pasadena, CA 91106

April 8, 2013

Subject:  
**City of Pasadena**  
**Draft General Plan**

13 APR 08 03:58PM  
CITY CLERK

Dear Mayor Bogaard and Council Members:

With the draft General Plan now before City Council, we are writing, as design professionals, to share two observations and recommendations regarding the Plan's current outcome. One observation/recommendation is global; and one is quite specific.

ARMANDO L GONZALEZ FAIA

DAVID L GOODALE AIA

**VITALITY**  
**Observation**

JOHN FERGUSON AIA

The architectural and planning founding fathers of the City proposed—(graphically in the Bennett Plan)—a robust, bustling vision for Pasadena, with expanding mid-rise boulevards at the height and density of a Paris or a Rome. It remains a generous vision that was, and continues to be: vigorously urban and optimistic.

HARRY R DRAKE AIA

ALI BARAR AIA

The draft General Plan, in its current outcome, is a timid and regressive shadow of this original vision, institutionalizing a state of no-growth and low density over most of the City, while relegating true urbanity, as if it were a nuisance, to the highly delimited "Transit Village" and main existing corridors.

While recognizing the political forces behind the draft, we believe that it will continue to frustrate economic, cultural, human, and physical development in Pasadena.

**Recommendation**

For these reasons, we are writing in support of higher F.A.R, higher density, and mixed-use zoning throughout all Plan Elements of the City.

**STYLE**

In a survey of the work of these same architectural founding fathers, (who include Hunt, Goodhue, Morgan, Greene and Greene, and Wright), we see an enormous range of diversity and creativity. These architects were highly contemporary, and they evolved new and inventive styles with almost every project.



In this regard, Attachment A.1-A.7, Topic Area #2, 3.

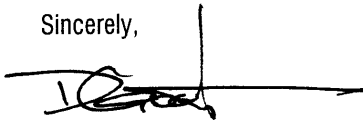
*Architectural Excellence, A, Style: 'Encourage a variety of architectural styles: allow contemporary and creative architecture in appropriate locations,'* carries the implicit message that it is inappropriate for architects to be contemporary and creative in so-called 'historic' locations.

This clause is ridiculous on the face of it, implying that architects working in these locations should do slavish, copy-book, faux historic architecture—bad for architecture, and bad for the reputation of Pasadena as a cultural Mecca.

**Recommendation**

For these reasons, we recommend deleting this clause; or replacing it with; "Encourage architects to respond creatively to the context in which they are designing."

Sincerely,



**Gonzalez Goodale Architects**  
David L. Goodale, AIA Architect  
Principal



**Gonzalez Goodale Architects**  
Ali Barar, AIA Architect  
Principal

**Iraheta, Alba**

---

**Subject:**

**FW:**

General Plan

Sent from Windows Mail

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

I am writing with concerns about the proposed changes to Guiding Principle Number 2. Specifically, my concern is with the second sentence about having all development citywide harmonize with and enhance the city's character. I think this sentence will be misused to prohibit modern architectural styles that do not have a Spanish or Craftsman spirit. This would be a huge loss to the City and would have prohibited Frank Lloyd Wright, the Green brothers and Buff and Hensman in their time. Today it could prohibit the wonderful, edgy Thom Mayne building on California Blvd. on the Caltech campus. Please modify that proposed sentence to be clear that we, as a city, love and admire modern architecture.

Thank you.

Darrell Cozen  
232 Avenue 64  
Pasadena, CA

**Subject:** FW: Specific Plans

-----Original Message-----

From: ckirby [<mailto:ckirby351@earthlink.net>]

Sent: Monday, April 08, 2013 4:21 PM

To: Bogaard, Bill; Robinson, Jonathan (DOIT); McAustin, Margaret; Bryant, Joel; Masuda, Gene; Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Tornek, Terry

Cc: [jamesbrennan@charter.net](mailto:jamesbrennan@charter.net); Laura Rodriguez; Gerald Wright

Subject: Specific Plans

Dear Mayor and City Council Members: On behalf of our association, the Lower Hastings Ranch Association, I would urge you to support the planning commission's recommendations for the East Pasadena and East Colorado Specific Plans. We are concerned over the increased density for those areas. We urge you to look forward in preserving space for appropriate commercial use and research, development and light industrial so that our jobs base and our sales tax revenues are protected. In particular, the development of Halstead and the Avon property will have a direct impact on the neighborhoods of Lower Hastings Ranch and Daisy Villa. Diane Kirby, Board Member, Lower Hastings Ranch Association

**Novelo, Lilia**

---

**Subject:** FW: Draft General Plan  
**Attachments:** General Plan 4-8-13.pdf; ATT00001.htm

**From:** "Paul Little" <Paul@pasadena-chamber.org>  
**To:** "City\_Council" <City\_Council@cityofpasadena.net>  
**Cc:** "Beck, Michael" <mbeck@cityofpasadena.net>, "Bertoni, Vince" <vbertoni@cityofpasadena.net>, "Jomsky, Mark" <mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net>  
**Subject:** **Draft General Plan**

Thank you for an opportunity to comment (briefly) on the proposed General Plan.

Attached is a brief letter from the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce. We will likely provide more in-depth comments as the decision date for City Council action approaches.

Mark, can you make sure copies are available for the Council and are recorded as public comment on the General Plan item?

Thank you,

Paul

Paul Little  
Paul Little  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Pasadena Chamber of Commerce  
844 East Green Street, Suite 208  
Pasadena, California 91101  
Tel: 626.795.3355  
Fax: 626.795.5603

ExchangeDefender Message Security: Check  
Authenticity <<http://www.exchangedefender.com/verify.asp?id=r38NQHxa023475&from=paul@pasadena-chamber.org>>



April 8, 2013

Mayor Bill Bogaard and Pasadena City Council  
100 North Garfield Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91109  
VIA E-MAIL

Re: Pasadena General Plan

Dear Mayor Bogaard and Council Members.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed General Plan on behalf of the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce.

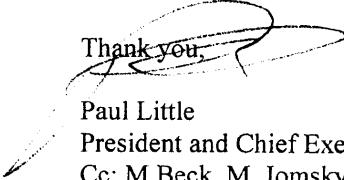
First, relating to the proposed changes to the guiding principles, we are in accord with most of the changes suggested. We very much appreciate the broadening of the education principle to take into consideration the broad array of educational opportunities in Pasadena, as well as the impact each and every one can have on our city's future. We remain concerned about language that requires new development to be "in harmony with" the existing built environment. While we appreciate that the addition of language about enhancing the environment, we are concerned the new language will restrict the opportunity Pasadena may have to attract the caliber of design and architecture that will make buildings constructed over the next 30 years as important a part of our built environment as those built more than 70 years ago.

While we appreciate the addition of housing units in the Central District, we are very concerned with the recommendation to impose commercial development caps, especially if those caps are at the reduced numbers recommended in the land use tables and diagrams provided by staff. Imposing caps at lower levels than currently allowed will further reinforce Pasadena's reputation as a city that is hostile to development. Allowing for amendment to the General Plan is not an answer. As I recall, the existing General Plan has been amended only a couple of times over its nearly 20 year life.

2,500,000 square foot development caps will also restrict the ability of the city to grow as the economy rebounds and may serve to stall Pasadena's economic recovery. By cutting the development levels in half, and capping development at these lower levels, we will further increase the value of developable properties in Pasadena. This may seem like a desirable outcome, but not when faced with competition from our neighboring cities where land, development, entitlement, tax and use and rent costs are lower. To be competitive in the current and future environment, Pasadena's cost for retail, office, R&D and tech/flex space must be competitive with our neighboring cities or companies will do what we have seen in the past couple of years and move to cities that are less expensive and can offer similar amenities, if not of the same quantity or quality.

Your own Economic Development Strategic Plan Task Force identified a strong need for Pasadena to be open to development, encouraging of investment in our economy and willing to embrace economic growth. The development caps in the Central District serve to inform anyone wanting to invest in the Pasadena economy that that is clearly not the case. We urge the Pasadena City Council to heed the input that has been received throughout the prolonged process of revising the General Plan and pay close attention to our local economy and its ability to generate jobs for the community, amenities for our residents and funding for civic improvements.

Thank you,

  
Paul Little  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Cc: M.Beck, M. Jomsky, V. Bertoni

# General Plan Update We Have Reached a Critical Juncture



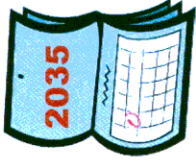
## Three Key Questions

- Does the Central District Plan have sufficient growth capacity?
- How will the General Plan impact Pasadena's fiscal health?
- What is the Playhouse District Association (PDA) recommending?

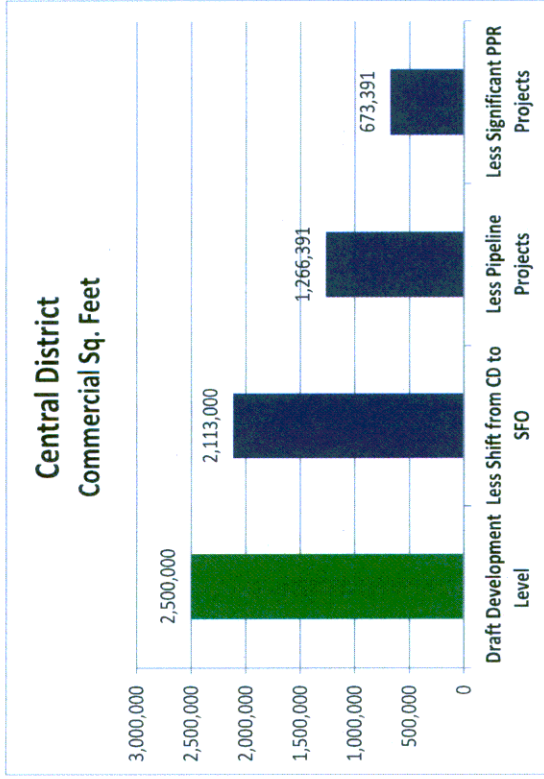




# Does the Central District Plan Have Sufficient Growth Capacity? Commercial Recommendations are Inadequate



## Commercial



- At the very beginning of a 20-year cycle, both Pipeline and Significant PPR already absorb 68% of allowable development!
- With only 32% of projected levels available, we will inevitably run out of capacity well before 2035
- These draft recommendations leave no development capacity even for obvious opportunities (let alone other desirable projects not even on the radar yet)
- PDA recommendation for the Central District: 4 Million Commercial sq. ft.**



Parsons



IDS Playhouse Plaza



The Hotel Constance



# Does the Central District Plan Have Sufficient Growth Capacity? (cont'd) Residential Recommendations Lack Foresight

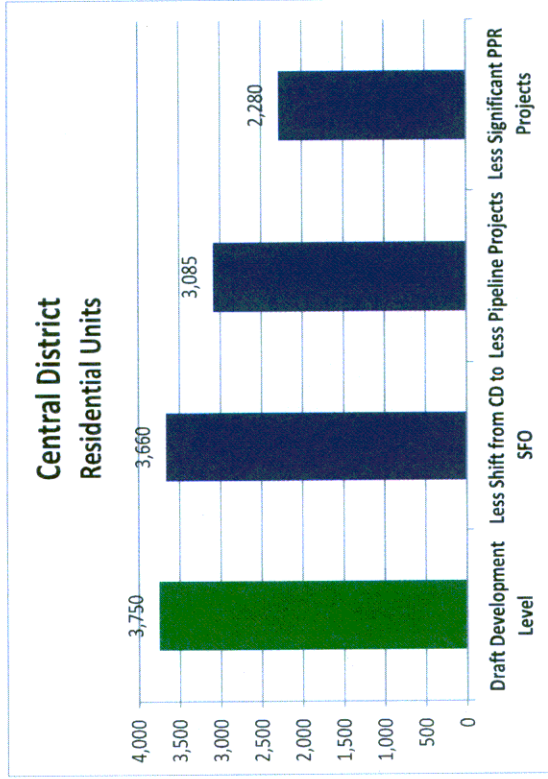
## Residential

- At the beginning of this 20-year cycle, both Pipeline and Significant PPR already absorb 38% of allowable development!

Accounting for current pipeline plus PDA-identified vacant sites reduces available units to less than 50% of proposed Draft Development Levels

- Fails to capitalize on Pasadena's regional competitive advantages – demographic trends favor our unique urban assets
- More residential units in Central Districts provides sustainable base to live without a car and more affordable housing units

- **PDA recommendation for the Central District: 5,000 Residential Units**



SW Corner Hudson and Walnut



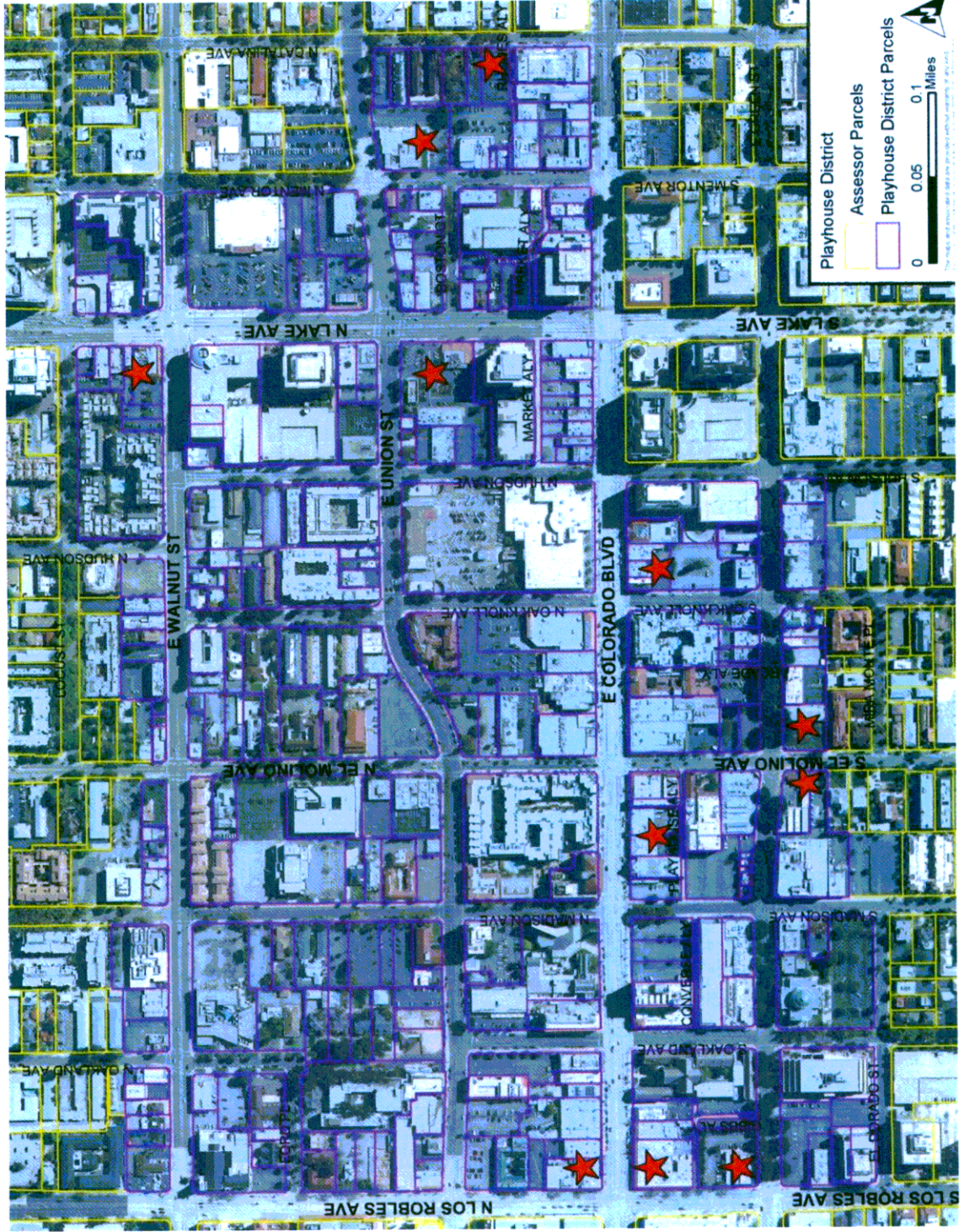
SE Corner Walnut and El Molino



NW Corner Walnut and El Molino



# Does the Central District Plan Have Sufficient Growth Capacity? (cont'd) And Many Obvious Sites Are Still Not Addressed

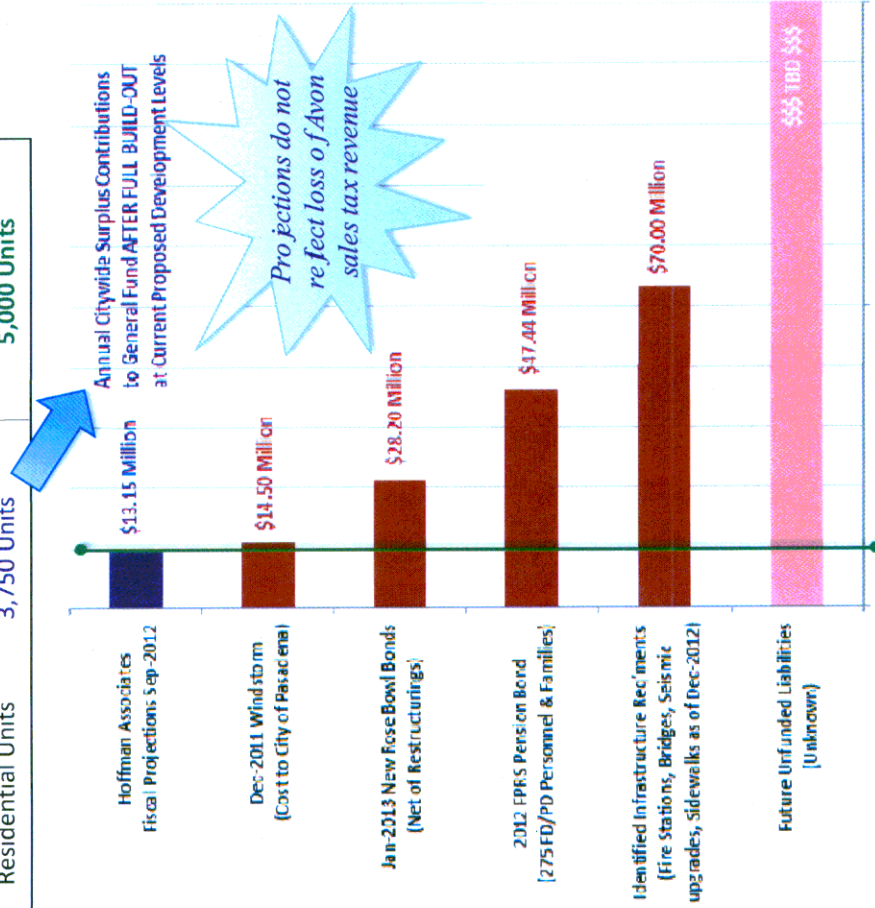






# How will General Plan Impact Pasadena's Fiscal Health? Today's General Plan Decisions = Tomorrow's General Fund

Central District Development Levels		PDA Recommendations	
Comm'l Sq Ft	2.5MM Sq Ft	4.0MM Sq Ft	
Residential Units	3,750 Units	5,000 Units	



## Please Note:

- In Hoffman analysis, the Central District contributes 23% of the City's Net Annual Surplus (more than any other Specific Plan area)
- The PDA's proposed development levels do not expand the current urban envelope
- We have good checks-and-balances in place to manage the quality of future development
  - Design Commission
  - Planning Commission
- All we are asking for is Central District Development Levels that accommodate the current pipeline and provide future flexibility so markets can find appropriate opportunities that support Pasadena's fiscal health
- Please help ensure that we continue to enjoy the quality of municipal services that have come to define Pasadena



## What is the PDA Recommending? Sound, Responsible Growth for a Healthy City

### 1. Study Economically Robust Development Levels in the EIR

- Vince Bertoni: “Can always scale down – cannot scale up”
- If environmental impacts are untenable, this will come out in the EIR
- We should not arbitrarily stunt future opportunities – we should trust our current system – we have checks-and-balances in place to manage the quality of future development:
  - Design Commission
  - Planning Commission
- **The PDA believes that the appropriate Central District Development Levels are:**
  - 4 Million Commercial Sq. Feet
  - 5,000 Residential Units

### 2. Land Use Diagram FAR Should Be Increased in Two Key Playhouse District Gateways

- CD -23: Should not be down zoned from 2.75 FAR to 2.25 FAR to adequately frame the eastern edge of the District, and retain property rights/values
- CD -36: Should not be down zoned from 1.50 FAR to 1.0 FAR - CD-36 should be designated at the 2.25 FAR as staff recommended
  - Existing uses in CD-36 include the First Congregational Church, the University Club and the ARCO gas station
  - With a low commercial density FAR of 1.0 the ARCO gas station would most likely remain “as is” through 2035

### 3. The PDA Wants Land Use Designation at the Two Municipal Parking Lots to Allow “Parks over Parking” at the sites

- Mixed Use Commercial designation conditionally allows for park space and off-site commercial parking, while an open space designation prohibits off-street commercial parking



## What is the PDA Recommending? (cont'd) Sound, Responsible Growth for a Healthy City

### 4. The PDA Supports Form-Based Code for the Central District

- We see Floor Area Ratio restrictions as an impediment to creative in-fill solutions and suggest that the General Plan be written in a way to accommodate Form-Based Code in the future

### 5. We Prefer “Development Levels” over “Caps” – But We Need a Trigger Point to Prevent Future Shutdowns

- In reality, there may be no practical difference between the terms we might use
  - Caps
  - Development Levels
  - SAL (Sensitivity Analysis Limits)
- Irrespective of the term applied, we strongly believe that a trigger point (70%) should be established well before capacity is reached
  - Reaching trigger point initiates study of expanded Development Levels
  - Ensures that we have the appropriate time required to move this analysis through the system rather than creating an artificial barrier that halts forward progress
- However, we do feel that the term “Development Levels” signals a level of receptivity to investment in our community - an opportunity to communicate that Pasadena is more focused on proactive, creative civic management (rather than containment)
  - Development Levels should accommodate development through 2035
  - Development Levels need to support investment and reinvestment in the Central District to support Pasadena’s General Fund over this critical time horizon

#### How often can we afford to go through this process?

- Land use consultant fees between \$800,000 - \$900,000.
- “Soft costs” of staff salaries and benefits - \$X,XXX,XXX???
- Commissioners and public time commitments extending over a four-year period

## **Novelo, Lilia**

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**From:** Phillip Kobylanski <pk@valhallaent.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 5:50 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Cc:** DPNAlist@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Statement of Support for DPNA  
**Attachments:** Statement of Support for DPNA.pdf

April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Dear Mayor Bogaard, Pasadena City Council Members and Staff,

This letter is in support of the DPNA's position in regard to the currently proposal for amendments to the Pasadena General Plan. As a resident of downtown, property owner and business owner in Old Pasadena, I am a committed stakeholder in the city.

I believe Pasadena's future success lies in responsible development, and the recommended changes to the General Plan proposed by DPNA will result in the best possible mix of residential, retail and commercial uses. A vibrant downtown that emphasizes walkability, increased core population density, pocket parks, reliance on public transportation, and personal safety, will result in a strong tax base that will ensure that the city will survive and thrive in all economic climates.

I urge you to join me in supporting the DPNA recommendation to increase the FAR as well as the CD and SFO development levels so that the city will continue to enhance its livability and economic vitality.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Gale Anne Hurd  
Resident  
Business Owner, Vertical Wine Bistro  
Property Owner, 70 N. Raymond Ave  
44 S. Raymond Ave.



# vertical

WINE BISTRO

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