

August 11, 2012

Brian Kearney's My turn "Apartments will be asset to Scottsdale area" totally missed the point and also killed the popular city council notion that people who work downtown will live in these expensive apartments. Of course he makes money off these projects so it is convenient to ignore the truth. The truth is that all these high rise apartments, being approved by this council as fast as they come forward, like Blue Sky, will negatively impact Scottsdale resident's quality of life.

First, the height, which destroys views and is a stark contrast to the low western character buildings in Old Town and the Arts district. Views are a critical component of our quality of life.

Second, is the dramatic population density increase, which will make downtown much more congested. Kearney admits that these apartments will be at the high end of the rental market, so what down town worker will be able to afford to live in one? The reality is that these apartment dwellers will drive to where they work, increasing traffic congestion down town. Our unique shopping experience is a big draw, but this increase in congestion will deter shoppers from going down town to shop, hurting our existing businesses.

What makes Scottsdale unique and attractive is the combination of the LACK OF CONGESTION, a low population density, good views, and excellent recreation facilities for the number of people using them. Along with our Sonoran Desert and Preserve, these qualities of Scottsdale have attracted both tourists and higher income residents, but they also attract business because the business owners want to live here. All are key to Scottsdale's desirability and sustainability as well as the quality of life it offers. What these high rise apartments will do is take away those very characteristics of Scottsdale that attract both tourists and higher income residents and as we drive them out, everything else will suffer, including the city's income and our quality of life.

The bottom line is that development, especially residential development, doesn't pay for itself through property tax and sales tax income, so the more residents we add the more loss the city incurs, so the other thing that happens is that our taxes will have to go up to make up that loss. Right now, the excess income from tourism keeps us stable and sustainable, but as we add residents, that excess income from tourism won't make up for the additional loss, and that is if the income from tourism doesn't decline, which it certainly will as we become a big congested city.

There are long range impacts to these decisions that this city council are totally unaware of, or don't want to consider. Their slogan of sales tax income follows rooftops simply doesn't consider the FACT that this strategy is a big financial loser for the city and its current residents, and also negatively impacts our quality of life. Time for a change in our city council!

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