

The other side of the story...

Density is a Big City Timebomb

The Town of Jackson says this is what you want.

After consultants met with town residents, they determined you want to make room for more people. You want a lot more density in town.

You want 1,800 more living units crammed into our small mountain community, even though those 1,800 homes were originally meant to be spread throughout the county. Using a conservative average of 2.5 people per unit, that's another 4,500 people all trying to turn left onto Broadway. Using a 5 people per unit metric, it's 9,000 more people in Jackson — almost a doubling of population.

And that's just for starters. It won't end there.

New zoning proposed for Districts 3-6 includes the character-destroying NH-1 zone — a high-density designation where 3-story, 39-foot apartment complexes will be the rule. These 10,000-sf dormitory boxes will house the seasonal workforce. Does that sound like community to you?

Town leaders tried not to ruin every neighborhood. They kept a few relatively unchanged. But these quieter stable neighborhoods will be butted right up against heavily-populated, seasonal workforce districts whose traffic, noise, and big city crime will spill over into surrounding areas.

Remember when town was for locals, and resorts were supposed to house all their workers within the resort? Now it looks like town is both becoming a resort itself and housing the workers for Teton Village and Snow King.

These aren't subtle changes. The upzoning for Districts 3-6 (to be finalized July 2) is drastic. If your vision of the upzone was adding a quaint mother-in-law cottage on a single lot, think again.

In some residential zones town is mandating the minimum construction of a triplex. You won't be able to build your dreamhouse in these areas unless your dream is being crammed together with two other families you don't know. Welcome to big city life.

*Property owners
don't want this*

Upzoning for residential Districts 3-6 shows a total disrespect for stable communities and our small town way of life. Your neighborhoods are about to be annihilated with tall buildings, light pollution, and overcrowding.

We get one chance to get this right. If upzoning goes too far, we can't just dial it back. Many of us would be happy to dream the Utopian ideal that everyone who wants a house should get a house. But in the real world, Jackson isn't big enough.

Jackson Hole is not immune to the hordes of visitation and relocation that is spoiling other cities around the globe. From Rome to Reykjavik — desirable places are being loved to death. And it's already happening here.

We need to learn from those who've been there. Cities like Palo Alto, California (who have battled overcrowding by instigating growth caps in its Comprehensive Plan) are being proactive rather than reactive in dealing with population growth. They don't embrace solutions that make their problems worse.

Simply making room (at any and all costs) for the masses who want to live here by widening our roads and bulking up our neighborhoods is both unsustainable and incredibly short-sighted.

The current plan for Districts 3-6 will destroy Jackson as you know it. It's a major step toward making Jackson a big city. That's not what most of us ever wanted to see.