

From: Nicholas Adams <nicholasjohnadams@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 06, 2021 5:46 PM

To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>

Subject: Transit Corridor Zoning

Just wanted to offer my full-throated support for the transit corridor zoning proposal and to encourage stakeholders to push to expand it even further. Let's make smart room for all of our potential future neighbors while also addressing climate change. A literal win/win!

Thanks,

Nick Adams

It was great to hear the thoughtful discussion and debate last Tuesday. Thank you all for your service to the city. Below are two suggestions and a comment.

1. Remove the new 2 story height minimum.

The staff presentation at the last meeting [showed](#) that one-story commercial buildings would be allowed in the TC1 district, whereas the newest version of the district [adds](#) a two-story minimum for all buildings to the dimensional standards table.

It's important to allow one-story buildings for at least three reasons:

- a. Grocery stores, movie theaters, plant nurseries, and other common uses are often only one-story, and it would be unreasonably strict to forbid these businesses from expanding or rebuilding.
- b. Forbidding property owners from building one-story buildings over their parking lots would be contrary to the city's climate plan.
- c. A two-story minimum would make it harder to proactively rezone transit corridors, because of the risk of disrupting existing businesses.



Forbidding Argus Farm Stop from expanding would be unpopular and counterproductive.

2. Remove the phrase that says the district is intended for "established commercial and office sites."

That phrase, in the first sentence of the [general intent statement](#), is not consistent with the first special purpose statement that allows rezoning requests for other types of sites, like:

- a. Hotel sites.
- b. Research sites.
- c. Warehouse sites
- d. Vehicle repair sites

One solution is to end the sentence earlier and say, "This district is intended along existing transit corridors with regular fixed service provided by the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority."

The current text might be confusing to future commissions, because the first specific purpose statement specifically allows rezoning requests in districts that are not commercial or office districts. In the worst-case scenario, a future commission would follow the general intent statement over the specific purpose statement and refuse to consider a rezoning on a hotel or vehicle repair site. This outcome can easily be prevented by changing the general intent statement.

Decoupling the ordinance text from specific kinds of sites, or maps of specific areas, is good anyway, because the district will be used by future planning commissions with a different master plan, and they will be better served by a flexible tool.

3. Removing the 3rd specific purpose statement was wise.

In addition to the reasons the commissioners already gave at the last meeting, here are two more reasons why removing the third purpose statement was a good idea:

- a. Any “specific purpose statement” that guides future planning commissions can and should be put into words. It would be difficult for future commissioners to look at maps of zoning districts in 2021, pull out some wordless principle from them, and then use that wordless principle to decide a rezoning.
- b. If the planning commission intends to soon rezone the properties within the map’s boundaries, then those property owners will not need encouragement to request the TC1 district.

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