



**LAWRENCE KESTENBAUM
COUNTY CLERK / REGISTER OF DEEDS**

200 North Main Street, Suite 120 P.O. Box 8645 Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-8645

Phone (734) 222-6730 • Fax (734) 222-6528

www.ewashtenaw.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jackie Beaudry, Ann Arbor City Clerk
All contiguous local units of government

FROM: Jason Brooks
Deputy Clerk
Washtenaw County

DATE: March 8, 2009

SUBJECT: Resolution 09-0036

2009 MAR 18 PM 2:29
CITY OF ANN ARBOR
CITY CLERK
REGISTRY

At their regular meeting held on March 4, 2009, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners passed resolution 09-0036, a resolution to accept comments from the Washtenaw County Planning Advisory Board on the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan Land Use Element and direct the County Clerk to send comments to the City of Ann Arbor and the contiguous local units of government. For your convenience, I have attached a certified copy of the resolution. If you need additional certified copies or further information please contact me at (734) 222-6655.

jb

Enc.

A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT COMMENTS FROM THE WASHTENAW COUNTY PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD ON THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR MASTER PLAN LAND USE ELEMENT AMENDMENT AND DIRECT THE COUNTY CLERK TO SEND COMMENTS TO THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR AND THE CONTIGUOUS LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT

WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 4, 2009

WHEREAS, Public Act 33 of 2008 ("the Act") requires that the County submit comments on the proposed amendments to the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan to the City of Ann Arbor; and

WHEREAS, the Act requires that the comments include, but not be limited to, a statement whether the proposed revisions are considered to be inconsistent with the plan of any contiguous city, village, township or region, and a statement whether the proposed plan is considered to be inconsistent with the county plan; and

WHEREAS the County Board of Commissioners created the Planning Advisory Board to review plans and recommend adoption by the Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS City of Ann Arbor submitted an amended City of Ann Arbor Master Plan; and

WHEREAS the revisions were reviewed for consistency with the goals, objectives and recommendations of *A Comprehensive Plan for Washtenaw County*; and

WHEREAS the amendment was reviewed and approved by the Washtenaw County Planning Advisory Board at their February 23, 2009 meeting;

WHEREAS the amendments are forwarded to the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners as a County staff report for review;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners accepts the staff report from the Washtenaw County Office of Strategic Planning on the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan Land Use Element Amendment, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners directs the County Clerk to send the comments to City of Ann Arbor and the contiguous local units of government.

COMMISSIONER	Y	N	A	COMMISSIONER	Y	N	A	COMMISSIONER	Y	N	A
Bergman	X			Ouimet	X			Schwartz	X		
Gunn	X			Peterson	X			Sizemore			X
Irwin	X			Ping	X			Smith	X		
Judge			X	Prater	X						

CLERK/REGISTER'S CERTIFICATE - CERTIFIED COPY ROLL CALL VOTE: TOTALS 9 0 2

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

COUNTY OF WASHTENAW)^{SS}

I, Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register of said County of Washtenaw and Clerk of Circuit Court for said County, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of a resolution adopted by the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners at a session held at the County Administration Building in the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan, on March 4, 2009, as it appears of record in my office.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court at Ann Arbor, this 5th day of March, 2009.

LAWRENCE KESTENBAUM, Clerk/Register

BY: _____

Deputy Clerk



Res. No. 09-0036



Washtenaw County
Office of Strategic Planning

2/23/2009 DRAFT UNTIL ADOPTED BY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Jeff Kahan
City of Ann Arbor Planning and Development Services Area
100 N. Fifth Avenue
P.O. Box 8647
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8647

Re: City of Ann Arbor Master Plan Land Use Element Amendment Review

Dear Mr. Jeff Kahan:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan (City Plan) update. In accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, the City Plan was reviewed by Washtenaw County Planning Advisory Board and the Board of Commissioners. The Washtenaw County Department of Parks and Recreation, Road Commission, Department of Public Health, Office of the Water Resources Commissioner and the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS) were also given the opportunity to comment on the amendment.

Worth commending is the expressed emphasis on cooperating with surrounding townships in land use issues through boundary agreements established with Ann Arbor, Scio and Pittsfield townships, as well as Action Statements noting the importance of working with adjoining townships to meet common goals. The language on the importance of coordinating land uses to promote public transit, seeking opportunities for redevelopment and infill development to incorporate mixed uses, and reviewing site design standards to decrease negative impact on the environment is also to be commended. Specific site area plans and commitment to underground and structured parking are also strong components of the plan.

The City Plan also consistently demonstrates the interconnectedness of issues, for example encouraging mixed use and mass transit as actions to achieve a goal of improved air quality and adaptive reuse as a method of both historic preservation and economic development. Such goals and collaboration allows for the needs of existing and future residents to be met, while also addressing sustainable growth and natural resource protection.

Staff reviewed the proposed update in the context of A Comprehensive Plan for Washtenaw County (County Plan), plans of contiguous local units of government and the current City of Ann Arbor Master Plan Land Use Element (City Plan). Staff found the

proposed amendments to be consistent with the County Plan and the plans for the contiguous communities.

Although the following recommendations are not applicable to the consistency with the County Plan, we strongly encourage the incorporation of the following to enhance the overall plan:

- A major concept of the plan is the establishment of an interconnected natural features system, as well as pedestrian and bicycle linkages. To further support this goal, the Washtenaw Metro Alliance (WMA) Coordinated Parkland and Open Space Plan should be incorporated into the plan.
- Many of the ideas and statements within the City Plan are expressed and discussed multiple times. Specifically in the Central Area Plan's Objective section repeats Goals and Actions almost verbatim, and should be refined to be more concise. This duplication of ideas is also found in Chapter 5: Community Oriented Design - Neighborhoods, Retail Centers.
- Land Use Goals and Objectives
 - Goal F, Objective 2: (pg 36) Another Action Statement should be added to "Encourage multi-jurisdictional coordination on travel and transportation investment and opportunities."
- MAPS:
 - West Area Future Land Use: The intention for "Study Sites" is not clear. While these pieces of property closely align with those listed within the section for Site Specific Land Use Recommendations, there are some "Study Sites" which are not addressed, such as what appears to be the entire Eberwhite School property including the woodland. This may imply to some that such properties are being considered for development. The development of these public natural areas should be avoided, as pocket parks create the neighborhood feel and livability that attracts people to this area.
 - The Map Features Color Key should be consistent. For example, in the West Area Future Land Use Map, Public/Quasi Public is dark blue. However, in the rest of the maps, Public/Quasi Public is light blue, while dark blue represents Transportation/Utilities.
- The Central Area chapter includes the objective to "preserve existing small neighborhood grocery stores and re-establish vacated neighborhood grocery stores." Washtenaw County Department of Public Health specifies that this portion of the plan could be strengthened by "referring to the use of open space and neighborhood parks for community gardens as a strategy to increase access to healthy food."

- Urban Design in Central Area includes an action statement under Objective 5 calling for "establishing appropriate densities based on neighborhood characteristics and norms, and rezoning these sites for lower density residential uses." It is unclear whether this is stating down-zoning is the only and best available option. This action statement also seems to contradict objectives 7-10 under the same section which call for a variety of housing and more affordable options.
- While goals for Lower Town include encouraging density and mixed use, the Land Use Recommendations and Design Guidelines repeatedly reference height caps, but only once contain language setting the standard for multiple stories. In the Wall Street Area section, at the top of page 52 there is a sentence which states "Most buildings should generally vary in height from 3 to 5 stories with a few as high as 8 stories." This use of range, rather than simply caps, should be used throughout Chapter, especially in the Design Guidelines Throughout Lower Town to ensure it is clear that multi-story buildings are expected and encouraged.
- On page 47, the Riverfront Area is described as containing a portion of the "Huron River bike trail." The Washtenaw County Parks Department has implemented a branding campaign to increase the public awareness of this trail as the Border to Border trail, through signage and public outreach and education. The City Plan should be consistent with this name to encourage its recognition and promote its use.
- The University of Michigan plans for a transit station in Lower Town will be a significant land use with direct impact to the character of the area. Discussion of this potential development should be included in the chapter, as should a statement on the importance of the UM station and buses, AATA buses and future commuter rail lines to coordinate.
- Specific revitalization/development sites are included for West Stadium Blvd. Although Maple Village is described as less successful, with challenges of isolation and lack of access, this shopping center is not included in the list of sites given specific recommendations for revitalization. With a vast amount of unused parking space and significant setbacks, recommendations to continue infill through stand-alone buildings closer to N. Maple, as well as some protected and landscaped pedestrian-ways through the block, would do a great deal to encourage a more integrated and accessible center.

The attached staff report provides additional detail and background regarding County comments. Additionally, agency comments are provided containing additional detailed recommendations and should be reviewed and considered. On behalf of the Planning Advisory Board and the Board of County

Commissioners, I would like to thank you for your contribution to promoting a shared vision for Washtenaw County.

If the Department may be of assistance to the City as you work to implement the policies included in your plan, please call me at (734) 222-6809.

Sincerely,



Patricia Denig, Director of Community Planning
Office of Strategic Planning
Washtenaw County



PD/ad

Attachments

Staff Report

Washtenaw County Department of Public Health comments

Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS) comments

Cc: Ann Arbor Township Clerk
Pittsfield Township Clerk
Scio Township Clerk

Lodi Township
Barton Hills Village



**Washtenaw County
Office of Strategic Planning**

Staff Report

RE: City of Ann Arbor Master Plan Review – Washtenaw County Review

Staff Report Date: 2/23/2009

Background

The Washtenaw County Office of Strategic Planning received the draft City of Ann Arbor Master Plan (City Plan) on January 27, 2009. In accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, the County is to provide comments to the City, which must include two statements of consistency:

- A statement as to whether, after considering any comments received by contiguous local units of government, the proposed update is consistent with the plan of contiguous communities, and;
- A statement as to whether the proposed update is consistent with the County Plan.

The proposed amendment was reviewed for consistency with *A Comprehensive Plan for Washtenaw County* (County Plan). The Washtenaw County Department of Development Services, Department of Parks and Recreation, Road Commission, Department of Public Health, Office of the Water Resources Commissioner and the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS) were also given the opportunity to comment on the document.

Summary of Update/Review in context of County Plan

The expressed emphasis on cooperating with surrounding townships in land use issues is to be commended. The City Plan references boundary agreements established with Ann Arbor, Scio and Pittsfield townships, as well as Action Statements noting the importance of working with adjoining townships to meet common goals. The City Plan also consistently demonstrates the interconnectedness of issues, for example encouraging mixed use and mass transit as actions to achieve a goal of improved air quality and adaptive reuse as a method of both historic preservation and economic development.

Language on the importance of non-motorized connections, as well as the importance of encouraging land uses which promote public transit as a mode of transportation is also found throughout the plan. A non-motorized transportation system within and connecting commercial and residential land uses help to create a safe and enjoyable community for residents.

Natural Systems: Chapter 4

Goals, Objectives and Action Statements:

- The following language should be added to Goal A, Objective 1: "Continue coordination with HRWC, County Water Resources Commissioner, the parks departments of the City of Ann Arbor, Ann Arbor Township, Pittsfield Township, Scio Township and Washtenaw County, and other organizations to better coordinate and prioritize goals, and enforce regulations to protect and preserve natural systems and greenways, especially along the Huron River."
- The inclusion of Objective 2: "Encourage...alternative land use designs that provide the best protection for existing natural features" speaks to the importance of not only the location, but the character of development in the conservation of natural features. In addition to encouraging multiple story buildings and stormwater management systems, considering the adoption of a natural features ordinance or standards with wetland, tree and stormwater components would further help to attain the city's goals. The action statements to create design guidelines for development patterns, and to map existing woodlands and wetlands are a good step toward implementation. This section could be further strengthened by referencing the Low Impact Development Manual from SEMCOG.

Land Use: Chapter 5

- Community Oriented Design - Neighborhoods, Retail Centers: The readability of this section would benefit from eliminating redundant sentences.
- There is an opportunity to further clarify the intention for setbacks and the necessary balance between increasing pedestrian access and minimizing the visual impact of multiple story buildings in the paragraph on Multiple Story Buildings under Section A. Neighborhoods.
- Land Use Goals, Objective and Action Statements: These Action Statements provide specific implementation steps to pursue such as developing regulatory incentives and design guidelines, and revising city codes to better address expressed goals. This section has a strong focus on the connection between the built environment and transportation options which could be strengthened with the following additions:
 - Goal D: Objective 4: Provide extensive landscape buffering between residential neighborhoods and non-residential uses. (pg 34) While this certainly has some applications such as near freeways as mentioned, Action Statement "C" should be reviewed to ensure unnecessary barriers between adjacent compatible residential and non-residential uses.
 - Goal F, Objective 2: (pg 36) Another Action Statement should be added to "Encourage multi-jurisdictional coordination on travel and transportation investment and opportunities."
- MAPS:
 - West Area Future Land Use: The intention for "Study Sites" is not clear. While these pieces of property closely align with

those listed within the section for Site Specific Land Use Recommendations, there are some "Study Sites" which are not addressed, such as what appears to be the entire Eberwhite School property including the woodland. There needs to be clarification if this area is being considered for development, or edit the Future Land Use map accordingly to remove this property from the Study Site designation. The development of these public natural areas should be avoided, as pocket parks create the neighborhood feel and livability that attracts people to this area.

- Map Features: Color Key needs to be consistent. For example, in the West Area Future Land Use Map, Public/Quasi Public is dark blue. However, in the rest of the maps, Public/Quasi Public is light blue, while dark blue represents Transportation/Utilities.

Lower Town: Chapter 6

- On page 47, the Riverfront Area is described as containing a portion of the "Huron River bike trail." The Washtenaw County Parks Department has implemented a branding campaign to increase the public awareness of this trail as the Border to Border Trail, through signage and public outreach and education. The City Plan should be consistent with this name to encourage its recognition and promote its use.
- Recommended Land uses and goals for Lower Town include encouraging density, mixed use and bringing new retail buildings along Broadway up to the sidewalk. While the Land Use Recommendations and Design Guidelines repeatedly reference height caps, only once does this section contain language setting a standard for having multiple stories. In the Wall Street Area section, at the top of page 52 there is one sentence which states "Most buildings should generally vary in height from 3 to 5 stories with a few as high as 8 stories." This use of range, rather than simply caps, should be used throughout Chapter, especially in the Design Guidelines Throughout Lower Town to ensure it is clear that multi-story buildings are expected and encouraged.
- Should recent plans come to fruition, the University of Michigan transit station in Lower Town will be a significant land use with direct impact to the character of the area. Discussion of this potential development should be included in the chapter, as should a statement on the importance of the UM station and buses, AATA buses and future commuter rail lines to coordinate.

Central Area: Chapter 7

The Central Area section discusses the opportunity for redevelopment and infill development in the form of mixed use on vacant or underutilized lots. This helps provide housing choices within the urban area and curbs the development pressure in outlying areas, and is to be commended. Also noteworthy is the objective to "preserve existing small neighborhood grocery stores and re-establish vacated

neighborhood grocery stores." Washtenaw County Department of Public Health specifies that this portion of the plan could be strengthened by "referring to the use of open space and neighborhood parks for community gardens as a strategy to increase access to healthy food."

- Urban Design in Central Area: one action statement under Objective 5 calls for "establishing appropriate densities based on neighborhood characteristics and norms, and rezoning these sites for lower density residential uses." It is unclear whether this is stating down-zoning is the only and best available option. This action statement also seems to contradict objectives 7-10 under the same section which call for a variety of housing and more affordable options.
- The section on Evolving Land Uses may benefit from mentioning the recent discussion of a possibility for the Allen Creek Greenway.
- Many of the ideas and statements within this chapter are expressed and discussed multiple times. Specifically, the Objective section repeats Goals and Actions almost verbatim. This chapter should be refined to be more concise.

UM/North Campus: Chapter 8

- Development Guidelines include a few redundancies where bullet points should be combined.

West Stadium Blvd: Chapter 9

- Specific revitalization/development sites are included in this chapter, as well as an emphasis on encouraging pedestrian connects between commercial corridor and neighboring communities. Although Maple Village is described as less successful, with challenges of isolation and lack of access, this shopping center is not included in the list of sites given specific recommendations for revitalization. With a vast amount of unused parking space and significant setbacks, recommendations to continue infill through stand-alone buildings closer to N. Maple, as well as some protected and landscaped pedestrian-ways through the block, would do a great deal to encourage a more integrated and accessible center.

Site Specific Land Use Recommendations: Chapter 10

- Site 19: It is unclear whether these recommendations would be involved developing part of the Eberwhite Woods.

Implementation: Chapter 11

- Highest Priority Actions for Land Use include density bonuses for projects including affordable housing units and revising setback standards. Revising height maximums and imposing minimums, FAR and other density-promoting measures should also be included, especially as it relates to Land Use Goal B, Objective 1:" Locate higher residential densities near mass transit routes and in proximity to commercial, employment and activity centers." pg 32

Washtenaw County Community Planning can provide assistance in regard to any of these plan areas.

Contiguous Community Land Uses

- North and Northeast (Ann Arbor Township): The portion of Ann Arbor Township which abuts the City's northern border is planned for predominately Residential, Agriculture and Open Space Preservation. Along the northeastern border there is some Research and Institutions. These uses do not conflict with the City's plans for Single and Two Family Residential, Multiple Family Residential and Parks and Recreation.
- South (Pittsfield Township): The northern portion of Pittsfield Township which borders the City of Ann Arbor has a wide variety of future land uses including Research & Development, Light Industrial, Regional Commercial, Community Commercial and Moderate to High Density Residential. There is also a significant amount of nearby Public Facilities and Public and Private Recreation and Open Space. These uses are compatible with the corresponding future land uses for the city included Research and Industrial, Commercial and Multiple Family Residential.
- Southwest (Lodi Township): A very small portion of Ann Arbor's southwestern boundary touches Lodi Township, although is across the I-94. The future land use plans in this area of the township are Suburban Residential and Light Industrial, which is compatible with the City's plans for Residential land uses.
- West (Scio Township): While much of Ann Arbor's western border is M-14 and I-94, some portions are directly adjacent to Commercial, Office/Industrial and Conservation. Across the highways are predominately Medium and High Density Residential. These uses are compatible with the City's Future Land Uses of Single and Two Family Residential, Multiple Family Residential Commercial and Parks and Open Space along this western border.

Review of Plan in Context of Contiguous Community Master Plans

The proposed City Plan update is consistent with the master plans of adjacent communities.

Review of Plan in Context of Historic Preservation

The preservation of historic resources has economic, environmental and social benefits. Washtenaw County, seated in the City of Ann Arbor, has recognized the County's unique characteristics in Chapter Nine of the *Washtenaw County Comprehensive Plan*, which places significant value upon our irreplaceable historic resources. Recommendations 1.1 through 1.6 encourages the recognition of historic resources through the creation of local historic districts and listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as well

as the application of innovative preservation strategies such as preservation easements and overlay districts. Federal and state tax credit programs are also cited as viable preservation strategies for many commercial and residential properties. Furthermore, Recommendation 3.1 promotes the incorporation of historic resources in local master plan updates, while Recommendation 3.2 suggests historic resource education by local units of government.

The City of Ann Arbor and its citizens have long known and respected these values, and have a track record for protecting many significant historic resources. They are integrated components of the City's rich, multi-dimensional community fabric, and contribute to Ann Arbor's unique feeling and sense of place. Formal efforts to preserve historic resources are most visible in the city's 14 local historic districts, and ongoing efforts by the office of Planning and Building. The 2008 release of the *Historic District Design Guidelines* by the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission provided an excellent visualization of the community character that the City's local historic districts act to preserve.

The *City of Ann Arbor Master Plan Land Use Element* aptly communicates a strong grasp of the city's history, development, assets, and community character. Historic resources or local history are also appropriately referenced throughout the plan, as integrated elements of the larger community context. The "Historic Preservation Goals of the Central Area" are carefully worded and respective of the non-standardized nature of many older buildings as they relate to building code compliance. Particularly encouraging is Goal C, which seeks to better engage citizens with information about the benefits and duties associated with historic designation.

The Central Area Goal F and its action statements address the issue of density and development pressure where historic buildings presently exist, and reference the need to respect the existing character of neighborhoods when considering infill development. These issues impact both residential and non-residential land uses, and are a matter of current debate in numerous cities nationwide. It is clear that increased public demand for adequate housing and commercial services in close proximity to urban centers, a "greener" lifestyle, public transit, and non-motorized amenities are placing pressure on historic buildings often in prime locations. Washtenaw County Office of Strategic Planning cautions the City of Ann Arbor to remain sensitive to the issues of density and development pressure in or near local historic districts. While it is clear that all older buildings are not worthy of preservation, it must also be firmly understood that once a building is demolished, a piece of the neighborhood character is altered irrevocably. This fact is clearly articulated in the Central Area Goal G. Of additional consideration on this topic is the LEED Existing Buildings Standards, which provide support to the City's goal of encouraging rehabilitation of historic buildings.

As stated in this plan's Issues section, it is clear that the current dialogue solicits strong considerations of how Ann Arbor will act to balance preservation desires with such pressures for increased density in the urban core. Washtenaw County encourages the City to continue researching best practices on this topic. A few good case examples and discussions include:

Galveston, Texas (Height and Density Development Plan, by Nore Winter)
<http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/training/npc/additional-resources/2008-tulsa/session-handouts-tulsa/GalvestonProject-Nore-Winter.pdf>

Seattle, Washington (Place Economics, by Donovan Rypkema)
<http://www.placeeconomics.com/2008/05/unintended-consequences-of-push-for.html>

Madison, Wisconsin (Candid Q&A, Madison Trust for Historic Preservation)
http://www.madisontrust.org/news/news_mayoral.html

Applicable Agency Comments

Washtenaw County Public Health: See attached

Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS): See attached



**City of Ann Arbor Master Plan Amendment 2/11/09
Washtenaw County Public Health Comments**

1. The plan includes elements that increase access to physical activity.				
	Not Addressed	Somewhat Addressed	Adequately Addressed	Not Applicable to this review
A. Opportunities for use of non-motorized transportation are evident in the plan (bikeability, multi-use paths).			X	
B. Connectivity between schools and residential areas are promoted in the plan (e.g. Safe Routes to School).			X	
C. Preservation of green/open space including parks is evident in this plan.			X	
Comments: The Master Plan amendment does an excellent job of addressing connectivity, access to and preservation of open space to promote physical activity for Ann Arbor residents of all ages.				
2. The plan includes elements that increase access to healthy eating resources.				
	Not Addressed	Somewhat Addressed	Adequately Addressed	Not Applicable to this review
A. The plan promotes mixed use development (retail including access to grocery stores and residential).			x	
B. Grocery stores and supermarkets can be accessed using non-motorized transportation.			X	
C. The plan includes elements that support or improve the local food system, including preservation of agricultural land/urban agriculture and community gardens.		X		

<p>Comments:</p> <p>Preservation of open space and natural areas is addressed throughout the plan, as well as non-motorized access between neighborhoods and retail.</p> <p>The plan could be improved by specifically referring to the use of open space and neighborhood parks for community gardens as a strategy to increase access to healthy food.</p>				
<p>3. The plan includes elements that promote emotional well-being and social connectivity.</p>				
	<p>Not Addressed</p>	<p>Somewhat Addressed</p>	<p>Adequately Addressed</p>	<p>Not Applicable to this review</p>
<p>A. The plan includes elements that promote the use of, and access to, public transportation.</p>			<p>x</p>	
<p>B. The plan includes elements that promote connectivity between residential development and retail.</p>			<p>x</p>	
<p>C. The plan includes built elements that increase community cohesion and neighborhood activities.</p>			<p>x</p>	
<p>Comments:</p>				

References:

- 1) Washtenaw County Public Health comments for Environment and Planning Master Plan.
- 2) Design Guidelines for Active Michigan Communities (2006). Available at: www.mihealthtools.org/communities
- 3) Promoting Active Communities (PAC). Available at: www.mihealthtools.org/communities
- 4) Robert Wood Johnson: Active Living Research
 - a. Designing for Active Recreation (Updated February 2005)
 - b. Designing for Active Transportation (Updated February 2005)
 Available at: http://www.activelivingresearch.org/index.php/What_We_are_Learning/117

W
A
T
S



WASHTENAW AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

705 NORTH ZEEB ROAD 2ND FLOOR
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48103-1560
PHONE: (734) 994-3127 FAX: (734) 994-3129
WEBSITE: WWW.MIWATS.ORG
E-MAIL: WATS@MIWATS.ORG

Planning Reviews

Community: City of Ann Arbor

Date Received : 2/1/2009

Complete Master Plan Update:

Complete Zoning Plan Update:

Master Plan Amendment:

Zoning Plan Amendment:

Other: Land Use Element

Sections reviewed: Goals Policies Land Use Recommendations
 Transportation Recommendations Other

Land Use Implications:

WATS commends the City of Ann Arbor for examining the important issue of land use particularly with respect to transportation. In general the land use components of the various area plans have been tied together to create clear guidelines as to how the City wants to grow with specific consideration for all modes of transportation and the consideration of transportation as part of all new development or redevelopment. The Washtenaw Area Transportation Study submits the following comments.

Transportation Component Implications:

Page 3 – First sentence – There is a typo

Page 4 – Consider adding to the introduction a paragraph describing what is included in the document and the order in which it is presented.

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

• CITY OF ANN ARBOR • ANN ARBOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY • ANN ARBOR TOWNSHIP • CITY OF CHELSEA • VILLAGE OF DEXTER •
• DEXTER TOWNSHIP • EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY • MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION • NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP • PITTSFIELD TOWNSHIP •
• CITY OF SALINE • SCIO TOWNSHIP • SOUTHWEST WASHTENAW COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS • SUPERIOR TOWNSHIP • UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN •
• WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS • WASHTENAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION • CITY OF YPSILANTI • YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP •
• EX OFFICIO: FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION • SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS •

AN INTERMUNICIPALITY COMMITTEE ORGANIZED UNDER ACT 200 OF PUBLIC ACTS OF MICHIGAN (1957)
REPRESENTING WASHTENAW COUNTY

Page 4, Third sentence – “Although most land in the City is within the jurisdiction of the City of Ann Arbor, some land is in the jurisdiction of Ann Arbor, Scio and Pittsfield Townships.” The sentence is inaccurate.

Page 4, Last paragraph – This paragraph appears to have been pulled from the Northeast Area Plan and does not reflect the unified document. Consider changing “Northeast Area” to “Ann Arbor” where appropriate.

Page 5, Section III., It would help if this section noted how this document fits into to the process of unifying the area plans.

Page 10, Population Profile Charts – Consider using SEMCOG estimates for more recent population numbers. This information would also show how the population has changed over the last several years. Consider displaying this information in the form of a map as well.

Page 10, Population profile – Race is likely not the most important variable to stratify the community. Consider removing or using a different variable such as income.

Page 12, Last sentence first paragraph – Consider replacing the word “confront” with “affect”.

Page 13 – Transportation/Communication/Utility Land Uses – Consider stating that the 3.7% does not include land that is covered by roads, bridges and sidewalks.

Page 21 last sentence fifth paragraph – Consider revising to “However, many people who work in Ann Arbor commute from areas that are not easily connected through alternative modes of transportation and are forced to drive to work, presenting transportation challenges.”

Page 22 Affordable Housing – defined as “housing units where the occupant is paying no more than 30% of gross income for housing costs, including taxes and utilities.” This seems inaccurate. It is possible that the quote loses part of its meaning. Please check language for accuracy.

Page 24 Community Oriented Design – This section should be revisited to ensure that the sections from each of the area plans are unified in a similar manner. For example, section A does not include a history but section B begins with a detailed history. The fonts also change from section to section.

Page 27 – Structured parking or below-structure parking – Consider mentioning the importance of having parking for multiple modes of transportation such as bicycles, mopeds and scooters in addition to automobile parking.

Pages 25-31 – Throughout the different sections some of the language is repeated i.e., the recommendations of “Pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections”. Consider alternative ways of authoring this section so that the same information is not repeated three times.

Pages 28-29 – Three of the four pictures in the Retail section have pictures of strictly residential uses. Consider using pictures of retail uses.

Page 33 Objective 1, Action Statement C – Consider adding the word “from” between the words provided and within.

Page 33 Objective 2, Action statement E and Action statement I – Consider using “Ensure” as is used in many other action statements, instead of “Strongly encourage”.

Page 33 Objective 2, Action Statement H – Recommend removing “Consider the feasibility of” and change the word including to Include.

Page 42 – Background paragraph – It is unclear how this paragraph relates the Lower Town area to THIS Land Use Plan.

Page 45 – Transportation – End of first paragraph- Update language to reflect completion of the Broadway bridges

Page 45 – Transportation Third paragraph – Given the interest and momentum towards the various commuter rail studies currently underway, the recommendations should be reviewed now to determine if additional development intensity should be allowed.

Page 53 Transportation Analysis – consider adding “or development” at the end of the paragraph. Transportation components are critical to ANY improvement or development, not just transportation improvements.

Page 60 Objective 5 – Font/italics do not match the rest of the section.

Page 65 Objective 8, Action Statement A – Reference to “bike plan” seems to be outdated.

Page 66 – Historic Preservation Goals of the Central Area – It is unclear as to whether or not the concepts presented in this section should be considered for other areas of the City or just the Central Area. As there is much overlap in the goals and guidelines for each area there is the potential to condense sections to reflect those goals applicable to the entire City.

Page 69 – letter E – This statement would benefit from a more thorough description of what types of improvements should be made.

Page 69 – Letter F – This would be a good place to consider inserting language from the Ann Arbor Transportation Plan regarding Transportation Demand Management strategies and requirements, etc.

Page 71 – Action letter D – A map showing the numbered areas on page 71 and 72 would be helpful.

Page 84 – first paragraph – Schlotzsky’s Deli has been vacant for several years.

Page 88 Number 6 – The first paragraph discusses relocation of sidewalks away from Stadium Boulevard to move cyclists away from Stadium Boulevard. The concept of recommending or planning for cyclists to use the sidewalk, particularly in an area with a high number of curb cuts is contrary to

the adopted City of Ann Arbor Non-motorized Plan. Throughout this section it is important to not tie in bicyclists with pedestrians or cars but to treat them as their own mode, with its own set of needs.

Page 95 Objective 3 Action statements – The action statements do not discuss the maintenance of non-motorized and transit improvements even though the Objective explicitly lists maintenance.

Page 95 Objective 4 Action statement B – Pedestrians and bicyclists are listed as users of a “walkway system”. Consider using non-motorized facility or shared use path instead of walkway if the intent is for cyclists to use as well.

Page 96 Objective 1 Action statement E – This Action Statement is very prescriptive. Consider relying on the results of the charettes discussed in Action Statement A for this type of idea.

Page 97 Objective 3 Action Statement A – Include bike lanes as part of improvements, not just pedestrian improvements.

Page 104 – third paragraph in Site 7 – Consider adding “and bike access” after “pedestrian walkways” in the second sentence.

Page 107 – Site 17, last sentence – Consider adding “However, non-motorized access to Plymouth Road should be considered.”

Page 109 and 111 – The first paragraph of the South Area and West Area sections uses the word “substandard” to describe the size of sites to select for inclusion. Based on the Northeast Area opening paragraph on page 98 it appears the word should be “substantial”. The word “vacant” is also misspelled in each section.

Page 111 First sentence - “The Ann Arbor Railroad may serve as a future High Occupancy Vehicle lane and express bus route...” Please provide more detail on this option as it relates to the City of Ann Arbor Transportation Plan Update.

Page 115 Site 7 second paragraph – Update discussion on Jackson Road boulevard project as this project is nearly fully implemented not “proposed”.

Page 116 Site 8 last paragraph last sentence – Clarify that access between the shopping center and residential area via non-motorized modes would be allowed and encouraged. Access restrictions between the two land uses on this site should only be restricted for automobiles to match other recommendations in the Plan and the Transportation Plan Update.

Page 116 Site 9 second paragraph – The majority of this paragraph speaks negatively about some businesses for no apparent reason. Consider removing negative language and focus on possibilities for redevelopment or removing entirely.

Page 121 – Highest priorities – Please include discussion as to how these highest prioritize were decided.

Page 122 – Land Use-Ongoing number 1 – Consider adding “and maintained” after the word “established”.

Page 123 – Special Studies paragraph- This paragraph is in the implementation section but it has no discernable action steps and no ownership of responsibility.

Page 124 – CIP – Please provide more detail about how portions of this plan and the actions statements within can be implemented through the CIP process and how that may occur. The City has taken a comprehensive look at transportation for this plan update. However, several inaccuracies should be corrected before the plan is approved.