

Subject: Addendum on Downtown Core Housing Targets

From: BRIAN CHAMBERS

Sent: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 11:29 PM

To: City Council <CityCouncil@a2gov.org>; Dohoney Jr., Milton <MDohoney@a2gov.org>; Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>; Lenart, Brett <BLenart@a2gov.org>; Delacourt, Derek <DDelacourt@a2gov.org>; Stults, Missy <MStults@a2gov.org>

Cc: Waas Smith, Zach <ZWaasSmith@a2gov.org>; Gale, Mia <RGale@a2gov.org>; Reynolds, Kelly <KReynolds@a2gov.org>; Higgins, Sara <SHiggins@a2gov.org>

Subject: Re: Addendum on Downtown Core Housing Targets

This is a good summary reference for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) principles:

<https://tod.itdp.org/what-is-tod/eight-principles-of-tod.html>

Brian

On 10/24/2023 11:13 PM EDT BRIAN CHAMBERS wrote:

Mayor Taylor, City Administrator Dohoney and Council:

I appreciate the dynamic of the unsolicited proposal for the Kline's lot. These types of proposals are not rare-events for many other cities.

This note is in response to a comment about the downtown core not being a TC1 District, and hence may not be prioritized for housing.

My attached addendum was provided to understand the need for significantly more housing in the downtown core, in a 1/4 - 1/2 - 3/4 mile walkable radius around the AAATA Transfer Center and the Amtrak Train Station. This property is well within that radius.

An overall Transit Oriented Development plan, including Transit Corridor components, is architected at the urban design level to include core mass transit centers. If you are interested in references on these overall design elements, beyond those in the attached Addendum, please let me know.

I won't over-press the point, but the downtown core, aligned to the A2Zero plan, should have significantly more housing density. Especially since post-COVID work patterns show more remote-based work for higher income professions. Housing, to support downtown businesses, should be built out in the downtown core.

The City also needs a plan for more middle-income housing, that isn't exposed to the open market-rate bidding. As you know, I am also involved in initiatives to address that need.

We're all trying to define the new reality with our highest aspirations and intentions. I know that.

Yours for equity-based sustainable development,

Brian
Ward 3
Ann Arbor, MI

On 09/24/2023 2:01 PM EDT BRIAN CHAMBERS wrote:

Mayor Taylor, City Administrator Dohoney, and City Council:

Attached is an addendum to my prior working paper on Increased Housing through Zoning Reform. It is only 3 pages in length.

The focus of the update is titled, "Downtown Center and Core Housing Targets for Transit Oriented Development." It takes into account the current downtown population, and then estimates the additional housing needed using the DDA, D1 and D2 districts areas. Since much of the DDA district of 271 acres, or 0.45 square miles, is confounded with the U-M, public rights of way, and the Historic District, it is actually extremely constrained from supporting significant new housing development.

Maybe during the Comprehensive Land Use Plan project, there can be a subcommittee specifically looking at the downtown core area, and how zoning and ordinances may need to be addressed to facilitate substantial additions to housing on a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) basis.

I hope these writings of mine are informative and contribute in meaningful ways to addressing Ann Arbor development challenges.

By the way, you may have heard I've joined the Equitable Ann Arbor (EA2) Land Trust Board. We have a meeting in the next two weeks with U-M's CFO office to review our proposal for employee housing on North Campus, also based on TOD-scaled densities. U-M properties on Fuller and Plymouth roads are part of this scope, as well as the Huron River corridor. We are proposing mixed use housing developments from 1,200 to 4,800 housing units for U-M employees.

Maybe there is a way for EA2 to collaborate in areas where the City and U-M have adjacent property interests, as we are also proposing regular integration sessions with their long range land use plan project leadership.

Brett, would you please share this addendum and communication on it with the Planning Commission? It can be referenced publicly here:

<https://sites.google.com/view/annarborworkingpapers/>

Yours for equity-based sustainable development,

Brian
Ward 3

On 04/05/2023 5:55 PM EDT BRIAN CHAMBERS wrote:

Mayor Taylor, City Administrator Dohoney, and City Council:

With the upcoming Comprehensive Land Use Plan project, I thought an exercise on Ann Arbor's capacity for increased housing through zoning reform would be of interest. I used the A2Zero plan, TC1 Districts, and Ann Arbor's historical population growth over the past 80 years, as the paper's foundation.

The paper identifies low, moderate and high growth scenarios, and the changes to zoning that could accommodate each scenario over a 40 to 80 year period. It is organized with a Preface, Executive Summary, and a Discussion section, for ease of reading.

In addition, Sarah Lorenz (on copy), co-founder of Equitable Ann Arbor (EA2) Land Trust, wrote a section on the 'market barriers to housing production via re-zoning single family districts for gentle density,' as a complement to the working paper.

While many have advocated for greater housing density, it has been apparent that the scale of housing needed, or feasible for Ann Arbor, has not been explicitly discussed, let alone the market barriers that need to be addressed beyond zoning ordinances themselves.

If we happen to meet individually, I would be happy to discuss it further, or please feel free to respond back individually.

Brett, would you please forward this email and working paper to the Planning Commission, on my behalf?

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours for equity-based, sustainable development,

Brian Chambers
3rd Ward