

**Subject:** Strong opposition to upzoning

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**From:** Jason DeBord  
**Sent:** Friday, March 28, 2025 7:57 AM  
**To:** Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>  
**Cc:** City Council <CityCouncil@a2gov.org>  
**Subject:** Strong opposition to upzoning

To the Planning Commission,

I have been a resident of Ann Arbor for over a decade. I write to you to express my *strong* opposition to the proposed upzoning of residential neighborhoods in Ann Arbor.

One of the main reasons I chose to make my home in this city—and in my particular delightful, unusual neighborhood—was because of its balance: a diverse, vibrant, and human-scaled community surrounded by peaceful, quiet residential streets. Ann Arbor's neighborhoods are not generic suburbs. They are a patchwork of unique homes, old trees, green spaces, and people from many walks of life. This proposed upzoning proposal gravely threatens this balance.

Upzoning to allow for increased density and commercial development in primarily residential areas will irreparably and fundamentally alter the fabric and nature of our neighborhoods. I did not choose to live next to a business district, nor did my neighbors. The prospect of businesses, multi-unit developments (beyond duplexes), and increased traffic directly adjacent to family homes undermines the very purpose of zoning protections—to create stability, predictability, and livability.

While I understand the need to address housing and affordability, I urge the Commission to consider that densification alone does not guarantee affordability. [A 2023 study from the National Bureau of Economic Research](#) found that "upzoning has small and often statistically insignificant impacts on overall housing supply and prices in the short term" (Glaeser & Gyourko, 2023). What it *does* do, often, is invite speculative development, displacement, and the erosion of the qualities that made these neighborhoods desirable and unique in the first place.

[A 2024 study by Kim and Lee, published in \*Urban Studies\*](#), examined neighborhood-level upzoning in New York City and found that "upzoning is positively associated with signs of gentrification—upzoned neighborhoods became whiter, more educated and more affluent in the long run." The study also noted that "Black-majority and low-income neighborhoods experienced gentrification to the greatest extent." These findings suggest that upzoning can lead to significant demographic shifts, potentially displacing long-term residents and altering the community's social fabric.

Beyond the statistics, this is personal. I value the quiet and respite of my home. My home is a refuge from a busy world. The sounds of birds and children playing are what I expect to hear—not increased traffic, construction, or commercial activity. This will not only degrade property values but quality-of-life. Sustainable growth starts with transit and infrastructure—not by "skipping the line" to upzoning that disregards the current capacity and livability of our neighborhoods.

I chose to live in the city of Ann Arbor because it is a community that I was under the impression values thoughtful planning, environmental stewardship, and respect for the people who already call it home. I urge you in the strongest terms to reject upzoning proposals that threaten to turn our residential neighborhoods into commercial corridors and transient rental markets without consideration for long-term residents.

Please protect the integrity, diversity, and peaceful qualities of Ann Arbor's neighborhoods.

Sincerely,  
Jason DeBord  
2640 Kimberley  
Ann Arbor, 48104