

Subject:

Comments on draft 2 of the comprehensive plan and continued support for a pause

From: Linda Dabrowski**Sent:** Friday, August 29, 2025 5:37 PM**To:** Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>**Subject:** Comments on draft 2 of the comprehensive plan and continued support for a pause

Dear planning commission,

I want to reiterate my previously expressed concerns about the comprehensive plan and its impact on city neighborhoods, with special consideration for those close to downtown and central campus. In particular, my neighborhood, Lower Burns Park, already supports and welcomes a variety of housing types, and cannot sustain any additional density without significant adverse impact to what makes our neighborhood unique. Since I can't say character (?), I will say that we are a neighborhood of mostly 2 story older homes with appropriate for the neighborhood small apartment buildings. Within our (can I say charming?) set of homes, there is a mix of renter and owner occupied. As a resident of Lower Burns Park for 24 years, we have noticed an increased number of student rentals, resulting from the conversion of single family owner or even non-student rental homes to student rentals. I understand student rental is also something I can't say, but if you've lived next to a student rental, you'd understand the distinction. More importantly, if we are seeking to house Ann Arbor residents, the move to increased student renters negatively impacts the supply of housing stock for non-student residents. I encourage the city to continue to work with the University of Michigan to responsibly house its student body and minimize disruptive impacts on city neighborhoods.

I do not support action that removes lot size minimums, allows lots to be combined, or reduces minimum setbacks within the Lower Burns Park neighborhood.

I am also writing about the transition zones, which I understand to be up to 6 story buildings intended to encourage businesses and residential use. Packard has been designated as a transition zone. I would like to point out that currently Packard has a mix of homes (some rental and some owner occupied) and local businesses. I frequently patronize the local businesses including the Argus grocery store, Argus coffee shop, and a hair salon. Oh, and we used to have a hardware store within walkable distance, but that got torn down to make way for ... student housing. All/most of these currently viable businesses are locally owned and housed in 2, possibly 3 story buildings. If 6 story buildings are allowed along Packard, these local businesses are at significant risk. A developer will be incentivized to tear down a modest 2 story building, replace it with a much larger, more income generating 6 story building, and *maybe* continue to offer ground floor retail, with rents likely to be much higher than currently paid. I believe this is defined as gentrification in the comprehensive plan? It is also highly reminiscent of The George development, which displaced a functional commercial shopping area including a grocery store, a post office, a gift shop, and a barber shop. I believe these are the types of businesses that form the walkable neighborhood environment that is desired in the comprehensive plan. An environment that I am fortunate to already have and do not wish to see destroyed/gentrified.

I would also advocate for the people who currently live on Packard who may not want their 2, possibly 3 story home to be suddenly dwarfed by a 6 story commercial structure. I currently live within 7 houses of Packard. I personally do not wish to see my neighborhood of again 2, maybe 3 story homes overshadowed by a row of 6 story commercial use structures. Nor do I wish to see this type of building anywhere north of Wells. This type of large scale building will significantly change the feel of the Lower Burns Park neighborhood, leaving us to be an isolated residential zone within a busy, high rise district. It also has the potential to make Packard a less safe area for pedestrians and cyclists as greater density will inevitably bring more cars, and crowd the existing 2 lane road.

Finally, circling back to the question of neighborhood character. Ann Arbor is known for its annual art fairs, has several visible public art projects, but we aren't supposed to care about neighborhood aesthetics?

With continued support for pausing the plan,
Linda Dabrowski
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