

Subject: Comprehensive Land-Use Plan
Attachments: copier@onealconstruction.com_20250509_111422.pdf

From: Joe O'Neal
Sent: Friday, May 9, 2025 11:23 AM
To: Taylor, Christopher (Mayor) <CTaylor@a2gov.org>; Disch, Lisa <LDisch@a2gov.org>; Harrison, Cynthia <CHarrison@a2gov.org>; Mallek, Jon <JMallek@a2gov.org>; Watson, Chris <CWatson@a2gov.org>; Radina, Travis <TRadina@a2gov.org>; Ghazi Edwin, Ayesha <AGhaziEdwin@a2gov.org>; Eyer, Jen <JEyer@a2gov.org>; Akmon, Dharma <DAkmon@a2gov.org>; Briggs, Erica <EBriggs@a2gov.org>; JComell@a2gov.org
Cc: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Subject: Comprehensive Land-Use Plan

Please see attached letter.

Many thanks,

Joe O'Neal

Karen and Joe O'Neal
1920 Scottwood Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

May 6, 2025

Mayor Taylor and City Council Members
City Hall
301 East Huron Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

RE: COMPREHENSIVE LAND-USE PLAN

Dear Mayor Taylor and City Council Members:

There is a problem when a great university grows within a small community restrained by expressways on all sides. However, the proposed Comprehensive Land-Use Plan is not the solution. It is worse than the problem presented.

We believe that the focus of the Plan should be:

- 1) Preserving the beautiful treelined neighborhoods that have made Ann Arbor **"Ann Arbor"**.
- 2) Improving major arteries [Washtenaw, Packard, Stadium, Liberty, Miller, etc.] to become welcoming "Avenues" not commercial strip malls.
- 3) Densifying, within reason, all underutilized properties such as Arborland and vicinity; North Main; Briarwood; Westgate and vicinity; several locations on South State, Stadium, and Maple; multiple locations downtown [old phone company building that fronts on both Huron and Washington and the Federal Building on Liberty to name just two]; certain areas where civilization ceases and expressways begin; **ETC**. We believe that if several of us, as in the old days, were to sit down, without consultants, and ponder this question we could multiply this list several times.

- 4) Working with the University of Michigan to develop a strategy that eases the problem that is causing the problem. We know that this task has its challenges. However, don't forget, and don't let them forget, that this is their community as well as ours. Most of the people that make UM great call the areas we are seeking to preserve "home". It is often said: "As goes UM – so goes Ann Arbor". This can be flipped. Let's be proud and give AA credit for contributing to UM's success. After all, **"Ann Arbor"** is often used in place of **"University of Michigan"**.

It would be a crime to yank the protection of "zoning" from residents who have purchased their homes in reliance on these zoning laws being in place. There is no reason for requiring such a drastic and devastating change. Once done, there will be no way to reverse the damage.

One reason stated for up-zoning is to provide more affordable housing. The reverse will happen. Codes are burdensome and constant revisions never reduce costs; permits and tap fees continue to rise; bigger and taller buildings require more costly trades and construction details; taxes for everyone will rise to pay for added costs of streets/sidewalks, water, sewer, etc.; gas and electrical costs will rise; any savings using mass-production will be eaten by transportation/field-assembly; **ETC.** It is easy to prove that costs will rise. Has anyone proven they will go down? "Affordable" is an oxymoron in most cities – Ann Arbor is no exception. "Affordable" housing requires subsidies.

It is unfortunate that over \$1,000,000 [consultant = \$800,000 + staff] of taxpayer money has been invested in producing this flawed Comprehensive Land-Use Plan. Why the need for so many consultants in a city like Ann Arbor?

Please take a more constructive approach to this vital question.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Karen and Joe O'Neal

CC: Ann Arbor Planning Commission
Our Concerned Neighbors