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To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>

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Subject: Comments for 8/16/22 Public Hearing on TC-1 for W. Stadium / Maple

Planning Commission and Planning Staff,

I will be out of town on 8/16/22 when the Planning Commission Public Hearing on TC-1 zoning for W. Stadium and Maple will be held. I am submitting the comments below so they can be considered in Planning Commission deliberations, and for the public record.

The TC-1 Zoning that was approved for Briarwood is not "one size fits all" and is not appropriate for the W. Stadium / Maple corridor. A new and separate zoning category needs to be developed to achieve the stated goals (housing affordability, "walk ability," and carbon neutrality). Zoning code needs to specify requirements for the goals it intends to accomplish.

Increasing housing supply to make housing more affordable is a laudable goal. However, without any guidance or requirements in the zoning code, this is very unlikely to be achieved. Developers build to make money and Ann Arbor is a very desirable market. This quote by a local developer illustrates that point:

"The only way affordable housing will truly become an option is if the city specifically mandates it and is also willing to support it financially," Bonner said. "Otherwise, the 226 acres of rezoned properties around the mall will also become high-end luxury residential developments."

As more high-end apartments are built, rental rates across the market will continue to rise. The existing relatively 'affordable' apartments and condos immediately west of W. Stadium (on Pauline and S. Maple) will respond to market rate increases, raise rental rates, and drive more working people out of Ann Arbor. Thus, re-zoning to increase housing stock must include specific measures to encourage if not mandate lower rental rates.

Similarly, Ann Arbor has established a goal to be carbon neutral by 2030. If we are serious about meeting that goal, requirements for energy efficient building must be established. These requirements need to be in our new zoning codes.

It seems that "walk ability" is a desired outcome for the re-zoning of the W. Stadium / N. Maple corridor. Yet, buildings will edge right up to the sidewalks, with no space in between them "as in downtown." There is no plan for green space to soften the built environment. Yet, even in downtown there are planters, and the DDA plants trees to provide some relief. Residential areas typically have set-backs and landscape buffers. Why are these things omitted from the TC-1 zoning that we 'hope' will add housing stock? Pedestrians and those waiting for buses will, at least on occasion, need shelter from the hot sun, or the rain. Trees can provide such shelter, as well as reducing the "heat island" effect of pavement, brick, and other building material.

Because of the residential areas surrounding W. Stadium / N. Maple the dramatic heights allowed in TC-1 are not appropriate. I believe having a narrower range, or a uniform height limit, say of 5 stories, would make the proposal more palatable to more people. A height

limit of 5 stories mimics those in residential areas of great cities (Paris, Chicago). This more human scale is much more appealing for residents and travelers alike.

W. Stadium / Maple was selected for TC-1 zoning precisely because it is a major traffic artery through the city, so it was very disheartening to hear that traffic flow was evidently not considered at all in the planning process. W. Stadium / Maple, being surrounded by residential neighborhoods, is totally different from the Briarwood area for which TC-1 was approved. (Washtenaw and Plymouth Rd. are different in their own ways.) These differences deserve to be addressed to attempt the most appropriate, "best," plan for each area. To do otherwise is a disservice to our community. The impact on traffic flow, and planning for those impacts, is critical to the ultimate success of any zoning proposal.

Adding more bus service, bicycles, even pedestrians will increase the volume of traffic, and affect traffic flow. People (including the hoped for new residents) still need to get where they are going. Delivery trucks still need to service the Post Office, grocery and hardware stores, and other retail shops. New residents are likely to want deliveries from UPS, Fed Ex, etc. Will these delivery services block lanes of traffic on the road as so often now happens on Huron in front of the new apartments, or in the new protected bike lanes downtown? Will buses continue to impede traffic or will there be pull-off areas to allow the safe drop-off and pick-up of passengers, especially those in wheelchairs?

One commissioner suggested 'traffic calming measures' such as have been introduced into neighborhoods recently, which would further impede traffic. This is antithetical to a transit corridor! You can't have it both ways, residential street vs. thoroughfare. By definition a transit corridor must take transportation, and traffic, into account. Planning must include all anticipated types and volumes of traffic, and incorporate accommodations to ensure the safe and smooth flow of that traffic.

In summary, TC-1 Zoning is not "one size fits all." Briarwood is a destination location, on the edge of and separated from the rest of the city. By contrast, W. Stadium is a major traffic corridor surrounded by residential neighborhoods. The TC-1 zoning approved for Briarwood is not at all appropriate for W. Stadium / Maple. A separate zoning category that addresses the specific goals, and the specific characteristics, of this area is needed.

I hope you will listen to all the concerns, as well as the hopes, that have been expressed and re-work this zoning proposal to give it some chance of achieving the stated goals before bringing it forward for approval.

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P.S. I would appreciate confirmation that Planning Commission members received these comments.

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