

Subject:

DC-5 and the Comprehensive Plan

From: Adam Jaskiewicz**Sent:** Friday, April 4, 2025 12:27 PM**To:** City Council <CityCouncil@a2gov.org>**Cc:** Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>**Subject:** DC-5 and the Comprehensive Plan

Dear Mayor and City Council,

I'm writing to you about DC-5. As I am sure you expect, I'm not particularly happy with this. It feels like it is rolling back what we as a city have set out to do with our new comprehensive plan. While I recognize that it will indeed follow through on the elimination of exclusionary single-family zoning, I think it concedes too much and removes a lot of flexibility.

I would therefore like to request a couple of changes:

First, one of the tools you consider to ensure these new buildings fit into neighborhood contexts is "limiting maximum number of homes per building and/or number of beds per unit". I do not think this should be considered.

I think we should instead use approaches that limit the overall size or massing of buildings, and rule out the use of unit density limits. I think the other tools listed are great, such as "limiting maximum development scale by floor area or floor area ratio" or "modifying lot size minimums and setback requirements, and limiting parcel assemblages". These are appropriate ways to limit density.

Combining form-based standards with unit density limits, however, creates strange incentives that will create undesirable outcomes, such as limiting the number of apartments appropriate for families, young couples, and single people. We'll see more buildings designed to maximize the number of bedrooms, with four- or six-bedroom units rented to roommates.

Therefore, I believe unit density limits are incompatible with the other tools you present, and that bullet point should be removed.

Second, height limits. I don't think that the Comprehensive Land Use Plan should set a specific height limit. This dramatically reduces the flexibility of the Plan, and will restrict this and future councils from making changes in this area.

I do think you should ask Planning Commission to remove the specific height of 48 feet from the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Instead of replacing this with a 35 foot limit, however, I think this should be left to the UDC to work out. If you believe such a limit is necessary, you can instead include this height limit as part of

your direction to Planning Commission when implementing the Low-Rise Residential category in the UDC (the last RESOLVED clause). Commit to this and make it clear you will not pass a UDC change that does not include this height limit.

Furthermore, I think the height should be expressed as "three stories" rather than in feet. This will allow greater flexibility when writing our form-based code, particularly if we want to allow ground-floor commercial spaces which may have higher ceilings.

This approach will allow you and future councils the flexibility to modify this with a UDC amendment, without the need to amend the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. And it will still show your commitment to preserving neighborhood character.

Thank you,
Adam Jaskiewicz (he/his)
Ward 4