

Subject: Thoughts on comprehensive plan

From: Emily Abbenante
Sent: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 9:57 AM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
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Dear committee

Thank you for your work in envisioning a future for Ann Arbor. Like many residents I view affordable housing as one of the most pressing issues facing our community. While I am largely in support of the comprehensive plan, there are some issues I hope continue to be explored and clarified by the committee. I am in support of upzoning generally including multi level residences and mixed commercial/residential development, including in my own neighborhood - Lower Burns Park. I ask that the committee please speak to and/or address the following issues as they continue planning:

1. While I agree with the need for denser residential development, it seems there is also a need for the development of smaller "starter" single family homes as well, and without the development of both, the residential needs of the community will not be met. I ask that the commission consider and support measures that will increase the development of single family homes including making it easier for single family homes to be built and offering incentives/putting restrictions on developments to encourage the construction of smaller homes. If families continue to be unable to afford to live in Ann Arbor, the impact on our public schools will be immense. While families do live in multi unit residences, they also occupy and need affordable single family dwellings. Additionally, I support any requirements for affordable housing to be required in multi unit developments.
2. I ask the committee to consider and put restrictions on how many parcels can be combined to create a multi unit dwelling. I am in support of allowing some combination, but would also like to see a cap.
3. I am concerned about the environmental impact of development. I recognize that there will always be pros and cons to any development plan, but it is unclear how much this has been considered. With larger buildings and fewer yards run off would likely be increased and the lack of greenery would seemingly impact temperature. Will there be requirements for rain gardens or roof gardens to offset this? How is the city's goal of sustainability being taken into account in new developments? I am asking the committee to consider including requirements for these measures and to not change the current set backs as these allow for green spaces. Additionally, for those residents who currently have solar panels, will measures be taken to ensure that future developments do not block these investments in sustainability?

In summary, I am in support of further residential development in Ann Arbor and consider it necessary for our town to grow. My fervent hope is that the comprehensive plan results in actual affordability for ALL residents of our community and not solely increased rental properties that perhaps lower rent (a much needed measure!) but ultimately have no positive impact on homeowners or those hoping to purchase homes.

Sincerely and with recognition of my lack of expertise in these matters,

Emily Abbenante-Honold
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