



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 25-0761, **Version:** 1

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### Resolution Regarding the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Low-Rise Residential Density Background

Zoning that prohibits multifamily housing (all R1 and R2 areas) is currently applied to 54% of developable land in Ann Arbor. While many of these districts thrive, this framework also artificially constrains housing supply, drives up prices, and creates an economic reality that excludes middle-income people from purchasing or renting homes. When housing demand is high, only those with greater affluence can access a limited housing supply. We believe that we can have successful, lively neighborhoods with close access to employment and entertainment centers, and increased housing supply that positively impacts affordability and resident diversity.

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) is importantly distinct from Zoning regulations. It is a policy statement of principles and goals that shape the priorities, and future zoning decisions that are made to designate and regulate land use. A Comprehensive Plan can be more or less specific on these points. It can detail clear, balanced, and readily implementable land use regulations or defer specification of those details to future discussions.

As part of City Council's directive for the CLUP, planning staff and consultant teams have engaged with the community extensively to develop the draft plan. The state requirement for engagement is a 63-day review period once the drafted plan is released. Over the past year, Staff have already mounted events, conversations, and surveys citywide. So far, we have received over 4000 distinct resident inputs-and the 63-day state-mandated public review period is still to come. In the meantime, the City will host additional engagement sessions on the initial draft of the plan starting this month (April 2025).

The CLUP community consensus that has emerged to date from this public engagement supports an incremental increase in potential density to support 3-story, multi-family housing in a proposed Low Rise Residential Area.

Whereas, Pursuant to resolution R-23-131 <<https://a2gov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6124799&GUID=9D65CC3D-0D29-4EC8-84E5-085A0325CB33&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=interface>>, increasing the potential density in all districts is important to provide new housing supply and typology to the City;

Whereas, Increasing housing supply in a variety of types and locations is the best available method for the City to use land planning and regulations to increase affordability;

Whereas, New housing should be appropriate in scale and size to harmoniously grow neighborhoods, integrating more households into traditionally low-density areas;

Whereas, Broad support has emerged from CLUP public engagement for an incremental increase in potential density at an appropriate scale to existing neighborhoods;

Whereas, City Planning Commission has entertained an appropriate scale of up to 48 feet and four stories;

Whereas, City Council recognizes and respects the Planning Commission's crucial and autonomous role in the administration and development of the City's land use policy and laws, including drafting the CLUP;

Whereas, City Council does not draft, and cannot amend, the CLUP;

Whereas, City Council will vote on whether or not to accept the CLUP after it has been drafted and approved by Planning Commission; and

Whereas, City Council believes prior communication regarding potential divergences between Planning Commission and City Council is appropriate and efficient.

RESOLVED, That the City Council believes that the appropriate scale for development in proposed Low-rise residential areas is an incremental increase over the traditional patterns of height, scale, and mass of development in these areas, and;

RESOLVED, That the City Council requests that Planning Commission define this proposed area to feature a limitation of height to 35 feet, allowing for three stories, which is consistent with community consensus to date;

RESOLVED, That the City Council requests that, in implementing the Low-Rise Residential land use category, Planning Commission consider tools that are known to fit denser development harmoniously into neighborhood contexts, which may include:

- Overall limit on development intensity to ensure appropriate scale for available infrastructure
- Incentives or standards that encourage the development of smaller, more flexible homes that help increase the supply of homes
- Limiting maximum development scale by floor area or floor area ratio
- Limiting maximum number of homes per building and/or number of beds per unit
- Modifying lot size minimums and setback requirements, and limiting parcel assemblages.

Sponsored by: Mayor Taylor and Councilmembers Disch, Eyer, Radina and Watson