

From: Brian Chambers
To: Planning; Lenart, Brett; Carolyn Lusch; Oliver Kiley; Stacey; Bennett, Michelle; Higgins, Sara; Delacourt, Derek; Manor, Courtney
Subject: Draft 3 of the CLUP - Excellent - But Please Adjust Timeline for Recommendation 1.4
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Chair, Commissioners, and neighbors: (Brett / Courtney, please share with the Planning Commission)

Ann Arbor stands at a crossroads. We face a severe housing shortage that is driving out families, young professionals, and long-time neighbors alike. Draft 3 of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan offers a path forward—a principled opening of neighborhoods, while connecting housing growth to walkability, transit, and sustainability.

This plan does not call for sudden upheaval—it provides for **incremental change**: duplexes and triplexes allowed in Residential areas, with careful height and scale limits; more homes along corridors and hubs tied to infrastructure; and a framework for affordability and permanence that builds on our affordable housing millage, nonprofit partnerships, and zoning reform toolkit.

But we must also acknowledge what the plan itself identifies:

Recommendation 1.4—prioritize and expedite the process for subsidized affordable housing development across the city.

In the current draft, regulatory updates—like those making it easier for land trusts and shared equity housing to succeed—are scheduled 4 to 6 years out. That is too long.

The urgency of our housing crisis means we cannot wait. These reforms should begin now, and be **ongoing**, so that community land trusts, nonprofit developers, and affordability stewards can more efficiently get shovels in the ground.

At the same time, Draft 3 makes clear that **housing growth and affordability must not come at the expense of Ann Arbor’s natural features, open space, or ecological integrity**. The plan affirms that preserving woodlands, wetlands, floodplains, and tree canopy is not negotiable—it is part of the character and sustainability of our community.

Our goal is not growth versus nature; it is growth with nature, where affordability and density are advanced in tandem with protection of the ecosystems that make Ann Arbor livable.

Critics worry about neighborhood disruption or overreach. Let us be clear: the **Future Land Use Map is guidance, not zoning**. Parks remain parks. Natural features

remain protected. Neighborhoods will evolve gradually, not overnight. But if we fail to act quickly, the cost of waiting will be measured in more displaced neighbors, longer commutes, and a less inclusive Ann Arbor.

Yes, national economic uncertainty looms—rising costs, unstable policy directions in Washington—but that is precisely why Ann Arbor must lead. Local action is our shield. By accelerating reforms, we ensure more homes are built faster, costs are stabilized, opportunities for income-eligible households expand permanently, and all of it is done while **protecting our natural environment and local ecology**.

So, I urge you: **adopt Draft 3 with an added commitment to accelerating its affordability reforms promptly**. Let's not defer to 4–6 years on what can and should be done on an **ongoing** basis. Otherwise, it will not be responsive to the housing crisis we're experiencing.

Let's come together—as neighbors, not adversaries—to affirm that Ann Arbor's future is one of **walkability, equity, ecological stewardship, diversity, community cohesion, and bottom-up placemaking**.

This is our chance to broaden belonging, safeguard our environment, and keep Ann Arbor a place for all.

Let's seize it—together!

To the Planning staff and consultants, as well as the Planning Commission, thank you for your hard work, perseverance, and steadfastness to Ann Arbor's core values and principles,

Brian Chambers, Ph.D.
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