

Subject: Stay strong, don't "pause the plan"

From: Katrina Folsom
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 4:09 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Subject: Stay strong, don't "pause the plan"

Good afternoon,

As I bike into downtown, I see various yard signs fear-mongering about the Comprehensive Plan. A common refrain is to "pause the plan," spreading misperceptions that the planning process has been taking part in secret, without public engagement.

Well, I'm dropping into your inbox to say that even though I didn't initially recognize past events as being part of the ongoing comprehensive plan process, the connection is very clear on the A2 Engage website. So I want to counteract their misleading claims with a message of support to keep going!

It's well established that anti-change people use process-based tactics to try to sink efforts they don't like, rather than debate them on the substance. Don't fall for it!

Speaking of keeping things on track, there seems to be a lot of misunderstanding about what the Comprehensive Plan will do vs. the detailed zoning that will come after. I was fuzzy on this too. But now I know the current process is about setting a vision for our city, so it's wrong that many of these signs say things like "our neighborhood is being rezoned." That's straight up fear-mongering, and it can easily take hold with a topic like this that takes effort to understand. It might be worth stepping up efforts to help moderate, perhaps disengaged people (who are vulnerable to misinformation) understand what the process is and how it could benefit them.

To that end, on the substance of it, I support allowing more density to enable missing middle housing and preserve the diversity and vibrancy that makes Ann Arbor special. (And trees, of course, but I don't see that as incompatible.) What really gets me about the yard signs is that, no coincidence, they're in the wealthiest neighborhoods where residents evidently don't want to let anyone else in. Some of them could probably appreciate that allowing things like triplexes could directly benefit them, like if they have young adult children or elderly parents who want to live nearby. But that's not the overriding narrative...

I appreciate the Planning Commission's work to create a forward-looking plan and wanted to offer thanks and support for what I assume is often thankless work.

Have a great weekend!

Katrina Folsom
2411 Dayton Dr, Ann Arbor, MI 48108