

Subject: Forwarded message from historian and filmmaker Ken Burns to the Ann Arbor Planning Commission and City Council
Attachments: Ann Arbor _ Ken Burns (FINAL).docx

From: Anthony Pinnell
Sent: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 7:51 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>; City Council <CityCouncil@a2gov.org>
Subject: Forwarded message from historian and filmmaker Ken Burns to the Ann Arbor Planning Commission and City Council

To the Planning Commission and City Council of Ann Arbor, Michigan

Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 at 5:28 p.m.
From: "admin 1"
To: "Anthony Pinnell"
Subject: Re: Contact Us Forms Submission

Hi Tony,

Here's the final version of the letter from Ken. He's fine with you reading it at tomorrow's meeting and sending it to both of the city bodies on his behalf (via email).

We wish you the best of luck!

Jillian Hempstead
Executive Assistant to Ken Burns

Word has reached me that the Planning Commission in Ann Arbor has prepared a draft Comprehensive Land Use Plan that many residents fear will alter the city's college-town landscape too radically. I've read that while smart, high-density development is welcome at many locations, the plan's broad-stroke approach exposes much of old Ann Arbor to teardown and high-rise building catering only to wealthy buyers and high-end renters.

I grew up in Ann Arbor in a small, modest wooden house – that's still there - in Burns Park at the bottom end of Wellington Court - a little back-alleyway off Cambridge. I went to Burns Park Elementary School, Tappen Jr. High School and Pioneer, graduating in 1971. I walked down Minerva, Olivia and South Forest Streets every day. It delights me that schoolchildren at Burns Park who've perhaps watched some of my work may actually pass by my house, and maybe, just maybe, be inspired.

Creativity is born from knowing and curating our past, while exploring and embracing the future. Ann Arbor has traditionally enjoyed a strong sense of the past mixed with innovative, cutting-edge thinking. My hope is that the town can find a healthy, productive balance to modernize intelligently and ergonomically, but also retain, nourish and rejuvenate its storied history and architecture. That moderation and balance will keep your sense of place strong.

Sincerely,

Ken Burns