

Subject:

Comprehensive Plan Review Discussion / 25-069 / 10-a.

From: Gregg Saldutti Jr**Sent:** Tuesday, April 1, 2025 7:30 PM**To:** Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan Review Discussion / 25-069 / 10-a.

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in regards to the Comprehensive Plan discussion on tonight's agenda (4/1/2025).

I would first like to say thank you to all of the commissioners and staff involved for all the hard work that you have put in during this long process.

As a long-term renter, I am writing to support every effort to legalize more housing and density through the entire city of Ann Arbor. It has been exciting to see the broad support for the legalization of a broader array of housing options that has been shown during the public outreach events that I have attended over the past 12+ months.

Recently, it seems there has been an increase in vocal opposition to the efforts that the commission has made to further housing affordability and availability. There are many things that opponents would argue that more development will bring: increased rent (not true); destruction of the 'character' of the city (incoherent); abolishment of single family zoning (I wish, but also not true); lower property costs (yes, hopefully).

But, the fact of the matter is that there is a great deal of support for increasing housing options in the city, and in doing so increasing affordability of housing. This is borne out anecdotally in my experience at the planning events I have attended in the past, as well as in the data the city has collected throughout this process.

Further, increased housing and density is good for a number of reasons. It is good for the environment, because it allows people to live close to where they work and shop, meaning fewer miles driven or fewer car trips all together. It also means less greenfield development in the surrounding area. And apartment buildings are simply more efficient in terms of energy use for heating and cooling homes. It is good for the city's tax base, not only in adding taxpayers to the tax rolls, but also in the tax value per acre of property. It is also more efficient for city infrastructure, services and public transportation. And it is good for addressing decades of racial and income inequality, allowing low wage workers to live closer to their places of work, rather than having long commutes and using more income on transportation or child care.

The final thing I would like to highlight is that anti-development sentiment has been rife in this community for 50 years. From 1950 to 1970 there was a massive housing boom in Ann Arbor. These homes were built under a regime of single family restrictive zoning not only in Ann Arbor, but throughout the country. These

laws were developed with the logic of racial and class exclusion baked in, something that has been shown in works like *The Color of Law*, and *Arbitrary Lines: How Zoning Broke the American City and How to Fix It*. We can also see the same arguments that we see today; the city is full, neighborhood character will be destroyed, and (worst of all) there will be no parking. It's time to stop having the same argument and it's time to finally legalize more housing in the city.

Regards,
Gregg Saldutti
515 W Liberty APT 3

Public Divided On C

Feb. 14, 1972

By Ron Cordray
(City Government Reporter)

Ann Arbor's growth — or lack of it — will be a major issue facing city government during the coming months.

If City Council hopes to get some guidance from citizens it will find there is no unanimity on the question.

"If the city doesn't grow it will become very exclusive to the detriment of the community."

"We've about reached the limit (in size) I'd like to see."

These are two of the conflicting opinions received in a random survey of citizen opinion on the growth question conducted recently by The News. A much more elaborate survey conducted last year emphasizes the split in the community on this issue.

Mrs. Neal Laurence, a housewife living at 876 Heather Way, expounded the exclusivity theory. She says a no-growth policy would lead to an "exclusive and segregated city." Mrs. Laurence favors a policy of controlled growth but admits she has no answer on how this is to be accomplished.

She is not alone in this, for the City Council is also perplexed on how to achieve controlled growth. It is instituting a four-month study on the growth question.

Growth, says Mrs. Laurence, should be discussed in relation to the rest of the area. Such a discussion could come at the regional level through the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, she said.

On the other side of the issue was Richard Lewis of 3635 Green Brier Blvd. Involved in medical research at University Hospital, Lewis came here from Boston, Mass. "I like the size of the community," he said. "It's large enough to provide good services, but you don't get the feeling that you're living in a large town." He said if Ann Arbor continues to grow it "would lose some of its charm and uniqueness, especially if it becomes industrialized."

A young lady who lives in southeast Ann Arbor and wished not to be identified by name said she was "very much against more growth." She recently received her master's degree in biology from the University. "I just think Ann Arbor is getting too big, you can barely park downtown, the schools are overcrowded, and you have a sewage problem."

"Besides," she said, "I'd like to see a few trees instead of apartment houses," stating the city should discourage additional apartment building on the outskirts of the city. "We shouldn't encourage any more people to move here," she said. "I don't want to see Ann Arbor become just another suburb of Detroit."

One of the events which focused attention on the growth question was the overcrowding of Clinton Elementary School. Mrs. Robert Anderson of 2805 Sequoia Parkway moved to her new address from the Clinton area, but said her family did not move because of the overcrowding issue.

Mrs. Anderson, a housewife, is also from a larger city — Philadelphia, Pa. "I feel the city should grow," she said, stating this would be "beneficial to everyone." She said she would like Ann Arbor just as well if it were a larger city. There should be a limit on size, she said, but that limit should be based on services that are available.

Another housewife, Mrs. Ralph O. Cammett of 1105 Granger, says she believes the city is large enough now. "If it got much bigger, and we had many more people, the traffic would be worse and it's terrible now." She said there is no place to park downtown, noting she's been downtown only twice in the past year or so to shop and both times she received a parking ticket. "I'll never go down there again," she vowed.

"We have enough problems already, at least in the downtown area," Mrs. Cammett said.

John R. Kurkjian, a local Realtor and developer who lives at 2359 Renfrew, believes the city should grow. He said the city "abdicates any responsibility as a community if we say we're not going to grow." He, like many others, says there will be growth in the Ann Arbor area. The ultimate size of the city, Kurkjian says, relates to the ability to service the new areas.

"It is our responsibility to take care of the problem, the city is equipped to do so. We can do it better, and are more able to do it, than the townships," Kurkjian said.

Don Raley of 3129 Baylis finds himself in a quandary over the growth issue. He is in the construction business and therefore advocates growth, but adds "as a taxpayer I have second thoughts."

Raley lives in the Clinton School district. "All I can tell you is that we've grown too fast for the schools. We seem to keep breaking ground for houses but there is no action on schools."

Stating he doesn't think you can stop growth, Raley says he believes "the cart is being put before the horse." The school overcrowding problems will exist whether the growth occurs in the city limits or in the townships, Raley adds.