

Subject: Please Clear Up the Confusion

From: bpbblock@umich.edu
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2025 11:56 AM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Subject: Please Clear Up the Confusion

Dear Members of the City Planning Commission:

A recent article about the Commission's draft comprehensive plan and community outreach effort appeared in mlive.com (4/28/25). It states (quoting Council Member Dharma Akmon, D-4th Ward):

The status quo is failing many people, Akmon said, saying modest, aging homes that used to be attainable to middle-income families are selling for \$600,000.

"The status quo is nurses, lab techs and university staff commuting from Pinckney or Jackson — great places, but not where many would choose to live if they could afford Ann Arbor," she said, saying she wants to build a city that works for everyone, not just the lucky few.

The implication of Akmon's statement is that the Commission's draft plan, if implemented, would result in significantly more affordable, low-cost housing, thus allowing the people whom she mentions to live in Ann Arbor should they choose to do so. But nowhere in the plan, certainly not in Chapter 5, is this outcome clearly stated or promised.

If the Commission knows of credible research or other evidence that supports such an outcome, it should prominently say so, particularly in Chapter 5, citing references, e.g., reports from analogous cities that have implemented such a plan, journal articles from refereed publications, communications from officials in analogous cities, etc., so that readers of the draft plan can decide for themselves based on some facts.

If the Commission does not have credible research to support such an outcome or knows of credible research that contradicts such an outcome, then it should state this clearly throughout the plan, particularly in Chapter 5.

There are ways in which more affordable housing can be obtained such as through land trusts and co-ops. Unfortunately, these proven methods seem not to be endorsed in the draft plan.

Quite frankly, I find the draft plan to be sadly short on facts and references that might educate or enlighten me and long on colorful cartoons and buzzy undefined phrases that attempt to paint a rosy picture to convince me that the Commission's vision is a viable one. We, the citizens of our fine city, deserve better.

Last, if it is the intent of the Commission to do away with R1 and R2 zoning, how about having the courage and honesty to state as much right up front as well as in Chapter 5.

Best regards,

Bruce Block
1319 Olivia Avenue