

Subject: A Fork in the Road
Attachments: BP Block Comments 5-13-2025.pdf

From: Bruce Block
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2025 5:50 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Cc: Taylor, Christopher (Mayor) <CTaylor@a2gov.org>; Radina, Travis <TRadina@a2gov.org>; Ghazi Edwin, Ayesha <AGhaziEdwin@a2gov.org>
Subject: A Fork in the Road

Please find the attached PDF containing my comments re the CLUP for submission to the City Planning Commission meeting on May 13, 2025.

Thank you,

Bruce Block

To the Members of the City Planning Commission:

It seems to me that the Commission has reached a fork in the road:

1. You can proceed on your current path of making edits to the draft Plan, producing a final Plan that is in substance what we see in the current version;
2. Or you can acknowledge the significant and valid criticisms that have been voiced, e.g., in the Barry document¹, pausing the process to undertake a complete review of the basic assumptions put forth in the draft Plan and then proceeding (with a rigor and citizen involvement that is wholly lacking in the current version) to produce a revised Plan with supportable basic premises and reasonable actions based on these premises.

I have read the draft Plan and followed the numerous comments, both in the Commission's public comment sessions and through submitted emails. I do not overstate when I say that the Commission's credibility is at stake following the publication of the well-researched and convincing Barry document, which performs the very sort of basic homework that should have been done and subsequently presented in the draft Plan.

I will not re-iterate the fundamental objections to the draft Plan, which are clearly stated in the Barry document², other than to say that the basic premise of the draft Plan, i.e., a housing crisis exists in Ann Arbor and that drastic actions (such as doing away with R1 and R2 zoning) must be taken to solve this supposed crisis, causes me to doubt that the Commission has the long-term interests of the current residents of the City at heart. Nor does the Commission appear to be interested in maintaining the essential character of our city – its tree-canopied streets, open spaces, and peaceful neighborhoods – for future generations to enjoy. The draft Plan raises the question: *cui bono*? Certainly not the residents, the long-term investors in the city where they have staked their future.

Which path will the Commission take? If it chooses 1., I submit that the drastic zoning changes now proposed, if made into law by City Council, will forever be suspect, and that the now-famous premonition expressed by Commissioner/Councilperson Disch³ may come to pass. If it chooses 2., the Commission has the opportunity, through true engagement with the residents of the city, to produce a fact-based, well-reasoned, and measured Plan that its citizens can and will support.

I sincerely hope that the Commission will choose path 2.

Submitted by: Bruce Block, 1319 Olivia Avenue, Ann Arbor, May 13, 2025

¹ Barry, Hank, Letter to Mayor Taylor et al., Re: Proposed Comprehensive Plan., May 5, 2025
<https://a2gov.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=14151125&GUID=37C501BE-529B-4C92-BC31-DEAA9F6181D2>

² Ibid., pp. 1-4

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcwFdmLw3LU> , time 0:00-0:38