

Staff Edits for the draft Comprehensive Land Use Plan

May 6, 2025

Office of Sustainability and Innovation

- Land for circular economy's "messier" uses
- Research on building heights and solar panels
- SEU is most resilient when it focuses on small-scale generation and distribution (no need for large-scale solar).
- 10.2 - If only focused on areas with existing flooding, we'll always be on our heels. The city has to get to a point of being more forward looking as opposed to reactive.
- The city's greenhouse gas inventory shows 70% of emissions locally come from the built environment

Downtown Development Authority

- Want to make sure that strategies 6.1. and 6.2 work together and not against each other in terms of funding and priority.
- DDA want to provide this support and TIF is the appropriate tool to strengthen the downtown environment and infrastructure. However, the DDA funding model needs to change to be able to provide this support.

Transportation

- Complete Streets: The Moving Together plan makes recommendations for a city-wide network of high-frequency bus service and a complete bike network with separation from motor vehicles on major streets. The existing rights of way in some street corridors are wide enough to provide space for each travel mode to have dedicated space; in other corridors the rights of way are narrower and will require tradeoffs in their design.
- The desired roadway designs will need to be in conversation with future development along major roads as building setbacks and access will define the space available for the pedestrian realm as well as safety, transit, and cycling features. The City is developing street design concepts on major (multi-lane) roads that advance community priorities. There will be places where corridor right of way space is too constrained for all desired features. For these corridors, critical considerations will need to be made to either limit the features of the

roadway or make time and money preparations to purchase additional right of way in the corridor.

Solid Waste

- If there's no parking required for new MF development, where will dumpsters go? How does solid waste operationally serve higher density development?

Systems Planning

- 10.1: Part of the narrative says "introducing more flexibility to site plan review will help ensure ecosystem benefit such as woodland preservation, restoration of degraded critical features or landmark trees of a certain size are prioritized over dimensional standards alone and that performance metrics and incentives reflect these priorities."
 - Where is the research that supports this? Staff think it is more likely that flexibility would further degrade natural features rather than protect them.
 - Suggest that the city states that we do not intend to roll back environmental protections
- Page 106: There should be another topic area on this page focused on utility infrastructure needs - water, sanitary AND stormwater.

Economic Development

- While I value the strong policy support for housing development, a healthy city must balance residential and employment growth. Overprioritizing housing risks undermining one of Ann Arbor's greatest strengths: our ability to grow and retain advanced industries, thanks to our highly educated workforce and the presence of the University of Michigan.
- Retaining our graduates requires high-quality, career-aligned job opportunities in sectors like STEM, health sciences, and technology. We should focus more on employment or we risk losing talent to communities that offer both affordability and professional opportunity. Yet there are very few parcels in the city properly zoned or situated to support that kind of development. The City must protect these areas. Allowing housing - even limited housing - can compromise their viability for employment uses. Not only does it take that particular parcel off the table for future employment-centered development, it can deter job-generating uses on adjacent parcels due to compatibility concerns or the perception by the business of a more difficult approval process (neighbors don't always love new industry).

- For areas designated “Flex,” the Plan should be much clearer. The current definition blurs the line between employment-based “flex space” and a catch-all district for “everything else + housing.” We should remove housing references from this district and create stronger policies that support high-quality employment growth. These employment districts are too scarce to treat as just another mixed-use zone. Even going a step further, I think a conversation about allowing low-impact tech or R&D uses in Transition zoning districts would be something to consider. Some areas along arterials would be tough spots for retail/restaurant/service but great spots for new ventures.
- The Plan lacks meaningful policy support for business attraction and job creation. While the “Key Considerations” in the Economic Development chapter are helpful, they are the exception rather than a consistent focus. The Plan should include a clear policy stating that the City is open to using incentives, such as tax abatements, for projects aligned with Ann Arbor’s core economic strengths like biomedical, advanced R&D, clean manufacturing, and technology. It’s not necessary to list specific tools, but the Plan should affirm the City’s commitment to strategic investment in job-creating businesses. Without this, we limit our ability to support growth in high-value sectors.

Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility

- Goal 8: More frequent and heavy storms will impact the WRRF’s ability to process these flows as higher dry weather flows from growth will reduce the ability of the Equalization/Retention tank to hold the more intense storm flows generated.

Parks and Recreation

- 4.1 – What determines low- and high-quality parks?

AAATA

- Page 99: Include the U-M Campus Plan Bus Rapid Transit
- As previously mentioned on 2/20/25, AAATA suggests that all of Plymouth/Broadway be identified as Transition (there seems to be a gap between roughly Murfin and Maiden). Plymouth is identified as a BRT corridor so the entirety of the Plymouth corridor should receive this future land use designation.