

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Brett Lenart, Planning Manager

SUBJECT: **Annual Comprehensive Plan Review**

DATE: May 17, 2022

PROPOSED PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

RESOLVED, That the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby approves the "2022 Comprehensive Plan Resolution" and the "2022 – Comprehensive Plan Resource Documents Resolution."

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **approving** the motion that adopts the attached Comprehensive Plan Resolution and Comprehensive Plan Resource Documents Resolution.

STAFF REPORT

While Act 33 of 2008 requires review of the City Comprehensive Plan ("Plan") every five years, Article III of the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission Bylaws requires Commission review of the Plan each May. The purpose of Plan review is to identify policies that may need to be studied for possible change or new policies that should be added to the Plan. On average, this review was conducted once every 1 ½ years since 2008.

While some enabling legislation, ordinances, and past policy documents utilize the term "Master Plan," included in the proposed resolution is a commitment to seek other terminology (i.e., Comprehensive Plan). This is done to move away from the term "Master Plan," which can be associated with slavery, paternalism, and perhaps a finality that are not reflective of our community's desires.

The City's Comprehensive Plan is currently comprised of eight documents, which in total create the City's Comprehensive Plan. Some of these components of the Plan warrant more focus through an upcoming process to update the City's Plan:

- Natural Features Master Plan – 2014
- Downtown Plan – 2009
- Land Use Element – 2009
- Sustainability Framework – 2013
- South State Corridor Plan – 2013

More recent components, are either independently being updated or are distinct and of a recent adoption that lends to incorporation/carry forward in a new Plan without the resources of revisiting or amending:

- Parks and Recreation Open Space - 2016
- Treeline Allen Creek Urban Trail Master Plan – 2017
- Moving Together Toward Vision Zero – Comprehensive Transportation Plan - 2021

A public hearing was held on May 4th meeting to allow community members the opportunity to suggest changes or other comment on the City's planning documents.

Staff recommends that Planning Commission adopt the attached resolution, which recommends an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. This recommendation is based on the following:

- The consolidated Land Use Element of the City Plan was adopted over a decade ago. While reviewed in an ongoing fashion, it has not evolved since adoption. The Land Use Element adoption relied primarily on recommendations made from the 1990 South Area Plan, the 1992 Central Area Plan, the 1995 West Area Plan, and the 2006 Northeast Area Plan. Today, the City's land use policies are based in analysis and community goals specified over 30 years ago in some instances.
- Over time, public institutions have become more educated on their role in perpetuating racism and economic segregation. Through the Plan process, the City can acknowledge its role, both active and passive, in land use and other policies that have adversely impacted non-white communities in the evolution of the City. As a focus of an Ann Arbor planning effort, this focus provides the City an opportunity to identify reparative measures to ensure a more equitable future.
- In 2019, the City Council declared a Climate Emergency and directed the creation of a plan to guide the City toward Carbon Neutrality by 2030. The A²Zero Living Carbon Neutrality Plan was adopted in 2020, which prescribes a set of strategies to achieve carbon neutrality in Ann Arbor through the reduction of 2.1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions annually. There are numerous intersections between these strategies and land use. The planning update process should integrate these carbon neutrality goals in the Comprehensive Plan to accelerate success.
- Over time, the City has adopted Eight (8) documents that comprise the Comprehensive Plan and have added 17 "resource documents" as well. The volume of these plans (in distinct documents and pages) makes it difficult for residents, property owners, and boards and commissions to maintain a comprehensive understanding of City goals. A more concise rendering of the City's land use goals would benefit the use and implementation of the goals that are developed.
- Affordability is an acute challenge for the City in supporting a diverse population, a robust workforce, and sustainability goals. As part of a Plan process, conversations should consider revisioning of single-family zoning districts to enable more quantity and distinct housing typologies, consideration of revising development standards that to support more housing supply, and goals to support the expansion of affordable housing at the lowest, and most challenging income levels.

Based on these factors, staff recommends adoption of the attached resolution, which supports a comprehensive update to the City's Plan.

Attachments: Draft Comprehensive Plan Resolution
Draft Comprehensive Plan Resource Document Resolution



CITY OF ANN ARBOR PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION

2022 – COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RESOLUTION

Whereas, The City Planning Commission is authorized by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended), to make and adopt a comprehensive plan for the City; and

Whereas, The City Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for decisions and recommendations regarding the physical development of the City and for the implementation of related plans, policies and programs; and

Whereas, The Planning Commission held a public hearing on May 4, 2022 to gather input regarding the City Comprehensive Plan; and

Whereas, The Planning Commission has considered the documents below and concluded that based on many factors, including equity, climate change, and affordability, an extensive review and update to the City's Comprehensive Plan documents is warranted.

Resolved, The Planning Commission hereby affirms the following documents to constitute the elements of the City Comprehensive Plan:

1. Natural Features Master Plan (2004)
2. Downtown Plan (2009)
3. Land Use Element (2009)
4. South State Corridor Plan (2013)
5. Sustainability Framework (2013)
6. Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (2016)
7. Treeline Allen Creek Urban Trail Master Plan (2018)
8. Moving Together Towards Vision Zero—Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2021);

Resolved, The Planning Commission recommends a full review and update to the City's Comprehensive Plan beginning in FY23 and commits to the Commission's leadership to undertake this process; and

Resolved, The Planning Commission recommends the allocation of city resources to solicit both consultant assistance and internal support of a comprehensive plan update process.



CITY OF ANN ARBOR PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION

2022 – COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RESOURCE DOCUMENTS RESOLUTION

Whereas, The Comprehensive Plan of the City of Ann Arbor is used by the City Planning Commission as a guide for decisions and recommendations regarding the physical development of the City and for the implementation of related plans, policies and programs; and

Whereas, several valuable studies and historical plans support the City Comprehensive Plan by providing additional detail for interpretation and implementation of the recommendations;

Resolved, the planning documents listed below shall be used by the Planning Commission and Planning staff as resource information in support of the City Comprehensive Plan:

1. Current Fiscal Year Capital Improvements Plan (2018-2023)
2. Fuller/Geddes/Conrail Corridor Study (1994)
3. Miller/Maple/Newport Traffic and Circulation Study (1995)
4. Briarwood Subarea Plan (1995)
5. Downtown Vision and Policy Framework (Calthorpe Study – 2006)
6. Northeast Area Transportation Plan (2006)
7. Flood Mitigation Plan (2007)
8. Allen Creek Greenway Task Force Report (2007)
9. Washtenaw County Access Management Plan (2008)
10. Huron River and Impoundment Management Plan (2009)
11. Washtenaw Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Strategy (2010)
12. Downtown Design Guidelines (2011)
13. Connecting William Street Plan (2013)
14. Climate Action Plan (2013)
15. North Main Street/Huron River Corridor Vision for the Future Report (2013)
16. Reimagine Washtenaw Corridor Improvement Study (2014)
17. Washtenaw County Affordability and Economic Equity Analysis (2015);

Resolved, The Planning Commission recommends a full review and update to the City's Comprehensive Plan and the resource documents above in the coming years and commits to the Commission's leadership to undertake this process; and

Resolved, The Planning Commission recommends the allocation of resources to solicit both consultant assistance and internal support of a comprehensive plan update process.