

Subject: Input to the Comprehensive Plan

From: Larry Schmitt
Sent: Monday, March 3, 2025 1:34 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Cc: Climate Action Team <climate-action-team@gaggle.email>
Subject: Input to the Comprehensive Plan

Hello Commissioners,

Attached is input for the group developing Ann Arbor's Comprehensive Plan. It is from the Wolfpack Climate Action Team of which I am the Chair. We are strongly advocating that the Comprehensive Plan place an increased emphasis on building decarbonization, to go along with Land Use, affordability etc., as a top priority. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or comments.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xALEKJhLRbicA0JoNgU4D_QKrPM1oo7lgQTX3bEHohl/edit?tab=t.0

For those of you not familiar with the Wolfpack and its Climate Action Team, [here is a brief description](#).

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Climate Action in the A2 Comprehensive Plan

The Climate Action Team of the Ann Arbor Wolfpack, a local network of over 40 climate activists, is strongly advocating that the A2 Comprehensive Plan emphasize building decarbonization and zero-emissions in its comprehensive plan. Specifically, the comprehensive plan should commit the City to

1. Require all new buildings to be built to [Passive House standards](#) by a set date
2. Require all new buildings to be [Zero-emission](#) by a set date
3. Develop a plan, policies and incentives to improve existing buildings to get as close to these same goals (Passive House, Zero Emissions) as reasonably possible.

Climate change caused by human activity is happening. It is now inevitable. We have already passed critical thresholds that guarantee degrees of warming this decade. This makes it all the more critical for action to happen to stop the emissions of CO₂ and CH₄. Buildings are a major contributor, accounting for approximately 30% of emissions nationwide. It's much higher in Ann Arbor, where 69% of our emissions come from the operation of buildings.. Stopping the emissions from buildings is necessary to achieve climate stability.

What is sitting in the way of zero emissions buildings? These are the key perceived barriers

- Knowledge and experience
- Technology
- Economics
- Market demand
- **Sense of urgency**

These barriers, in fact, no longer exist. The technology and solutions exist. The economics and financing are favorable if the building is built to passive house standards. The market is at a tipping point and a sense of urgency is rapidly emerging. It is policy, planning and politics that now need to lead the energy transition.

Here are examples (out of more than [20 developments](#)) of local developers building the types of all-electric buildings that are necessary for Ann Arbor to take meaningful climate action.

- Doug Selby and [The Bridge](#)
- Heidi Poscher and [Southtown](#)
- Matt Grocoff and [Veridian](#)
- Core Spaces - 333 E William: 16 stories, 202 units
- Bleznak Real Estate Investment Group - 3400 Nixon Rd., 131 units
- Simon Group - 900 Briarwood Cir., 354 units
- Core Spaces- 732 Packard, 15 stories, 376 Units

These efforts are proof that everything needed is in place to address the five bullet points listed above. Ann Arbor should be a leading community where this energy transition happens.

- It has a motivated population
- It has the resources to finance it
- It has the support of local government and institutions
- It has a sophisticated developer community that is committed to building decarbonization
- It has an engaged and knowledgeable leading university

In order to meet Ann Arbor's climate goals, the comprehensive plan must address not only land use planning, it must also address building performance. Encouraging, or better yet, striving to require building decarbonization through efficiency and zero-emissions in the comprehensive plan is both justifiable, reasonable and necessary.