

Subject:

City density

From: Barb Leonard
Sent: Thursday, May 1, 2025 9:40 AM
To: Bennett, Michelle <MBennett@a2gov.org>
Subject: City density

Hi Michelle,

My name is Barb Leonard. Ann Arbor has been my home of record for 56 years. I'm a senior citizen with some mobility issues so I'm reaching out to you via email rather than attending one of the community meetings for residents to express their concerns regarding the push by this city administration to increase housing density.

Ann Arbor has sometimes been described as 26 square miles surrounded by reality, a rather apt description as we are indeed surrounded by a ring of highways. For this reason, the only way to expand seems to be to reach for the sky. However, as a longtime resident, I see some problems with that. We simply don't have the infrastructure to support that level of development density. No matter what time of day you might go out to run errands, visit the doctor, head to a local restaurant, etc. you find yourself caught in bumper to bumper traffic on abysmal roads that rival the conditions of a third world country. And sometimes bikers make them more unsafe for themselves, drivers and pedestrians by weaving in and out of traffic, riding through red lights, turning into the paths of oncoming traffic that has the right of way. When was the last time anyone on city council brought home a week's worth of groceries on a bike, or a bus, for that matter? Or cycled to a doctor or dentist appointment in the pouring rain or a snowstorm? Or after the city plows have been through after a snowstorm? Unlike places like New York (we have a son and daughter-in-law who live in Brooklyn who are able to walk or cycle or take the subway just about anywhere. They can pick up groceries at local bodegas as needed , etc), our town simply wasn't built for those modes of transportation. And it's impossible to retrofit it mainly due to the cost of doing so. Bike lanes are a nice idea but present a few problems as well. Some streets are already somewhat narrow and adding bike lanes means large delivery trucks, dump trucks etc. inevitably are crossing the lane markers, sometimes even crossing into oncoming traffic.

Huron, from Washtenaw to Main Street is in dire need of needing to be replaced as is Brockman (a convenient place to get from Washtenaw to Stadium Blvd which we now avoid at all costs because your liable to break an axle the potholes are so deep). It's not even on the repair list for this year! And yet it's one of the main roads to Tappan school and one the school buses use daily.

We don't need more housing in Ann Arbor. The tax base is such that it will never ever be affordable for everyone who works here (thanks to UM owning so much property that is not taxable which means homeowners pay obscene amounts of property taxes). I don't know what the answer is, but it's not building more.

Barb Leonard

Sent from my iPad