

Subject: CLUP resolution (DC-5)

From: Scott Trudeau **Sent:** Friday, April 4, 2025 10:38 AM
To: City Council <CityCouncil@a2gov.org>
Cc: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Subject: CLUP resolution (DC-5)

Dear Mayor & Council,

I'm writing about two issues in the upcoming Council resolution regarding the Comprehensive Land Use Plan update. A good plan provides guidance for adapting to challenges and opportunities as they change over time. This document will last decades, and we should not unnecessarily constrain our ability to adapt by making the plan overly rigid or specific.

1. The comprehensive plan should not include a specific height limit. This inappropriately limits future flexibility. A defined height limit *in the plan* will constrain future Councils much more severely than general guidance about the intent of recommended districts. It would be more appropriate and helpful to **replace a specific height limit with general guidance like "at least three stories."** We can hash out the details in the ordinance drafting process (where the numbers genuinely matter) to meet the requirements of the plan (as a 35' height limit in an ordinance would do) while giving future Councils room to adapt our ordinances without requiring plan revisions if they deem more flexibility in height appropriate or necessary in certain areas.

Furthermore, overly restrictive height limits incentivize lower-quality units with low ceiling heights. This is especially important for the first floor of buildings where higher ceiling heights enable future adaptive reuse much more readily.

2. The plan should not recommend using unit density tools (e.g., # of units or bedrooms per unit) to control overall density; these are fundamentally exclusionary tools. There is no reason for unit density (or bedroom count limits) other than to exclude specific kinds of households from neighborhoods. Three single people living in three studio apartments or a three-person family living in one three-bedroom house in the same building envelope have the same relative impact on our infrastructure. Unit density limits prevent flexibility in adapting our built environment to our needs over time and intentionally exclude specific household shapes from living in our neighborhoods, in this case, in over half of the City.

With a form-based code, the limits on the overall size of a building and the building code itself already impose reasonable limits on household occupancy. There is no reason to restrict this further in the zoning code.

Furthermore, I do not believe that our comprehensive plan (nor our ordinances) should define what constitutes a family or an appropriate household configuration of people voluntarily living together. This restriction in our current ordinance limits the ability of people to form housing co-ops and for non-

traditional families and households to form and live together.

Scott Trudeau
Ward 1