

Subject: Thanks to all of you for your work

From: Brian Donovan
Sent: Wednesday, July 2, 2025 2:02 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
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Hi Planning Staff and Commission,

My name is Brian Donovan. I am the General Manager of the Inter-Cooperative Council at the University of Michigan (ICC) and a resident of Highland Park, Michigan. I take the D2A2 bus to and from work here at the ICC.

I and other members of the ICC attended a public and commission meetings during the Comp Plan process including the meeting a few weeks ago about plan implementation and last night's meeting about the second draft of the Comp Plan. I am heartened by your work, the plan and the level of engagement here.

First of all thank you for listening to us throughout the process. Several of our properties rely on grandfathering to exist. We actually had to sell a property that was damaged by fire back in 2004 because we were not allowed to rebuild and use the house as before the fire. You can see everything we compiled and shared with you and city council on our website (<https://icc.coop/zoning/>) I believe that most of the constraints we faced will be removed if the plan is passed and implemented. We will stay in touch with staff and the commission and our elected representatives as implementation occurs.

One other thing we seek is to be differentiated from Fraternities and Sororities. At the moment we share the same use, group living. To establish our difference we are income qualifying student applicants using FAFSA. We reserve 30% of the spaces in each of our locations for them. We provide 166 spaces for low-income students near the university. We want group living to be allowed city wide instead of subject to conditional approval city wide. I expect that you understand the impacts of requiring a CUP on cost and from lack of certainty. It has effectively prevented us from expanding for the last 30 years.

Can limits on the number of unrelated people be eliminated as part of the plan implementation? Our houses range from 9 to 165 unrelated people in them. One of the things that makes us special is the democratic co-management of our houses by the people who live there. It is great for developing future leaders (like Mayor Taylor and Council Member Akmon). Jeff Crockett in Old Fourth Ward likes us because we preserve the look of the old houses even when adding to the number of people living there. We would like to build more places like 1500 Gilbert Ct. (165 members in 150 rooms) taking advantage of the bigger forms allowed in the plan.

Colorado recently removed unrelated occupancy limits. Within a year a mansion in Denver was purchased by a cooperative to become permanently affordable housing <https://denverite.com/2024/12/11/capitol-hill-mansion-affordable-housing-coop/>

ICC is for students. Many of our alumni however are looking for community living after they graduate. While that may not be in our wheelhouse, we are working on addressing that problem. ICC is a founding member of Michigan Community Land Co-op. MCLC is a cooperative that buys and holds properties for use as cooperative housing. Local groups manage the houses. We are effectively a land trust with cooperative governance. In the next few weeks we will buy our second property in Grand Rapids. Our goal is to work state wide to provide permanently affordable housing for non-students. We are certainly interested in serving cooperators in Ann Arbor should the opportunity arise.

Once more, thank you very much for your work and vision for a welcoming Ann Arbor.

Brian Donovan
General Manager

[Inter-Cooperative Council](#)

Link for scheduling 30 minutes with me:

<https://calendar.app.google/mwDqPnhMKqXX4cyy6>

734-496-8348 c