

From: John Mirsky <johnmirsky@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 5:26 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Subject: Comprehensive Planning Considerations

Brett, Shannan and Planning Commissioners,

I ask that proposed scope of services for the City of Ann Arbor's Comprehensive Plan Update take the following into consideration:

1. Facilitating town-gown partnership. The City of A2 is updating its comprehensive plan at the same time U-M will be updating its campus plan. The City has a new, stronger city council majority and U-M has new leadership in several key roles. Finally, the City and U-M have many shared values and interests, including the need to address:

- Climate change and reduce GHG emissions and thus reducing vehicle miles traveled;
- Creating more new housing in general, both to support of the above through reduced commuting as well as to bring supply and demand into better balance and reducing total housing costs, including the cost of transit and the opportunity cost of time in transit;
- Improving transit, public and private;
- Creating walkable, bikeable 15' neighborhoods;
- Enhancing the community generally.

This is a unique opportunity to coordinate plans and strive for win-win outcomes for the City, U-M, and current and future residents.

2. The exploration of other public-public and public-private partnership opportunities across a wide variety of domains and entities.

3. Opportunities to activate, improve access to, preserve and enhance the City's greatest natural feature, the Huron River valley (and its tributaries), and thereby its ecosystem and social benefits. The service provider should have demonstrated success in this area.

4. Demonstrated expertise and success in great placemaking.

5. Significant (in some cases unresolved) planning issues such as:

- The best options for the expansion of public transit, including the best location and sizing of a new train Amtrak station and feeder transportation options;
- Opportunities to increase the public benefits of surface parking lots, underutilized school properties;
- Dealing with long-term macro-trends related to the energy transition (including grid and distributed energy assets, the electrification of transportation), climate change (increasing temperatures and participation the their effects like changes to floodplains), climate induced migration, new transportation options (such as autonomous vehicles, including for public transportation), etc.

I also strongly recommend that the City reach out to prospective service providers with international experience. Evaluations of the great cities of the world almost always rank cities outside the U.S. at / near the top. Moreover, cities outside the U.S. have generally more proactive and successful in addressing issues like higher but still appropriate density, less car-dependency and improved public transportation, creating great downtowns and other districts with pedestrian-only zones (like those which only cropped up in the U.S. since Covid and have proven highly popular in spite of past objections to and failures creating them), great mixes and treatment of traditional and modern architectural styles, historic preservation, etc.

Thank-you for taking my input into consideration and for your public service.

John Mirsky
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Chair, A2 Energy Commission
Environmental Commissioner