

## MEMORANDUM



TO: Planning Commission  
FROM: Brett Lenart, Planning Manager  
Michelle Bennett, Principal Planner  
DATE: January 6, 2026  
SUBJECT: Top Concerns from the Review Period Comments

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During the Comprehensive Land Use Plan's review period from October 21, 2025 to January 5, 2026, 960 comments were submitted by 734 unique names. All of the comments were reviewed. The most frequent areas of concern are listed below with staff's rationale or reference to the draft plan for proposed action for each concern.

**1. Opposition or concern about enabling duplex and triplex development in single-family neighborhoods.**

The future land use category "residential" calls for new development to be compatible with existing neighborhood fabric and for dimensional standards to scale appropriately to its surroundings (pages 112-113). Heights were also capped to the current standard of three stories (page 116).

**2. Concern or skepticism that the plan and policies will not result in affordable housing to an adequate degree.**

The draft acknowledges that zoning alone is insufficient to solve the housing shortage. However, it is planner's primary mechanism for impacting the housing supply. The implementation matrix recommends many different approaches to help create affordability in addition to zoning for "missing middle" housing types: expedite permitting processes, explore the impacts of STRs, collaborate with local and regional partners, develop pre-approved plans, support programs for subsidized housing, and advocate for state-level change (strategies 1.1 through 2.1).

**3. Engagement was inadequate, should be extended, and/or the plan should be presented to the community for a vote.**

The engagement process has lasted about two years and far exceeds the state standard. Page 33 outlines all of the engagement efforts as of September 2025. Many additional meetings were held with organizations and with Councilmembers in their respective wards. The 63-day review period was

extended by two weeks to allow more time for public comment. The final vote to adopt the plan is held with elected officials.

**4. Sustainability concerns were identified around the protection of solar exposure, inadequate requirements for net zero or carbon neutral construction.**

Sustainability is one of the plan's values. Strategy 11.2 is to reduce energy use and carbon emissions of buildings. The city's role is partially limited in requiring sustainability features by the state's building code. As a part of strategy 11.2, planners will work with OSI to incentivize high-performing buildings. Regarding solar exposure, "residents have expressed concerns that increased building heights could shade rooftop solar units. Although experiences in other cities suggest that shading effects are minimal, the Plan should aim to minimize zero-sum tradeoffs between valued goals. Capping height at three stories in the residential category is one important step in that direction" (page 88).

**5. Common transportation concerns raised were that the City's emphasis on non-motorized transportation is inappropriate and that the City should require vehicular parking.**

Ann Arbor declared a climate crisis in 2019. To align with the city's A2 Zero Carbon Neutrality Plan to reduce emissions, the city must use available mechanisms to increase access to nonmotorized transportation modes. Strategies 9.2 and 9.3 recommend aligning our land uses with public transit and improving nonmotorized infrastructure to reduce reliance on vehicles.

**6. The proposed plan is a financial gift to developers and builders and doesn't serve the values of the larger community.**

One of the potential outcomes of permitting a variety of housing types is to open development opportunities for smaller-scale developers. Permitting duplexes and triplexes gives local developers a chance to enter the market and work at a neighborhood level. As for the "transition" land use category, the purpose of upzoning certain corridors is to align with TheRide's 2045 Plan of increased bus service so that more residents can get around the city without having to rely on a car.