

From: [Barbara Lucas](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Cc: [City Council](#)
Subject: Please keep the CLUP flexible!
Date: Friday, August 15, 2025 5:45:34 PM

Oops! Here is my letter with the email address and acronym corrected:

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to urge you not to make the mistake of dividing the Residential category or adding a 3-unit limit in the CLUP. I believe it is crucial to keep the Residential category undivided without unit limits.

We are in a climate emergency, and our federal government is rolling back what meager progress had been made to address it. So we MUST address it on the local level, with whatever tools are within our reach, and by providing more housing near jobs we can significantly reduce VMT. That is why I am such a supporter of removing housing barriers.

Instituting a unit cap would limit the construction of badly needed housing and developers might build fewer, larger, more expensive units—which is exactly what we don't want!

If anything is done to change the latest version of the CLUP, it should be to speed up the building of neighborhood retail. It's not enough to be able to get to work without a car—one must be able to get to shopping as well. Our house is within walking distance of jobs, but stores are farther than most of my neighbors will walk. It's not until we have both within easy reach that we can truly reduce the number of cars needed per household, thus improving affordability and reducing carbon footprint.

I am a tree advocate along with being a climate activist, so I empathize with people who fear the loss of trees. But there are nearly an infinite number of places in Ann Arbor where more trees can be planted. With policies that ensure increased housing density is accompanied by increased density of vegetation (somewhere in town), we will not lose our precious tree cover and the many ecosystem benefits trees provide. Yes, a mature tree has many benefits that a young one does not, but in my lifetime I've planted scores of trees that are now huge, providing lots of shade and habitat. They grow faster than people think!

I also greatly value local history and historic architecture, but feel we must increase flexibility in this area as well. For instance, there is a historic house for sale in our neighborhood (by the hospital) that has been empty a long time without a buyer because it is small and expensive, and adding an attached ADU is not allowed. This is an example of where I feel rules about historic buildings should be relaxed, so the lot could house two households in a walkable location far more affordably than one.

An attached ADU could easily be designed to complement the house and neighborhood. We cannot let historic “purity” be prioritized over climate and affordability. Remember, many of our now historic buildings, when new, were replacing structures older than themselves. Which was the “real Ann Arbor”?

I believe Ann Arbor must meet the needs of the times. That requires flexibility in our thinking and our policies, and I embrace the change.

Sincerely,
Barbara Lucas
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