

From: Will Leaf
To: Planning
Subject: 2026 schedule
Date: Thursday, December 11, 2025 8:08:23 PM

Hello,

This is a comment for the 12/16 meeting of the planning commission. It is not a comment on the comprehensive plan, and I would appreciate it being included in the next packet. Thank you.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/137ypxBznhHLuPCPlrS01ZxCcbBcSVLzSs549kLpB-rs/edit?usp=sharing>

Hello Planning Commissioners. Thank you for your selfless service to the city. I have one suggestion for your next meeting.

At some point during the next meeting, please ask staff to schedule time in January to discuss zoning changes to further the city's affordability, climate, and traffic safety goals. The city has had these goals for many years, and you do not need to wait for any new guidance document, including the comprehensive plan, to start work on them. The new plan just makes zoning changes an even more urgent priority.

The first meeting could be a high-level discussion of what zoning changes should be tackled first. There are many viable approaches, but I suggest the following one:

Before Plan Adoption

Create a flexible MU1 mixed-use district with a tapered height limit, using the [example district](#) included in the presentation of Professors Levine and Kazis as a starting point. You could schedule meetings to discuss the permitted uses, dimensional standards, and any additional standards.

You don't need to decide exactly where this district will be applied yet. I imagine it covering all of Hub and non-R1 Transition, but you might favor different boundaries.

By separating out the concern of where exactly you are going to put the district, you can avoid getting caught in decision paralysis, where you can't determine the area until you know the rules, and you can't determine the rules until you know the area. You need to start somewhere, and designing the rules for the most permissive new district is a great starting place.

After Plan Adoption

Once the plan is passed, you could figure out the exact boundaries of MU1. Then you could move on to creating MU2, which will be easier, now that you have an MU1 baseline. You could continue with MU districts until all of Hub and Transition are rezoned, and then you can move on to the Residential category.

Creating a new zoning district might seem daunting, but this commission is up to the task. Towns and cities across the country with a fraction of the resources of Ann Arbor create and modify new zoning districts all the time. Please get the process started by asking staff to schedule time in January to discuss high-priority zoning changes.

Thank you for reading,

Will