

Subject:

FW: comprehensive plan revisions

From: J. Bruce Fields <bfields@fieldses.org>
Sent: Saturday, August 2, 2025 4:56 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Subject: comprehensive plan revisions

Thanks for your work on the comprehensive plan!

I'm writing to request some minor changes:

1. I understand the motivation for preferring active first floor uses in the transition and hub districts. I certainly appreciate it when I walk along streets with shops and things to look at. But taken across these districts that adds up to a huge square footage of non-residential uses and I'm just skeptical that the demand exists.

And while I understand this is merely a "preference", I'm having a hard time seeing how this preference is going to filter down to zoning code without creating some kind of actual requirements and complications that, depending on the exact details, risk significantly discouraging the new homes that I understand as the primary goal of "Ann Arbor for All".

2. I think on page 115, "high-rise if adjacent to hub" was intended to be "high-rise in when far from residential".

(In general, if we have to limit building heights and sizes, I wish we could do it using rules that adapt to context rather than applying uniformly across zones. The former seems to lead to a proliferation of zones (R1-4, etc.) and a less flexible code. For the same reason, I'd prefer we not introduce a second low-rise category as suggested in an August 5 staff memo.)

3. Why the name "residential district" instead of, say, "low-rise district"? I haven't done the math, but isn't it hub and transition that are actually going to end up with the most residences? I suppose this is purely a cosmetic question, but the naming seems to perpetuate the idea that somehow homeowners are the only "real" Ann Arborites, and that bugs me.

Thanks again to planning commissioners and staff for all your good work,

--Bruce Fields