

Downtown Development Strategies Project

Draft Document – For Internal Review

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Introduction

The Draft Recommended Policy Framework for Downtown Ann Arbor, developed by Calthorpe and Associates, represents a significant investment by the City to gather information from national experts on the direction that the Downtown should take and obtain relevant feedback and input from residents. The report clearly satisfies one of its goals - there is a city-scale conversation underway related to the report and what it seeks to accomplish. The report does provide a framework to enhance our Downtown, and SPU staff support many of the directions pointed to in the Calthorpe report. However, there is a level of analysis that is not performed nor well defined in the report that is critically important to moving in the directions outlined in the report. The report is more a point of departure to enhance the community conversation rather than a finished product that is ready to implement. In that spirit, this input is offered in writing and attempts to add some clarification and depth to the conversation, reflect the views of City Staff, and voice some concerns that may enable the vision to be more clear and more likely to be implemented.

The report states that we are attempting to identify and encourage change through an integrated approach to land use, economic development, environment, design and mobility. This is no small undertaking. We, the City of Ann Arbor, are through this report attempting to create a framework for a vision that keeps and enhances living, working, shopping, and learning in our downtown. Downtown is seen as the place that not only meets immediate local needs but serves an entire region, too.

In general, there is much discussion of general directions to be taken to enhance the downtown and some mention of the costs that should be reduced to encourage development to meet stated goals. However, there is very little specific advice or discussion about the mechanisms available to create economic development or reduce costs (or generate additional revenue) to make development costs lower. In addition, there is no discussion of how these initiatives integrate with existing master plan recommendations for the Downtown and Central Area, particularly the neighborhoods bordering Downtown.

The comments below are a collection from many City staff. They have been arranged thematically and edited by one staff person.

E C O N O M I C S

Much of the report is about money – the costs to live downtown and the cost to redevelop existing structures. Staff believes that there is a broader set of economic considerations to consider as decisions are made.

For example, 1000 units of housing could be placed downtown. This would generate xx amount of new taxes for the city and other millages. There is no specific discussion about the ability of city utilities to handle these additional units. What is the capability of the Water and Wastewater plants to deliver and treat water used by these units? What do our models tell us about the infrastructure and better locations for units based on existing

infrastructure? What other utilities would be affected and at what magnitude (e.g., natural gas, electricity)? These are all questions that need to be answered before specific discussions can continue about the density and specific sites.

Another economic issue relates to Proposition A and the funding of our school system. If the new housing is such that children are likely residents, then the community economic benefit is greatly enhanced by the addition of \$9,000 per year per student to the Ann Arbor Public School System. The NPV of a kindergartener to the AAPS is approximately \$100,000. Housing downtown adds vitality to that area. Housing for young families adds additional sustainable income to the school system.

Jobs and Economic Development

The report seeks to reinforce downtown as center for jobs but does not focus on economic development and what it takes to bring (or keep) jobs into the downtown. There is a discussion about the changing market and the newer smaller type of firms that choose the downtown, but there is no strategy or focus on how to grow jobs in the downtown. The report discusses ground floor retail flex space and the like, which may be correct, but is not an economic development or jobs strategy. We need more than a statement about how to make the downtown an attractive place for the types of businesses, large and small alike we are looking for. From a job concentration standpoint, downtown is where we have the best transit service and therefore accessibility to labor, it is where walking and biking serve a higher percentage of work trips and it is an environment that can allow for other retail needs to be met without a car trip. But we need to focus on a target for job growth, be it numbers or industry clusters, e.g., health sciences, auto, high tech, head offices.

Smart Growth

There is a global statement in this section that may not be supported or is out of context. The report states "sixty-six percent of these units were built in the unincorporated portions of the County, suggesting the majority of growth in the region has been absorbed at the edge of existing development." This might be introducing a relationship with Detroit that is not relevant in the Ann Arbor downtown vision and it also may not be true in the county either. Washtenaw County's growth may not be concentrated at the edge of existing development but could be on scattered rural home sites.

How does one reconcile the statements about slow growth in the city with the statement that begins with "The simultaneous trend of faster growth in the downtown..." Any trends discussions should be substantiated with appropriate data.

There is a chart in the report that does not address the effect of different employment growth scenarios. If the city is successful in developing new mixed-use buildings and capturing "a variety of new business to downtown...", can we assume the expenditures by downtown employees will increase? If so, by how much?

Life Cycle Development Costs

As we further this discussion, we should expand the definition of "economic drivers" to include a broader life-cycle analysis of "development costs". We need to create incentives to link the Developer's first costs to the User's long-term costs, especially for energy escalation factors. This type of accounting would allow improved opportunities for investments in more energy conserving design details, higher quality glazing systems for daylighting, higher performance HVAC systems, higher efficiency lighting systems, more durable and lower maintenance materials, etc. These efforts will best assist in creating a sustainable City of Ann Arbor.

More Specific Goals

The report uses the word "balance" but we need to specifically identify what should be in balance. Since the report does not mention any of the adopted goals of the Downtown Plan, it's not clear if this report assumes their continuation, or proposes a different set of goals. The discussion should include ratio of jobs to housing to

“destinations” and what is the proper balance. As a vision statement we should know what we are looking to accomplish.

TRANSPORTATION - PEDESTRIANS, BIKES, STREETS, AND CARS

Our future discussion should include more detail on issues such as intelligent transportation systems and enhanced information, wayfinding, district coding, info kiosks, and countdown pedestrian signals.

Wayfinding

The discussion and description of the type and importance of gateway markers is very narrow and limited. These are the front doors to the city. Gateways that let you know you have arrived would be a neat touch.

Information such as wayfinding or information kiosks are ways to offer travelers information to connect land use and transportation. With good information, a person can determine where they are and where they want to go and best of all how to get there. Linkage to the university is missing as a key use that should be connected to transportation systems.

Further discussion should emphasize that the design for our downtown also describe a role for and use of street art, wayfinding, open space, street furniture and vendors, etc...

Transportation

This seems like a good place to introduce all modes as transportation, including rail-based and other intermediate forms of transport such as BRT, peplemovers and the like. Think bold and futuristic! Include transportation and streets under infrastructure; seek not to just identify what exists, but look at this with true vision. Do we want modern fixed guide way systems, maximizing non-motorized transport to fit in here? Other goals should address the support amenities needed to reinforce all of the modes, e.g., preferential parking strategies, bike lanes, signs, lockers, showers, etc....

We need a policy for Downtown TDM. Some other considerations should include vehicle trip limits per land use, required transportation coordinators, flex time and time specific building and occupancy timeframes, mandatory participation in get Downtown or purchase of transit passes, etc...

The report discusses "Human-scale street lights" and "improved transit shelters". Expand the definition of these "streetscape enhancements" to include energy elements. This is related to encouraging use of public transportation systems and to facilitate easy, safe pedestrian movement throughout Downtown. This strategy would reduce the impact in energy use and pollution from the automobile.

“Local-serving Retail”. Consider business incentives for small, alternative-energy transport vehicles given special preferences to move through Downtown between retailers. This would decrease the amount of large-scale semi-trucks and delivery vehicles needing to move, park and idle in Downtown - effectively reducing energy consumption and air pollution.

"Mobility" The report could have included much more detail on the energy and pollution components of the various modes of mobility. Information and data from local groups (WATS, etc.) and national benchmarks could be included to build awareness on mobility choices relative to energy. Such data could include per capita and total fossil fuels consumed, toxic emissions, etc. for each type: pedestrian, transit, auto and parking. Much of this work is already included in the local Clean Cities initiative and could be incorporated or at least cross-referenced in the Calthorpe Report.

Bus

Improve transit service goal should include expanded transit service systems to address express bus, Bus Rapid Transit. The goal should encourage the consideration/implementation of intermediate capacity transport to link to university /North campus/Plymouth activity center, to the medical campus with future extension to athletic campus and Briarwood (e.g., streetcars, light rail or even a dedicated BRT). What about operations policy flexibility such as a fare free zone along the corridors in the downtown?

Rail

Is it the City's priority to enhance connections to the Amtrak and Huron River Greenway area or other neighborhoods in the city and the region? Why is the picture a light rail image from Texas? There is no active or anticipated light rail project as illustrated underway and it is unclear if there would be support and R-O-W for the image presented here in Ann Arbor. A streetcar image from Philadelphia or Portland or commuter train from New Jersey would be more relevant¹.

The report puts emphasis on connecting the Amtrak station to the downtown. We really need to introduce regional service concepts here and link to Washtenaw County and environs in addition to better connecting the interregional service with local connections.

Pedestrians and Bikes

Place the pedestrian first sounds great but what does this statement mean?

In the real world there are tradeoffs and costs. Are we to shut down streets to have folks be able to walk and bike on them? We should ensure that every regulation and review process ought to carefully consider the pedestrian path and realm, but there need to be specific statements that address those processes.

The pedestrian section doesn't address bikes. Bicyclists have their own needs and we might want to present some of that here. See our non-motorized plan for content!

Pedestrian amenities should include wayfinding signage, information kiosks, clean safe, well-lit area, trees for shade, and parking stations not meters to end clutter. Bikes are not discussed at all and are a big part of downtown mobility.

In terms of pedestrian safety, the report needs more on lighting, entrance design, percentage window glass and eyes on the street.

Bike access.... good to see the policy but as stated earlier the report text needs to address this mode.

Add policies to support lockers, racks, showers in buildings or bike stations for bicyclists, bike lanes, bike signage, bike maps, bike coordinator, bike subsidies, parking cash out, etc. The city should lead by example in new city hall project!

Streets, Roads, and Traffic Calming

Opening statement identifies "limited-access" roads. There is only one, M-14, in proximity to downtown. It also states downtown is more oriented to the auto. Is this true? Many residents ride transit, walk and bike around our downtown areas. Driving and parking are choices for many who come to the Downtown area, but the existing transportation system design in the downtown is mixed, not auto-centric. Reword this section to

¹ What about freight mobility – how does the chicken get to market, is everything ok in the downtown. Loading areas and times? Waste removal?

enhance the environment and consideration of other forms of mobility as a priority – this might be more aligned with our goals.

Reference to a transit spine assumes a type of service we do not have. Our system serves all parts of the city, east, west, south and north, a spine would require many routes using the same corridor to access downtown. The redesign of the system might be an area we want to study? If the intent is to have frequent service on a spine like corridor, why not be bold and introduce the concept of a dedicated corridor for a streetcar or BRT?

Traffic calming is not described and what are the appropriate treatments in the city's downtown? Curb cuts are access management issues, not traffic calming. Taming traffic should occur through design and development of a traffic management system with real-time responsive signals, e.g., SCOOT. Congestion should be limited by using land use practices to minimize the attraction of the downtown for cars. Parking management is a strong tool that can be used.

Automobiles

The auto section is incomplete. Cars are part of the community and we should strive to meet the needs of the ones that are here. We can seek to provide priority for parking of alternative fuel vehicles, hybrids, car and vanpools supporting their use. Priority for buses at signals, queue jumper lanes, direct access improvements, HOV lanes with priority for carpools and vanpools is another area we could provide support for. The City could plan to provide places to store shared cars, charge electric cars, refuel innovative fuel vehicles, hydrogen power stations, in addition to developing state of the art communications Variable Message Signs, Highway Advisory Radio, web casts, parking availability signs in and around the downtown. Route mapping and Wayfinding are other areas that could be introduced as part of the vision for the auto or street system.

BUILDINGS – ZONING, ARCHITECTURE

Architecture

Use architecture as an amenity under this goal of the standards. We are not looking for standards that result in a cookie cutter downtown in our community. Earlier and later in the report, it speaks to enhancing the diversity of uses. Standards should seek out inspirational building designs. Cities are built one building at a time. Architectural variety and perhaps even competition for design of public structures or investments will be fun and build more character into the community.

Design guidelines should be linked to policy statements in the report if that is what they are. However, if one of the objectives of this initiative is making the project review and approval process more transparent, design guidelines, which must be interpreted by staff or an advisory committee, add further uncertainty to the process.

The chart in the report is not clear in its definition of how high is up? It speaks to a 10 story maximum but elsewhere in the report speaks to pursuing density bonuses. We should define what we want in a simple chart and define how to get there, as the beginning to being clear about what the City wants.

Build to lines should not be prescribed in every instance. Variety in design creates interest.

Clarify the statement that in the downtown core “efforts in this area should focus on maintaining and enhancing the diversity of uses and historic fabric.” Which elements make it diverse and what components of the historic fabric are important.

Adaptive reuse policy Repword to have a review of the historic review process and establish target dates for completion of a decision. Is the issue the amount of time for process or the lack of good progress through the system for a complete application? We should only reduce the time necessary if it is warranted to assure a reasonable decision timeframe and the process should be adequately staffed.

Define the term “relatively transparent building facades”.

Encourage the renovation of historic structures in downtown. Historic homes are often the most inefficient buildings in communities. This policy should encourage renovations that not only preserve the historic structure (and its embodied energy) but make the home more energy efficient.

Zoning and Zoning Costs

The report introduces zoning costs as the rationale for driving new development into the townships. That may explain a piece of what is going on but it is not the whole story. Market forces are different for different types of communities. Large homes on individual lots are desired by families, however, demographic trends seem to speak to empty nester’s needs and young professionals, as well as single person households that might prefer the urban location and amenity or the lack of home maintenance. In later stages the report speaks to demographic trends and is more relevant than what is listed here!

The current zoning ordinance has premiums (i.e., incentives) in the downtown, but they have only recently been sought by developers. An evaluation of the current market forces must be done to determine a baseline FAR if the suggested incentives will net the hoped for benefits.

Given the problems with the existing zoning, it is questionable whether an overlay zone will “undo” the flaws, or just complicate the approval process more. Perhaps a more comprehensive approach is to revise the underlying zoning to match the character of the individual districts, at the same time lowering the baseline FAR to make the incentives more realistic.

Processing downtown site plan applications ahead of others might create equity issues. Consideration should be given to allowing site plans without rezonings to be approved by Planning Commission, saving the step of going through City Council review.

Lower development costs? Provide public parking and other infrastructure to support the development. Allow live work units; provide tax credits or other incentives. These are among a number of ways to be creative. What’s hot in this market today and future in development, life science, high tech, and automobile R & D?

Post Construction Storm water controls are federally mandated by the City’s Phase 2 NPDES Permit and storm water detention is not a unique cost of downtown construction.

Transfer of Development Rights

Before considering transfers of development rights from outlying townships (currently not enabled by State law), it makes more sense to explore this concept for protecting historic structures and blocks in the Downtown. The idea of allowing a developer to purchase development rights from owners of property on a historic block of Liberty, for instance, and transfer them to a non-historic site or parking lot has the benefit of protecting historic resources and maintaining a diverse character to the downtown.

Housing

Housing discussion is overly simplified. It is much more robust of a discussion than just density. What about inclusionary housing, Land buy downs, other public resources, the non-profit sector, etc.

Retail/Commercial

Is the ground floor retail issue a percent of window area on first floor to create a vibrant and interesting feel and not retail? We probably do not want internally oriented windowless retail establishments on ground floors. Lets provide carefully defined terms that allows us to move forward. How much “ground floor” retail can the community support?

South Main - William write-up is lacking in detail and vision.

The Huron St. corridor is defined as a gateway – what are the appropriate gateway elements, what should we be doing to reinforce that role for this part of the city?

S. University – shouldn't this area include live/work units and the role they can play? Is this where in the downtown we can accommodate an environment for incubator jobs, mixed commercial office flex buildings? How can we address the challenge of stimulating new development on small parcels owned by so many property owners?

In the mixed-use center can we define terms...high density, medium density. Would this really evolve a really interesting city? What about neighborhood character, design etc. Too much focus on mixed-use. By definition downtown is mixed use. Not every building has to be mixed use. We need to define the downtown districts and allow for development. Neighbors should know what is expected and then stick with it for decades, not years.

ENVIRONMENT - ENERGY

More narrative could be included in the report on the essential quality of energy as a key component to the future vision of the Downtown. Also, more compelling visual examples need be presented on how understanding future energy sources will affect the shape of the architecture that will be created Downtown.

The Energy Commission in a recent report suggests that the DTE substation that serves the developing Downtown area is already at or near its maximum capacity. Future growth will not be realized to any meaningful quality of life without understanding the need for reliable energy and the sources and infrastructure to sustain and convey it.

One of the strategies to "increase the diversity of housing types Downtown" is to have the City Building Department require (or offer incentives to) developers to spend more money to make energy conserving housing, while keeping the cost the same, so that the housing will, with usage, be more affordable. Also, more Downtown housing could reduce the total city energy costs due to automobile traffic.

The City could develop an incentive program to encourage the reuse and renovation of any existing building in reasonable condition...not just "*historic*" structures. This strategy would place a value to the City on the "embodied energy" in its existing structures. Such value would offset the intensive energy and costs associated with demolishing a structure, trucking away waste materials, and erecting a new structure in the same location.

Consider that green building should not be optional as the report suggests. Michigan has one of the least stringent residential building energy codes and we should push to have mandatory changes made to this code starting at the local level.

"Work to lower the development cost in Downtown" This should also include operational costs as well. Design and construction costs typically represent 10% of the life cycle cost of a building. O&M typically represents over 50%. Some suggested bullets:

Require minimum energy efficiency standards above ASHRAE 90.1-2001 and the 2003 International Energy Code for new construction and major renovations in both residential and commercial buildings.

Create incentives for building energy star homes and LEED certified buildings.

Create an educational plan to inform residents about current and future federal incentives that promote the building of energy efficient buildings.

Encourage the renovation of historic structures in downtown." Historic homes are often the most inefficient buildings in communities. This policy should encourage renovations that not only preserve the historic structure (and its embodied energy) but also make the home more energy efficient.

Solar Planes

"Land Use & Zoning." Add a Zoning Chapter on "solar zoning". Reference Davis, CA Municipal Code Chapter 63.08.110, "Solar access easements". This strategy would preserve the value of access to sunlight for both light and for potential solar energy devices that may be mounted onto buildings - whether today or in the future. Also clauses in such requirements can be written to protect Developers rights, as stated in the Davis, California ordinance: "required easements shall not result in reducing allowable densities or the percentage of lot which may be occupied by a building or a structure under applicable planning and zoning in force at the time..."

"Recommended Downtown Structural Plan." Add solar overlay study for daylighting opportunities in new and existing buildings. Also, show shadow projections from existing building masses and other factors as they may influence the potential for new buildings development related to energy.

"Building Design". "New development...should consider the pedestrian first." Expand this opportunity to include "solar access building envelope" design of new buildings to allow more daylight down to street level. Also, consider requiring shadow impact studies (similar to the types analysis a developer might do for impacts on the streetscape due to winds) for new buildings. With more effective daylighting of our streets and sidewalks, and the energy required for streetlights may be reduced.

Use solar planes not setbacks for upper stories. Solar access planes may address solar energy and light better, while creating opportunity for unique and perhaps interesting building designs.

Green Buildings

Green building has to do with buildings – the leap to shared retention basins misses so much...green roofs, energy efficient design, passive solar, etc. It could also address community design issues such as solar orientation to maximize insulation and other passive energy applications. Anyone think about roof top windmills, solar panels, etc.

Adds address maintenance somewhere in the discussion of streetscape enhancements. What about snow melting areas?

"Expedited development review process". To induce the market for Developers to build Downtown, the City could add an incentive for new projects: "if green, then go to the head of the line" at the City Building Department.

Urban Forest

Trees...ash tree removal is a citywide issue, what are the issues for trees in the downtown/ Type of trees, placement, number, value, and role in environmental matters. Calming effect on traffic and human psychology, etc...

Stormwater/Impervious Surface

The City of Ann Arbor has a Stormwater Plan that is not referenced in the report so previous staff work is not incorporated. For example, the Calthorpe report recommends regional detention – a position that has a historical basis but is outdated. Staff suggest removing this recommendation from the report. This concept is taken from the Downtown Residential Task Force Report on recommendations addressing barriers to downtown residential development. The recommendation to pursue regional detention facilities remains largely uninvestigated. Further, preliminary investigation by Systems Planning Unit indicates that it is unlikely that this

approach would meet the design standards of the Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner and is not an efficient or cost effective method of addressing storm water quality. We recommend striking this idea and replacing it with green building incentives, such as green roofs.

There are two other communities that could be looked at as examples of these two concepts:

- The City of Novi adopted a Storm Water Master Plan in 1983 and again in 1992 that relied on a regional detention concept. In their 2005 Storm Water Master Plan Update they have mostly abandoned the regional concept and have gone back to the onsite storm water detention strategy. A long explanation of why they have determined that onsite detention is a better approach than regional detention can be found in their 2005 Storm Water Master Plan. Here is a link: <http://www.ci.novi.mi.us/Services/Engineering/StormWaterMasterPlanUpdate/3-Discussion-RecommAndCosts.pdf>.
- The City of Portland, Oregon has developed a system of incenting green building design and storm water best management practices. Portland's Stormwater Management Manual can be found at: <http://www.portlandonline.com/bes/index.cfm?c=29323>.

Small public spaces as well as residential, commercial, and community uses. Special attention should be given to creating developments for these parcels that employ best management practices for floodplains.

In addition, new development in the floodplain and floodway should be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Flood Mitigation Plan.

Eliminate parking requirements outside the DDA - outside the DDA

Do we want to introduce permeable areas within a central median along Huron and portions of Main Street? How is that area to be maintained and what are the effects on traffic flows? The wording should seek to guide the city to invest in a process to determine how to best reduce the impact of impervious surfaces and to what degree this is a critical issue. I wonder if this is an area that Jerry has tagged?

There is a Parking exemption in the DDA.

Post Construction Storm water controls are federally mandated by the City's Phase 2 NPDES Permit and storm water detention is not a unique cost of downtown construction.

Green Space

Page 43 the policy says to do a calculation...are we trying to say we need more or less greenspace?

Bottom of left column is too much detail for this type of vision. Does the city have a Maximum and how does one go about getting there? Lots of planning theory could come into play in this area.

COORDINATION - CITY, UNIVERSITY, OTHER LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT

University/City Coordination

It would have been helpful to acknowledge the coordination that already exists between the City and University, which currently does meet monthly on a variety of policy and project planning issues. The policy statement should be revised to emphasize that the University should coordinate with the City on its master planning, not

just building review. This is the case particularly where the University is contemplating expanding its boundaries or changing its parking and transportation infrastructure.

MEMO

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Jennifer Hall, Chair, Planning Commission
DATE: 19 January 2006
RE: Comments from Planning Commission on the Downtown
Development Strategies Final Report

The Planning Commission has discussed the Downtown Development Strategies Final Report several times over the last few months. In addition, we held a public hearing on 10 January 2006 where we heard from about 25 members of the public. I would like to share the following comments with you.

In general, we felt the report provides a useful vision and set of goals for the development of Downtown Ann Arbor. Although much of the content of the report is not “new material” regarding downtown development strategies, we feel that the Calthorpe report takes the best ideas from other documents and reports and presents them in a unified approach. The Calthorpe study, including the extensive public process, reinforces our existing knowledge base and gives us a framework to achieve the goals. CPC believes the recommendation of form based design guidelines and zoning is a good one, although perhaps other tools are needed to achieve all our goals.

The general nature of the report makes it easily accessible to many people in our community. The report contains helpful charts and summary tables and is visually appealing. Individual Planning Commissioners mentioned the following as exceptional components which deserved recognition: recommendations for tools, retail master plan, structural plan, greenway, density bonuses related to the greenbelt, and the recommendations for other agencies to implement (chamber of commerce, university of Michigan).

The Planning Commission feels that the Downtown Development Strategies process was designed to capture community input and thought about our downtown. We applaud the Council for establishing the Steering Committee of Council, DDA and CPC members. As we move forward to the implementation phase, we encourage Council to continue this collaborative and public process.

The Planning Commission has been thinking about many of these issues for some time, and is anxious to begin work on implementing the recommendations. We see a number of challenges in front of us as we move forward and we feel we are well positioned to collaborate in addressing these challenges and making recommendations to Council for implementation.

Here are some specific challenges that we feel deserve high priority in future discussions:

- **PROCESS:** We agree that there may be ways to streamline the development review process. Any efficiency to the process must not compromise community and city goals. In particular, we support the idea of establishing an order for petition review through various commissions (ZBA, HDC, CPC, etc.). CPC would like to participate in discussions regarding which aspects of the development review process could be made more efficient.
- **INCENTIVES:** Although there have been challenges with incentives in the past, we generally feel that density bonuses are a good idea to achieve the community goals identified in the report. Defined standards will make enforcement easier and reduce challenges to such bonuses. We must improve how incentives are written. For example, some projects that received bonuses for providing “pedestrian amenities” have resulted in little community benefit (the wind tunnel outside 101 North Main is an example of a “pedestrian amenity” which has had little practical value). Let’s look closely at what didn’t work and improve what we’re asking for and what we give in return (in other words, better understand the economics).

A key challenge will be implementing density bonuses to make them more successful than in the past. It will be important to have a plan to modify the bonuses as our priorities change. Perhaps a review every 5 years would be appropriate. We also think that an evaluation of our past track record relative to bonuses is an important step to understand our past successes and failures. We also feel that Calthorpe could clarify their rationale for the density bonuses and present examples from other communities that have been successful with this type of zoning.

- **HEIGHT:** We would like to explore the idea of a maximum height limit. On the one hand, we feel that consensus on height limits would make it more comfortable to give bonuses and overcome the community concern related to “too tall” proposals. It is also important to prevent a “canyon” effect while at the same time encouraging the use of bonuses. On the other hand, we support the 1988 plan policy of promoting diversity in building types through varying FARs and not specifying maximum heights.
- **AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** CPC totally agrees with the Calthorpe recommendation to get more affordable units in the City, although we have a concern that it might not be legal in the State of Michigan to require it expressly in our code. CPC would like to have a member on the group that reviews and determines the affordable housing needs, overall goals, and establishes the bonus in the zoning code. We would also like to think about how to resolve the issue of varying costs of housing in different locations. Finally, we think a community discussion about where affordable housing is located in the City should take place. Our community is very small and perhaps it isn’t necessary to provide the affordable units in places where

development costs preclude market driven affordable units (like the downtown).

- **DESIGN GUIDELINES:** CPC is not pleased with the aesthetics of most projects we see. We agree that some type of design review process or architectural review is needed, but how explicit those guidelines still needs much discussion. CPC would like to participate in the future discussions on this topic.
- **PUD ZONING:** Finally, we are unsure that eliminating the PUD process is a good idea. Many commissioners felt that it is a critical tool to be available for flexibility, but should not be the primary method of development. We all agree that the PUD zoning standards should be revised to clarify and objectify standards.

Thank you again for leading us through this collaborative process. We look forward to working with you to implement many of these recommendations.