

Question 1 - Intent

			Are the ordinances fulfilling their intent of supporting the downtown as the city's traditional center and allowing for a mixture of land uses, dense urban development, pedestrian orientation, unique residential opportunities, and mix of historic and contemporary building design)? Why or why not?
Who	Yes/No	Subject	
Developer (2)	No	Housing Mix	Ordinance produced too much student housing. City wants more "regular housing" and is not producing that. Several projects are not just students. People want downtown apartments. City needs more high-rise living for young professionals and empty nesters
DDA (2)	Yes	Developable land	They are beginning to: higher density in the core, but will always fall short because of the historic districts, floodways, and other constraints to development. Thus, higher density zoning downtown will never solve the problem of sprawl because there isn't enough developable land.
		Height	Ordinances tried to make it easier for developers, but established a cap that wasn't there before (height).
		Process	Tried to make the process more streamlined, and entitlement projects are able to move through faster
		Bad press	Developer feedback: all the attention is being focused around the edges, and not on the easy, entitlement projects. Thus, the <i>perception</i> is that Ann Arbor is a difficult place to do business and develop in. The bad press is undermining developers' confidence in Ann Arbor. They want to spend as little time in process as possible.
Concerned Neighbor (1)	no comment		
Developer (1)	Yes	Density	Generally speaking, the ordinance did what it was supposed to do. Cornerhouse Lofts at Washington and State wanted to put up a one-story building. When the City said no, they went to an 8-story building. He thought the zoning ordinance should continue to as is. He thinks the developer gets to make the <u>decision about the market.</u>
Developer (2)	Yes	Density	Yes, the ordinances are achieving that intent, but in a limited way and a limited area. The limited way is that the premiums reward a certain mixture of development. For instance, they do not incentivize maximizing an office building. Also, the 400% limit in the historic area pushes higher buildings to the edges and penalizes the historic property holders. The other limitation is the political process, which predates A2D2.
TOTALS:			
Yes		3	
No		1	
No comment		1	
<u>Subjects</u>			
Density		2	
Housing Diversity		1	
Process		1	
Bad press		1	

Question 2 - Positive Aspects

		Thinking about your specific observation: what are the positive aspects that came of this project that you have observed? Think about examples, such as allowable uses, height and massing, floor area limits/premiums and design.
Who	Subject	
Developer (2)	Process	The ordinances are good: they are explicit, many by-right projects are allowed
	D1 Zoning	D1 zoning facilitates interest in the property; there should be more D1 zoned property, for example from 5th avenue west; also more northward on Main, and south to Packard (there are already a lot of rentals in these areas and they are walkable to downtown
	D2 Zoning	D2 zoning doesn't work given the land prices right now (maybe it will in the future)
DDA (2)	Financing	Available financing is driving the student housing boom, not the ordinance; it's a safe investment for developers right now.
	Predictability	The ordinance <u>is</u> encouraging growth and gives more predictability to developers for entitlement projects
	Mixed Use	Allows more mixed use to happen without the use of PUDs
	Common Vocabulary	We are developing a common vocabulary, so that we all can communicate what we want better.
Concerned neighbor (1)	Height	No problem with building height or setbacks, the problem is with massing that affects sunlight
	Density	More height and density is ok in the urban area
Developer (1)	Density	Bringing population downtown has had a positive affect, such as between Main Street and State Street. Restaurants are doing better. It is more lively and urban. People spend huge amounts of subsidies to make a 24-hour community. In Ann Arbor, you don't need the subsidies. You just need to get out of their way and it will happened. Anything we can do to encourage mixed use. He worries about a 100% restaurant town, but it would be difficult to change because government would then need to pick winners and losers, which they have not historically done well
	Mixed Use	
Developer (2)	Process	Projects went smoother than before. The Planning Commission and City Council had an opportunity to give input earlier.
	Design	Some quality buildings went up.
TOTALS		
Process	2	
Mixed Use	2	
Density	2	
Design	1	
D1 Zoning	1	
Height	1	
D2 Zoning	1	
Common Vocabulary	1	
Predictability	1	

Question 3 - Negative Aspects

Who	Subject	What are negative aspects you have observed? And what do you think needs to change about the ordinance to address these issues, such as it pertains to allowable uses, height and massing, floor area limits/premiums and design?
Developer (2)	Process	Bad press – because of neighbors objections; the City made developers address the concerns, resulting in a long process and a “big fight”. The process was too lengthy and the City did not handle it well
	Neighbors Historic Neighborhoods/ Districts	Neighbors want to react to everything and they get involved too late in the process; their concerns should have been brought up earlier (during the creation of the zoning) Historic district is a problem – it is too tied to deteriorated old houses (that should be moved or rebuilt). The Division Historic District wipes out all development potential; the same with State St. district
DDA (2)	Height	There is now a cap on height that wasn’t there before
	Common Vocabulary Design Guidelines	There is much more room to go on the common vocabulary, like defining how you break up massing (so that large buildings look more like multiple small buildings) Design guidelines don’t work – they can be ignored.
	Premiums	Premiums are not working: affordable housing isn’t being build, environmental amenities aren’t being included, and no one is up at their maximum height (with premiums)
	Process	The longer we drag out the process, the less resources developers have to invest in good architecture/materials, amenities, etc.
	Use	We need to be more flexible about use... <u>but</u> the building needs to contribute to the fabric of the area as well. The buildings will outlive the current owners, and so they must contribute to the fabric while being adaptable to different uses.
Concerned Neighbor (1)	Housing diversity	The City wanted a spectrum of different types of residential, not just student high rises
	Historic Neighborhoods/ Districts	Doesn’t take into account the boundary with the historic districts
	Trees	Also impacts on landmark trees ignored
	D1 to D2 Projects	Some areas need to be changed to D2 Why create zoning that gives us projects that no one wants?
Developer (1)	Housing diversity	The huge student apartments are something to fix. Generally speaking, there is one parking space per apartment but each student apartment has 6 bedrooms. So, the structure encourages student housing and exacerbates the parking problem. More focus should be put on the mixed audience or limiting the apartments to 2 or 3 bedrooms, the format of a typical mixed apartment.
	Design Guidelines	The height and massing tend to be uniform looking structures. The detail, such as cornices, is more important. The results of design standards were mixed. It is appropriate to have them. Cornerstone Lofts and Ashley Terrace got away with a bait and switch, leaving off details in the end. Washington Square is the same height and shape as the Zaragon buildings, which he felt were some of the best in the City, but in Washington Square they peeled out the little bits of details, probably their last percent of costs to make the bottom line.
	Premiums	In terms of premiums, hard to know whether social consciousness, such as LEED Certification, should be kept. If those are legitimate goals, then maybe you should.
Developer (2)	Historic Neighborhoods/ Districts	The limitations on size in the historic district and the regulatory control of the Historic District Commission are negatives.

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	Process	The rules need to apply to everyone fairly. Ours is still a troubled, non-streamlined process. The 11th hour negotiations create uncertainty and they feel they cannot trust City Council not to bow to public pressure at the last minute.
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TOTALS		
Process	3	
Historic		
Neighborhoods/Districts	3	
Premiums	2	
Design	2	
Mixed Use	1	
D1 to D2	1	
Neighbors	1	
Height	1	
Common Vocabulary	1	
Trees	1	

Question 4 - Top 3 Priorities

Who	Priority	What are the top three priorities you would like the Planning Commission to consider as it relates to downtown development?
Developer (2)	Density	Ann Arbor needs density to fund parks and to make up for lost revenue from U of M land.
	Density	Density works, and the ripple effects from it create new markets for businesses downtown (both students and young adults moving in helps this)
	Young professionals	Young professionals WILL live in these buildings
DDA	Intent	Revisit why we are doing this; we have strayed from the original intent. What do we gain from this? People have forgotten the “why” and what are the social benefits. Then create a diagnosis of what works and what doesn’t (and remember what is working)
	Incentives	Incentivize precisely what we want (residential? Office? Hotel?)
	Public Realm	Focus on more than just the buildings – look at the public realm (sidewalk, street, right of way);
	Don't downsize D1 extend	Don't downsize any more and keep the amount of developable land (don't restrict more). For example, if the DTE lot is downzoned, its highest and best use will be to remain a parking lot. Setbacks and design restrictions are ok, but don't downzone Consider extending D1 southward on Main
Concerned Neighbor	Historic resources	More protection is needed for significant historic resources, the university, and other important resources.
Developer	Height & massing	In general, nothing is wrong with the height, massing, etc. between D1 and D2.
	Housing Diversity	The number of bedrooms and to what degree that fosters a certain type of design/development and how it affects parking.
	Design Review	Strengthen the design review process
Developer	More FAR Premiums Clarification on non-leasable space	
Density	2	
Design	1	
Young Professionals	1	
Intent	1	
D1 extend	1	
Height	1	
Incentives	1	
Public Realm	1	
Don't downsize	1	
Height & massing	1	
Housing Diversity	1	
Design Review	1	
More FAR	1	
Premiums	1	
Clarification on non-leasable space	1	

Question 5 - Other Communities

Who	Have you seen examples of techniques, ordinances or standards in other communities that you think would work well in Ann Arbor?
Developer (2)	<p>No, it's the opposite: other communities should be modeling their ordinances after Ann Arbor.</p> <p>The downtown zoning works better than zoning in other areas of the City, like the Washtenaw Area (near Whole Foods) – in those developments the second floor doesn't work (no one wants to occupy those spaces). South Zeeb Rd. is another example, along with live-work units in Brighton.</p>
DDA (2)	<p>In older communities (like Ypsi) – ground level storefronts can be used for multiple things, including residences! They can be converted as the market changes, but the buildings are still suited for the active retail use.</p>
Concerned Neighbor (1)	No comment
Developer (1)	<p>In Ann Arbor, a developer spends all of his time on how to get an approval. Anything to formalize what you need to get an approval would be good. He has doubts about how general systems work around stormwater – drainage, run-off, floodplain, etc.</p> <p>It is outrageously expensive to connect to utilities. That cost might be a factor driving the height.</p>
Developer (2)	<p>They did not have any suggestions of examples, but one shared a story from a friend who builds in Chicago. When presenting to the Chicago Board, his friend said, "No one comes to Chicago to see small buildings." He was approved. One question is what do people come to Ann Arbor to see.</p>

Question 6 - Other Comments

Who	Is there anything else you would like to share or have the consultant consider?
Developer (2)	<p>Ann Arbor should allow some residential on the 1st floor of these buildings – this would be ideal for seniors as accessible apartments.</p> <p>The ordinance is too limiting on uses – it is not the business of the City to regulate uses this specifically. The market will handle filling the spaces; if it's the right</p>
DDA (2)	<p>We need to make sure we get some variation in height (not everyone bumping up against a maximum)</p> <p>Uniformity isn't speaking to livability (need things like balconies, rooftop spaces, Don't price out the core – people need to be able to live there; we don't want to have just the very rich and the very poor (downtown Boulder is an example).</p> <p>Consider allowing the private sector to own and manage some of the public spaces near their buildings – don't just get a contribution to the parks fund. Could use this as a trigger for premiums as well.</p>
Concerned Neighbor (1)	<p>Regarding 413 E Huron:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Felt we "lost" for no good reason · The project didn't make any sense for anyone and no one liked it, yet the · Was merely asking that the plan for the building be "sane" o There was no loading zone o There was no pick up/drop off area o Not enough parking spots o Entrance off of Huron St. is not perpendicular to the street · Cast an historic building into the shade at noon 9 months out of the year · Setback for the tower was too small · Building needed to be reconfigured to account for sunlight and sight lines · Building is not consistent with Sloan Plaza and Campus Inn · Large traffic increase through 4th ward neighborhoods · Building is not functional · The whole thing was an example of poor government and a poor process · Many of these issues should have been caught by employees reviewing the
Developer (1)	<p>He wants our community to be more dense, lively and occupied on a 24-hour basis. He is frustrated by the overemphasis on parks, easiest thing to get approved. If the greenbelt and Allen Creek Greenway were coupled with densification, that is a good trade-off. It is grow or die. We have to allow positive new things to happen.</p>
Developer (2)	<p>Out of this evaluation process, they would like to see a map of parcels more than 8,500 square feet that have the potential for development (vacant or underutilized). They thought that data should drive some decision-making.</p>