

Dear Commissioners,

I strongly oppose this proposed ordinance amendment. Yes! Knoxville is an organization that exists to promote housing abundance and freedom, transportation choice, and vibrant placemaking. This proposed change enshrines the status quo of the post-war suburban development experiment which has catapulted pollution, isolated communities, and exacerbated physical and mental ill health in the United States. The fact that some developers may encounter added complexity under the code as-written should not rob people of the opportunity to enjoy walkable neighborhoods, dignified public transportation, and vibrant mixed-use development.

The case file claims that, "the application of build-to-zones and build-to- percentages alone will not promote a pedestrian oriented environment for properties zoned C-G-2 and C-G-3." My reading of the argument in favor of this amendment, however, is not that the application of current code will be ineffectual at encouraging walkability, but rather that application of the build-to zones and percentages *themselves* is too complicated to be implemented at all. One cannot have it both ways. If those in favor of this amendment think that the previous iteration of the municipal zoning code (the 1962 code) was more effective in producing pedestrian-oriented development, all available evidence points otherwise.

Historically, auto-oriented, suburban style development has decimated walkability. Preserving the older pattern will not miraculously generate human-centered development as has been claimed. This proposed amendment is unnecessarily broad. If individual property owners in the affected corridors believe it is too difficult to comply with code, they might consider applying to re-zone their properties to a more appropriate zoning designation. I personally have gone through this process when I thought that my property was incompatible with existing code. Though my policy preference may be city-wide legalization of duplexes and fourplexes, I understood the importance of targeted, case-specific corrections for properties with inappropriate zoning. The same standard should be applied here. Such a broad-brush approach to rolling back human-centered design is not necessary, and it will negatively impact those who wish to build a more walkable, healthier, more enjoyable Knoxville.

Caution and deference are not hallmarks of leadership. Be bold. Keep in place our hard-won reforms.

Civically,

Drew Harper, *Advocate*
Yes! Knoxville