

FROM THE DESK OF

DUSTIN W. DURHAM

Knoxville Transportation Authority Commissioner | Renter
New Urbanist | Bike Commuter | Knoxville Since 2008 |
Saying Yes To Better Neighborhoods

To: Knoxville-Knox County Planning

Subject: Ordinance Amendment [10-B-23-OA](#)

I am writing this letter in support of proposed Amendment 10-B-23-OA to our City codes and zoning. Without getting into specifics of the Amendment itself, I believe that, on the whole, these changes are a critical first step in helping to remedy our housing crisis as well as allowing the necessary incremental increase in neighborhood density required for an effective and robust bus system.

As a Commissioner of the KTA, I am proud and humbled to be part of the effort to make KAT a system that works better for our City. The areas chosen for the City's effort to start re-legalizing 'missing middle housing' are primarily in neighborhoods that will be a ten-minute-or-less walk to bus routes that will soon come every 15 minutes. Transit systems like that will allow many to live 'car-lite' lives, such as I currently do, where we utilize the car for trips only once a week or less. This not only allows us to begin tackling the 50%+ of community emissions that come from ground transportation, but it allows us as citizens to better interact with our surroundings as we are no longer viewing our home from behind the isolated screen of a car. Better transportation systems allow for better community interaction, and in order to have better transportation systems, two things must happen: more frequency and better land-use. We at the KTA have done our part in providing more frequency to these areas; now it is up to you as the Planning Commission to do yours. Update our land-uses to allow the needed density in these places to let our buses work.

As well, from the perspective of a renter, it excites me to no-end at the possibility of allowing housing types that, for generations, were legal here by-right and which allowed our neighborhoods to respond to changing demographics. Frankly, our current housing situation ignores that 40% of the county are singles, like myself, and that we do not want or cannot afford a single-family home on a large lot. There is nothing less honorable or neighborhood-character-destroying about a duplex or a fourplex, and for many like me, the fact that they are illegal in the inner-city neighborhoods where we want to live is not only disheartening, but feels like a personal attack. Remedy this, and approve this Amendment.



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As well, Mr. Bentley Marlow has brought up several Amendments that can also go a long way toward helping in the areas of housing and transportation, and when considering this Amendment, do not overlook the fact that the City's proposal is not contradictory to his. Evaluate both carefully, see where they can build upon one another, and do your duties to allow housing to flourish and respond to the needs of the younger, yet also aging, generations. Do not view this proposal, nor Mr. Marlow's, as something which to say 'yes' or 'no'; view them as 'yes, and!'. Neither are perfect, but both are needed, and we shouldn't miss this opportunity to respond to the housing crisis by doing what we can now and building upon it later. Thank you for your time.