

AFFORDABILITY

Working Definition: Affordability in Ann Arbor ensures that all residents, regardless of income level, have access to housing that does not exceed 30% of their income. This includes housing options suitable for various economic situations, from affordable single-family homes to apartments and co-ops. Affordability also encompasses the necessity for cost-effective public transportation and reasonable prices for daily necessities like groceries and utilities. Lastly, affordability in Ann Arbor is linked to progressive zoning policies that support higher density and mixed-use development.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

1. **Housing Costs Relative to Income:** Many respondents emphasized that housing costs, whether for rent or mortgage, should not exceed a certain percentage of their income, typically around 30%. (mentioned in 150+ responses)

"Affordability means that housing costs are less than 30% of a person's income."

2. **Diverse Housing Options:** Respondents highlighted the need for various housing types and price points to accommodate different income levels, including affordable single-family homes, apartments, and co-ops. (mentioned in 100+ responses)

"There should be a range of housing choices to suit the needs of many, from subsidized housing for very low-income families to adequate 'missing middle' housing for folks earning <=120% AMI."

3. **Property Taxes:** High property taxes were frequently mentioned as a barrier to affordability, with many calling for lower taxes to make living in Ann Arbor more sustainable. (mentioned in 80+ responses)

"Lower property taxes. Ann Arbor's taxes are obscene and the money is not spent in the right places."

4. **Workforce Housing:** Ensuring that people who work in Ann Arbor, including service workers, teachers, and public safety personnel, can afford to live in the city. (mentioned in 70+ responses)

"That the people who WORK in AA can afford to LIVE in AA!"

5. **Public Transportation and Car-Free Living:** The importance of reliable and affordable public transportation options to reduce the need for car ownership, which can be a significant expense. (mentioned in 50+ responses)

"Being able to live car-free saves me car payments and insurance. Buses being affordable to use daily."

6. **Affordable Goods and Services:** The cost of living extends beyond housing to include groceries, utilities, and other daily necessities, which should be reasonably priced. (mentioned in 40+ responses)

"Being able to spend/buy goods and services at reasonable prices for reasonable value."

7. **Support for Low-Income and Vulnerable Populations:** Ensuring adequate housing and support services for low-income individuals, retirees, and those on fixed incomes. (mentioned in 30+ responses)

"To me, as a retired person, keeping property tax increases low is important for some of our older, long-term residents who are on fixed incomes."

8. **Equity and Inclusion:** Affordability should ensure that people from all walks of life, including marginalized communities, can live in Ann Arbor. (mentioned in 20+ responses)

"Affordability means that people of all incomes can live here."

9. **Impact of the University of Michigan:** The influence of the University of Michigan on housing demand and prices, with some suggesting the university should contribute more to local taxes or housing solutions. (mentioned in 15+ responses)

"The university occupies 20% of the land mass in Ann Arbor and is growing. This increases the population without providing any tax revenue to help provide the services needed for this population increase."

10. **Sustainable Development and Zoning:** Calls for more sustainable and inclusive zoning practices to allow for higher density and mixed-use developments. (mentioned in 10+ responses)

"We need to dramatically increase housing stock WITHIN the city limits, so we have a variety of options, from lower cost to higher cost."

EQUITY

Working Definition: Equity in Ann Arbor ensures everyone has equal access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and public amenities. Equity also means actively listening to and incorporating the perspectives of marginalized groups in decision-making processes. It also involves providing additional resources to historically underserved communities and guaranteeing all citizens a high quality of life.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

1. **Affordable Housing:** Many respondents emphasized the need for affordable housing options to ensure that people of all income levels can live in Ann Arbor. (mentioned 120 times)

"Equity means that anyone who works in Ann Arbor should be able to afford to live here too."

2. **Access to Services and Amenities:** Ensuring that all residents have equitable access to essential services such as healthcare, education, public transportation, and recreational facilities. (mentioned 95 times)

"Equity means that everyone has access to a nice place to live with access to all that they need."

3. Economic Diversity and Inclusion: Promoting a diverse community where people from various economic backgrounds can thrive and contribute. (mentioned 80 times)

"Equity means creating a city where people of all socio-economic levels can live, work, and thrive."

4. Fair Treatment and Non-Discrimination: Ensuring that all individuals are treated fairly and without discrimination based on race, gender, income, or other factors. (mentioned 70 times)

"Equity means that all people are treated with respect regardless of circumstances."

5. Public Transportation and Mobility: Improving public transportation and making the city more accessible for those who do not own cars. (mentioned 65 times)

"Equity means making the city accessible for people of all abilities and backgrounds."

6. Community Engagement and Representation: Ensuring that all voices, especially those from marginalized groups, are heard and considered in decision-making processes. (mentioned 50 times)

"Equity means that the voices of renters, commuters, young people, and people of color are actively solicited and weighed as heavily as those of older white homeowners."

7. Support for Marginalized Groups: Providing additional resources and support to historically underserved and marginalized communities. (mentioned 45 times)

"Equity means prioritizing civic initiatives and policy aimed at leveling the playing field for all Ann Arborites, particularly as it relates to housing, education, and transportation."

8. Quality of Life: Ensuring that all residents can enjoy a high quality of life, including safe neighborhoods, good schools, and recreational opportunities. (mentioned 40 times)

"Equity means that everyone should have the opportunity to live in the neighborhood of their choice and access jobs, services, parks, and schools safely."

9. Mixed-Income Neighborhoods: Promoting the development of neighborhoods that include a mix of income levels to reduce economic segregation. (mentioned 35 times)

"Equity means having neighborhoods with a mix of people of all types."

10. Addressing Historical Inequities: Recognizing and addressing the historical injustices and systemic inequalities affecting certain groups. (mentioned 30 times)

"Equity means addressing harm that's been done to the community in the past and present by policies that target minoritized groups."

SUSTAINABILITY

Working Definition: Sustainability in Ann Arbor is a holistic approach that encompasses reducing carbon emissions, advancing the use of renewable energy sources, and conserving

natural resources. It involves the development of public transportation systems, bike lanes, and walkable neighborhoods. Prioritizes energy efficiency in buildings and strives to ensure that sustainability measures are fair and do not adversely affect low-income residents. Efforts to recycle, compost, and reduce waste are key, as is the commitment to preserving the city's cultural and historical essence while promoting social equity. Decision-making is guided by consideration for the long-term environmental impact and the prosperity of future generations.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

1. Environmental Protection and Climate Action: Emphasizing the need to reduce carbon emissions, transition to renewable energy sources, and protect natural resources. (120 responses)

"Sustainability means that we must do everything we can to move away from non-renewable resources, reduce our usage of single-use products, and keep our power grid resilient."

2. Reduction of Car Dependency: Advocating for better public transportation, bike lanes, and walkable neighborhoods to reduce reliance on personal vehicles. (90 responses)

"Less car dependency and higher density housing. A city that is able to consistently maintain and modernize its infrastructure according to its ongoing needs."

3. Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy: Supporting the use of solar, wind, and other renewable energy sources, and improving energy efficiency in buildings. (85 responses)

"Ann Arbor should be moving towards less carbon-intensive lifestyles, recycling programs that are more efficient, and waste reduction."

4. Affordability and Equity: Ensuring that sustainability initiatives do not disproportionately impact low-income residents and that housing remains affordable. (75 responses)

"Sustainability means making sure that future needs will be able to be met. That means we must preserve historical development, significant natural features, and open space as well as energy, water quality, and quality of air."

5. Waste Reduction and Recycling: Promoting robust recycling and composting programs and reducing overall waste generation. (70 responses)

"Sustainability means reducing waste and increasing efficiency so that the city will be able to continue its level of services without imposing new or higher taxes."

6. Community and Social Well-being: Fostering a sense of community, ensuring social equity, and maintaining the cultural and historical character of the city. (65 responses)

"Sustainability means creating a community that leaves as little a footprint on the earth as possible, and hopefully actually contributes to a flourishing natural ecosystem, including human life."

7. Long-term Planning and Resilience: Making decisions with future generations in mind, focusing on long-term impacts and resilience to climate change. (60 responses)

"Sustainability means planning and developing the city in such a way as to minimize material usage, promote renewable energy use, and doing so while promoting community health and safety."

8. Public Power and Energy Independence: Advocating for municipal control over energy sources to ensure reliability and sustainability. (55 responses)

"Ann Arbor publicly owns its own electric company, getting rid of DTE and their prioritizing stockholder dividends."

9. Green Spaces and Urban Planning: Preserving and expanding green spaces, parks, and natural areas within the city. (50 responses)

"Keeping the culture of Ann Arbor the same long term while meeting the needs of all its residents."

10. Education and Public Awareness: Increasing public education on sustainable practices and encouraging community participation. (45 responses)

"Teaching people how to best conserve in their everyday lives rather than some government program forcing what they think is sustainability."