**The Mixed Use Party Will:**

**Replace the Zoning Code**

City council controls the Ann Arbor zoning ordinance and map. Like most cities, Ann Arbor has zones for residences, retail businesses, industrial areas, and many other uses. There are density controls to limit the number of people allowed to live in an area. In most parts of Ann Arbor, it is illegal for five or more non-related people to live together. In the least-dense residential zone, it is illegal to build houses on lots smaller than half an acre.

The purpose of zoning is to separate incompatible uses from each other, like polluting factories from houses. But local governments use zoning for much more than preventing harm. In many cities, people who do not want to live near businesses or apartments use exclusionary zoning to force suburban development onto everyone else. To push traffic and noise out of favored areas, city councils have separated residential zones from commercial zones, making people rely on cars every time they go to work or to stores. To keep property values high, they have made small houses and apartments illegal, making housing expensive and scarce. This scarcity has caused more people to live and work outside of cities, replacing farms and forests and increasing traffic.

Ann Arbor has avoided some of these problems because the city partly developed before city council passed the zoning code in 1923. The downtown has businesses next to residences, and areas like Burns Park and the Old West Side allow lot sizes that are too small to be legal in newer parts of the city. Even so, most of Ann Arbor has exclusionary zoning and the problems that go with it.

We will replace exclusionary zoning with a code that restricts harms without segregating businesses from residences or making small houses illegal. We will do this by replacing all of the current zones with three new ones: Mixed Use, Neighborhood Mixed Use, and Heavy Industrial.

1. The Mixed Use Zone will cover areas that currently have tall buildings. It will provide space for people who accept shade, noise, and late-night traffic in return for the freedom of living in a less restrictive area. Businesses, houses, and apartments can be next to each other with few rules about noise, light, building height, and opening and closing times.

2. The Neighborhood Mixed Use Zone will cover all areas that do not currently have tall buildings and are not currently zoned for heavy industry. It will provide space for people who want to avoid the harms of shade, noise, and late-night traffic. Residences and businesses can be next to each other, but owners will have to close their businesses at 10:00 PM and avoid disturbing their neighbors with too much light or noise. Buildings can only be three stories high. Businesses that already exist near residences without problems will be exempt from any new restrictions.

3. The Heavy Industrial Zone will cover the same areas that it currently does. It will provide space for loud and dirty activities that cannot be near other land uses.

Except for public land including parks, all of the city will be covered by these three zones. With the new zoning code, housing will be cheaper, walking to stores will be easier, natural areas will be preserved, and people will be freer to do what they want with their property

**Legalize Victimless Crimes**

We will get rid of laws that penalize people for actions that do not harm others. If an action is harmless unless it is performed improperly, then we will make only the improper form of the action illegal. For example, someone consuming alcohol in public does not harm others unless the drinker litters, drives drunk, or otherwise does damage. We will strictly enforce rules against littering glass and driving drunk without banning drinking in public. We will apply the same principle to other victimless crimes.

**Abolish Tax Increment Financing**

The Downtown Development Authority is a mayor-appointed board that uses taxpayer money to invest in private developments. The board members hope that their investments will raise land values enough that the city will profit from increased property tax revenue. This is called tax increment financing, and we will abolish it. We will stop the city government from making investments in private businesses. Private developers can obtain financing from banks or individuals, and the Downtown Development Authority board members should not be able to force citizens to loan money to developers. Individuals can make their own investments with their own money, and tax money should only be used for necessary services that individuals cannot easily obtain without the city government.

**Move the Tax Burden to Unimproved Land**

Currently property taxes are levied on the improved value of land. This means that if someone owns a house on a parcel of land, he or she pays property taxes on both the unimproved land (the parcel), and the improvement (the house). Taxes on improvements discourage landlords from renovating houses or doing anything else that makes their property more valuable. Taxes on unimproved land only discourage speculation and holding land deeds for profit. To encourage improvements, and discourage speculation and un-earned rent, we will eliminate taxes on improvements, and increase taxes on unimproved land.

**Lower Taxes**

With mixed-use zoning that allows more people to live in the same amount of space, tax revenues will grow faster than expenses for roads, sewer expansions, and other costs that are expensive in low-density areas. We will use this increased revenue to lower taxes without cutting necessary services.