

Common Misconceptions about *Rochester 2034*

Misconception: The comprehensive plan is the same as a zoning code.

While both documents describe how land can be used and developed over time, the comprehensive plan is about the future of the city's land use, describing a long-term vision of how and where the city will grow and change over the next 15 years. The zoning code and map are about what is allowed today. Zoning is more specific than the comprehensive plan and comes with a set of rules that specify what uses are allowed, and how buildings may be developed or changed. In short, the comprehensive plan provides foundation and direction, while zoning is a set of specific rules and regulations that implement the plan.

Misconception: *Rochester 2034* is suggesting that the community be taken out of zoning decisions.

Residents and business owners are important partners in Rochester's zoning decisions. Since the release of the May 2019 draft of *Rochester 2034*, Community Groups, which include neighborhood and business associations, have been more explicitly identified in the Plan as partners during the upcoming Zoning Code update process. Community members will be key in guiding this process, and will have the opportunity to discuss zoning code amendments. Additionally, all comments related to zoning that came in as part of the Comprehensive Plan process will be carried over to the Zoning Code update process.

Misconception: *Rochester 2034* and the Zoning Code cause development.

Development happens when a developer or property owner determine that the market will allow a reasonable rate of return for their investment. A Comprehensive Plan and a Zoning Code guide, direct, and regulate that development. A Plan and Zoning Code do not generate development proposals.

Misconception: *Rochester 2034* is recommending Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) be incorporated into the upcoming Zoning Code update.

Rochester 2034 states, "Over time, if Rochester's population increases, the City should consider additional affordability strategies that increase housing options, such as allowing one extra (subordinate) unit", also known as Accessory Dwelling units, in the Low-Density Residential Character Area. Since the Comprehensive Plan is a 15-year plan, elements of it are longer range recommendations. ADU's are not being recommended for near-term zoning changes. The Plan is simply recommending that ADUs be included in future discussions of how to create strong, healthy neighborhoods with multiple housing options.

Misconception: *Rochester 2034* is recommending building heights that are not consistent with existing neighborhood character. The Plan recommends that, through the zoning update process, maximum heights be established in certain mixed-use areas. These recommended height limits are consistent with taller structures found in many mixed-use areas. While a 4-story building may be taller than an adjacent house, limiting buildings to 2 or 3 stories along these corridors is not in keeping with the historic built form of the city and works against other Plan Goals/Strategies, such as supporting multi-modal choices by focusing growth on transit corridors and re-establishing a critical mass of residents to support local businesses.

Misconception: *Rochester 2034* is going to change the character of the City's neighborhoods that are predominantly single-family homes. The neighborhoods that have the highest concentration of single-family homes will experience minimal, if any, impact on neighborhood character from the recommendations of *Rochester 2034*. The Plan recommends allowing existing built-as or legally-converted 2-families to continue as 2-family structures even if they are vacant for an extended time or damaged. This is intended to encourage wealth-building opportunities for owner residents, re-legalize the historic built form of the city, and reduce vacancy. Existing 2-family homes are relatively rare in the areas that are designated as low-density residential character areas. Neighborhoods that are more mixed-density will see a decrease in vacancies caused by current regulations. Beyond that recommendation, the Plan has several Strategies about preserving the quality of life and historic character of our residential neighborhoods.