



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

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Date: March 5, 2015
To: Planning Commission
From: Neighborhood Planning Committee
RE: The District 11 Hamline Midway Mixed-Use Corridors 40-Acre Zoning Study

Background

The Hamline Midway Zoning Study was initiated by Saint Paul Planning Commission Resolution 13-58 in December of 2013 and the study's findings and recommendations were released for public review on December 5, 2014. Per the authorizing resolution, the zoning study looked at blocks with frontage on Snelling and Hamline Avenues between University Avenue and Pierce Butler Route, and at blocks with frontage on Thomas and Minnehaha Avenues between Hamline and Snelling. A public hearing was held on February 13, 2015 and the Neighborhood Planning Committee reviewed testimony on March 4, 2015.

Zoning Study Process

As noted, the Planning Commission initiated the study in late 2013, based on a request from District 11, the Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC). At the same meeting, the Planning Commission released and set a public hearing date for the Hamline Midway Community Plan. That plan, which was adopted as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan by the City Council in May 2014, was a summary document, developed by City staff from a longer plan originally written by D11/HMC board and committee members and volunteers. While the adopted plan includes relatively little discussion of the requested zoning study, more extensive discussion of zoning issues was found in the original plan document developed by D11/HMC. The areas requested for rezoning were listed in Appendix A to the *Hamline Midway Community Plan* (excerpted below). The final study area, as described in the authorizing resolution, was identified based on the original D11/HMC document as well as City staff discussions with the D11/HMC staff and the Ward 4 office.

Appendix A: Current and Proposed Zoning

Area	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning
A: Snelling Avenue, between Thomas and Englewood	B2	T2
B: West side of Snelling Avenue at Pierce Butler Route	B3	T2 or T3
C: Hamline Avenue at Minnehaha and Van Buren	B1	T1
D: Intersection of Hamline and Thomas Avenues	B2, RT1	T2
E: Thomas Avenue, between Hamline and Pascal	RT1	R4

In September, letters were sent to owners of properties recommended here for rezoning, notifying them of the potential recommendation. Minimal responses were received.

In evaluating the current zoning and developing recommendations for changes to zoning in the study area, staff considered a number of factors. These included past, current and planned future land use, parcel size and configuration, building types, regulation of college campuses, planned transit improvements, and general market trends, as well as City plans for the area. For purposes of discussion, the study area has been broken into sets of subareas along Snelling and Hamline, as shown on Maps 1 and 2 (attached).

Findings: Snelling (Areas 1, 2, and 3)

Current Land Use, Zoning, and Building Types

Snelling Avenue in the study area is currently characterized by a mix of commercial, residential and institutional uses, with one and two-story commercial buildings generally predominate. On most blocks, the parcels facing Snelling are about 120 ft. deep, and are separated from single-family and duplex housing along the cross streets by a north-south oriented alley. The west side of Snelling is characterized by detached low-density residential structures between Edmunds and Pierce Butler Route on the north end of the study area (Area 1) and on the first block and a half going north from Thomas Avenue (Area 2). Everything north of Englewood Avenue on the east side of Snelling is part of the Hamline University Campus. On the west side, the block between Englewood and Hubbard is occupied by Hamline Elementary and the Hancock Recreation Center.

All parcels along Snelling in Area 1 are currently zoned RM2 multi-family, with the exception of the small motel (2 parcels) on the west side of Snelling at Pierce Butler Route, which is zoned B3 general business. Area 2 parcels along Snelling are all presently zoned B2 community business, except for the City park between Lafond and Thomas, which is currently zoned T2.

Minnehaha Avenue between Snelling and Asbury (Area 2, immediately east of Snelling) is lined by single family homes on the north side, and the Hamline Library and the now-vacant Knox Presbyterian Church on the south. The library and church parcels are presently zoned R4 one-family residential.

Area 3 also includes the site of the former Samaritan Hospital site, which occupied a block bounded by Thomas Avenue on the north, Simpson Street on the east, Charles Avenue on the south, and Asbury Street on the west. Edmund Avenue is vacated between Asbury and Simpson, forming a superblock. It is presently zoned RM2 Multi-family. Samaritan Hospital itself occupied the southern portion of the superblock. Later, an accessory medical office building and parking ramp were built on the northern half of the block. At the time it was built, hospitals were allowed in residential districts. In the early 1990s, the former Samaritan Hospital was demolished and townhomes were constructed on the site. The medical office building and parking ramp became legally nonconforming primary uses. The office building continues to be used for that purpose. However, this use only generates demand for approximately 100 off-street parking spaces, while the ramp, built to serve the hospital as well, has 327 spaces. In April of 2014, the Planning Commission approved an establishment of nonconforming use permit for use of the parking ramp for vehicle storage. The portion of Area 3 between Snelling Avenue and the Samaritan Hospital site is primarily a mix of multi-family and single family residential, and is zoned RM2. The parcels fronting on Snelling in Area 3 were rezoned to T2 as part of the Central Corridor zoning study.

Comprehensive Plan, District Plan, and Future Land Use

The future land use map in the Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan identifies Snelling Avenue, including the entirety of all blocks on the east side of Snelling in the area, as a Mixed-Use Corridor (Areas 1, 2, and 3). The map identifies the intersection of University and Snelling (Area 3) as a Neighborhood Center. All of the land within Area 3 is also located within the station area planning boundary, as defined by the 2008 Snelling Station Area Plan. The Comprehensive Plan describes Mixed-Use Corridors as being primary thoroughfares served by transit. Neighborhood Centers are described as compact mixed-use areas located adjacent to major intersections and served by transit. Outside of Downtown, the Comprehensive

Plan identifies Mixed-Use Corridors and Neighborhood Centers as having the highest residential densities in the city. Strategies 1.12 and 1.21 of the Land Use Chapter call for balancing the density and scale of development to accommodate growth and provide housing at densities that support transit in, respectively, Neighborhood Centers and Mixed-use Corridors. Strategies 1.15 and 1.24, respectively, call for a mix of uses in these areas.

Land Use Strategies LU 1.1 and 1.2 of the Hamline Midway Community Plan call for zoning studies to evaluate the appropriateness of rezoning from business to traditional neighborhood designations throughout the district and along Snelling Avenue in particular. Strategy LU 1.3 calls for identifying redevelopment opportunities in the district. Strategies LU 2 and LU 5 call for pedestrian scale development and appropriate transitions between “disparate land uses”, respectively.

Analysis and Recommendations

Recent and planned transit improvements were a key consideration of this zoning study. The Green Line LRT on University Avenue is now operational. In 2015, the planned opening of the A Line arterial BRT will provide improved service on Snelling and link it to the Blue Line, via Ford Parkway and, in Minneapolis, 46th Street. Also, in addition to BRT-related infrastructure, the Snelling Avenue Multi-modal Study (completed by MnDOT in early 2013) identified recommendations on better accommodating bikes and pedestrians within the corridor and improving safety and mobility, although time lines and funding for improvements aren’t clear.

Arterial BRT will not only bring better service to Snelling, but also establish Snelling as a key north-south link and reaffirm Snelling and University as a key node in that system, drawing growth and investment to the node at University and the entire length of Snelling considered in this study.

Zoning along the Snelling Avenue corridor needs to accommodate growth and intensification of both residential and commercial uses, consistent with its designation as a Mixed-Use Corridor and with the investment that improved transit service should bring over time. The physical form of future development along the corridor should also enhance the multi-modal nature of the corridor through building design and site configuration. T2 Traditional Neighborhood zoning provides for development densities similar to those allowed under the current B2 Community Business, B3 General Business, and RM2 Multifamily Residential designations. It also provides for step downs in allowed height near lower density residential properties to soften transitions from these to more intense types of land uses. T2 Traditional Neighborhood is recommended for all parcels on the west side of Snelling within Areas 1 and 2 and on the east side of Snelling within Area 2, with the exception of Hamline Park between Thomas and Lafond, which is already T2 Traditional Neighborhood.

North of Englewood Avenue on the east side of Snelling are two large parcels owned by Hamline University (Area 1), which are currently zoned RT1 Two-Family Residential. These parcels are part of the Hamline University campus as defined by the conditional use permit (CUP) which regulates campus boundaries, uses, building heights, and parking for Hamline University. The conditional use permit allows for use within the campus boundary, such as classroom buildings, dormitories, offices, etc. that would not otherwise be allowed under the base zoning. The campus boundaries may only be expanded with approval of the Planning Commission. The present base zoning and CUP are sufficient to allow continued development of and investment in the Hamline University campus. However, development standards for college and university campuses, codified in Chapter 65 of the zoning code and enacted through the CUP, require setbacks of 50 feet from all property lines, with additional setbacks for building heights above 50 feet. Such large setbacks are not appropriate along Snelling, nor do they reflect how the campus has been built out, including the recently constructed student center just north of Englewood, which required a CUP modification for reduced setback. No change to the present zoning is recommended. However, as an alternative, a change to a T1 base zoning could also be considered. This would remove the need for a CUP for most of the existing campus, and would apply T1 dimensional standards.

In Area 2, the Hamline Library and the former Knox Presbyterian Church are located along the south side of Minnehaha Avenue, just east of Snelling. Reuse of the church building is limited by the present R4 Single-Family Residential zoning. A T2 Traditional Neighborhood designation would allow reuse of the building for a variety of commercial and residential uses, and is recommended. It is assumed that the Hamline Library will remain in operation and under the ownership of the City for the foreseeable future, and the inclusion of the library parcel in the rezoning to create a contiguous zoning district is recommended.

In Area 3, the parcels along Snelling, as well as several along Thomas Avenue were, as noted, previously rezoned to T2 Traditional Neighborhood. Also as previously noted, the Samaritan Hospital site and the remainder of Area 3 between it and Snelling are within the defined station area planning boundary in the Snelling Station Plan, and are within a quarter mile (5 minute walk) of the Snelling Green Line LRT station. Rezoning of this entire area (as shown on Map 1) to T2 Traditional Neighborhood is recommended.

The portion of Area 3 generally west of Asbury (it includes one parcel on the east side of Asbury on the south side of Sherburne) is well within walking distance of the Snelling LRT station and should be considered part of the Neighborhood Center identified on the future land use map of the Comprehensive Plan. T2 Traditional Neighborhood zoning would be compatible with all existing uses, and would provide for flexibility in potential redevelopment as the level of transit service in the area continues to improve and land use in the station area generally intensifies as projected during planning for the Central Corridor. The office building on the former Samaritan Hospital site would become a conforming use under T2 zoning. Including the site in the proposed rezoning would also create a contiguous district and provide flexibility in potential future redevelopment of the site.

All recommended rezonings in Areas 1, 2, and 3 are shown on Map 1, attached.

Findings: Hamline (Areas 4, 5, 6 and 7)

Current Land Use, Zoning, and Building Types

At the intersections of Hamline with Thomas (Area 6) and Minnehaha Avenues (Area 4), one- and two-story commercial uses (with second floor multi-family residential) occupy three of four corners, and are zoned B2 community business. At Minnehaha, Horton Park is located on the northwest corner and at Thomas a duplex, presently zoned RT1 two-family, occupies the northwest corner. The rest of Hamline within the study area is lined by single-family homes oriented to the cross streets, with two notable exceptions. At Van Buren (Area 4), Dreamland Arts, a small gallery and performance space, occupies a one-story commercial building facing Hamline; the building shares a lot with and is attached to a single family home that faces Van Buren, which is occupied by the owner/proprietor of Dreamland Arts. The parcel is currently zoned B1 local business. The former Saint Columba parish school occupies the entire eastern side of Hamline between Lafond and Blair (Area 5). The school building shares a large parcel (approximately 2/3 of the block bounded by Hamline, Blair, Syndicate and Lafond) with the Church of Saint Columba, which is located to the east along Lafond. The church is still in active use. The parcel shares R4 one-family zoning with the surrounding properties. Area 7, along Thomas Avenue, consists of 46 single-family homes and 12 duplexes on (with one exception) approximately 125' x 40' one-family lots and is presently zoned RT1 two-family.

Comprehensive Plan, District Plan, and Future Land Use

The future land use map in the Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan identifies Hamline Avenue (Areas 4, 5, and 6) as a Residential Corridor. Thomas Avenue (including portions in Areas 3 and 7) and Minnehaha Avenue (portions in Area 1) are not identified as corridors, and are considered part of the surrounding Established Neighborhoods except where they intersect with Neighborhood Centers and

identified corridors. Residential Corridors are described in the Comprehensive Plan as segments of streets

that run through Established Neighborhoods and that are characterized predominantly by medium density residential uses. Established Neighborhoods are described in the Comprehensive Plan as being predominantly residential, with a variety of housing types and scattered, neighborhood serving commercial and service uses.

As noted previously, land use strategy LU 1.1 of the Hamline Midway Community Plan call for zoning studies to evaluate the appropriateness of rezoning from business to traditional neighborhood designations throughout the district. Strategy LU 1.3 calls for identifying redevelopment opportunities in the district. Strategies LU 2 and LU 5 call for pedestrian scale development and appropriate transitions between “disparate land uses”, respectively.

Analysis and Recommendations

Commercial uses are generally relatively limited along Residential Corridors and in Established Neighborhoods. Where commercial uses do exist, underlying zoning should support the continuance of uses—and establishment of new uses on existing commercial sites—that are generally compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and provide local consumer goods and services. Zoning should also reflect building scale and form and site design requirements consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Area 4 includes the existing commercial node at Minnehaha and Hamline, as well as the Dreamland Arts site at Hamline and Van Buren. The commercial node at Thomas is currently zoned B2 Community Business. The recommended rezoning to T2 Traditional Neighborhood would generally allow a similar range and intensity of uses, and apply similar dimensional and density standards. However, in the event of redevelopment, T2 zoning would require site and building design more consistent with traditional neighborhood storefront designs. It would also provide property owners with the flexibility in use of properties for which finding viable commercial uses can be difficult. A similar cluster of B2 zoned commercial properties exists in Area 6, at the intersection of Hamline and Thomas. For similar reasons, rezoning to T2 is recommended here as well. However, Area 6 also includes a duplex property, currently zoned RT1 Two-Family Residential. Rezoning to T2 would allow for continued residential use or the potential conversion of the space to a commercial use.

Dreamland Arts and the attached residential structure are currently zoned B1 Local Business. The business is generally regarded as a gallery for zoning purposes. However, it also functions as a very small scale theater. A theater would be allowed under the proposed T2 zoning, as would the attached residence. Although the change in zoning would technically allow a more potentially intense set of uses and more building mass on the site, the small size of the parcel is a practical limitation on the potential for uses of a type and scale that would be incompatible with surrounding uses.

As noted, Area 5 consists of the St. Columba church and former parish school. Under the present R4 Single-Family Residential zoning, options for reuse of the vacant building are limited, even under the provisions for reuse of large structures in Chapter 65 of the zoning code. Under the proposed T1 Traditional Neighborhood zoning, the building could be put back into use as a school, converted to multi-family housing, or used for office space for community, non-profit, and service organizations. It should be noted that parking may not be sufficient for a multi-family use.

The concentration of duplexes in Area 7 (12 out of 58 total residential structures) is similar to the concentration in surrounding R4-zoned areas. Changing the zoning of Area 7 to R4 as contemplated by the *Hamline Midway Community Plan* would bar future duplexes under all circumstances. However, with one exception, the residential lots in the area do not meet the minimum lot dimensions required for a duplex in the RT1 two-family zone (50 ft. wide and 6,000 sq. ft. in area), meaning new duplexes in the

area would require more lot area. Any lot area variance on a standard 40 ft. lot is unlikely given the standards variances must meet, barring an unusual set of circumstances. Put another way, changing the zoning of Area 7 to R4 one-family would provide very little marginal benefit in terms of preventing duplex conversions, the only potential benefit of the change. At the same time, changing the zoning to R4 would make the existing 12 duplexes nonconforming as to use. It would also constitute downzoning, something generally inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, which seeks to accommodate increased density, particularly in relative proximity (just over ¼ mile) to the Green Line LRT. No change to the zoning in Area 7 is recommended.

All recommended rezonings in Areas 4, 5, and 6 are shown on Map 2, attached.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adoption of a resolution forwarding the findings of the District 11 Hamline Midway Mixed-Use Corridors 40-Acre Zoning Study to the Mayor and City Council for consideration with a recommendation for adoption.

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number _____
date _____

Recommendations of the District 11 Hamline Midway
Mixed-Use Corridors 40-Acre Zoning Study

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission, with Resolution 13-58, initiated the District 11 Hamline Midway Mixed-Use Corridors 40-Acre Zoning Study ("Zoning Study"); and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Study considered the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan, the Hamline Midway Community Plan, current and future land use, building type, general market trends, and past and planned transportation infrastructure investments; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan identifies Snelling Avenue as a Mixed-Use Corridor, the area around the intersection of Snelling and University Avenues as a Neighborhood Center, and Hamline Avenue as a Residential Corridor; and

WHEREAS, Strategies 1.12 and 1.21 of the of the Land Use Chapter of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan call for balancing the density and scale of development to accommodate growth and provide housing at densities that support transit in, respectively, Neighborhood Centers and Mixed-Use Corridors; and

WHEREAS, Strategy LU 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 of the Hamline Midway Community Plan call for rezoning from business to traditional neighborhood designations along Snelling Avenue and throughout District 11 Hamline Midway and for identifying redevelopment opportunities throughout District 11 Hamline Midway; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Study found that recommended changes to zoning would be consistent with the strategies of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and Hamline Midway Community Plan and with the character of the Hamline Midway area; and

WHEREAS, on February 13, 2015 the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the Zoning Study, including draft zoning map amendments; and

moved by _____
seconded by _____
in favor _____
against _____

File #

District 11 Hamline Midway Mixed Use Corridors 40-Acre Zoning Study

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WHEREAS, the Planning Commission referred the draft Zoning Study back to the Neighborhood Planning Committee for review and consideration of the public hearing testimony and for recommendation; and

WHEREAS, the Neighborhood Planning Committee forwarded its recommendations and rationale for amendments to the Zoning Map of Saint Paul pertaining to the Zoning Study in a March 4, 2015 memorandum to the Planning Commission;

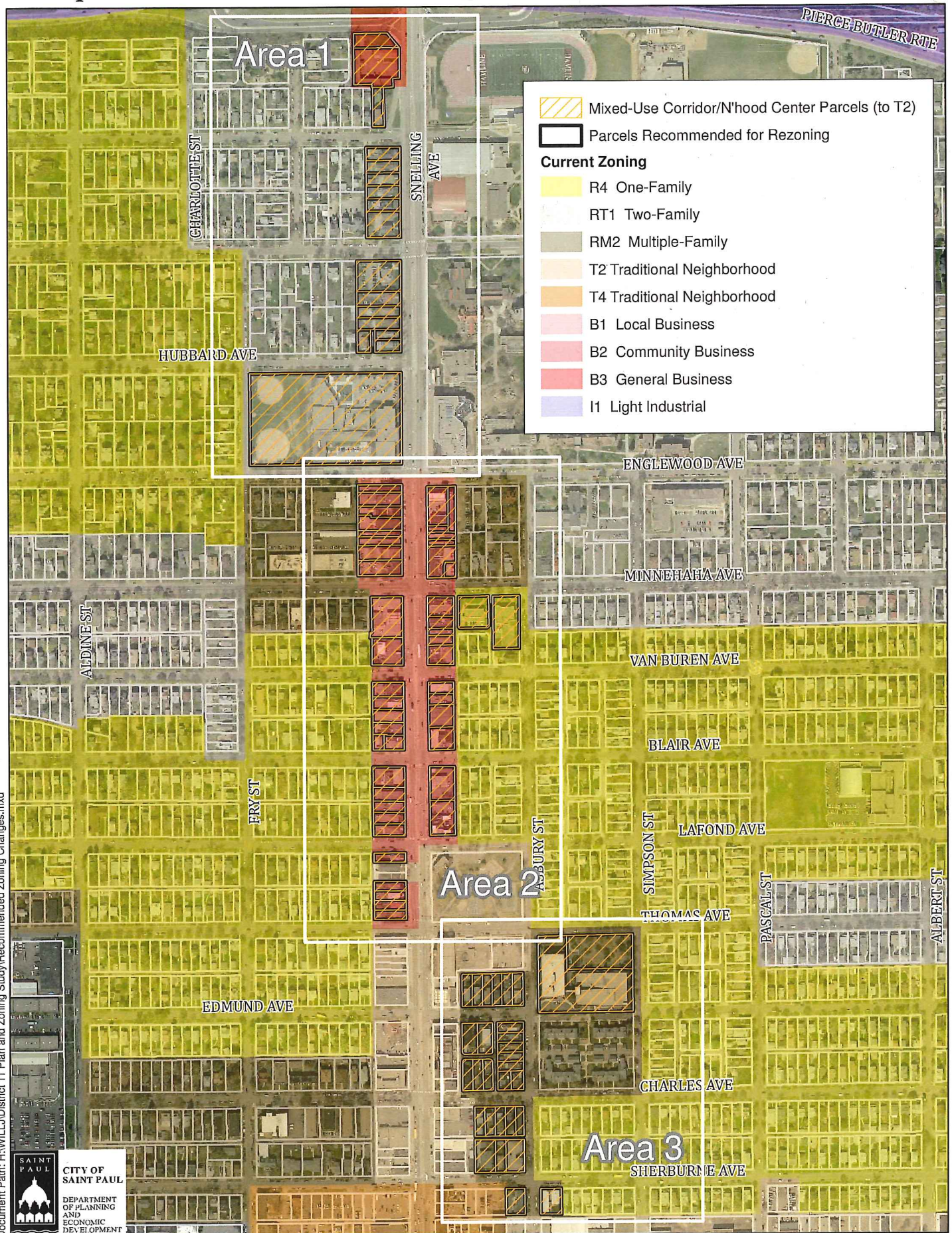
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 462.357 and § 61.801 of the Legislative Code, that the Planning Commission hereby recommends to the Mayor and City Council the rezoning of property along portions of Snelling Avenue, Asbury Street, Minnehaha Avenue, and Thomas Avenue from B2 community business, B3 general business, and RM2 multiple-family residential to T2 traditional neighborhood, and the rezoning of property along Hamline Avenue at Minnehaha Avenue, at Van Buren Avenue, between Blair and Lafond Avenues, and at Thomas Avenue from B1 local business, B2 community business and R4 one-family residential to T1 traditional neighborhood and T2 traditional neighborhood as shown on Attachment 1 "Recommended Zoning Changes."

(District 11 Hamline Midway Mixed Use Corridors 40-Acre Zoning Study)

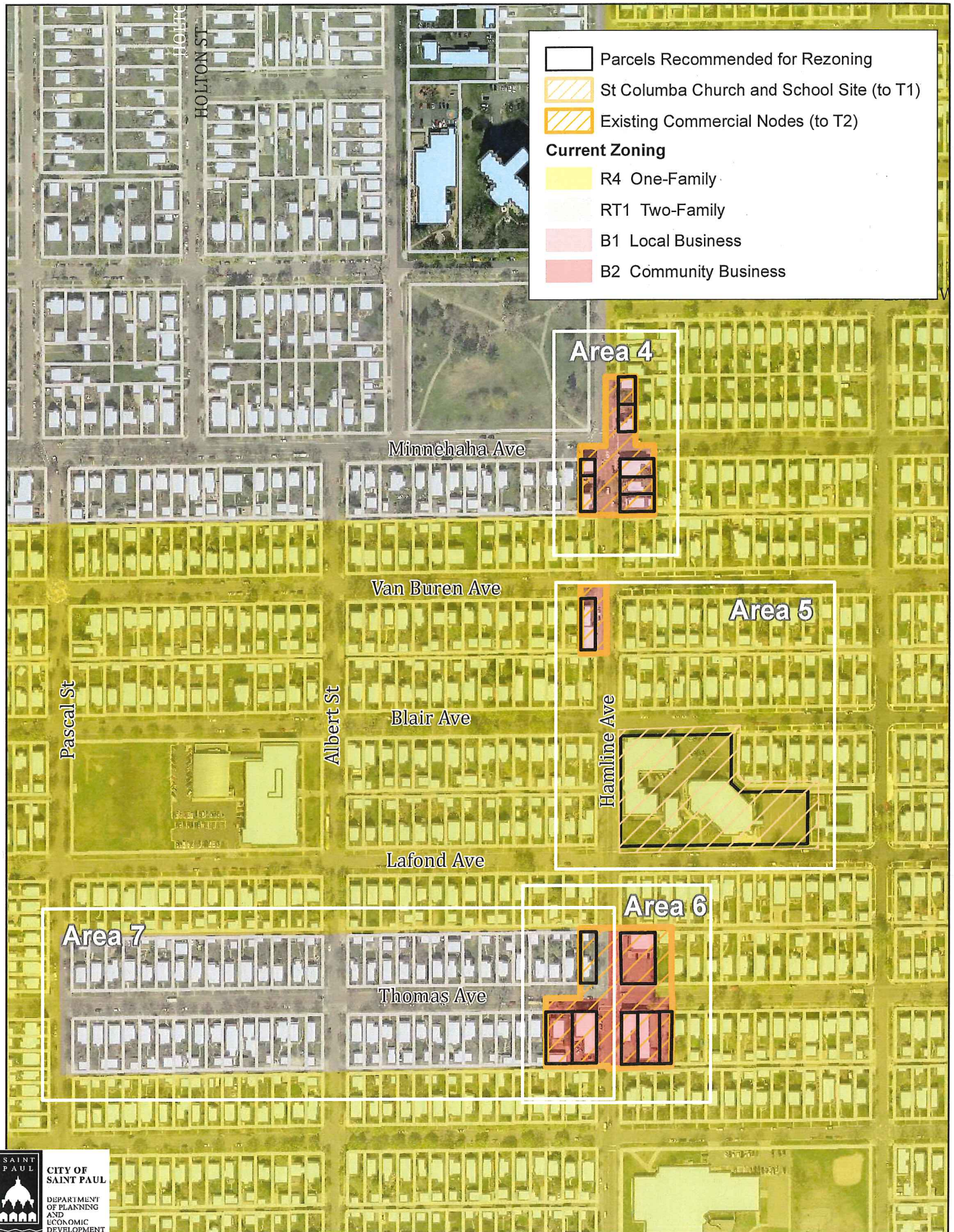
Attachment 1: Recommended Zoning Changes

- Map 1: Recommended Zoning Changes – Snelling Avenue
- Map 2: Recommended Zoning Changes – Hamline Avenue

Map 1: Recommended Zoning Changes - Snelling Avenue



Map 2: Recommended Zoning Changes - Hamline Avenue





CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

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DATE: March 6, 2015
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Neighborhood Planning Committee
SUBJECT: Ward 3 Residential Design Standards

Background

On August 6, 2014, City Council passed Resolution 14-1324 initiating a zoning study to review current design standards in Ward 3 as they relate to the construction and remodeling of single-family homes in the R1-R4 zoning districts (see Map 1-*Zoning Districts*). The study was initiated in response to a concern that the height and scale of recent single-family home construction is out of character with the surrounding established neighborhood. This report addresses the issue and the proposed recommendations are intended to prevent future construction that is inconsistent with the existing character of the residential areas of Ward 3.

Issue

The physical character of some recent single-family home construction differs significantly from the existing housing stock in southwest Saint Paul. Differences in the scale and materials of homes can lead to a sense that these changes are altering the character of the surrounding neighborhoods. While these homes are built within the limits of the zoning code, the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and many district plans emphasize the importance of maintaining the character of established neighborhoods. A conflict emerges when some of the new construction is out of character, yet is in conformance with the zoning code. Striking a balance between neighborhood change and reinvestment in the city's housing stock is important and difficult.

A main source of conflict is the degree of regulation appropriate to control the physical characteristics of housing. Generally, residents want more restrictions, while architects and builders want less. Among all stakeholders, however, there are a number of points upon which all agree – supporting some degree of stylistic and dimensional variety on block faces, the need to address drainage and flooding concerns, and the benefits of living in a neighborhood with quality housing stock and access to amenities such as commercial areas, transit options, and cultural institutions.

There is also a demand among new and existing residents, especially families, for larger homes. However, the built-up urban context limits the size of structures that it can support due to established

lot sizes and existing patterns of development. An evolution of all residential areas of the City is inevitable; the trajectory of this evolution is determined in large part by the zoning ordinance.

Definitions

The following is a short list of terms that will appear throughout this report, along with definitions specific to the context of the residential standards.

Density: Generally, density is the amount of development within a given area. In residential areas, it is usually expressed as dwelling units per acre (du/acre) or people per acre. In the context of this discussion, there is a distinction between the density of people and spatial density. While there may be a slight increase in “people” density due to changes in size of homes and accessory structures, the number of dwelling units per acre will remain relatively constant. However, with an increase in the size of houses combined with a constant area on which they are located, there is an increase in the spatial density of the neighborhood. In other words, there is more structural volume within the same space of the neighborhood.

Building Height: (*From 60.203.- B*) The vertical distance measured from the established grade to the highest point of the roof surface for flat and shed roofs; to the break line of mansard roofs; and to the average height between eaves and ridge for gable, gambrel, and hip roofs. Where a building is located on sloping terrain, the height may be measured from the average ground level of the grade at the building wall. The existing grade of the property shall not be raised around a new building or foundation in order to comply with the height requirements of this code. When there is a dormer built into the roof, the height is measured to the midpoint of the dormer roof if the dormer(s) roof width exceeds fifty (50) percent or more of the building roof width on the side where the dormer(s) is located.

Story: (*From 60.220. – S*) That part of a building, except a mezzanine, as defined herein, included between the surface of one (1) floor and the surface of the next floor, or if there is no floor above, then the ceiling next above. A basement shall not be counted as a story.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): (*From Section 60.207. – F*) The total floor area of all buildings or structures on a zoning lot divided by the area of said lot.

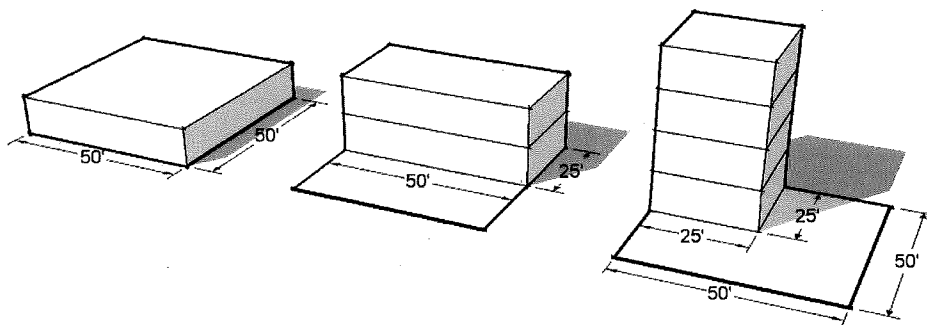


Figure 1 - Floor Area Ratio (FAR). All examples have a FAR of 1.0. (Source: City of Winnipeg)

Character: The definition of the term “character” presents challenges for this study. Many policy documents call for maintaining it, though none clearly define what it means. Though not explicitly defined in the zoning code, there are references to the term in our ordinance. From these references (74.87, 74.36), we can understand character as the assemblage of elements that make up the distinguishing features of the buildings and environment.

Sidewall: Sidewall is the exterior wall that faces a side yard, and the height is measured from grade to the lowest point of the eave on the sidewall.

Teardown: In this report, teardown will refer either to the act of demolishing a building to the foundation (or including the foundation), or the building that is bought solely for the purpose of demolishing. In the course of discussion with various stakeholders, the term teardown has sometimes been used to describe the home that replaces the one that has been demolished. This is *not* the way the term will be used here.

Permit Activity

Total construction activity in the last five years has been relatively steady in the last five years in both Ward 3 and in the city as a whole. Data for 2014 includes activity through November 14, 2014.

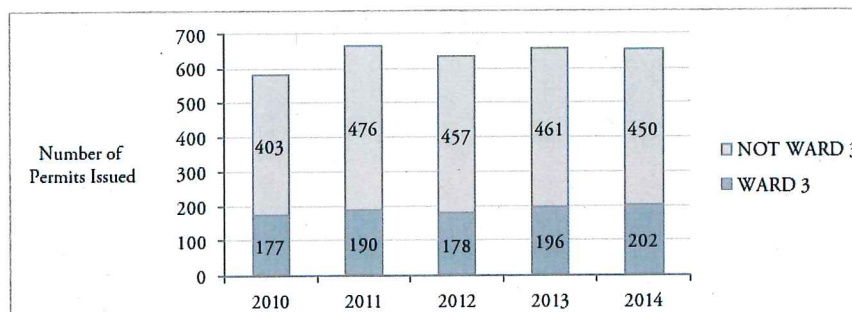


Figure 2 - Total SF Residential Permit Activity, 2010-2014. Includes new home construction, additions, new accessory structures, and additions to accessory structures. (Source: City of St. Paul)

New home construction has increased significantly city-wide, but remained relatively constant in Ward 3.

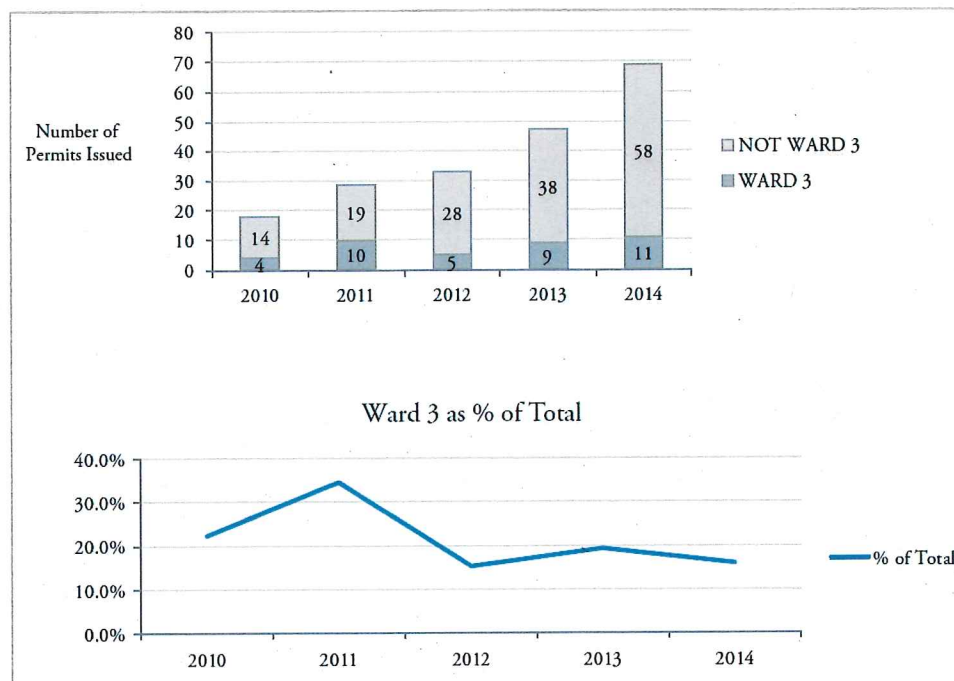


Figure 3 - New SF Residential Permit Activity, 2010-2014. (Source: City of St. Paul)

The total number of additions to single family homes has decreased somewhat in the last two years across the city as a whole, though activity in Ward 3 has remained relatively constant. It is significant to note the number of permits for additions (1285 over the five-year period) compared to the number of permits issued for new home construction (196 over the same period).

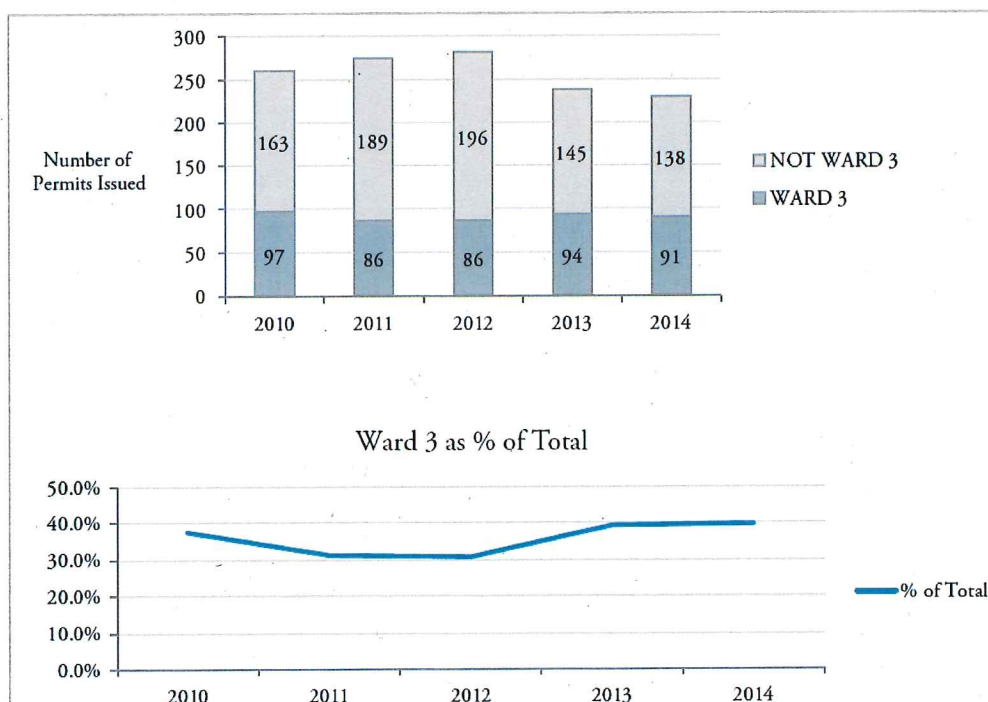


Figure 4 - SF Residential Addition Permit Activity, 2010-2014. (Source: City of St. Paul)

Accessory buildings are significant due to lot coverage requirements and the impact they have on the built environment, especially as they impact neighbors. There are a significant number of new accessory building permits issued (~330 per year). Annual permit numbers have remained relatively constant for the last five years.

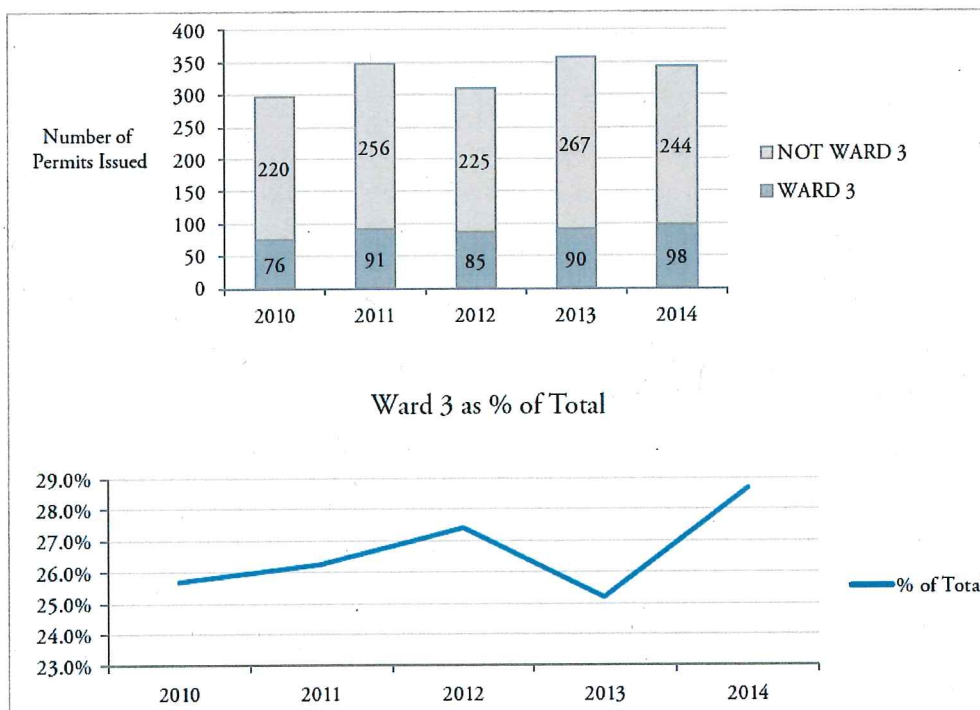


Figure 5 - New Accessory Building Permit Activity, 2010-2014. (Source: City of St. Paul)

There are two main takeaways from this information. First, the number of additions is far greater than the number of new homes (by a factor of eight). Since projects categorized as additions potentially have a significant impact on the appearance of the structure, any recommendations should have the same effect on additions as they do on new construction. Second, the general stability in the level of activity combined with the recent increase in the urgency and volume of complaints suggests that there is a problem with the type of construction, not necessarily level of activity.

Policy Support

As noted earlier, there is significant support for maintaining the character of residential districts in the Comprehensive and District 14 and 15 Plans. Relevant policies from each are included in the attachment "Policy Support Materials." A few specific policies from the Comprehensive Plan are highlighted here:

*LU 1.5 Identify residential areas where single-family, duplex housing, and small multi-family housing predominate as Established Neighborhoods (see Figure LU-B). The City should **maintain the character** of Established Neighborhoods.*

*LU 3.4 Prepare citywide infill housing design standards so that infill housing **fits within the context of existing neighborhoods and is compatible** with the prevailing pattern of development.*

*H 2.17. Support creativity in the construction of neighborhood infill housing by proactively developing zoning and design guidelines. Develop, with broad public input, citywide infill housing design standards so that infill housing **fits well within the existing Saint Paul neighborhood context**...*

The delicate nature of balancing interests can be seen in the language of H 2.17, which supports creativity in construction, while at the same time suggests the development of standards that encourage conformity with the existing context.

How We Got Here

In 2008-2009, action was taken to review residential zoning ordinances in response to an increase in the number of homes that supposedly detracted from neighborhood character. The primary items addressed in the interim ordinance and permanent design standards that followed were:

- Ensure a clear relationship between front door and street
- Minimum door and window openings
- Garages and surface parking must be off an alley if possible
- Detailed position and dimension of the garage as it relates to the house
- Driveway width

An item that was included in the interim standards, but was not in the permanent standards was a stipulation that new development should relate to the design of adjacent traditional buildings in scale and character. This regulation was criticized as being too subjective, potentially restricting creativity and investment that could be beneficial to the neighborhood. While the standards that were adopted in 2009 addressed significant residential design concerns, they were not intended to address scale and dimension of the structure.

Review of Existing Regulations

Current regulations that relate to residential standards are found throughout the zoning code. Chapter 60 contains definitions for terms such as building height and lot coverage. Chapter 63 contains building design standards (63.110) that address entry location, window and door opening minimums, and building materials. It also addresses accessory building requirements (63.501). The District Uses/Density and Dimensional Standards describe the intent and what uses are allowed in each zoning district. Section 66.231 contains dimensional standards in a table with lot size and setback minimums, height maximums, and relevant notes. These dimensional standards are applied city-wide, with the exception of note (k), which is specific to Grand Avenue.

Public Input

An extensive public engagement effort was undertaken for this study. Staff presented to the Macalester-Groveland Housing and Land Use committee and the Highland Community Development Committee at two different times to discuss the study and gather feedback. Staff also met with focus groups of

architects and realtors to discuss the study, gather feedback, and answer questions. Four different builders who do work in the area hosted staff in their offices, provided comments, and asked questions.

Precedents

Minneapolis

Minneapolis has worked in recent years to address many of the same issues regarding new construction that is out of character with surrounding context, particularly the southwest corner of the city. There have been three major zoning changes affecting residential development in the last ten years. In 2005, new site plan review standards were adopted. From 2006-2007, an infill housing text amendment was developed and adopted that reduced the maximum size of the structure, better controlled grade alterations, and reduced hard cover on the lot. In the summer of 2014, additional standards were adopted that further refined the recent changes. Methods to govern new residential construction include:

- Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits
- Defining grade in context of new construction
- Maximum lot coverage for all buildings
- Allow larger homes if context is consistent in scale
- Height limit, with maximum for ridge
- Point-based site plan review in which certain attributes have certain point values; a minimum point total is required for approval

Edina

Edina has experienced a significant amount of construction activity, including teardowns and additions, in recent years. In reaction to the changes experienced in residential neighborhoods, amendments to the zoning code were considered and adopted in 2013. Amended residential standards include:

- Graduated interior side yard setbacks based on lot width
- Specified setback distances for various accessory structures
- Height limits for principal structures based on the number of stories and to highest point on roof
- Height limits for accessory structures
- Sidewall articulation for principal structures with side walls of a certain length; allows two permitted architectural elements to count towards this requirement

Portland

Portland experienced an increase in the construction of large homes during the mid-2000s, but the activity stalled during the recession. In the last few years, however, there has been increased pressure to build larger homes again. Similar to Saint Paul, many of the lots that were platted in the first half of the 20th Century are quite narrow. The city of Portland has recognized the potential incompatibility of large homes on small lots and developed code with the stated purpose of “increas[ing] the compatibility of new houses on small and narrow lots.” The standards include:

- Height limits based on the width of the structure

- Maximum lot coverage for all buildings – simple percentage for very small lots, formula for others
- Limit height of entrance based on distance from grade
- Exterior material standards
- Trim width minimum
- Minimum eave projection

Salt Lake City

During a period of intense new construction activity in the mid-2000s, Salt Lake City reacted to the construction of new homes that are out of character with the existing fabric of the neighborhood by modifying their residential zoning code. Similar to Saint Paul, their single-family residential zoning districts are based on the size of the zoning lot. While height limits are similar across the district types, side yard setbacks decrease with smaller lots. A summary of their residential standards are as follows:

- Height limit based on either maximum height of roof ridge or the average height of other principal buildings on the block face
- Height limit for buildings with a flat roof
- Maximum sidewall height limits with increases allowed with additional side yard space
- Additional building height allowed in historic districts with approval by review board
- Maximum total building coverage – higher percentage allowed on smaller lots

Analysis

Based on input from stakeholders and information gathered from the data, there are a number of issues that emerge as particularly important.

Increasing Home Size

There is increasing pressure to build larger homes on lots that have remained the same size. As of the end of 2013, the average area for single family residential homes in Macalester-Groveland and Highland Park was 1,590 SF. The average area of homes in the same area built between 2005 and 2013 is 2,673 SF. This is an increase of 68% and approaches maximums allowed in the dimensional standards, which was uncommon in the initial build out of the neighborhood. Many of the blocks in Ward 3 are populated with structures that were built within 15 years of each other (See Map 2 – *Age of Structures*). The example shown below shows a block in Ward 3 with all homes built prior to 1925. There are a couple of things to note about this example. First, while there are a number of homes that approach the side setback minimum, which results in space between homes that is generally greater than what is required. The importance of the space between structures was emphasized by many residents, with many saying that the negative space between structures is key to defining the built environment. Second, note the variety in footprint shape and the small spaces that are created between buildings when there is articulation in the exterior walls. Many new homes lack this degree of complexity of their footprint.

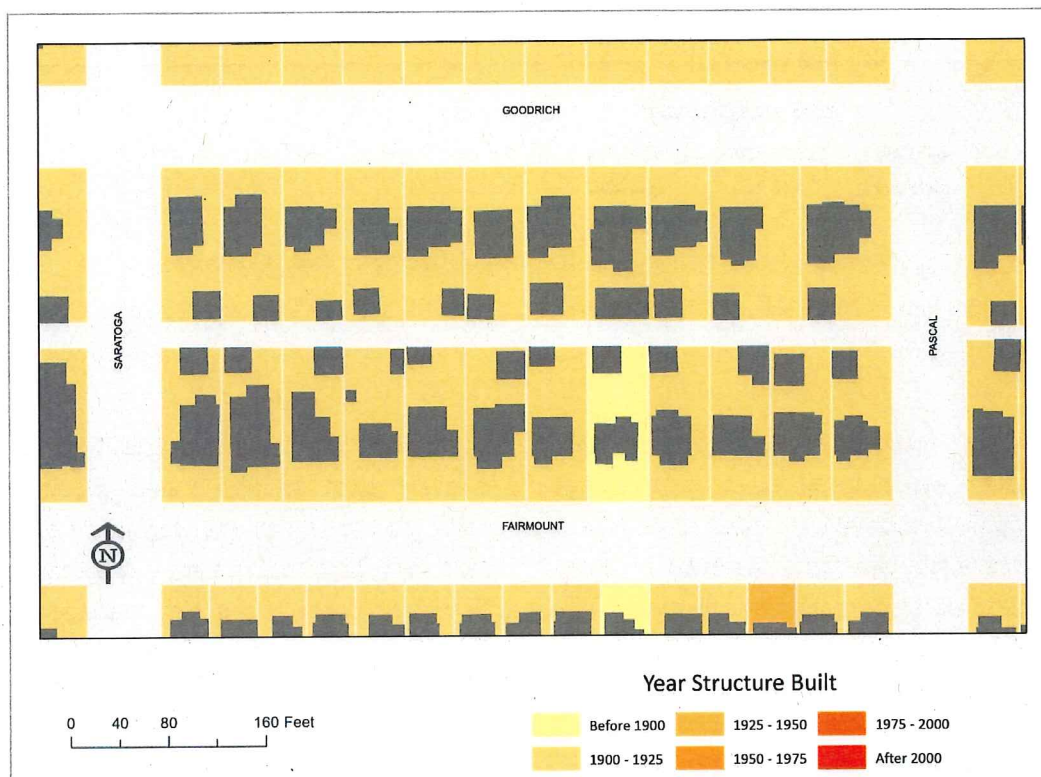


Figure 6 - A block in Ward 3. (Sources: Ramsey County and City of St. Paul)

Character

As discussed earlier, the character of an area can be difficult to define. Residents describe it in a variety of ways, including by architectural style, presence of vegetation, space between houses, walkability, the human scale of the built environment, and others. Residents were almost universal in their opinion that character occurs at a scale much smaller than that of an entire Ward and is defined rather at the block level. In response to this, and in consideration of potential zoning changes that would be based on character, a series of maps has been prepared to better understand the nature and grain of residential character.

For the most part, the maps demonstrate that although there are general trends based on certain physical characteristics, the variety is such that it is difficult to assign character “identities” to specific areas. For example, in Map 3 (Exterior Materials), there is a predominance of stucco finish in the northern half of Ward 3 and a significant amount of siding and brick in the south. However, there are multiple other exterior materials peppered throughout both of these areas. The same phenomenon can be seen in Map 4 – *Home Styles*.

The other three maps address home size through *Square Footage* (Map 5), *Floor Area Ratio* (Map 6), and *Lot Coverage* (Map 7). These maps show similar swaths of homes with certain dimensional characteristics. An important takeaway from these maps is that areas of stark contrast tend to coincide with homes that residents have identified as properties that are out of character. The figure below

shows what a contrast in FAR looks like on the street. Although not surprising, contrasts in square footage and FAR are indicators of potentially out-of-character homes.

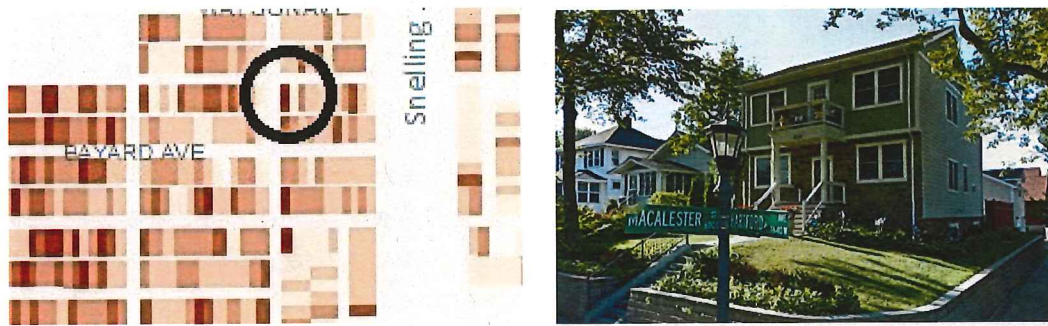


Figure 7 - FAR Contrast. (Sources: Ramsey County, City of St. Paul, Google)

Mass, Height, and Style

When discussing issues of scale and character, it is helpful to consider some of the contributing elements individually. For this report, these elements are separated into mass, height, and style. Each will be discussed in terms of current policy that applies and alternative methods of regulation.

Mass

Building mass is more difficult to define than height and can be understood as the visual weight of the structure, and is a significant contributor to its character. Massing that is too great has been one of the primary concerns of residents, who have said that there has been an overall increase with recent construction. Massing is influenced by overall size, the complexity of the form, and permeability. Increasing the overall size of the structure not only increased the visual impact of structures, but also reduces the space between them. As form increases in complexity, the number of physical and visual breaks increases, generally reducing the physical and perceived massing. The permeability of the building refers to the number of openings present or perceived in the structure; as the permeability increases, the visual mass tends to decrease.

Current Saint Paul standards address massing through dimensional and building standards. The dimensional standards (Sec. 66.231) control the overall size, or building envelope, possible for various zoning districts. Building design standards (Sec. 63.110) currently requires delineation of the entry using architectural means. For single-family residential buildings, there are also minimum percentages of window and door openings, which increase the permeability of the structure. Strategies to reduce the massing of a building include reducing the building envelope, increasing the openings, and requiring breaks in form.

Footprint is closely related to mass and refers to the area on a site covered by the structure(s). Complexity in the footprint translates to variety in the massing, since the complexity is extended vertically. When people say that homes are getting larger, they are referring to either height, footprint, or both. Saint Paul zoning code currently addresses footprint through its lot coverage limits on principal residential (Sec. 66.232) and accessory structures (Sec. 63.501). Alternative methods to regulate the footprint include setting maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits, as Minneapolis has recently done and as Saint Paul currently does for some commercial and traditional neighborhood districts. Additionally,

lot coverage maximums that use the total footprint and the total lot size could be used, as is done in Portland, Salt Lake City, and Minneapolis. The impact of a larger footprint not only influences massing, but also has implications on stormwater runoff since a larger footprint results in less impervious surface into which water can infiltrate.

Height

Although height contributes to the mass of the building, it is significant enough that it warrants separate discussion. Current Saint Paul zoning code limits height in single-family residential districts based on feet and number of stories. In R1-R4 zoning districts, the height limit is thirty feet and structures are limited to three stories. Building height is measured from grade to the highest point of the roof surface for flat and shed roofs, and to the average height between eaves and ridge for gable, gambrel, and hip roofs.

Alternate methods to regulate height include limiting the highest point of the roof, limiting the height based on nearby structures, and limiting the height of the exterior walls. Controlling the highest point of the roof establishes a maximum plane above which no new construction can surpass. As Saint Paul's code is currently written, there is no maximum and the highest point will change depending on the roof pitch. Maximum ridge height limits can have the effect of encouraging shallow roof pitches. Limiting the height based on nearby structures, as is done in Salt Lake City, is a way to prevent drastic changes in height from one structure to the next. This method can temper the speed at which a neighborhood's physical character evolves. However, it is resource intensive for staff to process and results in homeowners having different building potential based on the size of the homes that happen to be nearby. Limiting the height of exterior walls has a direct impact on the adjacent property owners by regulating the size of the surface that faces their lot. Current construction methods and story heights in demand affect the height of the sidewall. Prefabricated joists range between 18"-24" and typical story heights range between eight and ten feet in the homes observed in this zoning study. This differs from the homes built during most of the 20th Century, which had shorter story heights and 8"-10" joists.

Basement height has been addressed recently in Minneapolis, where they placed a limit on the height of the basement in the most recent series of code amendments. There may be site conditions for which a higher basement is appropriate, however, including a sloping site and a high water table. Although the foundation wall can affect the visual impact of the structure, the overall height limit of the structure or sidewalls has a greater influence on the scale of the building.

Style

In the context of this report, style refers to architectural typologies of residential buildings, including details such as materials and other design attributes. While style contributes to the character of a building and a neighborhood, it is not addressed in Saint Paul's dimensional or building design standards. A number of residents have suggested using traditional architectural styles or eras of construction as the basis for residential standards. Standards based on style can be difficult to administer since a design review process must be put into place. This is currently done for projects that fall within the areas governed by the Historic Preservation Commission and the resources that go into those reviews are considerable. Generally, architects and City staff opposed style-based standards because they have a tendency to be overly restrictive and prevent the natural evolution of a neighborhood's physical identity.

There are a number of other ways that aesthetics can be addressed through zoning. The first is through materials requirements, which allow or prohibit certain exterior finishes. Requirements of this type are used in Saint Paul's current traditional neighborhood design standards. In residential areas, material requirements can be cost-prohibitive for a homeowner who wants to make alterations to a home and can limit design choices for an architect or builder. However, there are potential benefits related to sustainability and longevity of exterior materials. Another method of regulating style and aesthetics is through a point-based system, as is used in Minneapolis. Various architectural features are given certain point values, and an applicant must include enough features to hit a minimum point threshold. Based on comments from architects and builders, this method of regulation is only moderately successful. They assert that similar combinations of elements are required to achieve the minimum points required, and homes begin to look similar after enough have gone through the process. Finally, there is the possibility of allowing conservation districts. Conservation districts are typically areas within a neighborhood that have been identified as possessing certain characteristics unique to that area and have additional review requirements and procedures in place for new development. The appropriateness of conservation districts in Ward 3 is beyond the scope of this report and would require considerable further study.

Ward 3 vs. City-wide Application

The resolution initiating this zoning study identified issues and complaints in Ward 3. Any adopted regulations could be tested in the southwest part of the city and eventually be considered for city-wide application. There was near-universal agreement among stakeholders that any recommendations should be applied based on zoning district or physical characteristics of a site, rather than political boundaries. It is recommended that the boundaries of the area where initial changes would happen should be extended to include the northwest corner of the Macalester-Groveland planning district due to similarities between the pattern of development and the presence of a natural boundary of Summit Avenue to the north.

Related Issues Not Within Scope of Zoning Study

Sustainability

While beyond the scope of this zoning study, sustainability was brought up by many stakeholders as a topic that is very important to ensure efficiency and longevity of new and remodeled structures. Further investigation is recommended to examine policy options that will incentivize homeowners and developers to pursue efficient and durable structures. It should be noted MN Statute § 16B.62, Subd. 1 prevents a municipality from adopting provisions with the intent of "regulating components or systems of any residential structure that are different from any provision of the State Building Code."

Demolitions/Teardowns

An issue that is closely related to residential construction, yet is also beyond scope of this study is the issue of teardowns. Based on numerous interactions with residents over the past months, there is significant concern that demolition permits are given without enough consideration for the interests of the neighborhood. The main concerns are a loss of small housing stock for an aging population, the unnecessary waste of energy due to the loss of embodied energy in a functioning house and the energy required to replace it, and the divisions that are created among neighbors when unanticipated and

sudden construction activity occurs. Currently, residents can enroll in the electronic notification service (ENS) and are notified when demo permits are issued. However, neighbors want a delay between when permit is issued and when work can take place in order to give them an opportunity to share comments with the homeowner. Residents have suggested that teardowns be treated in a similar way as variances due to the impact that they have on the neighborhood.

Recommendations

Approach

Based on a review of existing code and precedents from other cities, there are three basic approaches that could be taken to address the issue of residential standards: change limits, context-sensitive, design/style controls. Recommendations have to be impactful and substantive, while not being overly restrictive or costly to either a homeowner or the City in terms of resources required to administer new code. The diagrams below show the differences between the approaches. The orange bars represent the number of homes that possess some specific characteristic. There are many that fall in the middle, and there are fewer that are at the low or high extremes.

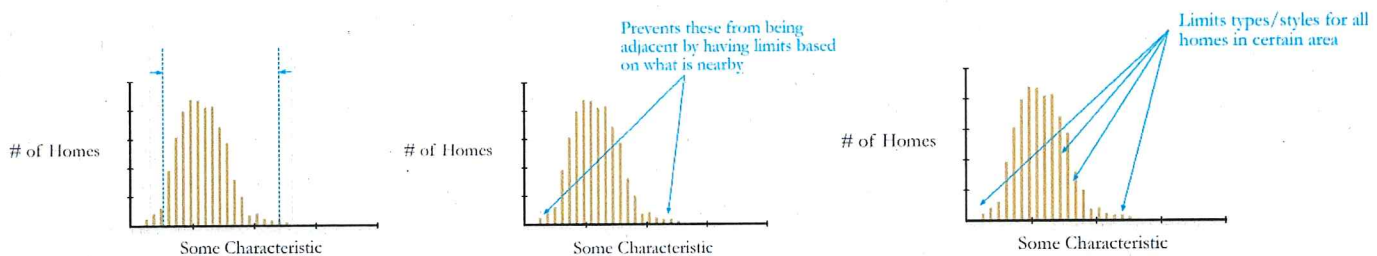


Figure 8 - Possible Approaches

The first approach is to adjust dimensional limits using a language similar to what already exists in our code. Changes would have the effect of adding additional constraints to the extremes of the characteristic. This method would be the most straightforward as it uses zoning controls that are familiar to the public and those who administer the code. It can, however, be a blunt tool that operates on a large scale.

The second approach takes into account conditions specific to the property and prevents characteristics that are too different from being next to each other. It is a finer-grained approach than the first, and is responsive to conditions, but can be costly to administer. Another consideration is that restrictions could be considered unreasonable or unfair. For example, if homes adjacent to a project are small enough, it could prevent a homeowner from expanding a half or full story. There is also a concern that a homeowner in one parcel would be able to build less or more than a homeowner two blocks away, simply because the neighbors have larger or smaller homes.

Finally, there are design or style controls. These would most likely be in the form of guidelines and would have to be evaluated through a design review process. The primary concerns with this approach

are that it can be very costly to administer and a degree of subjectivity is introduced to the review process.

In considering these options, these recommendations largely fall into the first category, using language and processes similar to what exists in the code.

Zoning Recommendations

These recommendations attempt to establish a balance between accommodating reinvestment that reflects a change in the living habits of single families and minimizing the negative effects of structures that are built to push the potential building envelope. They aim to prevent monotony and mitigate the negative impacts that very large homes can have on adjacent property owners, including loss of views, light, and privacy.

Although some of the recent projects would not be directly impacted by all of the recommendations discussed here (see attached dimensional analysis of recent projects), they reflect a modified envelope in terms of scale and massing that establishes a limit that new construction cannot surpass. The figure below shows a comparison of the building envelope currently in place and the effect that the recommendations would have to diminish and break up the envelope. To be clear, the “new” envelopes (red color) show a variety of potential envelope types that result from the recommendations – they are the maximum under certain conditions. A more detailed discussion of the impact of each recommendation follows.

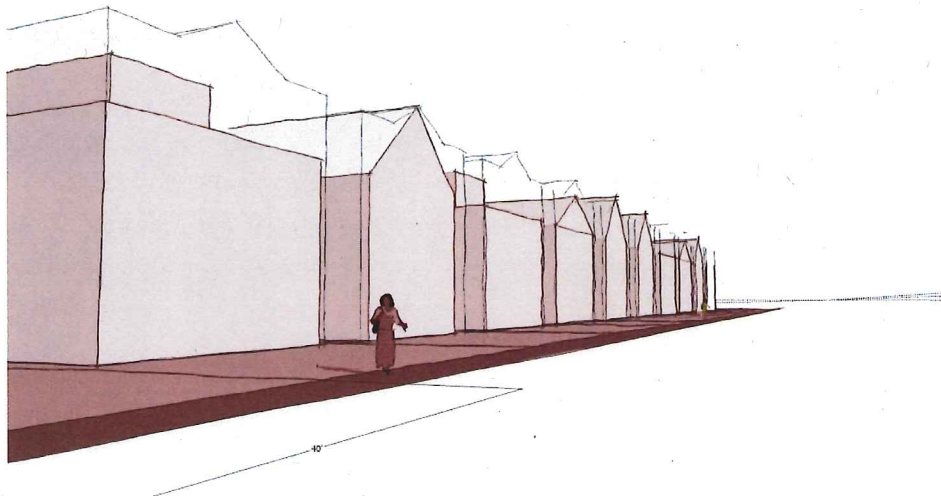


Figure 9 - Alterations to Existing Maximum Building Envelope

A summary of the recommendations are as follows (related existing code in parentheses):

1. Create Overlay District (Chapter 67)
2. Define “Sidewall” and “Sidewall height” (Sec. 60.203)
3. Height reduction unless additional side setback is given (Sec. 66.231)
4. Sidewall height limit within a certain distance of a lot line (Sec. 66.231)
5. Sidewall articulation for exterior walls of a certain length (Sec. 63.110)

6. Introduce total maximum lot coverage for all structures (Sec. 66.232, Sec. 63.501)
7. Allow greater height if consistent with the context of nearby houses. (Sec. 66.231)
8. The height of new construction can match the height of a demolished structure (Sec. 66.231)
9. Require additions to adhere to window/door opening minimums (Sec. 63.110)
10. Add exceptions for expansion in nonconforming setback areas (62.105)

1. Create an overlay district.

Creating an overlay district is the most straightforward and effective way of implementing zoning changes for a number of reasons. First, this study recommends including the northwest corner of Macalester-Groveland and excluding the Historic Preservation District along Summit. The northwest corner of Macalester-Groveland is included due to the similar nature of housing to the west of Prior Avenue. The Historic Preservation District is excluded to simplify governing ordinance; current Historic Preservation Commission review procedures address issues of character at a more detailed level than do zoning ordinances alone. Second, it is more straightforward to navigate changes to residential standards if they are in one location, rather than in a series of notes interspersed in the code. Finally, these recommendations represent a significant change to residential standards, and will likely be tested and potentially altered. By using an overlay district, any alterations would not affect the main body of the code, reducing potential confusion in the future.

2. Define "Sidewall" and "Sidewall height"

The proposed definitions are as follows:

Building sidewall. Any exterior wall that is less than forty-five (45) degrees from parallel to a side lot line.

Building sidewall height. The vertical height of the building sidewall measured from grade to the top of the wall plate on the sidewall.

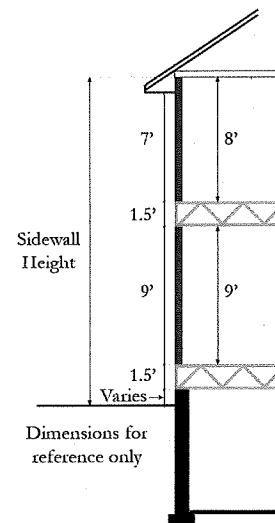


Figure 10 - Sidewall height

3. On lots less than 50 feet wide, reduce maximum height from 30 feet to 26 feet, but allow additional height when increased setback is given.

Most of the structures that residents brought up as having height that was out of character with the neighborhood were located on lots that were less than 50' wide. One of the main concerns with new housing projects is that they are tall *and* they are very close to the adjacent property. This recommendation allows homes to be built to the current height limits, but only if additional space is given in the side yards. This change would primarily impact properties in R4 zoning districts.

4. Limit the height of sidewalls to 22 feet within 12 feet of a lot line

Sidewall height is one of the principal elements of building massing and influences sense of enclosure for adjacent property owners. This also significantly reduces the potential building envelope for buildings with a flat roof. Currently, there is no difference in the building height allowed for residential structures based on roof type, as there is with accessory structures. This recommendation accounts for the fact that sidewalls on a flat-roofed house will extend further vertically than those on a gabled house of the same height as defined by midpoint between eave and ridge (see figure). Parapet walls are included in this calculation because the effect on adjacent properties is the same regardless of whether it is above the roof line. Limiting the height of sidewalls has the secondary effect of increasing the roof pitch if overall height is maximized.

The 22 foot limit allows for two full stories using modern construction methods as discussed in the height section of this report, with some flexibility for the height of the stories. Additional height (up to the underlying zoning maximum) would be allowed in the interior of the structure, past the 12 foot setback limit.

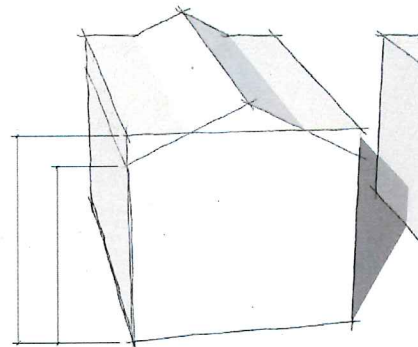


Figure 11 - Difference in sidewall height for structures of same height

5. Sidewall articulation would be required for unbroken building faces longer than 35 feet. Architectural projections would have to be at least 1 foot deep x 6 feet long and extend from grade to eave.

Long, unbroken building facades occur much more frequently in recent construction than they do in the majority of existing housing stock (see figure 6). This recommendation is intended to avoid the monotonous appearance of long unbroken building facades from streets or adjacent properties. There is a secondary effect of increased side yard space for structures longer than 35' since the setback would apply to the furthest extent of the wall (see figure at right; this figure also shows the effect of height reduction if maintaining minimum setbacks). Closely related to this recommendation is Sec. 63.106, which allows for projections into yards. Chimneys and fireplaces may project one foot into a required yard. Overhangs, decorative details, and bay windows may project 16 inches into a required yard, with additional allowed depending on the dimension of the required side yard. An important consideration regarding this recommendation is that the outermost vertical plane of the

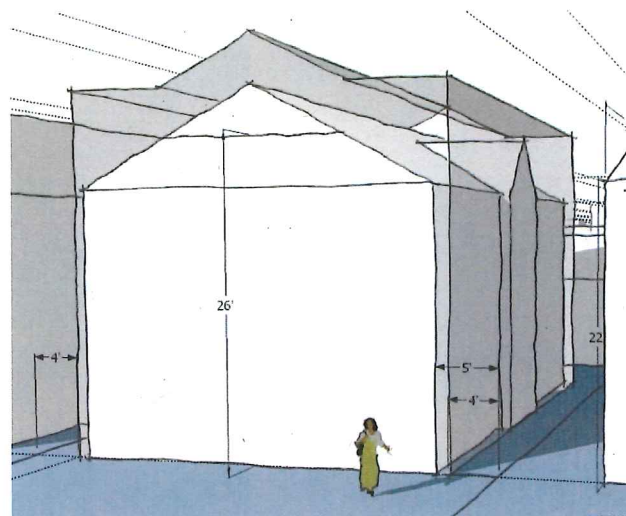


Figure 12 - Sidewall articulation and height reduction

architectural projection would have to adhere to the setback minimums and increase space in the side yard, where this is not the case for projections as defined in the existing code.

Compliance with this recommendation could be more costly for some additions or projects that make use of an existing foundation due to the constraints that the existing structure presents.

It is not the intent of this recommendation to be overly prescriptive when it comes to design; adherence to this recommendation could come in the form of a projection as pictured above or as an L- or T-shaped footprint, in which the “projection” is flush with the front or rear face of the building.

6. Introduce total maximum lot coverage of 50% in R3 and R4 zoning districts.

Lot coverage limits for principal and accessory buildings are currently treated individually in the code (66.232 and 63.501(f), respectively). This recommendation considers the total lot coverage of all structures on the parcel. Accessory structures are an important element of residential environment and contribute significantly to the bulk and spatial qualities of a property. With this recommendation, homeowners would not be able to maximize lot coverage for both primary and accessory structures on smaller lots, and would have to prioritize where they want to dedicate their space. The figure below shows the maximum total lot coverage on lots of different widths using current maximums of 35% for principal structures and 35% of the rear yard or 1000 SF for accessory structures. As the lot area decreases, the maximum lot coverage under the current zoning increases. This recommendation would have the most significant effect on lots in the R4 zoning districts.

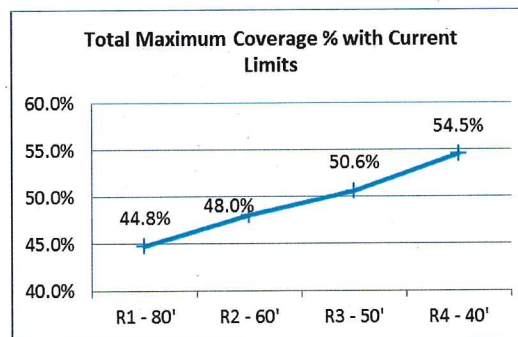


Figure 13 - Total maximum lot coverage based on current principal and accessory limits

7. Allow maximum height to be exceeded if it can be demonstrated that more than half of the homes in a 150 foot radius exceed the maximum height. The maximum building height would be the average of the single-family residential building heights that exceed the maximum in the sample.

This recommendation would generally apply to areas that have large, older homes where a tall home would not contrast with others in area. Although this recommendation is context-sensitive and would require additional resources to administer, the frequency of this situation would be minimal based on the properties that have been reviewed during the course of this study. Without a standard such as this,

the others could prevent homes from achieving consistency of character by being overly restrictive in areas with uncharacteristically large homes.

8. The height of new construction can match the height of a demolished structure on the same lot.

This recommendation would allow new construction to meet the height of an existing building if the existing building exceeded height maximums. Currently, this is allowed only if the new construction is constructed on the same footprint of the previous – this recommendation adds flexibility to that restriction and allows a change in the footprint.

9. For additions greater than 120 square feet, the 10% minimum for window and door openings would be required on new elevations or would have to be met by all elevations post-modification.

This recommendation would cause all elevations altered by additions to conform to the same rules for openings as new construction. Sec. 63.110 currently only applies to new principal residential buildings and to new elevations facing public streets. This would expand the minimum opening requirement to side and rear elevations for significant additions. While the draft language is written in a way to minimize additional review time by City staff, it would result in a slight increase in the number and complexity of reviews.

10. Add exceptions for expansion in nonconforming setback areas.

The number of variance requests is anticipated to increase with additional zoning standards. The Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) has received a significant number of variance requests related to the recently adopted Sec. 62.105(b), which states that *“a structure with a nonconforming setback shall not be expanded horizontally or vertically within the setback area.”* The vast majority of those requests have been granted, primarily due to hardship arguments based on increased complication and cost to modify the structure to accommodate the ordinance. In order to reduce the number of variance requests and encourage construction that is unobtrusive, it is recommended that exceptions to Sec. 62.105(b) be developed. DSI has developed the following for consideration by the Planning Commission:

As an exception to Sec. 62.105(b), an addition to a single family dwelling or a conforming duplex could be built along an existing nonconforming side setback line providing:

The addition is on the back of the building or fills in a jog on the side of the building and does not alter the front façade, and

The footprint of the addition does not exceed 500 square feet, and

The roof pitch on the front third of the building is not altered, and

The addition does not add a full half story or more in height unless it does not exceed the height of adjoining properties.

Alternatively, if a notarized petition is submitted that is signed by the adjoining property owners and 2/3 of the remaining property owners within 100 feet, an addition to a

single family dwelling or a conforming duplex could be built along an existing nonconforming side setback line.

The Committee recommends that the Planning Commission solicit input on this proposed amendment and whether it should apply citywide or just in the proposed overlay district. No zoning code amendment language to implement this change is in the current draft amendments.

Alternative/Supplemental Solutions to Augment Code Changes

There are a number of additional possible efforts that could serve to augment the code and have a positive effect on maintaining the character of established neighborhoods. The first is advocating for an awards program that recognizes homeowners and designers for building projects that fit well in the neighborhood. A precedent for this is the BLEND Awards in Minneapolis, which has been in place since 2007. Second is the creation of a design advisory service, which consists of a short consultation period for homeowners interested in remodeling or building new. Saint Louis Park partners with the American Institute of Architects (AIA) to provide a two-hour session for property owners to provide guidance on new projects. Finally, the City could develop a guidebook that lays out renovation or addition possibilities for homes types that are frequently altered. A document like this would serve as a resource for homeowners and give the City an opportunity to show options for alterations that maintain character.

Next Steps

The Neighborhood Planning Committee recommends that the Planning Commission release this study and proposed amendments for public review and schedule a public hearing for April 24, 2015.

Attachments

1. Draft Language
2. Resolution 14-1324 v.2
3. Dimensional Analysis of Recent Projects
4. Policy Support Materials
5. Maps

Draft Language for Ward 3 Residential Standards Zoning Study

3/5/15

ARTICLE II. - 60.200. GENERAL DEFINITIONS

...

Sec. 60.203. - B.

...

Building line. A line formed by the above grade face of the building, and for the purpose of this code, a minimum building line is the same as a front setback line.

Building sidewall. Any exterior wall that is less than forty-five (45) degrees from parallel to a side lot line.

Building sidewall height. The vertical height of the building sidewall measured from grade to the top of the wall plate on the sidewall.

Building, totally or completely enclosed. A structure...

Sec. 63.110. - Building design standards.

- (a) A primary entrance of principal structures shall be located...
- (b) For principal buildings, except industrial, production, processing, storage, public service and utility buildings, above grade window and door openings shall comprise at least fifteen (15) percent of the total area of exterior walls facing a public street or sidewalk. In addition, for new principal residential buildings, above grade window and door openings shall comprise at least ten (10) percent of the total area of all exterior walls. For buildings with a living area increase of at least one hundred and twenty (120) square feet, above grade window and door openings shall comprise at least ten (10) percent of the wall area added, or above grade window and door openings shall comprise at least ten (10) percent of the total area of all exterior walls. Windows in garage doors shall count as openings; the area of garage doors themselves shall not count as openings. For residential buildings, windows shall be clear or translucent. For nonresidential buildings, windows may be clear, translucent, or opaque.
- (c) In pedestrian-oriented commercial districts...

ARTICLE VIII. - 67.800. SWR SOUTHWEST RESIDENTIAL INFILL OVERLAY DISTRICT

Sec. 67.801. - Establishment.

- (a) The SWR southwest residential infill overlay district is established as a portion of the area south of Summit Avenue and west of Ayd Mill Road and Interstate 35E as shown on the official zoning map.

Sec. 67.802. – Building standards.

The following building standards shall apply in R1-R4 single-family residential districts.

- (a) On lots less than fifty (50) feet wide, building height shall be limited to twenty-six (26) feet. A building may exceed this if set back from the side setback lines a distance equal to the additional height.
- (b) Within twelve (12) feet of a lot line, building sidewall height shall be limited to twenty-two (22) feet. For structures with flat or shed roofs, the vertical height of parapet walls is included in this calculation.
- (c) Sidewall articulation is required for building faces that exceed thirty-five (35) feet in length. Articulation shall be in the form of a structural projection of at least one (1) foot in depth and six (6) feet in length, and must extend from grade to the eave.
- (d) The total coverage of all structures shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of any zoning lot.
- (e) Maximum building height can be exceeded if it can be demonstrated that more than fifty (50) percent of residential buildings within one hundred and fifty (150) feet of the property exceed the current maximum building height. The maximum building height may be the average of the single family residential building heights that exceed the maximum in the sample.
- (f) New construction on a lot that requires the demolition of a home can match the height of the building that it replaces. Building height of the existing building must be verified with an inspector prior to demolition.



City of Saint Paul

City Hall and Court House
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
Phone: 651-266-8560

Legislation Text

File #: RES 14-1324, Version: 2

Initiating a zoning code study of the current dimensional and building design standards applicable to the new construction or remodeling of single-family homes located in R1- R4 zoning districts within the defined boundaries of Ward 3 set forth in the most recent ward boundary resolution adopted pursuant to City Charter § 4.01.2.

AMENDED 8/6/14

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Saint Paul finds that the zoning code's present dimensional and building design standards for single family homes have been adopted at various times and for various purposes in order to create uniform, city-wide standards; and

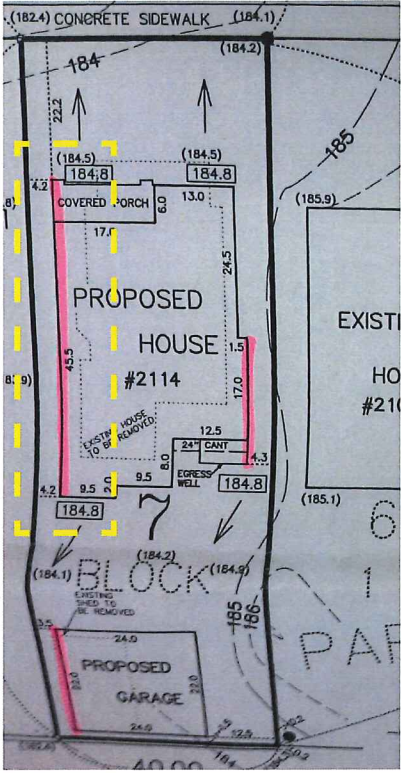
WHEREAS, within Ward 3, the City Council detects an increasing trend for newly built or remodeled homes to be constructed at heights and scales that comply with the dimensional and design standards of the zoning code yet may lack compatibility with the existing density, height and scale of adjacent homes; and

WHEREAS, it appears to the City Council that the zoning code's present dimensional and building design standards, which are applicable on a city-wide basis, may not be in keeping with the expressed goal of the land use and housing chapters of the City's Comprehensive Plan to maintain the character of the established neighborhoods, when those standards are applied within the established neighborhoods of Ward 3; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to maintain the character of Ward 3's established neighborhoods and wishes to undertake a limited zoning study to consider text amendments to the zoning code's city-wide dimensional and building design standards for single-family homes and recommend new density, height, scale, and aesthetic elements that would be applied only to Ward 3's established neighborhoods in order to encourage reinvestment in Ward 3's existing residential housing stock by providing opportunities for new or remodeled construction projects that are in harmony with the present character of Ward 3's established neighborhoods; now, be it

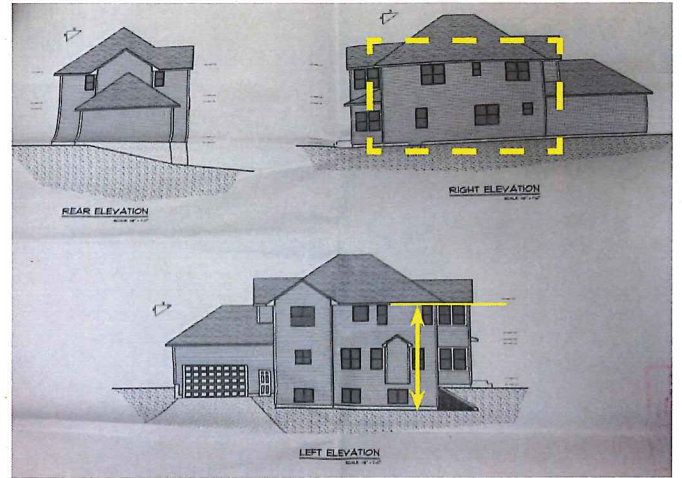
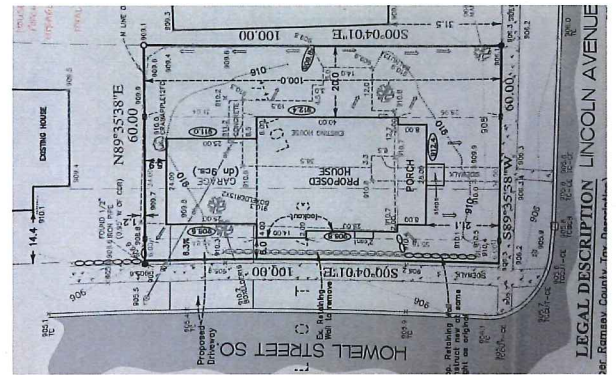
RESOLVED, pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 462.357, Subd. 4, the Council of the City of Saint Paul hereby refers to the planning commission for study, the possibility of amending Leg. Code § 66.231 ("density and dimensional standards"), Leg. Code § 63.110 ("building design standards"), and any other section of the zoning code deemed necessary by the commission as a result of its study, and to receive from the commission a report and recommendation regarding amendments to the zoning code sections stated herein or any other zoning code sections which, in the opinion of the commission, will facilitate the Council's intention to maintain the existing character of Ward 3's established neighborhoods; and be it

RESOLVED, that the City Council requests Planning Commission staff to complete their staff recommendation to the Commission by January 1, 2015 and provide this recommendation to the Planning Commission and the City Council (for informational purposes) at that time.



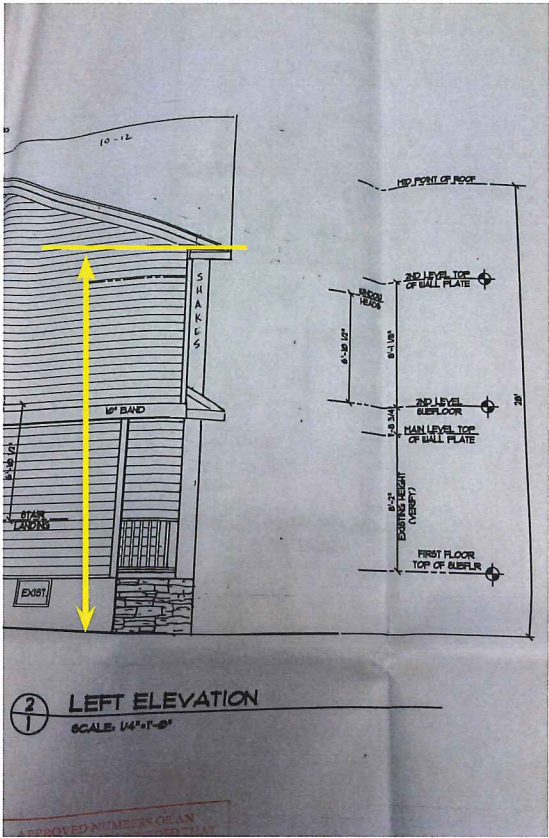
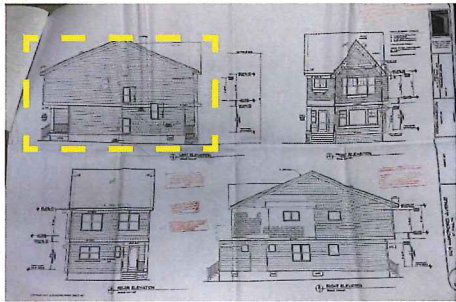
Would require sidewall articulation on one side

Property	Lot Size (SF, Incl. Alley)	Principal Foot-print (SF)	Principal %	Accessory Foot-print (SF)	Total %	Height	Length	Sidewall Ht (Right)	Sidewall Ht (Left)
2114 Jefferson	5215	1433	27.5%	528	37.6%		45.5	20'-0"	



OK - 6' Side Setback Would require sidewall articulation on one side Potentially too tall depending on grade calc.

Property	Lot Size (SF, Incl. Alley)	Principal Foot-print (SF)	Principal %	Accessory Foot-print (SF)	Total %	Height	Length	Sidewall Ht (Right)	Sidewall Ht (Left)
1871 Lincoln	6000	2076	34.6%	0	34.6%	26'-6" (Rt)	40.0 (Rt)	20'-0"	25' - 6"

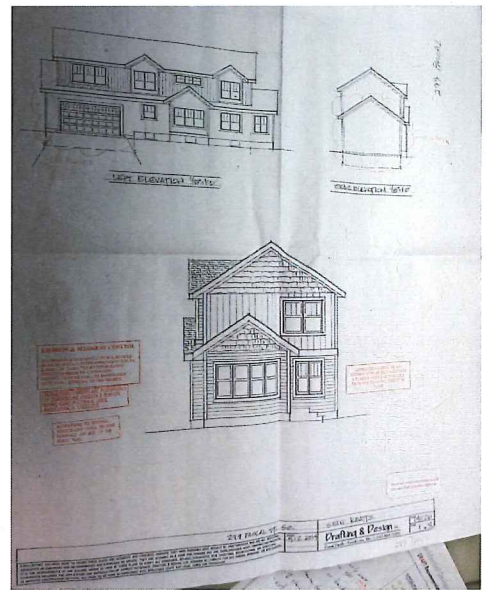


Would be too tall because within 6' of lot line Would require side-wall articulation Maximum Sidewall Ht

Property	Lot Size (SF, Incl. Alley)	Principal Foot-print (SF)	Principal %	Accessory Foot-print (SF)	Total %	Height	Length	Sidewall Ht (Right)	Sidewall Ht (Left)
1329 Hartford	5400	1140	21.1%	324	27.1%	28'-0"	~48'	22'-0"	

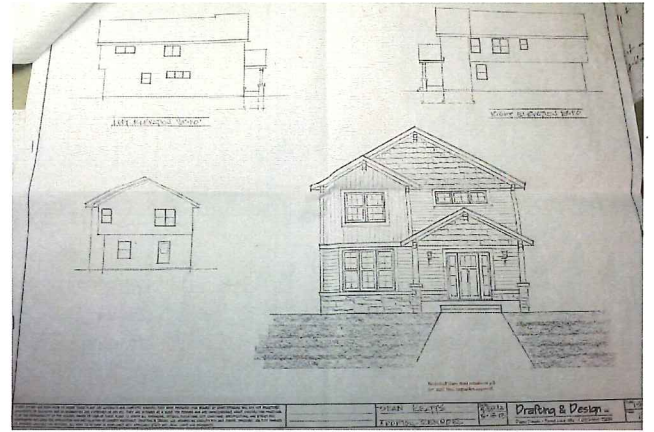


Would be required
to demonstrate 10%
total openings



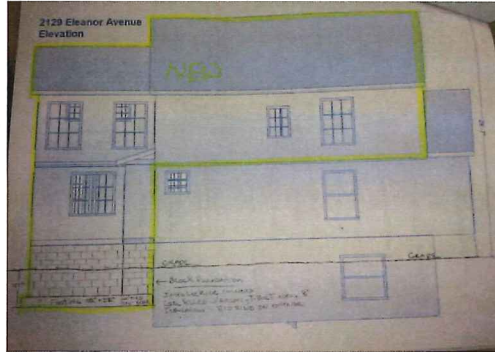
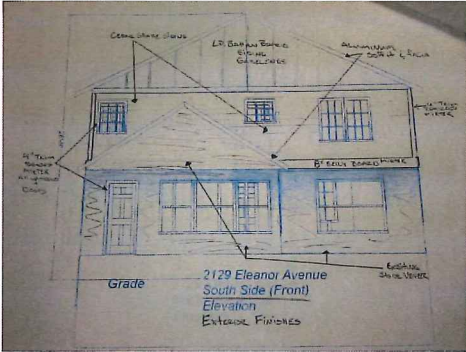
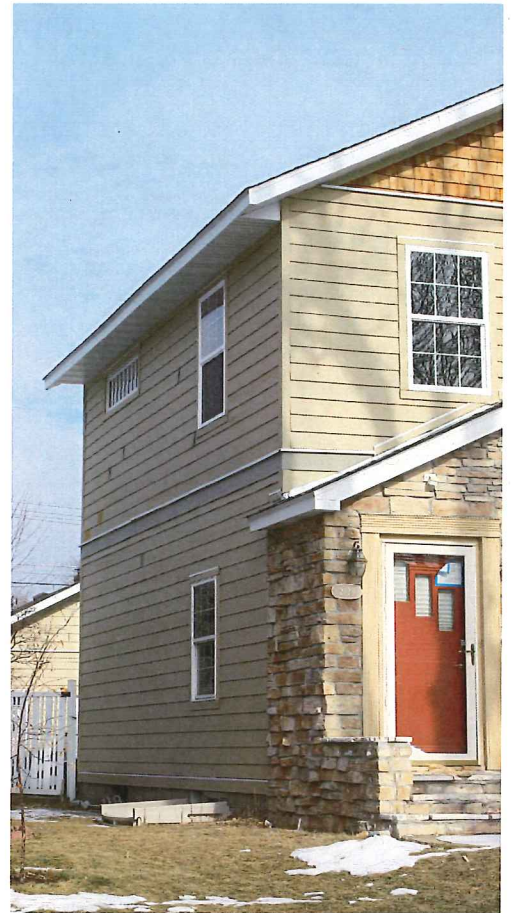
Would require side-
wall articulation

Property	Lot Size (SF, Incl. Alley)	Principal Foot-print (SF)	Principal %	Accessory Foot-print (SF)	Total %	Height	Length	Sidewall Ht (Right)	Sidewall Ht (Left)
299 Pascal	5420	1466	27.0%	0	27.0%	23'-6"	~55'		19'-0"



Would require side-wall articulation

Property	Lot Size (SF, Incl. Alley)	Principal Foot-print (SF)	Principal %	Accessory Foot-print (SF)	Total %	Height	Length	Sidewall Ht (Right)	Sidewall Ht (Left)
1721 Stanford	5418	1334	24.6%	660	36.8%	25'-6" (Approx)	47	19'-0"	



Potentially required on right elevation; NOT required on left because face is broken

Property	Lot Size (SF, Incl. Alley)	Principal Foot-print (SF)	Principal %	Accessory Foot-print (SF)	Total %	Height	Length	Sidewall Ht (Right)	Sidewall Ht (Left)
2129 Eleanor	5320	1187	22.3%	440	30.6%	24'-0" (Approx)	~47'	21'-4"	21'-4"

POLICY SUPPORT MATERIALS

Comprehensive Plan

LU Strategy 1: Target Growth in Unique Neighborhoods

This strategy focuses on sustaining the character of Saint Paul's existing single-family neighborhoods while providing for the growth of mixed-use communities. New development in Neighborhood Centers, Corridors, the Central Corridor, and Downtown is intended to create communities where housing, employment, shopping, and community amenities, supported by transit, work together to provide for the needs of the people who live and work in them.

LU 1.5 Identify residential areas where single-family, duplex housing, and small multi-family housing predominate as Established Neighborhoods (see Figure LU-B).

The City should maintain the character of Established Neighborhoods.

LU Strategy 3: Promote Aesthetics and Development Standards

As Saint Paul continues to revitalize itself and to grow, it must be an attractive place to live, work, and visit. This strategy provides a framework for design and aesthetics that will engage people and help integrate the built environment into the community.

LU 3.4 Prepare citywide infill housing design standards so that infill housing fits within the context of existing neighborhoods and is compatible with the prevailing pattern of development.

The City Council has directed PED to study how new housing can be constructed and existing single-family houses can be renovated and remodeled to be compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. The standards will establish a baseline for development on vacant infill lots.

Housing Strategy 2: Preserve and Promote Established Neighborhoods

Saint Paul has a unique mix of neighborhoods that consist of a diversity of people. The city is known as a high-quality place to live with an abundance of assets. The city boasts amenities such as...

H 2.17. Support creativity in the construction of neighborhood infill housing by proactively developing zoning and design guidelines.

- a. *Develop, with broad public input, citywide infill housing design standards so that infill housing fits well within the existing Saint Paul neighborhood context. Neighborhood groups should be directly involved;*

Historic Preservation

Strategy 6: Preserve Areas with Unique Architectural, Urban, and Spatial Characteristics that Enhance the Character of the Built Environment

Historic preservation plays a critical role in defining the physical and visual character of Saint Paul. It is inextricably linked to community character, quality of life, and the sense of place in neighborhoods and commercial districts throughout the city. Policies under this strategy focus on maintaining and enhancing the traditional urban character and fabric of the city to create distinctive, vibrant places to live, work, and recreate.

Traditional Urban Fabric and Features

6.3. Explore the creation of neighborhood conservation districts.

In its broadest interpretation, conservation district planning speaks to the idea that the total environment—built and natural—is worthy of understanding and protection. In urban settings, conservation districts usually refer to the delineation of an area with a distinctive appearance, amenity, landscape, architecture, and/or history that does not easily fit into standard historic district frameworks. Neighborhood conservation districts are a tool to recognize and preserve the unique features of an area that, while they define the area's overall character, may not rise to the level of significance required for formal designation. Features and characteristics may include the size, scale, architectural character, and material found on buildings; the rhythm and spacing of structures; general visual character; and infrastructure. In conservation districts, development standards are typically less stringent than the design guidelines for historic districts, and they are customized to protect the unique characteristics of a particular neighborhood.

Visual Character

6.6. Assist neighborhoods in addressing design issues related to the retention and preservation of neighborhood character.

- a. Partner with appropriate organizations to focus on educating the public on the significance of specific features and characteristics of a neighborhood and how to protect these features through appropriate maintenance and sympathetic alterations;

District Plans

District 14 Macalester-Groveland

Land Use

1. *Retain and improve upon the residential quality of the community*

Housing

7. *Maintain and preserve the district's current housing stock.*
8. *Maintain the single family character of the district.*
9. *Diversify housing to meet the needs of all income levels and lifestyles, such as empty nesters.*

Urban Design

34. *Develop design guidelines for residential and commercial development.*
35. *Encourage preservation and restoration of housing stock and commercial properties that are compatible with the character of the neighborhood.*
40. *Encourage new and replacement construction which would be compatible with neighborhood structures and setbacks.*

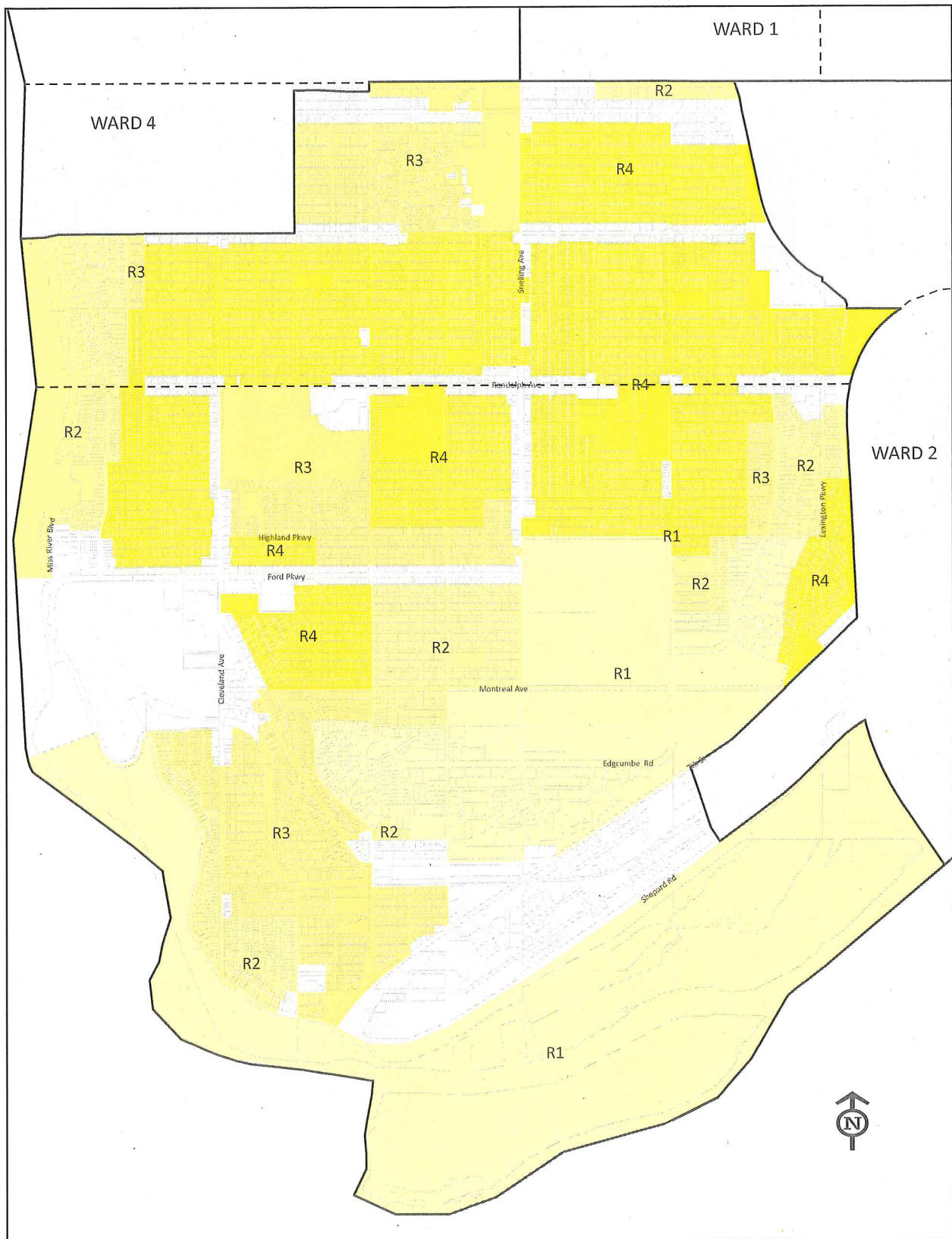
Actions Requiring City Leadership

10. *Develop design guidelines for residential and commercial development (District Council, PED, Design Center)*

District 15 Highland Park

Housing

- 10) *Ensure that any redevelopment of the St. Gregory's site—or any future redevelopment in residential areas—is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood*
- 13) *District 15 requests that the City implement architectural design standards to ensure that new residential construction is compatible with adjacent houses in scale, form and architectural design*

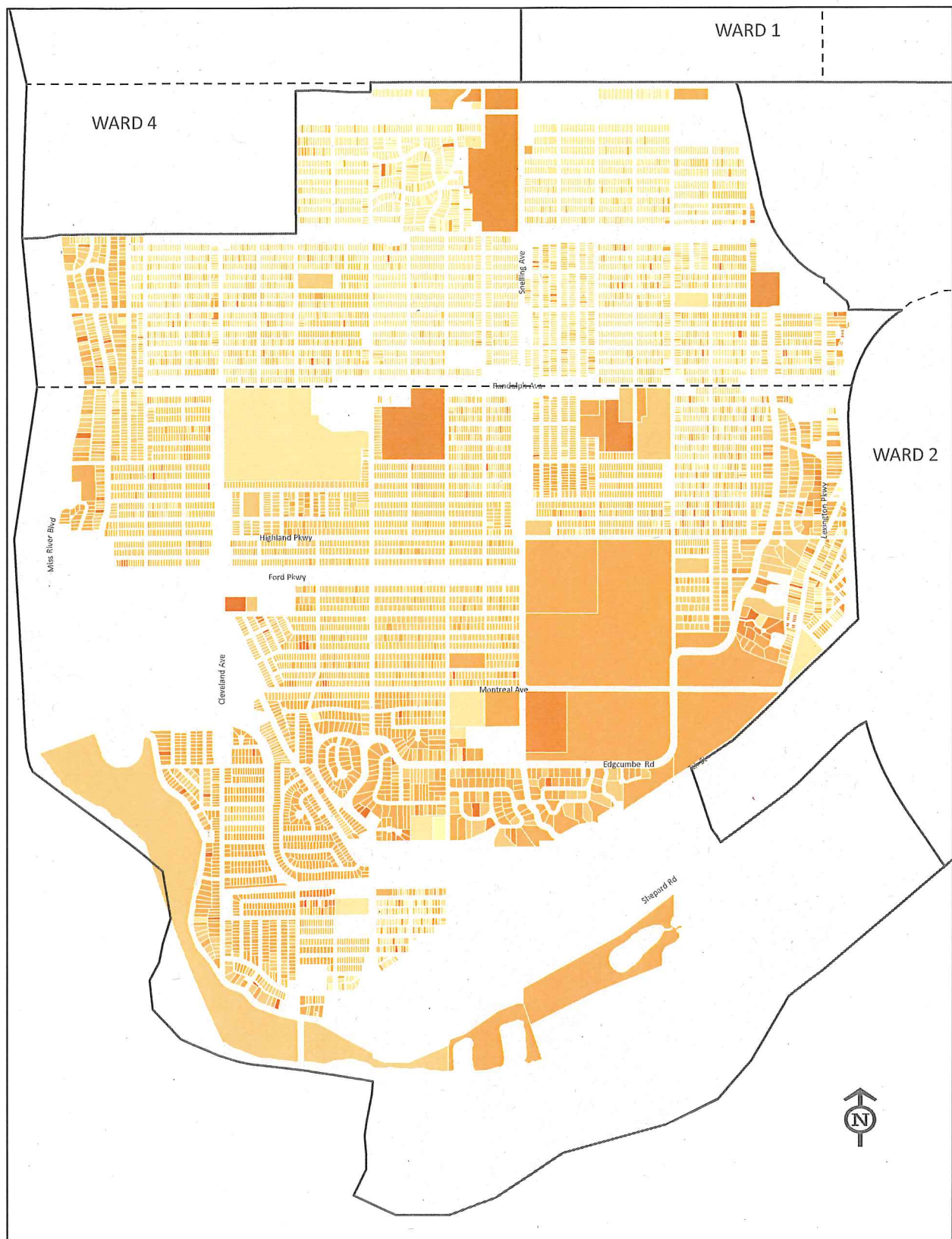


Map 1
Zoning Districts
In Ward 3

Source: Ramsey County and
 City of Saint Paul
 Date: 10/30/2014

Zoning			
	R1 One-Family		R3 One-Family
	R2 One-Family		R4 One-Family

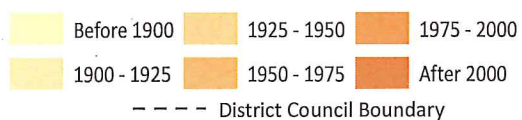
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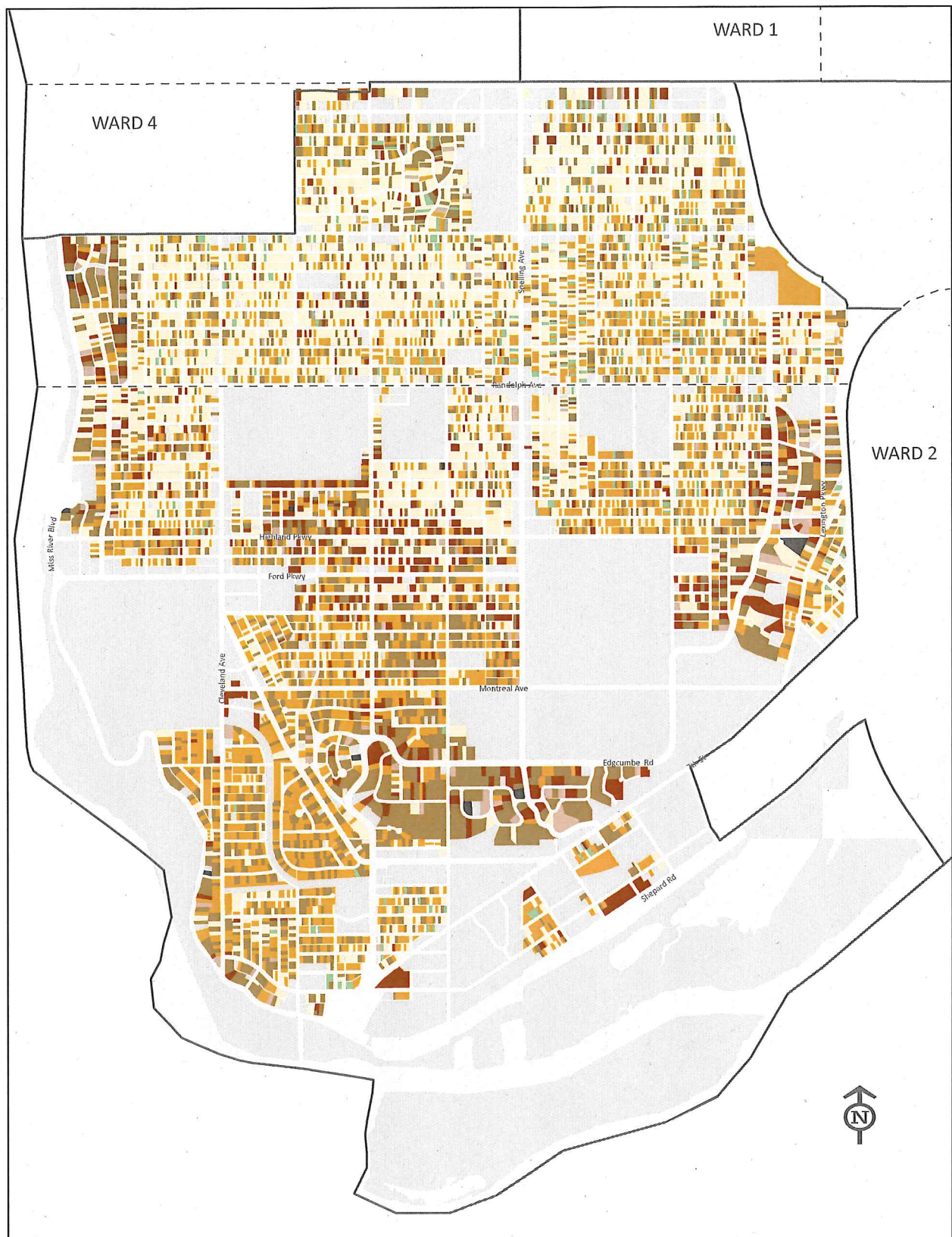


Map 2
Age of Structures in Ward 3 Zoned R1-R4

Source: Ramsey County and
City of Saint Paul
Date: 9/2014

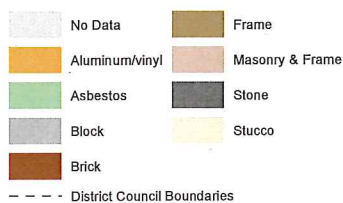
Year Structure Built





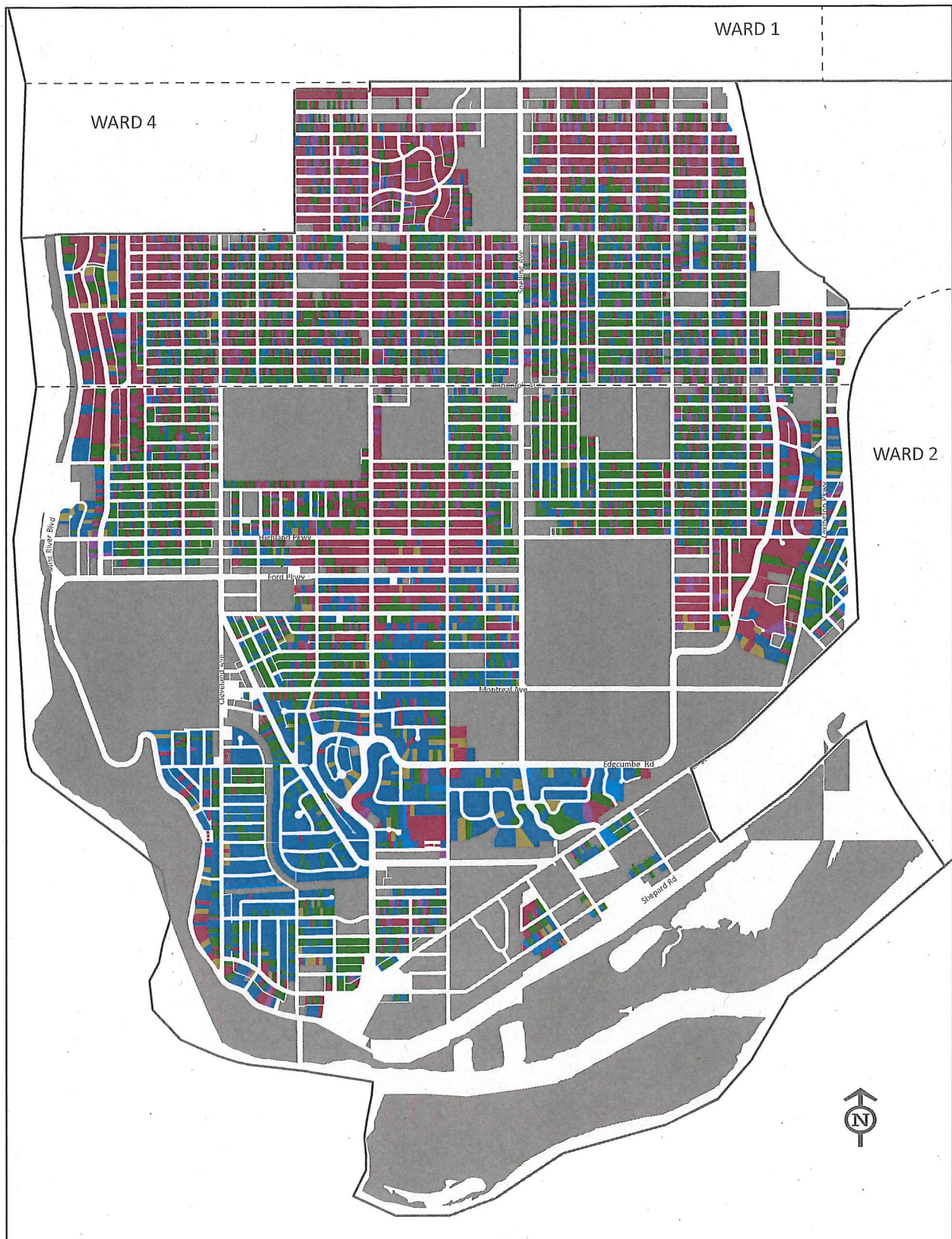
Map 3
Exterior Materials In Ward 3

Exterior Materials



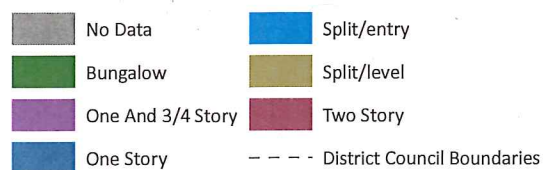
Source: Ramsey County and
City of Saint Paul
Date: 9/2014

0 800 1,600 3,200 Feet



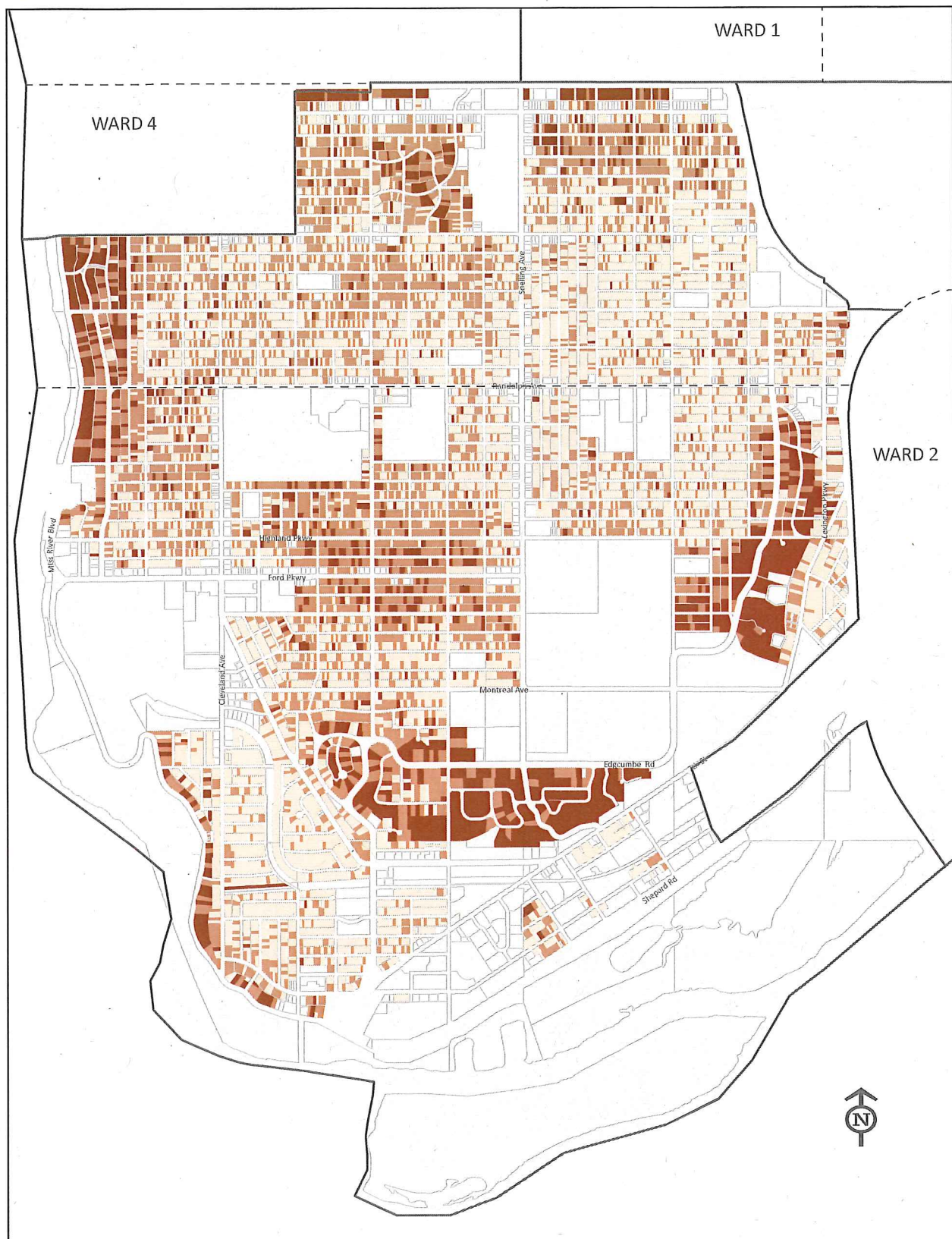
Map 4
Home Styles In Ward 3

Home Styles

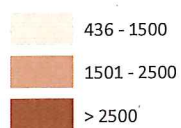


Source: Ramsey County and
City of Saint Paul
Date: 9/2014

0 800 1,600 3,200 Feet



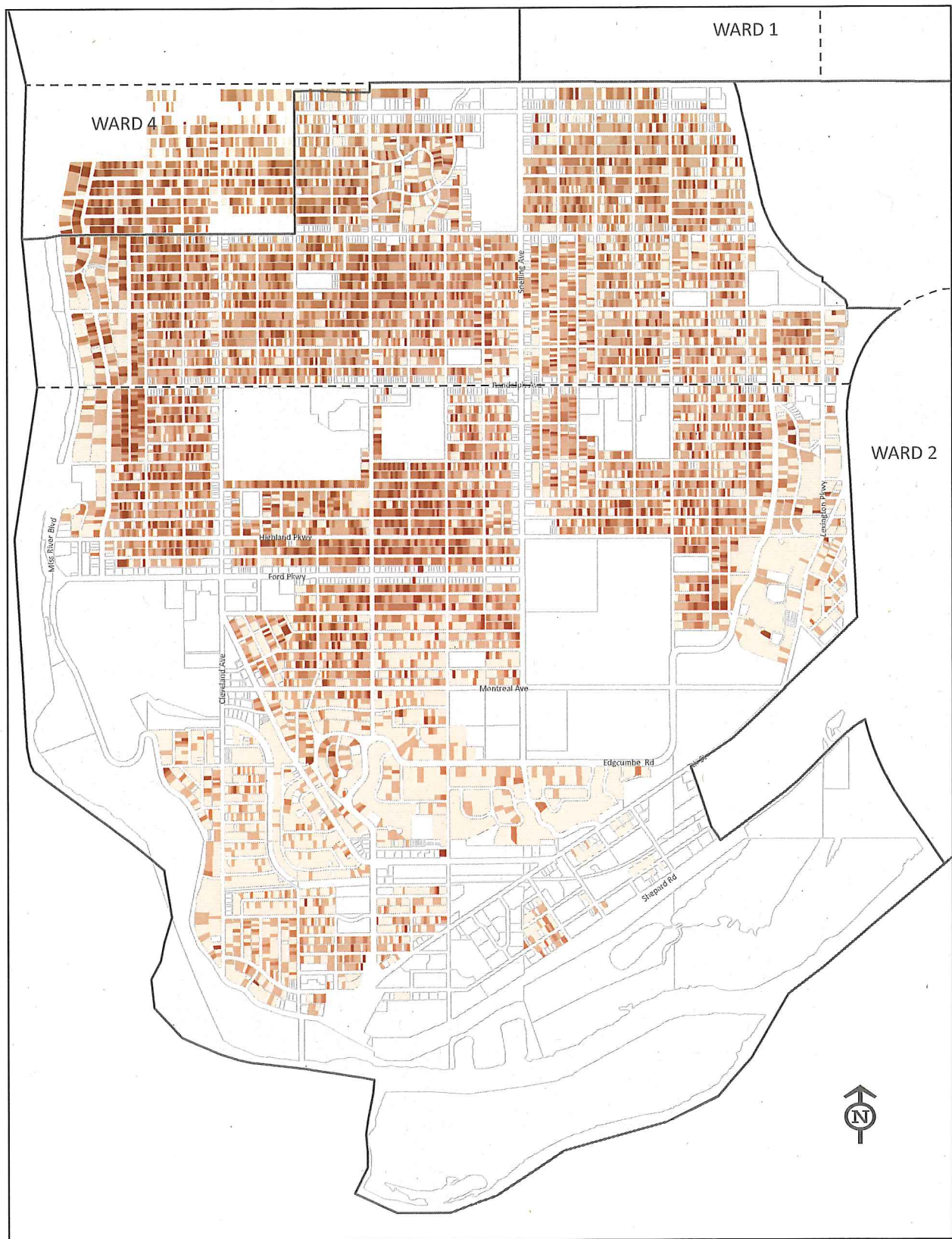
Map 5
Living Area In Ward 3
Square Feet of Living Area



Source: Ramsey County and
City of Saint Paul
Date: 9/2014

--- District Council Boundaries

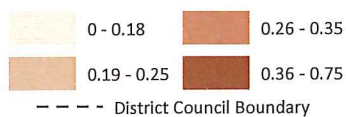




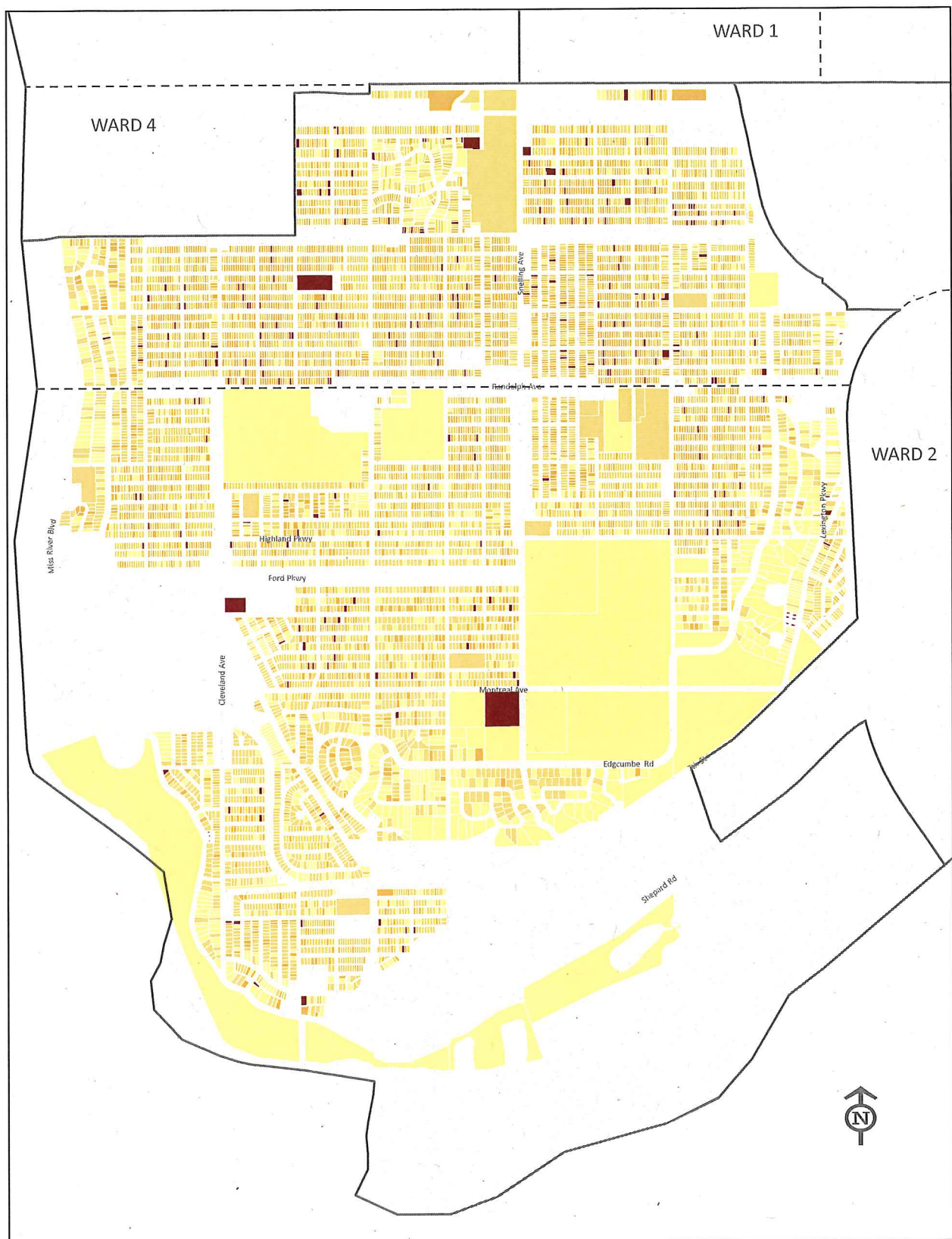
Map 6
FAR, Principal Structures In Ward 3

Source: Ramsey County and
City of Saint Paul
Date: 9/2014

FAR



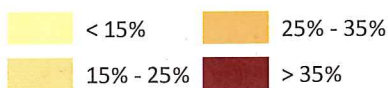
0 800 1,600 3,200 Feet



Map 7
Percent Lot Coverage of Primary Structures Zoned R1-R4 in Ward 3

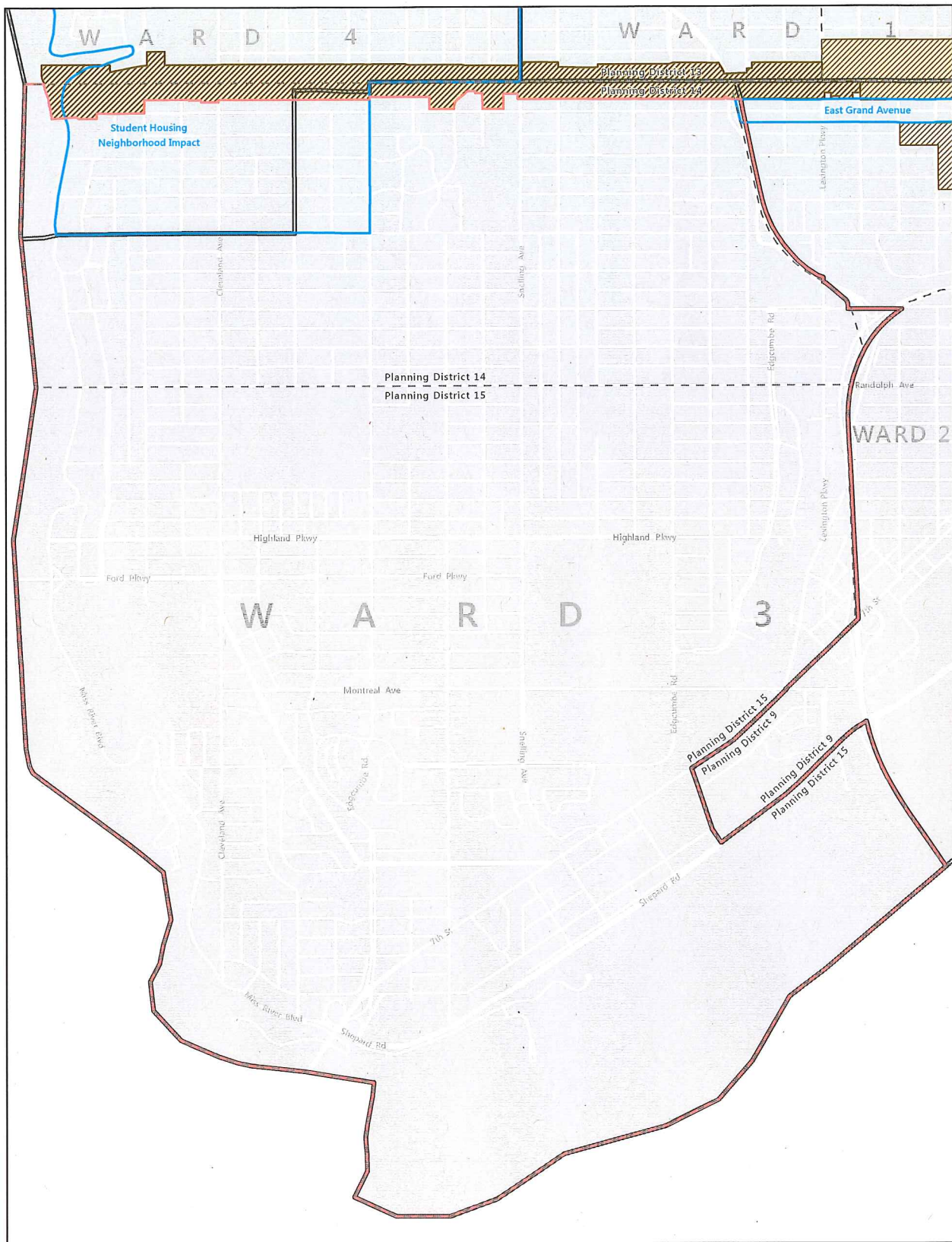
Source: Ramsey County and
City of Saint Paul
Date: 9/2014

Percent Lot Coverage



--- District Council Boundary





Proposed SWR Southwest Residential Infill Overlay District

- | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| NRHP Historic District | Proposed Overlay Zoning District | Planning Districts |
| Local Historic District | Current Overlay Zoning Districts | Council Wards |



Source: City of Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development
Date: 2/24/2015

Document Path: K:\GIS\MapRequests\Ward3_2014\Mike's Maps\ProposedSouthwestResidentialInfill_OD.mxd