



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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Date: December 2, 2016

To: Neighborhood Planning Committee

From: Josh Williams (266.6659) and Tony Johnson (266.6620)

RE: Snelling Avenue South Zoning Study

Process and Background

The Planning Commission initiated the Snelling Avenue South Zoning Study in July of 2015 (resolution attached). The zoning study was initially assigned to Michelle Beaulieu, who is no longer with the City.

Planning staff have conducted a robust community engagement process as part of the zoning study. The intent of the engagement has been to help build community understanding of zoning in general, why and how the City conducts zoning studies, and how changes in zoning might impact their neighborhoods. It also provided a way to gather informal feedback to help inform eventual staff recommendations to the Planning Commission prior to a formal hearing process.

On October 4th, planning staff hosted a large, public informational meeting in conjunction with the three district councils impacted by the study (Union Park, Macalester Groveland, and Highland). Approximately 120 people attended. Planning staff also attended 5 subsequent district council meetings to facilitate more detailed discussions of potential changes within the respective neighborhoods.

In addition to the materials provided with this memo, additional information regarding the zoning study can be reviewed on the project webpage:

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/current-activities/snelling-avenue-south-zoning>

(The webpage can also be reached by googling “snelling avenue south zoning”.)

Staff Findings

Overall, staff has found that it would be appropriate to rezone the current mix of commercial and multi-family residential districts to traditional neighborhood districts. Converting B2, B3, and RM2 zones along the majority of the corridor to T2, with limited T3 zoning at the northern end of the corridor and at a few existing commercial nodes would provide for mixed-use development, improved design standards more appropriate for an important transit corridor, and would modestly increase potential intensity of development relative to current zoning.

Staff also found that conversion of R4 single-family zones with lots fronting on Snelling to T1 would allow for long-term transition to higher density residential and potentially commercial uses.

Feedback

Community response to potential changes has been mixed. While there is substantial support for potential changes and for moving forward with the formal zoning study process, a number of concerns have been raised. Broadly, these are concerns over how additional development might impact traffic on Snelling and adjacent neighborhood streets, increased on-street parking demand (particularly with the likely long-term loss of parking on Snelling due to construction of medians), and building height, both in general and in particular where T zones would abut predominantly single-family neighborhoods.

Additional Research

Staff are currently working with Public Works staff to evaluate the potential for long-term traffic impacts and determine how to effectively convey this information to the public. We are also working on an analysis—using dimensional standards, parcel data, and existing development—of the increase in potential density across the study area.

Requested Action:

Discussion of zoning study and feedback for staff as to how and when to proceed with development of final recommendations to be released for public review and comment.

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number 15-44
date July 10, 2015

Initiation of Snelling Avenue South Zoning Study

WHEREAS, Sec. 61.801(b) of the Zoning Code authorizes the Planning Commission to initiate an amendment to the Zoning Code as provided in Minnesota Statutes Sec. 462.357, Subd. 4;

WHEREAS, Metro Transit is planning on opening the first Arterial Bus Rapid Transit line (the A Line) in the region along Snelling Avenue in 2016; and

WHEREAS, in a report dated May 2015, a University of Minnesota Humphrey School Capstone class recommended a Traditional Neighborhood Zoning study to rezone certain properties along Snelling Avenue South, at the future A Line station areas, as a strategy to maximize the land use and economic development benefits of this transit investment; and

WHEREAS, the study would include the blocks adjacent to Snelling Avenue South between I-94 and Ford Parkway, and the blocks adjacent to Selby, Grand, St Clair and Randolph Avenue and Highland Parkway within ¼ mile of Snelling Avenue; and

WHEREAS, a study to consider the appropriateness of rezoning portions of the corridor to Traditional Neighborhood zoning is consistent with the *Highland Park Neighborhood Plan Summary* (2007) strategies "8. Consider rezoning portions of the Snelling-Randolph commercial area to TN-2 to support mixed-use development and to provide design standards that limit the visual impacts of parking and maintain attractive building facades", and "9. Utilize zoning mechanisms, such as TN zoning that allow for residential uses in commercial areas, while limiting the expansion of commercial uses into residential neighborhoods"; and

WHEREAS, such a study is consistent with the *District 14 Macalester-Groveland Community Plan* (2001) strategies "2. Encourage mixed use housing development with commercial uses on the first floor and residential uses upstairs in selected commercial clusters" and "14. Promote a pedestrian-friendly environment"; and

WHEREAS, a study would similarly be consistent with the relevant plans in District 13 Union Park, being the *Merriam Park Community Plan* (2004) strategy "2. Major new development should be mixed-use and located along transit routes or on underused or inappropriately developed sites", and the *Snelling-Hamline Neighborhood Plan* (2007) strategy "2. Promote Transit Oriented Development, a street design

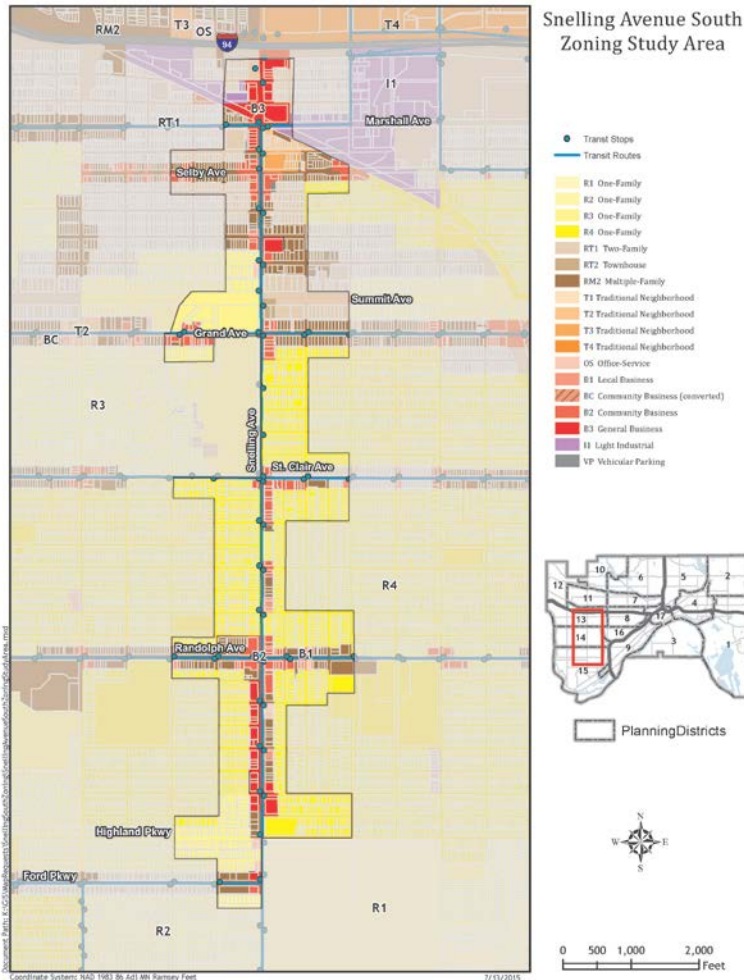
moved by Edgerton
seconded by _____
in favor Unanimous
against _____

that provides for efficient automobile, bus and rail transportation while at all times respecting and encouraging the safety of pedestrians"; and

WHEREAS, the *Land Use Plan*, adopted by the City Council as a chapter of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan in 2010, designates Snelling Avenue through these neighborhoods as a Mixed-Use Corridor that is a primary thoroughfare through the city served by public transit, where two or more uses including residential, commercial, retail, office, small scale industry, institutional and open space, could be located either within a single building or in close proximity, and which is consistent with Traditional Neighborhood zoning; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Planning Commission hereby initiates the Snelling Avenue South Zoning Study for a study area generally defined as the blocks adjacent to Snelling Avenue South between I-94 and Ford Parkway, and the blocks adjacent to Selby, Grand, St Clair and Randolph Avenues and Highland Parkway within ¼ mile of Snelling Avenue.

SOUTH SNELLING ZONING STUDY AREA



- Study area:
 - Blocks adjacent to Snelling Avenue between Concordia Avenue and Ford Parkway
 - Block w/in approx. $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of Snelling on major cross streets

KEY QUESTIONS ASKED

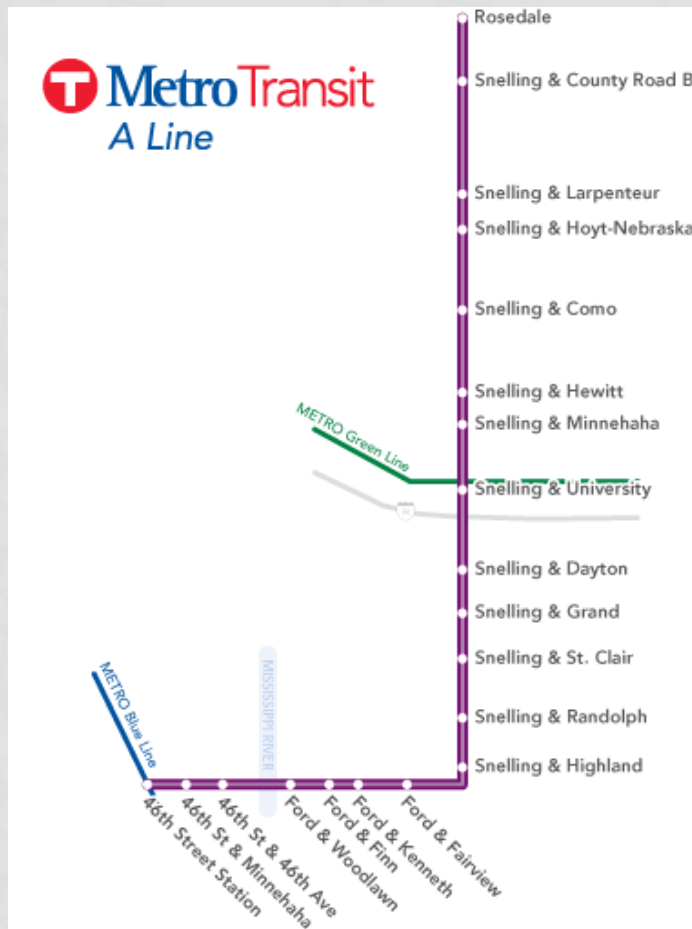
- What does the area look like today?
- What types of changes are we seeing?
- Other important long-term trends?
- What does our Comprehensive Plan say?
- What do area and neighborhood plans say?

STUDY AREA TODAY



- Mix of uses along Snelling, more heavily commercial at north end
- Zoning largely reflects underlying uses
- Quick transition to 'Established Neighborhoods' away from Snelling, particularly on south end of study area

CHANGES AND TRENDS

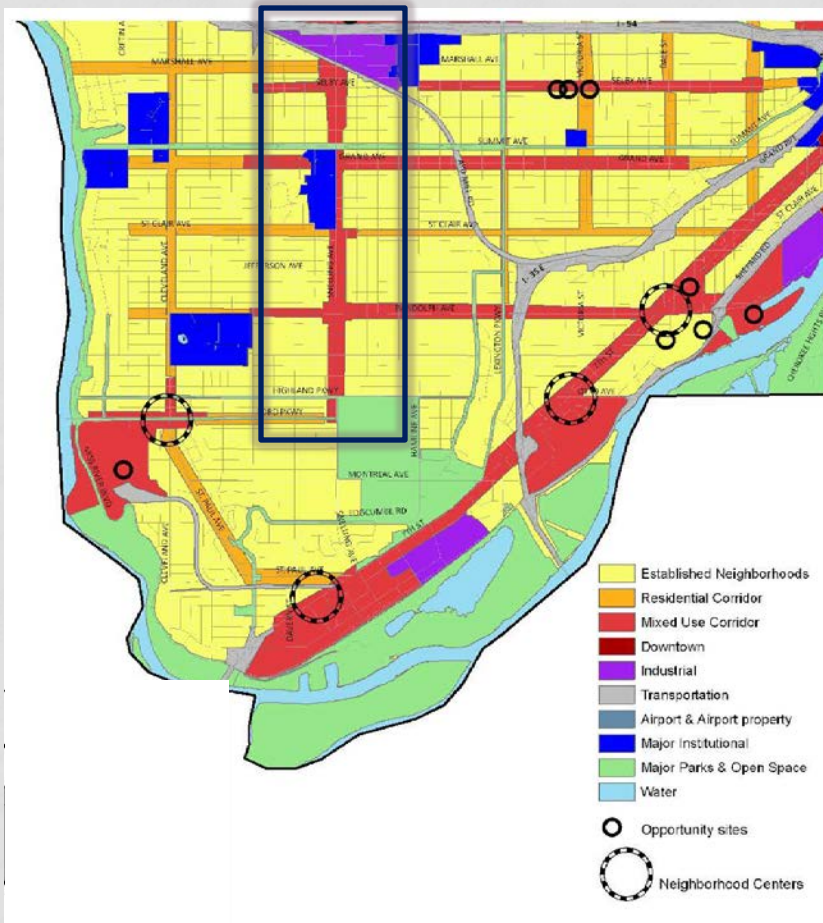


- A-Line (Frequent service, Train-like features, Enhanced stations)
- Market supporting investment, a variety of use and development types
- Population growth, mode-shift

CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan (2010)

- Snelling as a Mixed-Use Corridor
- Supports higher densities, mixed-use zoning



NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

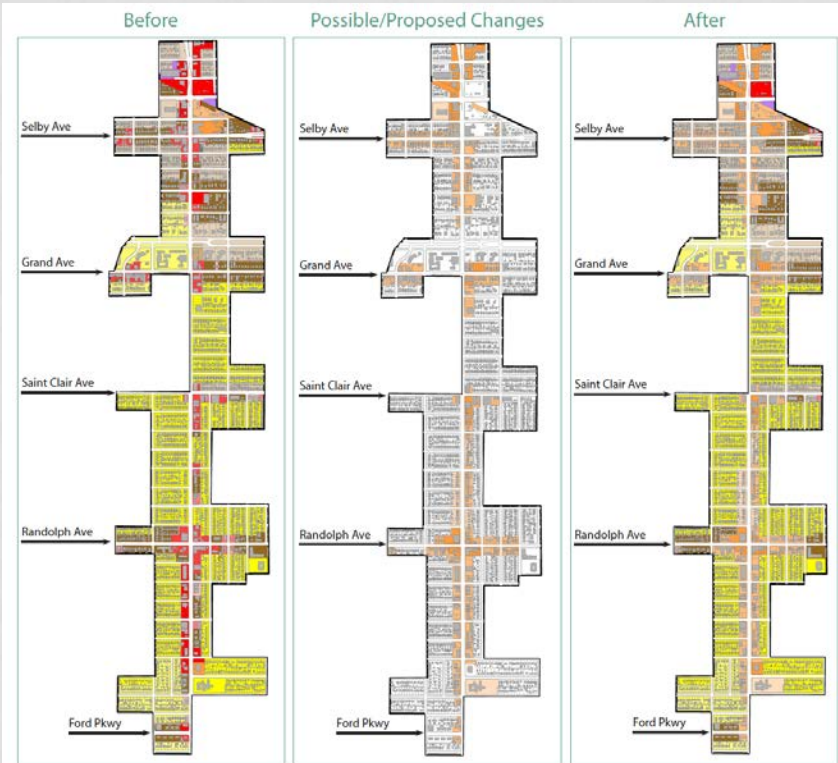
District Plans

(2001-2007)

- Three District Councils, four plans
- Support strategic land use intensification
- Focus commercial uses at existing nodes



OVERVIEW OF STAFF FINDINGS



- B2, RM2 (current) to T2 (future) on Snelling and at existing nodes
- Limited B3, B2 to T3 north of Selby and at Grand, Saint Clair, and Randolph
- R4 to T1 for properties fronting (ie. facing) Snelling
- Maintain current zoning in 'Established Neighborhoods'

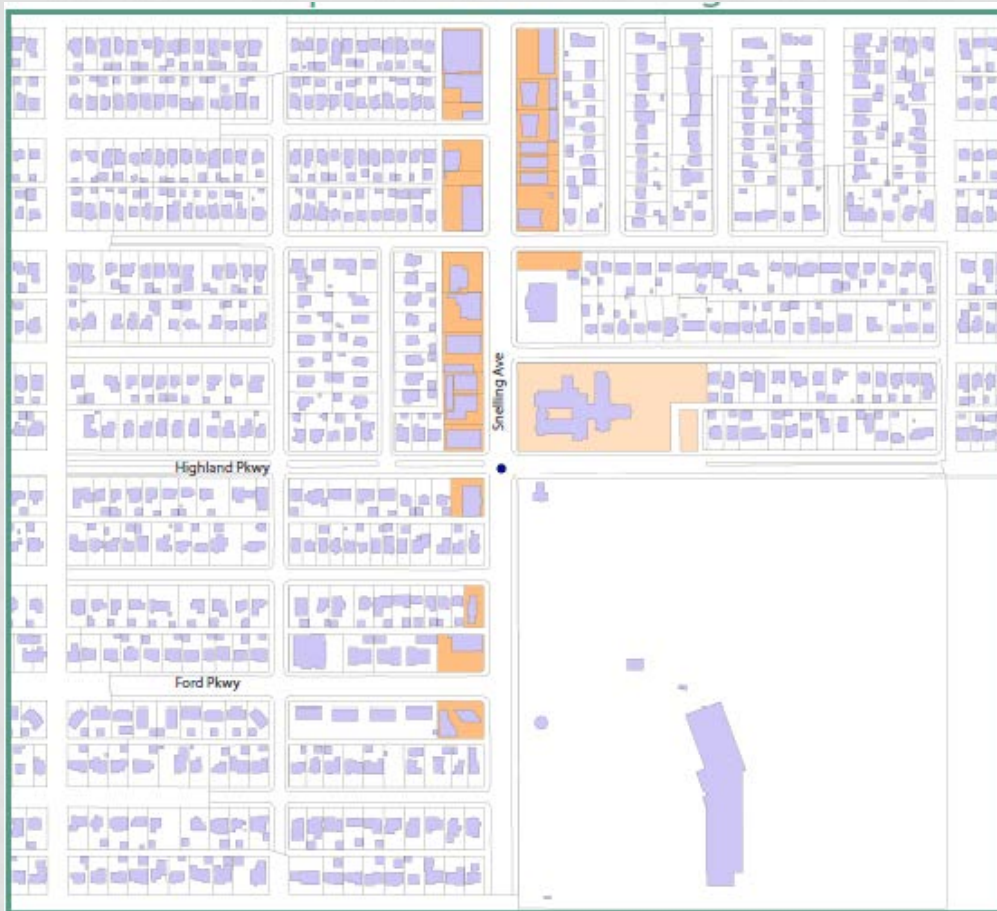
SNELLING AND HIGHLAND PKWY (EXISTING ZONING)



Zoning Districts

R1 One-Family	T3 Traditional Neighborhood
R2 One-Family	OS Office-Service
R3 One-Family	B1 Local Business
R4 One-Family	BC Community Business (converted)
RT1 Two-Family	B2 Community Business
RT2 Townhouse	B3 General Business
RM2 Multiple-Family	I1 Light Industrial
T1 Traditional Neighborhood	VP Vehicular Parking
T2 Traditional Neighborhood	

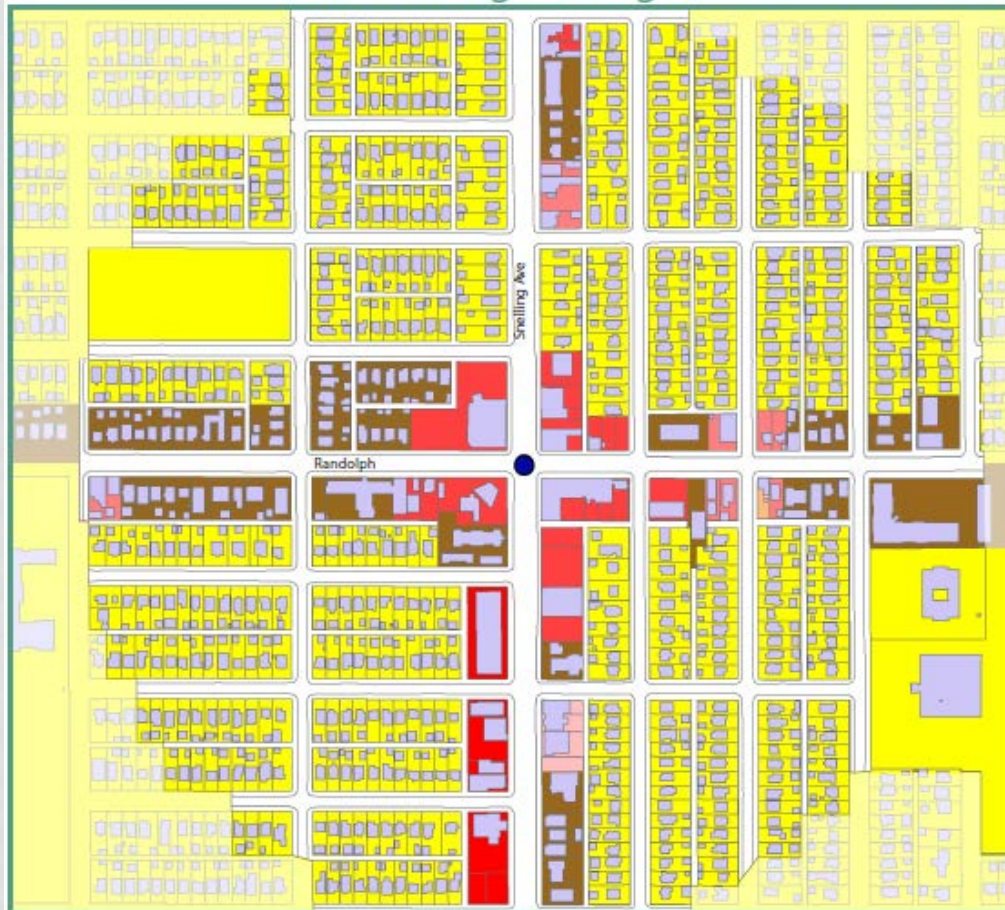
SNELLING AND HIGHLAND PKWY (POTENTIAL CHANGES)



Zoning Districts

R1 One-Family	T3 Traditional Neighborhood
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RT2 Townhouse	B3 General Business
RM2 Multiple-Family	I1 Light Industrial
T1 Traditional Neighborhood	VP Vehicular Parking
T2 Traditional Neighborhood	

SNELLING AND RANDOLPH (EXISTING ZONING)



Zoning Districts

R1 One-Family	T3 Traditional Neighborhood
R2 One-Family	OS Office-Service
R3 One-Family	B1 Local Business
R4 One-Family	BC Community Business (converted)
RT1 Two-Family	B2 Community Business
RT2 Townhouse	B3 General Business
RM2 Multiple-Family	I1 Light Industrial
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SNELLING AND RANDOLPH (POTENTIAL CHANGES)



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SNELLING AND ST. CLAIR (EXISTING ZONING)



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R2 One-Family	OS Office-Service
R3 One-Family	B1 Local Business
R4 One-Family	BC Community Business (converted)
RT1 Two-Family	B2 Community Business
RT2 Townhouse	B3 General Business
RM2 Multiple-Family	I1 Light Industrial
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SNELLING AND ST. CLAIR (POTENTIAL CHANGES)



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RT2 Townhouse	B3 General Business
RM2 Multiple-Family	I1 Light Industrial
T1 Traditional Neighborhood	VP Vehicular Parking
T2 Traditional Neighborhood	

SNELLING AND GRAND (EXISTING ZONING)



Zoning Districts

R1 One-Family	T3 Traditional Neighborhood
R2 One-Family	OS Office-Service
R3 One-Family	B1 Local Business
R4 One-Family	BC Community Business (converted)
RT1 Two-Family	B2 Community Business
RT2 Townhouse	B3 General Business
RM2 Multiple-Family	I1 Light Industrial
T1 Traditional Neighborhood	VP Vehicular Parking
T2 Traditional Neighborhood	

SNELLING AND DAYTON (EXISTING ZONING)



Zoning Districts

R1 One-Family	T3 Traditional Neighborhood
R2 One-Family	OS Office-Service
R3 One-Family	B1 Local Business
R4 One-Family	BC Community Business (converted)
RT1 Two-Family	B2 Community Business
RT2 Townhouse	B3 General Business
RM2 Multiple-Family	I1 Light Industrial
T1 Traditional Neighborhood	VP Vehicular Parking
T2 Traditional Neighborhood	

SNELLING AND DAYTON (POTENTIAL CHANGES)



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R1 One-Family	T3 Traditional Neighborhood
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SNELLING AND GRAND (POTENTIAL CHANGES)



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RT1 Two-Family	B2 Community Business
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WHY TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD ZONING?

- Higher **design standards**
- Allow **mix of uses**
- Development pattern more conducive to **walking, biking, transit**
- Introduces residential uses to commercial areas

T1 – Mixed use, low density

T2 – Mixed use, medium density

T3 – Mixed use, medium-high density

WHAT IT MEANS

- Zoning change DOES NOT EQUAL land use change
- Very limited non-conforming uses (auto body and repair) created
- Strip-style commercial development does not meet 'T' district design criteria; major physical changes to some sites would require additional zoning approvals under 'T' zoning
- All development would still require zoning approvals
- Zoning is just one factor influencing how our city develops