Grand Row Development Project

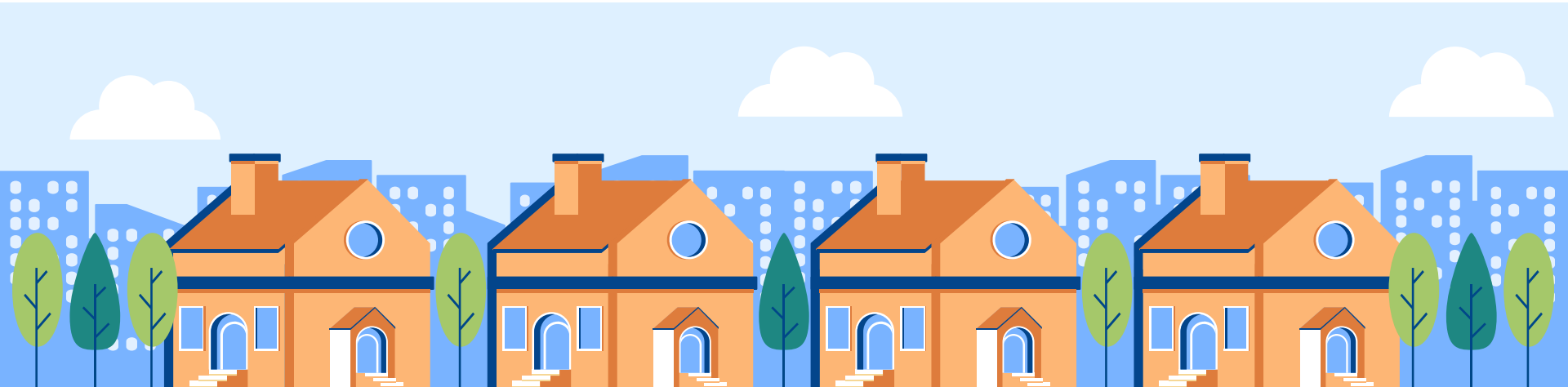
Zoning Variance Request

Saint Paul City Council Meeting
Benegas
December 11th, 2024

Michelle and Ruben

Our Family

Current Situation



There are currently 17 apartment buildings on this city block. There are 8 on north, and 9 on the south side.

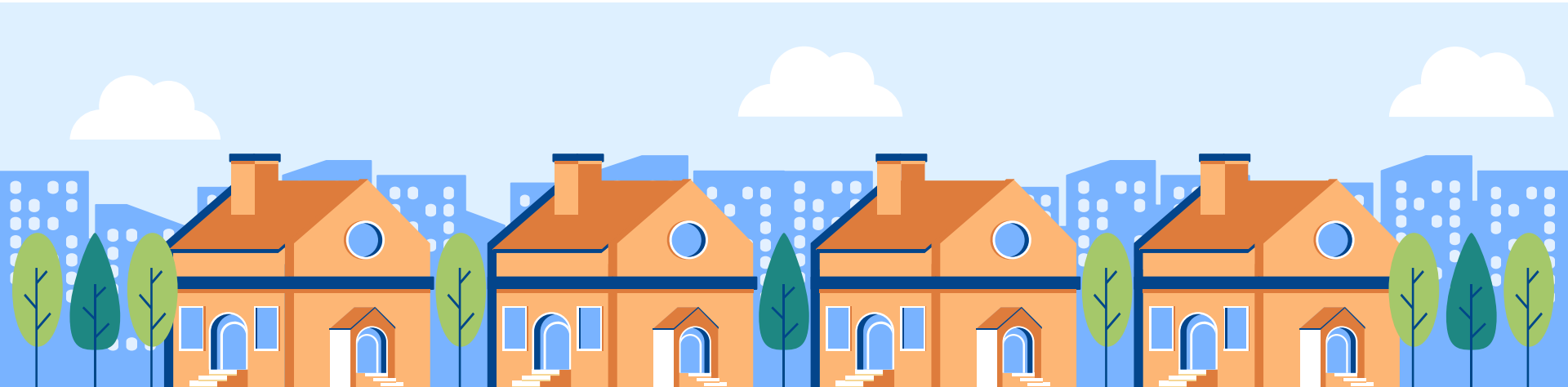
Which option makes the most sense for Saint Paul? For the neighborhood?

Grand Avenue allows buildings to be up to 50 feet or 5 stories, except for the section from Fairview to Cretin which only allows 40 feet or 4 stories. This is where our lot is located, resulting in the following options:

OPTION A: We construct a 4 story building **(61 apartments)** with 1 level of underground parking **(just 32 parking spaces)**. This option does not require a variance, but given the already limited parking on Grand Avenue, we prefer not to take this route.

OPTION B: We construct a 5 story building **(75 apartments)** with 2 levels of underground parking **(64 parking spaces)**, using the 5th story to offset the cost of the additional parking level. This option requires City Council variance approval but alleviates the parking concern.

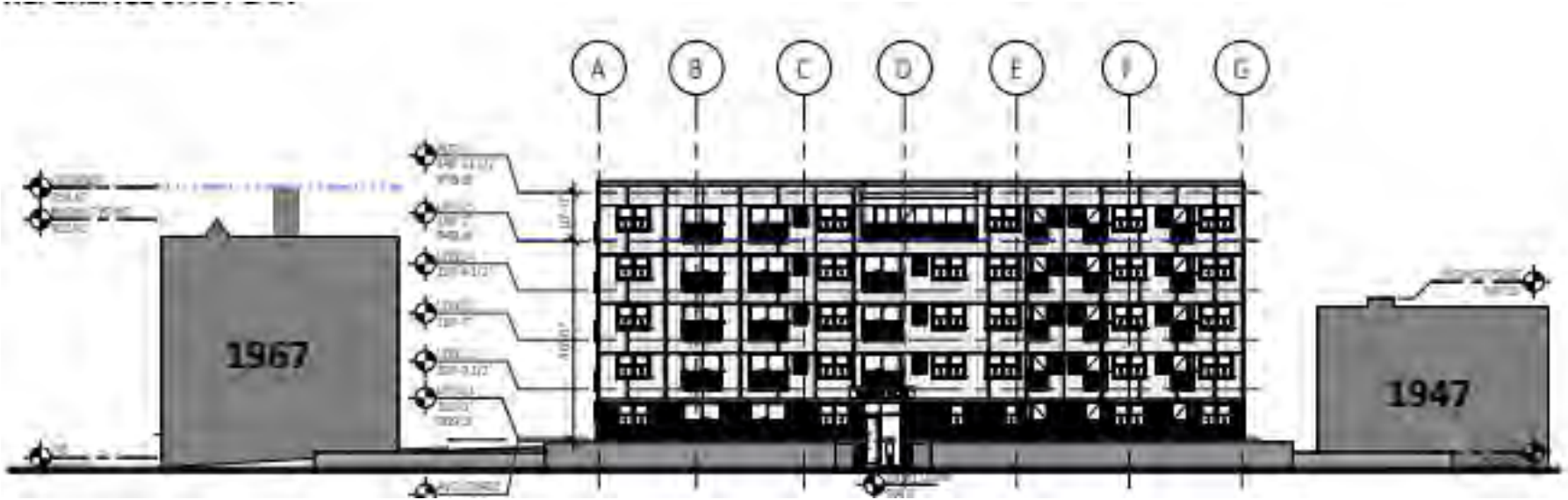
Grand Row Development Project



Design Aligned to the Neighborhood Aesthetic

Grand Avenue Elevation

Site Plan - Height Comparisons



Mac Groveland Council

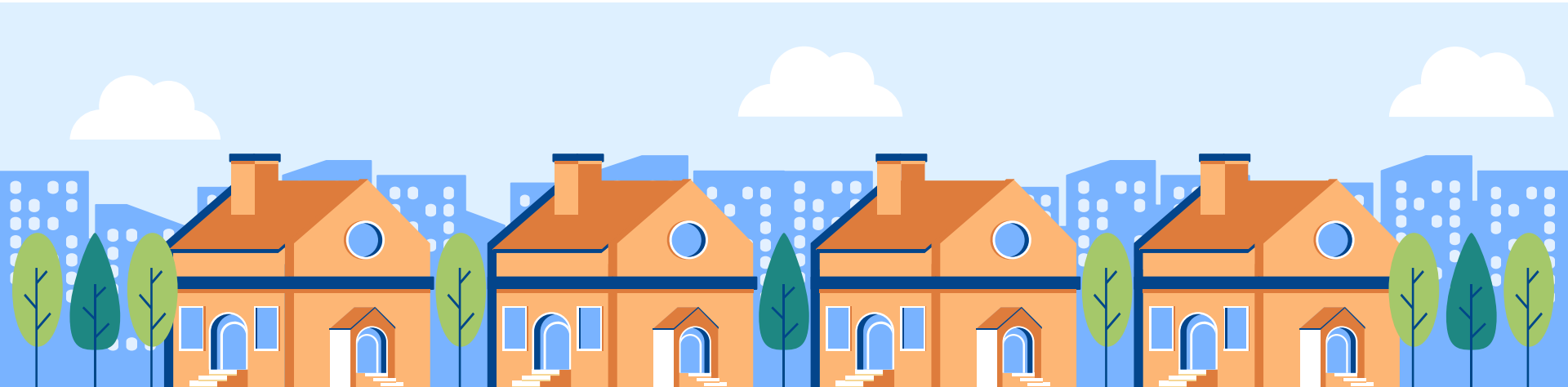
Approves!

Union Park

Union Park is an urban District near the geographic center of the Minneapolis / Saint Paul metropolitan area. Within a relatively small area, it hosts strong residential neighborhoods with a 50 / 50 mix of owner-occupied and rental properties, a wide variety of 1,000+ businesses, three universities, and 150+ non-profits. Union Park enjoys a diverse economy with many local jobs and abundant transportation options.

Union Park 2040 Comprehensive Plan

The Union Park District Council is the product of the merger of the Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline Community Councils. The purpose of this plan is to consolidate an updated vision for Union Park, and to set forth the objectives and strategies to achieve this vision.



Commitment to DIVERSITY

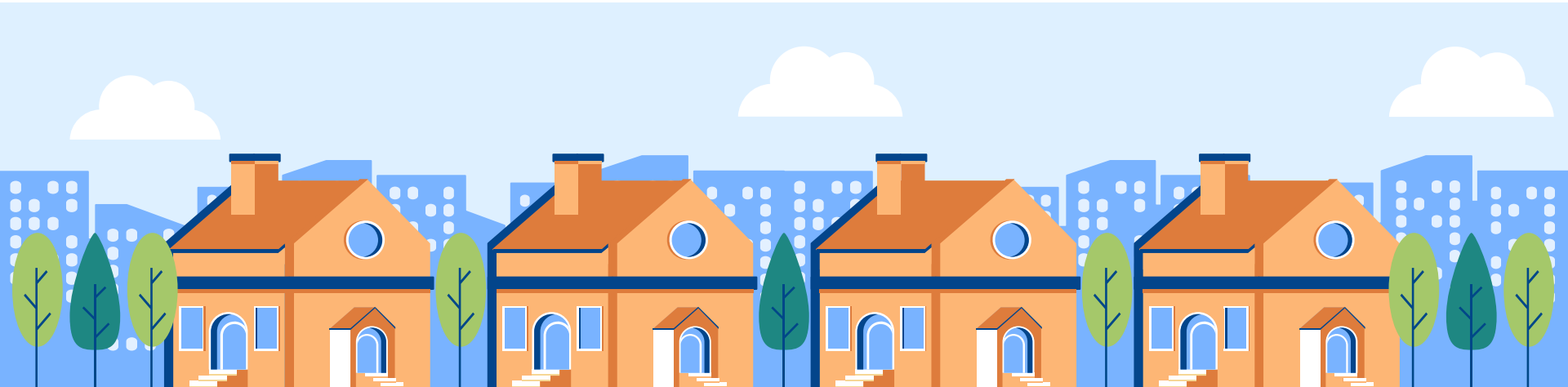
And, as Union Park rapidly becomes more diverse, it will be important to welcome new immigrants and entrepreneurs to live and establish businesses in Union Park.

Changing Trends

1. There is an increased market interest in mixed-use, high-density housing convenient to transit and commercial areas, creating some resident concern about preserving neighborhood character.
2. Aging housing stock is creating concerns about home maintenance, energy efficiency, and affordability.
3. An increase in populations of students from St. Thomas, Macalester and Concordia living within the neighborhoods has increased concerns about student housing encroaching on single family neighborhoods.

Comparable Properties

Within Fairview-Cretin Section of Grand Avenue



1967 Grand Avenue

Next door to the west of the proposed building

5 stories visible from the alley

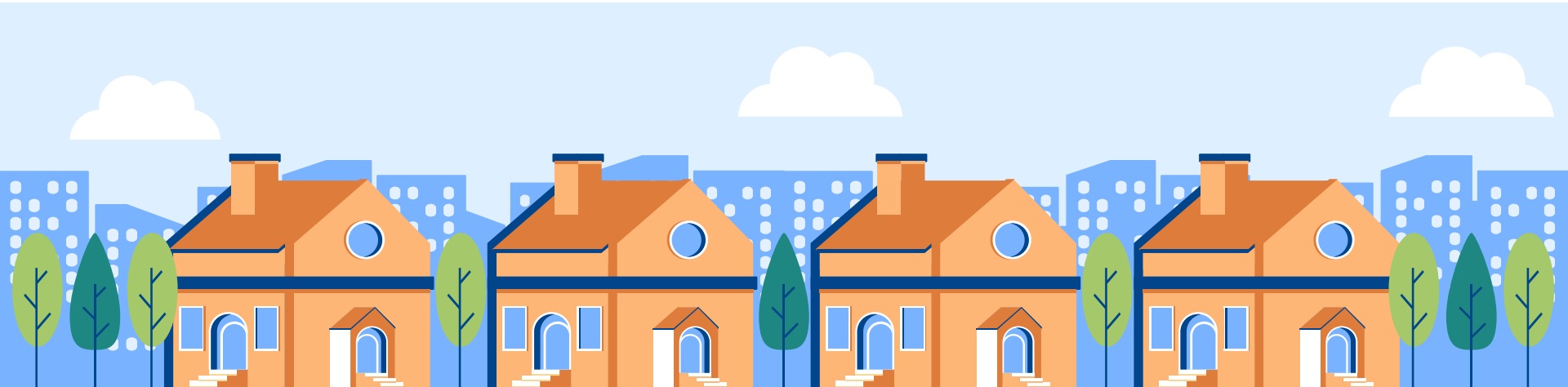
5 floors

Also within Cretin-Fairview section of Grand Avenue

2124 Grand Avenue

Comparable Properties

Near Fairview-Cretin Section of Grand Avenue



745 Grand Avenue

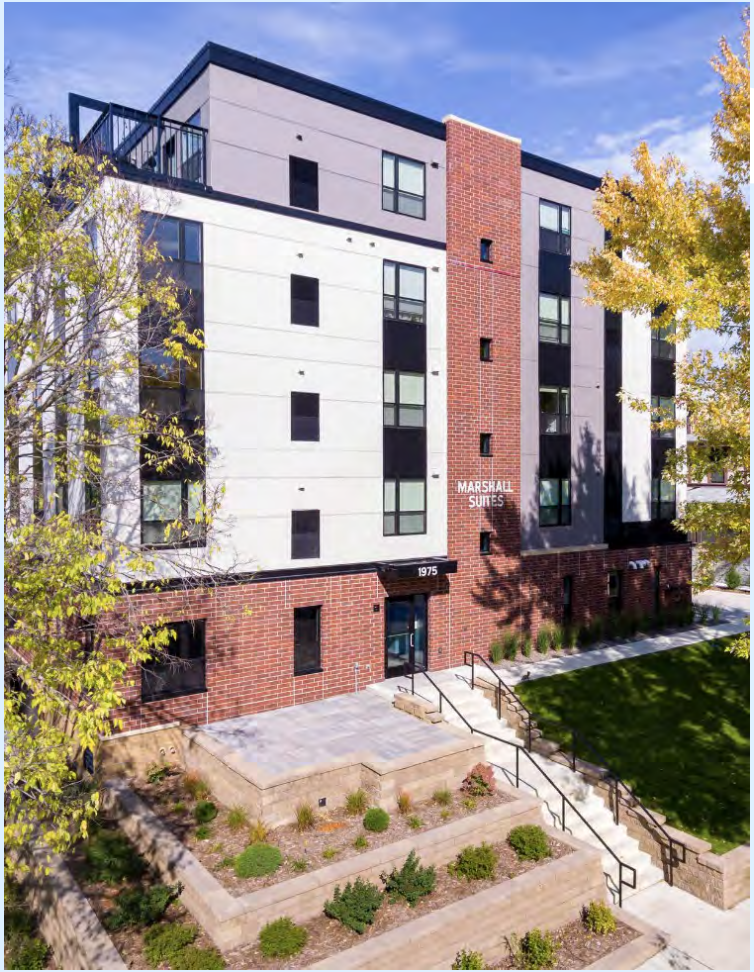
6 floors

Outside of Cretin-Fairview section of Grand Avenue

1975 Marshall Ave

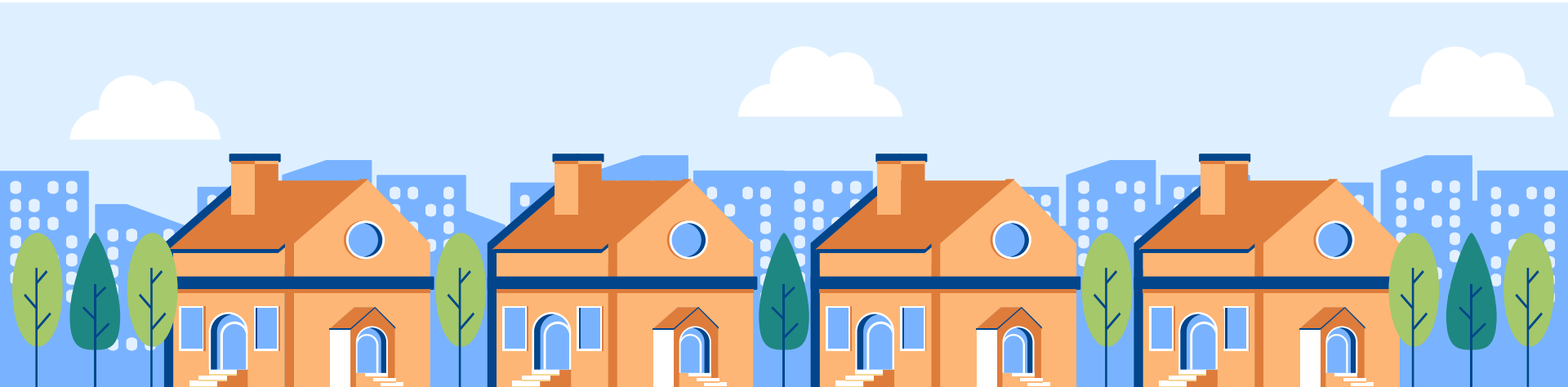
5 floors

1 mile north of proposed Grand Row Project



Comparable Prospective Property

Near Fairview-Cretin Section of Grand Avenue



1655 Grand Avenue

Macalester College - New Dormitory and Welcome Center

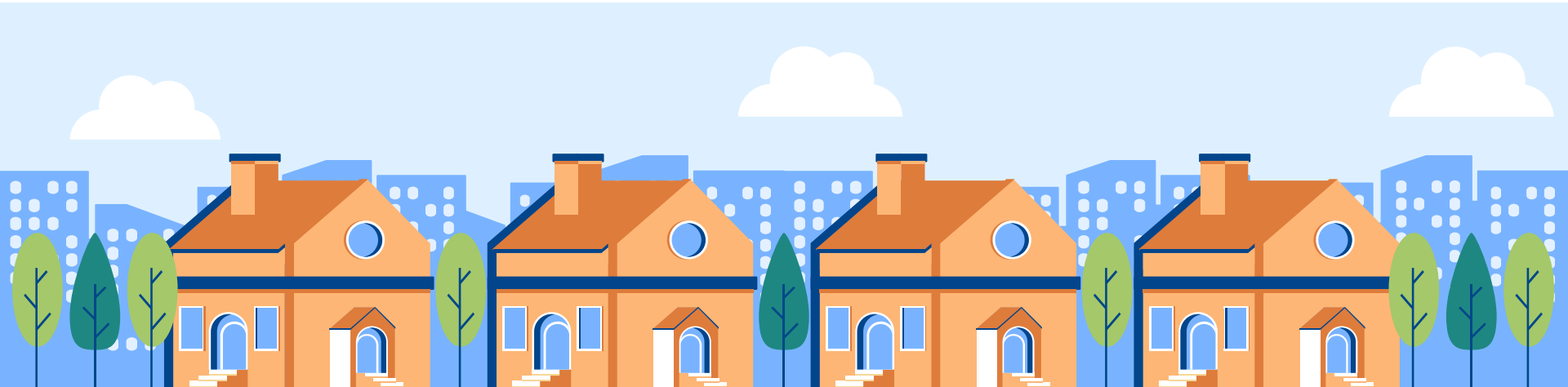
5 floors

2 blocks east of Fairview Avenue

Why is this restriction in place?

When asked why there is a height restriction on the Fairview to Cretin section of Grand Avenue, members of the Macalester Groveland Council did not know.

Union Park's 2040 Comprehensive Plan to increase development and population density is not aligned with discriminating against this section of the corridor.

Given that two buildings in the corridor already exceed the suggested height, we request permission to comply with the height restriction of the rest of Grand Avenue.

Closing Statement