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

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Zoning Code, found in chapters 60 through 69 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, is established to promote and to protect the public health, safety, morals, aesthetics, economic viability and general welfare of the community; and

WHEREAS, Section 61.801(b) of the Zoning Code authorizes the Saint Paul Planning Commission to initiate amendments to the code; and

WHEREAS, on March 7, 2025, the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul voted to initiate a zoning study to correct minor text errors that should be corrected and clarify language regarding a variety of topics, which was formalized in Resolution 25-18; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on April 18, 2025 regarding the potential amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission referred the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Planning Committee for consideration, review of the public testimony, and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Planning Committee, on May 14, 2025, forwarded its recommendations to the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered the public testimony and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Planning Committee;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Planning Commission under the authority of the Legislative Code, that the following proposed amendments to the Legislative Code are recommended for approval by the Mayor and Council of the City of Saint Paul:

Proposed Minor Zoning Code Amendments

Existing language to be deleted shown by ~~strikeout~~. New language shown by underlining.

Sec. 33.07. Fences—Requirements.

...

(c) *Height of fences.* In residential districts and on lots occupied for residential purposes, fences must be no more than seven (7) feet in height above the sidewalk or finished grade. The applicant must ensure that fences and all supporting structures are completely within the boundaries of such lot with no portion encroaching onto adjacent property. All fences erected in a front yard as defined in section 60.226 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code must be no more than four (4) feet in height. On a corner lot at two (2) intersecting streets in a residential zoning district, no fence, wall or other structure is allowed above a height of two (2) feet from sidewalk grade in the triangular area of the lot included within ten (10) feet of the corner along each lot line unless the structure is more than eighty (80) percent open. For back lots as defined in section 60.213 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, ~~all fences between the property line that is parallel to the street and~~ any gate that crosses a direct pedestrian connection to the street from a primary entrance of the nearest principal building must be no more than four (4) feet in height. Fences for nonresidential uses in residential zoning districts must not exceed eight (8) feet in height, except fences around tennis courts, which must not exceed twelve (12) feet in height, back stop fences, which must not exceed twenty (20) feet in height, and golf range fences, which must not exceed thirty (30) feet in height. The selvage end of chain link or metal fences must be smooth; knuckled ends are permitted, twisted ends are not permitted.

Sec. 60.104. Construction of language.

The following rules of construction apply to the text of this code:

...

(l) A "—" shall mean "through" when used between zoning district abbreviations within a land use category, e.g., "~~RT1~~H1—RM2" residential districts shall mean ~~RT1~~H1, ~~RT2~~H2, RM1, and RM2 residential districts.

Sec. 60.307. More restrictive or less restrictive districts.

When the code refers to more restrictive districts or less restrictive districts, the districts in order from more to less restrictive are: CV, CO, RL, ~~R1, R2, R3, R4, RT1, RT2~~ H1, H2, RM1, RM2, RM3, T1, OS, B1, BC, T2, B2, T3, B3, T4, B4, B5, IT, I1, I2, I3. The VP district shall be as restrictive as the district for which the VP district provides accessory parking.

Sec. 61.502. - Modify ~~special~~ conditions.

The planning commission, after public hearing, may modify any or all ~~special~~ conditions, when strict application of such ~~special~~ conditions would unreasonably limit or prevent otherwise lawful use of a piece of property or an existing structure and would result in ~~exceptional~~ undue hardship to the owner of such property or structure; provided, that such modification will not impair the intent and purpose of such ~~special~~ conditions and is consistent with health, morals and general welfare of the community and is consistent with reasonable enjoyment of adjacent property.

Sec. 62.109. - Nonconforming use permits.

…

d) Expansion or relocation of nonconforming use. The planning commission may permit the ~~t~~ expansion or relocation of a legal nonconforming use if the commission makes the following findings:
   1) In residential districts, the expansion, or relocation will not result in an increase in the number of dwelling units;
   2) For expansion of a structure, the expansion will meet the yard, height and percentage of lot coverage requirements of the district;
   3) The appearance of the expansion or relocation will be compatible with the adjacent property and neighborhood;
   4) Off-street parking is provided for the expansion or relocation that meets the requirements of article 63.200 for new uses;
   5) Rezoning the property would result in a "spot" zoning or a zoning inappropriate to surrounding land use;
   6) After the expansion or relocation, the use will not result in an increase in noise, vibration, glare, dust, or smoke; be detrimental to the existing character of development in the immediate neighborhood; or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare; and
   7) The use is consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Sec. 63.111. - Residential development on steep slopes.

In reviewing residential development on slopes of greater than twelve (12) percent, the zoning administrator shall, in addition to general site plan standards, consider the following requirements and standards:

(a) An engineering report on slope stability and hydrology, if the zoning administrator determines that such a report is warranted. The zoning administrator shall establish and maintain written criteria to use in making this determination, which criteria may include the size of the proposed development and any official records of soil instability, groundwater, and erosion in the vicinity. An engineering report must be prepared by a registered hydrological, geotechnical or soils engineer. Before a grading permit will be ~~issues~~ issued, the following elements of the engineering report must be submitted to the city and approved:
   (1) An evaluation of existing conditions including slope stability, ground water, and surface water. Testing should use techniques that minimize disturbance to existing slopes and vegetation (for example, drilling cores for soil samples rather than digging with a back hoe).
   (2) Site-specific recommendations for construction. Recommendations will depend on site conditions but may include the use of drain tiles, water-proofing walls, poured concrete foundations and sump pumps.
   (3) A schedule of inspections to be attended by city staff, the builder and the engineer who prepared the report. As a minimum, inspections shall be

scheduled prior to grading, after grading and during installation of any special measures required to deal with slope stability or water conditions.

...

Sec. 63.122. Travel demand management.

(a) Purpose. The Travel Demand Management (TDM) provisions of this section are intended to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips and implement comprehensive plan policies calling for balance and choice in transportation options.

(b) Applicability. A TDM Plan (TDMP) shall be required for development proposals of a scale that meets or surpasses the following thresholds:
New or phased construction greater than or equal to twenty thousand (20,000) GFA of a nonresidential use; or 25 or more new dwelling units.
~~This section applies to any development or redevelopment, including phased construction over forty thousand (40,000) square feet or any new development or redevelopment or any development providing one hundred (100) or more accessory off-street parking spaces, and to any change resulting in a parking increase of twenty-five (25) percent or fifty (50) accessory off-street parking spaces, whichever is less, and providing one hundred (100) or more parking spaces. TDMPs may be done for other development, but are not required by this section.~~
...

~~**Sec. 63.203. - Multi-tenant buildings and shared areas.**~~
~~The parking requirement for each use in a multi-tenant building shall be determined based on the percentage of the gross floor area used by each use in the multi-tenant building including shared areas.~~
~~(C.F. No. 10-403, § 1, 6-16-10)~~

Sec. 63.206. - Rules for computing maximum parking.

(a) For the purpose of computing the maximum number of parking spaces, the definition of "gross floor area" in section 60.207 shall apply.

(b) When units or measurements determining the maximum number of parking spaces result in a fractional space, any fraction up to and including one-half (½) shall permit one (1) parking space.

(c) The maximum parking for each use in a multi-tenant building shall be determined based on the percentage of the gross floor area used by each use in the multi-tenant building including shared areas.

Sec. 63.212. Electric vehicle parking.

For surface parking facilities with more than fifteen (15) parking spaces that require site plan review per section 63.202, electric vehicles shall be accommodated as follows:

~~(a) If intended to serve any use that includes a multifamily dwelling, at least eighty (80) percent of the facility's parking spaces must have an electrical conduit or raceway connection to electrical service with sufficient panel space reserved that is capable of operating at Level 2 (two hundred eight (208) Volts) or greater power. If intended to serve uses that do not include a multifamily dwelling, at~~

~~least twenty (20) percent of the facility's parking spaces must be served in this manner.~~

~~(b) Additionally, for surface parking facilities with more than thirty (30) spaces that require site plan review per section 63.202, and that are intended to serve any use that includes a multifamily dwelling, at least one (1) of the spaces per each thirty (30) must be served by installed wiring in electrical conduit or raceway, and electrical service sufficient to supply electric vehicle charging at a minimum of two hundred eight (208) Volts power level. Such space may or may not include the associated above-ground charging equipment for charging an electric vehicle.~~

(a) If intended to serve any use that do not include a multifamily dwelling, at least twenty (20) percent of the facility's parking spaces must have an electrical conduit or raceway connection to electrical service with sufficient panel space reserved that is capable of operating at Level 2 (two hundred eight (208) Volts) or greater power.

(b) If intended to serve any use that includes a multifamily dwelling, at least eighty (80) percent of the facility's parking spaces must have an electrical conduit or raceway connection to electrical service with sufficient panel space reserved that is capable of operating at Level 2 (two hundred eight (208) Volts) or greater power.

(c) Additionally, for surface parking facilities with more than thirty (30) spaces that require site plan review per section 63.202, and that are intended to serve any use that includes a multifamily dwelling, at least one (1) of the spaces per each thirty (30) must be served by installed wiring in electrical conduit or raceway, and electrical service sufficient to supply electric vehicle charging at a minimum of two hundred eight (208) Volts power level. Such space may or may not include the associated above-ground charging equipment for charging an electric vehicle. Such spaces may or may not include the associated above-ground charging equipment for charging an electric vehicle.

A parking lot reconstruction that is not associated with a larger project may comply with this section only within the surface parking facility footprint, and does not need to comply with this section to the extent it would require work outside the surface parking facility footprint.

Conduit and raceway required above shall be installed in accordance with the Minnesota State Building Code and National Electrical Code, including with regard to sizing and location, and shall be capped. The amounts of electric vehicles parking infrastructure for structured parking shall be as directed by the Minnesota State Building Code.

Sec. 65.220. College, university, seminary, or similar institution of higher learning.

An institution for post-secondary education, public or private, offering courses in general, technical, or religious education and not operated for profit, which operates in buildings owned or leased by the institution for administrative and faculty offices, classrooms, laboratories, chapels, auditoriums, lecture halls, libraries, student and faculty centers, athletic facilities, dormitories, fraternities, and sororities, but not including colleges or trade schools operated for profit.

Standards and conditions in residential districts:

(a) The campus boundary as defined under subparagraph ~~(f)~~ (d) below at some point shall be adjacent to a major thoroughfare as designated on the major thoroughfare plan.

(b) Buildings shall be set back a minimum of fifty (50) feet from every property line, plus an additional two (2) feet for every foot the building's height exceeds fifty (50) feet.

(c) The height of campus buildings may exceed the maximum building height in the underlying zoning district provided that ~~O~~on a campus of five (5) acres or more, no building shall exceed ninety (90) feet in height; on a campus smaller than five (5) acres, no building shall exceed forty (40) feet in height.

(d) The boundaries of the institution shall be as defined in the permit, and may not be expanded without the prior approval of the planning commission, as evidenced by an amended conditional use permit. The campus that is defined by the boundaries shall be a minimum of three (3) acres, and all property within the campus boundaries must be contiguous.

The applicant shall submit an "anticipated growth and development statement" for approval of a new or expanded campus boundary, which statement shall include but not be limited to the following elements:

(1) Proposed new boundary or boundary expansion.

(2) Enrollment growth plans that include planned or anticipated maximum enrollment by major category (full-time, part-time, undergraduate, graduate) over the next ten (10) years and also the anticipated maximum enrollment over the next twenty (20) years.

(3) Plans for parking facilities over the next ten (10) years, including potential locations and approximate time of development.

(4) Plans for the provision of additional student housing, either on-campus or off-campus in college-controlled housing.

(5) Plans for use of land and buildings, new construction and changes affecting major open space.

(6) An analysis of the effect this expansion (or new campus) will have on the economic, social and physical well-being of the surrounding neighborhood, and how the expansion (or new campus) will benefit the broader community.

Approval of a new or expanded campus boundary shall be based on an evaluation using the general standards for conditional uses found in section 61.500, and the following criteria:

(i) Anticipated undergraduate student enrollment growth is supported by plans for student housing that can be expected to prevent

excessive increase in student housing demand in residential neighborhoods adjacent to the campus.

(ii) Potential parking sites identified in the plan are generally acceptable in terms of possible access points and anticipated traffic flows on adjacent streets.

(iii) Plans for building construction and maintenance of major open space areas indicate a sensitivity to adjacent development by maintaining or providing adequate and appropriately located open space.

(iv) The proposed new or expanded boundary and the "anticipated growth and development statement" are not in conflict with the city's comprehensive plan.

Sec. 65.731. Parking facility, commercial.

An off-street parking facility, not accessory to any principal use, for which a fee is charged for the privilege of parking or electric vehicle charging.

Standards and conditions in traditional neighborhood districts, IT industrial districts, B4 central business districts, and B5 central service districts:

(a) At least fifty (50) percent of the length of any parking structure facade adjacent to a public street shall consist of retail, office, civic, institutional, residential, or other similar non-parking uses at street level.

(b) Except in the T2 district, all parking spaces shall be underground or within a parking structure. Thirty (30) percent of the floor area of the commercial parking facility may be counted toward meeting the minimum floor area ratio.

(c) In the T2 district, commercial surface parking facilities shall not be located within one-quarter (¼) mile of University Avenue.

Sec. 66.231. Density and dimensional standards table.

Notes to table 66.231, residential district dimensional standards:

...

(b) Up to two (2) additional dwelling units for the H1 residential district or one (1) additional dwelling unit for the H2 residential district and an additional five (5) percent lot coverage are permitted on the zoning lot through any combination of the following methods. These additional units are not subject to the minimum lot size per unit standard.

(1) Affordable rental units. Two (2) additional dwelling units in H1 and one (1) additional dwelling unit in H2 is permitted if at least twenty (20) percent of the total number of principal units on the zoning lot are leased at a rate at or below the sixty (60) percent of the area median income (AMI) rent limits as defined by the Multifamily Tax Subsidy Program published by Minnesota Housing and are affordable to and occupied by households earning up to sixty (60) percent of the area median income for at least ten (10) years. Each affordable unit must have at least the same floor area as another principal dwelling unit on the

zoning lot. Prior to issuance of a building permit for the new building (or building expansion or conversion), demonstration of the commitment to affordable housing in accordance with this footnote must be provided as a deed restriction or other contractual agreement with the city, or a city housing and redevelopment authority financing agreement or other similar financing agreement. Upon occupancy of the units, documentation of the households' income qualifications is required.

Number of total principal units on the zoning lot with a density bonus	Number of units required to be affordable at 60% of AMI on the zoning lot
2	1
3	1
4	1
5	2
6	2

(2) Affordable ~~owner-occupied~~ ownership units. One (1) additional dwelling unit is permitted for each principal dwelling unit on the zoning lot that is sold at a price affordable to a household earning up to eighty (80) percent of the area median income as defined by the Metropolitan Council's Livable Communities Act Affordability limits for ownership housing. The affordable dwelling unit must have at least the same floor area as another principal dwelling unit on the zoning lot. Prior to issuance of a building permit, demonstration of the commitment to affordable housing in accordance with this footnote must be provided as documentation of the fair market sales price via an appraisal based on full plans and specifications. Upon sale of the affordable unit to the end buyer, documentation of the household's income qualifications is required, and may include but not be limited to base pay or variable pay, income from business or self-employment, income from financial assets, government transfer payments, and insurance or benefit payments.

...

(e) The side yard setback requirement from interior lot lines may be reduced or waived when an easement or common wall agreement, certified by the city building official for conformance with the state building code, is recorded on the deeds of the adjoining parcels.

For townhouse structures, ~~S~~side yards are required only for dwelling units on the ends of townhouse structures. ~~The side yard setback requirement from interior lot lines may be reduced or waived when an easement or common wall agreement, certified by the city building official for conformance with the state building code, is recorded on the deeds of the adjoining parcels.~~

In RM1 and RM2 districts, the minimum side yard setback for a one-family dwelling, two-family dwelling, and multiple-family dwellings of thirty-five (35) feet in height or less on lots of sixty (60) feet width or narrower is five (5) feet.

...

(g) Floor area ratio (FAR) is prorated upon the percentage of parking that is provided as structured parking. The FAR maximum may be increased by 0.5 if at least ten (10) percent of the dwelling units on the zoning lot are affordable at sixty (60) percent of the area median income for at ten (10) years. The FAR maximum may be increased by an additional 0.5 (total of 1.0 increase) if at least twenty (20) percent of the dwelling units on the zoning lot are affordable at sixty (60) percent of the area median income for at least ten (10) years. Units required to be affordable must be occupied by households earning up to sixty (60) percent of the area median income. Prior to issuance of a building permit for the new building (or building expansion), demonstration of the commitment to affordable housing in accordance with this footnote must be provided as: a deed restriction or other contractual agreement with the city, or a city housing and redevelopment authority financing agreement or other similar financing agreement. Upon occupancy of the units, documentation of households' income qualifications is required.

...

~~**Sec. 66.242. Parking requirements in RM1—RM3 multiple-family residential districts.**~~

~~The minimum amount of required off-street parking may be reduced by twenty-five (25) percent for buildings with more than six (6) dwelling units in RM1-RM3 districts when more than fifty (50) percent of both the building and the parcel are within one-half (½) mile of University Avenue or any transit station serving light rail transit, bus rapid transit, streetcar or arterial bus rapid transit.~~

Sec. 66.331. Density and dimensional standards table.

Table 66.331, traditional neighborhood district dimensional standards, sets forth density and dimensional standards that are specific to traditional neighborhood districts. These standards are in addition to the provisions of chapter 63, regulations of general applicability. Where an existing building does not conform to the following requirements, the building may be expanded without fully meeting the requirements as long as the expansion does not increase the nonconformity.

Table 66.331. Traditional Neighborhood District Dimensional Standards

Building Type by Zoning District	Density	Lot Size Minimum (per unit)		Building Height (feet)		Yard Setbacks (feet)		
	Min.—Max.(a)	Area (sq. ft.)(a)	Width (feet)	Min.	Max.	Front Min.—Max.	Side Min.	Rear Min.
T1								

1-family dwelling	6—12 units/acre(b)	3500(b)	30	none	35(e)	15—25(i)	(k)	15
2-family~~/townhouse~~	8—20 units/acre(b)	2000(b)	20	none	35(e)	10—25(i)	(k)	15
Multifamily	10—25 units/acre(b)	1700(b)	n/a	none	35(e)	10—25(i)	(k)	(k)
Nonresidential or mixed use	0.3—1.0 FAR	n/a	n/a	none	35(e)	0—25	(k)	(k)
T2								
1-family dwelling	6—12 units/acre(b)	3500(b)	30	none	35(e)	15—25(i)	(k)	15
2-family~~/townhouse~~	8—20 units/acre(b)	2000(b)	20	none	35(e)	10—25(i)	(k)	15
Multifamily	FAR as for mixed use	n/a	n/a	none	35(e), (f)	10—25(i)	(k)	(k)
Nonresidential or mixed use	0.3—2.0 FAR with surface parking and 0.3—3.0 FAR with structured parking(c)	n/a	n/a	none	35(e), (f)	0—10(j)	(k)	(k)
T3								
1-family dwelling	8—12 units/acre(b)	3500(b)	30	25	35(e)	15—25(i)	(k)	15
2-family~~/townhouse~~	10—20 units/acre(b)	2000(b)	20	25	35(e)	10—25(i)	(k)	15
Multifamily	0.5—3.0 FAR(d)	n/a	n/a	25	45(e), (g), (l)	10—25(i)	(k)	(k)
Nonresidential or mixed use	0.5—3.0 FAR(d)	n/a	n/a	25	55(e),	0—10(j)	(k)	(k)

					(g), (l)			
T4								
Multifamily	0.5 min. FAR(d)	n/a	n/a	25	75(e), (h)	10—25(i)	(k)	(k)
Nonresidential or mixed use	0.5 min. FAR(d)	n/a	n/a	25	75(e), (h)	0—10(j)	(k)	(k)

Min. - Minimum Max. - Maximum FAR - Floor Area Ratio n/a - not applicable

Notes to table 66.331, traditional neighborhood district dimensional standards:

...

(e) Except in the river corridor overlay district, height of structures may exceed the maximum if set back from side and rear setback lines a distance equal to additional height. Structures shall be no more than twenty-five (25) feet high along side and rear property lines abutting RL-~~RT2~~H2 residential districts; structures may exceed this twenty-five (25) foot height limit if stepped back from side and rear property lines a distance equal to the additional height.

...

(Ord. No. 11-27, § 1, 4-20-11; Ord 14-12, § 2, 6-4-14; Ord 15-5, § 3, 2-5-15; Ord 15-20, § 2, 6-10-15; Ord. 21-27, § 1, 8-18-21; Ord 22-1, § 3, 1-19-22)

Sec. 66.431. Density and dimensional standards table.

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Notes to table 66.431, business district dimensional standards:

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(c) Since BC zoned property has a residential character, buildings shall maintain a twenty-five-foot front setback or meet the requirements of section 66.231(~~f~~d).

...

moved by _____
seconded by _____
in favor _____
against _____