



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** RES 12-1551, **Version:** 2

---

Requesting that the Planning Commission conduct a West Grand Avenue zoning study, and instituting a moratorium on certain development in the study area.

WHEREAS, under the Land Use Chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan, the 2030 generalized Land Use Map identifies the west end of Grand Avenue as a "Residential Corridor" which, the Plan explains, is composed of "segments of street corridors that run through Established Neighborhoods, predominantly characterized by medium density residential uses;" and

WHEREAS, the Land Use Chapter characterizes Established Neighborhoods as areas with a range of housing types, predominantly single-family houses and duplexes, as well as scattered small scale multi-family housing; and

WHEREAS, Strategy 1 of the Land Use Chapter, to target growth to areas where there will be compact mixed-use communities where housing, employment, amenities, and transit can work synergistically to serve the needs of people who live and work there, states that its "core goal" is "higher density development," a purpose of which is to achieve the 2030 residential growth targets established for the City by the Metropolitan Council; and

WHEREAS, Strategy 1 of the Land Use Chapter specifically intends for development to take place "at densities greater than currently found in the community," and states that "higher density development is not an objective sought solely for itself," but to "contribute to the goal of creating a vibrant, economically strong community that is environmentally sustainable; and

WHEREAS, Established Neighborhoods are described in the Land Use Chapter as areas of stability where the existing character will be essentially maintained," and Strategy 1 provides that the "existing zoning standards, as well as new zoning standards and districts, will be used to support the prevailing character of Established Neighborhoods and to allow higher density in . . . Residential Corridors;" and

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Saint Paul finds that the RM2 Multiple Family zoning classification presently assigned to the majority of parcels along the Residential Corridor at the west end of Grand Avenue, between Cretin and Fairview Avenues, may not further the Comprehensive Plan's land use objective to support the prevailing character of Established Neighborhoods which abut Residential Corridors along with the Comprehensive Plan's call to increase density in Residential Corridors, in that the zoning code's dimensional standards for RM2 allow buildings up to 50 feet high in comparison to the 30 foot height limit for properties zoned R3 and located in the abutting Established Neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the Council also finds that the RM2 height standard is more permissive than the height standard regulating University of St. Thomas buildings along Grand between Cretin and Cleveland Avenues under to the University's Conditional Use Permit as the Permit's conditions were implemented in part as a means of transitioning the University's buildings into the prevailing character of the surrounding Established Neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the Council also finds that larger dwelling units in apartment buildings designed for student housing may have greater impacts, that density regulations address, than smaller dwelling units; and

WHEREAS, the Council also finds that the B2 Community Business zoning classification presently assigned to some parcels along Grand Avenue at Cleveland and Fairview may hinder future use development or development density potential along the Grand Avenue "Residential Corridor" in light of the use regulations and dimensional standards imposed on new development in a B2 district; and

WHEREAS, the Council therefore finds that it is necessary to request the planning commission to undertake a zoning study to assess whether the present RM2 zoning classification and standards along Grand Avenue between Cretin and Fairview Avenues actually furthers the Comprehensive Plan's land use objectives for Residential Corridors and whether B2 zoning remains the best zoning classification within the said area; and

WHEREAS, during the period in which this zoning study is underway, the Council further desires that the status-quo regarding land use within the said area be maintained by immediately prohibiting the issuance or approval of any zoning and building permits for development within the area described herein which would or could be inconsistent with any recommendation or regulation adopted in light of the said zoning study until such time as the planning commission has completed its study of these matters and the Council takes action on any recommendations contained therein; NOW, THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Saint Paul, based upon the findings noted above and for the general welfare of the public, deems it necessary to hereby immediately prohibit the issuance or approval of any zoning and building permit which would permit development more than 40 feet in height within the area described in this resolution, or permit multi-family residential development with design features similar to that of "dormitory" style housing, which would or could be inconsistent with any recommendation or regulation adopted in light of the said zoning study, until such time as the planning commission has completed its study of these matters and the Council takes action on any recommendations contained therein until the expiration of twelve (12) months as provided in Minn. Stat. § 462.355, Subd. (4), or until such earlier time as the Council has taken action on the recommendations contained in the study; development projects that have had site plan approval prior to August 8, 2012, are exempt from this moratorium; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, as provided in Minn. Stat. § 462.355, Subd. (4), the Council of the City of Saint Paul will, in conformance with the City Charter § 6.05, subsequently enact a separate interim ordinance, consistent with the intent of this resolution as set forth above and, for the purpose of complying with the time limit imposed on interim ordinances under Minn. Stat. § 462.355, Subd. (4), the effective date of the said interim ordinance shall be the effective date of this resolution and, finally, upon the effective date of the said interim ordinance, the regulatory effect of this resolution shall terminate with no additional action on the part of this Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, for the purpose of this interim zoning ordinance, that the area of the study and the area subject to the said zoning and building permit approval restrictions imposed herein shall be defined as follows: from a point beginning at the centerline of the intersection of Grand and Cretin Avenues, then east along Grand Avenue to a point ending at the centerline of the intersection of Grand and Fairview Avenues; the area of the interim ordinance shall be further bounded on the north by the rear lot line of any parcel whose front or side lot line is bounded by Summit Avenue and on the south by the rear lot line of any parcel whose front or side lot line is bounded by Lincoln Avenue, all within the points between Grand and Fairview Avenues.