

City of Detroit

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TO: City Planning Commission

FROM: M. Rory Bolger, City Planner

RE: **The initiative of the City Planning Commission to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-73, District Map No. 71 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to change the PD (Planned Development District) zoning classification as currently shown at eleven locations to either an R1 (Single-Family Residential District) or an R2 (Two-Family Residential District) or an R3 (Low-Density Residential District) or an R5 (Medium-Density Residential District) zoning classification.**

DATE: March 27, 2025

On April 3, 2025, the City Planning Commission (CPC) will convene a 5:15 PM public hearing in the community to consider the rezoning of land currently zoned PD (Planned Development District) to more appropriate residential zoning district classifications at eleven sites on Zoning District Map No. 71 in the far northwest corner of Detroit, City Council District 1. This hearing is part of the CPC's ongoing "PD Project," stemming from the pandemic era review and site visits to 403 locations in Detroit zoned PD.

Background

Nine of the eleven PD sites on Map No. 71 had been zoned in the R1 (Single-Family Residential District) zoning classification until 1957 through 1963 when they were rezoned to allow for Multiple Residential (RMA) development and then in 1968 were all re-classified as Planned Developments in the PD District zoning classification. These nine sites are proposed to be rezoned because the Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code) currently requires PD Districts to have an approved development plan and site plan and review by City Council—provisions that were not required between 1957 and 1963—and because other zoning district classifications can more adequately regulate these already-developed sites.

The remaining two of the eleven sites were more recently rezoned from R1 to allow for proposed developments that were never realized.

The eleven locations are indicated on the maps attached at the end of this report.

Locations—The "RMA" PDs

1. Three split-zoned lots on the north side of West Seven Mile between Woodbine and Lenore, commonly known as 24224, 24270, and 24290 West Seven Mile [Originally rezoned in 1957 per Ord. No. 260-F]. These lots are proposed to be rezoned from PD to R3 and are classified in the Master Plan's future general land use maps as Low Density

Residential (RL). Established use: 2-story apartments (Courtyard @ 7Mile), office building. Nearby land use: houses, multi-family, shopping center. Nearby zoning: R1, PD, B2.

2. Two “through lots” north of West Seven Mile between Shiawassee and Appleton, just west of Greater Grace Temple (and the former Edgewater Park, 1927-1981), commonly known as 19130 and 19220 Appleton [Originally rezoned in 1961 per Ord. No. 633-F]. These lots, which are addressed off Appleton but front on Shiawassee, are proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R3** and are classified in the Master Plan’s future general land use maps as Low-Medium Density Residential (RLM). Established use: 2-story apartments (Imperial Manor House). Nearby land use: Multiple residential; houses. Nearby zoning: PD, B1, R1.
3. One lot south of West Seven Mile on the east side of Fenton, commonly known as 18980 and 19000 Fenton [Originally rezoned in 1962 per Ord. No. 657-F]. This lot is proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R3** and is classified in the Master Plan’s future general land use maps as Low Density Residential (RL). Established use: 3-story, 2 building apartments. Nearby land use: commercial; surface parking. Nearby zoning: B2, R1, B4, P1.
4. One lot, east of Telegraph Road, containing two buildings on the west side of Shiawassee between West Seven Mile and Verdun, commonly known as 19301 Shiawassee and one 2.8-acre lot, west of Telegraph Road, on the west side of Woodbine 300 feet north of West Seven Mile, commonly known as 19225 Woodbine [Originally rezoned in 1962 per Ord. No. 727-F]. These two non-contiguous lots are proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R3** and are classified in the Master Plan’s future general land use maps as Low Density Residential (RL). Established use: 2-story apartments (Pierre Manor Apartments—Shiawassee site); 2-story apartments (Woodbine site). Nearby land use: Houses; DWSD Rouge River facility (Shiawassee site); houses, shopping center, 2-story apartments (Woodbine site). Nearby zoning: R1, PD (Shiawassee site); PD, R1 (Woodbine site).
5. Two lots on the west side of Berg Road, just east of Greater Grace Temple, between West Seven Mile and Cambridge, commonly known as 19143 and 19173 Berg [Originally rezoned in 1962 per Ord. No. 738-F]. These lots are proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R3** and are classified in the Master Plan’s future general land use maps as Low-Medium Density Residential (RLM). Established use: 2-story apartments (River Park Apartments). Nearby land use: school, houses, surface parking, Rouge River. Nearby zoning: PD, R1, P1.
6. Eight lots north of West Seven Mile between Lenore and Grandview, commonly known as 19141, 19160, and 19191 Winston and 19120, 19140, and 19180 Grandview, and 24620 West Seven Mile, and 19185 Lenore [Originally rezoned in 1963 per Ord. No. 762-F]. These lots are proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R3** and are classified in the Master Plan’s future general land use maps as Low Density Residential (RL) except for the Seven Mile frontage as Neighborhood Commercial (CN). Established use: 2-story apartments (Northwest Co-op; Babcock Terrace Gardens co-op); 3-story apartments. Nearby land use: houses, multi-family, vacant commercial. Nearby zoning: R1, PD, B2.

7. One lot at the northeast corner of Telegraph and Frisbee, commonly known as 19800 Telegraph [Originally rezoned in 1963 per Ord. No. 764-F]. This lot is proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R3** and are classified in the Master Plan's future general land use maps as Low Density Residential (RL). Established use: 2-story apartments (Hidden Pine Apartments). Nearby land use: U-Haul, houses, US-24. Nearby zoning: PD, R1.

8. Two lots on the north side of Shiawassee between Fenton and Grandview, commonly known as 24540 and 24570 Shiawassee [Originally rezoned in 1963 per Ord. No. 795-F]. These lots are proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R5** and are classified in the Master Plan's future general land use maps as Thoroughfare Commercial (CT). Established use: 2-story apartments, DTE substation. Nearby land use: commercial, houses. Nearby zoning: commercial, vacant commercial, houses.

9. One lot on the west side of Shiawassee between West Seven Mile and Verdun, just west of Greater Grace Temple, commonly known as 19255 Shiawassee [Originally rezoned in 1963 per Ord. No. 810-F]. This lot is proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R3** and is classified in the Master Plan's future general land use maps as Low-Medium Density Residential (RLM). Established use: 2-story apartments (Pierre Manor Apartments). Nearby land use: Houses; multiple-family; DWSD Rouge River facility. Nearby zoning: R1, PD.

Locations (More recent PDs)

Two of the eleven sites also had been zoned in the R1 (Single-Family Residential District) zoning classification until they were rezoned to PD for specific development projects. Neither of those projects (identified below) was realized and the Zoning Ordinance specifies that abandoned/lapsed PDs be rezoned to their original classification or to a different, appropriate zoning classification:

10. Eighty-one lots, (11 vacant residential lots and 70 lots with houses), from ??? feet north of West Seven Mile toward Frisbee: 31 of the 81 on the east side of Woodbine, commonly known as 19254 through 19534 Woodbine (even); 29 of the 81 on the west side of Woodbine, commonly known as 19261 through 19511 Woodbine (odd); and 21 of the 81 on the east side of Lenore, commonly known as 19280 through 19514 Lenore (even). These lots were planned for redevelopment as a big-box retail store (The Home Depot) per Ord. No. 40-04 in 2004—a development that was never realized. These lots are proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R2** and are classified in the Master Plan's future general land use maps as Retail Center (CRC). Established use: houses and vacant lots. Nearby land use: houses, multi-family, shopping center. Nearby zoning: R1, PD.

11. One lot covering approximately nine acres of the former 46-acre Bonnie Brook golf course on the east side of Telegraph Road (US-24) between Frisbee and West Eight Mile Road (M-102), commonly known as 20400 Telegraph. This land was planned for redevelopment as an extended-stay hotel per Ord. No. 07-09 in 2009—a development that was never realized. This land is proposed to be rezoned from **PD to R1** and is classified in the Master Plan's future general land use maps as Recreation (PRC). The property owner indicates his support for reversion of the land to its original R1 District

classification. Established use: vacant. Nearby land use: vacant land, U-Haul, Rouge River, US-24. Nearby zoning: PD, R1.

Atypical PDs

As indicated above in the “Background” section of this report, nine of the subject properties on Map No. 71 present a somewhat different origin than what the Planning Commission sees in “typical PDs.” These nine came to be PDs through the “back door.”

Between 1947 and 1966, the Zoning Ordinance’s maps were amended 33 times to rezone land to what was then labeled an RMA District—Residential, Multiple [with] Approval. These RMA Districts were established in areas that were largely characterized exclusively by single- and two-family dwellings and required special review and approval by the then City Plan Commission under its legendary director, Charlie Blessing.

In 1968, when the Zoning Ordinance underwent its first major rewrite (Ord. No. 390-G) since the original 1941 ordinance, any land that was identified as RMA was reclassified as PD (Planned Development). However, unlike today’s PD districts, which are generated pursuant to a development plan and an approved site plan, these “RMA PDs” provide no guidance today as to the parameters of development, much less a binding site plan.

This atypical PD classification is usually not an issue but when the land goes vacant or the owner desires to expand or change the use of the land or seek refinancing of an existing use, there are no clear “ground rules” as to what an alternative development should look like or what new uses might be permissible as are afforded by a standard zoning district classification or a typical (post-1968) PD. As a result, needless delays in processing a proposal or permit application can arise and property owners’ options are unclear.

In all nine “RMA PD” locations, multiple residential structures, both apartment buildings and townhouses, were built and are occupied. Although the land underneath these structure was originally zoned R1, to rezone them from PD back to R1 would render them non-conforming. Instead, they are proposed to be rezoned to residential zoning district classifications that support multiple-family dwellings and townhouses on a by-right basis. In eight of the nine locations, it is proposed they be rezoned to the R3 (Low-Density Residential District) classification; in one location, which backs up against West Eight Mile Road, an R5 (Medium-Density Residential District) classification is proposed.

Lapsed PDs

In two of the eleven PD locations on Map No. 71, land was rezoned at the request of owners or developers who proposed notably different land uses than what had been permissible under the R1 District classification:

- 81 residential lots on Woodbine and Lenore were to be part of a proposed Home Depot big-box development along the west side of Telegraph Road;
- On the east side of Telegraph, just south of West Eight Mile Road and just north of the existing PD (formerly Super K, now U-Haul), nine acres of the former Bonnie Brook golf course were to be redeveloped for an extended stay (Staybridge Suites) hotel.

The owner of the former Bonnie Brook golf course is no longer actively seeking redevelopment of his land on the east side of Telegraph and finds a reversion to the previous R1 classification as appropriate at this time.

Because of the number of vacant lots along Woodbine and Lenore, the CPC is considering a rezoning to R2, which would allow both single- and two-family dwellings on a by-right basis

along with numerous low-intensity public, civic, or institutional uses on a conditional basis. The R2 District offers a broader range of land use options for future development.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Current Zoning

PD – Planned Development District

The PD district will permit planned developments throughout the City and will be particularly useful in urban renewal areas. Such planned developments shall be substantially in accord with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan, by having a major land use that corresponds to the most general category of land use, which are Residential, Public/Civic/Institutional, Retail/Service/Commercial, Manufacturing and Industrial, and Other, proposed in the Master Plan for the area involved. Such planned developments shall provide a desirable environment for the uses proposed and shall not be out of harmony with their general surroundings. The regulations of the district are designed to accomplish this by permitting flexibility in overall development while ensuring adequate safeguards and standards for public health, safety, convenience, and general welfare and, where applicable, encouraging historic preservation.

Proposed Zoning

R1 – Single-Family Residential District (proposed for Location 11)

The R1 Single-Family Residential District is designed to protect and preserve quiet, low-density residential areas now primarily developed and those areas which will be developed with single-family detached dwellings and characterized by a high ratio of home ownership. The regulations for this district are designed to stabilize and protect the essential characteristics of the district and to promote and encourage a suitable environment for activities associated with family life. To these ends, development is limited to a relatively low concentration and uses permitted by right are limited to single-family detached dwellings which provide homes for the residents of the area. Additional residential uses such as religious institutions, neighborhood centers, and utility uses necessary to serve the immediate area may be permitted on a conditional basis.

R2 – Two-Family Residential District (proposed for Location 10)

The R2 Two-Family Residential District is designed to protect and enhance those areas developed or likely to develop with single- or two-family dwellings. The district regulations are designed to promote a suitable environment for homes and for activities connected with family life. The only principal uses permitted by right are single- and two-family dwellings and family day care homes.

R3 – Low-Density Residential District (proposed for Location 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9)

The R3 Low Density Residential District is designed as a low-density multi-family district. The regulations are designed to promote and encourage town and terrace house development, courts, and garden apartments. It is intended that this district be used primarily on local thoroughfares thereby encouraging a suitable environment for family life. Among others, uses permitted by right include single- and two-family dwellings, townhouses, multi-family dwellings, and community facilities necessary to serve a residential district.

R5 – Medium-Density Residential District (proposed for Location 8)

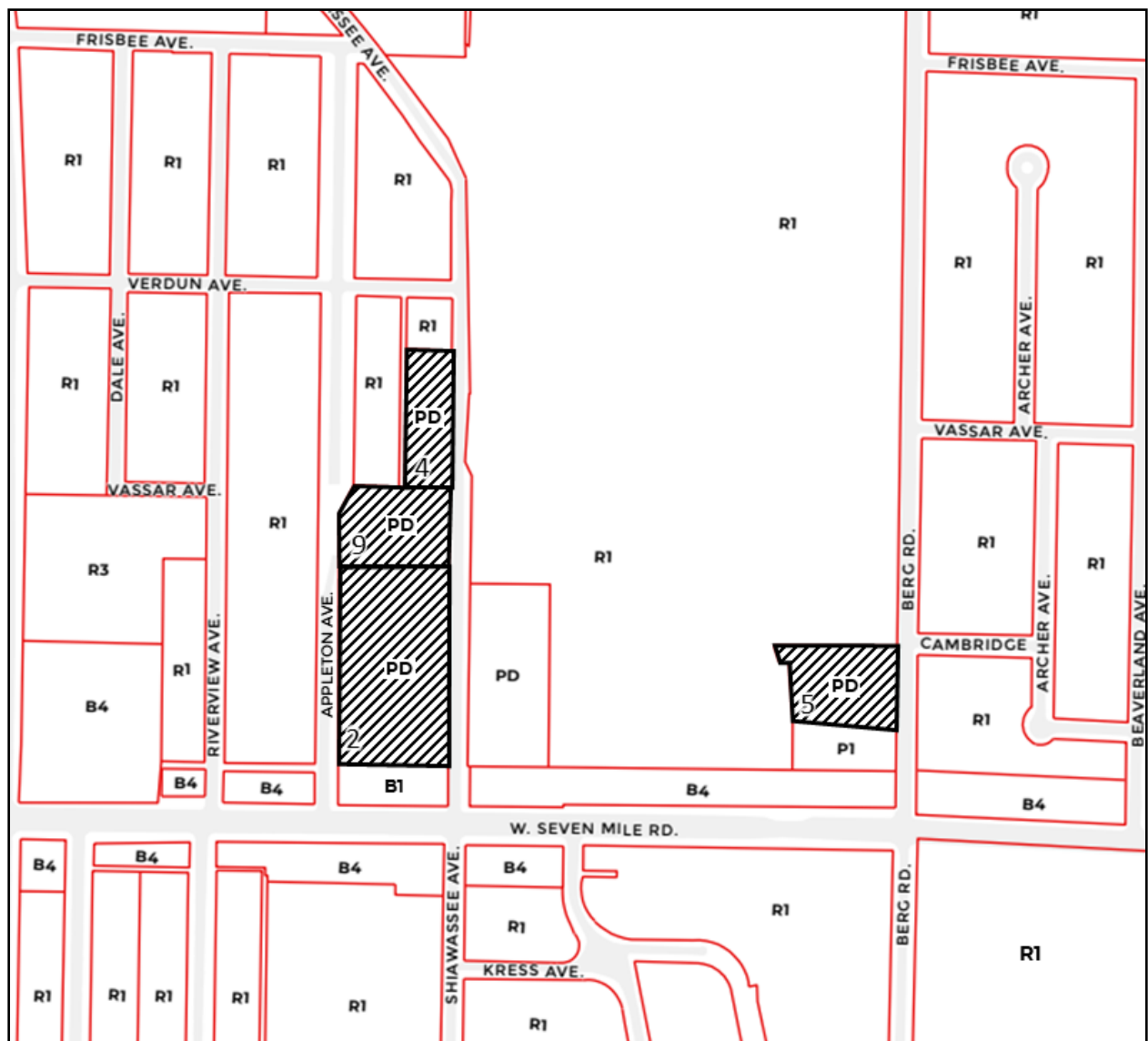
The R5 Medium Density Residential District is designed to provide for a range of residential development from the single-family detached dwelling to medium-density multiple-family dwellings. The primary use in this district will be the rental apartment structure. In addition to permitted residential uses, certain specified non-residential uses which can be properly blended into this district may be permitted.

Master Plan Consistency

All locations on Map No. 71 are found within Neighborhood Cluster 8 in the Redford subsector. The Master Plan future general land use classification has been identified above for each of the eleven locations. The Planning and Development Department will provide its comments and determinations as to Master Plan consistency at the Planning Commission hearing or vote meeting.

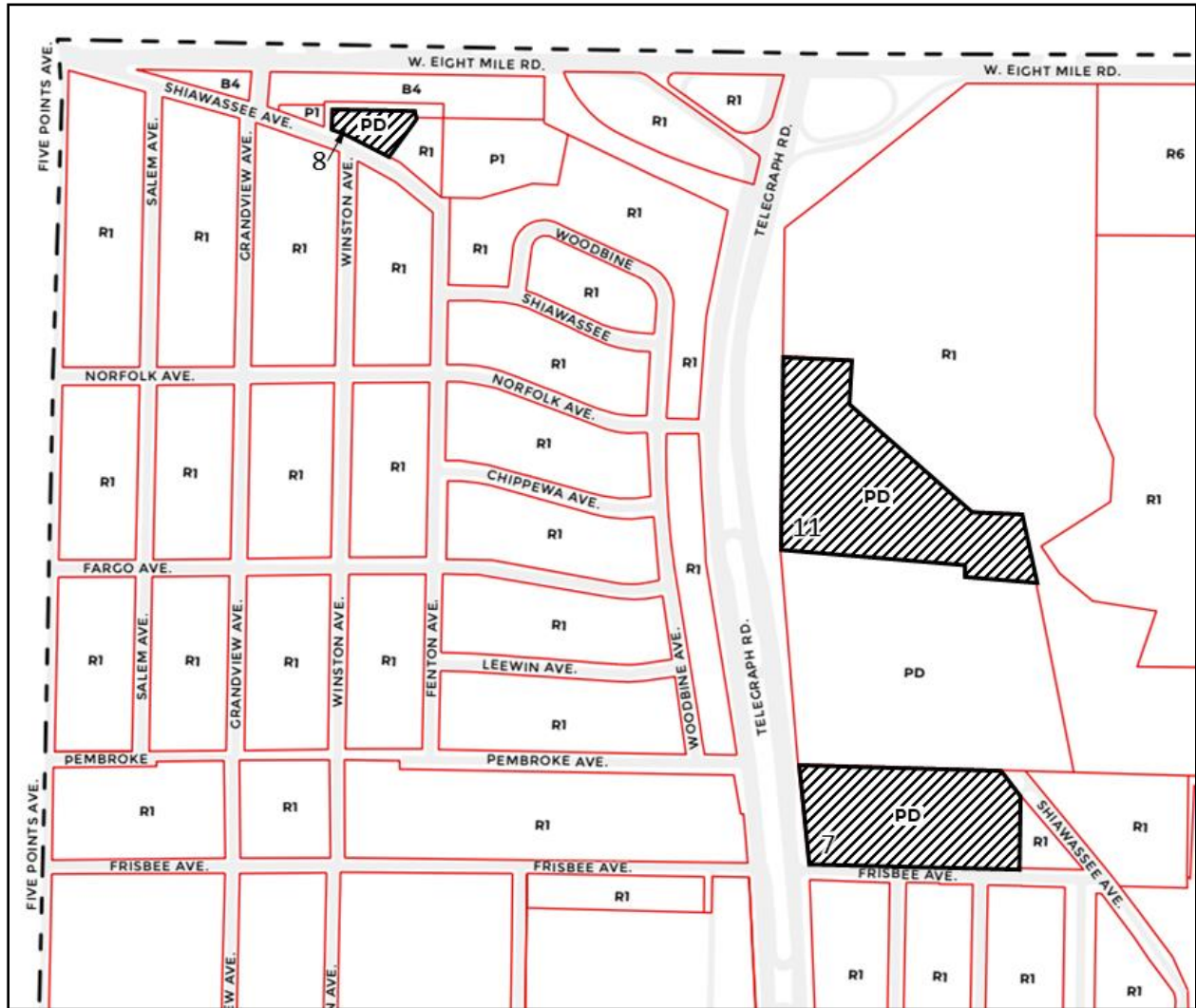
Outreach

In addition to the usual notification by mail of all owners and occupants of the subject properties and all land within 300 radial feet of those properties, CPC staff attended a District 1 community meeting convened by Council President Pro-Tem James Tate on February 21. Staff also reached out to the owner of the largest site to discuss plans and intentions for the Bonnie Brook Golf Course property.



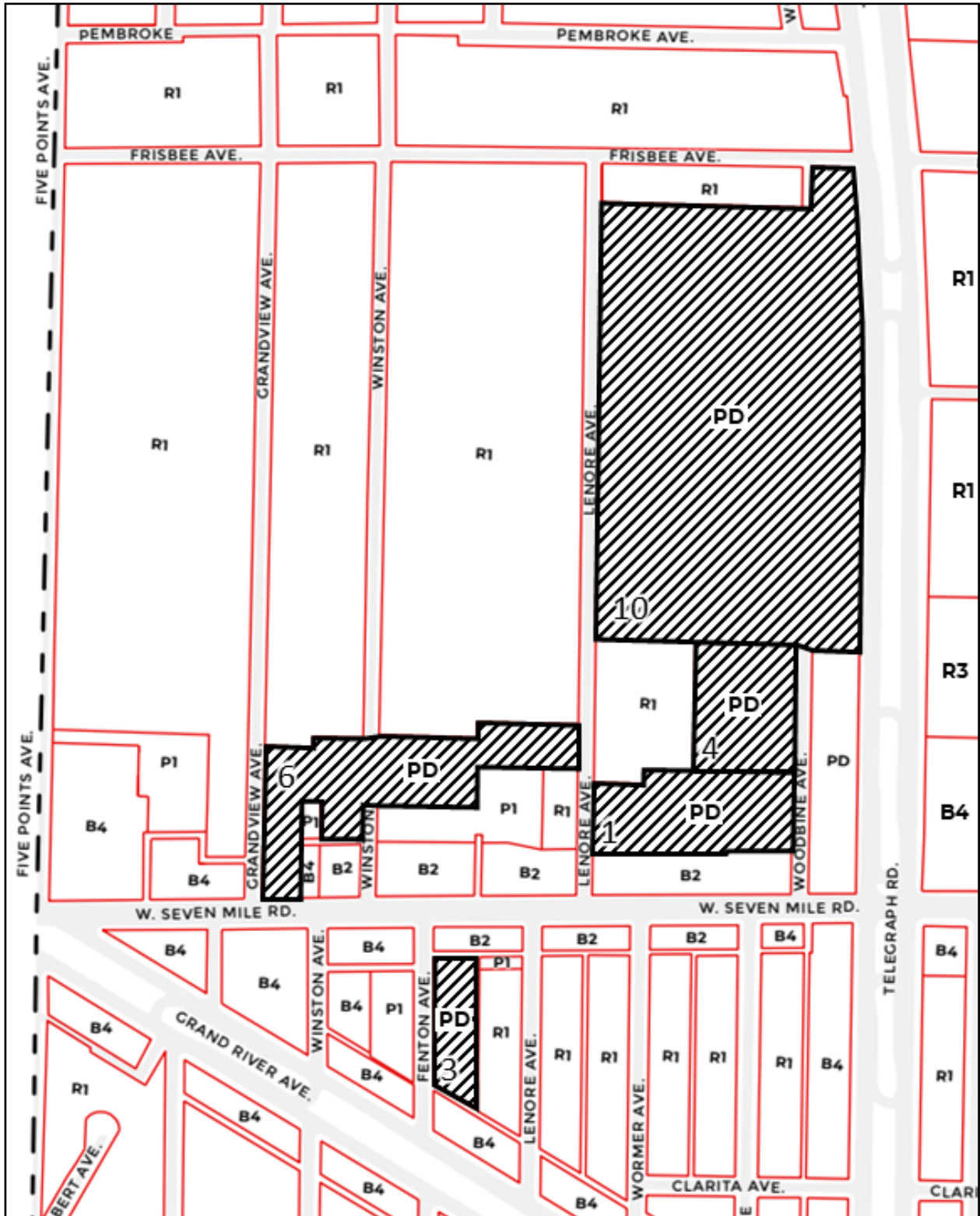
The hatched areas are proposed to be rezoned.

The numbers correspond to the descriptions on pages 2-3.



The hatched areas are proposed to be rezoned.

The numbers correspond to the descriptions on pages 3-4.



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