

# Alewife Zoning Working Group

An aerial architectural rendering of a city block. The scene is filled with multi-story buildings in shades of orange, red, and white. Green trees are scattered throughout the block, particularly around a central green space and a small pond in the lower-left quadrant. The drawing style uses fine lines and soft shading to create a sense of depth and texture.

Meeting #8: Final Zoning Recommendations  
February 9, 2023



# Today's Agenda

- District Vision & Planning Objectives
- Transportation Analysis
- Final Zoning Recommendations
- Healthpeak Presentation
- Working Group Discussion
- Next Steps
- Public comment

# Planning Objectives

- Create a mixed-use district
- Increase housing supply, including affordable housing
- Promote neighborhood uses
- Prioritize earlier delivery of infrastructure
- Scale down to existing neighborhood

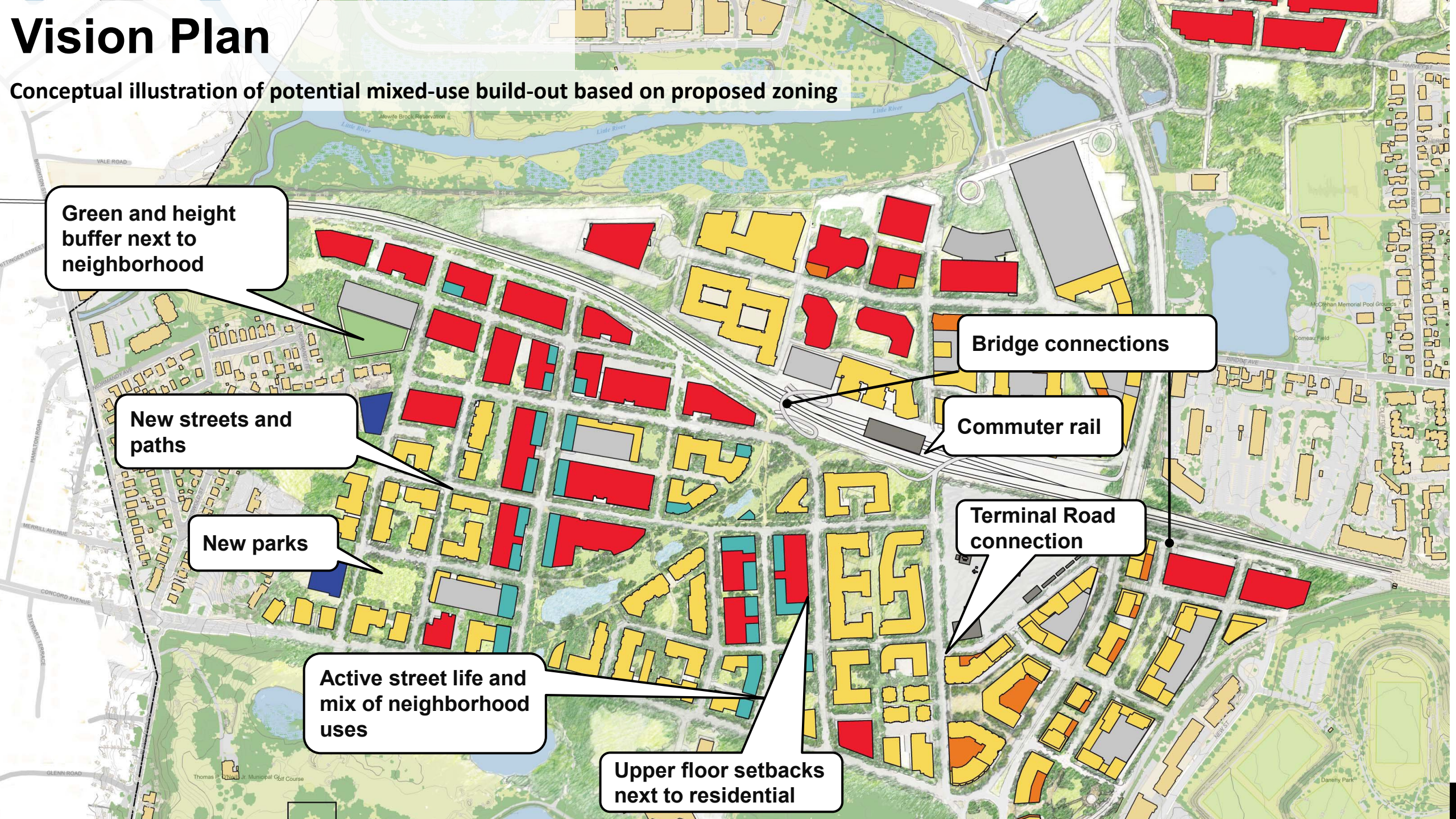
# Key Zoning Recommendations

- Increase residential density and heights
- Tie commercial density and heights to production of housing, neighborhood uses, open space, and infrastructure
- Require contributions to district housing for any commercial development above base
- Require contributions to transportation infrastructure for any commercial development above base
  - Transportation impact fees or delivery of priority transportation infrastructure



# Vision Plan

Conceptual illustration of potential mixed-use build-out based on proposed zoning



**Green and height buffer next to neighborhood**

**New streets and paths**

**New parks**

**Active street life and mix of neighborhood uses**

**Upper floor setbacks next to residential**

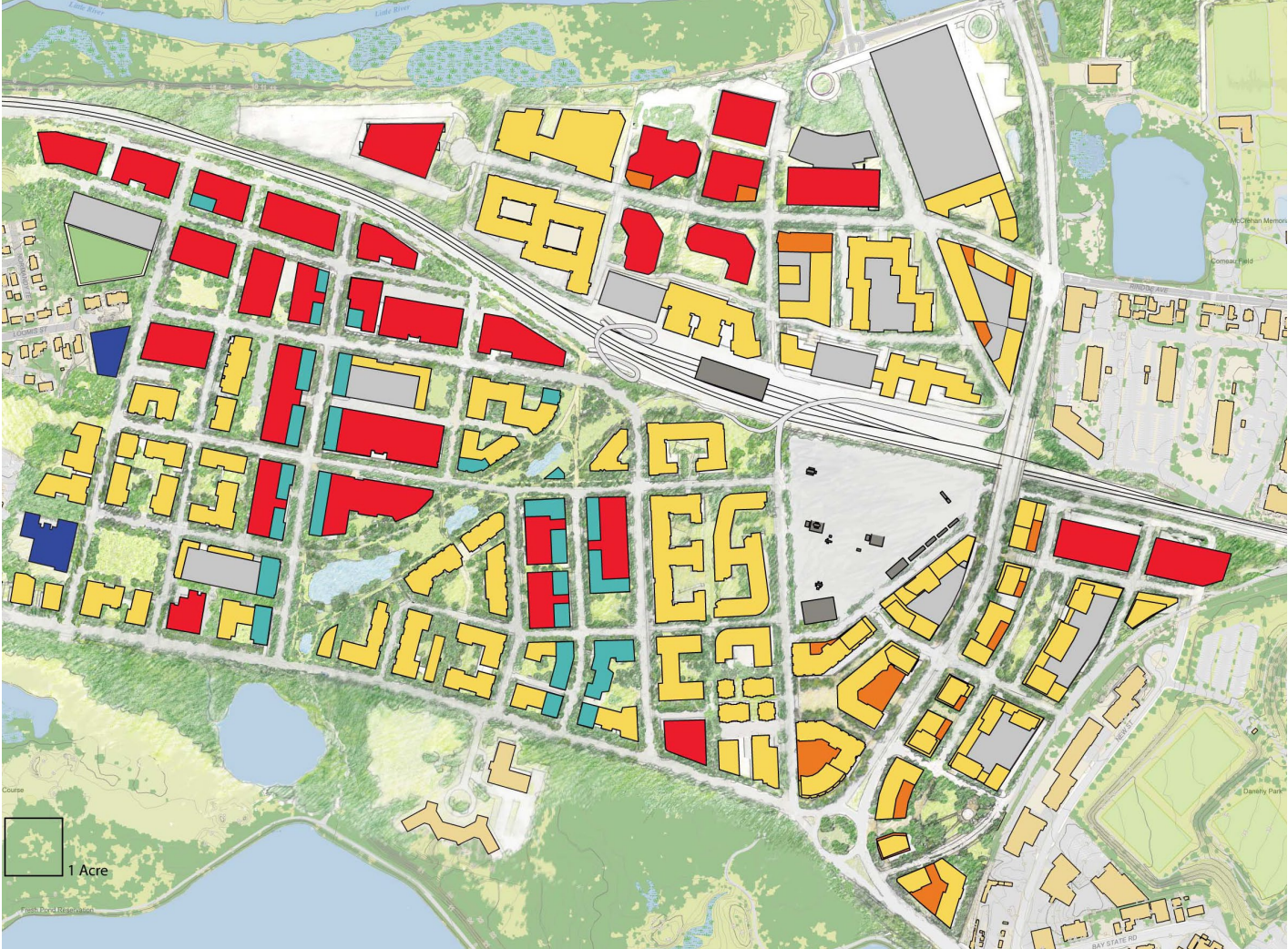
**Bridge connections**

**Commuter rail**

**Terminal Road connection**



# Alewife Vision Benefits



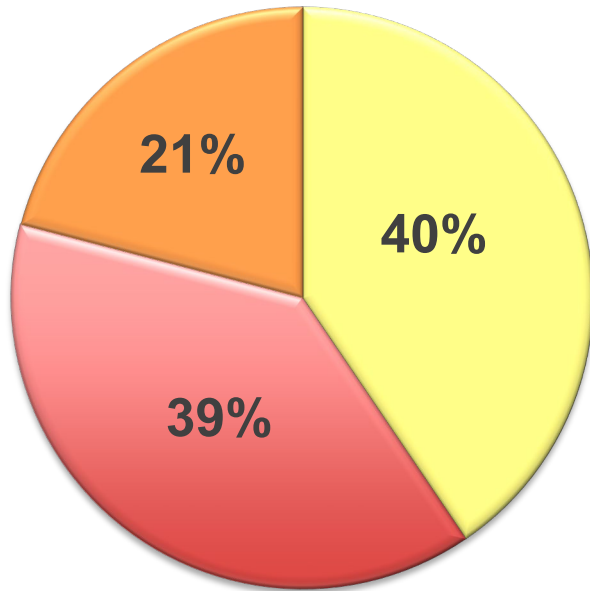
2040 Buildout	
- New Housing Units	~3,750 units
- New Affordable Housing Units (Inclusionary)	~750 units
- New Residents	~7,500 residents
- Net New Jobs	~6,000 jobs

### Proposed Land Use

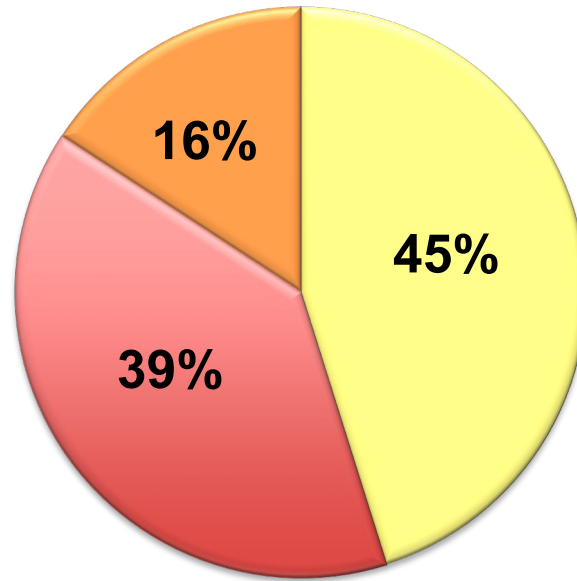
- Residential
- Neighborhood Uses
- Commercial
- Parking
- Retail
- Civic

# How does the proposed zoning compare?

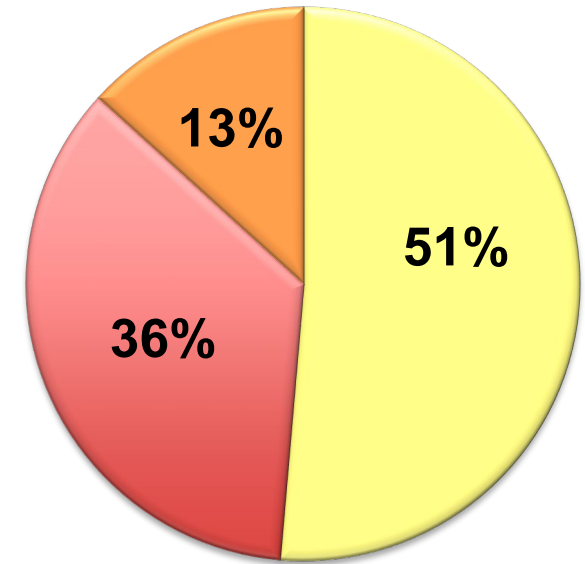
## Existing Use Mix



## Current Zoning 2040 Use Mix



## Proposed Zoning 2040 Use Mix



- Residential
- Commercial
- Retail, N'hood Use, Civic

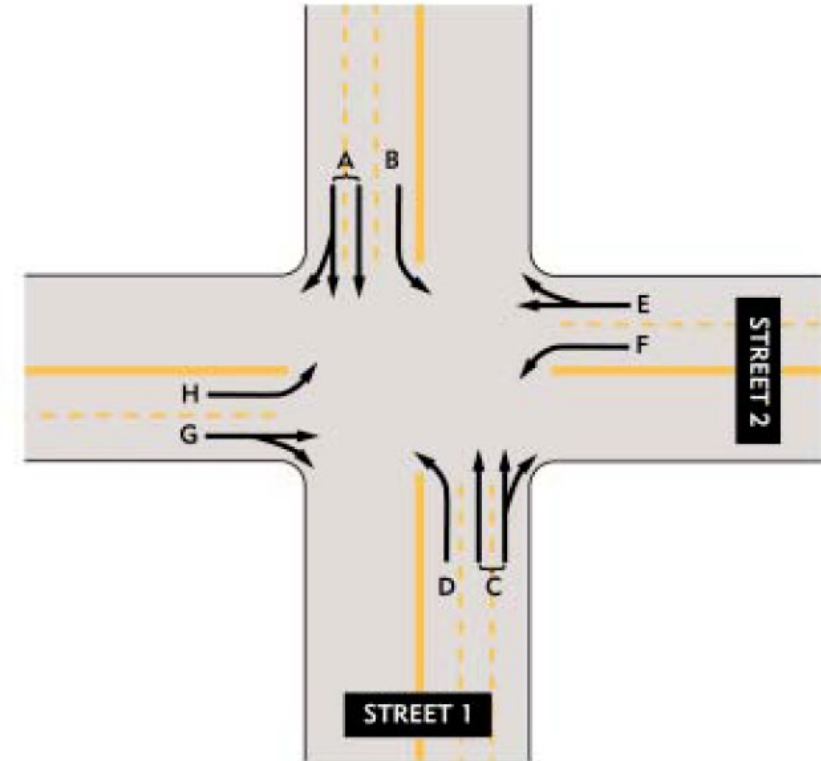
# How does the proposed zoning compare?

	Existing Development	Current Zoning 2040 Buildout	Proposed Zoning 2040 Buildout
<b>Residential</b>	3.2 million	5.1 million	7 million
<b>Office/R&amp;D</b>	3.1 million	4.4 million	4.8 million
<b>Retail, N'hood Use, Civic</b>	1.7 million	1.8 million	1.8 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 million</b>	<b>11.3 million</b>	<b>13.6 million</b>

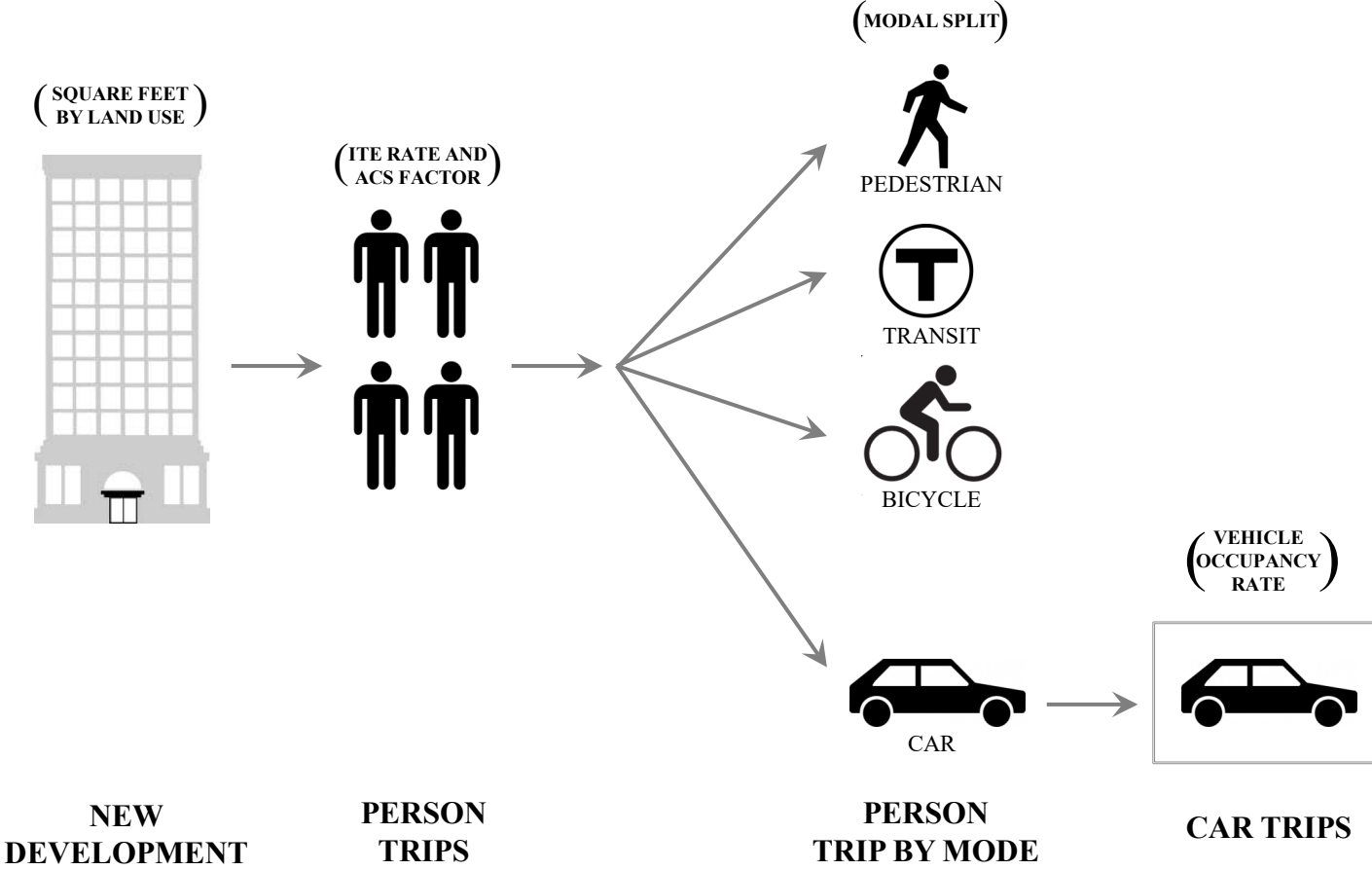


# Critical Sums

- Critical Sums Analysis is a planning tool used to compare build-out scenarios
- Compares how different levels of build-out impacts specific intersections in general way
- Not a traffic engineering tool
- Same methodology used in prior planning studies:
  - 2001 Citywide Rezoning
  - 2001 ECaPS
  - 2004 Concord-Alewife Plan
  - 2011 K2C2
  - 2019 Alewife District Plan



# Critical Sums Methodology



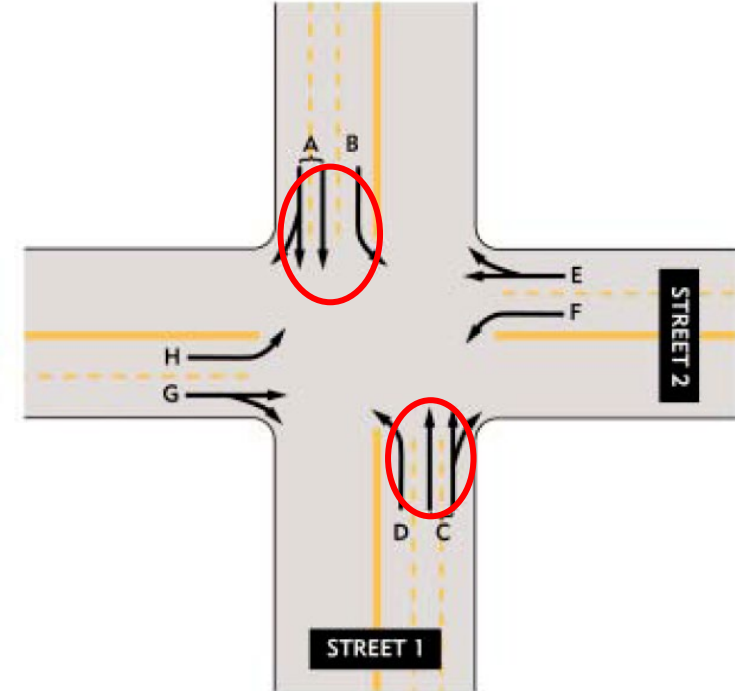


# Critical Sums Methodology

Critical movement volume at an intersection is the sum of all conflicting traffic movements (vehicles per hour).

- **Intersections** with **1,500** or fewer vehicles per hour considered to operate adequately, i.e. motorists will wait no more than two light cycles to get through the intersection.
- **Rotaries** with **1,800** or fewer vehicles are considered to operate adequately

When thresholds are exceeded, intersection operation starts to deteriorate exponentially.



Street 1:  $(A+2) + D$  or  $(C+2) + B$ , whichever is more

Street 2:  $E + H$  or  $G + F$ , whichever is more

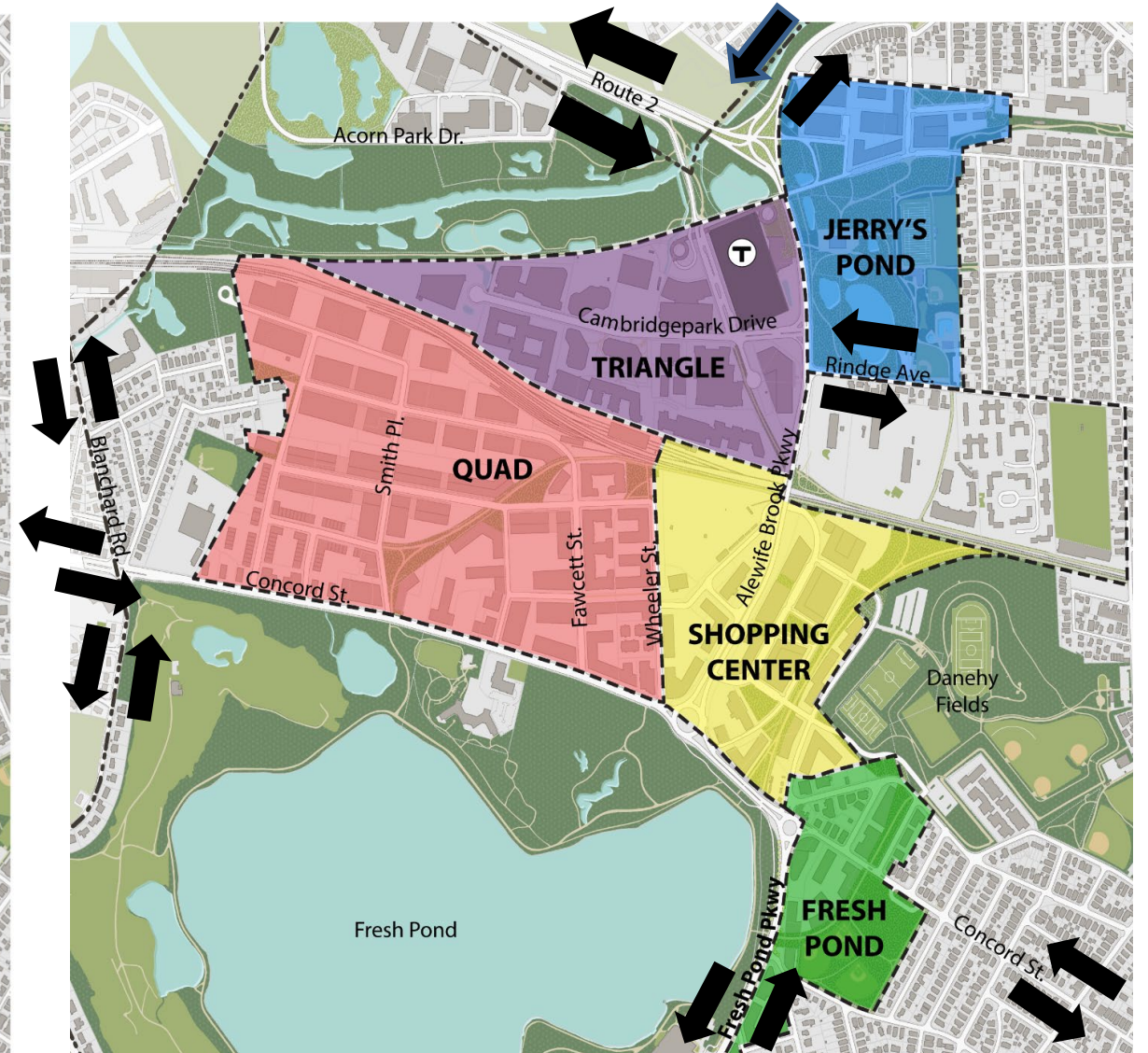
Critical Sum = Result of Street 1 + Street 2



# Study Area Intersections



# Study Area Trips





# Critical Sums By Intersection

Intersection	Existing (2016)		2040 Current Zoning		2040 Proposed Zoning	
	Total Volume	Critical Sum	Total Volume	Critical Sum	Total Volume	Critical Sum
1. Alewife Brook Parkway & Route 2	5498	1699	5537	1784	5606	1800
2. Alewife Brook Parkway & Cambridge Park Drive	3844	1267	4103	1375	4143	1366
3. Alewife Brook Parkway & Rindge Ave.	3769	1305	4036	1363	4117	1371
4. Alewife Brook Parkway & Concord Ave Rotary	3388	2152	3952	2342	4214	2442
5. Concord Ave & Fresh Pond Parkway Rotary	3033	1375	3434	1598	3652	1712
6. Concord Ave & Fawcett St.	1350	708	1917	1110	2207	1345
7. Concord Ave & Blanchard Rd.	1955	1096	2402	1341	2622	1468

Red = over threshold

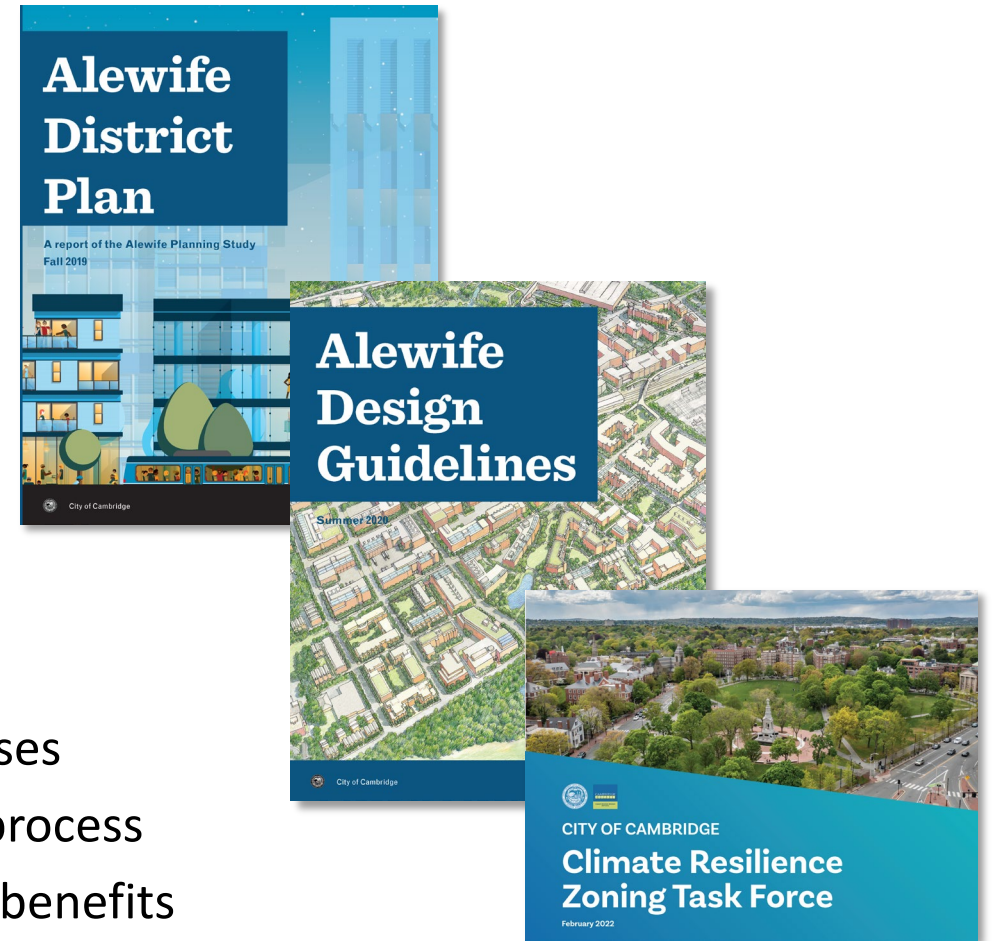
# Findings

- Under current and proposed zoning, no new intersections exceed thresholds.
- Required parking ratios (low maximums) and infrastructure improvements promote sustainable modes of transportation



# Overall Approach & Zoning Intent

- Adopt recommendations from Envision Alewife, such as:
  - Open space
  - Dimensional standards
  - Flood/heat resilience
  - Max parking ratios & TDM
  - Buffer from Highlands Neighborhood
  - Funding for transit and infrastructure
- Take it further by:
  - Increasing allowable heights/density for housing
  - Expand permitted uses and incentivize neighborhood uses
  - Address large-scale development through PUD review process
  - Expand development bonuses to achieve critical public benefits



# Zoning Principles

1

**Increase housing**



2

**Promote neighborhood uses**



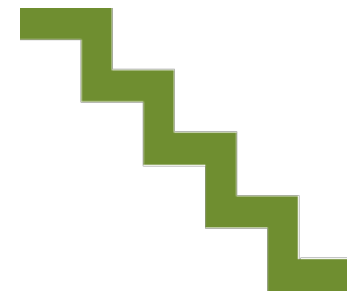
3

**Prioritize earlier delivery of infrastructure**



4

**Scale down to existing neighborhoods**

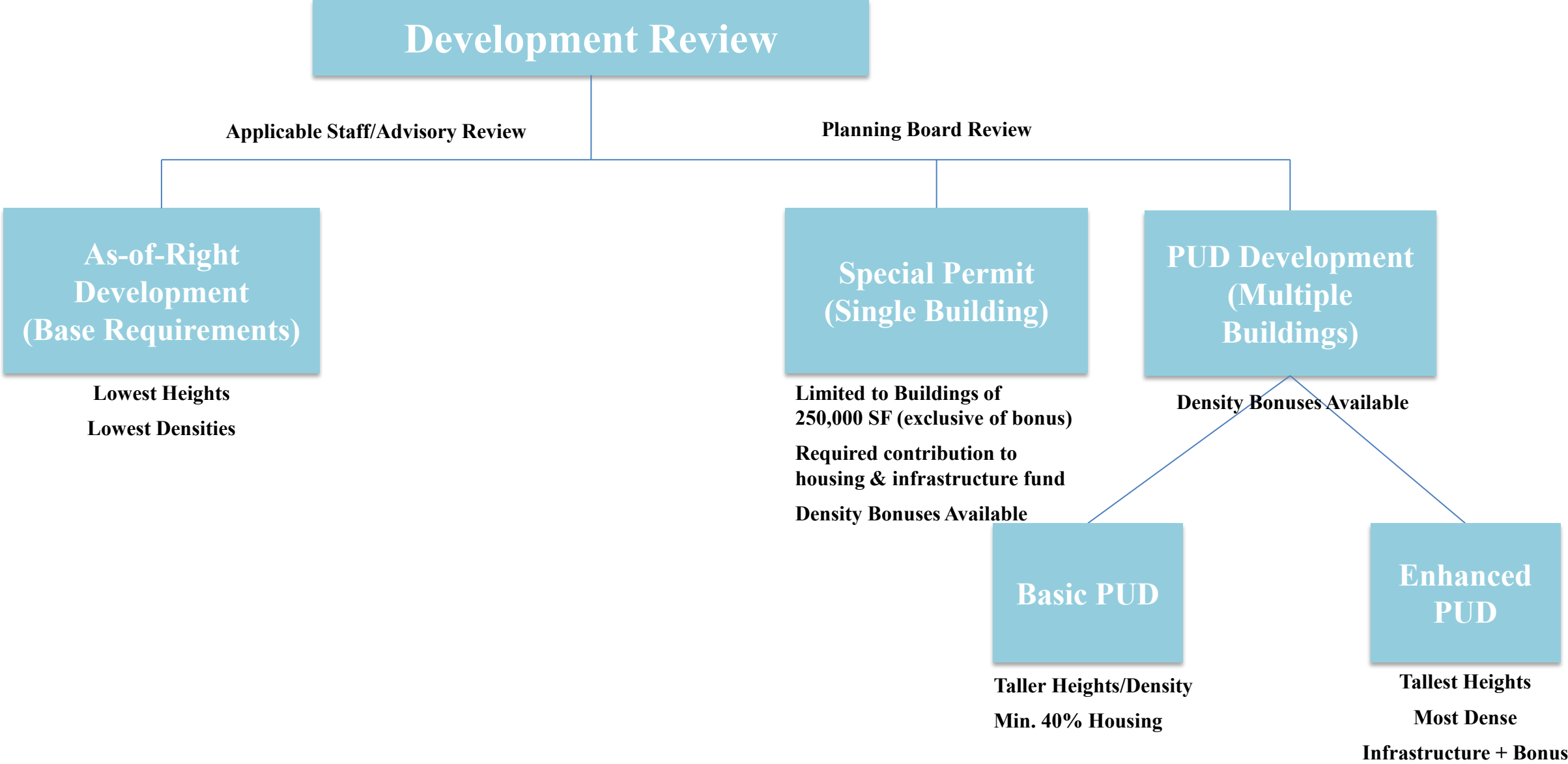




# Overall Zoning Structure

- Base requirements
  - Low-to-moderate scale development that contributes positively to District-wide planning goals. New standards apply to all new development, including special permits and PUD's.
  - Updated to address open space, permitted uses, dimensional requirements.
- Special Permit requirements
  - Larger development subject to Planning Board review.
  - Contains a mix of residential and non-residential development
  - Provides opportunity to implement planning goals at a site-by-site level through development review process, transportation impact review, and urban design review.
  - PUD review
    - For multiple buildings – streamlined pathway to permit phased development in exchange for public benefits.
    - Uses existing review process for PUD development – multiple public hearings and ongoing design review.

# Overall Zoning Structure





# Review Process

- Base requirements
  - Usually requires an advisory review or staff level review
  - 50,000+ square feet requires special permit review
  - 25,000+ square feet requires building and site plan review
- Special Permit requirements (Planning Board)
  - Limited increases in height or density on a single site
  - Typically larger, single building development (250,000 square feet or less)
  - Planning Board must find conformance with area plans and guidelines, and that it provides public benefits that outweigh adverse effects.
- PUD requirements
  - Greater increases in height and density, transfer of development rights, phased development and timing
  - Additional public benefits required
  - Follows the existing PUD review process in zoning
  - Basic & Enhanced: Enhanced required to provide infrastructure and gets bonus for development parcel

# Uses

- Permit the following uses:
  - Multifamily, townhouse, and elderly congregate housing (4.31.d through g)
  - ALL Retail and Consumer Service establishments (4.35)
  - Temporary outdoor retail/consumer service uses (4.36.j)
  - Educational Uses, like daycare centers, schools, etc. (4.33.b)
  - Light Industrial/Maker space (4.37)
  - Civic & Institutional uses – such as libraries, community/gathering spaces, healthcare uses, and municipal facilities (4.33.d through h)





# Neighborhood Uses

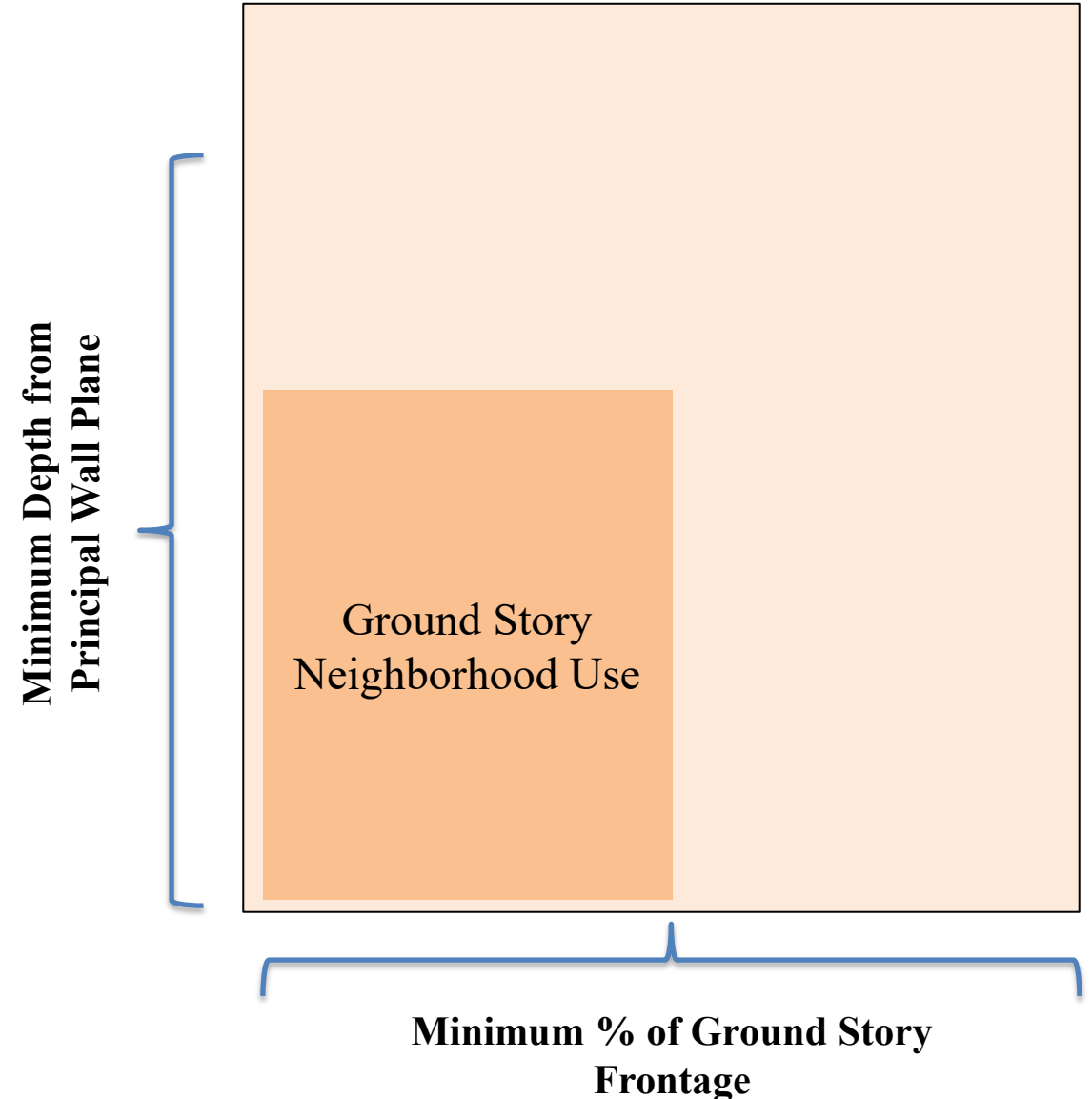
- Create “Neighborhood Uses” and Incentivize Them
  - Retail & consumer service establishments
  - Community gathering spaces
  - Libraries
  - Daycare centers
  - Arts & Cultural spaces
  - Light industry/maker spaces
  - Dentist/Doctors offices
  - Healthcare facilities
  - Temporary outdoor retail
  - Co-working spaces
  - Other uses, subject to Planning Board Review & Approval





# Neighborhood Uses

- Incentivize the incorporation of neighborhood uses in the ground story of buildings throughout the District, by:
  - Exempting from calculation of Gross Floor Area
  - Additional GFA bonus
- For PUD – Require minimum 3% of total non-residential GFA be devoted to Neighborhood Uses



# Allowable Non-residential Height Zones

## Quad West Zone:

Base	Special Permit & PUDs
2 stories (35')	3 stories (50')

## Quad North Zone:

Base	Special Permit	Basic PUD	Enhanced PUD
2 stories (35')	4 stories (65')	5 stories (80')	8 stories (125')

## Quad South Zone:

Base	Special Permit	Basic PUD	Enhanced PUD
2 stories (35')	4 stories (65')	5 stories (80')	6 stories (95')

## Shopping Center & MBTA Zone:

Base	Special Permit	Basic PUD	Enhanced PUD
2-4 stories (35-65')	4 stories (65')	5 stories (80')	6 stories (95')

35' max height w/in 100' of Highlands

45' max height w/in 200' of Highlands



# Allowable Residential Height Zones

## Quad West Zone:

Base	Special Permit & PUDs
3 stories (35')	6 stories (75')

## Quad North Zone:

Base	Special Permit and PUDs
3 stories (35')	10-12 stories (120'-145')

## Quad South Zone:

Base	Special Permit and PUDs
3 stories (35')	10-12 stories (120'-145')

## Shopping Center & MBTA Zone:

Base	Special Permit and PUDs
4-6 stories (55'-75')	18-20 stories (205'-230')

35' max height w/in 100' of Highlands

45' max height w/in 200' of Highlands



# Max Floor Area Ratio – Overview of Approach

	Current Zoning		Proposed Zoning		
	Base Requirements	Special Permit Requirements	Base Requirements	Special Permit Requirements (Single Use)	PUD Requirements
NR	0.75-1.25	1.25-1.75	0.75	1.00	Basic PUD: 1.25 Enhanced PUD: 1.50
R	0.75-1.25	1.50-2.00	0.75-1.25	3.00 (3.90 w/ inclusionary bonus)	3.00 (3.90 w/ inclusionary bonus) Min. 40% housing

- Base requirements: Keep both residential and non-residential at current base zoning levels
- Special permit & PUD: Tiered commercial FAR based on whether housing and/or infrastructure included. Increase residential to 3.0 (3.90 with inclusionary bonus)
- “Enhanced” PUD includes Major Infrastructure – ped/bike rail crossing, commuter rail
- Additional bonus for land conveyed for public use (streets, open space, &c.)
- Exemption and bonus GFA for Neighborhood Uses

# Density Bonuses

- PUD Infrastructure Bonus
  - Delivery of bike/ped railroad crossing
  - Construction of an MBTA commuter rail station
  - For enhanced PUD, added height flexibility for TDR when conveying land for municipal facility

+ 0.25 FAR to  
Development Parcel

- Conveyance of Land for Public Use
  - Available to all special permits
  - Public open space
  - Completion of roadway/path segment
  - Municipal facility
  - District stormwater or district energy facility
  - Other public use subject to PB review and approval

1.5x applicable FAR  
applied to size of  
land conveyed

# GFA Exemptions

- Ground Floor Neighborhood Use (meeting dimensional requirements)
- Shared District Parking
- All subject to Planning Board Review & Approval



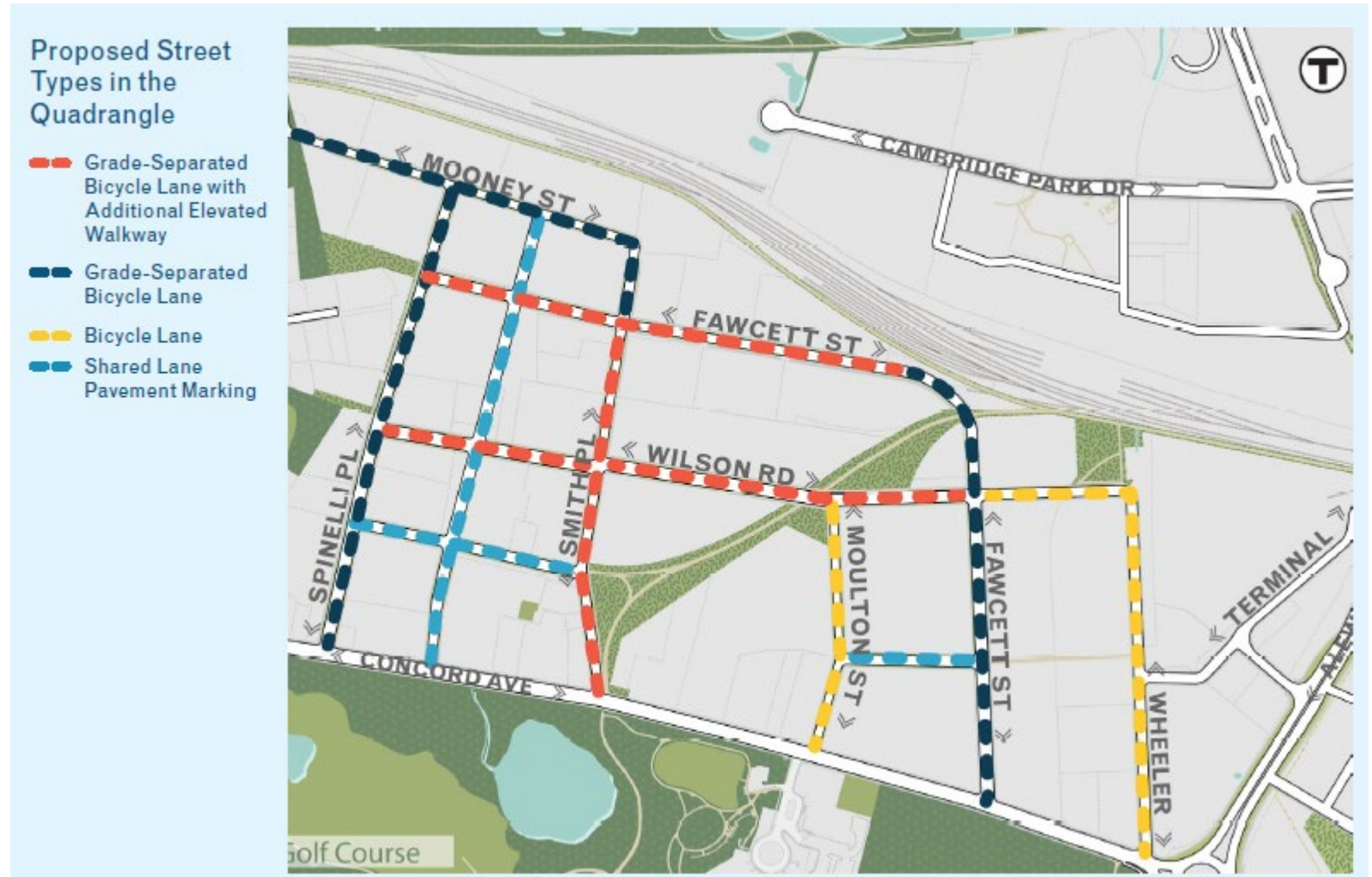


# Required Housing

- Special Permit (Single Use) Requirements:
  - For nonresidential development, offsetting payment in lieu of providing housing
- Mixed-Use PUD
  - 40% min. housing in Quadrangle; 60% min. housing in Shopping Center & Triangle
  - No offsetting payment permitted.
  - Some required housing may be offset by an all-affordable housing development for a range of incomes.

# Setbacks, Open Space & Permeable Area

- Setbacks:
  - Follow Envision Alewife standards (build-to line, no side or rear)
  - 25' setback along Concord Ave
- Open Space:
  - 20% total open space requirement
  - 25% permeable area requirement
  - Publicly beneficial open space required in special permit



# Transportation Recommendations

- Maximum parking ratios
  - Principal use parking and pooled parking subject to PB review and approval
- New commercial development to contribute to public infrastructure (approx. \$15-20)

<b>Maximum Number of Parking Spaces</b>	
<b>Retail</b>	maximum 1.5 per 1,000 SF
<b>Office</b>	maximum 1.1 per 1,000 SF
<b>R&amp;D</b>	maximum 0.8 per 1,000 SF
<b>Industrial</b>	maximum 0.5 per 1,000 SF
<b>Residential</b>	maximum 0.75 per dwelling unit



# Sustainability Recommendations

- ALL new development:
  - DPW guidelines for stormwater management must be met
  - Street tree planting per Envision Alewife recommendations
  - Flood Resilience and Green Factor requirements must be met
- Buildings over 25,000 square feet:
  - LEED Gold, Passive House, or Enterprise Green Communities
  - Green Roofs required
  - Applicable Green Building Requirements must be met

