



Welcome!

Zoning for Multifamily Housing



The Cambridge City Council is discussing proposed changes to allow multifamily housing in all city neighborhoods.

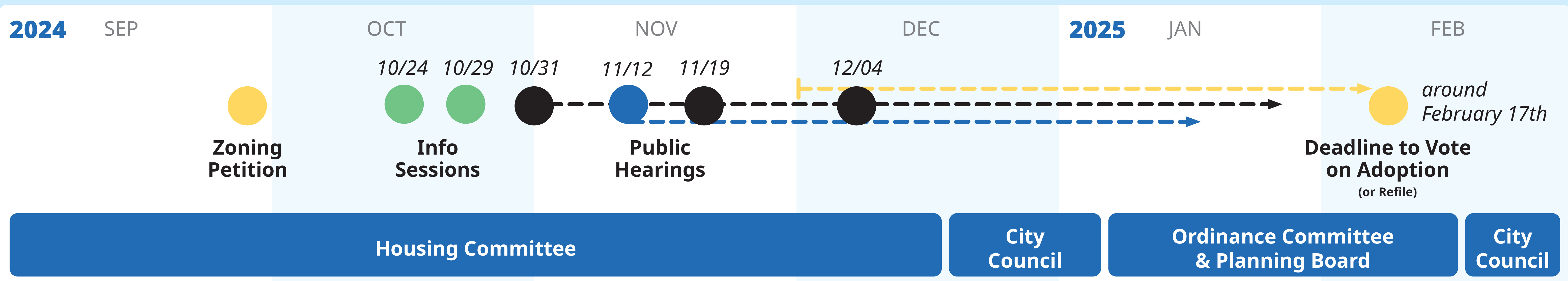
The proposal has these main goals:

Allow **multifamily housing** (such as apartments and condos) in **all neighborhoods** of the city.

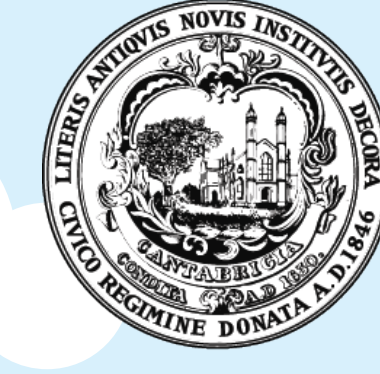
Allow residential buildings of up to **6 stories** in all neighborhoods and districts of the city.

Remove other requirements that make it more difficult to build multifamily housing, such as minimum lot sizes, limits on the number of housing units and amount of floor area.

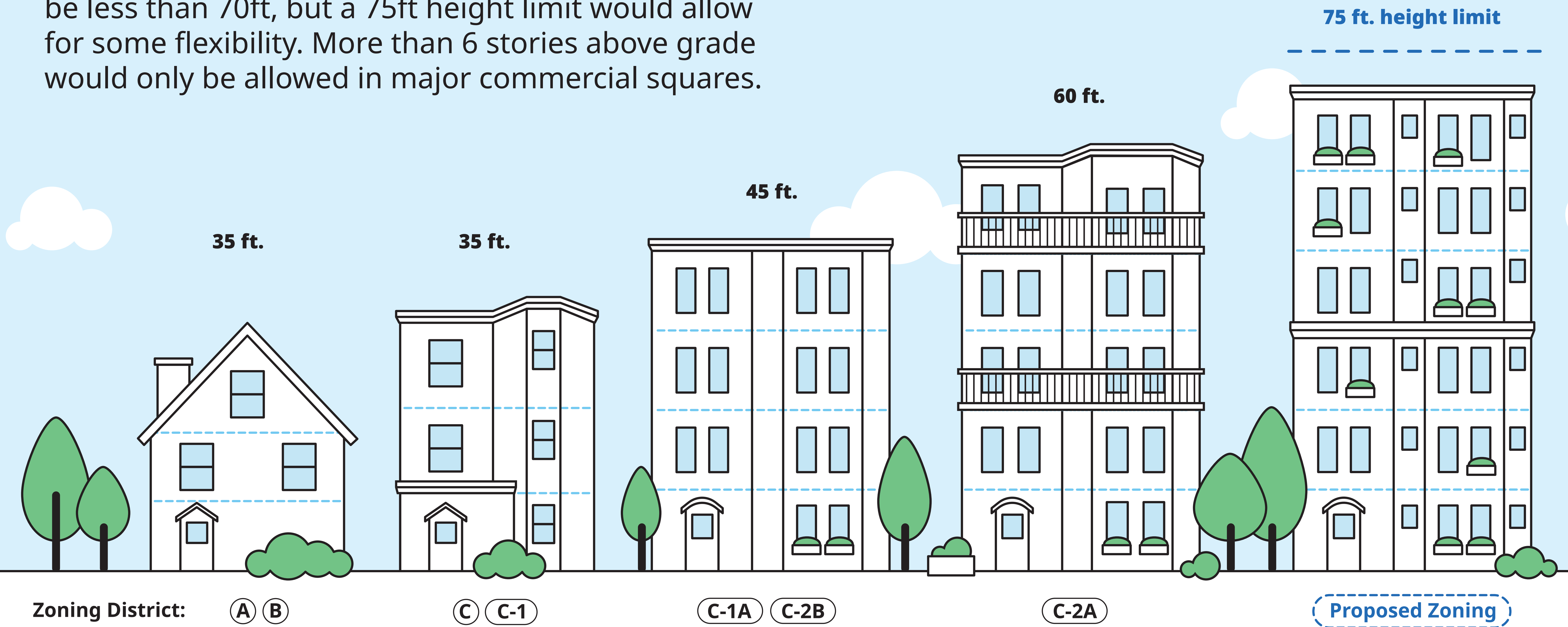
Continue to encourage the creation of **permanently affordable housing** through the inclusionary housing requirements and Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO).



What would be allowed under the latest zoning proposal?



In most of the city, housing would be allowed up to 6 stories above grade. Most 6-story buildings tend to be less than 70ft, but a 75ft height limit would allow for some flexibility. More than 6 stories above grade would only be allowed in major commercial squares.



What other requirements would there be?

1 Inclusionary Housing:

If the building has at least 10 units or 10,000 square feet of floor area, at least 20% of the building must be set aside for units that are permanently affordable to low or moderate income residents.

2 Setbacks:

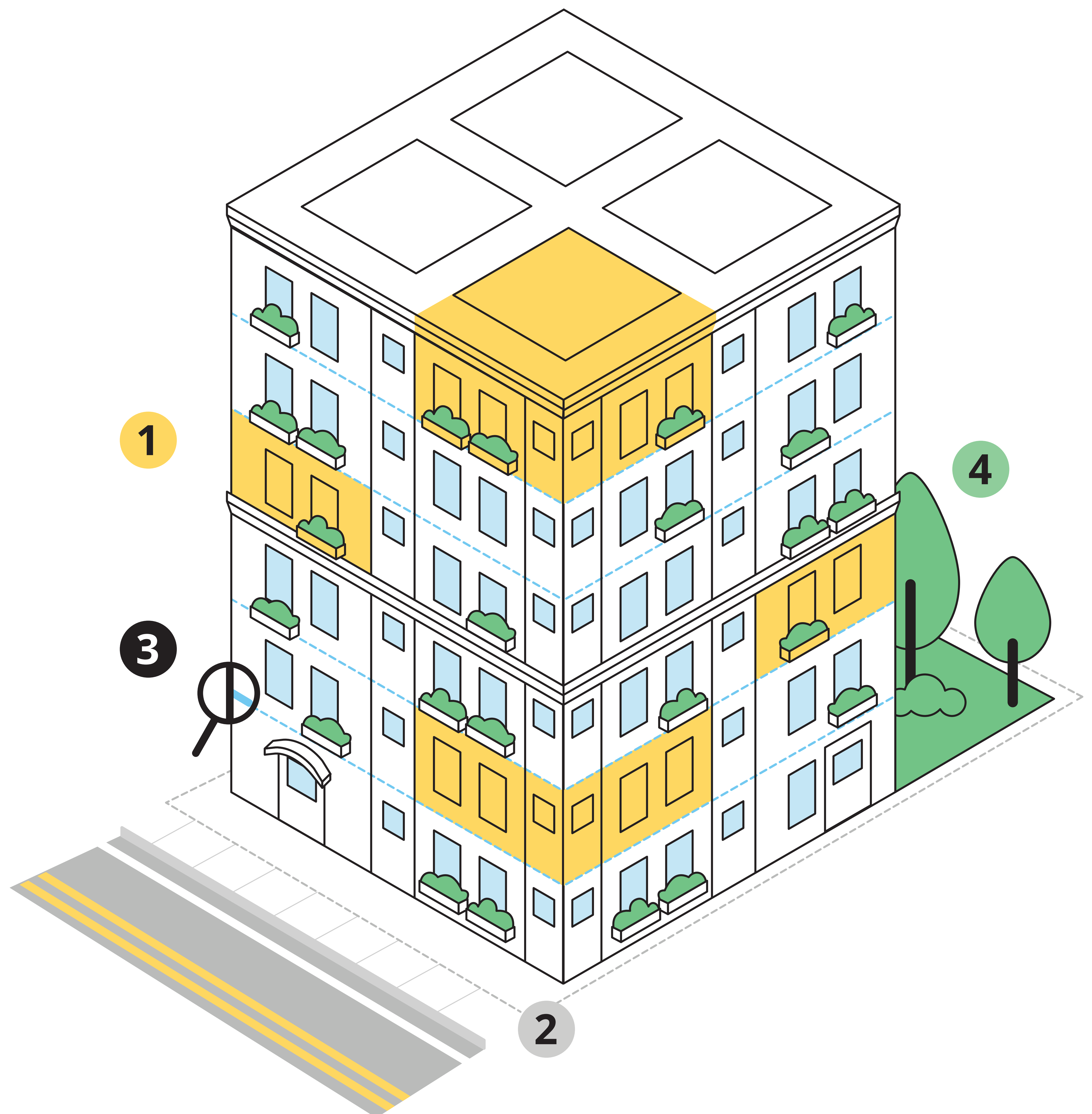
Most residential areas would require a front setback of 10 feet or more from the public sidewalk to the front of the building. Setbacks from other property lines would not be required by zoning.

3 Review:

A special permit would be required if the building has at least 75,000 ft² of floor area. Advisory review would be required if the building has at least 50,000 ft², or if it is in a special area like Central Square or Harvard Square. Historic preservation rules would still apply.

4 Open Space:

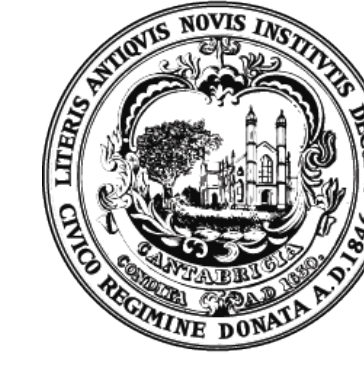
Most residential areas would require 30% of the lot be used as open space. That includes outdoor areas that are permeable or usable by residents or the public (excluding parking). It must also meet a "Green Factor" score by including trees, plantings, and other measures to cool the environment.



Removed Requirements:

- Minimum lot sizes
- Limits on the number of dwelling units
- Limits on the amount of floor area

Changes to Height Limits



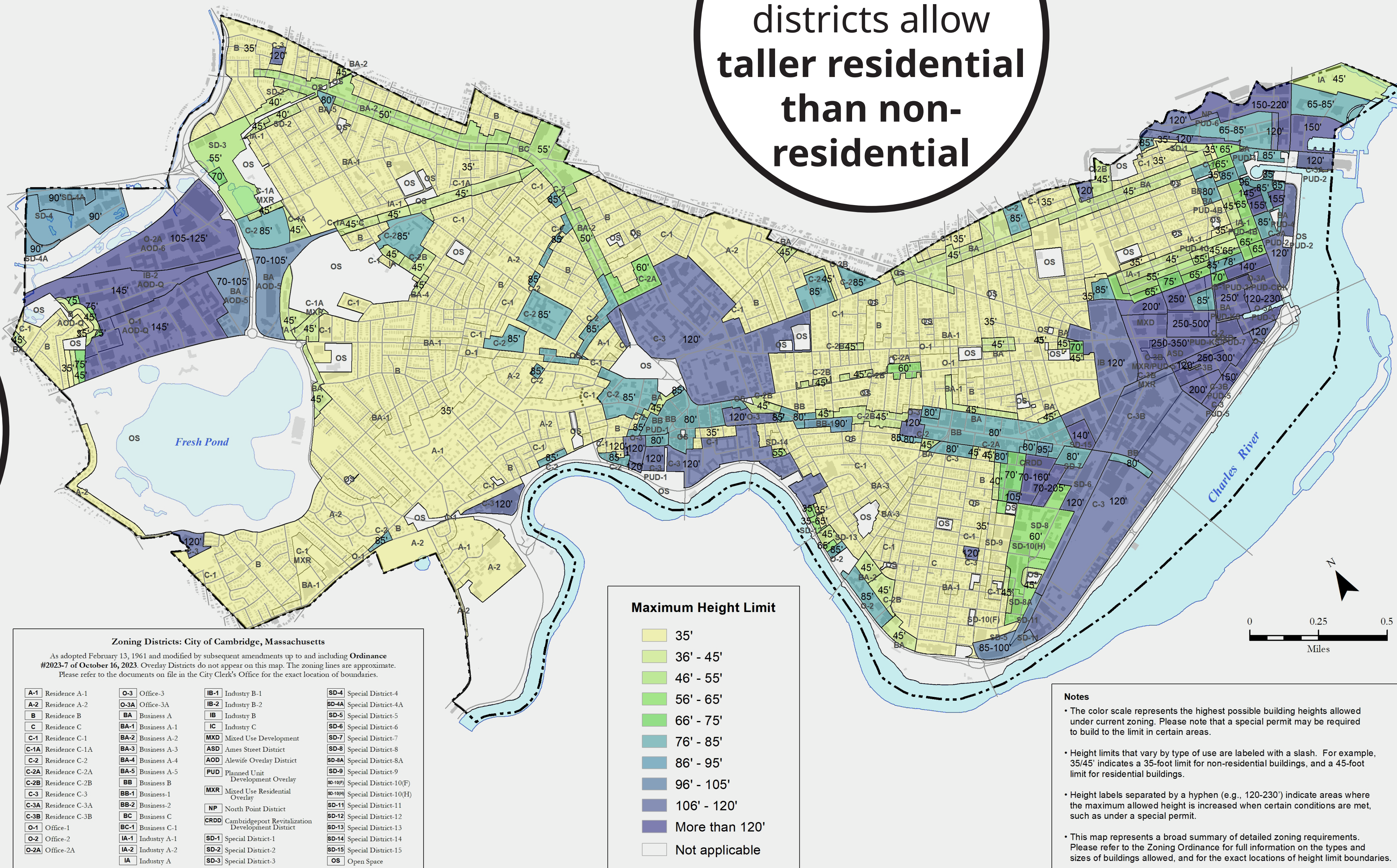
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Community Development
Department

Current Zoning

Many mixed-use districts allow taller residential than non-residential

Height limits for housing in most residential districts range from **35 feet to 60 feet**

Some districts allow **70+ foot residential heights**



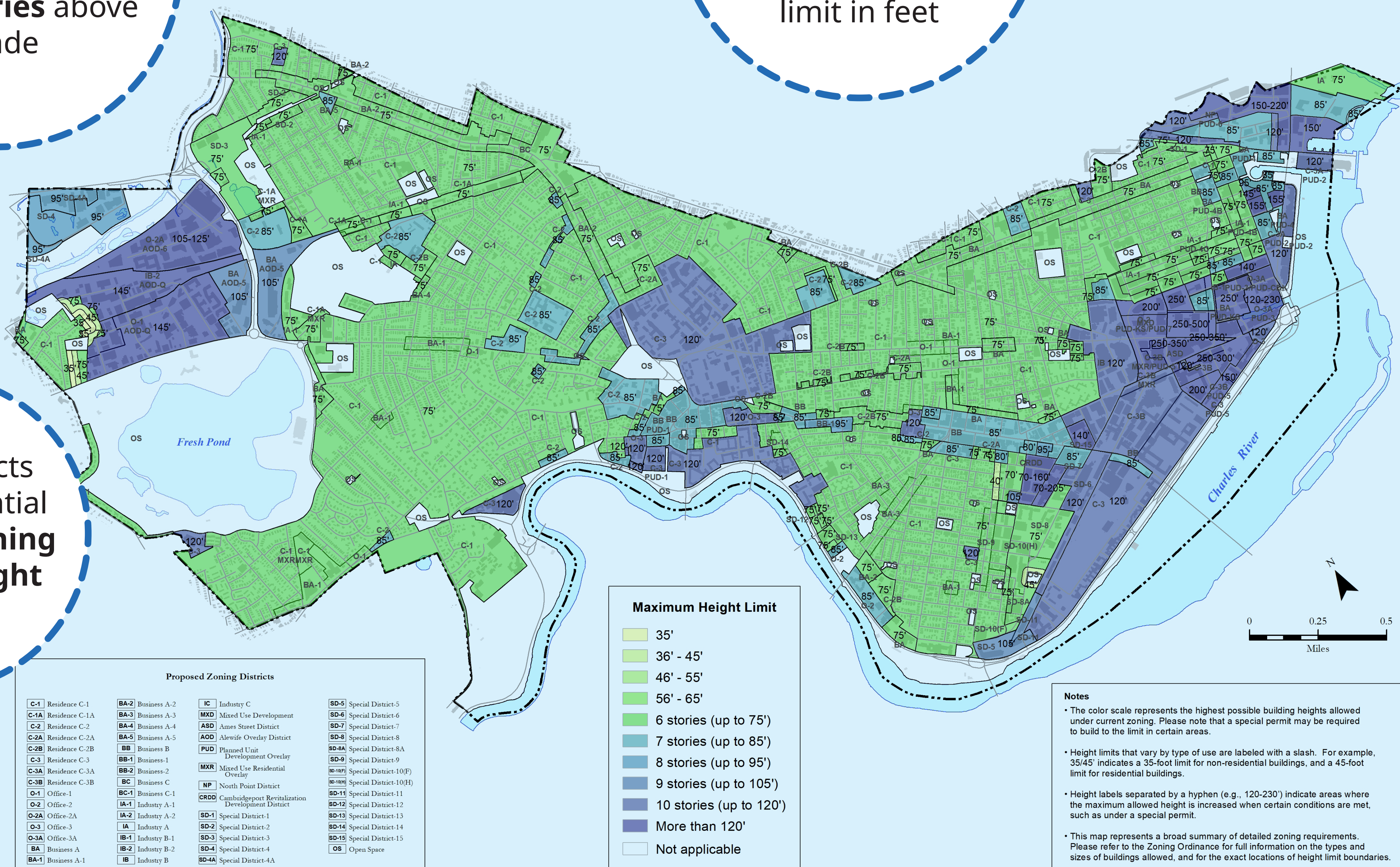
Proposed Zoning

Districts with current residential height limits less than 75' allowed up to **six stories** above grade

Residential height limits based primarily on **number of stories above grade**, with flexible upper height limit in feet

Non-residential height limits **unchanged**

Other districts allow residential stories **matching current height limit**



What does this change do?

Create a more predictable limit on stories above grade, with flexibility in exact height to account for different construction types

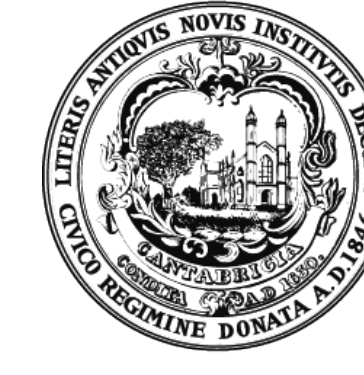
Allow a range of "mid-rise" housing throughout the city

Make mixed-use development easier where commercial use is allowed

Where 6-story development is feasible (likely not on every site), it will allow more units and more likely have affordable units through inclusionary

Continue to allow all-affordable development at taller heights

Changes to Zoning Map



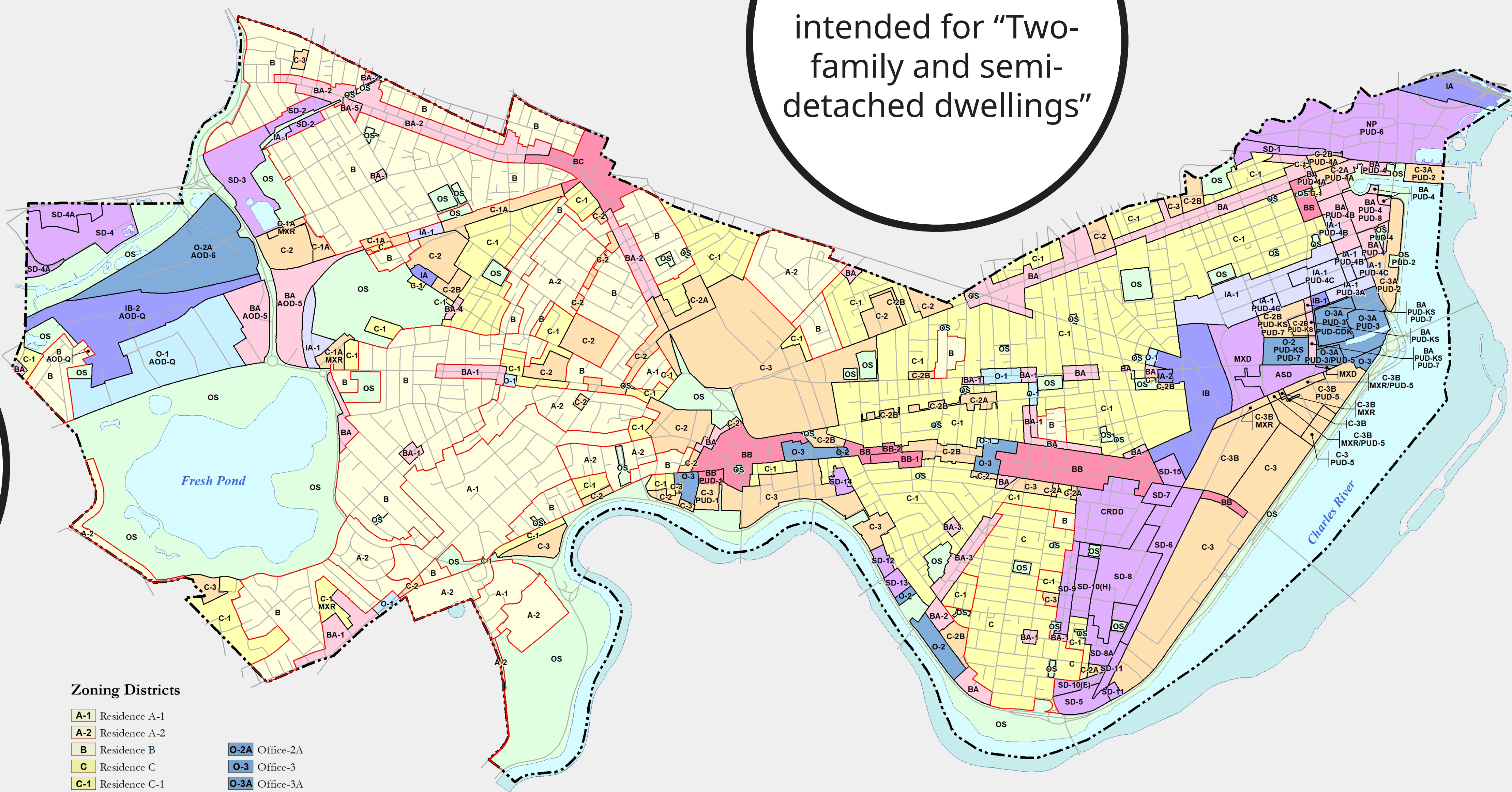
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Current Zoning

Residence A-1 and A-2 districts intended for "Single-family dwellings"

Residence B districts intended for "Two-family and semi-detached dwellings"

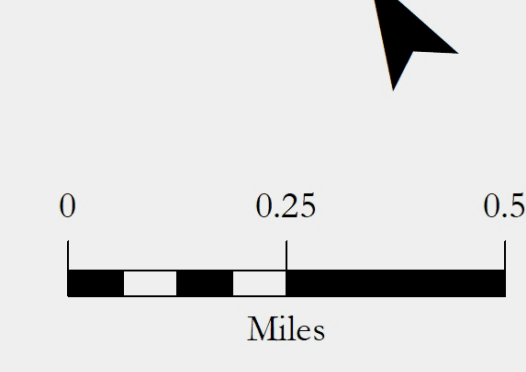
All other districts allow multifamily housing (Residence C and C-1 are the most limiting)



Zoning Districts

- A-1 Residence A-1
- A-2 Residence A-2
- B Residence B
- C Residence C
- C-1 Residence C-1
- C-1A Residence C-1A
- C-2 Residence C-2
- C-2A Residence C-2A
- C-2B Residence C-2B
- C-3 Residence C-3
- C-3A Residence C-3A
- C-3B Residence C-3B
- O-1 Office-1
- O-2 Office-2
- O-2A Office-2A
- O-3 Office-3
- O-3A Office-3A
- BA Business A
- BA-1 Business A-1
- BA-2 Business A-2
- BA-3 Business A-3
- BA-4 Business A-4
- BA-5 Business A-5
- BB Business B
- BB-1 Business-1
- BB-2 Business 2
- BC Business C
- BC-1 Business C-1
- IA Industry A
- IA-1 Industry A-1
- IA-2 Industry A-2
- IB Industry B
- IB-1 Industry B-1
- IB-2 Industry B-2
- IC Industry C
- MXD Mixed Use Development
- ASD Ames Street District
- AOD Alewife Overlay District
- PUD Planned Unit Development Overlay
- MXR Mixed Use Residential Overlay
- NP North Point District
- CRDD Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District
- SD-1 Special District-1
- SD-2 Special District-2
- SD-3 Special District-3
- SD-4 Special District-4
- SD-4A Special District-4A
- SD-5 Special District-5
- SD-6 Special District-6
- SD-7 Special District-7
- SD-8 Special District-8
- SD-8A Special District-8A
- SD-9 Special District-9
- SD-10 Special District-10(F)
- SD-10H Special District-10(H)
- SD-11 Special District-11
- SD-12 Special District-12
- SD-13 Special District-13
- SD-14 Special District-14
- SD-15 Special District-15
- OS Open Space

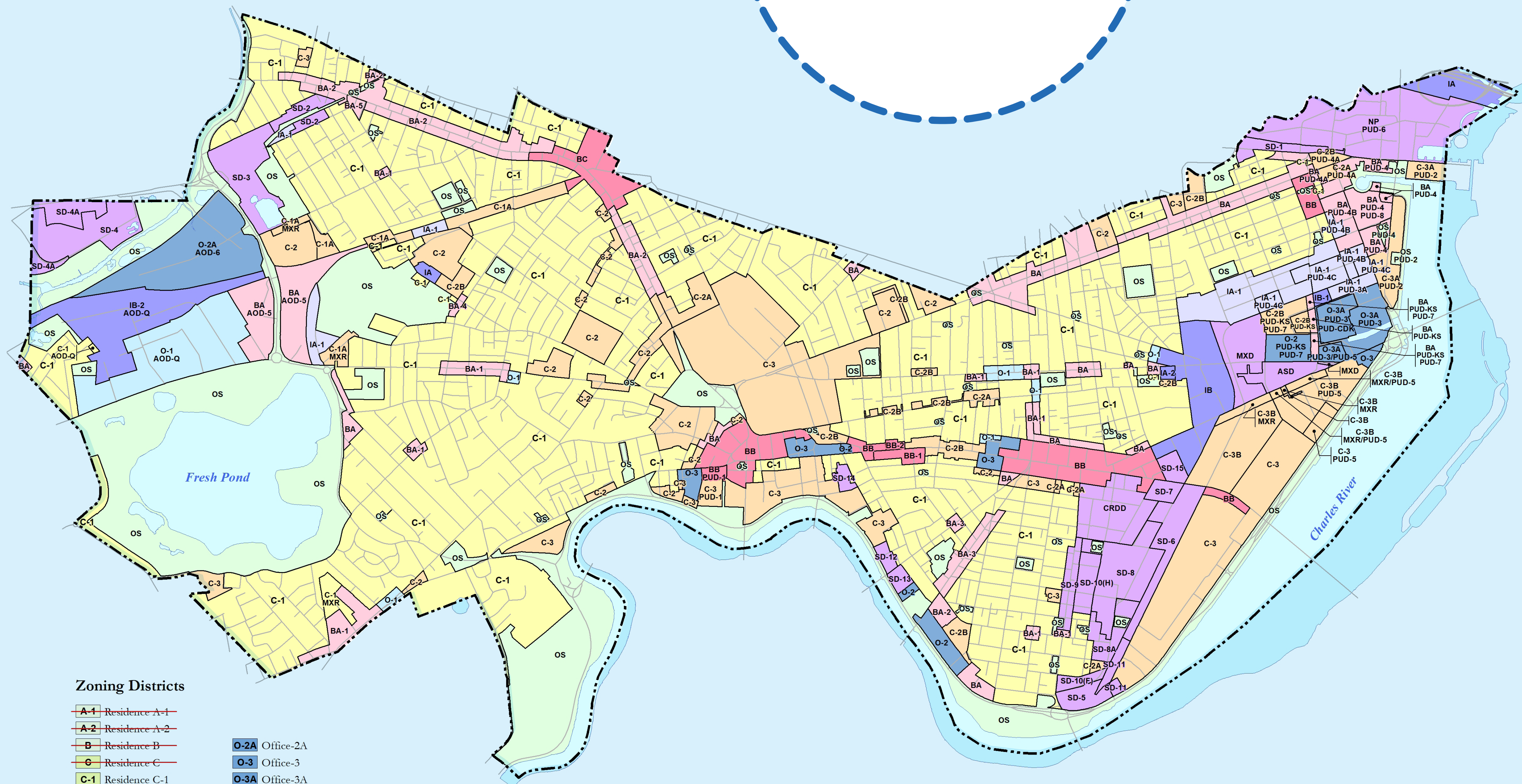
Districts to be changed to C-1



Proposed Zoning

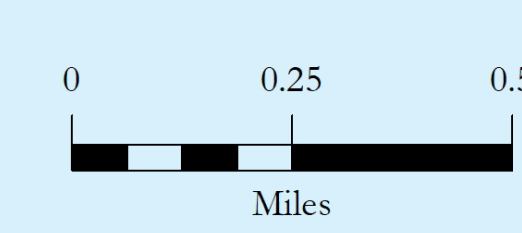
Delete Residence A-1, A-2, B, and C from the Zoning Ordinance

Areas currently zoned Residence A-1, A-2, B, or C are rezoned to Residence C-1



Zoning Districts

- A-1 Residence A-1
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- C Residence C
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- C-3A Residence C-3A
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- BA Business A
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- BA-4 Business A-4
- BA-5 Business A-5
- BB Business B
- BB-1 Business-1
- BB-2 Business 2
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- SD-12 Special District-12
- SD-13 Special District-13
- SD-14 Special District-14
- SD-15 Special District-15
- OS Open Space



What does this change do?

Make multifamily housing an allowed use citywide

Promote equity and consistency by applying the same zoning rules to residential neighborhoods in all parts of the city

Reduce the number of zoning districts to simplify the code