

City of Cambridge
Community Development Department
**Citywide Multifamily Housing
Zoning Petition**

Ordinance Committee Hearing
November 19, 2024



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Community Development
Department





Background

Regional Housing Challenges

“Three persistent challenges have faced the region for decades: insufficient housing supply, lack of housing affordability, and inequity in access to housing. These interrelated issues call for a variety of policy solutions, offering several areas of opportunity for improving the region’s housing market.”

- Dukakis Center, *2019 Greater Boston Housing Report Card*

Envision Cambridge set aggressive housing targets

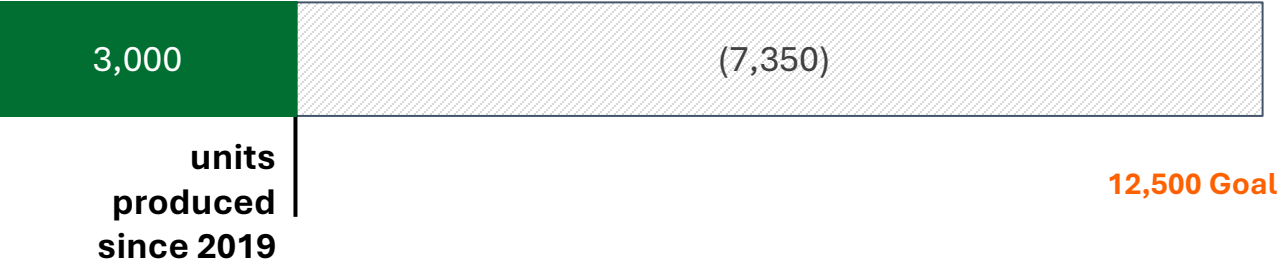
+12,500

units by 2030

+3,175

affordable units

What has been built since Envision?



The proposed citywide multifamily zoning would contribute to this target, along with changes in areas like Alewife, Central Square, and Mass Ave.

Most Cambridge residents live in multifamily homes

- 35% of residential buildings, 80% of housing units

INVENTORY: STRUCTURES & UNITS

TABLE 1.01:
Housing Stock
Inventory: 2016

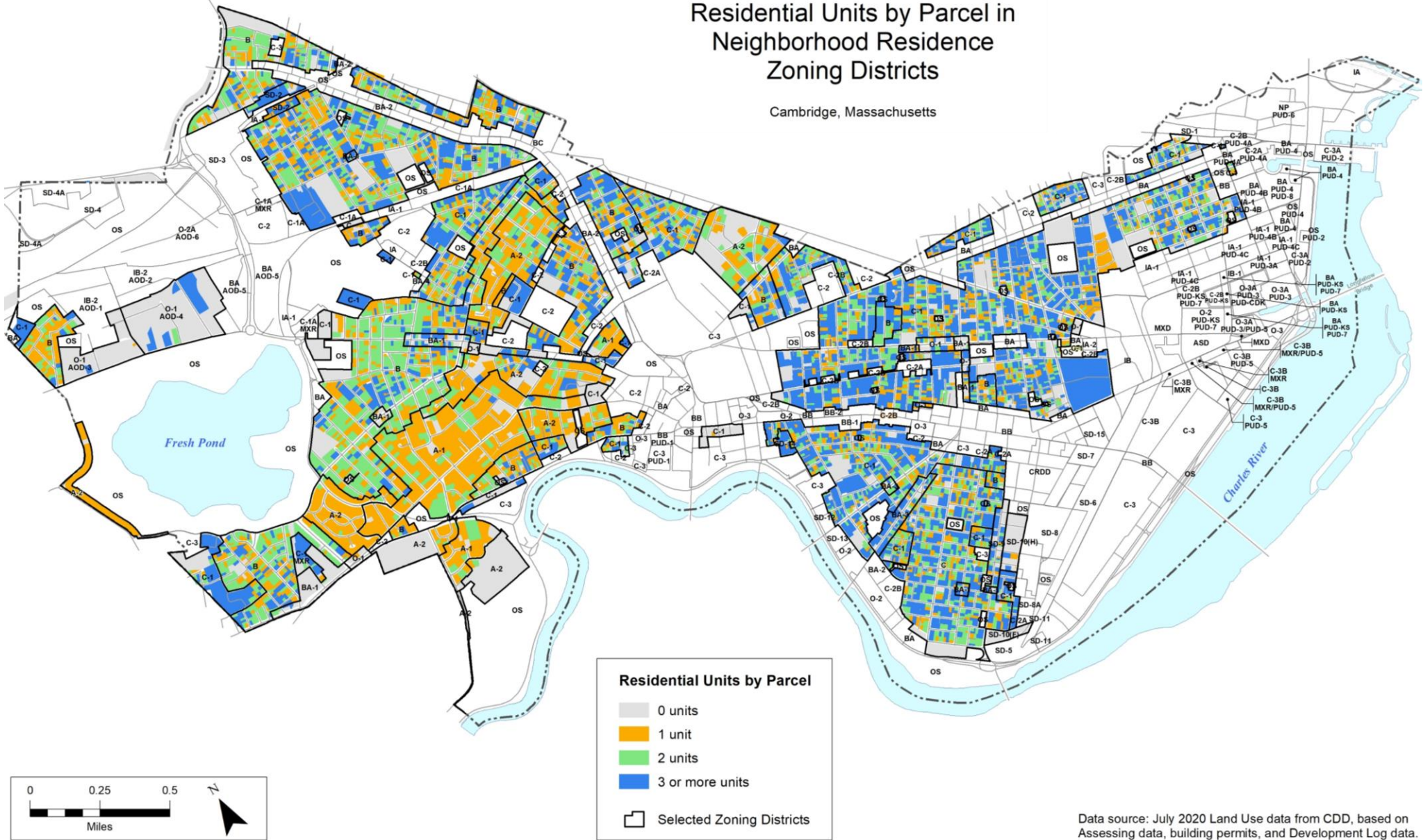
Type of Housing ¹	ALL UNITS		ALL PROPERTIES	
	Count	Percent of Total	Count	Percent of Total
Single Family	3,780	7.2%	3,780	34.0%
Two Family	6,976	13.2%	3,488	31.3%
Three Family	6,216	11.8%	2,072	18.6%
4 to 6 Units	5,019	9.5%	1,014	9.1%
7 to 25 Units	6,259	11.8%	513	4.6%
26 to 50 Units	3,995	7.6%	114	1.0%
51 to 100 Units	5,659	10.7%	83	0.7%
Over 100 Units	14,918	28.2%	69	0.6%
Total Units	52,822	100%	11,133	100%
<i>Mixed Use</i> ²	6,219	11.8%	369	3.3%

Source: CDD, Cambridge Housing Profile 2016

Multifamily housing exists across all neighborhoods

Residential Units by Parcel in Neighborhood Residence Zoning Districts

Cambridge, Massachusetts

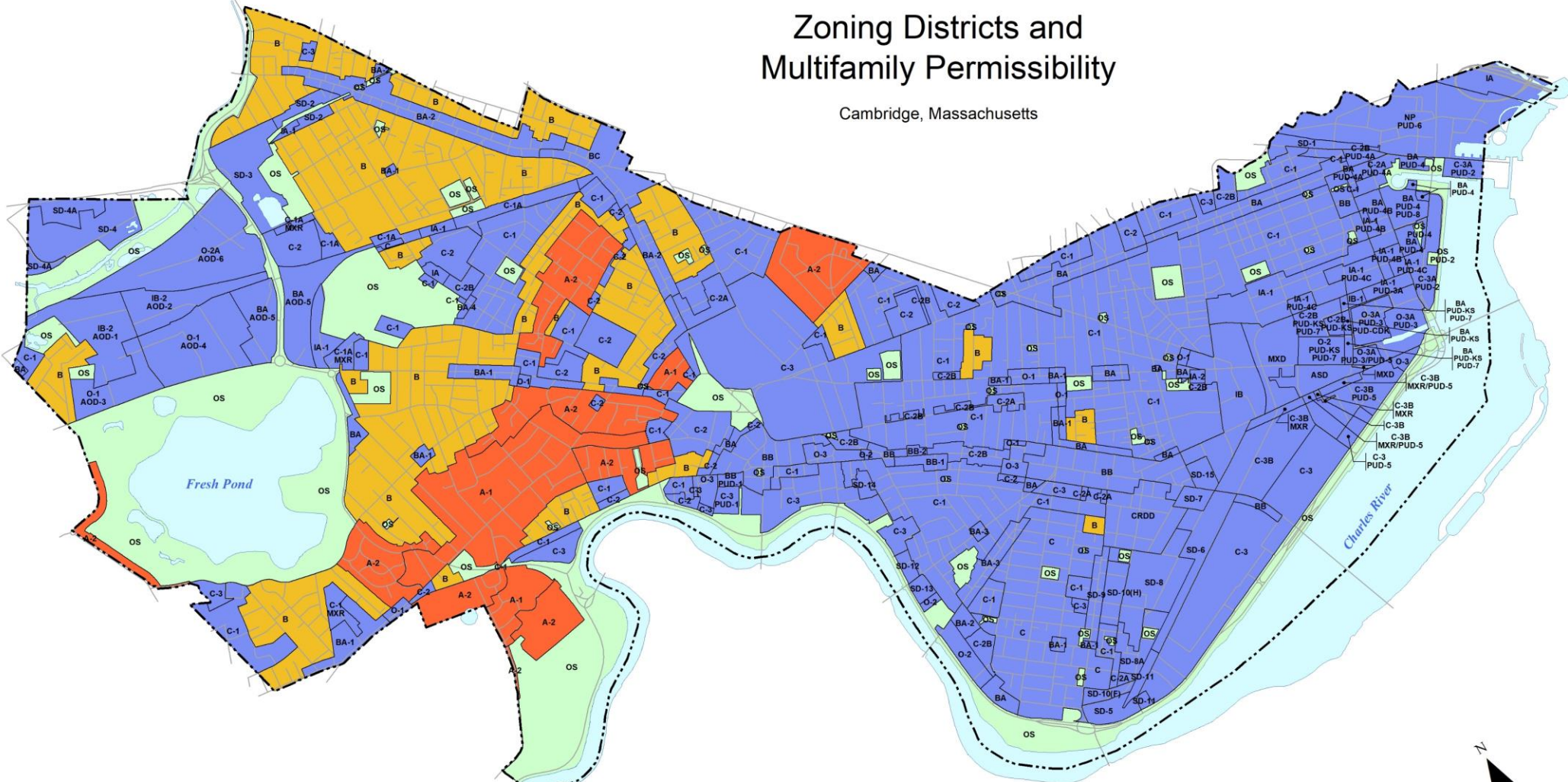


Data source: July 2020 Land Use data from CDD, based on Assessing data, building permits, and Development Log data.

Multifamily housing is not allowed everywhere by zoning

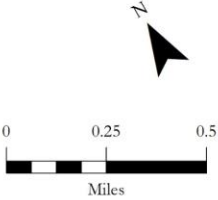
Zoning Districts and Multifamily Permissibility

Cambridge, Massachusetts



Zoning Districts by Multifamily Permissibility

- Only single-family allowed
- Only single-family, two-family, and townhouse allowed
- Multifamily allowed
- Open Space zoning districts



Multifamily Zoning Reform

- Minneapolis became the first city to allow multifamily citywide in 2019
- State-level zoning reform initiatives to promote multifamily housing have been adopted in states such as California, Oregon, and Montana
- Massachusetts' "MBTA Communities" Law (2021) requires cities with transit access to zone for multifamily housing

In Cambridge

- City Council discussed in 2021
- Several community-led zoning petitions, none adopted
- Planning Board discussed in 2022 and made a report to City Council
- City Council passed Policy Order in 2024 for Housing Committee and staff to create a zoning proposal

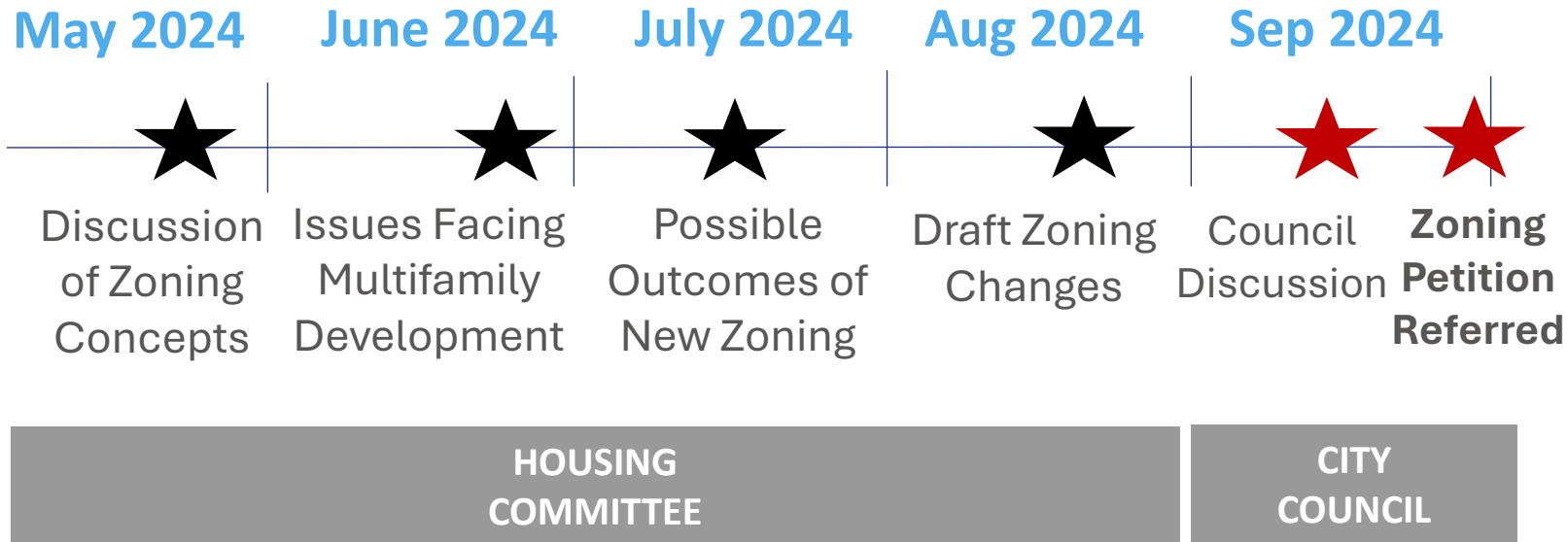
City Council Goals

Issues in Policy Order (May, 2024):

- End “exclusionary zoning” in Cambridge
- Promote more multi-family housing, including income-restricted affordable housing (through inclusionary program), throughout the city
- Make multifamily housing more conforming and easier to build by removing barriers that add cost



Housing Committee Process



Referring a Zoning Petition starts a process to talk about a proposed zoning change and get public input before the City Council can consider adopting the change.

★ City Council Committee Hearing

★ City Council Meeting

Proposed Zoning Concept

- Allow all residential use types everywhere
- Remove minimum lot sizes
- Regulate based on “stories above grade” and open space, remove density limits for residential use (FAR, lot area per dwelling unit)
- Allow up to 6 stories as the lowest residential height limit citywide
- Reduce/remove setback requirements
- Reduce/remove special permit requirements
- Continue to support all-affordable development





Proposed Zoning Changes

Main Zoning Changes

1. Map/district changes (Article 3.000 and throughout)
2. Deletion of lot size and residential density standards (Article 5.000 and throughout)
3. Residential height limits (Article 5.000 and throughout)
4. Setbacks and open space (Article 5.000 and throughout)
5. Special permits / project review (Articles 10.000 and 19.000)
6. Special cases – nonconformance (Article 8.000), split lots (Article 3.000), accessory apartments (Article 4.000)
7. Consistency updates to Affordable Housing Overlay (11.207)

Why two petitions?

- Per Chapter 40A, Section 5 of Massachusetts General Laws, most zoning amendments need a two-thirds vote of City Council
- The “Housing Choice” legislation adopted by Massachusetts in 2021 provides that specific zoning amendments which allow or increase capacity for multifamily housing need a simple majority vote
- The proposed changes are separated into those that the City believes would require a simple majority vote and those that would require a two-thirds majority vote per Chapter 40A, Section 5

What's Not Changing?

Requirement	What it does
Inclusionary Housing	10+ housing units or 10,000+ square feet requires 20% affordable to low-moderate income households
Climate Resilience	All new buildings must protect to future long-term flooding and mitigate heat through trees, plantings, and site design
Green Building Requirements	25,000+ square feet (all uses) must be designed to Green Building standards and install Green Roof
Historic Regulations	Rules for historic districts and buildings (Demolition Delay, Conservation District Commission review) are separate from zoning and don't change
Building Codes, Other Requirements	Fire safety codes, state sanitary code, stretch energy code, fossil-fuel-free pilot, tree protection ordinance, &c., are separate from zoning and don't change

Changes to Zoning Map

Current Zoning

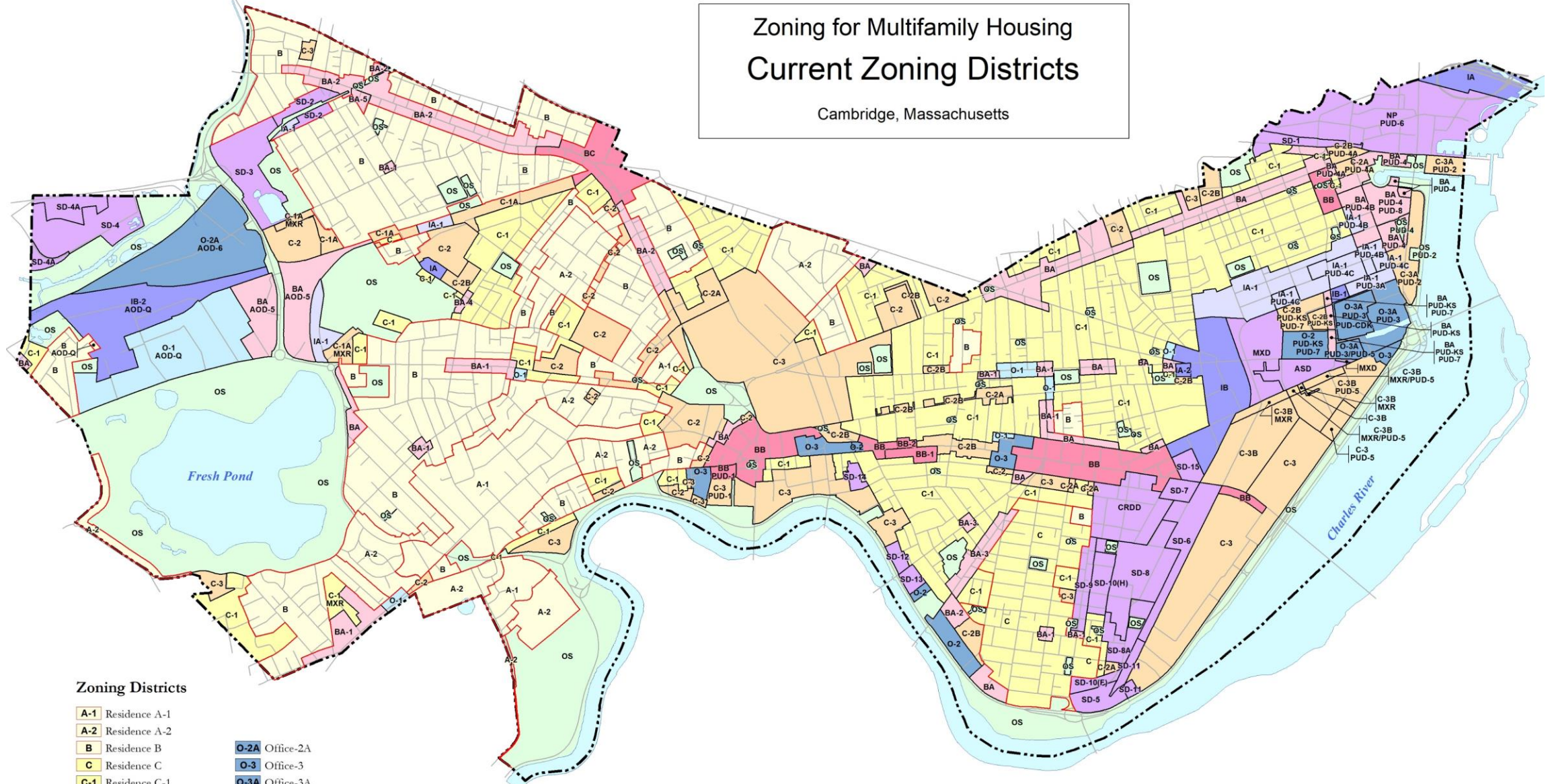
- Res. A-1 and A-2 districts intended for “Single-family dwellings”
- Res. B districts intended for “Two-family and semi-detached dwellings”
- All other districts allow multifamily housing (Res. C and C-1 are the most limiting)

Proposed Zoning

- Delete Res. A-1, A-2, B, and C
- All of the above are changed to Res. C-1

Zoning for Multifamily Housing Current Zoning Districts

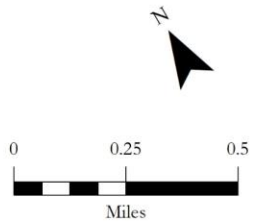
Cambridge, Massachusetts



Zoning Districts

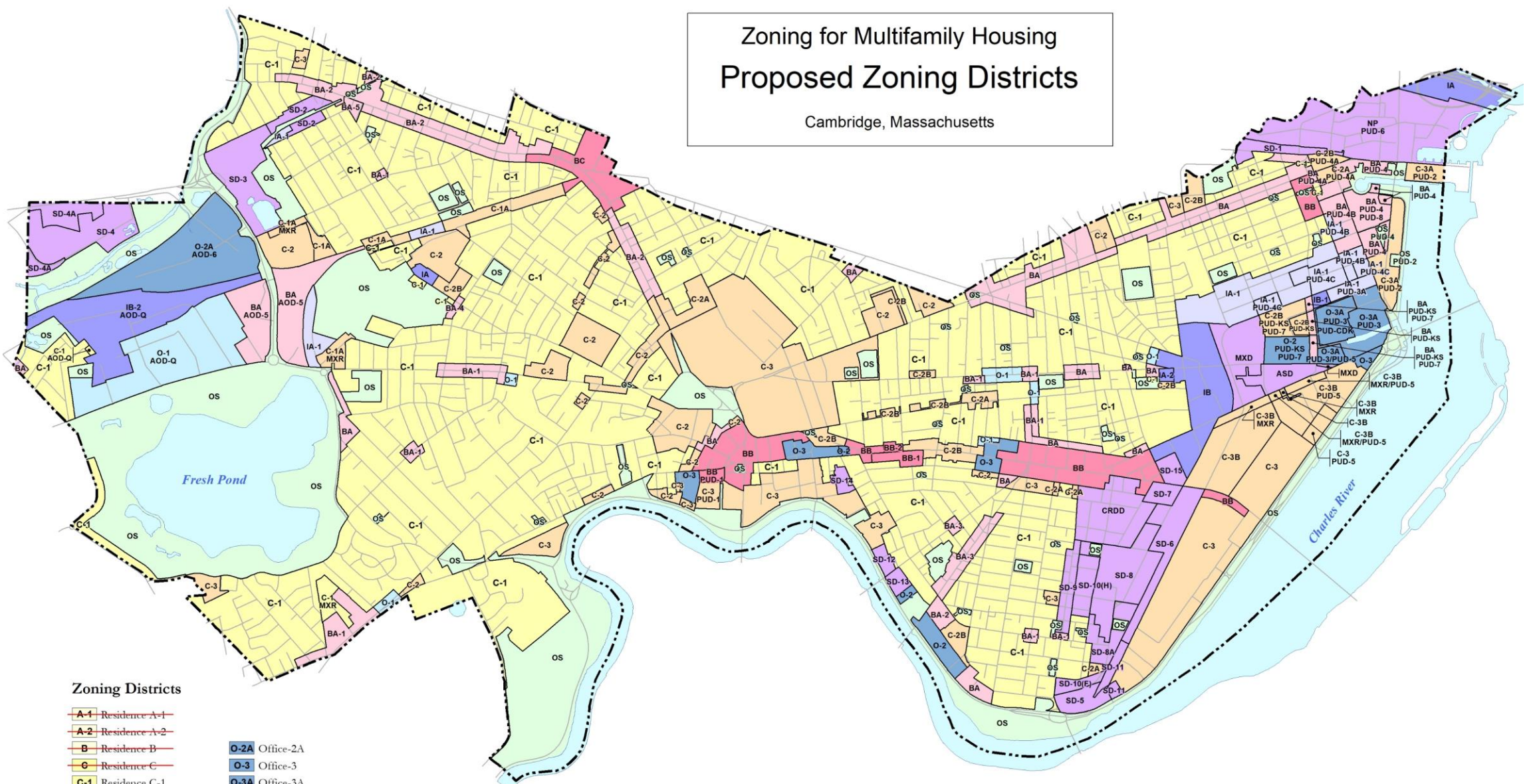
- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| A-1 Residence A-1 | O-2A Office-2A | MXD Mixed Use Development | SD-2 Special District-2 | SD-9 Special District-9 |
| A-2 Residence A-2 | O-3 Office-3 | ASD Ames Street District | SD-3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

Districts to be changed to C-1



Zoning for Multifamily Housing Proposed Zoning Districts

Cambridge, Massachusetts



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

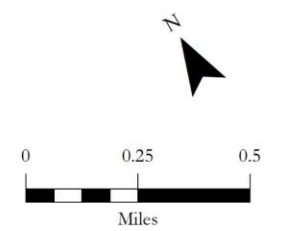
- BC Business C
- BC-1 Business C-1
- IA-1 Industry A-1
- IA-2 Industry A-2
- IA Industry A
- IB-1 Industry B-1
- IB-2 Industry B-2
- IB Industry B
- IC Industry C

- 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

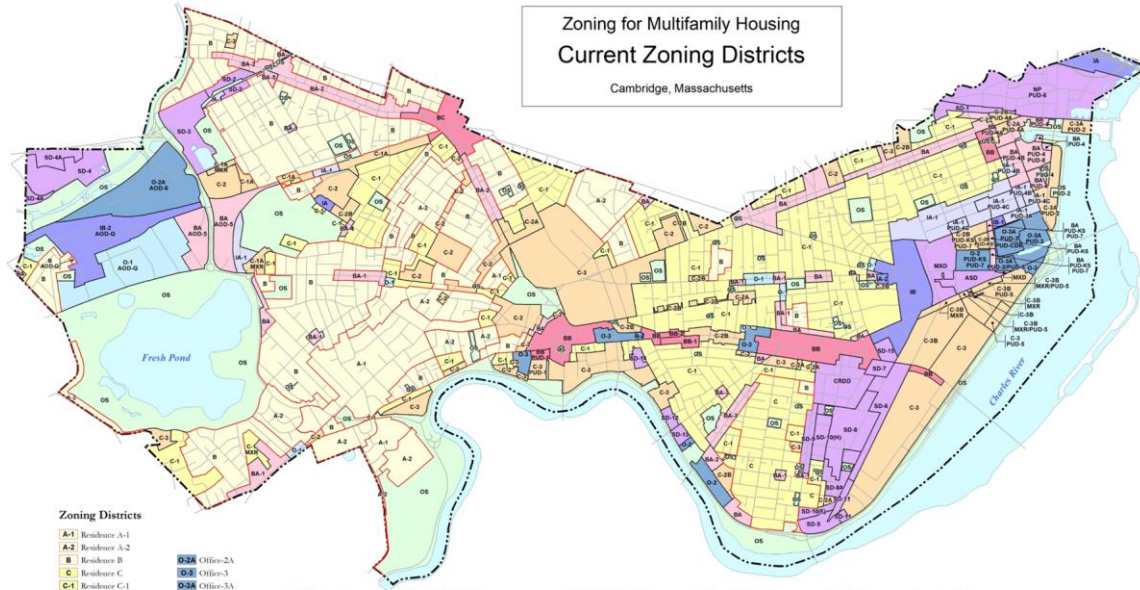
- SD-9 Special District-9
- SD-10(F) Special District-10(F)
- SD-10(H) Special District-10(H)
- SD-11 Special District-11
- SD-12 Special District-12
- SD-13 Special District-13
- SD-14 Special District-14
- SD-15 Special District-15
- OS Open Space

NOVEMBER 19, 2024



Map Changes

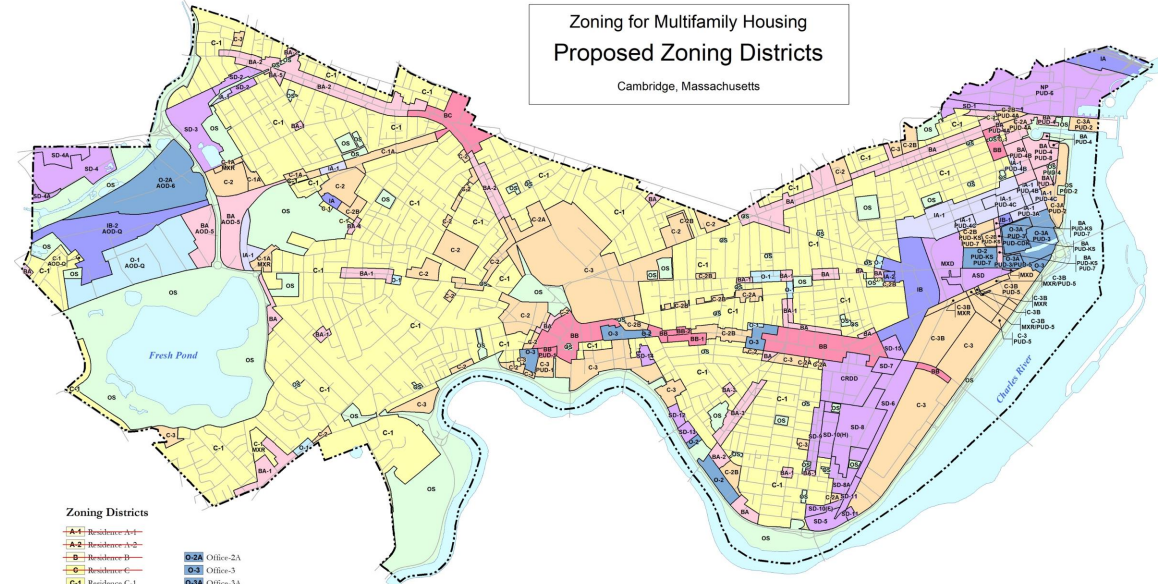
Zoning for Multifamily Housing
Current Zoning Districts
Cambridge, Massachusetts



Zoning Districts

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
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| A-2 Residence A-2 | O-3 Office-3 | ASD Ames Street District | SD-3 Special District-3 | SD-10 Special District-10(F) |
| B Residence B | O-3A Office-3A | ADD Alewife Overlay District | SD-4 Special District-4 | SD-11 Special District-11 |
| C Residence C | BA-1 Business A | PUD Planned Unit Development Overlay | SD-5 Special District-5 | SD-12 Special District-12 |
| C-1 Residence C-1 | BA-2 Business A-1 | MUR Mixed Use Residential Overlay | SD-6 Special District-6 | SD-13 Special District-13 |
| C-1A Residence C-1A | BA-3 Business A-2 | NP North Point District | SD-7 Special District-7 | SD-14 Special District-14 |
| C-2 Residence C-2 | BA-4 Business A-3 | CRD Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District | SD-8 Special District-8 | SD-15 Special District-15 |
| C-2A Residence C-2A | BA-5 Business A-4 | OS Special District-1 | SD-16 Special District-8A | OS Open Space |
| C-2B Residence C-2B | BA-6 Business A-5 | | | |
| C-3 Residence C-3 | IB-1 Industry B-1 | | | |
| C-3A Residence C-3A | IB-2 Industry B-2 | | | |
| C-3B Residence C-3B | IB-3 Industry B-3 | | | |
| C-3C Residence C-3C | IB-4 Industry B-4 | | | |
| O-1 Office-1 | IB-5 Industry B-5 | | | |
| O-2 Office-2 | IB-6 Industry B-6 | | | |
- Districts to be changed to C-1

Zoning for Multifamily Housing
Proposed Zoning Districts
Cambridge, Massachusetts



Zoning Districts

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A-1 Residence A-1 | O-2A Office-2A | MXD Mixed Use Development | SD-2 Special District-2 | SD-9 Special District-9 |
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| C-2B Residence C-2B | BA-6 Business A-5 | | | |
| C-3 Residence C-3 | IB-1 Industry B-1 | | | |
| C-3A Residence C-3A | IB-2 Industry B-2 | | | |
| C-3B Residence C-3B | IB-3 Industry B-3 | | | |
| C-3C Residence C-3C | IB-4 Industry B-4 | | | |
| O-1 Office-1 | IB-5 Industry B-5 | | | |
| O-2 Office-2 | IB-6 Industry B-6 | | | |

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

Deletion of Lot Size and Res. Density Standards

Current Zoning

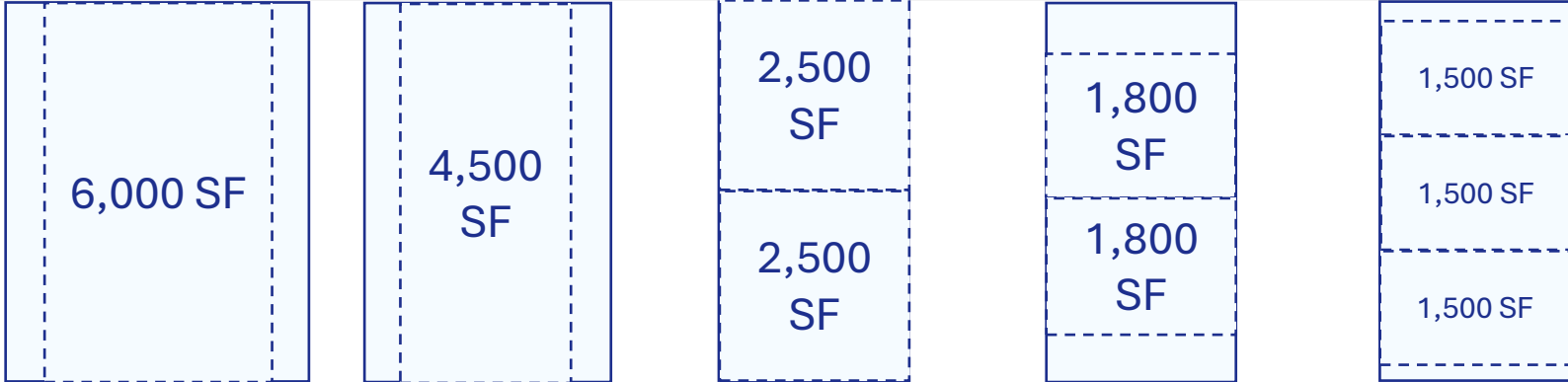
- Min. lot area 5,000-8,000 square feet, min. lot width 50-80 feet
- Many commercial districts have no minimum lot size
- Min. “lot area per dwelling unit” limits number of homes on a lot
- Max. “floor area ratio” (FAR) limits total floor area on a lot

Proposed Zoning

- No min. lot area or width
- All buildable lots must have min. 20 feet of street frontage (current)
- No min. lot area per dwelling unit
- No max. FAR for residential use
- Non-residential use still subject to current FAR limits

Current Density Limits

District	A-1	A-2	B	C	C-1
Min. Lot Area/Width	8,000 SF/80'	6,000 SF/65'	5,000 SF/50'	5,000 SF/50'	5,000 SF/50'
Min. Lot Area/ Unit	6,000 SF	4,500 SF	2,500 SF*	1,800 SF	1,500 SF
Max. FAR	0.50	0.50	0.50*	0.60	0.75



*2,500 SF lot area /unit and 0.50 FAR for the first 5,000 SF of lot area, 4,000 SF lot area/unit and 0.35 FAR for lot area over 5,000 SF



1 unit allowed
4,000 SF GFA



1 unit allowed
3,000 SF GFA



2 units allowed
2,500 SF GFA



2 units allowed
3,000 SF GFA



3 units allowed
3,750 SF GFA

In Cambridge Neighborhoods

- Most lots **don't conform** to minimum lot size
 - Citywide median roughly 4,000 SF
- Most lots in Res. B, C, and C-1 districts **don't conform** to minimum lot area per dwelling unit
- Most lots in Res. B, C, and C-1 districts **don't conform** to maximum FAR limitations
- When a lot is rebuilt, in most cases no increase in units would be allowed; in some cases fewer units can be built than what exists

What does this change do?

- Make more existing housing conforming to zoning
- Allow for more units when sites are redeveloped
- Remove standards that can be “exclusionary” because they limit development to fewer, larger, more expensive homes
- Shift focus away from limits on housing density and towards dimensional standards like height and open space
- Retain limits on non-residential floor area
- *Changes the application of Institutional Use Regulations (IURs) which currently apply in districts that require 1,200 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit*

Changes to Residential Height Limits

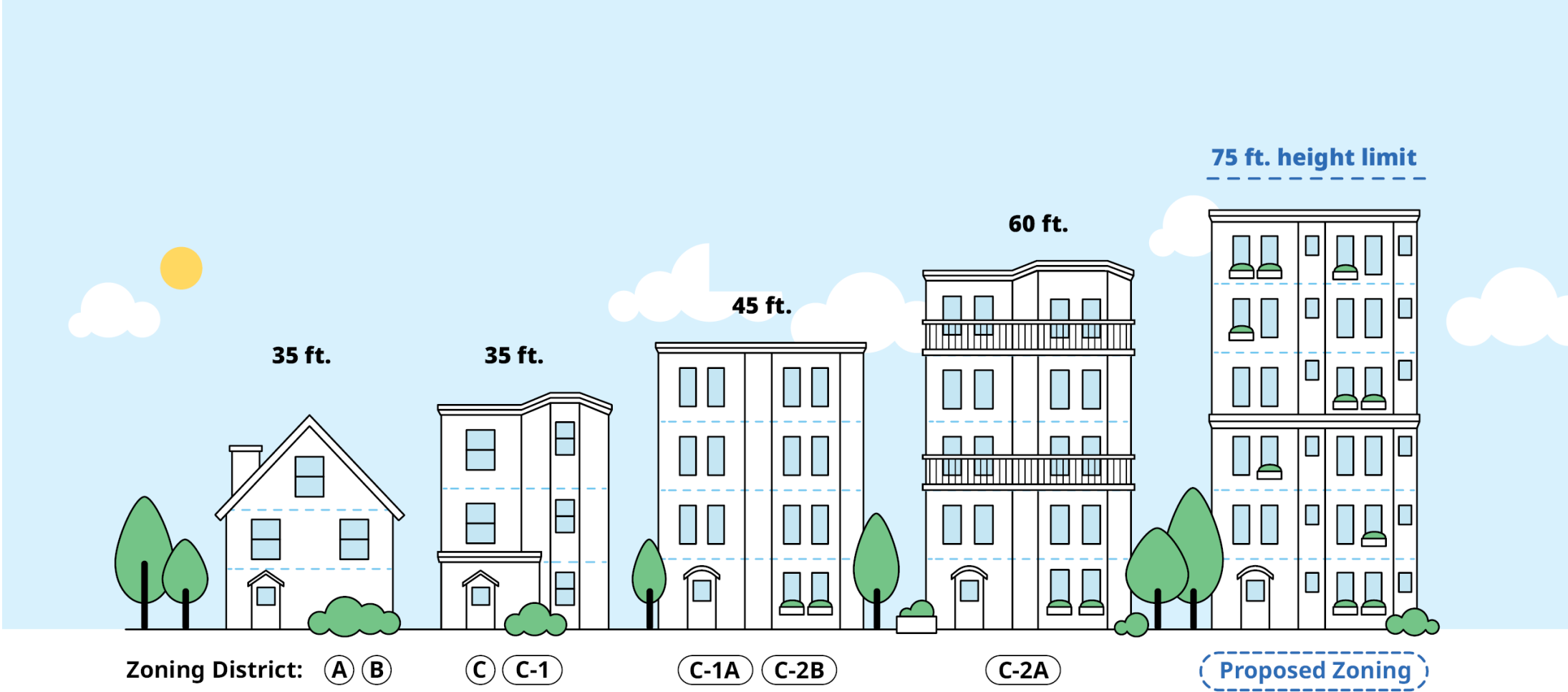
Current Zoning

- Res. height limits range 35-60 feet in most Res. districts
- Some districts allow 70+-foot res. heights
- Mixed-use districts often allow taller residential than non-residential

Proposed Zoning

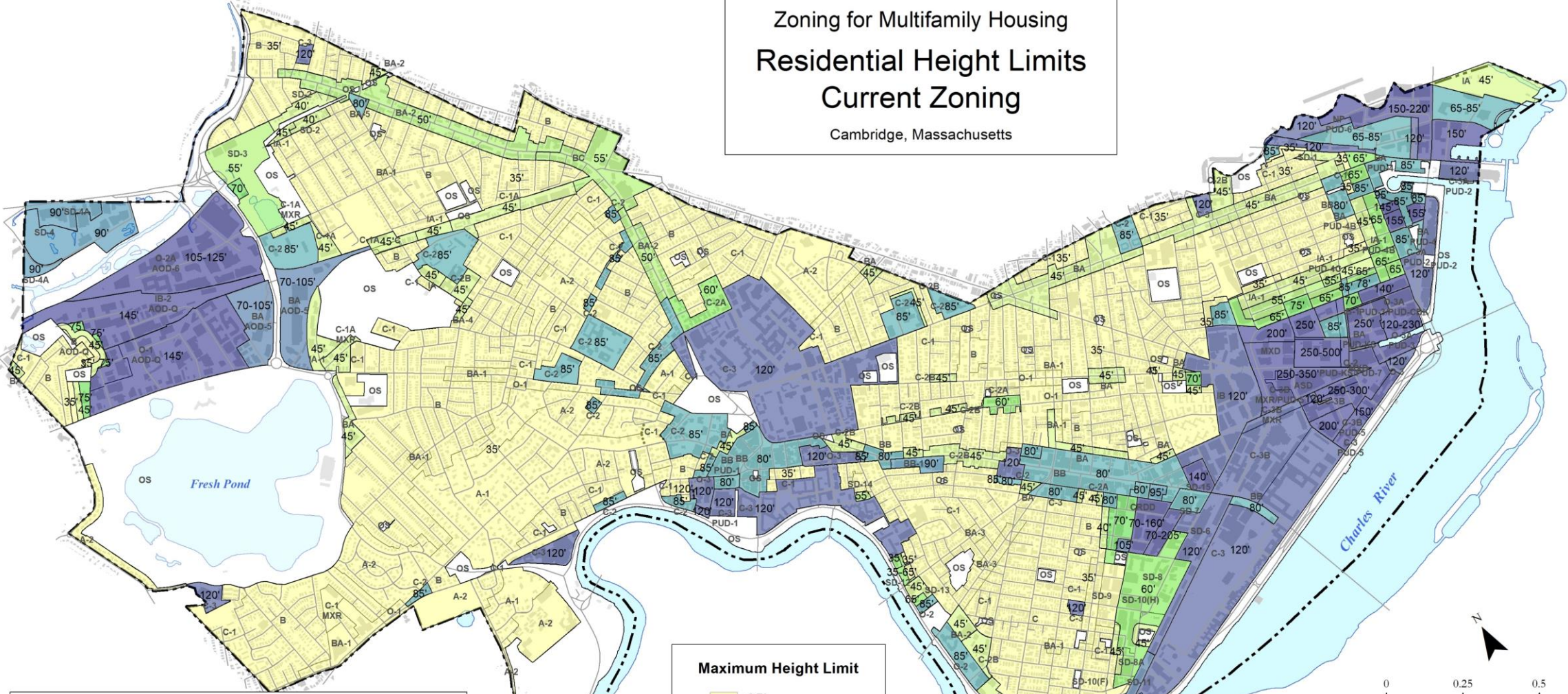
- Res. height limits based primarily on **number of stories above grade**
- Also height limit in feet to accommodate that number of stories without excessive height
- Up to six stories above grade allowed where currently <75' res. limit
- Stories match current height limits in taller districts
- Non-res. height limits unchanged

Changes to Residential Height Limits



Zoning for Multifamily Housing Residential Height Limits Current Zoning

Cambridge, Massachusetts



Zoning Districts: City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

As adopted February 13, 1961 and modified by subsequent amendments up to and including Ordinance #2023-7 of October 16, 2023. Overlay Districts do not appear on this map. The zoning lines are approximate. Please refer to the documents on file in the City Clerk's Office for the exact location of boundaries.

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

Maximum Height Limit

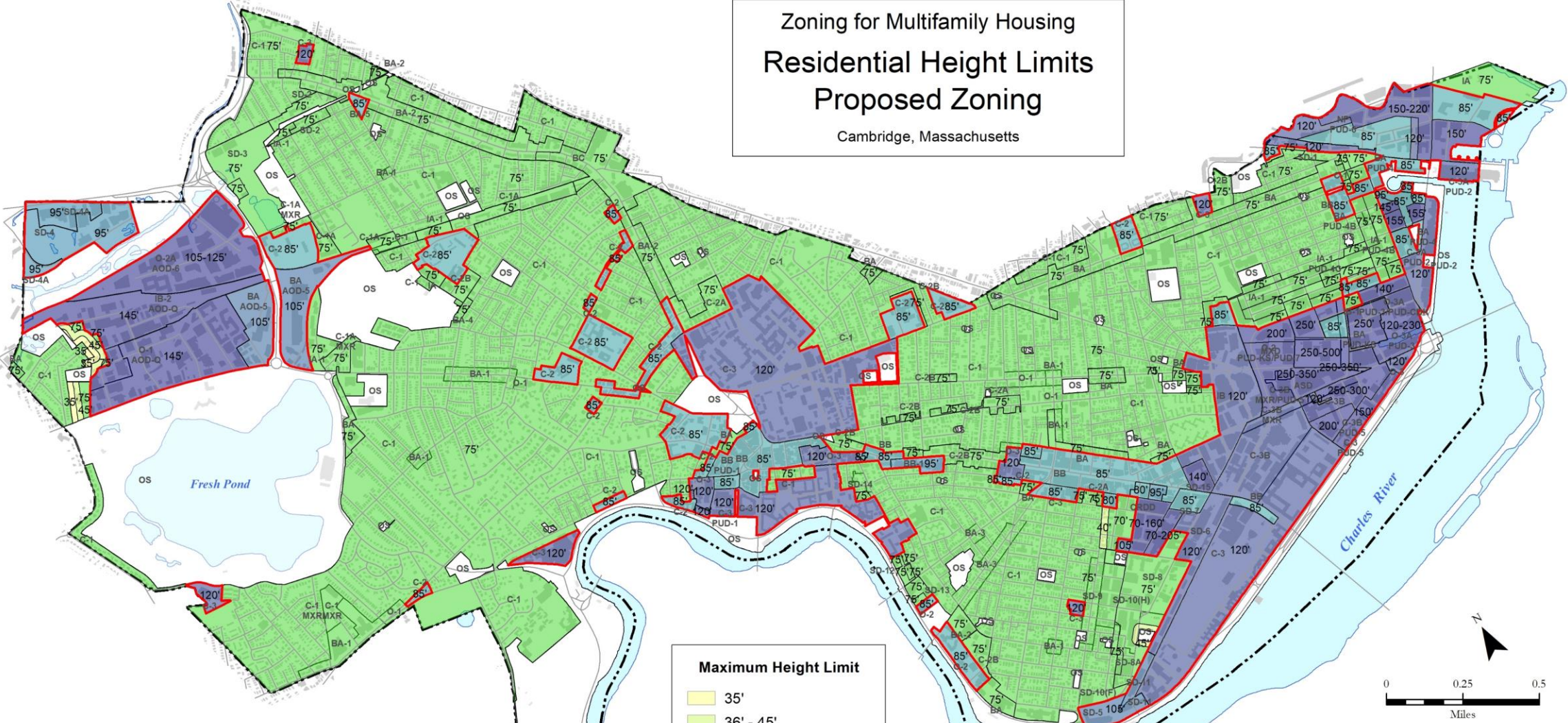
35'
36' - 45'
46' - 55'
56' - 65'
66' - 75'
76' - 85'
86' - 95'
96' - 105'
106' - 120'
More than 120'
Not applicable

Notes

- The color scale represents the highest possible building heights allowed under current zoning. Please note that a special permit may be required to build to the limit in certain areas.
- Height limits that vary by type of use are labeled with a slash. For example, 35/45' indicates a 35-foot limit for non-residential buildings, and a 45-foot limit for residential buildings.
- Height labels separated by a hyphen (e.g., 120-230') indicate areas where the maximum allowed height is increased when certain conditions are met, such as under a special permit.
- This map represents a broad summary of detailed zoning requirements. Please refer to the Zoning Ordinance for full information on the types and sizes of buildings allowed, and for the exact locations of height limit boundaries.

Zoning for Multifamily Housing Residential Height Limits Proposed Zoning

Cambridge, Massachusetts



Proposed Zoning Districts

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












Maximum Height Limit

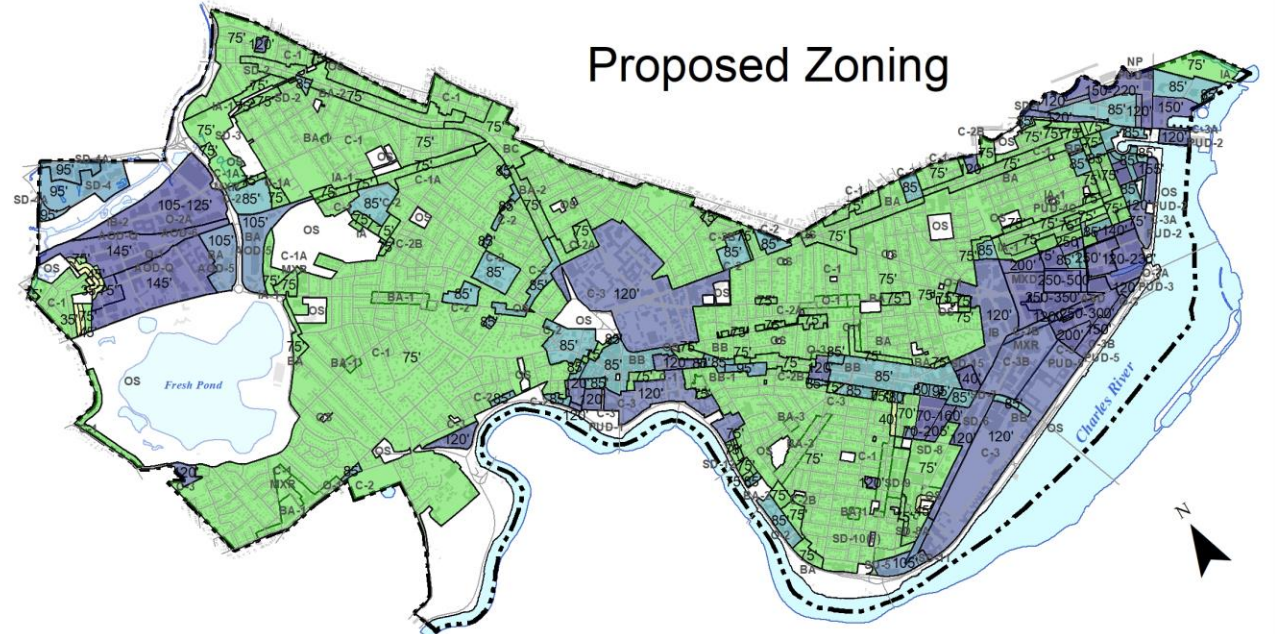
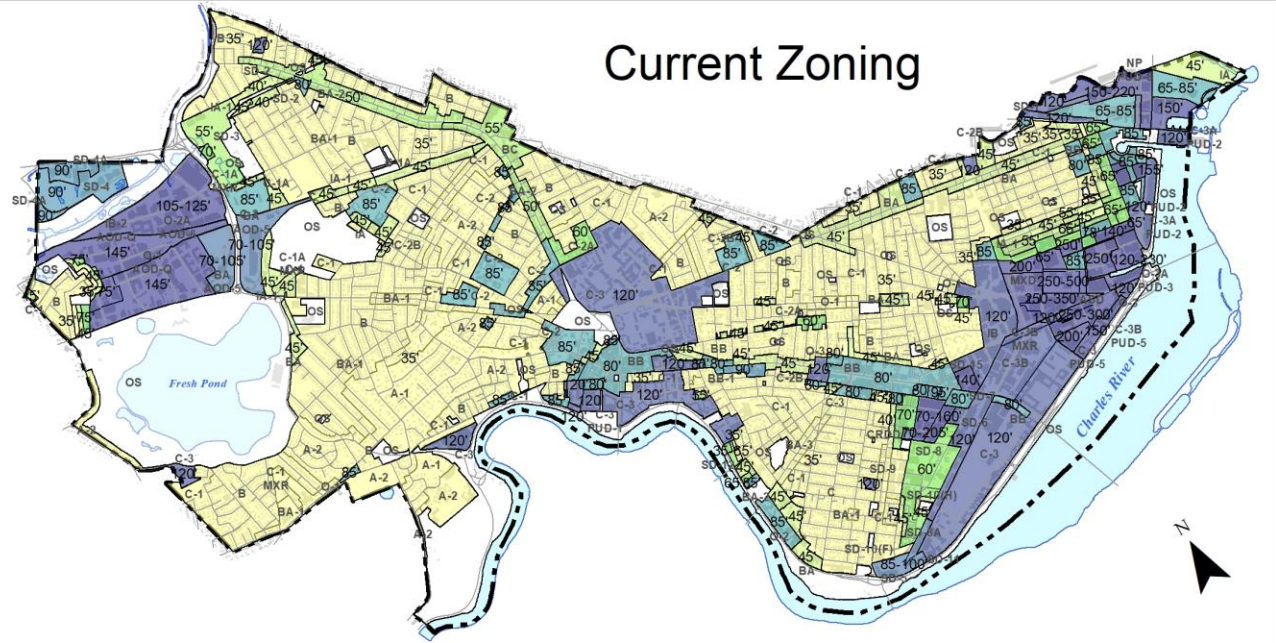
35'
36' - 45'
46' - 55'
56' - 65'
6 stories (up to 75')
7 stories (up to 85')
8 stories (up to 95')
9 stories (up to 105')
10 stories (up to 120')
More than 120'
Not applicable

Notes

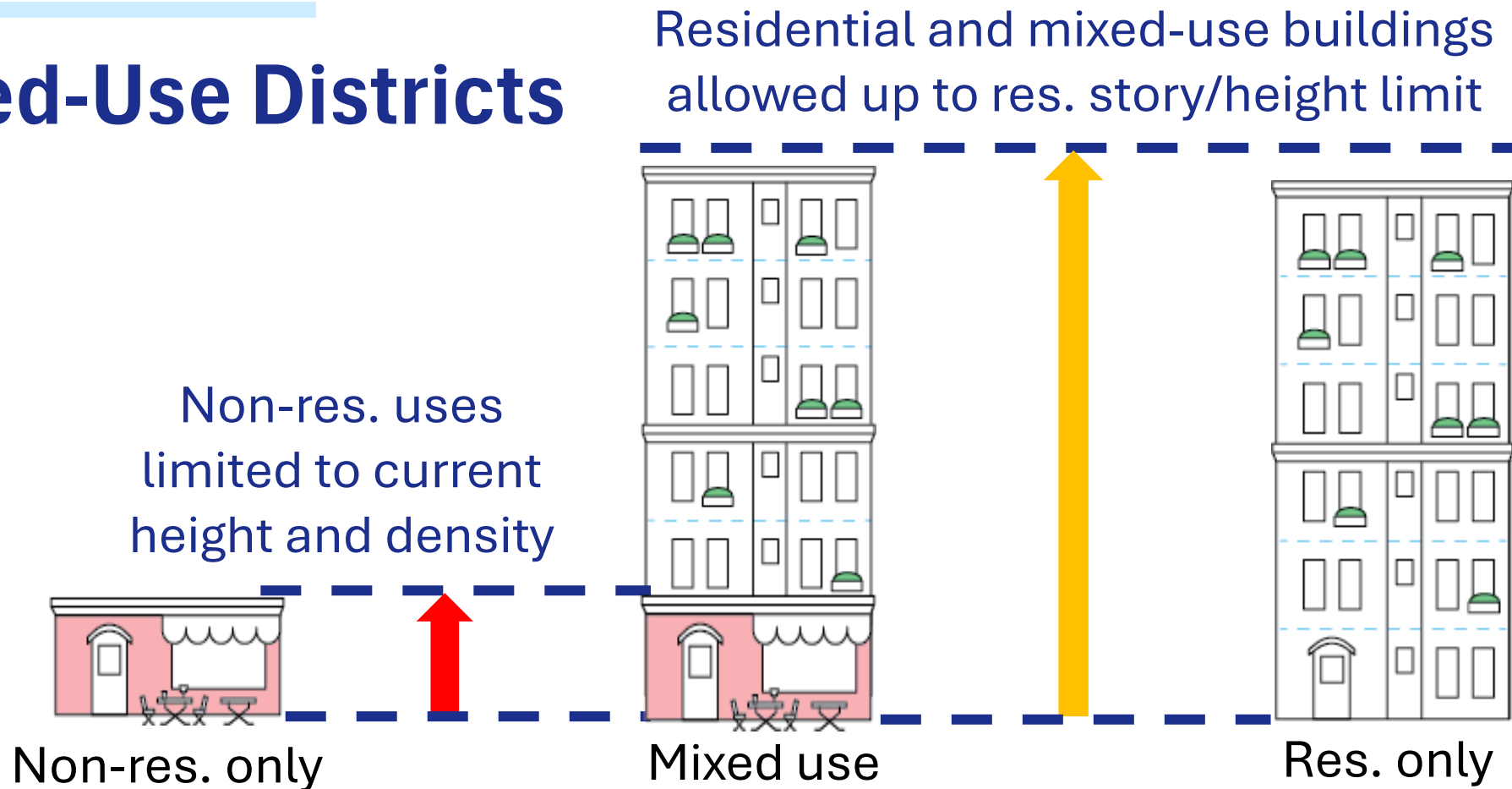
- The color scale represents the highest possible building heights allowed under current zoning. Please note that a special permit may be required to build to the limit in certain areas.
- Height limits that vary by type of use are labeled with a slash. For example, 35/45' indicates a 35-foot limit for non-residential buildings, and a 45-foot limit for residential buildings.
- Height labels separated by a hyphen (e.g., 120-230') indicate areas where the maximum allowed height is increased when certain conditions are met, such as under a special permit.
- This map represents a broad summary of detailed zoning requirements. Please refer to the Zoning Ordinance for full information on the types and sizes of buildings allowed, and for the exact locations of height limit boundaries.

Zoning for Multifamily Housing: Residential Height Limits

	Current Maximum Height Limit	Proposed Maximum Height Limit
	35'	35'
	36' - 45'	36' - 45'
	46' - 55'	46' - 55'
	56' - 65'	56' - 65'
	66' - 75'	6 stories (up to 75')
	76' - 85'	7 stories (up to 85')
	86' - 95'	8 stories (up to 95')
	96' - 105'	9 stories (up to 105')
	105' - 120'	10 stories (up to 120')
	More than 120'	More than 120'
	Not applicable	Not applicable



Mixed-Use Districts



- Proposed standards only apply to residential uses
- Non-residential uses stay within current height and FAR limits
- Remove “mixed-use formula” that discourages mixed-use development

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 proposed (likely not every site), it will allow for more units and more likely have affordable units through inclusionary
- Continue to allow all-affordable development at taller heights

Changes to Setback and Open Space Standards

Current Zoning

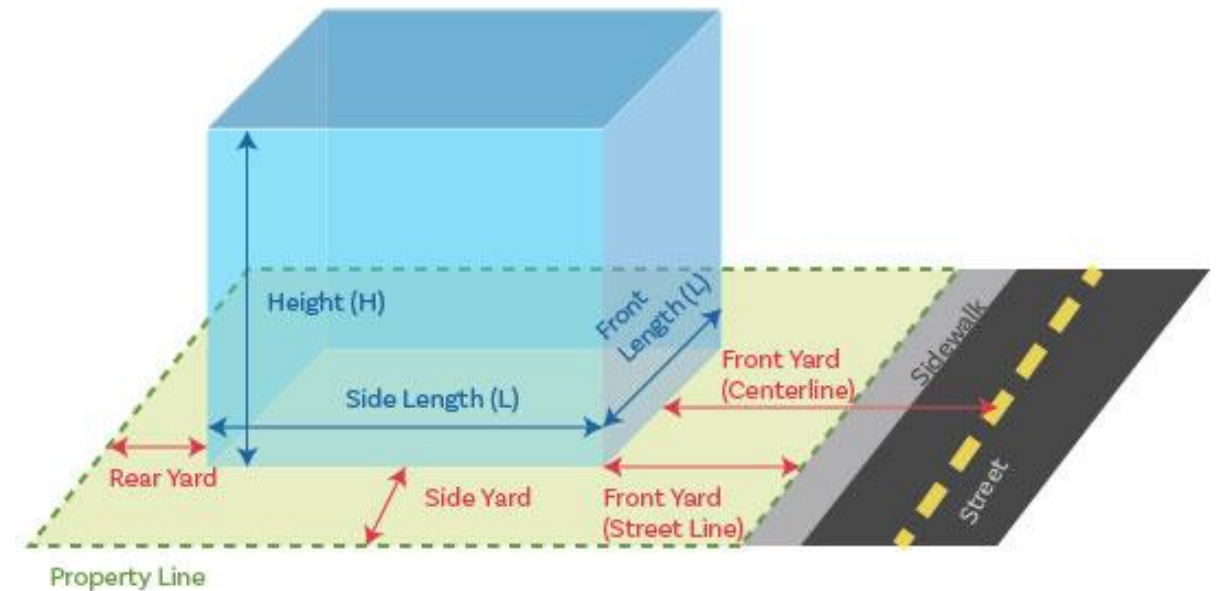
- Varied front, side, rear yard setbacks for res. buildings (often “height-plus-length” formula)
- 10%-50% “private open space” requirements for res. buildings
- Non-res. buildings tend to have little to no setback or open space requirements
- “Green Factor” requires a minimum score based on trees, plantings, and other site design features (no change)

Proposed Zoning

- 10’ min. front yard setback in most res. districts, 5’ where currently allowed
- Side or rear setbacks not required
- Open space includes “permeable” and “publicly beneficial” as well as “private”
- 30% min. open space in most res. districts, 10-15% where currently allowed
- Same requirements for res. and non-res. (i.e., no min. setback or open space in most mixed-use districts)

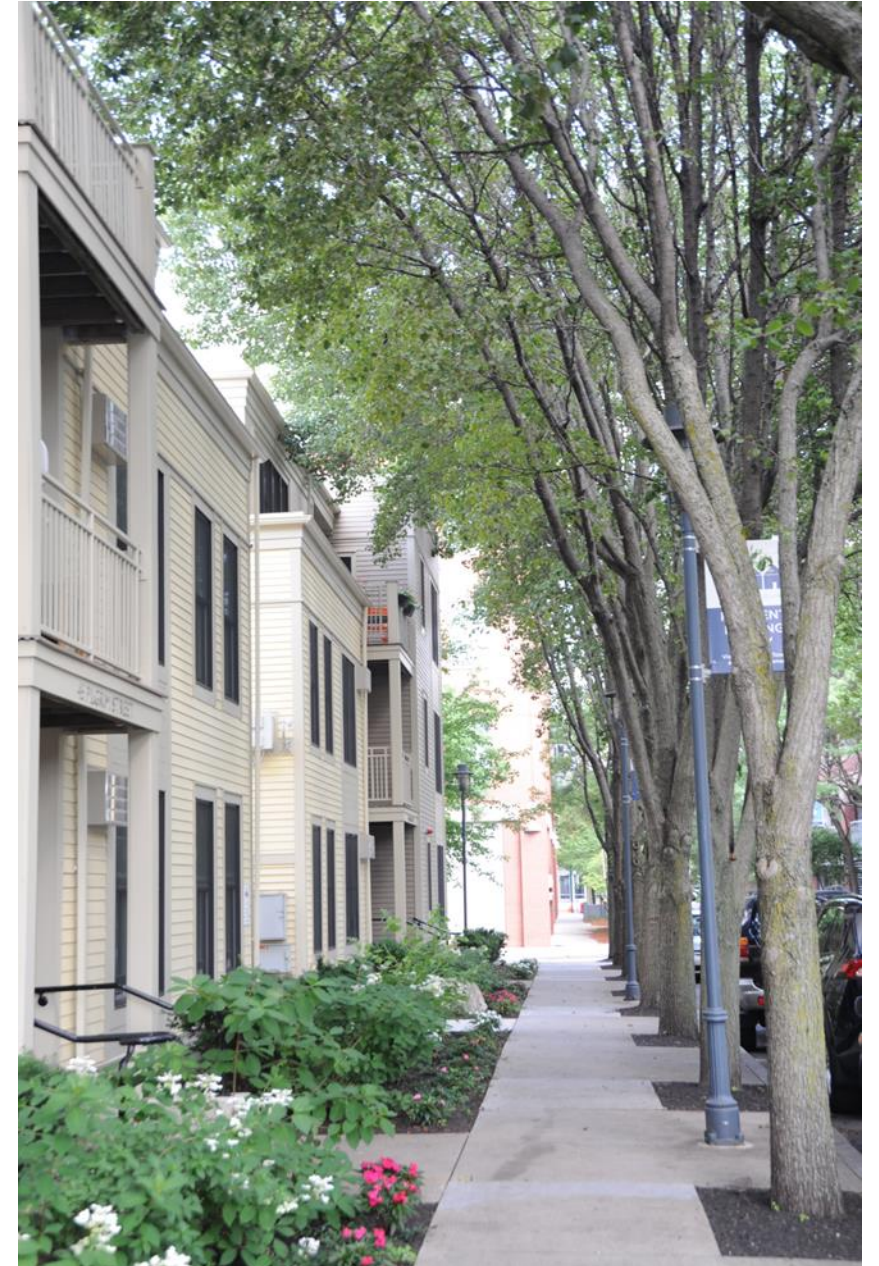
Current Setback Standards

- “Formula” setback regulations introduced in 1960s when the goal was to encourage tall buildings isolated in space
- Very difficult and unpredictable to apply, especially to pre-existing buildings and smaller sites
- Frequently requires variances for multifamily buildings (even if they otherwise conform)



Front Yards

- Space that provides public benefit
- Trees (including street tree root systems), other plantings, and shade
- More sidewalk/usable space
- Elevated stairs/ramps and porches promote flood resilience
- Allowing projections into the front setback avoids flat façades
- Setbacks may be reduced to align with existing street pattern



Side/Rear Yards



- Without zoning requirements, building and fire codes would control – e.g., separation between residential walls with windows
- Flexibility can allow for more side-by-side “rowhouse” style development
- Open space standards can be a more flexible way to require usable open space
- Vast majority of residential buildings have non-conforming side or rear setbacks

Total Open Space

- Loss of open space is a frequent concern
- Min. open space requirement combines Permeable, Private, and Publicly Beneficial Open Space
- In C-1, half of required open space is permeable and half is private (retained in proposed zoning)
- New “Green Factor” standard requires trees, landscaping, other site design features
- Parking is NOT open space



High-SRI paving
+Turf
+Planting area
+Medium tree
+Large tree

1.02

What does this change do?

- Provide more design flexibility while keeping front yard and open space standards, which align with planning goals
- Apply the same rules for residential and non-residential buildings in mixed-use areas
- Simplify complicated requirements based on different types of open space in favor of a broader concept more consistent with planning goals

Changes to Special Permit/Project Review Requirements

Current Zoning

- Special permit required for many multifamily or townhouse projects (6+/12+ units) in Res. B, C, C-1, C-1A
- Special permit required for 20,000+ square feet in some mixed-use districts, 50,000+ square feet in others
- Affordable Housing Overlay projects and smaller projects in “special” areas only need advisory review
- Design standards apply (administratively) at 25,000+ square feet

Proposed Zoning

- Special permit review for housing only required at 75,000+ square feet (deleting multifamily/townhouse special permits)
- Advisory review required for 50,000+ square feet and special planning areas per current zoning
- Design standards apply (administratively) at 25,000+ square feet
- Special permit thresholds for non-residential use remain unchanged

Project Review Changes

Special Permits

- Normally granted if requirements are met, but risk of appeal
- Time, cost, unpredictability are burdens on medium-scale housing
- Conditions are key to mitigate impacts of larger-scale development
- Proposal: Citywide threshold of 75,000+ square feet with Transportation Impact Study (TIS)

Design Review

- Prescriptive standards for 25,000+ square feet (Section 19.50)
- Proposal: Design review for smaller projects through advisory process

Planning Board Advisory Consultation

Like AHO advisory review, intent is to apply City's design objectives holistically through a public process, but without the legal burden of a special permit and risk of appeal.

- Developer does community outreach before submitting plans
- Conceptual plans reviewed by Planning Board, with public comment
- Second meeting to review more detailed design and respond to comments from the first review

Housing Review – Current Zoning

Project Size	All Housing	AHO
< 25,000 SF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small/Large Project Advisory Consultation (special districts) • Planning Board special permit (some districts) 	
25,000-50,000 SF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design standards applied (19.50) • Planning Board special permit (some districts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design standards applied (11.207.7)
50,000-75,000 SF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Board special permit (w/TIS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public/Planning Board advisory review (at least 2 community meetings, at least 2 Planning Board reviews)
75,000+ SF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Board special permit (w/TIS) 	

Housing Review – Proposed Zoning

Project Size	All Housing	AHO
< 25,000 SF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small/Large Project Advisory Consultation (special districts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small/Large Project Advisory Consultation (special districts) • <i>Planning Board Advisory Consultation if above base zoning (1 meeting)</i>
25,000-50,000 SF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design standards applied (19.50) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design standards applied (11.207.7) • <i>Planning Board Advisory Consultation if above base zoning (1 meeting)</i>
50,000-75,000 SF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design standards applied (19.50) • Planning Board Advisory Consultation (2 meetings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design standards applied (11.207.7) • Planning Board Advisory Consultation (2 meetings)
75,000+ SF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Board special permit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design standards applied (11.207.7) • Planning Board Advisory Consultation (2 meetings)

What does this change do?

- Remove special permit for smaller residential developments, which adds to time and cost and carries a risk of appeal which can delay a project for years
- Rely more on prescriptive design standards and advisory review procedures to guide the design of smaller residential projects
- Retain special permit requirement for larger residential development, which provides a greater opportunity for review of impacts (including transportation impact) and mitigation through special permit conditions

Other Changes – Non-Conformance

Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning
<p>Section 8.22: Conforming additions to non-conforming buildings are allowed if they don't exceed the existing by 10% (or 25% by special permit) in area or volume</p>	<p>Conforming residential additions are allowed as-of-right without limits on area or volume</p>
<p>Section 5.28.2: Conversion of a non-residential structure to residential use is allowed by Planning Board special permit (in place of any other use or dimensional relief that is needed)</p>	<p>A Planning Board special permit is only needed if it increases an existing non-conforming condition – e.g., a decrease in non-conforming open space or increase in stories above grade beyond what is allowed</p>

Other Changes – Split Lots

Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning
<p>Section 3.32: On a lot in two or more districts, the dimensional requirements of the less restrictive district can extend 25 feet into the more restrictive district by BZA special permit</p>	<p>For residential uses, the extension of the less restrictive requirement 25 feet into the more restrictive district is allowed as-of-right</p>
<p>Section 5.27: On a lot in two or more districts, allowable units and floor area can be transferred from the portion in one district to another, with limitations</p>	<p>This now only applies to allowable non-residential FAR, because there are no limits on dwelling units or residential FAR</p>

Other Changes – Accessory Apartments

Current Zoning

Section 4.22: Accessory apartments are allowed as-of-right in most districts, by BZA special permit in A-1 and A-2. However, a special permit is often needed for dimensional relief on lot area per dwelling unit, FAR, or other limitations.

Proposed Zoning

Accessory apartments are allowed as-of-right in all districts, and the development controls that might otherwise prevent them would no longer apply.

How does the Affordable Housing Overlay change?

Standard	Effective Changes
Maximum Heights	Based on current AHO text (11.207.5.2.1), all districts would permit AHO projects of at least 13 stories ; up to 15 stories would still be permitted for AHO projects in “AHO Squares” (Harvard, Central, Porter, Cambridge/Webster)
Open Space	Updates for consistency with changes to base zoning open space standards
Design Standards	Deletion of standards that would not apply to housing under base zoning – requirement for ground-story non-residential in business districts, limitations on ground story elevation and basement units (Flood Resilience Standards still apply)
Design Review	Applicability of procedures applies same as base zoning except: no special permit required; Planning Board Advisory Review required if height exceeds base zoning



Housing Projections

Policy Order

- City Council asked CDD to provide analysis of housing projections under alternative zoning scenarios:
 - Different variations of the proposed multifamily zoning in residential districts; and
 - Rezoning of major squares and corridors to allow greater residential development.

Envision Cambridge Housing Target

by 2030...

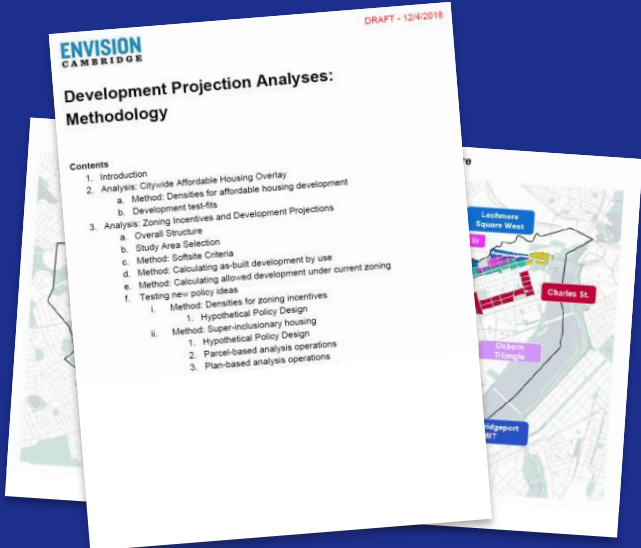
+12,500
total new units

+3,175
new affordable units

Envision Cambridge Projections (2019)

As part of the Envision Cambridge process, the City studied impacts of future development under different policy scenarios.

What has been built since Envision?

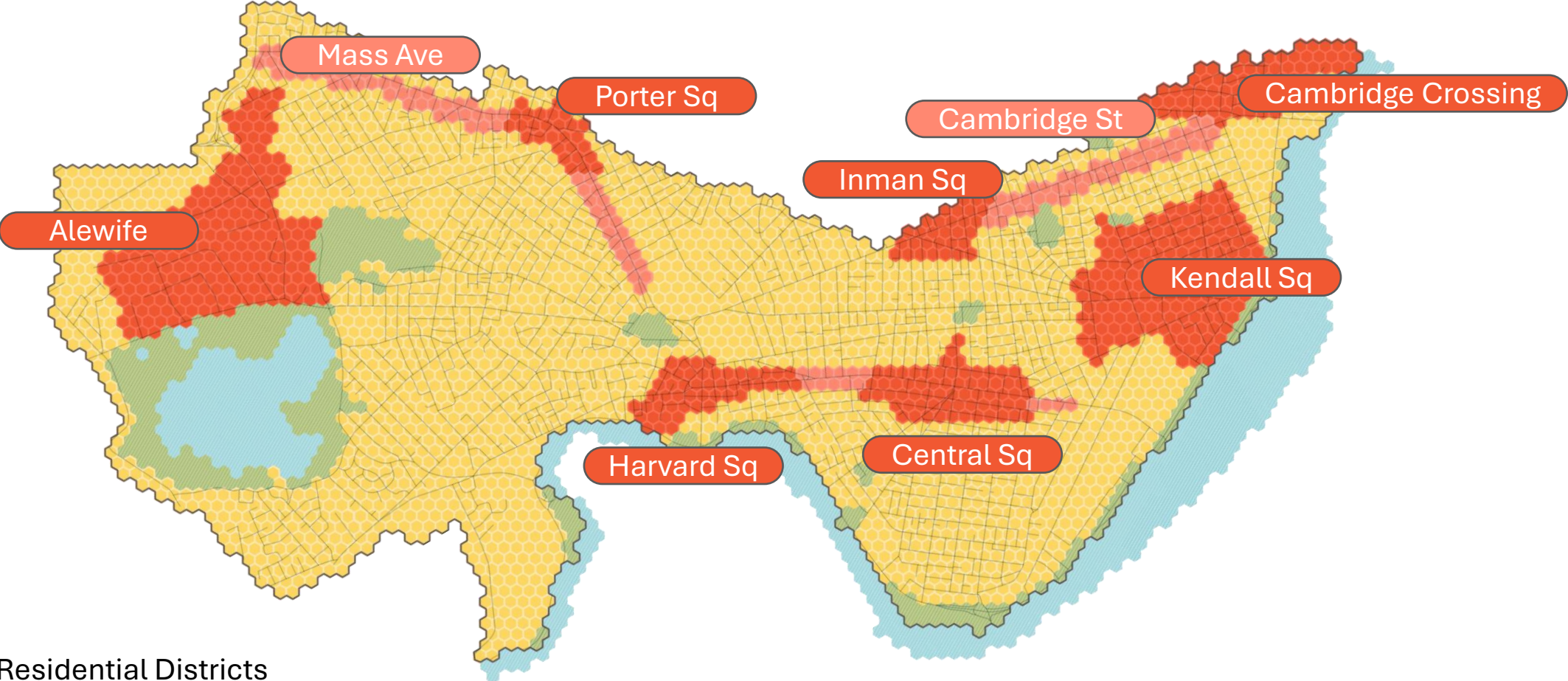


Housing Projections Analysis

- Planning level analysis to compare potential buildout anticipated by 2030 and 2040 under various zoning scenarios
- It does not consider site-specific constraints, and should not be considered a predictive tool to identify sites and neighborhoods where development is likely to happen
- Analysis separated in two parts to understand impact of different policy decisions:

1. **Residential Districts** (where proposed multifamily zoning would apply)
2. **Corridors and Squares**

Study Area



- Residential Districts
- Squares and Corridors

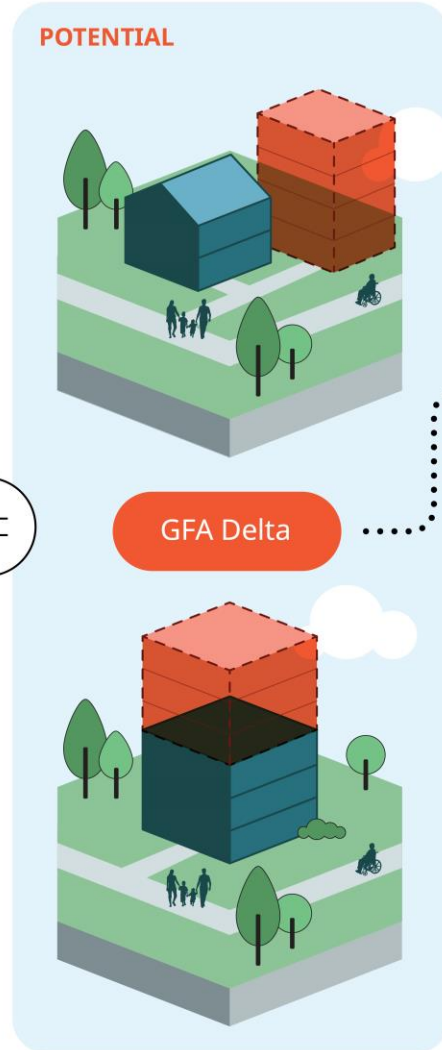
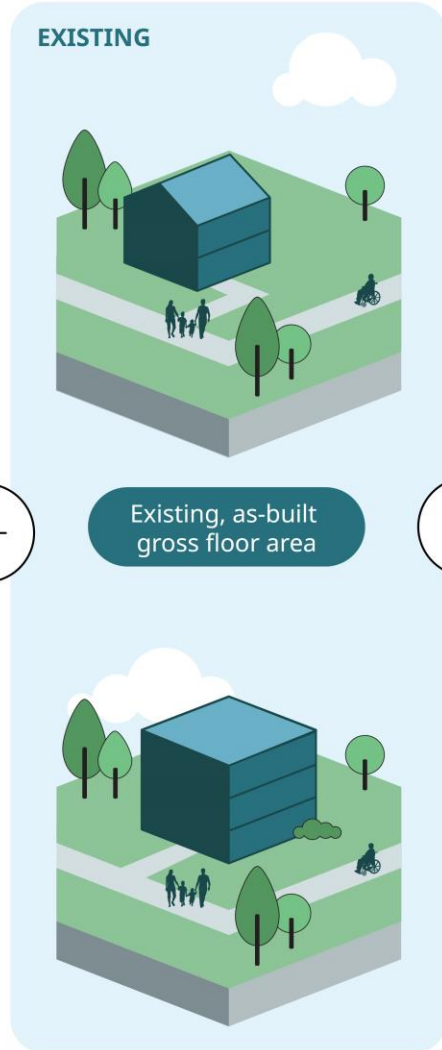
Methodology & Assumptions

- Parks and open space, hospitals, schools, and higher education parcels are assumed to stay and are not included in the analysis.
- Assumes developers will build under Inclusionary Zoning if can build at least 14 total units to cross-subsidize affordable units. If cannot build at least 14 units, assumes developers will build 9 market units. The exception is in one scenario (6 story IZ only) for which the current base zoning is unchanged and assumes that developers will build under Inclusionary Zoning at 10 units (market and affordable).
- Build out of potential development is assumed to be 0.25% per year in residential areas and 1% per year in major squares and corridors (*based on past housing starts data*)
- Affordable housing developed under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) and/or funded by the Affordable Housing Trust is not included in these projections.
- Likelihood of redevelopment is based on difference between existing as-built condition and potential capacity under different zoning scenarios.
- Potential redevelopment needs to meet certain thresholds based on location in residential districts or squares and corridors (see next slide).

Determining Redevelopment Potential

Residential Areas

Squares & Corridors



Residential Redevelopment Criteria:

- GFA Delta > 4,000 SF
- GFA Ratio > 33%

$$\text{GFA Ratio} = \frac{\text{GFA Delta}}{\text{Existing}}$$

Corridor Redevelopment Criteria:

- GFA Delta > 10,000 SF
- GFA Ratio > 100%

number of units calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{Total GFA}}{1,000 \text{ SqFt}}$$

Residential Districts

Scenario Comparison



Residential Scenarios Overview

Multifamily Zoning Petition under Consideration

- 1 **Six Story As-of-Right:** Six story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts

Alternative Rezoning Scenarios Requested by City Council

- 2 **Four Story in A & B and 6 Story in C:** Four story multifamily housing allowed in Residential Districts A and B, six stories allowed in Residential District C
- 3 **Six Story for Inclusionary Zoning Projects Only:** Six story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts only if development includes affordable housing consistent with the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance. Zoning for projects without Inclusionary Zoning remain unchanged.
- 4 **Four Story As-of-Right + Up to Eight Stories on Select Neighborhood Streets:** Four story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts, and six or eight stories allowed along select neighborhood streets (Broadway, Prospect St, Huron Ave, Concord Ave)

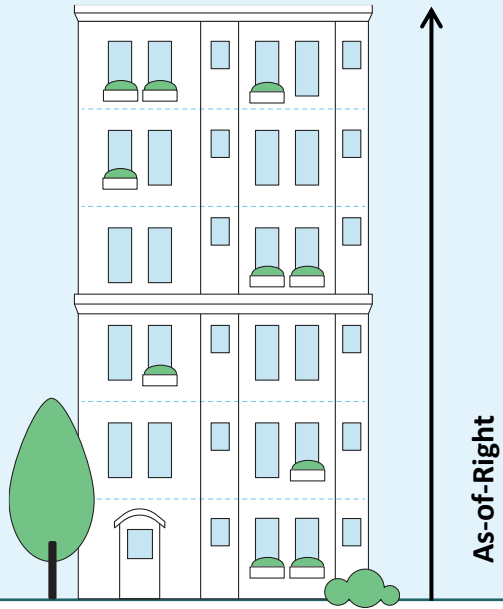
Additional Scenarios Evaluated By Staff

- 5 **Four Story As-of-Right:** Four story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts
- 6 **Four Story + Two Story Bonus Only for Inclusionary Zoning Projects:** Four story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts, with an additional two stories for projects that include affordable housing consistent with the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance.

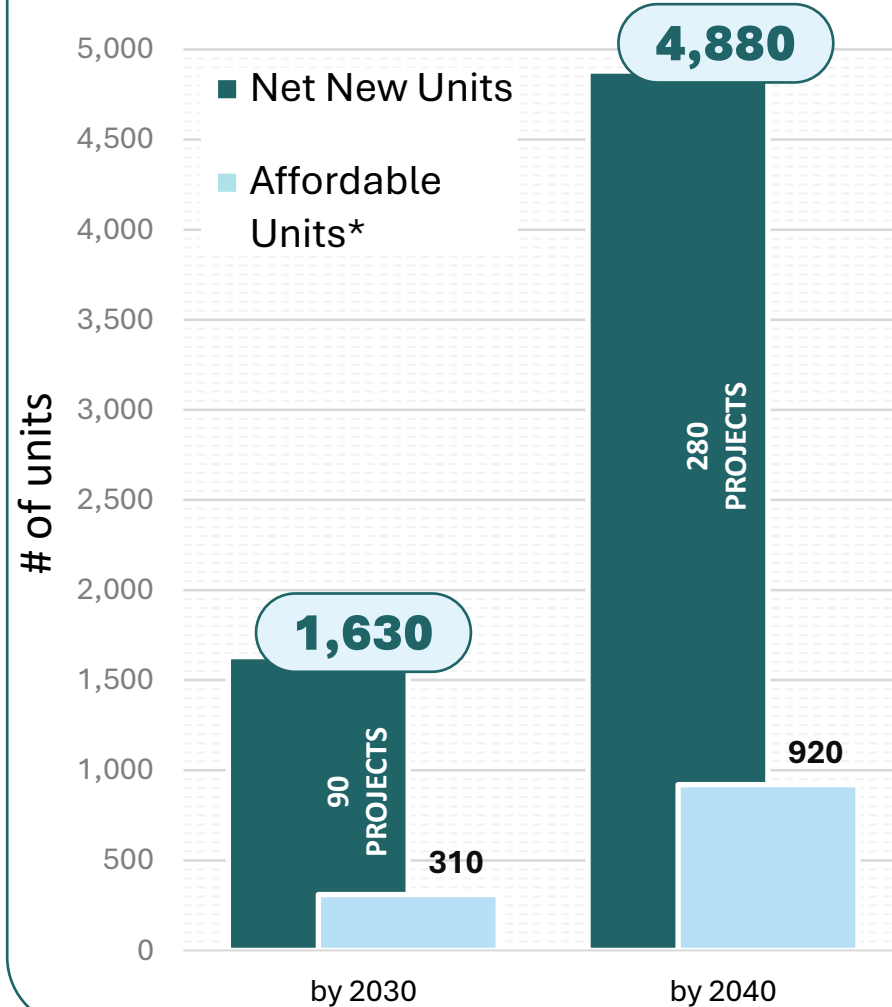
1 6 Story As-of-Right (Proposed Multifamily Zoning Petition under Consideration)

Six story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts

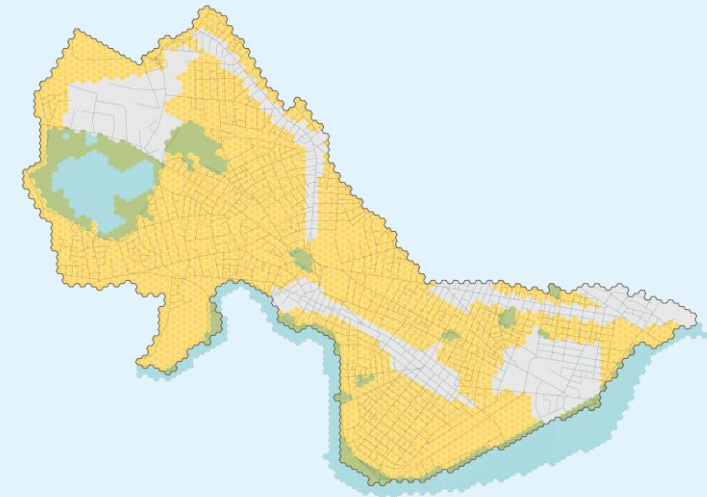
What it would allow



How much housing it could create:



Where it would apply

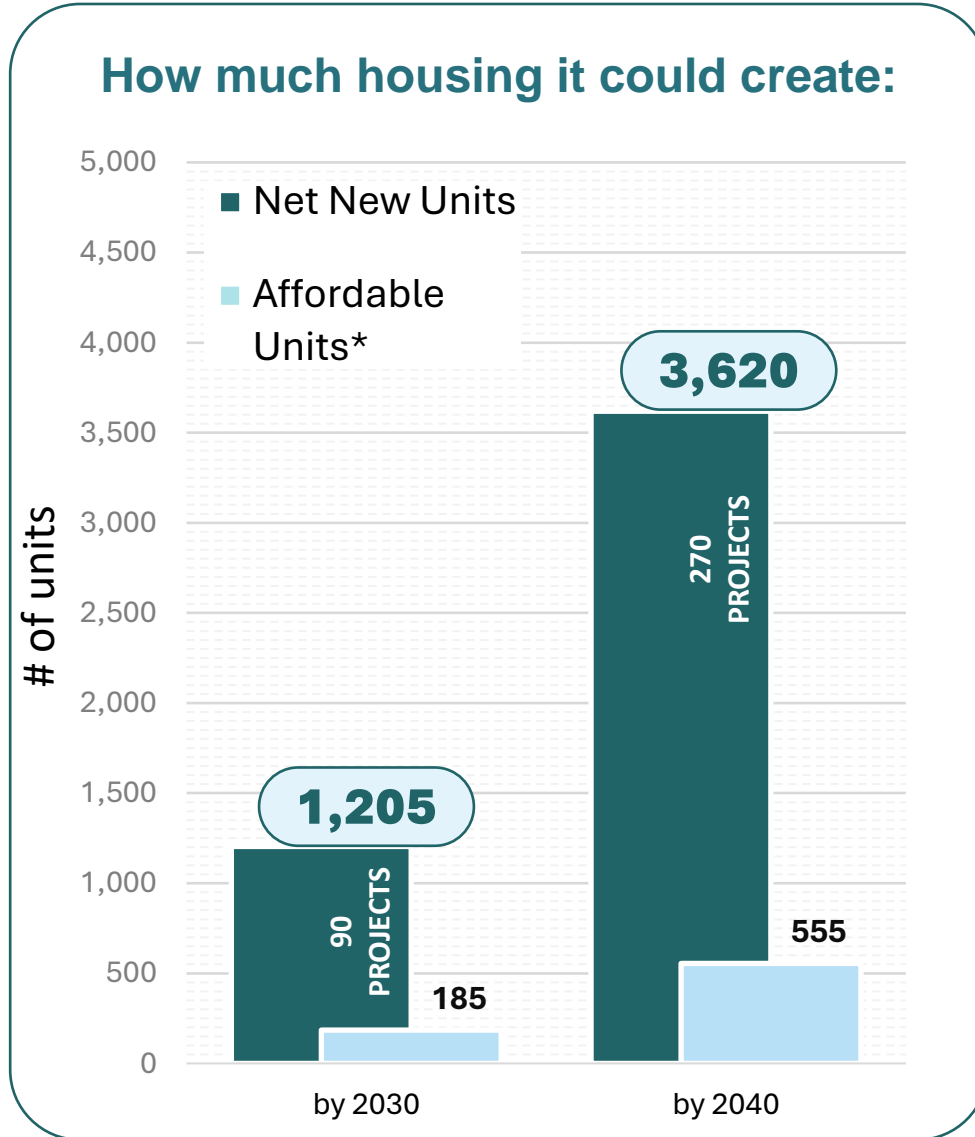
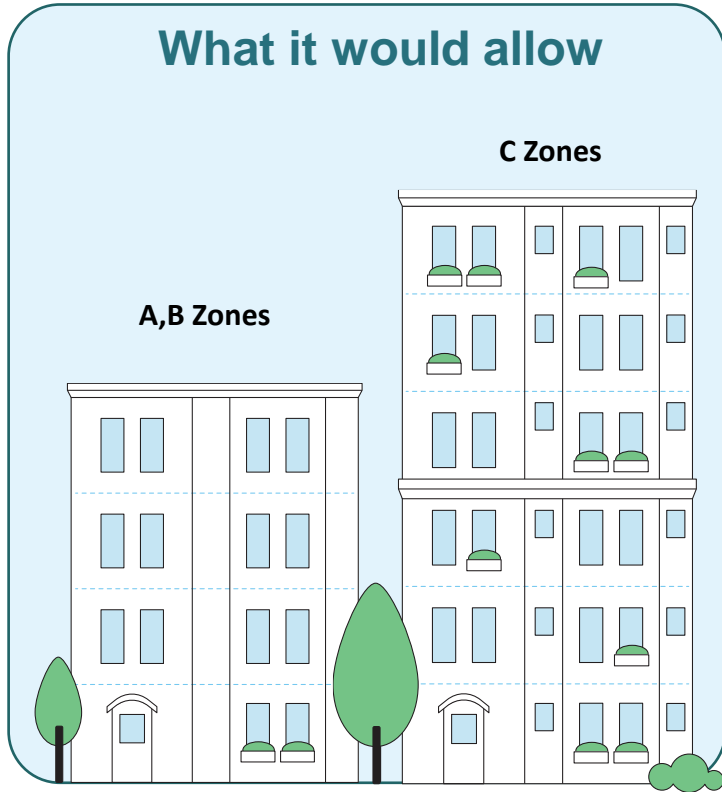


Citywide, primarily applying to residential neighborhoods

*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

2 Four Story in A & B and 6 Stories in C

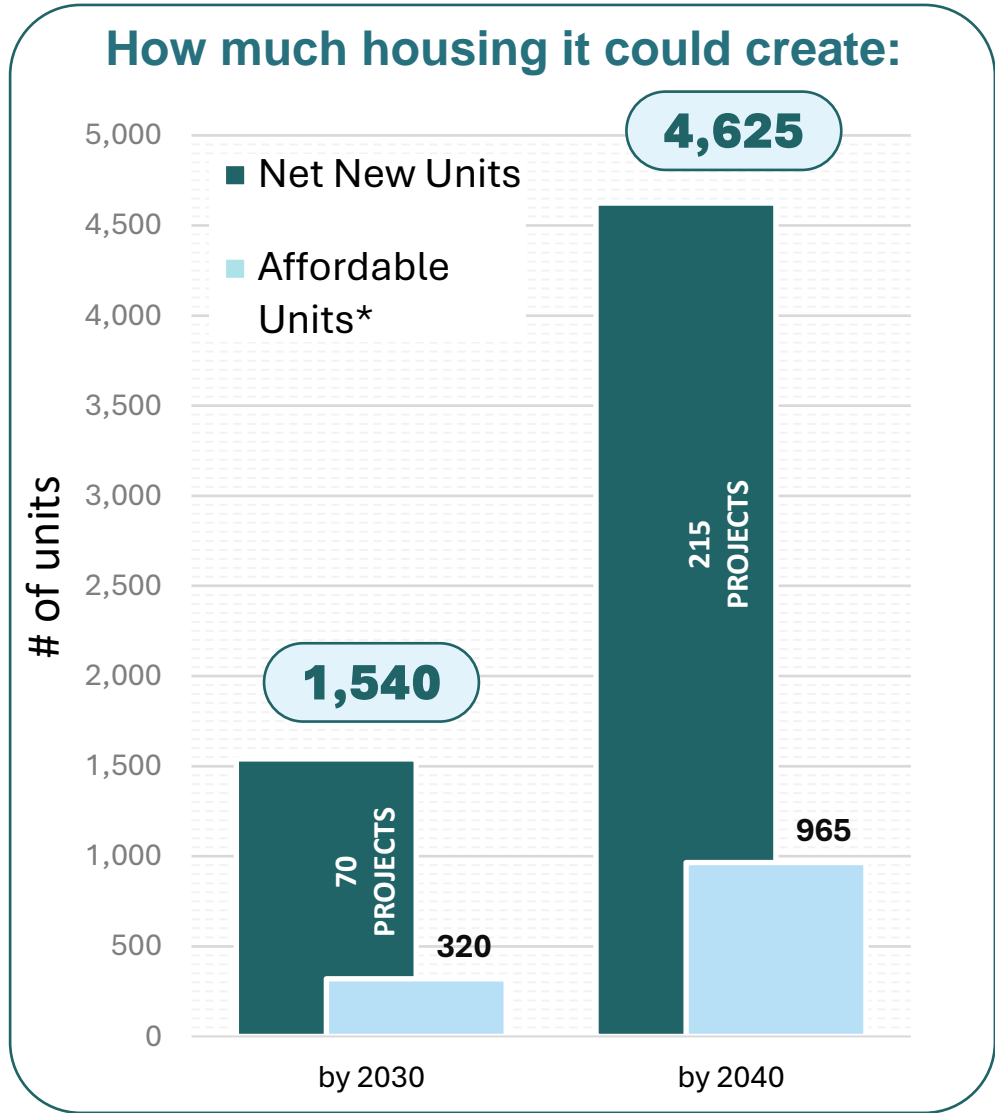
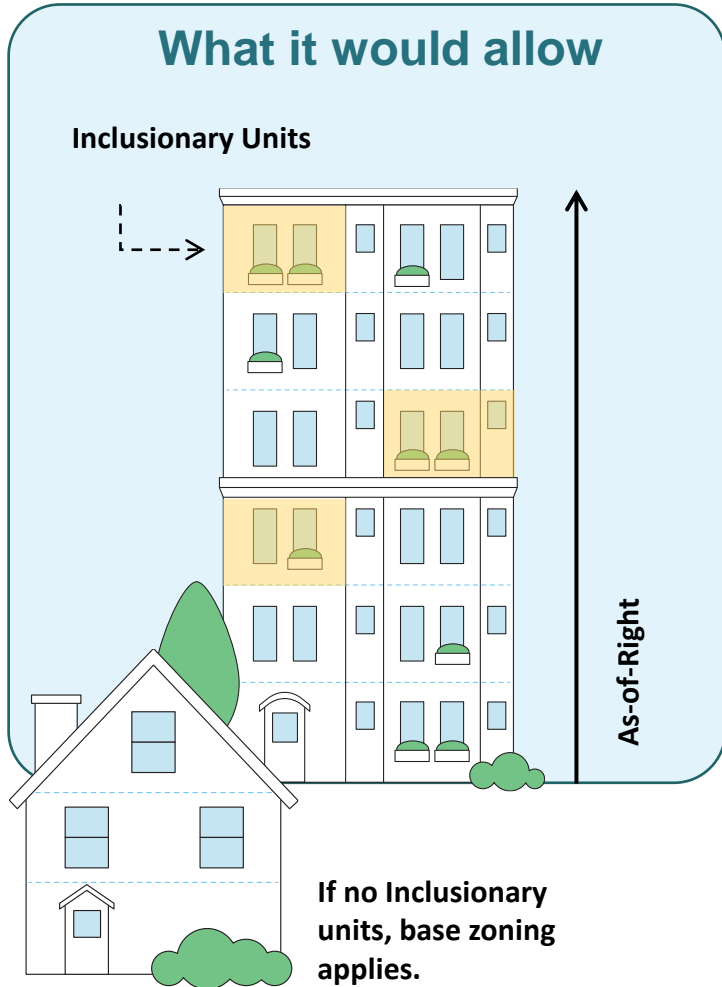
Four story multifamily housing allowed in Residential Districts A and B, six stories allowed in Residential District C



*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

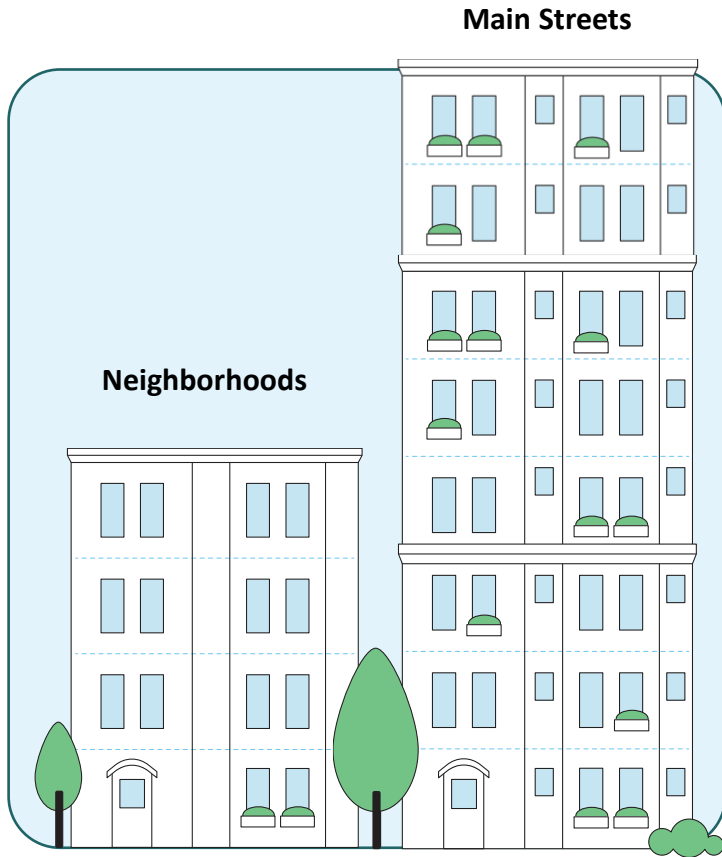
3 Six Story for Inclusionary Projects Only

Six story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts only if development includes affordable housing consistent with the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance. Zoning for projects without Inclusionary Zoning remain unchanged. ***This scenario does not allow multifamily housing in Res A and B Districts except in buildings that contain inclusionary units.***

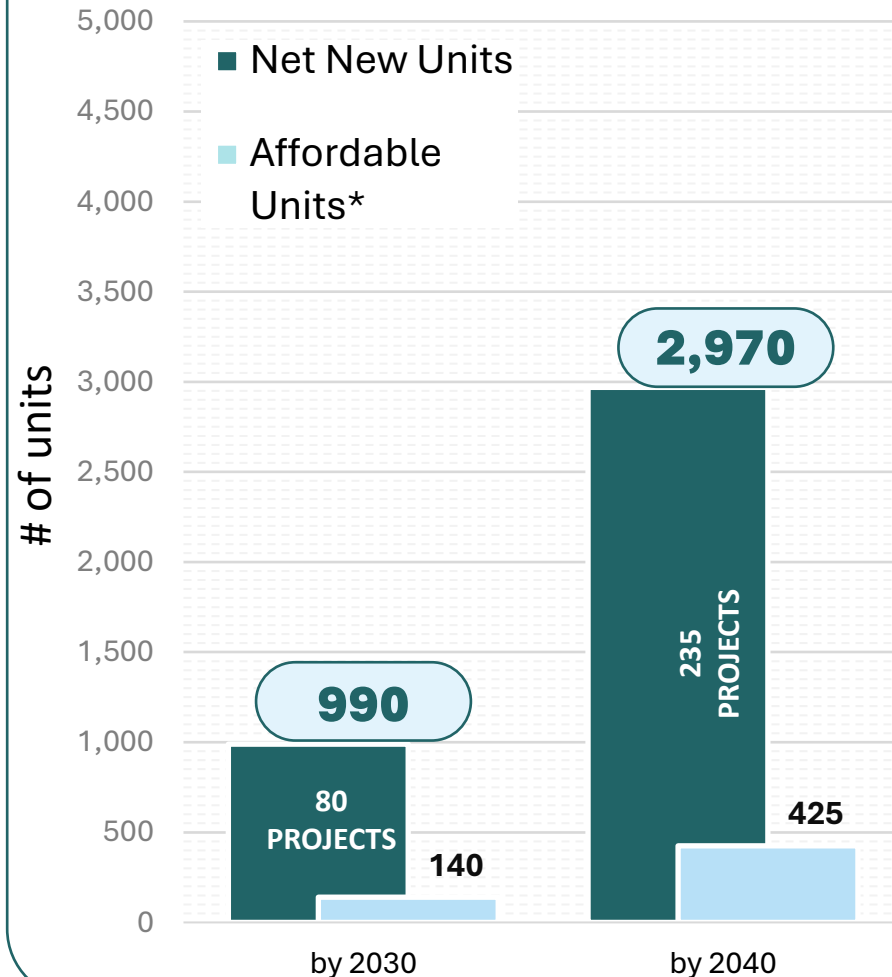


4 Four Story As-of-Right + Up to Eight Stories on Select Neighborhood Streets

Four story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts, and six or eight stories allowed along select neighborhood streets (Broadway, Prospect St, Huron Ave, Concord Ave)



How much housing it could create:



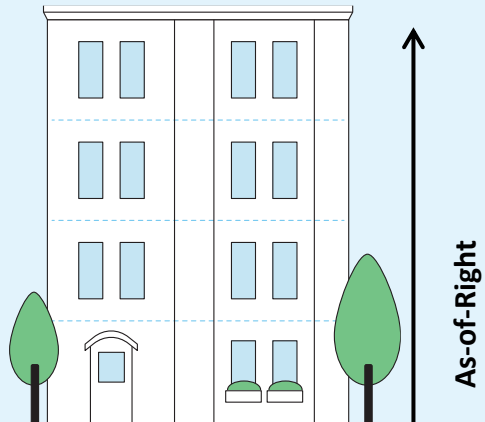
Neighborhood streets included in residential districts (not squares and corridors) to avoid double counting.

*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

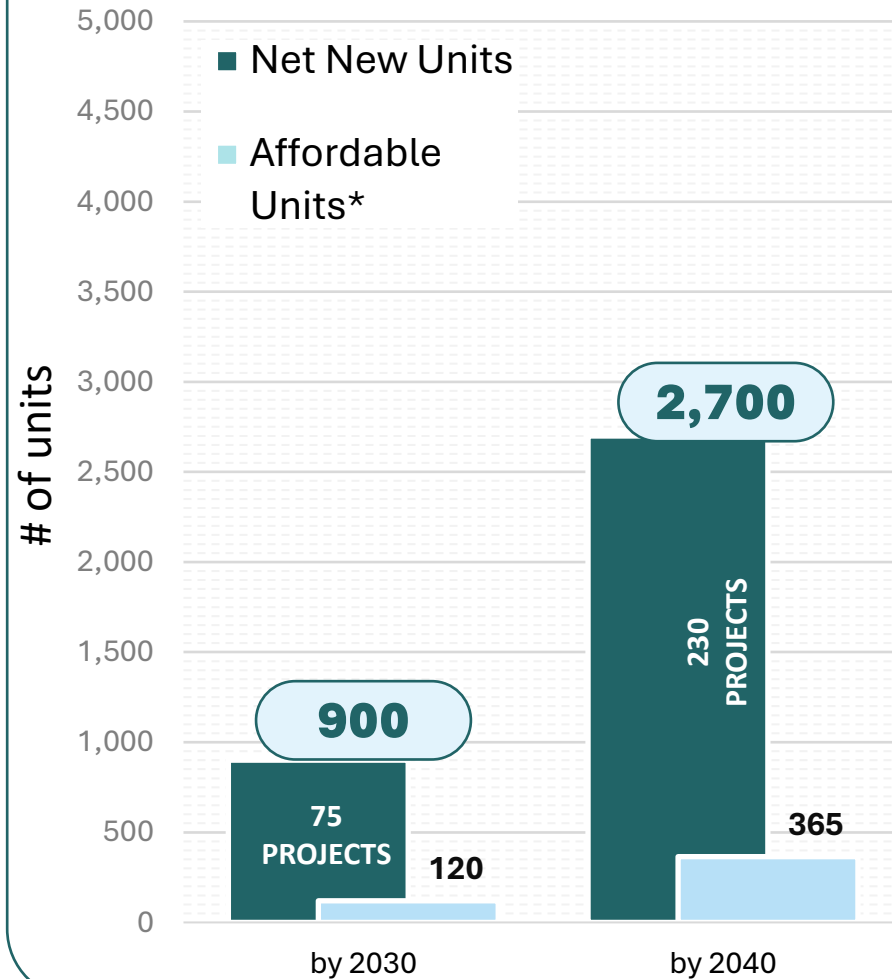
5 Four Story As-of-Right

Four story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts

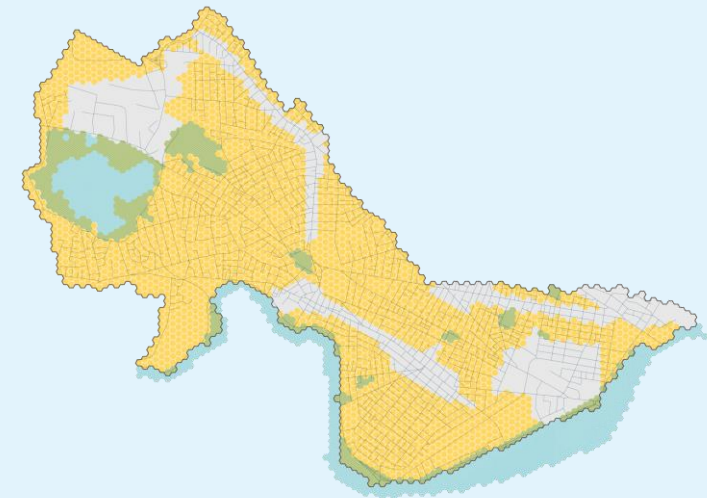
What it would allow



How much housing it could create:



Where it would apply



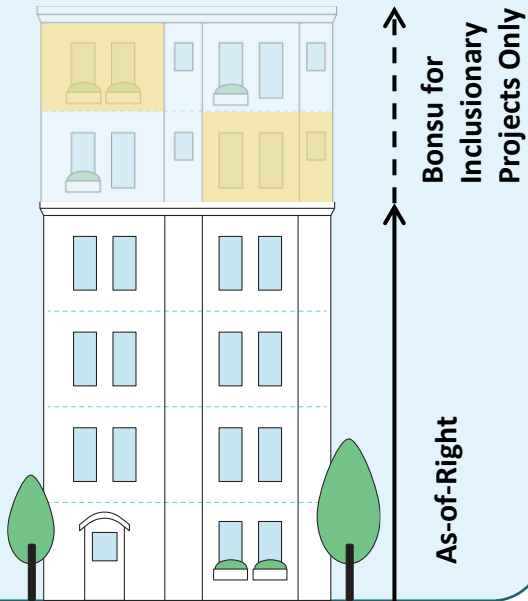
Citywide, primarily applying to residential neighborhoods

*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

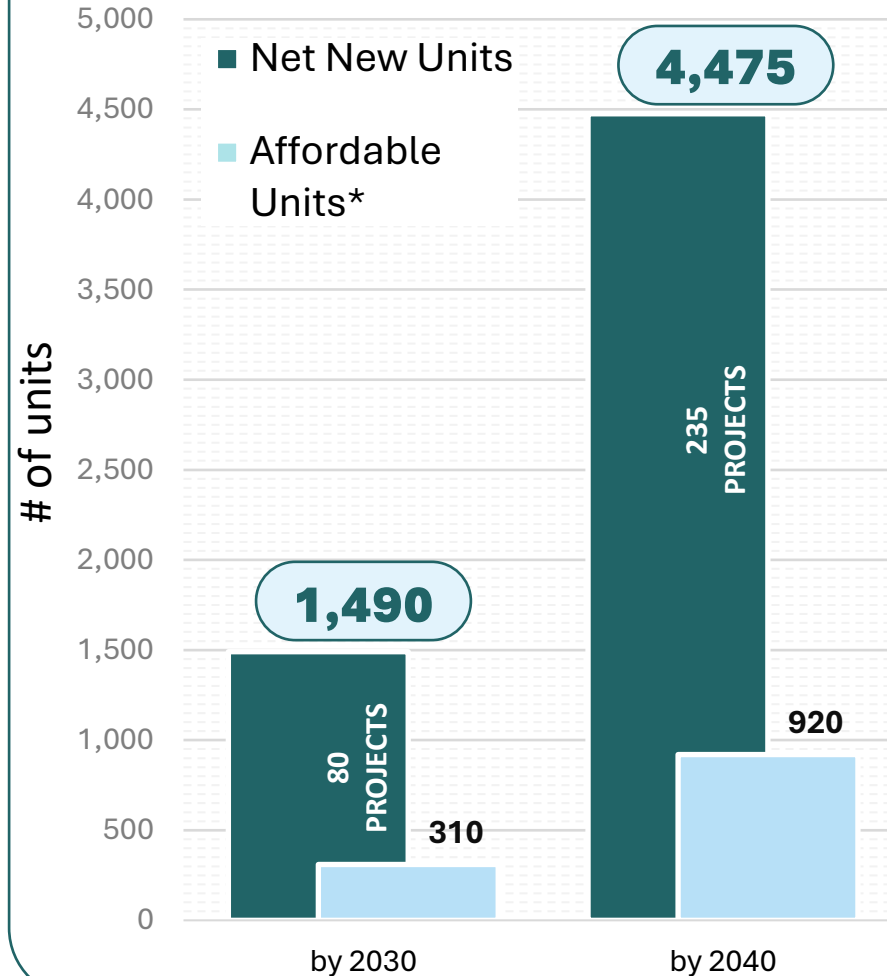
6 Four Story + Two Story Bonus Only for Inclusionary Zoning Projects

Four story multifamily housing allowed in all Residential Districts, with an additional two stories for projects that include affordable housing consistent with the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance.

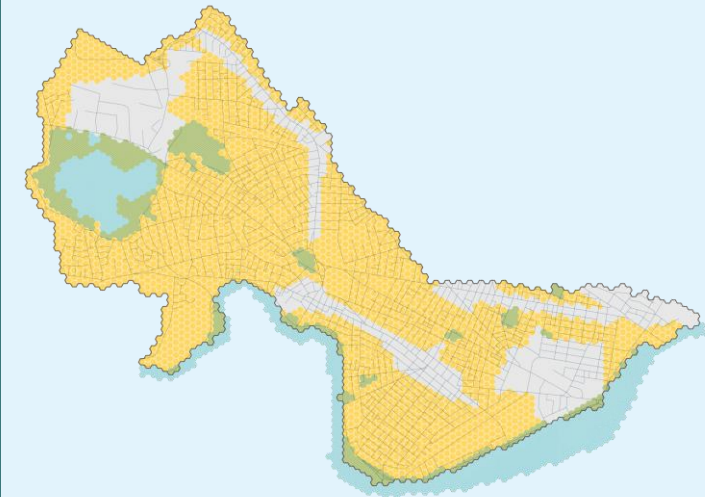
What it would allow



How much housing it could create:



Where it would apply

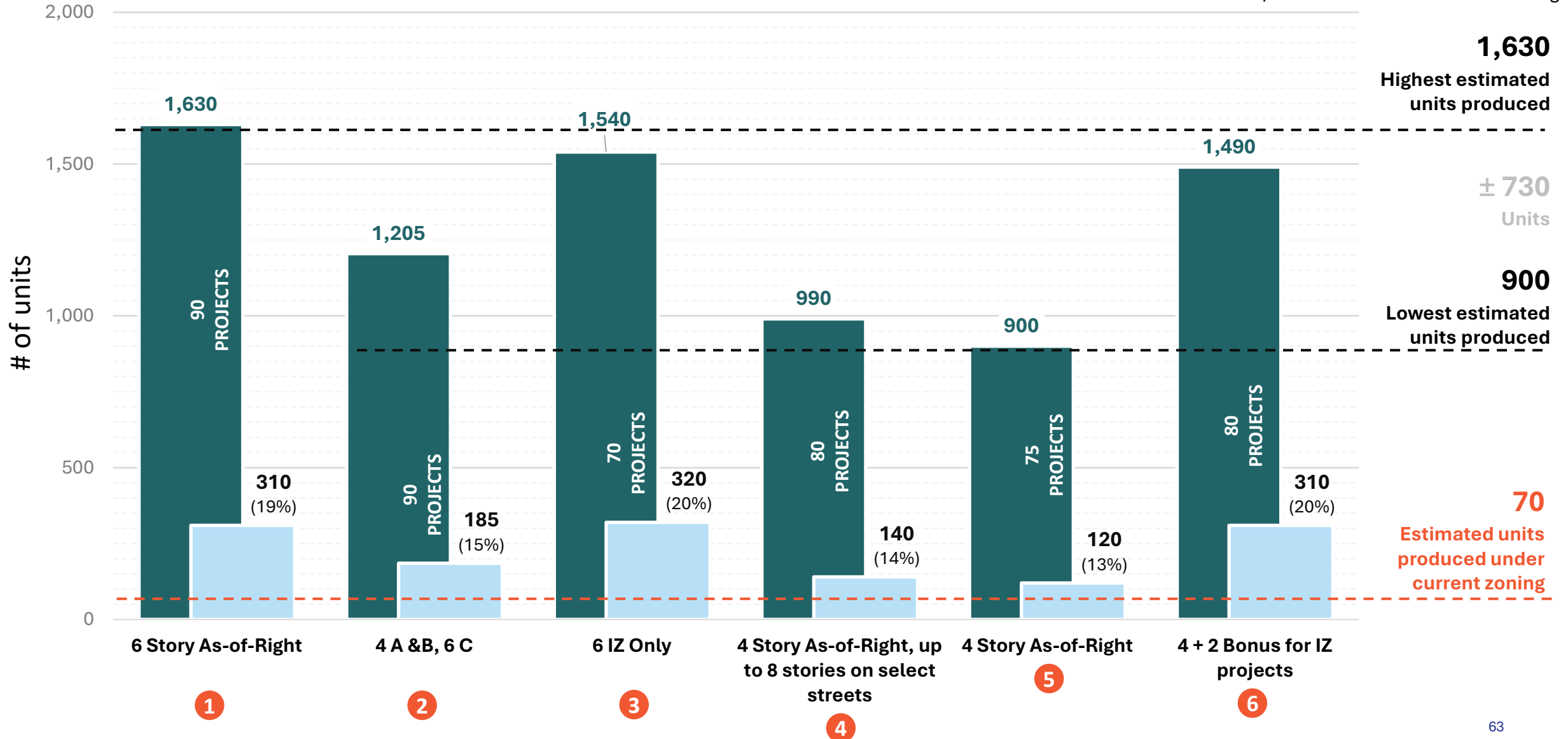


Citywide, primarily applying to residential neighborhoods

*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

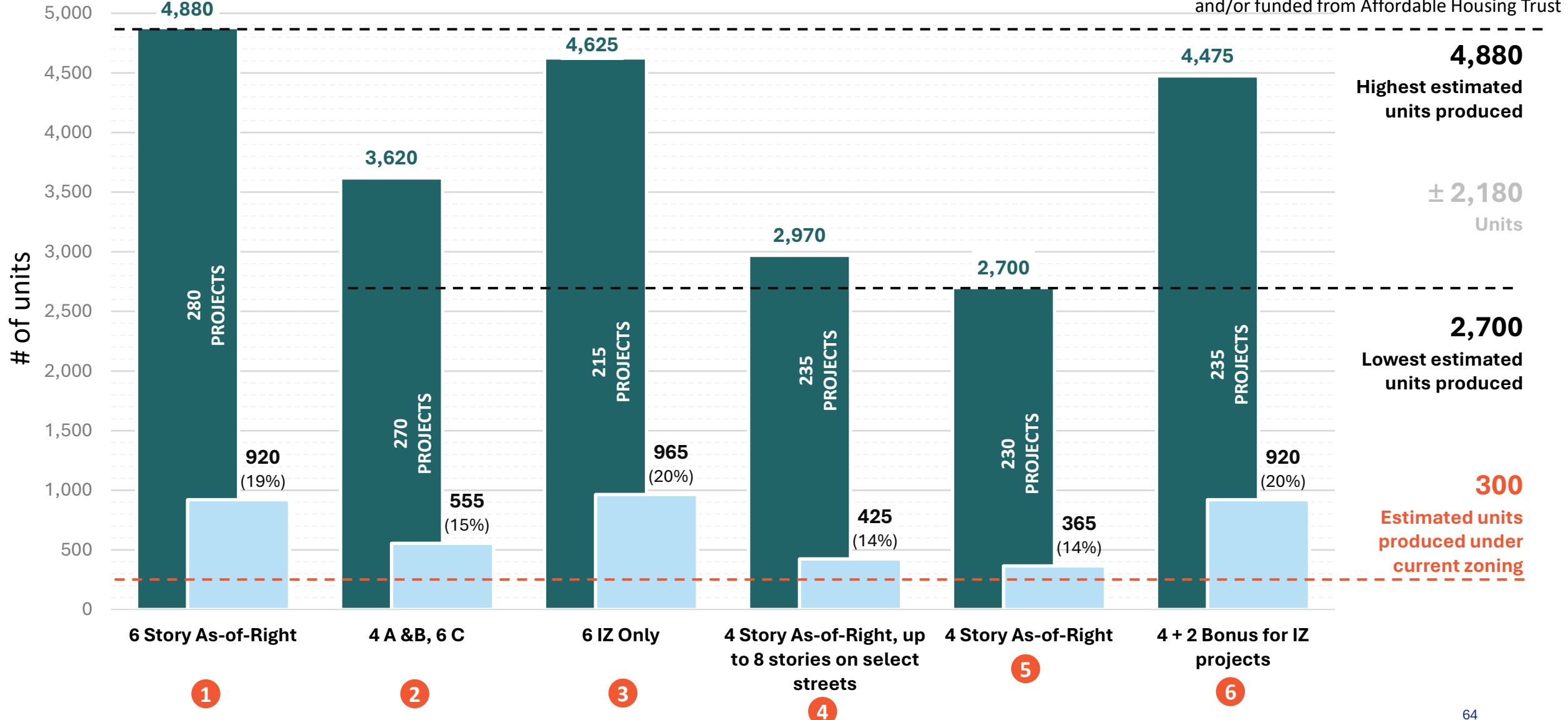
Comparing Residential Scenarios by 2030

■ Net new units
■ Affordable units* (% of net new)
 *does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust



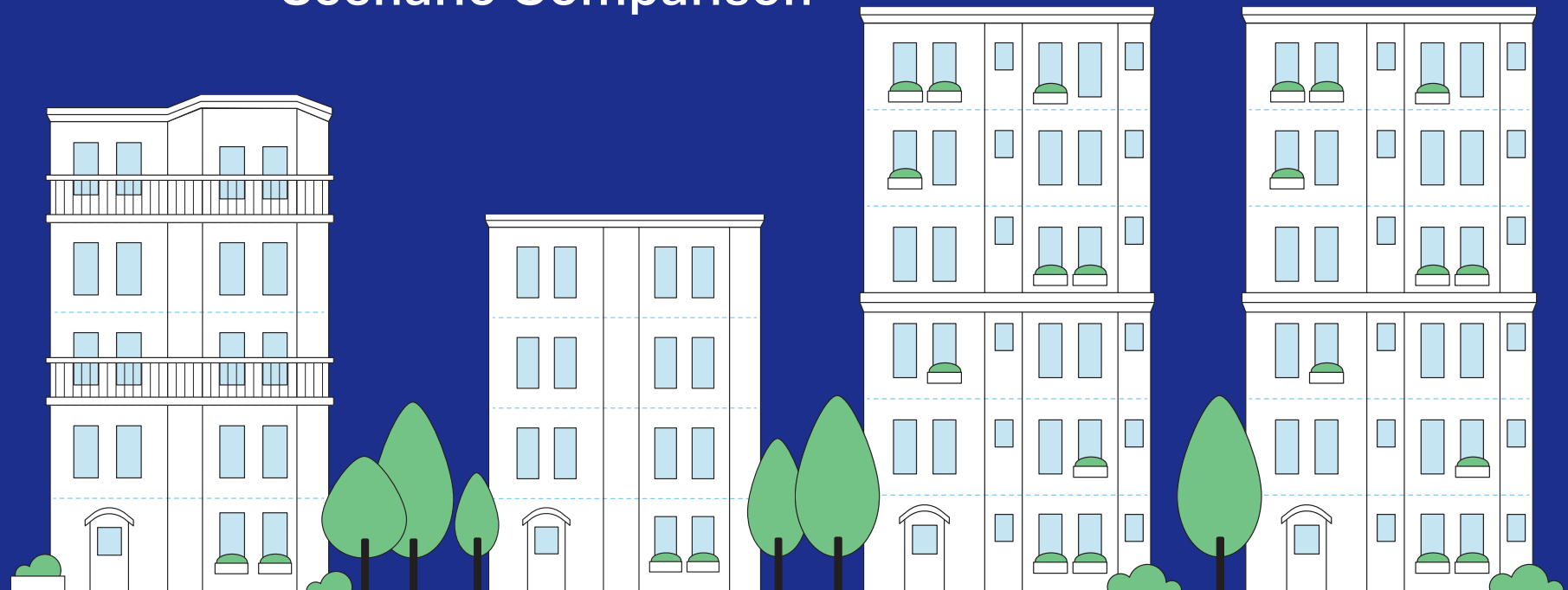
Comparing Residential Scenarios by 2040

■ Net new units
■ Affordable units* (% of net new)
*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust



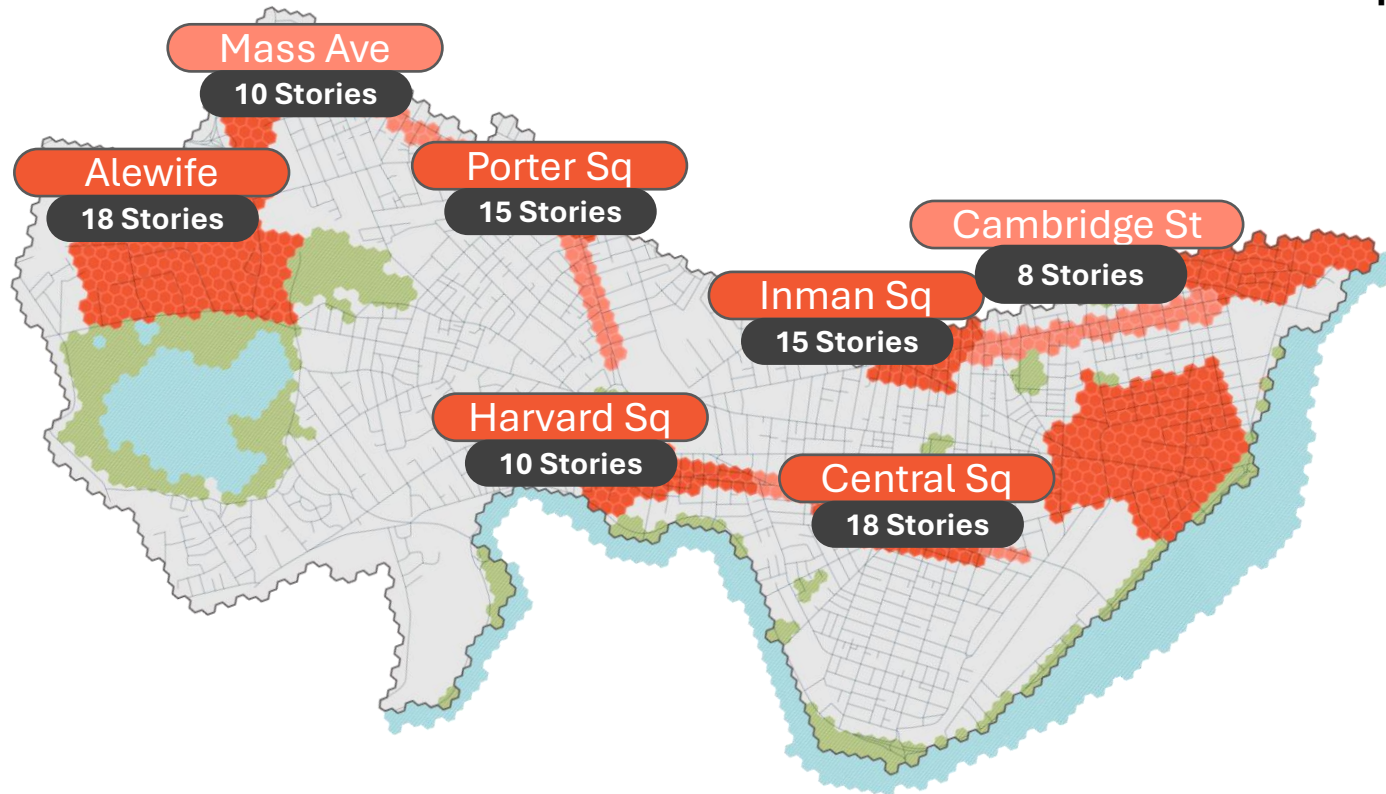
Squares & Corridors

Scenario Comparison



Squares & Corridors Rezoning Scenario

Where it would apply:



Only in designated major squares or corridors

Proposed heights guided by City Council Policy Order

Projections assume rezoning the following areas:

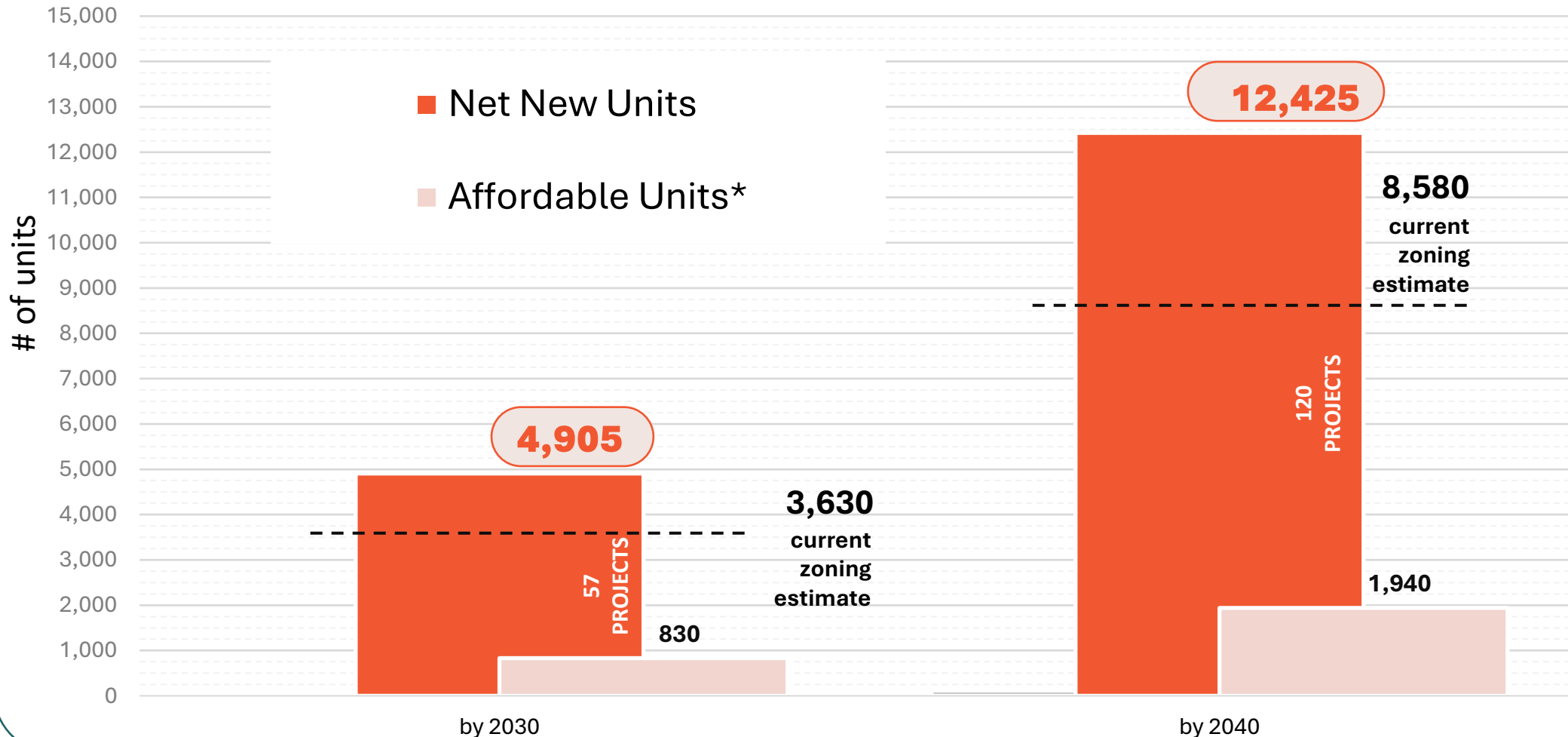
- Cambridge Street
- Mass Ave
- Central Square
- Porter Square
- Inman Square
- Harvard Square
- Alewife Triangle & Shopping Center

Current zoning assumed in recently planned and rezoned areas:

- Kendall Square
- Alewife Quad
- Cambridge Crossing

Squares & Corridors Rezoning Scenario

How much housing it could create:

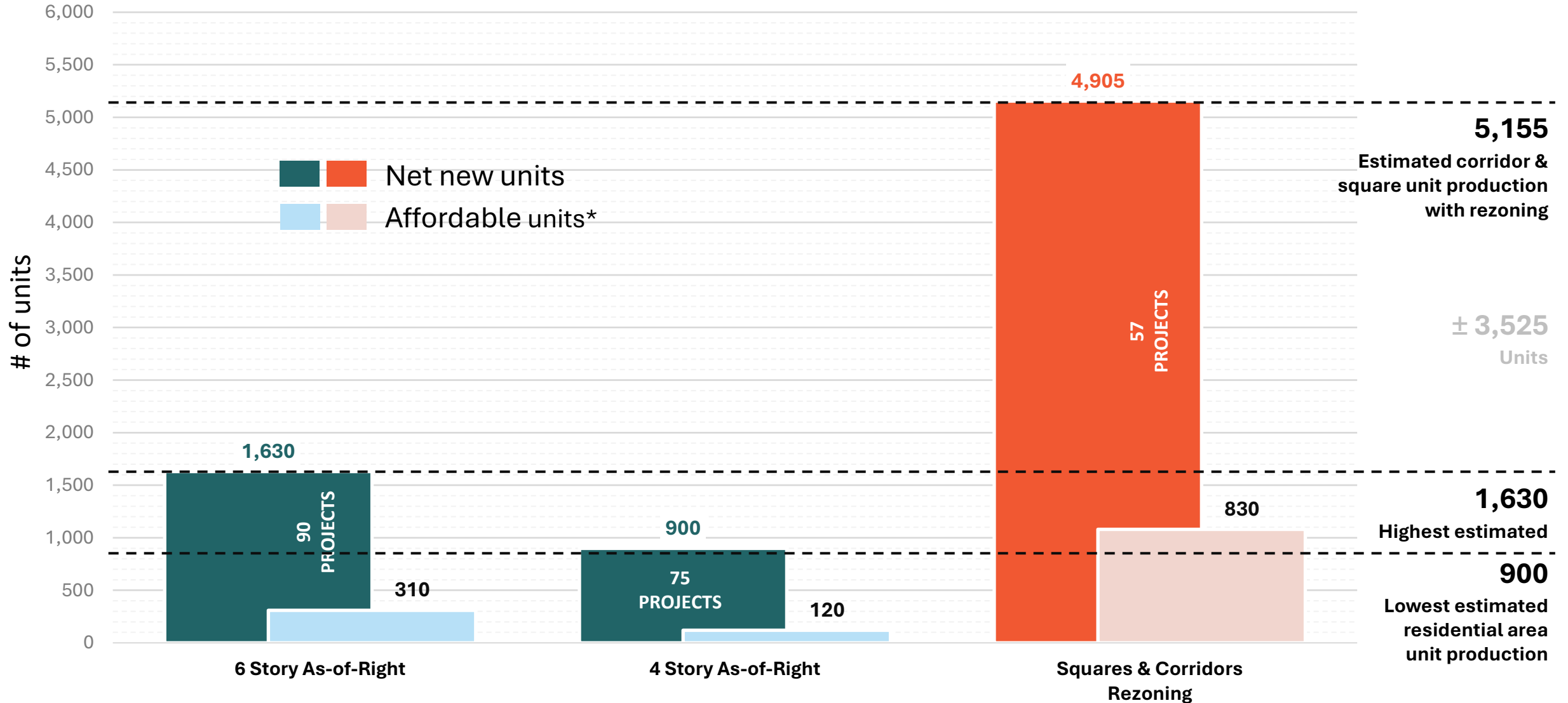


*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

Residential Districts and Square & Corridor Comparison

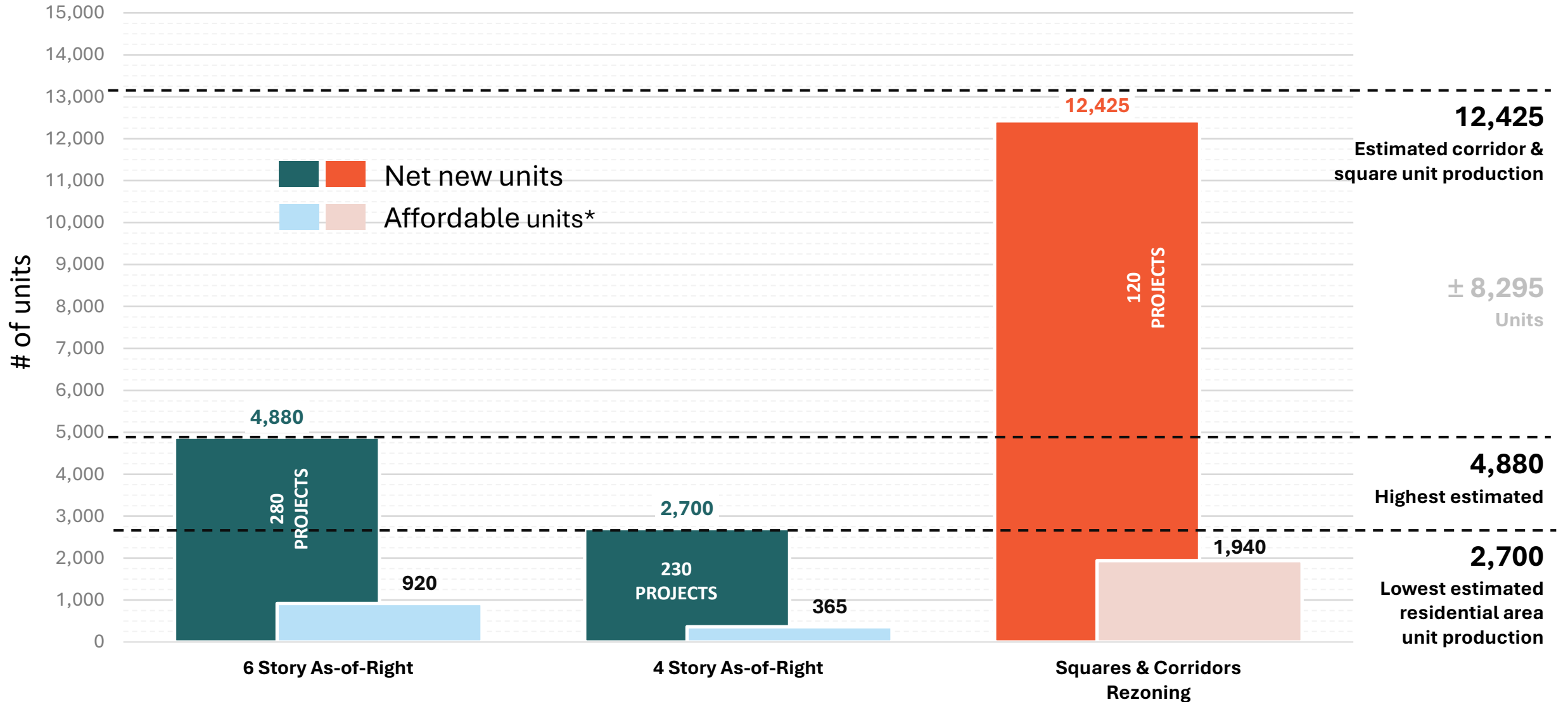


Comparing residential and corridor growth by 2030



*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

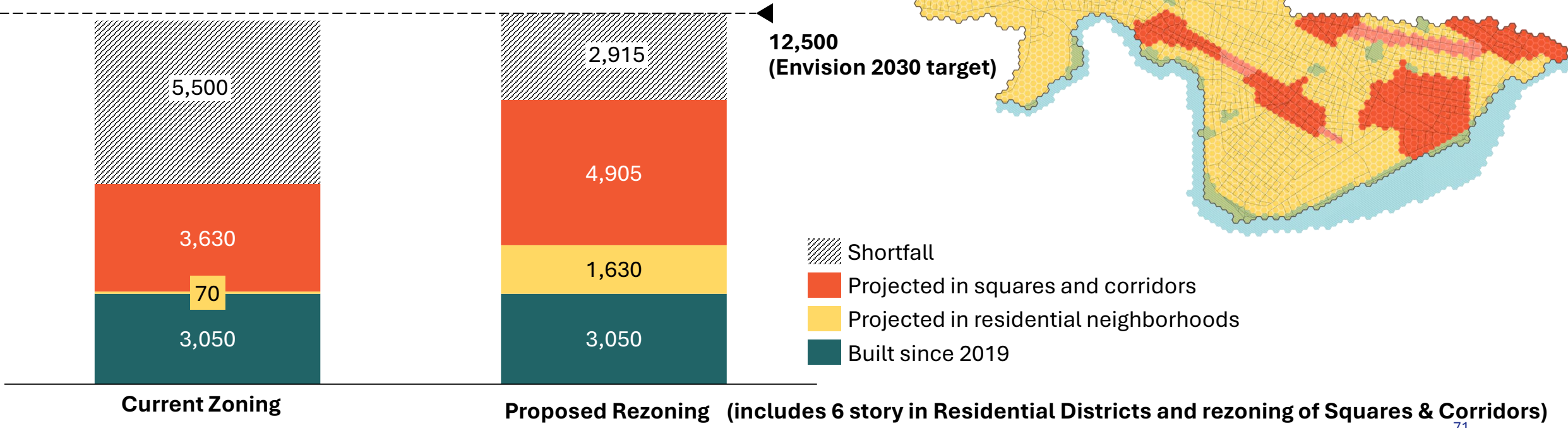
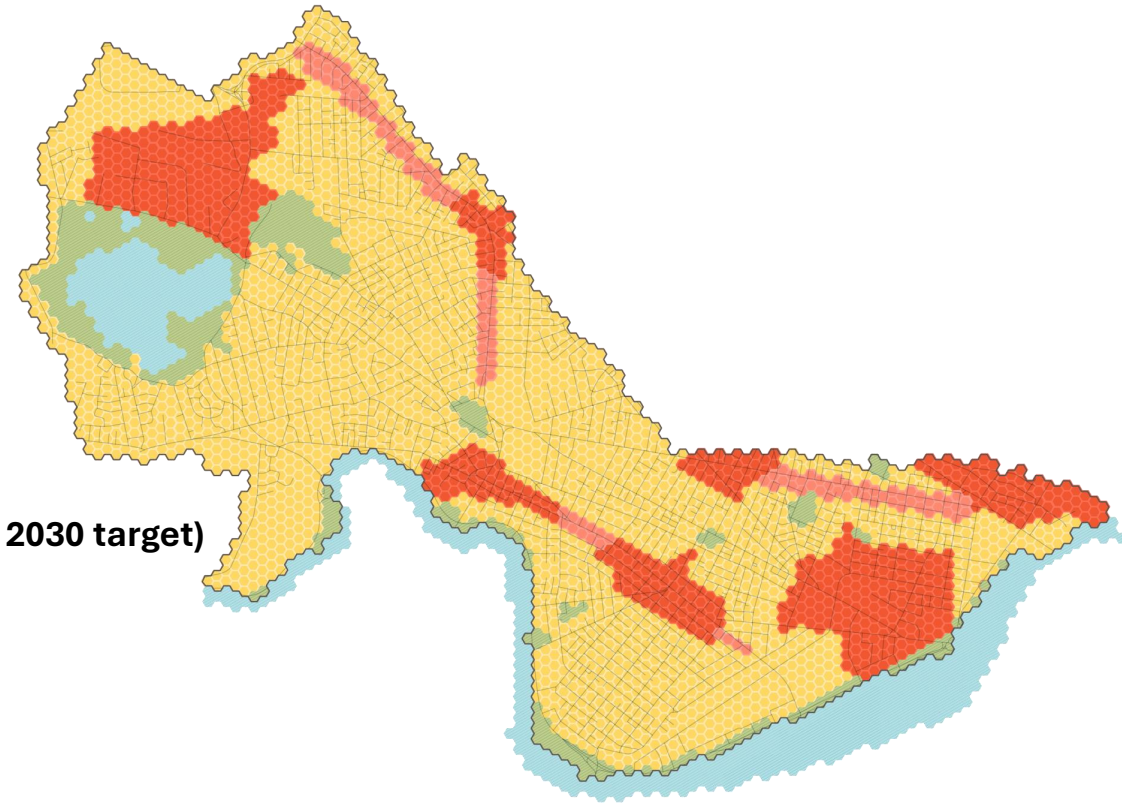
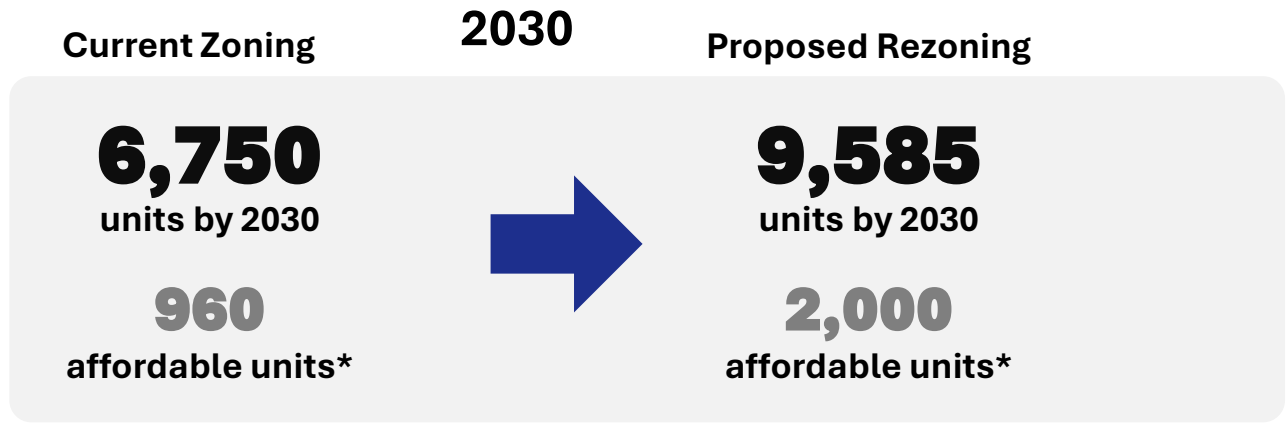
Comparing residential and corridor growth by 2040



*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

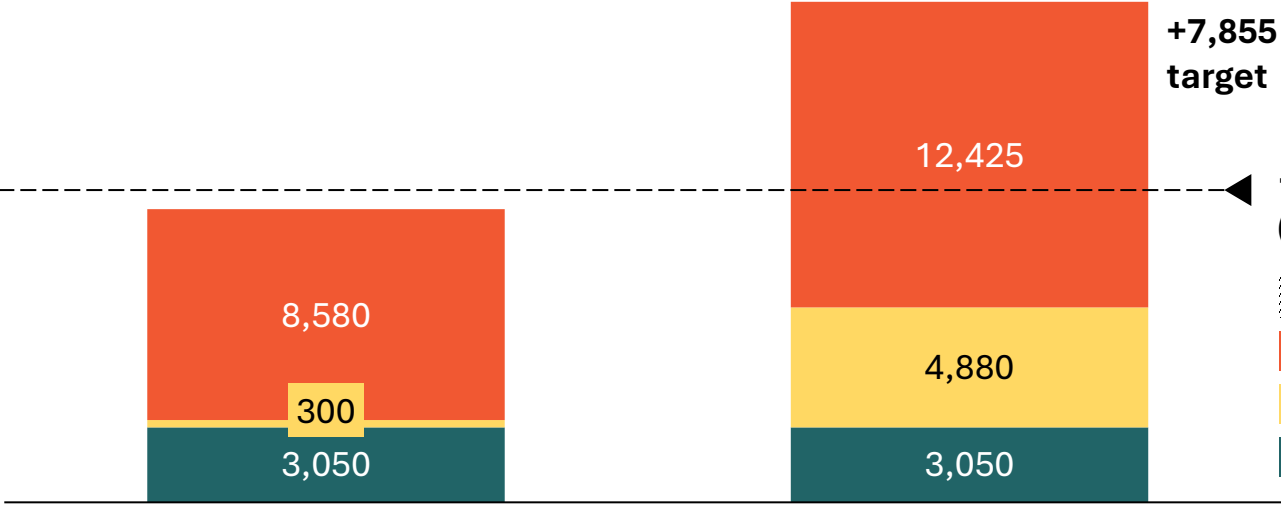
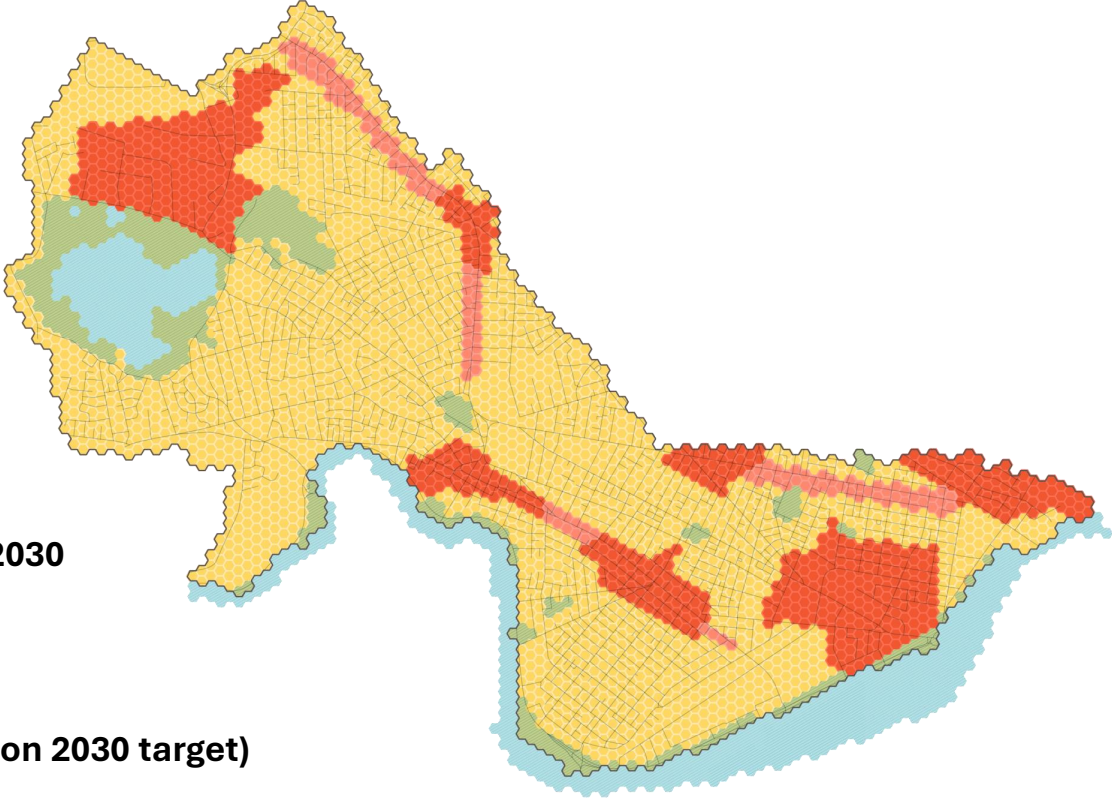
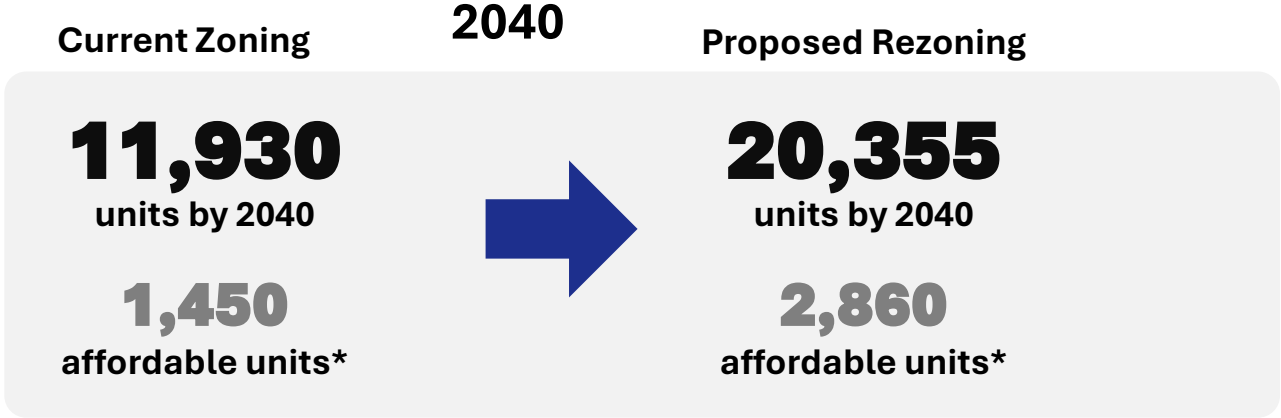
(Not included in proposed multifamily zoning petition) 70

By 2030, the City is expected to fall short of its housing target under both current and proposed zoning



*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

Under current zoning, the City is expected to meet its 2030 housing target by 2040. Under proposed rezoning of both residential districts and squares & corridors, the City is estimated to surpass its 2030 housing target by 2040.



+7,855 from 2030 target

12,500 (Envision 2030 target)

- Shortfall
- Projected in squares and corridors
- Projected in residential neighborhoods
- Built since 2019

Current Zoning **Proposed Rezoning (includes 6 story in Residential Districts and rezoning of Squares & Corridors)**

*does not include units developed under AHO and/or funded from Affordable Housing Trust

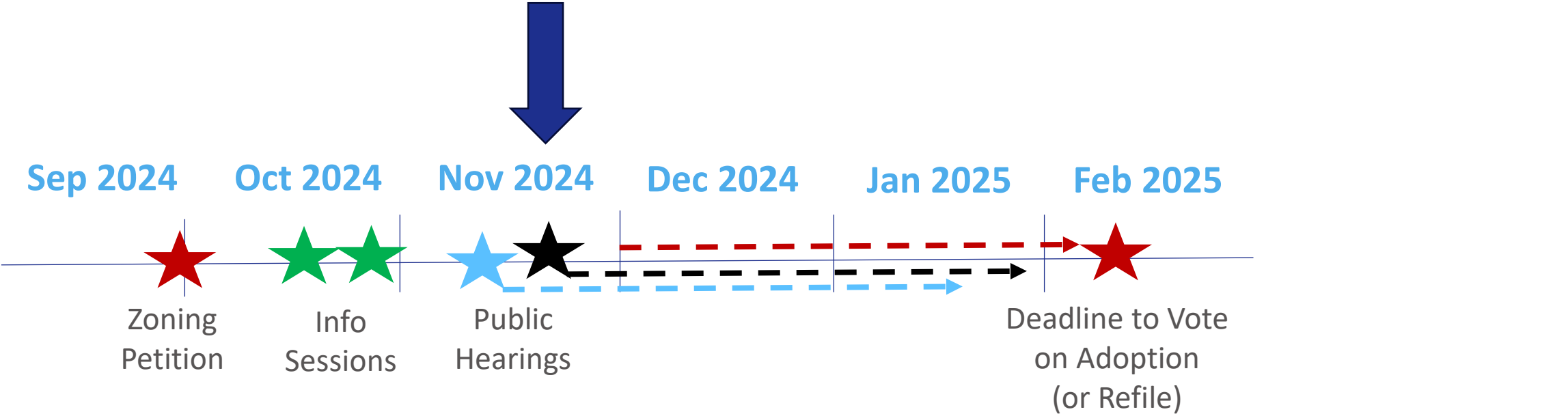
Summary

- Under **current zoning**, residential districts are estimated to produce approximately **70 new units by 2030**.
- By allowing a version of **multifamily zoning citywide** as studied in the analysis, City can gain between **900 – 1,630 new housing units by 2030 in residential districts**.
- Under **current zoning**, squares and corridors are estimated to produce **3,630 new housing units by 2030**.
- **Rezoning squares and corridors** to allow additional residential capacity is estimated to produce approximately **4,905 units by 2030**.
- The **current zoning petitions only address Residential Districts**. Rezoning of Squares and Corridors would need to be done through separate zoning petitions.



Process

Process Timeline

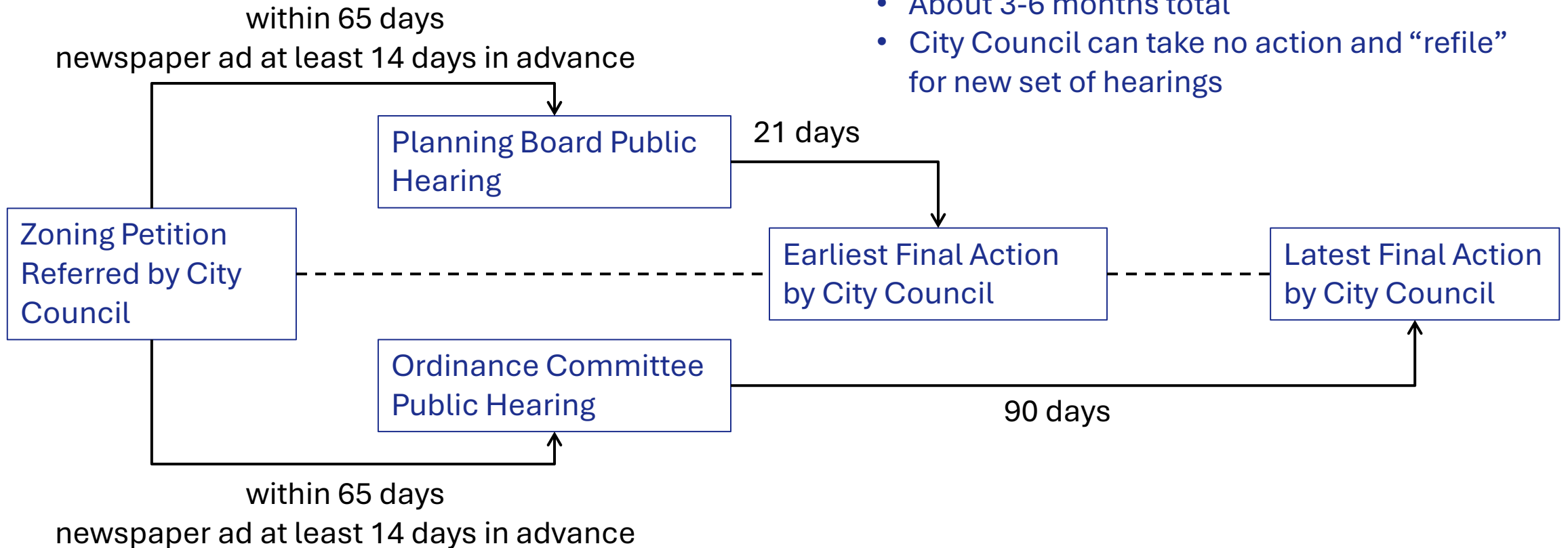


HOUSING COMMITTEE		CITY COUNCIL	ORDINANCE COMMITTEE & PLANNING BOARD	CITY COUNCIL
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- ★ City Council Committee Hearing
- ★ Planning Board Hearing
- ★ Community Meeting
- ★ City Council Meeting

Zoning Amendment Process

- About 3-6 months total
- City Council can take no action and “refile” for new set of hearings



- Requirements in state law (M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 5)
- City Council can amend the petition throughout the hearing process, but cannot change the “fundamental character”

Thank You