



# Western Avenue Corridor Study and Rezoning

## Urban Design Updates

Sept. 30, 2021



[bit.ly/westerncorridor](https://bit.ly/westerncorridor)  
[@bostonplans](https://twitter.com/bostonplans)

# Team



**Mark McGonagle**  
Planning/Community  
Engagement



**Matt Martin**  
Urban Design



**Michelle McCarthy**  
Housing Policy  
Manager



**Joe Blankenship**  
Transportation &  
Infrastructure  
Planning

Additional BPDA staff include: Tad Read, Te-Ming Chang, Meera Deean, Jim Fitzgerald, Jeong-Jun Ju, Prataap Patrose, Rosa Herrero de Andres, Grace Ng, Adam Johnson, Patricia Cafferky, Chantha Son

Other departments include: BPDA GIS, Graphics, Research; BTD, Parks.

# Agenda

1. Introduction & Housekeeping
2. May/June Public Feedback & How the Plan is Responding
3. Updated Urban Design Recommendations
4. Barry's Corner Public Realm Concepts
5. Housing Approach
6. Next Steps



# 1

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## Introductions & Housekeeping



# Project Website

[bit.ly/westerncorridor](https://bit.ly/westerncorridor)

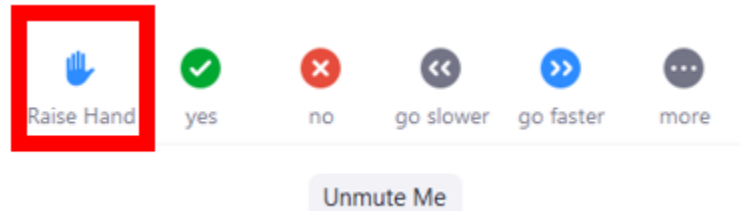
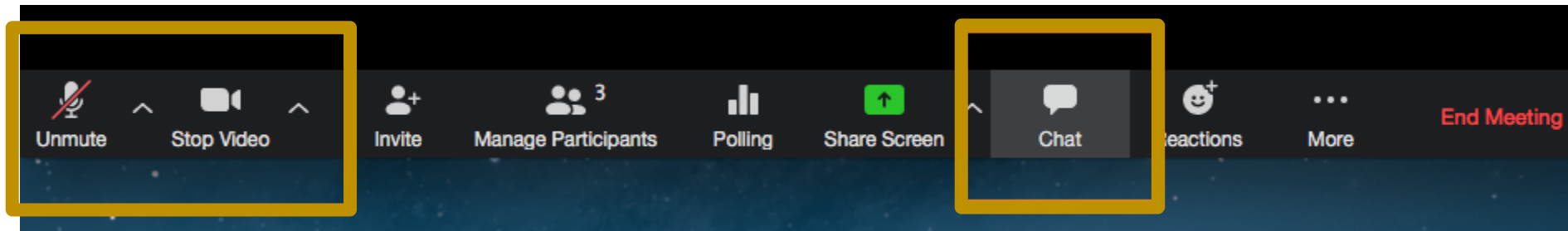
- Presentations (including tonight's!)
- Recordings from virtual meetings
- Project documents (e.g. Zoning Toolkit and Housing Toolkit)



# Zoom Tips

Your controls should be available at the bottom of the screen.

Clicking on these symbols activates different features:



# Virtual Meeting Protocols

- During the presentation you can ask questions through the chat feature. Depending on the question, we will answer it in writing in the chat box, verbally, or wait until the Q&A period.
- Following the presentation there will be time for verbal Q&A. Please be respectful of each other's time so that all may participate in the discussion.
- You can always set up a conversation with the project team through Joe Blankenship, [joseph.blankenship@boston.gov](mailto:joseph.blankenship@boston.gov).



# Meeting Recording

- The BPDA will be recording this meeting and posting it on its website at [bit.ly/WesternCorridor](https://bit.ly/WesternCorridor). The recording will include the presentation, Q&A, and public comments afterwards.
- Also, it is possible that participants may be recording the meeting with their phone cameras or other devices.
- If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.

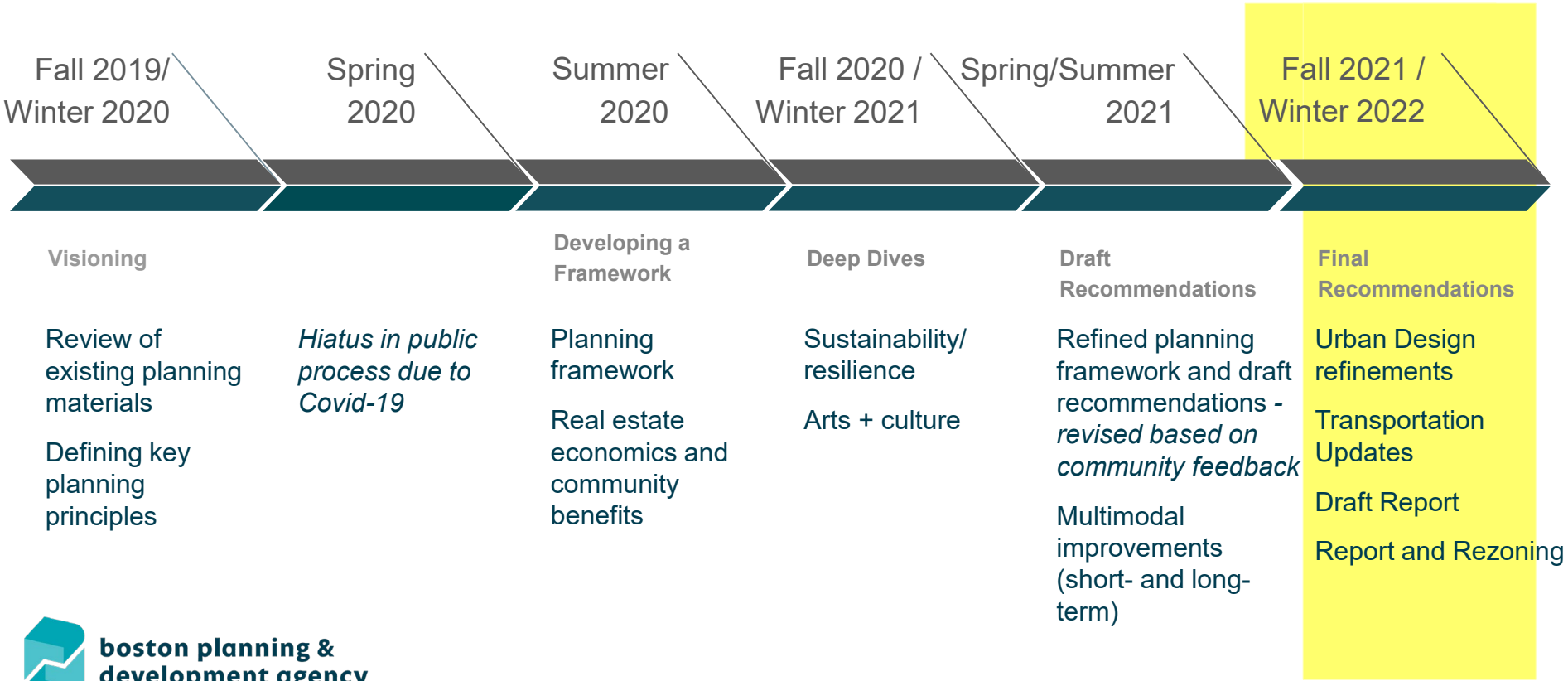


# 2

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**May / June Public Feedback  
& How the Plan is Responding**

# Timeline





# What we heard about Transportation & What we are doing

- Analyze **traffic impacts of development** in Allston Yards and potential development along Leo Birmingham Parkway at Nonantum Circle
- Evaluate **feasibility of a transitway** along Western Avenue
- Develop strategies to address **parking, pick up/drop off & loading/unloading** along Western Avenue
- **Report back** in Fall

*See June 30, 2021 Transportation meeting materials at [bit.ly/westerncorridor](https://bit.ly/westerncorridor).*

# What we heard about Urban Design

- Concern about the **impacts of the scale of new development** on Western Ave
- Questions about **shadow impact** on Soldiers Field Road and open spaces
- Desire for holistic vision for **Barry's Corner**

*See May 25, 2021 Urban Design meeting materials at [bit.ly/westerncorridor](https://bit.ly/westerncorridor).*

# What we heard about Urban Design & How the plan is addressing these issues

- Concern about the **impacts of scale of new development** on Western Ave
  - Enforce lot coverage to ensure light, air and views between buildings
  - Setbacks along street to create view corridor
- Questions about **shadow impact** on Soldiers Field Road and open spaces
  - Ensure tallest parts of the building is located in the middle of the parcel
- Desire for holistic vision for **Barry's Corner**
  - Concept 1: Reconfigure Spurr St.
  - Concept 2: Open Space
  - Concept 3: Community Hall

See May 25, 2021 Urban Design meeting materials at [bit.ly/westerncorridor](https://bit.ly/westerncorridor).

# 3

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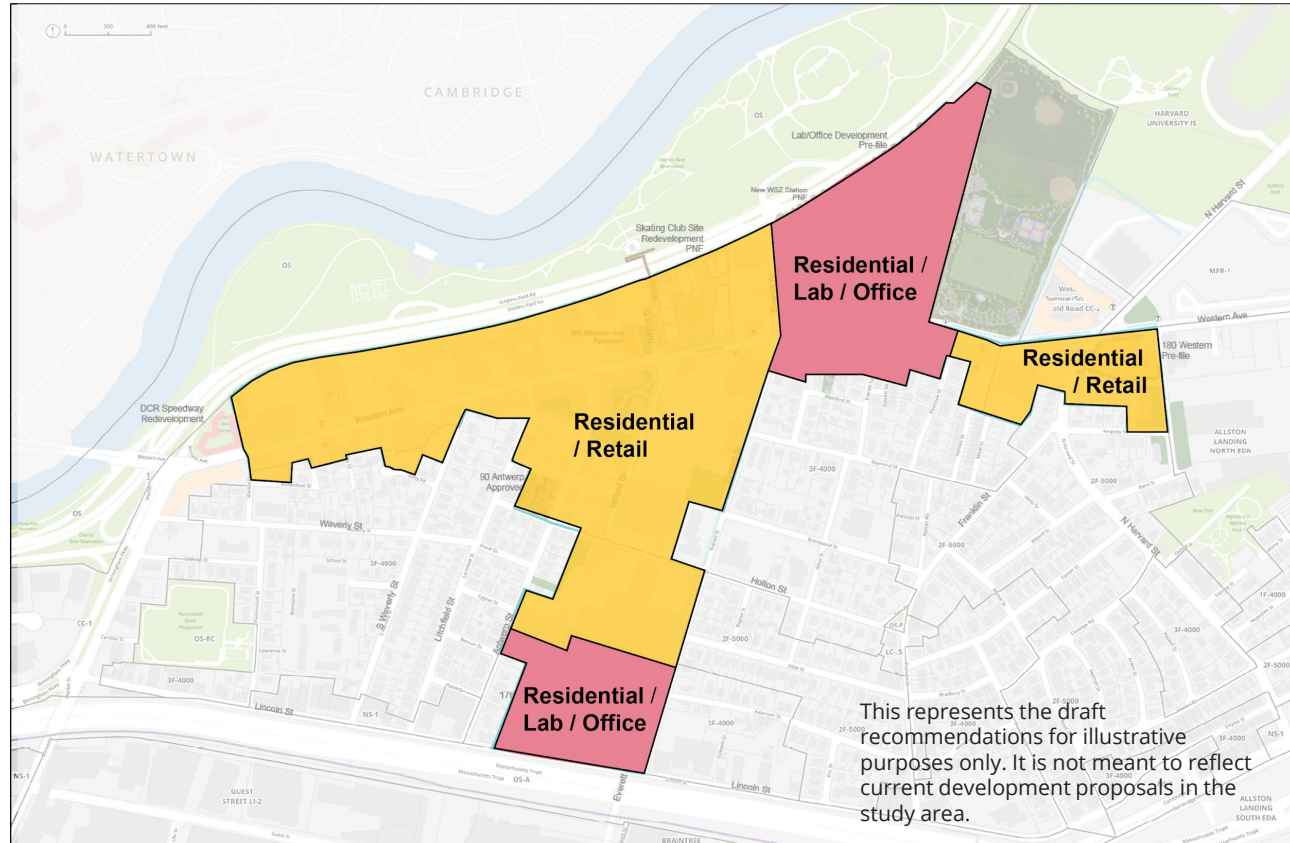
## Updated Urban Design Recommendations

# Urban Design - Recap

## Land Use

Encourage residential and retail throughout the study area.

Concentrate lab/office uses and height to Barry's Corner and closer to Lincoln Street.



# Urban Design - Recap

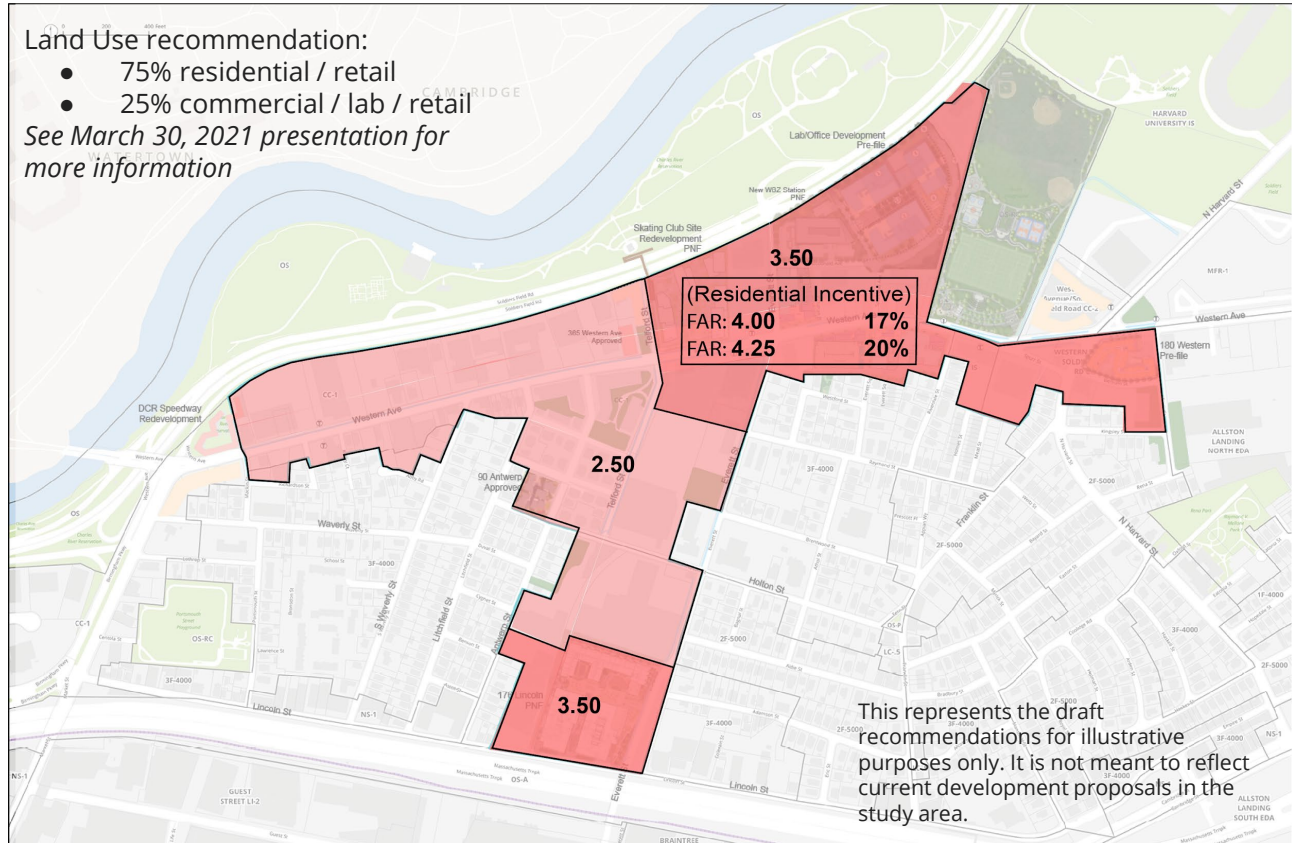
## FAR

Floor area ratio (FAR) is the ratio of a building's total floor area (gross floor area) to the size of the parcel upon which it is built.

Land Use recommendation:

- 75% residential / retail
- 25% commercial / lab / retail

See March 30, 2021 presentation for more information





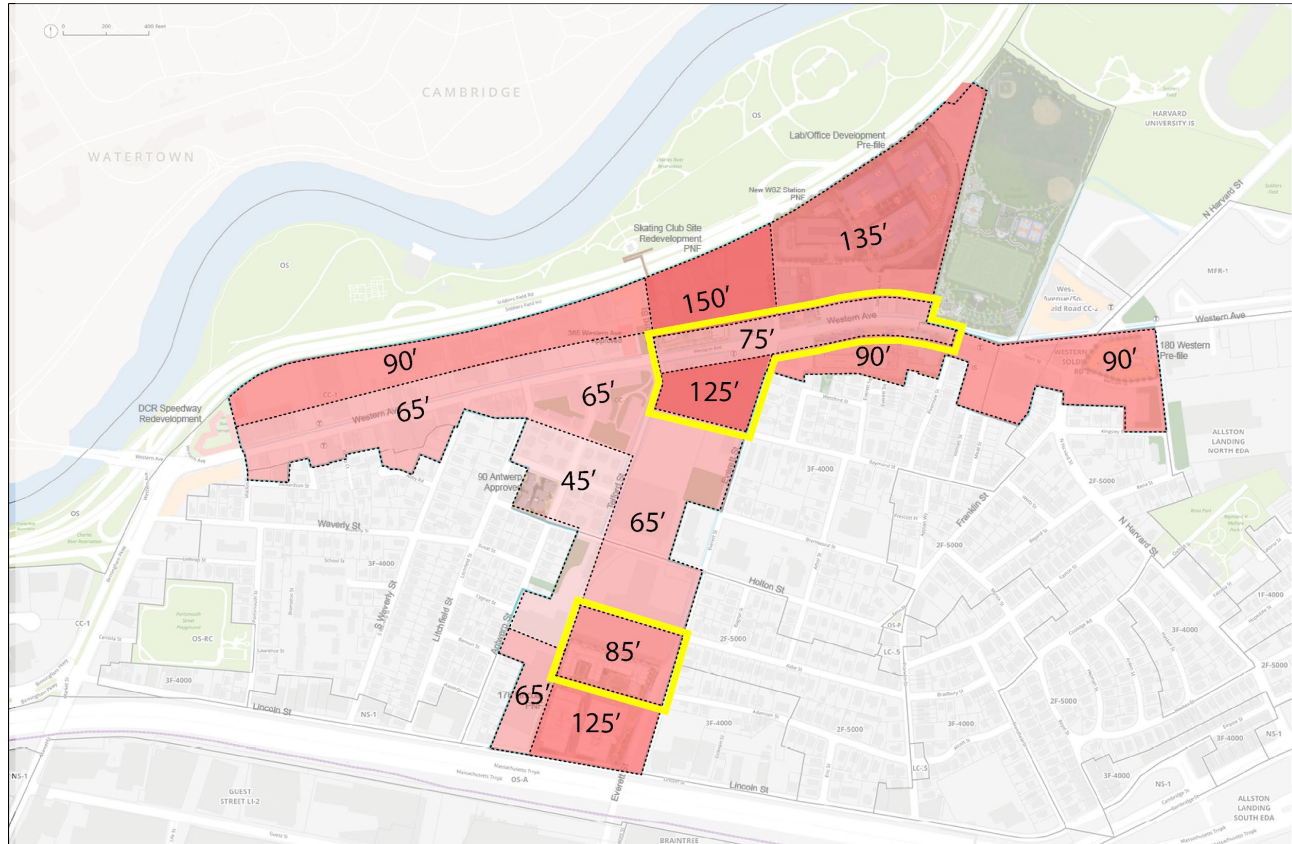
# Urban Design - Recap

## Height

Allow greater heights toward the river, Barry's Corner, and Lincoln Street.

Limit heights closer to existing residential fabric.

Limit heights in the Holton Street corridor to connect the residential neighborhoods east to west.

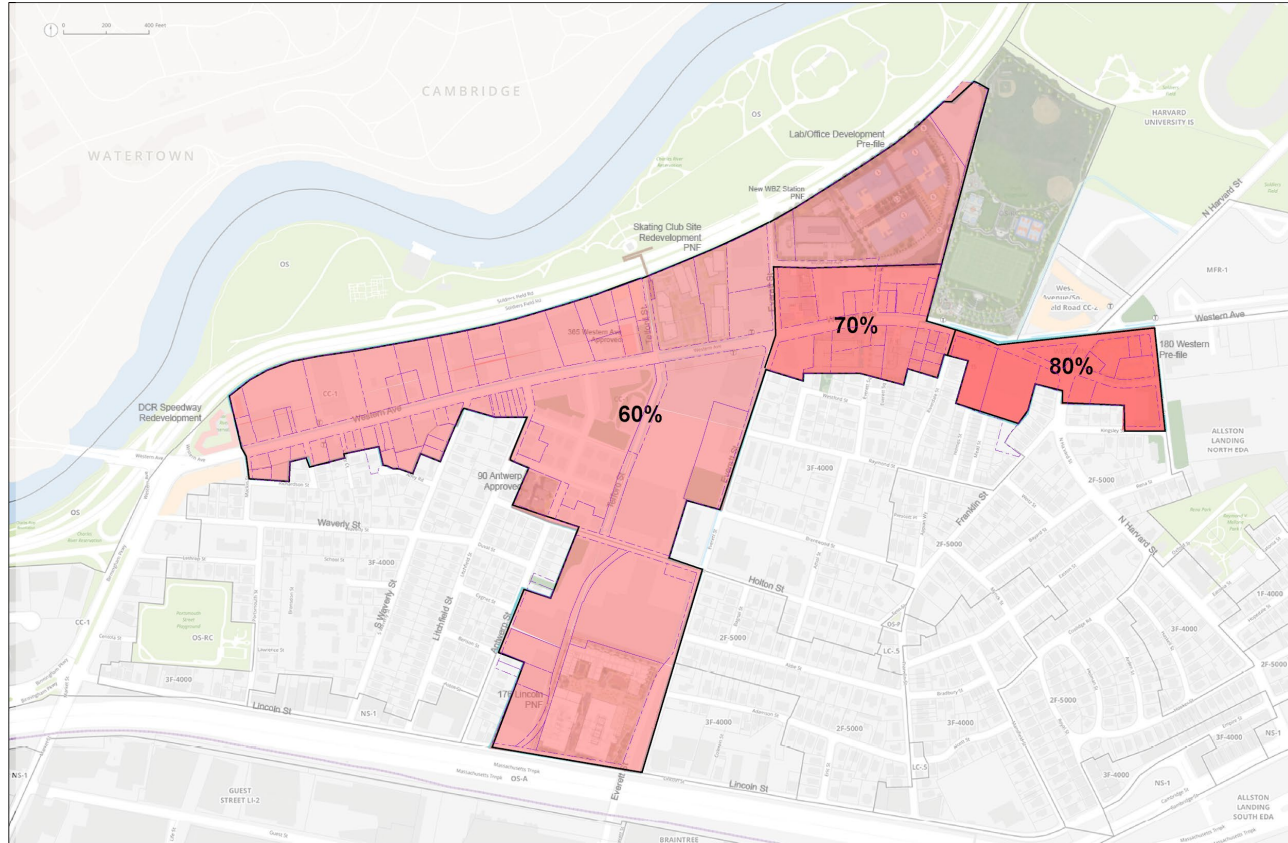


# Urban Design - Recap

## Lot coverage

Limit lot coverage to ensure that streets and open spaces can be built through new developments.

Allow greater lot coverage near Barry's Corner, where parcels are smaller and greater intensity of activity is desired.

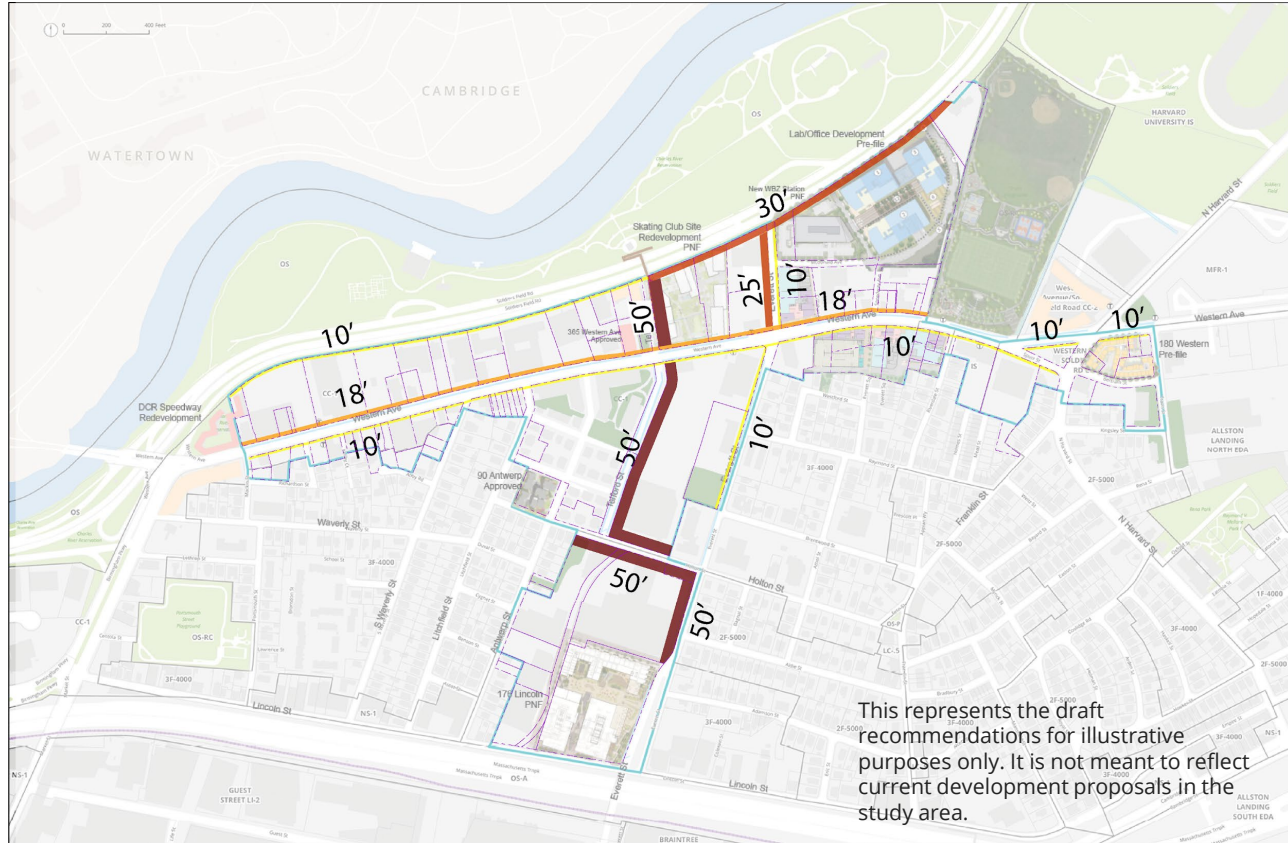


# Urban Design - Recap

## Setbacks on Existing Streets

Create setbacks along Western Avenue to allow multiple modes of transportation and generous sidewalks.

Create a generous path for people walking and biking between the river and the commuter rail station.



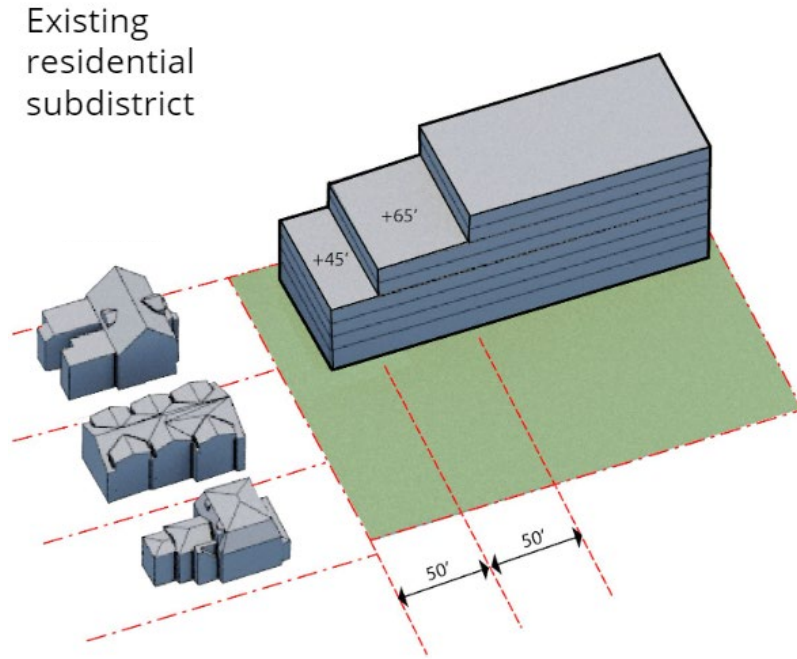
This represents the draft recommendations for illustrative purposes only. It is not meant to reflect current development proposals in the study area.

# Urban Design - Recap

## Greater Setbacks

**Community feedback:**  
Concern about **height and density**, especially as it abuts existing residential

**Response:**  
**More separation**  
between residential subdistricts and tallest building elements





# What we heard about Urban Design & How the plan is addressing these issues

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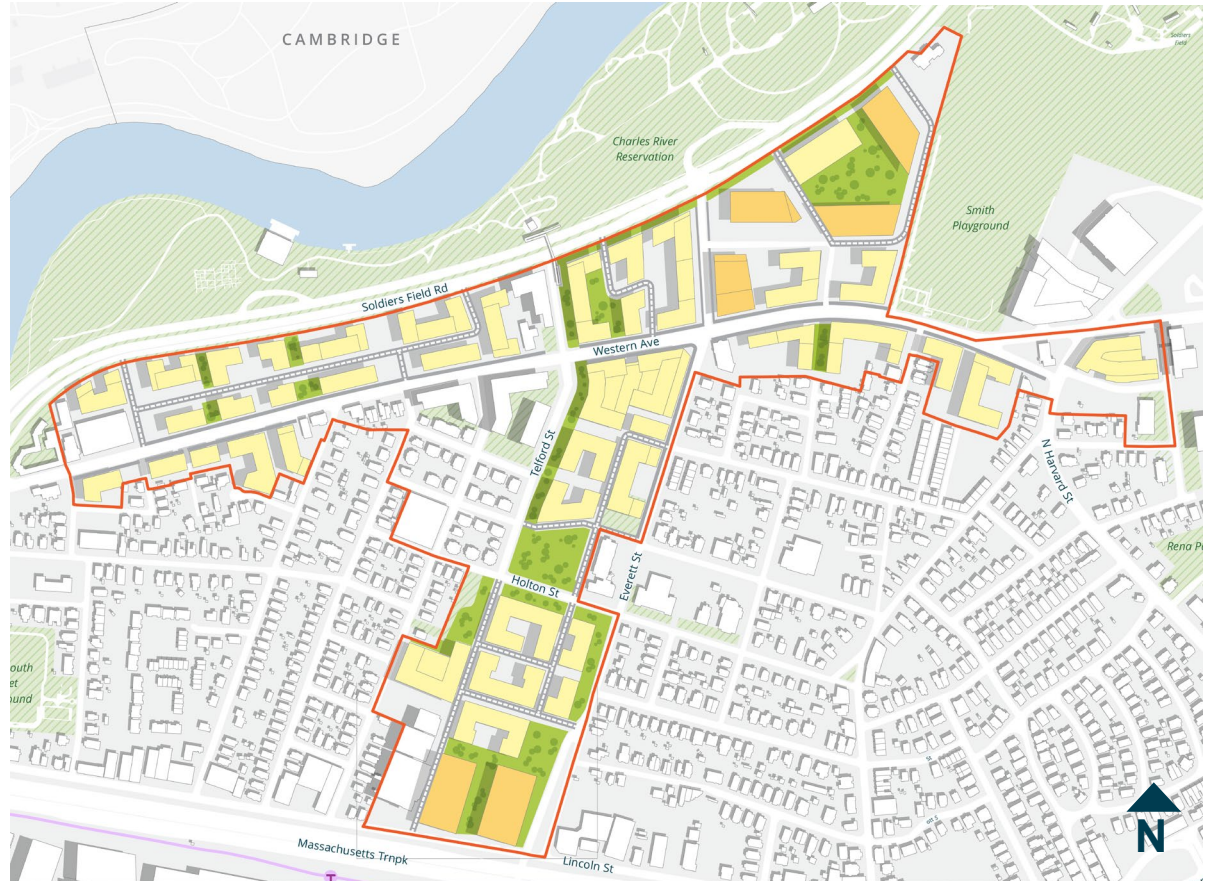
# Urban Design

**Community feedback:**  
Concern about the  
**impacts of scale of new  
development** on  
Western Ave

**Response:**

1. Enforce lot coverage to ensure **light, air and views** between buildings
2. Setbacks along street to create **view corridors**

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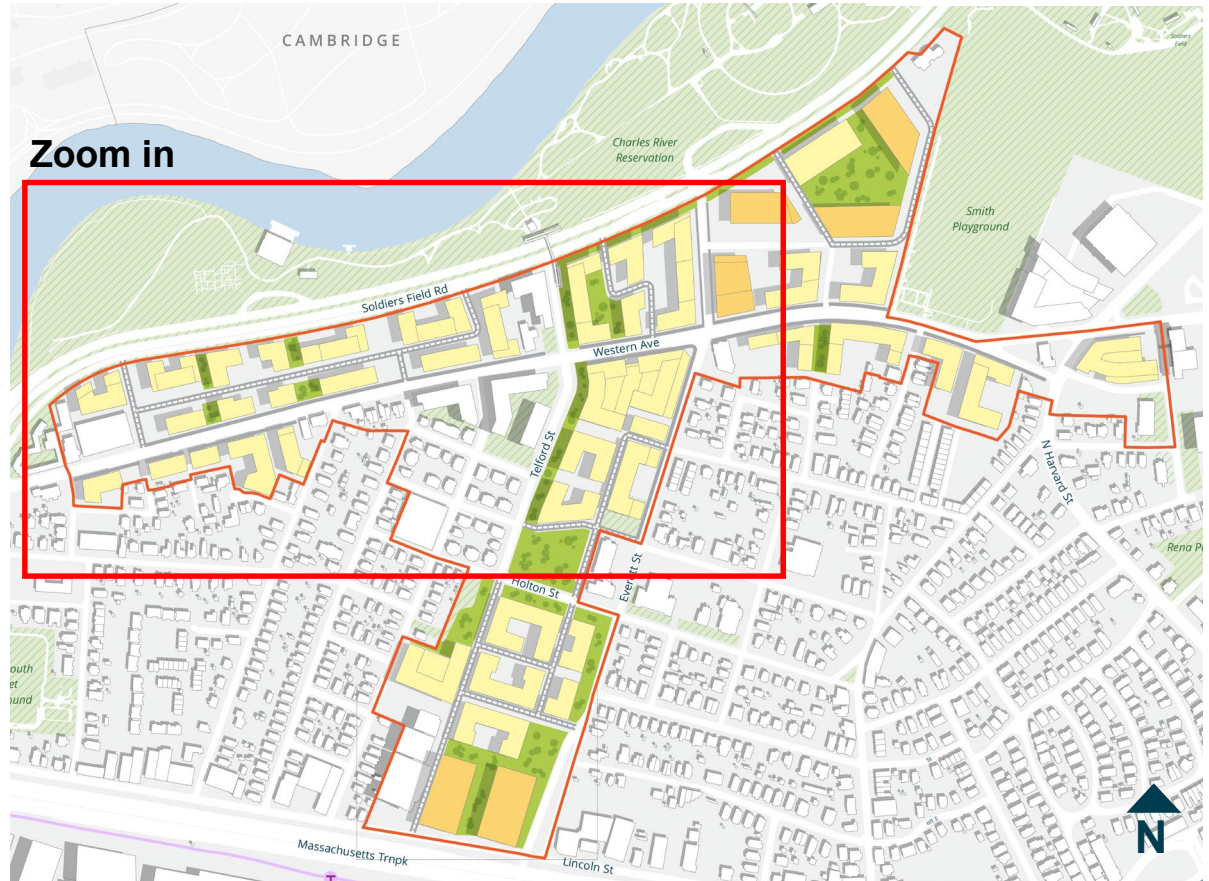


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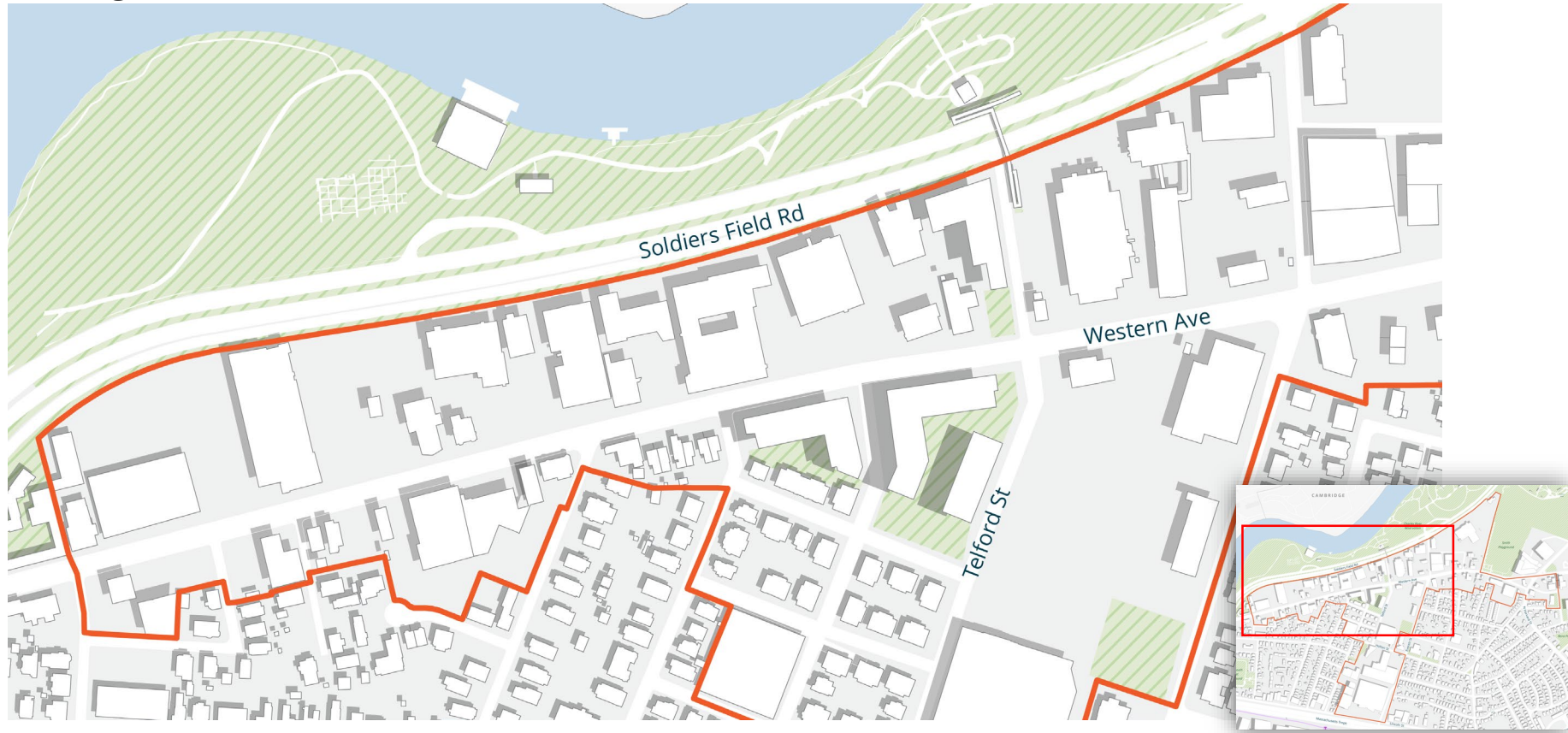
- Response:**
1. Enforce lot coverage to ensure **light, air and views** between buildings
  2. Setbacks along street to create **view corridors**

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# Urban Design Recommendations

Existing

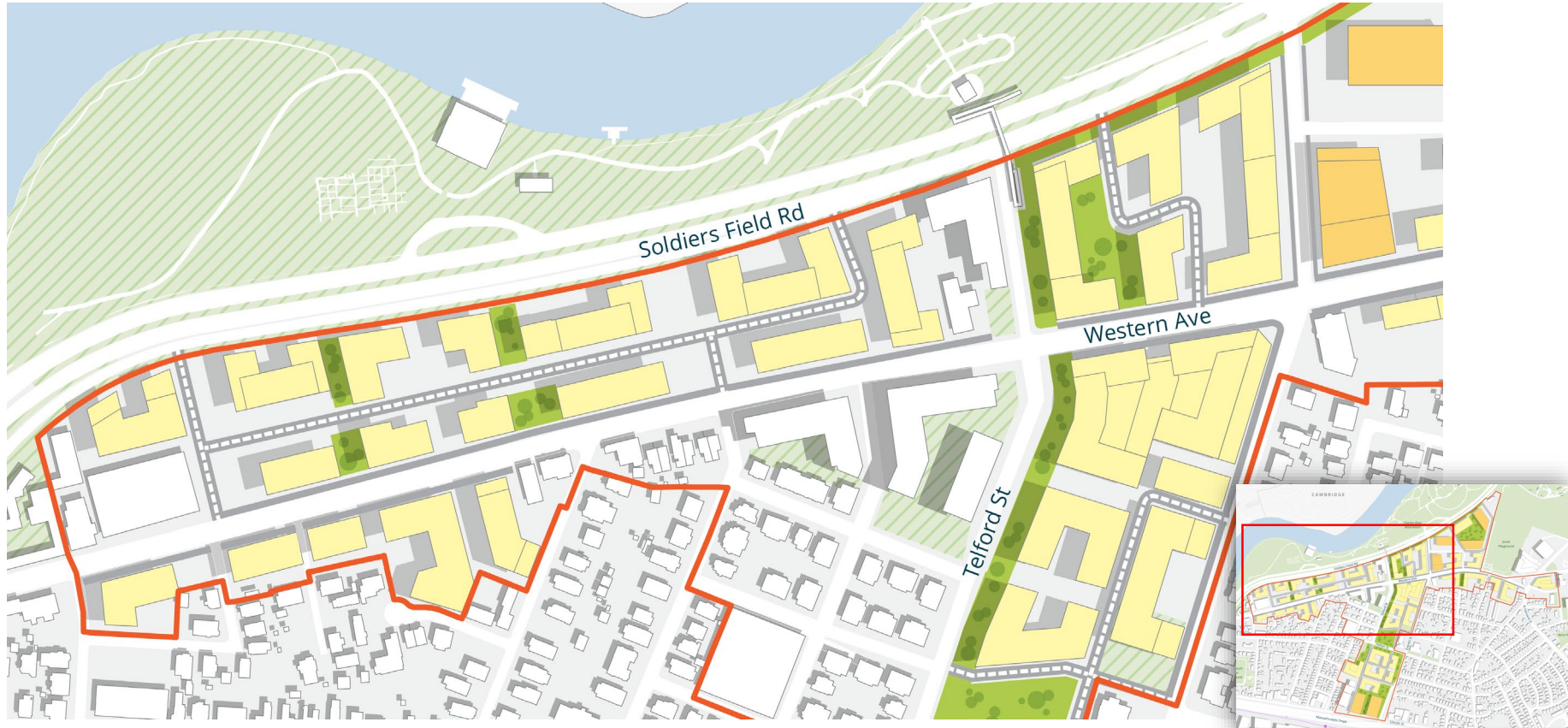




# Urban Design Recommendations

This represents the draft recommendations for illustrative purposes only. It is not meant to reflect current development proposals in the area.

## Future



# Urban Design Recommendations

Enforce lot coverage to ensure **light, air and views** between buildings



**West of Telford St.**



**Existing**

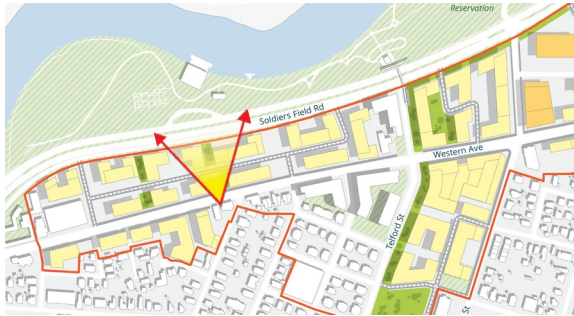


# Urban Design Recommendations

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Enforce lot coverage to ensure **light, air and views** between buildings

- View of Potential Open space between buildings



**West of Telford St.**



# Urban Design Recommendations

Enforce lot coverage to ensure **light, air and views** between buildings



**West of Telford St.**



**Existing**



# Urban Design Recommendations

This represents the draft recommendations for illustrative purposes only. It is not meant to reflect current development proposals in the study area.

Enforce lot coverage to ensure **light, air and views** between buildings

- View of Potential Open space between buildings
- View of Potential New Street



**West of Telford St.**



# Urban Design Recommendations

Require setbacks along street to create **view corridors** to the river



Existing

Telford St. looking North



# Urban Design Recommendations

Require setbacks along street to create **view corridors** to the river

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**Telford St. looking North**

# Urban Design Recommendations

Require setbacks along street to create **view corridors** to the river



Everett St. looking North



Existing



# Urban Design Recommendations

Require setbacks along street to create **view corridors** to the river

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Everett St. looking North

# What we heard about Urban Design & How the plan is addressing these issues

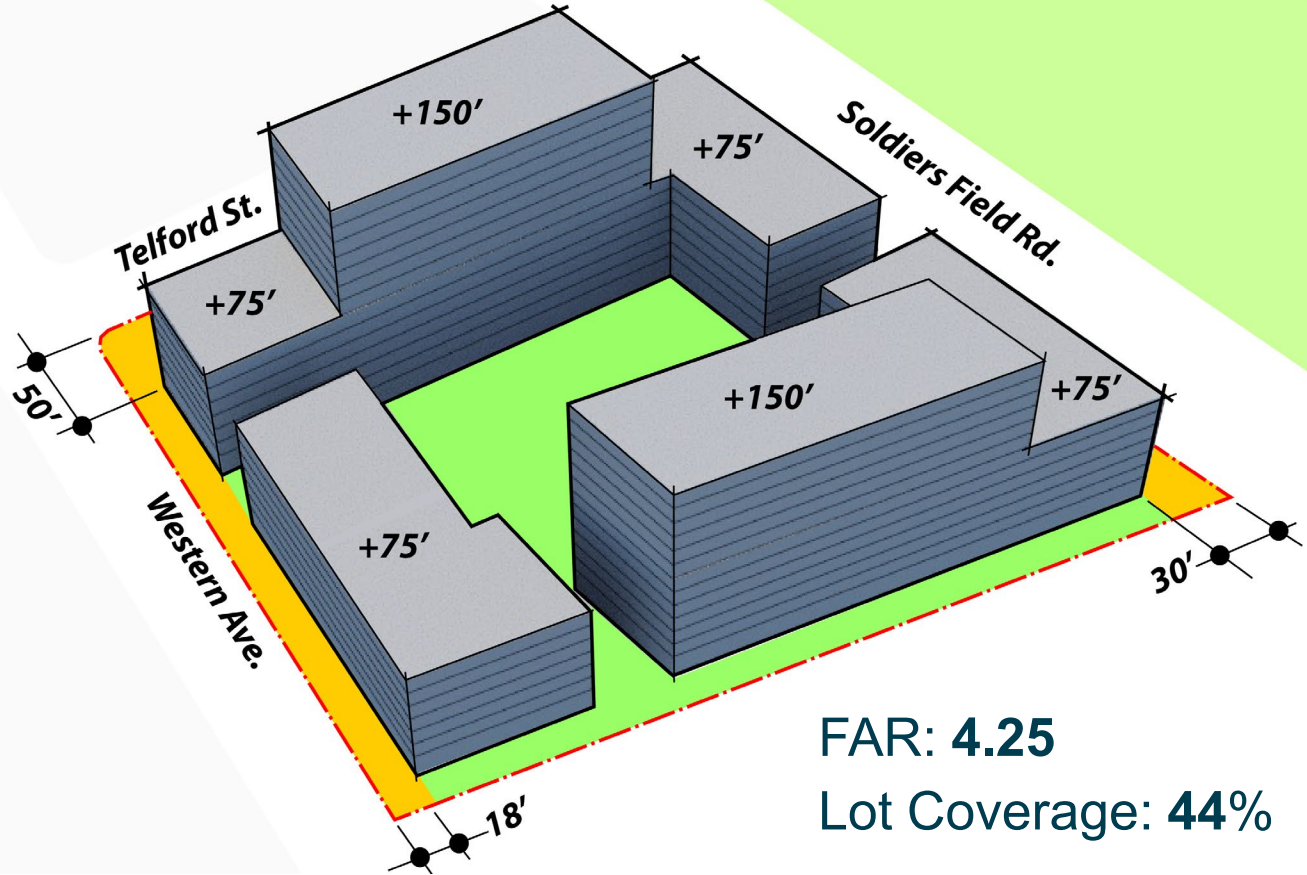
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  - Concept 3: District Hall

See May 25, 2021 Urban Design meeting materials at [bit.ly/westerncorridor](https://bit.ly/westerncorridor).

# Urban Design Recommendations

**Community feedback:**  
Questions about **shadow impact** on Soldiers Field Road and open spaces

**Response:**  
Ensure tallest part of the building is located away from the street, open spaces, and existing residential areas



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## Public Realm Concepts for Barry's Corner

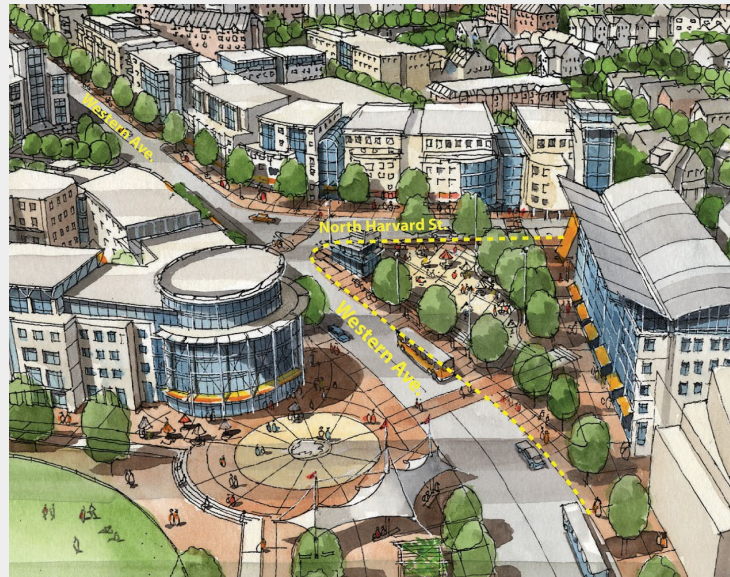


# Barry's Corner

## North Allston Strategic Framework for Planning May 2005

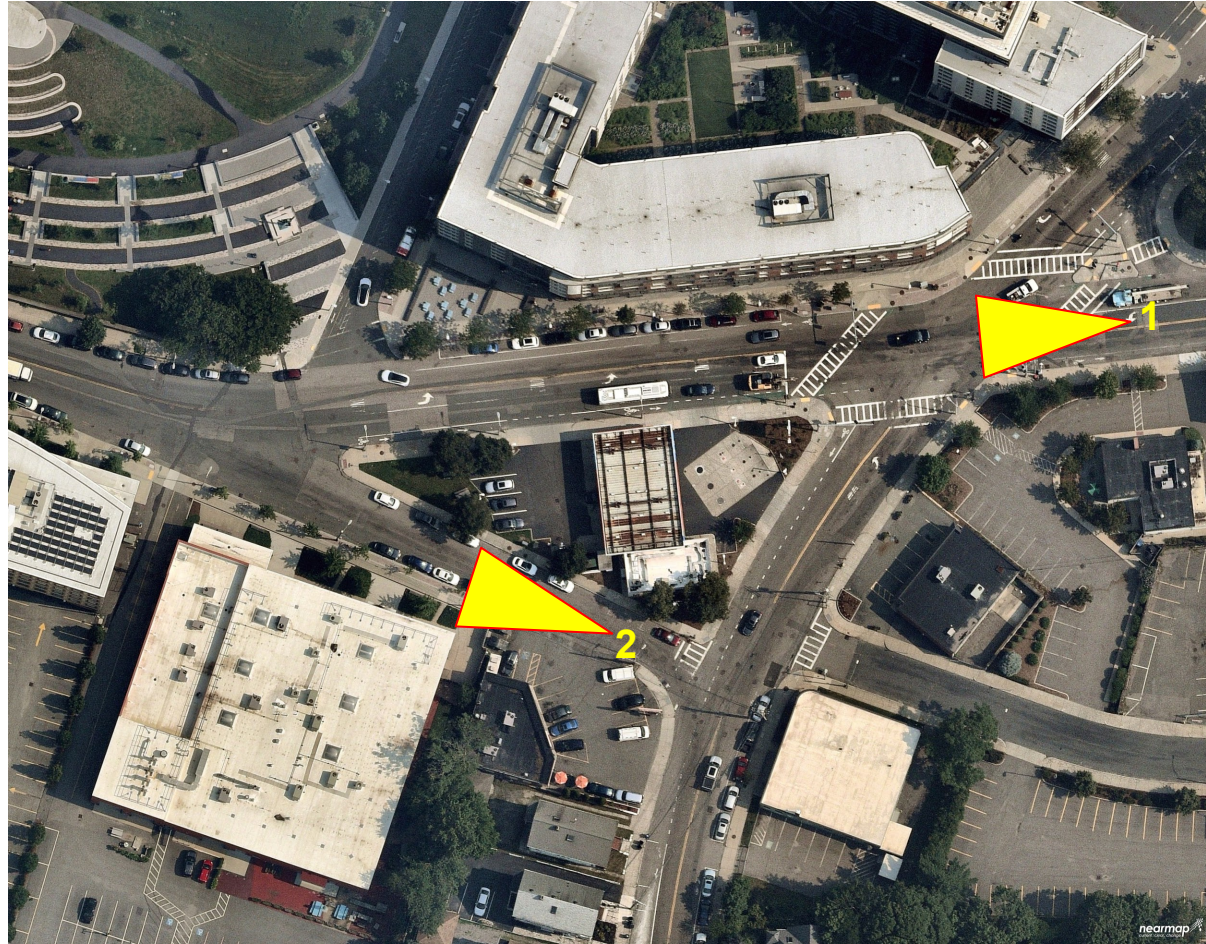
### OPPORTUNITIES

- Create a vibrant mixed-use area with a major new public space at North Harvard Street.
- Transform Western Avenue into a pedestrian-friendly, neighborhood-serving Main Street.
- Create a main street-like environment with approximately 200,000 square feet of community-serving retail and services, with housing, academic, and other uses located on upper floors.
- Transform Smith Field into a year-round neighborhood park while preserving its recreational facilities.
- Introduce seamless connections from the residential neighborhood to the Charles River and Herter Park.
- Develop a significant new cultural facility or other community center as a neighborhood and regional attraction.





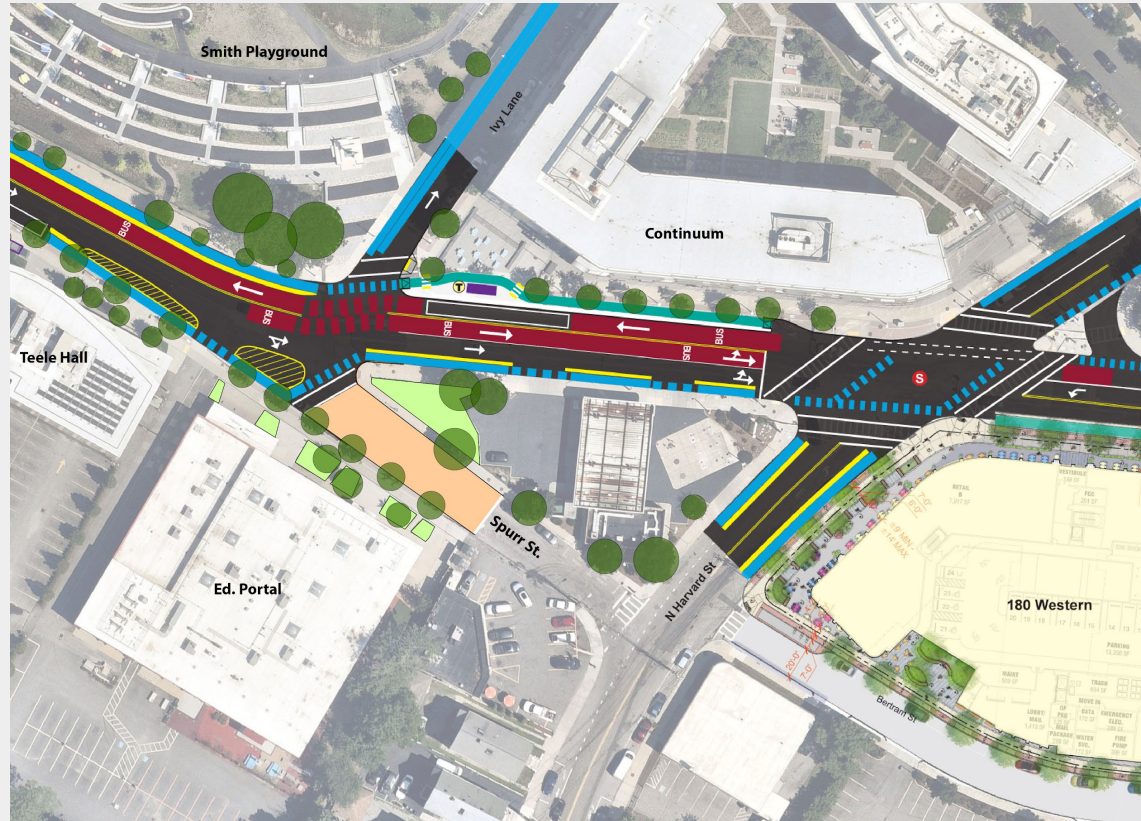
# Barry's Corner





# Concept 1: Reconfigure Spurr St.

- **Temporary Street Closure – Short Term**
  - Close vehicular traffic for events only
  - Paint roadway
  - Moveable Seating
  - Programming



# Precedents: Tactical Urban Pop-ups



***Annual Allston Village Street Fair***



***Brighton Center***

Allston Brighton Mobility Study tactical urbanism pop-up,  
Summer 2021



# Precedents: Activation



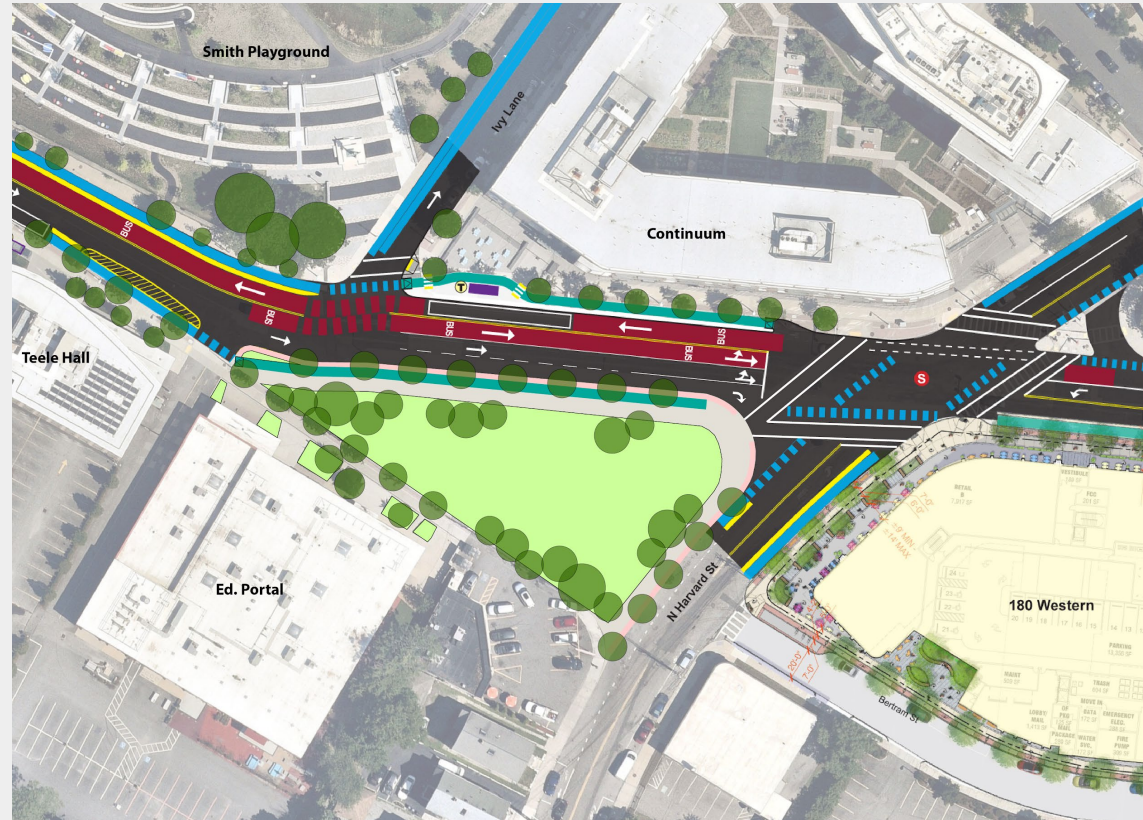
*Pop-Up Market, Seaport*



*Farmer's Market, Ed. Portal*

# Concept 2: Open Space

- *Long Term Options*
  - Lawn
  - Plaza
  - Seating
  - Public Art
  - Resilience: Storm Water Retention





# Precedents: Open Space

*Spurr St  
Parcel*



*Lafayette Sq.,  
Cambridge*





# Precedents: Open Space

*Spurr St  
Parcel*

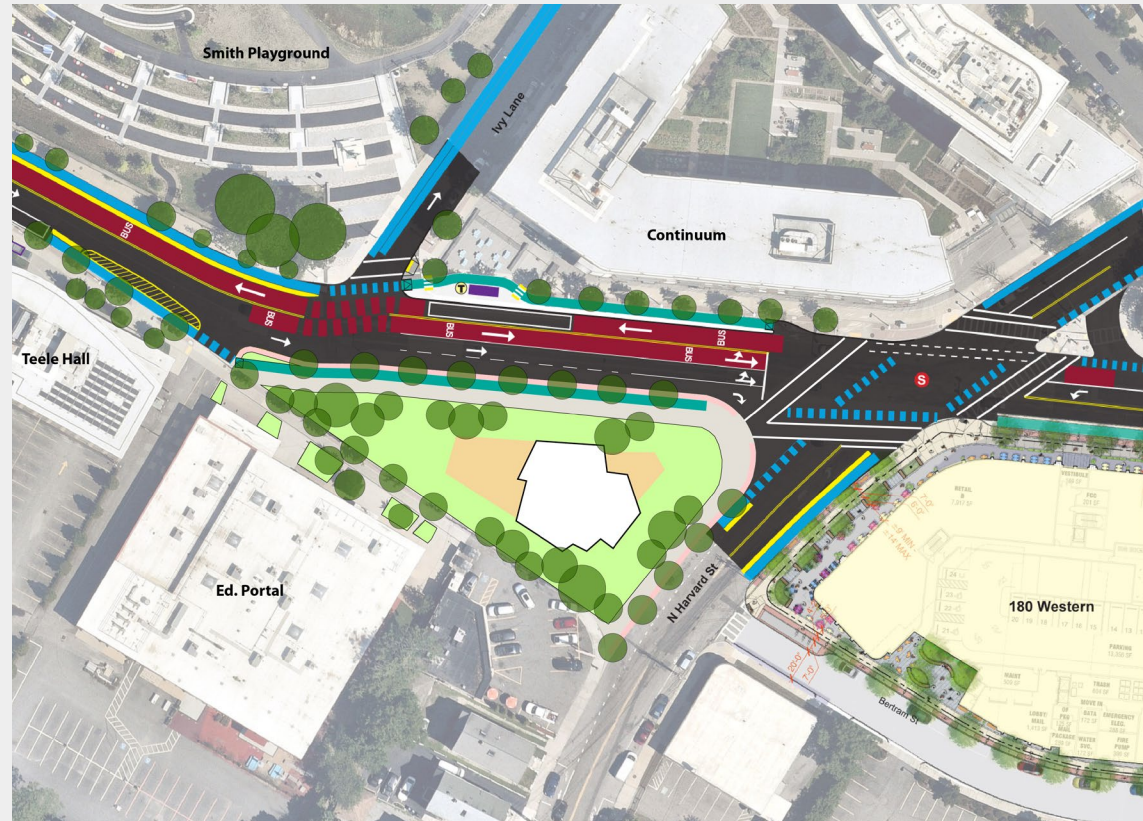


*Davis Sq.,  
Somerville*



# Concept 3: Community Hall

- *Long Term Options*
  - Community center
  - Retail
  - Outdoor seating
  - Farmer's Market





# Precedents: Activation

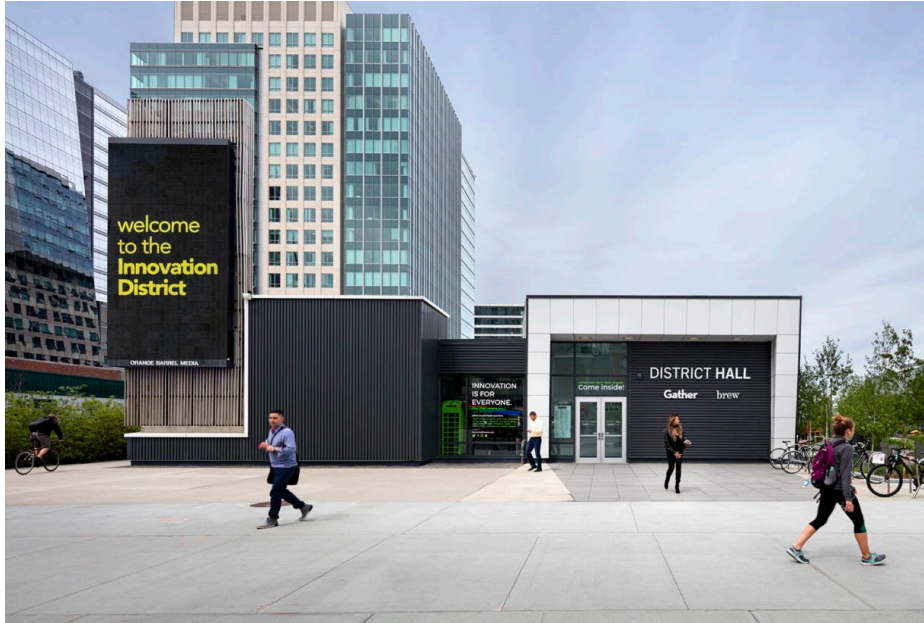


*Pop-Up Beer Gardens, Allston*



*Permanent Pavilion, Post Office Sq*

# Precedents: Activation



***District Hall, Seaport***



***Farmer's Market, Brighton Common***

# 5

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## Housing Approach



# Creating Income-restricted Housing

The Western Avenue Corridor Study and Rezoning will:

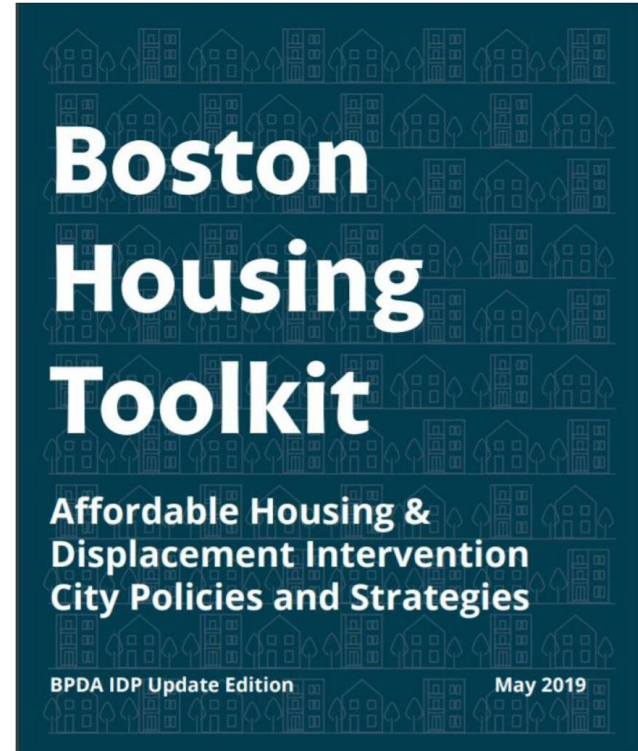
- Create incentives for greater density in exchange for higher percentages of IDP units
  - 15% baseline - 17% or 20% possible depending on FAR
- Create residential incentives to build housing where mixed use zoning is proposed
- Potentially generate almost 1,000 new income-restricted housing units

Total housing units, est.*	% Income restricted housing	Income-restricted units, est.*
5,500	15%	840
5,800	With 17% <i>in Barry's Corner at FAR 4.00</i>	900
6,000	With 20% <i>In Barry's Corner at FAR 4.25</i>	990

\* This is an estimate of the number of units that could be produced through the plan recommendations long-term (20-30 years) at full build-out. For residential development, this assumes 80% net-to-gross ratio and 900 SF units on average. This estimate assumes that development sites with current non-residential proposals remain non-residential.

# Inclusionary Development Policy - Scope & Impact

- IDP percentage adjustment apply universally to all projects within the study area
- IDP units do not have an ongoing subsidy
- The IDP doesn't influence housing type





# Income-restricted Housing beyond IDP

- Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing
  - Requires certain large projects to create a strategy for addressing the housing needs of protected classes
- Partnering with CDCs on City-owned land for creation of affordable housing
- Partnering with local institutions for the donation of land to support housing
  - Examples: Charlesview and the 90 Antwerp Street Project



## **90 Antwerp Street**

60% of the housing units at 90 Antwerp Street are income-restricted housing.

# 6

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## Next Steps

# Next Steps

- Fall Public Meeting (date TBD)
  - Continue Transportation Review
    - Development impacts
    - Transitway feasibility
    - Parking/pickup/loading policies
- Release draft report for public review and comment



**Thank You**  
**Q&A**

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