



# Western Avenue Corridor Study and Rezoning

## Draft Report Overview

July 28, 2022

# Agenda

1. Introduction & Housekeeping
2. Review: Why Plan & Our Planning Process
- 3. Document Walk Through & Overview  
of Refined Content**
4. Next Steps & Discussion

# 1

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## Introductions & Housekeeping



**boston planning &  
development agency**

# Staff Introductions

Joe Blankenship: BPDA Transportation - [joseph.blankenship@boston.gov](mailto:joseph.blankenship@boston.gov)

Kathleen Onufer: BPDA Downtown & Neighborhood Planning -  
[kathleen.onufer@boston.gov](mailto:kathleen.onufer@boston.gov)

Matt Martin: BPDA Urban Design - [matthew.martin@boston.gov](mailto:matthew.martin@boston.gov)



# Project Website

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

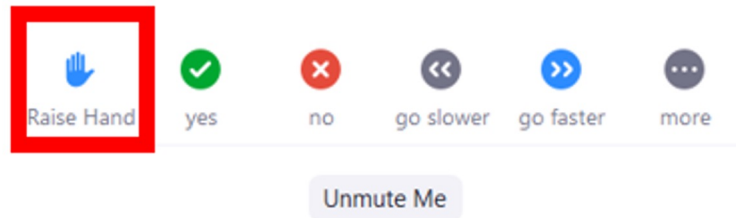
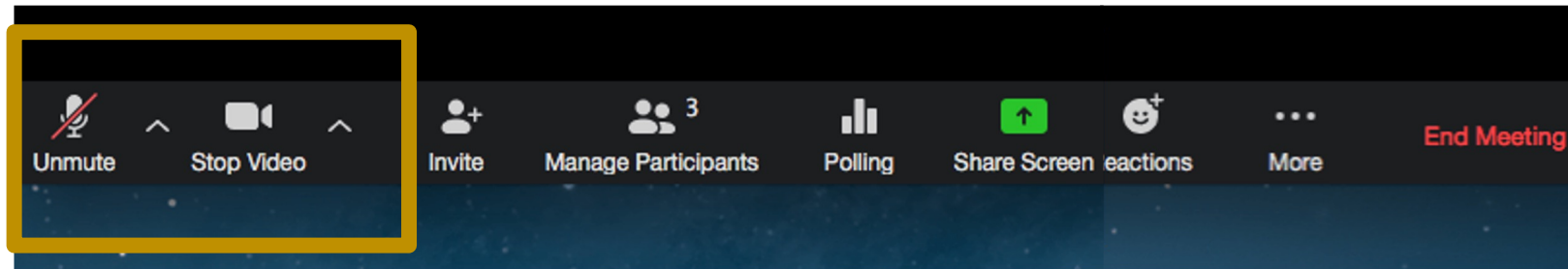
- Presentations (including tonight's!)
- Recordings from virtual meetings
- Project documents (e.g. Zoning Toolkit and Housing Toolkit)
- Draft report



# Zoom Tips

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

Clicking on these symbols activates different features:



# Virtual Meeting Protocols

- 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.





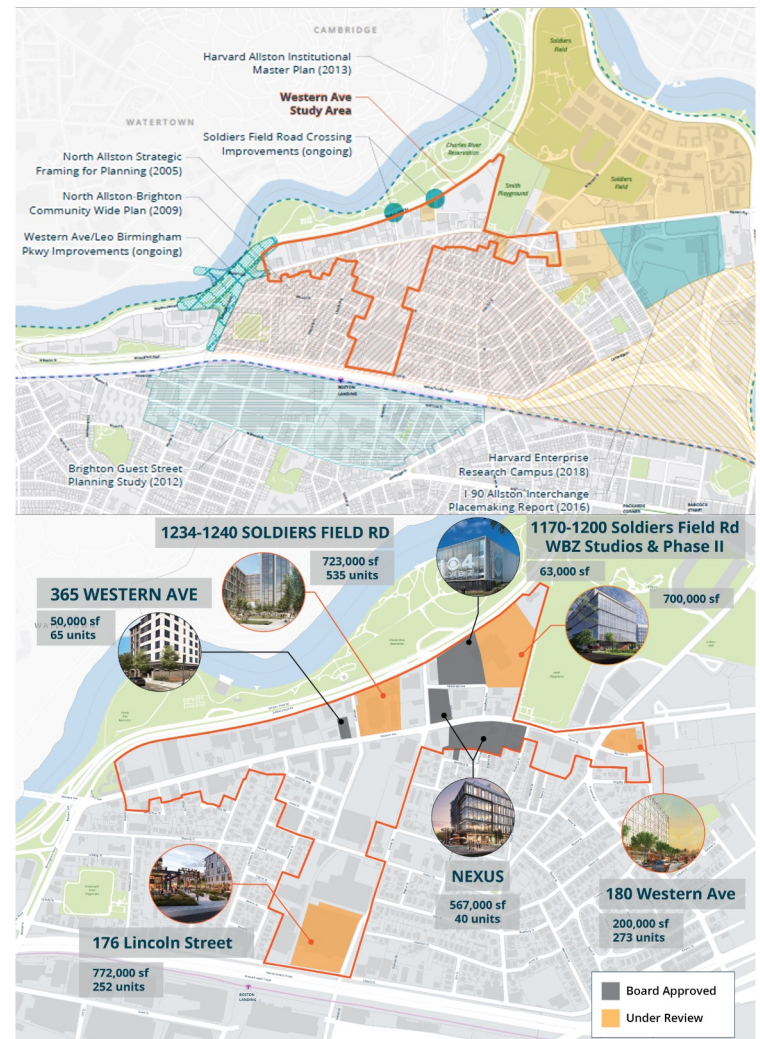
# 2

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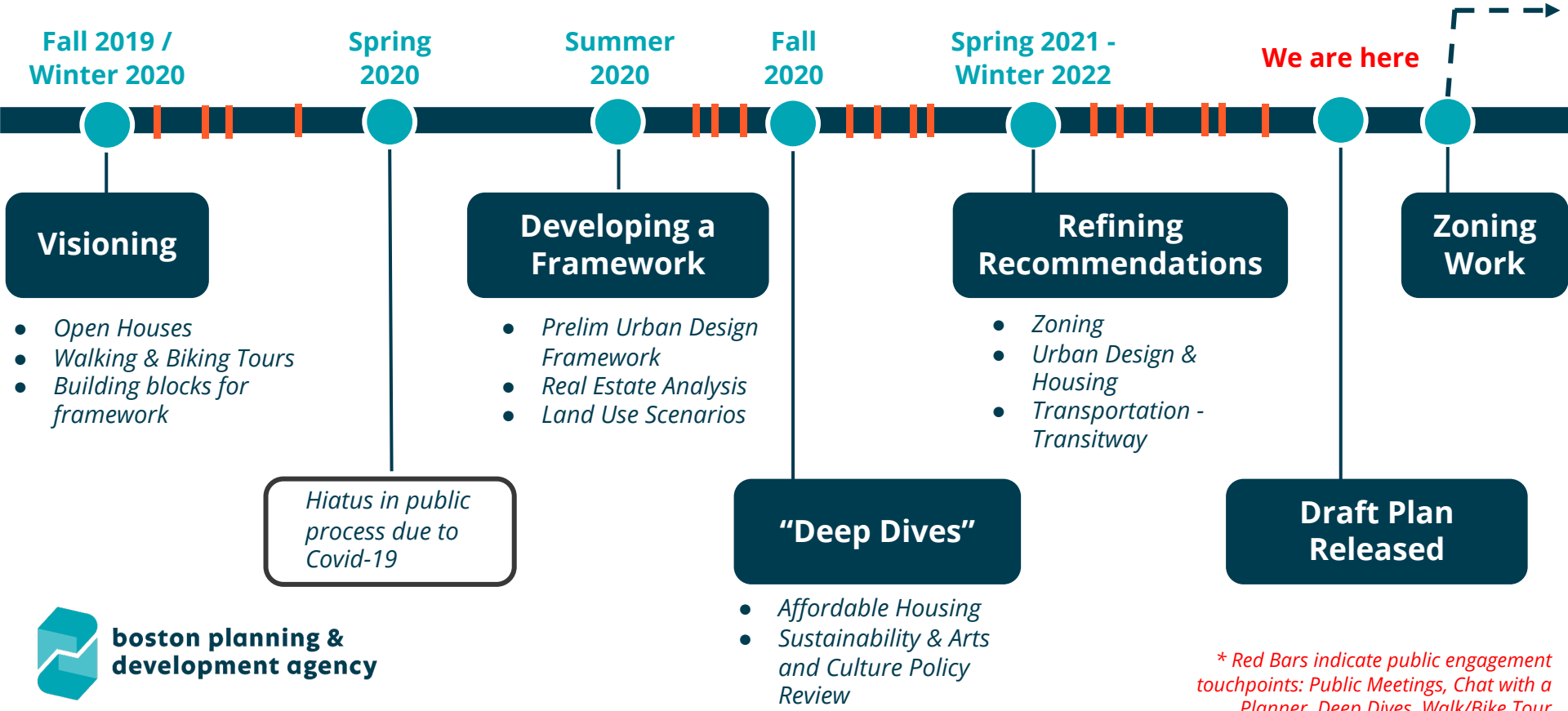
## Why Plan & Our Planning Process

# Why Plan

- Planning has occurred over the past two decades
- However, current zoning does not support community vision of:
  - More housing & jobs
  - Community retail
  - Active sidewalks & open space
  - Improved transportation
- Demand for new development
  - Over 3M SF recently approved or under current review

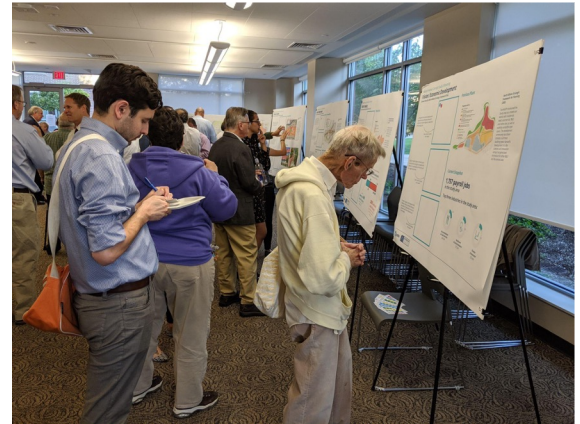


# Our Timeline To Date



# Next steps

- Release draft plan tonight!
- 30 day comment review period
- Office Hours w/ Staff
  - Wednesday, Aug 3rd 5:00-7:00 P.M. (virtual)
  - Wednesday, Aug 10th 6:00-8:00 P.M. (in-person, Zone 3: 267 Western Ave)
  - Thursday, Aug 18th 6:00-8:00 P.M. (virtual)
  - Late August (in-person, date & location TBD)
- Follow-Up/Closeout public meeting
  - Wednesday, Sept 7th 6:00 P.M.
- Potential BPDA Board consideration - September
- Potential Zoning Commission vote - October



# 3

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## Document Walkthrough, Highlighting Refined Content



## BREATHE & ADAPT



## CONNECT & MOVE



# Planning Framework

## LIVE & WORK

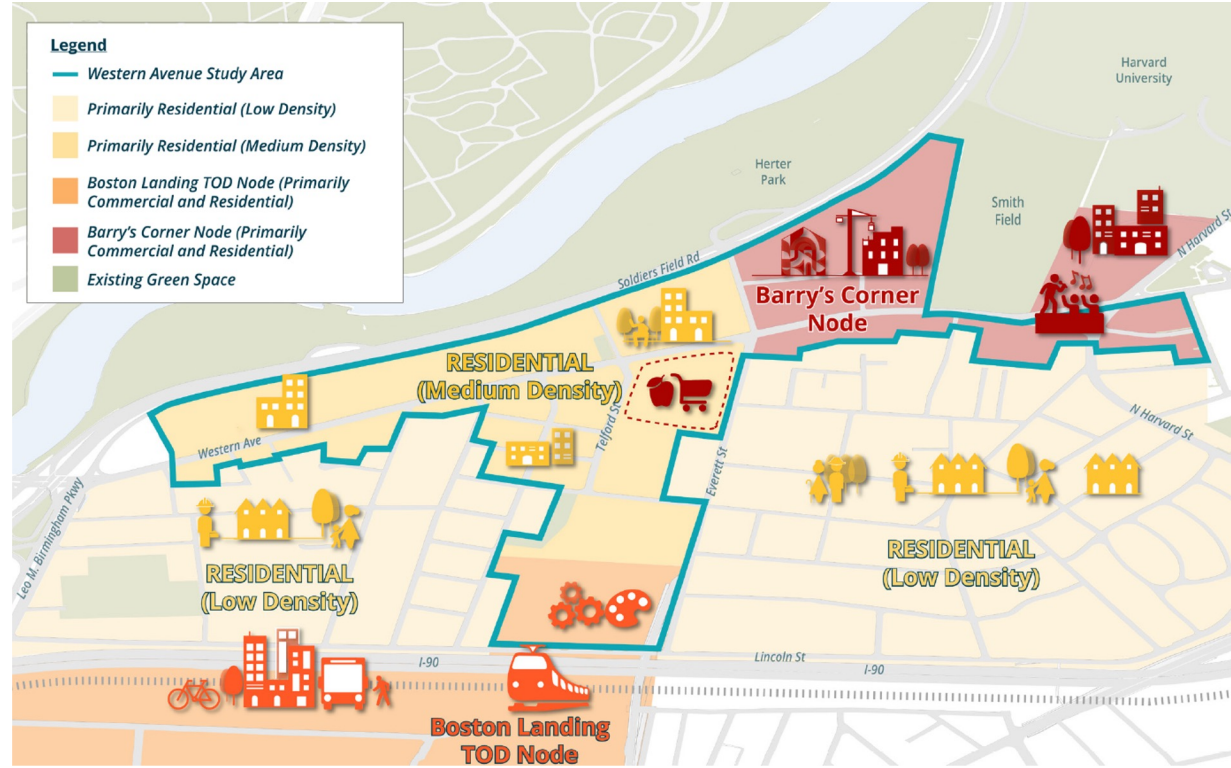


## CREATE



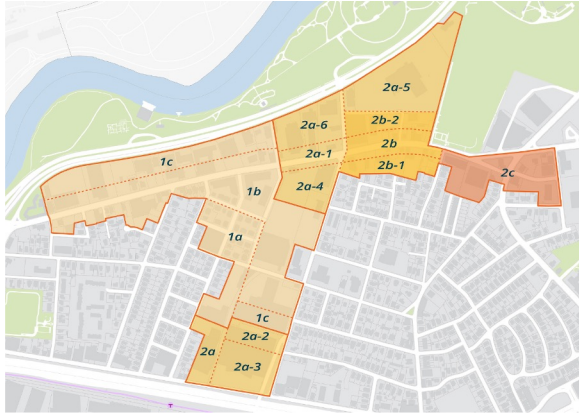
# Live, Work, & Create

- Mixed-use at higher densities concentrated in Barry's Corner and Boston Landing TOD Node
- Residential development and cultural uses allowed everywhere
- Western Avenue as retail & multimodal corridor



# Implementation

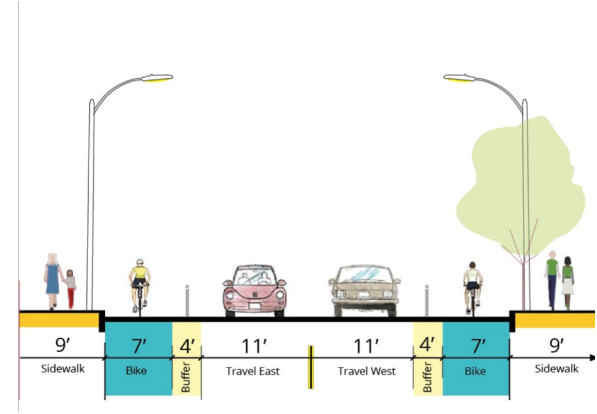
Implementing this Plan will occur via three key areas over time.



Zoning  
Recommendations



Urban Design  
Guidelines

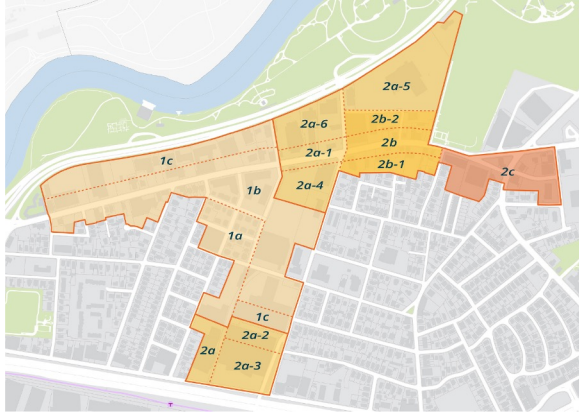


Mobility  
Recommendations



# Implementation

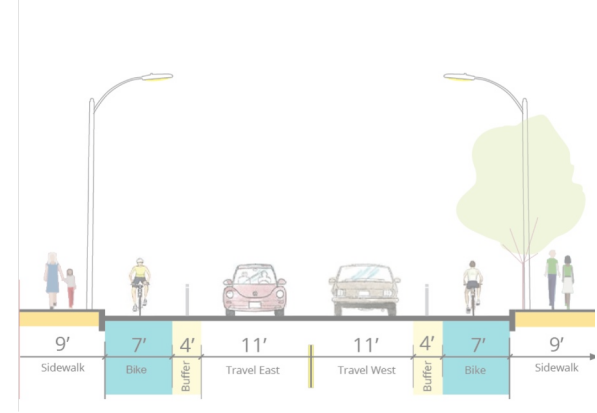
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Zoning  
Recommendations

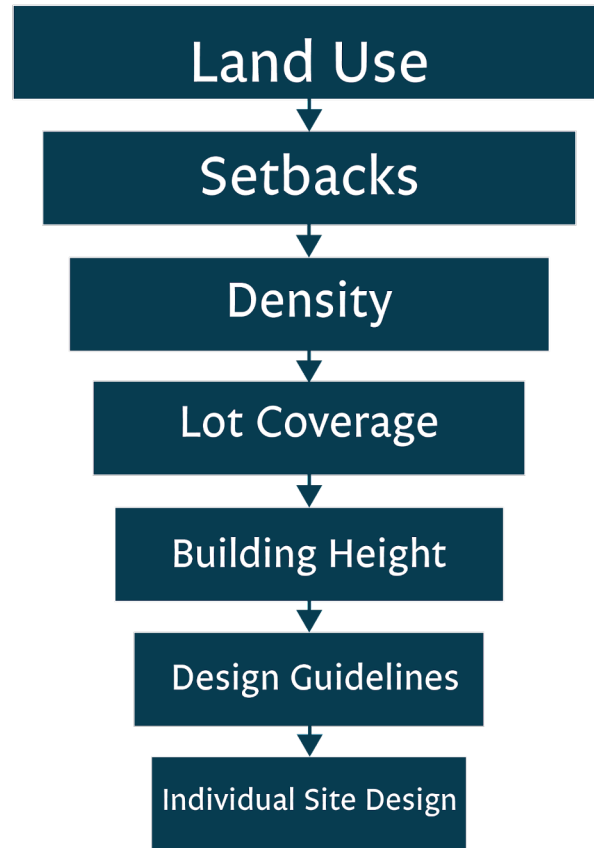


Urban Design  
Guidelines



Mobility  
Recommendations

All of these regulations work in concert



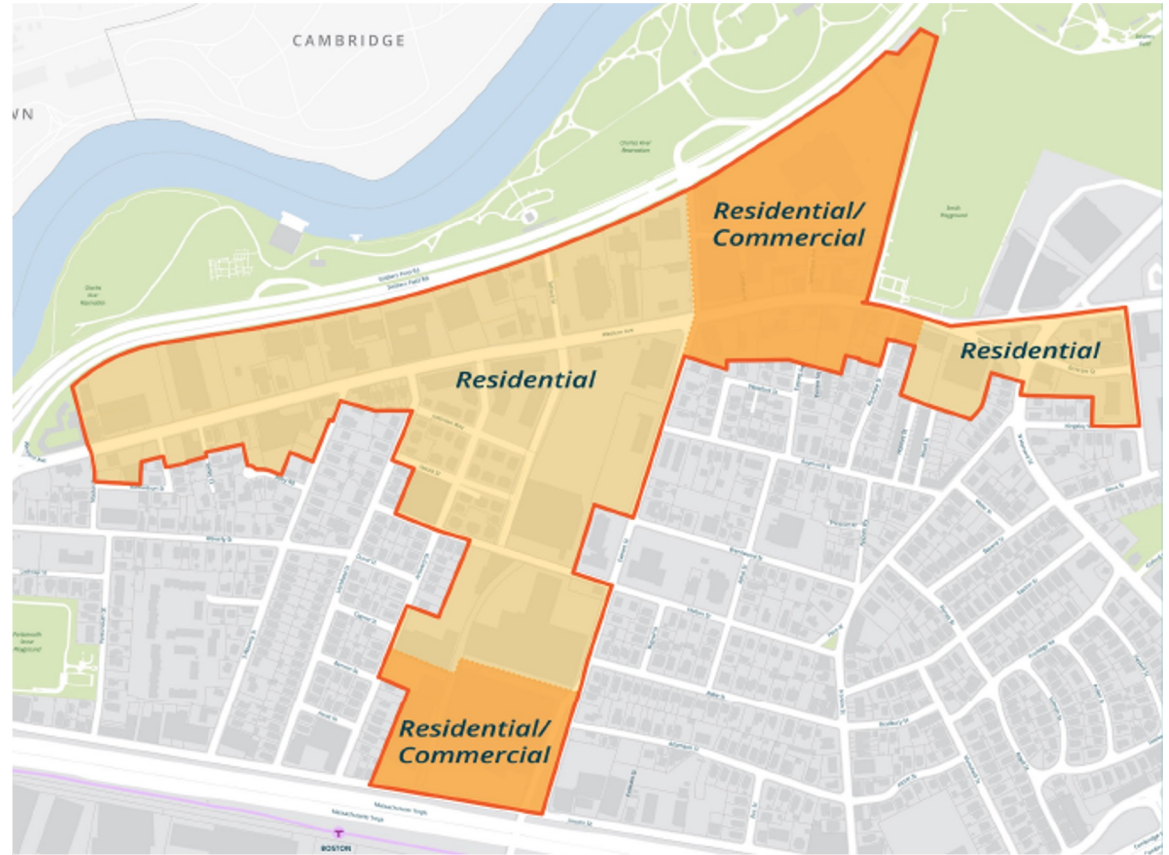
These are all written into the plan, and implemented through zoning



# Zoning

Article 51 will be amended to address:

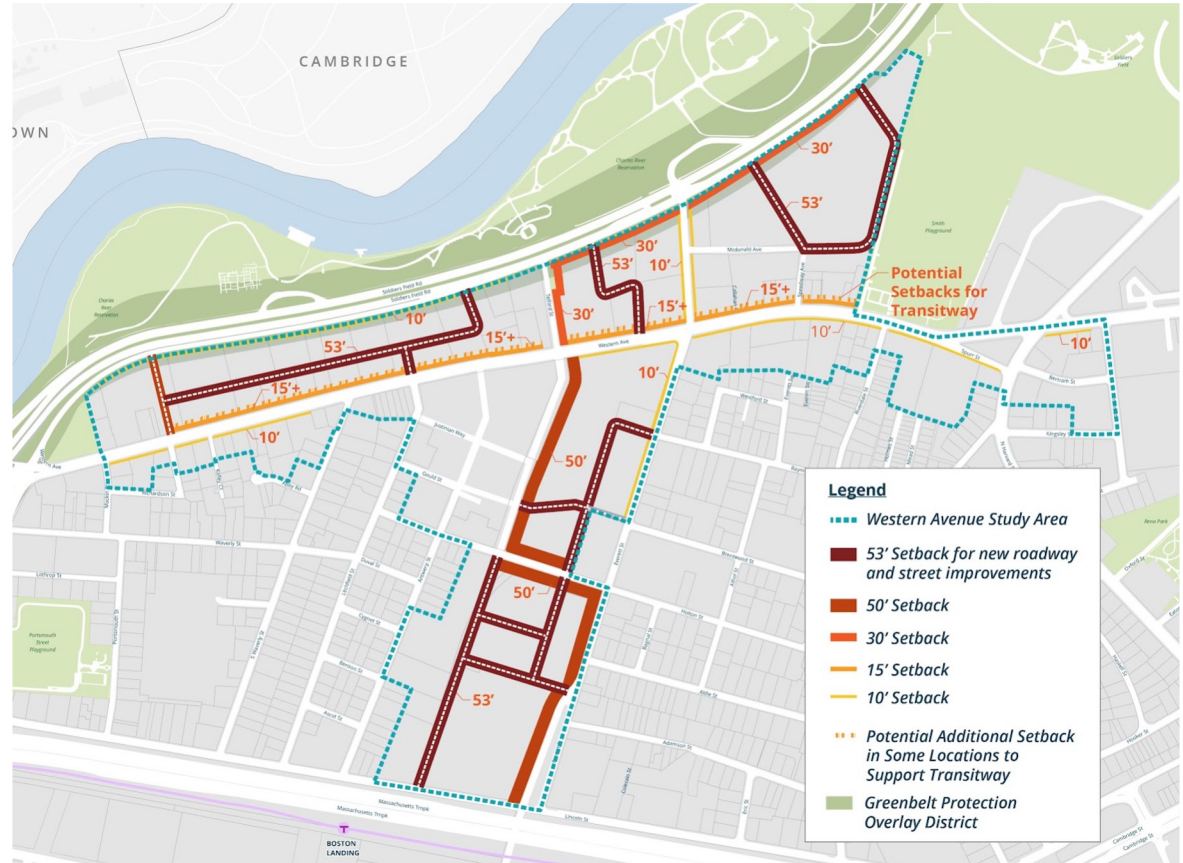
- Land Use
- Setbacks
- Lot Coverage
- Density
- Building Height



# Zoning

Article 51 will be amended to address:

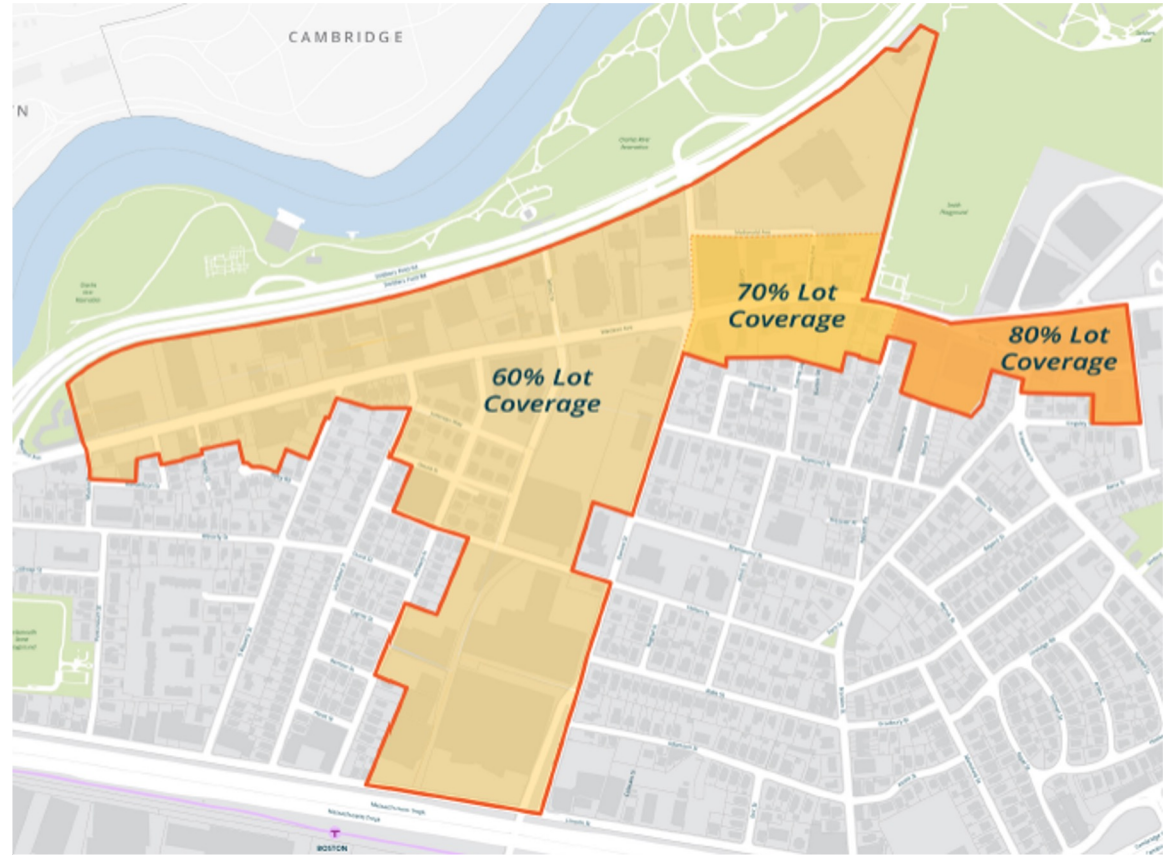
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# Zoning

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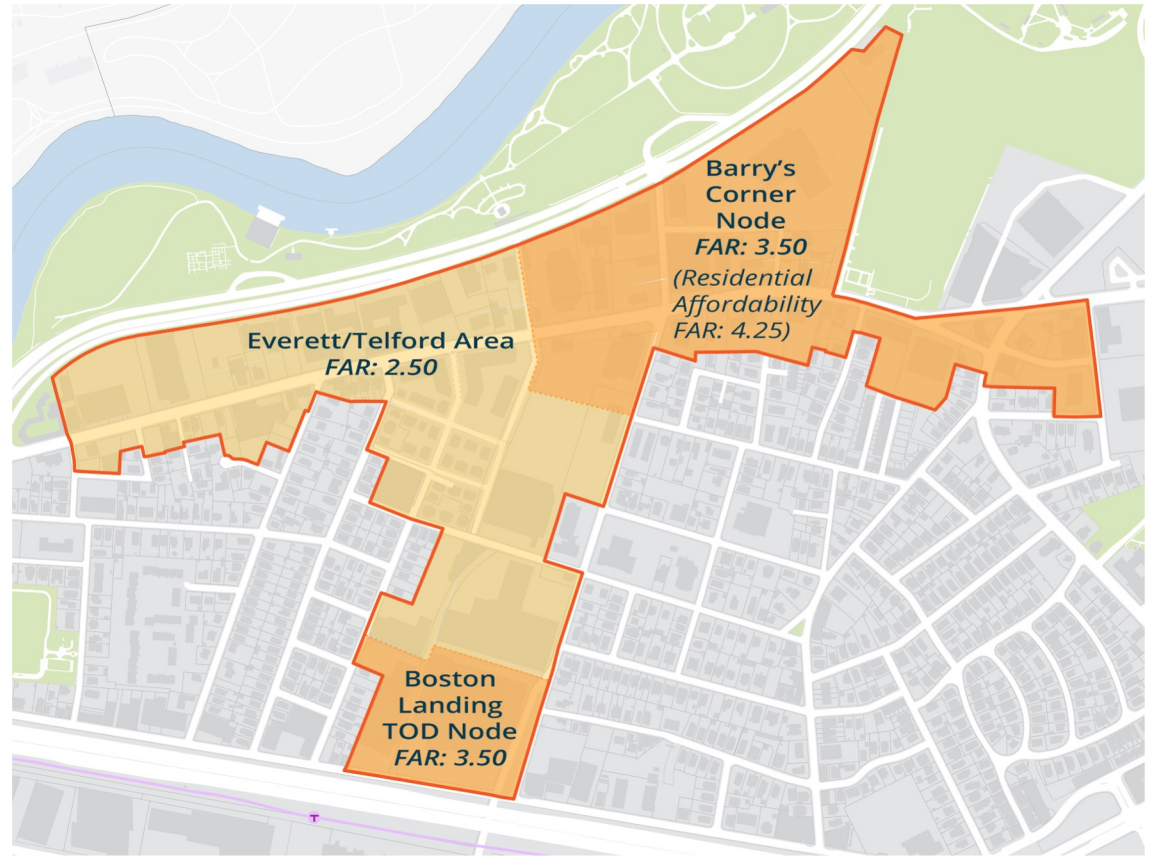
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# Zoning

Article 51 will be amended to address:

- Land Use
- Setbacks
- Lot Coverage
- Density
- Building Height



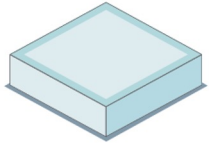
# Zoning

## What is Floor Area Ratio (FAR)?

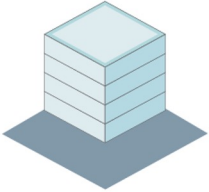
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is the total square footage of all the floors of a building, divided by the total square footage of the land on which it sits.



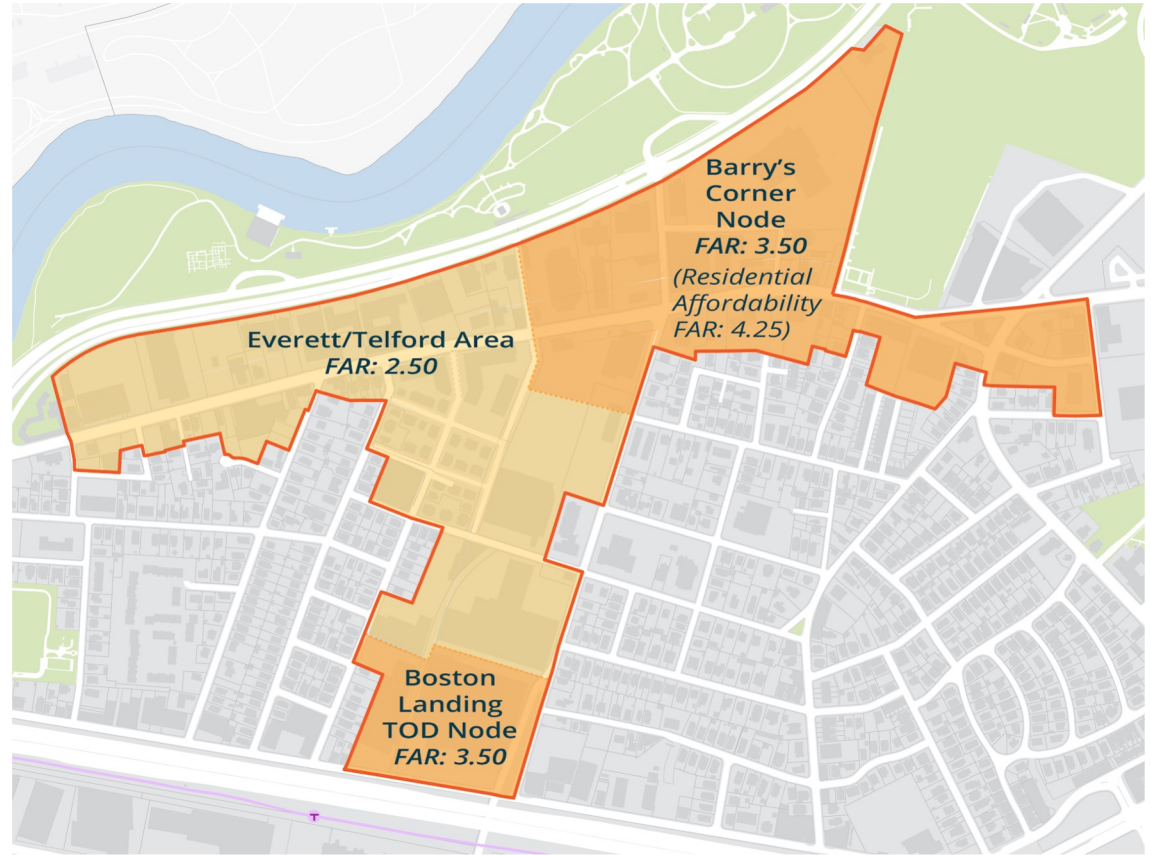
Lot Dimension: 100' x 100'  
Lot Area : 10,000 SQ FT.



FAR: 1.0 x (10,000 GSF)  
Building Footprint: 10,000 SQ FT  
Building Height: 10 Feet  
Lot Coverage - 100%



FAR: 1.0 x (10,000 GSF)  
Building Footprint: 2,500 SQ FT  
Building Height: 40 Feet  
Lot Coverage - 25%



# Residential Affordability Incentive

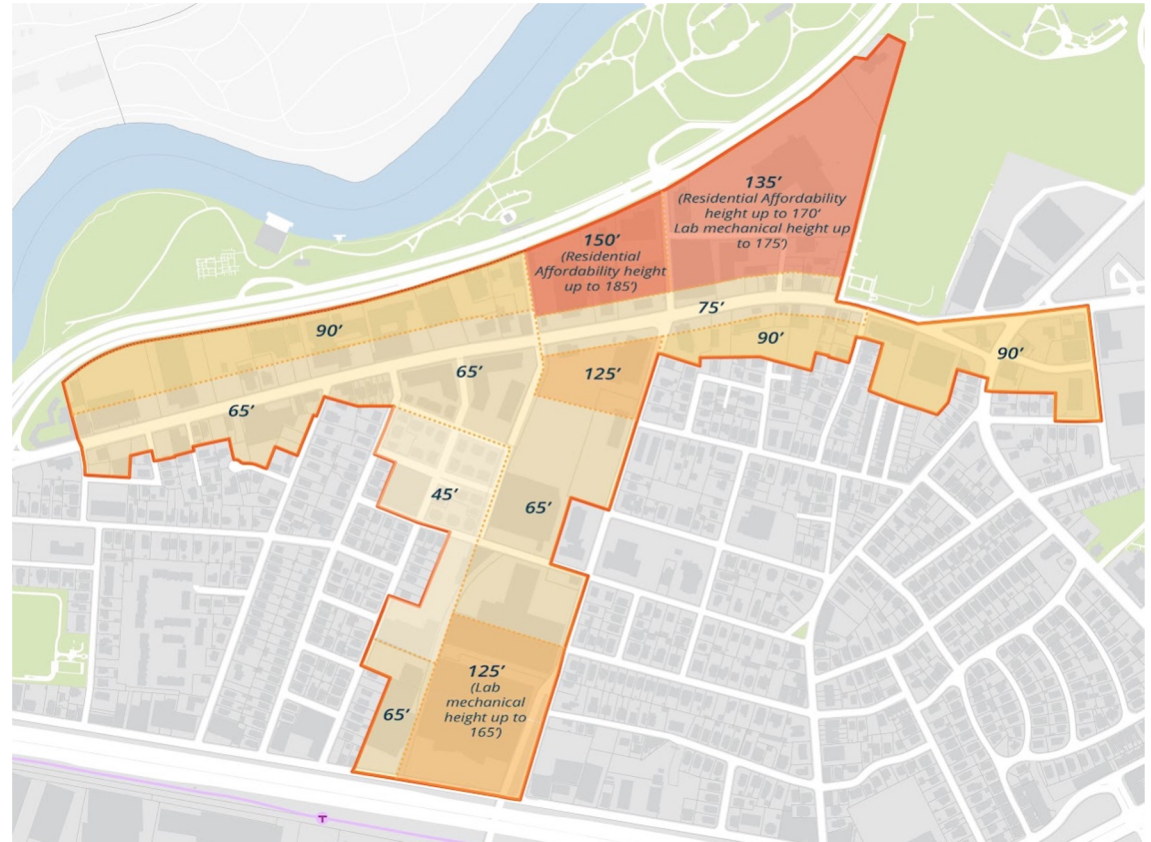
	FAR	On-site Affordability Requirement
Boston Landing TOD Node	<p><b>Max. 3.5</b></p> <p>All residential projects approved through a Planned Development Area will be subject to these requirements</p>	No fewer than 17% total residential square footage provided in IDP units - affordable to households averaging 60% AMI.*
Everett / Telford Area	<p><b>Max. 2.5</b></p> <p>All residential projects approved through a Planned Development Area will be subject to these requirements</p>	No fewer than 15% total residential square footage provided in IDP units - affordable to households averaging 60% AMI.*
Barry's Corner Node	<p><b>Max 3.5</b></p>	Non-residential projects are limited to FAR 3.5. No fewer than 15% total residential square footage provided in IDP units - affordable to households averaging 60% AMI.*
	<p><b>Affordability Incentive 3.5 - 4.0</b></p> <p>Within the residential incentive zone, all projects approved through a Planned Development Area with an FAR between 3.5 and 4.0.</p>	No fewer than 17% total residential square footage provided in IDP units - affordable to households averaging 60% AMI.*
	<p><b>Affordability Incentive 4 - 4.25</b></p> <p>Within the residential incentive zone, all projects approved through a Planned Development Area with an FAR between 4.0 and 4.25. Non-residential projects are limited to FAR 3.5</p>	No fewer than 20% total residential square footage provided in IDP units - affordable to households averaging 60% AMI.*



# Zoning

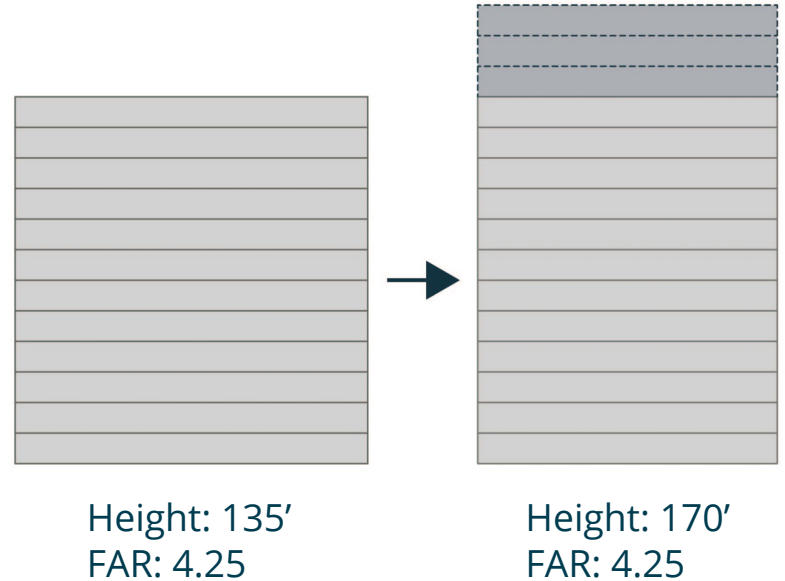
Article 51 will be amended to address:

- Land Use
- Setbacks
- Lot Coverage
- Density
- Building Height



# Residential Affordability Incentive

- Considering 35' of additional height for  $\geq$  **20% affordable** residential buildings (will update concurrently with Citywide Inclusionary Development Study)
- Density, lot coverage & FAR remain unchanged
- Buildings with bonus height must be limited to small area of the site and must comply with urban design guidelines

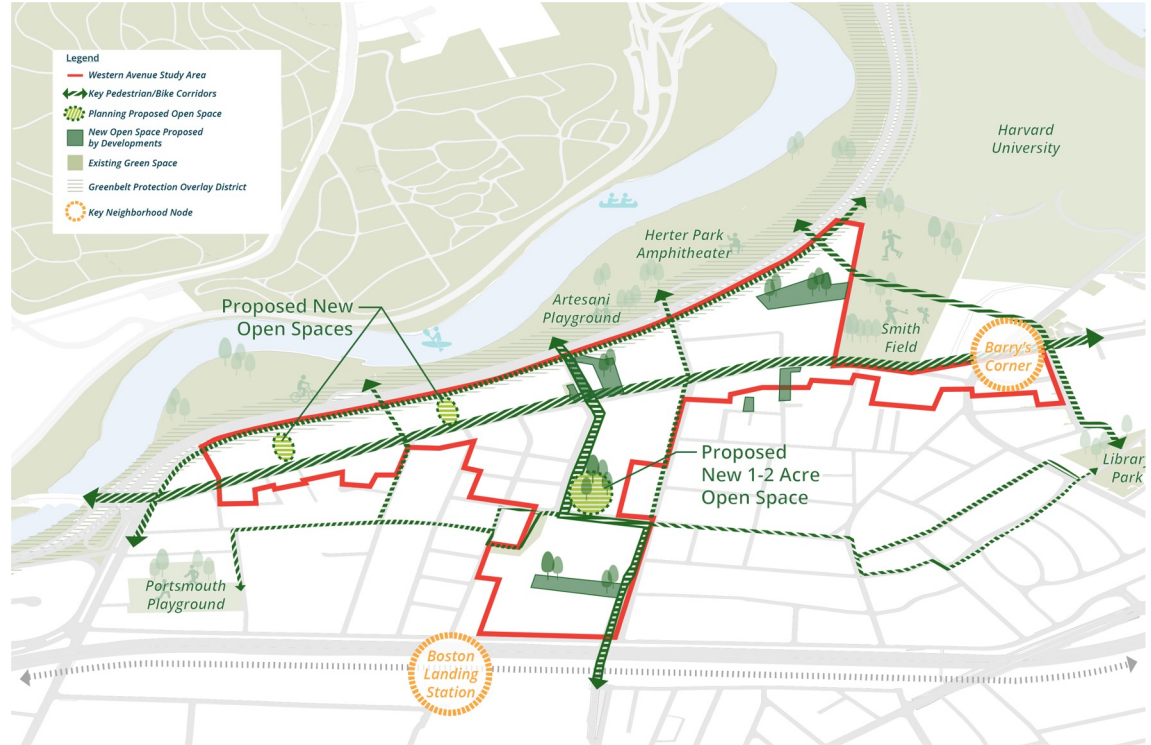


**Example**



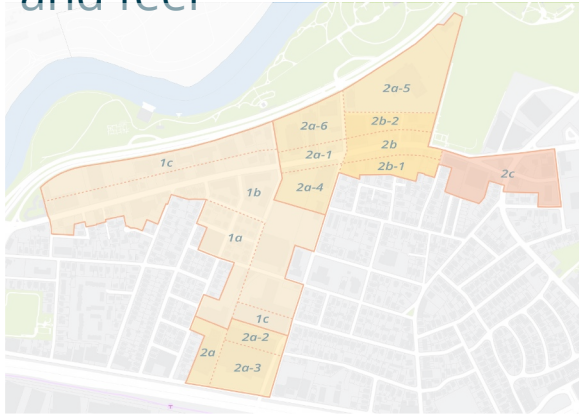
# Breathe & Adapt

The planning framework envisions Western Avenue a key multimodal corridor and seeks to improve connections to the Charles River & existing open space.



# Implementation - Urban Design

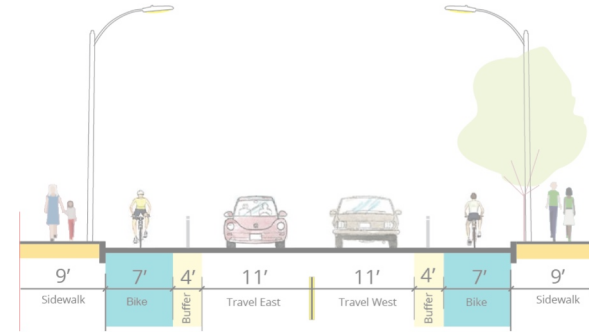
Urban Design Guidelines set a framework for how developments will look and feel



Zoning  
Recommendations



Urban Design  
Guidelines



Mobility  
Recommendations

# Implementation - Urban Design

- Site design and lot coverage
- Setbacks
- Parking structures
- Parking and loading



# Implementation - Urban Design

- Building heights and density
  - Residential bonus
- Rooftop mechanicals



# Refinement: Rooftop Mechanical Limits

- Laboratory uses only will have new limits on mechanical equipment
- Mechanical cubic volume based on 80% roof coverage and 25' height
- All occupiable height limits remain unchanged; maximum mechanical height will be 40' above occupiable height limit
- Design Review to ensure no negative impact on public realm

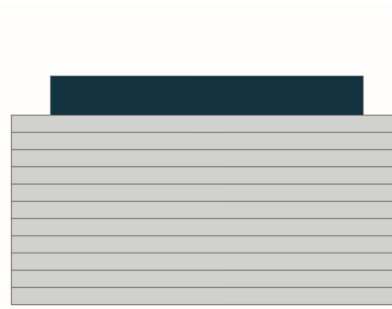


*Image: Rendering of approved NEXUS project & rooftop mechanical design*

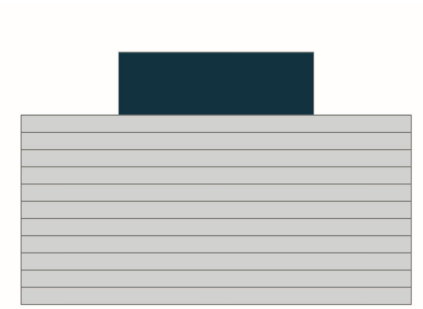


# Refinement: Rooftop Mechanical Limits

- Rooftop mechanical equipment limits will be set by a cubic volume calculation based on 80% roof coverage and 25' in height
- Maximum equipment height would be limited to 40' overall to allow design variation and to lessen design impact on the public realm with less rooftop coverage



*25' mechanical with 80% rooftop coverage*



*40' mechanical with 50% rooftop coverage*





# Implementation - Urban Design

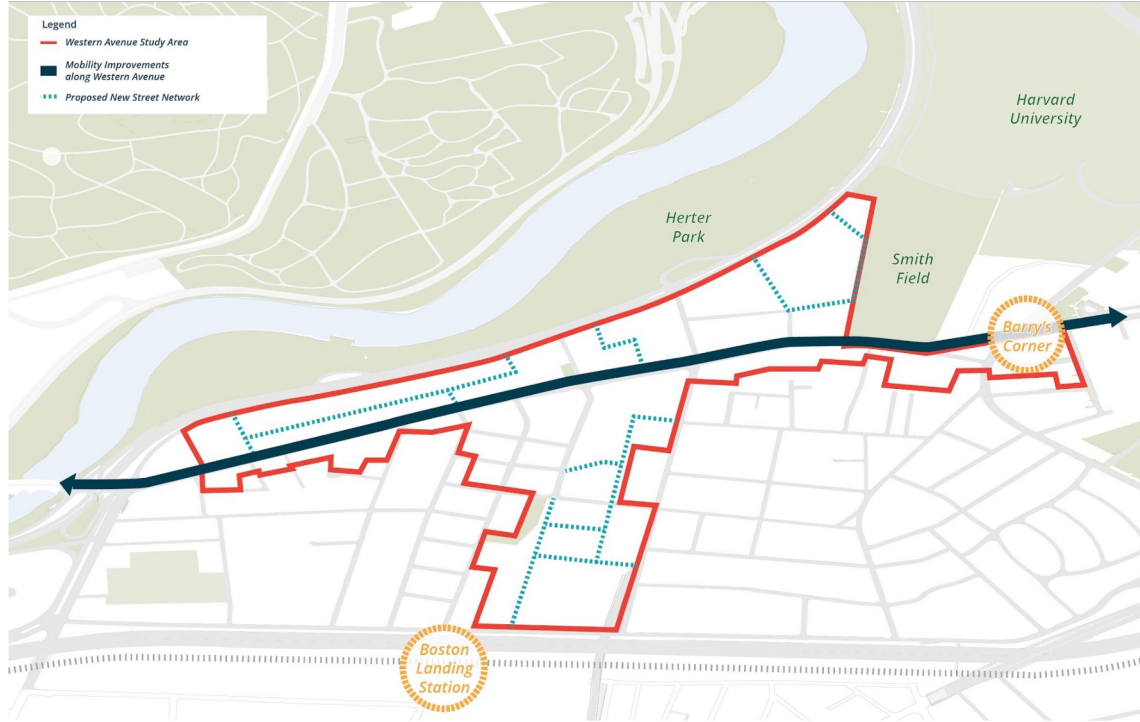
- Design and sizing
- Programming
- Public Realm
- Connectivity
- Comfort
- Sustainability and resilience



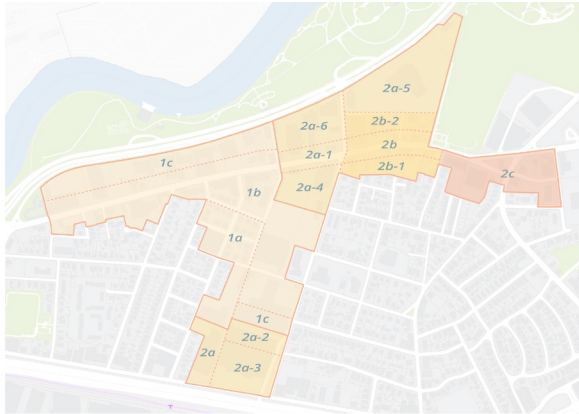
# Connect & Move

The planning framework envisions Western Avenue as an active, multimodal corridor.

- New street network and connections
- Strong Transportation Demand Management in Redevelopment
- New low-stress bikeway and Transitway on Western Ave



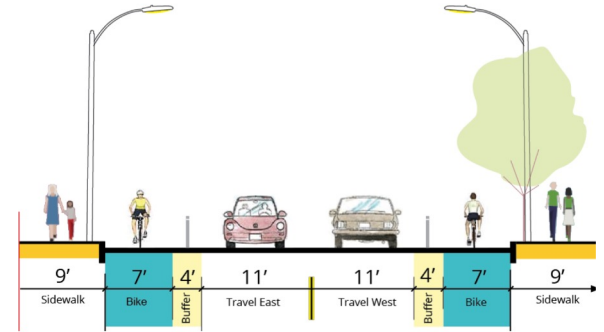
# Implementation - Transportation



Zoning  
Recommendations



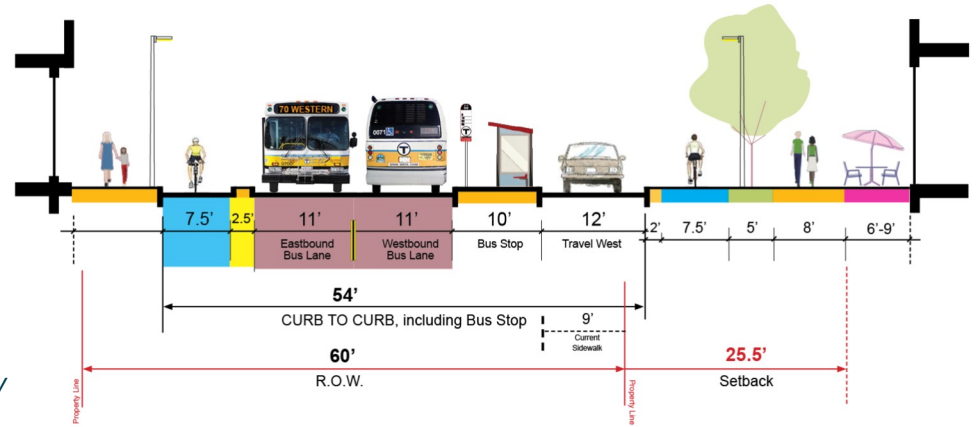
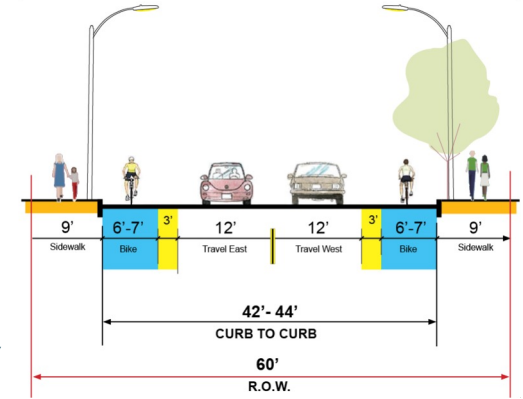
Urban Design  
Guidelines



Mobility  
Recommendations

# Implementation - Transportation

- Short-term low-stress bikeway
- Transitway
- Parking Ratios
- Parking & curbside use strategies
- Transportation Demand Management measures



# Refinement: Parking Ratios

- Parking ratios outlined in Plan document apply to projects that begin formal review after Plan adoption
- Projects currently under formal review continue to be reviewed in consultation with BTDA; strongly encouraged to adopt current ratios

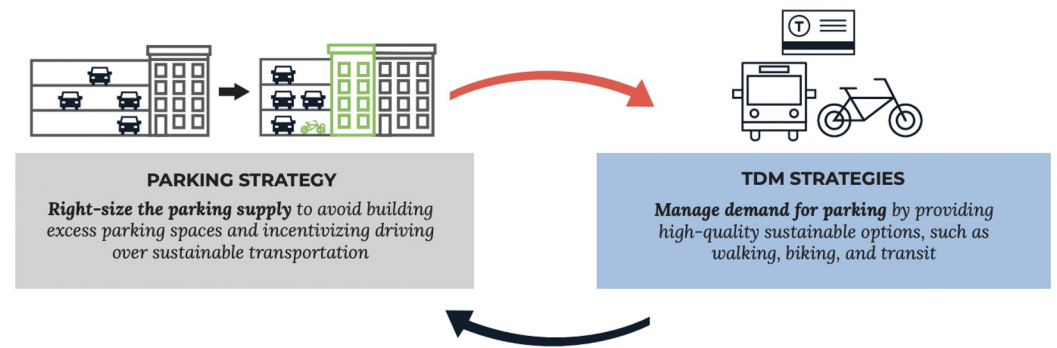


Figure 1: TDM plans and right-sizing parking supply feed into each other.

# Update: Western Ave low-stress bikeway

- Continue coordination with the Boston Transportation Department on design & implementation of the Western Ave low-stress bikeway after plan adoption



*Image: Walking & Biking Tour, Fall 2019*

# Update: Transitway

- Remains long-term multimodal goal
- Funding secured to further evaluate transitway through Harvard Phase A ERC mitigation
- Elements to evaluate include:
  - Expanded extent: Leo Birmingham Parkway to Soldiers Field Road
  - Neighborhood roadway circulation and vehicle access
  - Coordination with DCR, MBTA, Watertown, & Cambridge
  - Design process



*Image: Columbus Ave, Boston  
Source: MBTA*

# 4

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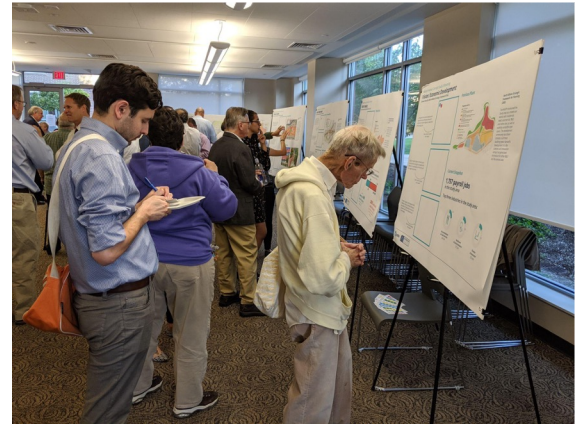
## Next Steps & Discussion





# Next steps

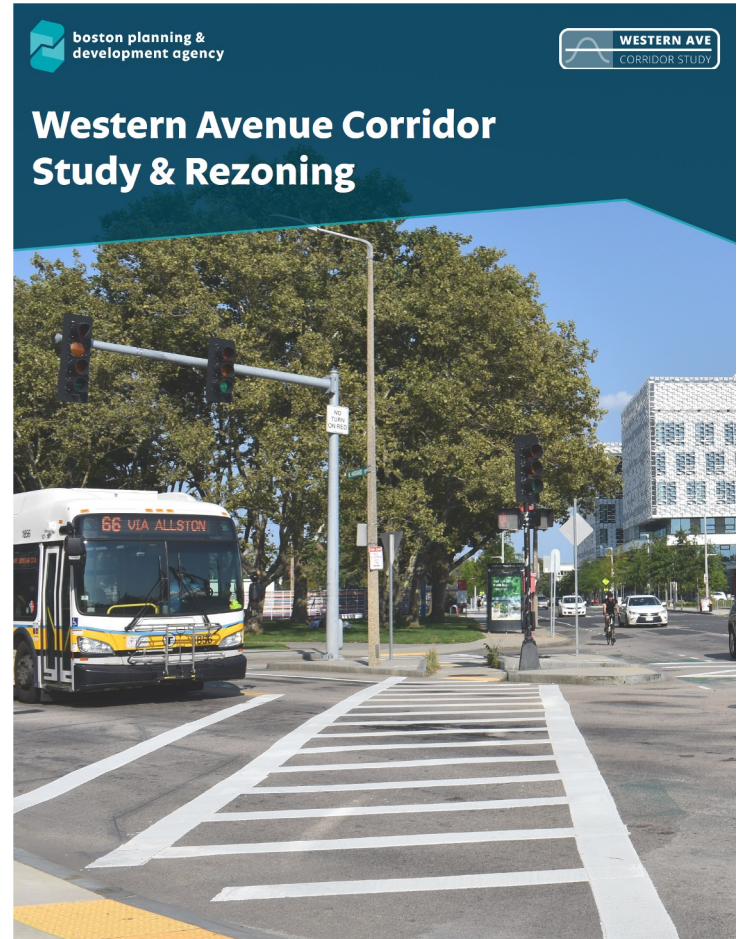
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# Draft Report

We want your input!

Draft posted on website at  
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# Thank you

## Questions & Discussion



**boston planning &  
development agency**