

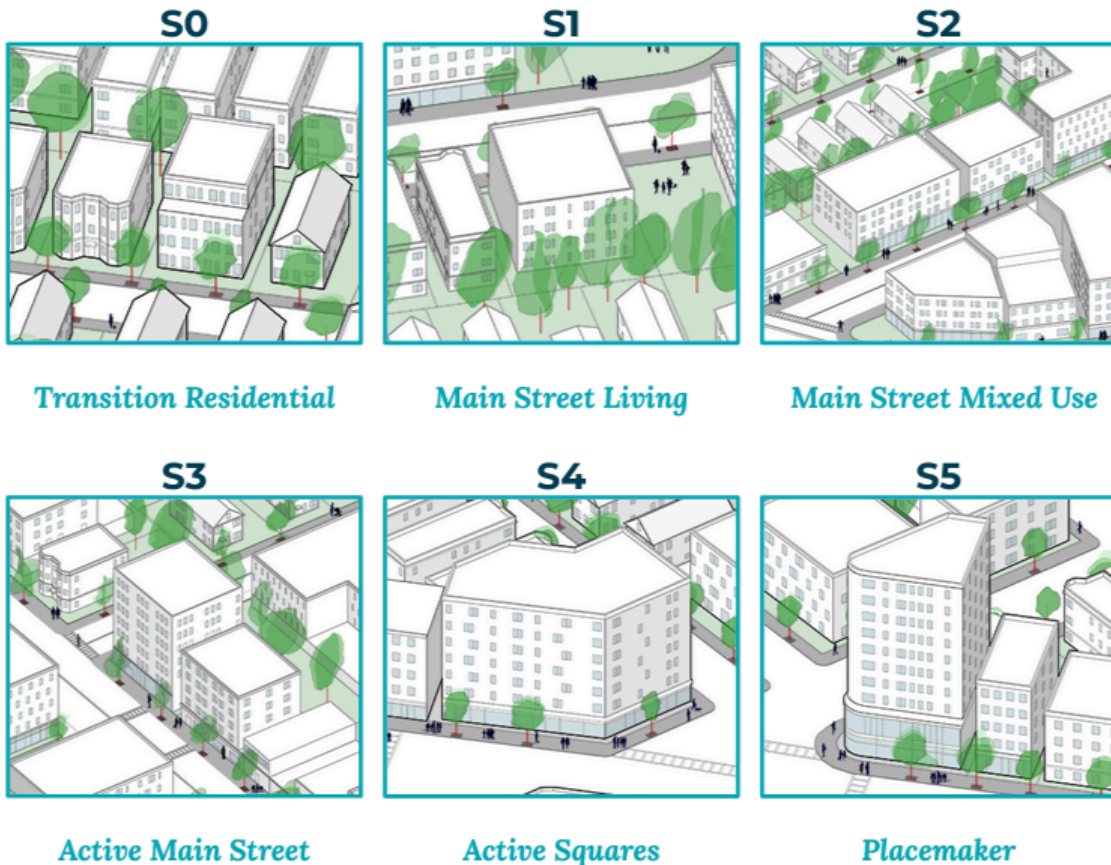
# Squares + Streets Zoning Summary

This is a brief overview of Squares + Streets zoning regulations, known as Article 26 (Squares + Streets Districts). For more detailed information including the full Use Regulation table, go to [bostonplans.org/zoning4squares](https://bostonplans.org/zoning4squares) to access the most recent version of the Squares + Streets zoning text amendment.

## Purpose of Squares + Streets Zoning

Squares + Streets Districts (adopted on April 17, 2024) are areas characterized by a mix of uses, significant transit service, and high levels of pedestrian activity. The purpose of these districts is to support and increase the mix of uses, support walkability, encourage adaptive reuse, and designate areas as appropriate for infill development and housing supply growth, to be delivered as the result of coordinated City planning and investment.

## SQUARES + STREETS Zoning Districts



# S0: Transition Residential

**Description:** Primarily a residential district that provides a transition from mixed-use and high activity squares and streets to lower activity residential areas. Transition Residential offers some flexibility in use but articulates the edges of the higher density growth areas. Residential uses are limited to no more than 14 dwelling units and have lot coverage, yard, and permeable area of lot dimensional requirements.

USE REGULATIONS SUMMARY	
	<p>Allowed uses in S0 are mostly limited to residential uses and civic uses like child care centers and schools. Residential uses are only allowed up to 14 units which is sub-article 80 scale. In addition, there are a few other uses which are conditionally allowed, which allows for the opportunities for things like corner stores and coffee shops in these transitional residential districts.</p>
DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS SUMMARY	
<p><b>Building Lot Coverage</b> = 60%</p> <p><b>Building Floorplate</b> = 4,000 sqft max</p> <p><b>Height</b> = 50' / 4 stories max</p>	<p><b>Permeable Area of Lot</b> = 20%</p> <p><b>Front Yard</b> = 8' min</p> <p><b>Rear Yard</b> = 15' min</p> <p><b>Side Yard</b> = 14' cumulative (3' min)</p>

# S1: Main Street Living

**Description:** A mixed-use district with majority residential uses and small to moderate square footage on individual floors of buildings. Buildings may include small-scale storefronts or offices on the ground floor in addition to residential uses. Small-scale side and front yards provide a buffer with lower and higher scale areas.

## USE REGULATIONS SUMMARY



The small active uses which are conditionally allowed in S0, become allowed in S1, some restricted to the ground floor. A few additional uses are allowed or allowed just on the ground floor: such as museums, clinics, and medium sized offices. A few additional uses are conditionally allowed on the ground floor in S1 (including large restaurants and medium retail stores), as well as banks and standalone ATMs.

## DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS SUMMARY

**Building Lot Coverage** = 70%

**Building Floorplate** = 8,000 sqft max

**Building Width** = 120' max

**Height** = 50' / 4 stories max

**Permeable Area of Lot** = 15%

**Front Yard** = 6' min

**Rear Yard** = 10-15' min

**Side Yard** = 14' cumulative (3' min)

# S2: Main Street Mixed Use

**Description:** Allows for medium-scale buildings with facades that fill the front of the lot to help create a continuous and active main street.

## USE REGULATIONS SUMMARY



The allowed uses in S2 are mostly the same as S1, with most residential uses and small active uses allowed. There are a few additional active uses allowed, including large retail stores. In S2, most large active uses are conditionally allowed. There are also a few commercial uses conditionally allowed, the main difference from S1 being small hotels are conditionally allowed in S2.

## DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS SUMMARY

**Building Lot Coverage** = 70%

**Building Floorplate** = 15,000 sqft max

**Building Width** = 150' max

**Height** = 65' / 5 stories max

**Permeable Area of Lot** = 15%

**Front Yard** = 2' min

**Rear Yard** = 10'-15' min

**Side Yard** = 5'-15' min (0' party wall)

**Outdoor Amenity Space** = 20%

# S3: Active Main Street

**Description:** Includes Main Street mixed-use buildings that allow residential, hospitality, and commercial uses on upper floors. The district accommodates larger-scale ground floor destinations and introduces requirements for active uses on the ground floor. Medium-scale buildings are allowed in the district, with zero-lot-line conditions.

## USE REGULATIONS SUMMARY



In S3, most residential uses are allowed, most commercial uses are allowed or conditionally allowed, and most active uses are allowed with some being restricted to the ground floor.

## DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS SUMMARY

**Building Lot Coverage** = 90% (70% on large parcels)

**Building Floorplate** = 20,000 sqft max

**Building Width** = 150' max

**Height** = 85' / 7 stories max

**Active Use Requirement**

**Permeable Area of Lot** = 15% on large parcels

**Front Yard** = 2' min

**Rear Yard** = 5'-15' min


**Side Yard** = 5'-15' min (0' party wall)

**Outdoor Amenity Space** = 20%




# S4: Active Squares

**Description:** Characterized by medium-scale mixed-use buildings with a wide range of active ground floor uses. Upper floors in this district can be residential or commercial, but dwelling units are not allowed on the ground floor primary street frontage.

USE REGULATIONS SUMMARY	
	<p>S4 has the most flexibility in terms of uses, with most residential, active, and commercial uses allowed, and very few limited to the ground floor.</p>
DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS SUMMARY	
<p><b>Building Lot Coverage</b> = 90% (70% on large parcels)</p> <p><b>Building Floorplate</b> = 25,000 sqft max</p> <p><b>Building Width</b> = 200' max</p> <p><b>Height</b> = 85' / 7 stories max</p> <p><b>Active Use Requirement</b></p>	<p><b>Permeable Area of Lot</b> = 15% on large parcels</p> <p><b>Front Yard</b> = 2' min</p> <p><b>Rear Yard</b> = 5'-20' min</p> <p><b>Side Yard</b> = 5'-15' min (0' party wall)</p> <p><b>Outdoor Amenity Space</b> = 25%</p>

# S5: Placemaker

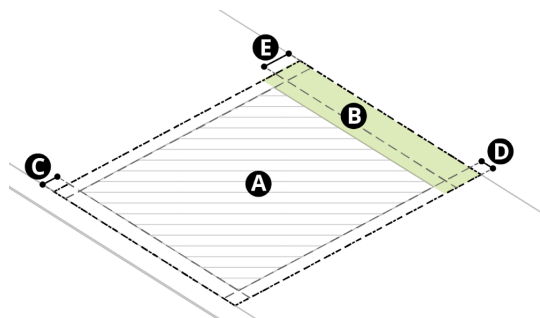
**Description:** Intended for areas in the heart of business corridors or closest to transit. With high street frontages, this district punctuates density and/or urban design. Commercial, hospitality, and entertainment uses are allowed throughout the building and active uses are required on the ground floor.

USE REGULATIONS SUMMARY	
	<p>S5 has the same use allowances as S4, with most residential, active, and commercial uses allowed, and very few limited to the ground floor.</p>
DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS SUMMARY	
<p><b>Building Lot Coverage</b> = 80% (70% on large parcels)</p> <p><b>Building Floorplate</b> = 25,000 sqft max</p> <p><b>Building Width</b> = 250' max</p> <p><b>Height</b> = 145'</p> <p><b>Active Use Requirement</b></p>	<p><b>Permeable Area of Lot</b> = 15% on large parcels</p> <p><b>Front Yard</b> = 2' min</p> <p><b>Rear Yard</b> = 5'-20' min</p> <p><b>Side Yard</b> = 5'-15' min (0' party wall)</p> <p><b>Outdoor Amenity Space</b> = 30%</p>

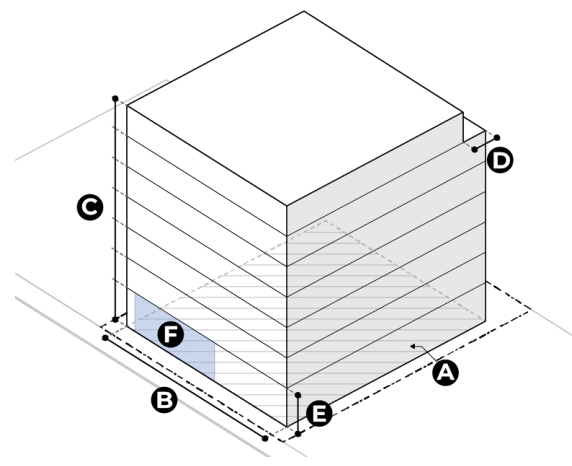
# Dimensional Standards in S+S Districts

The Squares + Streets Zoning Districts are regulated by updated dimensional standards, as showcased in the tables below (and further defined in the Squares + Streets zoning text amendment available at [bostonplans.org/zoning4squares](http://bostonplans.org/zoning4squares)).

## Lot Regulations

Illustrated Lot Standards	
	A Building Lot Coverage
	B Permeable Area of Lot
	C Front Yard
	D Side Yard
	E Rear Yard

## Building Form

Illustrated Building Form Standards	
	A Building Floor Plate
	B Building Width
	C Height
	D Highest Story Rear Stepback
	E Ground Floor Ceiling Height
	F Ground Floor Active Use Requirement



# Ground Floor Active Use Requirement

In the S3 through S5 zoning districts, there is a **Ground Floor Active Use** requirement that relates to the new **Active Uses** category of land uses. This requires that uses within the Active Uses category are required to **occupy a minimum of 50% of the primary lot frontage** on the ground floor of a development project within these zoning districts.

When the primary use is a Civic Use or Open Space Use or when there is an affordable housing development project (as further defined in Article 26), then those projects are exempt from this specific requirement.

**That list of Active Uses are:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Child Care/Adult Day Health Center</li><li>● Community Center</li><li>● Grocery Store</li><li>● Entertainment/Events</li><li>● Makerspace</li><li>● Museum</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Restaurant</li><li>● Retail Cannabis Establishment</li><li>● Retail Store</li><li>● Indoor Recreation</li><li>● Service Establishment</li><li>● Social Club</li></ul>
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These are uses that support the feeling of a “main street” – they are typically open to the public, and help make an area feel vibrant and welcoming.

# Outdoor Amenity Space Requirement

In the S2 through S5 zoning districts, there is an **Outdoor Amenity Space** requirement. This requires a development project in one of those zoning districts to have a percentage of the project be dedicated to outdoor amenity space as defined below:

*A space open to the outdoor air directly accessed from the ground floor or upper stories of a building and/or a pedestrian accessway, that is intended to be used for active or passive recreational use such as playing, gathering, and seating by building occupants and/or the public.*

These spaces can include a **variety of types, including but not limited to:**

- Publicly accessible open space
- New portions of public sidewalks created within the lot line
- Outdoor space for tenants or customers, like restaurant seating or outdoor event and performance areas
- Publicly accessible pedestrian connections through a block
- Private amenity spaces like porches, interior courtyards, shared gardens, balconies, terraces, patios, etc.
- Roof decks, occupiable vegetative roofs, and other programmed recreational spaces on rooftops accessible by building occupants or the public