



# HARRISON ALBANY CORRIDOR STRATEGIC PLAN

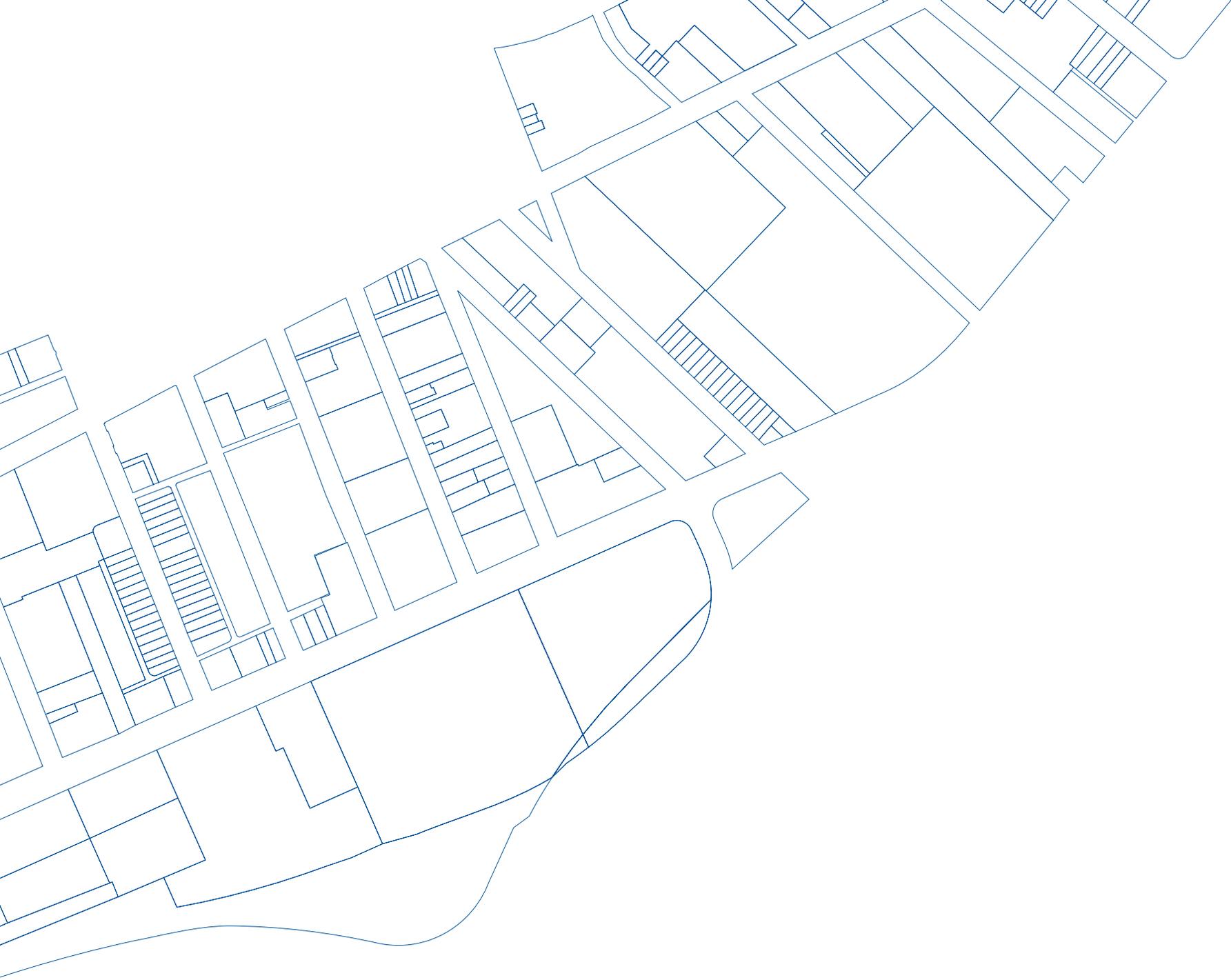
JUNE 2012



City of Boston  
**Thomas M. Menino, Mayor**



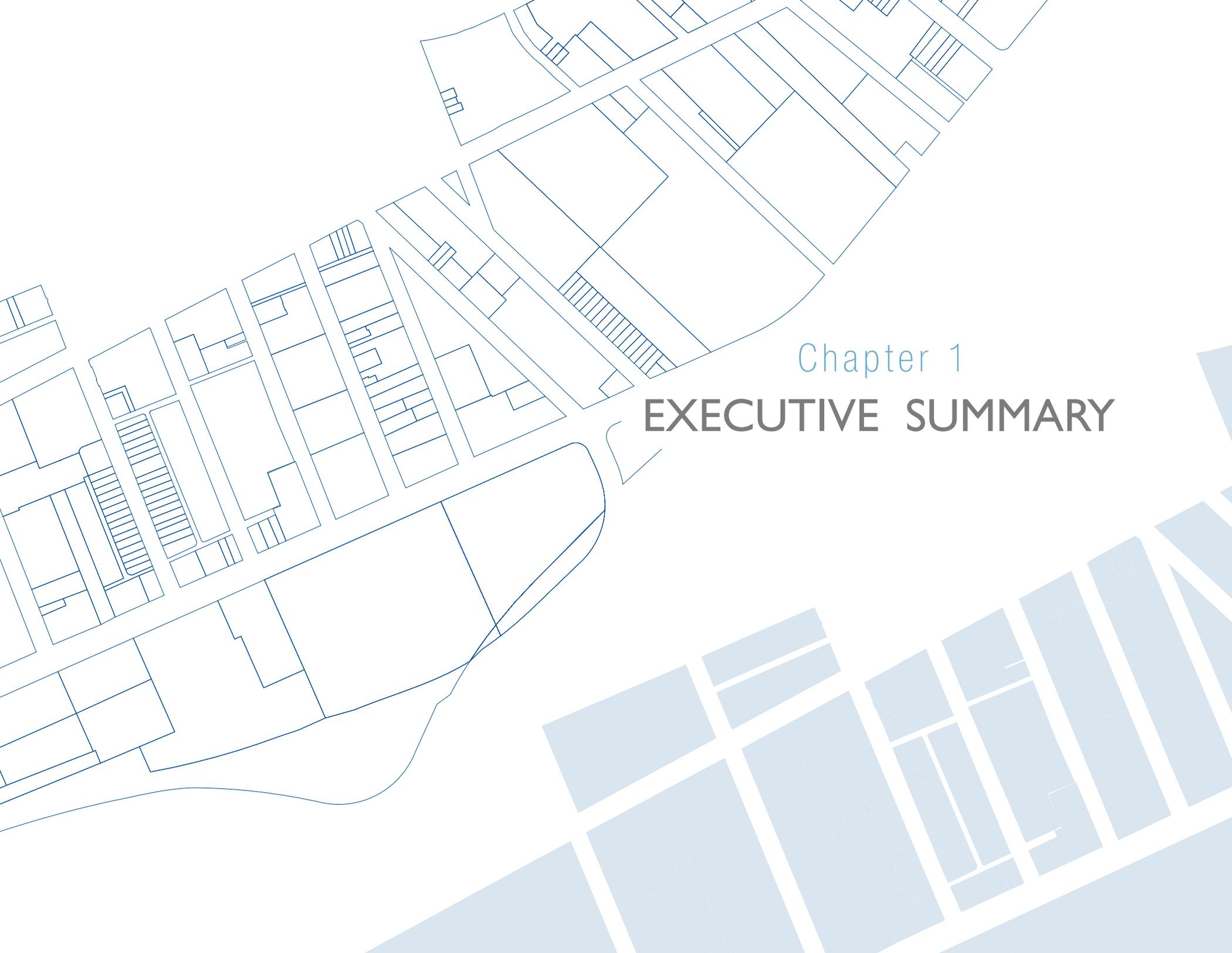
Boston  
Redevelopment  
Authority  
Peter Meade, Director



# HARRISON ALBANY CORRIDOR STRATEGIC PLAN

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Chapter 1

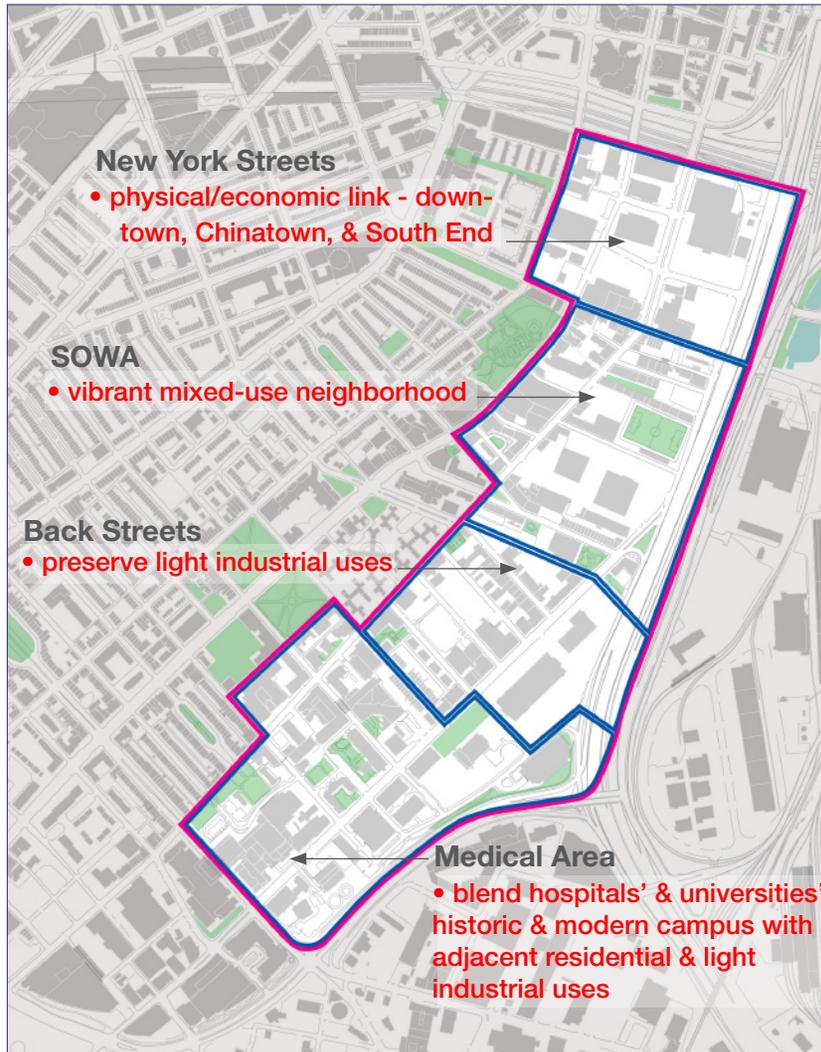
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

The “Harrison Albany Corridor” is located in the South End neighborhood in the City of Boston and is bounded by the Massachusetts Turnpike to the north; Albany Street/Southeast Expressway/Massachusetts Avenue Connector to the east; Massachusetts Avenue to the south; and generally Washington Street/Harrison Avenue to the west. It is a neighborhood that is in transition. Once a thriving industrial area that had access to the Boston Harbor, it is now an area that is uncertain of its future and identity. While the corridor is mostly comprised of commercial and light industrial uses of moderate scale, residential uses are starting to infiltrate. This two-year planning effort has created the opportunity to think strategically about the types of uses, the public realm, and the scale of development that are best suited for the corridor to attract and maintain jobs and preserve its funky and eclectic vibe, while continuing to be a good neighbor to the popular and successful South End neighborhood.



*View of the Study Area looking Northeast*



Map of district Sub-Areas

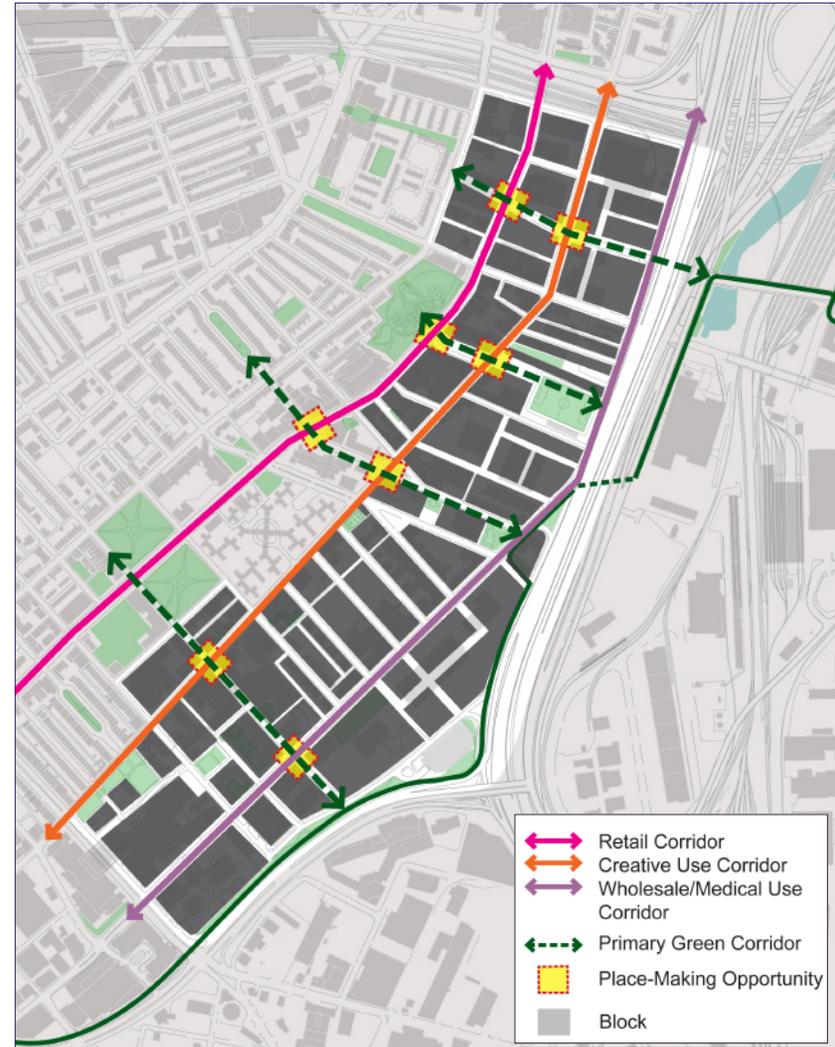
Market pressures affecting the Harrison Albany Corridor include its proximity to downtown, the successful redevelopment of Washington Street, adjacency to a regional highway network, and residential encroachment into a traditionally non-residential employment area. Recognizing these factors, Mayor Thomas M. Menino expressed interest in evaluating the development potential of this historically industrial area of the South End and developing a plan to manage its growth. In April 2009, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”), together with its consultant team and a 30-member business and resident Advisory Group, met for the first of 16 working sessions held over the course of the next two and a half years to develop a vision and draft a Strategic Plan for the Harrison Albany Corridor. The purposes of this plan are to: guide future growth within the corridor, or “Study Area,” through the drafting of a collective vision; reevaluate existing land use controls; update current zoning; calibrate future build-out to transportation capacity; create new connections; and enhance public transportation.

Initial Advisory Group working sessions led to the drafting of vision statements for four distinct planning sub-areas within the Study Area. For the New York Streets sub-area, the salient point was its role as a physical and economic link between downtown, Chinatown, residential South End and South Boston. For the South of Washington Street sub-area (“SOWA”), the main point was to enhance its role as a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. For the Back Streets sub-area, it was most important to preserve existing light industrial uses while accommodating compatible new growth. For the Medical sub-area, it was important to blend the hospital's and university's historic and modern campuses with adjacent residential and light industrial uses.

## Public Realm

Building upon the collective vision for the Study Area, an urban design framework was created to enhance the public realm in order to knit disparate areas together. The main goal of the public realm plan is the improvement of pedestrian connectivity and circulation within the Study Area as well as to neighboring areas and, more specifically, the following components:

- Enhancement of north-south connections through use corridors, strengthening of four main east-west streets for an interconnected open space network, and at the intersection of these, the creation of ground-level place-making opportunities;
- Enhancement of pedestrian and vehicular circulation through the breaking up of large blocks with new connections;
- Implementation of streetscape / public realm improvements shall occur through the BRA Article 80 development review process, which will require certain projects to provide public amenities that reinforce the recommendations in the public realm plan; and
- Creation of street design types that reinforce and improve streetscape character based on the functions of those streets as well as enhancing frontage for existing and future developments.



Public Realm diagram

## Land Use & Dimensional Regulations

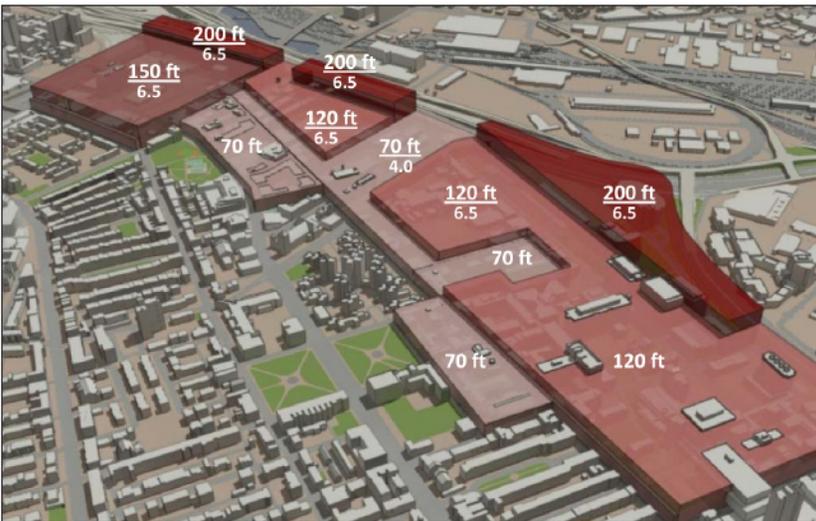
The plan recommends several changes and amendments to Article 64 (South End Neighborhood District) of the Boston Zoning Code. The first major recommendation is the creation of three new zoning sub-districts that reflect the redevelopment vision statements, and generally follow the Harrison Albany Corridor Strategic Plan planning sub-area boundaries for the New York Streets, SOWA and Back Streets sub-areas. Within certain sections of these three new zoning sub-districts and the existing BioSquare Economic Development Area (“EDA”), the as-of-right maximum building heights and Floor-Area Ratios (“FAR”) would be increased. In areas eligible for Planned Development Areas (“PDAs”), additional height and density would be allowed in exchange for specific public use amenities identified through the PDA process. It is also recommended that a lot coverage requirement be established within the three proposed zoning subdistricts and existing BioSquare EDA.

The next major recommendation is to revise the existing land use regulation table found in Article 64. The table would be revised to reflect the uses implied in the vision statements for the proposed three zoning sub-districts. Most of the recommended changes to the land use table would be less restrictive in order to promote growth and facilitate permitting. One exception is the recommendation to make residential uses conditional in the Back Streets sub-area to protect existing businesses.

Lastly, due to overlapping jurisdictions, the BRA will ask the South End Landmark District Commission to consider amending the Standards and Criteria for this area to include the new heights. The goal is to simplify the development review process for proponents.



*Proposed As-of-Right Height/FAR*



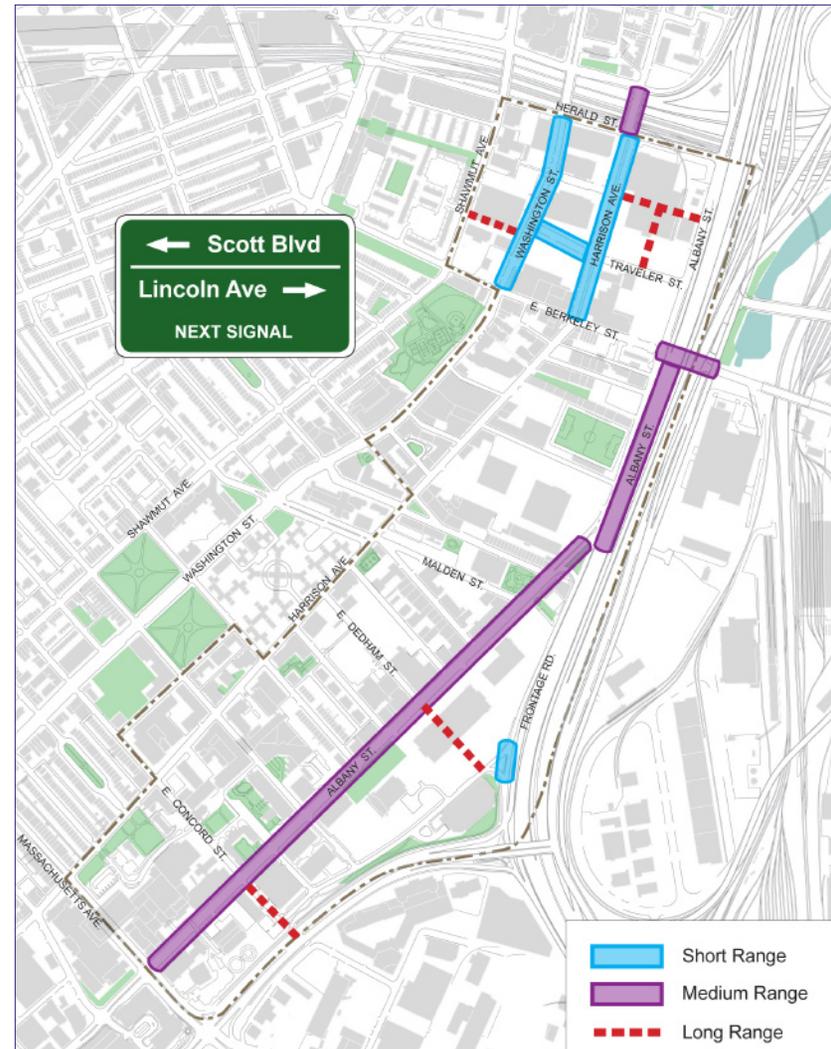
*Proposed PDA Height/FAR*

## Transportation

Transportation planning is an integral part of the reshaping of the Study Area's public realm and its ability to create capacity for accommodating future growth. This plan makes both physical transportation improvement and policy/zoning recommendations. In collaboration with Boston Transportation Department ("BTD"), the following package of proposed roadway network changes is intended to improve multimodal access and circulation for the neighborhood, add capacity to accommodate future development and better utilize and enhance public space.

- Five short-term recommendations involving changes in street directionality, improved signal systems, a proposed new connection, expansion of the public realm by utilizing excess roadway space, and improved signage and wayfinding;
- Four medium-term recommendations involving changes in street directionality, expansion of the public realm by utilizing excess roadway space, and traffic capacity improvements; and
- Three long-term/development-related recommendations involving new arterial roadway connections, as well as local midblock connections.

It is worth noting that the aforementioned street improvements are not limited to enhancing transportation in the area but are also intended to integrate pedestrian/public realm improvements.



Assumed transportation network improvements

Line work does not represent actual alignments or dimensions and instead reflects general intent for planning purposes.

The plan makes two important parking-related recommendations. The first is to revise parking ratios within Article 64 to establish maximum parking ratios and eliminate minimum parking requirements in order to create a multimodal, non-auto-oriented mixed-use district. The second recommendation is for a shared parking strategy in conjunction with Article 80 review, such as an off-site multi-user vehicular/bus parking facility under the Expressway. These two recommendations came as a result of a comprehensive inventory of existing on- and off-street parking spaces and other curbside regulations.

To further promote other modes of transportation in the Study Area, this plan recommends the creation of mobility hubs in conjunction with redevelopment or public infrastructure projects. Additionally, this plan supports the realization of the South Bay Harbor Trail that will create a new bicycle network through the area. Equally important, this Plan supports BTD's Complete Streets policy of requiring on-site bicycle amenities within new developments, such as bike storage and shower/changing facilities (to be determined through the Article 80 process).

Finally, this plan foresees the biggest opportunity for public transit improvements as being accomplished through bus and Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT") enhancements. This plan recommends a series of realistic modifications to existing bus routes to improve interconnectivity within the Study Area (they will also utilize the proposed changes in street directionality). Pending the completion of the Newmarket commuter rail station, this plan recommends increased bus service as demand grows. Lastly, this plan strongly advocates for the implementation of the Silver Line Phase III and the Urban Ring.

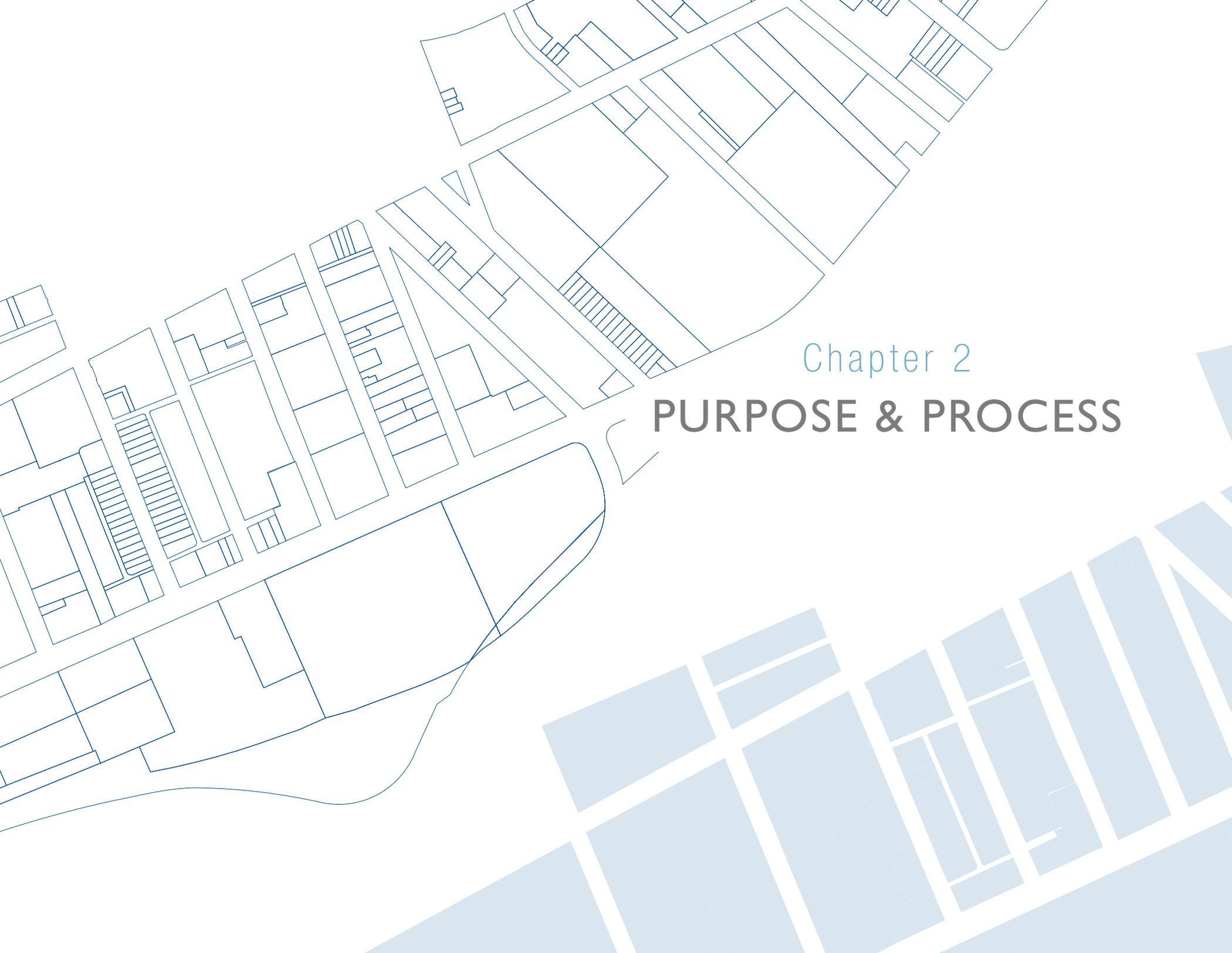
## Implementation

Implementation of the recommendations from this Strategic Plan will be an ongoing process that could extend over the next 15 to 20 years or even longer. In the short term, new zoning and short-term transportation improvements are possible and inexpensive to implement. Other recommended measures that can be implemented in the short term will help to support the realization of the vision described throughout this plan and will ensure that new development is in scale with the character of the individual sub-areas and fits within the existing transportation network.

Implementation of the mid- and long-term recommendations in the plan will be dependent upon availability of funding as well as coordination and cooperation with other entities, including City of Boston departments, state agencies such as the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority ("MBTA"), the Massachusetts Department of Transportation ("MassDOT") and private property owners. The BRA will help to coordinate the implementation of this plan.



Aerial view from south

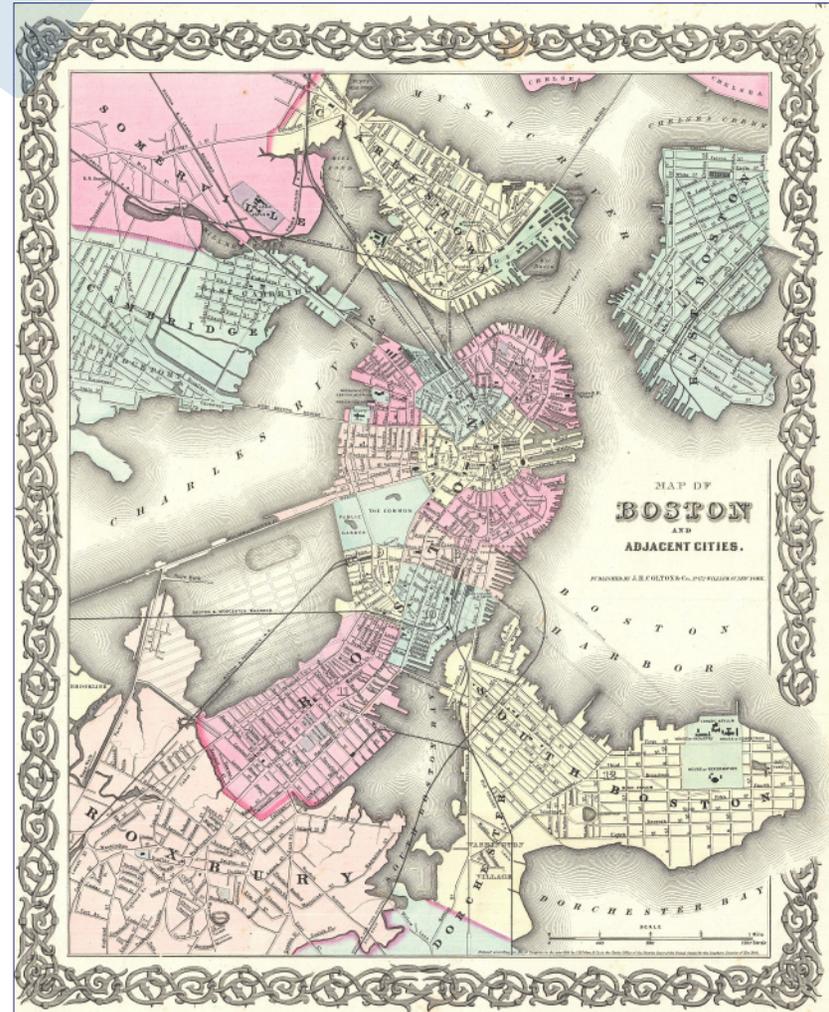


Chapter 2

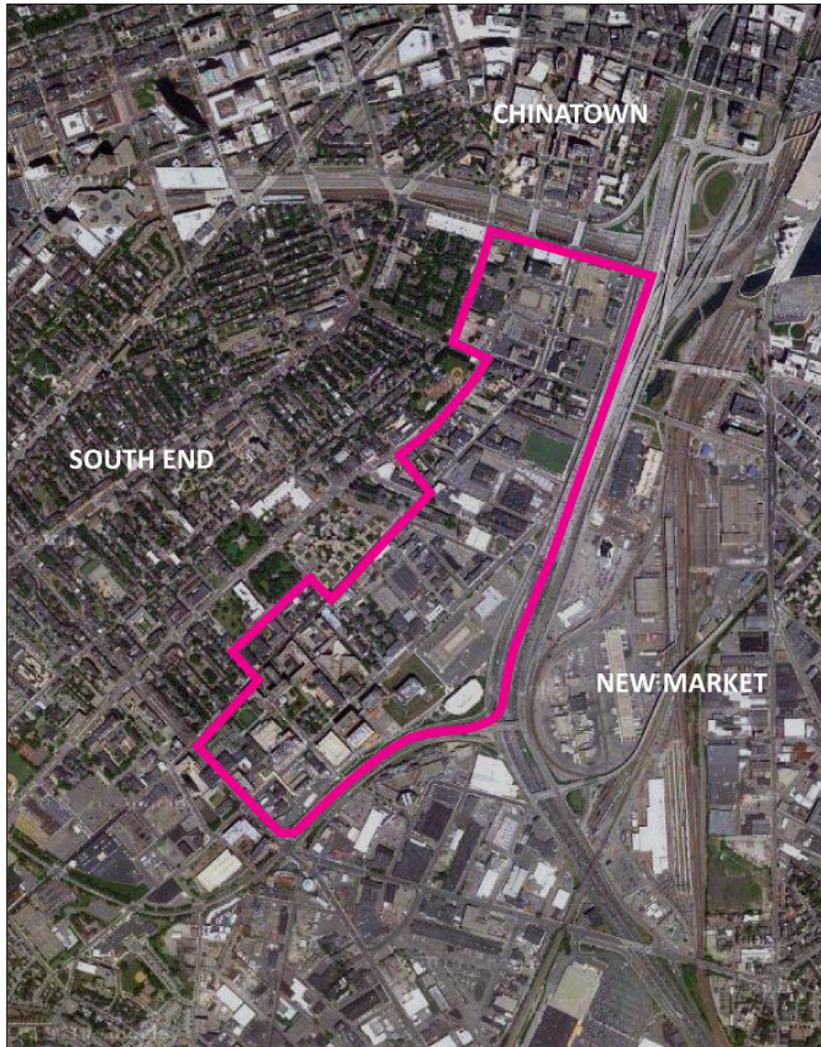
# PURPOSE & PROCESS

## Introduction

A history of the South End neighborhood of Boston begins with Washington Street. One of the city's oldest thoroughfares, it was, until the 1850's, the only road connecting colonial Boston to the rest of the state. When tidal marshes to the northwest were filled in, speculative residential development soon followed and the largest Victorian neighborhood in the nation began taking shape. The height of residential development in the South End neighborhood, bounded roughly by Massachusetts Avenue, the Southwest Corridor, Berkeley and Washington Streets, was between 1850 and 1873. The neighborhood would soon fall out of fashion, however, when the mansions of the Back Bay were constructed in the latter part of the century. To the southeast of Washington Street, along the Roxbury Canal, wharves and factories on Harrison Avenue and Albany Street were thriving by the middle of the 19th century due, in large part, to proximity to railroads and ports.



1857 map of Boston



2010 aerial of Study Area

By the late 19th century the South End had fallen victim to hard economic times and for most of the next century the built environment was victim to neglect and demolition. In 1901, a segment of the Boston Elevated Railway was constructed on Washington Street, casting its buildings in shadow and hastening the decline of the street's vitality until the structure was removed in 1987.

In 1995 Mayor Thomas M. Menino appointed a task force to revitalize Washington Street in the South End/Lower Roxbury, one of Boston's oldest and most prominent thoroughfares. The Washington Street Task Force Plan recommended new zoning for the corridor as well as the creation of a local Main Streets organization. Today, Washington Gateway Mainstreets continues to support Washington Street's economic vitality. In fact, the success of Washington Street has spilled over to Harrison Avenue and, to some extent, Albany Street, in the form of new residential units and commercial spaces. Recognizing that this part of the city would continue to attract development, Mayor Menino recommended in 2008 that a vision and plan for the industrial section of the South End be created to manage its inevitable growth.

The first step toward crafting a vision was to define the physical boundaries for the area to be studied. Harrison Avenue and Albany Street are the major north-south corridors in the industrial South End and together form the spine for the new Study Area. Because it was anticipated that changes to the zoning code might be recommended, the Study Area's northern, eastern and southern boundaries were derived from the existing boundaries for the South End zoning district. These are the Massachusetts Turnpike to the north; Albany Street/Southeast Expressway/Massachusetts Avenue Connector to the east; and Massachusetts Avenue to the south. The Study Area's western boundary includes all of Harrison Avenue and portions of Washington Street in the northern section of the area.



*Corner of Harrison Avenue and Traveler Street*



*View from Plympton Street looking north*



*Converted industrial building on Harrison Avenue*



*Harrison Avenue looking north from the Boston Medical Center*



*Aerial view of Shawmut Avenue (left) and Washington Street (right) looking north*

## Purpose

It is hoped that this Strategic Plan will assist in guiding future development in the Study Area so that it meets the needs of a diverse community in a way that does not jeopardize existing neighborhood uses. The area is currently home to a range of land uses including light industrial, wholesale distribution, medical, commercial (office and retail), and small pockets of multi-family residential. In addition, the presence of underutilized and vacant land parcels within the Study Area poses an opportunity for potential redevelopment.

The planning process has included:

- creating a long-term vision for the Study Area, broken down by sub-areas;
- comparing existing and potential future land uses allowed under the zoning code for the South End Neighborhood District (Article 64);
- analyzing the existing urban design framework and proposing a public realm plan;
- studying the existing transportation network and identifying weaknesses and areas of improvement; and
- projecting a future transportation network based on future development build-out over an approximate 30-year timeframe.

All of the above efforts have led to recommendations, which may relate to zoning and thus will ultimately amend the current Zoning Article for the South End Neighborhood District (Article 64). Other recommendations in this plan may not be codified, but are of equal importance to the plan's implementation.

## Process

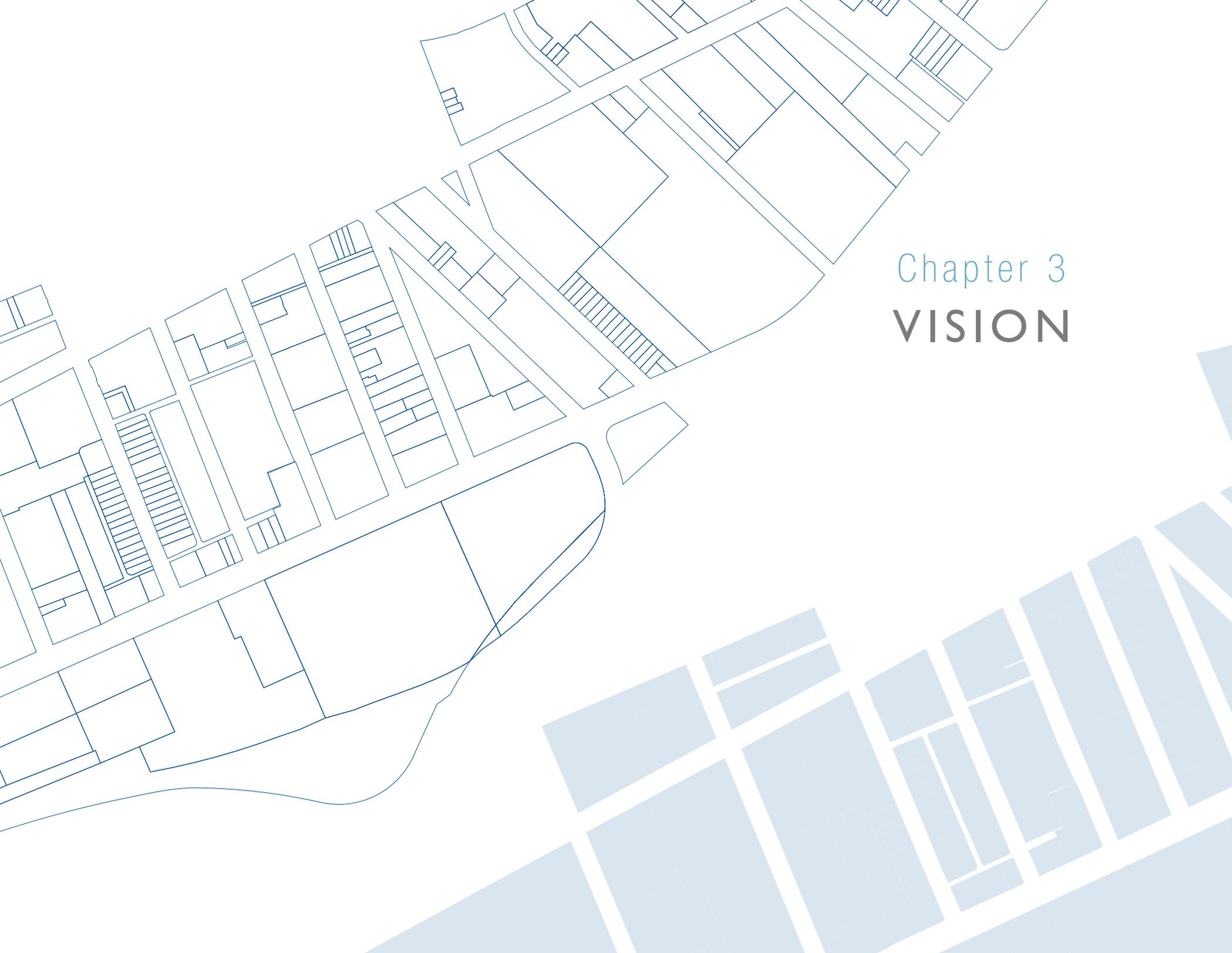
To develop the Strategic Plan the BRA and City team worked with a 30-member Mayor-appointed Advisory Group that consisted of neighborhood business owners, major property owners, institutions, representatives from several neighborhood associations and community members at-large. The Advisory Group met 14 times as well as two additional times with the community at-large, once during the visioning, and once to present the draft plan. All Advisory Group and community meetings were advertised and open to the public.

The first year and a half of the planning process was spent defining the vision and urban design framework. The Study Area was divided into four distinct sub-areas to allow the Advisory Group members and the public a closer study and understanding of the goals of each sub-area. There were also special interest topics interspersed throughout the agendas, pursuant to Advisory Group requests. Transportation became a topic of heightened interest after the urban design framework was established. The existing traffic network was studied, along with other modes of transportation. A projection of future traffic conditions was modeled based on future build-out. With the results of the traffic modeling, the future zoning recommendations (specifically maximum heights and densities) could be crafted.

A series of recommendations was presented to the Advisory Group over the course of several meetings. The recommendations changed based on feedback given by the Advisory Group and area stakeholders until a collective vision was crafted. In summary, this plan contains a set of zoning recommendations intended to open up the existing zoning and spur appropriate development in the Study Area, while maintaining the eclectic mix of uses found there today.



*Members of the Advisory Group on a walking tour of the Study Area*



Chapter 3  
**VISION**

## Introduction

With the geographical boundaries of the Study Area in place the Advisory Group began identifying goals and objectives for the planning study. These were arranged in six categories: 1) Urban Design, Public Realm and Historic Preservation; 2) Open Space and Sustainability; 3) Transportation; 4) Housing; 5) Commercial/Office/Retail; 6) Industrial and Institutional. It became apparent that while certain concerns, such as the need for improved circulation, apply to the entire Study Area, the diversity of the built environment, mix of uses and economic priorities vary greatly from one end of the Study Area to the next. For example, the northern section of the Study Area, with its under-utilized parcels and large blocks, has different needs than the area just to the south, where historic industrial buildings occupied by a diverse mix of businesses and residents give the area more of a neighborhood feel. Moving farther south, small business owners on Wareham, Plympton and Malden Streets are concerned with retaining affordable commercial space while the adjacent Boston Medical Center balances its expanding campus with local and regional transportation demands.

Given this diversity, the Advisory Group decided to divide the Study Area into four distinct sub-areas and crafted a vision statement, based on the goals and objectives for each one. The four sub-areas are:

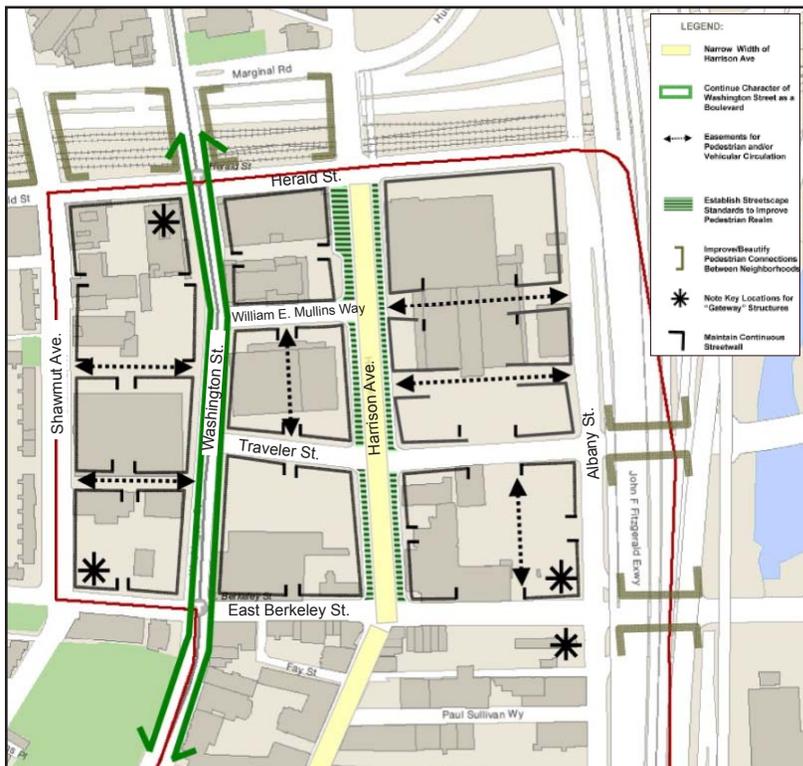
- 1) New York Streets;
- 2) South of Washington Street ("SOWA");
- 3) Back Streets;
- and 4) Boston Medical Center/Boston University Medical Campus ("Medical").



Map of Study Area and sub-area boundaries



Surface parking lot in the New York Streets sub-area



New York Streets sub-area vision diagram

## New York Streets

Bounded on the north by Herald Street and the Massachusetts Turnpike, on the west by Shawmut Avenue, on the east by Albany Street/Interstate 93, and on the south by East Berkeley Street, the area derives its name from a historic pattern of tightly gridded streets oriented to the east and west, many named for towns and cities in New York state including Rochester, Genesee, Oswego, Troy, etc.

Today, the New York Streets sub-area contains untapped potential. Its physical adjacency to two major highways and downtown Boston make it an attractive location for commercial and residential development, however, under-utilized parcels predominate. With little retail space and ground floor activity in the area, the pedestrian experience is compromised. This condition is compounded by long distances between streets, or large blocks, which are a product of the elimination of the “New York” streets. Further, street directionality in the New York Streets sub-area is such that vehicular circulation is more convoluted than necessary.

### *Vision Statement*

The New York Streets sub-area should emphasize its location as the vital physical and economic link between the City's downtown, Chinatown, and South End neighborhoods with convenient access to South Boston and the regional roadway system. Future development should provide exciting new 18-hour uses within a pedestrian-friendly public realm that includes a finer grain of city blocks that allow for enhanced transportation access and circulation. Non-residential uses should provide new jobs for Boston residents.

SOWA

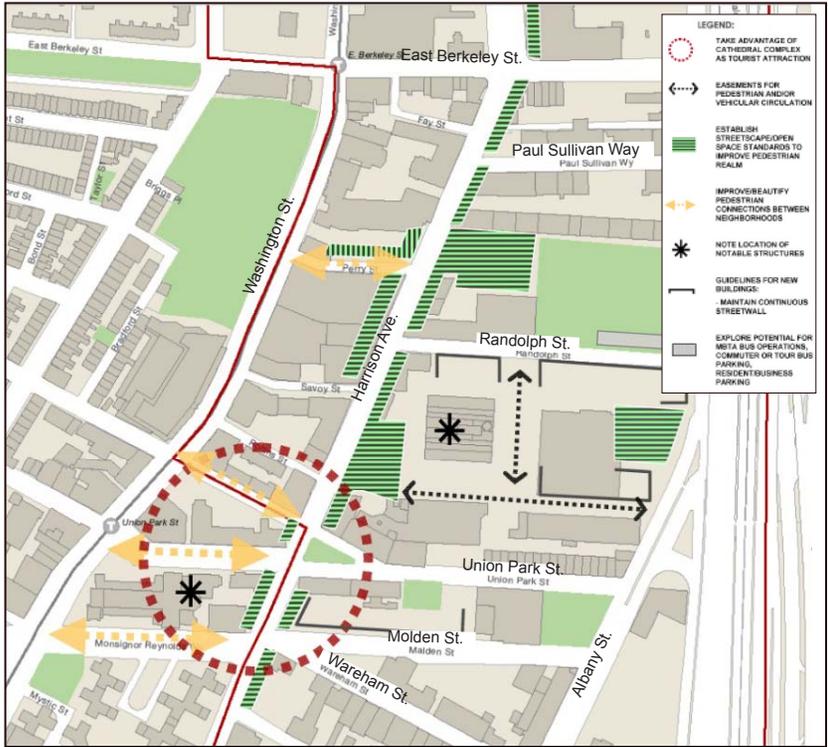
Immediately south of the New York Streets sub-area is the South of Washington Street (“SOWA”) sub-area. This district is bounded on the north by East Berkeley Street, on the west by Washington Street, on the east by Albany Street, and on the south by Malden Street. The area is a lively and eclectic mix of former industrial loft buildings, many now converted into artists’ work space and housing; as well as galleries, shops and restaurants primarily oriented to Harrison Avenue and East Berkeley Street. Institutions with deep roots in the South End also have a presence in SOWA, including the Cathedral of the Holy Cross and its associated schools as well as the Pine Street Inn, a social services organization. In the past ten years new residents have moved to the SOWA sub-area, giving it the feel of a truly mixed-use neighborhood.

*Vision Statement*

The SOWA sub-area should maintain the feel of a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. Existing historic resources and industrial character should be preserved while fostering a diverse range of uses including housing, commercial, artist space and strategically-located retail. Streetscape improvements should be focused to improve the pedestrian experience and reinforce connections to public transit.



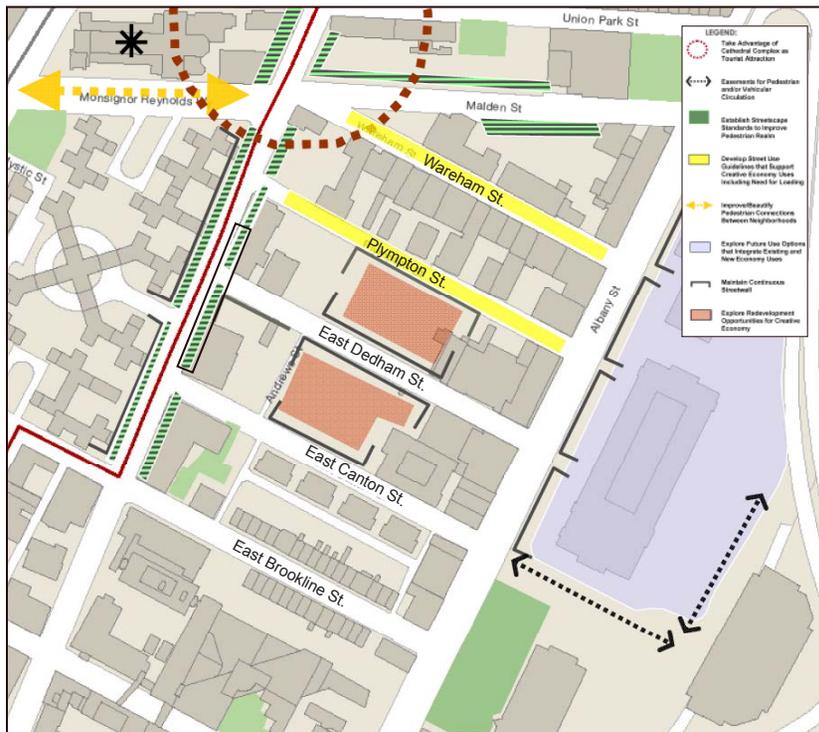
Harrison Avenue in the SOWA sub-area



SOWA sub-area vision diagram



Wareham Street in the Back Streets sub-area



Back Streets sub-area vision diagram

## Back Streets

To the south of SOWA, the Back Streets sub-area is defined by Malden Street to the north, Harrison Avenue to the west, the Southeast Expressway viaduct and Frontage Road to the east, and East Canton Street to the south.

The Back Streets sub-area gets its name from the Mayor's economic initiative to preserve industrial land and support small- and medium-sized industrial and commercial businesses. Malden, Plympton, Wareham and East Canton Streets are lined with small-scale historic buildings whose adaptability is well-suited to the affordable commercial and industrial space they contain. On Albany Street, two wholesale flower markets occupy single-story buildings on large lots. Residential uses are the exception in the Back Streets sub-area and are not always compatible with commercial activities, such as truck use and loading.

### *Vision Statement*

The Back Streets sub-area should continue to preserve light industrial uses while encouraging complementary commercial and research uses that create new jobs. The architectural character of future development should reinforce the existing scale, incorporate new green technologies, and set an example for quality contemporary design in a historic context. The sub-area should welcome a new streetscape that improves the aesthetics and safety for pedestrians and vehicles.

Medical

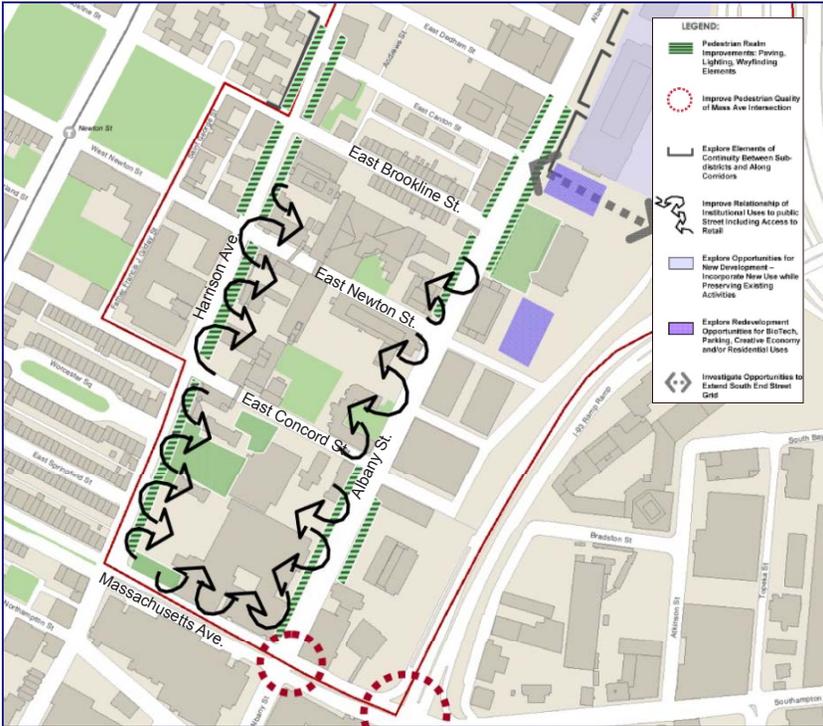
The fourth and final sub-area, to the south of Back Streets, is the Boston Medical Center/Boston University Medical Campus (“Medical”) sub-area. Defined generally by East Canton Street to the north, Harrison Avenue to the west, the Massachusetts Avenue Connector to the east, and on the south by Massachusetts Avenue, this sub-area is dominated by a campus of hospital and hospital-related uses including biomedical research facilities. The urban fabric is larger in massing and scale in this part of the Study Area, with the exception of a pocket of residential buildings on East Brookline Street. The properties within the Medical sub-area fall within the Boston University Medical Center Institutional Master Plan (“IMP”) physical boundaries. The purpose of an IMP is to establish the zoning regulations for the campuses of major institutions. Goals of any adopted IMP in the City of Boston are to provide for the well-planned development of institutions and to enhance their public service and economic development role in the surrounding neighborhoods; to encourage economic growth and the diversification of the economy, with special emphasis on creating and retaining job opportunities; to preserve, enhance and create open space; to protect the environment and improve the quality of life; to promote the most desirable use of land; and to promote the public safety, health, and welfare of the residents.

*Vision Statement*

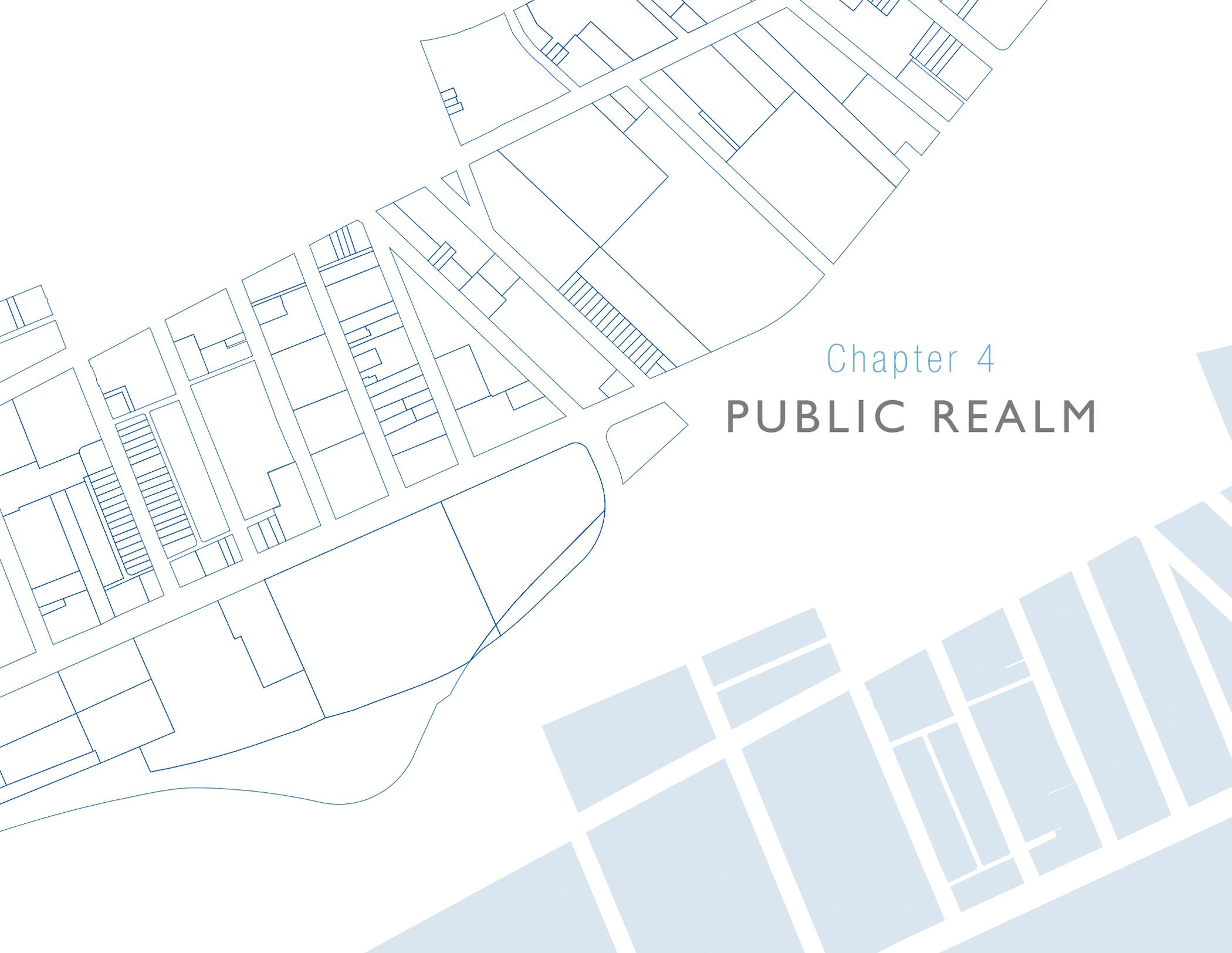
The Medical sub-area should continue to strive for smart growth that blends the hospital’s and university’s historic and modern campus with the adjacent residential and light industrial uses while improving its regional transportation access. Opportunities for job training and job creation for Boston residents should continue to be promoted.



Corner of Harrison and Massachusetts Avenues in the Medical sub-area



Medical sub-area vision diagram



Chapter 4

# PUBLIC REALM

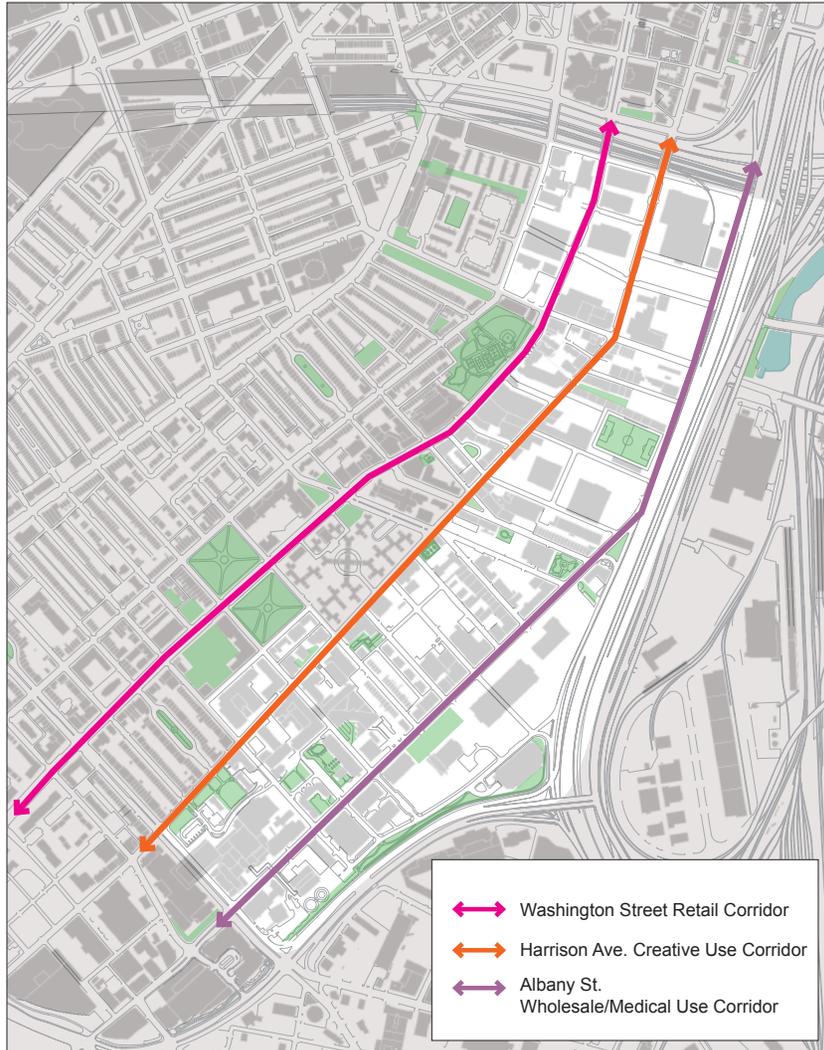
## Introduction

The existing physical environment in the Harrison Albany Study Area varies greatly from one sub-area to the next. For example, the pedestrian-friendly environment of SOWA gives way to super-blocks and underutilized parcels to the north in the New York Streets sub-area and a working light industrial neighborhood to the south in the Back Streets sub-area. Further south, the Medical sub-area's institutional campus and lab buildings co-exist with pockets of residential uses.

Early in the planning process the Harrison Albany Advisory Group determined that a successful public realm plan would offer recommendations to knit these somewhat disparate areas together. The resulting enhanced connectivity would not only improve the pedestrian experience and circulation within the Study Area but would optimize its proximity to downtown, Chinatown, South Boston and the residential South End.

All of the Physical Framework Recommendations, which combine to form the Harrison Albany Corridor Public Realm Plan, were devised as tools to enhance connectivity. The Use Corridor study examines both thematic and physical links within the Study Area. The Open Space study identifies four streets as appropriate locations for enhanced landscaping to improve east-west connections through the Study Area. Ground level place-making opportunities are also identified as tools to enhance the public realm. The identification of streetscape types will ensure that future improvements reinforce the principles in this plan. Finally, a comparison of the historic and current street patterns shows how one might begin to break up the larger blocks with new streets.

An in-depth analysis of these studies follows.



Use Corridor diagram

## Use Corridors

In addition to improving physical connectivity, the Advisory Group sought to identify thematic connections between four sub-areas whose characters differ substantially from each other. In addition to a vision for each sub-district, as described in the previous section, the Advisory Group identified street and open space networks which link the sub-areas. Three north-south corridors serve as common threads throughout the Study Area:

### Washington Street Retail Corridor

Active ground floor retail uses contribute to the lively, mixed-use character of Washington Street in the South End and should be reinforced and extended in the SOWA and New York Streets sub-areas. It is expected that the Washington Gateway Main Streets organization will continue to foster new development along Washington and East Berkeley Streets. New construction should contribute to a positive pedestrian experience by featuring ground floor retail space with open and transparent storefronts and closely-spaced pedestrian entries facing the street. Parked cars should be screened from the street and all parking and loading activities should be relegated to the interior of the property.



Washington Street Retail Corridor

### Harrison Avenue Creative Use Corridor

Harrison Avenue, particularly in the SOWA and Back Streets sub-areas, is home to creative economy uses such as art galleries, artist work space, architecture studios and other small businesses that bring jobs to this part of the South End and contribute to the eclectic character of the neighborhood. These uses should be encouraged through the zoning code and by preserving the historic buildings in SOWA and Backstreets that are well-suited to these types of small businesses. Ground floor facades should be visually accessible from the street, where possible.



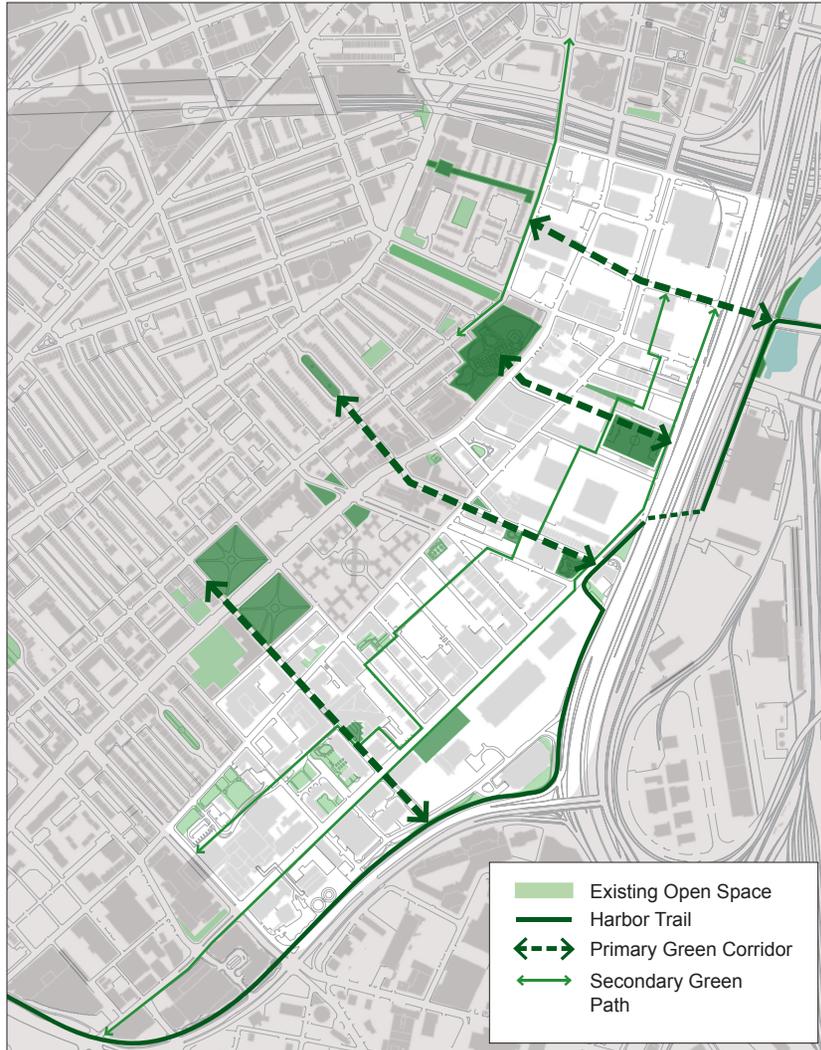
Harrison Avenue Creative Use Corridor

### Albany Street Wholesale/Medical Corridor

Existing medical uses in the Medical sub-area and wholesale uses in the Back Streets sub-area should be retained and encouraged. Loading and delivery areas should be clearly marked to maintain pedestrian safety and reinforce the character of the Back Streets sub-area. This can be done with an architectural feature, such as a canopy or with pavement striping or the like. Since wholesale businesses are not open to the public at-large, the ground floors of these buildings may not necessarily be designed to attract pedestrian traffic. In these cases streetscape improvements, especially along Albany Street, should be considered.



Albany Street Wholesale/Medical Corridor



Green Corridor diagram

Line work does not represent actual alignments or dimensions and instead reflects general intent for planning purposes.

## Green Corridors

The open space network proposed by the Advisory Group would achieve the following:

Create four primary east-west Green Corridors to encourage way-finding and connections between the residential South End, the Study Area and beyond to the Fort Point Channel and adjacent South Boston neighborhood. The four streets are: Traveler Street, Perry Street, Union Park Street, and East Newton Street.

Connect major existing open spaces found in the South End neighborhood and the proposed South Bay Harbor Trail. These primary Green Corridors would develop an enhanced pedestrian network of paths and open spaces along with increasing their visibility and use.

Enhance north-south pedestrian connections along a secondary green path that would variously run along public sidewalks as well as between and through private properties. This green path would be a potential enhancement to future redevelopment. Another enhancement could be the addition of a spur to the South Bay Harbor Trail running up Albany Street. This spur would assist commuter cyclists headed to work in the area. Additionally, where there is an opportunity to break up a large block but the creation of a new street is not practical, a green pedestrian corridor would still provide a crucial connection on a more intimate scale. It could also offer a way for pedestrians to discover and explore the neighborhood. Finally, enhanced signage is recommended to reinforce the proximity to South Boston.

Activate the space under the Southeast Expressway through the use of lighting, signage or public art.



Atlantic Avenue's wide sidewalk outside of South Station's bus terminal



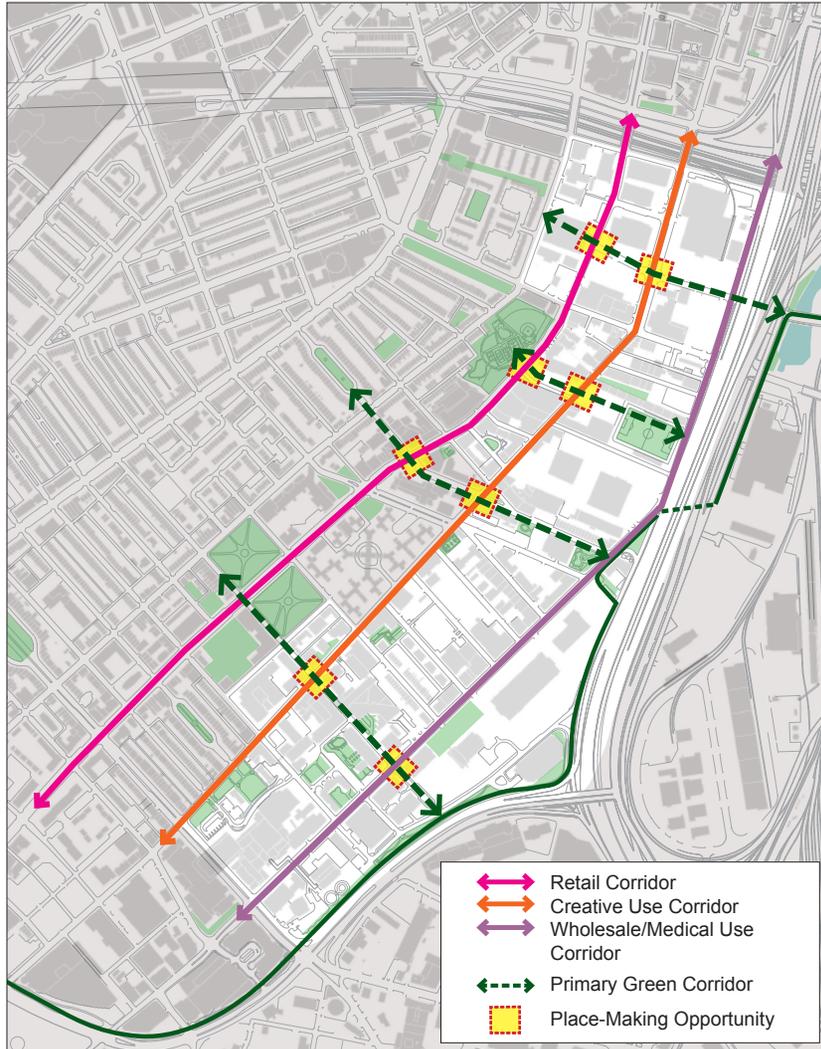
Mixed-use retail corridor on Thayer Street in SOWA



Daytime view of the Cumbernauld highway underpass in Scotland



Nighttime view of the Cumbernauld highway underpass in Scotland



Place-Making Opportunities diagram

Line work does not represent actual alignments or dimensions and instead reflects general intent for planning purposes.

## Place-Making Opportunities

Intersections of north-south Use Corridors with east-west Green Corridors are logical locations for place-making opportunities.

A place-making opportunity should provide visual interest, contribute toward an attractive public realm and encourage pedestrian traffic. A place-making opportunity could be located at the ground level and be designed as a public open space such as a park or plaza. It could be a special streetscape design, an area to display public art, or it might be a location where the architecture of the building responds to a view corridor.



*Boston City Hall Plaza Farmers' Market arcade*



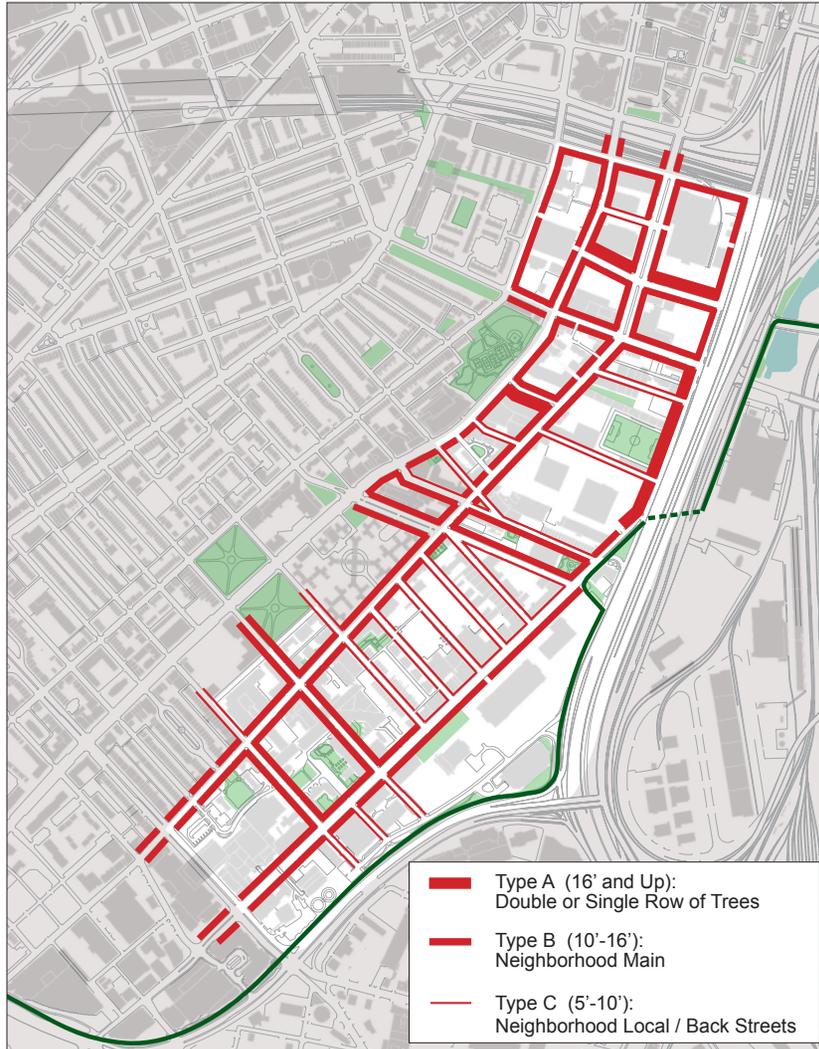
*Plaza at One Brigham Circle in Mission Hill*



*One Post Office Square, Boston*



*Plaza along Tremont Street in the South End*



Streetscape Guidelines diagram

## Streetscape Guidelines

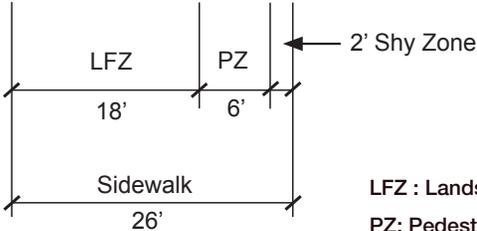
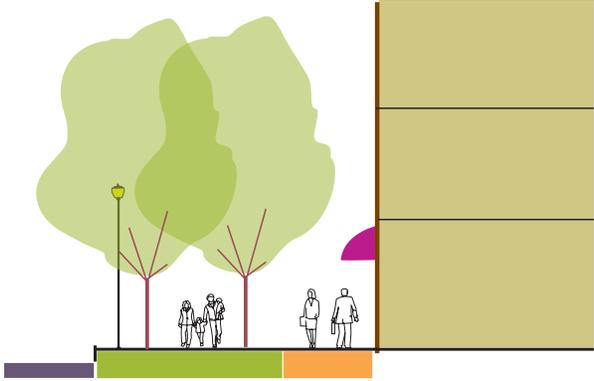
Streetscape, defined as the space between the building line and the curb, is an integral part of the public realm. A successful streetscape ties together all the different street elements including buildings, trees, street lights and furniture. A well-designed streetscape helps form and enhance the character of streets.

Three types of streetscape guidelines for the Study Area are recommended to reinforce and improve streetscape character based on the functions of those streets as well as enhance frontage for existing and future developments. Each type has specific standards to meet the different scale and character of the streets in each sub-area while allowing flexibility to be creative and adaptive for many conditions. Any proposed development proposing changes to the public right-of-way should refer to these guidelines.

The following streetscape types A, B and C are developed in keeping with the Boston Transportation Department's Complete Streets guidelines which have been adopted as a City-wide policy. The goal is to create streets that become both great public spaces and sustainable transportation networks.

**TYPE A : Single or Double Row of Trees ( 16' and Up )**

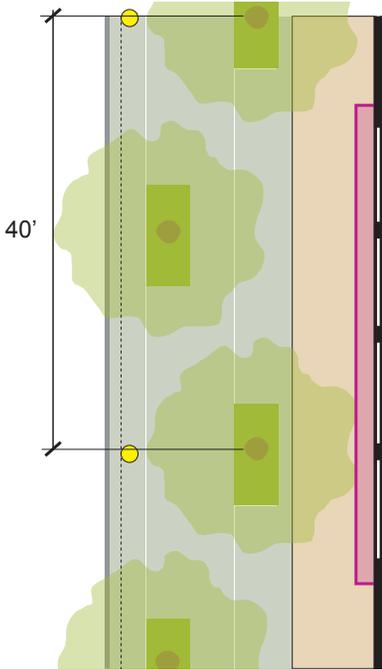
Type A are streets identified as primary east-west Green Corridors. This streetscape type would greatly enhance connectivity and improve the quality of the pedestrian environment in the Study Area. Traveler, Perry, Union Park, and East Newton Streets, along with the section of Albany Street in the New York Streets and SOWA sub areas are recommended for this Type A.

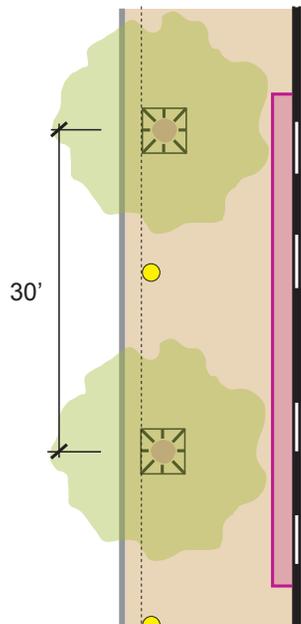
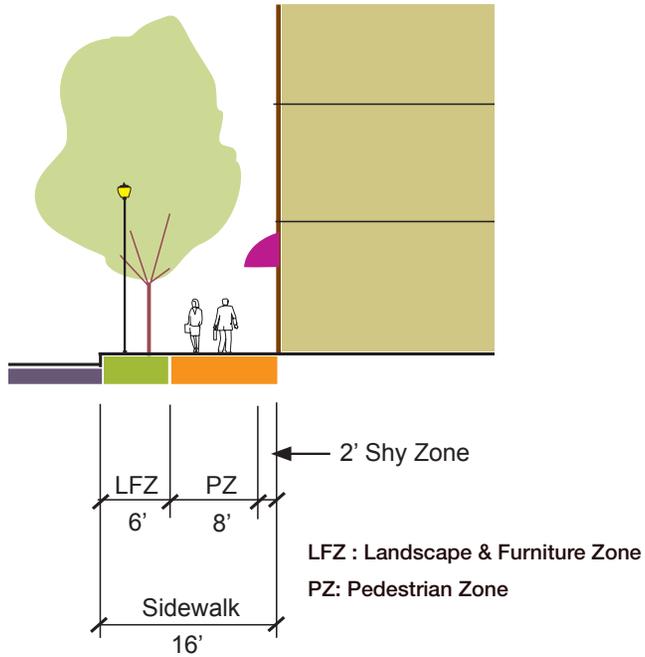


LFZ : Landscape & Furniture Zone  
 PZ: Pedestrian Zone



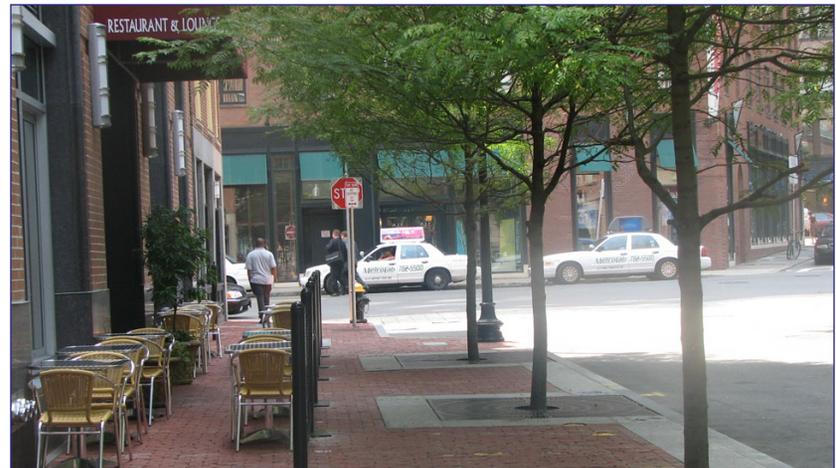
Stuart Street, Back Bay





### TYPE B : Neighborhood Main ( 10'-16' )

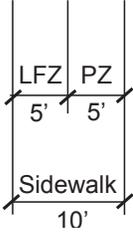
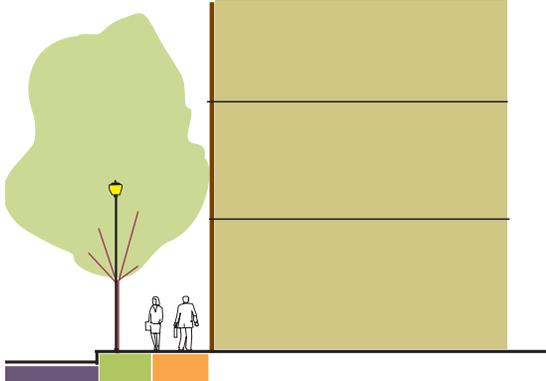
Type B are the most commercially active and culturally vibrant connector streets in the Study Area. Their design supports and enhances the current functions and roles of these streets. The three Use Corridors fall into this type. Type B streets include Shawmut Avenue, Washington Street, Harrison Avenue, Albany Street, Herald Street, East Berkeley Street, Monsignor Reynolds Way, Malden Street, East Newton Street, and East Concord Street.



Merchants Row, Downtown Boston

**TYPE C: Neighborhood Local ( 8'-10' )**

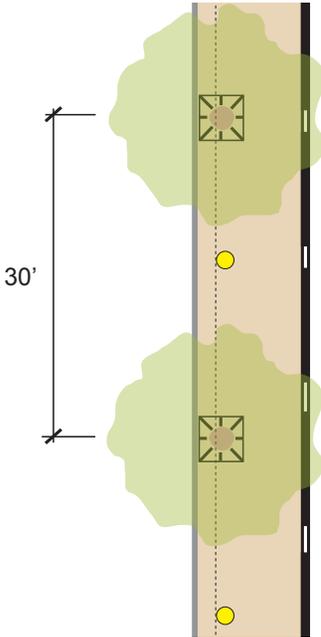
Type C streets typically cross major connector streets. These streets have distinctive characteristics associated with each sub-area. Type C streets are designed to maintain the existing character, scale, and use of those streets while improving the overall streetscape quality. Type C can be sub-divided into two categories, "Neighborhood Local" and "Back Streets." "Neighborhood Local" streets are William E. Mullins Way, Paul Sullivan Way, Randolph Street, Savoy Street, Rollins Street, East Brookline Street, East Canton Street, and East Concord Street.

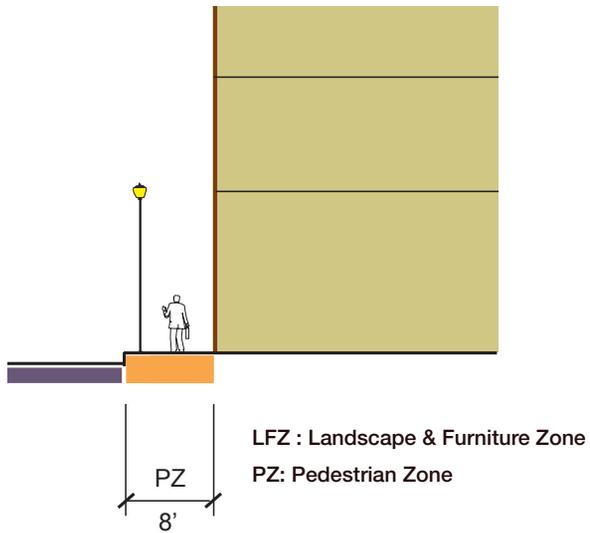


LFZ : Landscape & Furniture Zone  
PZ: Pedestrian Zone



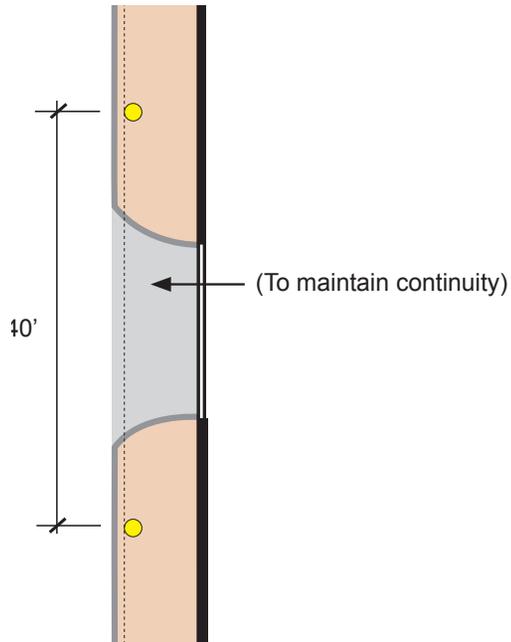
Residential street in South End





**TYPE C: Back Streets ( 5'-8' )**

“Back Streets” are designed to accommodate the needs of the businesses in the Back Streets sub-area while ensuring the safety and quality of the pedestrian environment. Type C “Back Streets” are Malden Street, Wareham Street, Plympton Street, East Dedham Street, and East Canton Street.



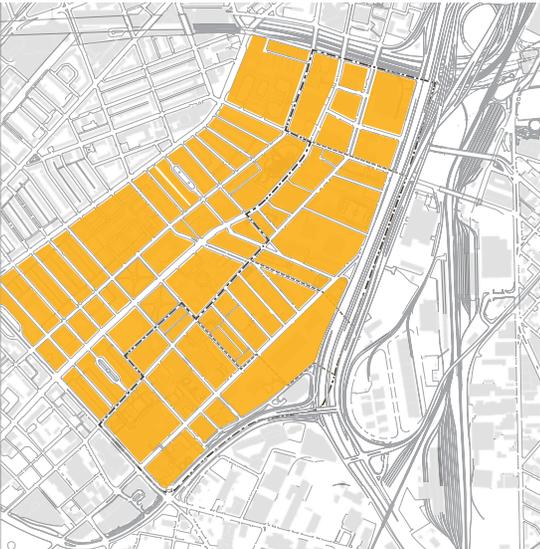
*Wareham Street, South End*

Street Grid and Block Pattern

A comparison of today's street grid and block pattern with that from historic maps at the turn of the 20th century reveals a marked shift in the size of the city's blocks, particularly in the New York Streets and SOWA sub-areas. Larger blocks are detrimental to efficient traffic flow as well as the pedestrian experience. New developments in these sub-areas should be encouraged and in some cases required to incorporate new vehicular and pedestrian connections. Enhanced traffic flow will alleviate congestion on surrounding streets and improved walkability will strengthen the Study Area's connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and public transportation.



Overlay of 1908 and today's Street Grid and Block Patterns showing missing streets in yellow



Top: 1908 Street Grid and Block Pattern  
Bottom: Today's Street Grid and Block Pattern



Public Realm diagram

Line work does not represent actual alignments or dimensions and instead reflects general intent for planning purposes.

## Public Realm

The Public Realm Plan for the Harrison Albany Study Area envisions enhanced pedestrian and vehicular connections achieved by breaking up large blocks and designing attractive streetscapes that enliven the pedestrian experience. Implementation of the Public Realm Plan will not only provide physical improvements to the Study Area, it will provide stronger connections to Downtown, South Boston and public transportation.

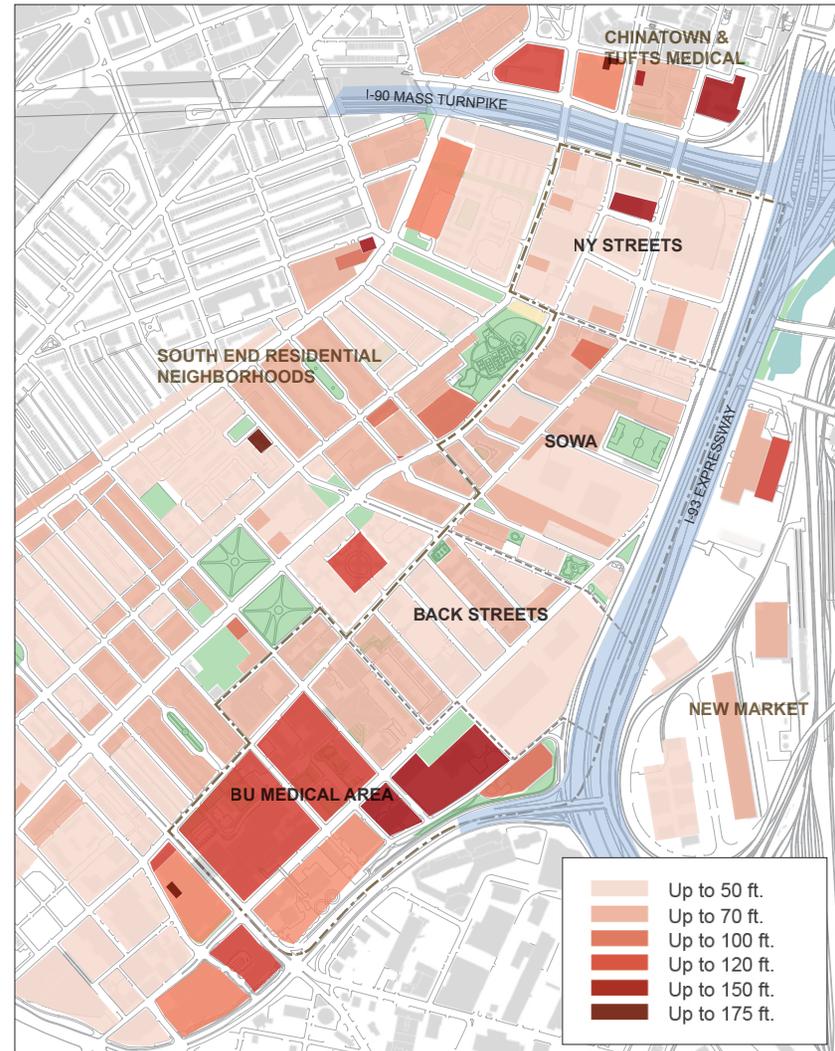
Implementation of the Plan will occur through the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Article 80 development review process. As described in the next chapter on dimensional regulations, certain projects will be required to provide public amenities that reinforce the recommendations in this plan.

## Height

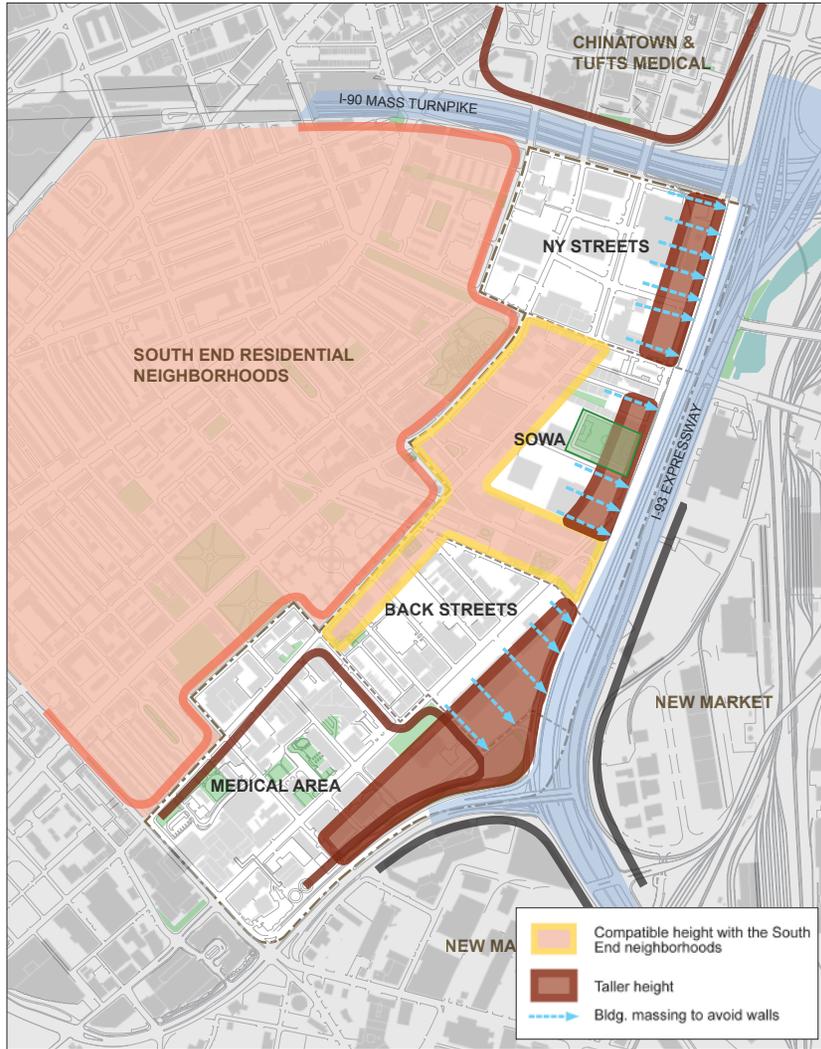
Building height is a key element in the urban design framework and zoning envelope. It directly contributes to the physical characteristics of the Study Area, and height regulations often have an effect on incentives for development. A significant outcome of the planning process was the recommendation to reconsider the current heights prescribed by zoning to, in part, lay the groundwork for achieving the vision for each sub-area. The Advisory Group determined that the heights and densities allowed under the current zoning do not reflect today's economic climate and that greater flexibility is necessary to stimulate development in the areas where growth is desired. An analysis of heights would also provide an opportunity to address the disconnect between current zoning heights and the height limits required under the South End Landmark District Commission's Standards and Criteria.

The following physical conditions and market pressures factored into the analysis of zoning heights in the Study Area:

- existing heights and building types in the residential South End neighborhood;
- the vision of the New York Streets sub-area as the geographical and economic link to Chinatown, downtown, and South Boston;
- the physical impact of the Southeast Expressway, which is approximately 40 feet above Albany Street in the New York Streets sub-area;



Existing Contextual Height diagram

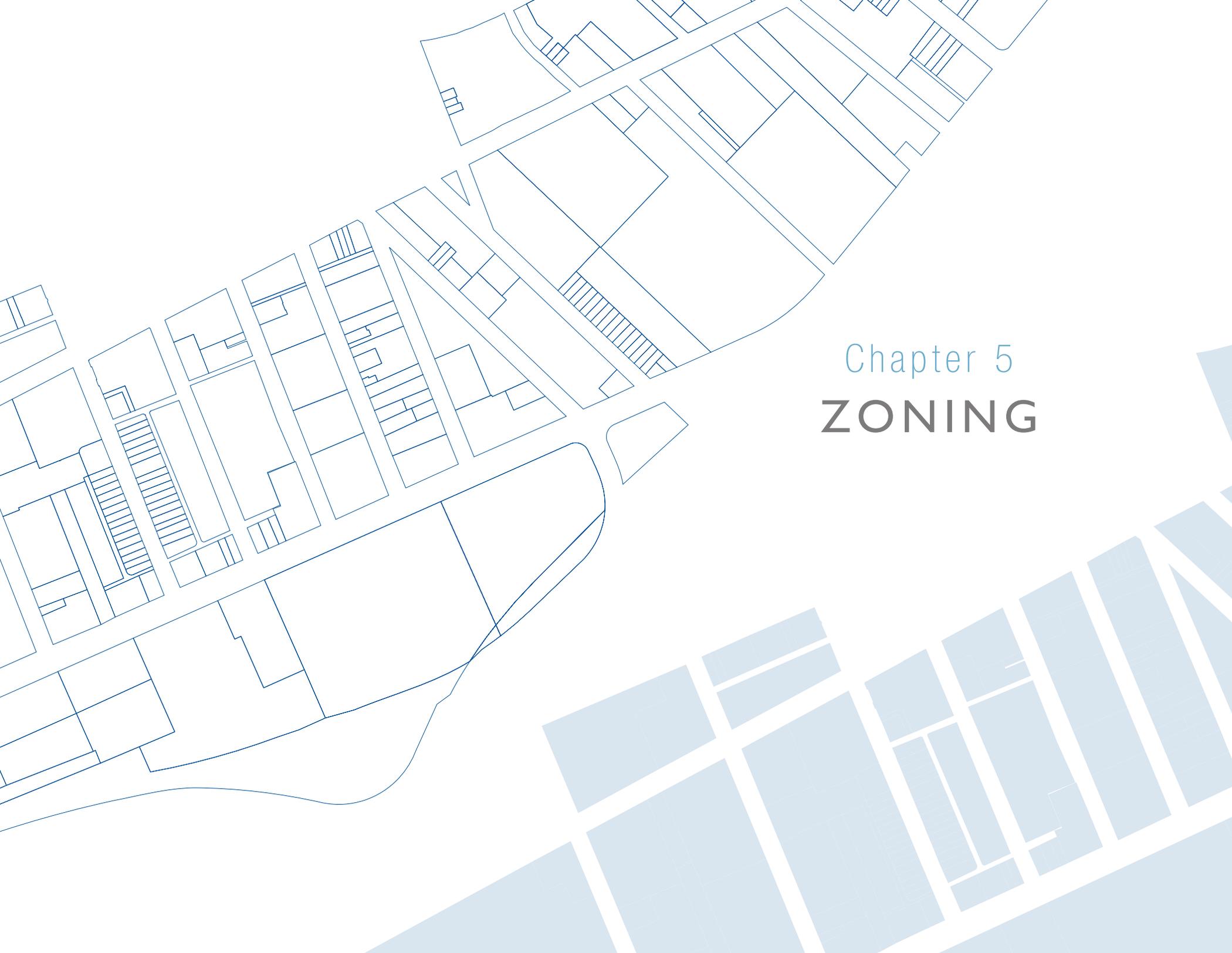


Height Concept diagram

- building heights and types along Harrison Avenue through the SOWA and Back Streets sub-areas;
- potential growth of research and development industry in the Back Streets sub-area;
- existing physical characteristics and future growth potential of the Medical sub-area; and
- impacts of development on the transportation network.

These considerations formed the basis for urban design analyses conducted throughout the planning process. These would ultimately lead to recommendations to increase the zoning heights and densities in parts of the Study Area. The next chapter describes these recommendations and how they can be integrated into the Zoning Code.

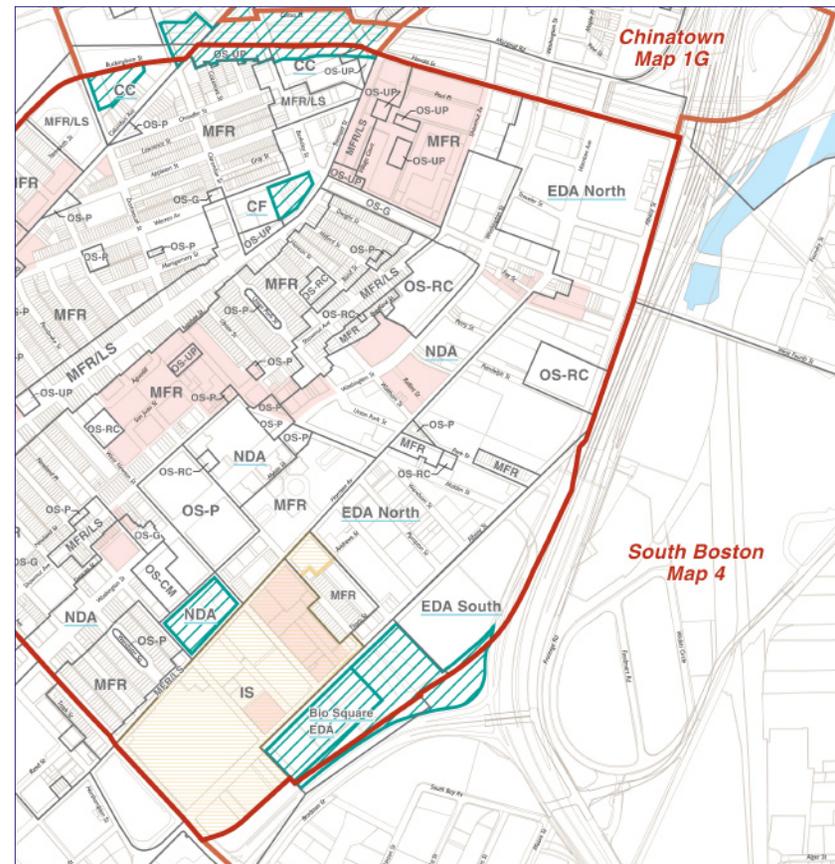




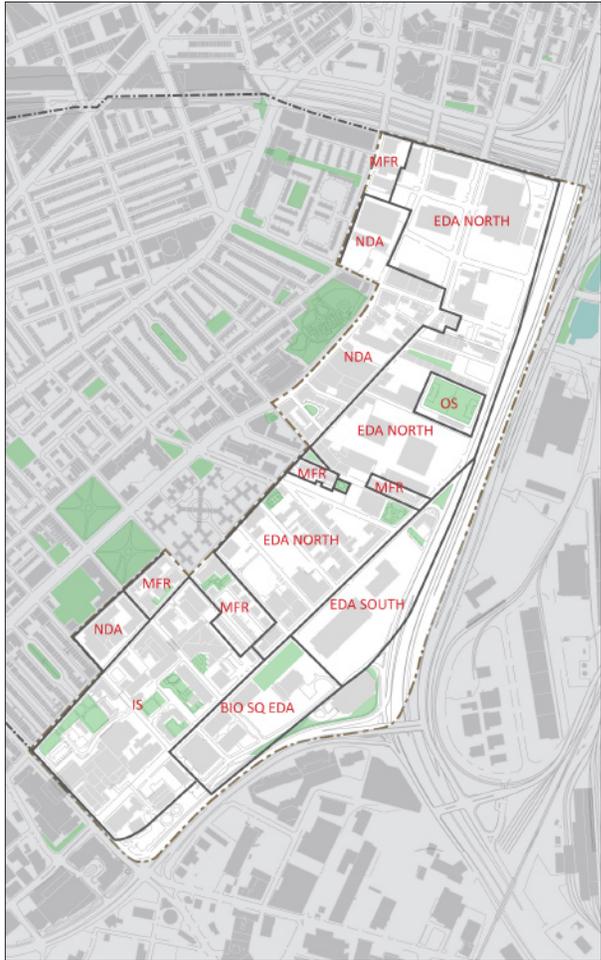
Chapter 5  
**ZONING**

## Introduction

The City of Boston Zoning Code regulates allowed uses and dimensional requirements throughout the city and this chapter begins with an analysis of the zoning that affects the Harrison Albany Corridor Study Area. The city's South End Landmark District Commission (SELDC) also has review authority over dimensional requirements in the Study Area. The Advisory Group examined the current zoning and SELDC criteria to determine whether these regulations can meet the changing needs in the Study Area.



South End Neighborhood District Map



Existing zoning sub-districts in the Study Area

### Existing Zoning Sub-Districts

The Harrison Albany Corridor is located in the South End Neighborhood District and is therefore subject to Article 64 of the Boston Zoning Code. The South End was rezoned from the base zoning code of 1965, and Article 64 was adopted in 1998. The Study Area is currently comprised of seven types of zoning sub-districts, each with its own range of allowed uses and dimensional requirements for buildings, such as height and density limits. Below is a brief description of the zoning sub-districts that exist in the Study Area today.

#### Multi-Family Residential (“MFR”)

Most of the residential South End is zoned multi-family residential but only small pockets of this sub-district exist in the Study Area today. In a MFR sub-district, residential uses are a priority and most commercial activity is discouraged. The height limit in a MFR sub-district is 70 feet and the allowable Floor-Area Ratio (FAR) is 2.0. Rowhouses on East Brookline and Union Park Streets are in MFR sub-districts, as is the northwest section of the New York Streets sub-area.

#### Neighborhood Development Area (“NDA”)

The Neighborhood Development Area sub-district was established to provide a buffer between residential and industrial uses and accommodates a variety of uses including residential, retail, offices, and artist space, to name a few. Like a MFR sub-district, the height limit in a NDA is 70 feet, however the allowable FAR is 3.0 to allow for greater density than in a residential sub-district. Washington Street, which sits between the residential South End to the west and industrial neighborhood to the east, is zoned as a NDA; therefore parts of the New York Streets and SOWA lie within a NDA.

#### Open Space (“OS”)

Open Space sub-districts are intended to enhance the quality of life for city residents by protecting open space resources. All of the existing open space in the Study Area can be found in the SOWA sub-area: Rotch Park is specifically designated for recreational space

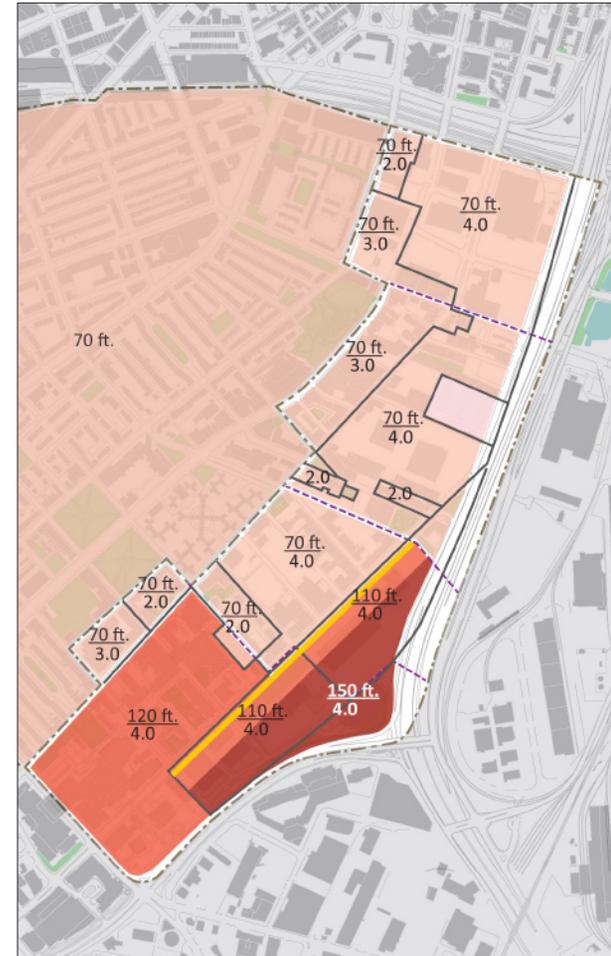
and contains a multi-purpose playing field. Two smaller open spaces can be found on Union Park Street. Peter's Park on Washington Street near East Berkeley Street lies just outside the Study Area boundaries and provides active and passive outdoor space to South End residents.

### Economic Development Areas (“EDA”) North, South and BioSquare

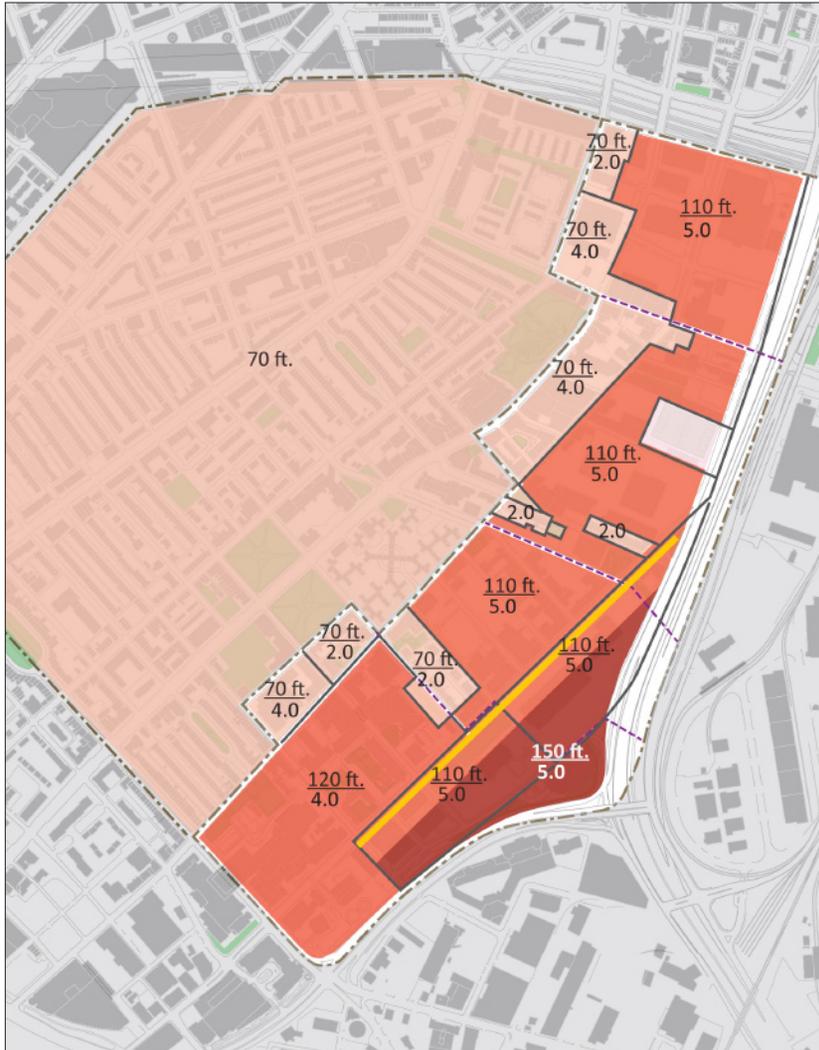
Most of the Study Area, with the exception of the Medical sub-area, is zoned as an Economic Development Area. This sub-district was established to encourage economic growth, including light manufacturing and research and development and to expand entrepreneurial opportunities at a building scale that is appropriate to the surrounding area. In the EDA North, South and BioSquare, a similar mix of uses is allowed including offices, commercial, retail, artists' mixed-use space, manufacturing, schools and hotels. The EDA BioSquare is distinguished by its partiality toward commercial uses specifically related to the Boston University Medical Campus. All three EDAs have a maximum as-of-right FAR of 4.0 but differ in their respective maximum as-of-right building heights. In the EDA North, the maximum allowable height is currently 70 feet, however in EDA South and EDA BioSquare heights of up to 150 feet are allowed as-of-right.

### Institutional (IS)

The Institutional sub-district accommodates a variety of institutional uses such as educational, laboratory, health care, business and the arts; and has a maximum FAR of 4.0 and a maximum building height of 120 feet. Most of the Medical sub-area is in the IS zoning sub-district and is also subject to an Institutional Master Plan (“IMP”). All institutional projects in the South End Neighborhood District, whether inside or outside the Institutional zoning sub-district, are subject to the Institutional Master Plan Review Requirement. Pursuant to the IMP Review Requirement, a task force was established prior to the creation of the Harrison Albany Corridor Advisory Group to publicly review changes to the Boston University Medical Center IMP. Therefore, changes to the underlying IS zoning are not part of this study's considerations.



Existing maximum allowable as-of-right heights and FARs



Existing maximum allowable PDA heights and FARs

### Planned Development Areas (PDA)

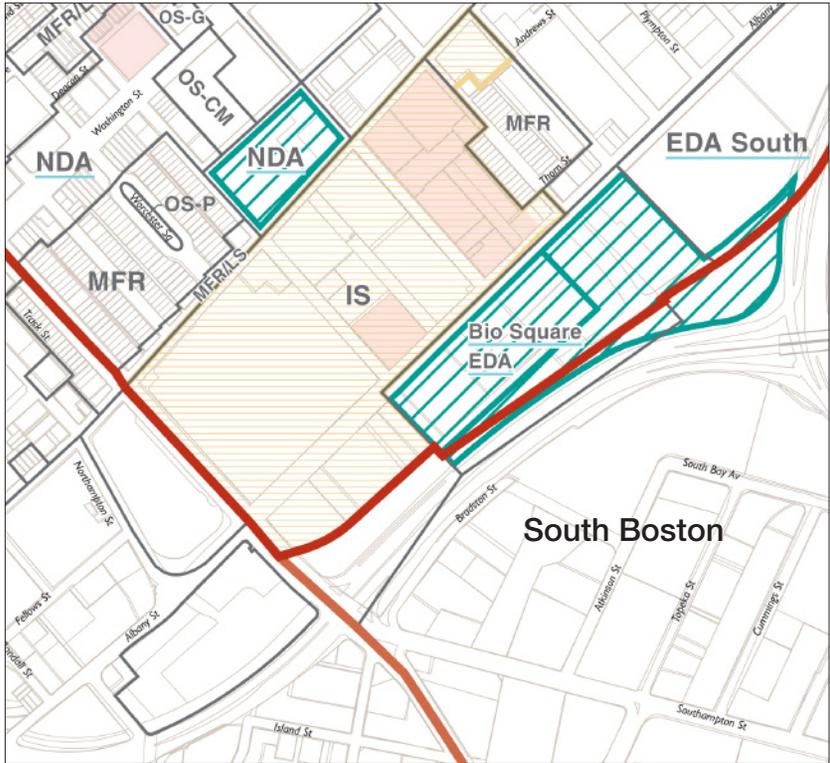
A Planned Development Area is a zoning district that functions as an overlay to as-of-right zoning regulations and can be allowed in select parts of the South End Neighborhood District. With respect to the zoning sub-districts in the Study Area today, PDAs are only allowed in NDAs and EDAs. The purpose of a PDA is to allow a development which is suitable to the area but may not be accommodated by the underlying zoning and provides jobs and housing to a mix of economic groups. Public benefits derived from PDAs, in addition to economic growth and diversification, may include amenities such as community or cultural space and improvements to the public realm, such as improved streetscape design. Developments with a mix of uses or a collection of buildings are typically considered for PDA designation and only parcels that are greater than one square acre are PDA-eligible.

Greater height and density may be afforded to PDA developments as follows:

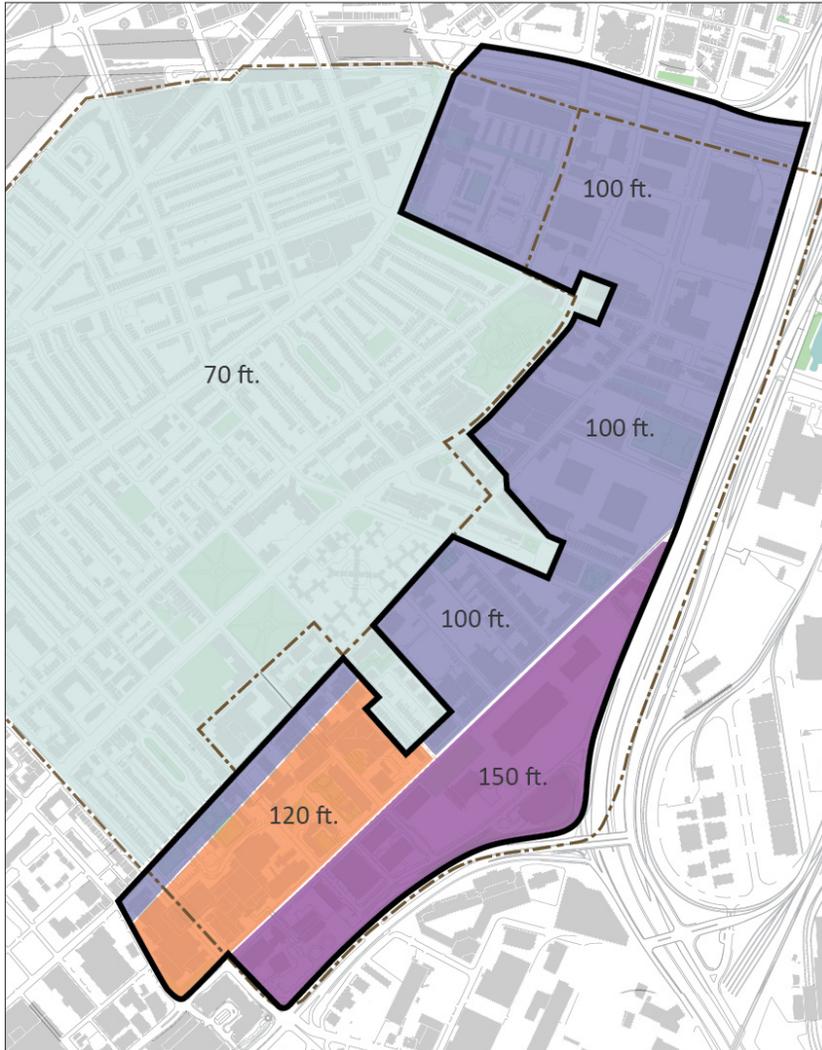
- In the EDA North, heights up to 110 feet and FAR up to 5.0.
- In the EDA South and EDA BioSquare, the as-of-right height of 150 feet is not increased for PDAs, however FAR may increase to 5.0.
- Although PDAs are allowed in NDA sub-districts, there is no corresponding change to allowable heights and FAR.

**South End Neighborhood District Boundary**

The Harrison Albany Corridor Study Area forms the eastern edge of the South End Neighborhood zoning district. The southern portion of the district's eastern boundary is intended to coincide with the Massachusetts Avenue Connector. However, the location of the roadway has changed since the zoning district was created, leaving portions of land that are contiguous to the South End in the adjacent South Boston Neighborhood zoning district.



South End Neighborhood District southern boundary



South End Landmark District Commission Protection Area boundary (bold black line) and height maximums

### South End Landmark District Commission Jurisdiction

In addition to dimensional regulations required by the Zoning Code, the City's South End Landmark District Commission also has jurisdiction over the height of structures in the Harrison Albany Corridor Study Area. The South End Landmark District and Protection Area were created in 1983 to protect one of the largest collections of Victorian architecture in the country. (See map on the left). The boundaries for the Protection Area roughly correspond to those of the Study Area. Exceptions include parcels at Washington and East Berkeley Streets, which lie within the Landmark District where the height limit is 70 feet. According to the Standards and Criteria, the Protection Area was created to "protect views of the adjacent Landmark District, to ensure that new development of major alterations adjacent to the District is architecturally compatible in massing, setback and height and to protect light and air circulation within the District." The Commission's jurisdiction in the Protection Area is limited to demolition, land coverage, height of structures, landscape, and topography.

Generally speaking, in most of the New York Streets, SOWA and Back Streets sub-areas (or EDA North) where the maximum allowed zoning height is 70 feet, the corresponding dimension allowed under the Protection Area standards is 100 feet. It is one of the recommendations of this study to eliminate inconsistencies, where they exist, between maximum zoning heights and those of the Protection Area in order to simplify the review process for the community, proponents, and pertinent City departments.

### Proposed Changes to Zoning Sub-Districts

The following recommendations are analyzed in greater depth on the following pages:

No changes to existing IS, NDA, MFR and OS sub-districts with the following exception – change portions of the existing MFR and NDA sub-districts found in the New York Streets sub-area to an EDA;

Create three new EDA sub-districts that reflect the redevelopment vision statements and loosely follow the boundaries for the New York Streets, SOWA and Back Streets sub-areas;

Increase the as-of-right maximum building heights and FAR;

Modify the dimensional and land use regulations for the existing BioSquare EDA;

Create new street wall setbacks and building step backs;

Increase the heights and FAR allowed for PDA projects in exchange for specific public amenities;

Create a lot coverage requirement for PDA projects;

Revise allowed land uses within the three proposed sub-districts to reflect the uses implied in the vision statements; and

Revise parking ratios.



Proposed Zoning sub-districts

## New Sub-Districts

### EDA – North (New York Streets)

The first proposed zoning sub-district is the EDA North sub-district, which is bounded by Herald Street to the north, Albany Street to the east, East Berkeley Street to the south, and Shawmut Avenue to the west. Its boundaries correspond to the New York Streets sub-area. The intent and purpose of the district is based on the following vision statement that was collectively drafted throughout the process: “A vital physical and economic link between the City's downtown, Chinatown, and South End neighborhoods with convenient access to South Boston and the regional roadway system. Future development should provide exciting new 18-hour uses within a pedestrian-friendly public realm that includes a finer grain of city blocks that allow for enhanced transportation access and circulation. Non-residential uses should provide new jobs for Boston residents.”

### EDA – Central (SOWA)

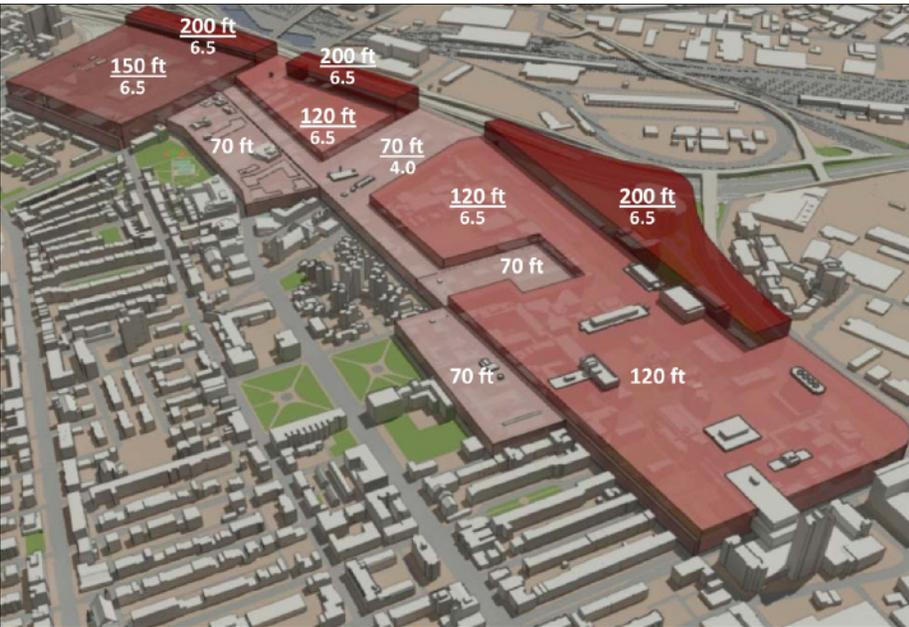
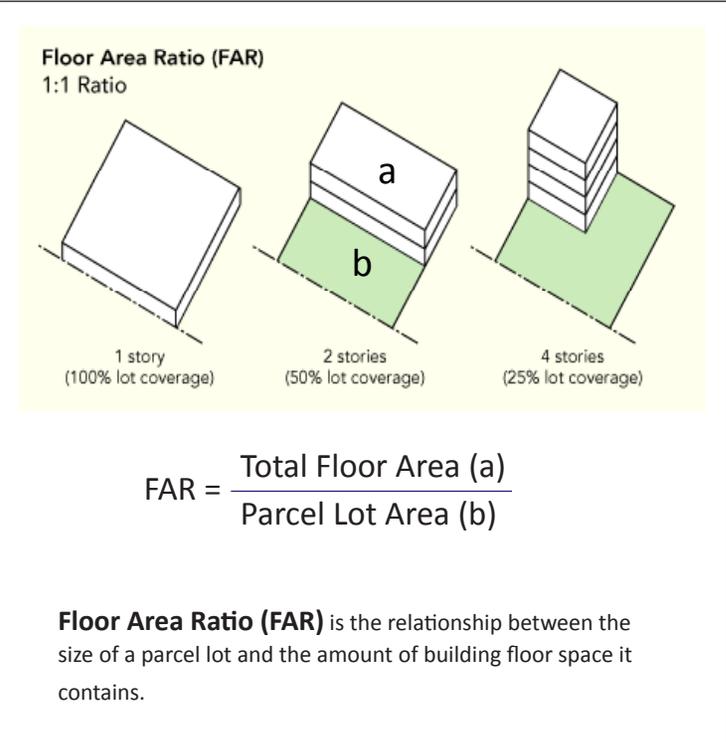
The second proposed zoning sub-district is the EDA Central sub-district which is bounded by East Berkeley Street to the north, Albany Street and I-93 to the east, Malden Street to the south, and Harrison Avenue to the west. Its boundaries correspond to the SOWA sub-area. The intent and purpose of the sub-district is based on the following vision statement that was collectively drafted throughout the process: “A vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. Existing historic resources and industrial character should be preserved while fostering a diverse range of uses including housing, commercial, artist space and strategically-located retail. Streetscape improvements should be focused to improve the pedestrian experience and reinforce connections to public transit.”

### EDA – South (Back Streets)

The third proposed zoning sub-district is the EDA South sub-district which is bounded by Malden Street to the north, I-93 to the east, the BioSquare EDA and East Canton Street to the south and Harrison Avenue to the west. Its boundaries correspond to the Back Streets HACSP sub-area. The intent and purpose of the district is based on the following vision statement that was collectively drafted throughout the process: “Preserve the light industrial uses while encouraging complementary commercial and research uses that create new jobs. The architectural character of future development should reinforce the existing scale, incorporate new green technologies, and set an example for quality contemporary design in a historic context. The sub-area should welcome a new streetscape that improves the aesthetics and safety for pedestrians and vehicles.”

**Recommendations for Increased Heights & FARs**

The following recommended increased heights and FARs pertain to the three proposed EDA sub-districts as well as the existing EDA BioSquare sub-district. The purpose of the increase in heights and FAR is to encourage (re)development consistent with the vision statements. As a means to achieve variations in building height, encourage the development of new jobs and mixed-use/residential development, and obtain public realm improvements, certain areas within the sub-districts have been identified as eligible for additional height and density in exchange for providing specific public benefits. Only projects that are subject to Large Project Review under Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code and are PDA-eligible may take advantage of these bonuses.



Top: Proposed as-of-right heights and FARs; Bottom: Proposed PDA heights and FARs

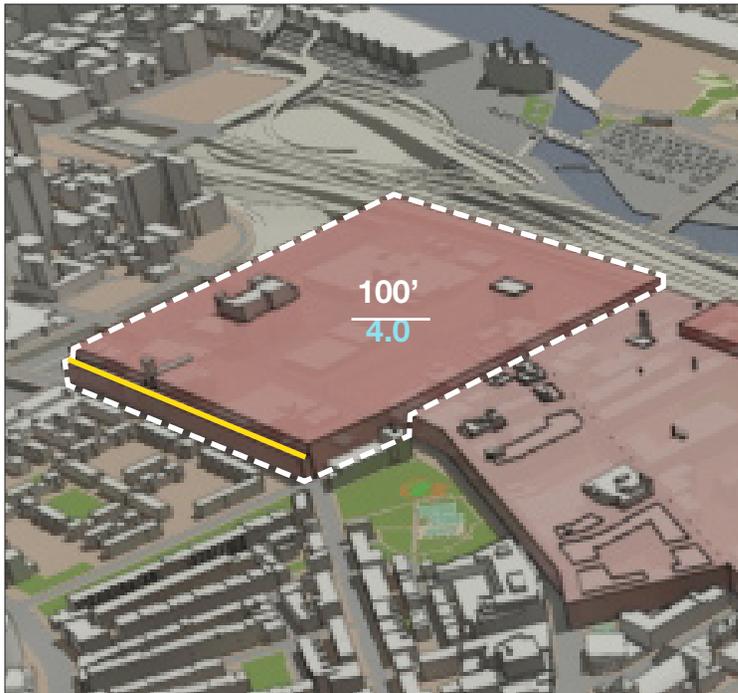
## Proposed EDA North Height/FAR

### *As-of-Right*

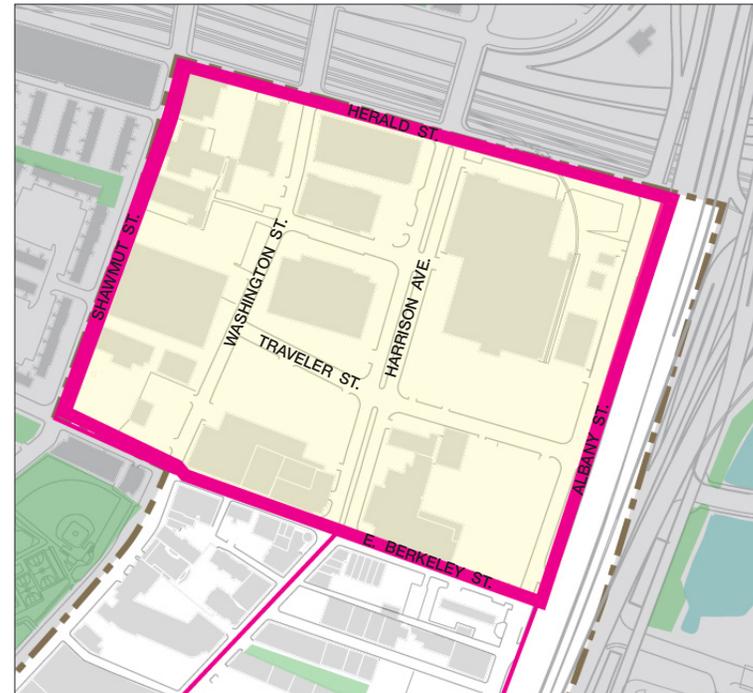
In the EDA North, it is recommended that the maximum as-of-right height be increased from 70 feet to 100 feet while the existing maximum as-of-right FAR be retained at 4.0. In order to provide an accessible pedestrian-friendly urban ground floor interface, it is recommended that the front yard/street wall setback for Albany Street, as well as the north side of Traveler Street, be ten (10) feet and the remaining streets in the

sub-area have a modal setback. Additionally, there is a 10-foot building step back after the first 70 feet in building height along the eastern edge of Shawmut Avenue, in order to minimize the perceived height from the right-of-way along the main façade.

— Street Wall: 10 ft. Stepback at 70'



Proposed as-of-right height and FAR - EDA North

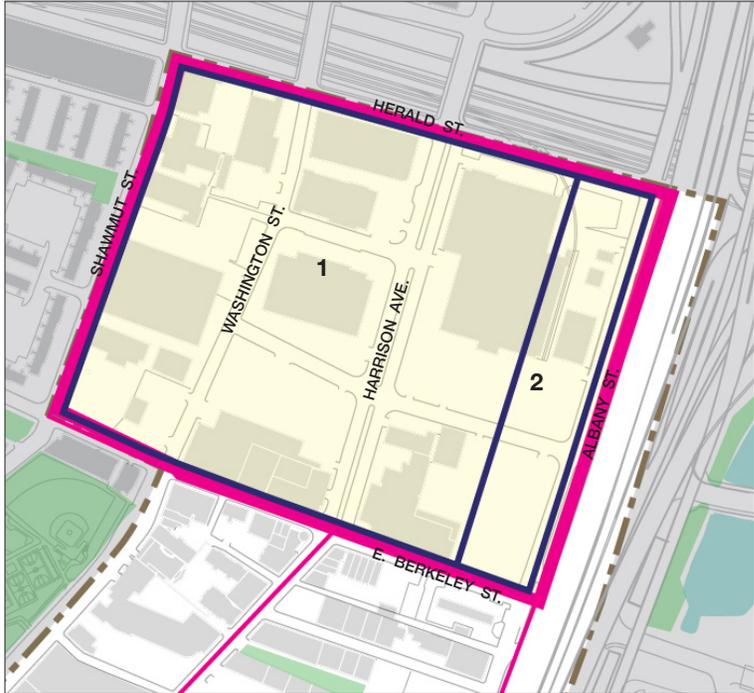


Proposed EDA North sub-district

PDA

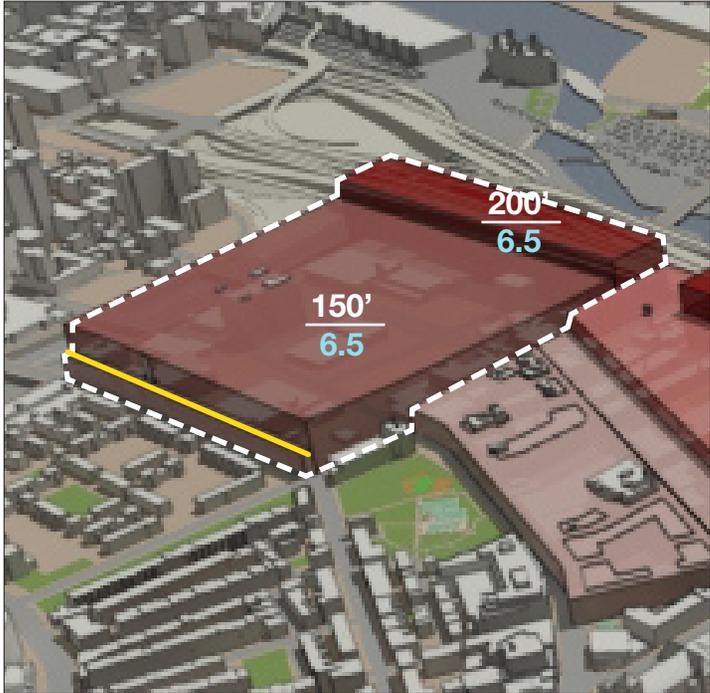
Within the EDA North zoning sub-district, PDAs will be allowed. The maximum allowed PDA FAR in the sub-district shall be 6.5. The maximum allowed PDA building height within Area 1 (see map below) shall be 150 feet. The maximum allowed PDA building height within Area 2 (see map below) (within 165 feet from Albany Street) shall be 200 feet.

		FAR	HEIGHT
EXISTING ZONING	<i>As-of-Right</i>	2/3/4.0	70'
	<i>PDA</i>	2/4/5.0	70'/100'
PROPOSED ZONING	<i>As-of-Right</i>	4.0	100'
	<i>PDA</i>	6.5	150'/200'



Proposed PDA height areas - EDA North

— Street Wall: 10 ft. Stepback at 70'



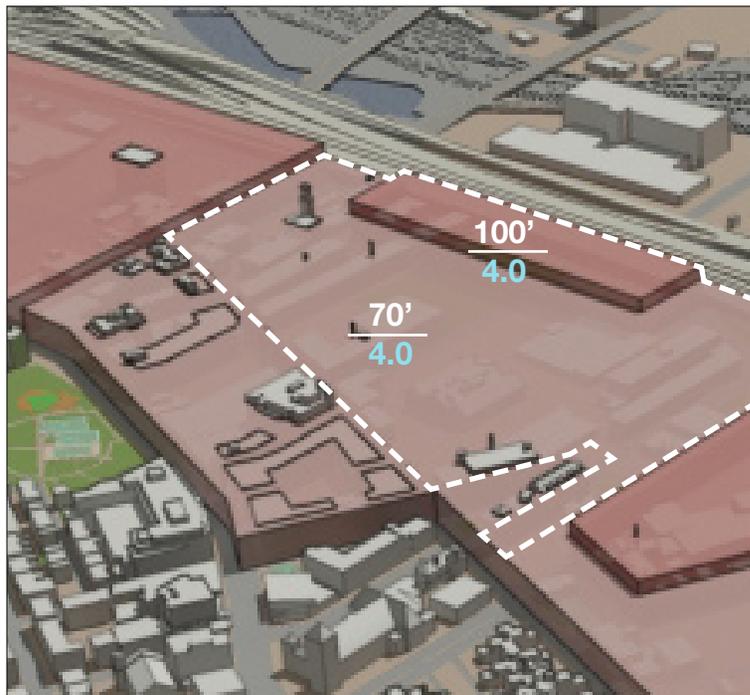
Proposed PDA heights and FARs - EDA North

## Proposed EDA Central Height/FAR

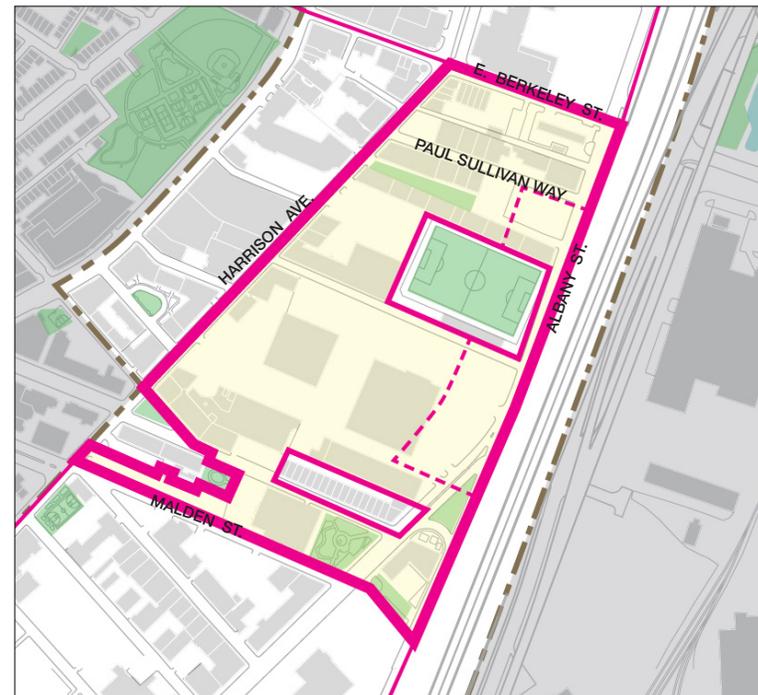
### *As-of-Right*

In the EDA Central, it is recommended that the maximum as-of-right height remain at 70 feet, as well as the maximum as-of-right FAR remain at 4.0 within most of the sub-district. Within the eastern portion of the sub-district that is within 165 feet of the Albany Street public right-of-way, running from the centerline between Paul Sullivan Way on the north and the southern parcel boundary for the existing MBTA operations site to the south, the maximum as-of-right height

shall be 100 feet and the maximum as-of-right FAR shall remain at 4.0. In order to provide an accessible pedestrian-friendly urban ground floor interface, the proposed front yard/street wall setback is ten (10) feet along Albany Street, while the remaining streets in the sub-area will have a modal set back.



Proposed as-of-right heights and FARs - EDA Central



Proposed EDA Central sub-district

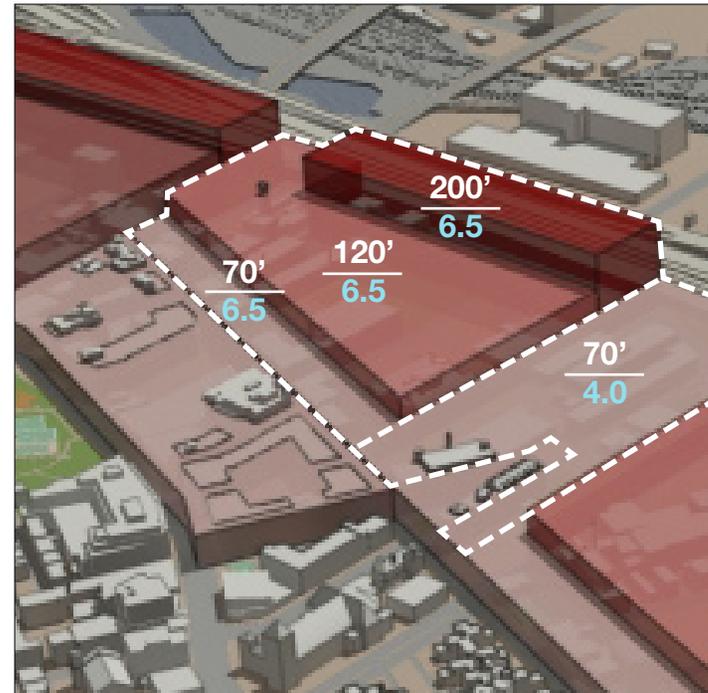
PDA

Within the EDA Central zoning sub-district, PDAs will be allowed. The maximum allowed PDA FAR in the sub-district shall be 6.5, except in Area 1 (see map below), where the maximum allowed PDA FAR shall be 4.0. Within Area 1, the maximum allowed PDA building height shall be 70 feet. Within Area 2 (see map below) (the portion of the sub-district within the 100-foot setback from the eastern edge of Harrison Avenue), the maximum allowed PDA building height shall be 70 feet. Within Area 3 (see map below) (the portion of the sub-district beyond the 100-foot setback from the eastern edge of Harrison Avenue to 165 feet from Albany Street), the maximum allowed PDA building height shall be 120 feet. Within Area 4 (see map below) (within 165 feet from Albany Street running from the centerline between Paul Sullivan Way on the north and the southern parcel boundary for the existing MBTA operations site to the south), the maximum allowed PDA building height shall be 200 feet.

		FAR	HEIGHT
EXISTING ZONING	<i>As-of-Right</i>	4.0	70'
	<i>PDA</i>	5.0	110'
PROPOSED ZONING	<i>As-of-Right</i>	4.0	70'/100'
	<i>PDA</i>	4.0/6.5	70'/120'/200'



Proposed PDA height areas - EDA Central



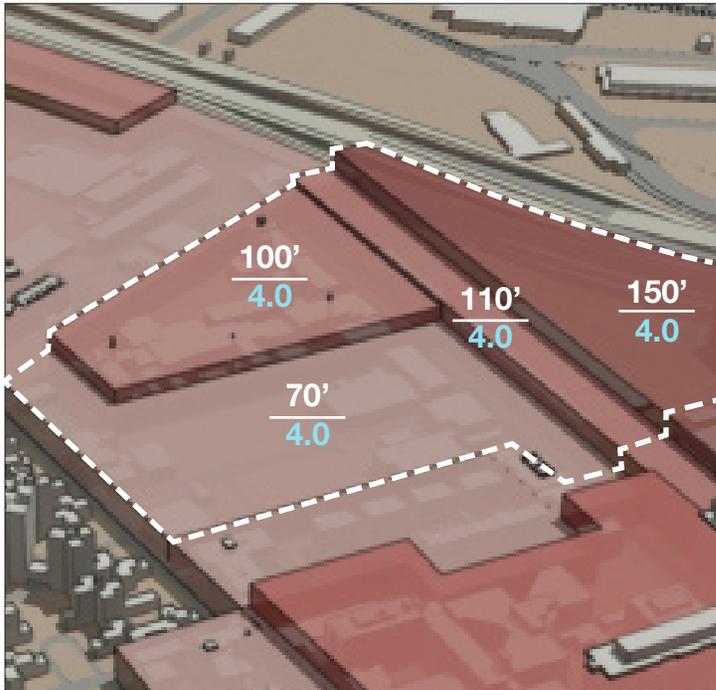
Proposed PDA heights and FARs - EDA Central

## Proposed EDA South Height/FAR

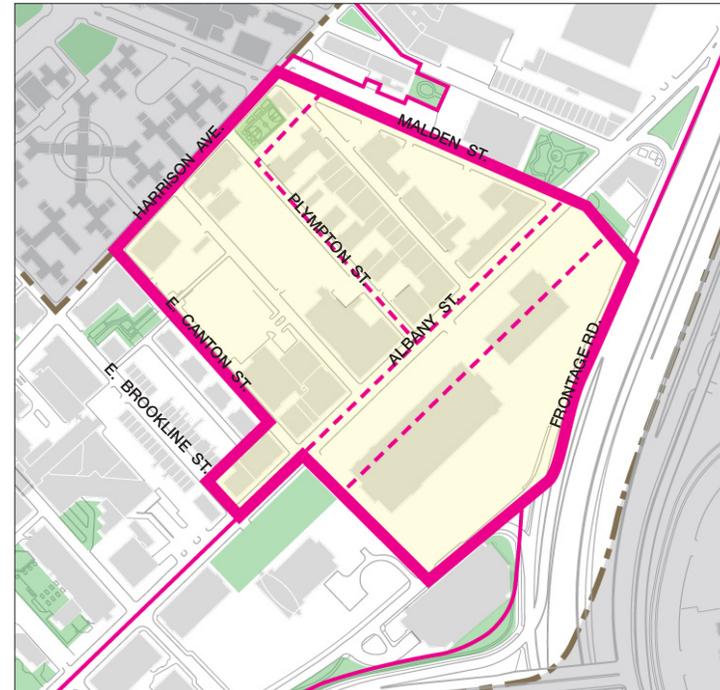
### As-of-Right

In the EDA South, it is recommended that the maximum as-of-right height remain at 70 feet, as well as the maximum as-of-right FAR remain at 4.0 in the area bounded by Plympton Street on the north, Albany Street to the east, East Canton Street to the south and Harrison Avenue to the west. Within the portion of sub-district bounded by Malden Street to the north, Albany Street to the east, Plympton Street to the south and 100 feet to the east of Harrison Avenue to the west, it is recommended that the maximum as-of-right height be increased from 70 feet to 100 feet while the existing maximum as-of-right FAR remain at 4.0. Within the eastern portion of the sub-district that is to the east of the Albany Street right-of-way centerline, the maximum

as-of-right heights shall remain at 110 feet and 150 feet, while the maximum as-of-right FAR shall remain at 4.0. In order to provide an accessible pedestrian-friendly urban ground floor interface, the proposed front yard/street wall setback is ten (10) feet along East Canton Street, with a modal setback for the remaining streets. Additionally, there is a 10-foot building step back after the first 70 feet in building height along East Canton Street, in order to minimize the perceived height from the right-of-way along the main façade. Finally, it is recommended that the 10-foot building step back after the first 70 feet in height along the eastern portion of Albany Street be eliminated.



Proposed as-of-right heights and FARs - EDA South



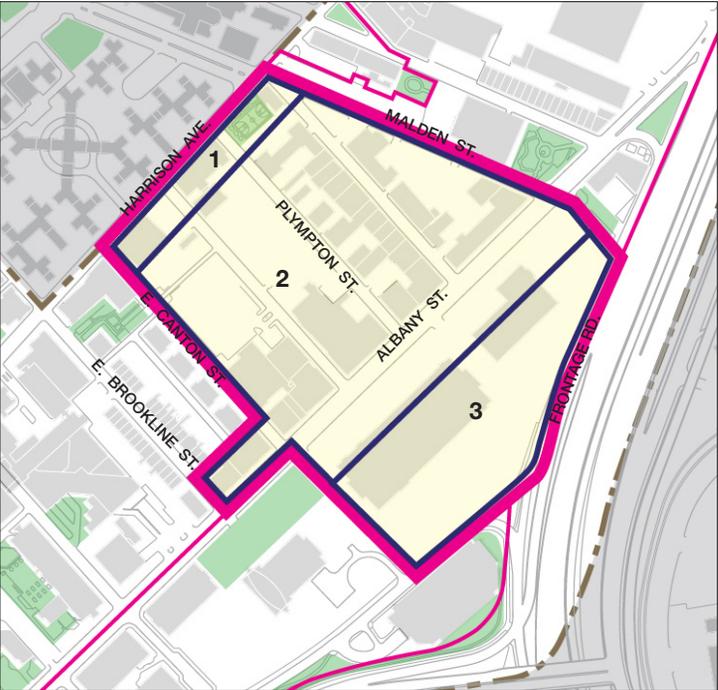
Proposed EDA South sub-district

*PDA*

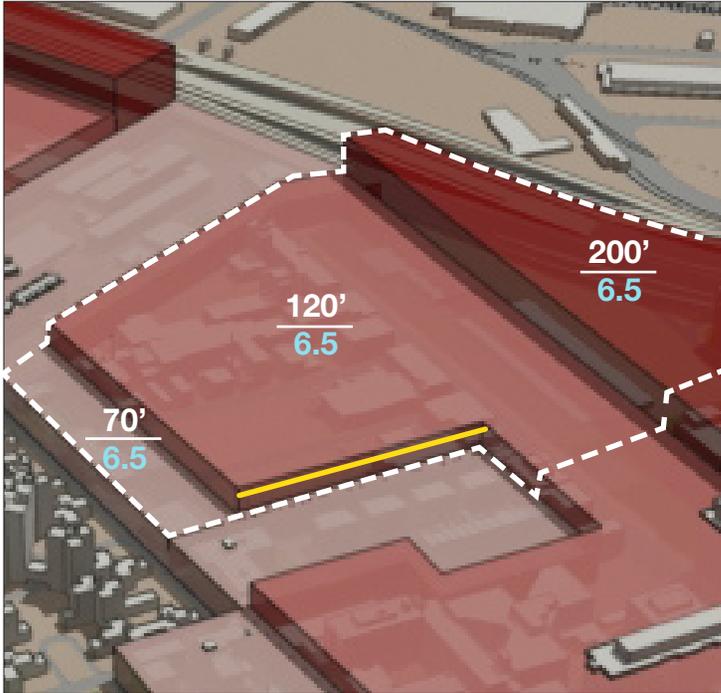
Within the EDA South zoning sub-district, PDAs will be allowed. The maximum allowed PDA FAR in the sub-district shall be 6.5. Within Area 1 (see map below) the maximum allowed PDA building height shall be 70 feet. Within Area 2 (see map below) (the portion of the sub-district beyond the 100-foot setback from the eastern edge of Harrison Avenue), the maximum allowed PDA building height shall be 120 feet. Within Area 3 (see map below) (the portion of the sub-district beyond the 100-foot setback from the eastern edge of Albany Street and toward the Expressway), the maximum allowed PDA building height shall be 200 feet.

		FAR	HEIGHT
EXISTING ZONING	<i>As-of-Right</i>	4.0	70'/110'/150'
	<i>PDA</i>	5.0	110'/150'
PROPOSED ZONING	<i>As-of-Right</i>	4.0	70'/100'/110'/150'
	<i>PDA</i>	6.5	70'/120'/200'

— Street Wall: 10 ft. Stepback at 70'



Proposed PDA height areas - EDA South

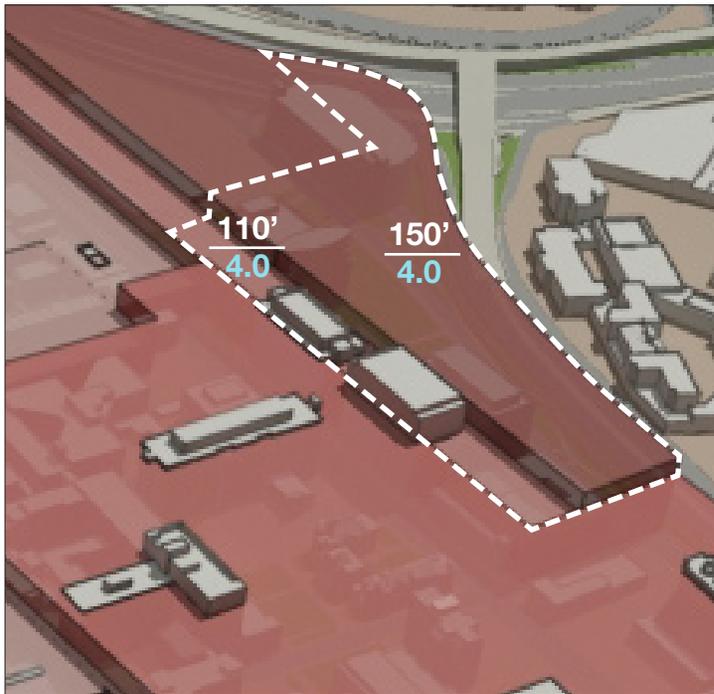


Proposed PDA heights and FARs - EDA South

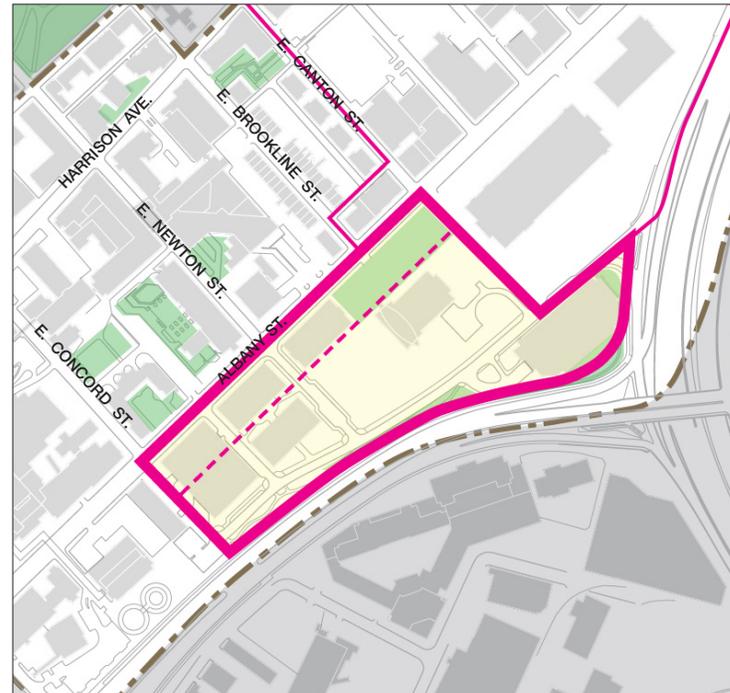
## Proposed EDA BioSquare Height/FAR

### *As-of-Right*

In the EDA BioSquare, it is recommended that the maximum as-of-right heights of 110 feet and 150 feet, as well as the maximum as-of-right FAR of 4.0, remain within the sub-district. Additionally, it is recommended that the 10-foot building step back after the first 70 feet in height along the eastern portion of Albany Street be eliminated.



Proposed as-of-right heights and FARs - EDA BioSquare

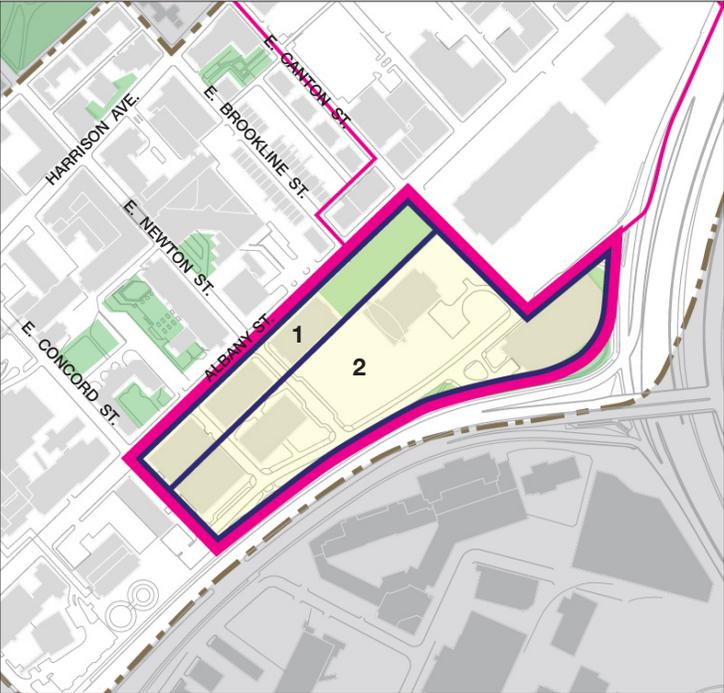


Proposed EDA BioSquare sub-district

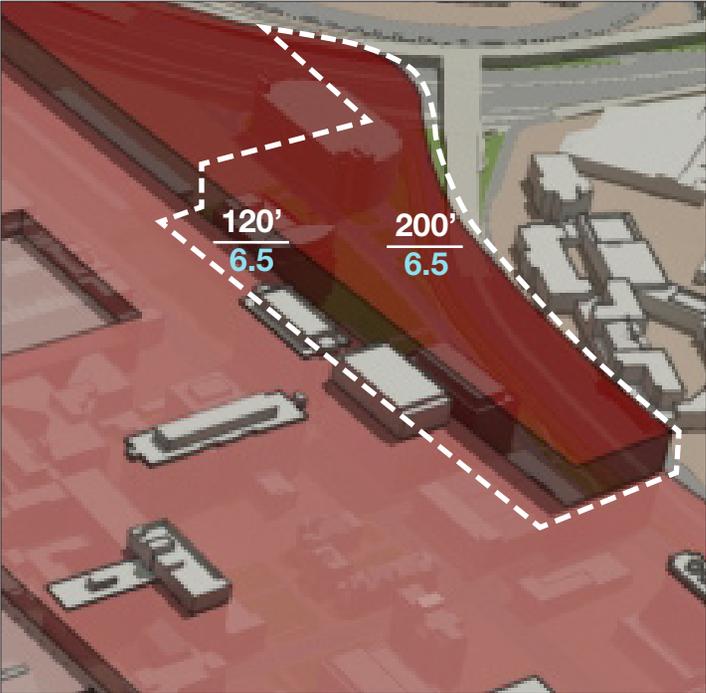
PDA

Within the EDA BioSquare zoning sub-district, PDA's will be allowed. The maximum allowed PDA FAR in the sub-district shall be 6.5. Within area 1 (see map) (the portion of the sub-district within 100-feet east of Albany Street), the maximum allowed PDA building height shall be 120 feet. Within area 2 (see map)(the portion of the sub-district beyond the 100-foot setback from Albany Street and toward the Expressway), the maximum building height shall be 200 feet.

		FAR	HEIGHT
EXISTING ZONING	<i>As-of-Right</i>	4.0	110'/150'
	<i>PDA</i>	5.0	110'/150'
PROPOSED ZONING	<i>As-of-Right</i>	4.0	110'/150'
	<i>PDA</i>	6.5	120'/200'



Proposed PDA height areas - EDA BioSquare



Proposed PDA heights and FARs - EDA BioSquare



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
THOMAS M. MENINO

EXECUTIVE ORDER  
OF  
MAYOR THOMAS M. MENINO

An Order Relative to the Inclusionary Development Policy's Income Policy

I, Thomas M. Menino, Mayor of Boston, created the Inclusionary Development Program (IDP) through An Order Relative to Affordable Housing dated February 29, 2000, as amended by An Order Relative to Affordable Housing Cost Factor, dated February 3, 2005, and later amended by An Order Relative to the Inclusionary Development Policy, dated May 16, 2006, (collectively the "Order"). To provide further clarification and ease of implementation, the following changes are ordered.

That 50% of the on-site and off-site affordable homeownership units, required in projects subject to the IDP, be made affordable to households earning less than or equal to 80% of the Area Median Income ("AMI") and that 50% of the affordable units be made affordable to households earning greater than 80% and less than or equal to 100% of the Area Median Income. The City of Boston recognizes that these income restrictions are comparable to 130% and 160% of Boston Median Income ("BMI").

That the on-site and off-site affordable rental units, required in projects subject to the IDP, be made affordable to households earning less than or equal to 70% of the AMI. The City of Boston recognizes that these income restrictions are comparable to 100% and 125% of the Boston median income (BMI).

I request that the Boston Redevelopment Authority adopt the above Order as its policy in connection with proposed projects.

  
Thomas M. Menino  
Mayor of Boston

Dated: 9/27/07

BOSTON CITY HALL • ONE CITY HALL PLAZA • BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS 02201 • 617/635-4000

Mayor Thomas M. Menino's Executive Order of September 27, 2007, relative to the Inclusionary Development Policy

## Public Amenities Required of PDA Projects

In addition to raising the as-of-right height in portions of the Study Area, the Advisory Group recognized that even greater heights and densities would be appropriate in certain areas provided that specific and significant public benefits be received in return. The desired public benefits were discussed throughout the planning process and include:

- Enhanced pedestrian and vehicular connectivity achieved by introducing new streets or through-ways to break up large blocks;
- Affordable incubator space for start-up businesses;
- New affordable housing units; and
- Cultural space.

In order to ensure that projects with higher density produce the desired public benefits, only projects that are PDA-eligible (one acre and above) and that undergo the Article 80 and PDA review processes may take advantage of the increased heights and FARs. These review processes, which include review by the public, will require PDA projects to provide affordable residential, commercial and/or cultural space and comply with lot coverage requirements to ensure access to the public realm, as well as improve vehicular and pedestrian connectivity.

These requirements were devised to produce tangible public benefits without sacrificing a project's financial feasibility.

PDA projects must provide one use amenity AND comply with lot coverage requirements, as follows.

**Use Amenity**

One of the following use amenities must be included in a PDA project.

**Affordable Housing**

20% of the project’s residential units must qualify as affordable housing units, according to the Inclusionary Development Policy of the City of Boston (see Executive Order on the preceding page).

OR

**Affordable Cultural Space**

5% of the bonus square footage must be provided on-site to a non-profit cultural entity whose eligibility for the program is to be determined by the BRA.

OR

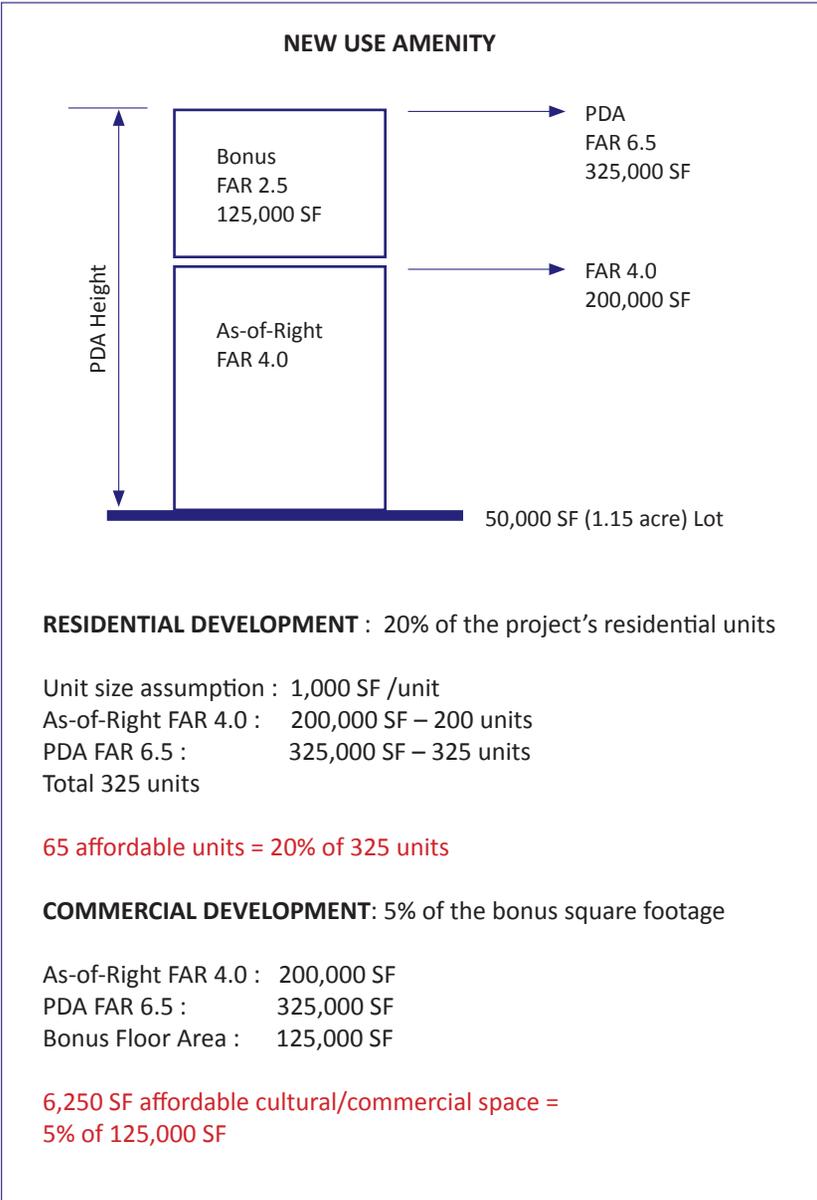
**Affordable Commercial Space**

5% of the bonus square footage must a) be provided on-site to a start-up business whose eligibility for the program is to be determined by the BRA or b) its equivalent value must be provided to a program or loan fund.

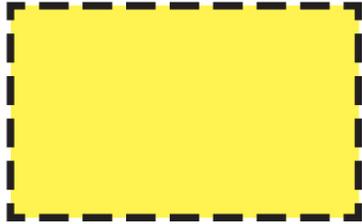
OR

**Mixed-Use Projects**

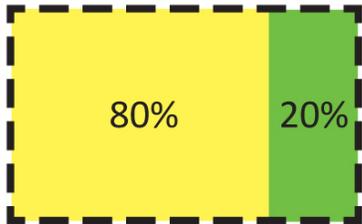
For mixed-use projects, an equivalent combination of the aforementioned amenities may be combined pursuant to the BRA’s approval.



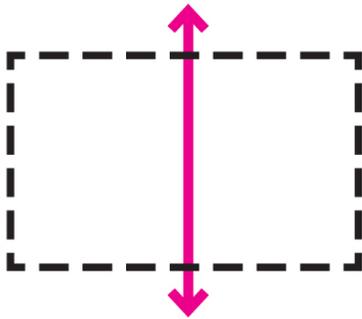
Example of a new use amenity



≥ 1 acre



80% : DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT  
20% : PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY FOOTPRINT



THROUGH-BLOCK CONNECTION



PLACE-MAKING SPACE

### Lot Coverage Requirements

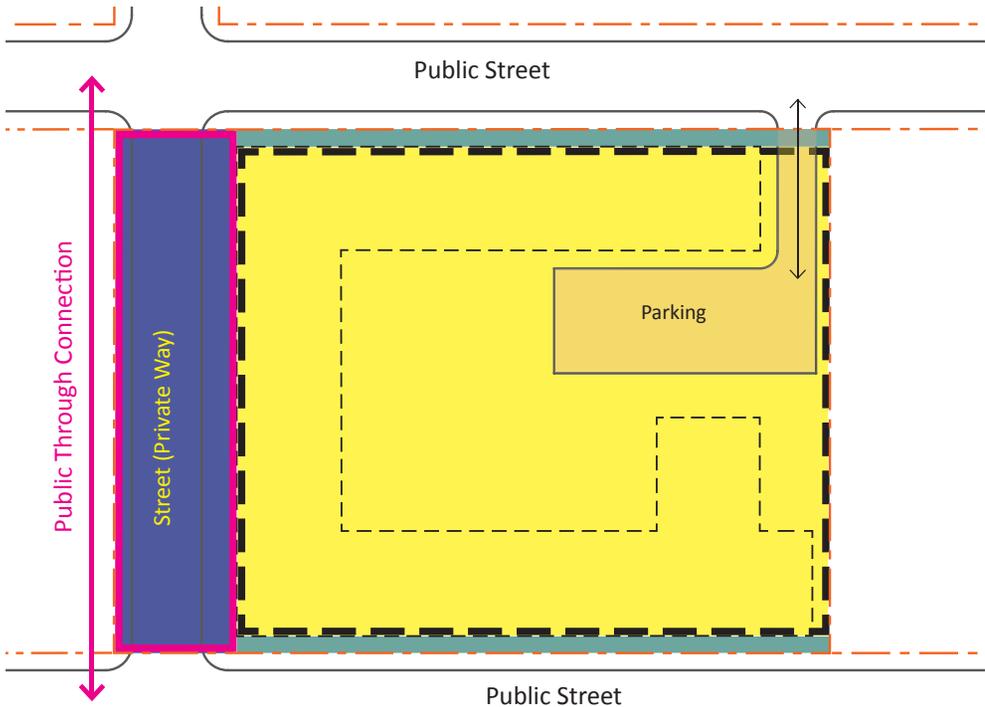
In addition to providing a use amenity, all PDA projects must meet the following lot coverage requirements.

The plan recommends a pedestrian friendly public realm that includes a finer grain of city blocks allowing for enhanced transportation access and circulation. To realize the goal put forth by the plan, it is recommended that for parcels of one acre or larger, the development footprint would not cover more than 80% of the lot. The remaining 20% of the lot would be designed and built to ensure public access or enhance the public realm and will be determined through the Article 80 review process.

Development features that would be counted toward the overall development footprint of 80% include building footprints, structured parking, surface parking, and service area(s). Public realm features to be built and maintained by the development that would be counted towards the overall public realm footprint of 20% include:

**Street (Private Way)**

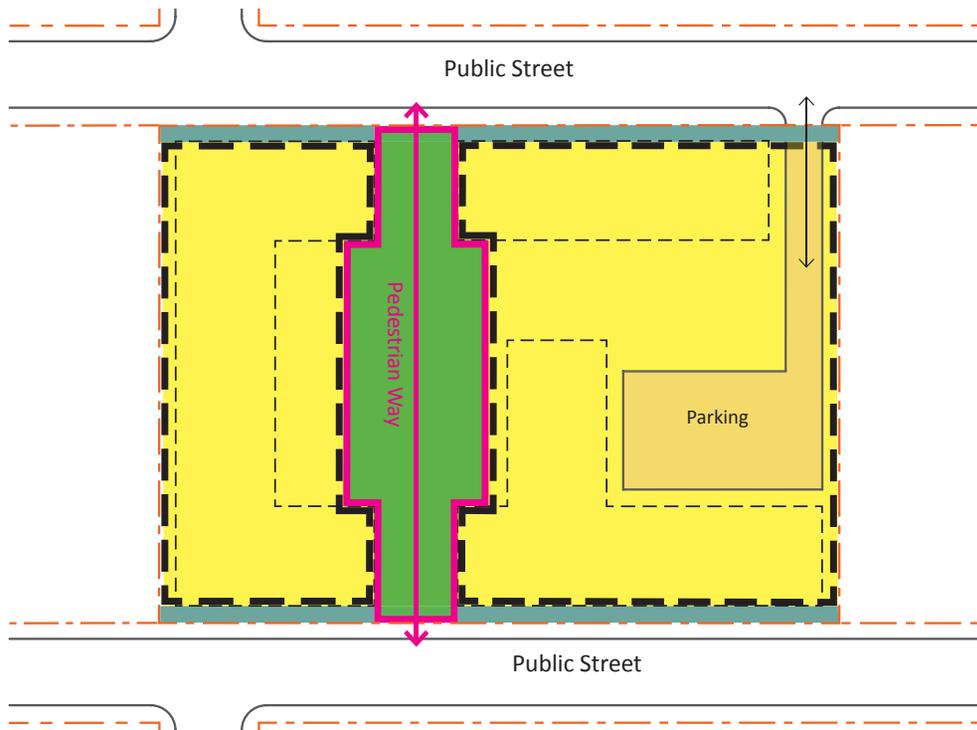
A street (private way) would be a continuous through-block connection linking streets at both ends and would be open to public vehicle and pedestrian access, including cyclists. It should be designed to meet City standards, while its location should contribute to creating compatible block sizes and enhancing connectivity to the existing network of streets. Finally, the street would be owned and maintained by the property owner.



*Rollins Street, South End*



*Crosstown Center, South End/Lower Roxbury*



### Pedestrian Way (Private Way)

A pedestrian way would be a continuous through-block connection linking sidewalks at both ends that is open to the public and limited to pedestrians and cyclists, where feasible. The pedestrian way would be open to the sky with a minimum number of exceptions for minor projections over it. Each end of a pedestrian way should be visible from the street, while its location and design should contribute to creating compatible block sizes and enhancing connectivity to the existing network of streets. Finally, the pedestrian way would be owned and maintained by the property owner.



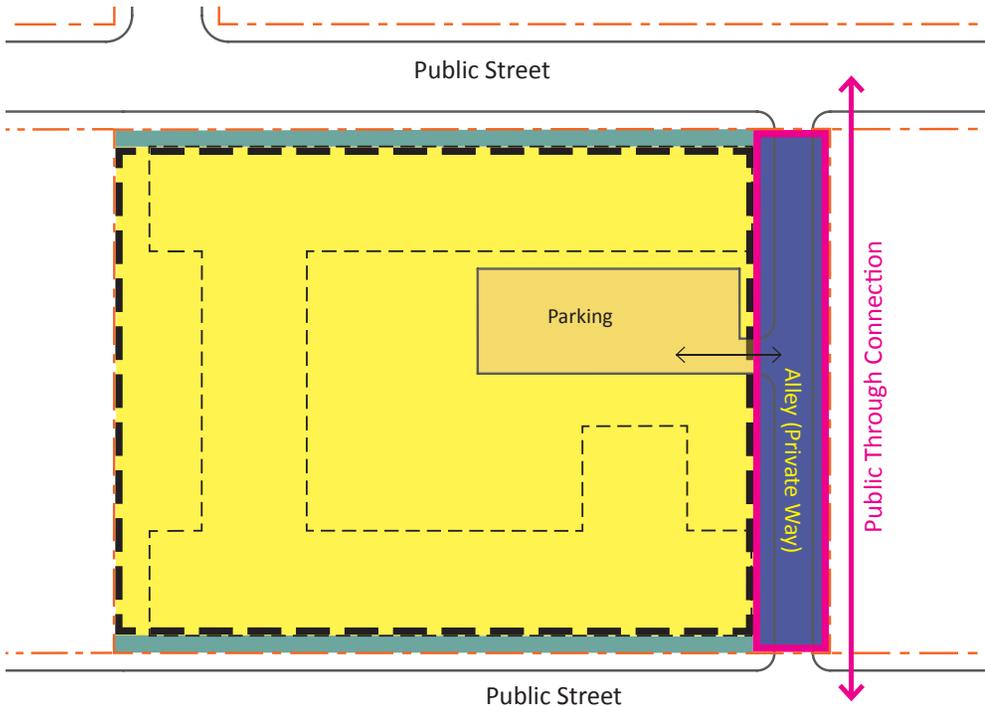
Dallas, Texas



Victoria, British Columbia

**Alley (Private Way)**

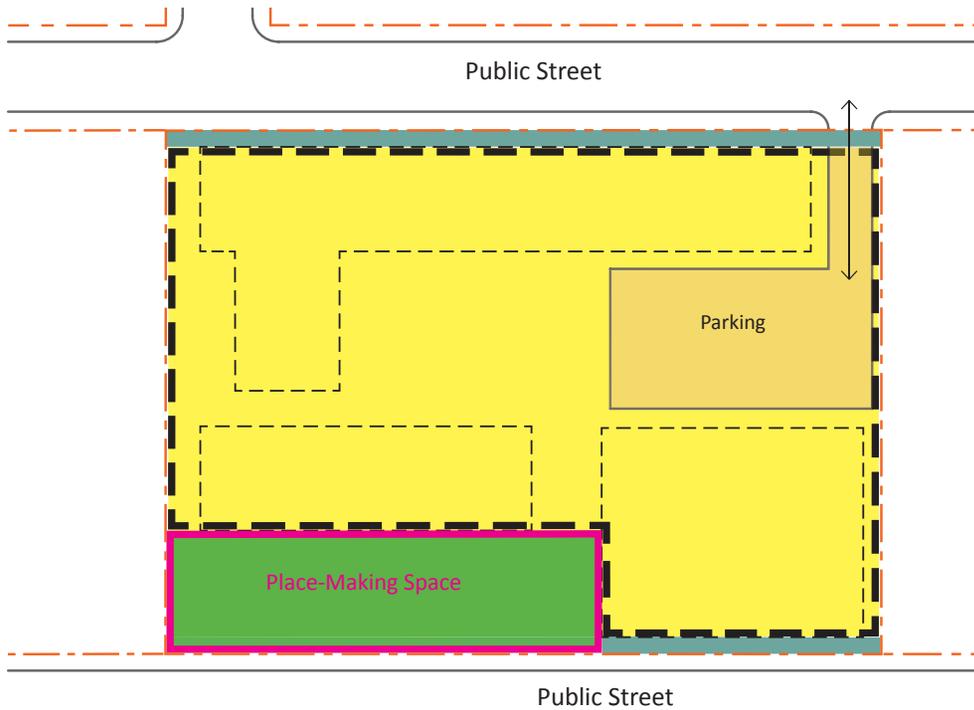
An alley would be a continuous through-block connection linking streets at both ends that would provide access to the development site for activities such as drop-off, parking, loading or other services. The alley would be open to public access and may be limited to vehicle traffic but should be designed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, where feasible. Its location and design should contribute to creating compatible block sizes and connectivity to the existing network of streets. Finally, the alley would be owned and maintained by the property owner.



Harvard Square, Cambridge



New York City



## Place-Making Space

A place-making space would be an open air plaza or green space, such as a park, that is located on the ground level and is open to the public. Its location and design should contribute to the overall character of the neighborhood and enhance the public realm of the area. Finally, the place-making space would be owned and maintained by the property owner.



*Silver Spring, Maryland*



*San Jose, California*

## Land Use

The way in which land uses are treated (*i.e.*, allowed, conditional or forbidden) in the Study Area is shown in Table B (“Use Regulations”) of Article 64, the Zoning Article for the South End Neighborhood District (see page 50 for EDAs, NDAs and IS sub-districts). Currently, allowed uses do not have to go through the City’s Zoning Board of Appeal (“ZBA”), and are permitted as-of-right by the City’s Inspectional Services Department (“ISD”). Conditional uses require a community process and a hearing with the ZBA. The same is the case for forbidden uses, however, they are inherently more difficult to permit because they are typically more controversial types of uses due to noise, exhaust, parking, traffic or any other effects perceived as negative by abutters.

As noted in the Vision Chapter, the Study Area is broken down into four distinct sub-areas: New York Streets, SOWA, Back Streets, and Medical. This exercise was done to allow the Advisory Group members and the public a closer study and understanding of the goals of each sub-area, as they are unique to one another. For purposes of rezoning, which is the ultimate goal of this planning study, it is best to translate each sub-area as closely as possible into an established zoning sub-district that is currently being used in Article 64. The New York Streets sub-area will precisely form the EDA North zoning sub-district. However, the SOWA sub-area will approximately form the EDA Central zoning sub-district. It will not include the existing NDA north of Harrison Avenue as those heights and FARs will not change from the existing requirements. The Back Streets sub-area will almost exactly form the EDA South zoning sub-district, and the Medical sub-area will continue

to use the boundaries of the BioSquare EDA/PDA and IS sub-districts. The requirements of the established 2003 BUMC IMP supersede the existing underlying zoning IS sub-district (see <http://www.bumc.bu.edu/imp.html>). Thus, we would make no recommendations for rezoning in the IS sub-district, with only slight changes to the BioSquare EDA/PDA.

In summary:

- New York Streets sub-area → EDA North
- SOWA sub-area → EDA Central
- Back Streets sub-area → EDA South
- Medical sub-area → IS (superseded by BUMC IMP requirements), and BioSquare EDA/PDA.

Generally speaking, the existing use regulations in Article 64 allow the types of uses that are being encouraged through the visions of the respective sub-areas. However, there are some discrepancies. An example of a forbidden use in the EDAs in Article 64 is a “Bar” (see table below). Due to hours of operation and the sale of alcohol, the neighborhood wanted to have a full community process on this use when Article 64 was being written and thus the use is currently forbidden. However, a bar could be a suitable use due to the Study Area’s detachment from the main residential part of the South End. Alternately, a bar might be a fine accessory use to other primary uses in the Study Area (*i.e.*, hotel). We would recommend that a bar be made a conditional use in the EDA North and EDA Central sub-districts but continue to be forbidden in the EDA South and existing EDA BioSquare sub-districts.

There are several proposed changes to residential uses and how they are currently being regulated in Article 64 today. For example, “Multi-family Dwellings” (more than three dwelling units per building) are allowed in existing EDAs, however accessory and non-accessory dormitories are forbidden. The Advisory Group determined that while this scenario works in parts of the Study Area, some adjustments are advisable to respond to existing demands and priorities. For example, given the proximity of the Study Area to both Tufts Medical School and Boston University Medical Center, an accessory dormitory might be a desirable use in the New York Streets and Medical sub-areas. Therefore it is recommended that accessory dormitories be made a conditional use in the EDA North and EDA BioSquare zoning sub-districts, but remain a forbidden use in the EDA Central and EDA South zoning sub-districts.

Given the priority placed on retaining and creating new jobs in the Back Streets sub-area and because residential uses are often incompatible with industrial uses, it is recommended that the multi-family dwelling use be changed to a conditional use in the EDA South and EDA BioSquare zoning sub-districts, but remain an allowed use in both the EDA North and EDA Central zoning sub-districts. In the same vein, “Artist Mixed-Use” is currently allowed in EDAs. While day work space for artists is an appropriate use Study Area-wide, especially in the EDA South, allowing the artist to also live where he or she works may create incompatibilities for abutting industrial business owners and operators who have specific needs and requirements. Thus, it is recommended that “Artist Mixed-Use” be made a conditional use in EDA South and EDA BioSquare zoning sub-districts, since Back Streets and medical businesses are heavily located there. It should continue to be permitted outright in the EDA North and EDA Central sub-districts. “Elderly Housing” is currently

<b>PROPOSED LAND USE REGULATION CHANGES WITHIN FOUR NEW PROPOSED ZONING SUBDISTRICTS</b>				
	<u>EDA-North</u> (New York Streets sub-area)	<u>EDA-Central</u> (SOWA sub-area)	<u>EDA-South</u> (BackStreets sub-area)	<u>EDA BioSquare</u> (Medical sub-area)
	Existing / Proposed	Existing / Proposed	Existing / Proposed	Existing / Proposed
Bar	F / C	F / C	F / F	F / F
Liquor Store	F / C	F / C	F / C	F / C
Multi-family Dwelling	A / A	A / A	A / C	A / C
Accessory Dorms	F / C	F / F	F / F	F / C
Artists’ Mixed-Use	A / A	A / A	A / C	A / C
Fitness Center or Gymnasium (<=2000sf )	C / A	C / A	C / C	C / A
Elderly Housing	C / A	C / A	C / C	C / C
Fitness Center or Gymnasium (>=2000sf)	C / C	C / C	C / C	C / C
General Retail Business (amended footnote)	C / A	C / C	C / C	C / C
Research Laboratory (amended footnote)	C / A	C / C	C / A	C / A
Small Take-out Restaurant	C / A	C / A	C / A	C / A
Airport-related Remote Parking Facility	C / F	C / F	C / F	C / F

a conditional use in all EDAs. Thus, it is recommended that elderly housing be allowed as-of-right in the EDA North and EDA Central zoning sub-districts, but remain conditional in the EDA South and EDA BioSquare zoning sub-districts.

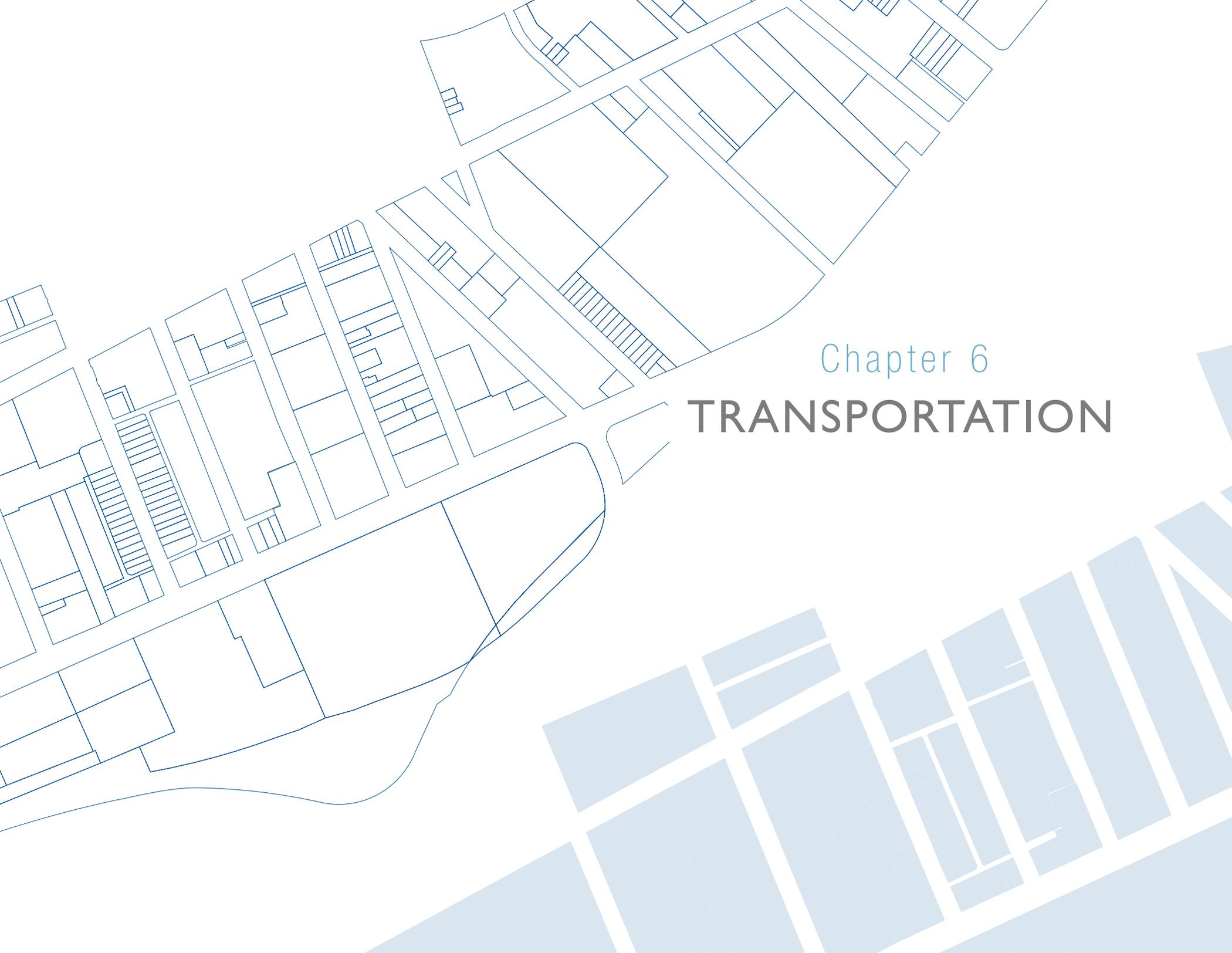
A “Research Laboratory” can be a high-volume job generator, and is currently conditionally allowed in EDAs. There are a wide range of research laboratory facilities that are not explicitly defined in Article 2A of the Boston Zoning Code (“Definitions Applicable in Neighborhood Districts”), and it is not the role of zoning to outline the details of the safety or operational factors in a research lab. The Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outlines bio-safety levels and maintains a certification process independent of zoning. Given that a research laboratory separately achieves the necessary federal and state permits to operate, it is recommended that this use continue as a conditional use in the EDA Central zoning sub-district, while it should be an allowed use in the EDA North, EDA South and EDA BioSquare zoning sub-districts where it either already exists or is envisioned.

Another example is a “Fitness Center or Gymnasium”, which currently is a conditional use in the EDAs. This means that any small yoga or Pilates studio, for example, must obtain a zoning variance. It is recommended instead that this use be allowed in the EDA North, EDA Central and EDA BioSquare zoning sub-districts, with a footnote denoting its maximum size (*i.e.*,  $\leq 2,000$  square feet) in the use regulations. That way, a proponent would still need to comply with parking requirements in order to proceed with such a project as-of-right. This use should remain conditional, regardless of size, in the EDA South zoning sub-district.

Parking for large-scale gymnasium uses (*i.e.*,  $\geq 2,000$  s.f.) is often concerning to abutters of this type of use, and it is recommended that this use be conditional in all four zoning sub-districts.

These are only a sampling of the uses that are recommended for changes in the way they are currently treated. The planning process revealed other types of uses that are not explicitly mentioned in the existing zoning code but which could be desirable. For example, “GreenTech” and “CleanTech” types of uses would be appropriate for all of the EDA sub-districts. Also, creative economy sector types of uses, such as video gaming software creation, uses associated with the film and music industry, uses associated with the printing and publishing industry, advertising, broadcasting and digital media, architectural design and industrial design would all be appropriate for the EDA sub-districts.

These use recommendations are for the purposes of this planning document. They will be formally added and codified into Article 64 during the subsequent rezoning phase for the Study Area.



Chapter 6

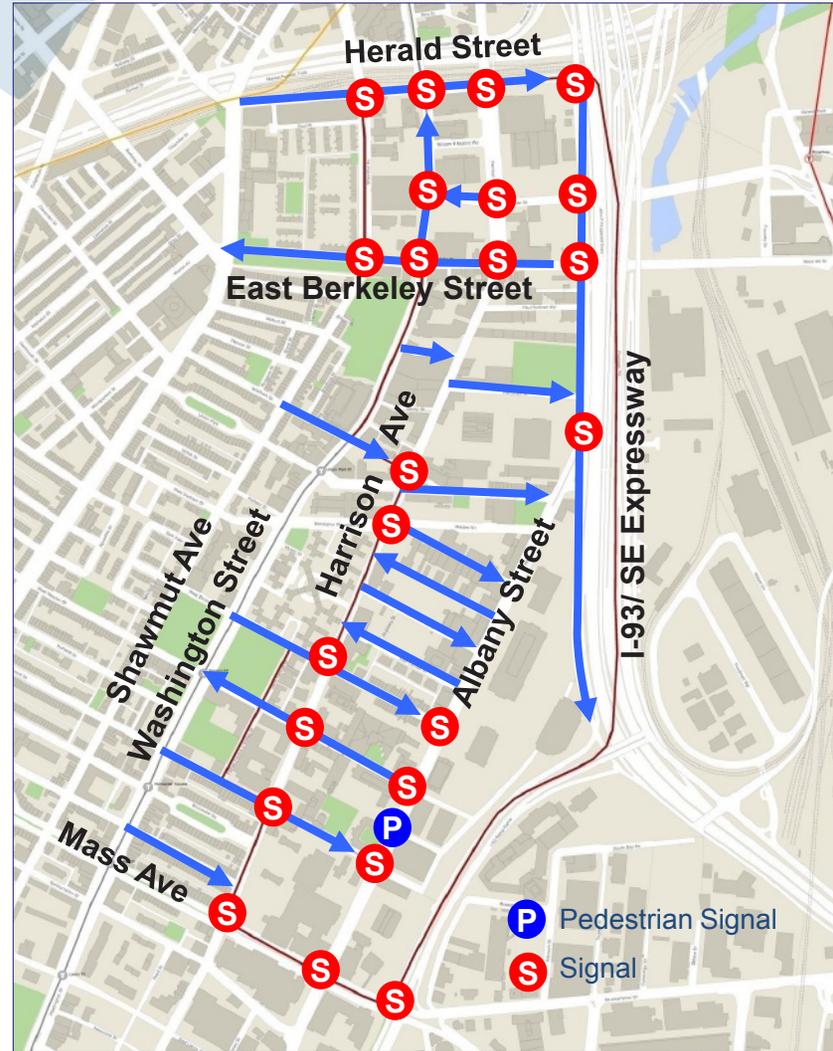
# TRANSPORTATION

## Introduction

This chapter will focus on the transportation network in the Study Area and will make recommendations on both physical and policy changes that will inform the proposed zoning changes and require future implementation actions. All of the recommendations are informed by the public planning process and guided by the vision for each sub-area. Since the transportation network components are major threads of the fabric of the built environment, elements within this chapter are linked to, and sometimes redundant with, this plan's other components.

This chapter will be organized with the following overlapping topic areas:

- Vehicular network
- Pedestrian network and environment
- Bicycle network
- Parking
- Transit
- Mobility Hubs
- Redesigned cross-sections of select roadways



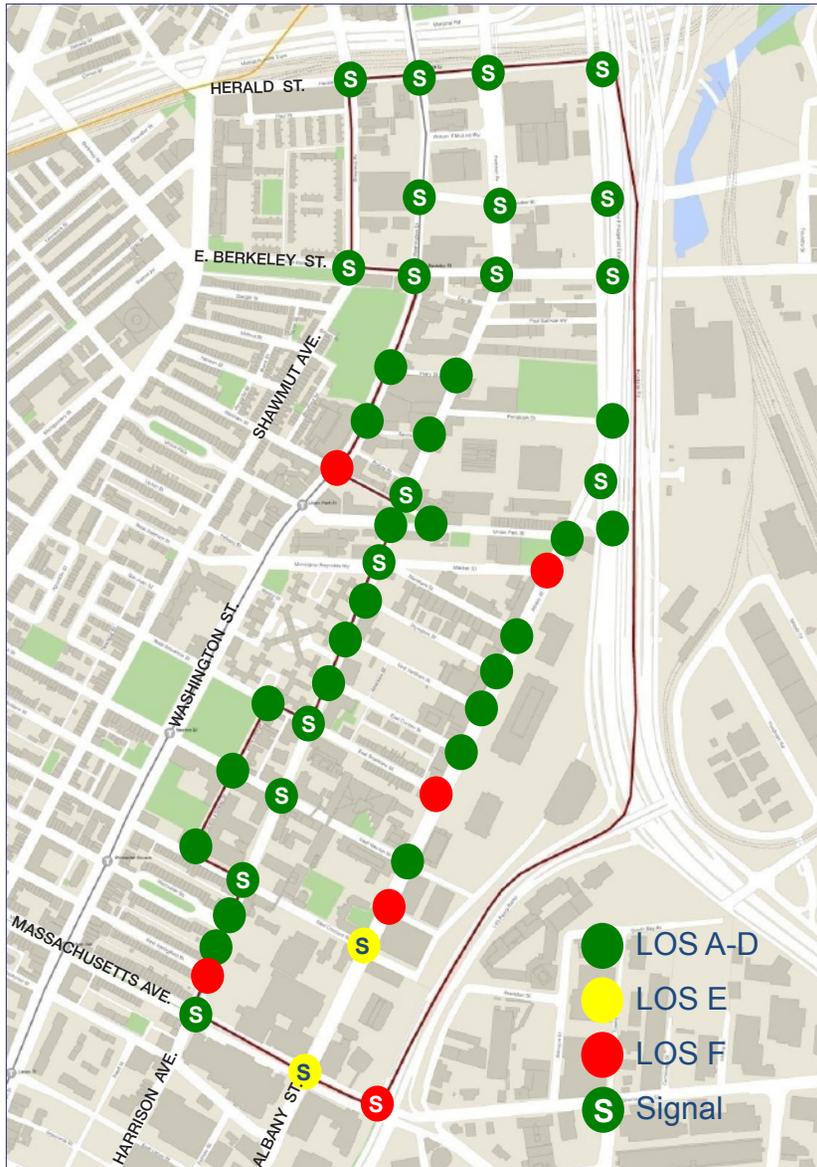
Street directions and traffic signals in Study Area

## Overview of Existing Vehicular Network

The transportation system in the Study Area provides regional connections on its eastern edge by I-93 north and southbound, which in turn provides access to I-90 (the Massachusetts Turnpike) westbound and eastbound to Logan Airport. The Turnpike also serves as the Study Area's northern boundary. Both of these major pieces of infrastructure serve as both physical and psychological boundaries to the South End neighborhood, with Chinatown to the north and South Boston to the east.

The main north/south roadways from east to west include Albany Street/Frontage Road, Harrison Avenue, and Washington Street. The primary east/west roads from north to south are Herald Street, East Berkeley Street and Massachusetts Avenue. A series of smaller scale local east/west roadways that mostly provide one-way access forms the remainder of the roadway network. The illustrations on this page and the next show the existing roadway network and the locations of traffic signals in the Study Area.

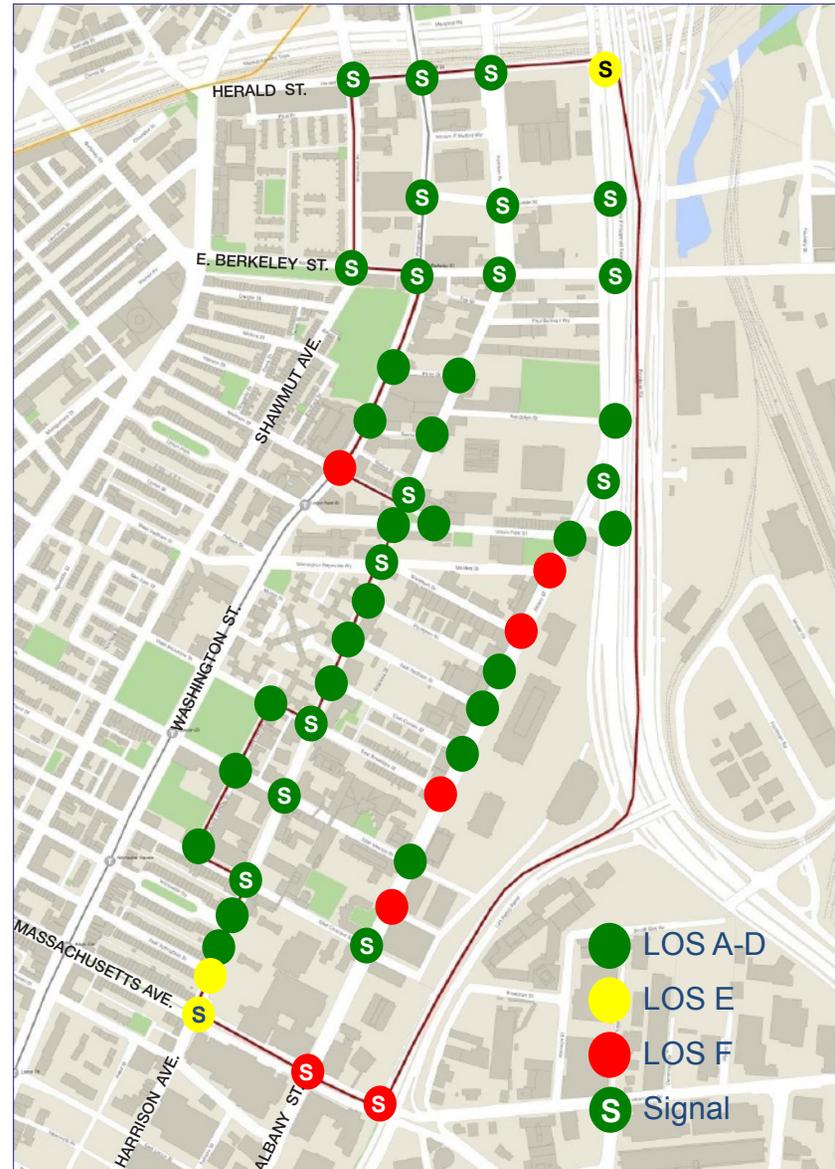
As part of the transportation analysis for this planning effort, a comprehensive traffic model of existing conditions was developed that incorporates recent traffic volume counts and existing traffic signal data, including the timings and phasings of these traffic controls. This computer model provides various outputs to gauge traffic operating conditions, the most widely used of which is the measure of intersection capacity known as "level of service" (LOS). LOS assigns a letter grade of A through F, with E signifying an intersection that is approaching



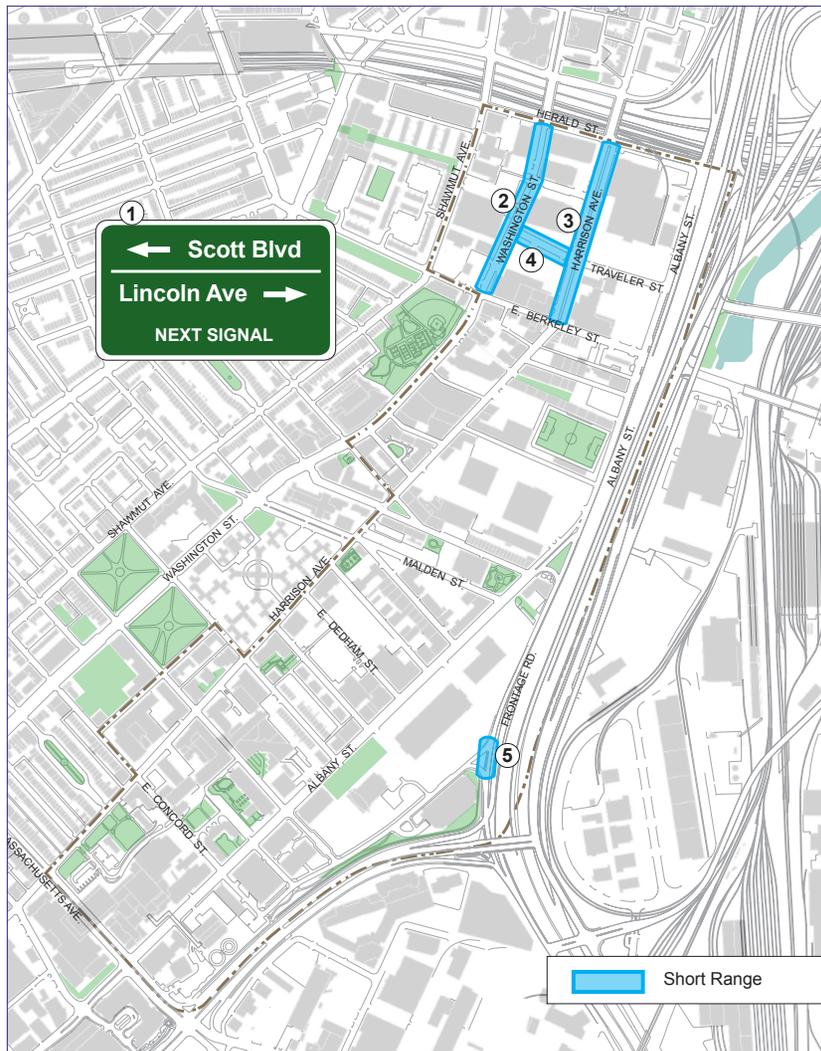
Existing Level of Service (LOS) at intersections in the AM peak period

capacity and F representing an intersection at or above its capacity to process traffic. In urban settings a LOS of D or greater is considered acceptable. The accompanying illustrations indicate the LOS in both the AM and PM peak periods for all major intersections in the Study Area for the “existing conditions” year of 2010.

The results reinforce what members of the Advisory Group and City staff had suspected: that roadway segments and intersections along Massachusetts Avenue and Albany Street in the more built-out areas in the southern portion of the Study Area are experiencing greater congestion than the less dense areas to the north. An additional burden to the area’s roadway network that has an important influence on traffic functions is regional through-traffic going to and from the highway system along the east edge of the Study Area. Those impacts are felt along Frontage Road, Albany, East Berkeley and Herald Streets.



Existing Level of Service (LOS) at intersections in the PM peak period



Map of short-range transportation improvements

## Proposed Roadway Network Changes

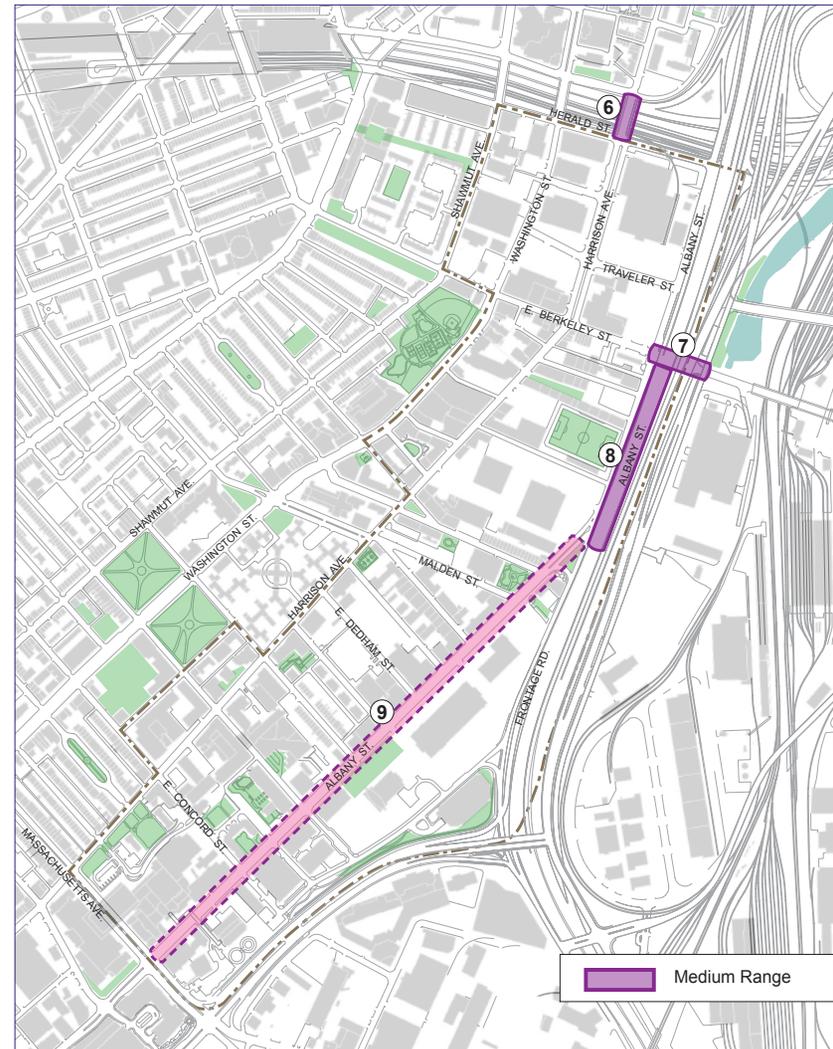
In consultation with the Advisory Group, City staff (including the Transportation Department) and the project’s transportation consultant, a package of roadway network changes have been proposed. These changes are intended to improve multimodal access and circulation for the neighborhood, add capacity to accommodate future development, and better utilize and enhance public space. All of these recommendations will require further efforts to implement with varying degrees of design and funding. Several recommendations, such as new transportation connections, will also be dependent on redevelopment and require the approval of and partnerships with private property owners. Because of these varying degrees of complexity, the improvements have been divided into short-, medium- and long-term efforts.

### Short-Range Transportation Improvements

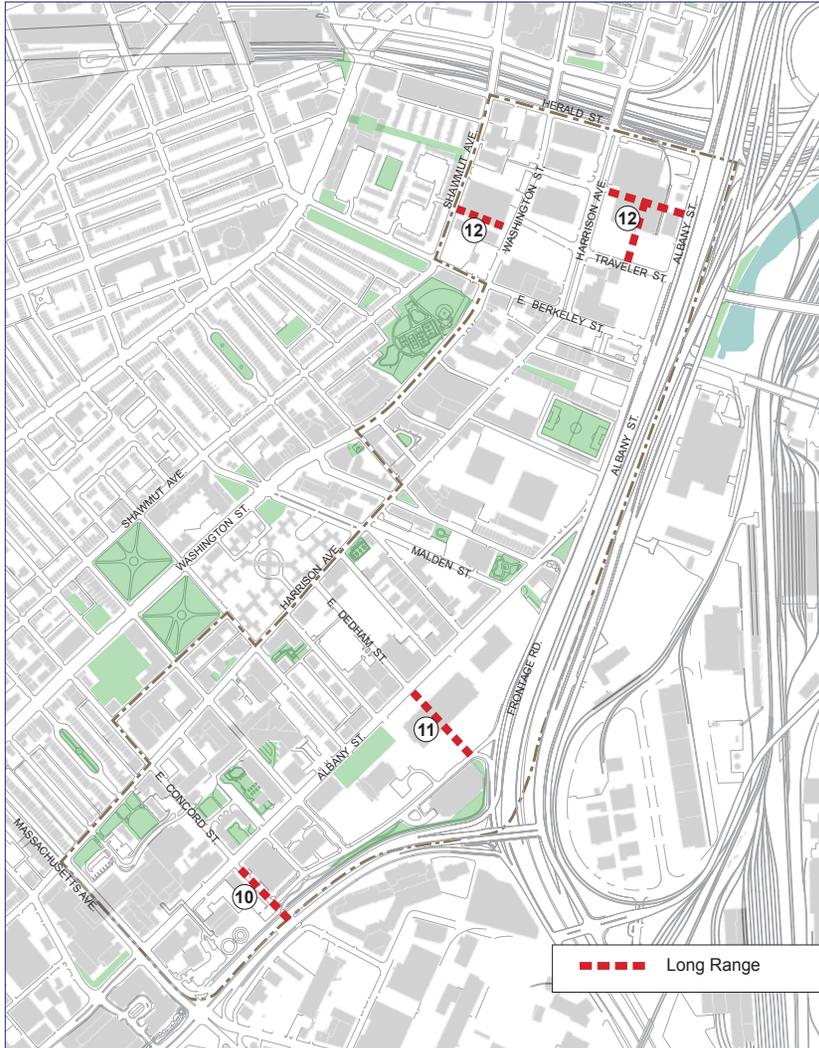
1. Improve signage and pavement markings for wayfinding and definition of space (#1 on map)
2. Convert Washington Street to two-way from Herald Street to East Berkeley Street (maintain “bus only” lanes for Silver Line) to improve circulation and local site access (#2)
3. Reallocate the cross-section of Harrison Avenue between Herald Street and East Berkeley Street to maximize public space for pedestrians and cyclists, and create better frontage for development (#3)
4. Introduce two-way traffic along Traveler Street to improve circulation (#4)
5. Complete BioSquare connection to Frontage Road to relieve pressure on Massachusetts Avenue/Melnea Cass Boulevard intersection (#5)

### Medium-Range Transportation Improvements

6. Introduce two-way traffic over the Harrison Avenue bridge in order to facilitate better circulation and connectivity to Chinatown (#6)
7. Convert the segment of East Berkeley Street under the Expressway to two-way to provide for enhanced traffic distribution and connectivity to the West Fourth Street Bridge and South Boston (#7)
8. Reallocate the cross-section on Albany Street from East Berkeley Street to Frontage Road to maximize public space for pedestrians and cyclists and create better frontage for development (#8)
9. Improve Albany Street south of Frontage Road through upgraded signalization and formalization of turning lanes where warranted (#9)  
As discussed later, this recommendation is not part of the “full-build” network since it was made after reviewing the outcomes of the traffic analysis



Map of medium-range transportation improvements



Map of long-range transportation improvements

Line work does not represent actual alignments or dimensions and instead reflects general intent for planning purposes.

## Long-Range Transportation Improvements

10. Extend East Concord Street to Massachusetts Avenue Connector to relieve regional transportation pressure on Massachusetts Avenue, provide enhanced circulation within the Study Area, and provide better connectivity to/for Newmarket (#10)

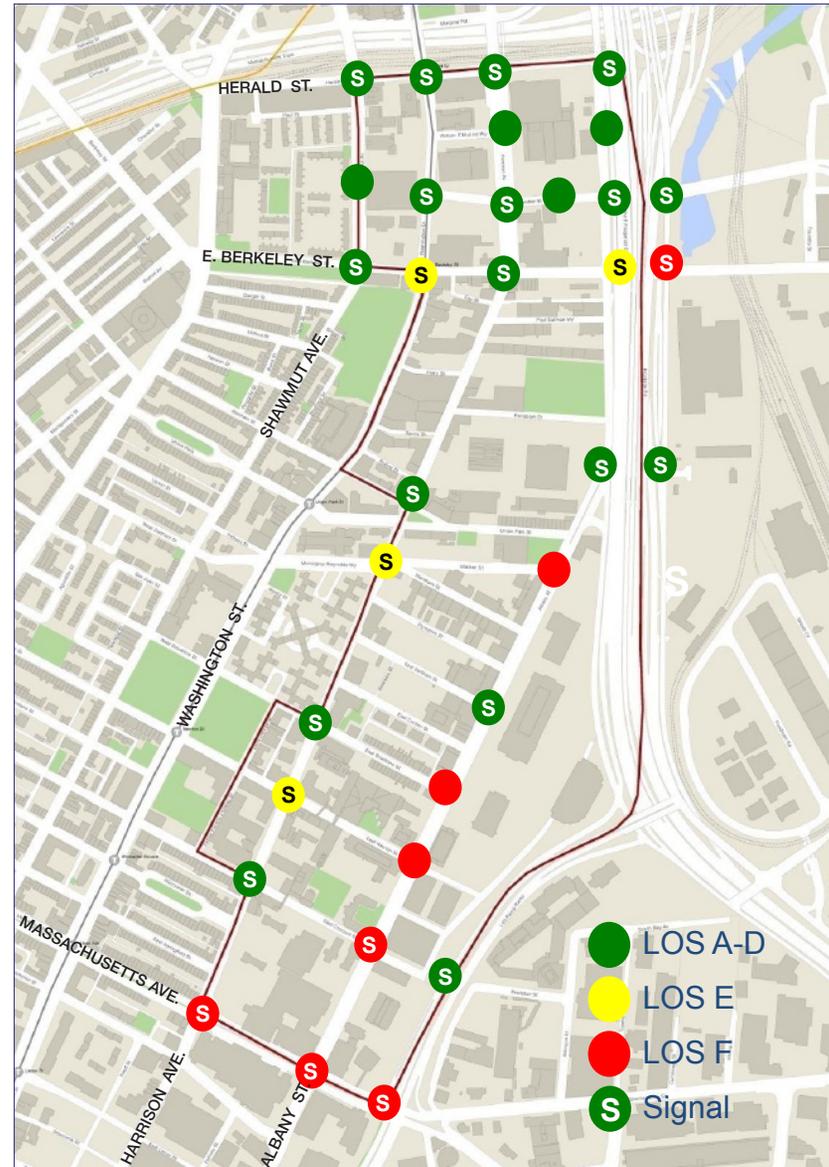
11. Extend East Dedham Street to Frontage Road tying into future BioSquare intersection (see #5) This will relieve regional transportation congestion and provide enhanced traffic circulation within the Study Area (#11). This improvement is dependent upon the existing properties being fully developed.

12. Create new local roadway connections within the New York Street sub-area. This will improve access and add capacity for future development which will relieve congestion along the existing streets. These new connections will also facilitate on-site loading and internalized parking.(#12). These improvements are dependent upon the existing properties being fully developed.

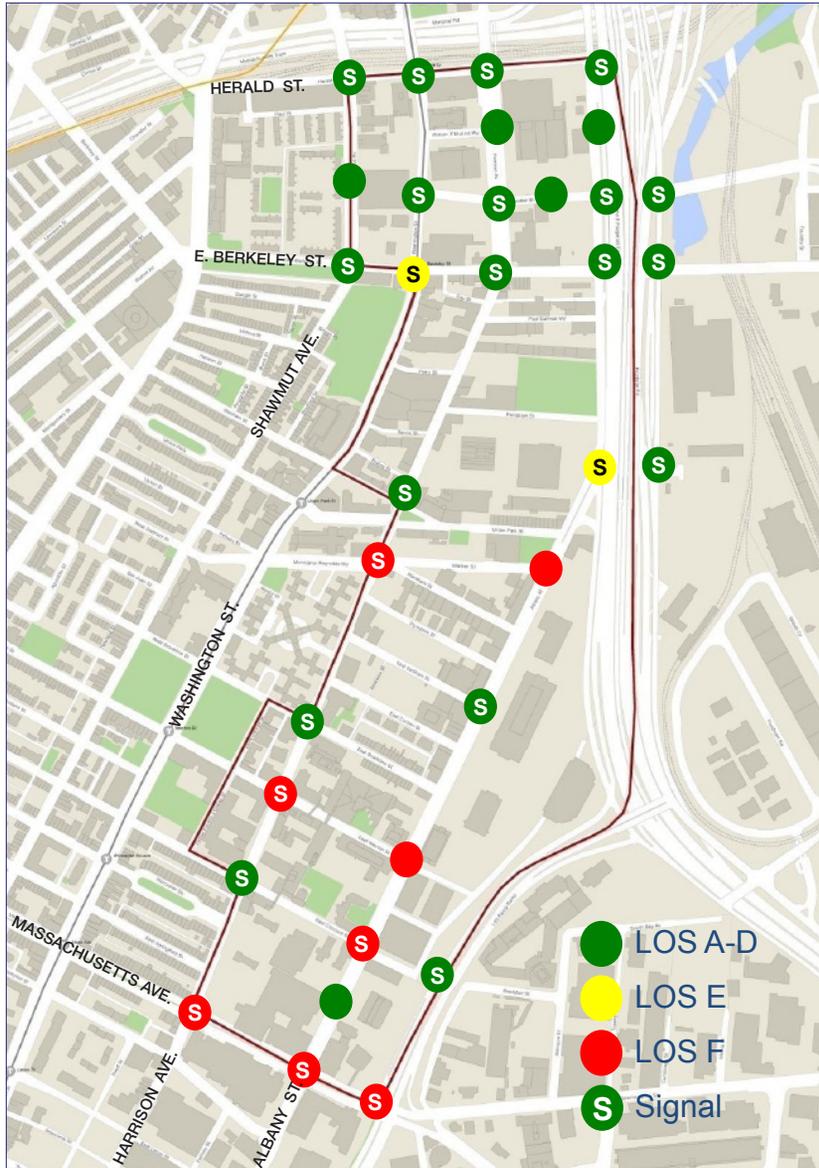
### Traffic Analysis of Future Scenarios

The above transportation network changes were first tested in a near-term future scenario (2015) to ensure their intended benefits. This led to some detailed refinement which included, for example, reducing the extent of the proposed Albany Street project from the southbound I-93 on-ramp to south of East Berkeley due to vehicular capacity needs.

With transportation network capacity being one of the primary limiting factors to future growth and development, the next logical step was to test a hypothetical “full-build” scenario based on potential future zoning. To do this, staff identified every potential future development/redevelopment site in the Study Area and calculated the total potential amount of new square feet of development. While an initial more aggressive increase in development rights yielded an over-burdened network, the impacts of the current proposed zoning changes were projected on the traffic network and are considered sustainable. In the end, what amounted to the additional vehicular trips of 7.3 million square feet of development were added to the traffic model networks. The graphics on this page and the next indicate the LOS in both the AM and PM peak periods for all major intersections in the Study Area for a full-build scenario. This analysis includes the above package of proposed network changes.



Level of Service (LOS) at intersections with proposed recommendations in the AM peak period



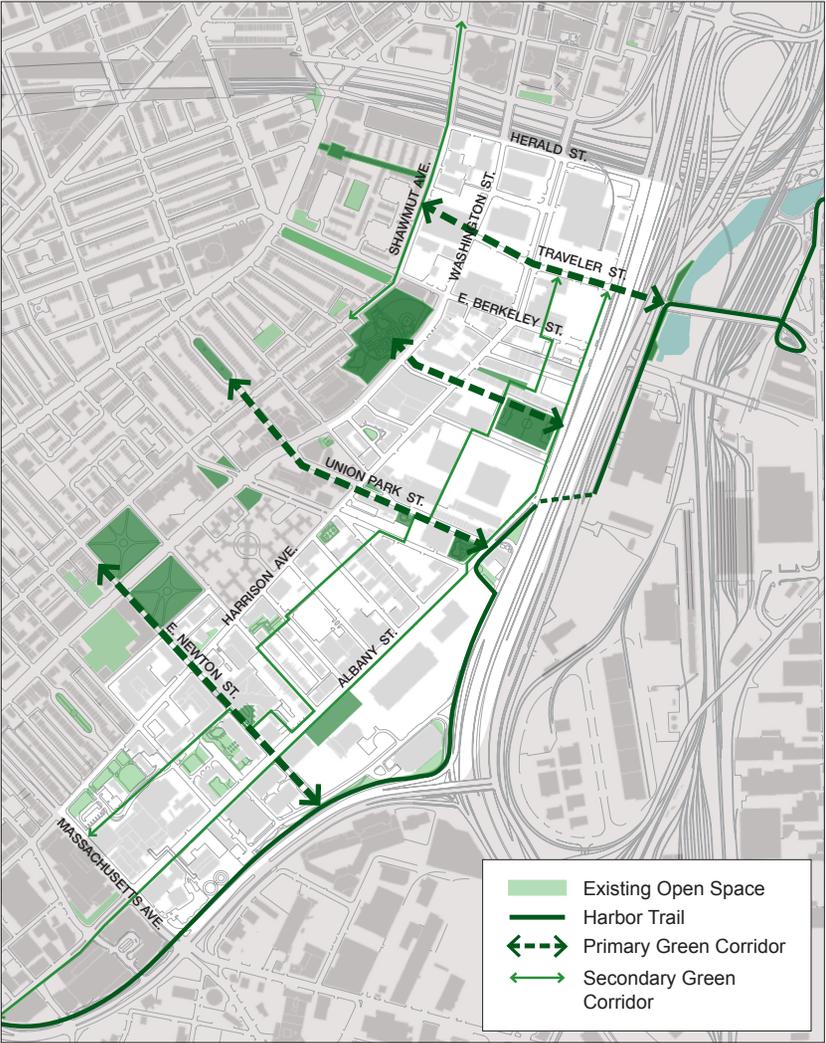
Level of Service (LOS) at intersections with proposed recommendations in the PM peak period

While Massachusetts Avenue continues to be congested, a detailed review of the analysis shows that the Albany Street corridor experiences the greatest change in traffic congestion from existing conditions. Because of this, in addition to the proposed changes above, the City recommends a redesign and upgrade of Albany Street (#9 on the previous “medium-range” improvements graphic). The existing corridor south of Frontage Road lacks lane definition and some intersections have aging signal equipment. Initial thoughts on improvements include updated, coordinated, and potentially additional signalization. There appears to be adequate right-of-way to create formalized turning lanes at intersections, which when combined with better signalization, should result in significant traffic operational and safety improvements.

Overview of Existing Pedestrian Network

The existing pedestrian network in the Study Area suffers from similar connectivity issues as the vehicular network. This is specifically evidenced in the New York Streets sub-area, where the large blocks and lack of a finer grained street network limit pedestrian connectivity.

Other problems are created by the elevated regional highway environment along the eastern I-93 edge of the neighborhood. These conditions, which can be seen along the Albany Street/Frontage Road corridor, unfortunately tend to favor the automobile over an adequate pedestrian environment. Another challenging environment is created by the elevated I-93 infrastructure. The northern edge of the Study Area is formed by the below grade “boat” condition of the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90), and the pedestrian conditions provided by the Shawmut Avenue, Washington Street and Harrison Avenue bridges are in need of improvement.



Green Corridor diagram

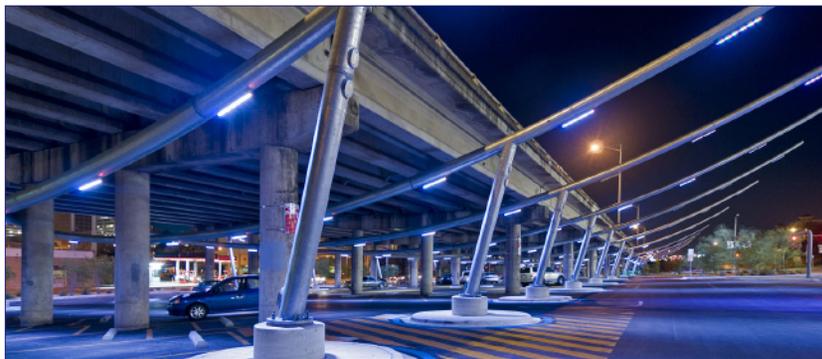
Line work does not represent actual alignments or dimensions and instead reflects general intent for planning purposes.



*Example of enhanced lighting beneath major infrastructure*



*Rendering of Toronto's Underpass Park, currently under construction*



*Example of parking below highway in Austin, Texas*

## **Pedestrian Improvements**

As presented in the Public Realm chapter, this plan identifies enhanced pedestrian corridors that are integral to the envisioned open space network.

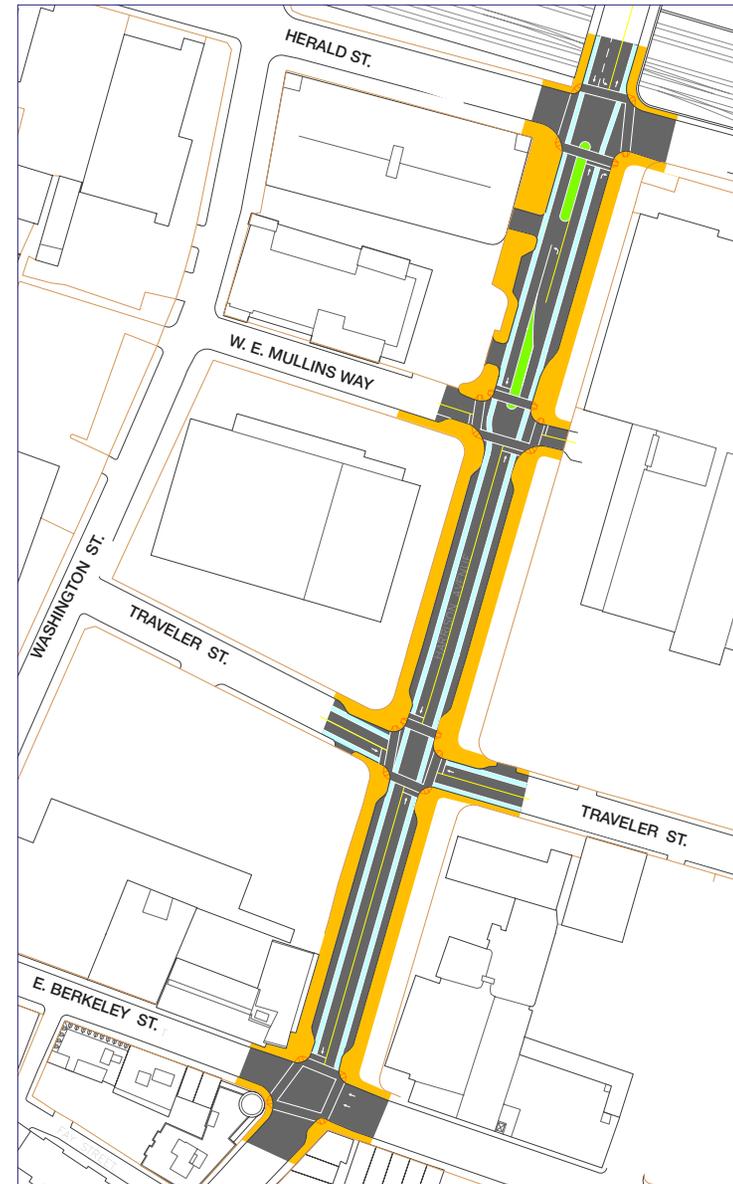
Additionally, the City's commitment to the pedestrian environment under its "Complete Streets" policies, means that all of the proposed vehicular network improvements will also result in enhanced pedestrian conditions. Examples of these improved conditions are articulated in the image to the right that envisions a re-designed Harrison Avenue, as well as in the proposed cross-sections at the end of this chapter.

Where new roadway connections are proposed such as in the New York Streets area, new pedestrian connections will be made as well. In the case of the proposed changes to Harrison Avenue and Albany Street, these projects are primarily driven by the potential for improved pedestrian conditions. One potential approach to re-designing Harrison Avenue can be seen in the accompanying image.

On the bridges that cross the Turnpike and provide crucial connectivity, the conditions for pedestrians should be improved by providing enhanced lighting and where possible widening the existing sidewalks by better allocating existing roadway space.

The environment under the expressway is challenging, particularly for pedestrians. This plan, as presented in the Public Realm chapter, recommends improving the pedestrian conditions under the expressway at both Traveler and East Berkeley Streets. Also, in the near term the South Bay Harbor Trail will as part of its scope of work be improving the conditions for the portion of the trail that crosses under the expressway at the Albany Street/ Frontage road intersection, with enhanced lighting and a widened cross section.

The South Bay Harbor Trail as has been discussed is a forthcoming integral improvement to the area. This facility will be built as a “multi-use” trail meaning it is designed to adequately accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists. It will be an asset that can be utilized for both recreational and traditional commuting needs.



A potential approach to re-design Harrison Avenue



*South Bay Harbor Trail proposed graphics and crosswalk markings*



*South Bay Harbor trail proposed graphics*

## Bicycle Network

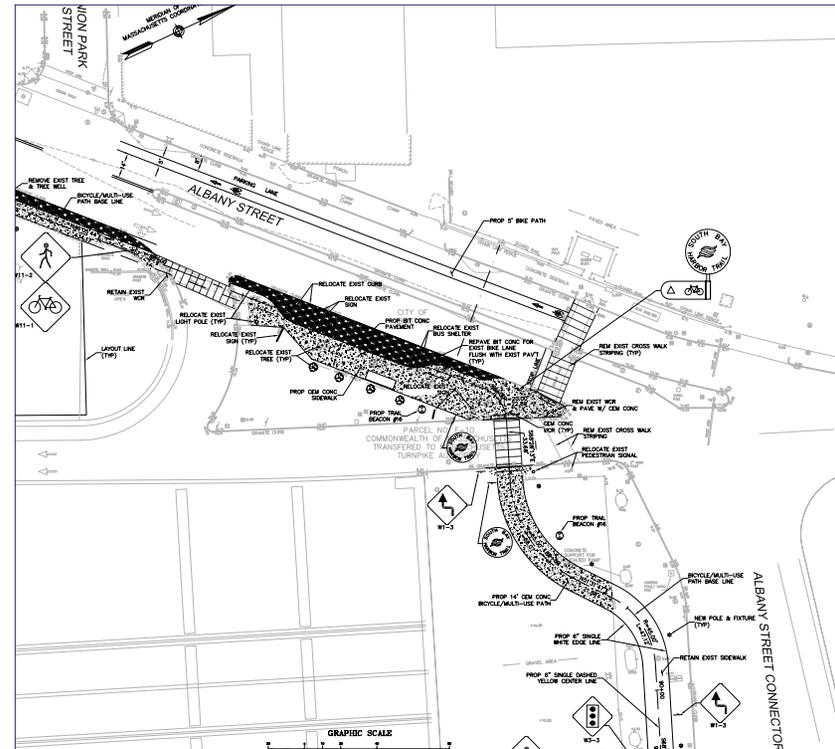
The South Bay Harbor Trail should be viewed as the area's main "arterial" for cyclists. However, without system-wide bicycle accommodations and connections to the trail, utilization of this asset will be diminished. The City's current policy is to accommodate cyclists on every re-designed roadway segment and where physically possible to retrofit existing roadway cross-sections when the opportunities arise.

In the near term the Massachusetts Avenue reconstruction project will provide on-street bicycle lanes when completed. In addition to the new roadway segments providing bicycle lanes, the package of existing streets recommended for improvements will also establish bike lanes for Harrison Avenue, Traveler and Albany Streets.

Boston continues to advance and formalize its commitment to cycling through policy changes and creative cycling initiatives. One of the city's most exciting efforts that is beginning its initial roll out phase is the Bike Share Program. Members join the program and can utilize one of 600 bikes located at 61 strategically located stations throughout the city. Additional capacity will be added as demand and membership grows. Ideally these stations will be a component of the envisioned "mobility hubs" in the study area that are more fully discussed in a following section.

A major impediment to increased cycling mode share is the lack of bicycle on-site amenities. To address this, the city has established new policies for recommended bicycle storage spaces and shower/changing facilities for new developments as highlighted in the chart below. The full context can be viewed at the following web location:

<http://www.bostoncompletestreets.org/pdf/COB%20Bike%20Guideline.pdf>



Proposed South Bay Harbor Trail design at Albany Street/ Frontage Road

Land Use	Secure/Covered Bike Spaces	Outdoor (i.e. "public") Bike Spaces	Shower/Changing Facilities	Bike Share Station (if none within 600')
Residential	1 per unit	1 per 5 units	As included in units	Provide a station for buildings >100 units
Office/Other Commercial	0.3 per 1,000 sf	At a rate of 2.5% of daily building users	At a rate of 1 shower per 40,000 sf	Provide a station for buildings >50,000 sf
Retail	0.3 per 1,000 sf	1 per 5,000 sf	At a rate of 1 shower per 40,000 sf	Provide a station for buildings >50,000 sf
Institutional/Dorms	0.5 per 1,000 sf	At a rate of 5% of daily building users	At a rate of 1 shower per 40,000 sf	Provide a station for buildings >50,000 sf

BTD's Bicycle accommodations recommendations

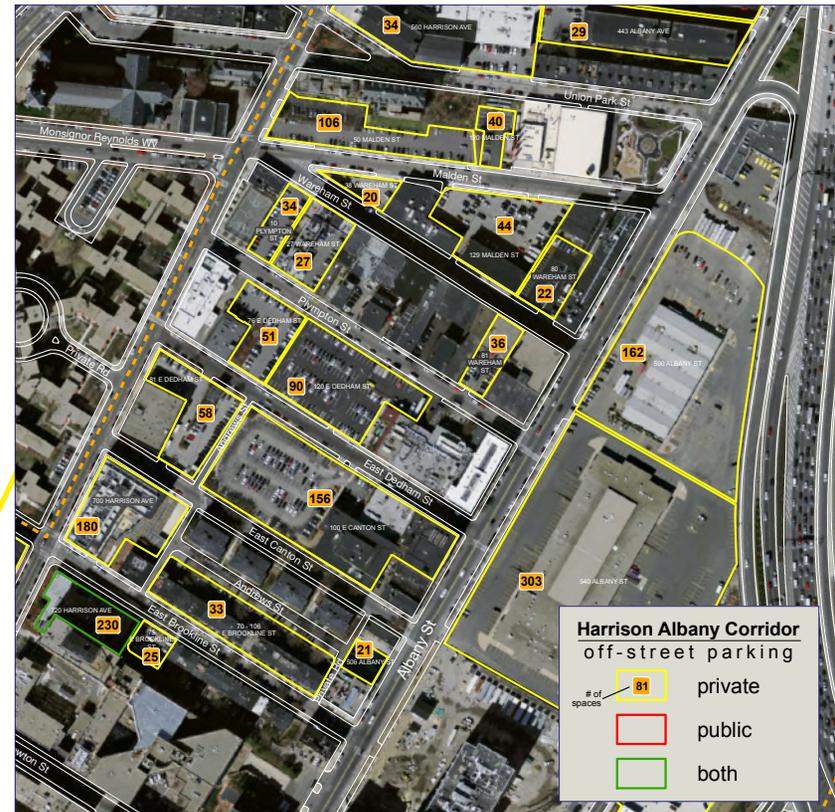
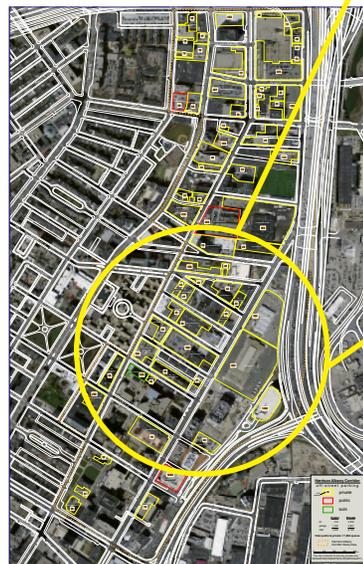


### Off Street Parking

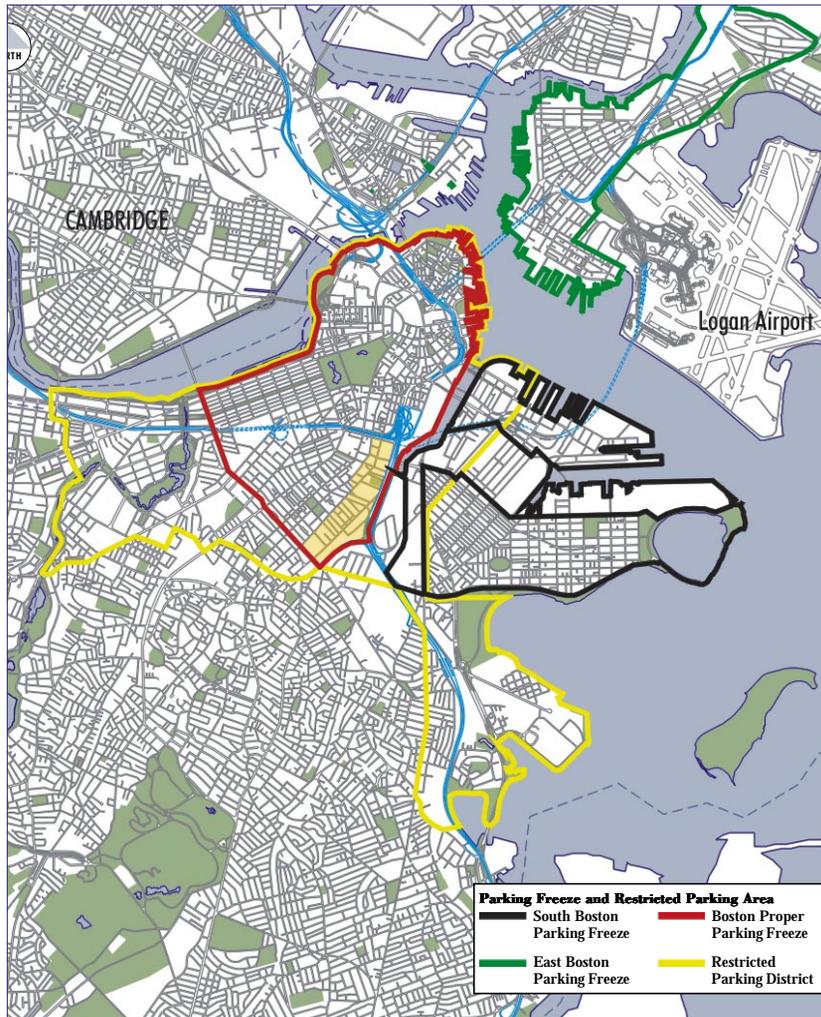
Most of the off-street parking in the study area is dedicated to the on-site uses of each site. There are currently 4 locations that provide public parking for a fee:

- 89 space surface lot at East Berkeley Street and Shawmut Avenue
- 130 space surface lot at 484 Harrison Avenue
- 120 spaces in the 720 Harrison Avenue garage
- 1000 spaces in the 710 Albany Street garage

In total there are approximately 7,600 off-street parking spaces in the study area which results in a ratio of about 0.92 spaces per 1,000 square feet of existing uses. Current guidelines established by the Transportation Department for this part of city recommend a parking ratio between 0.75 – 1.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet.



Existing off street parking



Existing parking controls

## Parking Policies and Zoning Controls

As with on-street parking, off-street parking involves many challenges to ensure that parking meets the needs of the area without inducing additional vehicle trips and an increase in automobile mode share (mode share is the percentage of a particular mode of travel that people are using within a defined geography). Currently, the Study Area is influenced by two existing control factors that help prevent the proliferation of excess parking and will continue to be in place into the future:

- Restricted Parking Overlay District

This zoning control designates all off-street parking on a site that serves commercial uses as “conditional” and thereby requires zoning relief. Residential uses (including hotels) are not included in this regulation.

- Downtown Parking Freeze

The entire Study Area is within the Downtown (*i.e.*, “Boston Proper”) Parking Freeze district, which is administered through the City’s Environment Department by the Air Pollution Control Commission (“APCC”). The freeze manages a capped supply of 35,500 public parking spaces (these are spaces that are open to the general public – usually for a fee). Sites with this type of parking need to adhere to an annual permitting process, which allows the APCC to monitor and

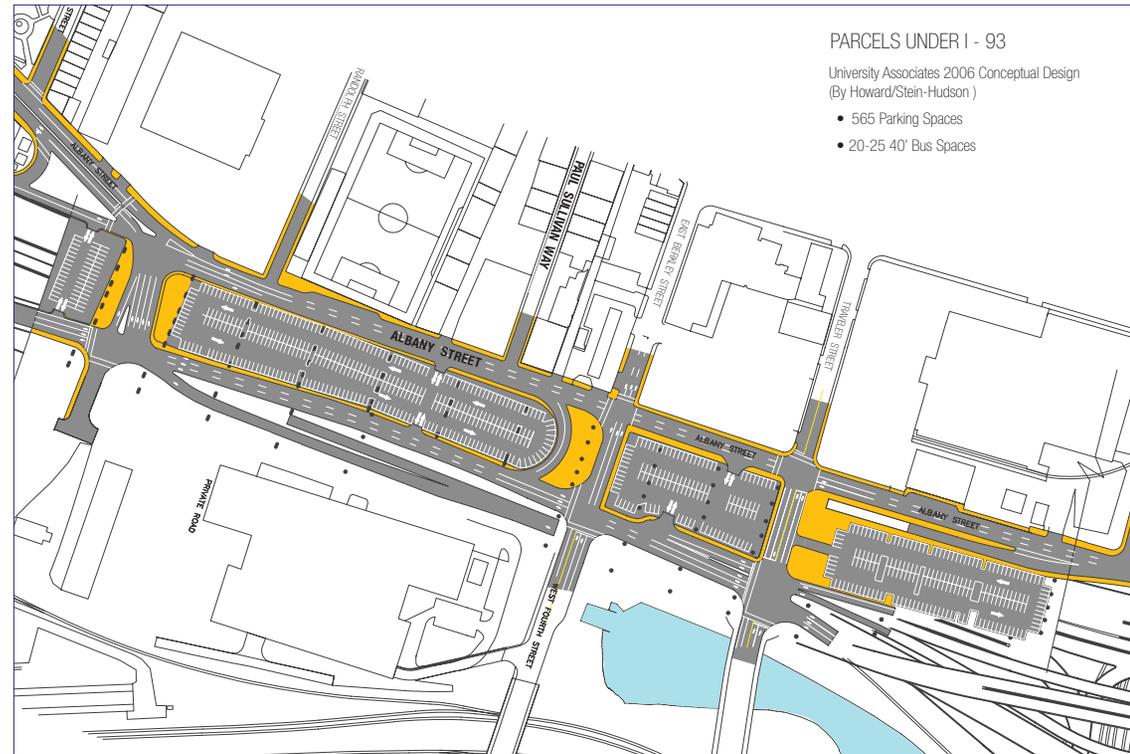
### Shared & Off-Site Parking

manage these spaces.

The idea of encouraging shared parking was consistently supported throughout the planning process. This plan fully endorses this concept, which would allow complimentary uses to utilize the same off-street parking spaces (*i.e.*, dedicated office use spaces being made available to local retail establishments in the evening).

Another recommendation is to allow multiple sites to meet their parking needs through a shared off-site parking facility. This would provide flexibility in land use and urban design by not requiring every future development to accommodate its parking on-site. Instead, more appropriately located parking facilities (in terms of traffic and urban design implications) could be utilized by multiple nearby land uses.

One such location that has been contemplated for some time is the space under the I-93 viaduct. Earlier efforts by the City and community have met resistance at the state and federal levels due to post-September 11th security issues.



Parking layout for space under I-93 (Accommodations for bus parking and carpool are also recommended)

This plan recommends that the City continue to work with the MassDOT and the Federal Highway Administration to take advantage of this underutilized space, while still meeting safety and security needs. Activating this space with parking would also help to reduce undesirable activity that continues to occur on these parcels. A preliminary layout and assessment of the geometry of these parcels was conducted in 2006. As indicated in the graphic on the preceding page provided by University Associates (and modified by the BRA), parking for over 600 vehicles could be provided. This is one of a multitude of ways that this space could be laid out and utilized. In addition to vehicles, bus parking/layover could also be accommodated here. This plan also recommends that the potential for relocating the MBTA's bus storage and layover functions now at its Albany Street garage be explored.

Any use of this space should also include adequate landscaping and buffering of vehicular uses. Additionally, opportunities for new pedestrian connections across these parcels should also be explored if they are

### Parking Ratios

developed.

From a current City policy perspective, the preference is to apply parking ratios for land uses as maximum ratios as opposed to minimums (a parking ratio represents the number of parking spaces for each residential unit, hotel room, or for every 1,000 s.f. of all other land uses). This approach is often in conflict with older zoning regulations that are applied as minimums. Most recently in the Fenway neighborhood, new zoning was adopted that incorporates this maximum approach to parking ratios. This regulation requires projects that have parking ratios over the established maximums to seek zoning relief.

Currently in the Study Area, there are no parking requirements for commercial uses, in order to maintain compliance with the Restricted Parking Overlay District, which requires projects with commercial parking spaces to seek approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). This plan recommends that the revised zoning add parking ratio maximums for residential uses within the Study Area's zones to the

Land Use	Minimum Ratio	Maximum Ratio
Residential	0.7 per unit	1.0 per unit
Hotel	0.7 per room	0.7 per room

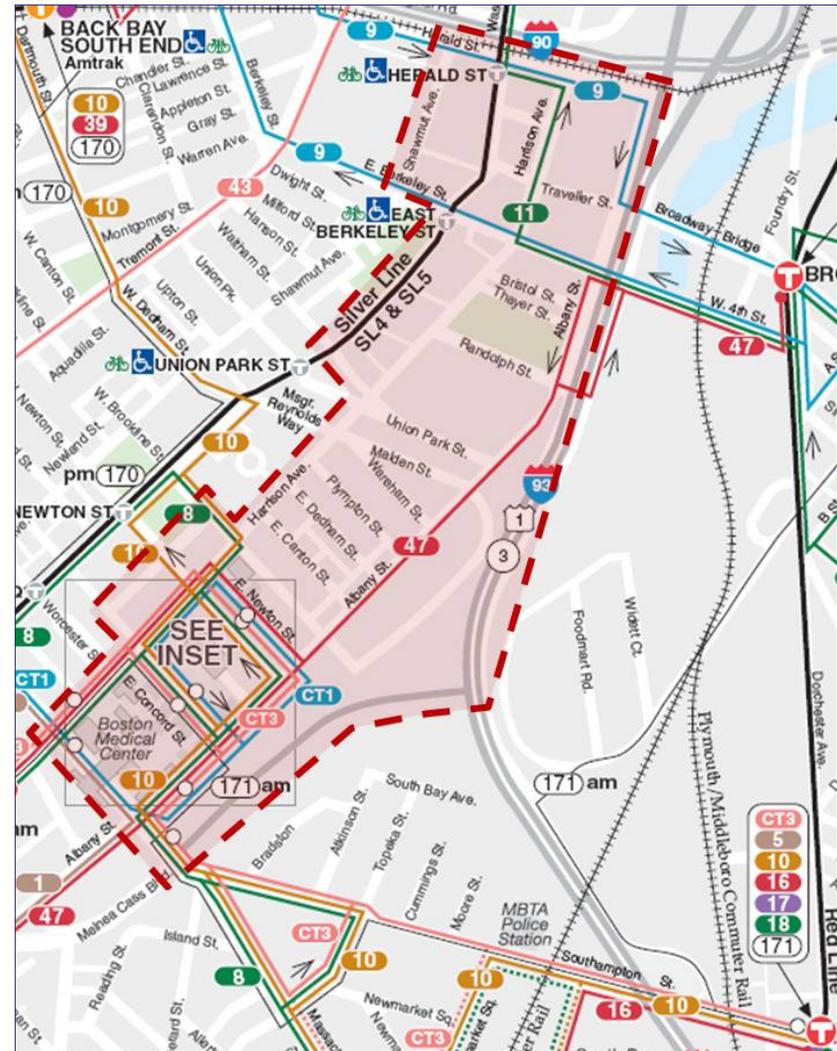
current minimum requirements. This will result in the following ratios:

It should also be noted that any large project requiring Article 80 Large Project Review or that elects to pursue a PDA will have their parking supplies determined by these processes, and will not be bound to the

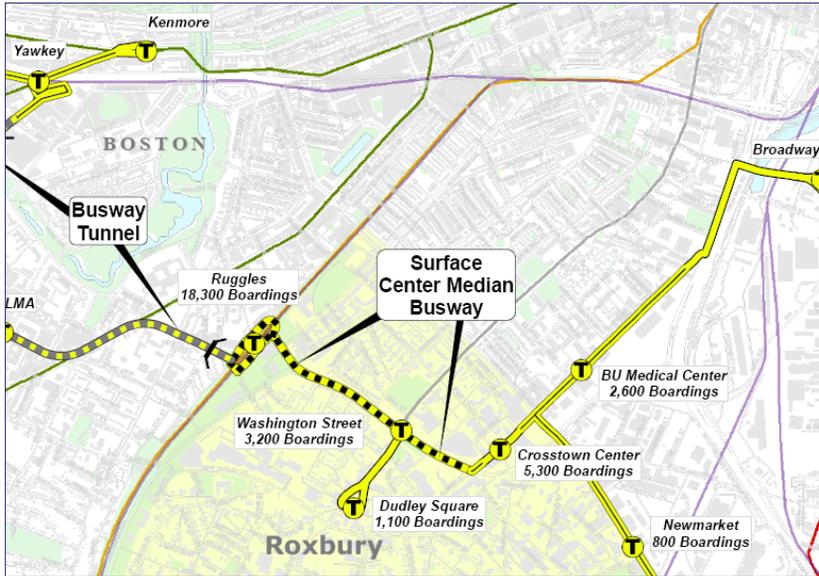
## Transit

### Overview of Existing Transit

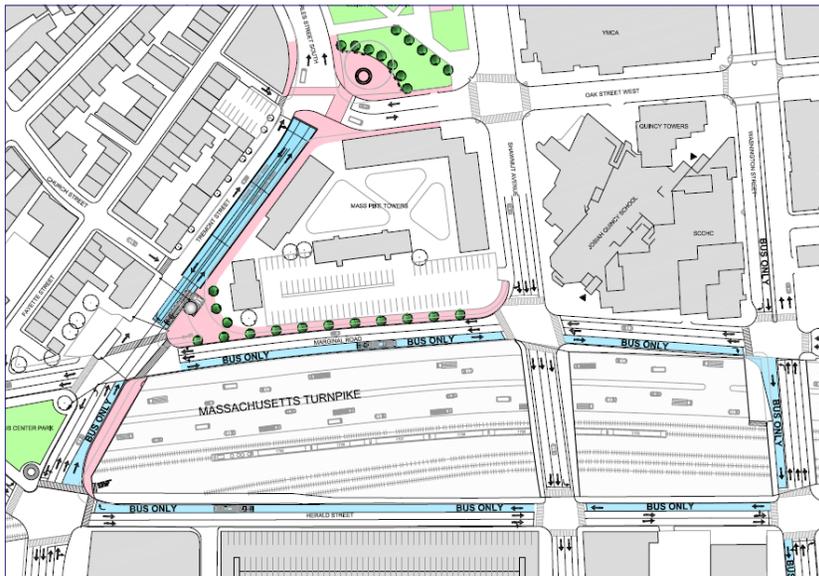
parking ratios in the established Zoning Code. The Study Area relies heavily on its extensive public transit network. Within this part of the city, daily transit mode shares run from 17% - 30%, with these percentages considerably higher in the AM and PM peak periods. The Silver Line along Washington Street is the area's most significant transit service, with connections to downtown and other MBTA rail lines. Just outside the Study Area to the east and on the other side of I-93 runs the Red Line, with access to Broadway station via Traveler Street. In the southern portion of the Study Area, Andrew station can be accessed via Southampton Street and multiple bus routes. Access to the Orange Line can be made on the other side of the Turnpike at Tufts Medical Center station. Multiple bus routes provide local connectivity and access to multiple MBTA stations in the system. To the right is a map of MBTA services in the Study Area.



Transit service in the Study Area



Urban Ring-Melnea Cass and Albany Street segments



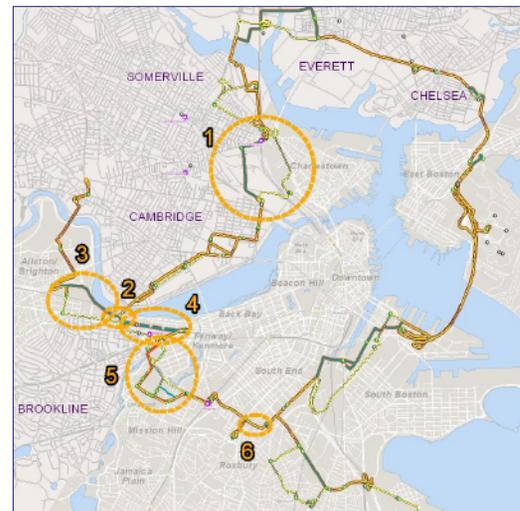
Silver Line Phase III - proposed design adjacent to the Study Area

## Long Range Major Projects

The Urban Ring and Silver Line Phase III are the two planned major transit infrastructure projects that would positively impact the Study Area. The Urban Ring is a circumferential transit system providing connections to the radiating “spokes” of the other MBTA mass transit lines. Within the Study Area, the current design approach would implement bus rapid transit service (“BRT”) along Albany Street via Melnea Cass Boulevard.

The Silver Line Phase III would connect the Washington Street Silver Line service and the Silver Line’s “transitway” that serves the South Boston Waterfront via a new tunnel segment with a portal on Tremont Street just north of the Turnpike. (see graphic below).

Currently both of these projects are on hold until further funding is identified to advance their final design, permitting and construction. This plan supports continuing to work towards implementing these projects and ensuring that future changes to the built environment do not preclude the planned components of these projects.



Urban Ring - proposed full alignment

### Short/Mid Range Projects

Newmarket station, just outside of the Study Area on Massachusetts Avenue (see graphic to the right), is scheduled to be completed and open in December 2012. As one of four new stations that are being built on the MBTA's Fairmount Commuter Rail line, this station will provide additional transit connectivity to Dorchester, Mattapan and Hyde Park. The longer term vision by the City is for this line to operate with higher levels of service that would be comparable to the rest of the heavy MBTA rail lines (i.e., Orange, Red and Blue Lines). This plan acknowledges that the current connectivity of existing buses is adequate for the near term, but hopes that as station utilization and ridership demand increase, the MBTA will add additional and more frequent bus service.

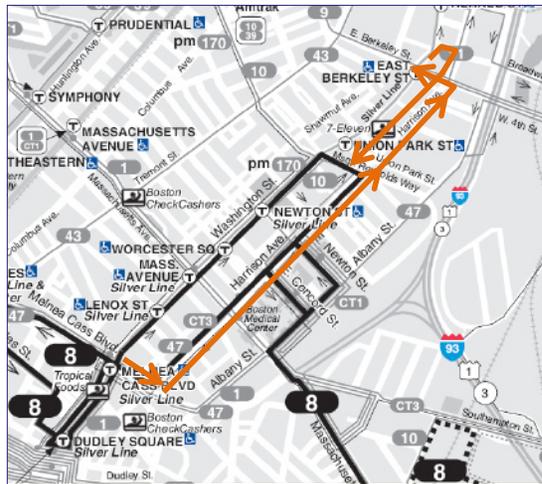
The existing bus routes servicing the area provide local connectivity, connections to the Red, Orange and Green Lines, and connections to surrounding neighborhoods, such as Back Bay, The Fenway, Roxbury and Dorchester (see map on p. 89). Most of this service, however, is limited to the Medical Center area and aside from the Silver Line there is an overall lack of interconnectivity within the Study Area. A few potential bus routing modifications are recommended on the following page, all of which were well-received by the Advisory Group. The MBTA's initial response was receptive, however additional work with them is necessary to advance these changes.



Short/Mid Range Project: Newmarket Station

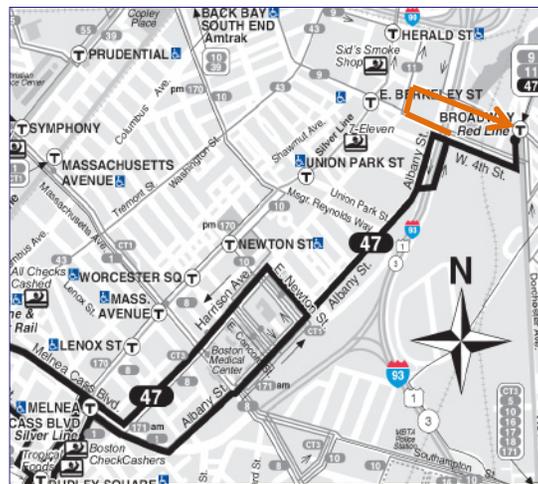
### Bus Route 8

- Extend to Traveler Street; operate in both directions on Harrison (orange line work in diagram represents changed routing)
- Establishes two-way bus service on Harrison Avenue through the center of the area
- Better local interconnectivity with all sub-areas
- Utilizes improved two-way Traveler Street



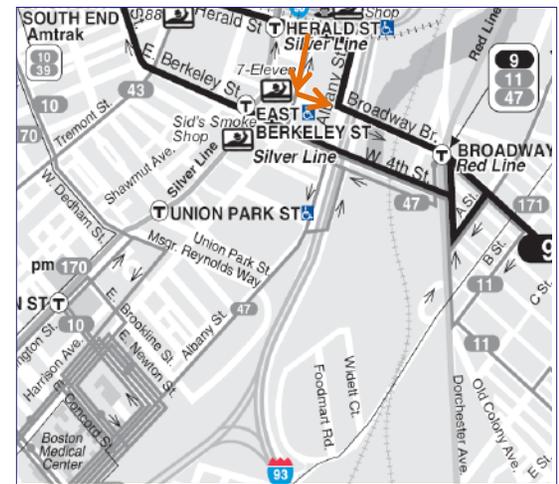
### Bus Route 47

- Change eastbound routing to East Berkeley, and Traveler Streets, Harrison Avenue, and Broadway Bridge
- Better connectivity for New York Streets sub-area to Red Line, Albany Street corridor and Medical sub-area
- Utilizes improved two-way Traveler Street



### Bus Route 9

- Change eastbound routing to Harrison Avenue and Traveler Street
- Better connectivity for New York Streets sub-area to Red Line, Back Bay and South Boston
- Utilizes improved two-way Traveler Street
- Utilizes improved Harrison Avenue



## Mobility Hubs

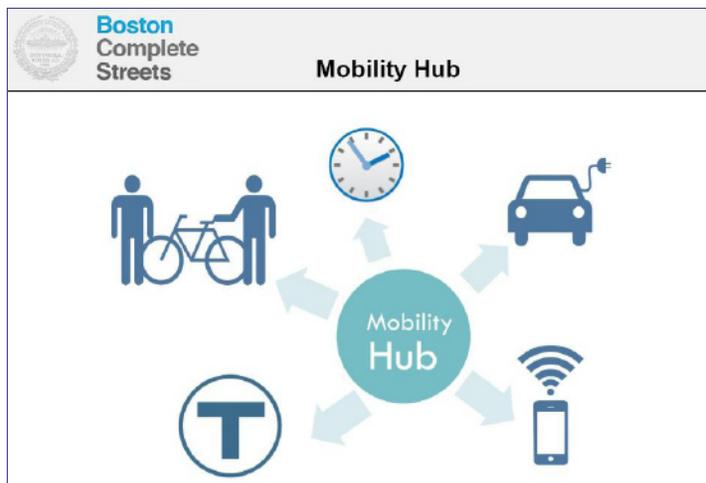
As introduced through the City's Complete Streets program, the establishment of "Mobility Hubs" throughout the City is an opportunity to connect the pieces of our multi-modal transportation system at strategic locations. A Mobility Hub is a location where users can take advantage of components of the transportation system and if desired, seamlessly transfer between modes of transportation. If possible, they also should be located where future transportation improvements are likely, such as the Urban Ring. The components that make up a Mobility Hub could include the following:

- Public transit informational kiosk
- Transit fare vending machine
- Bike share station
- Strong WiFi service for access to real time web-based transportation information
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Streetscape amenities (transit shelter, benches, bike racks, etc.)
- Parking space(s) for car-sharing vehicles

The locational characteristics of establishing a Mobility Hub include:

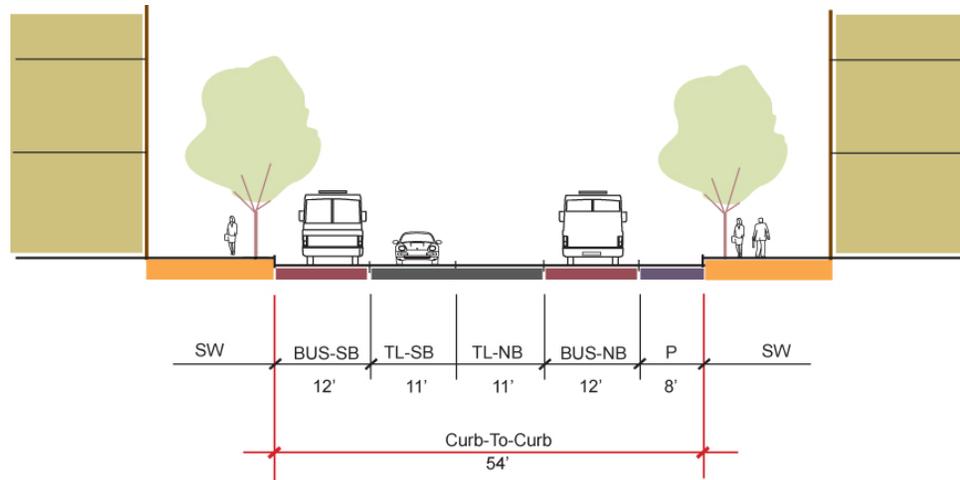
- High level of transit service (preferably with multiple services to afford transferability);
- Adequate physical space that is publicly accessible and has high visibility;
- Optimal bicycle mode accommodations;
- A dense mix of land uses to serve maximum users and provide consistent activation; and
- Engaged adjacent property owners.

This plan recommends that the City look to establish Mobility Hubs at strategic locations in the Study Area and likely in conjunction with redevelopment or public infrastructure projects.



## Potential Future Roadway Cross-Section

As mentioned earlier in this chapter and elsewhere in the plan, including the Public Realm chapter, all new and reconstructed public ways will be designed to the City's Complete Streets standards. While still being finalized, the Complete Streets Guidelines will require equitable accommodations for all modes of travel, and incorporate the latest in "green" and "smart" components (for additional and the latest up-to-date information go to <http://www.bostoncompletestreets.org>). Below is a conceptual design of a roadway cross-section that could be used for many of the proposed roadway improvements.



## Washington Street

*From Herald Street to East Berkeley Street*

Washington Street has played a key role in the South End's revitalization by creating a vibrant and active pedestrian environment conducive to retail activities, such as stores and restaurants. In order to continue and enhance its "main street" characteristics between Herald and East Berkeley Streets, the proposal is for a return to a fully functioning two-way street. For example, this will include the following:

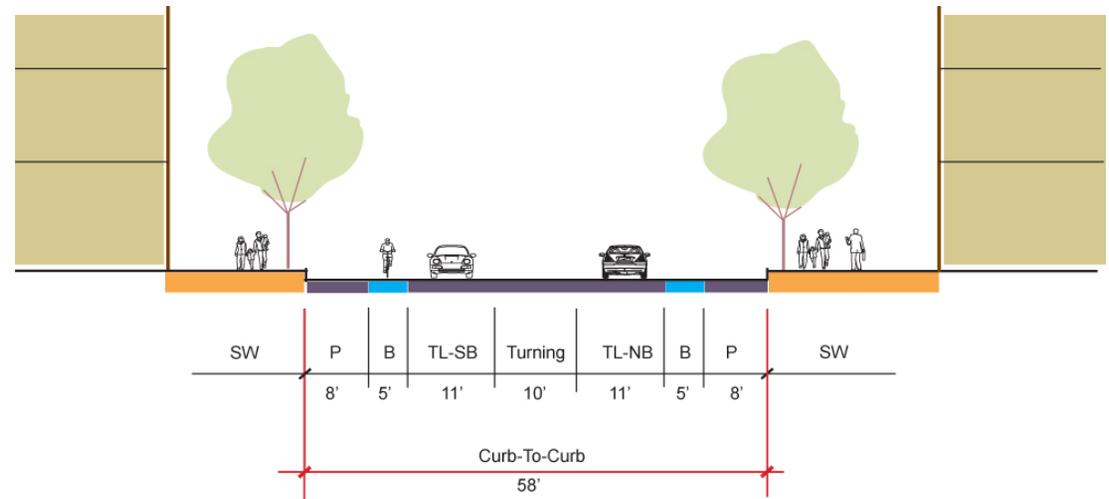
- Maintaining the current curb-to-curb width without interruption to the exclusive Silver Line bus lanes;
- Pavement restriping and upgrades to signal equipment, as well as sequencing to control two-way access;
- Adding curbside parking on the western side of the street as these properties redevelop; and
- Building heights up to 150' with no step-back required.

## Harrison Avenue

*From Herald Street to East Berkeley Street*

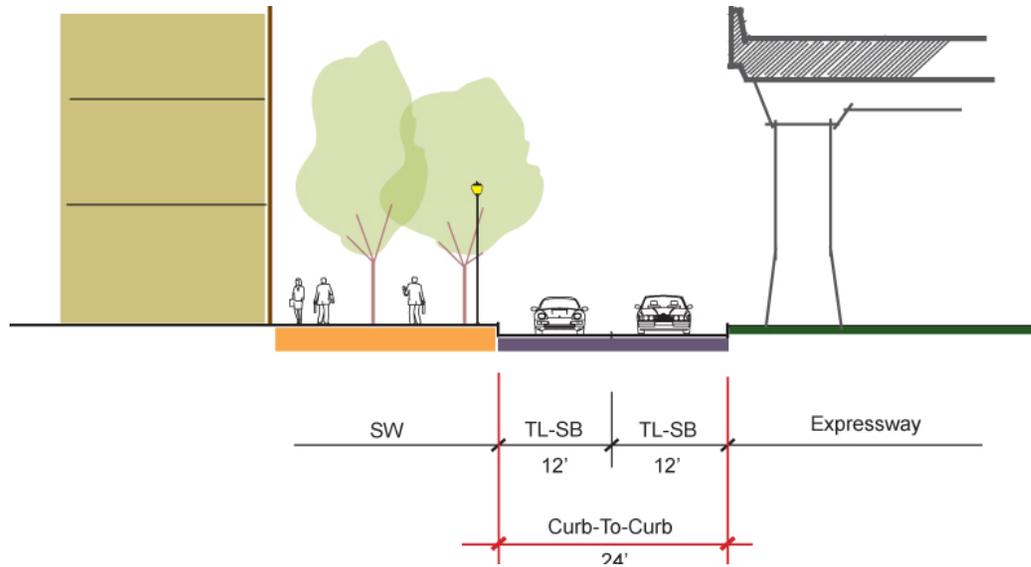
The segment of Harrison Avenue in the New York Streets sub-area was designed to serve the auto- and truck-dependent uses on its large parcels, which were the result of urban renewal efforts. Traffic modeling results support the belief that this four-lane stretch of Harrison Avenue has excess vehicular capacity. This plan proposes to redesign this portion of the roadway to match the rest of Harrison Avenue. The resulting cross-section would include:

- One lane in each direction, bike lanes, and curb side parking;
- Maintaining the right turning lane onto Herald Street for traffic flow;
- Maintaining the left turning lane into the garage of 1000 Washington Street;
- The creation of left-turn lanes at other intersections if additional traffic analysis during the design stage warrants; and



- Building heights up to 150' with no step-back required.

With the proposed changes, the utilization of any remaining right-of-way will require further study and discussion in order to ensure that it is designed to enhance the public realm and maximize development potential.



## Albany Street

*From East Berkeley Street to Frontage Road*

Traffic modeling results support the belief that this one-way, three-lane segment of Albany Street in the SOWA sub-area has excess vehicular capacity. This plan proposes to redesign this portion of Albany Street to increase space for pedestrians and cyclists in the near term. In the longer term this space can be utilized to accommodate the Urban Ring project. Recommendations include:

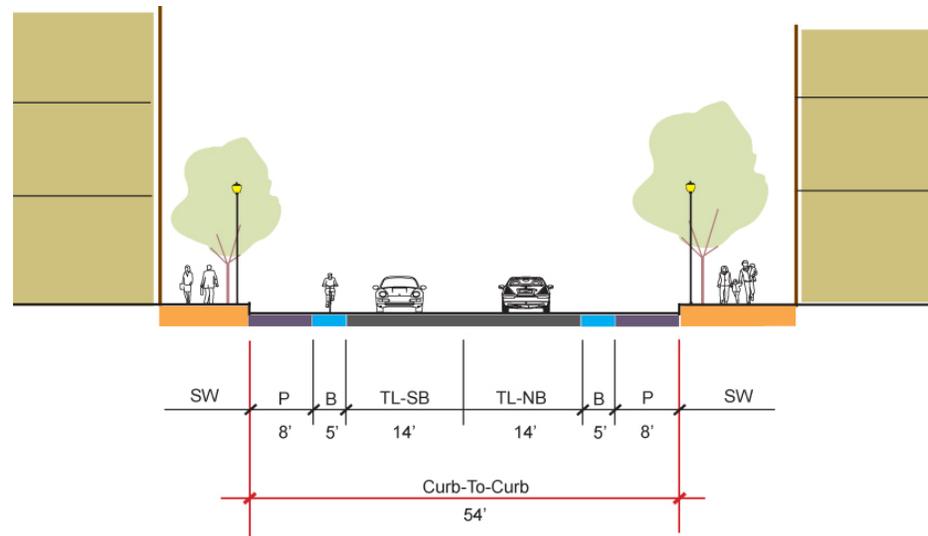
- A reduction of vehicular travel lanes from three to two to create space for quality streetscape elements, pedestrians, cyclists, and eventually the Urban Ring;
- A 10' building setback required of new development, which will contribute to this improved edge; and
- Varied building heights, from 70', 120' and 200' along this edge.

## Albany Street

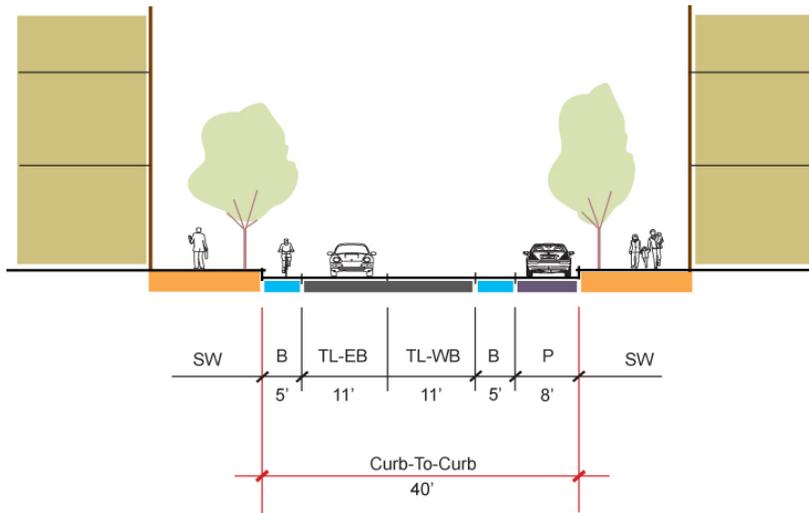
*From Frontage Road to Melnea Cass Boulevard*

Albany Street in the Back Streets and Medical sub-areas is largely characterized by intense economic activities and diverse building types. The street will need to continue to provide adequate vehicular capacity due to the connectivity to jobs and other nodes of the transportation system this corridor provides. Currently, the street lacks adequate traffic control and has minimal pavement markings. Capacity can be improved greatly by providing dedicated turning lanes at intersections to accommodate major vehicular movements. Urban Ring bus accommodations will also be provided in this corridor when the project is implemented. Recommendations include:

- Incorporating turning lanes and signalization at intersections where (and when) warranted by traffic volumes;
- Better utilization of excess pavement in the corridor through more efficient lane markings;
- Establishment of on-street bicycle accommodations;



- Requiring a 10' building setback in Back Streets and SOWA sub-areas for new development to provide additional space for pedestrians, the public realm, and the future Urban Ring; and
- Building heights up to 120' with no step-back required.



## Traveler Street

*New York Streets sub-area*

Traveler Street currently lacks definition and alternates between one-way and two-way segments. Identified as one of the “Green Corridors”, this plan envisions a redesigned two-way street to provide a stronger connection to South Boston, the MBTA’s Broadway station, and the proposed Harbor Trail. A new Traveler Street cross-section would include:

- Conversion to two-way operations between Albany and Washington Streets;
- Accommodation of bike lanes and parking on one side within the current curb-to-curb width;
- Addition of curbside parking, if desired, in conjunction with redevelopment;
- Extension of Traveler Street to Shawmut Avenue in conjunction with redevelopment;
- Requiring a 10’ building setback for new development on the north side of the street to provide additional public realm space;
- Creation of new frontage with redevelopment on the northern side of the street, contributing to the Green Corridor concept; and
- Building heights up to 150’ with no step-back required.





Chapter 7

# RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

## Introduction

Implementation of the recommendations from this Strategic Plan will be an ongoing process that could extend over the next 15 to 20 years or even longer. In the short-term, new zoning and transportation improvements are possible and inexpensive to implement.

Other recommended measures that can be implemented in the near future will help to support the realization of the vision described throughout this plan and will ensure that new development is in scale and character of the individual sub-areas and fits within the existing transportation network.

Implementation of the mid- and long-term recommendations in the plan will be dependent upon availability of funding as well as coordination and cooperation with other entities, including City of Boston departments, state agencies such as the MBTA and MassDOT, and private property owners. The BRA will help to coordinate the implementation of this plan.

For each plan recommendation, the following chart indicates the parties that will be involved in implementation, and the time frame in which implementation can be expected to occur. For the purpose of this chart, short-term is defined as up to four years (2016), mid-term is defined as five to eight years (2017-2020), and long-term is defined as more than eight years.

This chart provides the City, the community and the BRA a framework for implementation and a guide for coordination with other agencies.

Key:

BRA = Boston Redevelopment Authority

Parks = City of Boston's Department of Parks and Recreation

BTD = City of Boston's Department of Transportation

PWD = City of Boston's Department of Public Works

SELDC = South End Landmarks District Commission

MASSDOT = Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Transportation

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

	<b>Depts/Organizations/ Parties Involved</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>OPEN SPACE</b>		
Creation of primary & secondary Green Corridors to connect to the South Bay Harbor Trail, Fort Point Channel and South Boston neighborhood	BRA, PARKS	Ongoing
Protect existing community gardens from shadows	BRA	Ongoing
Require maximum lot coverage for parcels greater than one acre (Planned Development Areas) in order to promote the creation of open space	BRA	Ongoing
<b>LAND USE / ZONING</b>		
Rezone Study Area with new height and FAR maximums	BRA	Ongoing
Coordinate South End Landmarks Protection Area height guidelines to proposed rezoning heights	BRA, SELDC	Short-term
Allow for appropriate contemporary uses in the use regulations	BRA	Short-term
Promote primary use corridors *Washington/Berkeley = Retail *Harrison = Creative Use & Commercial *Albany = Wholesale & Medical	BRA	Ongoing
Maintain the creative economy by attracting artist and entertainment uses along with retail and residential uses in the EDA Central zoning subdistrict	BRA	Ongoing
Attract new and support existing businesses to the overall Study Area	BRA	Ongoing
Maintain and attract light industrial and creative economy uses in the BackStreets sub-area; discourage residential uses	BRA	Ongoing
Maintain and attract medical and biotech uses in the EDA North and EDA BioSquare zoning subdistricts	BRA	Ongoing
Require maximum lot coverage for parcels greater than one acre (Planned Development Areas)	BRA	Ongoing
Require a public use amenity ( <i>i.e.</i> , commercial, cultural, or affordable residential) in exchange for greater height and FAR in Planned Development Areas (parcels greater than one acre)	BRA	Ongoing
Require front setbacks according to the Streetscape Types Guidelines on designated streets throughout the Study Area	BRA	Ongoing
Consider parking maximums in the Study Area for non-commercial uses (currently, there is no parking requirement for commercial uses)	BRA, BTD	Ongoing
<b>URBAN DESIGN</b>		
Build new streets and alleyways in order to return to historical street and block patterns (see Transportation)	BRA, BTD, Private Developer	Ongoing
Open up ground floor use to pedestrians in Medical sub-area; create ground-floor amenities so they are visual and accessible to general public and pedestrians	BRA	Ongoing
Creation of Place-making Nodes ( <i>e.g.</i> , squares, plazas, parks, active ground-floor use, streetscape) negotiated through the Article 80 development review process (potential locations include Washington & Herald Streets, Shawmut Ave & E. Berkeley St, Harrison Ave & E. Berkeley St, Herald & Albany Sts, Albany & Randolph Sts, Frontage Rd & sight line of Plympton St)	BRA, Private Developer	Ongoing
Encourage LEED-certifiable buildings < 50,000 SF	BRA	Ongoing

	<b>Depts/Organizations/ Parties Involved</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>		
Promote shared parking between developments	BRA, BTD, Private Developer	Ongoing
Promote BTD's Complete Streets streetscape guidelines with any new development	BRA/BRA	Ongoing
Break up superblocks with vehicular and/or pedestrian connections negotiated through the Article 80 development review process	BRA, BTD, PWD, Private Developer	Ongoing
Creation of Mobility Hubs negotiated through the Article 80 development review process		
Potential locations include Washington & E. Berkeley Streets, Harrison Ave & Traveler St, Albany St & Frontage Rd, Albany St & E. Concord St)	BRA, BTD, PWD, Private Developer	Ongoing
Improve signage and pavement markings for wayfinding and definition of space	BTD	Short-term
Convert Washington Street to two-way from Herald Street to East Berkeley Street (maintain "bus only" lanes for Silver Line) to improve circulation and local site access	BRA, BTD, MBTA	Short-term
Introduce two-way traffic over the Harrison Avenue bridge in order to facilitate better circulation and connectivity to Chinatown	BRA, BTD	Short-term
Introduce two-way traffic along Traveler Street to improve circulation	BRA, BTD	Short-term
Complete Bio-Square connection to Frontage Road to relieve pressure on Massachusetts Avenue/Melnea Cass Boulevard intersection	BRA, BTD, MASSDOT	Short-term
Improve the pedestrian conditions under the Expressway at both Traveler and East Berkeley Streets with lighting and fencing	BRA, MASSDOT, Private Developer	Mid-term
Coordinate with the MBTA to consider relocation of their bus servicing lot under the Expressway	BRA, MBTA, MASSDOT	Mid-term
Reduce the cross-section of Harrison Avenue between Herald Street and East Berkeley Street to better allocate public space for pedestrians and cyclists	BRA, BTD, PWD	Mid-term
Convert the segment of East Berkeley Street under the Expressway to two-way to provide for enhanced traffic distribution and connectivity to the West Fourth Street Bridge and South Boston	BRA, BTD	Mid-term
Reduce the cross-section on Albany Street from East Berkeley Street to Frontage Road to better allocate public space for pedestrians and cyclists and create better frontage for development	BRA, BTD, PWD	Mid-term
Configure space within several parcels under the expressway to allow for tour bus parking or alternative uses to help reduce undesirable activity that continues to occur on these parcels	BRA, MASSDOT	Mid-term
Extend East Concord Street to Massachusetts Avenue Connector to relieve regional transportation pressure on Massachusetts Avenue, provide enhanced circulation within the Study Area, and provide better connectivity to/for Newmarket	BRA, BTD, MASSDOT	Long-term
Extend East Dedham Street to Frontage Road tying into future Bio-Square intersection (see above). This will relieve regional transportation congestion and provide enhanced traffic circulation within the Study Area	BRA, BTD, MASSDOT	Long-term
Create new local roadway connections within the New York Streets sub-area. This will improve access and add capacity for future development that will relieve congestion along the existing streets. These new connections will also facilitate on-site loading and internalized parking	BRA, BTD, Private Developer	Long-term
Make modifications to existing Bus Routes 8, 47, and 9 in order to extend those bus routes to the New York Streets and SOWA sub-areas	MBTA, BTD	Mid-term

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## Harrison Albany Corridor Strategic Plan Advisory Group

Mark Baranski	Gilbert Ho
Harold Brown	Ogden Hunnewell
Guy Busa	Bill Jacobson
Joseph Cefalo	Adrienne Kimball
Sherry Clancy	Marc LaCasse, Co-Chair
Aimee Coolidge	Kye Liang
Harold Dennis	Terry McDermott
David Flaschenriem	Ann McQueen
James Foley	William Moy
Jeffrey Gates	Gary Nicksa
David Goldman	Tamara Roy
Bonnie Gossels	Sandi Silk (stepped down)
Michael Guran (stepped down)	Robert Walsh, Co-Chair
Mark Haley	Bob Wells
Christos Hamawi	Reggie Wong
Jay Hargis	Richard Wong

## Boston Redevelopment Authority Board of Directors

Clarence J. Jones, *Chairman*  
Paul D. Foster, *Vice-Chairman*  
Consuelo Gonzales-Thornell, *Treasurer*  
Timothy Burke, *Member*  
James M. Coyle, *Member*  
Christopher J. Supple, *Member*  
Brian P. Golden, *Executive Director/Secretary*

## Boston Redevelopment Authority

Peter Meade, *Director*  
Kairos Shen, *Chief Planner*  
**Community Planning Department**  
Randi Lathrop, *Deputy Director for Community Planning*  
Sue Kim, *Senior Planner III*  
Carlos Javier Montañez, *Senior Planner II*  
Marie Mercurio, *Senior Planner I*  
Jim Fitzgerald, *Senior Manager – Transportation and Infrastructure*  
**Urban Design Department**  
Michael Cannizzo, *Senior Architect*  
Alexa Pinard, *Urban Designer II*  
Te-Ming Chang, *Manager - Urban Design Technology Group*  
Jeong-Jun Ju, *Urban Designer II*  
Kenya Thompson, *Urban Designer*  
**Zoning Department**  
Marybeth Pyles, *Land Use Counsel*  
Jeff Hampton, *Senior Zoning Officer*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## **Boston Landmarks Commission**

Ellen Lipsey, *Executive Director*  
Emily Wolf, *Architectural Historian*

## **South End Landmarks Commission**

Walter Maros, *Preservation Planner*

## **Boston Public Works Department**

Para Jayasinghe, *City Engineer*  
Bill Egan, *Supervising Structural Engineer*

## **Boston Transportation Department**

Vineet Gupta, *Director of Planning and Policy*  
Bill Conroy, PE, *Senior Transportation Planner*

## **Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services**

Tabitha Bennett, *Neighborhood Coordinator*

## **Boston City Council**

William Linehan, *Councilor*  
Timothy Brown, *Staff to Councilor*

## **Massachusetts State House of Representatives**

Representative Aaron Michlewitz  
Blake Webber, *Aide*  
Representative Byron Rushing  
Representative Michael Capuano

## **Massachusetts State Senate**

Senator Sonia-Chang Diaz  
Katherine Adam, *Communications Director*

## **Consultant Team**

### **Stull & Lee: Lead (2009-2010)**

David Lee, *Principal*  
Tom Maistros, *Project Manager*

### **Tetra-Tech Rizzo: Transportation**

Michael Hall, *Senior Project Manager*  
Sasha Wood, *Project Engineer*

### **Byrne McKinney & Associates, Inc: Economics / Real Estate**

Pam McKinney, *Principal / Economic Consultant*



City of Boston  
**Thomas M. Menino, Mayor**



Boston  
Redevelopment  
Authority  
Peter Meade, Director