



PLAN: Charlestown

Urban Design Meeting Part 2

June 1, 2023



boston planning & development agency



Welcome

Jason Ruggiero, Community Engagement Manager

Meeting Recording

At the request of community members, this event will be recorded and posted on the PLAN: Charlestown project webpage at <http://bostonplans.org/PlanCharlestown> for those who are unable to attend the zoom event live.

It is possible that participants may be recording the meeting with their phone cameras or other devices. If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.

If your camera and microphone are off, you can still participate through the text chat feature at the end of the presentation.

Note: These meetings are not subject to Open Meeting Law. Open Meeting Law also does not require that public bodies allow public comment or public participation during meetings.

Zoom Tips

Welcome! Here are some tips on using Zoom for first-time users.
Your controls are at the bottom of the screen



Use the chat to type a comment or ask a question at any time –
Members of the PLAN: Charlestown team will enable the chat at the end.



To raise your hand, click on “Participants” at the bottom of your
screen, and then choose the “Raise Hand” option in the participant box



Mute/unmute – Participants will be muted during the presentation –
the host will unmute you during discussion if you raise your hand and
it is your turn to talk



Turns your video on/off

Zoom Etiquette

- Please remain muted until called on. If you'd like to speak during this time please use the "Raise Hand" function in Zoom.
- The chat function will be enabled during the discussion agenda item. (In keeping with convention from in-person meetings.)
- Please be respectful of each other's time. *We ask comments be held to 2 minutes.*
- We ask that participants limit their questions so that others may participate in the discussion. If you have more questions, please wait until all others attending have an opportunity to ask questions.
- If we are unable to get to your question at this meeting please put them in the Chat at the end or email **Jason.Ruggiero@boston.gov**

Code of Conduct (co-written w/ AG)

- Virtual planning events will be held via the Zoom “Meeting” platform, which allows participants to control their engagement features such as “mute/unmute,” “camera,” and other features. Zoom Webinar does not allow these capabilities.
- During presentations, the chat feature will be turned off. The chat feature will be enabled once a presentation is complete. Participants are encouraged to raise their hands to ask questions if needed. The virtual “Raise Hand” feature is located at the bottom of the Zoom screen (hand icon).
- We strongly encourage speakers to turn on their cameras while speaking.
- Comments or questions from the public will be limited to 2 minutes of speaking time. Two questions per person at a time is the maximum. A 30-second follow-up comment after a staff member responds is allowed. These time limits will be strictly enforced.
- We ask that all attendees respect one another and any differences of opinion. We welcome differences of opinions, including opinions that differ from those of BPDA staff. Always assume good intentions when any contradictions or disagreements are made. Constructive comments and opinions should be aimed at topics, not people.
- We ask that all attendees refrain from the following behaviors:
 - Threatening to take unwarranted legal action against meeting participants
 - Bullying participants either in the chat or verbally out loud
 - Harassment including criticizing, mocking, or posing threats against participants
 - Threats or derogatory speech against BPDA staff or other participants
 - Grandstanding or exceeding allowed time limits
- Those who exceed the limits on speaking time or interrupt or otherwise disrupt others while they are speaking may be removed from the meeting.

For all meeting content:

<http://www.bostonplans.org/plancharlestown>

Agenda

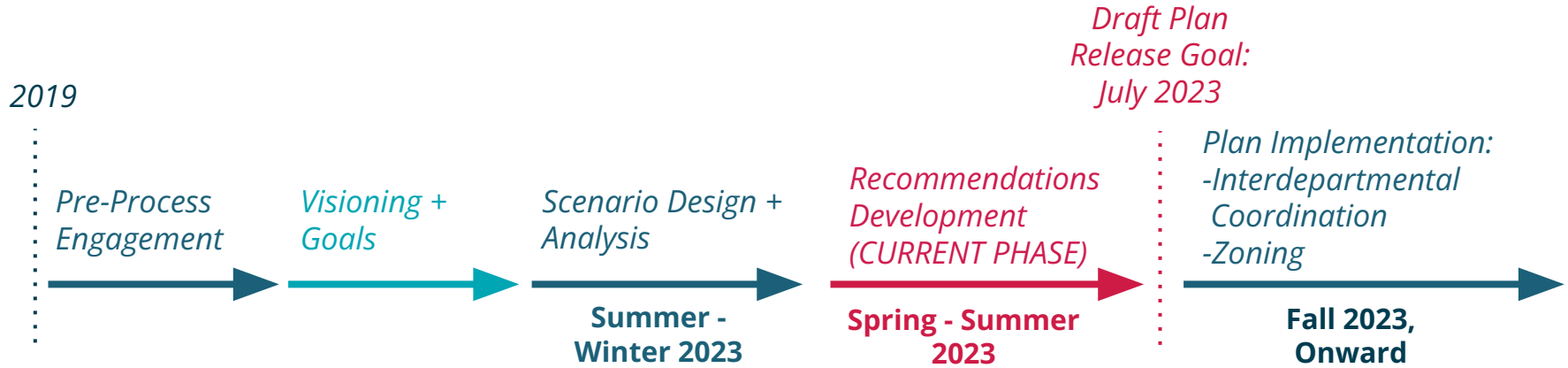
- Hybrid Scenario Review (6:10-6:25pm)
- Planning Concepts, Zoning, and Urban Design Guidelines (6:25-6:30pm)
- Site + Building Design (6:30-6:45pm)
- Open Space (6:45-6:50pm)
- Mobility (6:50-7:00pm)
- Q+A (7:00-7:30pm)

If you have a follow up item, please reach out to Jason Ruggiero (**Jason.Ruggiero@boston.gov**) and we will be in touch as soon as possible.

Quick Project Schedule Update

Patricia Cafferky, Senior Planner

Timeline



3 Buckets of Work

Zoning Recommendations

- Focused on historically industrial areas
- Receive public feedback via the scenarios comment periods
- Consultant Team created the hybrid scenario
- There will be another iteration after the hybrid

Neighborhood Needs Analysis

Analysis Topics Include:

- Minor Zoning Changes
- Housing Needs
- Open Space / Sports Fields
- Neighborhood Services
- Retail + Food Access
- Resilience
- Arts and Culture
- Preservation
- Mobility

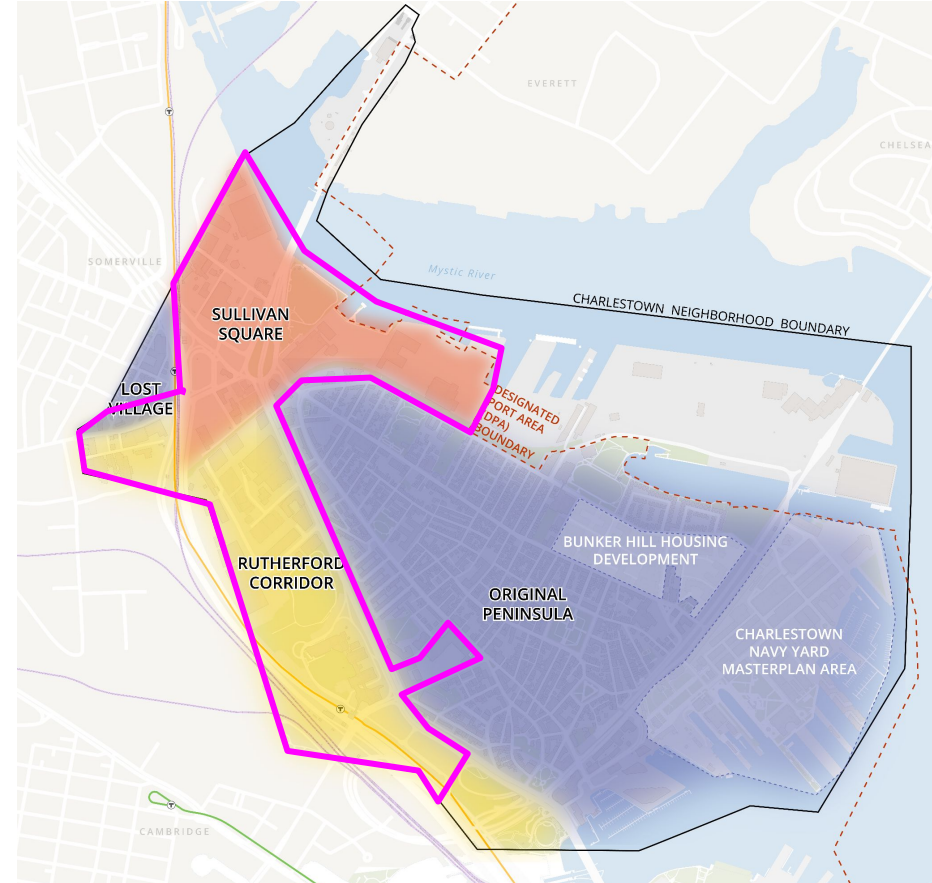
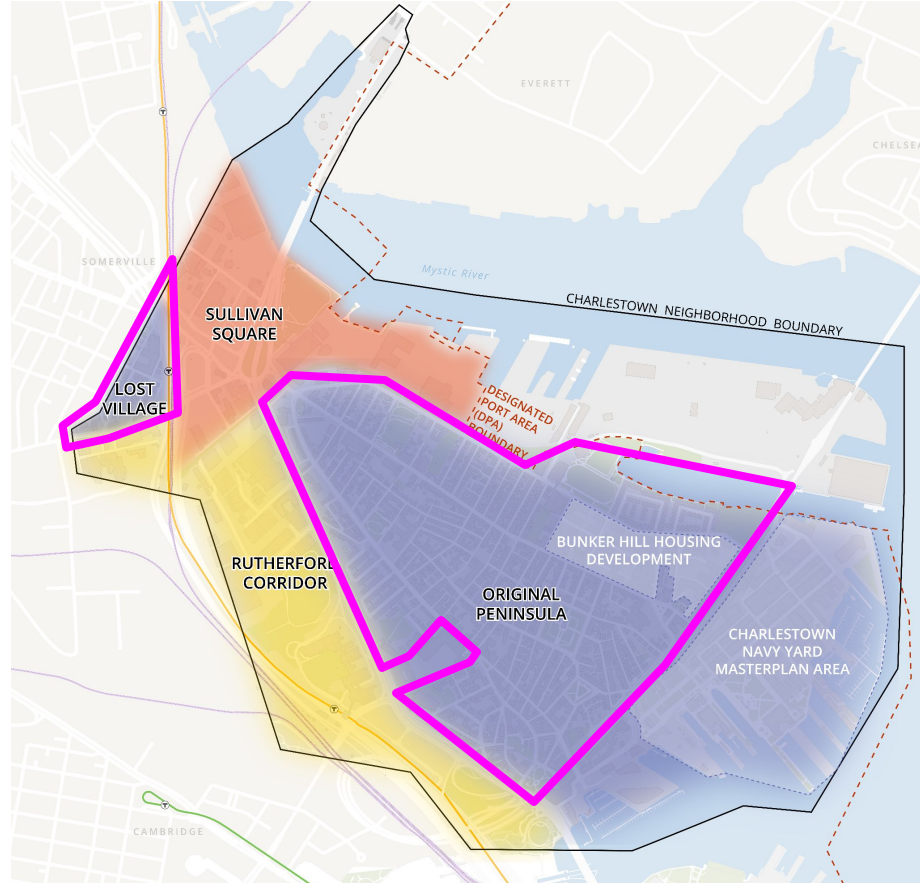
Urban Design Guidelines

- One set of guidelines for the Original Peninsula/ Lost Village;
- One set of guidelines for the Sullivan Square/ Rutherford Ave areas

TOPICS OF LAST MEETING

TOPIC OF TONIGHT'S MEETING

Our Last Meeting vs. Tonight's Focus



Current Engagement Phase

1. Zoning Recommendations (Scenarios)

- a. Hybrid Scenario out for public comment until Friday, June 9th (extended to include a late meeting with the Mishawum board)
- b. Updated version of the scenario to come in July

2. Urban Design Guidelines

- a. Meeting #1 (last meeting) - Wednesday, May 24th
 - i. Topic: Original Peninsula + Lost Village areas
- b. Meeting #2 (this meeting) - Thursday, June 1st
 - i. Topic: Rutherford Ave + Sullivan Square areas

**TONIGHT'S
MEETING**



3. Neighborhood Needs Analysis

- a. Meeting #1 - Wednesday, June 14th
 - i. Topic: Neighborhood Services (Schools, Fire, Police, EMS, Library, Water, Sewers, Trash Collection, Street Sweeping, etc.)
- b. Meeting #2 - Date TBD
 - i. Topic(s): Housing, Retail, Food Security, Arts + Culture, Mobility (Resident Parking Permits, Intersections), Climate Resilience

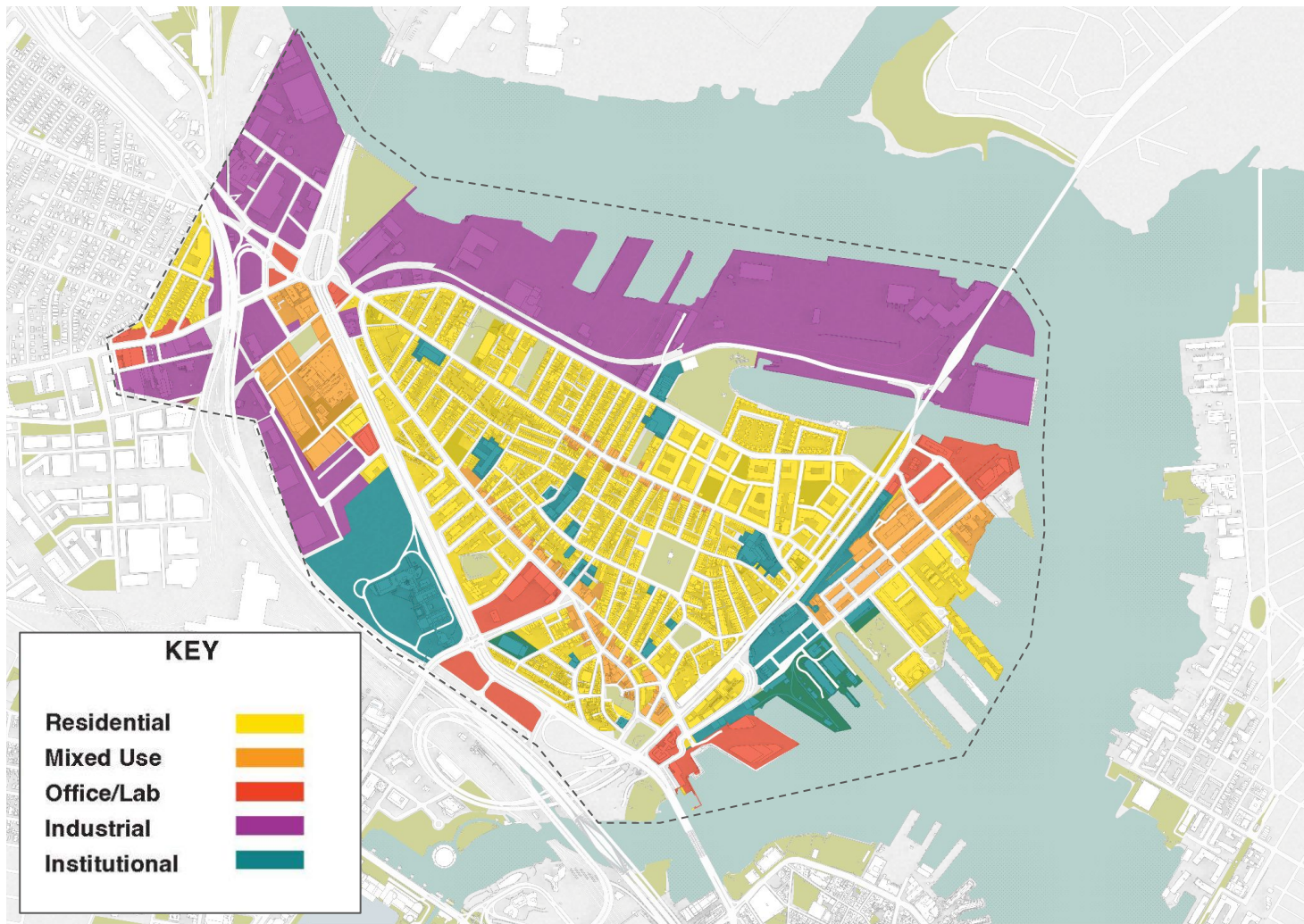
Hybrid Scenario Review

Patricia Cafferky, Senior Planner

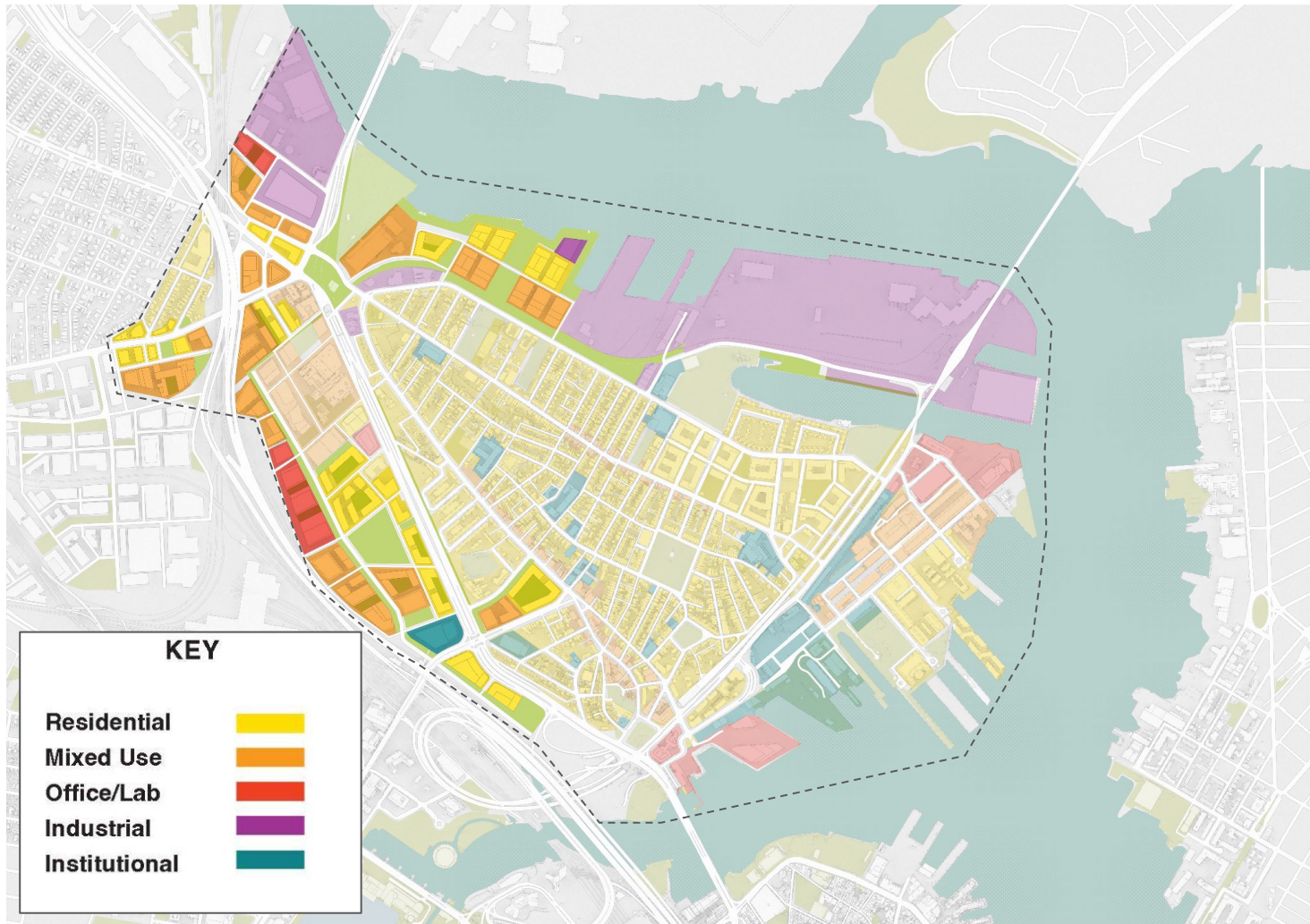


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Land Uses in Charlestown Today



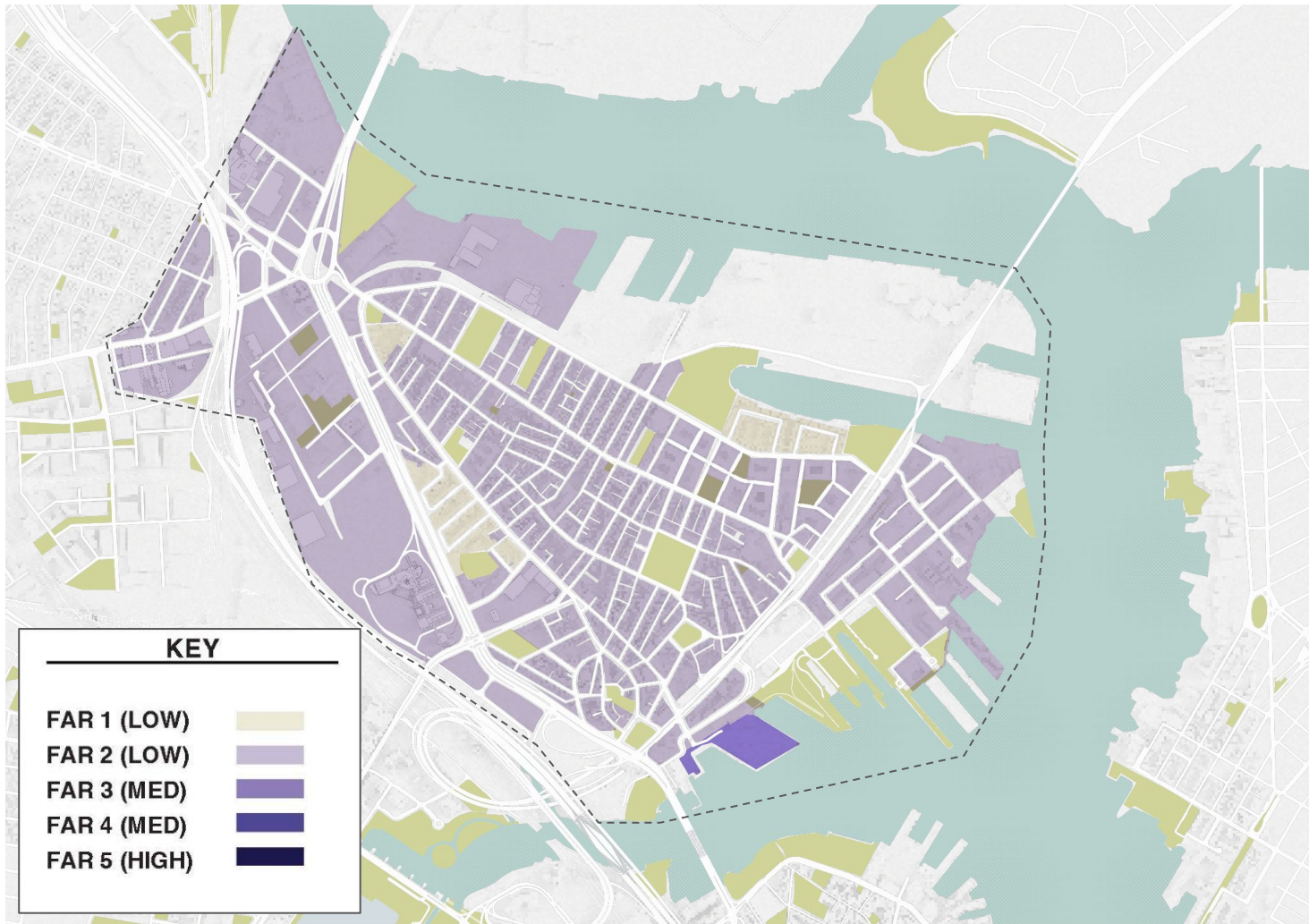
Land Uses in Charlestown in 2050



Zoning Density in Charlestown Today

FAR = Floor Area Ratio

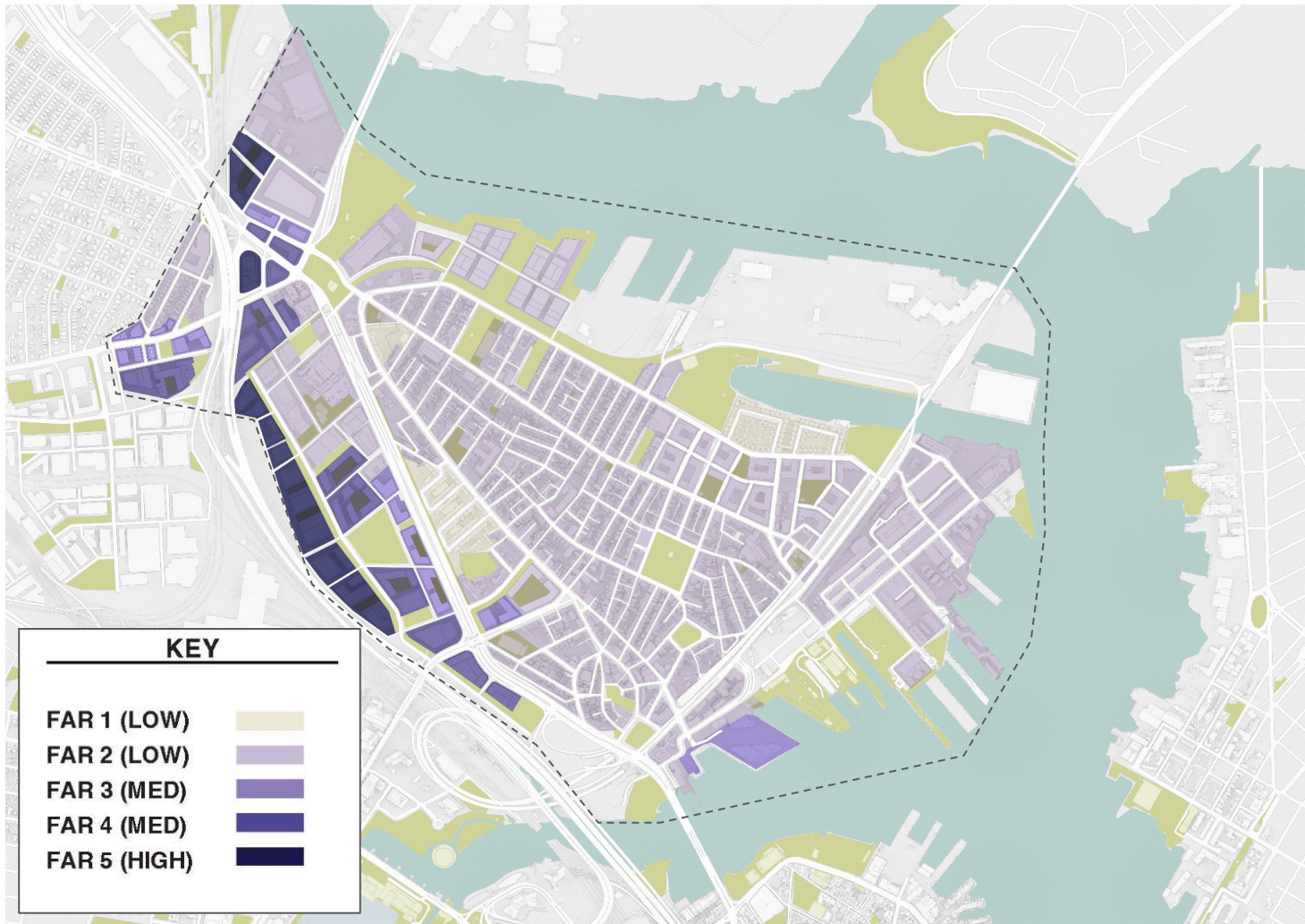
FAR is a measure of how much building square footage can be built, as a multiplier of the parcel area. For example, a 1000 sq ft parcel, at 2 FAR, could build 2000 sq ft of interior space.



Zoning Density in Charlestown in 2050

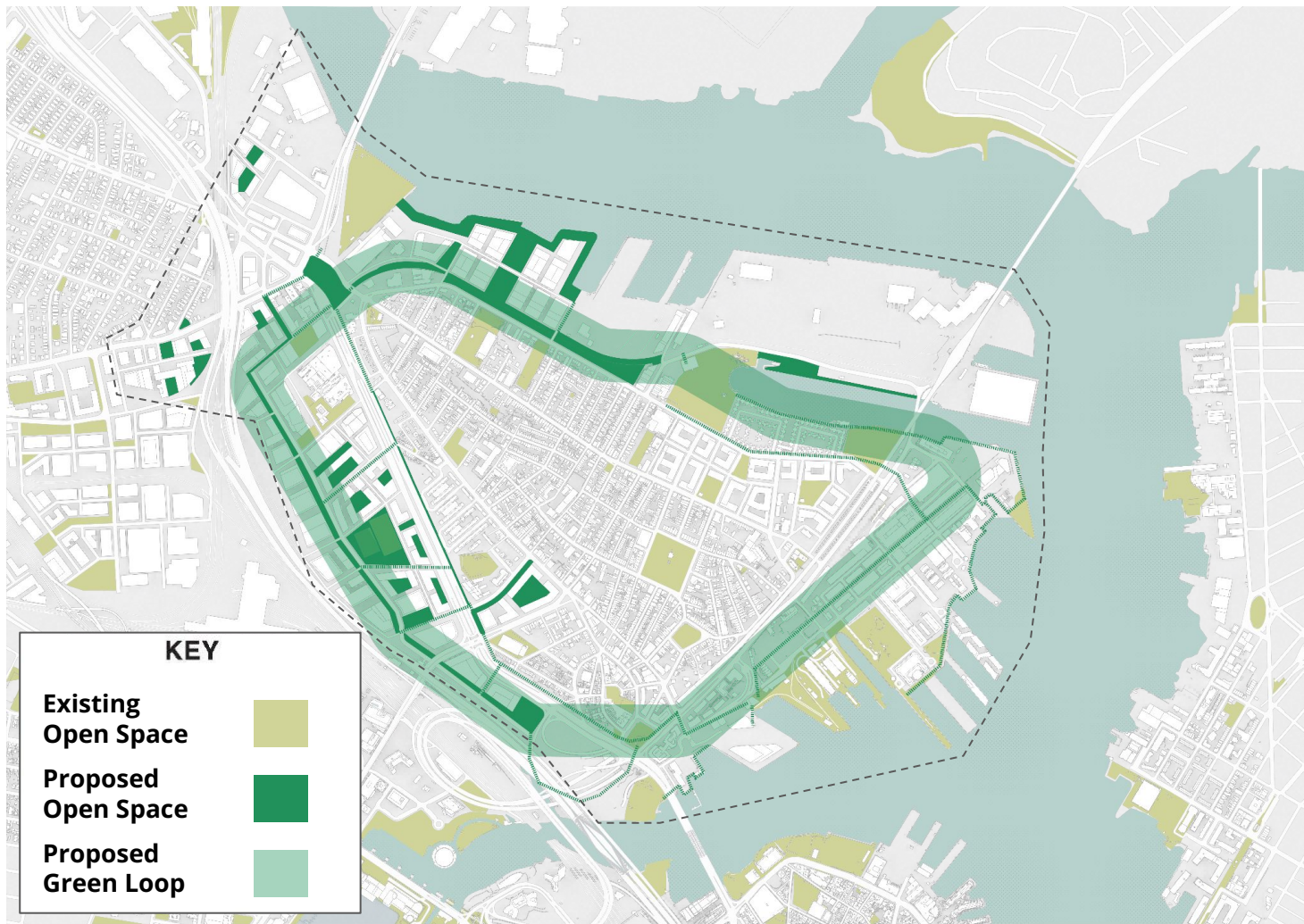
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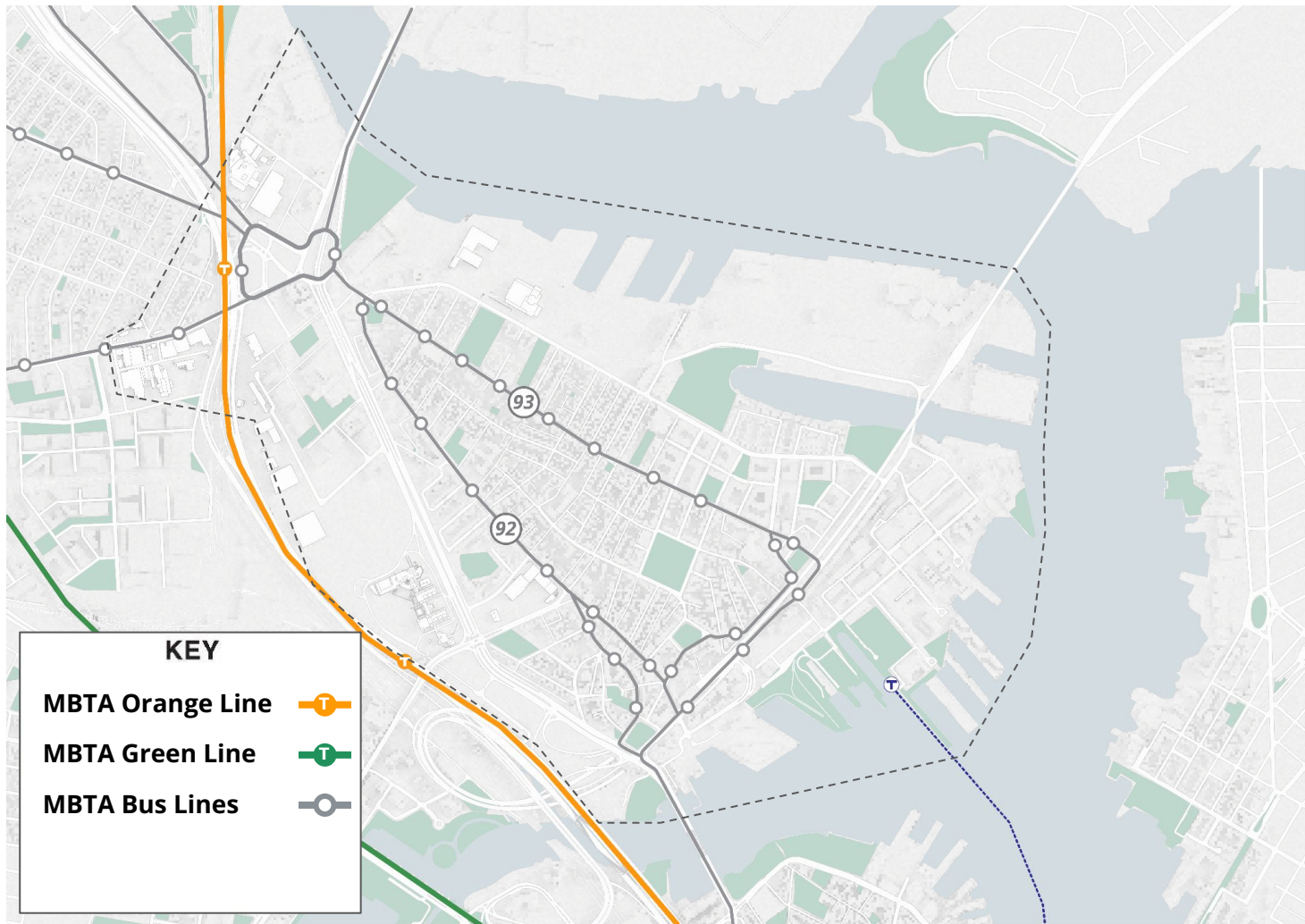


KEY	
FAR 1 (LOW)	Light Yellow
FAR 2 (LOW)	Light Purple
FAR 3 (MED)	Medium Purple
FAR 4 (MED)	Dark Purple
FAR 5 (HIGH)	Dark Blue




Charlestown Proposed New Open Space and Green Loop



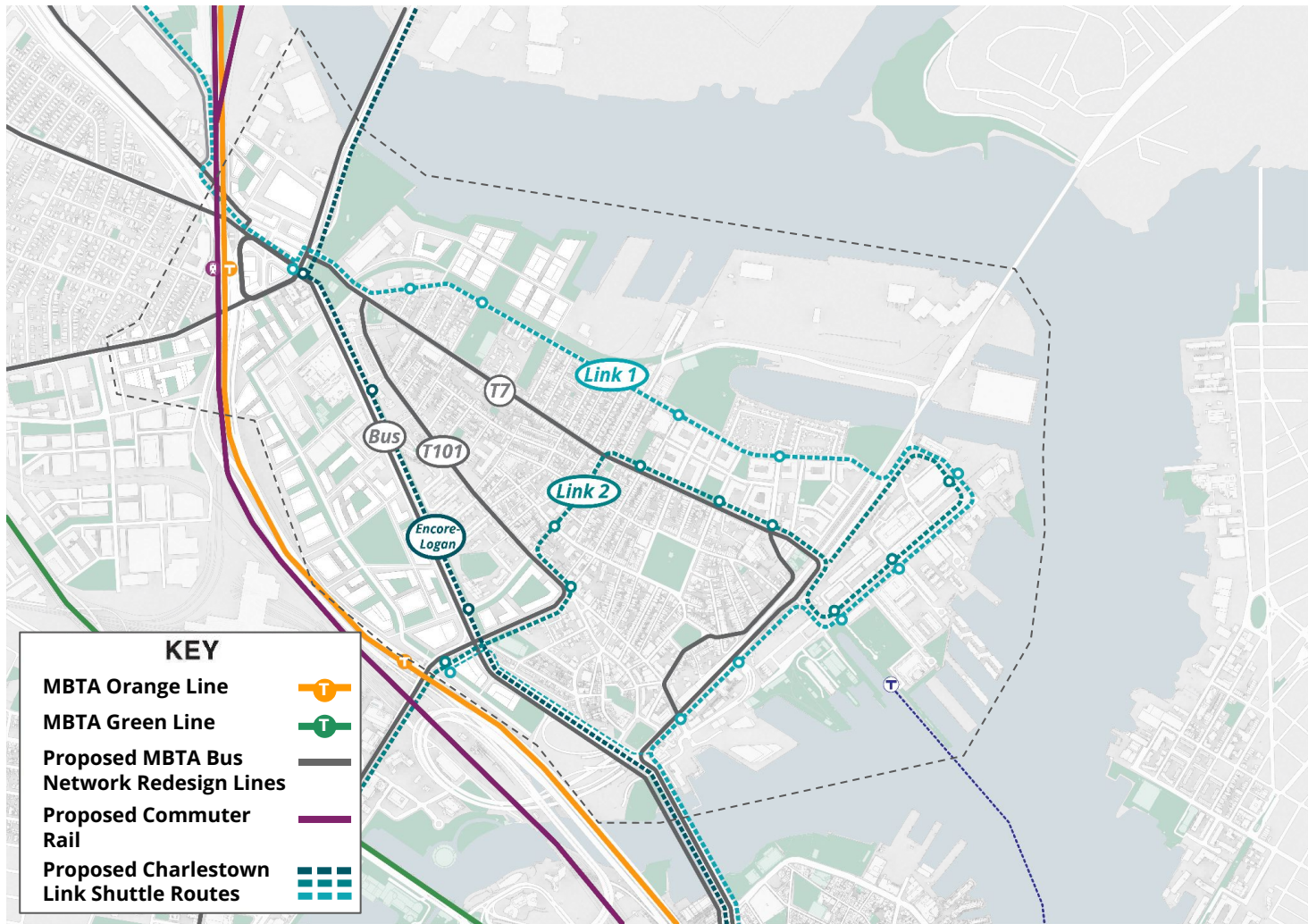
Mobility in Charlestown Today



KEY

- MBTA Orange Line 
- MBTA Green Line 
- MBTA Bus Lines 

Mobility in Charlestown in 2050



Hybrid Scenario Survey Link:

<https://arcg.is/0HP9Or>



*Note: Please respond
by June 9th, 2023*

Planning Concepts, Zoning, and Urban Design Guidelines

Patricia Cafferky, Senior Planner



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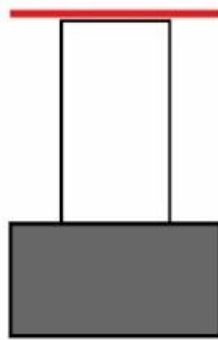
Planning Concepts

- Large, overarching ideas to guide development and capital projects.
- Guides improvements on public and private property. Zoning and urban design guidelines enforce the delivery of these concepts on private property.
- Examples:
 - New street networks
 - Identification of transit nodes
 - Open space network design

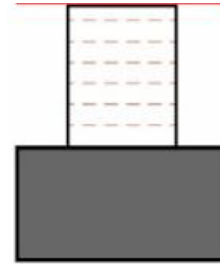


Zoning

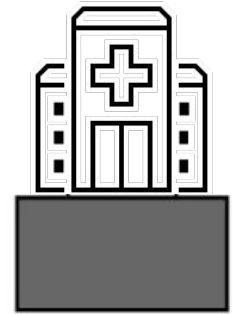
- Dictates the allowed shape, density, and use of development in a given area
- Protects Boston's distinct neighborhoods from the development of buildings or uses that do not harmonize with their surrounding context
- Regulates things that are quantifiable or binary.
 - Ex.) Multifamily uses are either allowed or not allowed.



Height
(Max. height or number of floors)



Density
(Floor Area Ratio)



Use
(Allowed, Conditional, or Forbidden)

Urban Design Guidelines and Article 80

Article 80 is how UD Guidelines are implemented

Article 80

- Provides specific requirements for the review of certain development projects in all of the neighborhoods of Boston
- Provides important opportunities for community involvement and feedback
- **Urban Design Guidelines are deployed by BPDA Urban Designers** in the Article 80 review process

Urban Design Guidelines

- **Establishes the quality and character of architecture and open space**
- Provides a framework for design review
- Ensures private development aligns with PLAN: Charlestown

Site + Building Design

Meera Deean, Deputy Director of Design
Patricia Cafferky, Senior Planner



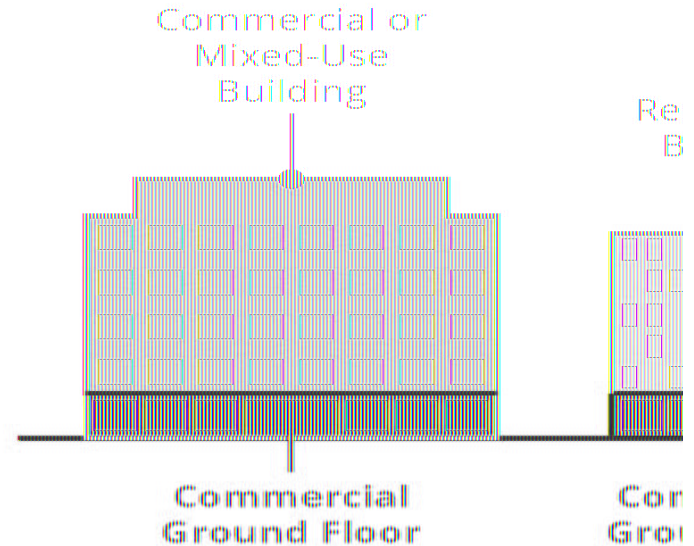
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Land Use

- Neighborhoods should have a mix of uses, contributing to accessible, inclusive, and walkable environments where residents can 'live, work, and play.'
- Retail is allowed on the ground floor everywhere in the focus area, and encouraged at key intersections, along main streets, and near transit.
- Publicly accessible green space is required in all districts, designed for all seasons, to encourage year-round use.

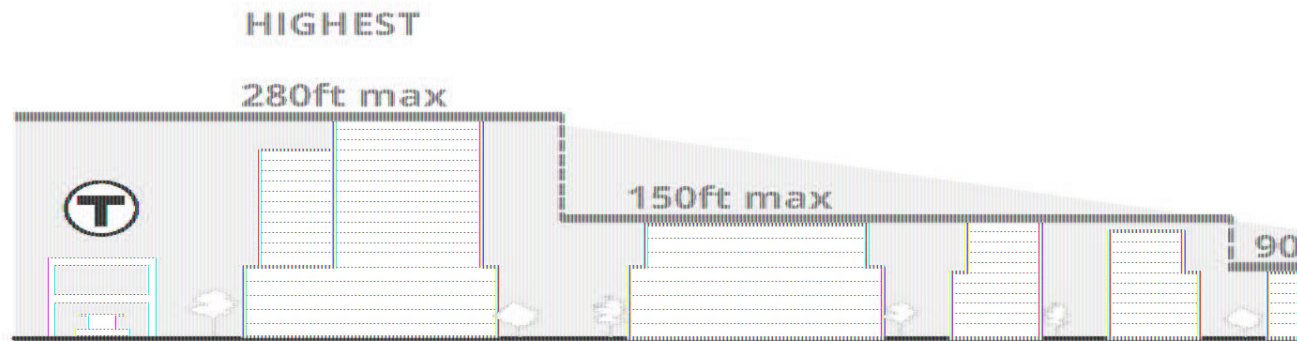
Ground Floor Commercial

Ground floor commercial uses are permitted development



Density

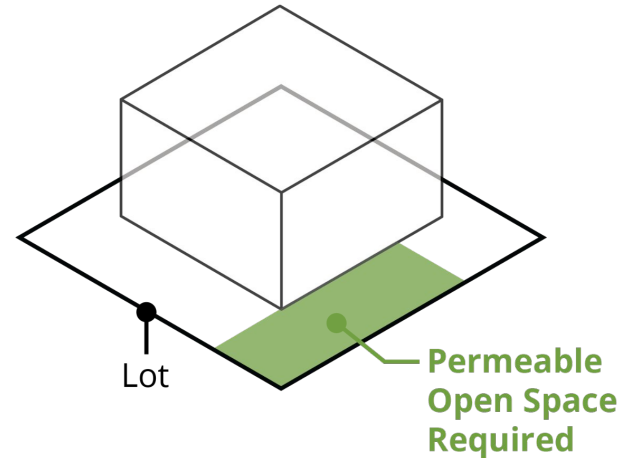
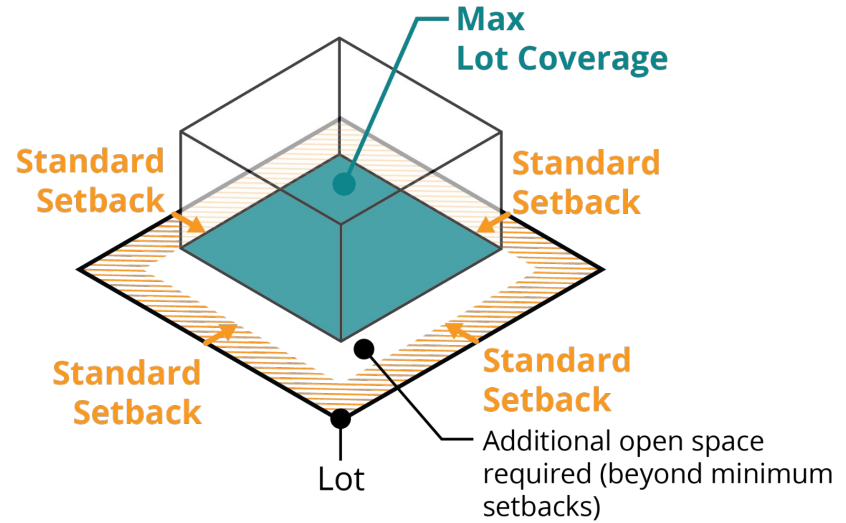
- Densest development should occur near existing transit hubs at the Sullivan Square and Bunker Hill Community College T stations.
- Buildings with larger bases are encouraged along I-93 to act as a physical buffer. Buildings and public spaces near the interstate should be designed to mitigate the effects of noise, vibrations, and pollution.
- Developments abutting low residential neighborhoods should step down to scales that complement the existing neighborhoods, with gradual height transitions.



*I-93 and
Orange Line*

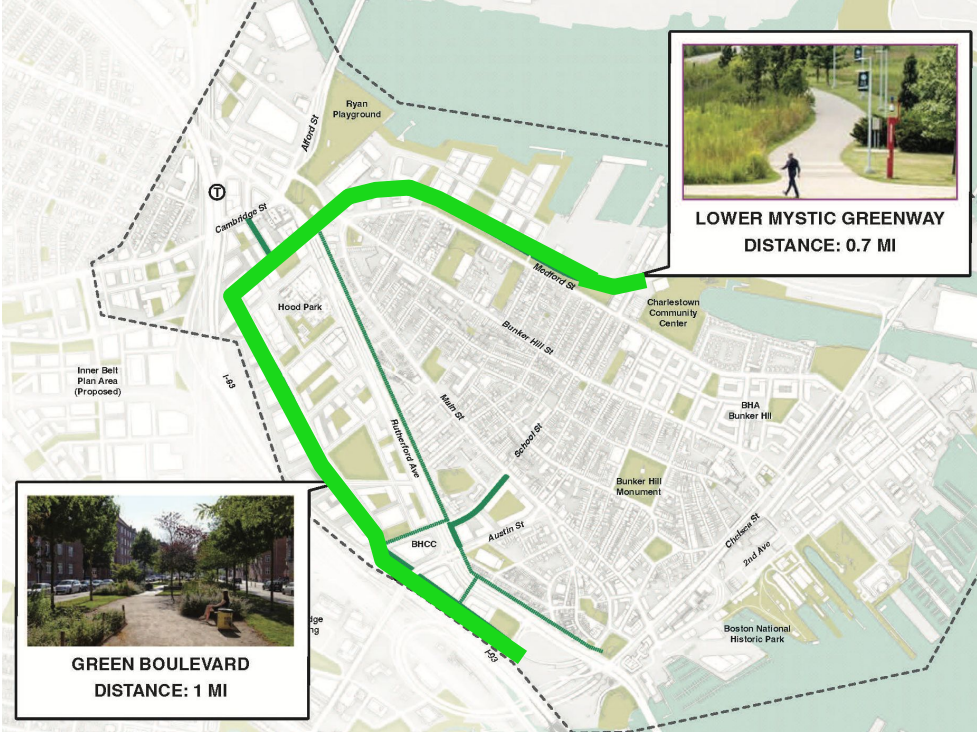
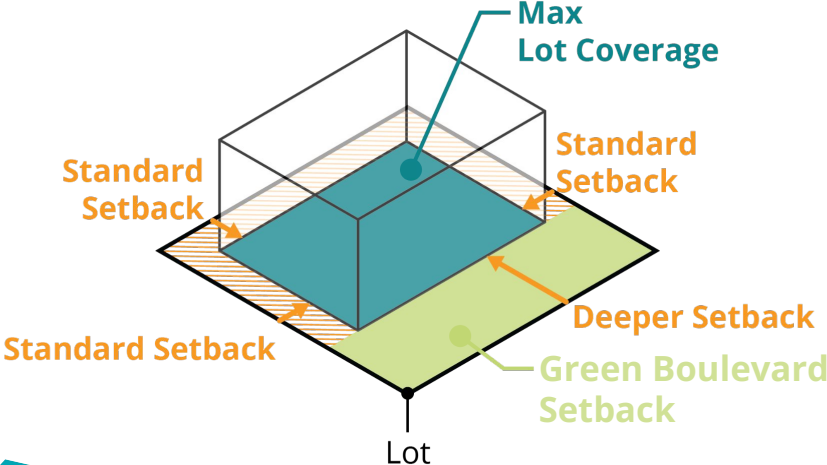
Massing

- New buildings may cover up to a maximum percentage of the total parcel area.
- All new buildings must maintain setbacks from all lot lines, to provide space for wide sidewalks, street trees, and open space.
- All developments must provide permeable open space (planted area, grass, permeable pavers, etc).



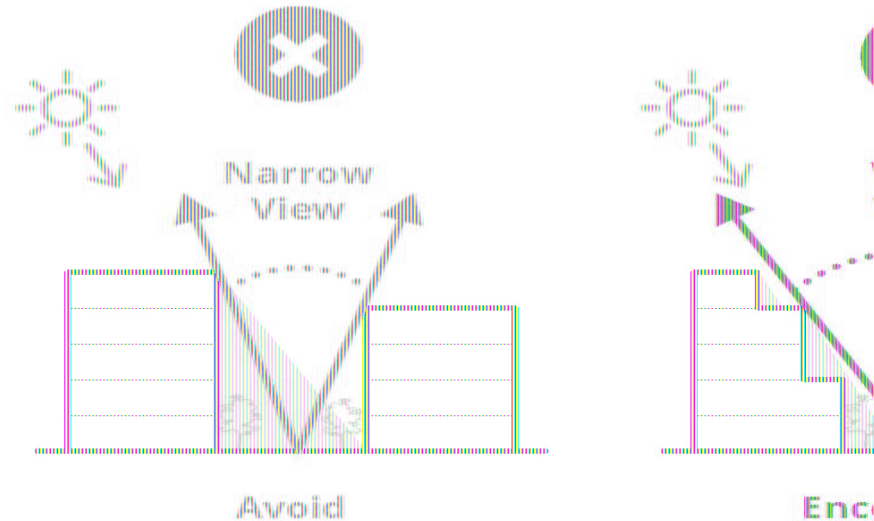
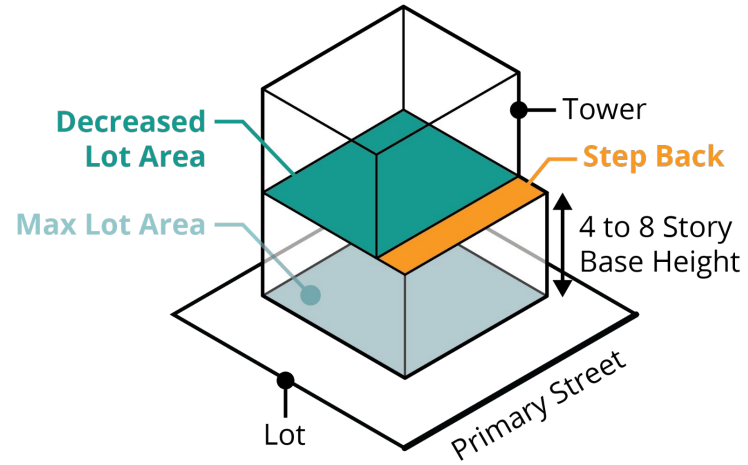
Massing

- Setbacks needed along new streets will be determined by the street type (described in the connectivity section). The widest setback is needed along the Green Boulevard



Massing

- To bring a more human scale to taller buildings, a building base should be used, defined by a step back (typically between the 4th and 8th stories) from the building base along the primary street frontage.
- For taller buildings, slender building massing is encouraged in order to preserve sky views and sunlight. Avoid building massing that creates a feeling of canyons or walls.



Materials

- Creative, forward-thinking, and innovative designs that build on Charlestown's heritage are encouraged.
- Facade elements, materials, and color palettes of buildings near historic neighborhoods should be designed to be compatible with Charlestown's context.
- As a nod to Charlestown's history, high-quality masonry elements in new construction are encouraged, especially at building bases, along sidewalks.



40 Warren Street, Charlestown

Principles in Practice - Example 1 (Before)



Principles in Practice - Example 1 (Model)



Principles in Practice - Example 1 (After)



Principles in Practice - Example 2 (Before)



Principles in Practice - Example 2 (Model)



Principles in Practice - Example 2 (After)



Principles in Practice - Example 43 (Before)



Principles in Practice - Example 3 (Model)



Principles in Practice - Example 3 (After)

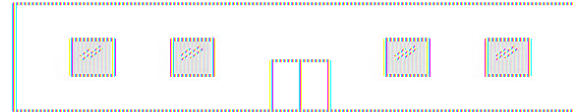


Street Level Design

- Ground floor transparency of at least 50% is encouraged to create active, inviting street walls.
- Ground-floor uses should be visible and accessible from the primary street frontage, and retail should include street-facing entrances that are used during business hours.

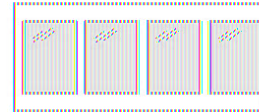
Ground Floor Transparency

Incorporate high-visibility, transparent storefronts, and as much as possible



Avoid

Ground floor transparency of under 50%



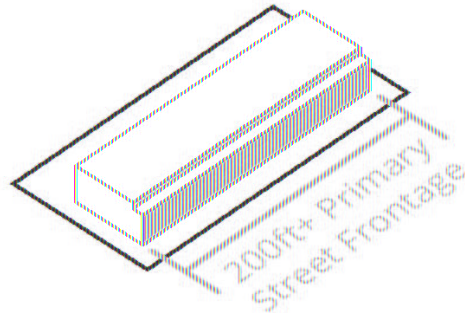
Encourage

Ground floor transparency of at least 50%

Street Level Design

- Avoid overly long street frontages, especially longer than 200 feet. Break up long facades with publicly accessible through-block connections.
- Street-level facades should be broken to create visual interest and a human scale. Massing moves like projections and recesses, varied colors and materials, and facade transparency can all help break up a long facade.

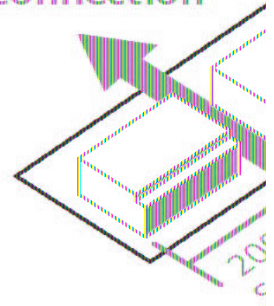
Frontage Length



Avoid



Through-Block Connection

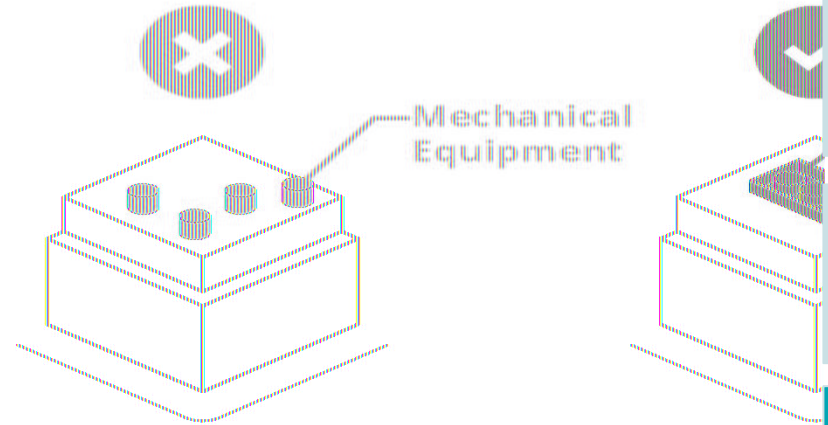


Encourage

Mechanicals and Utilities

Guided by citywide policy:

- Mechanical elements should be designed with buildings. For example, they may be visually integrated into the design of the building, or the visibility of rooftop mechanical elements and penthouses may be minimized.
- Ground level mechanical equipment should be screened from view.
- Select low-noise and low-emission mechanical equipment, and locate in areas away from building users and amenities.
- Mechanical penthouses that cover more than 30% of the roof must be included in total building height.
- Utility lines should be located below grade.
- Lab buildings should refer to the [BPDA's Lab Design Guidelines](#).



Avoid

Encourage

Scattered, high-height, high-visibility mechanical equipment near the roof edge, and visible from the public realm. Encourage screening, setbacks from the roof edge, and distribution of mechanical elements.

Adaptive Reuse of Existing Buildings

- The adaptive reuse of industrial and commercial buildings in Charlestown's scenario focus area is encouraged, to maintain the character and integrity of the buildings original design while enhancing functionality.
- Additions should use high-quality materials compatible with historic character, and respect the scale, massing, and street presence of original buildings. Contrast between old and new can be preferable.
- Incorporate new sustainable design features.
- Ensure adapted historic buildings are accessible to all.



Whittemore- Wright Tannery Building, 62-68 Alford Street, Charlestown

Sustainability and Resilience

Resilience Planning

- Refer to [Coastal Resilience Solutions for East Boston and Charlestown](#) recommendations.
- Refer to [Heat Resilient Solutions for Boston](#) for strategies to mitigate heat.
- Refer to [Boston Urban Forest Plan: Charlestown Neighborhood](#) for recommendations on priority zones for tree planting, species selection, and installation recommendations.
- Areas of Charlestown within the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District may be subject to future coastal flooding until key flood pathways are cut off. Refer to the [Coastal Flood Resilience Design Guidelines](#) for design guidance on all projects located within the overlay district. Where possible, architecturally integrated resilience strategies should be prioritized.



Sustainability and Resilience

Resilience

- Resiliency strategies should preserve the function and historic character of neighborhoods while undoing the unjust patterns of historic planning that places certain communities at risk of environmental hazard.

Sustainability

- Development projects should refer to
 - [Carbon Free Boston](#)
 - [Boston Zoning Code Article 37: Green Buildings and Climate Resiliency Guidelines](#)
 - [Smart Utilities Program and Policy for Article 80 Review](#)
- Sustainability strategies shall incorporate energy conservation measures that decrease energy cost burdens and promote health and wellness strategies for occupants, such as all electric buildings, geothermal, etc.

Open Space

Patricia Cafferky, Senior Planner



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Scales of Proposed Open Space

Proposed Open Space Scale/Type Key

Pocket Park Scale



Neighborhood Scale



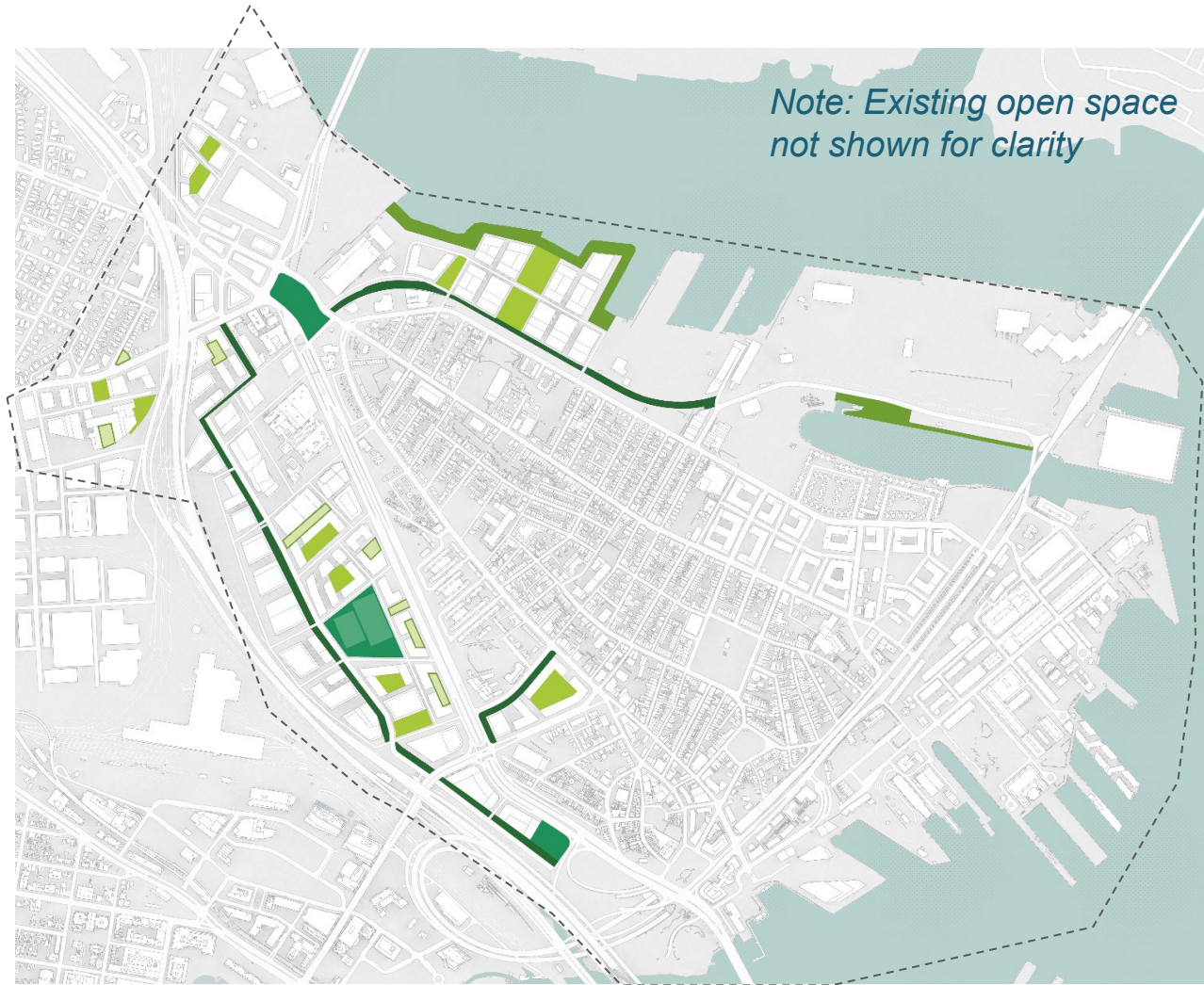
Community Athletic Scale



Waterfront



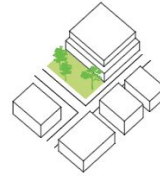
Linear



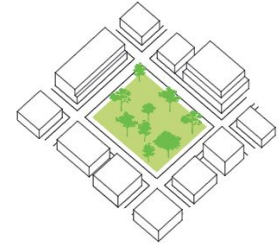
Open Space Scales

- **Pocket Park Scale**
 - Small park within a dense neighborhood. Serves nearest residents. Can be playgrounds, dog parks, community gardens or traditional open space. Ex: Hayes Square, Gardens for Charlestown
- **Neighborhood Open Space Scale**
 - Flexible and able to offer a wide range of uses. Easily accessed and serves a broader area of residents than pocket parks. Ex: City Square Park
- **Community Athletic Park Scale Open Space**
 - Large proportion dedicated to active recreation, like soccer fields or tennis courts. Serves entire neighborhood. Ex: Ryan Playground, Barry Field

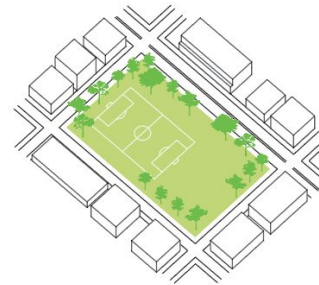
Open Space Scales



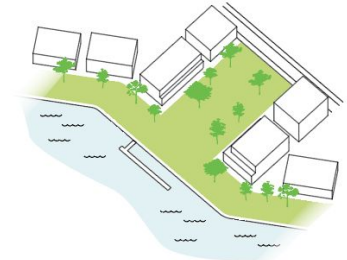
**Pocket Park Scale
Open Space**



**Neighborhood Scale
Open Space**



**Community & Athletic
Park Scale Open Space**

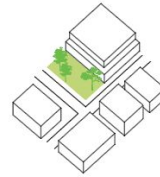


**Waterfront Scale
Open Space**

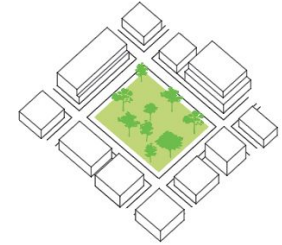
Open Space Scales

- **Waterfront Scale Open Space**
 - Expansive green space located adjacent to urban harbors, rivers, etc. Serve both tourists and residents. Amenities can include athletic fields, dog parks, playgrounds, etc. Can include special infrastructure like docks and flooring mitigation. Ex: Charlestown Naval Shipyard Park, Menino Park
- **Linear Greenway**
 - Green corridors within an urban setting, connecting between places, typically along a street, and incorporating resiliency elements like bioswales and habitat corridors.

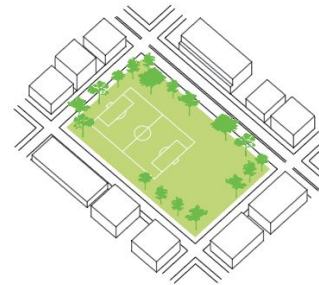
Open Space Scales



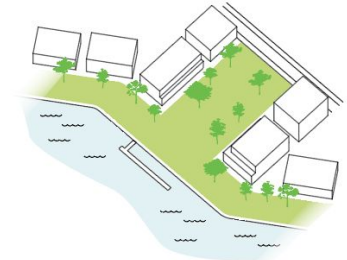
**Pocket Park Scale
Open Space**



**Neighborhood Scale
Open Space**



**Community & Athletic
Park Scale Open Space**



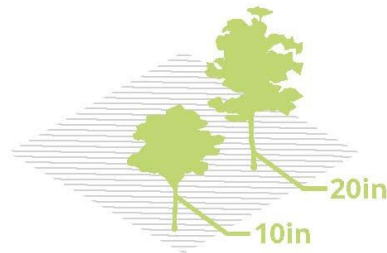
**Waterfront Scale
Open Space**

Open Space Guidelines

- All development projects should improve the public realm by providing active public open spaces. This can include wider sidewalks, plazas, parklets, plant beds, sports fields, etc
- Existing trees, especially mature trees, should be retained. If existing trees must be removed, they must be replaced on a per-caliper basis.
- New trees should be at least 3" caliper.
- Open spaces should accommodate users of all ages and abilities.
- Open spaces should have good visibility and physical access to surrounding sidewalks.
- Design for thermal comfort with shade and wind breaks.

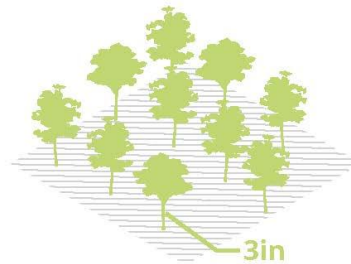
Example:

These two trees are a combined 30 caliper inches. If removed...



1x 10 inch caliper tree
+ 1x 20 inch caliper tree
= **30 Caliper Inches**

You must plant a total of 30 caliper inches of new trees. For example:



10x 3 inch caliper trees
= **30 Caliper Inches**

Note: caliper is the diameter of the tree trunk.

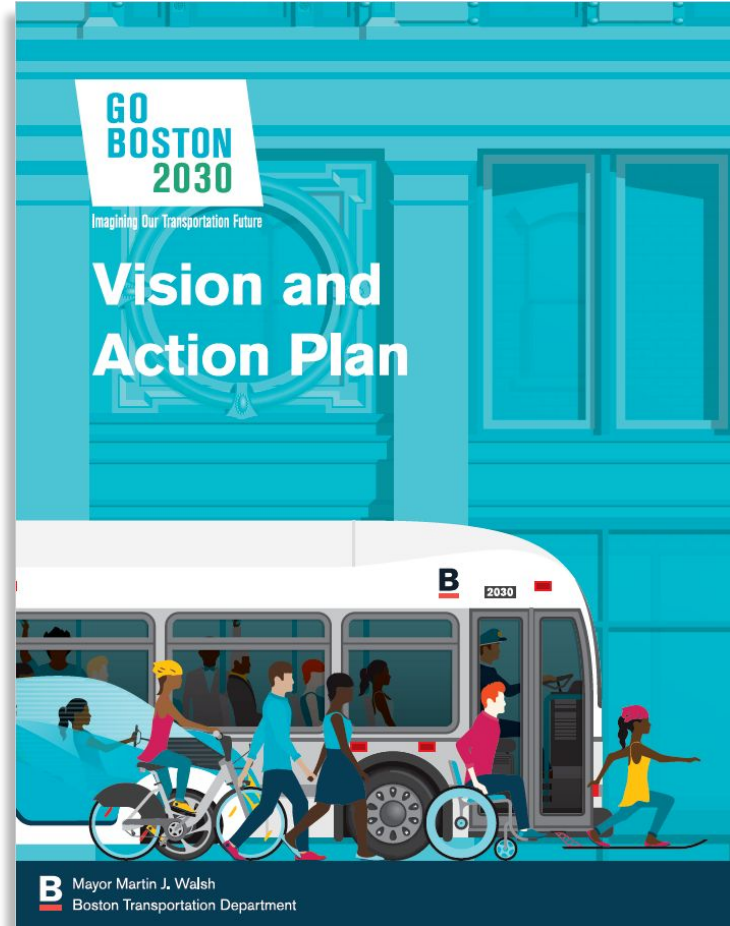
Mobility

Lydia Hausle, Senior Transportation Planner

Connectivity

Principles

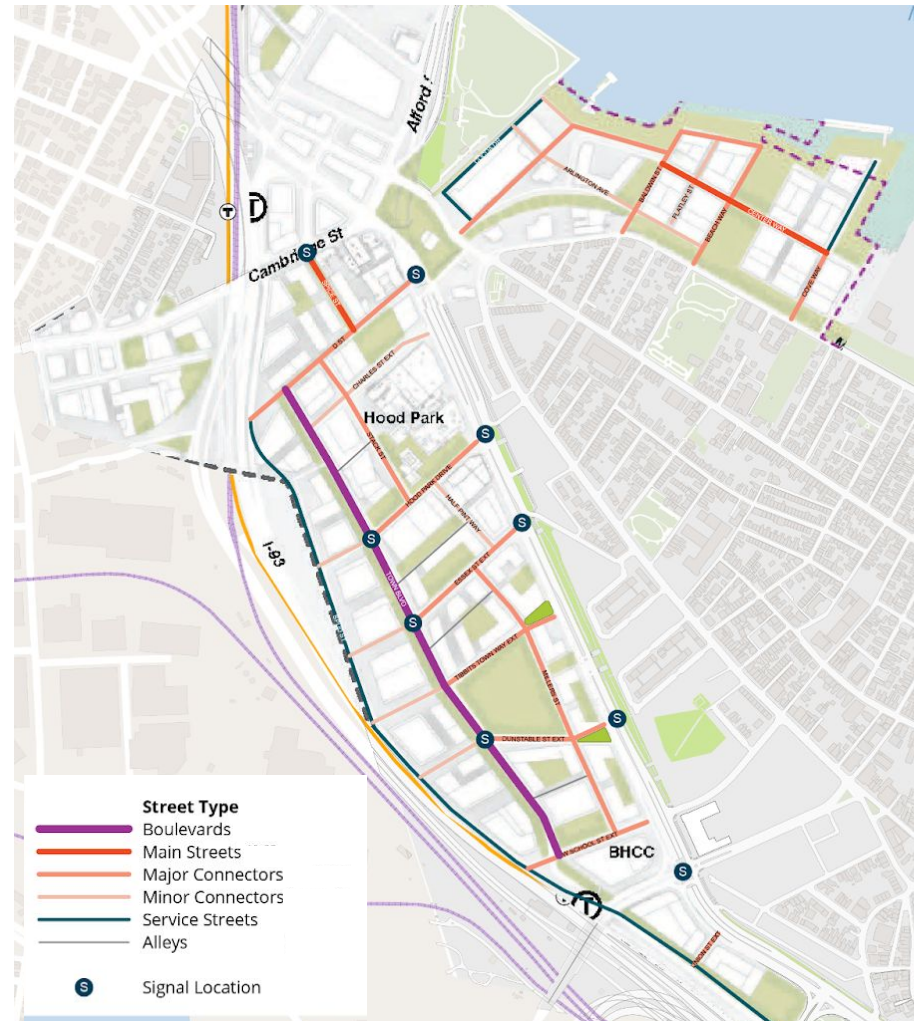
- All new streets in Charlestown will support the multimodal safety, access, reliability, and resilience goals of *Go Boston 2030*.
- Streets are not only assets that support transportation, but also contribute to Charlestown's open space and green infrastructure goals.
- The scale of elements included in new streets will be aligned to the proposed land uses and scale of new development.



Connectivity

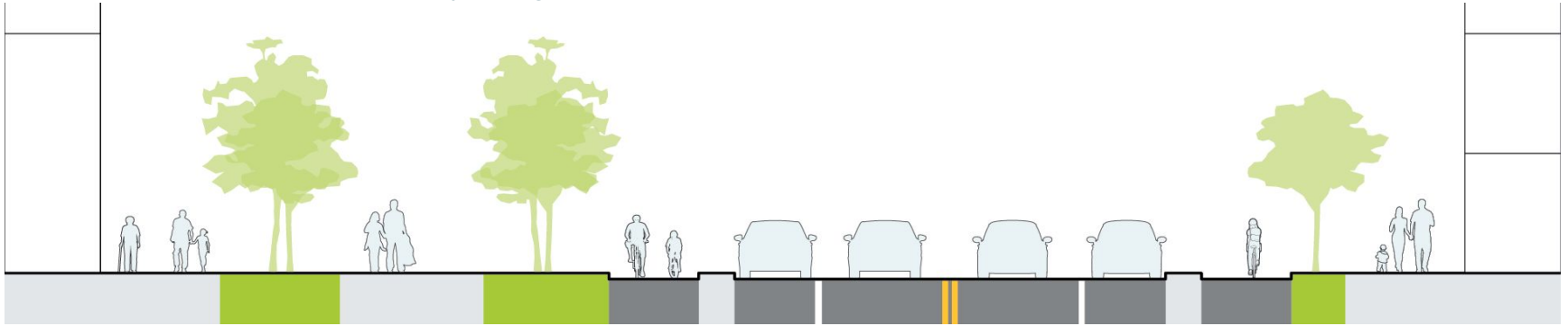
Street Framework

- New streets create an urban grid that connect logically to the existing street network, align with parcel lines, and leverage existing publicly-owned rights-of-way.
- A hierarchy of streets relates to the proposed land uses and scale of development
- A mix of street types allows for different streets to prioritize different elements and contributes to visual interest and variability
- New streets will help create redundancy so as to not overburden existing streets

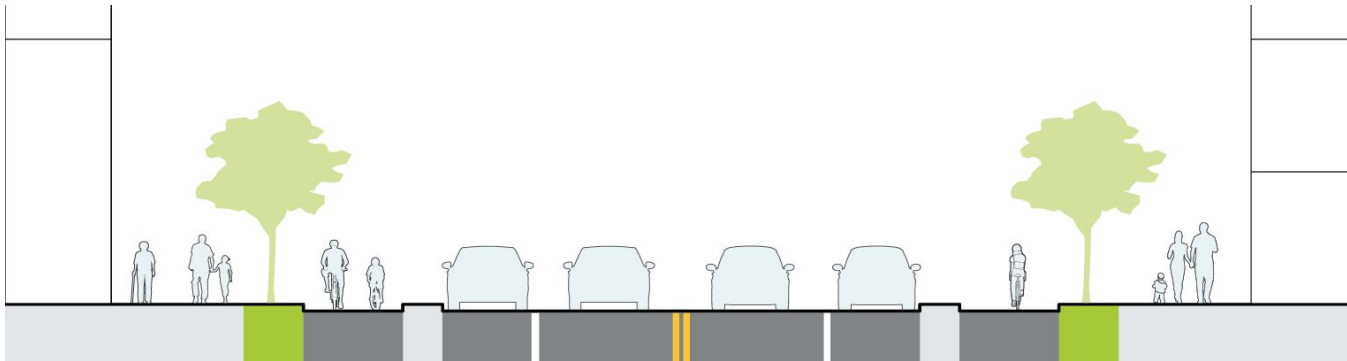


Connectivity

Boulevards connect important civic, commercial, and transportation destinations with active sidewalks, a linear greenway, bike lanes, and vehicle travel and parking lanes

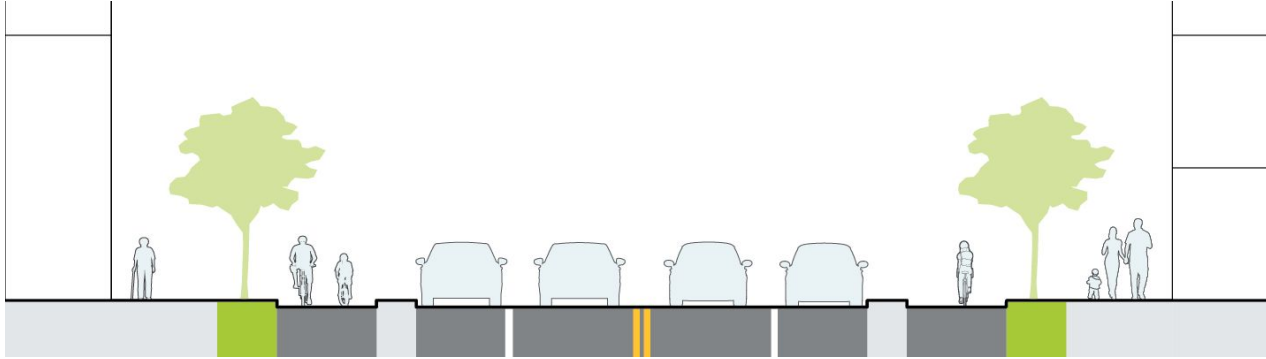


Main Streets anchor commercial and mixed uses with generous sidewalks, landscaping, bike lanes, and vehicle travel and parking lanes

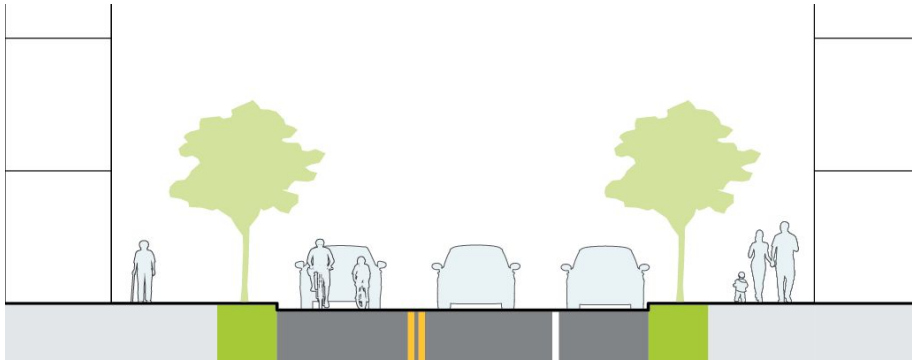


Connectivity

Major Connectors are the primary streets people use to connect into the broader Charlestown network and support a mix of land uses and transportation modes



Minor Connectors make up a finer-grain network of streets with comfortable sidewalks and traffic calming

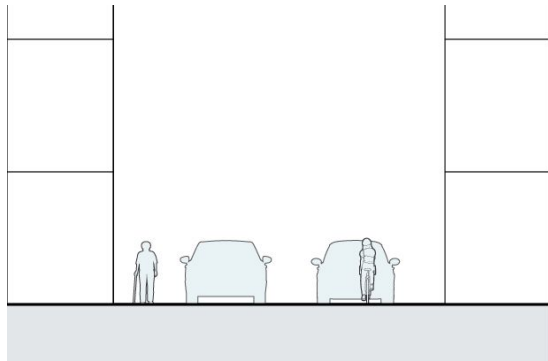


Connectivity

Service Streets support commercial businesses and residential garages by providing space for truck traffic, loading operations, parking garage access, and other back-of-house uses



Accessible Alleys provide a shared resource for buildings to separate back-of-house functions like trash, recycling, parking access, and loading from primary building frontages



Vehicle Parking + Service/Loading

On-Street Parking

- On-street parking should reflect the needs of adjacent land uses and may include pick-up/drop off zones, short-term parking (up to 2 hours), and unregulated parking.
- On-street parking is not permitted within 20' of any intersection. Curb extensions are encouraged to enforce no-parking zones near intersections and improve visibility between all travelers.

Access to Garages and Loading Areas

- Access to parking and loading should be located on Service Streets and Alleys, unless not physically possible.
- The accessible path of travel must continue at sidewalk grade across all driveways.
- Where possible, curb cuts should be shared between parcels to reduce the total number of curb cuts needed.
- Motor-courts (off-street parking turn around areas) and surface parking lots are not permitted.
- All developments must comply with Boston's EV Readiness Policy.

Visual Screening

- Above ground parking garages are strongly discouraged, and if used must be screened with facade elements to add visual interest. Below-grade parking and loading is strongly encouraged. Buildings on Boulevards and Main Streets may not have ground floor parking visible from the pedestrian zone.
- Ground level mechanical and trash collection areas should be screened.

Urban Design Meeting 2 Survey

<https://arcg.is/1eKaCG>



*Note: Please respond
by June 23rd, 2023*

Questions?

*Please hold comments to **2 Minutes MAX***



Current Engagement Phase - Next Steps

1. Zoning Recommendations (Scenarios)

- a. Hybrid Scenario out for public comment until Friday, June 9th (extended to include a late meeting with the Mishawum board)
- b. Updated version of the scenario to come in July

2. Urban Design Guidelines

- a. Meeting #1 (last meeting) - Wednesday, May 24th
 - i. Topic: Original Peninsula + Lost Village areas
- b. Meeting #2 (this meeting) - Thursday, June 1st
 - i. Topic: Rutherford Ave + Sullivan Square areas

**TONIGHT'S
MEETING**



3. Neighborhood Needs Analysis

- a. Meeting #1 - Wednesday, June 14th
 - i. Topic: Neighborhood Services (Schools, Fire, Police, EMS, Library, Water, Sewers, Trash Collection, Street Sweeping, etc.)
- b. Meeting #2 - Date TBD
 - i. Topic(s): Housing, Retail, Food Security, Arts + Culture, Mobility (Resident Parking Permits, Intersections), Climate Resilience

**NEXT
MEETING**

