



# PLAN: Downtown

Advisory Group Meeting

February 9, 2023



**boston planning &  
development agency**

# Meeting Recording

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

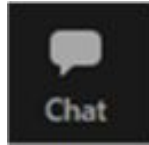
It is possible that participants may be recording the meeting with their phone cameras or other devices. If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.

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

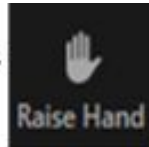
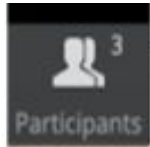


# Zoom Tips

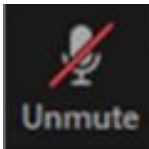
Welcome! Here are some tips for first-time Zoom users.  
Your controls are at the bottom of the screen:



Use the **chat** to type a comment or ask a question at any time –  
Members of the PLAN: Downtown 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, or press \*9 on your phone



**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. To mute/unmute on your phone press \*6.



Turns your **video on/off**



# Zoom Etiquette

- We want to ensure that this conversation is a pleasant experience for all attendees.
- Please remain muted until called on. If you'd like to speak during this time please use the "Raise Hand" function in Zoom so a BPDA moderator can unmute attendees.
- Please be respectful of each other's time.
- 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 [plandowntown@boston.gov](mailto:plandowntown@boston.gov)



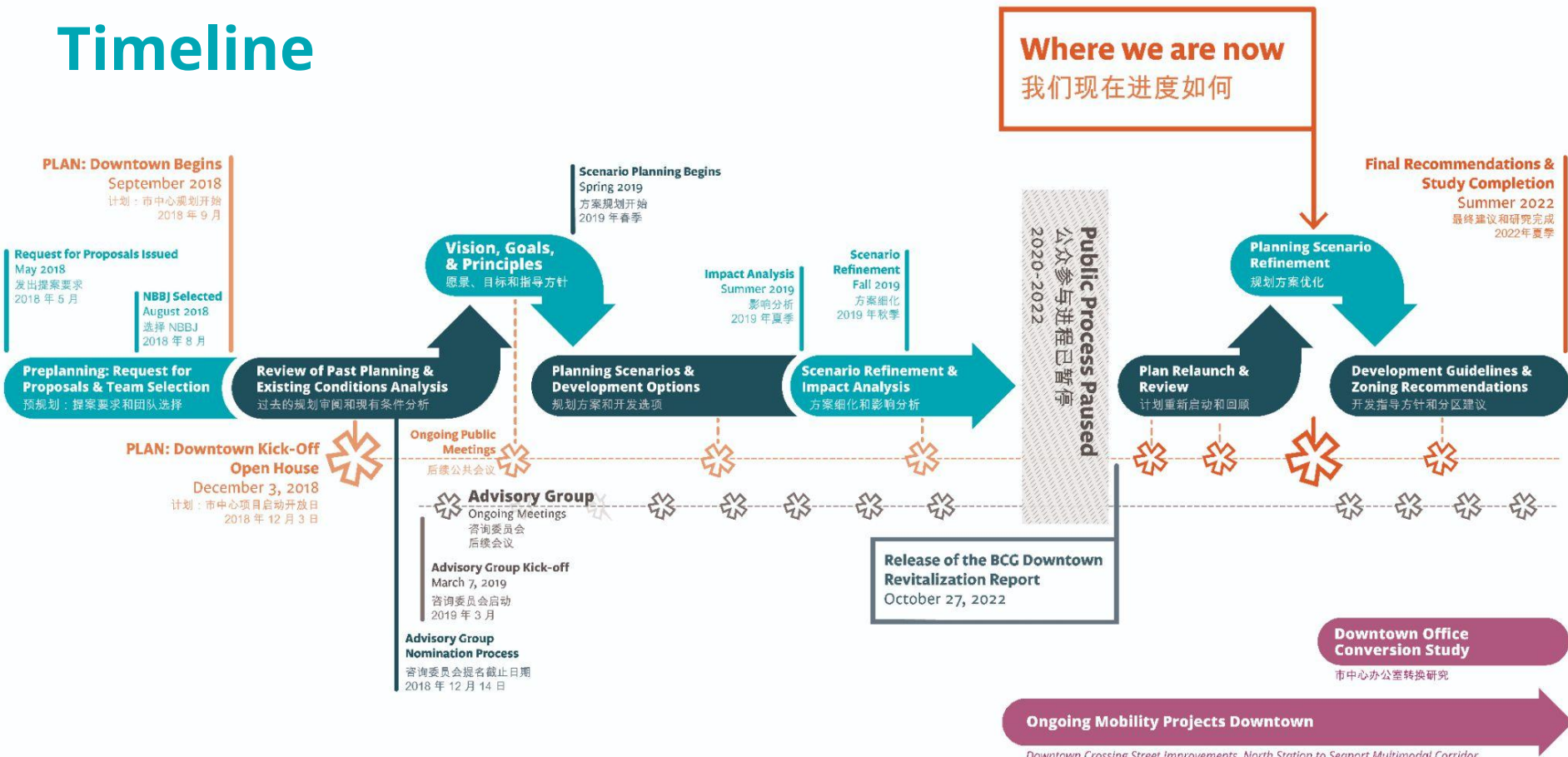
# Agenda

## *Advisory Group Meeting*

- Welcome and Timeline Updates
- Public Feedback to Date
- Draft Development Scenario Recap
- AG Discussion
- Public Discussion



# Timeline



**Where we are now**  
我们现在进度如何

**Public Process Paused**  
2020-2022  
公众参与进程已暂停

**Ongoing Mobility Projects Downtown**

*Downtown Crossing Street Improvements, North Station to Seaport Multimodal Corridor, Connect Downtown, State Street Improvements*  
市中心交通项目：Downtown Crossing改造, North Station 至 Seaport 多功能走廊, State Street 改造。

# Public Feedback to Date

## Draft Scenario Heights and Preservation Areas

- The proposed maximum heights within the Ladder Blocks do not align with the historic character of the area and will have a detrimental impact on nearby historic sites and assets
- Are protection areas just about height?

## Residential growth

- How do we encourage more residential growth? Can zoning be used to restrict other land-uses such as office?
- Can the density-bonus system be used to Incentivize residential development?

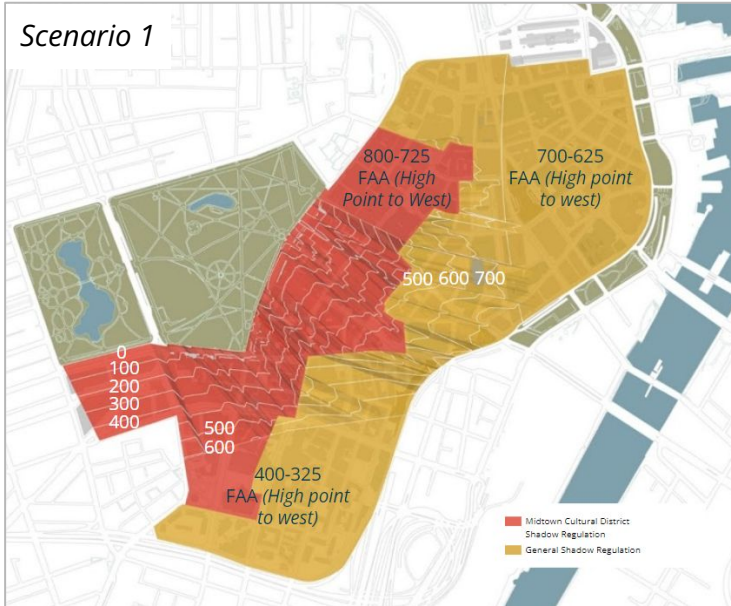
## Public Benefits

- How does the public benefit system work? Who manages it and how are funds allocated?

## Planning Process

- Provide additional breakout meetings
- How will the Office Conversion Study align with the study?
- Will PLAN: Downtown be completed before the 11-21 Bromfield proposal moves forward?

# Scenarios Proposed in 2020

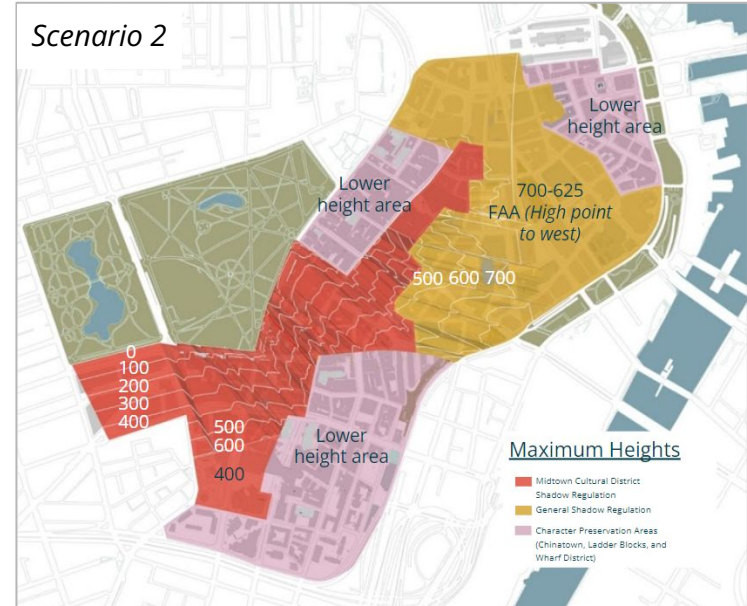


**Baseline heights:**

General Area: 155'

**Maximum heights:**

Shadow Regulations / FAA limit



**Baseline heights:**

General Area: 155'

Character Preservation Areas: 100'/125'

**Maximum heights:**

Shadow Regulations / FAA limit

Lower heights in the Character Preservation Areas





# Scenario 2

*Proposed in 2020*

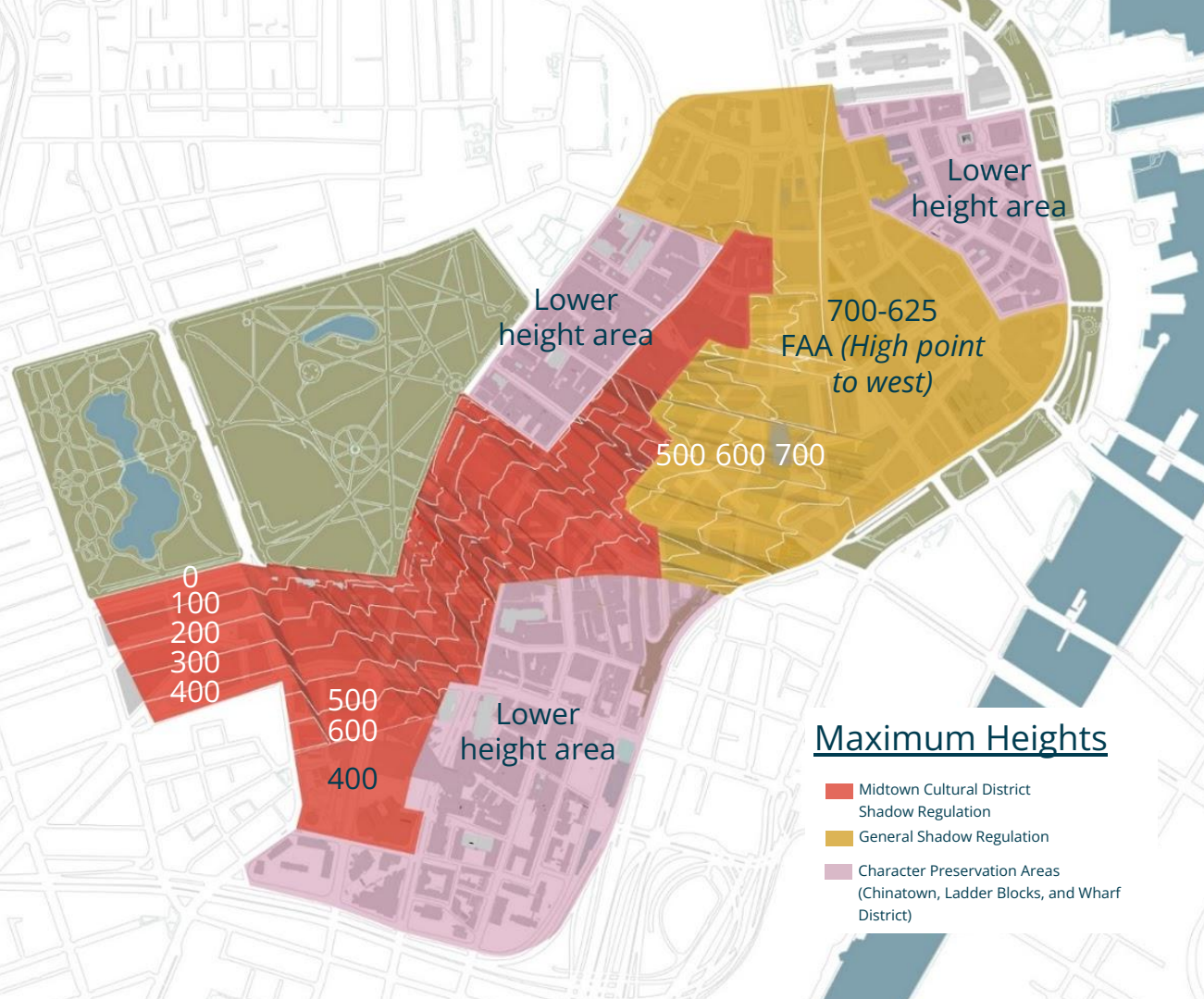
Baseline zoning starting points and maximum heights are based on Character Area baseline and Developer can contribute to a public-benefit fund to add capacity through density bonus system.

## Downtown Crossing General Area, Theater District, Financial District

- Baseline: 155-ft
- Maximum: Up to Midtown Cultural District Shadow Regulation, Shadow Regulation, and FAA height limit

## Three Character Preservation Areas

- Chinatown Baseline: 100-ft
- Wharf District Baseline: 100-ft
- Ladder Blocks Baseline: 125-ft
- Maximum: Lower Height Area



# Draft Scenario

January 17, 2023

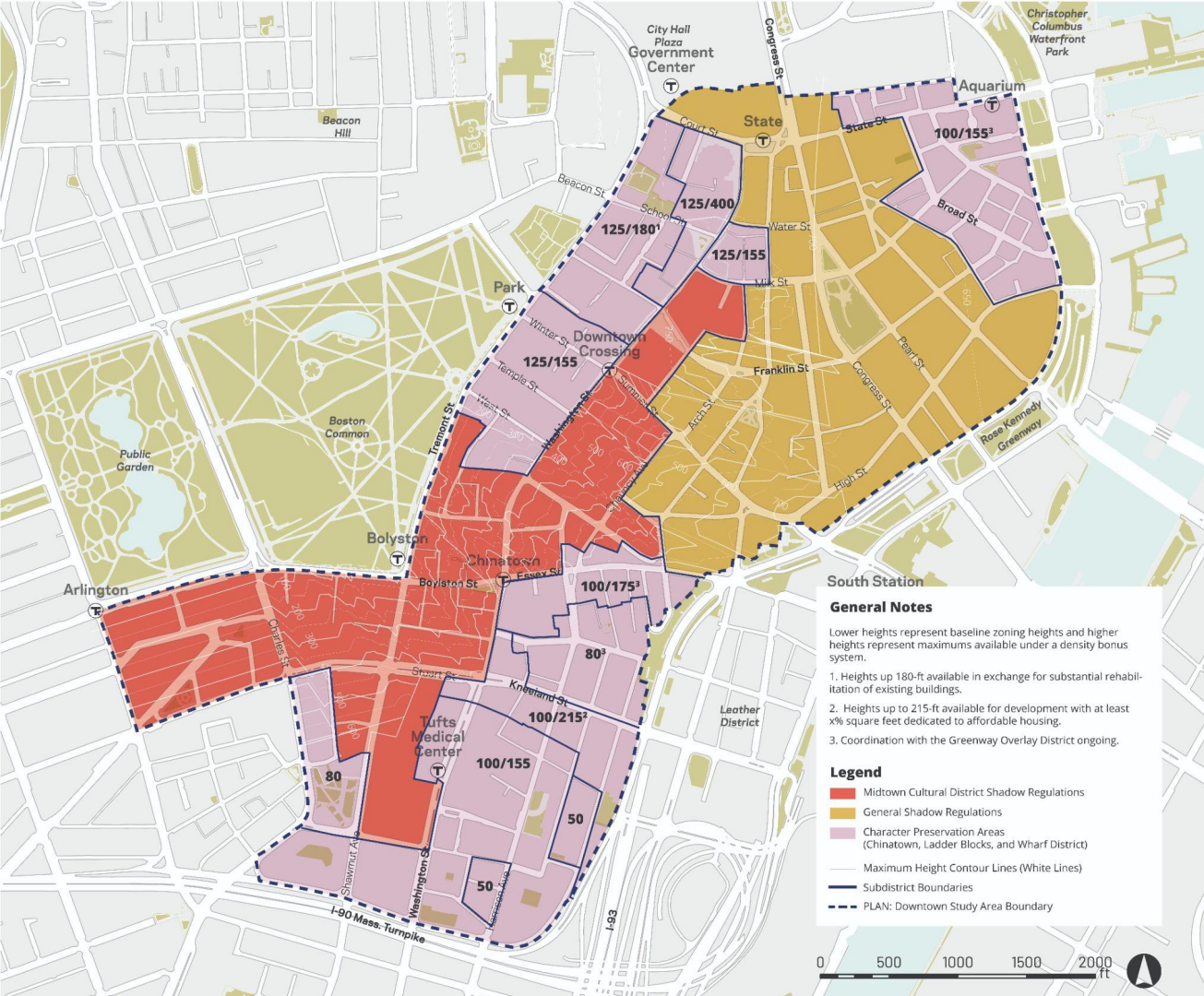
Baseline zoning heights and maximum heights are based on Character Areas. A developer can add density up to a maximum building height by contributing to a public benefit fund.

## 2023 Updates

- Ladder Blocks boundary expanded north and south & subdistrict broken into three subdistricts.
- Chinatown boundary expanded north & subdistrict broken into seven subdistricts.
- Character preservation area added against Bay Village

## Unchanged from 2019 Scenario 2

- Height regulation of the Financial District, Theater District, and Downtown Crossing (excluding the Ladder Blocks)
- Height regulation of the Wharf District Character Preservation Area



# Existing Context



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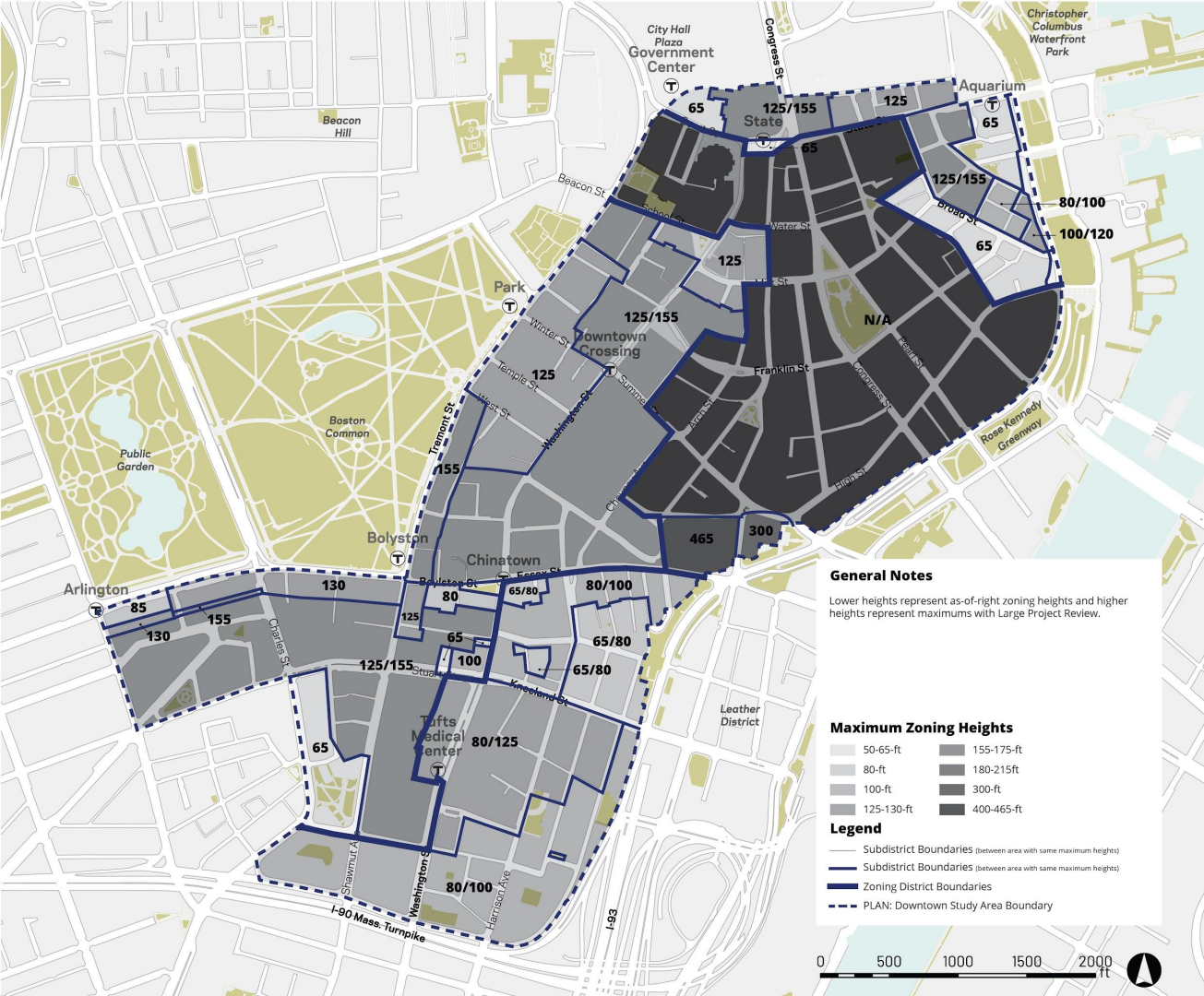


# Existing Zoning

## Maximum Zoning Heights

Lower heights represent as-of-right zoning heights and higher heights represent maximum heights for owners who elect into Large Project Review.

Boston Proper does not have a maximum height under current zoning.



### General Notes

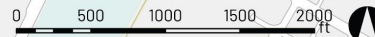
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### Maximum Zoning Heights

50-65-ft	155-175-ft
80-ft	180-215ft
100-ft	300-ft
125-130-ft	400-465-ft

### Legend

- Subdistrict Boundaries (between area with same maximum heights)
- Subdistrict Boundaries (between area with same maximum heights)
- Zoning District Boundaries
- PLAN: Downtown Study Area Boundary



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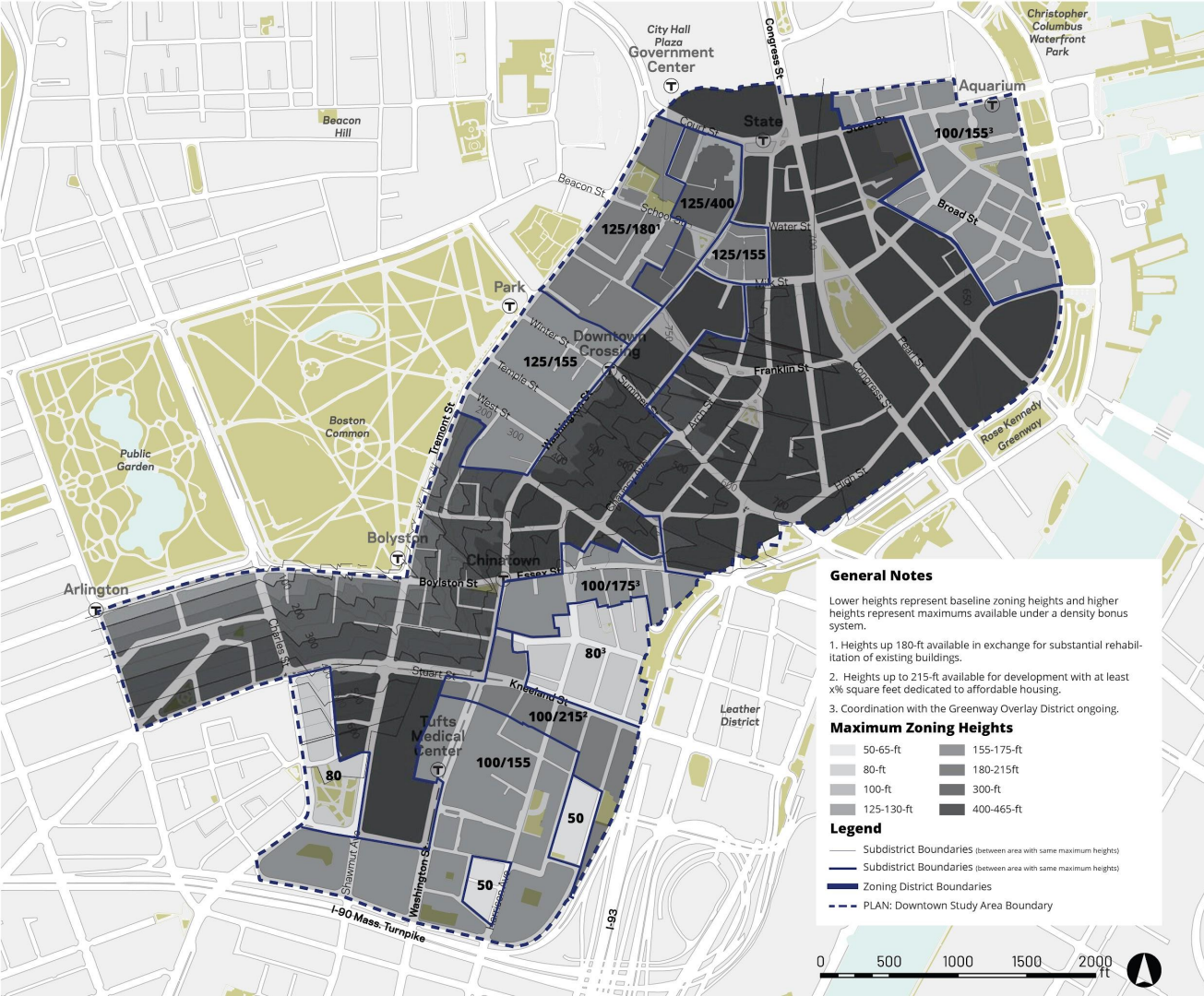
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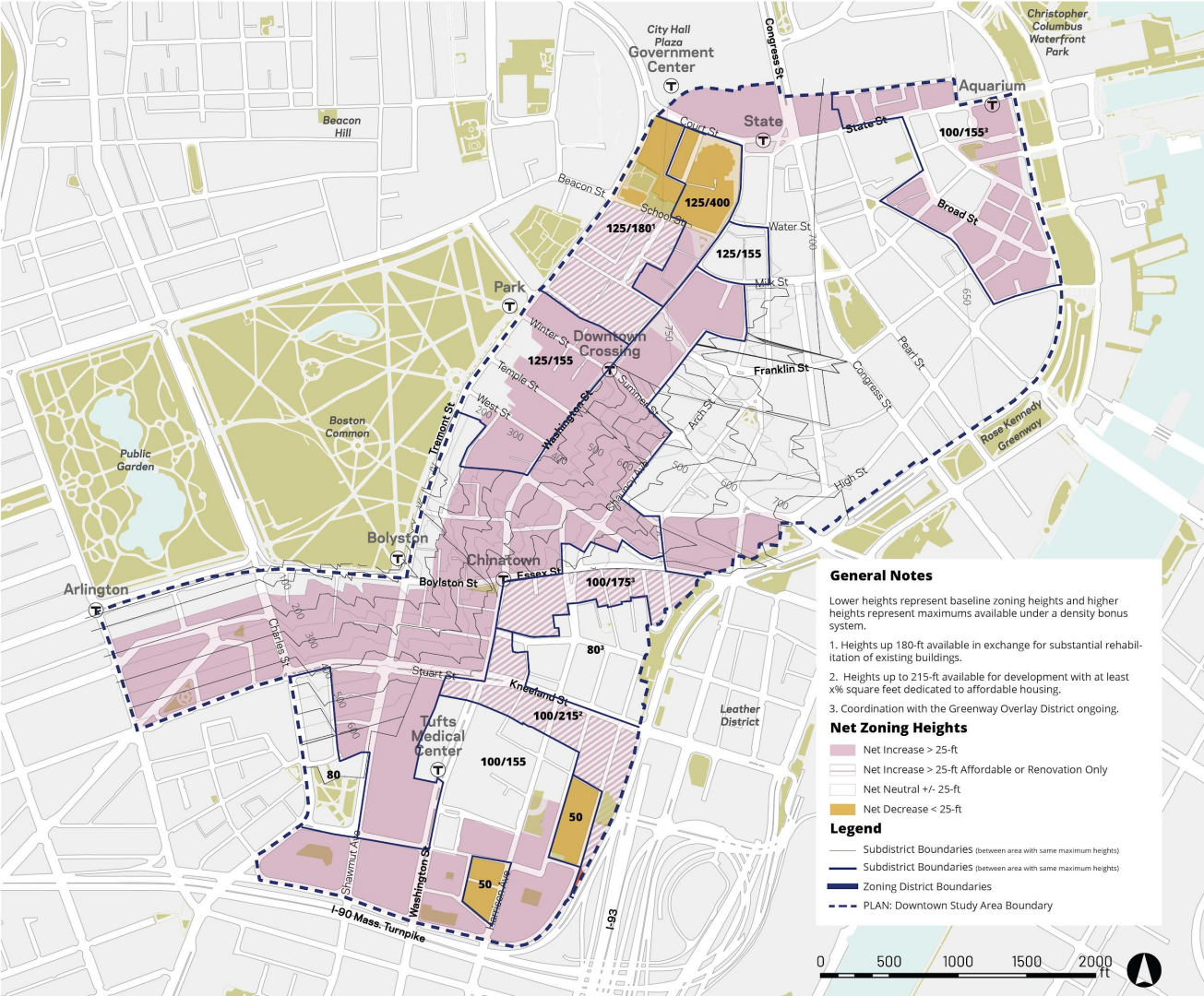
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# Draft Scenario

January 17, 2023

Net Change in Building Height  
between existing zoning and proposed  
scenario



## General Notes

Lower heights represent baseline zoning heights and higher heights represent maximums available under a density bonus system.

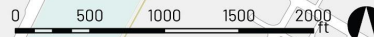
1. Heights up to 180-ft available in exchange for substantial rehabilitation of existing buildings.
2. Heights up to 215-ft available for development with at least x% square feet dedicated to affordable housing.
3. Coordination with the Greenway Overlay District ongoing.

## Net Zoning Heights

- Net Increase > 25-ft
- Net Increase > 25-ft Affordable or Renovation Only
- Net Neutral +/- 25-ft
- Net Decrease < 25-ft

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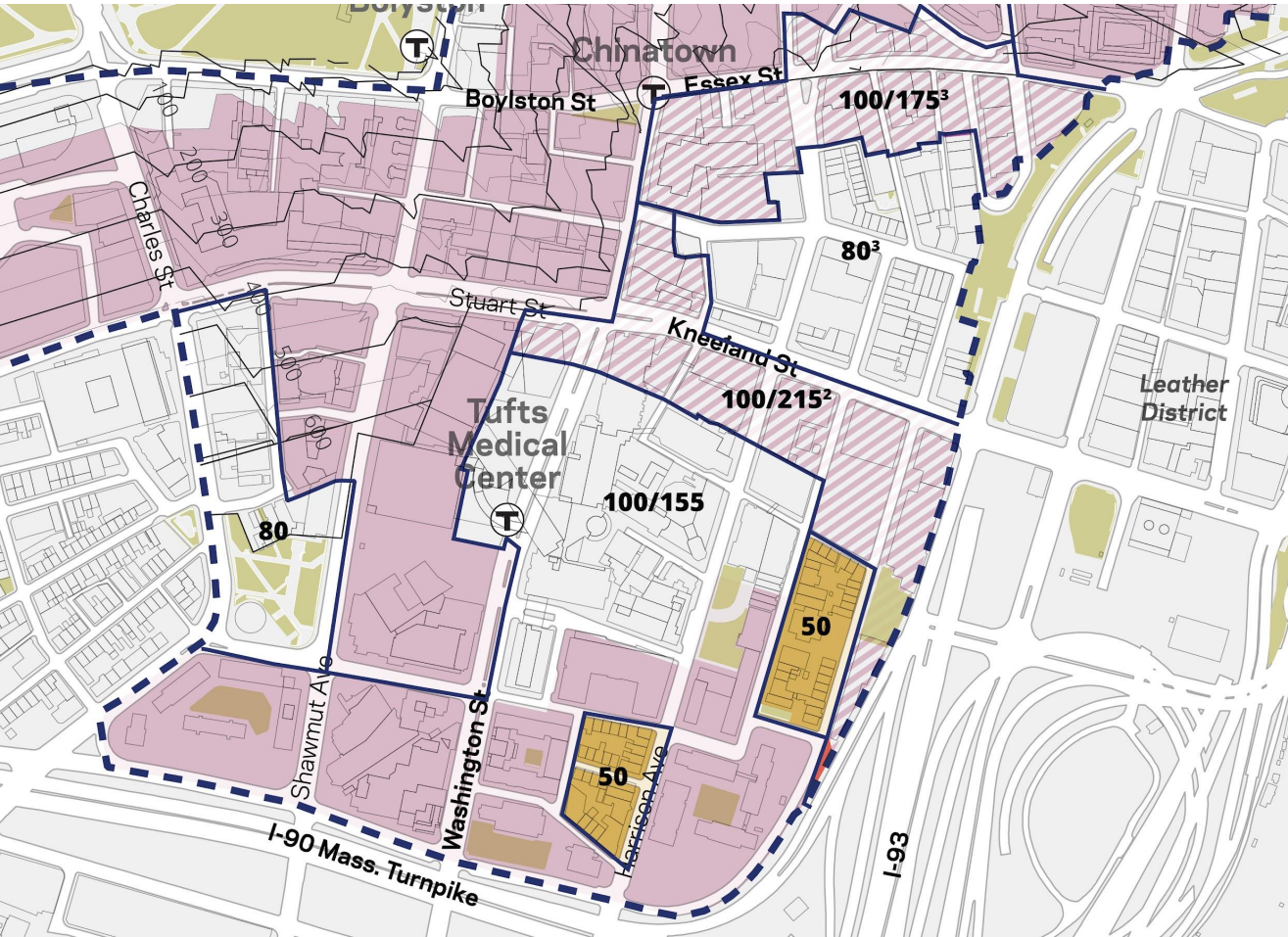
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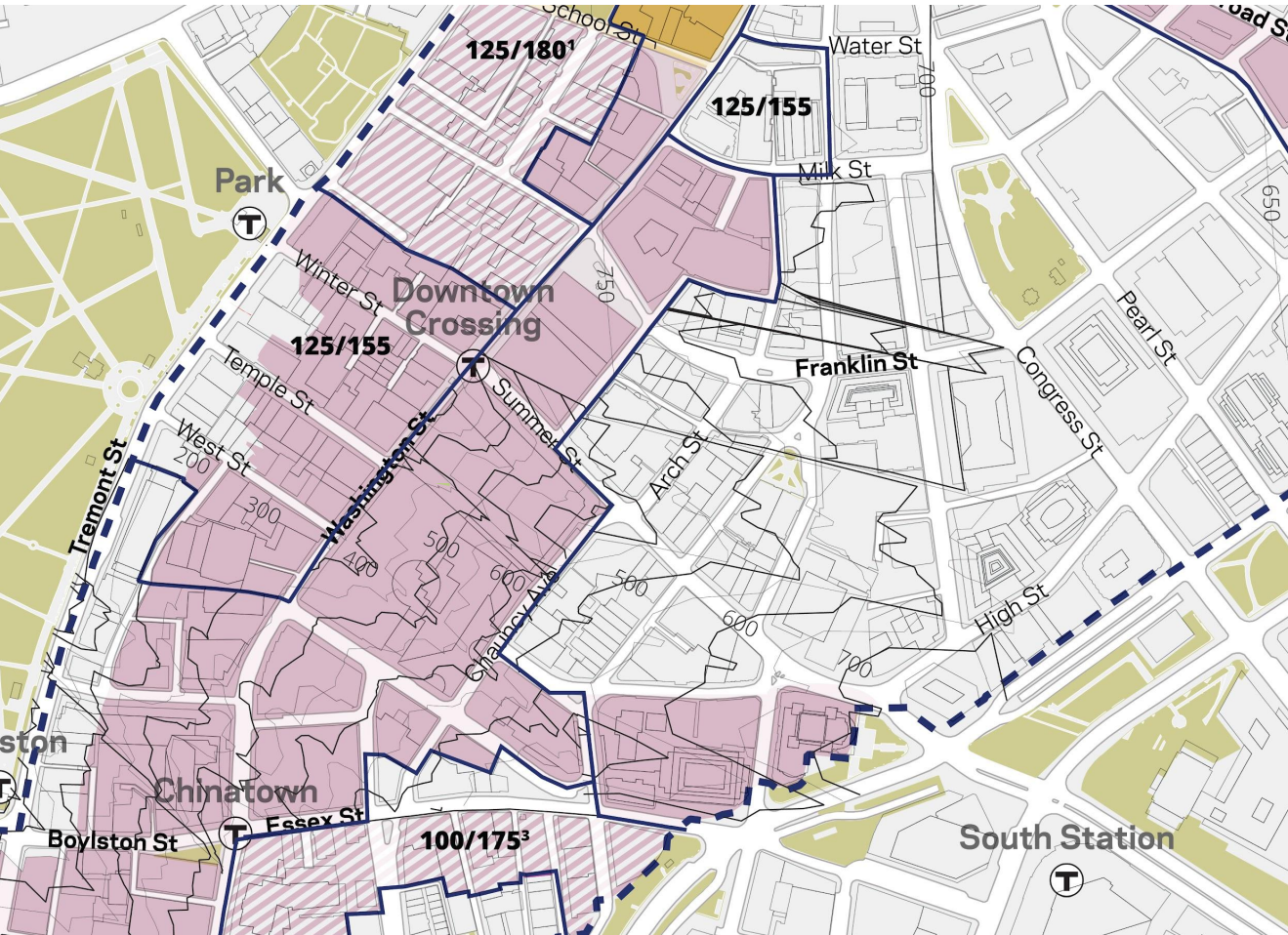
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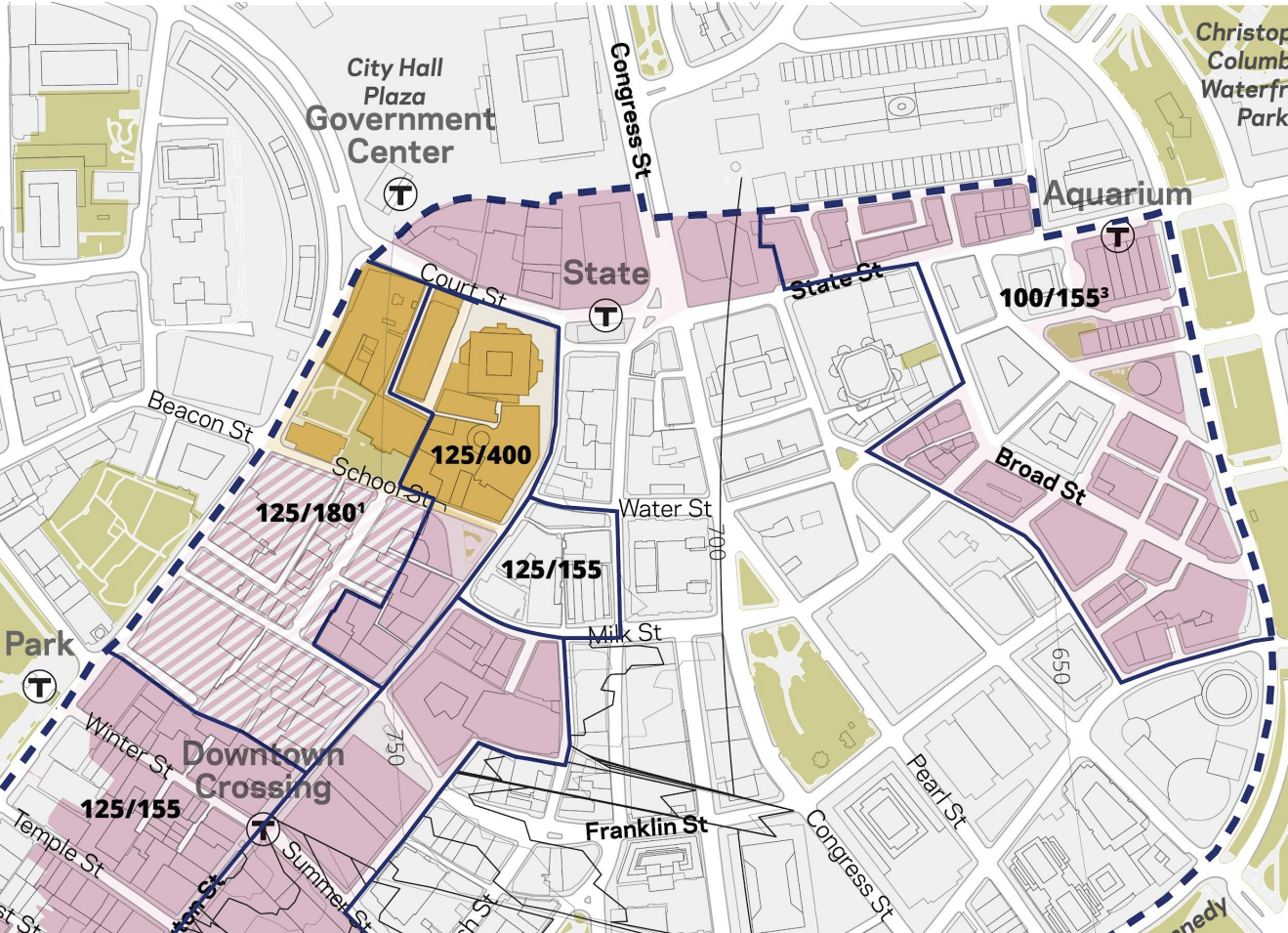
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# Wharf District, Financial District, & Ladder Blocks

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# Upcoming Engagement Events

- **Public Meeting: Planning Recap** - December 14, 2022
- **Public Meeting: Scenario Update** - January 11, 2023
- **Advisory Group Meeting\*** - February 9, 2023
- **Advisory Group Meeting\*** - February 27, 2023
- **Office Hours:**
  - February 14, 11-12pm
  - February 20, 12-1pm
  - *Additional dates TBD*
- **Public Meeting: Zoning Recommendations and Updates** - *End of March/Beginning of April*

*Get Involved with PLAN: Downtown:*  
<http://bit.ly/plandowntownboston>

*Questions and Comments:*  
[plandowntown@boston.gov](mailto:plandowntown@boston.gov)

**Release PLAN: Downtown Draft:**  
June 2023

**Board Downtown Adoption:**  
*August target*

**Zoning implementation:**  
*Fall*

\*All Advisory Group meetings are open to the public.



# *Advisory Group Q&A and Discussion*



# *Public Q&A and Discussion*