

Minor Text Updates to Squares + Streets Zoning

Annotated Greenlined Draft - 10/23/2024

How to Read this Document

~~RED AND STRUCK TEXT~~ = removals proposed to the Zoning Code as part of this amendment

GREEN TEXT = additions proposed to the Zoning Code as part of this amendment

BLACK TEXT = current text within the Zoning Code that we have not changed

Section 8-3. Use Regulations.

TABLE A: USE REGULATIONS

Key:

Districts. S = Squares + Streets

Status.

~~A*, A-G | C*, A-G | F*, C*, or C-G | F*~~ = Subject to district Use and Performance Standards

ALLOWED

A = Allowed

A-G | C = Allowed only on basement or ground floor (Conditional on upper stories)

A-G | F = Allowed only on basement or ground floor (Forbidden on upper stories)

CONDITIONAL

C = Conditional

C-G | F = Conditional only on basement or ground floor (Forbidden on upper stories)

FORBIDDEN

F = Forbidden

* = Subject to district Use and Performance Standards for the designated use. Other Use and Performance Standards may apply for all buildings in a district if indicated by the corresponding district article.

See Section 3-1 (Division of the City into Districts) for listing of districts.

Commented [1]: Reformatting/clarification: moving information to the bottom of the key.

Commented [2]: Reformatting/clarification: moving within key, removing unnecessary language, and adding language to make the meaning of "*" more clear.

	Squares + Streets (S)					
	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
OPEN SPACE USES						
Cemetery	F	F	F	F	F	F
Private Open Space	C	C	C	C	C	C
Publicly Accessible Open Space	A	A	A	A	A	A
CIVIC USES						
Child Care/Adult Day Health Center	A	A	A	A	A	A
Community Center	C	A	A	A	A	A
Municipal Use	A	A	A	A	A	A
Place of Worship	A	A	A	A	A	A
School, K through 12	A	A	A	A	A	A
RESIDENTIAL USES						
Artists' Live-Work	A*	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
Fraternity or Sorority	F	F	F	F	F	F
Household Living - 1-4 units	A	A	A*	A*	A*	C*
Household Living - 5-8 units	A	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
Household Living - 9-14 units	A	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
Household Living - 15+ units	F	A	A*	A*	A*	A*

Commented [3]: Reformatting/clarification: moving "Community Center" from "Active Uses" section of table to "Civic Uses" section.

	Squares + Streets (S)					
	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Lodging House	F	C	C*	C*	A*	A*
Mobile Home Establishment	F	F	F	F	F	F
Shelter Facility	F	F	F	F	F	F
Supportive Housing	A*	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
ACTIVE USES						
COMMERCIAL USES						
Adult Entertainment	F	F	F	F	F	F
Art Studios	F	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
Bank	F	C-G F	C-G F*	C*	C*	C*
Check Cashier	F	F	F	F	F	F
Drive-in	F	F	F	F	F	F
Entertainment/Events - Extra Small	C-G F	A-G F A-G C	A-G F A-G C*	A-G C*	A*	A*
Entertainment/Events - Small	F	C-G F C	A-G F A-G C*	A-G C*	A*	A*
Entertainment/Events - Medium	F	F	C-G F C*	A-G C*	A*	A*
Entertainment/Events - Large	F	F	F	C*	C*	C*

Commented [4]: Reformatting/clarification: removing "Active Uses" category from the table. The uses that were in this category are moved to the "Commercial Uses" and "Civic Uses" categories. The meaning of "Active Uses" is now defined within the definitions section instead of acting as a use category.

Commented [5]: Use change: allowing greater flexibility for entertainment/event uses on upper stories.

Commented [6]: Reformatting/clarification: moving uses which were previously in the "Active Uses" category.

	Squares + Streets (S)					
	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Entertainment/Events - Extra Large	F	F	F	F	F	F
Funeral Home	F	C	C*	C*	C*	C*
Grocery Store - Small	C	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
Grocery Store - Large	F	F	C*	C* A-G C*	A*	A*
Hotel - Small	F	F	C*	A*	A*	A*
Hotel - Large	F	F	F	C*	C*	C*
Indoor Recreation	F	F C	F C*	A-G C*	A*	A*
Makerspace	F	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
Museum	F	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
Office - Small	C-G F C	A-G F A-G C	A-G C A*	A*	A*	A*
Office - Medium	F	A-G F A-G C	A-G C A*	A*	A*	A*
Office - Large	F	F	F	C*	C*	C*
Research Laboratory	F	F	F	F	F	F
Restaurant - Small	C-G F	A-G F	A-G F A-G C*	A*	A*	A*
Restaurant - Large	F	C-G F	A A-G C*	A*	A*	A*

Commented [7]: Reformatting/clarification: adding *s to commercial uses in S2 because the existing commercial use ground floor ceiling height requirement was moved to the Additional Use and Performance Standards table

Commented [8]: Use change: allowing large grocery stores (over 15,000 sq ft) on the ground floor in S3 without a conditional use permit

Commented [9]: Use change: allowing greater flexibility for indoor recreation in S1 and S2

Commented [10]: Use change: allowing greater flexibility for office on upper stories

Commented [11]: Use change: standardizing the treatment of restaurants on upper stories between small and large restaurants.

	Squares + Streets (S)					
	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Retail Cannabis Establishment	F	C-G F	C-G F*	C-G F*	C*	C*
Retail Store - Small	C-G F	A-G F	A-G C*	A*	A*	A*
Retail Store - Medium	F	C-G F	A-G C*	A*	A*	A*
Retail Store - Large	F	F	C*	A-G C*	A-G C*	A-G C*
Retail Store - Extra Large	F	F	F	F	C*	C*
Service Establishment - Small	C-G F	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
Service Establishment - Large	F	F	C*	A*	A*	A*
Social Club	C	A	A*	A*	A*	A*
Standalone ATM	F	C	C*	C*	C*	C*
HIGHER EDUCATION USES						
College or University Use	F	F	C	C*	C*	C*
School, Trade or Professional	F	F	C	C*	A*	A*
HEALTH CARE USES						
Clinic	F	A-G C	A-G C A	A*	A*	A*
Hospital Use	F	F	F	F	C*	C*

Commented [12]: Reformatting/clarification: correcting scrivener's error which omitted this text in the adopted article

Commented [13]: Reformatting/clarification: removing *s from "non-active uses" in S3-S5 because the ground floor active use requirement in the Additional Use and Performance Standards table now states that it applies to "all buildings," rather than all "non-active uses."

Commented [14]: Use change: allowing clinics on upper stories in S2

	Squares + Streets (S)					
	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Nursing Home Use	C	C	C	A *	A *	A *
TRANSPORTATION USES						
Airport-Related Remote Parking Facility	F	F	F	F	F	F
Gasoline Station	F	F	F	F	F	F
Major Transportation Facility	F	C	C	C *	C *	C *
Motor Vehicle Rentals	F	F	F	C *	C *	C *
Motor Vehicle Sales	F	F	F	F	F	F
Standalone Parking Garage	F	F	F	C*	C*	C*
Standalone Parking Lot	F	F	C	C *	C *	C *
Vehicular Services	F	F	F	F	F	F
INDUSTRIAL AND STORAGE USES						
Crematory	F	F	F	F	F	F
Food and Beverage Production	F	F	F	C*	A*	A*
General Industrial	F	F	F	F	F	F

	Squares + Streets (S)					
	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Light Manufacturing or Trade Establishment	F	F	F	F	C*	C*
Non-retail Cannabis Establishment	F	F	F	F	F	F
Restricted Industrial	F	F	F	F	F	F
Self-Storage	F	F	F	F	F	F
Storage of Fuel or Minerals	F	F	F	F	F	F
Storage of Supplies and Scrap	F	F	F	F	F	F
Urban Agriculture	See Article 89	See Article 89	See Article 89	See Article 89	See Article 89	See Article 89
Warehouse or Distribution Center	F	F	F	F	F	F
<i>Accessory uses must comply with the provisions of Section 8-2.5</i>						
ACCESSORY USES						
Accessory Drive-Through	F	F	F	F	F	F
Accessory Dwelling Unit (Detached)	C	C	F	F	F	F
Accessory Dwelling Unit (non-Detached)	C	C	F	F	F	F
Accessory Electrical Vehicle Charging	A	A	A	A	A	A

	Squares + Streets (S)					
	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Accessory Entertainment/Events	C	A	A	A	A	A
Accessory Family Day Care Home	A	A	A	A	A	A
Accessory Helicopter Landing Facility	F	F	F	F	F	F
Accessory Home Occupation	A	A	A	A	A	A
Accessory Keeping of Animals	C	C	C	C	C	C
Accessory Keeping of Laboratory Animals	F	F	F	F	F	F
Accessory Motor Vehicle Rental	A	A	A	A	A	A
Accessory Office	F	A	A	A	A	A
Accessory Parking	A	A	A	A	A	A
Accessory Personnel Quarters	F	C	C	C	C	C
Accessory Smoking	F	F	F	C	C	C
Shared Parking	A	A	A	A	A	A

Table A Definitions

The following definitions and size categories shall apply only for Districts in Table A of this Article 8 or where otherwise specified in the Code. For the purposes of determining size categories, total square footage shall mean the total internal area dedicated to a use including storage, mechanicals, and all other occupied and non-occupied space.

Active Uses. Uses which are open to the public and produce high levels of coming and going by customers, visitors, and users. Active Uses include Community Center, Grocery Store, Entertainment/Events, Makerspace, Museum, Restaurant, Retail Cannabis Establishment, Retail Store, Indoor Recreation, Service Establishment, and Social Club.

Commented [15]: Reformatting/clarification: replacing "Active Uses" category on the table with definition. This is used to define which uses satisfy the Ground Floor Active Use Requirement established on the Additional Use and Performance Standards table.

ARTICLE 26 - SQUARES + STREETS DISTRICTS

Section 26-1 Purpose of Squares + Streets Districts

Squares + Streets Districts are areas characterized by a mix of uses, significant transit service, and high levels of pedestrian activity. The purpose of these districts is to support and increase the mix of uses, support walkability, encourage adaptive reuse, and designate areas as appropriate for infill development and housing supply growth, to be delivered as the result of coordinated City planning and investment. Squares + Streets districts and their purposes are listed in this Section 26-1 in order of increasing intensity:

- A. The S0 Transition Residential district is a primarily residential mixed use district that provides a transition from mixed-use and high-activity Squares + Streets to lower-activity residential areas. S0 also provides some flexibility for other active, commercial, and community serving uses, such as small retail spaces, on the ground floor of buildings. Residential uses are limited to no more than 14 dwelling units. Of the Squares + Streets districts, S0 has the smallest building footprint and lot coverage requirements and the largest yards and Permeable Area of Lot.
- B. The S1 Main Street Living district is a mixed-use district where buildings generally have principally residential uses. S1 also provides more opportunity for active and commercial uses, such as banks, museums, restaurants, and retail spaces. S1 requires small-scale side and front yards and minimum Permeable Area of Lot.
- C. The S2 Main Street Mixed Use district is a small- to medium-scale mixed-use district that allows more active and many commercial uses, especially on the ground floor. S2 buildings can fill the width of the lot to help create a continuous and active main street. S2 includes requirements for Outdoor Amenity Space and a maximum for the blank wall of a facade.
- D. The S3 Active Main Street district is a mixed-use district of medium-scale buildings. In addition to residential, the S3 district allows more commercial and active uses on upper floors, such as hotels and offices. S3 requires Active Uses on the ground floor and prohibits dwelling units on the ground floor primary lot frontage. The district also introduces a more restrictive building lot coverage for large lots.
- E. The S4 Active Squares district is a mixed-use district characterized by medium to large-scale mixed-use buildings with the widest range of allowed uses among the Squares + Street districts. Commercial, hospitality, and entertainment uses are allowed throughout the building, and Active Uses are required on the ground floor.
- F. The S5 Placemaker Squares is a mixed use district intended for areas in the heart of high activity squares, closest to transit, with high street frontage, and surrounding density. It is characterized by the largest-scale mixed-use buildings of Squares + Streets districts. S5 allows the same wide range of uses as S4, with ground floor Active Use and higher Outdoor Amenity Space requirements.

Section 26-2. - Establishment of Squares + Streets Districts

- A. **This Section 26-2, together with Section 3-1 (Establishment of Zoning Districts) establishes six Squares + Streets Districts (S0, S1, S2, S3, S4, and S5).** A Squares + Streets District is indicated by the designation "S0", "S1", "S2", "S3", "S4", or "S5" on any official zoning map of the City of Boston. The provisions of Article 26 and the remainder of this Code constitute the zoning regulations in a Squares + Streets District. Unless otherwise specified in this Article, where conflicts exist between a provision of this Article and the remainder of this Code, the provision of this Article shall govern.
- B. **Use Regulations Applicable in Squares + Streets Districts**
Use regulations for Squares + Streets districts are set forth in Article 8 (Regulation of Uses) and in Table A of this Article (Additional Use and Performance Standards).
- C. **Dimensional Regulations Applicable in Squares + Streets Districts**
Dimensional Regulations for Squares + Streets districts are set forth in Table B of this Article.

Commented [16]: Reformatting/clarification: adding title of Table A for clarity.

The illustrations included in Figure 1 of this Article depict the dimensional standards set forth in Table B. Where conflicts exist between an illustration or other graphic and the text of any provision of this Code, the text shall govern.

D. Parking and Loading Regulations Applicable in Squares + Streets Districts

Parking regulations for Squares + Streets districts are set forth in Article 23 (Off-Street Parking). Loading regulations for Squares + Streets are set forth in Article 24 (Off-Street Loading).

E. Within a Squares + Streets District, no Planned Development Area shall be permitted.

TABLE A: ADDITIONAL USE AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Uses and use categories have the meanings set forth in Article 8 Table A. [Defined dimensional standards have the meanings set forth in Article 2.](#)

Commented [17]: Reformatting/clarification: adding clarifying language.

USE AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
USE RELATED STANDARDS FOR USES THAT ARE NOT ACTIVE USES ALL BUILDINGS						
Ground Floor Active Use Requirement	-	-	-	Active Use(s) must occupy at least 50% of the Building Width of the Ground Floor along the Primary Lot Frontage to a minimum Ground Floor Use Depth of 20 ^{1,2}	Active Use(s) must occupy at least 50% of the Building Width of the Ground Floor along the Primary Lot Frontage to a minimum Ground Floor Use Depth of 25 ^{1,2}	
Ground Floor Active Use Requirement	No	No	No	Yes ^{1,2}	Yes ^{1,2}	Yes ^{1,2}
Percentage of Building Width of Ground Floor Active Use (min)	-	-	-	50% ^{1,2}	50% ^{1,2}	50% ^{1,2}
Depth (min) of Ground Floor Active Use	-	-	-	20 ^{1,2}	25 ^{1,2}	25 ^{1,2}
STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL USES						
Ground Floor Dwelling Units Allowed	Yes	Yes	Conditional on Primary Lot Frontage; Allowed on non-Primary Lot Frontage with 4' Front Yard (min)	Forbidden on Primary Lot Frontage; Allowed on non-Primary Lot Frontage with 4' Front Yard (min)		
Dwelling Units (max)	14	-	-	-	-	-
STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL USES						
Ground Floor Ceiling Height for areas occupied by Commercial Uses (min)	-	-	14'	14'	14'	14'
STANDARDS FOR TRANSPORTATION USES						
Standalone Parking Garage	-	-	-	Another allowed use, that is not a Transportation Use, must be located on the ground floor of the building along any lot frontage that abuts a public sidewalk, street, or park to a minimum depth Ground Floor Use Depth of 25'		
STANDARDS FOR INDUSTRIAL AND STORAGE USES						

Commented [18]: Reformatting/clarification: changing language to make it more clear when the Ground Floor Active Use Requirement applies.

Commented [19]: Reformatting/clarification: moving requirements for the Ground Floor Active Use Requirement to a single row of the table (rather than three). This follows the same format of the other standards on this table.

Commented [20]: Use change: making ground floor dwelling units conditional on the primary lot frontage.

Commented [21]: Reformatting/clarification: moving existing regulation from Table B (dimensional regulations) to Table A (additional use and performance standards) because it only applies to commercial uses.

Commented [22]: Reformatting/clarification: adding Article 2 term which clarifies how to measure this dimension.

USE AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Food and Beverage Production	-	-	-	Must include a minimum of 500 sf of accessory or associated Restaurant or Retail use	Must include a minimum of 1,000 sf of accessory or associated Restaurant or Retail use	

Footnotes to Table A (Additional Use and Performance Standards)

1. ~~Active Use(s), as defined in Article 8 Table A, are required to occupy a minimum of the ground floor building width at the minimum depth along primary lot frontage specified in Article 26 Table A-B, except Active Uses are not required~~ when the principal use(s) is a Civic Use or Open Space Use, as defined in Article 8 Table A; or when a Proposed Project is an affordable housing development project in which at least 60% of units income restricted at 100% or below of AMI and reviewed under Article 80 Small or Large Project Review.
2. For any project that is subject to or has elected to comply with Large Project Review or Small Project Review under the provisions of Article 80, the required Ground Floor Active Use width and depth may be located along any ~~bBuilding fFacade~~ through such review process.

Commented [23]: Reformatting/clarification: moving information from footnote to the table to follow the format of the other standards on the table and make the Ground Floor Active Use Requirement easier to understand.

Commented [24]: Reformatting/clarification: removing capitalization to clarify that building facade is not a defined term.

TABLE B: DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS

LOT STANDARDS	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Building Lot Coverage (max) for Lots smaller than 11,000 sf	60%	70%	70%	90%	90%	80%
Building Lot Coverage (max) for Lots greater than or equal to 11,000 sf	60%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
Permeable Area of Lot (min) for Lots smaller than 11,000 sf	20%	15%	15%	-	-	-
Permeable Area of Lot (min) for Lots greater than or equal to 11,000 sf	20%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Front Yard (min)	8'	6'	2' ¹	2' ¹	2' ¹	2' ¹
Rear Yard (min)						
Abutting non-residential zoning district	15'	10'	10'	5'	5'	5'
Abutting residential zoning district	15'	15'	15'	15'	20'	20'
Side Yard (min)						
With a party wall, abutting non-residential zoning district	-	-	0'	0'	0'	0'
Without a party wall, abutting non-residential zoning district	14' cumulative (3' min)	10' cumulative (3' min)	5'	5'	5'	5'
Abutting a residential zoning district	14' cumulative (3' min)	14' cumulative (3' min)	15'	15'	15'	15'
BUILDING FORM STANDARDS	S0	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Building Floor Plate (max sf)	4,000	8,000	15,000	20,000	25,000	25,000
Building Width (max)	-	120'	150'	150'	200'	250'
Maximum Building Height (in feet) ²	50'	50'	65'	85'	85'	145'
Maximum Building Height (in stories) ²	4	4	5	7	7	-
Outdoor Amenity Space (min)	-	-	20%	20%	25%	30%
Rear Stepback of Highest Story (min) where the rear yard abuts a residential zoning district	-	-	-	7'	7'	7'
Blank Wall of Facade (max) ³	-	-	15'	15'	15'	15'
Active and Commercial Uses Ground Floor Height (min)	14'	14'	14'	14'	14'	14'
Multiple buildings (detached) allowed on lot ^{4,2}	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Commented [25]: Reformatting/clarification: correcting error in adopted article which omitted relevant footnote reference.

Commented [26]: Reformatting/clarification: changing footnote references because of deleted footnotes.

Commented [27]: Reformatting/clarification: moving regulation to Table A (additional use and performance standards). Also removing reference to "Active Uses," because all relevant Active Uses are now included within the category of "Commercial Uses"

Footnotes to Table B

1. If a dwelling unit is located on the ground floor abutting a Front Yard, as defined in Article 2 and Section 18-4, the Front Yard must have a minimum depth of 4 feet.

~~2. As defined in Article 2, when maximum building height is specified in both stories and feet, both requirements must be met.~~

~~3. For any project that is subject to or has elected to comply with Large Project Review or Small Project Review under the provisions of Article 80, the maximum Blank Wall of Facade may be established on any lot frontage through such review process.~~

4. 2. In the case of attached buildings, yards are to be measured from the exterior building facade as if it was one structure.

Commented [28]: Reformatting/clarification: removing redundant information to make footnote section shorter and easier to understand and ensure city-wide consistency in the application of height requirements.

Commented [29]: Reformatting/clarification: moving information to the definition of Blank Wall of Façade to allow for more city-wide consistency and clarity.

Article 2

Active Uses. See Article 8 Table A Definitions.

Commented [30]: Reformatting/clarification: adding reference to Active Uses in Article 2 to ensure that the definition is easy to find.

Ground Floor Active-Use Depth. The depth of the Ground Floor interior space devoted to a use ~~an Active Use, as defined in Article 8, Table A.~~ The Ground Floor Active Use Depth is measured as the distance from the interior building facade towards the interior of the building.

Commented [31]: Reformatting/clarification: generalizing definition to apply to any use. This allows for more clarity and consistency in how to measure.

Blank Wall of Facade. On the Ground Floor of a building, the width of the facade that does not have windows or a pedestrian entrance facing the Primary Lot Frontage. ~~For a Proposed Project that is subject to or has elected to comply with Small or Large Project Review under Article 80 (Development Review and Approval), the maximum Blank Wall of Facade may be established on any lot frontage through such review process.~~

Commented [32]: Reformatting/clarification: moving information from Table B footnote to allow for more city-wide consistency and clarity.

(a) **Use definitions.** The following definitions of uses and use groupings do not apply to any district listed in [Article 8](#), Table A, unless otherwise indicated within [Article 8](#). **Definitions for uses and use groupings which do apply to districts listed in [Article 8](#) Table A are found in [Article 8](#) Table A Definitions.**

Commented [33]: Reformatting/clarification: adding clarifying language