

# South End Innovation District

*Planning Commission Presentation Summary*

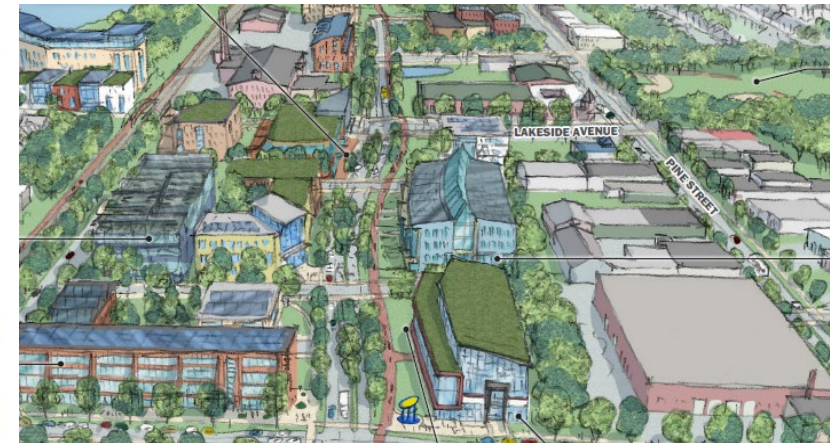


Meagan Tuttle, Director of Planning  
Charles Dillard, Principal Planner  
Sarah Morgan, Planner

# Key Question

How can large surface parking lots and other underutilized sites on and near Lakeside Avenue be re-envisioned to:

- Become vibrant places that enhance and preserve South End identity
- Create new space for makers, jobs, and even homes
- Increase the area's environmental and economic resilience



# Innovation District

Roughly Howard St. to Sears Ln.  
west of Pine Street

Focus on properties with large  
surface parking lots, other  
underdeveloped areas

*planBTV: South End* identified as  
the heart of an “Innovation District”

Potential Innovation District

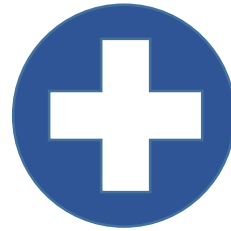


# Innovation District Intent

- An evolving, **vibrant urban district**
- A **mix** of **uses** and building **scales** and **types**
- A place for hundreds of **new homes and neighbors**
- A district where **arts**, **light manufacturing** and **office** coexist in harmony with new residents
- A 21<sup>st</sup> century district that **limits emissions**, **cleans our water**, and fosters a **healthy ecosystem**

# Innovation District =

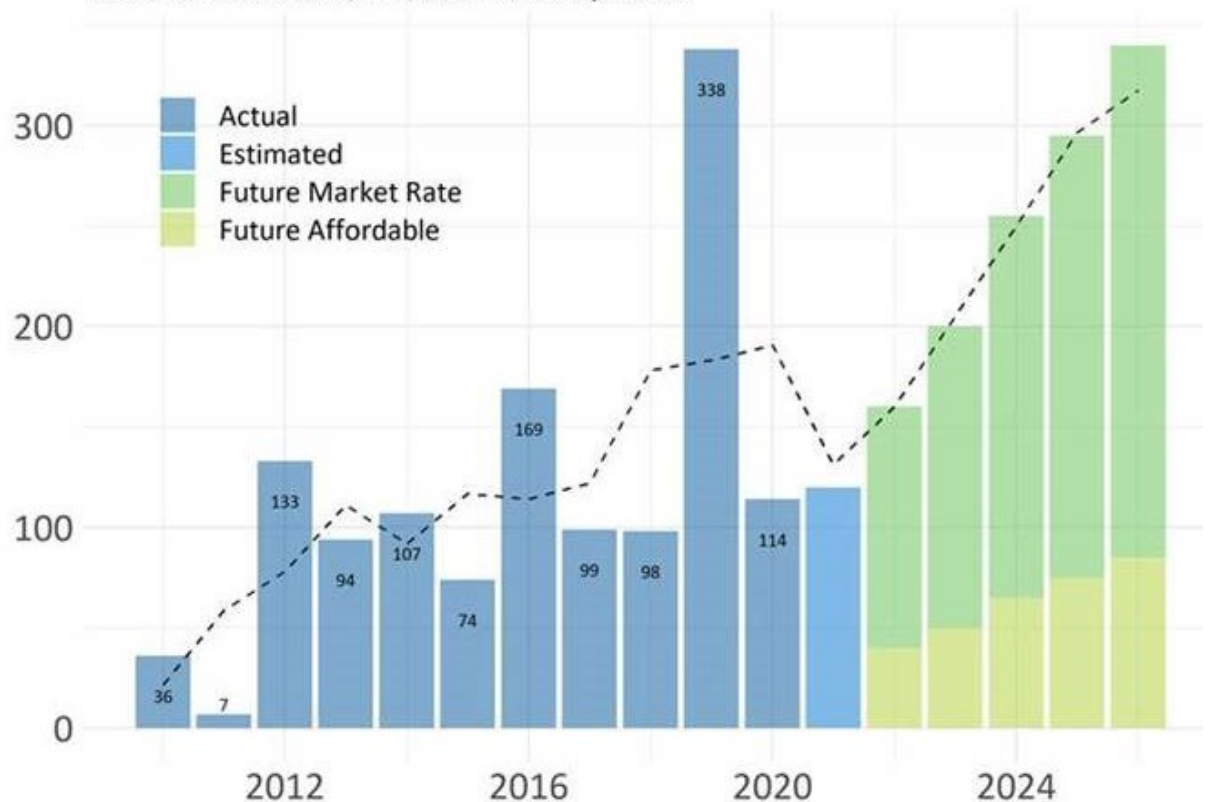
*planBTV: South End*



## Housing as a Human Right Action Plan



Net New Residential Units  
Goal: 1,250 New Residential Units by 2026



# **E-ID Zoning Amendment Content**

**Land Use**

**+**

**Urban Form Standards**

# Land Use Concept

## Permitted

Residential  
(multi-family  
and other)

Arts/Making

Office

Community

## Limited

Convenience + Service

Entertainment +  
Amenity + Hotel

## Not Permitted

Heavy Manufacturing +  
Logistics + Other

Residential  
(single family and other)

# Permitted - Residential

## Attached, multi-family dwellings

*Rationale: The district should be dense and composed of a mixture of rowhouses, small, medium and large apartment buildings. Such a mixture can provide housing across the income spectrum and support a walkable, sustainable district vision.*

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## Co-housing

## Assisted living

## Convalescent/Nursing Home

## Group Home

*Rationale: The Innovation District should be equitable home to Burlingtonians of all ages and abilities. The high degree of accessibility strived for in the district is an ideal location for housing for those with mobility challenges and/or lack of access to a car.*

## Emergency Shelter

*Rationale: The district's large supply of underdeveloped land can potentially support shelter needs for a range of emergencies*

## Inclusionary Zoning

The proposed E-ID Inclusionary Zoning percentage is 15%.

# Permitted – Arts + Making

**Art Gallery/Studio**

**Open Air Markets**

**Performing Arts Studio**

**Photo Studio**

**Photography Lab**

**Printing Shop**

**Radio & TV Studio**

**Recording Studio**

*Rationale: As affirmed in planBTV: South End, the Innovation District is intended to continue to foster a strong arts community in the South End. This list of permitted uses would promote the production of art, as well as its sale and distribution. As permitted uses, these are prioritized and incentivized in the E-ID.*

# Permitted – Office

**Office – General**

**Office – Technical**

**Research & Development Facility**

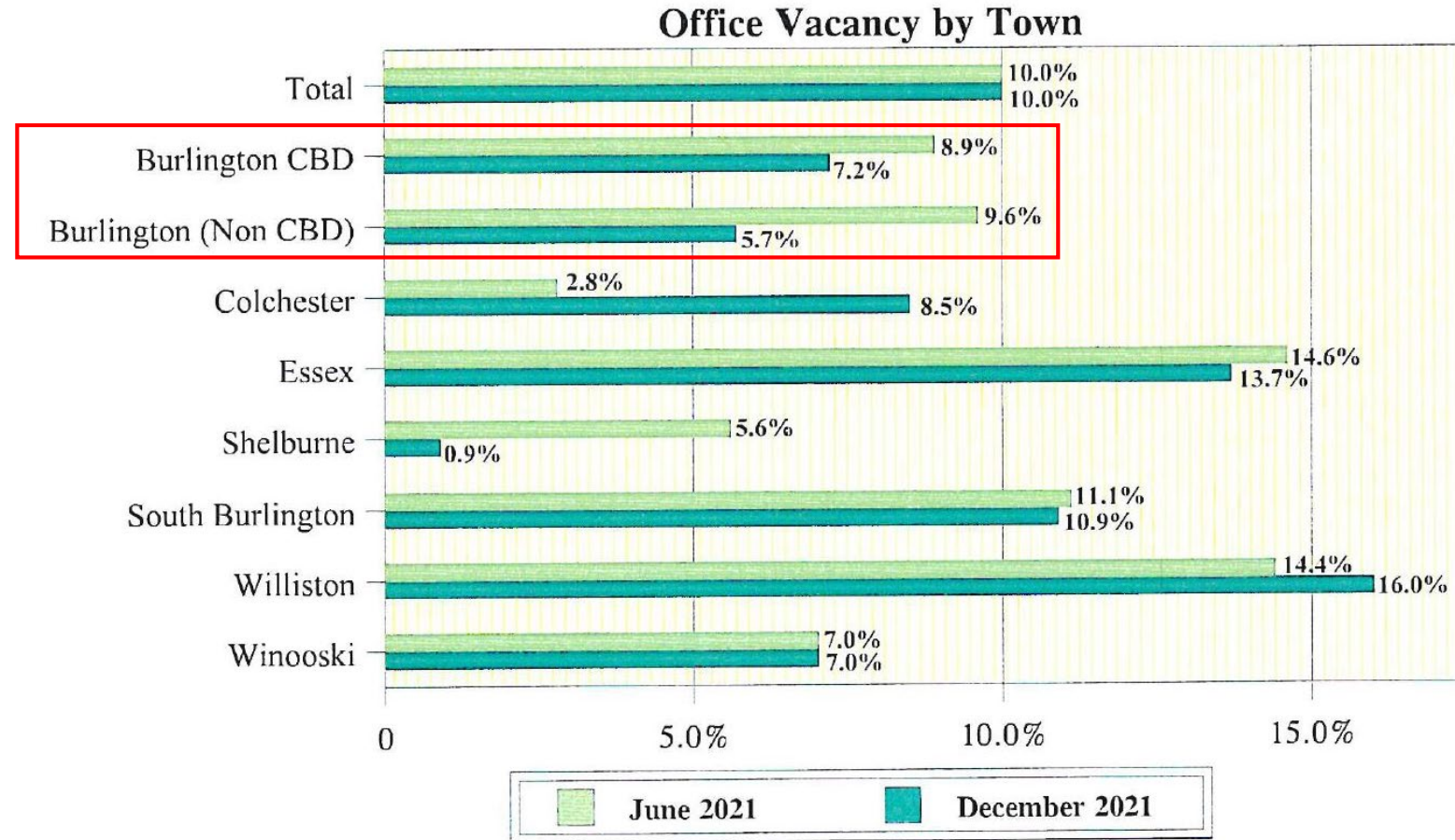
**Research Lab**

*Rationale: To promote the continued growth of office uses like those along Lakeside Avenue and Pine Street, the E-ID permits these uses without limitation. The range of permitted office uses reflects the diversity of work happening today and in innovation districts elsewhere.*

# Permitted – Office

## Allen, Brooks & Minor (2021)

- Vacancy remains high but is down from most recent peak (2020)
- Non-CBD market experiencing higher peaks and lower valleys
- Avg. level of growth (sf) only 39% of avg. level over previous 15 yrs.
- HULA Lakeside is largest speculative office developing in Chittenden Co. since 2008
- HULA accounts for 43.7% of new office space over last three years



# Permitted – Community

**Adult Day Care**

**Community Center**

**Daycare**

**Library**

**School (Preschool, Primary, Secondary, Post-Secondary, CC, Trade & Professional)**

*Rationale: As the Innovation District is anticipated to house a significant portion of Burlington's residential growth in the coming years, it should include community services and amenities that support residents at all stages of life. As permitted uses without limitations, these uses are incentivized in the E-ID.*

# Limited – Convenience + Service

**Animal Grooming**

**Animal Hospital / Vet's Office**

**Bank/Credit Union**

**Beauty/Barber Shop**

**Boat Repair/Service**

**Boat Sales/Rentals**

**Convenience Store**

**Crisis Counseling Center**

**Dry Cleaning Service**

**Health Club**

**Laundromat**

**Mental Health Crisis Center**

**Pet Store**

**Pharmacy**

**Place of Worship**

**Recreational Facility (Indoor + Outdoor)**

**Salon/Spa**

**Tailor**

*Rationale: The Innovation District should be a convenient urban neighborhood where residents and workers can access a range of services without needing to drive. However, in order to avoid their proliferation at the expense of the primary, permitted uses, they are limited in the extent to which they can be developed on any single lot.*

# Limited – Entertainment + Amenity + Hotel

**Appliance Sales/Service**

**Bar/Tavern**

**Billiard Parlor**

**Bowling Alley**

**Café**

**Cinema**

**Food + Beverage Processing**

**Garden Supply Store**

**General Merchandise / Retail (all sizes)**

**Restaurant**

**Restaurant – Take Out**

*Rationale: The Innovation District should be a convenient urban neighborhood where residents, workers and visitors can access a range of services without needing to drive. However, in order to avoid their proliferation at the expense of the primary, permitted uses, they are limited in the extent to which they can be developed on any single lot.*

# A note on Hotels

## Proposal:

Staff recommends the following:

- One hotel per lot; and,
- Any individual hotel may not account for more than 80 percent of the Gross Floor Area of the building in which it is located.

*Rationale for allowing hotels:*

- *Economic Development + Recruitment*
- *Remote Work Destination*
- *Recreation*

# **Not Permitted – Residential**

**Single Detached Dwellings**

**Attached Dwellings – Duplex**

**Bed & Breakfast**

**Community House**

**Historic Inn**

**Mobile Home Park**

**Sorority/Fraternity**

*Rationale: These uses either do not support the district's density goals, are they are not considered to be compatible with a mixed-use, urban setting.*

# Not Permitted – All Other Uses

**A range of other uses are proposed as not permitted in the E-ID:**

- **Heavy Manufacturing**
- **Uses that produce toxic or harmful waste (e.g. dry cleaning plant)**
- **Logistics**
- **Auto-Oriented Uses**
- **Large format service and retail (e.g. large grocery, dental/medical lab, recycling center)**
- **Warehouses**

*Rationale: While heavy manufacturing has a legacy in the South End, most of these uses have long vacated the proposed E-ID area. The potentially harmful externalities of such uses are not compatible with a mixed-use urban district. The range of other uses proposed as not permitted are similarly not consistent with the district intent.*

# Urban Form Concept

**Lot Occupation +  
Building Placement**

**Ground Floor  
Uses**

**Ground Floor  
Entries**

**Pervious Area**

**Frontage Buildout +  
Building Setback**

**Frontage  
Buildout**

**Setbacks**

**Building Form**

**Building Height**

**Building Bulk**

**Parking + Loading +  
Service**

**Parking Type**

**Parking Design**

# Building Bulk

## Proposals:

- **FAR: 2.25 (2.5 when IZ bonus is granted)**
- **Max. Building Footprint, Floors 1-6: 15,000 sf.**
- **Max. Building Footprint, Floors 7-8: 10,000 sf.**
  - **Exceptions to Floors 7-8 bulk standards when buildings are constructed using mass timber and/or to Passive House standards**

*Rationale: Taller buildings should be limited in bulk to create an appropriate mix of building heights and avoid excessive shadows on the public realm. It should be noted that shade is often desirable in warmer months.*



# For further discussion - FAR

## CDO Floor Area Ratio definition:

“In accordance with the district-specific provisions of Article 4 where the intensity of development is measured on a floor area ratio basis, the calculation of development intensity shall be measured by dividing the **gross floor area** of all structures on a site, or portion of the site where split by a zoning district boundary, by the **gross site area**.”

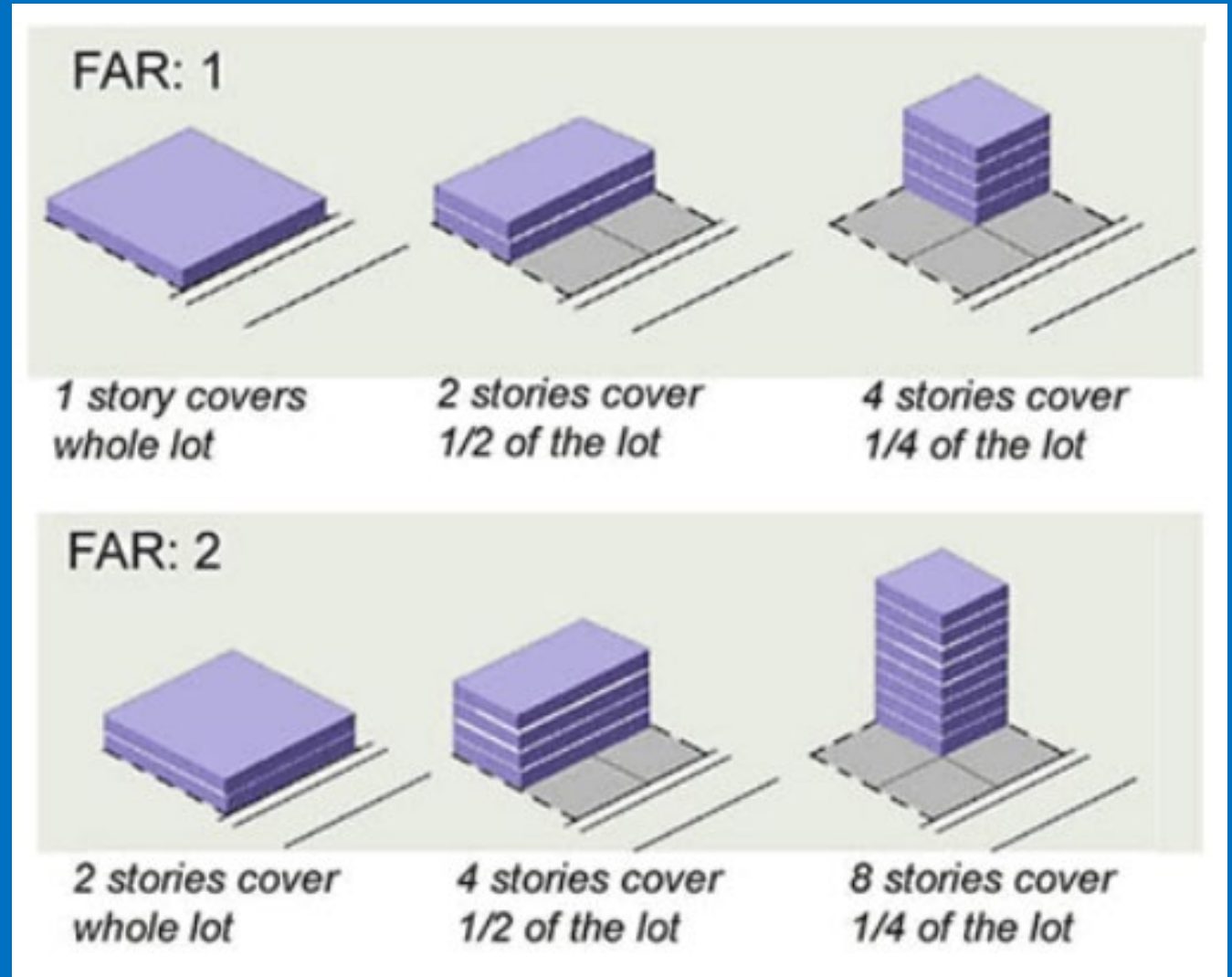


Image Credit: Julie Campoli

# For further discussion - FAR

**Site Area: 275,000 sf (6.3 acres)**

**Building GFA: 687,000 sf**

**FAR: 2.5**

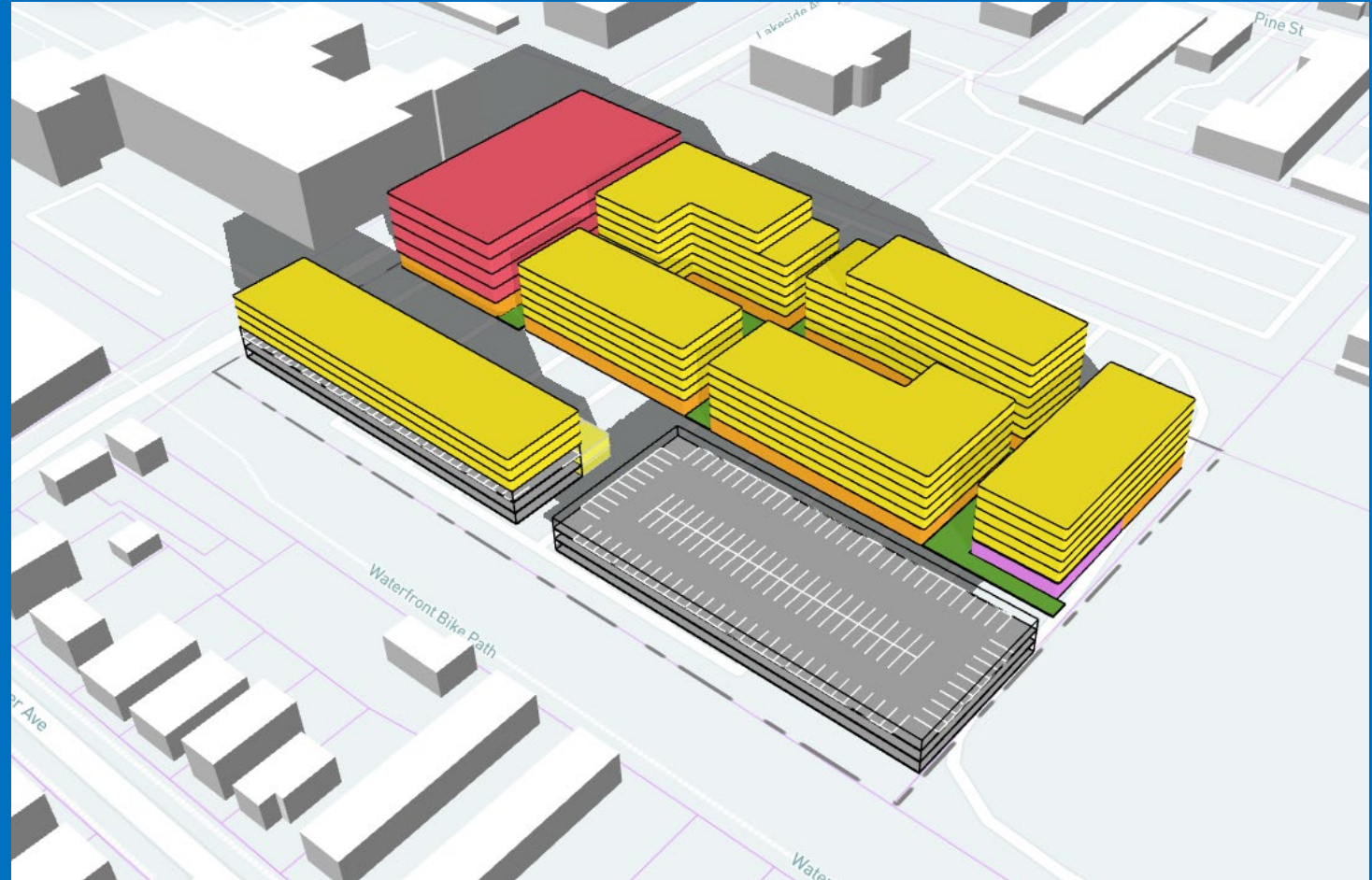
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**Res Units: 474\***

**Non-Res: 180,000 sf**

**Parking: 570 spaces**

\* Assumes 75% 1-BR / 15% 2-BR / 10% 3-BR



*\*for illustrative purposes only and not an endorsement or depiction of any development scenario*

# For further discussion - FAR

Site Area: 275,000 sf (6.3 acres)

Building GFA: 687,000 sf

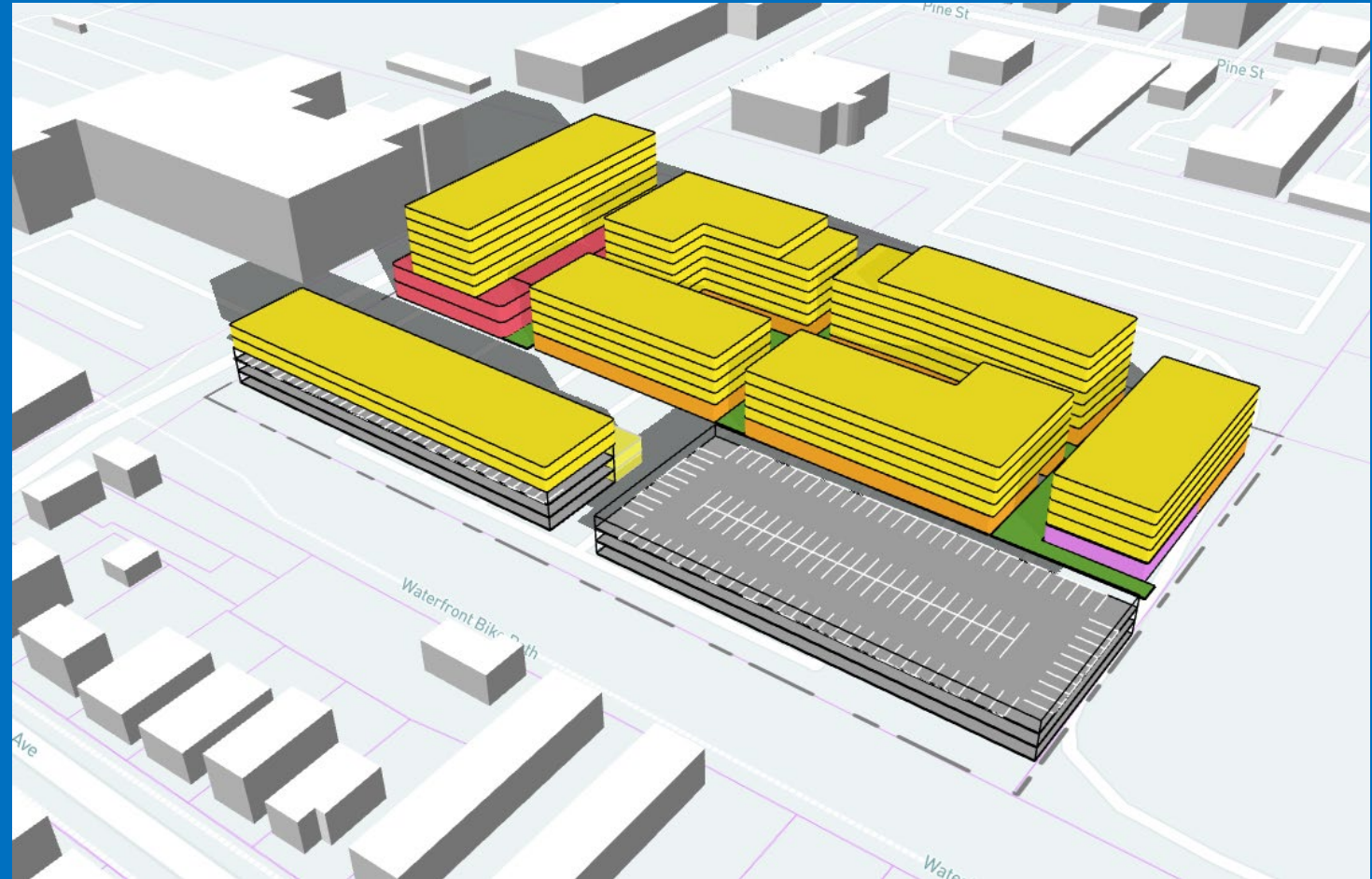
FAR: 2.25

Res Units: 483

Non-Res: 105,000 sf

Parking: 570 spaces

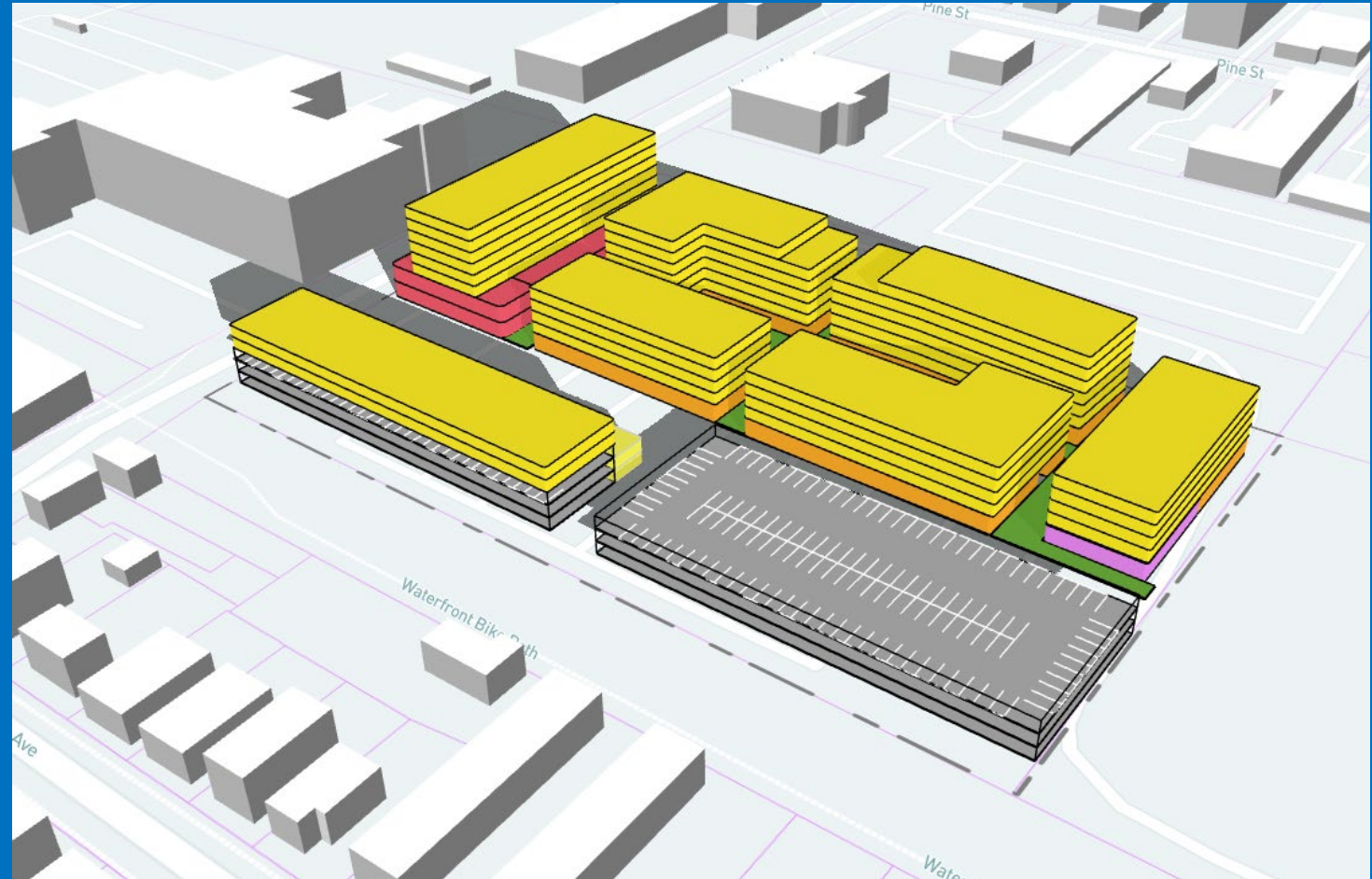
\* Assumes 75% 1-BR / 15% 2-BR / 10% 3-BR



*\*for illustrative purposes only and not an endorsement or depiction of any development scenario*

# For further discussion - FAR

On a 6.3 acre site, 0.25  
FAR is roughly  
equivalent to 75,000 sf.



*\*for illustrative purposes only and not an endorsement or depiction of any development scenario*

# For further discussion - FAR

Site Area: 275,000 sf (6.3 acres)

Building GFA: 687,000 sf

FAR: 2.42

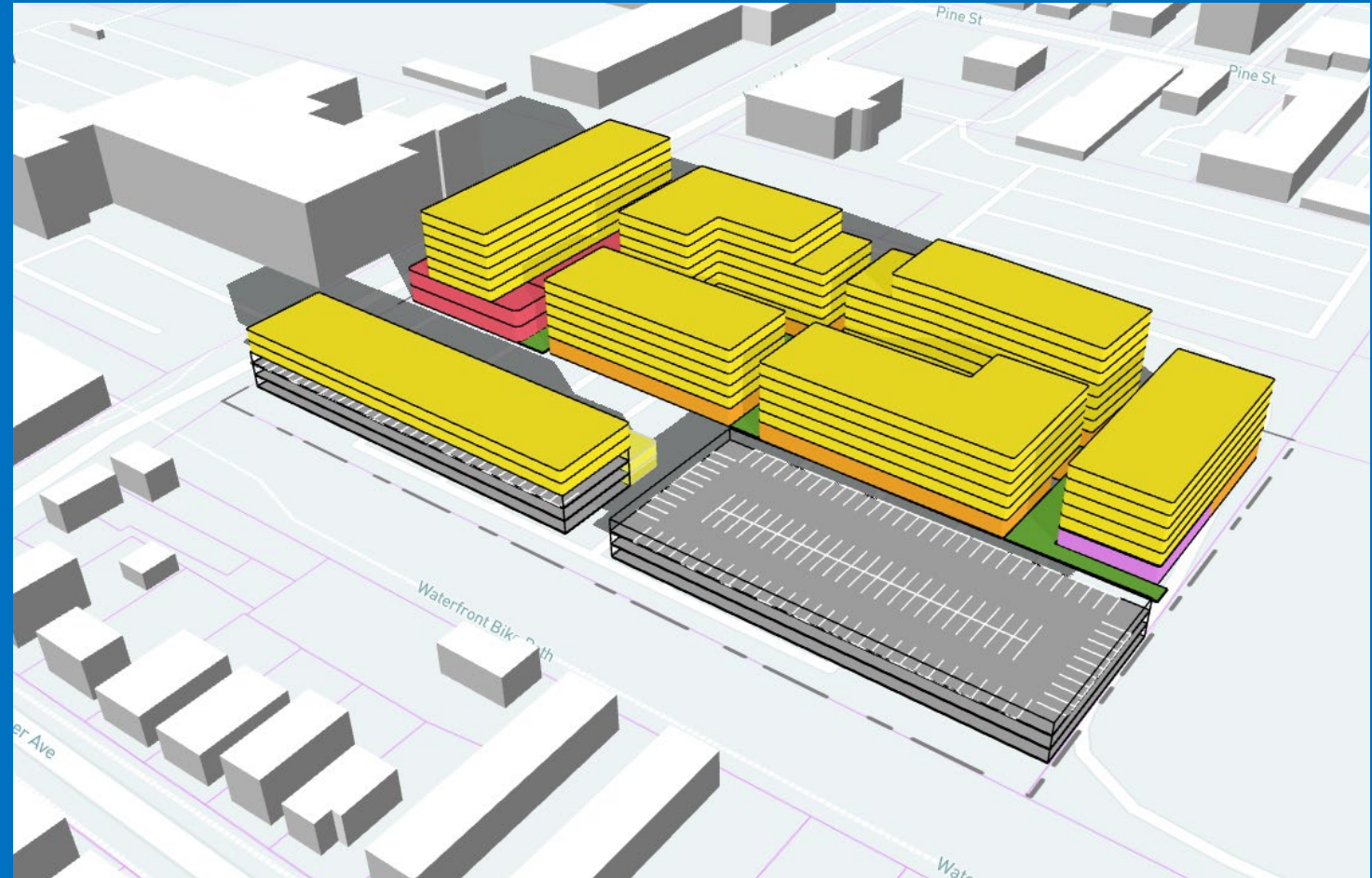
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Res Units: 548

Non-Res: 105,000 sf

Parking: 570 spaces

\* Assumes 75% 1-BR / 15% 2-BR / 10% 3-BR



*\*for illustrative purposes only and not an endorsement or depiction of any development scenario*

# For further discussion - FAR

**Site Area: 275,000 sf (6.3 acres)**

**Building GFA: 687,000 sf**

**FAR: 2.25**

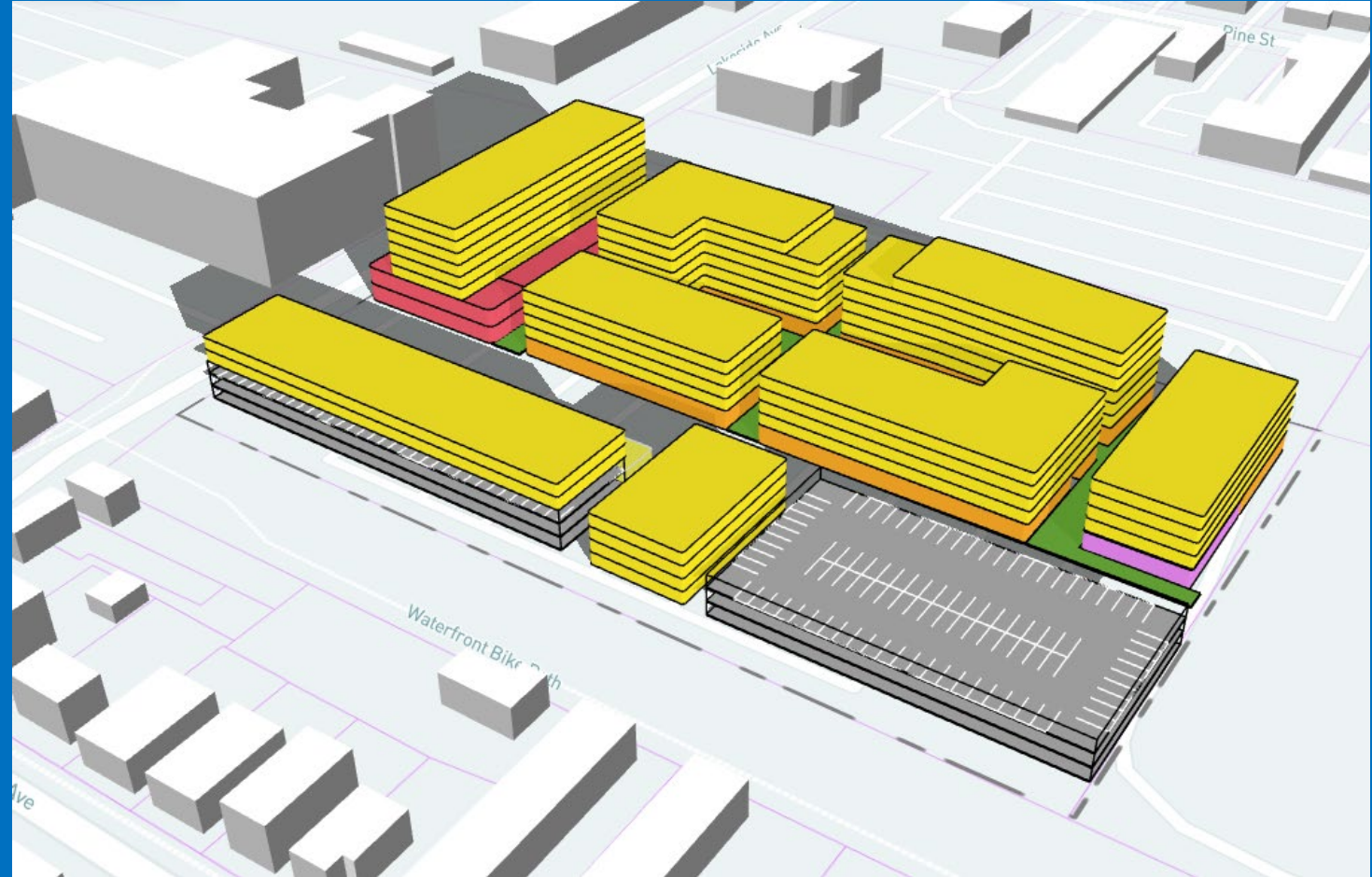
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**Res Units: 515**

**Non-Res: 105,000 sf**

**Parking: 480 spaces**

*\* Assumes 75% 1-BR / 15% 2-BR / 10% 3-BR*



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# For further discussion - FAR

**Site Area: 209,000 sf**

**Building GFA: 411,288 sf**

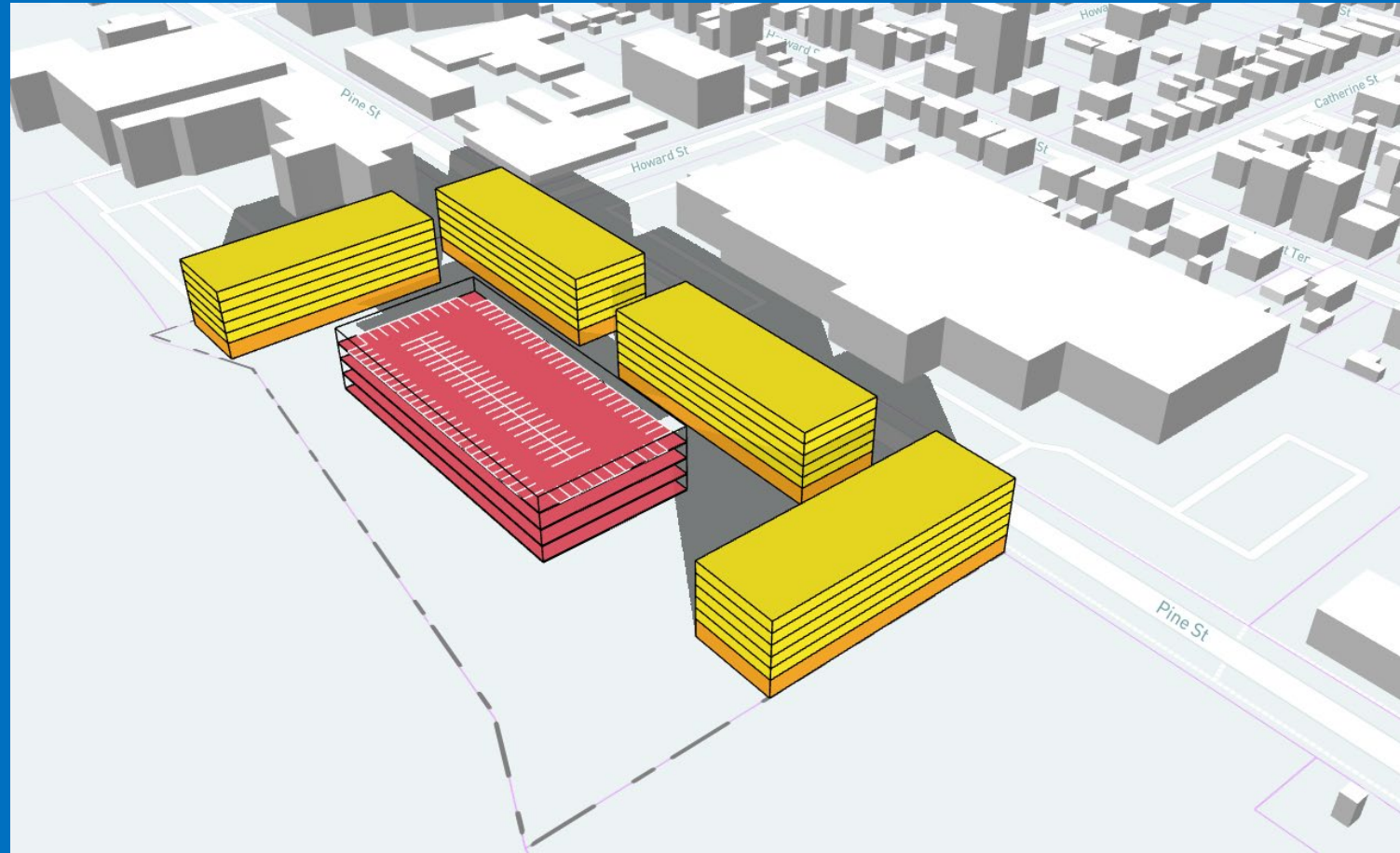
**FAR: 1.97**

**Res Units: 300**

**Non-Res: 50,000 sf**

**Parking: 460 spaces**

\* Assumes 75% 1-BR / 15% 2-BR / 10% 3-BR



*\*for illustrative purposes only and not an endorsement or depiction of any development scenario*

# Building Height

**Proposal: A maximum height limit of 8 stories / 85'.**

*Rationale: A mix of building heights, when properly organized, can achieve multiple planning goals. Taller buildings lining high-traffic corridors, as commonly practiced in Europe, can assist in intercepting noise and air pollution from entering the District's interior and adjacent open spaces. Additional height will also allow the District to house density levels that help Burlington meet its ten-year housing goals. Finally, different building heights can create a "texture" to the district that facilitates a range of uses that facilitate a vibrant and activated public realm.*

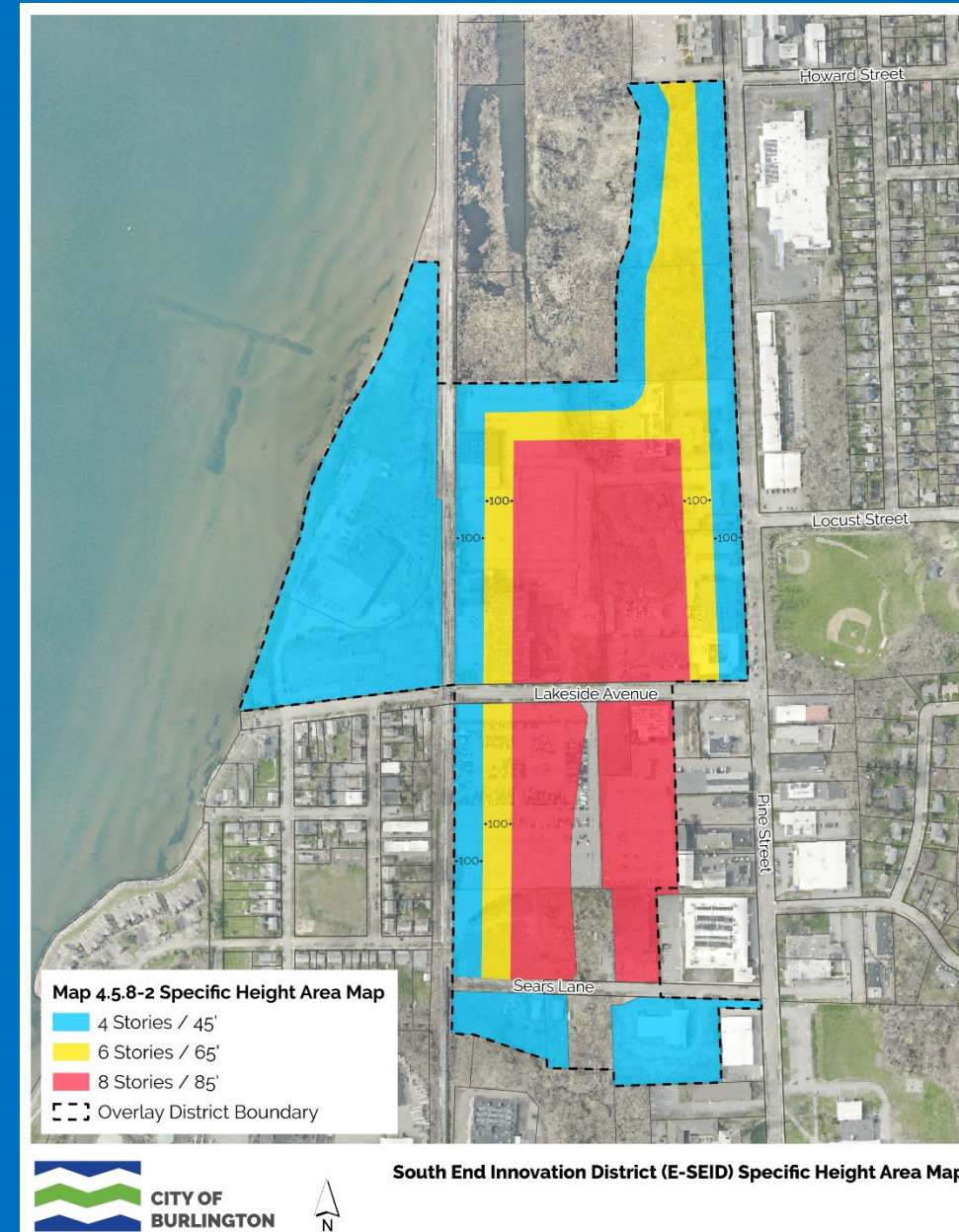


# For further discussion – Building Height

## Proposal:

Staff recommends the following:

- Specific Height Area Map to regulate height and mitigate shadow and view impacts to Pine Street, Barge Canal and Lakeside neighborhood



# Pervious Area

**Proposal: 20% of any lot should be pervious, with a minimum of 25% of that pervious area composed of DPW-approved GSI (e.g. constructed wetlands, suspended pavement, pervious pavement).**

*Rationale: The existing E-LM lot coverage standard is 80%. This proposed pervious area standard goes beyond the existing standard by requiring a minimum amount of GSI.*



# Pervious Area

**Proposal: The pervious area minimum standard may be reduced to 10% of the site area if 100% of the provided pervious area is composed exclusively of DPW-approved GSI**

*Rationale: The Innovation District should be a model for ecological urbanism. It is located within an urban ecosystem that is simultaneously contaminated, sensitive and rich in biodiversity. Furthermore, the South End's stormwater and wastewater infrastructure capacity relies on creative solutions that disconnect and slow flows from new development to the greatest extent possible.*



# Setbacks

**Proposal: Setback standards establish a urban building pattern:**

- **Min: 0'**
- **Max: 10'**

*Rationale: The Innovation District should be a highly urbanized, human-scaled district prioritizing accessible and active mobility. As such, the district's primary streets should be lined with buildings to the greatest possible extent. Where reductions in frontage are administratively approved, such voids in the street wall should provide access to interior courtyards or open space where feasible*



# Frontage Buildout

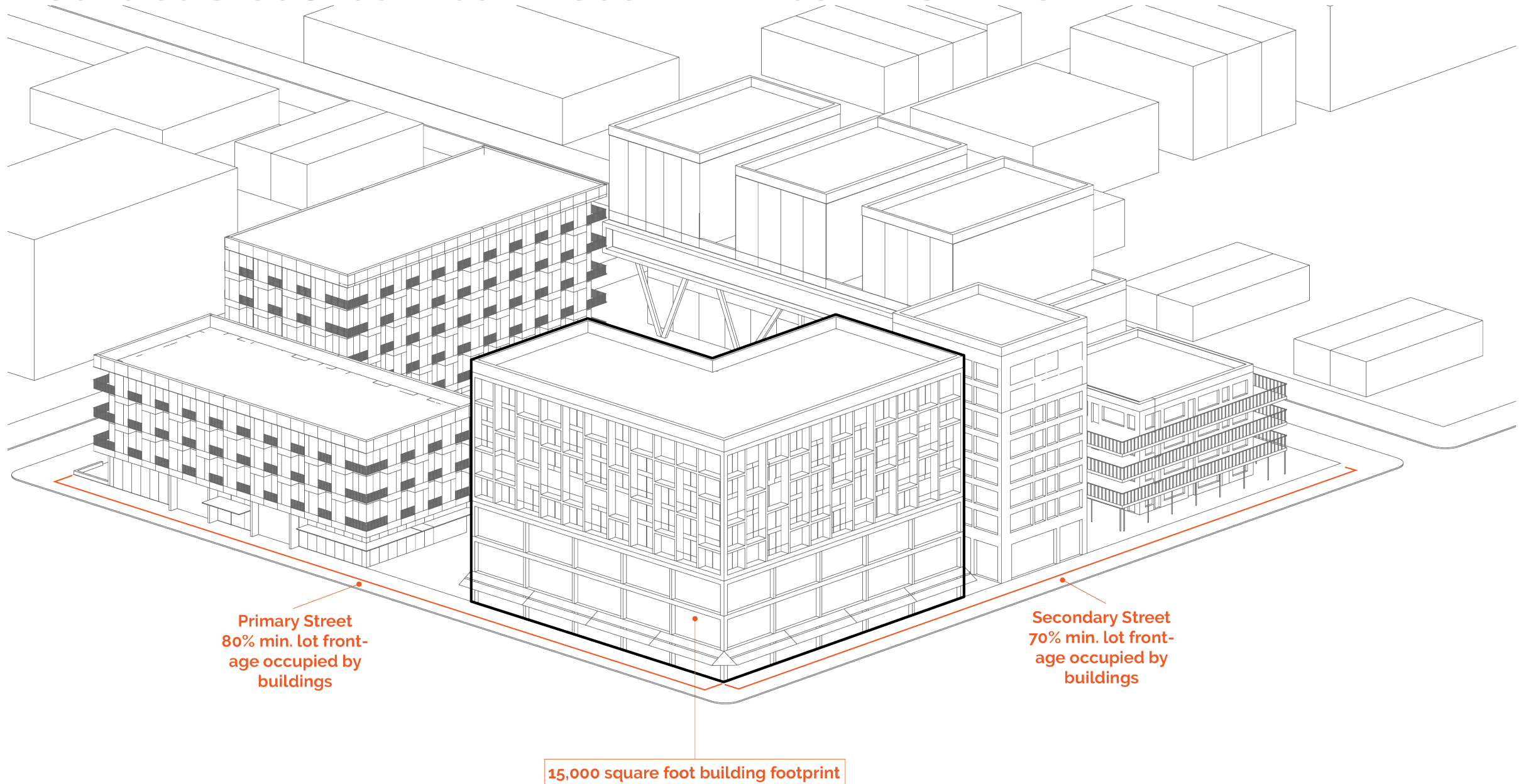
**Proposal: Frontage requirements are established by the Frontage Standards Map street hierarchy:**

- **Primary frontage: 80%**
- **Secondary frontage: 70%**

*Rationale: The Innovation District should be a highly urbanized, human-scaled district prioritizing accessible and active mobility. As such, the district's primary streets should be lined with buildings to the greatest possible extent. Where reductions in frontage are administratively approved, such voids in the street wall should provide access to interior courtyards or open space where feasible*



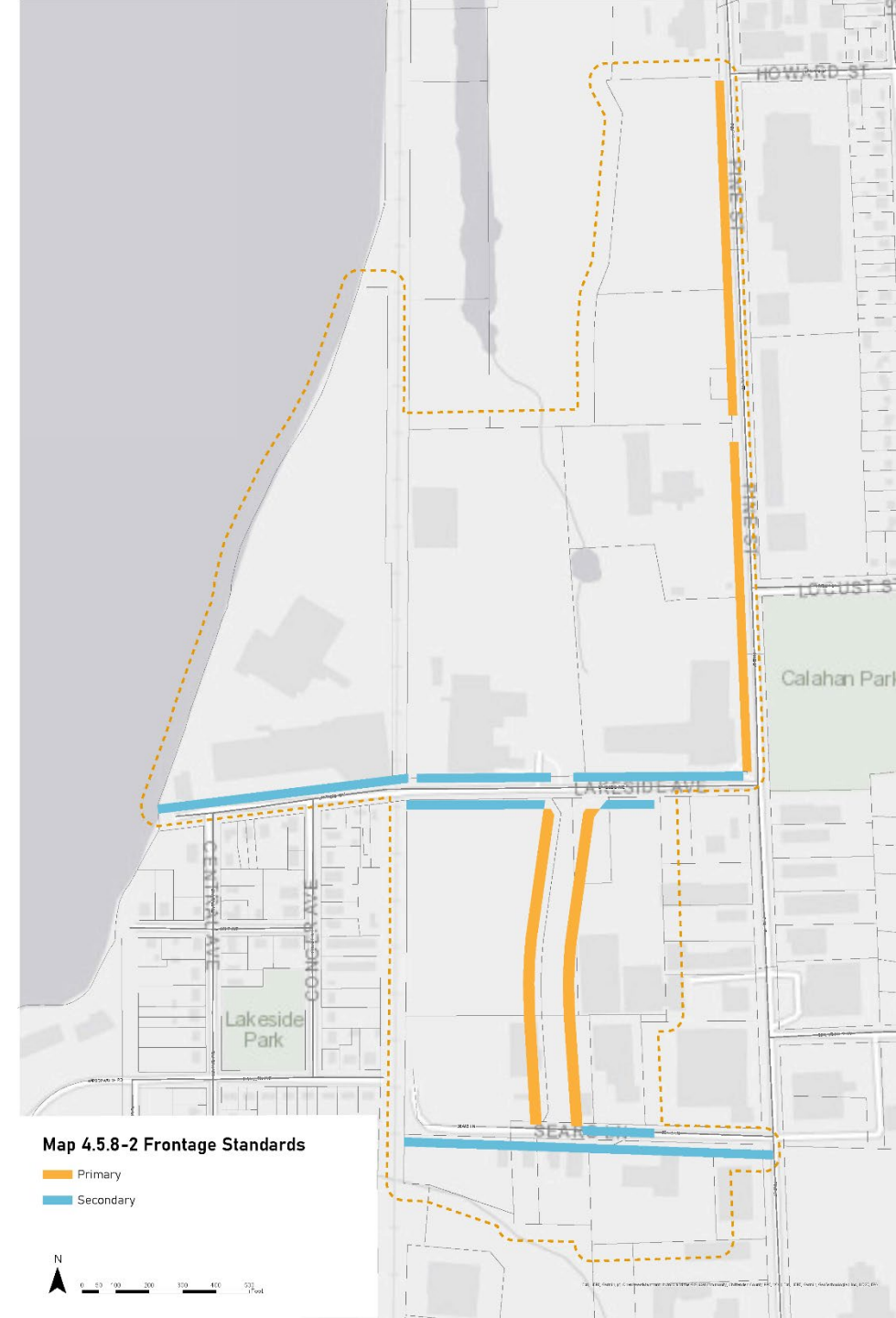
# Buildout and Bulk Framework



# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal:** The Innovation District includes existing streets and large lots, the development of which will require new streets. Ground floor uses are proposed as regulated by the Ground Floor Uses map.

*Rationale: The E-ID seeks to create an activated public realm (streets + open spaces) through ground floor uses. The district should include new activated “car-light” streets internal to large lots providing north-south access through the district. More auto-oriented streets like Pine Street and Champlain Parkway are reimagined as more pedestrian-friendly spaces. Other streets, like Lakeside Avenue and Sears Lane do not require the same ground floor activation, but there are no limitations to ground floor activation on these streets.*



# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal: Ground floor uses should have a minimum depth reflective of market conditions and high quality urban form.**

**Min. Depth: 25' (80% of all non-res. uses) and 10' (20% of all non-res. uses)**

*Rationale: An unintended consequence of ground floor commercial requirements in mixed-use development across the country is a glut of long-term vacant space. The proposal allows for portions of ground floor non-residential spaces to be as shallow as 25 feet while smaller portions are permitted at depths of just 10 feet. These standards provide flexibility in the development of ground floors and create smaller, more affordable non-residential spaces that still activate ground floors and the district's streetscapes.*

**STRONG  
TOWNS**

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What's up with all those empty commercial storefronts in new mixed-use developments?

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## Understanding Urban Retail Vacancy

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By [Jen Park](#) (Urban Institute)

### Colloquium: American Regionalism



STATE OF THE FIELD – American Regionalism and the Constellation of Mechanisms for Cross-Boundary Cooperation



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The Future of Collaborative Leadership in Contemporary Regional Entities



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# Ground Floor Uses

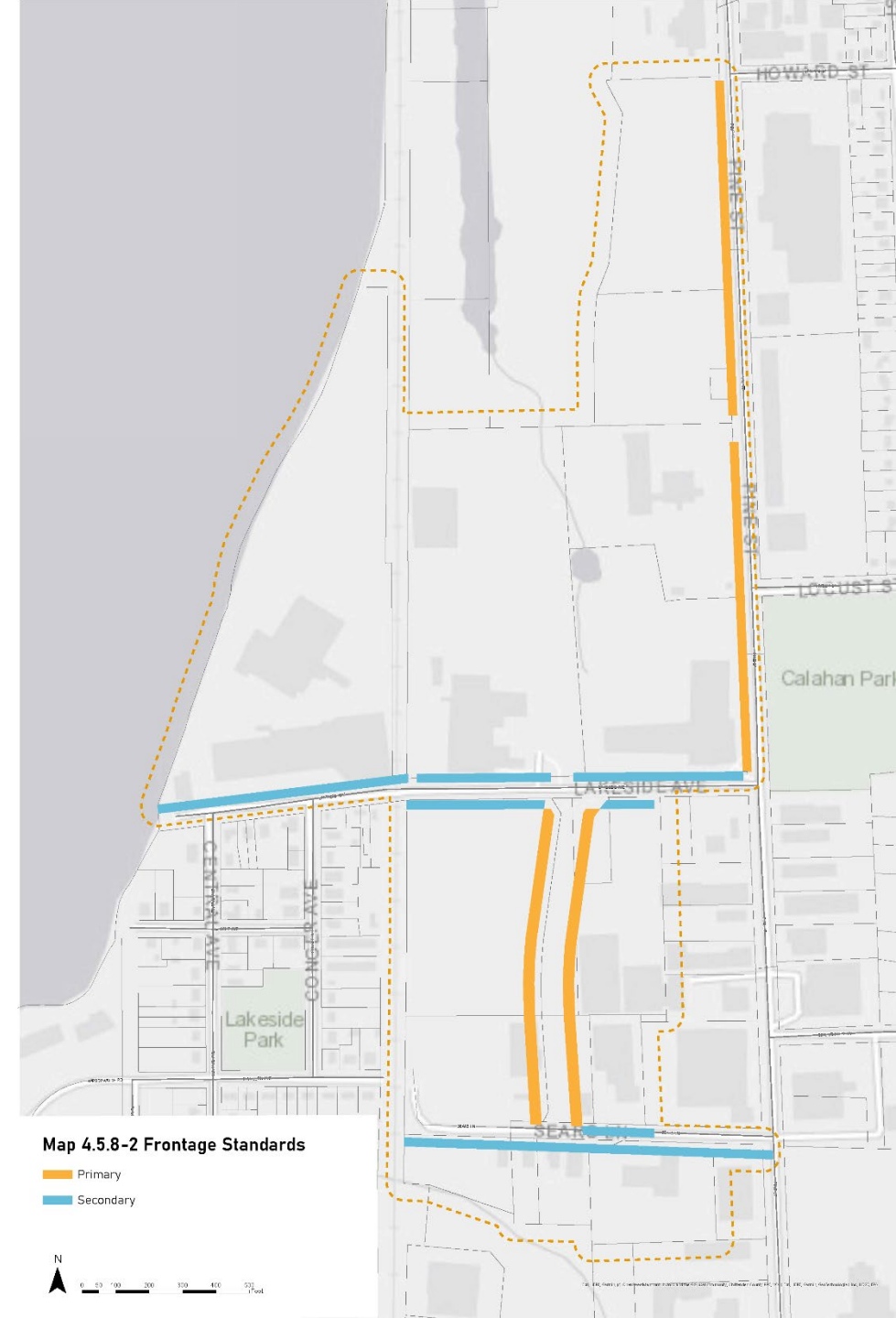
**Proposal: Building corners should include active non-residential uses.**

*Rationale: Non-residential uses at building corners in an urban district help to establish a highly visible retail or service landmark at building corners and intersections of streets and paths. Additionally, non-residential uses at corners can mitigate any undesirable impact of such uses to adjacent and nearby residences.*

# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal:** A minimum of 80% of any ground floor along primary frontages shall be occupied by non-residential uses.

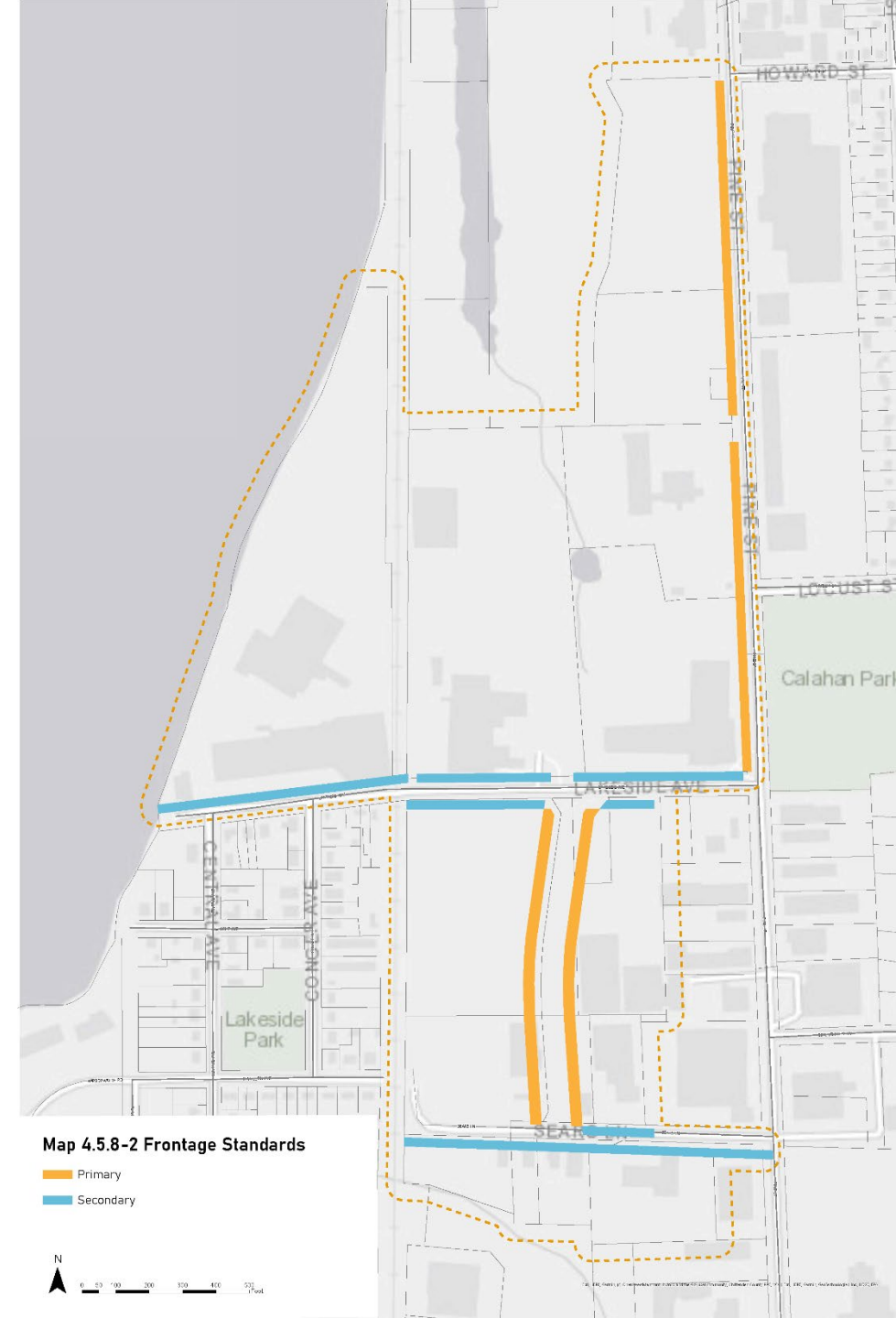
*Rationale: Development along the Innovation District's primary streets should be oriented toward and designed for the convenience, comfort and enjoyment of people not in cars. Requiring a high percentage of such non-residential uses on the ground floor, with exceptions granted as per below, will help create a vibrant, safe and enjoyable Innovation District.*



# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal:** A minimum of 20% of any ground floor along secondary frontages shall be occupied by non-residential uses, or 500 square feet, whichever is greater.

*Rationale: Development on the Innovation District's secondary streets should balance a vibrant urban street life with the needs and desires of residents, employees and others. Secondary streets may be lined with higher amounts of non-residential ground floor uses, but they are not required beyond 20 percent.*

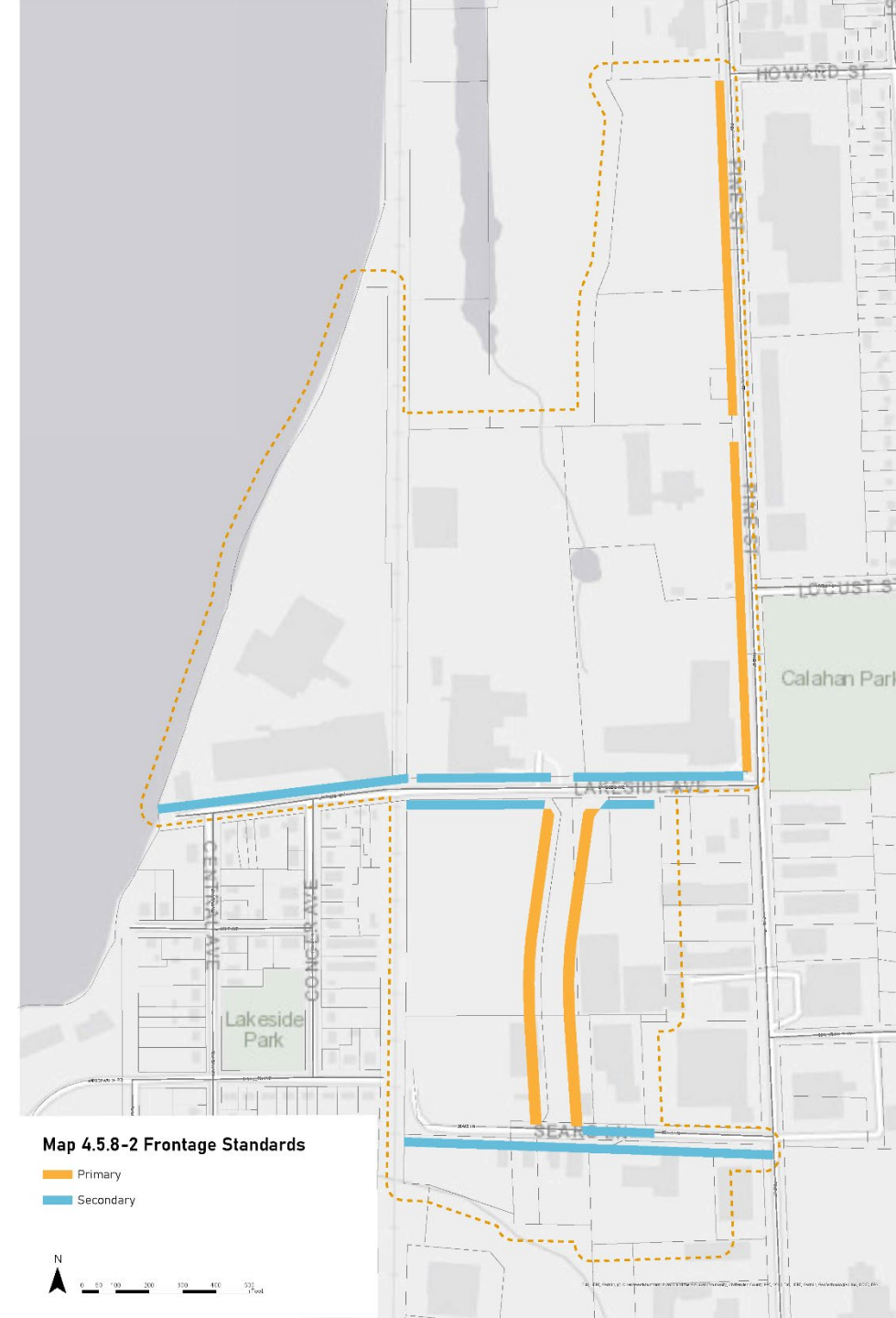


# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal:** Required active ground floor uses can be reduced:

- From 80% to 30% min. on primary frontages
- From 20% to no requirement on secondary frontages

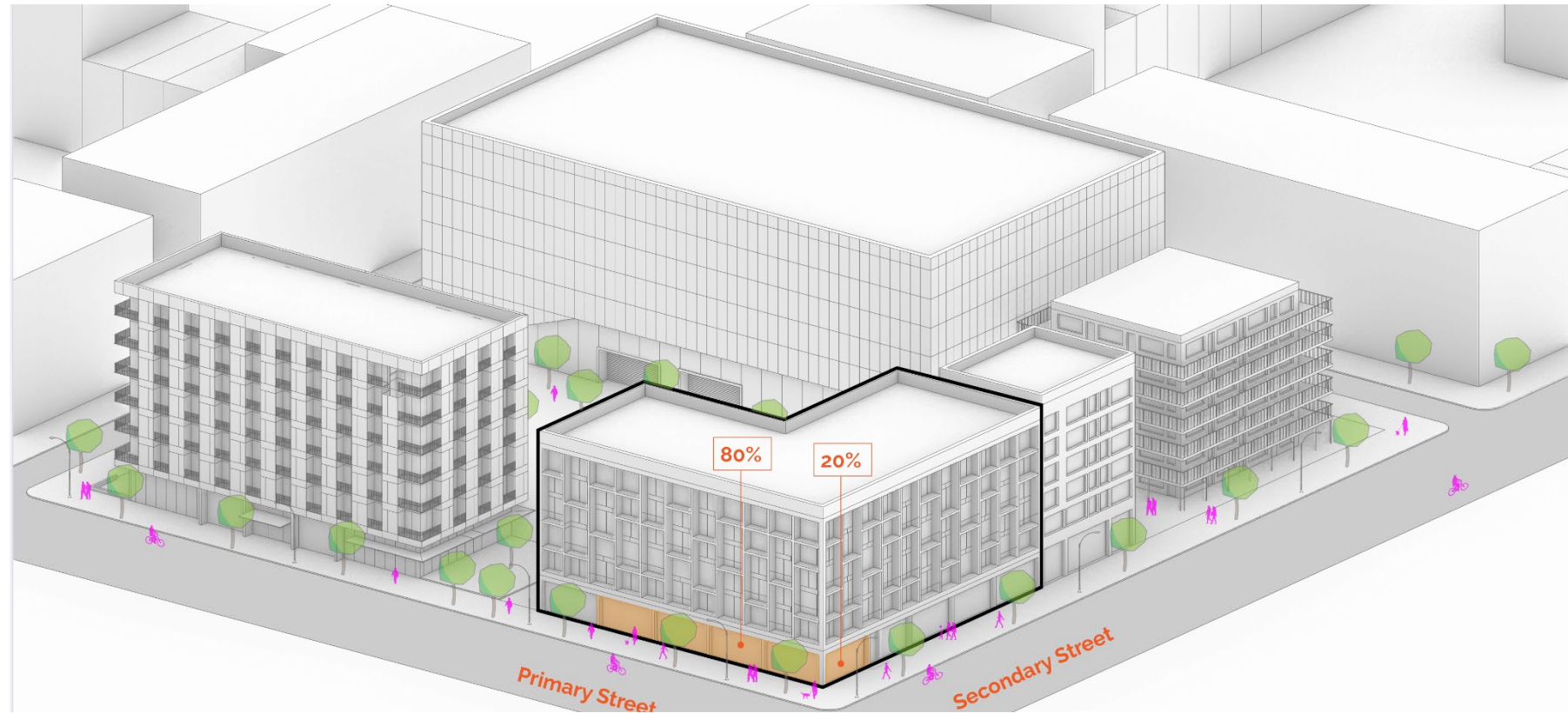
*Rationale: Ground floor non-residential use requirements have produced high vacancy rates of such space nationally and abroad. Also, residential uses at ground floor can be conducive to an activated urban district and should be permitted. The proposed reductions are intended to provide flexibility in development while also activating the district's public realm.*



# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal: Required active ground floor uses can be reduced:**

- **From 80% to 30% min. on primary frontages**
- **From 20% to no requirement on secondary frontages**



# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal:** Required active ground floor uses can be reduced when all non-residential uses are maintained as affordable for 30 years.

*Rationale: Affordable non-residential space supports a thriving local economy. Such space is in short supply across the city.*



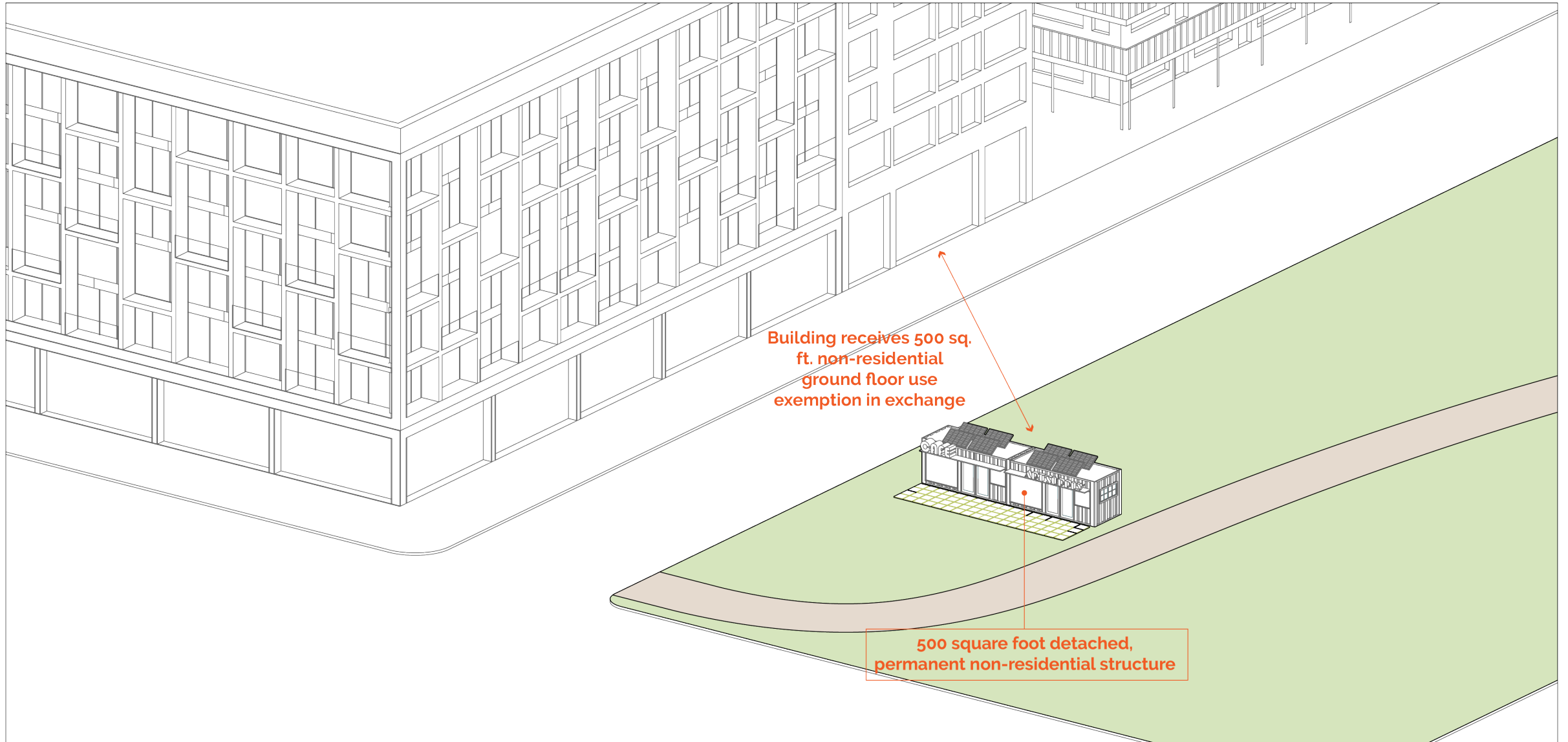
# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal:** Required active ground floor uses can be reduced in exchange for equivalent non-residential space in detached, permanent structures (e.g. kiosks, small, one- or two-story buildings, pavilions) located in the public realm.

*Rationale: Non-residential uses located in detached buildings within a district's public realm, including its streets, plazas and parks, can promote an active, accessible and economically healthy district in the same ways ground floor uses do. It can also be more feasible to create small, very affordable non-residential spaces in these smaller detached settings than in mixed-use building podiums.*



# Ground Floor Uses – Reduction for Detached Non-Residential Uses



# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal:** Required active ground floor uses can be reduced in exchange for publicly accessible open space at least 4,000 sf in size and located adjacent to or on roofs of buildings.

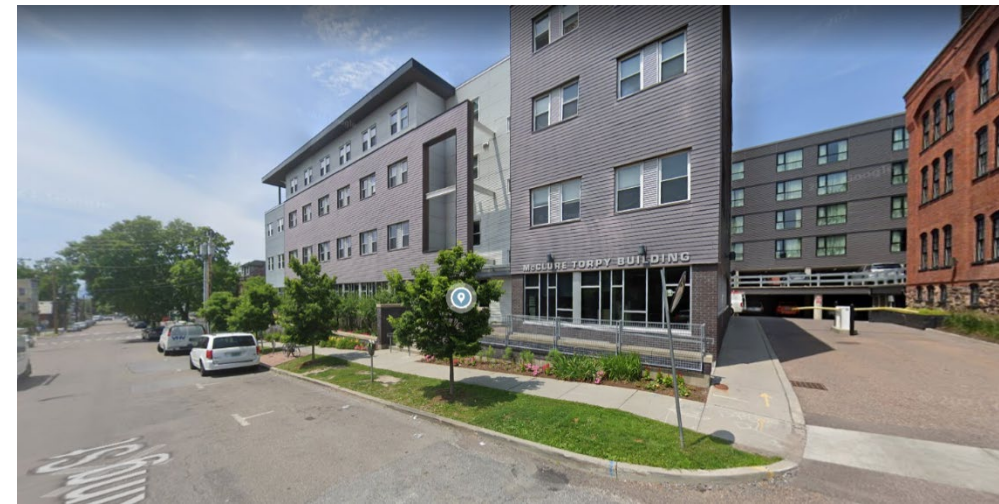
*Rationale: Open spaces can achieve ground floor public realm activation and create livable neighborhoods.*



# Ground Floor Uses

**Proposal:** Required active ground floor uses can be reduced when the building's residential mix consists of a minimum of 25% larger units, including at least 10% 3-bedroom and 15% 2-bedroom units.

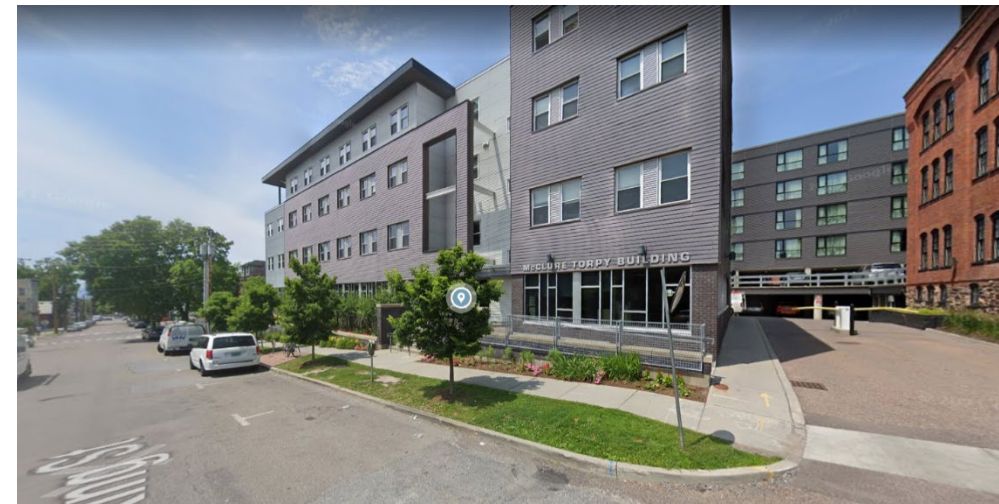
*Rationale: Typical apartment construction in the North American market consists almost entirely of studio and one-bedroom apartments. Equity and improved housing choice goals demand more family-sized apartments, particularly in amenity-rich settings like Burlington's core neighborhoods, including the future South End Innovation District.*



# Ground Floor Entries

**Proposal:** At least one ground floor entry is required each 60' linear feet of each building façade fronting on a public or private street or open space.

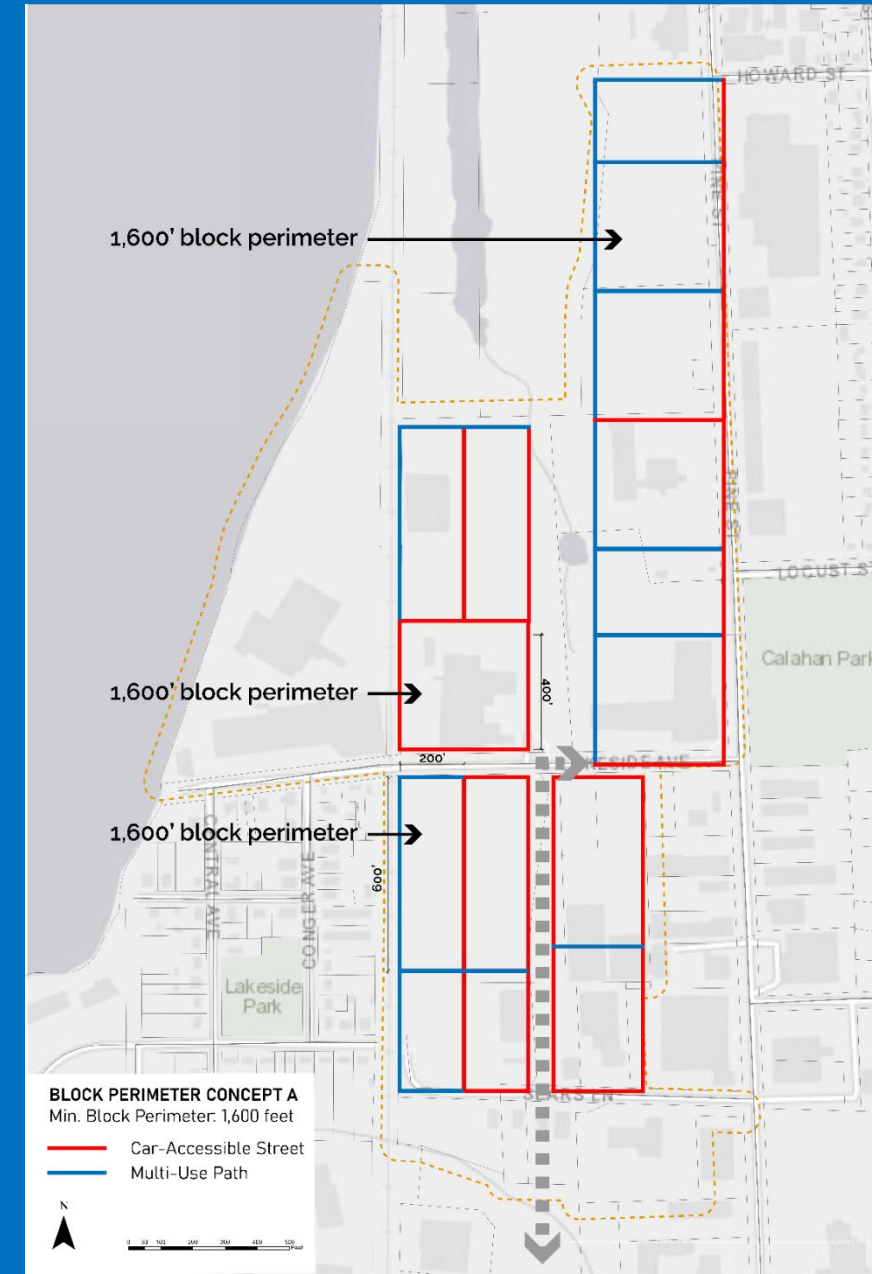
*Rationale: To foster and maintain a high degree of ground floor and public realm activation, ground floor entries should be frequent in the district.*



# For further discussion – Blocks/Streets

## Proposal:

- Maximum block perimeter (1,600 feet)
- Blocks can be enclosed by any combination of public streets and public paths.



# Parking

**Proposal:** Surface lots are not permitted, except for small lots accommodating four or fewer accessible spaces when associated with a principal building. No more than 20 such spaces are permitted on any one lot. In such lots, one or half (whichever is greater) must be marked and reserved for handicapped and pregnant individuals.

*Rationale: Small surface lots are critical in creating an accessible district. Such lots, when well-integrated into site plans, can be conducive to a safe, activated public realm.*

# Parking

**Proposal: With the exception of individual Garages serving a multifamily dwelling which shall be accessed from the rear of the building via a public or private alley, all Parking Structures and Garages shall be located behind a Perimeter Building or screened by architectural or vegetative structures.**

*Rationale: Parking structures generate noise and light pollution that is not consistent with the intent of a car-light, livable urban district. Parking structures also do little to activate the public realm, unless wrapped by buildings with active uses or engaging facades.*