

a taste of home?

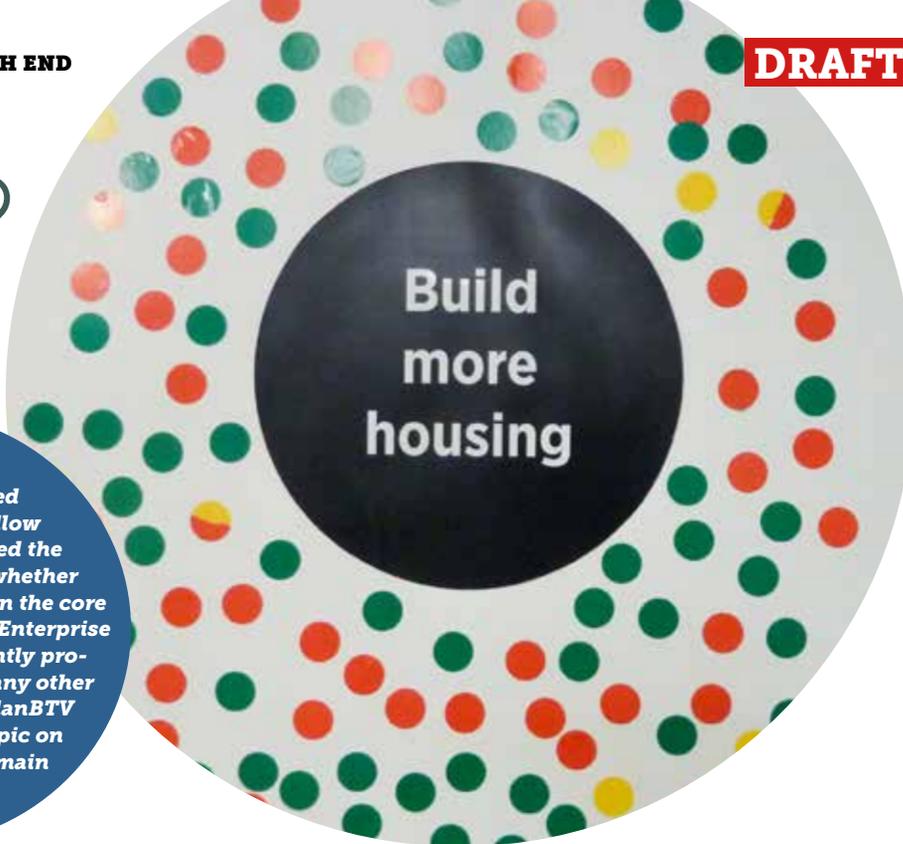
HOUSING AND THE SOUTH END

Housing is not currently permitted in the South End Enterprise Zone, the area that's the focus of this plan. The case for and against housing within the core of the South End has been debated back and forth, and our community is passionate about this topic. But it is increasingly difficult to make the case that all housing should be excluded from the Enterprise Zone in the light of the regional and citywide housing shortage, the economic and environmental importance of locating additional housing close to South End workplaces, and a fundamental shift in the relationship of home and work in the new American city. So **planBTV South End advocates policy changes that would allow some housing in some places within the core of the South End provided certain critical conditions are met:**

- 1. Any housing must be targeted to the needs of the area workforce and must include an affordable component.**
- 2. Any housing must increase the supply of unique arts/commercial/maker space that characterizes the South End.**

South End artist Amey Radcliffe's "Red Light, Green Light, Yellow Light" project highlighted the range of opinions about whether housing should be allowed in the core of the South End, within the Enterprise Zone, where zoning currently prohibits housing. More than any other issue discussed during planBTV South End, this was a topic on which South Enders remain divided.

While opinions on this topic are likely to continue to be divided, the benefit of the community conversation in planBTV South End is that it allows the development of more nuanced solutions that respond to perspectives that come from both sides of the debate. Burlington must create the zoning tools to manage and control the type and extent of housing development in ways that avoid negative impacts that some community members fear, while capturing the positive economic and environmental benefits of an expanded housing supply.



**Build
more
housing**

What locations would be a good fit for multifamily housing? What kinds of housing should be allowed or encouraged? The planBTV South End strategy is to:

- Target housing to sites outside of the Enterprise Zone, where it's currently allowed by zoning.
- Allow housing within the Enterprise Zone in certain locations provided it's made up of workforce and affordable units, and that it increases the supply of unique arts/commercial/maker space that characterizes the South End.
- Continue the community discussion as part of the zoning effort.

planBTV supports expansion of housing with conditions

Community comments have been divided on the topic of housing. But with the right policies and controls in place, it's possible to capture the benefits without triggering undesirable impacts.

Community comments from the planBTV South End webtool.

"Don't let housing in the enterprise zone. We need to focus on commercial uses not housing in this area."

"The south end is the enterprise zone. Allowing housing will force artists out and will only create a positive improvement for developers. If housing is allowed in the south end it won't be a good mix with what is already there. Artists banging on metal, using power tools and working at odd hours will not mix well with housing."

"We desperately need more housing in Burlington and the South End is a great place for it. I think it should be allowed in only certain areas of the Enterprise Zone though, in order to keep the industrial and commercial nature of the area."

"Yes, of course. High density residential with required commercial on the bottom floor is almost always a great solution."

More housing could bring benefits for all of us, including:

- **More housing choices for people at different stages of their life**, so "empty nesters," younger workers and couples, and others looking for smaller, apartment-style units with lower monthly costs and maintenance burdens have options without leaving the South End.
- **More spending power focused on neighborhood businesses**, supporting a strong hyper-local economy.
- **More trips that can be taken on foot or via bike**, so area businesses would need less parking for customers and employees.
- **A more resilient economy that keeps workers and business in Burlington and Vermont**, because without ample housing at prices workers can afford, Burlington—and the South End economic hub—will face challenges in attracting and retaining businesses.

Some South Enders voiced concerns about allowing housing within the Enterprise Zone, including:

- **New housing could conflict with industrial and commercial activities**. The Enterprise Zone has long been a manufacturing district where housing is prohibited, and the one place left in the city where industrial activities are still allowed by local zoning. These kinds of activities typically come with loud noises, unpleasant odors, and truck traffic. While some of these impacts can be mitigated, housing could be a tough fit.
- **Housing might contribute to already rising rents and property values**. The South End is already an expensive choice for traditional industrial/manufacturing enterprises, with higher rents than elsewhere in the County.¹ This reflects the South End's appeal to businesses that combine industrial and consumer-facing operations—e.g., breweries with tap rooms, prototyping facilities with retail shops, commercial kitchens with cafés, studios that incorporate gallery or shop space—and are therefore willing to pay higher rents for industrial space. Adding more higher-paying uses within the Enterprise Zone could further erode the South End's position as a traditional manufacturing/light industrial area—perhaps threatening businesses that rely on low-cost space. This is especially true for small entrepreneurs and artists who rely on low cost space to make ends meet.

¹ Source: Burlington South End Market Study, by HR&A

Strategies

Add housing outside of the Enterprise Zone

Develop housing outside of the Enterprise Zone, where it's currently allowed by zoning.

Consider the school district maintenance facility behind Champlain School; the church site at Pine and Flynn; commercial parcels on St. Paul Street, Shelburne, and South Champlain Street.



Initiate conversations with land owners to gauge interest in potential redevelopment, and to identify potential barriers.



Department of Planning & Zoning; Community & Economic Development Office

Permit housing in certain locations within the Enterprise Zone.

Designate the area near Lakeside Avenue—the future Maker'hood Center—and a portion of the Railyard Enterprise Project area as places where housing is allowed, provided that the supply of unique arts/commercial/maker space is increased and housing combines workforce housing and affordable units. Large parking lots

and vacant sites are where the South End could add a significant amount of new space for offices, maker businesses and

"Live-work space for artists would be a useful resource."

Community comment from the webtool

"The parcel on Pine/Flynn (St. Anthony's) should be combination of South End community center and co-op housing. Housing is also appropriate behind Champlain School on the property which is now used for school maintenance equipment."

Community comment from the webtool

other supporting uses. Incorporating housing as part of the mix would support this area as a lively place on evenings and weekends, and offer new housing choices within easy reach of South End jobs and businesses. Regulations could require that a portion of the affordable units required under Burlington's inclusionary zoning rules be designated for artist and maker work-live space.



Prepare zoning revisions to allow housing under the conditions described above.



Department of Planning & Zoning; Planning Commission

Allow artist and maker work-live space in buildings new and old.

In a recent Artist Work Space and Housing Survey, over 140 local artists expressed interest in work-live space. This type of space would provide the option of working and living within a single unit designed for that purpose, lowering overhead and living space expenses for interested artists. Efforts already underway to explore feasibility of artist work-live space within the South End should continue to be advanced through non-profit

partnerships and/or private development. For more information on work-live space, please see *Spice It Up: Preserving Arts + Affordability in the South End*.



Prepare zoning revisions to allow artist work-live space within the South End.



Department of Planning & Zoning; Planning Commission

"I think that the area around Lakeside has a lot of potential for redevelopment (big parking lot) and housing should be allowed there, but always as part of a mixed-use building, on top of some commercial uses, like a grocery store for example."

Community comment from the webtool

In the Somerville, MA Fabrication District, two projects at 9 & 39 Medford Street in development by Berkeley Investments, a private real estate developer, will provide 100 residential units in an adaptive reuse project. The project complies with Somerville's 15% inclusionary housing requirement, as well as the zoning district's requirement that 5% of gross square feet be arts related. To comply with the latter, the project will include five artist live/work units (all of which will be two-bedrooms), an arts amenity space to be programmed by the residents, and a gallery/media room totaling 7,000 SF. The remainder of the units are market rate which will help cross-subsidize the affordable units.

Continue the conversation

Continue community discussion as part of zoning effort.

Continuing this discussion as part of the zoning update will be important in ensuring that the rules for future development in the South End match community sentiments.



Provide forums for continued community discussion and information sharing as part of efforts to update zoning.



Department of Planning & Zoning; Planning Commission

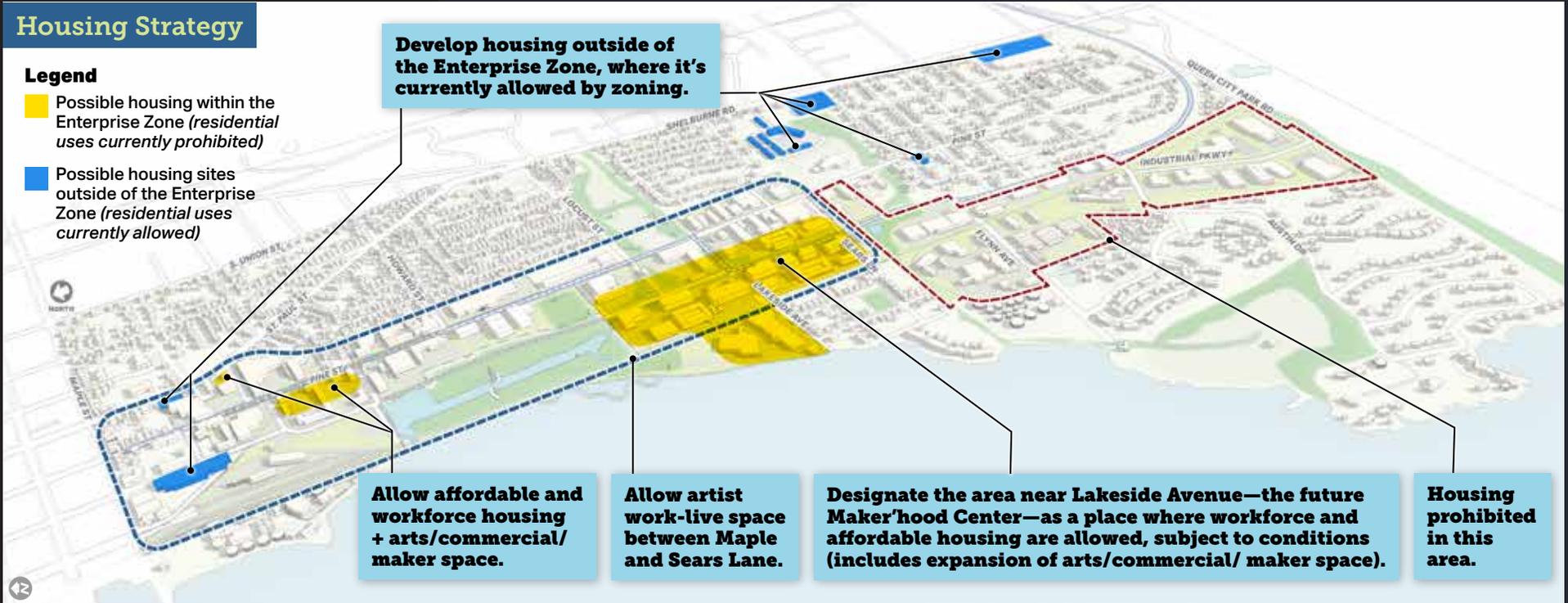


CREDIT IMAGE: BOSTONGLOBE.COM

Housing Strategy

Legend

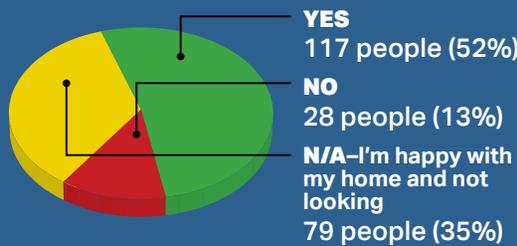
- Possible housing within the Enterprise Zone (residential uses currently prohibited)
- Possible housing sites outside of the Enterprise Zone (residential uses currently allowed)



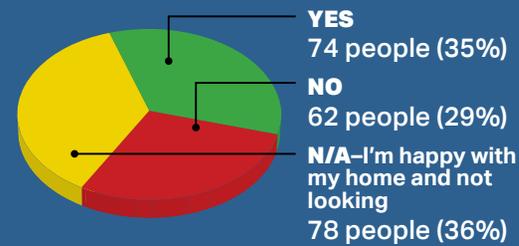
THE RESULTS ARE IN!

Two recent surveys asked: "Assuming it's affordable to your income and meets your bedroom needs, would you live in a newly built 3 or 4 story building with an elevator and amenities if it was built on or near Pine Street?"

Respondents to the **Artist Work Space and Housing Survey**, targeting local artists, reported:



Respondents to the **South End Employee Housing Survey**, targeting workers at large South End businesses, reported:



In work-live space...

- Work is *always* present; living space is secondary (and sometimes just part time).
- Design of units reflects the primary purpose of work; work-live units look like industrial work spaces that have small spaces set-aside for residential needs.