



---

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

---

BRIAN MURPHY  
Assistant City Manager for  
Community Development

To: Planning Board, CRA Board  
From: CDD Staff  
Date: March 14, 2014  
Re: **Kendall Square Zoning Discussion – MXD Area**

The purpose of this brief is to provide an update on the status of the Kendall Square (K2) study recommendations, and to begin discussing the next phases of implementation.

Earlier this year, the Planning Board received the **K2C2-Kendall Square Final Report**. We hope Board members have had an opportunity to review the report, as it provides a comprehensive review of the analysis, discussion, and final recommendations of the Kendall Square Study Committee.

#### **Process to-Date**

The work of the K2 Study Committee concluded in June, 2012. Over the course of the following nine months, the Planning Board had several discussions about the Committee's recommendations.

The K2 study recommended an overall framework to guide future development in Kendall Square as a whole (described on the following page). It also identified four distinct districts within the study area, each of which would have its own unique development objectives (see attached map):

- KS1. The district controlled by the CRA (currently the MXD zoning district)
- KS2. The district predominated by the US-DOT Volpe Center (currently PUD-KS)
- KS3. The district adjacent to the Broad Canal and riverfront (currently PUD-3)
- KS4. The land area owned by MIT (subject of the MIT-Kendall rezoning petition)

In its early discussions of the K2 study recommendations, the Planning Board expressed a desire to address each of these districts individually, with input from the property owners.

The initial discussion of the K2 recommendations was followed closely by discussion of the MIT-Kendall rezoning petition, which incorporated the recommendations of the K2 study into a more specific vision for MIT land holdings in Kendall Square. The City Council adopted that rezoning in April, 2013.

Since the development of new housing on Ames Street in the short-term is likely, given the recent approval of the Ames Street land disposition and zoning amendments, there is renewed interest in proceeding with the K2 proposal for rezoning of the MXD district.

## Kendall Square Study – Overall Planning Framework

The planning vision articulated by the K2 Study Committee includes four main points:

- **NURTURE KENDALL’S INNOVATION CULTURE** by allowing for growth in the knowledge economy, strengthening connections between MIT and Kendall Square, and supporting a vibrant environment for creative interaction.
- **CREATE GREAT PLACES** with open space and recreational opportunities for the neighborhood, lively and walkable streets, and interaction among diverse segments of the community.
- **PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY** by expanding transportation choices with less reliance on automobile travel, reducing resource consumption and waste emissions, encouraging compact development and promoting a healthier environment.
- **MIX LIVING, WORKING AND PLAYING** with added housing, retail and amenities, focused intensity around transit, and minimized development pressures on traditional neighborhoods.

Based on this vision, the following zoning provisions were recommended for each of the four districts:

- **Active Ground-Floor Uses** would be required on major streets including Main Street, Ames Street, Broadway and Third Street, and incentivized throughout.
- **Middle-Income Housing** would be required in housing developments taller than 250 feet.
- **Innovation Office Space** for small companies and start-ups would be required as a component of all new office development.
- **Community Investments** into a common fund would support open space improvement and activation, expanded transportation options, and workforce development programs.
- **Sustainability** in new buildings would be improved by requiring LEED Gold standards, energy monitoring, cool roofs and stormwater management, and encouraging use of district steam, cogeneration and other efficient energy systems.
- **Parking and Loading** impacts would be mitigated through strict parking maximums, flexible minimums, and encouragement of sharing among different users within the area.
- **Design Guidelines**, developed through the K2 study, would be applied during project review.

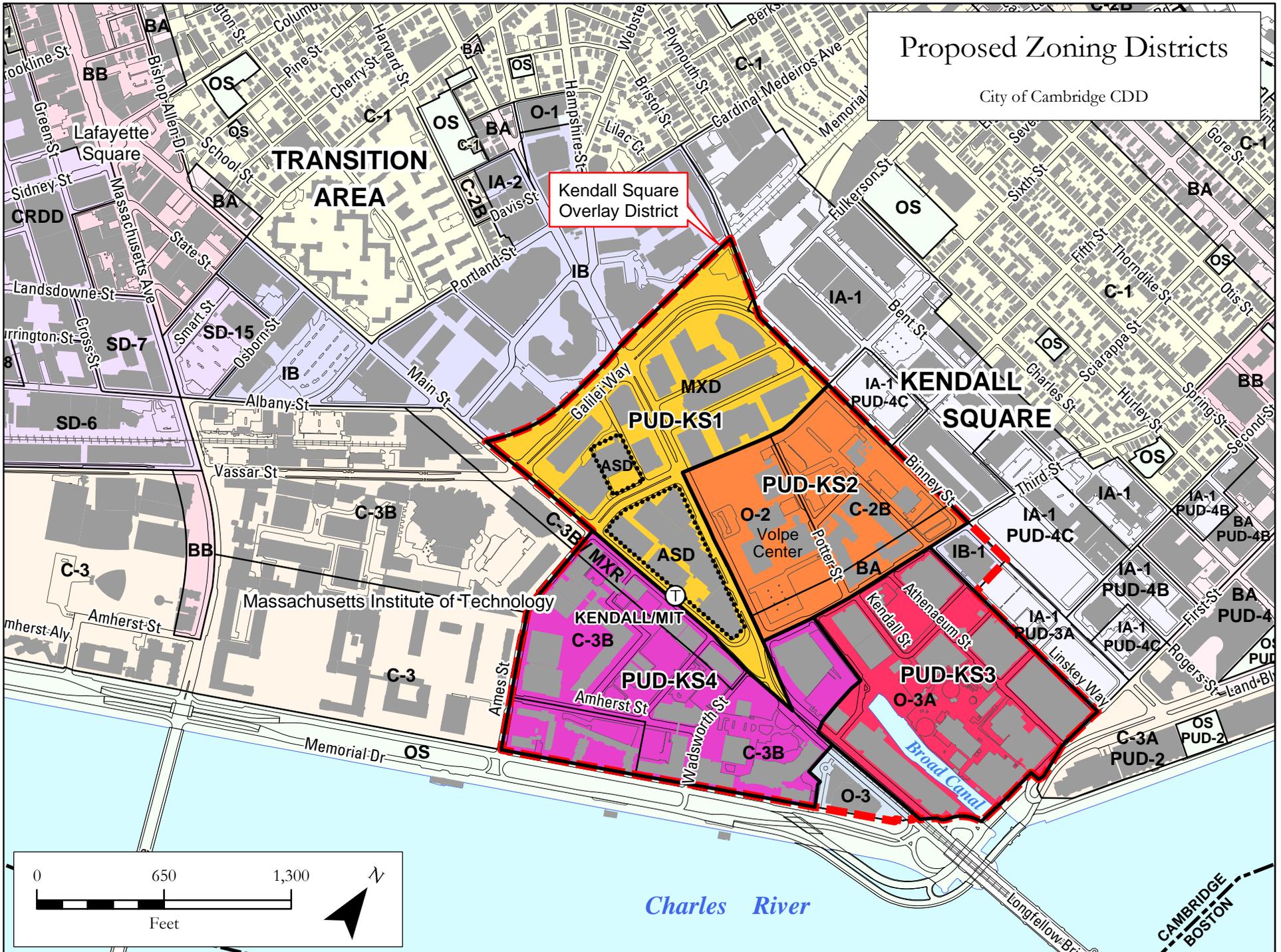
## MXD Area

The K2 study envisions about an additional one million square feet of new development in the MXD area, with up to 60% for commercial uses and at least 40% for residential. This new development would be allowed only after the completion of 200,000 square feet of residential development currently permitted by the MXD zoning, which is now being planned for Ames Street.

At Tuesday’s meeting, representatives of the CRA and owners of land within the MXD area will be present along with CD staff to participate in a discussion of how future development might take place within this conceptual framework. This discussion will be an opportunity to raise specific issues and questions to be addressed as the planning process continues.

# Proposed Zoning Districts

City of Cambridge CDD



# MXD Zoning District

Cambridge, Massachusetts

