

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-06 – FINAL PUBLICATION
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
In the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Six
AN ORDINANCE

That the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Cambridge be amended on a Zoning Petition by the Cambridge City Council to amend the Zoning Map and Article 17.000 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance as follows with the intent of strengthening active use requirements on Cambridge Street.

Amendments to the Zoning Map.

See attached Zoning Map and descriptive text.

Amendments to Article 17.000.

Amend Section 17.704.2.1 to read as follows:

17.704.2.1 Ground Story Active Uses. The following limitations shall apply in addition to the Table of Height Limitations below:

- (a) On lots abutting one or more Primary Streets, residential uses shall be limited to 3 stories above grade and 35 feet above grade if the Ground Story is not occupied by one or more Active Uses, as defined in Section 17.703.3, comprising at least 60% of the interior portion of the Ground Story that is within 50 feet of a Primary Street.
- (b) Upon granting a special permit, the Planning Board may approve modifications to the Active Use floor area and location standards in paragraph (a) above to permit residential heights up to those set forth in the Table of Height Limitations if the Board finds that all of the following criteria are met in addition to those in Section 17.707.2 and may impose conditions to ensure ongoing conformance:
 - (i) Active Uses shall be provided in a manner that generally meets the intent of the requirement to provide for reasonably continuous active ground floor frontage along the Primary Street, and
 - (ii) the total floor area of required Active Uses is not substantially reduced, and
 - (iii) the modifications directly respond to unique site-specific conditions that make the application of paragraph (a) infeasible.
- (c) Lots that do not directly abut a Primary Street shall not be subject to the additional limitations of paragraph (a) above; however, (i) within 50 feet of the street line of a Primary Street, the permitted residential heights shall not exceed the applicable limitations set forth in paragraph (a) above, and (ii) the limitations set forth in paragraph (a) above shall apply to the entire area of any lot that abuts a Primary Street on April 27, 2026, including any lots or portions of lots that are later subdivided so that they no longer abut a Primary Street.
- (d) The additional limitations of this Section shall not apply to an AHO Project.

Amend Section 17.704.3 to read as follows:

17.704.3 Table of Height Limitations.

	CAM-6	CAM-10	CAM-12
Non-Residential Uses (Section 4.30 except 4.31 a-j., 4.33.b.7 & 4.33.a)	35 feet and 3 stories above grade	45 feet and 4 stories above grade	35 feet and 3 stories above grade
Dormitory Uses (Section 4.33.b.7)	45 feet and 4 stories above grade	45 feet and 4 stories above grade	45 feet and 4 stories above grade
Religious Purposes Uses (Section 4.33.a)	75 feet and 6 stories above grade	75 feet and 6 stories above grade	75 feet and 6 stories above grade
Residential Uses (Section 4.31 a-j.)	75 feet and 6 stories above grade	120 feet and 10 stories above grade	145 feet and 12 stories above grade

Formula Business Special Permit

Amendments to Article 17.000.

Create a new Section 17.703.4 to read as follows:

- 17.703.4 Formula Businesses.** A Formula Business as defined in this Ordinance may be established in a Cambridge Street District only after the issuance of a special permit from the Planning Board. In reviewing an application the Planning Board shall take the following into consideration:
- (a) The extent to which the design of the proposal reflects, amplifies, and strengthens the established historical character of existing buildings and store fronts on Cambridge Street.
 - (b) The extent to which the particulars of the building or storefront design is varied from the formula or standard design of the chain in order to reflect the unique character and conditions of Cambridge Street generally or the specific location in particular.
 - (c) The extent to which the standard elements of the enterprise as they define it as a Formula Business are modified to respect and provide unique expressions of Cambridge Street history and traditions as well as innovation in physical design and marketing that will distinguish the Cambridge Street location from other locations of the Formula Business.

In City Council September 14, 2026.

Ordained by a yeas and nays vote:-

Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0.

Attest:- Paula M. Crane, Interim City Clerk

A true copy;



ATTEST:-

Paula M. Crane
Interim City Clerk