

Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Zoning Proposal – Comparison Charts

The charts on the following pages compare the use and development standards of Cambridge base zoning districts with the standards in the proposed Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). The following standards are summarized:

- Land Use Types
- Height, Density, and Scale
- Yard Setbacks
- Open Space

Important Notes:

- These charts are intended to provide an overview of applicable zoning standards. Refer to the text of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance for more detailed standards (refer to Article 4.000 – Use Regulations and Article 5.000 – Development Standards).
- These charts summarize applicable standards for base zoning districts. Development standards in some areas of the city are modified by overlay zoning or are established in special zoning districts (refer to Articles 13.000, 14.000, 15.000, 16.000, 17.000, and 20.000). AHO standards apply in all zoning districts except Open Space (OS) districts.
- The proposed AHO standards would apply only to residential developments in which all dwelling units are subject to deed-restricted, permanent affordability standards set forth in the proposed AHO zoning text. In some cases, ground-floor non-residential uses may be allowed within an AHO project.
- Refer to the Zoning Map (attached) for the locations and descriptions of zoning district codes. The following charts only include base zoning districts that are currently established within Cambridge, and excludes some base districts that are listed within the Zoning Ordinance even though there is no land currently zoned with that designation.

Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Zoning Petition Comparison Charts

Land Use Types

District	Base Zoning – General range of allowed uses	AHO – Allowed uses (as-of-right)	
A-1	single-family detached dwellings	single-family, two-family detached dwellings townhouse, multifamily dwellings	
A-2			
B	single-family, two-family detached dwellings townhouse dwellings (some by special permit)		
C	single-family, two-family detached dwellings townhouse, multifamily dwellings (some by special permit) limited institutional uses	single-family, two-family detached dwellings townhouse, multifamily dwellings ground-floor non-residential (as allowed in district)	
C-1			
C-1A			
C-2			
C-2A			
C-2B			
C-3			
C-3A			
C-3B			
O-1			most types of residential dwellings hotels (except not in some districts) most institutional uses offices and laboratories
O-2			
O-2A			
O-3			
O-3A			
BA	most types of residential dwellings hotels (except not in some districts) most institutional uses offices and laboratories most retail uses	single-family, two-family detached dwellings townhouse, multifamily dwellings ground-floor non-residential (as allowed in district)	
BA-1			
BA-2			
BA-3			
BA-4			
BB			
BB-1			
BB-2			
BC			
IA-1			most types of residential dwellings most institutional, office, laboratory, and retail uses light industrial uses
IA-2			
IA	most types of residential dwellings (by special permit) hotels (not in some districts, by special permit in others) most institutional, office, laboratory, and retail uses light industrial uses some heavy industrial uses		
IB-1			
IB-2			
IB			
OS	open space, religious, or civic uses	no change	

Note: Charts are intended to provide a summarized overview of applicable zoning standards. Refer to the text of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance for detailed standards.

Height, Density, and Scale

District	Max. FAR (residential)	Min. Lot Area per Dwelling Unit	Max. Height (residential)	AHO Allowed Stories and Height
A-1	0.50	6,000 sq. ft.	35'	4 stories @ 45' max.
A-2	0.50	4,500 sq. ft.	35'	4 stories @ 45' max.
B	0.50	2,500 sq. ft.	35'	4 stories @ 45' max.
C	0.60	1,800 sq. ft.	35'	4 stories @ 45' max.
C-1	0.75	1,500 sq. ft.	35'	4 stories @ 45' max.
C-1A	1.25	1,000 sq. ft.	45'	7 stories @ 80' max.
C-2	1.75	600 sq. ft.	85'	7 stories @ 80' max.
C-2A	2.50	300 sq. ft.	60'	7 stories @ 80' max.
C-2B	1.75	600 sq. ft.	45'	7 stories @ 80' max.
C-3	3.00	300 sq. ft.	120'	7 stories @ 80' max.
C-3A	3.00	300 sq. ft.	120'	7 stories @ 80' max.
C-3B	4.00	300 sq. ft.	120'	7 stories @ 80' max.
O-1	0.75	1,200 sq. ft.	35'	4 stories @ 45' max. (50' with non-res. ground floor)
O-2	2.00	600 sq. ft.	85'	7 stories @ 80' max.
O-2A	1.50	600 sq. ft.	70'	7 stories @ 80' max.
O-3	3.00	300 sq. ft.	120'	7 stories @ 80' max.
O-3A	3.00	300 sq. ft.	120'	7 stories @ 80' max.
BA	1.75	600 sq. ft.	45'	7 stories @ 80' max.
BA-1	0.75	1,200 sq. ft.	35'	4 stories @ 45' max. (50' with non-res. ground floor)
BA-2	1.75	600 sq. ft.	45'	7 stories @ 80' max.
BA-3	0.75	1,500 sq. ft.	35'	4 stories @ 45' max. (50' with non-res. ground floor)
BA-4	1.75 or 2.00	600 sq. ft.	35' or 44'	7 stories @ 80' max.
BB	3.00	300 sq. ft.	80'	7 stories @ 80' max.
BB-1	3.25	300 sq. ft.	90'	7 stories @ 80' max.
BB-2	3.00	300 sq. ft.	45'	7 stories @ 80' max.
BC	2.00	500 sq. ft.	55'	7 stories @ 80' max.
IA-1	1.50	700 sq. ft.	45'	7 stories @ 80' max.
IA-2	4.00	no min	70'	7 stories @ 80' max.
IA	1.50	no min	45'	7 stories @ 80' max.
IB-1	3.00	no min	70'	7 stories @ 80' max.
IB-2	0.75	1,200 sq. ft.	35'	4 stories @ 45' max.
IB	4.00	no min	120'	7 stories @ 80' max.
OS	0.25	N/A	35'	N/A

Note: Charts are intended to provide a summarized overview of applicable zoning standards. Refer to the text of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance for detailed standards.

Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Zoning Petition Comparison Charts

Yard Setbacks

District	District Standards			AHO Standards		
	Front Yard Min. Setback	Side Yard Min. Setback	Rear Yard Min. Setback	Front Yard Min. Setback	Side Yard Min. Setback	Rear Yard Min. Setback
A-1	25'	15' (sum to 35)	25'	10'	7.5'	20'
A-2	20'	10' (sum to 25)	25'	10'	7.5'	20'
B	15'	7.5' (sum to 20)	25'	10'	7.5'	20'
C	10'+ [formula]	7.5' (sum to 20) [+formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
C-1	10'+ [formula]	7.5' [+formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
C-1A	10'	[formula]	[formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
C-2	10'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
C-2A	5'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	5'	7.5'	20'
C-2B	10'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
C-3	5'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	5'	7.5'	20'
C-3A	5'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	5'	7.5'	20'
C-3B	10'	no min	no min	10'	no min	no min
O-1	10'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
O-2	10'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
O-2A	10'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
O-3	10'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
O-3A	10'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
BA	no min *(C-2B)	no min *(C-2B)	20'+ [formula]	no min	no min	20'
BA-1	no min *(C-1)	no min *(C-1)	20'+ [formula]	no min	no min	20'
BA-2	5'	10'	20'*	5'	7.5'	20'
BA-3	10'+ [formula]	[formula]	20'+ [formula]	10'	7.5'	20'
BA-4	[formula] or 10'	[formula] or 10'	[formula] or 10'	10'	7.5'	10'
BB	no min *(C-3)	no min *(C-3)	no min *(C-3)	no min	no min	no min
BB-1	no min	20' from res. district line	20' from res. district line	no min	7.5' (or 20' from res. district line)	20' from res. district line
BB-2	no min	20' from res. district line	20' from res. district line	no min	7.5' (or 20' from res. district line)	20' from res. district line
BC	no min	no min	20'*	no min	no min	20'
IA-1	no min	no min *[formula]	no min *[formula]	no min	no min	no min
IA-2	no min	no min *[formula]	no min *[formula]	no min	no min	no min
IA	no min	no min	no min	no min	no min	no min
IB-1	no min	no min *[formula]	no min *[formula]	no min	no min	no min
IB-2	15'	no min *[formula]	no min *[formula]	10'	no min	no min
IB	no min	no min	no min	no min	no min	no min
OS	25'	15'	25'	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Denotes districts where a "formula" setback requirement is applicable only to residential development. See accompanying memo for an explanation of formula setbacks.

Note: Charts are intended to provide a summarized overview of applicable zoning standards. Refer to the text of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance for detailed standards.

Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Zoning Petition Comparison Charts

Open Space

	District Standards		AHO Standards	
District	Min. OS Ratio	“Private Open Space” Standards	Min. OS Ratio	“Private Open Space” Standards
A-1	50%	Half permeable, half “usable” dimension	30%	Half permeable, all at ground level
A-2	50%	Half permeable, half “usable” dimension	30%	Half permeable, all at ground level
B	40%	Half permeable, half “usable” dimension	30%	Half permeable, all at ground level
C	36%	Half permeable, half “usable” dimension	30%	Half permeable, all at ground level
C-1	30%	Half permeable, half “usable” dimension	30%	Half permeable, all at ground level
C-1A	15%	All “usable,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
C-2	15%	All “usable,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
C-2A	10%(+)	All “usable,” half at ground level	10%	Half permeable, all at ground level
C-2B	15%	All “usable,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
C-3	10%	All “usable,” half at ground level	10%	Half permeable, all at ground level
C-3A	10%	All “usable,” half at ground level	10%	Half permeable, all at ground level
C-3B	10%	All “usable,” half at ground level	10%	Half permeable, all at ground level
O-1	15%	All “usable,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
O-2	15%	All “usable,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
O-2A	15%	All “usable,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
O-3	10%	All “usable,” half at ground level	10%	Half permeable, all at ground level
O-3A	10%	All “usable,” half at ground level	10%	Half permeable, all at ground level
BA	15% (res)*	All “usable,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
BA-1	30% (res)*	All “usable,” half at ground level	30%	Half permeable, all at ground level
BA-2	no min	N/A	no min	N/A
BA-3	30%	All “usable,” half at ground level	30%	Half permeable, all at ground level
BA-4	no min	N/A	no min	N/A
BB	10% (res)*	All “usable,” half at ground level	10%	Half permeable, all at ground level
BB-1	15%	All “usable,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
BB-2	15%	All “usable,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
BC	no min	N/A	no min	N/A
IA-1	no min	N/A	no min	N/A
IA-2	no min	N/A	no min	N/A
IA	no min	N/A	no min	N/A
IB-1	no min	N/A	no min	N/A
IB-2	15%	“Usable dimension,” half at ground level	15%	Half permeable, all at ground level
IB	no min	N/A	no min	N/A
OS	60%	N/A	no min	N/A

* Denotes districts where the open space requirement is established by reference to a base residential district.

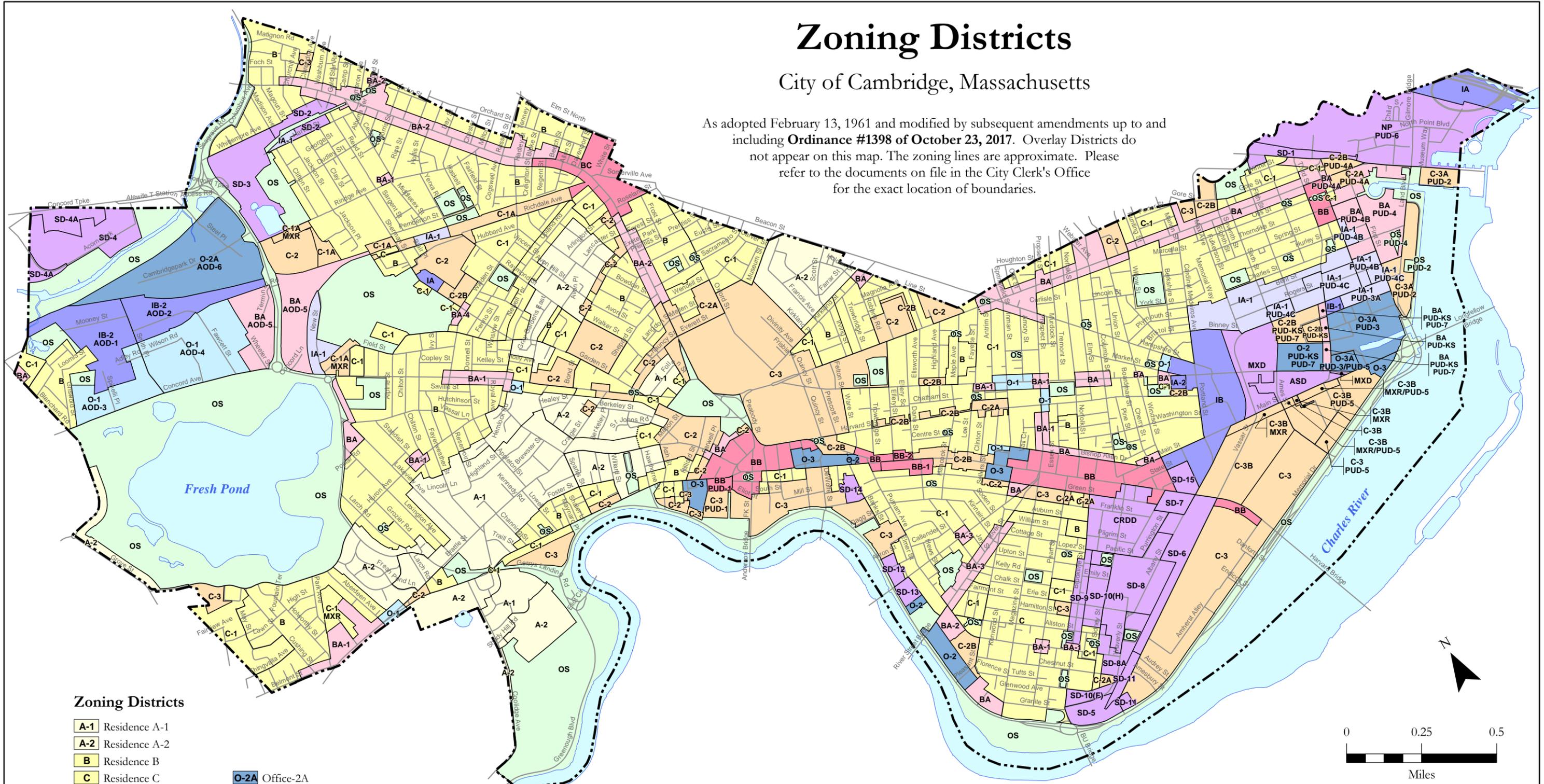
Note: Under proposed AHO standards, the required Open Space Ratio could be reduced to no less than 15% either to accommodate surface parking spaces or to facilitate preservation of a building on the State Register of Historic Places.

Note: Charts are intended to provide a summarized overview of applicable zoning standards. Refer to the text of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance for detailed standards.

Zoning Districts

City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

As adopted February 13, 1961 and modified by subsequent amendments up to and including **Ordinance #1398 of October 23, 2017**. Overlay Districts do not appear on this map. The zoning lines are approximate. Please refer to the documents on file in the City Clerk's Office for the exact location of boundaries.



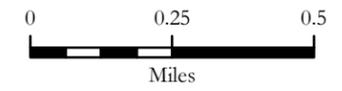
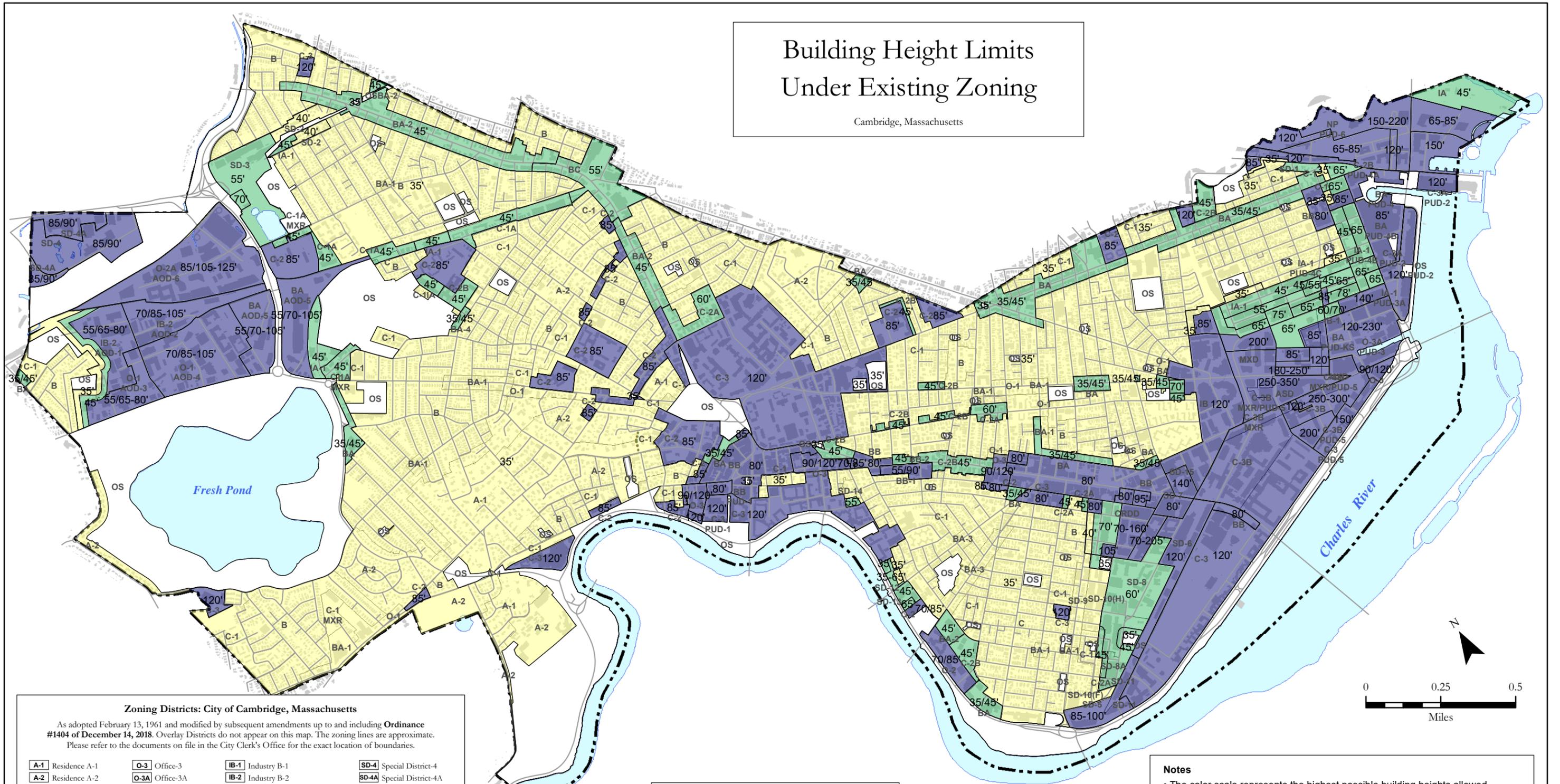
Zoning Districts

A-1 Residence A-1	O-2A Office-2A	BC Business C	MXD Mixed Use Development	SD-2 Special District-2	SD-9 Special District-9
A-2 Residence A-2	O-3 Office-3	BC-1 Business C-1	ASD Ames Street District	SD-3 Special District-3	SD-10(F) Special District-10(F)
B Residence B	O-3A Office-3A	IA-1 Industry A-1	AOD Alewife Overlay District	SD-4 Special District-4	SD-10(H) Special District-10(H)
C Residence C	BA Business A	IA-2 Industry A-2	PUD Planned Unit Development Overlay	SD-4A Special District-4A	SD-11 Special District-11
C-1 Residence C-1	BA-1 Business A-1	IB-1 Industry B-1	MXR Mixed Use Residential Overlay	SD-5 Special District-5	SD-12 Special District-12
C-1A Residence C-1A	BA-2 Business A-2	IB-2 Industry B-2	NP North Point District	SD-6 Special District-6	SD-13 Special District-13
C-2 Residence C-2	BA-3 Business A-3	IB Industry B	CRDD Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District	SD-7 Special District-7	SD-14 Special District-14
C-2A Residence C-2A	BA-4 Business A-4	IC Industry C	SD-1 Special District-1	SD-8 Special District-8	SD-15 Special District-15
C-2B Residence C-2B	BB-1 Business-1			SD-8A Special District-8A	
C-3 Residence C-3	BB-2 Business 2				
C-3A Residence C-3A					
C-3B Residence C-3B					
O-1 Office-1					
O-2 Office-2					
					OS Open Space

This map was prepared by the Community Development Department on December 7, 2017 and reflects the latest changes to zoning boundaries.

Building Height Limits Under Existing Zoning

Cambridge, Massachusetts



Zoning Districts: City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

As adopted February 13, 1961 and modified by subsequent amendments up to and including Ordinance #1404 of December 14, 2018. Overlay Districts do not appear on this map. The zoning lines are approximate. Please refer to the documents on file in the City Clerk's Office for the exact location of boundaries.

A-1 Residence A-1	O-3 Office-3	IB-1 Industry B-1	SD-4 Special District-4
A-2 Residence A-2	O-3A Office-3A	IB-2 Industry B-2	SD-4A Special District-4A
B Residence B	BA Business A	IB Industry B	SD-5 Special District-5
C Residence C	BA-1 Business A-1	IC Industry C	SD-6 Special District-6
C-1 Residence C-1	BA-2 Business A-2	MXD Mixed Use Development	SD-7 Special District-7
C-1A Residence C-1A	BA-3 Business A-3	ASD Ames Street District	SD-8 Special District-8
C-2 Residence C-2	BA-4 Business A-4	AOD Alewife Overlay District	SD-8A Special District-8A
C-2A Residence C-2A	BB Business B	PUD Planned Unit Development Overlay	SD-9 Special District-9
C-2B Residence C-2B	BB-1 Business-1	MXR Mixed Use Residential Overlay	SD-10(F) Special District-10(F)
C-3 Residence C-3	BB-2 Business-2	NP North Point District	SD-10(H) Special District-10(H)
C-3A Residence C-3A	BC Business C	CRDD Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District	SD-11 Special District-11
C-3B Residence C-3B	BC-1 Business C-1		SD-12 Special District-12
O-1 Office-1	IA-1 Industry A-1		SD-13 Special District-13
O-2 Office-2	IA-2 Industry A-2		SD-14 Special District-14
O-2A Office-2A	IA Industry A		SD-15 Special District-15
			SD-3 Special District-3
			OS Open Space

Maximum Existing Height Limit

- 35' - 40'
- 45' - 78'
- 80' - 350'

Zone OS: Open Space

Notes

- The color scale represents the highest possible building heights allowed under current zoning. Please note that a special permit may be required to build to the limit in certain areas.
- Height limits that vary by type of use are labeled with a slash. For example, 35/45' indicates a 35-foot limit for non-residential buildings, and a 45-foot limit for residential buildings.
- Height labels separated by a hyphen (e.g., 120-230') indicate areas where the maximum allowed height is increased when certain conditions are met, such as under a special permit.
- This map represents a broad summary of detailed zoning requirements. Please refer to the Zoning Ordinance for full information on the types and sizes of buildings allowed, and for the exact locations of height limit boundaries.