

Central Square Advisory Committee

March 14, 2012



urban design/planning study for
the **central** and **kendall square area**

Agenda

- **New development opportunity: finding the right fit**
 - Central Square
 - Transition Area
- **Activating great public places**
 - Building design
 - Public activities
 - Opportunity areas
 - Discussion
- **Next steps**



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Central Square development opportunity



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From February 8...

Strategy 3: *Preserve diversity of housing choices, community identity, the arts, retail and workplaces by adding **mixed-income housing***

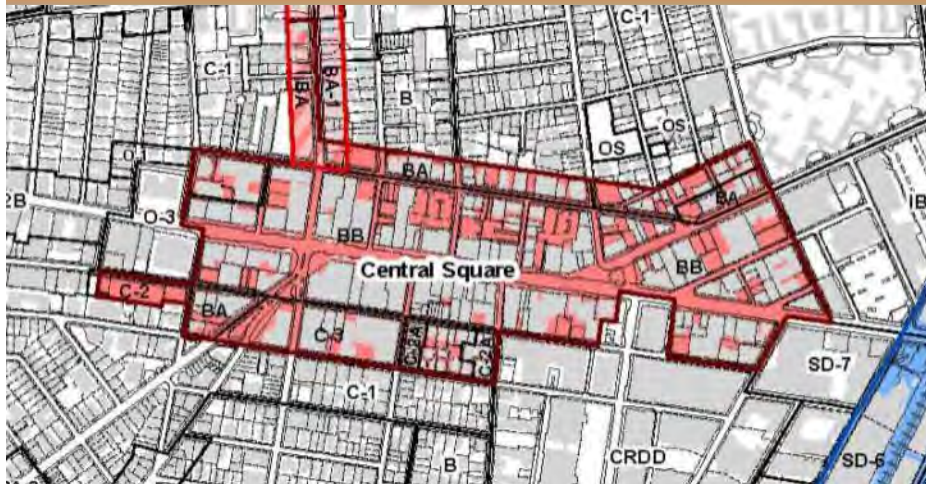
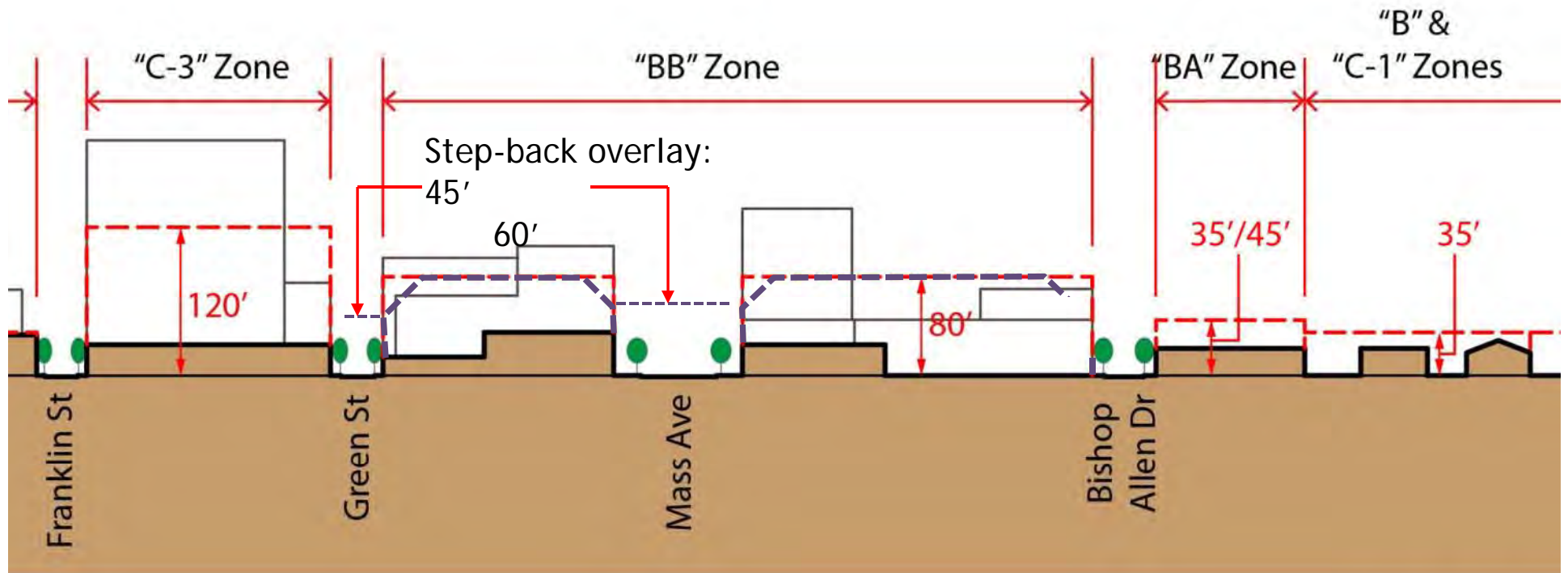
Potential capacity:

- Under existing zoning, and alternate height scenarios
- What envelope offers the right scale and character relationships with context?



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Development opportunity is shaped by limits on dimension and quantity



0 50' 100'

60' cornice-level step-back

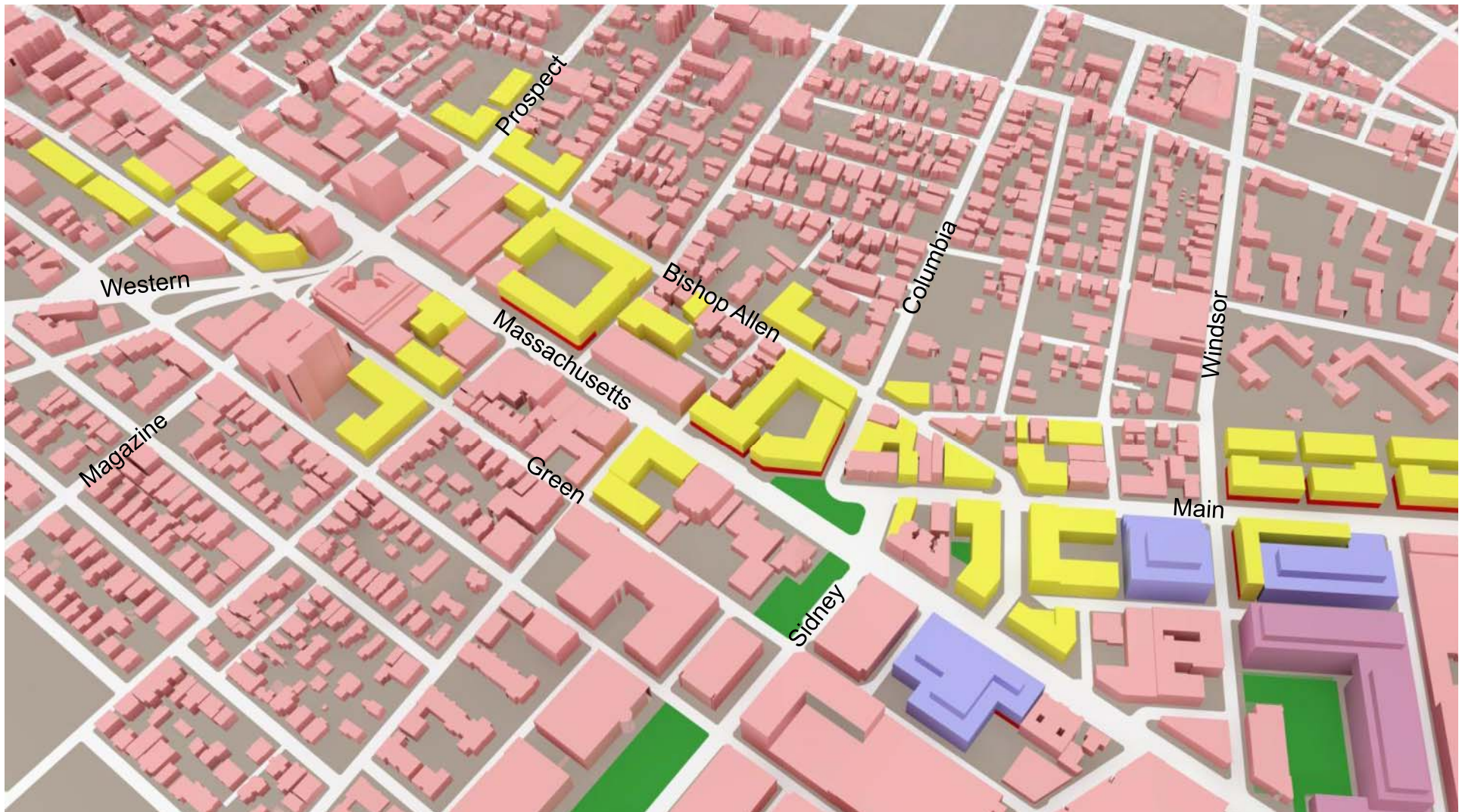


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Existing development



Potential development within existing density
1,400-1,500 new housing units



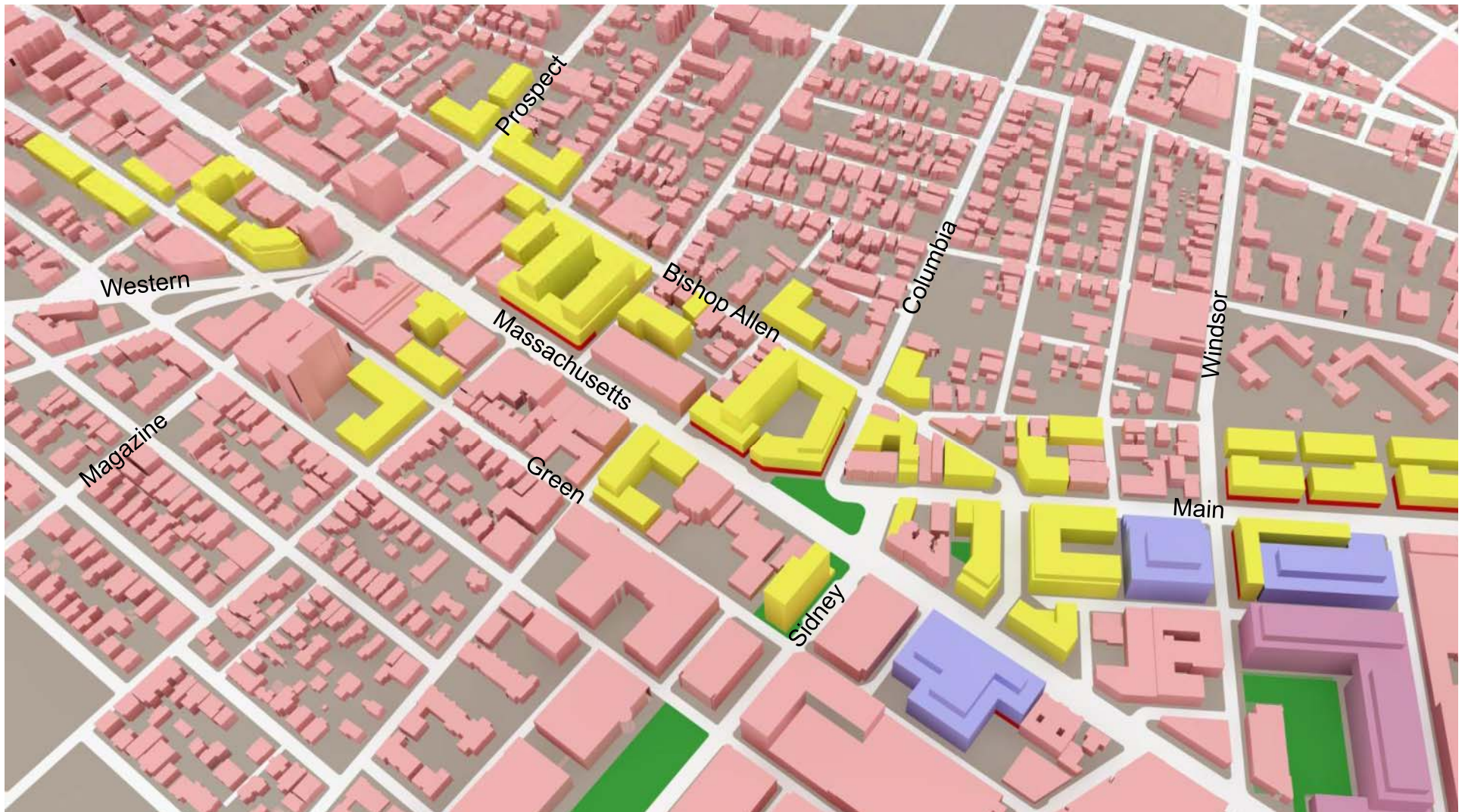
*Image depicts a potential development scenario;
not intended to represent a specific plan or design intent for specific sites*

**Potential development within current height envelopes:
1,900-2,000 housing units**



*Image depicts a potential development scenario;
not intended to represent a specific plan or design intent for specific sites*

**Potential development beyond height envelopes:
1,900-2,100 housing units**



*Image depicts a potential development scenario;
not intended to represent a specific plan or design intent for specific sites*

Transition area building form



Balancing complementary goals

- Provide appropriate scale and use transition to Area 4.
- Provide incentive for housing south of Main Street
- Accommodate research uses on sites uniquely suited to it
- Encourage active ground floor uses, emphasizing a continuously walkable Main Street corridor

PIZZA
GREEK SALAD
SPAGHETTI



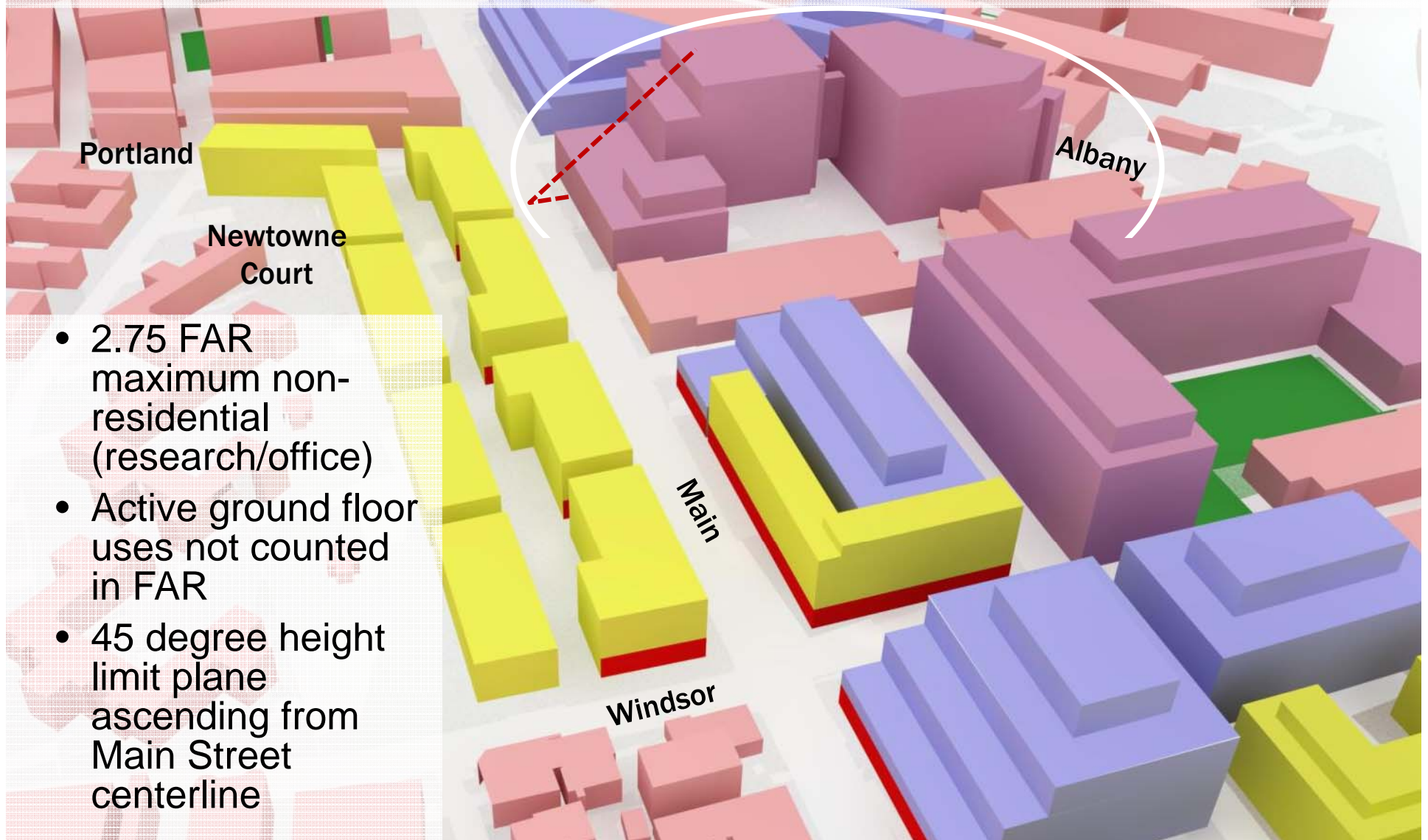
Existing conditions: south of Main



- Zone IB
- 2.75 FAR maximum for non-residential, 4.0 FAR maximum for residential
- 120' maximum height

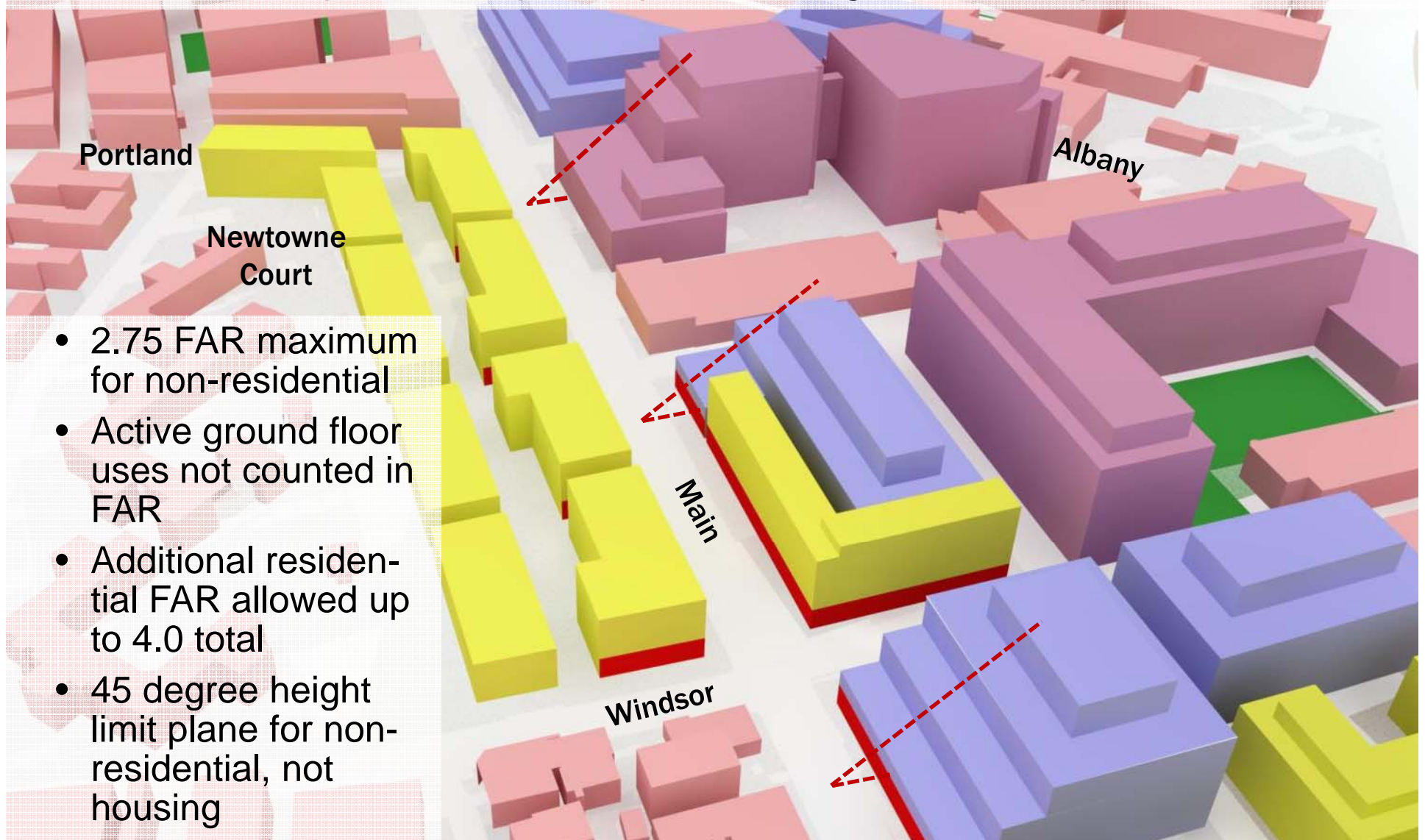
610 Main precedent

*Image depicts a potential zoning envelope scenario;
not intended to represent a specific plan or design intent for specific sites*



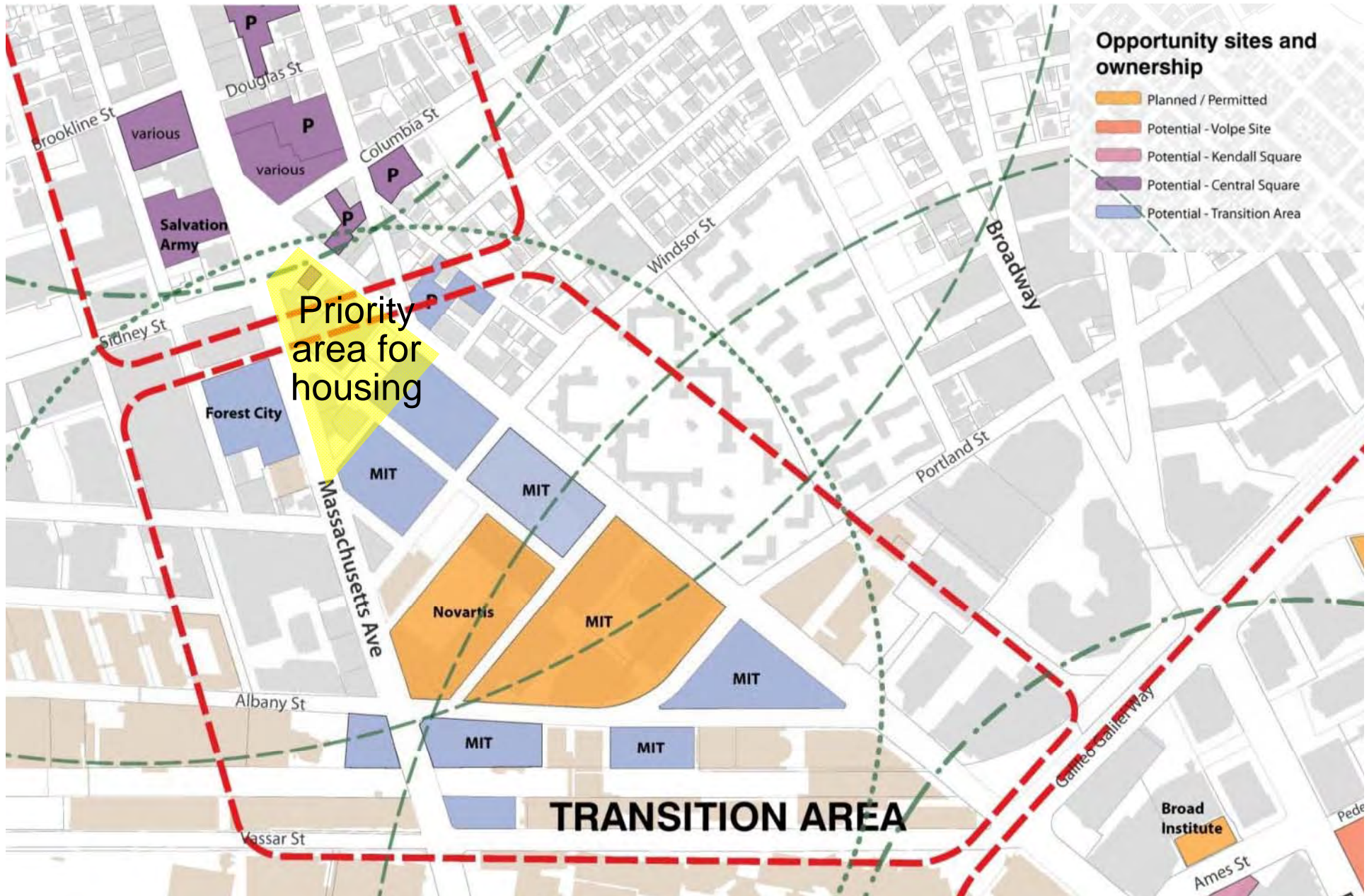
Potential framework: south of Main

Image depicts a potential zoning envelope scenario;
not intended to represent a specific plan or design intent for specific sites



- 2.75 FAR maximum for non-residential
- Active ground floor uses not counted in FAR
- Additional residential FAR allowed up to 4.0 total
- 45 degree height limit plane for non-residential, not housing

Research/office restricted west of Windsor



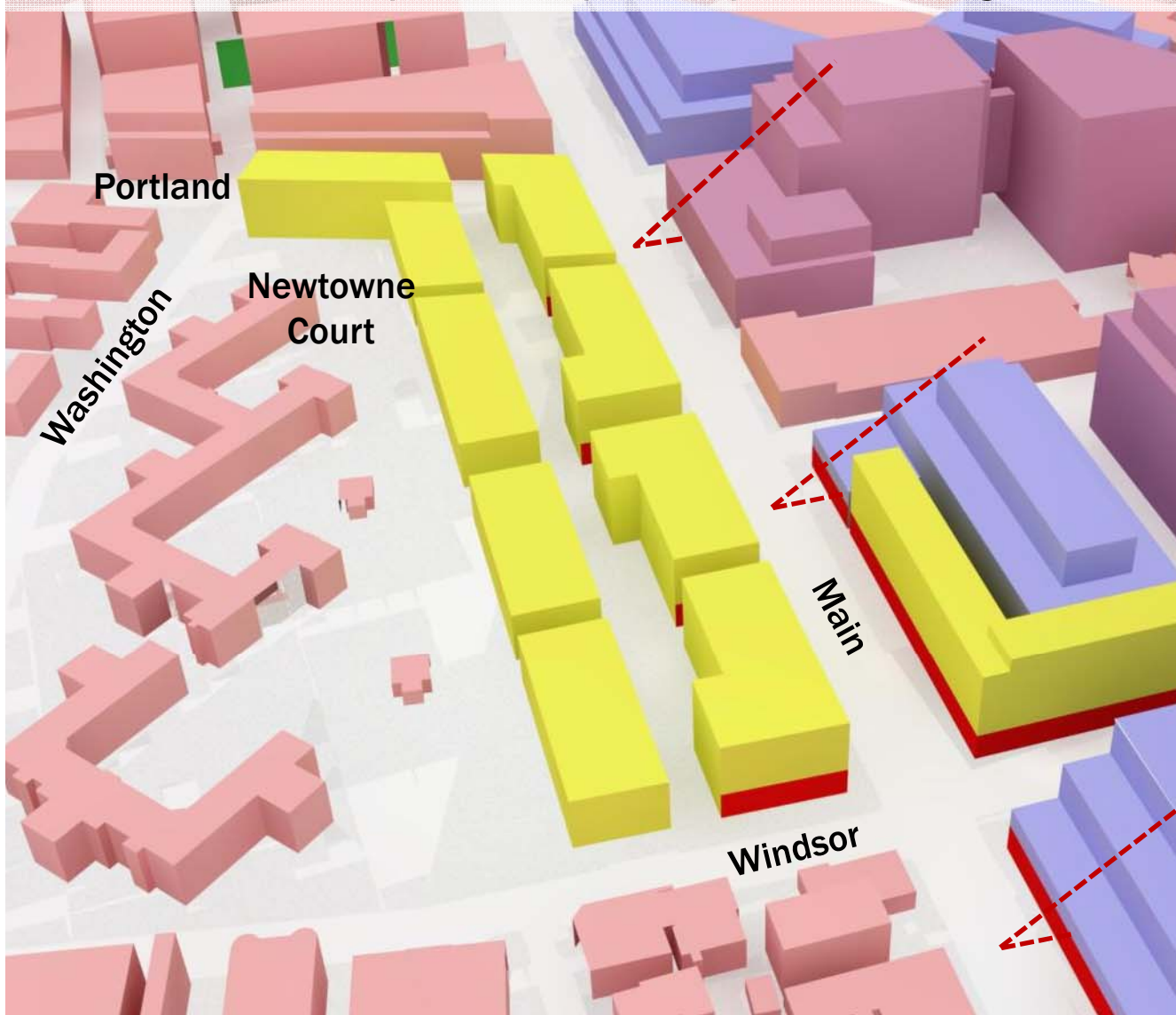
Existing conditions: north of Main



- Zone C-1
- 0.75 FAR maximum
- 35' height maximum

Potential framework for consideration: north of Main

Image depicts a potential zoning envelope scenario; not intended to represent specific plan or design intent



- Potential mixed-income redevelopment opportunity
- 1:1 replacement of any redeveloped public housing units (minimum)
- 60' height limit within 100' of Main and Portland to Washington
- 45' height limit beyond
- FAR approx. 2.0-2.5
- Additional density possible with low/moderate income housing

Activating great public places



What difference does design make? Upper story step-backs



Massachusetts Ave., Main, Western: Step-back at about 60' (Portland)



Side streets: Step-backs, scale for neighborhood/historic compatibility (Asheville, Washington)

What difference does design make? Housing over active uses



Step-back above active ground floor; multiple façade and balcony planes above (Portland, Charlotte, Alexandria)

What difference does design make? Active residential street edges



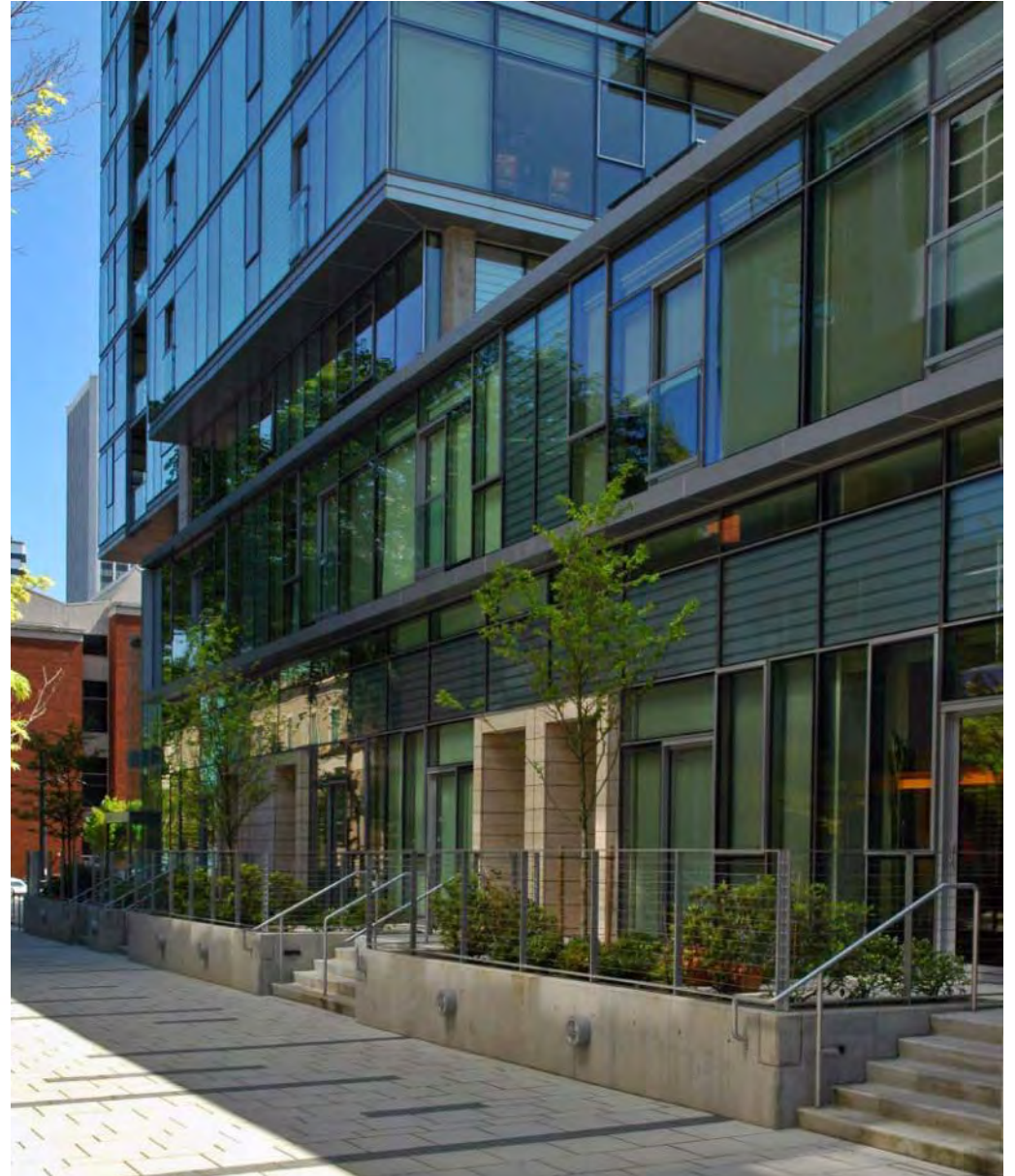
Balancing
privacy and
street
activation:
Live-work
uses
tolerating
public
exposure



What difference does design make? Active residential street edges



Balancing privacy and accessibility:
continuous "dock"



What difference does design make? Active residential street edges

Balancing privacy and accessibility:
ground level units with landscaped
setback, trellis/balcony forms



Making Mass Ave a great public space



Opportunity areas: where public realm, redevelopment and neighborhood connections can work together



Western-
River-
Magazine-
Green

Essex-
Pearl-
Norfolk

Brookline-
Columbia

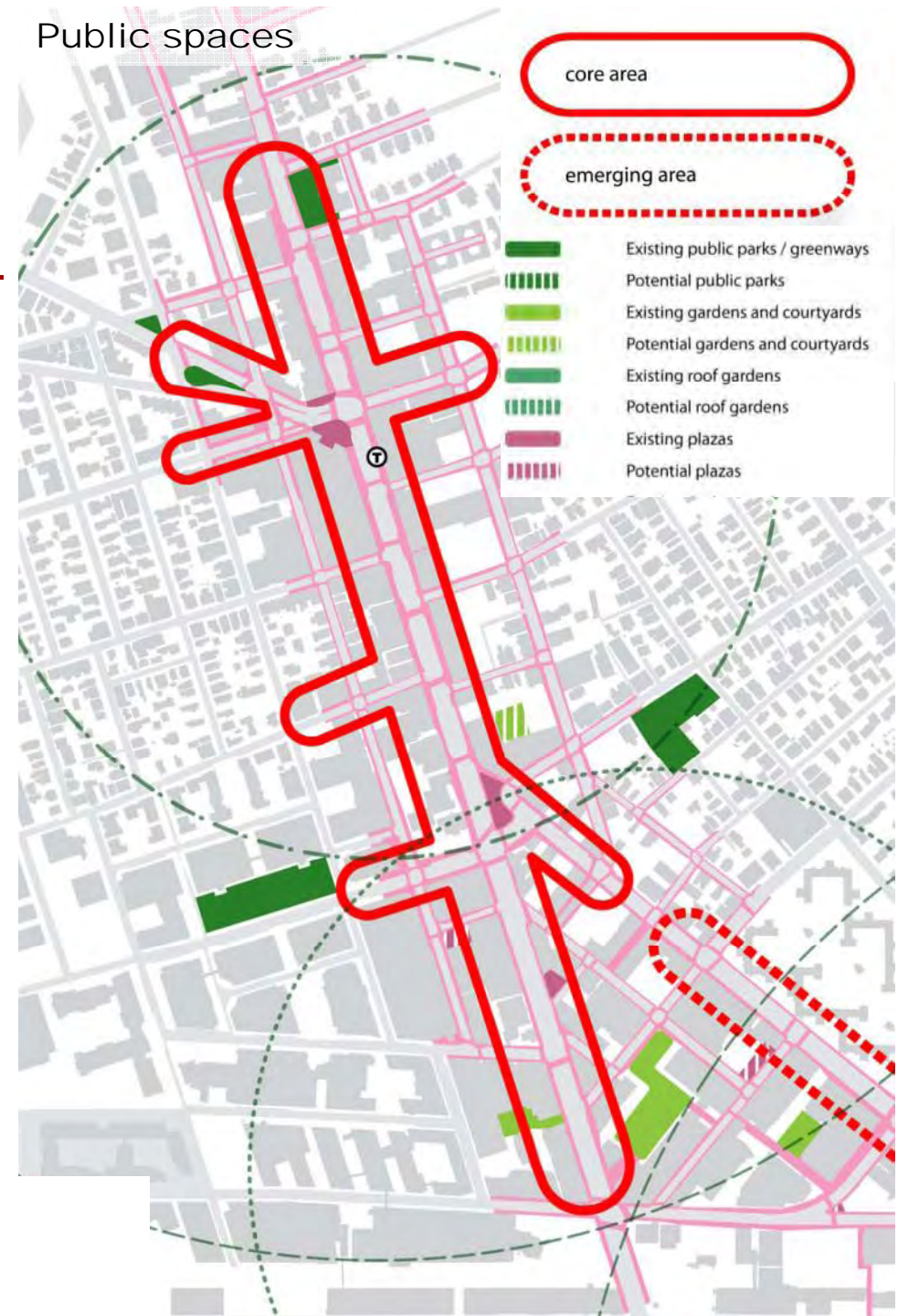
Main-
Bishop
Allen

Sidney-
Blanche-
Green

Strategy 1: Enhance ability of Central Square to support active civic life and dynamic cultural arts — especially in **public spaces**

KEY QUESTIONS

- **Physical Space:** Does the design fit the intended range of activities and experiences?
- **Context:** Does adjacent land and building use/design support active use of the space?
- **Culture of use:** Is the space welcoming to all? Is it cared for?
- What **improvements** are needed in each category?



Active sidewalks and plazas: dining



Comfort: separating dining from traffic with landscaping, parking

Flexible footprint: Narrow along sidewalks, broader at plazas



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Active sidewalks and plazas: dining



Nighttime: effective lighting, connection to arts/entertainment



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Active sidewalks and plazas: arts, entertainment



Flexibility for diverse activities: small and large, daytime and nighttime



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Active sidewalks and plazas: arts, entertainment



Accommodate occasional use of the entire street

Active sidewalks and plazas: Seating and plantings



Separate people and traffic



Canopy and ground



Create spaces



Planting for color

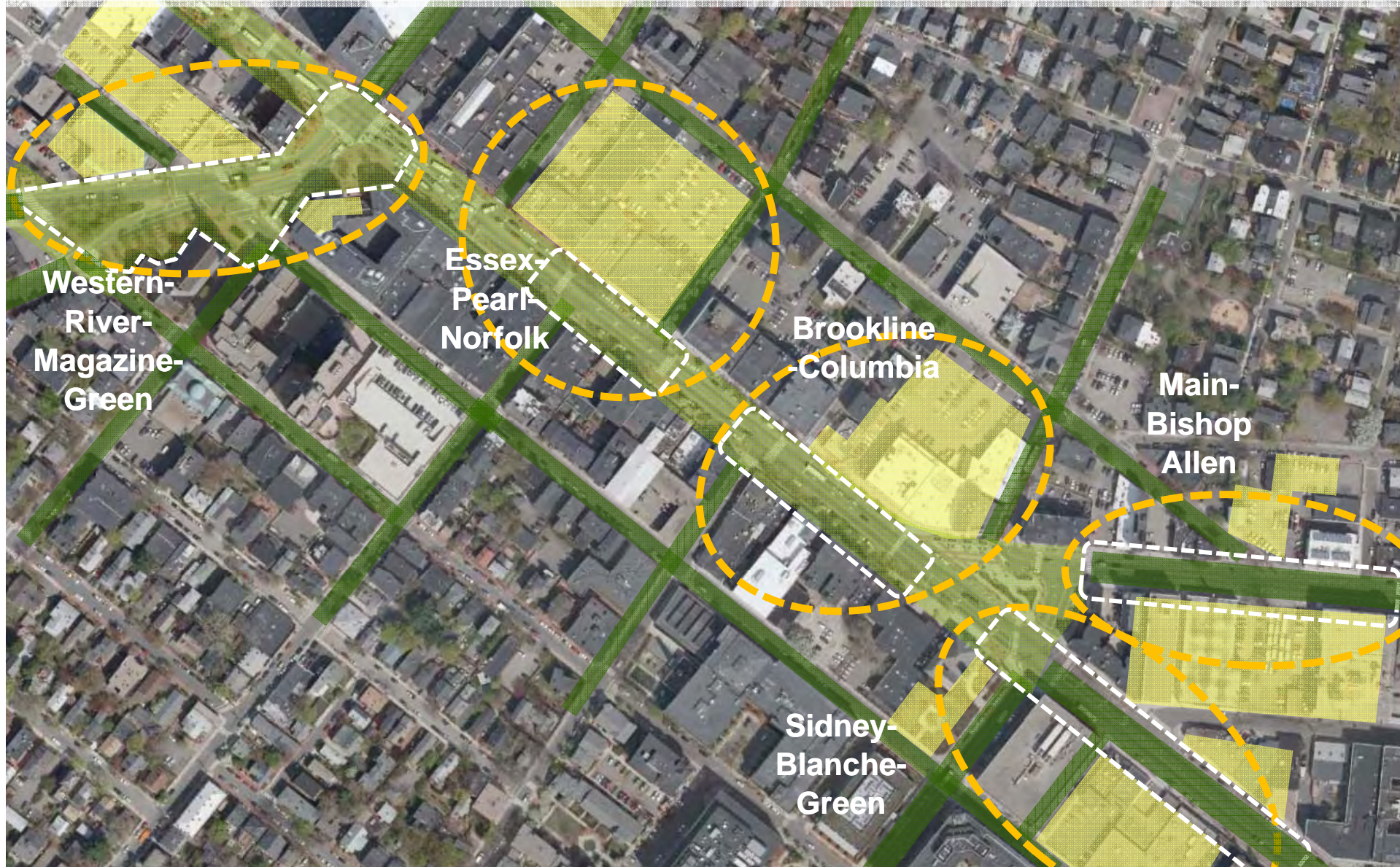


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Active sidewalks and plazas: places to play



Opportunity areas: where public realm, redevelopment and neighborhood connections can work together



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