



City of Somerville

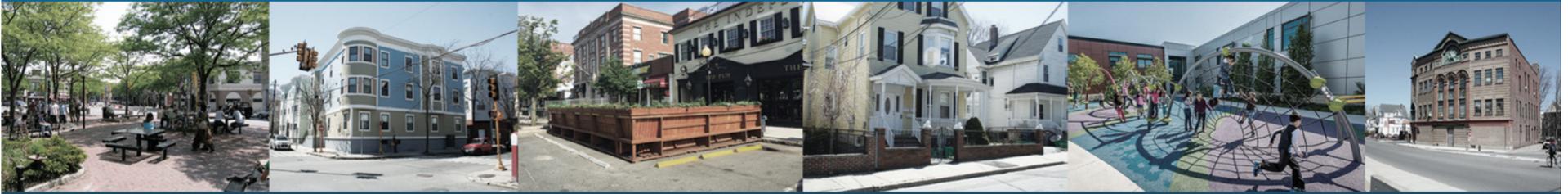
ZONING OVERHAUL

www.somervillezoning.com

May 23, 2018 – NR District & Parking

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

closes May 25th!



Proposed Code

The Administration has officially submitted the proposed Zoning Overhaul to the Board of Aldermen. To review a timeline of the steps required for adoption, see our [Adoption Process Infographic](#).

Please provide your feedback on our [CiviComment page](#), and don't forget to join us in the upcoming public hearings by the Planning Board and the Board of Aldermen Land Use Committee:

- On **Tuesday, February 13, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.** in the Aldermanic Chambers on the Second Floor of Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, the City Administration will introduce the code, provide an overview, and highlight the differences between the proposed 2018 overhaul and the 2015 version;
- On **Tuesday, March 13, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.** in the Aldermanic Chambers on the Second Floor of Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, the Planning Board and Land Use Committee will accept public comments;

For those who may be interested, the Land Use Committee and Planning Board will also meet on **Wednesday, January 31, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.** in the Aldermanic Chambers on the Second Floor of Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, for an introduction by administration staff to the drafting technique, document structure, and other technical items related to the proposed ordinance.

Below is the current draft of the new Somerville Zoning Ordinance. A change log and previous drafts are

Maintained by the City of Somerville's
Planning Department

Email us your feedback at:
planning@somervillema.gov

Language Options

EN HT PT ES

Follow us for regular updates!



Zoning Mailing List

Email Address

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somerville.civiccomment.org



City of Somerville
ZONING OVERHAUL

Mayor Joseph A Curtatone
Office of Strategic Planning
& Community Development

Contact the the Planning Division
with your feedback via email

planning@somervillema.gov



City of Somerville
ZONING OVERHAUL

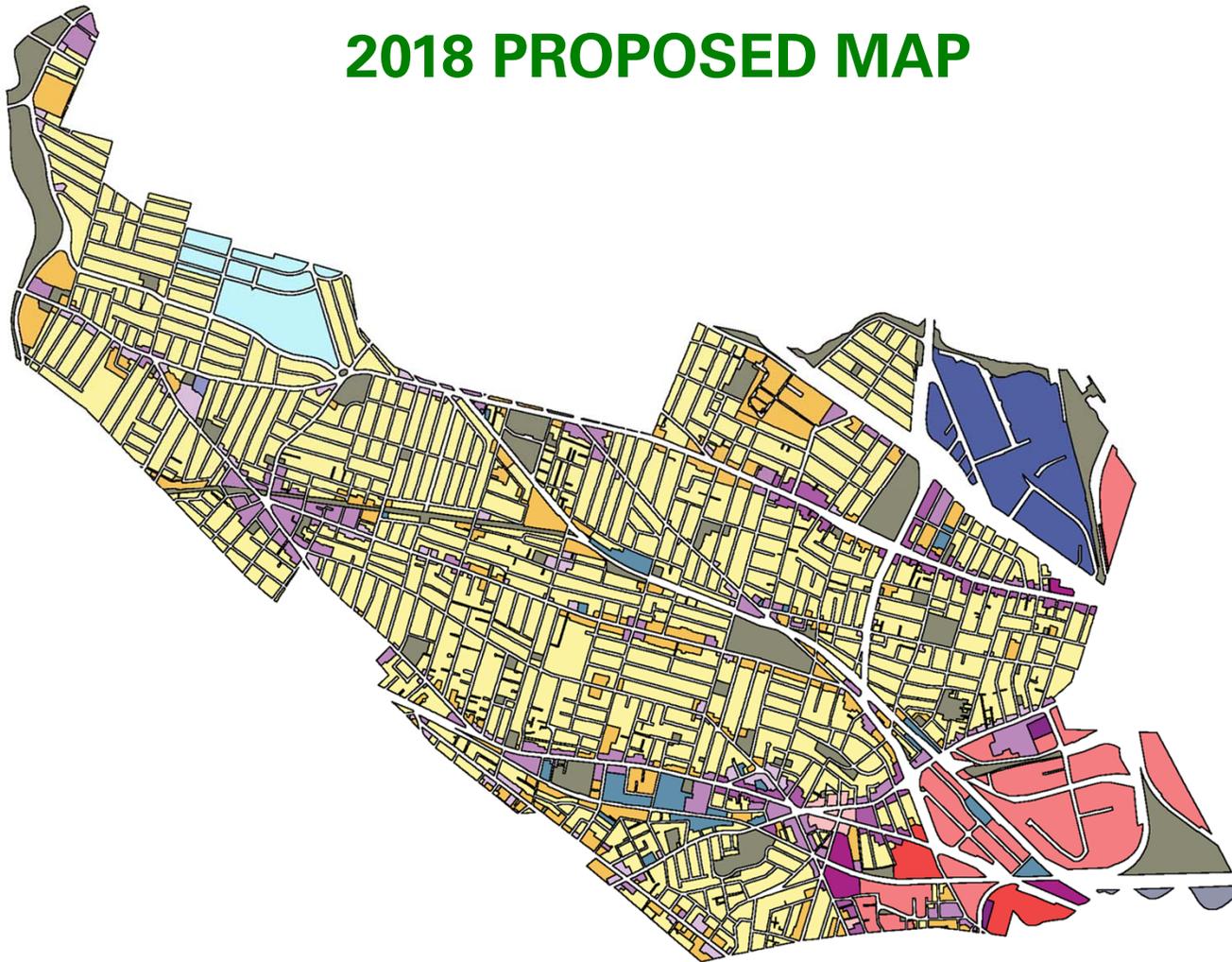
Mayor Joseph A Curtatone
Office of Strategic Planning
& Community Development

NR District

(also see May 15th presentation)



2018 PROPOSED MAP



EXISTING BUILDING TYPES IN NR

8,588	Detached House	75.51%
1,053	Detached Triple Decker	9.26%
680	Cottage	5.98%
336	Multiplex	2.95%
205	Rowhouses	1.80%
187	Semi-Detached House	1.64%
93	Duplex	0.82%
83	Apartment Building	0.73%
72	Commercial Building	0.63%
31	Apartment House	0.27%
25	General Building	0.22%
21	Semi-Detached Triple Decker	0.18%



EXISTING BUILDING TYPES IN NR



Cottage

1 Unit
70 outliers

Detached House

1-3 Units
108 outliers

Semi-Detached House

1-2 Units
36 outliers

Duplex

1-2 Units
9 outliers



Detached Triple Decker

2-3 Units
51 outliers

Semi-Detached Triple Decker

3 Units
0 outliers

Multi-Plex

4-6 Units
18 outliers

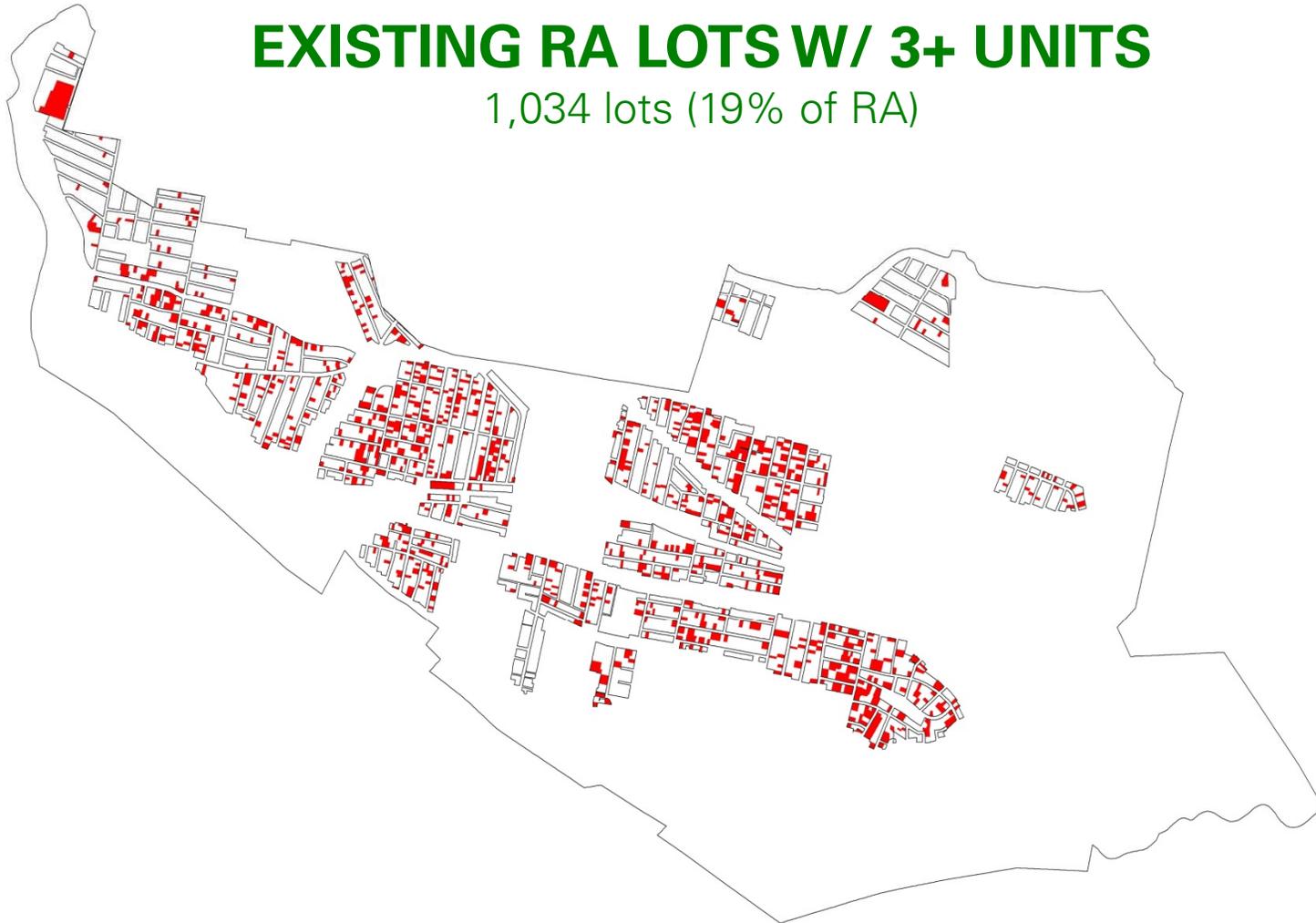
Apartment House

6-10 Units
11 outliers

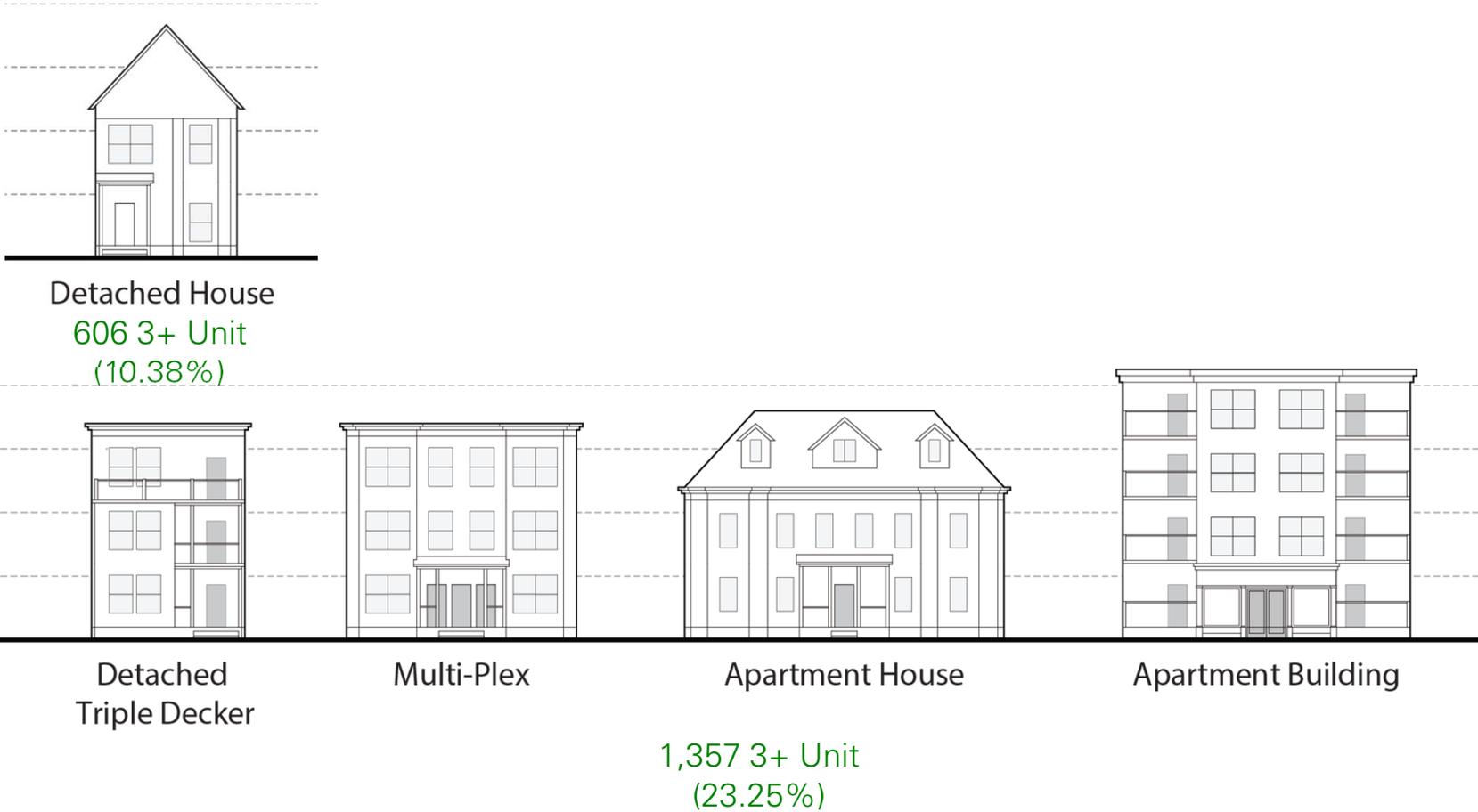


EXISTING RA LOTS W/ 3+ UNITS

1,034 lots (19% of RA)



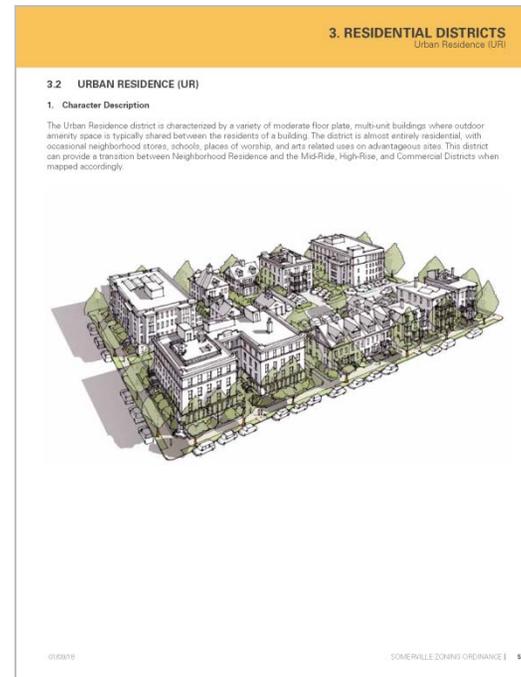
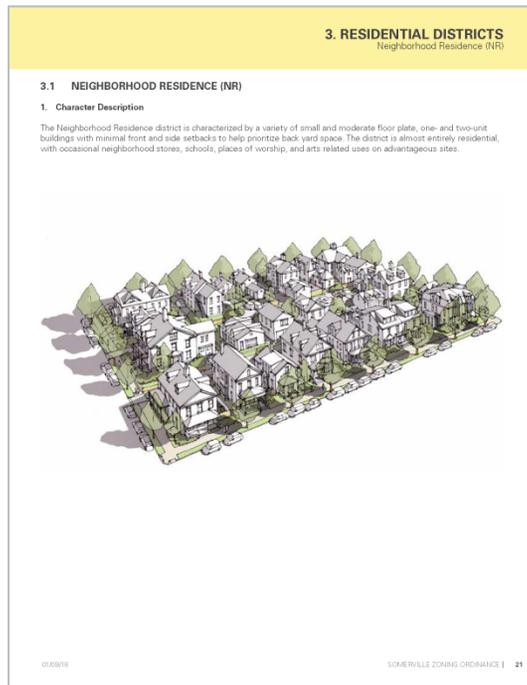
HOW MANY EXISTING 3+ UNIT TYPES IN RB?



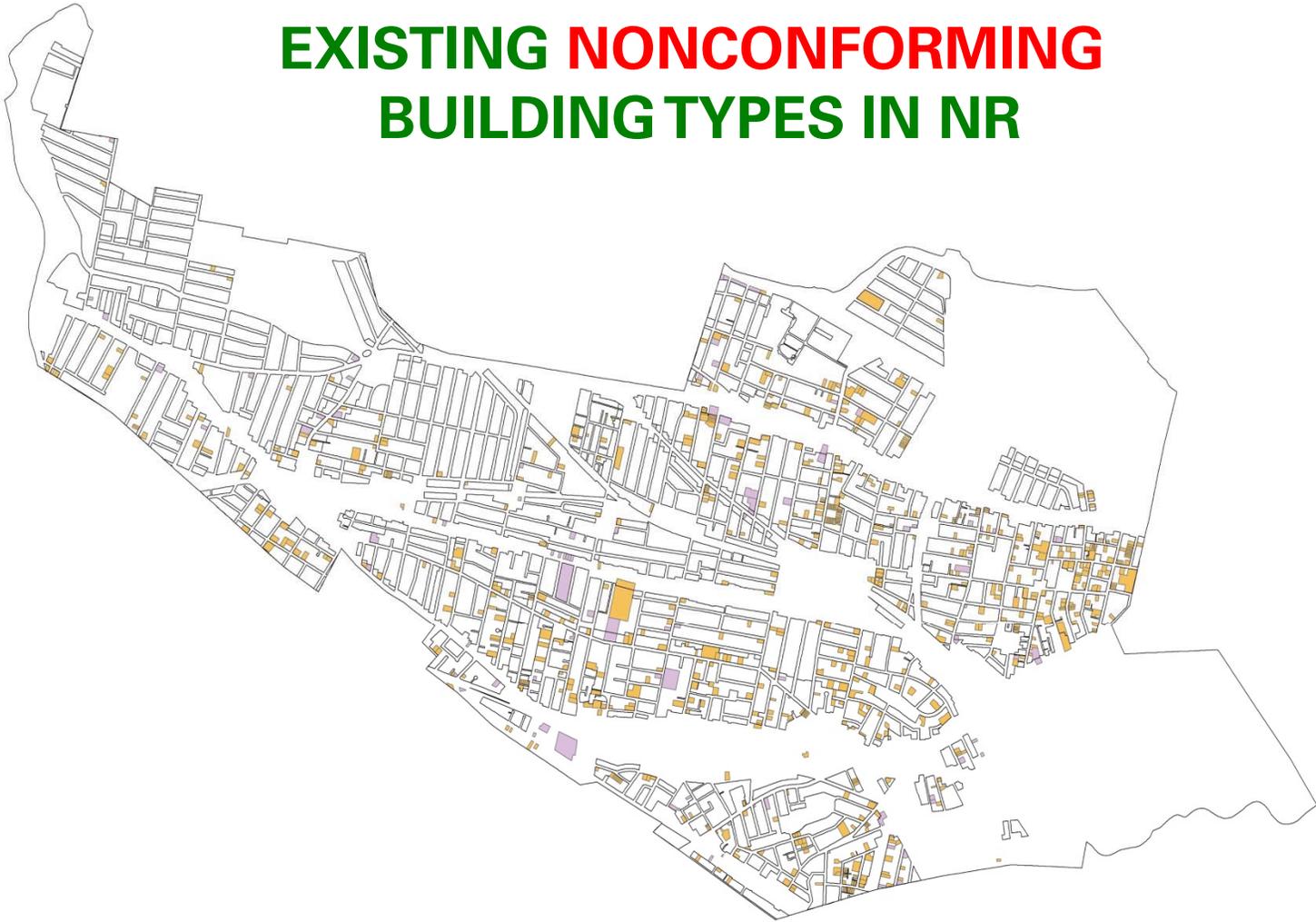
SUMMARY...

- RA has been evolving into RB (2015 version of NR)

- RB has been evolving into 2018 UR

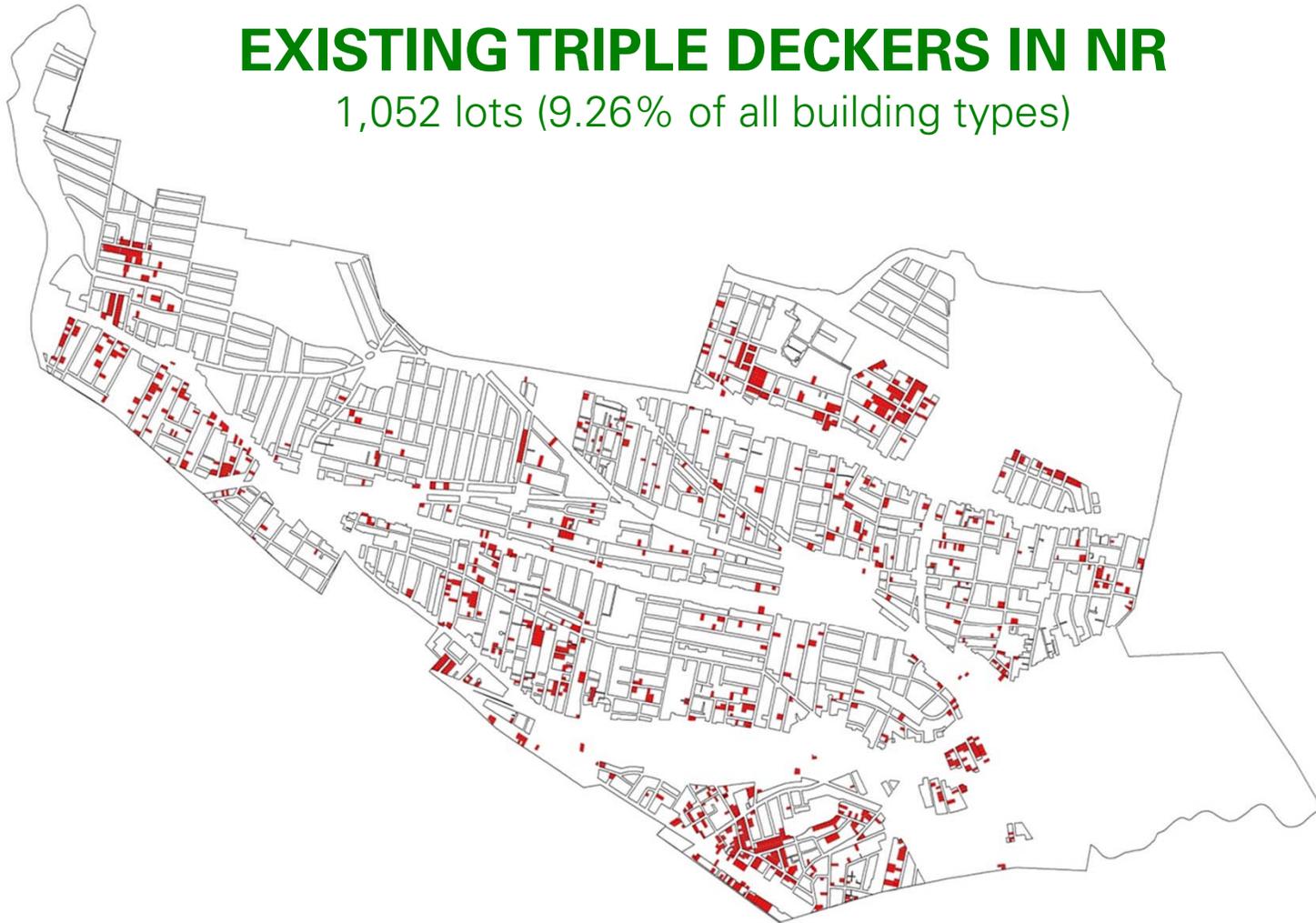


EXISTING NONCONFORMING BUILDING TYPES IN NR



EXISTING TRIPLE DECKERS IN NR

1,052 lots (9.26% of all building types)



HOW MANY TRIPLE DECKERS EXIST IN SOMERVILLE?

Existing Zoning

1,108	Triple Decker	100%
975	Residential A/Residential B	
68	Residential Commercial	
30	Business A/Business B	
5	CCD 55	
27	Neighborhood Business	
1	Industrial A	

2018 Proposed Zoning

1,108	Triple Decker	100%
1,053	Neighborhood Residence	
27	Urban Residence	
6	Mid-Rise 3	
10	Mid-Rise 4	
4	Mid-Rise 5	



Detached Triple Decker

HOW MANY TRIPLE DECKERS EXIST IN SOMERVILLE?

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975	Residential A/Residential B	
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2018 Proposed Zoning

1,108	Triple Decker	100%
1,053	Neighborhood Residence	
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6	Mid-Rise 3	
10	Mid-Rise 4	
4	Mid-Rise 5	



Detached
Triple Decker

WHAT ARE THE HURDLES TO ADDING UNITS?

Particularly 1 to 3 Unit & 2 to 3 Unit Conversions



WHAT ARE THE HURDLES TO ADDING UNITS?

Particularly 1 to 3 Unit & 2 to 3 Unit Conversions



Goran Smiljic

ISD Superintendent

Forthcoming Memo

- Building Code Summary
- Estimated Financials
- Past Frequency



UNIT CONVERSION IN RA & RB

	0 to 1	0 to 2	0 to 3	1 to 2	1 to 3	2 to 3	Other
2011		2					
2012							
2013	1				1		
2014		1	1	3	2	2	1
2015	1				1	3	2
2016		1		1			1
2017	2			7	2	2	
2018				3		1	
Total Projects	4	4	1	14	6	8	4
Total Units Added	4	8	3	14	12	8	-2

SMALL LOT DEVELOPMENT OF COTTAGES/HOUSES?

	0 to 1	0 to 2	0 to 3	1 to 2	1 to 3	2 to 3	Other
2011		2					
2012							
2013	1				1		
2014		1	1	3	2	2	1
2015	1				1	3	2
2016		1		1			1
2017	2			7	2	2	
2018				3		1	
Total Projects	4	4	1	14	6	8	4
Total Units Added	4	8	3	14	12	8	-2

UNIT CONVERSION IN RA & RB

	0 to 1	0 to 2	0 to 3	1 to 2	1 to 3	2 to 3	Other
2011		2					
2012							
2013	1				1		
2014		1	1		2	2	1
2015	1				1	3	2
2016		1		1			1
2017	2			7	2	2	
2018				3		1	
Total Projects	4	4	1	14	6	8	4
Total Units Added	4	8	3	14	12	8	-2

41 SITES

47 NEW DUs

UNIT CONVERSION IN RA & RB

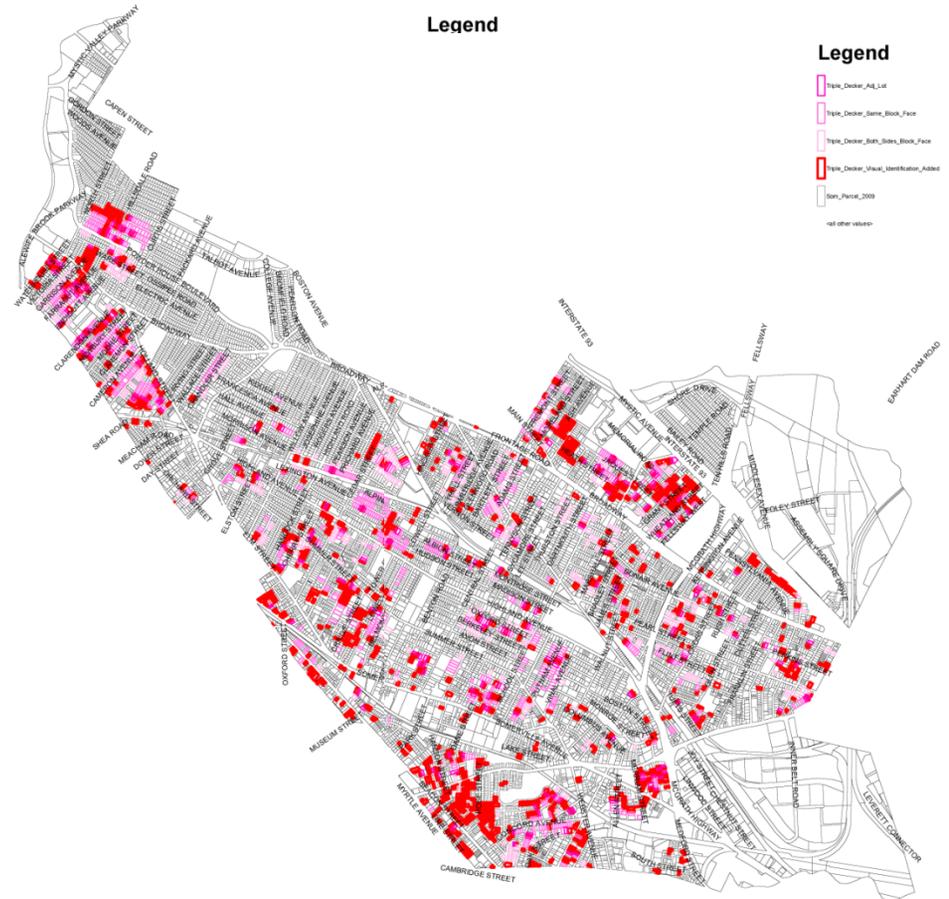
Types of Projects

Renovations	4
Gut Renovations	7
Large Additions	3
Demolish (or substantially demolish) structure and rebuild	15
Vacant or Nonconforming Use to Residential Building Type	11

HOW COULD WE PERMIT TRIPLE DECKERS?

Under what circumstances...

- ✓ Correct Size Lot
- Direct Adjacency
- Same Block Face Adjacency
- Both Block Faces Adjacency



MAXIMUM NUMBER OF NEW TRIPLE DECKERS

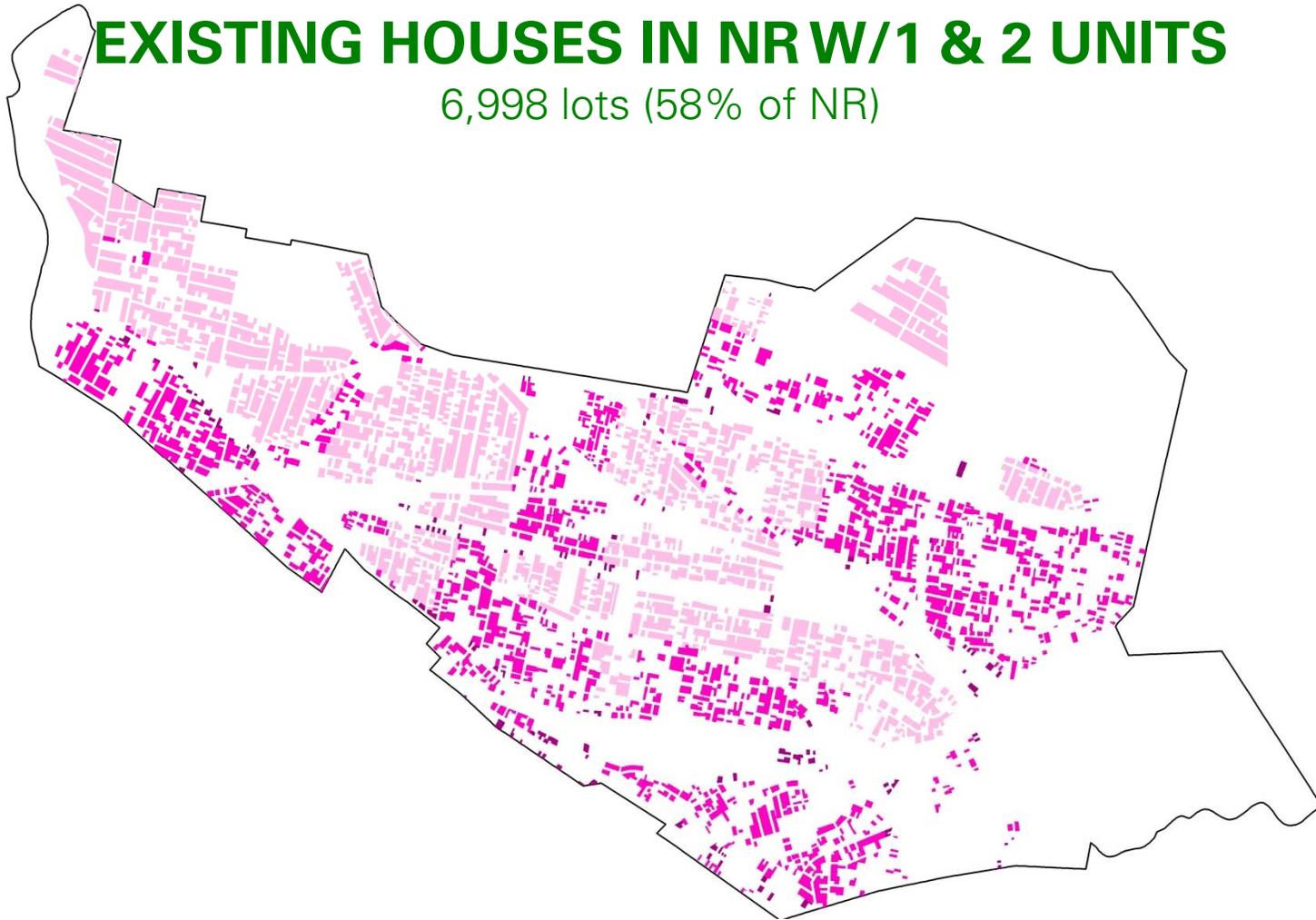
	Lot Size ONLY	Direct Adjacency	Same Block Face Adjacency	Both Block Faces Adjacency
Eligible Lots	3492	196	764	1135
Percentage of NR Lots	28.8%	1.60%	6.30%	9.36%
Existing Single	692	50	188	281
Existing Two	2533	127	507	761
Increase in Unit Count	3917	227	883	1323
In RA District	2176	40	224	386
Percentage of NR Lots	18.0%	0.30%	1.80%	3.18%
In RB District	1316	143	513	720
Percentage of NR Lots	10.9%	1.20%	4.20%	5.94%

DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE NR BOUNDARY



EXISTING HOUSES IN NRW/1 & 2 UNITS

6,998 lots (58% of NR)



LETS TALK ABOUT CONDOS

CONDOS BY BUILDING TYPE			Total	Condos	%
Apartment Building			83	30	36%
Apartment House			31	8	26%
Cottages			680	13	2%
Detached House			8,588	862	10%
Detached Triple Decker			1,053	146	14%
Duplex			93	41	44%
Multiplex			336	49	15%
Rowhouses			205	24	12%
Semi-Detached House			187	21	11%
Semi-Detached Triple Decker			21	1	5%
Total Buildings			11,277	1,195	11%
Total Units in NR			25,474	3,400	13%
2-3 Unit Houses			6,901	862	12%
All 2-3 Unit Buildings			8,255	1,071	13%
Total Units in Somerville			32,423	4,826	15%

OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS

1. How many buildable vacant lots are there in NR (RB/RB)?
2. How many 3 bedroom units exist in Somerville?

PARKING REGULATION



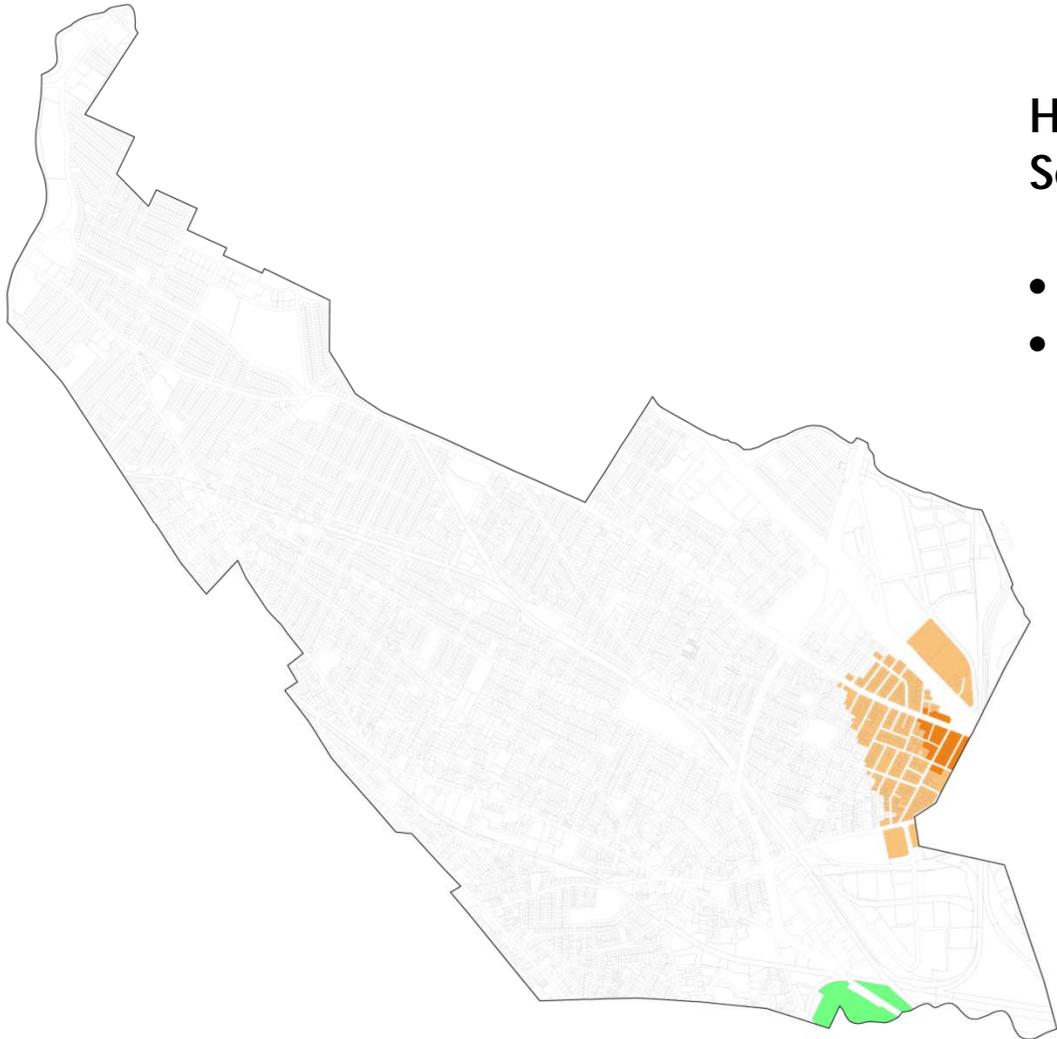
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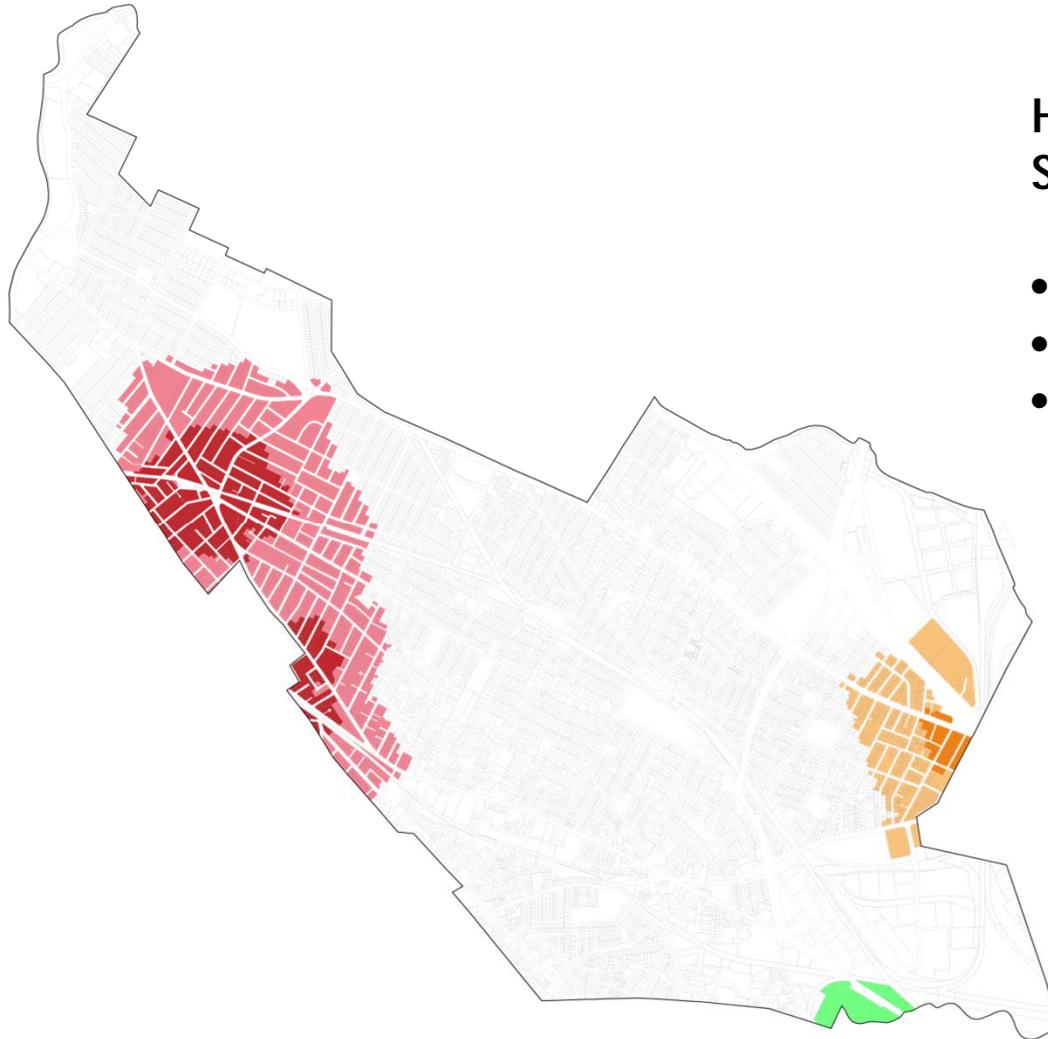
History of modern MBTA Service in Somerville

- 1959 Lechmere
- 1975 Sullivan



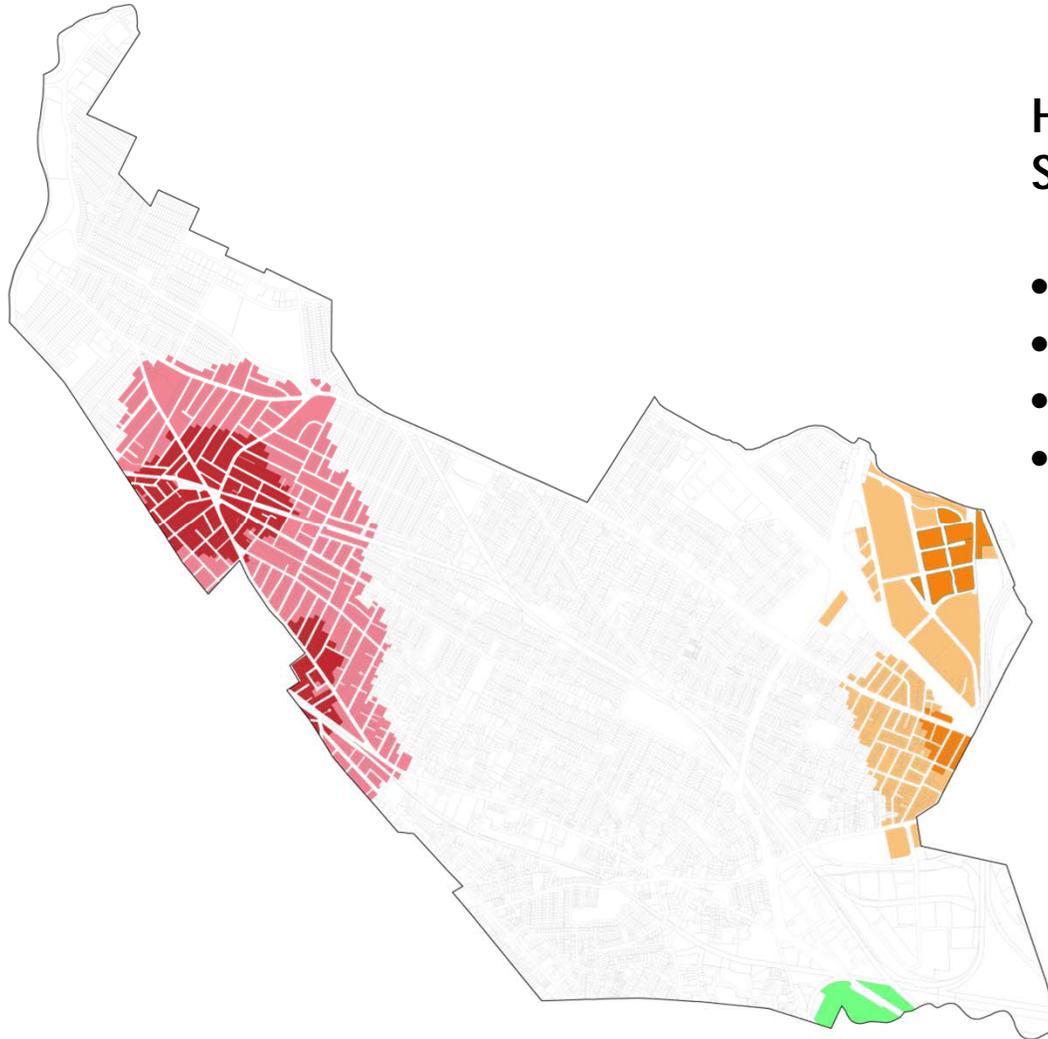
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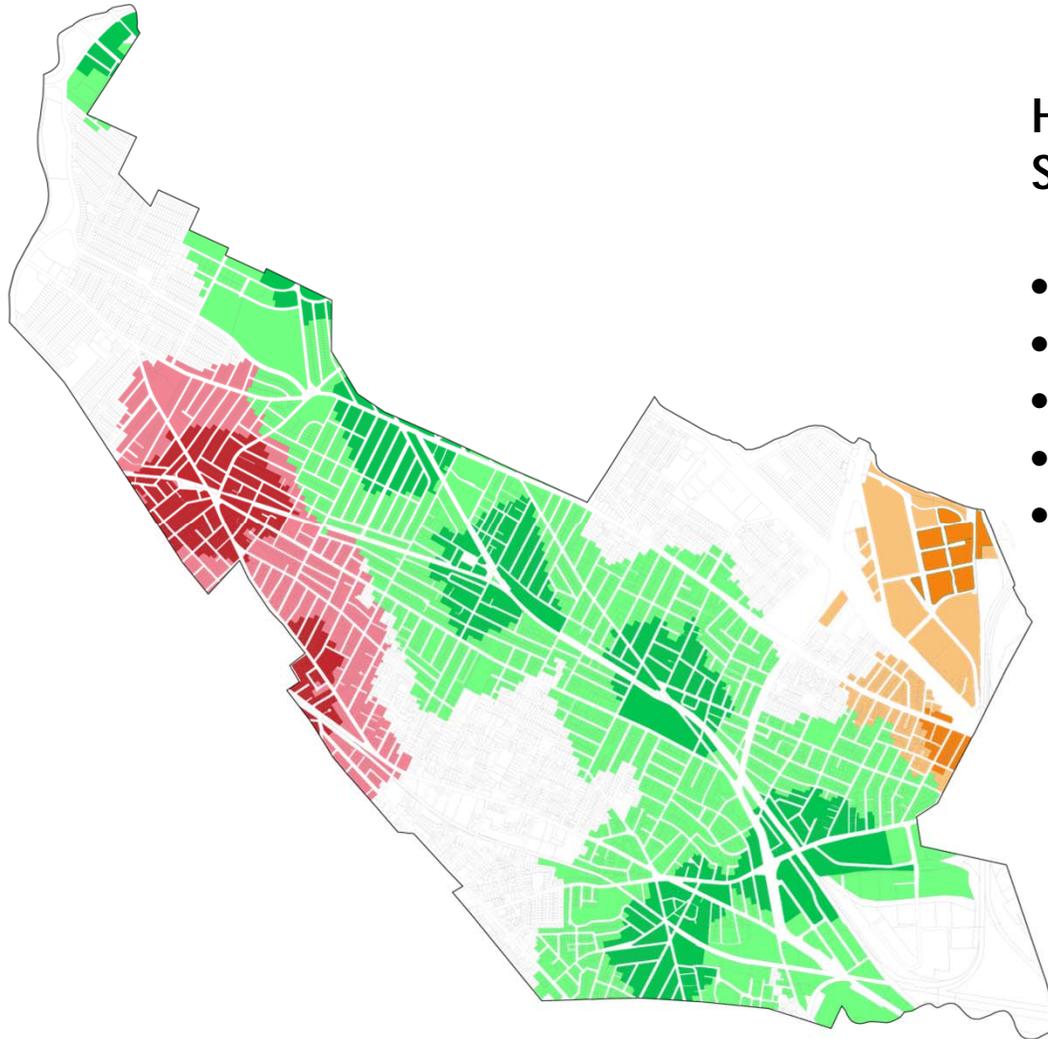
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History of modern MBTA Service in Somerville

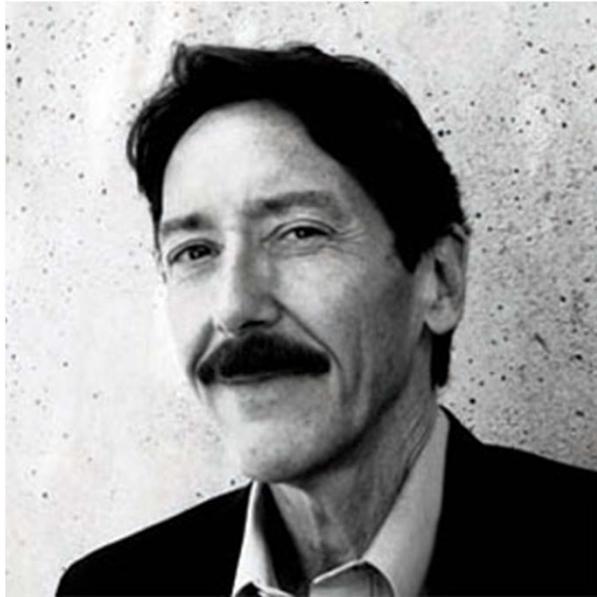
- 1959 Lechmere
- 1975 Sullivan
- 1984 Porter & Davis
- 2014 Assembly



History of modern MBTA Service in Somerville

- 1959 Lechmere
- 1975 Sullivan
- 1984 Porter & Davis
- 2014 Assembly
- 2025? GLX

PARKING ANALYSIS IS A SOCIAL SCIENCE



DR. Robert Cervero (UC Berkeley)

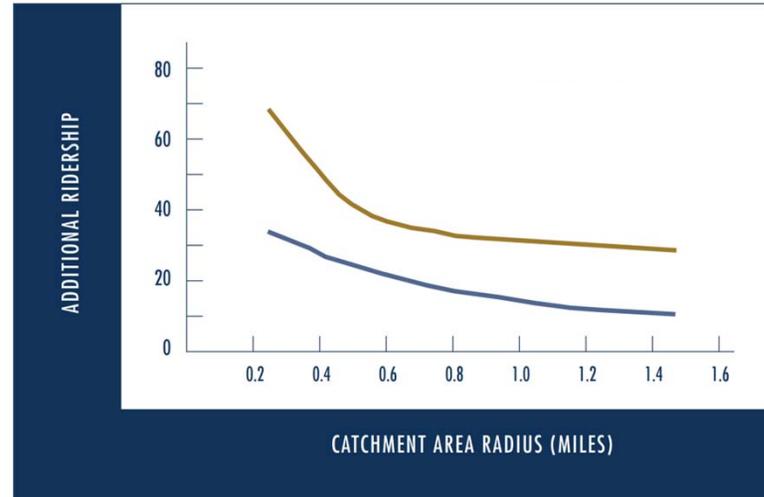
2013 Study of 1,450 U.S. Transit Stations

- $\frac{1}{4}$ mile is the distance people are willing to walk when traveling to/from work
- $\frac{1}{2}$ mile is the distance people are willing to walk when traveling to/from home



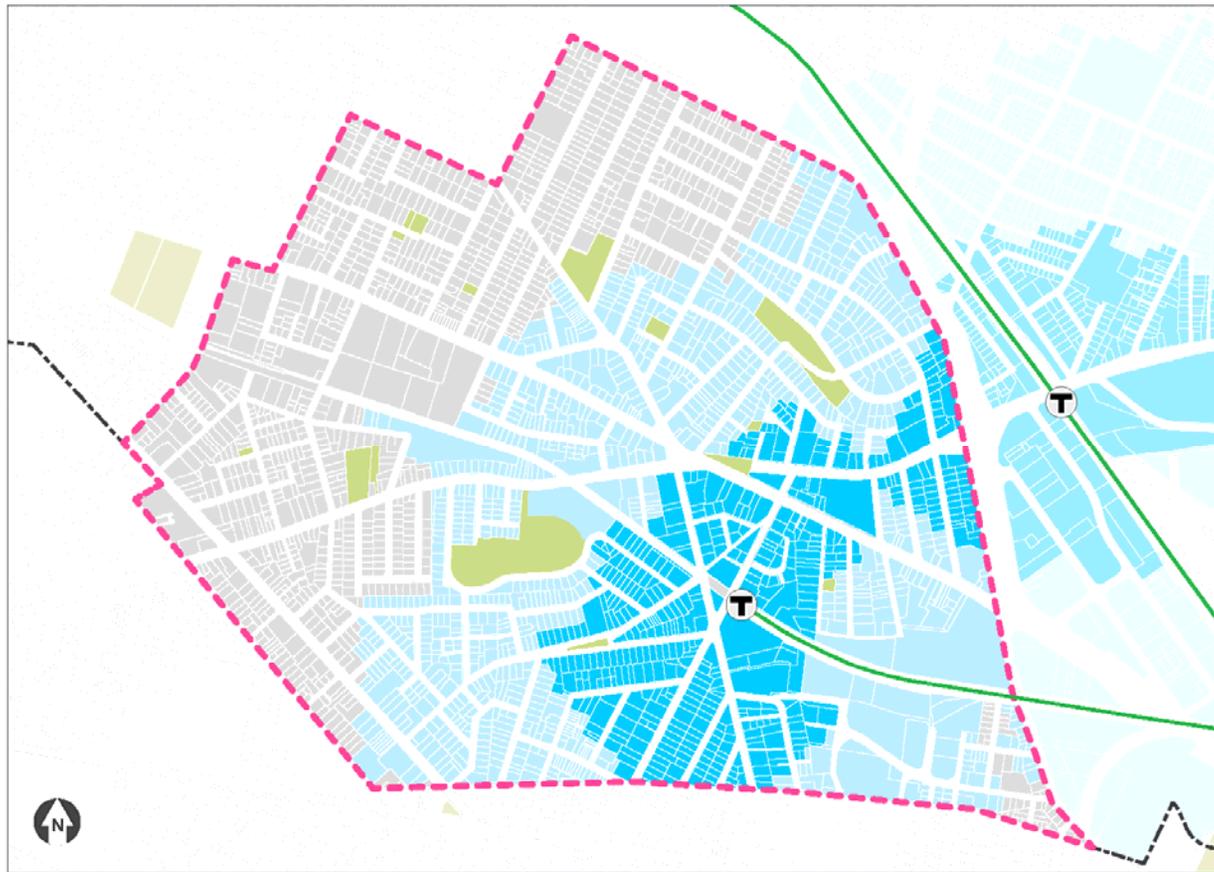
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Walking Distance to Transit



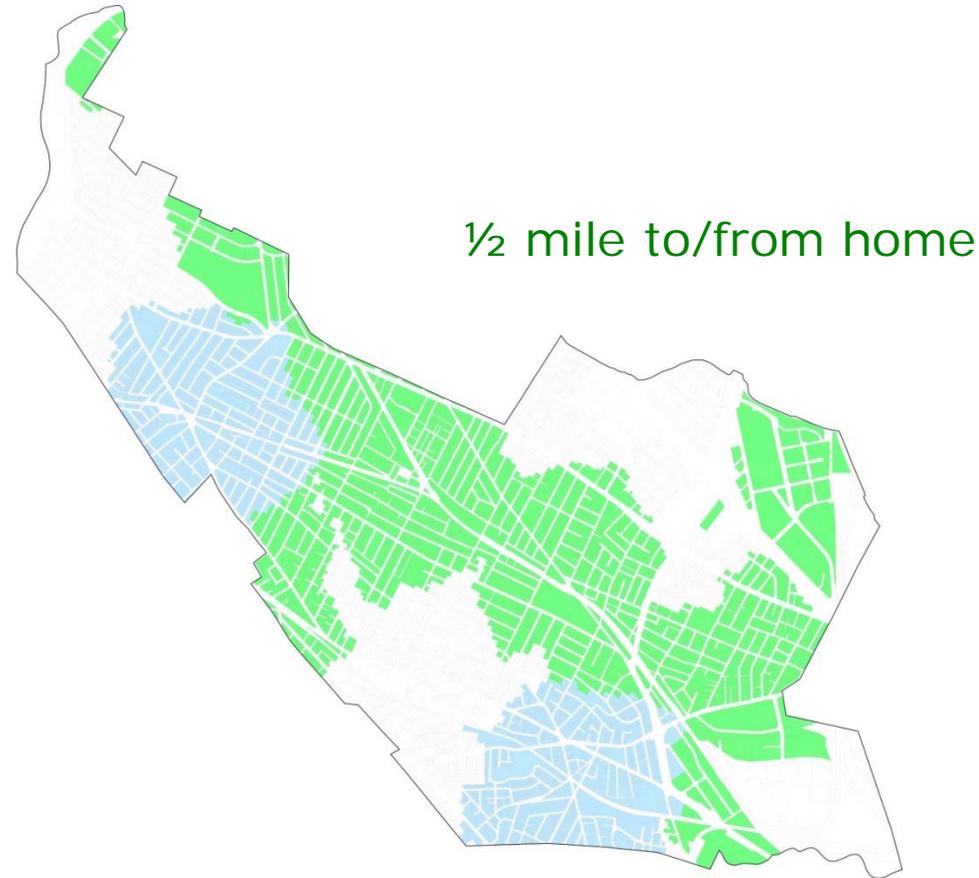
- The closer housing and jobs are to transit the higher probability residents and employees will use the service.
- People are generally willing to walk further to higher capacity, more frequent service and will typically walk further to rail than they will to the bus.

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT



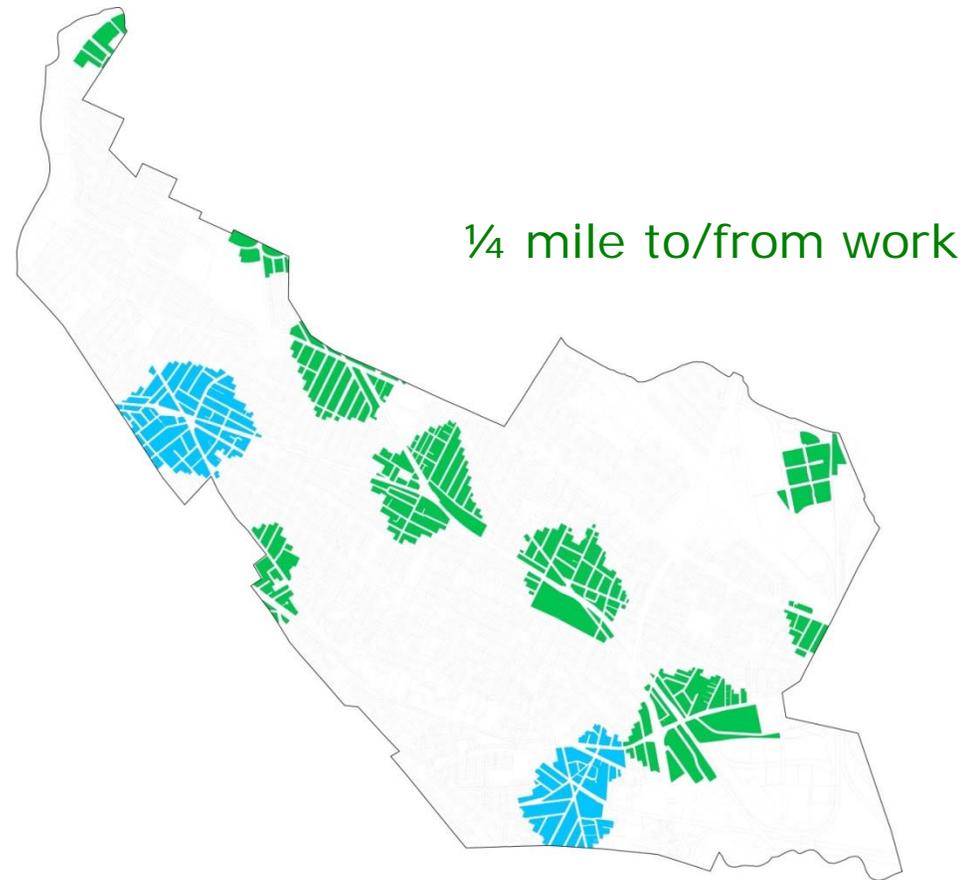
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Walking Distance to Transit



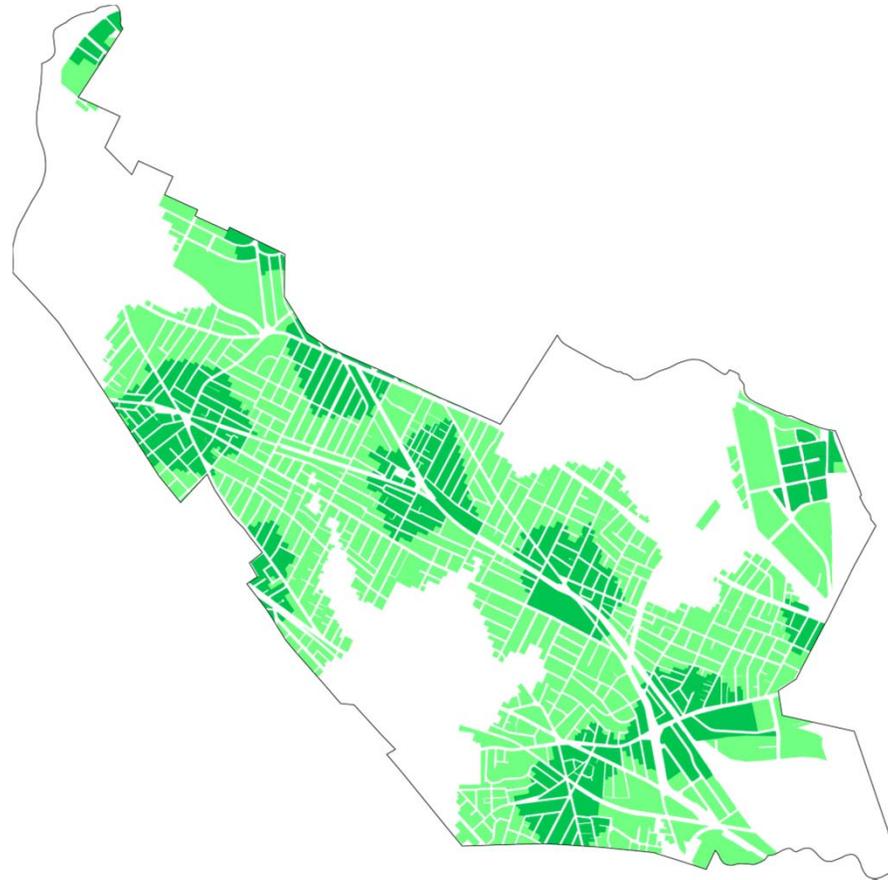
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Walking Distance to Transit



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Walking Distance to Transit



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Calibrating Parking Requirements

	Conventional Minimum Parking Requirements	Tailored Minimum Parking Requirements	No Parking Requirements	Maximum Parking Requirements
Typical Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requirement > average demand - Hides all parking costs 	Adjust for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - density - transit - mixed use - on-street spaces ...etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market decides - Garages funded by parking revenues - Manage on-street parking - Residential parking permits allowed by vote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limit parking based on road capacity or transit goals - Manage on-street parking - Market rate fees encouraged/ required
Traffic	High	←	→	Low
Housing Costs	High	←	→	Low
Transit Ridership	Low	←	→	High

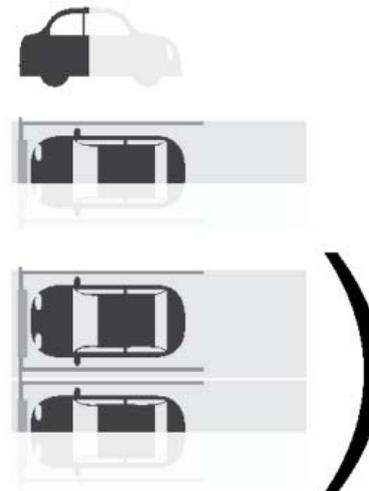
Figure 6 – Conceptual Approaches to Setting Parking Requirements

SOMERVILLE OVERALL:
Average car ownership rate: **0.99** cars per unit

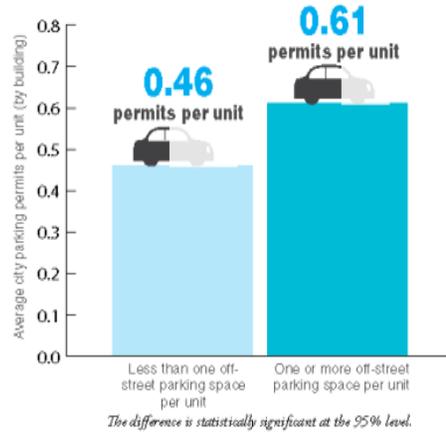
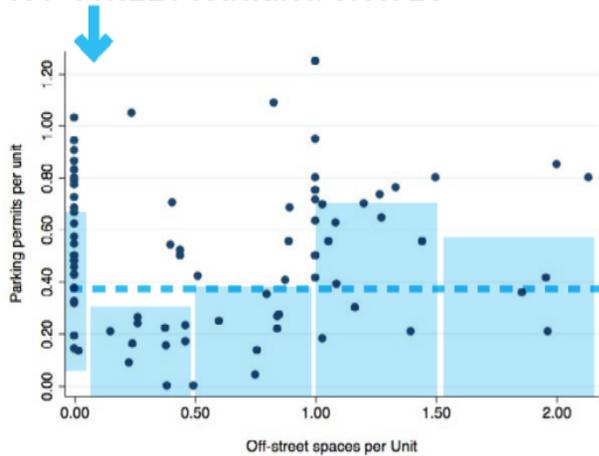
BUILDINGS WITH 7 OR MORE UNITS:
Average car ownership rate: **0.39** cars per unit

Average number off-street spaces: **0.60** spaces per unit

(Average number off-street spaces required by current Zoning Ordinance: **1.50** spaces per unit



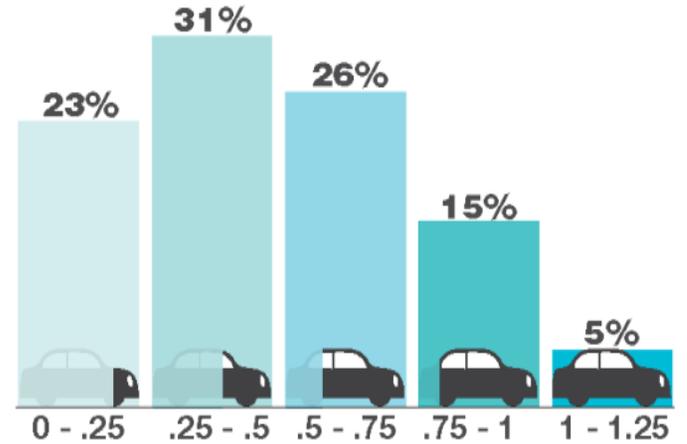
STREET PARKING PERMITS AND OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES



average:
0.39 permits per unit



AVERAGE NUMBER OF PARKING PERMITS PER HOUSEHOLD



1 PARKING SPACE REQUIRES ABOUT 330 SQUARE FEET.

1 PARKING SPACE = 165 TOMATO PLANTS
or 8 FITNESS MACHINES



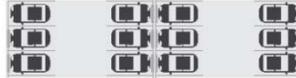
2 PARKING SPACES = A ONE-BEDROOM APARTMENT
or A RESTAURANT PATIO



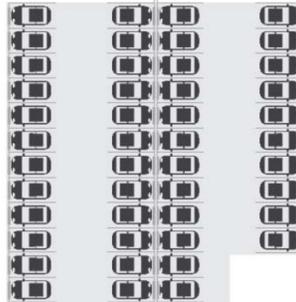
4 PARKING SPACES = A THREE-BEDROOM APARTMENT
or A SMALL PLAYGROUND



12 PARKING SPACES = DIESEL CAFE



46 PARKING SPACES = WALNUT STREET PARK



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Calibrating Parking Requirements

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Traffic	High	←	←	→ Low
Housing Costs	High	←	←	→ Low
Transit Ridership	Low	←	←	→ High

Figure 6 – Conceptual Approaches to Setting Parking Requirements

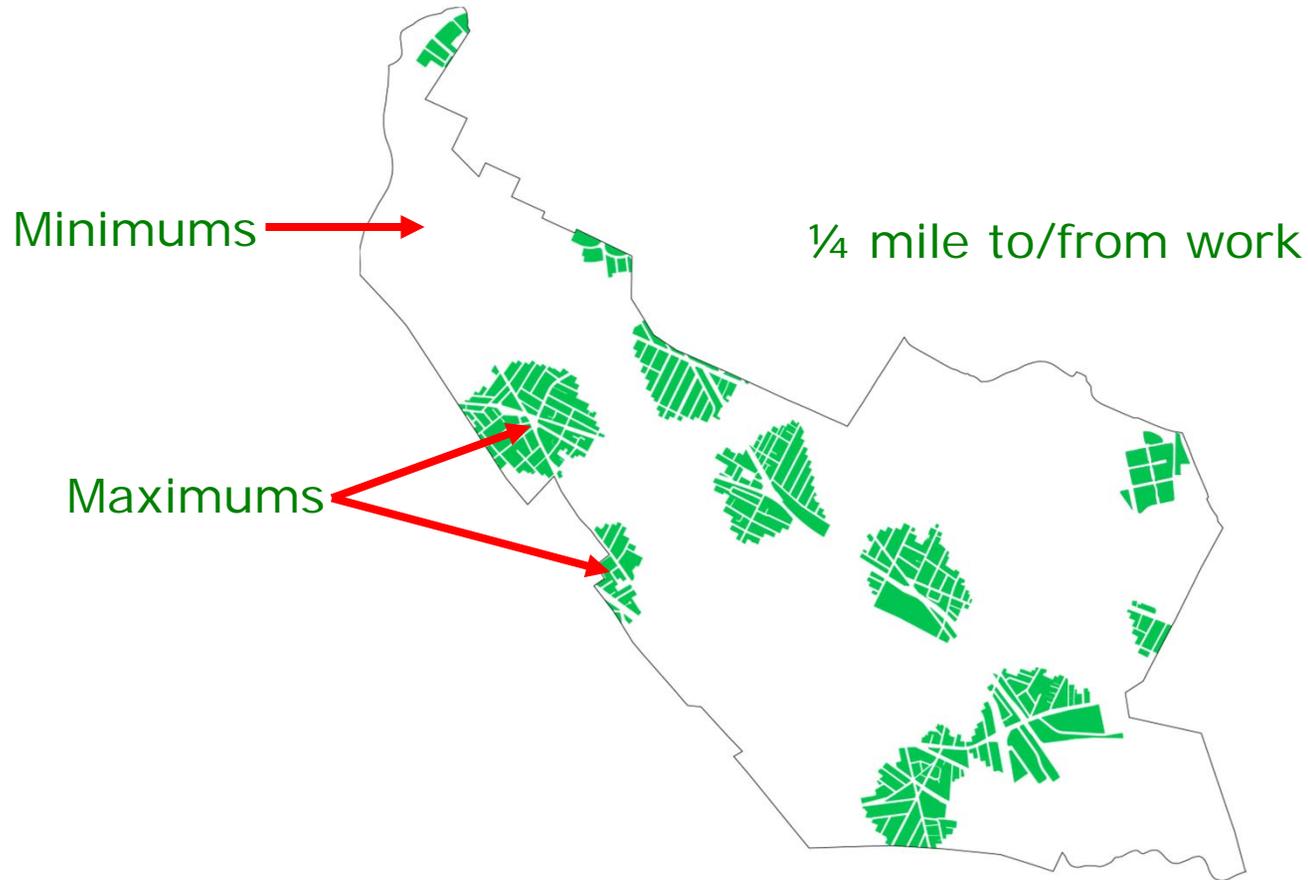
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Calibrating Parking Requirements



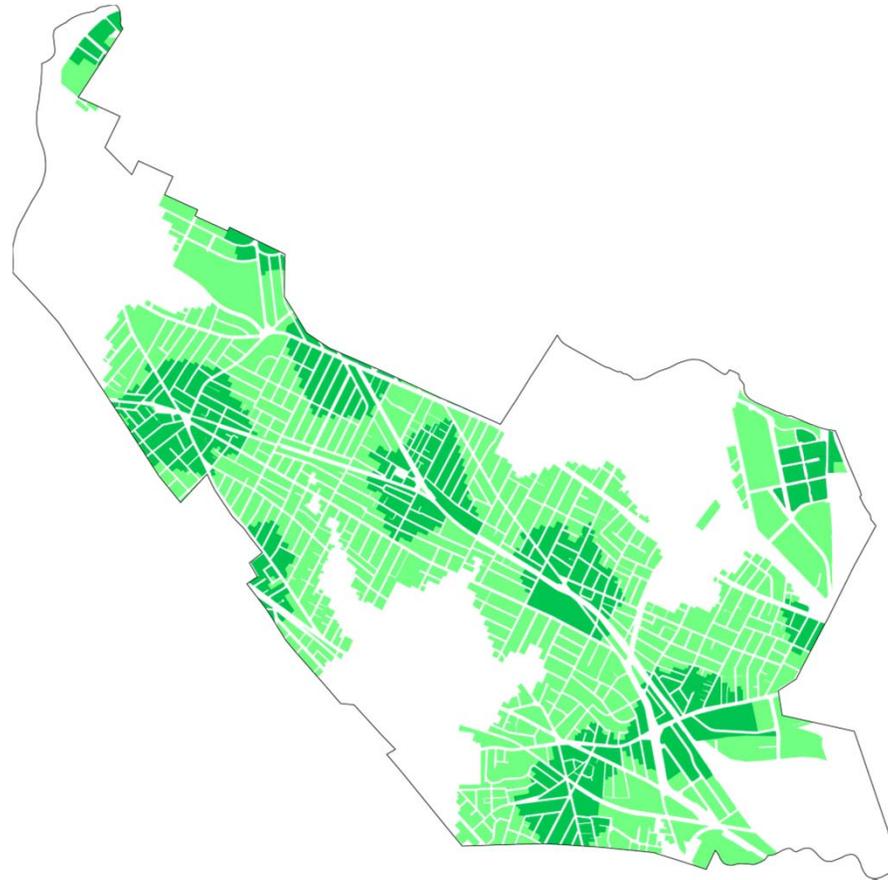
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Calibrating Parking Requirements



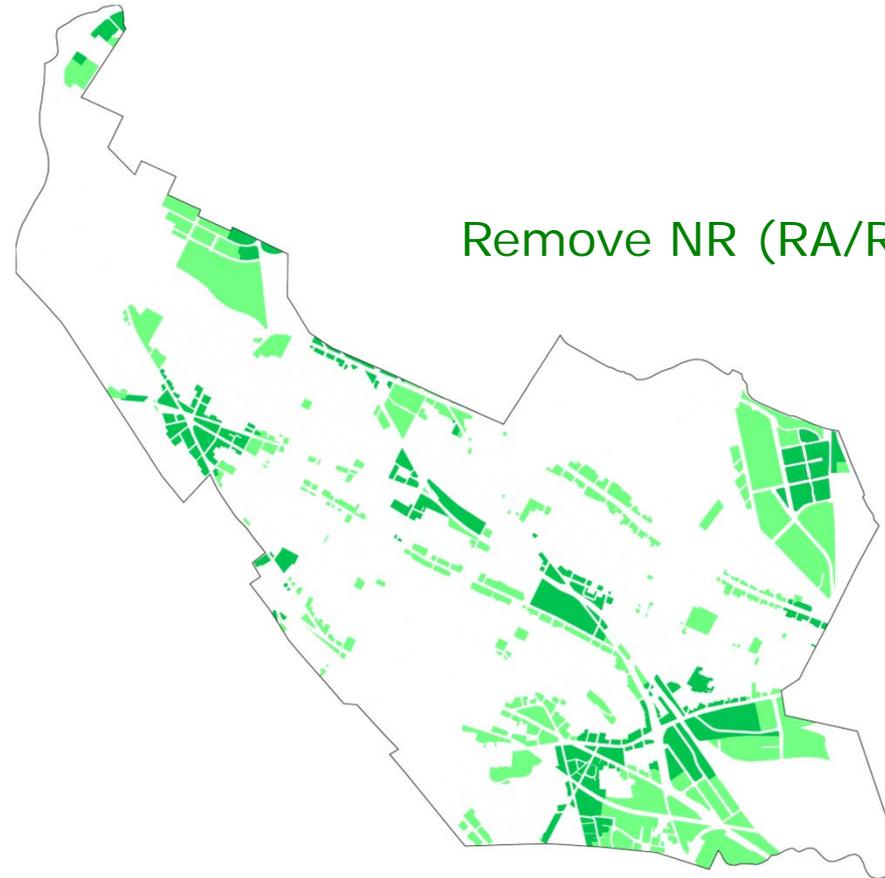
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Calibrating Parking Requirements



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Calibrating Parking Requirements

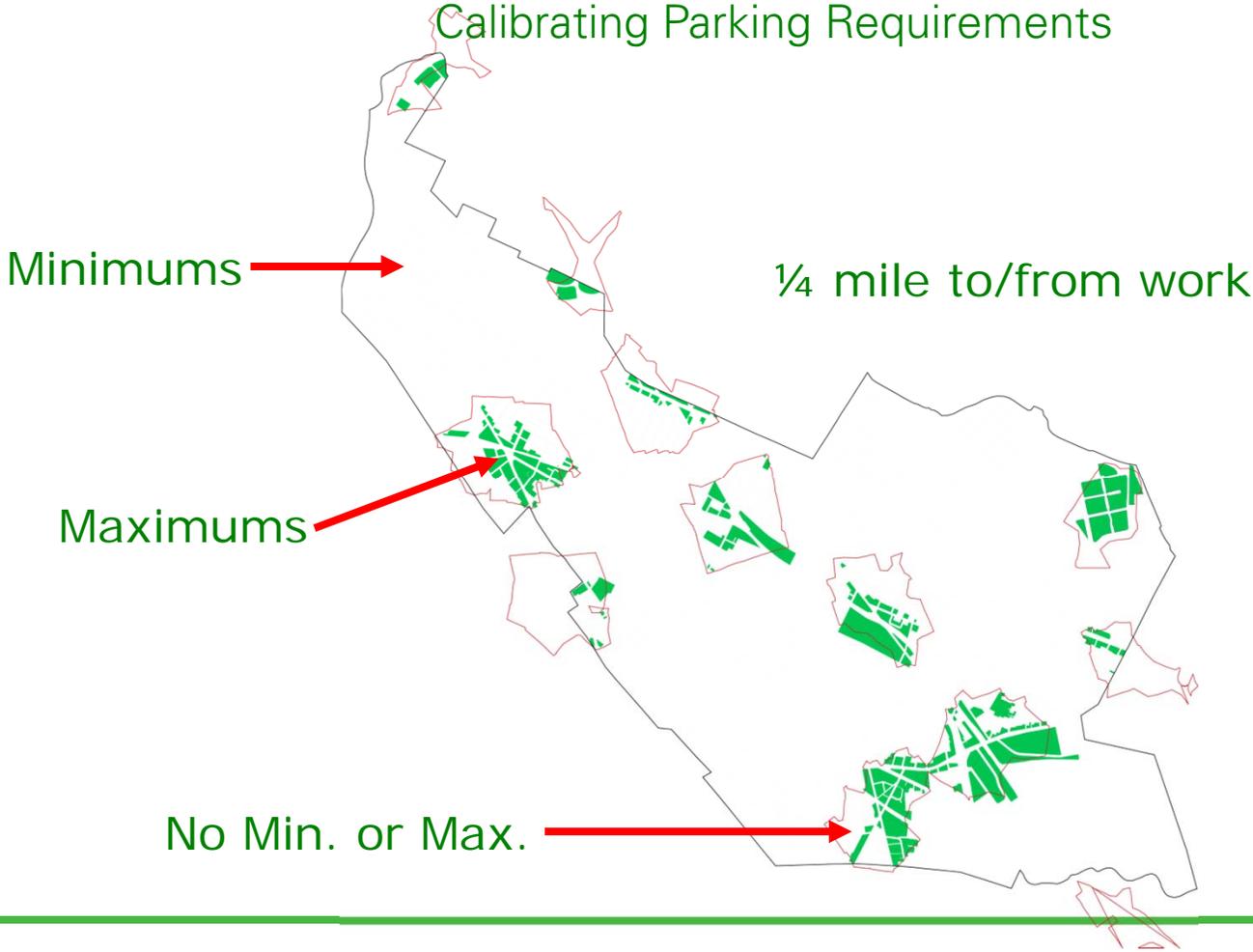


Remove NR (RA/RB)



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Calibrating Parking Requirements



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Calibrating Parking Requirements

Minimums

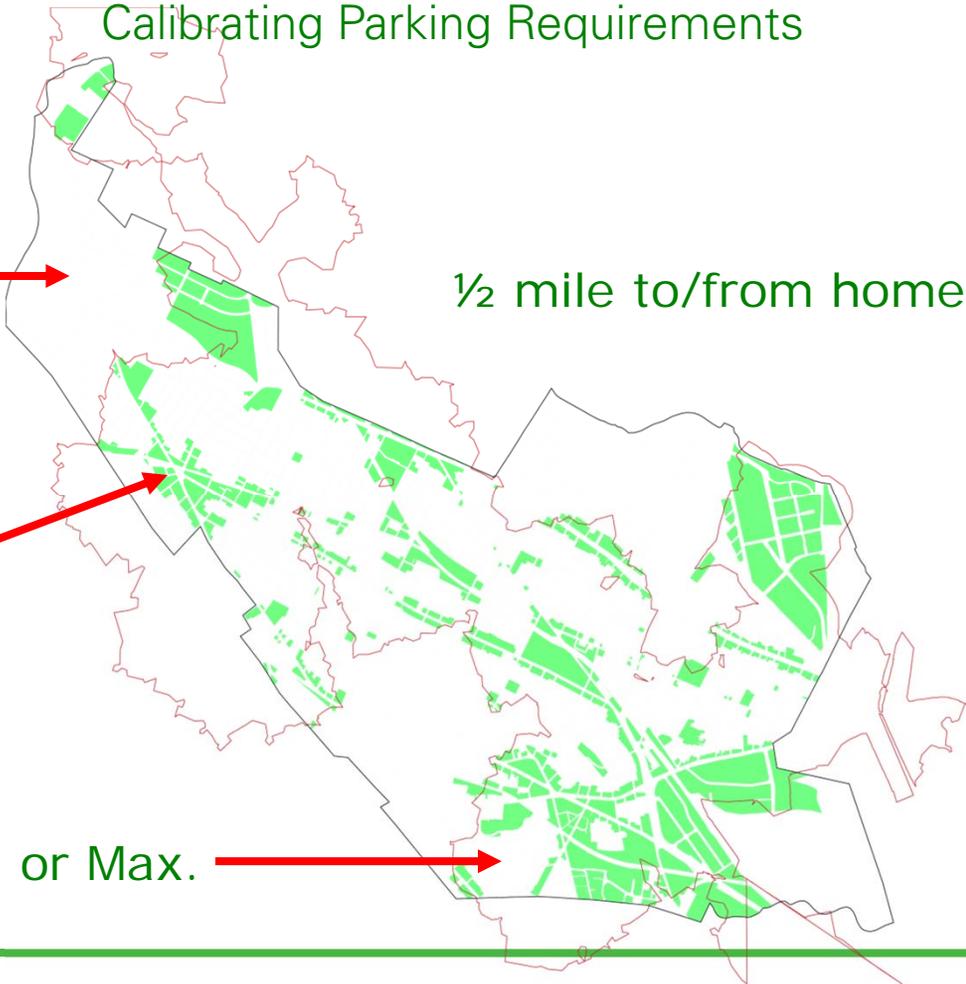


1/2 mile to/from home

Maximums

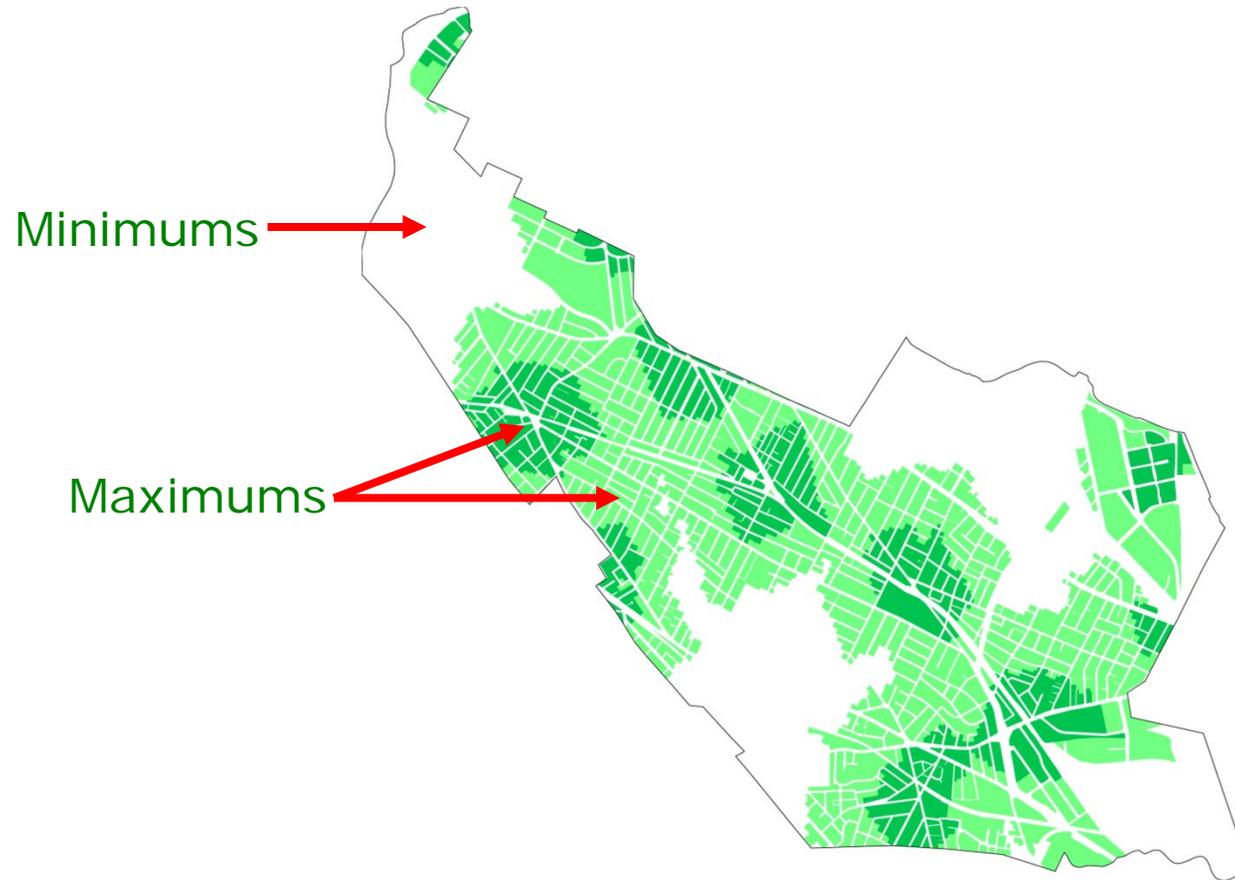


No Min. or Max.



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Calibrating Parking Requirements



Mobility Zoning Study

Findings for Bicycle Parking:

- The use of minimum parking standards for bicycles is good practice because it encourages the use of this transportation mode
- Somerville has proposed similar to worse short-term minimum bicycle parking standards and similar or better long term minimum parking standards
- Omitting bicycle parking standards for light industrial uses in the proposed ordinance was an oversight
- Similarly, no in-lieu payment option was provided for uses that cannot reasonably accommodate on-site bicycle parking



Mobility Zoning Study

Findings for Motor Vehicle Parking:

- The proposed ordinance has similar minimum parking standards and better maximum parking standards that peer municipalities (Cambridge, MA & Portland, OR)
- The proposed ordinance applies parking standards to individual uses rather than categories, which may seed confusion or disagreement over which specific use an activity falls under
- The Transit Orientation map is only used to calibrate parking minimums and maximums and not using it as an additional filter to further guide transit oriented development may be a missed opportunity



Mobility Zoning Study

Other Issues:

- The proposed ordinance sums the minimum parking for each principal use on a site or even city block, ignoring the common practice of sharing parking between uses
- The proposed ordinance does not include any best practices for permitting shared parking
- Off-site parking is required to be located within 660 feet of the principal use needing parking. Best practice is a 5 minute walk, about 1,320 feet
- On-street parking management practices should be implemented outside of zoning to ensure the efficient use of on-street parking and support the progressive changes of the proposed ordinance





City of Somerville

ZONING OVERHAUL