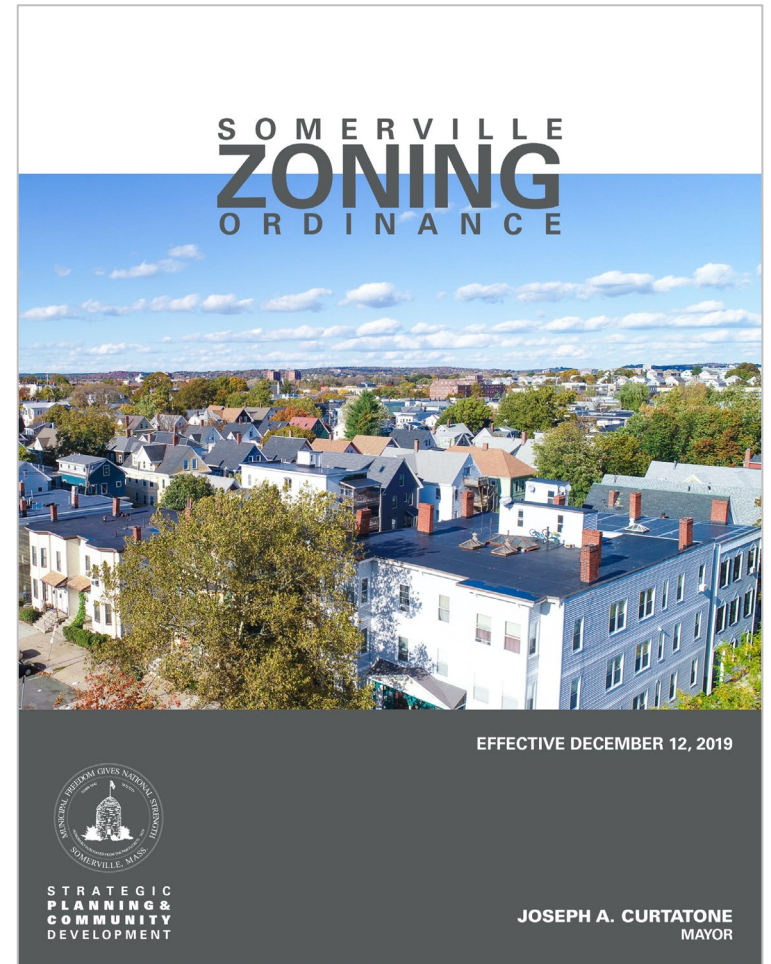


# MBTA COMMUNITIES ZONING

April 28, 2022



[www.somervillezoning.com](http://www.somervillezoning.com)

# MBTA Communities Multi-Unit Zoning Requirements

## January 2021 Economic Development Bill

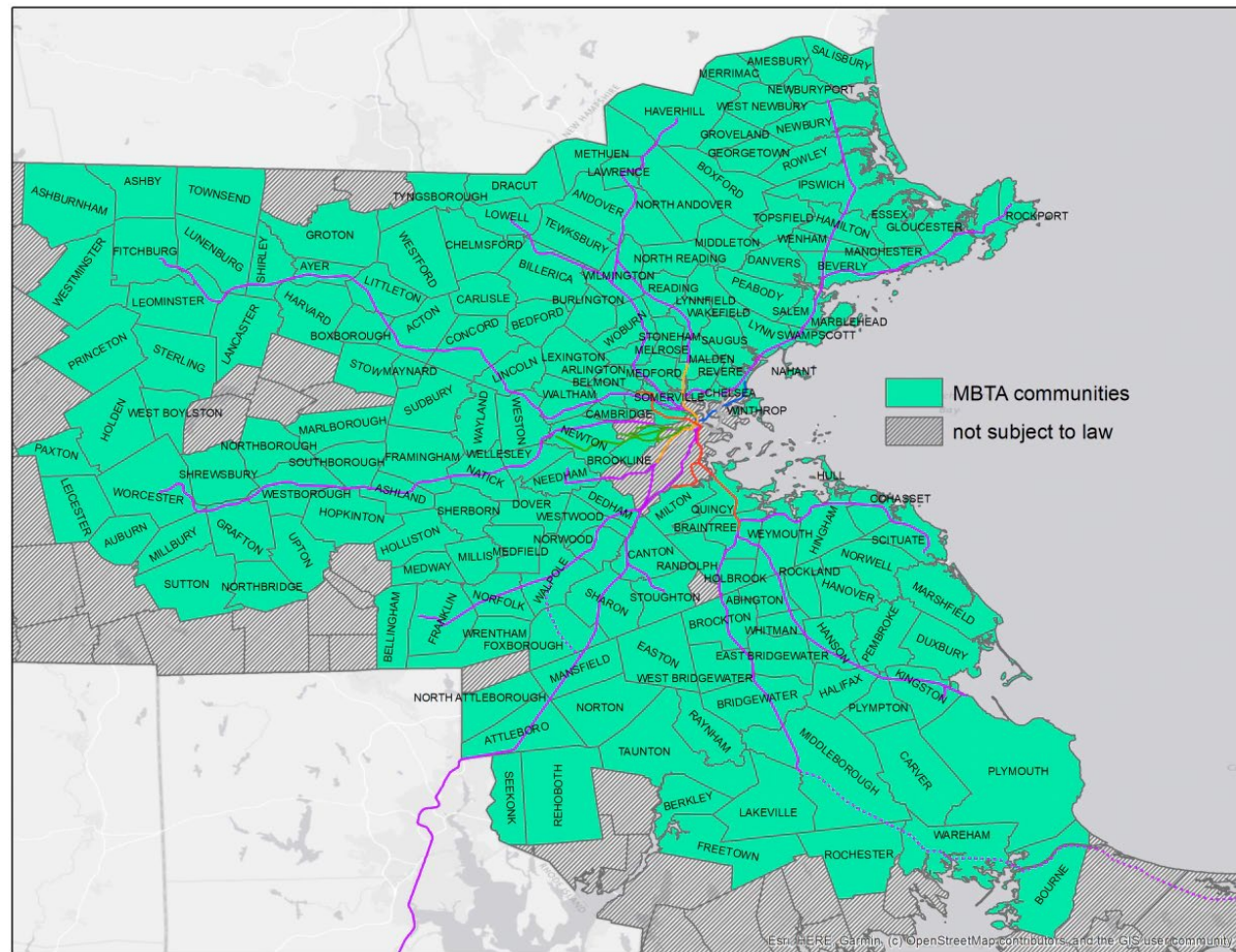
### New Section 3A of M.G.L 40A (the Zoning Act)

1. Requires that a “MBTA Community” have:
  - At least one (1) zoning district of *reasonable size*
  - Permit multi-unit housing *by right*
  - No *age restrictions; Suitable for households with children*
  - Minimum gross density of 15 dwelling units per acre
  - Not more than ½ mile from a commuter rail station, subway station, bus station, or ferry terminal.
2. An MBTA community that fails to comply with the standards is not be eligible for grant funds from major MA State programs:
  - Housing Choice Initiative
  - Local Capital Projects Fund
  - MassWorks Infrastructure Program
3. Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD), Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), and Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) must establish compliance guidelines.

# “MBTA Communities”

Defined by M.G.L. 161A, sec 1

175 MBTA communities are subject to the new requirements of Section 3A of the Zoning Act







# Compliance Guidelines

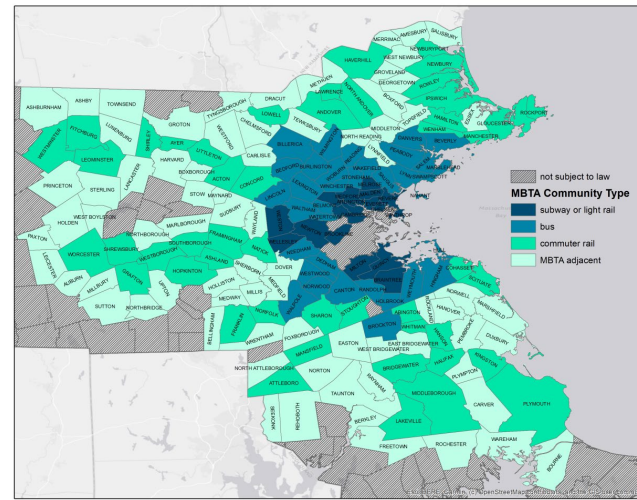
DRAFT Compliance Guidelines (December 2021)

- Compliance guidelines scale for MBTA communities with a higher level of transit service.

Accepted Comments from Municipalities (March 31, 2022)

## Compliance Criteria

- Reasonable Size: 50+ Acres
- Multi-Unit: 3+ Dwelling Units
- Suitable for Households with Children: No restrictions for age, unit size, bedroom count, size of bedrooms, or number of occupants
- Unit Capacity: 25% of existing Dwelling Units



## MBTA Communities - Cohort Designations and Capacity Calculations

Show  entries Search:

Municipality	MBTA Community Type	2020 Housing Units (Census PL-94)	Minimum multifamily district unit capacity requirement
Somerville	subway or light rail	36,269	9,067

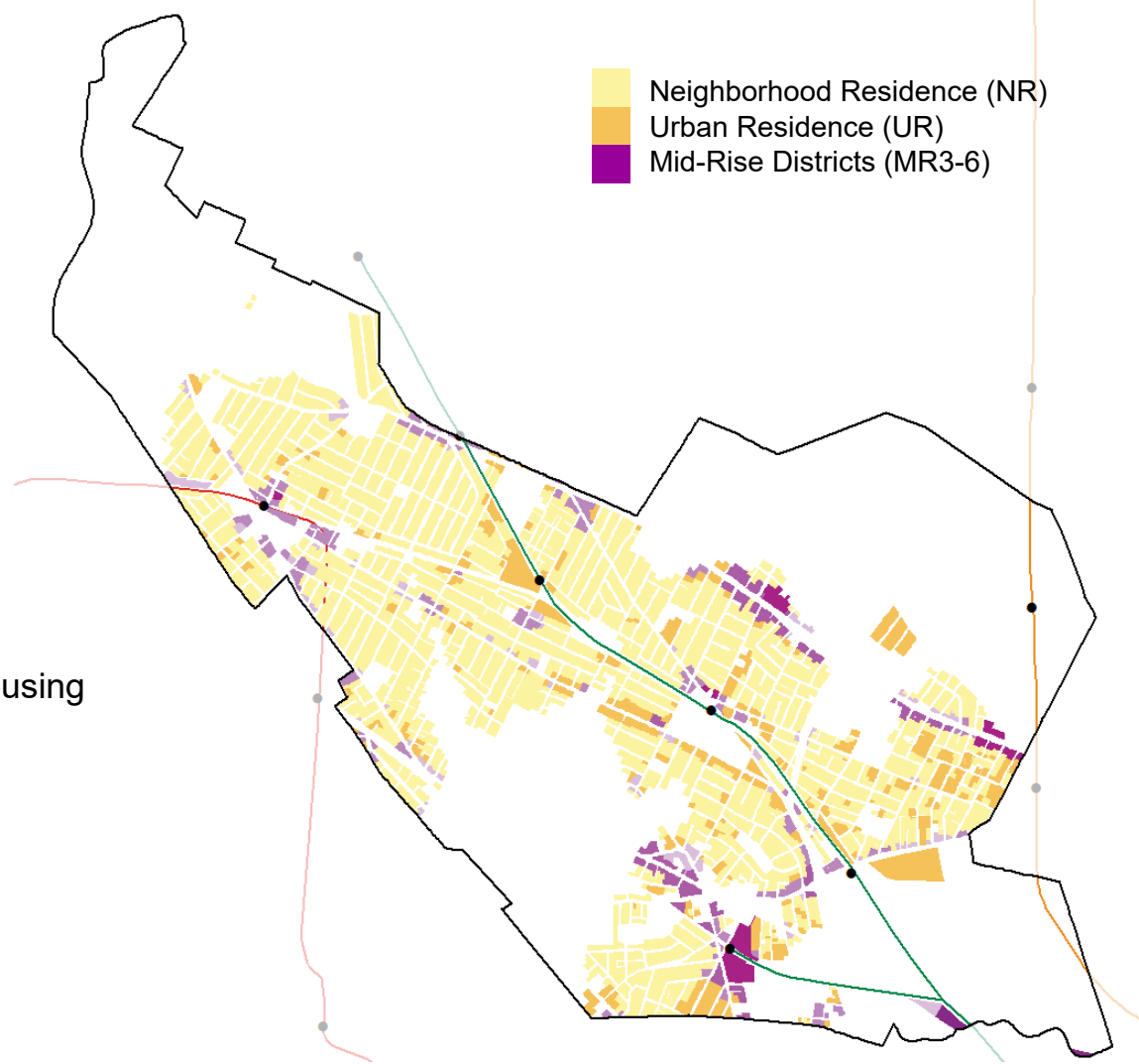
Showing 1 to 1 of 1 entries (filtered from 175 total entries) Previous **1** Next

\* MBTA communities with a unit capacity lower than 750 units are noted as having a unit capacity of 750. This is the fewest number of multi-family units needed to meet the gross density requirement of 15 units per acre (i.e. 50 acres x 15 units per acre).

# Compliance Guidelines

## Requirements (Calibrated for Somerville)

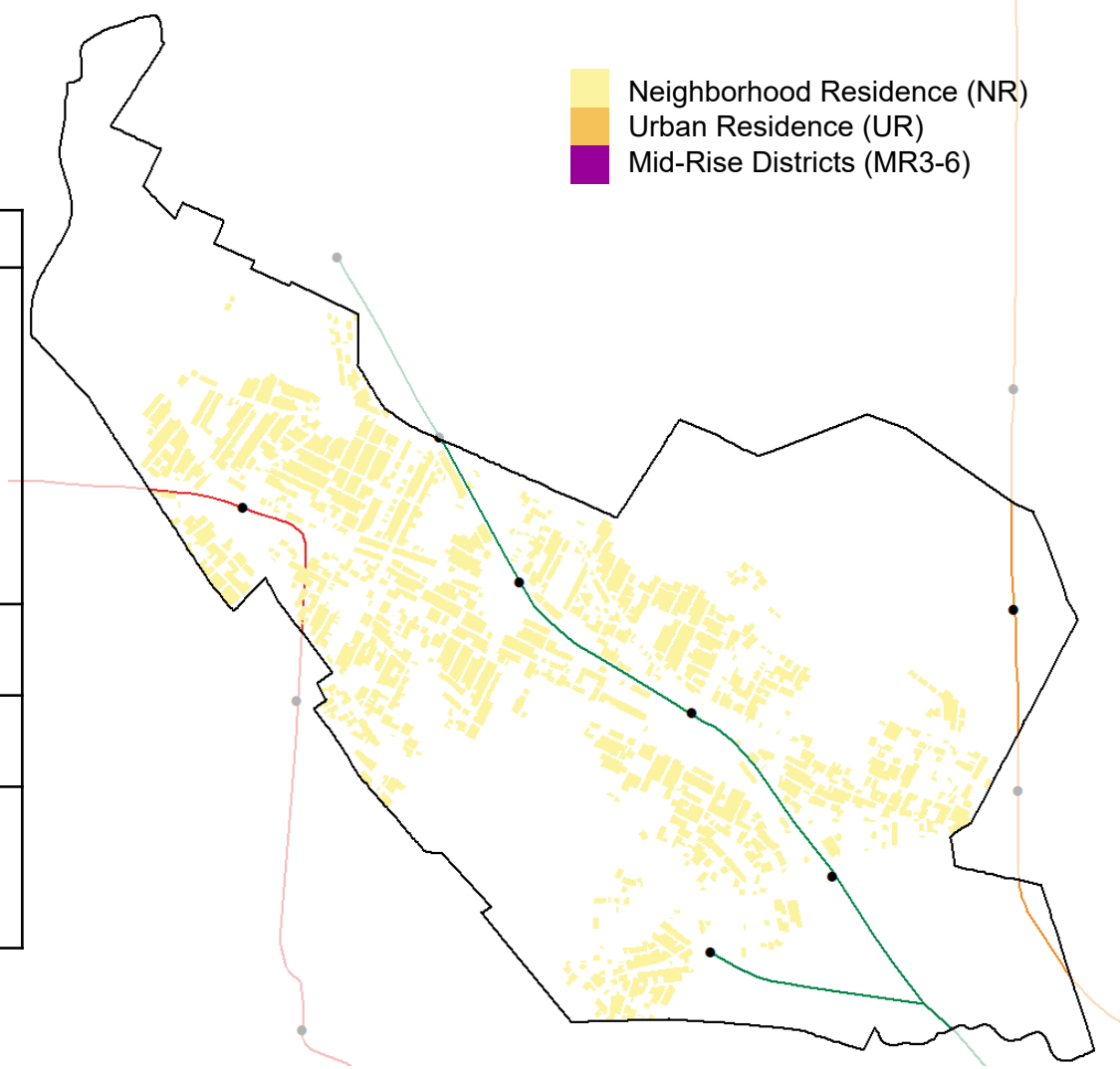
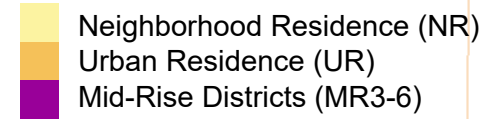
1. One (1) Zoning District
  - Within ½ mile of a Transit Station (“Transit Area”)
  - At least 50 total acres
  - Contiguous (reasonably)
2. Housing Standards
  - Permit “multi-unit” buildings “by right”
    - *Site Plan Approval OK; Special Permit NOT OK*
    - *Multi-Unit = 3+ DU*
  - Capacity equal to or greater than 25% of existing housing
    - *9,067 existing or new DUs*
  - Minimum gross density of 15 DU/ac
  - No standards allowed for:
    - *Square feet of dwelling units*
    - *Number of bedrooms*
    - *Size of bedrooms*
    - *Number of unit occupants*



# Preliminary Analysis:

## NR in Transit Area

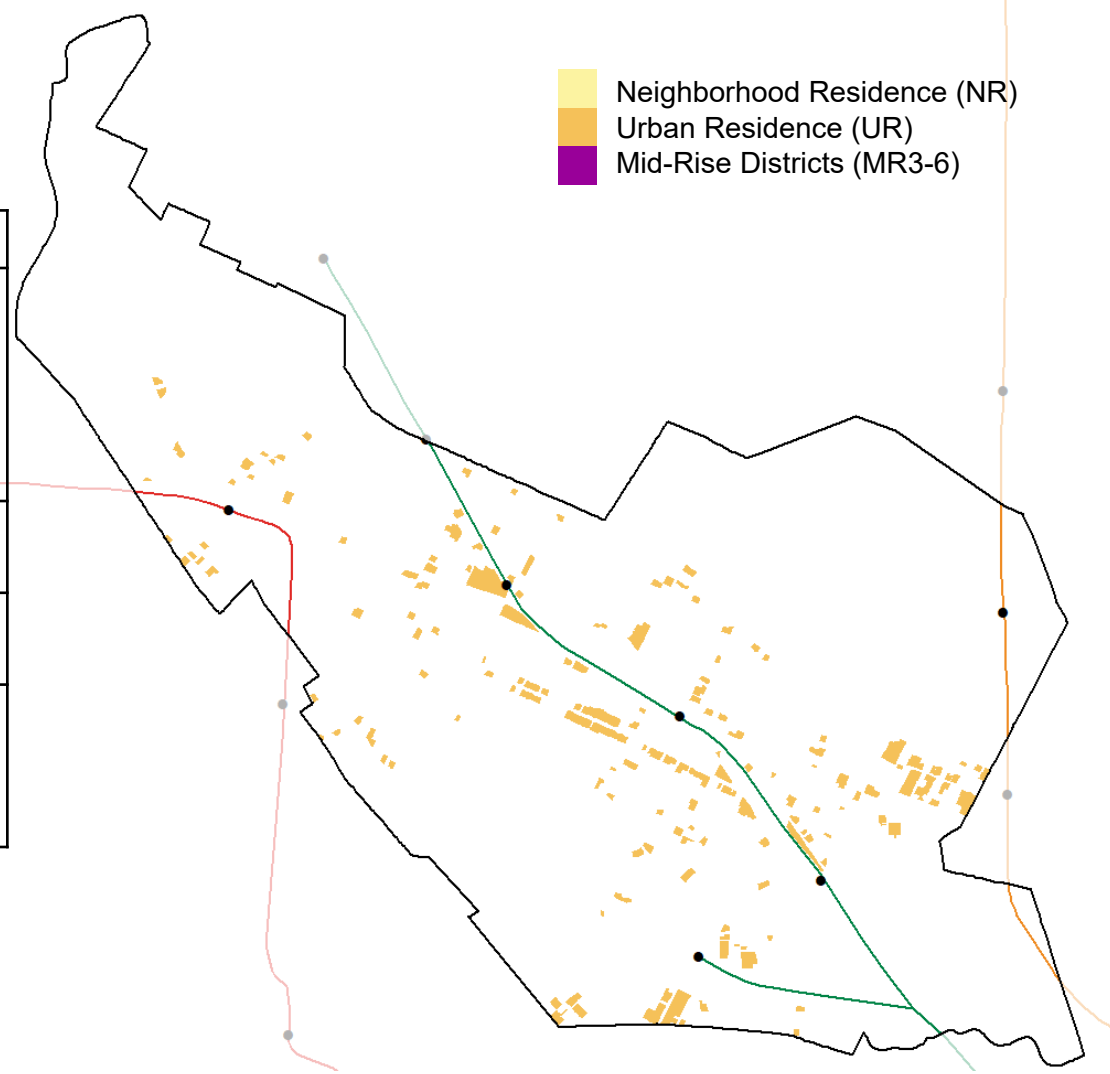
Land within Transit Area		416.2 ac
Building Types	Cottage	1 DU
	Duplex	2 DU
	Detached House	2 DU
		3 DU
	Semi-Detached House	2 DU
		3 DU
	Triple Decker	2 DU
	3 DU	
	Backyard Cottage	1 DU
Residential Uses	Household Living	By Right
	Group Living	Special Permit
Build Out Capacity	Dwelling Units	11,814
	Gross Density	18 DU/ac
Standards	Square Feet	n/a
	Number of Bedrooms	n/a
	Size of Bedrooms	n/a
	Number of Occupants	Regulated



# Preliminary Analysis:

## UR in Transit Area

Land within Transit Area		77.7 ac
Building Types	Semi-Detached Triple	2 DU
		3 DU
	Multiplex	4-6 DU
	Apartment House	4-10 DU
	Apartment Building	4+
	Row Houses	3-10 DU
Residential Uses	Household Living	By Right
	Group Living	Special Permit
Build Out Capacity	Dwelling Units	4,906
	Gross Density	42 DU/ac
Standards	Square Feet	n/a
	Number of Bedrooms	n/a
	Size of Bedrooms	n/a
	Number of Occupants	Regulated

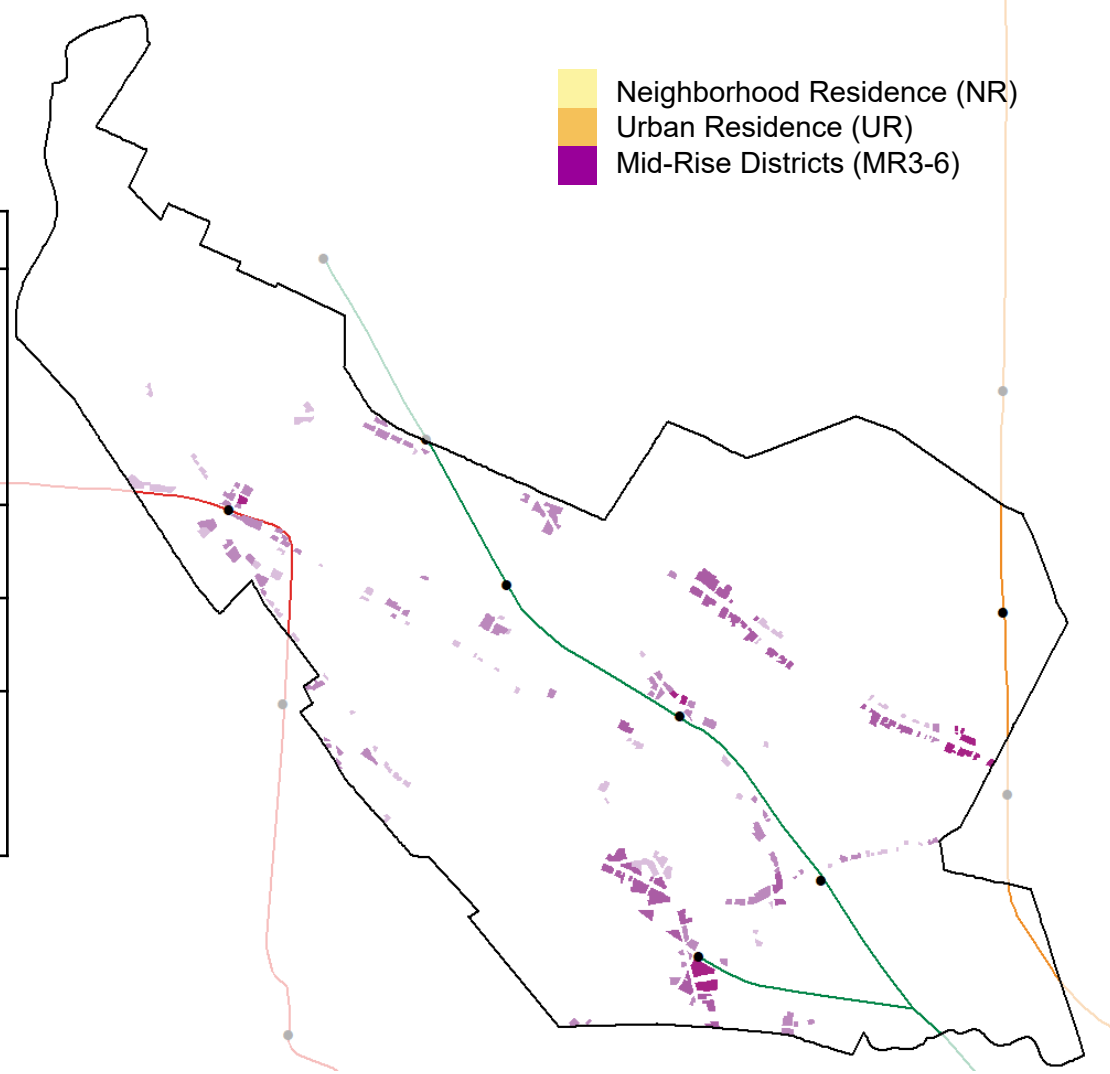




# Preliminary Analysis:

## MR in Transit Area

Land within Transit Area		72.1 ac
Building Types	Apartment Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MR3&amp;4</li> <li>• MR5&amp;6</li> </ul> General Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MR3&amp;4</li> <li>• MR5&amp;6</li> </ul>	Same density permitted for both building types
Residential Uses	Household Living Group Living	Special Permit Special Permit
Build Out Capacity	Dwelling Units Gross Density	8,816 91 DU/ac
Standards	Square Feet Number of Bedrooms Size of Bedrooms Number of Occupants	n/a n/a n/a Regulated



# Nest Steps

## DHCD FINAL GUIDELINES to issue Summer 2022

- May 2, 2022 Present to City Council\*
- May 2, 2022 Submit MBTA Community Information Form to DHCD\*

### \* Required for Interim Compliance in 2022

- December 31, 2022 Submit Action Plan or file for a Compliance Determination
- December 31, 2023 Zoning Must be Adopted

## OSPCD plans to propose an amendment that meets or exceeds DHCDs requirements by summer 2022.

1. Finalize Proposal
2. Receive Compliance Determination
3. Adoption by City Council

