

Apartment and Apartment Mixed-use Development Standard Amendments

Department of Planning and Permitting
Committee on Zoning and Planning February 5, 2026

Resolution 25-105:

DEPT. COM. 63(26)
ZON

“...By reevaluating the development standards of the City’s Apartment and Apartment Mixed-use Districts, thousands of affordable and market rate housing units could be built, which would be a significant step forward in addressing the City’s housing crisis...”

“...these units would be built in districts that, through extensive community planning and engagement, have been deemed appropriate for the construction of additional housing...”

Summary of Proposals

STANDARD	EXISTING (A/AMX1 A/AMX-2 A/AMX-3)	Bill 5 (Council Initiated)	Bill 6 (DPP and Planning Commission Supported)	Note
Min. Lot Dimension	70' Standard	45' / 50' / 50'	60' Standard	Support a reduction, but not less than 60'. 45'-50' poses frontage design problems. Flexibility available w/ PDH
Min. Lot Size	7.5k / 10k / 20k	5k / 5k / None	5k Standard	Support 5k
Max. FAR	.3-.9/.4-1.9/.6-2.9	2/3/4	2/3/4 (residential)	Support
Commercial FAR	.3/.4/.6 (counts toward Max)	No Change	.3/.4/.6 (counted separate)	Policy advantage to AMX districts
Building Area	40-60%	No Change	60% Standard	Streamline code

RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

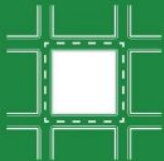
ONE ACRE
= 208'-9" x 208'-9"
= 43,560 square feet

**TYPICAL
SINGLE LOT**
= 50' x 100'
= 5,000 square feet
= 0.12 acres

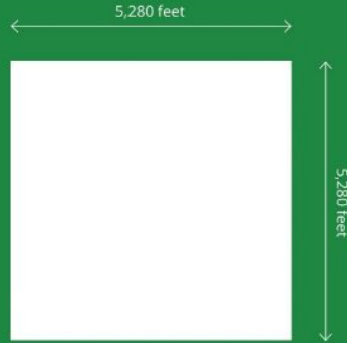
AVERAGE BLOCK
= 300' x 300'
= 90,000 square feet
= 2.06 acres
*(based on micro-sample
study)*



NET
Includes the building(s) area only



POPULATION DENSITY



ONE SQUARE MILE
= 27,878,400 square feet
= 640 acres

BUILDING DENSITY

0.5 FAR



1.0 FAR



2.0 FAR



Talking about Density:

Relevant Development Standards:

- FAR
- Building Area
- Lot Area/Dimension
- Height - NO CHANGE
- Setback - NO CHANGE
- Yards - NO CHANGE

All found in Table 21-3.3

NOTE: Thanks to Hawaii Housing Lab for imagery and graphics from "Understanding Density"

Brief Regulatory History:

- Prior to 1969: Proto-Zoning, not comprehensive
- 1969 - 1986: Comprehensive Zoning Code (CZC)
 - 1969 -1978 Land Use Intensity (LUI) Index, allowed up to 4.0 FAR in the Apartment Districts
 - 1978 - Major update, generally a reduction in density, and simplification over LUI Index
- 1986 - Current Land Use Ordinance (LUO)
 - Table 21-3.3 has generally remained the same

The LUO is the zoning code required by City Charter, and encourages development that is consistent with the City's General Plan, the Development Plans, the Sustainable Communities Plans, and, where applicable, other adopted plans. These plans are developed by the community, facilitated by the DPP, and adopted by the City Council.

The Apartment and Apartment Mixed-use Districts

Allow a range of densities and a variety of living environments, from common-wall housing (i.e., duplex and row-houses) to high-rise apartments.

Allow complementary commercial uses in AMX to support daily or weekly commercial needs of a neighborhood within a neighborhood to optimize use of land, urban services, and infrastructure

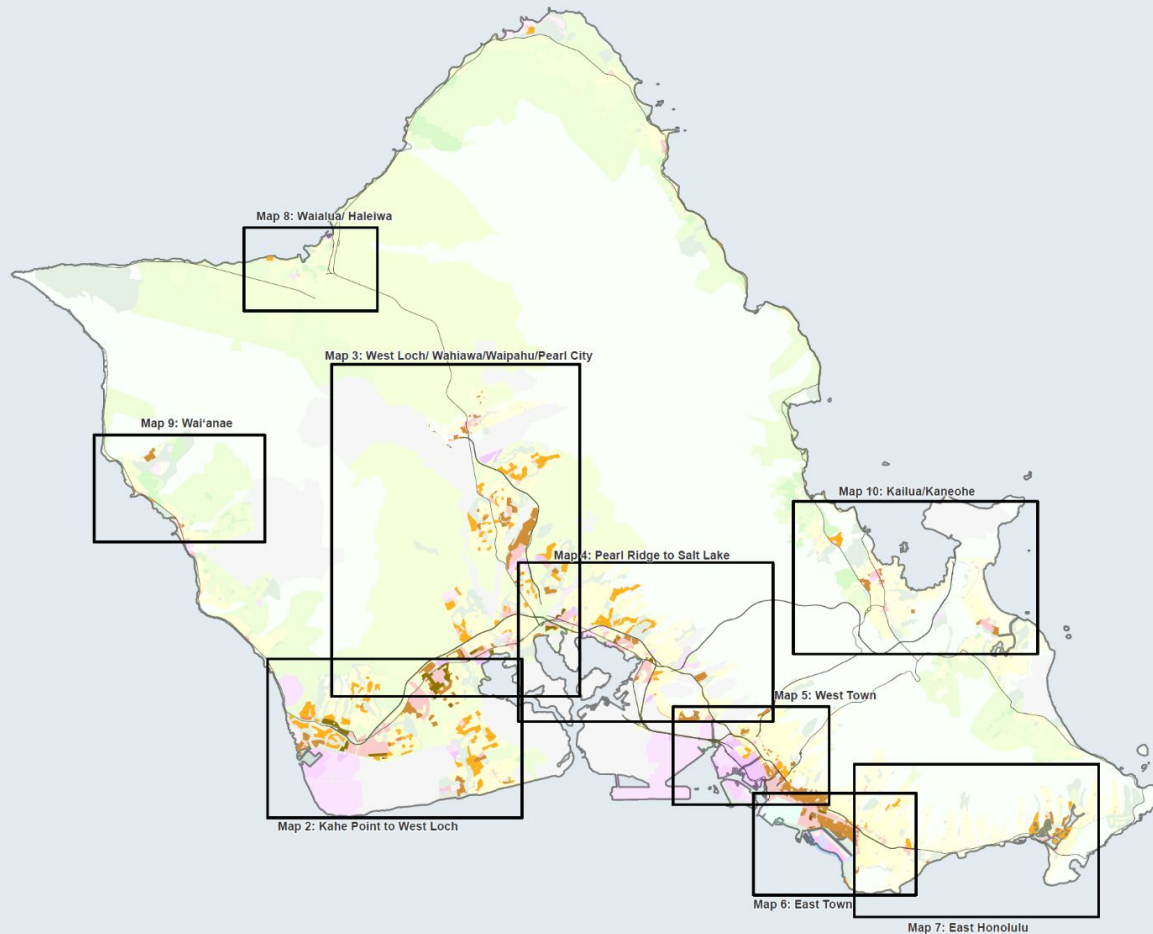
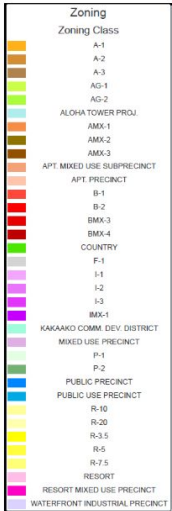


Where are the developable lots?

Excluding small and narrow lots, roadway lots, public utility lots, federal lands, high building to land value...

- 71% of the developable lots on the island are in the Primary Urban Center and 'Ewa Development Plan Areas.
- Another 23% are in Central O'ahu (Wahiawā, Mililani, Koa Ridge, Waipi'o and TOD)
- Only 6% are spread through the remainder of the island.

Zoning Lots with High Development Potential in the Apartment and Apartment Mixed Use Districts									
	Total	Primary Urban Center	'Ewa	Central O'ahu	East Honolulu	Ko'olau Poko	Ko'olau Loa	North Shore	Wai'anae
<i>Total</i>	<u>308</u>	114	103	71	4	10	1	3	2



Apartment & Apartment Mixed Use Zoning

0 5,000 10,000 20,000

Scale: Feet



FILE NO: Resolution 20-203

Prepared by: Honolulu Land Information System (HLIS) AGS

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Note: Data represented on this map is not intended to replace title survey.



Summary of Proposals

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Minimum Lot Size (Area)

Summary	
	Square Feet
EXISTING (A/AMX1 A/AMX-2 A/AMX-3)	7.5k / 10k / 20k
COUNCIL <u>BILL A</u>	5k / 5k / None
DPP <u>BILL B</u>	5k Standard

Minimum lot area should accommodate plan-supported development that is safe, affordable, and efficient.

- Large Lots - efficiency of scale, greater density
- Small Lots - greater market participation, lower density
- 5,000 square feet - improves opportunities, minimizes inefficient development.

DPP does not recommend Bill 5's proposal of no minimum in the A-3/AMX-3 District. Bill 6 proposes a standard of 5,000 square feet.

(Nonconforming lots can still be developed. This only affects new requests for subdivision actions.)

Minimum Lot Dimension

Summary	
	Feet
EXISTING (A/AMX1 A/AMX-2 A/AMX-3)	70'
<u>Bill 5</u>	45' / 50' / 50'
<u>BILL 6</u>	60'

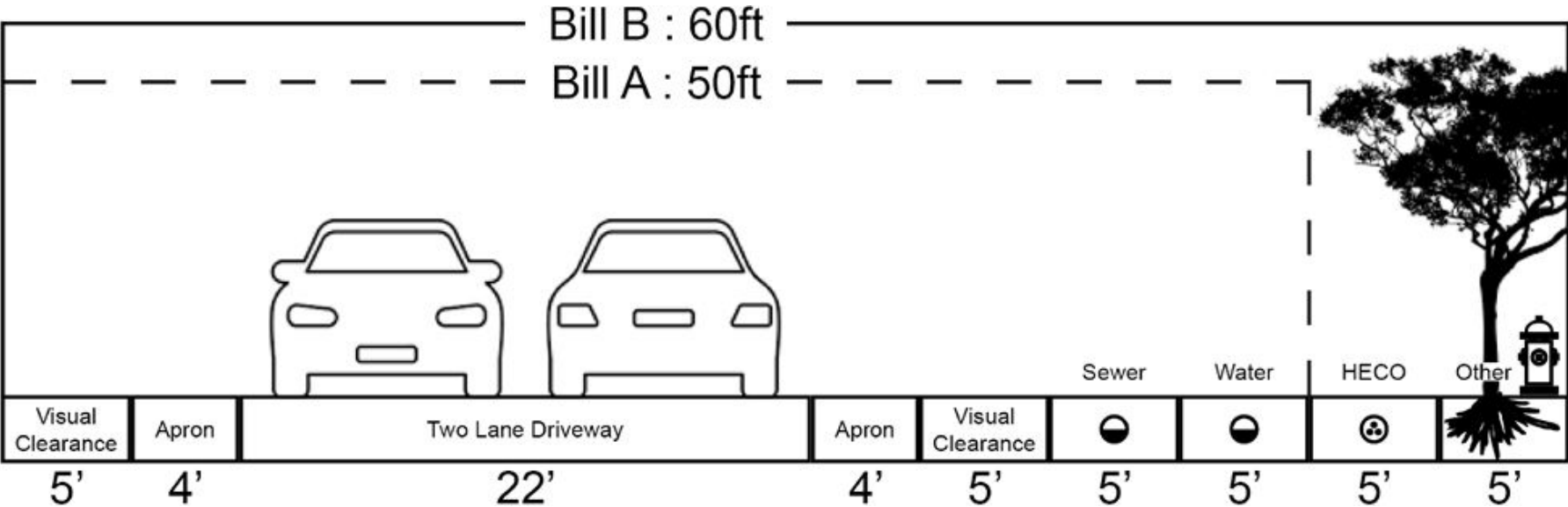
- A lot's frontage (where the lot meets the street) needs to accommodate a suite of features to support development of the site and the neighborhood.
- DPP does not support creating new higher-density lots less than 60' in width as a standard.
- Narrower lots are allowed through Cluster and PDH, which involves a holistic neighborhood review not allowed through standard subdivision.

Ten Feet for Neighborhoods, Not Just Lots

Common vision elements from the Plans: 'Well designed, attractive, meaningful, and stimulating environments,' 'enhance social and physical character,' 'promote excellent building and site design that responds to Honolulu's climate and environment,' "promote the pedestrian experience,' 'use green streets' 'reduce congestion, encourage walking,' 'avoid monotonous rows of garages and driveways' 'enhance walking environment for residents'



Typical Simplified Frontage



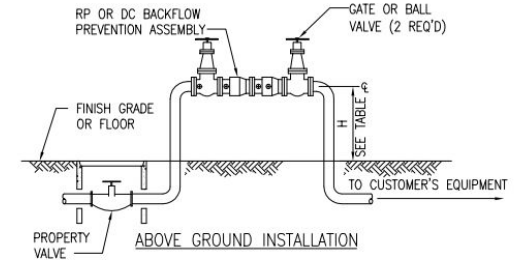
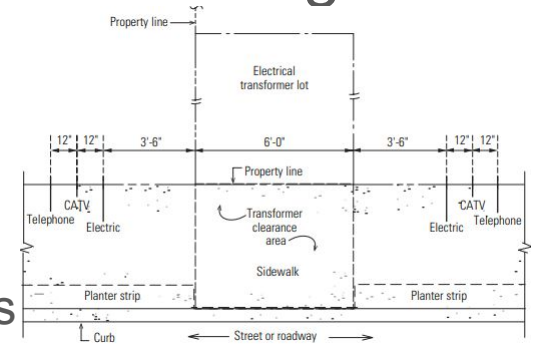
Higher densities will demand more stuff in the frontage.

HECO Transformer - 10' ft vehicle access, 12' total

BWS Backflow Preventer and Water Main - 6', 8' from trees

Fire Hydrant - 6'

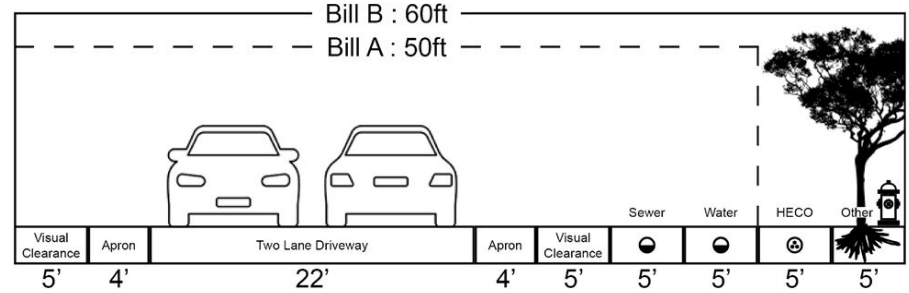
Street parking, crosswalks, bus benches, stormwater...



Minimum Lot Dimension

Competition for space eliminates opportunities for higher densities and plan-supported neighborhood design if a lot is too narrow.

Likely result: committing high-density zoning to low density development.



Building Area: The percentage of a lot that is covered by buildings.

Summary	
	Percent of Lot Area
EXISTING (A/AMX1 A/AMX-2 A/AMX-3)	40 - 60 %, inverse of lot size
COUNCIL <u>BILL 5</u>	No Change
DPP <u>BILL 6</u>	60% Standard

- Provides visual relief from built environment.
 - Not the same as *landscaped* open space. Parking is not building area, and tends to make up the bulk of open space.
 - Not required to be visible or accessible.
-
- Bill 5 proposes no changes.
 - Bill 6 simplifies and relaxes the standard.
 - New standard allows more efficient development, does not change landscaped open space requirements or yards.

Building Area

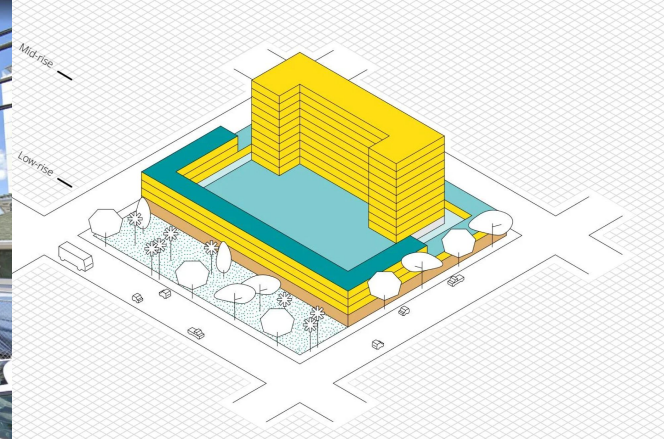
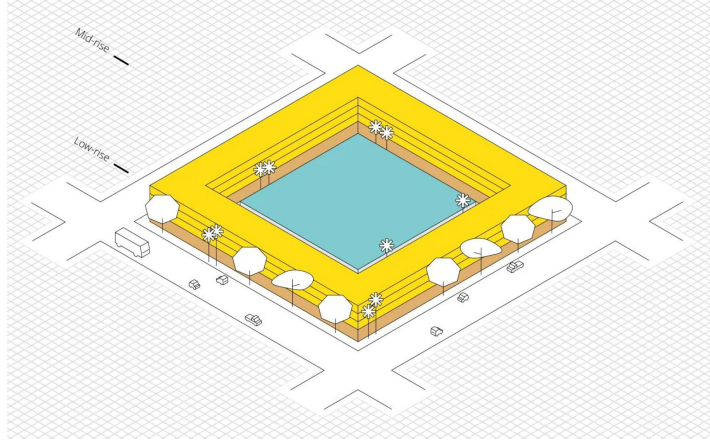


Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Summary	
	$\frac{\text{Floor Area}}{\text{Lot Area}}$
EXISTING (A/AMX1 A/AMX-2 A/AMX-3)	0.3 - 0.9 0.4 - 1.9 .6 - 2.8
COUNCIL <u>BILL 5</u>	2 3 4
DPP <u>BILL 6</u>	A/AMX 2 / 2.3 3 / 3.4 4 / 4.6

- Controls bulk, size, and density for each lot.
- Scales with lot size, and for neighborhood infrastructure planning.
- Works in tandem with height, yards, and height setback.
- DPP supports proposal for Apartment Districts
- DPP supports additional commercial allowance in AMX to give policy advantage to AMX, which better supports a myriad of City goals and objectives.

FAR - Demonstration - 1.85/1.9/2.17

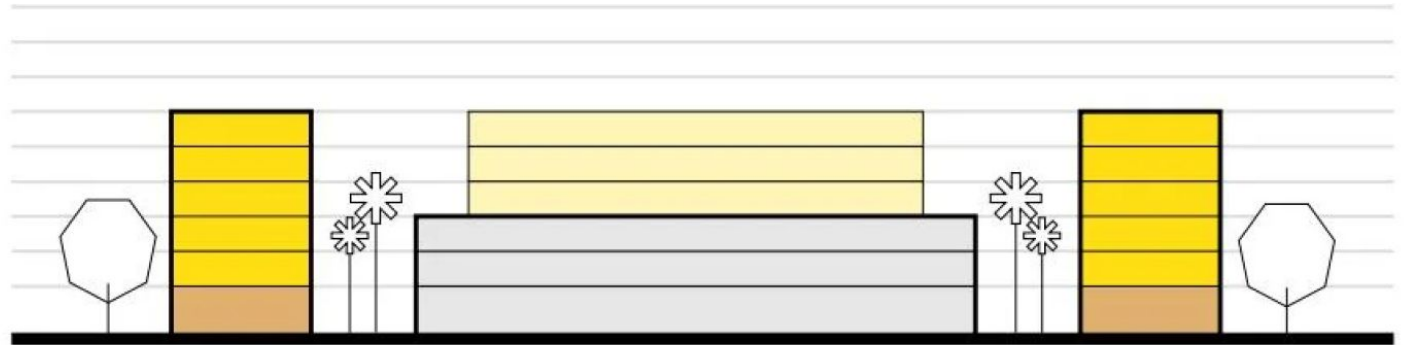
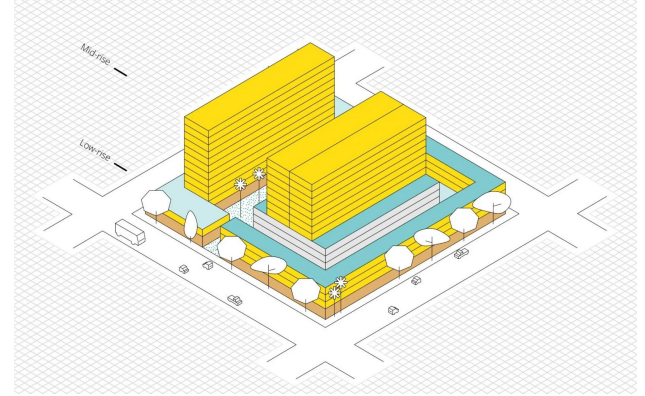
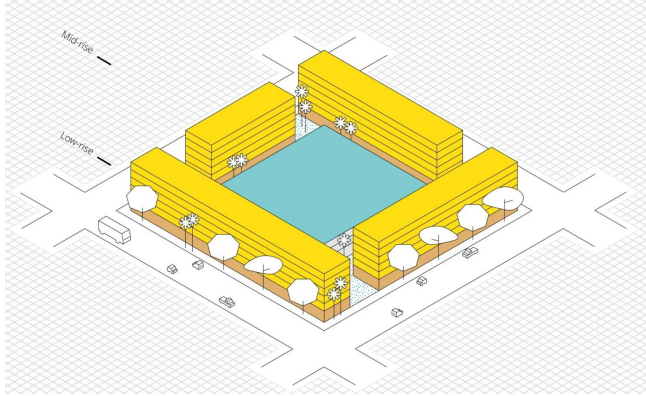


Low-rise

1-4 stories

Section Diagram

FAR - Demonstration - 2.3, 2.4, 3.4

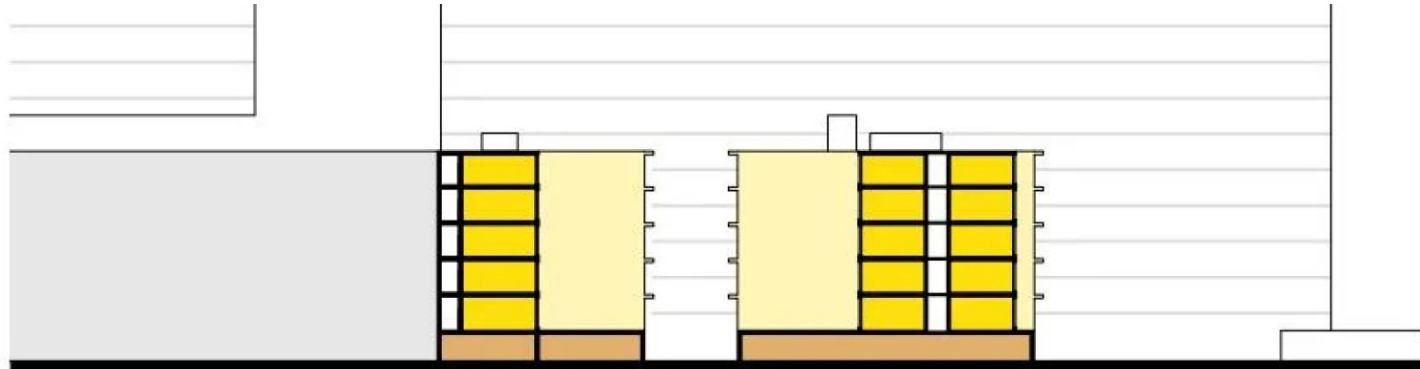
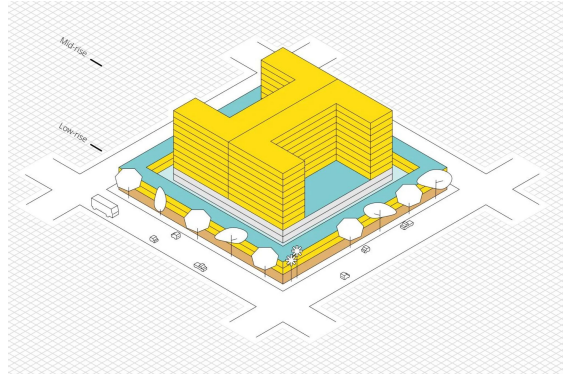
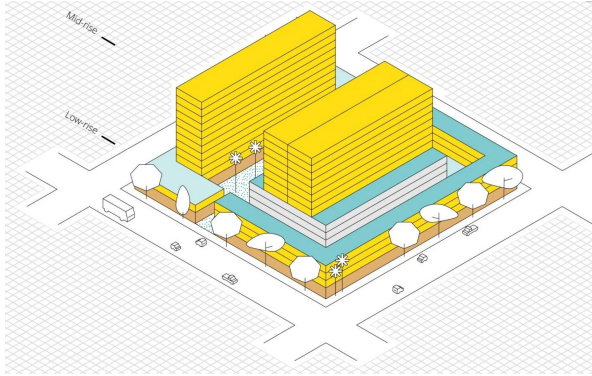


Low-rise

1-4 stories

Section Diagram

FAR - Demonstration - 3.4, 3.6, 3.6



Low-rise

1-4 stories

Section Diagram

FAR - Bill 6 Commercial Allowances (0.3, 0.4, and 0.6)

- The Plans support efficient neighborhood development with mixed uses.
- AMX Allows neighborhood-focused retail, personal services, office/clinic, and eating uses.
- Give the commercial floor area as a bonus or separate development allowance to encourage commercial space without sacrificing or creating competition with residential space.
- 0.3, 0.4, and 0.6 are relatively small intensities, and will result in ground-floor commercial activities, small neighborhood focused businesses, live-work units, and encouraging plan-supported design.

Result: More lots, more floor area, and more housing potential

Potential Increase in the Number of <u>Subdivided Lots</u>			
Lots	Today	Bill 5	Bill 6
308	6,443	+5,563	+5,344

Potential increase in the <u>Floor Area</u> and Number of <u>Housing Units</u>			
Floor Area	Today	Bills 5 and 6 (same)	New Potential Dwellings (1,500 sf each)
Square Feet	118,250,900	+82,917,000	+55,278

Questions?

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