

city of **yes**

*city of* **diversity**

*city of* **affordability**

*city of* **neighbors**

*city of* **housing opportunity**

*city of* **families**





Image credit: Alfred Twu

## Overview

# City of Yes for Housing Opportunity

This **citywide text amendment** would make it possible to build **a little bit more housing** in every neighborhood

“A little more housing in every neighborhood” means we can make a big impact on the housing shortage without dramatic change in any one neighborhood

## Why do we need more housing in New York City?

New York City faces a severe housing shortage that makes homes scarce and expensive:

- The **apartment vacancy rate is 1.41%** – the lowest since 1968. 0.82% of Bronx rental apartments are vacant
- **Over 50% of renters are “rent burdened,”** meaning they spend over 30% of income on rent
- **92,879 homeless New Yorkers**, including **33,399 children**, slept in the shelter system on a given night in December 2023



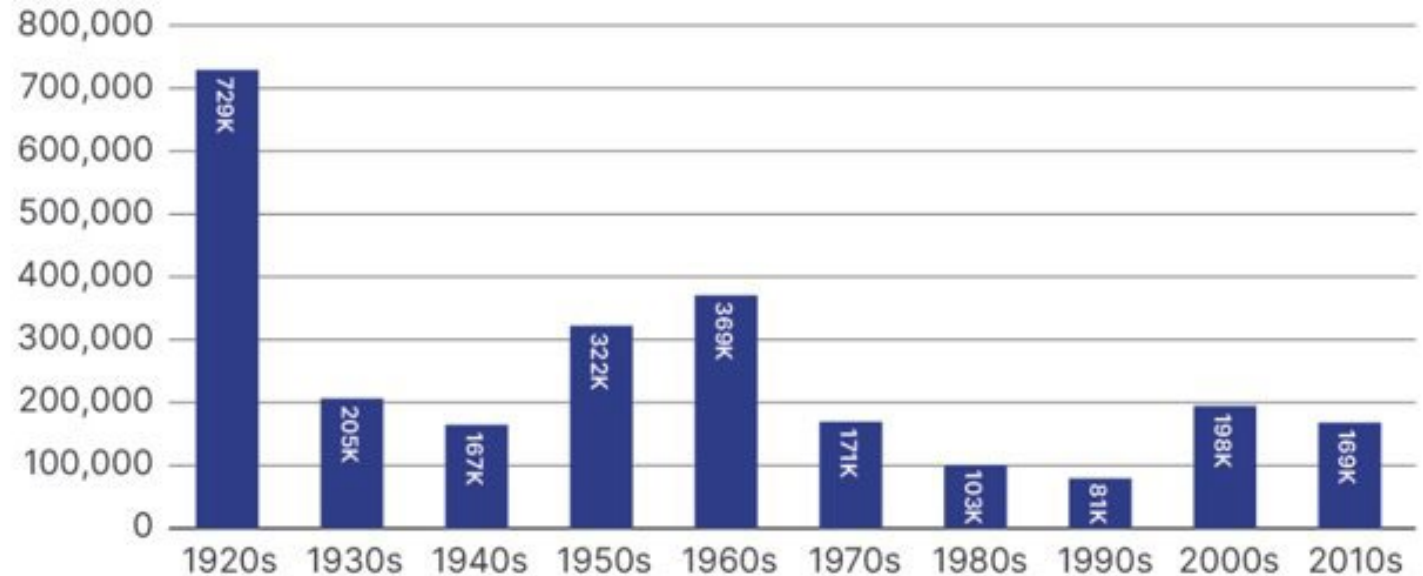
# NYC is not building enough housing to meet New Yorkers' needs

**New York City is creating far less housing than it used to**

At the same time, average household size is declining so we need more homes to house people

**The housing shortage is due in part to restrictive zoning rules that limit the number and types of homes that can be built**

New Housing Production by Decade



## New housing is concentrated in just a few neighborhoods

**Almost all of New York City's recent housing production has been concentrated in a few neighborhoods**

Some neighborhoods have created virtually zero new housing

**This puts additional pressure on just a few parts of the city to produce almost all new housing**

Homes in new buildings (2010-23)

- 0-2,000 units
- 2,001-4,000 units
- 4,001-8,000 units
- 8,001-12,000 units
- Over 12,000 units



## When tenants have few options, landlords gain leverage

This leads to:

- High rents
- Displacement and gentrification pressure
- Segregation
- Homelessness
- Poor housing quality
- Tenant harassment

**Over 60.0% of Bronx renters are “rent burdened,” meaning they spend over 30% of income on rent**



# An average family of 3 would have to spend almost 50% of their income on rent to afford an average 2-bedroom home:

## Income



**\$5,833/month**

A family of 3 with a household income of \$70,000 a year \*

\*Median household income of NYC renters

## Rent



**\$2,752/month**

Average 2-bedroom apartment available in NYC

## The housing shortage has direct human consequences

A nursing aide might spend **3 hours commuting every day** because she can't find housing close to her job.

A mother and her children fleeing an unsafe home wouldn't be able to find any affordable alternatives and are compelled to **enter a homeless shelter**.

A college graduate may discover that they **can't move back to their childhood neighborhood** because the rents are too expensive.

A retiree could watch their **friends and family move out-of-state** and decides to follow suit because they can no longer afford escalating rents.



Top two images courtesy of Jonathan Patkowski. Bottom two images: © New York City Mayoral Photography Office, 2023



## The housing crisis hurts the local economy

When people spend more of their money on rent, they have less to spend on everything else

- This harms the city's economy and slows job growth
- Less new housing also means fewer jobs in construction and residential maintenance

City of Yes for Housing Opportunity would add an estimated **\$58.2 billion** to NYC's economy and create **more than 260,000** jobs in the construction and service sectors alone



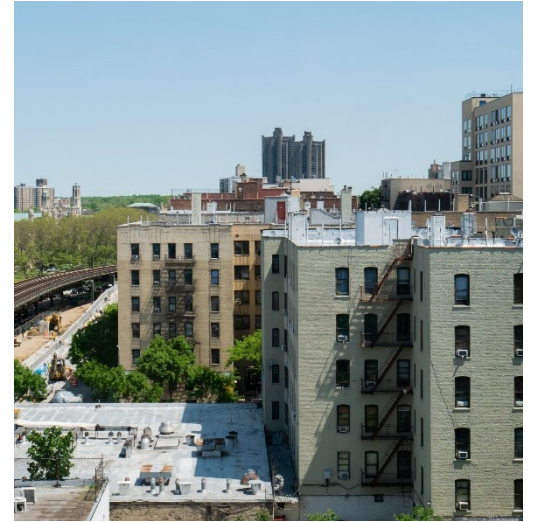
# Zoning is one tool to address NYC's housing shortage

**Zoning regulates the density and use of what is permitted to be built**

- Zoning can include requirements for income-restricted affordable housing
- Zoning does not directly build or fund new housing
- Zoning is within the city's control

**Other tools to support housing include:**

- Subsidies and tax incentives to create and preserve affordable housing
- Support for homeownership models
- Tenant protections



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## How can we help address the housing crisis with zoning?

We aim to update zoning rules to create **more housing** and **more types of housing across all NYC neighborhoods**.

**A little more housing in every neighborhood** means a lot of housing overall without dramatic change or overtaxed infrastructure. This approach can:

- Address the **root causes** of high housing costs
- Support **job growth** and New York City's **economy**
- Make NYC more **environmentally-friendly** by building more housing in areas with great access to jobs and transit



Image credit: Alfred Twu

## Proposal overview

### Low-density proposals

- Allow for "missing middle" housing, including **town center zoning** and **transit-oriented apartment buildings**
- Help homeowners by providing additional flexibility and allowing **accessory dwelling units**

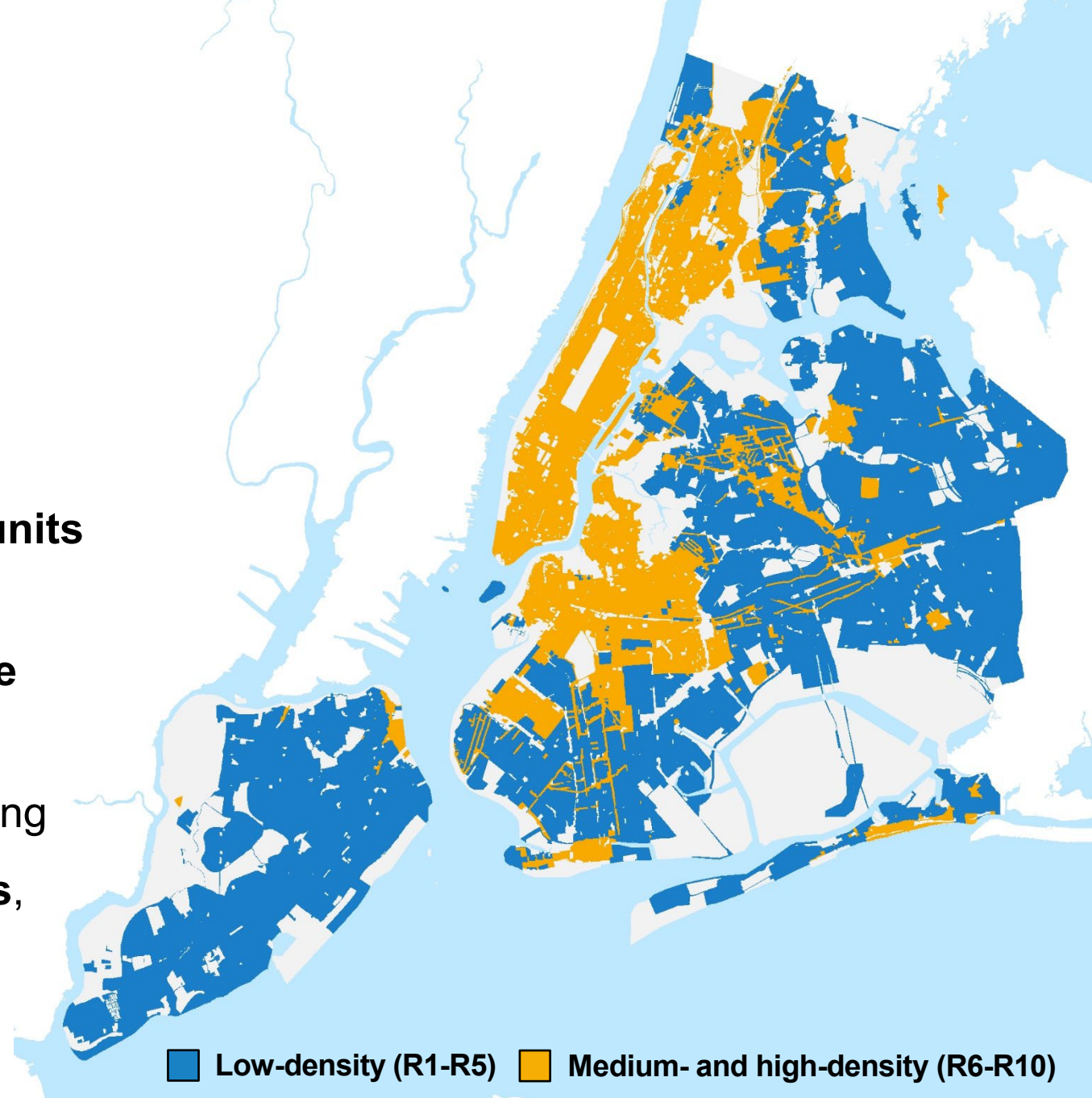
### Medium- and high-density proposals

- Create a **Universal Affordability Preference**

### Parking proposals

- **Lift costly parking mandates** for new housing

**Other citywide actions** to enable **conversions**, **small and shared apartments**, and **infill**



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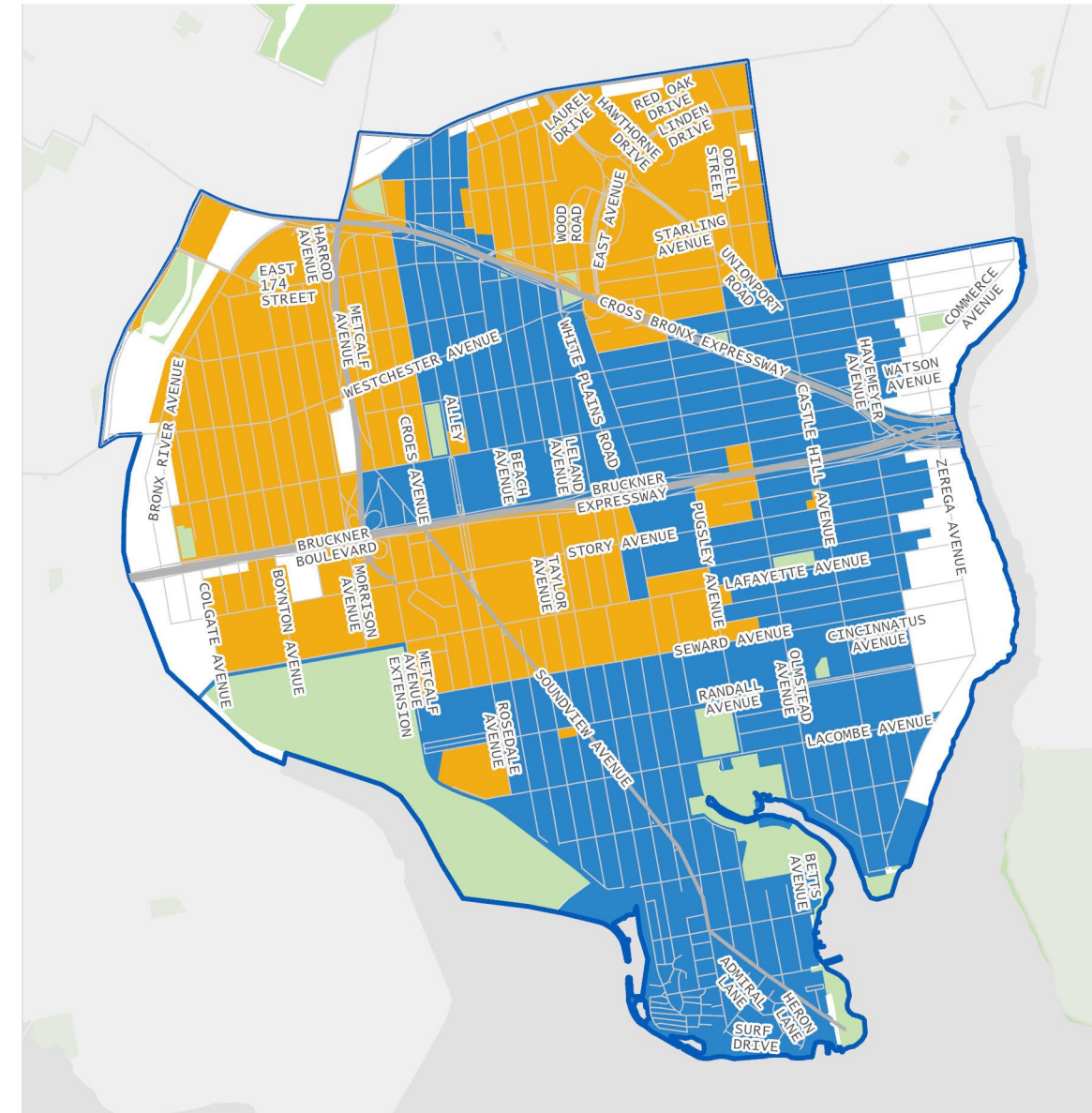
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Community District

Low-density (R1-R5)

Medium- and high-density (R6-R10)



# Low-density

Image credit: Alfred Twu

# Overview

**Due to restrictive zoning, most low-density areas have stopped building new homes, contributing to our city's housing shortage**

- We want to allow for the creation of a little more housing across low-density areas, in ways that won't impact neighborhood look and feel



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**Modest apartment buildings exist across low-density neighborhoods but could not be built today**

- 1-family districts
- 2-family districts
- LD multi-family districts



Low-density areas

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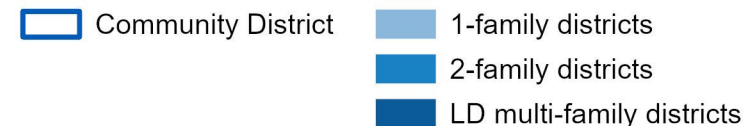
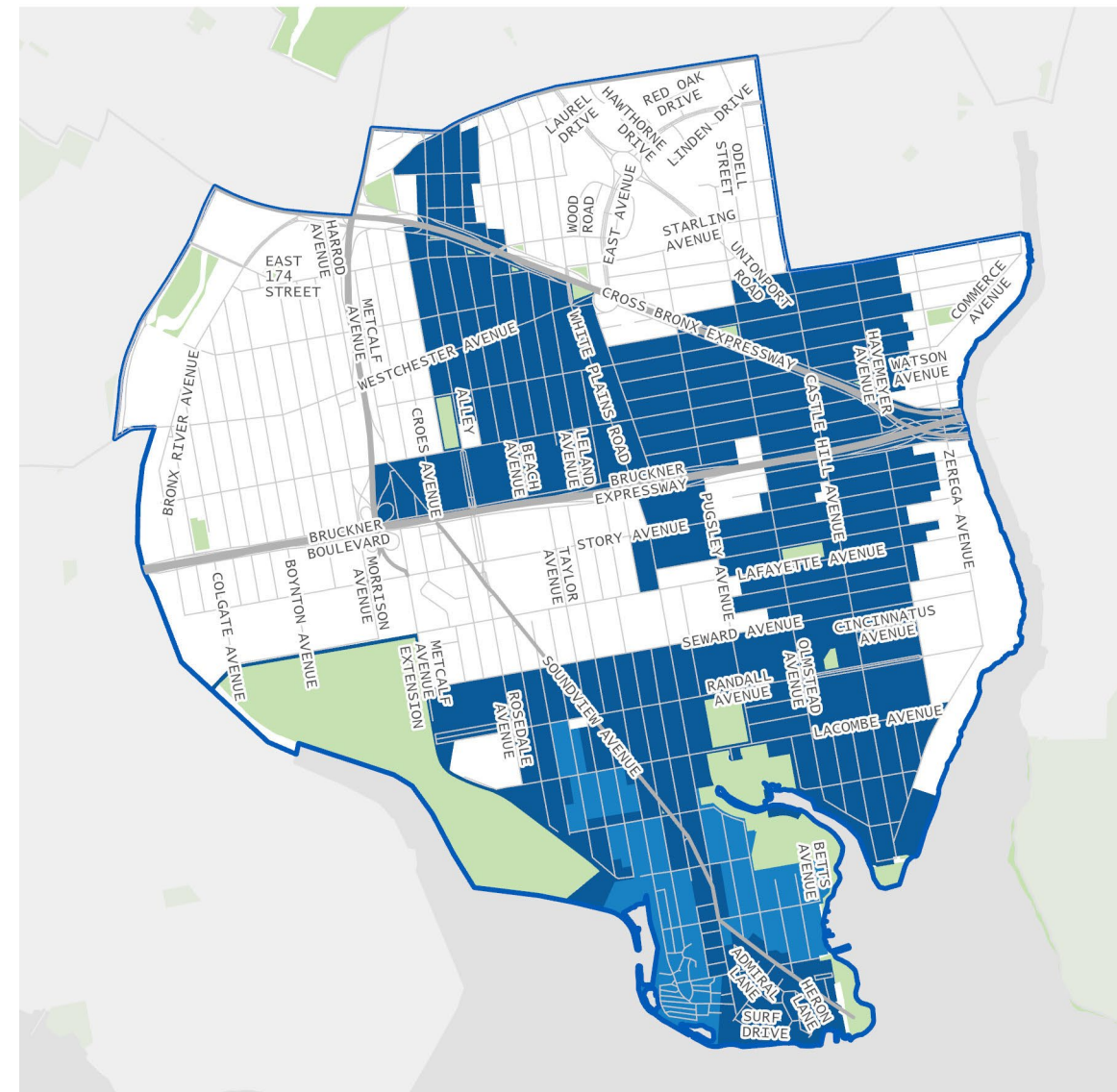


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Modest apartment buildings exist across low-density neighborhoods but could not be built today





## Town center zoning

### Relegalize housing above businesses on commercial streets in low-density areas

- New buildings would have 2-4 stories of residential above a commercial ground floor, mirroring existing buildings



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■ Commercial overlays in low-density districts, where town center zoning applies



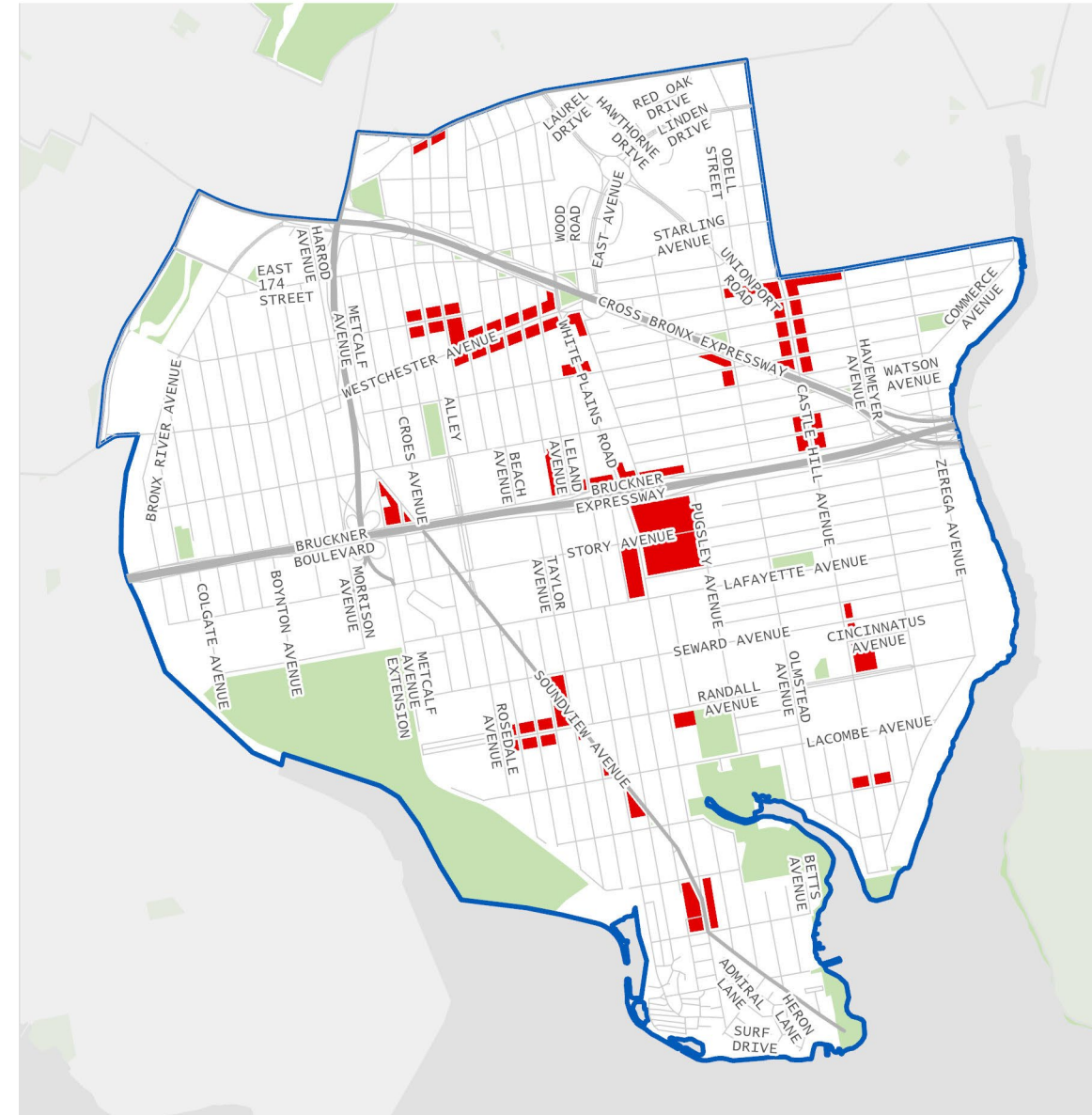
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Community District Commercial overlays in low-density districts, where town center zoning applies

## Transit-oriented development

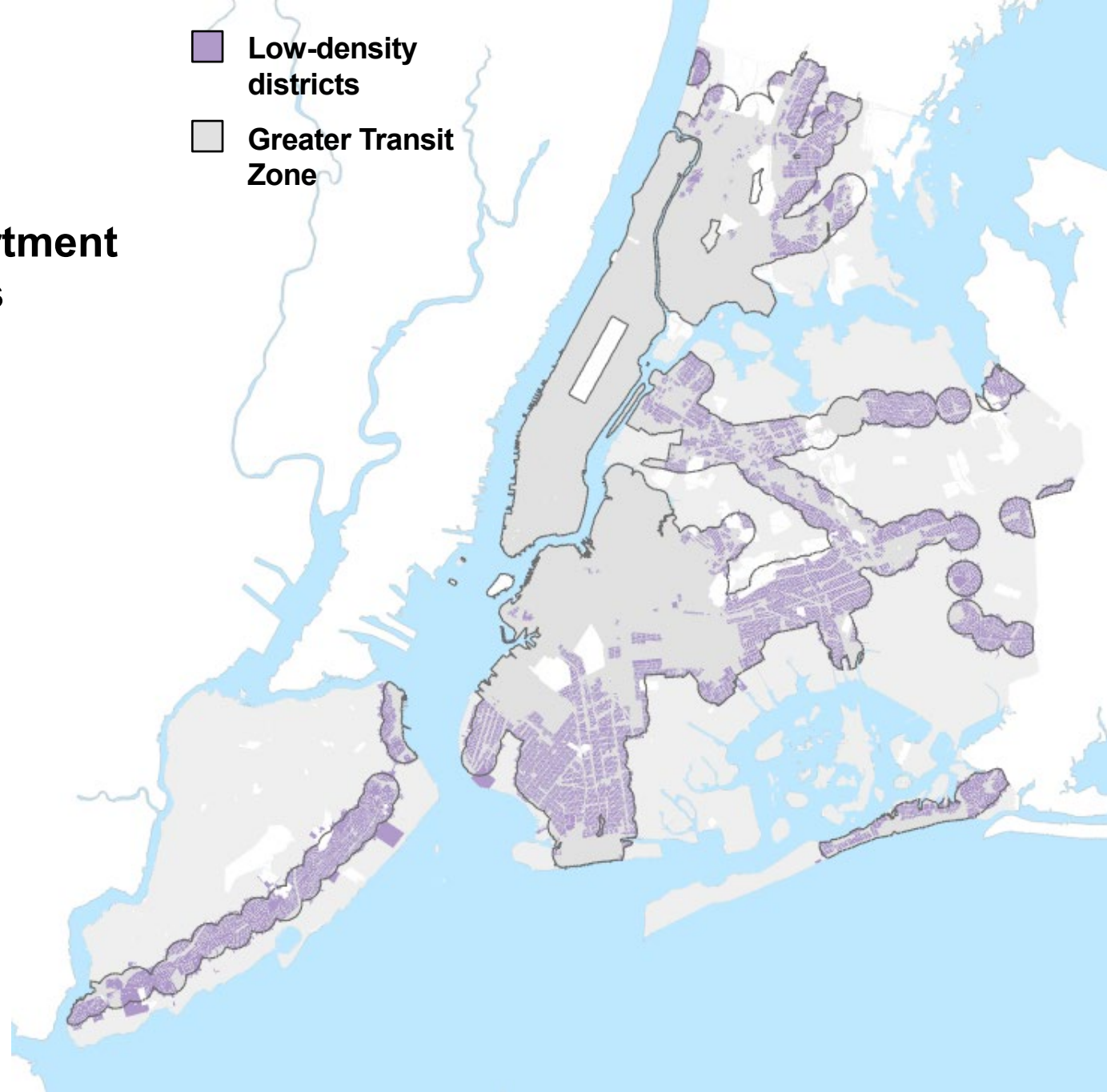
### Allow modestly-sized, transit-oriented apartment buildings in low-density residence districts

- Sites must be:
  - near transit,
  - over 5,000 square feet
  - on the short end of the block or facing a street over 75 feet wide
- Buildings will be 3-5 stories



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- Low-density districts
- Greater Transit Zone



Low-density areas

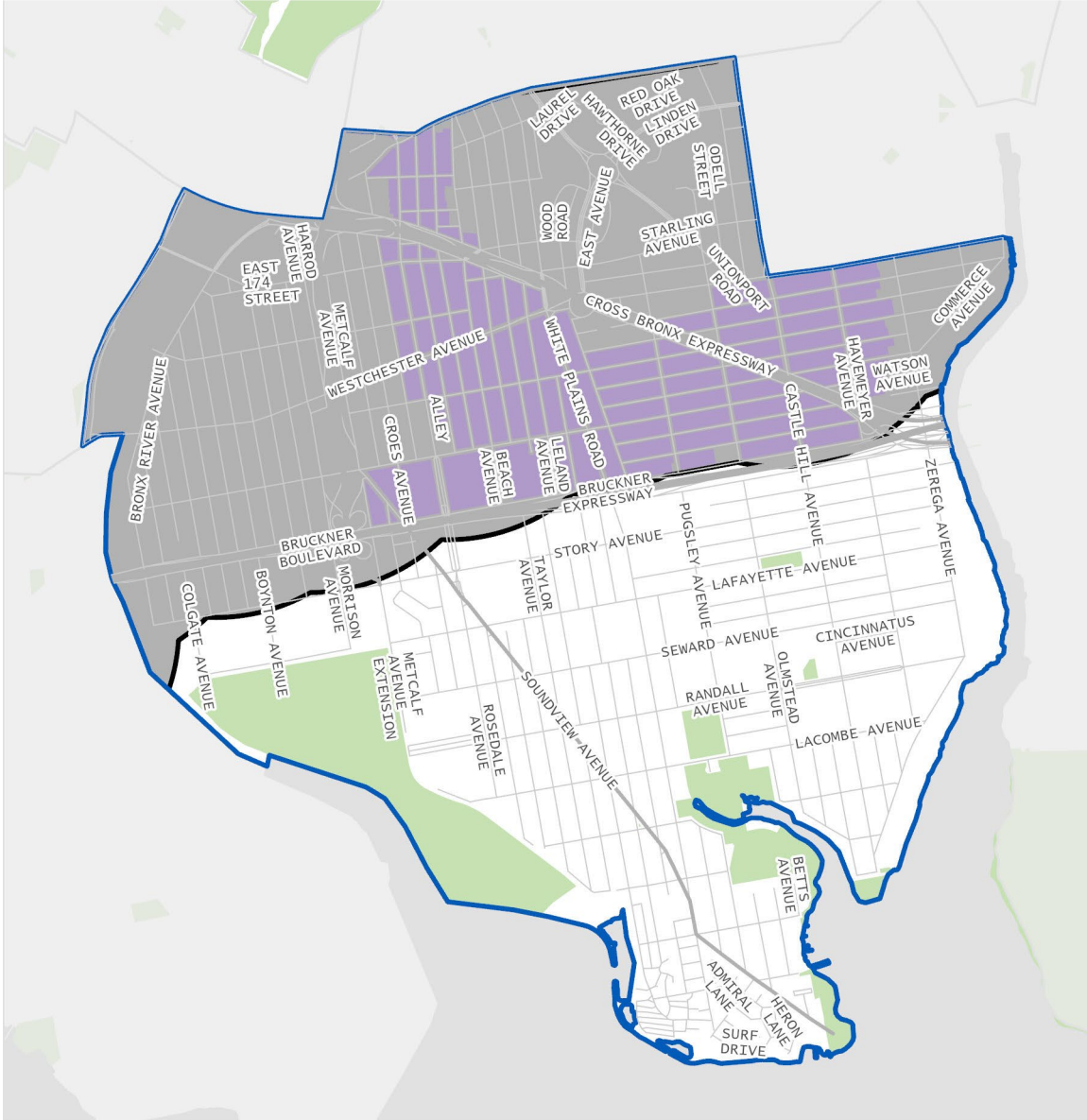
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Community District   
  Greater Transit Zone   
  Low density districts

## Help homeowners

### Allow 1- or 2-family homes to add a small accessory dwelling unit (ADU)

- ADUs provide important housing options for small households in low-density areas
- ADUs give multi-generational families more space and help homeowners pay for household expenses
- Many other cities have already legalized ADUs and experienced these benefits

Legalizing existing basement ADUs is not only a matter of zoning and would require changes to other state and local laws



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## Help homeowners

**Adjust FAR, perimeter heights, yards, and other rules to provide flexibility for homeowners**

- Many older homes are out of compliance, blocking homeowners from adapting their homes to meet their family's needs
- These changes will enable 2-family and multi-family buildings in districts that already permit them





# Medium- and High-density

Image credit: Alfred Twu

## Universal Affordability Preference

UAP will allow buildings to add at least **20% more housing** if the additional homes are **permanently affordable housing**, including supportive housing

UAP will enable **incremental affordable housing growth** throughout the medium- and high-density parts of the city

This will encourage **affordable housing throughout the city**, rather than concentrating it in a few neighborhoods





## Universal Affordability Preference

**Today, most zoning districts allow affordable senior housing to be about 20% bigger than other buildings**

- UAP would expand this framework to all forms of affordable and supportive housing, making it easier to build affordable housing in every medium- and high-density district

**This proposal would also create a 20% bump for affordable and supportive housing in districts that don't have a senior housing preference today**

- Some districts will also receive height increases, so that it's feasible for UAP buildings to fit their allowed square footage



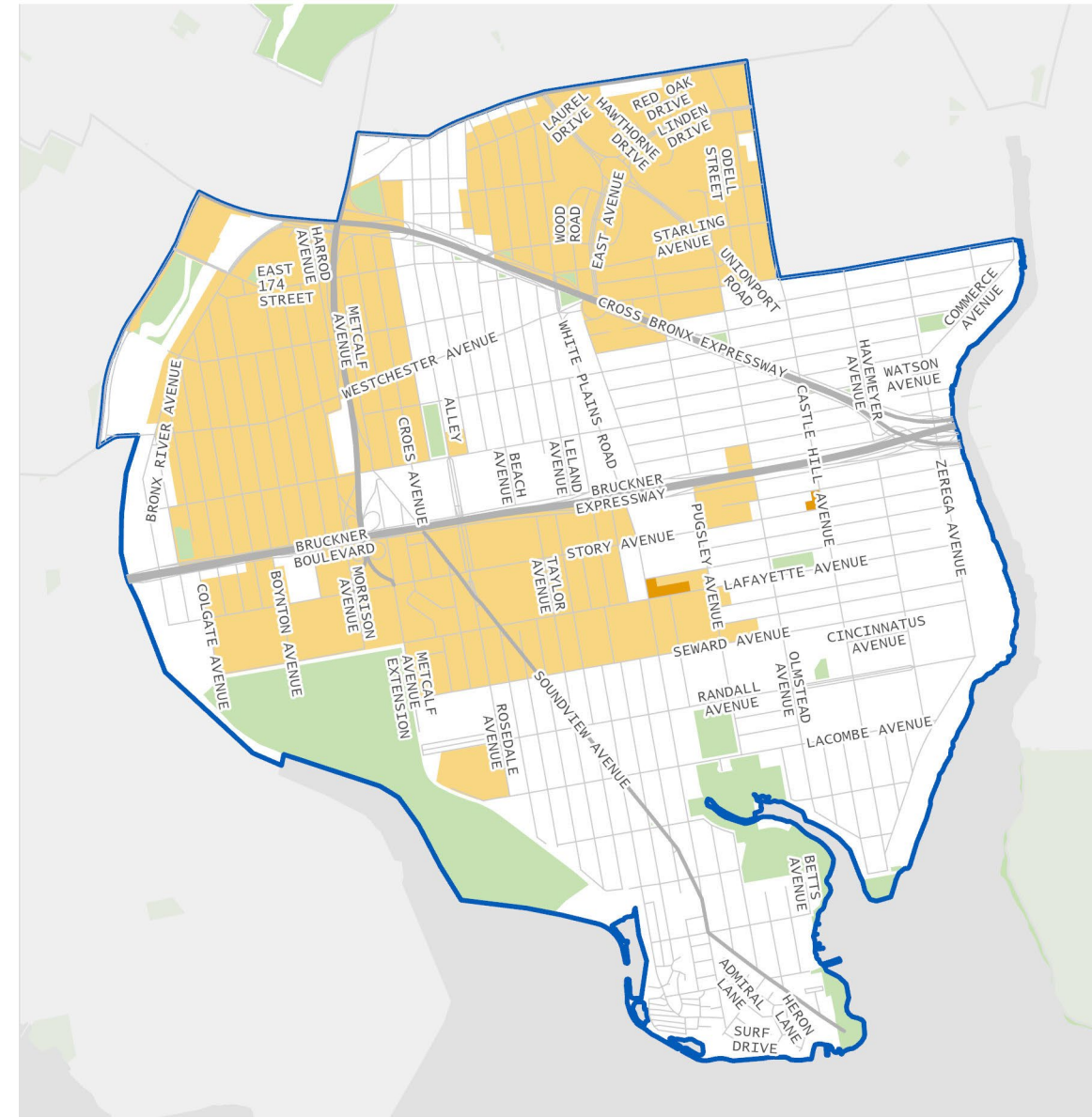
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Community District  
 Districts with existing senior housing preference  
 Districts with proposed 20% preference for affordable/supportive

## Universal Affordability Preference

**UAP will have an affordability requirement of 60% AMI**

- Area Median Income (AMI) is a measure of affordability established by the federal government

**UAP will also allow income averaging, allowing a wider range and more deeply affordable homes**



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# Universal Affordability Preference

**UAP will replace Voluntary Inclusionary Housing (VIH), achieving deeper affordability and allowing for income averaging.** Mandatory Inclusionary Housing will continue to be mapped and existing affordability requirements will remain in place.

**Voluntary Inclusionary Housing (VIH)**  
80% AMI with no income averaging

### What this meant for New Yorkers:

All income-restricted units in a VIH building were 80% AMI (\$101,686 for a family of 3 or \$2,796 for rent for a 2-bedroom home)

**Universal Affordability Preference (UAP)**  
60% AMI with income averaging

### What this means for New Yorkers:

Homes at a mix of incomes to reach 60% AMI, including more deeply affordable units. For example, a UAP building could include:

|                | Income for a family of 3 | Rent for a 2-bedroom |
|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>30% AMI</b> | \$38,130                 | \$1,084              |
| <b>60% AMI</b> | \$76,260                 | \$2,097              |
| <b>90% AMI</b> | \$114,390                | \$3,142              |

*Estimates from HUD Guidelines 2024 and NYC HDC.  
Rents for specific projects may differ*

## Universal Affordability Preference

**Example:** A church in an R6 district wants to partner with a developer to rebuild the church and put housing on top

**Today:** The site is limited to **3.0 FAR**, which results in about **35 units**

**Proposal:** If affordable and supportive housing got **3.9 FAR** like AIRS, the site could get **10-12 more units** as long as anything above 3.0 FAR is permanently affordable



# Universal Affordability Preference

Without UAP



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With UAP



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If UAP had been in place since 2014, an **additional 20,000 income-restricted affordable homes** could have been created – enough to house 50,000 New Yorkers

## Updates to Mandatory Inclusionary Housing

### Allow MIH Option 3 to be a standalone option

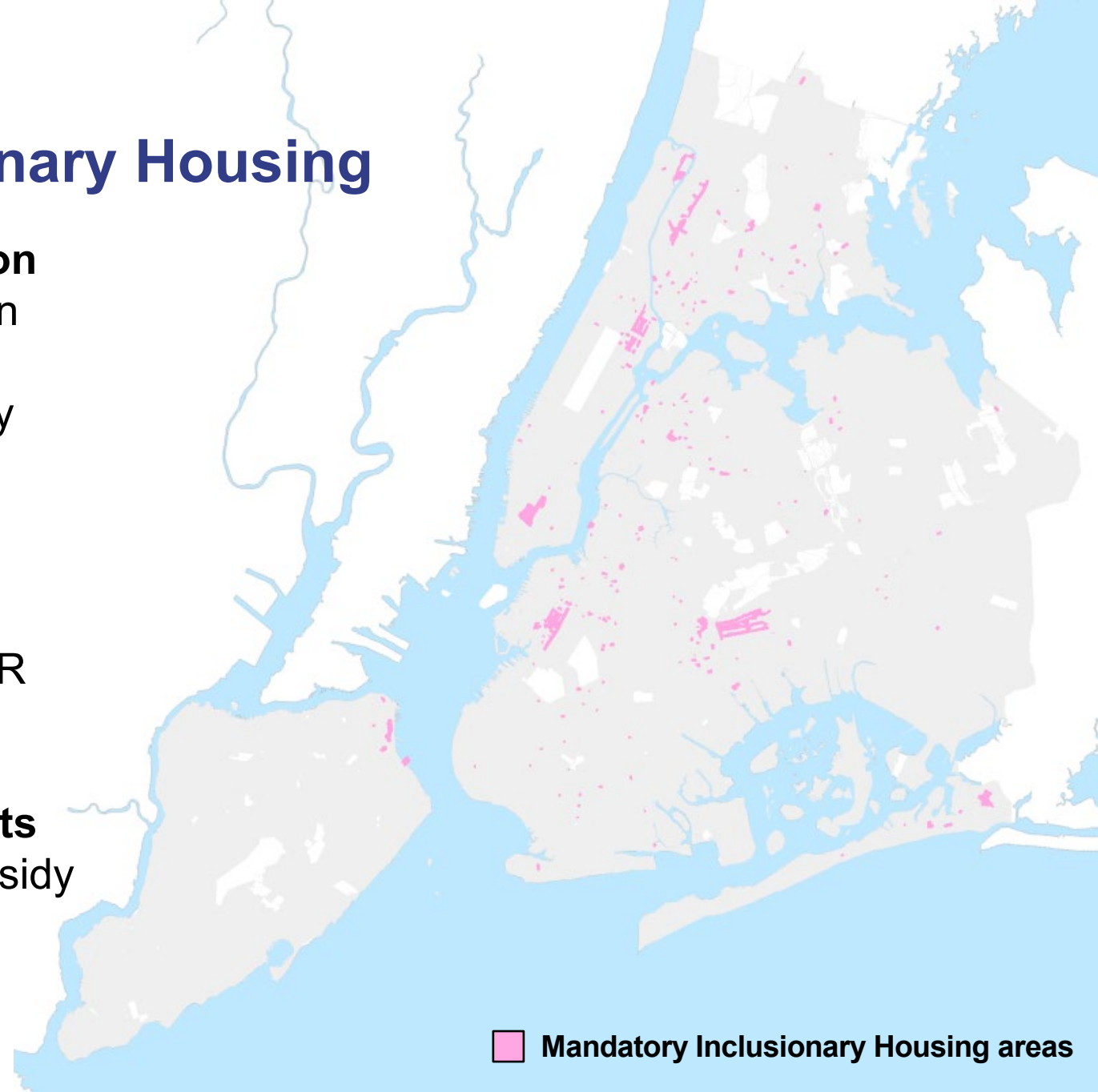
- MIH Option 3 requires a 20% set-aside at an average of 40% AMI
- Requested by the Speaker, members of City Council, and many housing advocates

### Equalize MIH FARs for districts where UAP FAR is higher

- Ex: R6A MIH will change from 3.6 to 3.9 FAR
- MIH Options will stay the same

### Streamline rules for 100% affordable projects

- Reduces conflicts with term sheets and subsidy programs
- Facilitates affordable homeownership



■ Mandatory Inclusionary Housing areas



# Citywide

Image credit: Alfred Twu



## End parking mandates

**Make parking optional in new buildings,**  
as many other cities have done

**Mandated parking is extremely  
expensive to provide**

- These costly mandates drive up rents and prevent new housing from being built
- This is an obstacle to housing growth, especially affordable housing

**Parking will still be allowed,** and projects can add what is appropriate at their location



**Two parking spaces take up nearly the same space  
as a studio apartment**

## End parking mandates

### Example:

A developer wants to build a **16-unit** apartment building a 4-minute walk from the nearest subway station

Today, the developer would **stop at 10 units**, because the 11th unit would trigger a **6-space parking requirement**

Without parking mandates, they can build the **16-unit building**, providing 6 more urgently needed homes near transit



# Additional changes to enable housing

**Enable conversion of under-used buildings**



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Expand adaptive reuse regulations citywide, move the eligibility date from 1961 to 1991

**Re-legalize small and shared apartments**



Image credit: Alfred Twu

Remove arbitrary zoning rules to allow small and shared apartments in central locations, easing pressure on family-size units

**Eliminate barriers to contextual infill**



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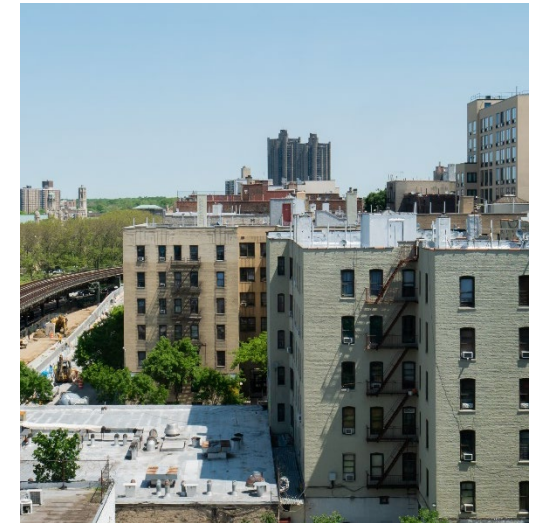
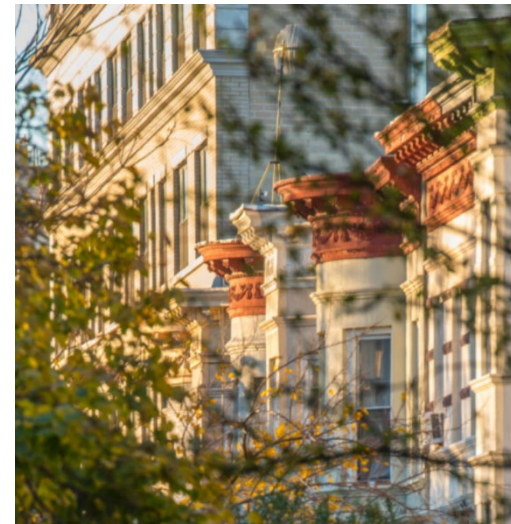
Allow new contextual housing on sites in non-contextual districts, including campuses and irregular sites

An aerial watercolor illustration of a city skyline, likely New York City, featuring various buildings of different heights and colors (tan, yellow, red, blue) interspersed with green trees. The word "Conclusion" is written in large, bold, blue sans-serif font across the center of the image.

# Conclusion

# How will these changes address our housing needs?

- **A little more housing** in every neighborhood and **more housing types** for the full range of New Yorkers
- Significantly **more affordable housing**
- **Less pressure on gentrifying neighborhoods** and areas hit hardest by the housing shortage and exclusionary zoning
- **Ending exclusionary zoning** in low-density areas
- **Accessory dwelling units** will support homeowners and multigenerational families
- More **sustainable** transit-oriented development



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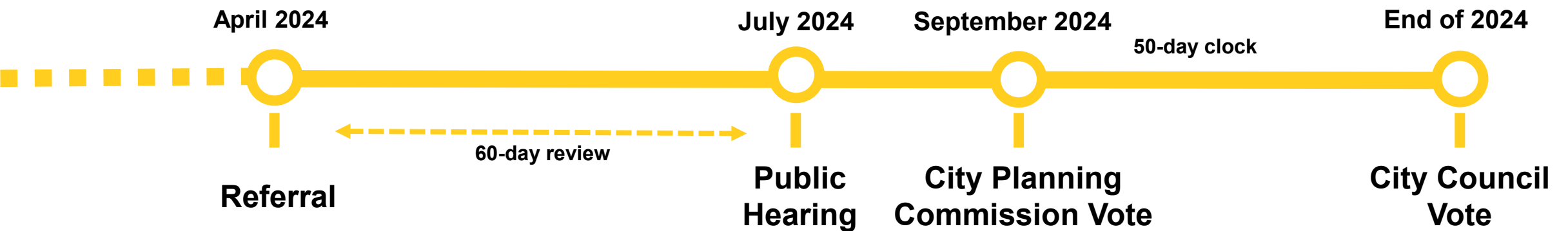


## City of Yes for Housing Opportunity

Image credit: Alfred Twu

### Stay in touch!

Email the project team at **[HousingOpportunity@planning.nyc.gov](mailto:HousingOpportunity@planning.nyc.gov)** with questions, concerns, and to be signed up for email alerts on this project.



*Approximate schedule of public review, for illustrative purposes only*