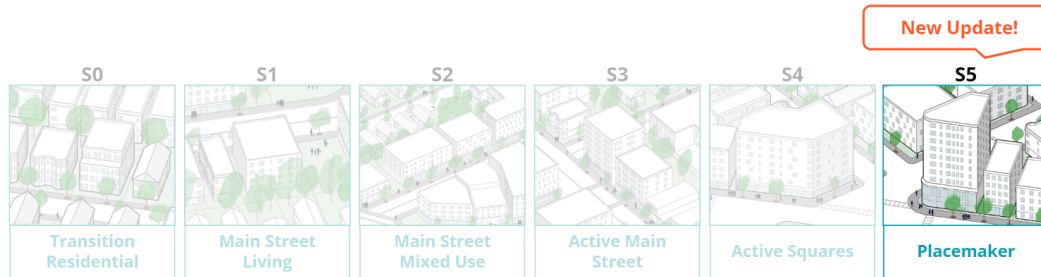


# Squares + Streets

## S5 District: *Placemaker Squares*



**Description:** The S-5 Placemaker Squares district is a mixed-use district intended for areas with high street frontage and are neighborhood destinations that allow taller buildings. Commercial, hospitality, and entertainment uses are allowed throughout the building and active uses are required on the ground floor primary street frontage.

**Public Feedback:** Several comments requested an additional district beyond S-4, an S-5 district that was explored in earlier public meetings, but not included in the draft text amendment released on December 5, 2023. Public comments cited the need to create more district options with higher height limits to enable more housing and job opportunities in potential Squares and Streets areas.

<p><b>Public Comment:</b>          “[The previously-discussed S5 Placemaker District] is not included in the draft text amendment... the BPDA should be stocking its toolbox with as many tools as possible to <b>create more homes</b> and invigorate neighborhoods.”          —Abundant Housing MA</p>	<p><b>Public Comment:</b>          “[S5] has the <b>potential to jumpstart housing availability</b> in appropriate locations in a way that the S4 option does not”          —Nate, Jamaica Plain</p>	<p><b>Public Comment:</b>          “If anything, <b>height limits should be increased</b>... We need to be doing anything and everything to increase... <b>housing supply.</b>”          —Prashant, Brighton</p>
<p><b>Public Comment:</b>  <b>“Bring back the S5!</b>          We need so much more housing”          —Barnabas, Jamaica Plain</p>	<p><b>Public Comment:</b>          “We need to have the *option* for taller buildings in areas well-served by transit. Allowing the <b>potential</b> for this type of zoning <b>doesn’t mean all buildings</b> will automatically be so dense.”          —Stefanie, South Boston</p>	<p><b>Public Comment:</b>  <b>“Housing production</b> and people over cars needs to be the #1 focus!”          —Alec, South Boston</p>
<p><b>Public Comment:</b>          “Please keep Placemaking Square subtype in this process. <b>Landmark buildings... define our landmark squares</b>, while providing housing and jobs for so many”          —Michael, Fenway</p>	<p><b>Public Comment:</b>  <b>“As much new housing</b> should be located near areas with good transit [as possible]”          —James, Brighton</p>	<p><b>Public Comment:</b>          “We hope the city has the courage to be <b>bold and definitive</b> with these changes. Scaling back and being more incremental will not help the future of Boston and those of us who... <b>would like to keep calling the city home.</b>” —Zack, Jamaica Plain</p>

**Location:** S-5 would be limited to key mixed-use gateway areas and near transit hubs that can support high activity and greater density for housing and job growth.

**Uses:** Allowed and conditional uses would remain the same as S-4.

**Form:** S-5 is an opportunity to align with new building code standards and efficient sustainable building methods that can simultaneously support greater housing and job growth. For example, residential mass timber buildings is an emerging building type that with a minimum 14' high one-story podium for active uses can go up to 145', depending on floor-to-floor height which often varies.

**Draft Dimensional Table** (differences from S4 in **bold**)

LOT STANDARDS	S5	BUILDING FORM STANDARDS	S5
<b>Building Lot Coverage (max) for Lots smaller than 11,000 sf</b>	<b>80%</b> <sup>(1)</sup>	Building Floor Plate(max sf)	25,000
Building Lot Coverage (max) for Lots greater than or equal to 11,000 sf	70%	<b>Building width (max)</b>	<b>250'</b> <sup>(2)</sup>
Permeable Area of Lot (min) for Lots smaller than 11,000 sf	N/A	<b>Height in feet (max)</b>	<b>145'</b> <sup>(3)</sup>
Permeable Area of Lot (min) for Lots greater than or equal to 11,000 sf	15%	<b>Height in stories (max)</b> <sup>(4)</sup>	-
Front Yard (min)	2'	Outdoor Amenity Space (min)	30%
Rear Yard (min)		Highest Story Rear Stepback (min) - Rear yard abutting residential zoning district	7'
Abutting non-residential zoning district	5'	Blank wall of facade (max)	15'
Abutting residential zoning district	20'	Active and Commercial Uses Ground Floor Height (min)	14'
Side Yard (min)		Multiple buildings allowed per Lot	Yes
With a party wall, abutting non-residential zoning district	0'		
Without a party wall, abutting non-residential zoning district	5'		
Abutting a residential zoning district	15'		

1. **Building lot coverage:** Decrease from S4 to ensure more open and public realm space.
2. **Building width:** Increase from S4 to allow larger uses in S5 Districts.
3. **Height in feet:** Increase from S4 to allow taller buildings that align with emerging building typologies such as mass timber construction.
4. **Height is limited by “feet” not “feet and stories”** to encourage a greater mix of uses. Floor-to-floor heights vary between different uses and construction types. Setting a maximum height in feet allows more flexibility in the number and mix of floors for each use.

***S5 from and use precedents:***



**Mixed-use center** to the neighborhood along side key transit destinations and hubs

Retail and commercial **anchor that supports the neighborhood and more housing density**

***Mass timber precedents:***



*Mass timber building in Milwaukee (25 stories: 19 stories mass timber over 6-story podium)*

*Mixed-use mass timber 12-story building in Portland*

