



PLAN: Downtown

Advisory Group Meeting #7
Downtown Boston Development Scenarios

November 20, 2019



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development agency**

Agenda

Advisory Group Meeting #7 Agenda

1. Community Priorities Workshop Feedback
2. Development Scenarios
3. Current Zoning
4. Two Proposed Development Scenarios
5. Scenario 1
6. Scenario 2
7. Scenarios: Comparison
8. Public Benefit



Community Priorities Workshop Feedback

Policies

- Include Resiliency into the improvement of Green Corridors
- Preserve Chinatown's history and as the ethnic enclave that it is
- Improvement to public wayfinding
- Improve access to cultural assets for all
- Support Job Growth- for new, existing residents
- Promote dense mixed-use development
- Integrate art into public spaces
- Promote density- create vibrant, mixed use area
- Preservation of historic fabric, while creating a more resilient city

Green Corridors

Concerns/ Suggestions

- Vertical green walls and window box programs
- Consider equity- who can afford to take on greening their properties
- Better engage residents with Green Spaces- Green Space as community gathering centers
- Need for more trash /recycling receptors
- Arch Street-Chauncy Ave needs to be connected to overall network
- Plaza in front of China Trade Center
- Build overhead footbridges crossing busy roads like Kneeland street

Street Network

Concerns/Suggestions

- How will new streets be implemented/enforced? Functionality?
- Need to understand who is driving downtown to identify solutions for reducing congestion.
- Reduce vehicular traffic and emissions
- Include commuting path- Washington Street to the South End
- Look to the South End for inspiration-balance between green and transit
- How will reducing car traffic align with goal of supporting small businesses?



Development Scenarios



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DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS HELP ESTABLISH:

1. **How much additional development downtown Boston might (or should) accommodate.**
2. **The value created for land owners or developers** via the creation of a density bonus / incentive zoning process.
3. **The value to be captured for additional public benefits** from the density bonus / incentive zoning process.



INCENTIVE ZONING-BASED DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

Incentive Zoning based on the Shadow Regulations would allow increased height and additional growth.

This growth can be captured to generate new public benefits.



ADDITIONAL PUBLIC BENEFITS



Affordable Housing



Climate + Resilience



**Local Transit +
Mobility**



**Small Business Support
+ Retail Activation**



Historic Preservation



Open Space & Public Realm*

*** Percentage of funds assigned to
management and maintenance**



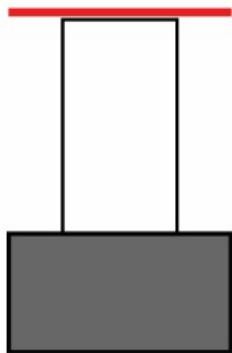
Current Zoning



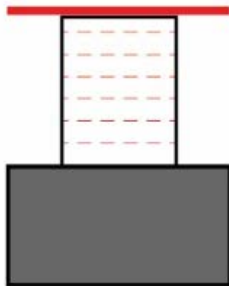
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Currently, building envelopes are primarily determined by four factors
(which are at times at odds with one another)

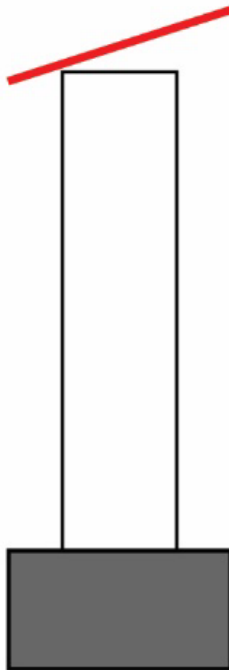
Zoning
Height



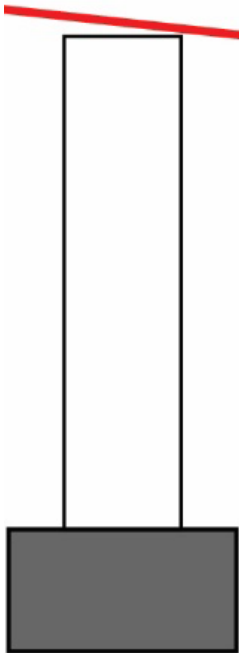
Zoning
FAR
Floor to Area Ratio



Shadow
Regulations
No new Shadows on
Common or Public
Garden*



FAA
Federal Aviation
Administration



* Boston Common Shadow Law
(Ch. 362, 1990 & Ch. 57, Acts of
2017)
Public Garden Shadow Law
(Ch. 384, 1993 & Ch. 57, Acts of
2017)



CURRENT SHADOW REGULATIONS

PLAN: Downtown Vision: Develop a new framework for the preservation, enhancement, and growth of Downtown Boston as a place for all, balancing livability, daylight, walkability, climate change preparedness, access to open space, affordability, and a dynamic mix of uses...

...without exceeding the shadow limits set by existing shadow legislation and zoning.

Boston Common Shadow Law (Ch. 362, Acts of 1990; Ch. 384, Acts of 1993; Ch. 57, Acts of 2017)

- This State law restricts new shadows on the **Common** to the first hour after sunrise or 7:00 a.m. (whichever is later) or the last hour before sunset, with different exemptions for buildings in the Midtown Cultural District, which lies east and south of the Common and Garden.

- For buildings in the **Midtown Cultural District**, new shadows are allowed for no more than two hours between the hours of 8:00 am and 2:30 pm from March 21 to October 21. Any new shadow lasting two hours or more during these times is not allowed.

Public Garden Shadow Law (Ch. 384, Acts of 1993; CH. 57, Acts of 2017)

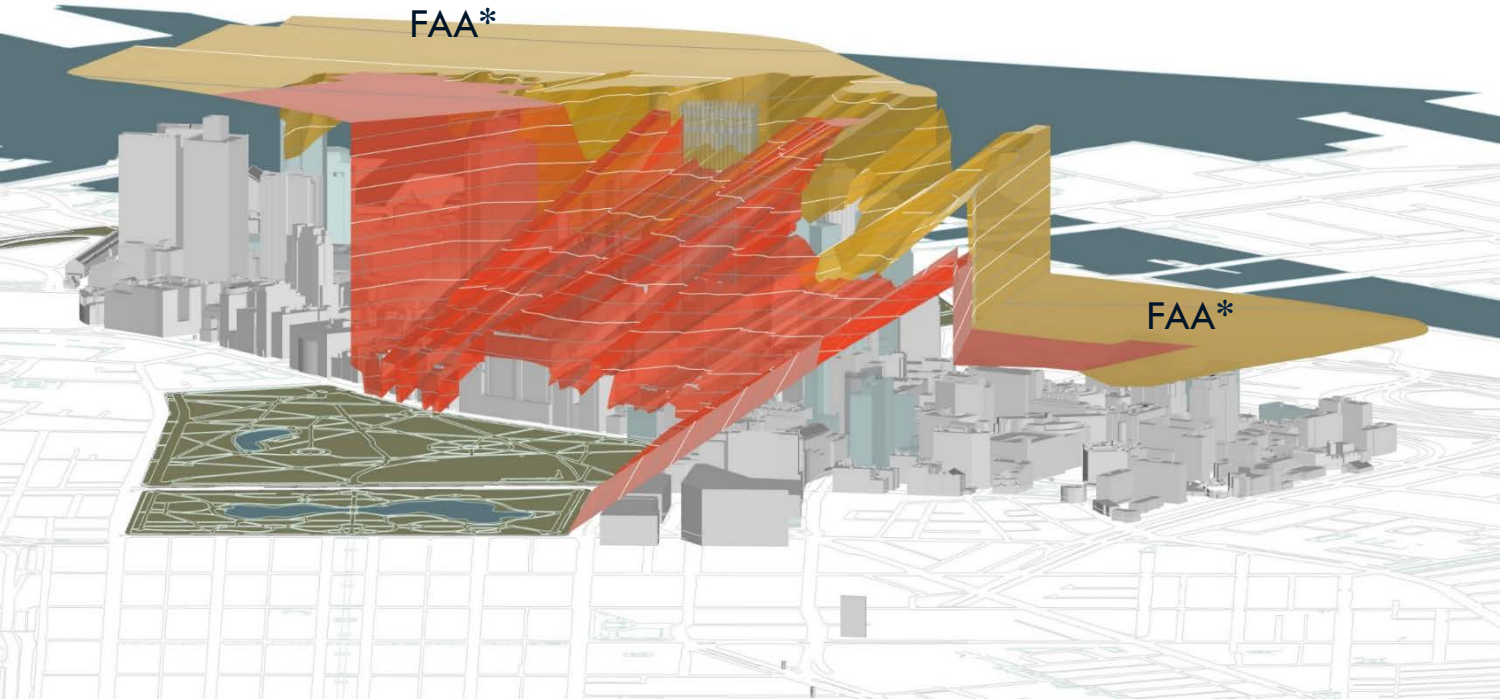
- This law restricts new shadows on the **Public Garden** to the first hour after sunrise or 7:00 a.m. (whichever is later) or the last hour before sunset.

- For buildings in the **Midtown Cultural District**, new shadows are allowed before 10:00 a.m. during the period between March 21 and October 21.



CURRENT SHADOW REGULATIONS

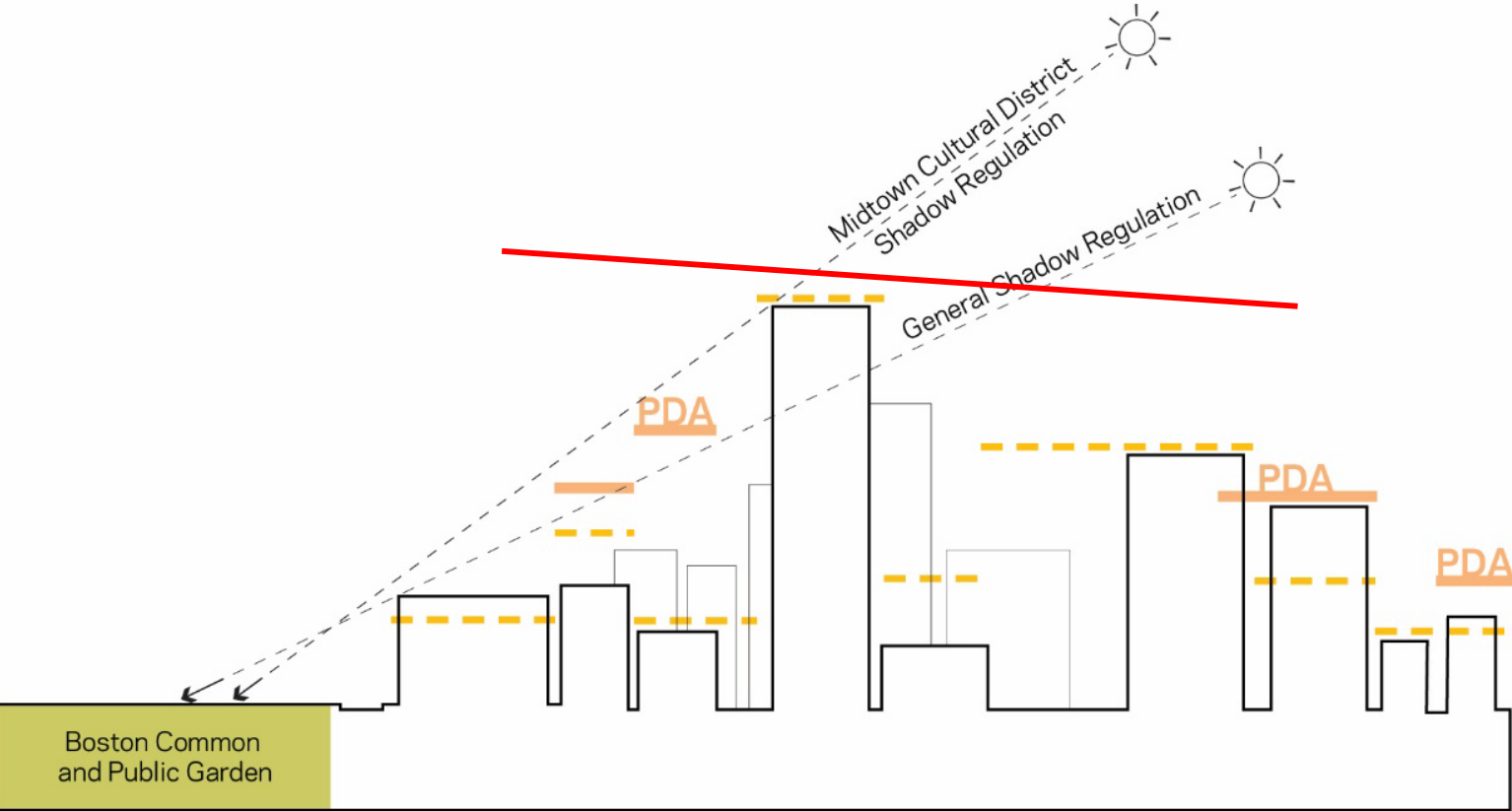
**The FAA flight path to Logan Airport impose height restrictions in the Financial District, Wharf District, and Chinatown.*



- Midtown Cultural District Shadow Regulation
- General Shadow Regulation



CURRENT MAXIMUM HEIGHT LIMITATIONS

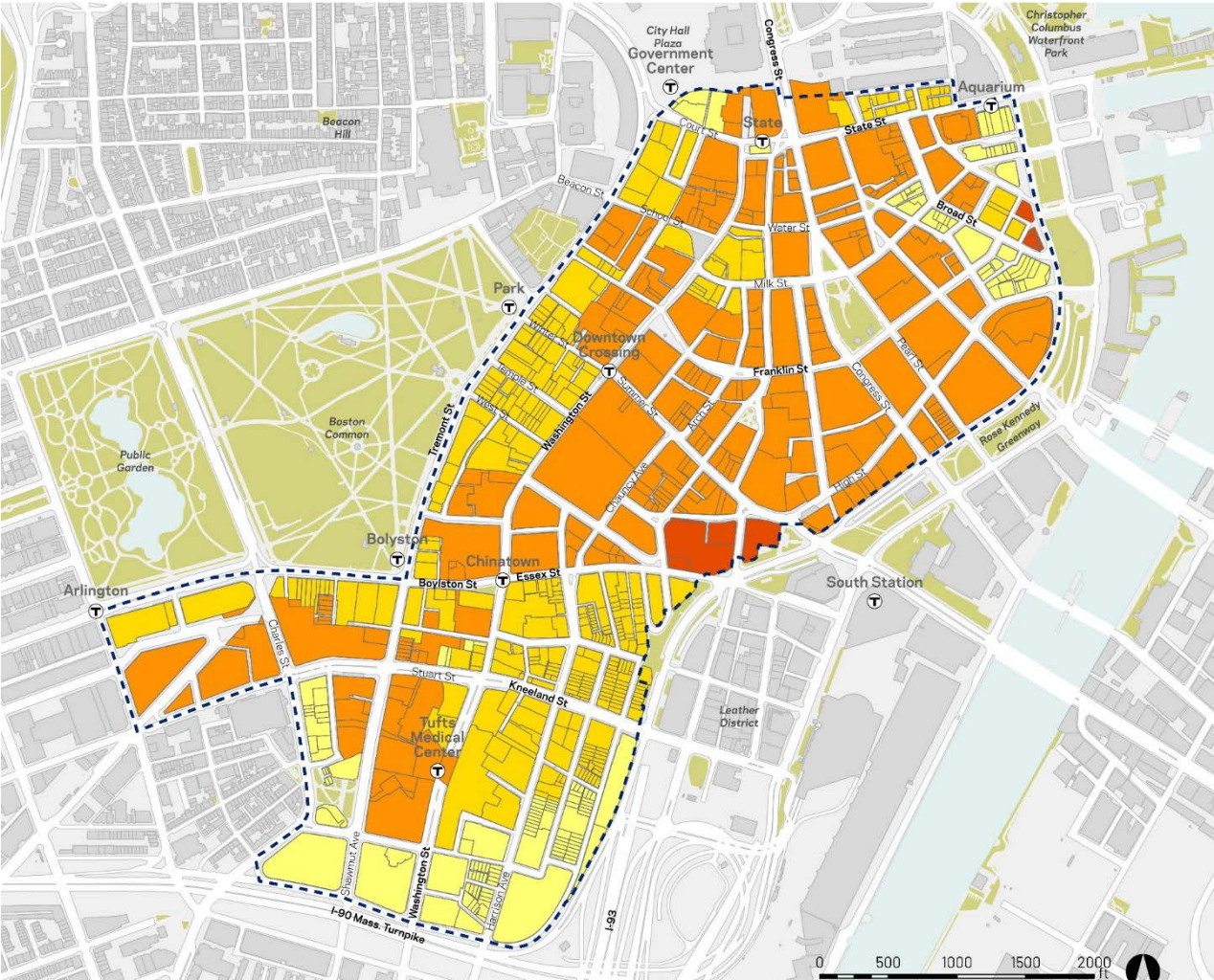


- Base zoning height limit
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Planned Development Area (PDA)



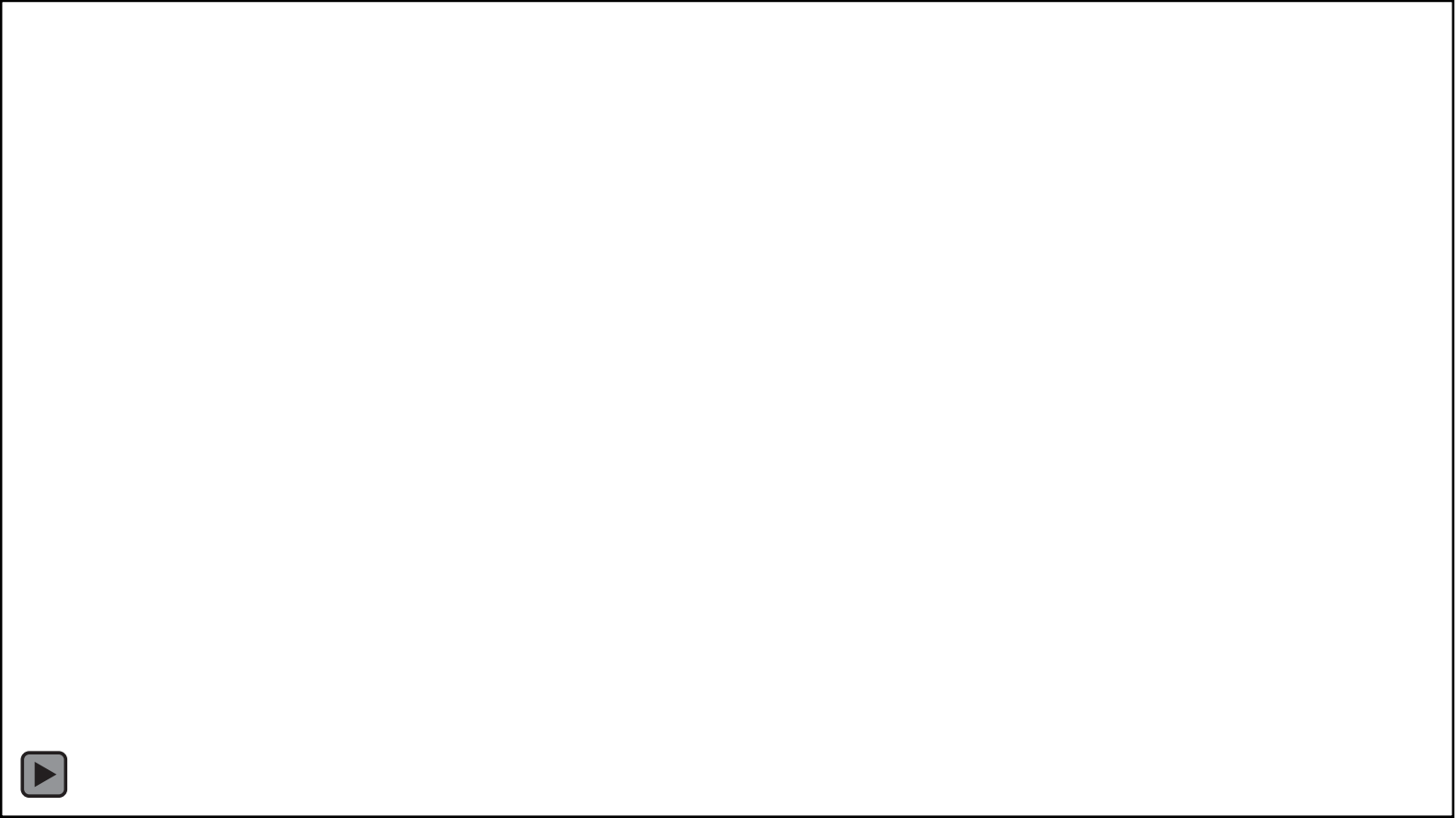
Current Zoning

Floor to Area Ratio (FAR)



Current Zoning

Maximum heights



-  **General Zoning**
(Various Height Limits with max 10 FAR)
-  **Planned Development Areas**
(Minimum area of over an acre)
-  **Preservation Sub-districts**
(Various Height Limits and FAR)
-  **Federal Aviation Administration**
(Logan Airport approach cone)

You can also see this video at <http://www.bostonplans.org/documents/planning/downtown-neighborhood-planning/plan-downtown/191120-ag-7/plan-downtown-advisory-group-mtg7-video-current-co>



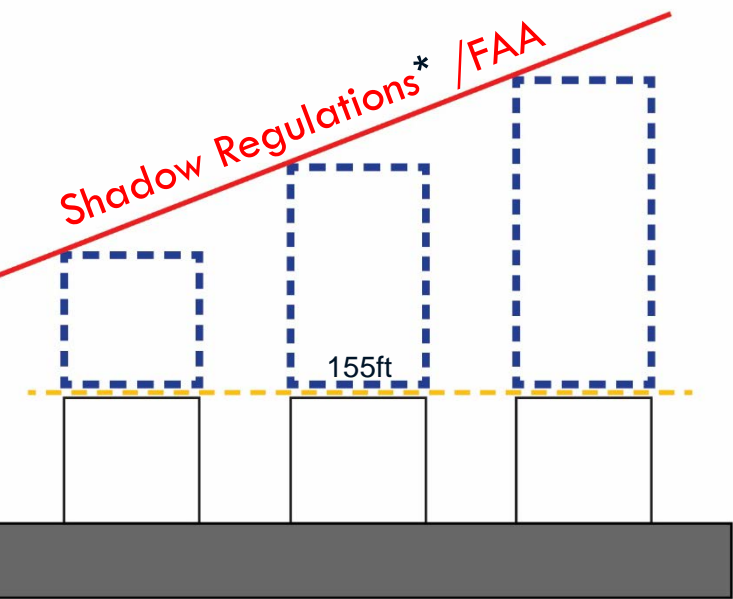
Two Proposed Development Scenarios



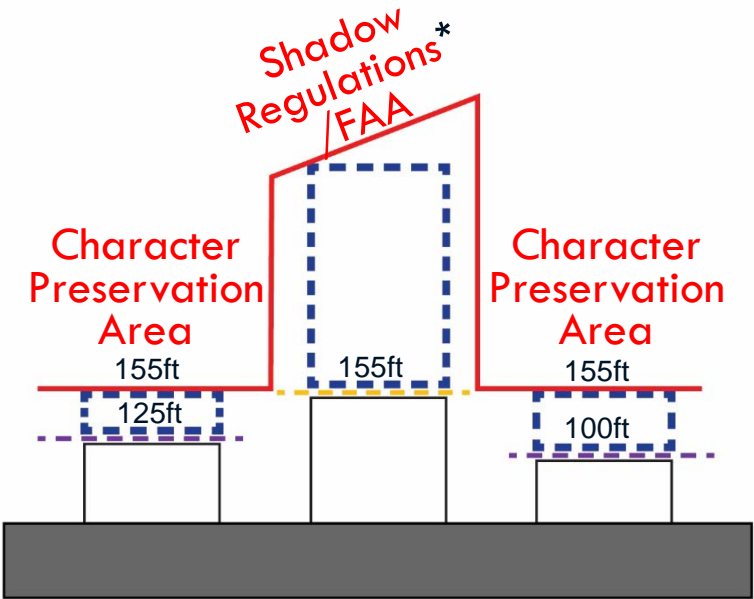
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TWO DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS illustrate the impact of different height restrictions and regulatory regimes

Scenario 1: Growth-Based
Density Bonuses based on a common baseline height established across the Downtown



Scenario 2: Preservation & Growth-Balanced
Density Bonuses based on varied baseline heights established by Character Area

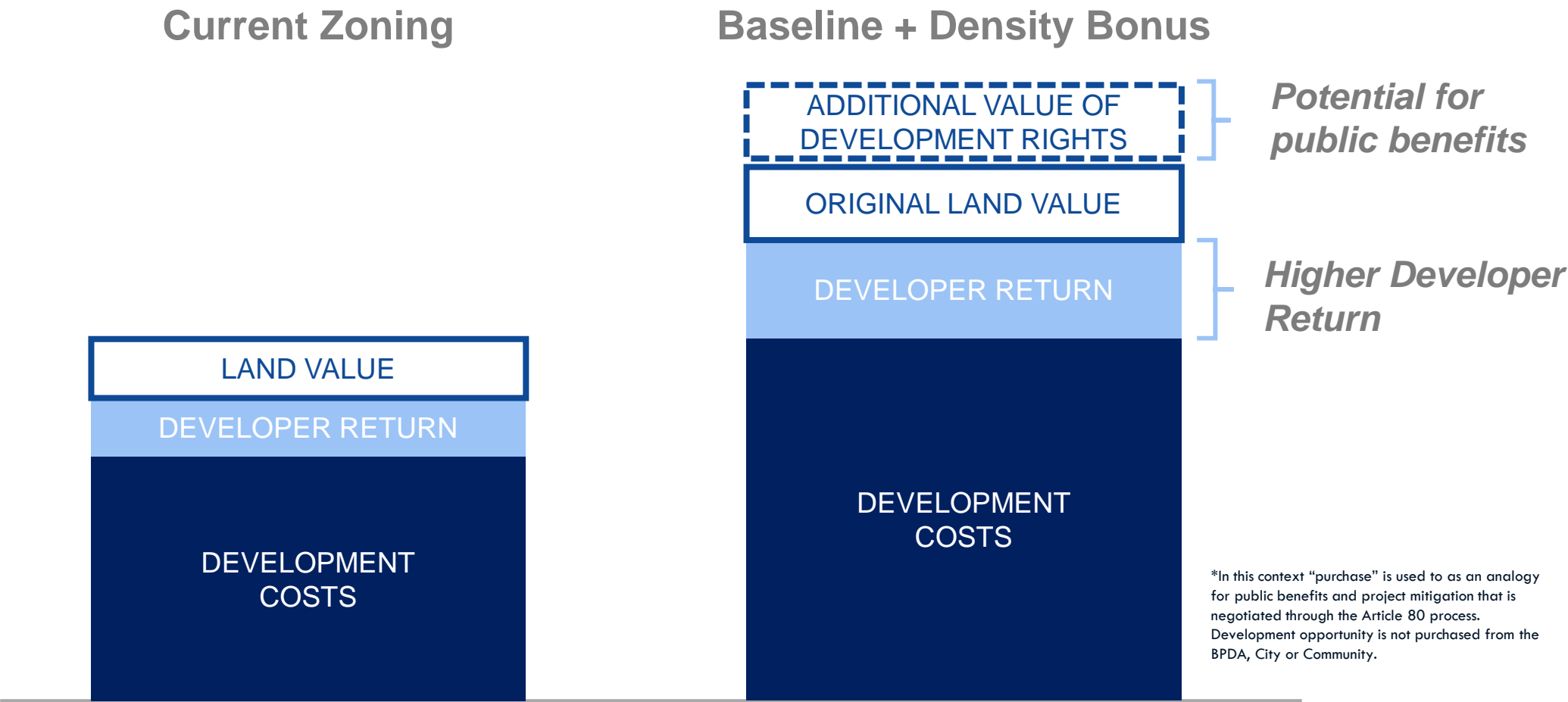


 **Development potential with public benefit capture**

* Boston Common Shadow Law (Ch. 362, 1990 & Ch. 57, Acts of 2017)
& Public Garden Shadow Law (Ch. 384, 1993 & Ch. 57, Acts of 2017)



As developers acquire land to construct a building, they are incentivized to “purchase” bonus density to deliver more space, and therefore generate a larger return



Scenario 1

Density Bonuses based on a common baseline height established across the Downtown



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Scenario 1: Growth-Based Density Bonus System

Scenario 1 Growth-Based Density Bonus System:

Developer can "purchase" capacity through density bonus system

For all of Downtown:

Baseline zoning height starting at 155 ft.

Maximum up to Midtown Cultural District Shadow Regulation,
Shadow Regulation, and FAA height limit

*In this context "purchase" is used to as an analogy for public benefits and project mitigation that is negotiated through the Article 80 process. Development opportunity is not purchased from the BPDA, City or Community.

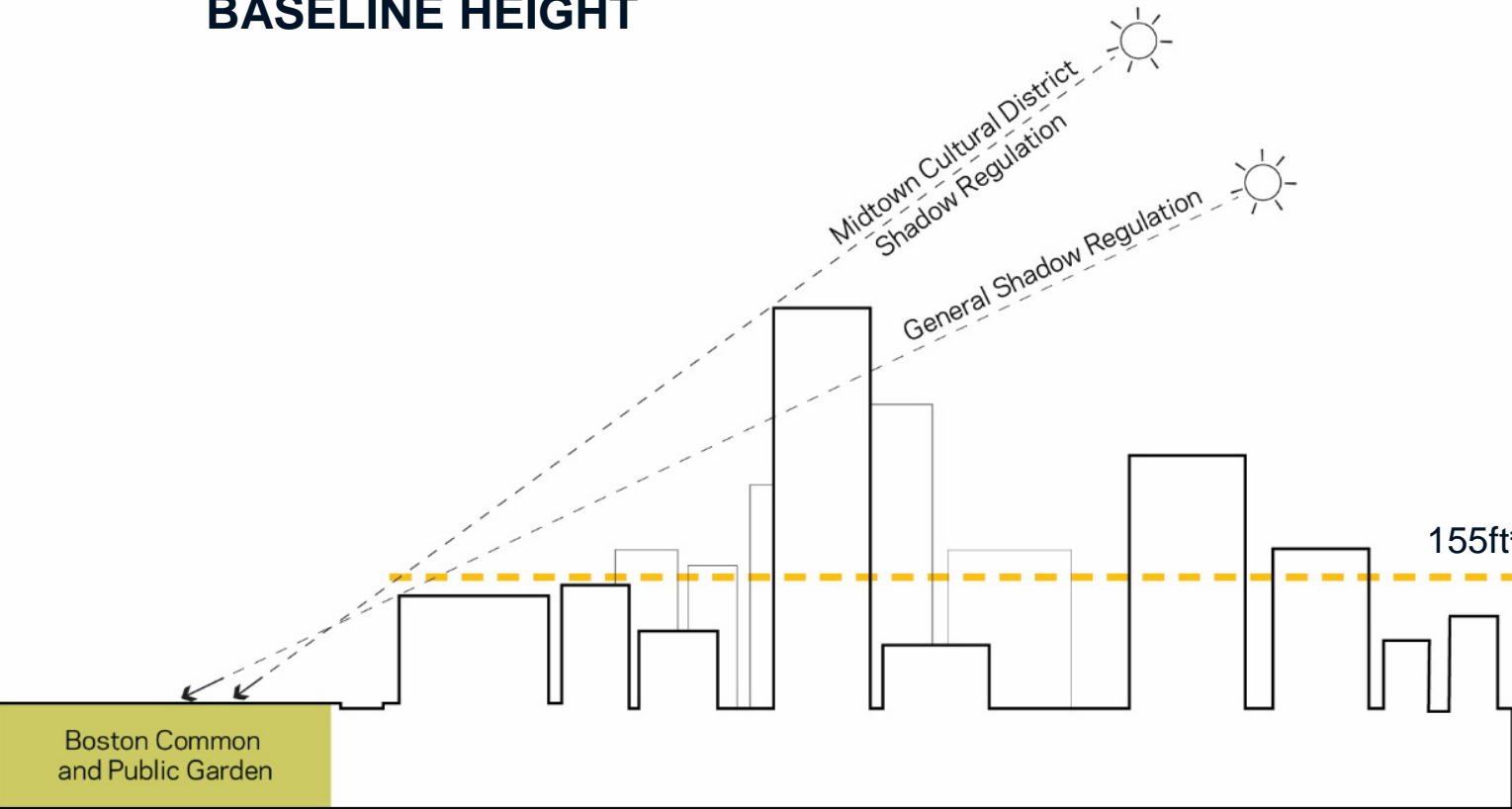


Piano Row, Corner of Boylston & Tremont Streets,
155 ft. Building Heights



Scenario 1: Growth-Based Density Bonus System

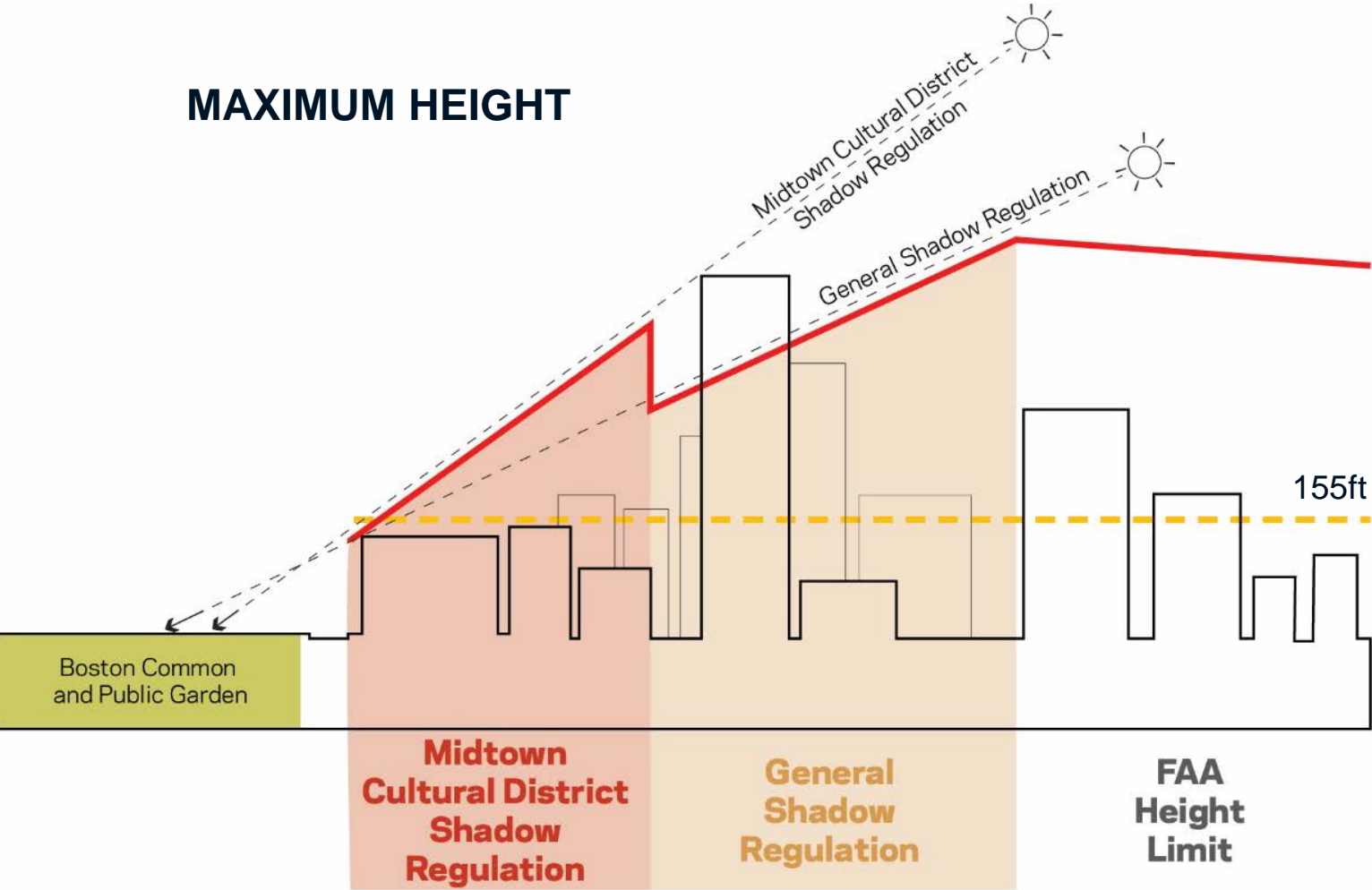
BASELINE HEIGHT



- Baseline zoning height
- Incentivized maximum height (Shadow Regulation, FAA)



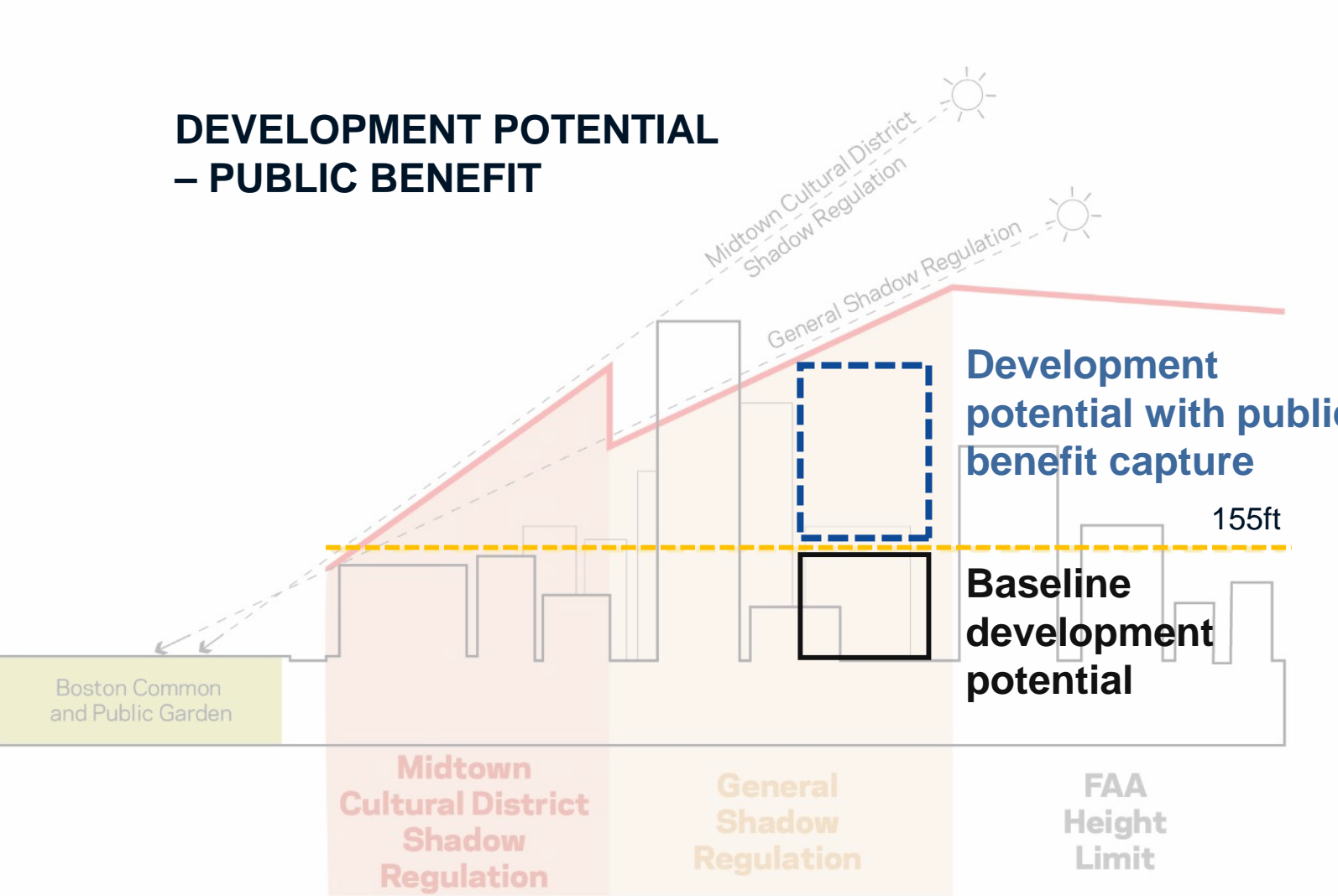
Scenario 1: Growth-Based Density Bonus System



- Baseline zoning height
- Incentivized maximum height (Shadow Regulation, FAA)



Scenario 1: Growth-Based Density Bonus System

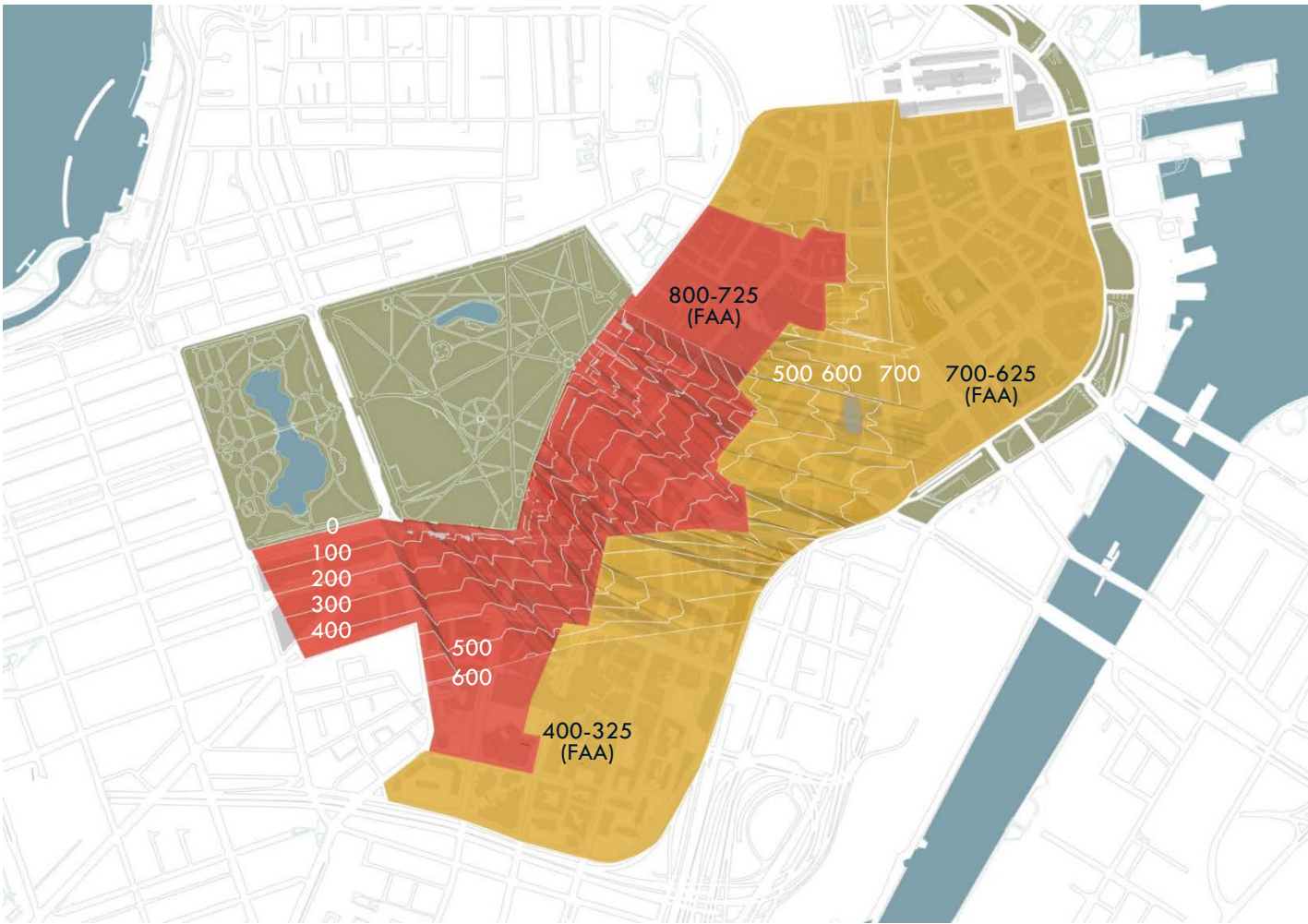


- Baseline zoning height
- Incentivized maximum height (Shadow Regulation, FAA)



Scenario 1: Growth-Based Density Bonus System

Maximum heights



Developer can "purchase" capacity through density bonus system

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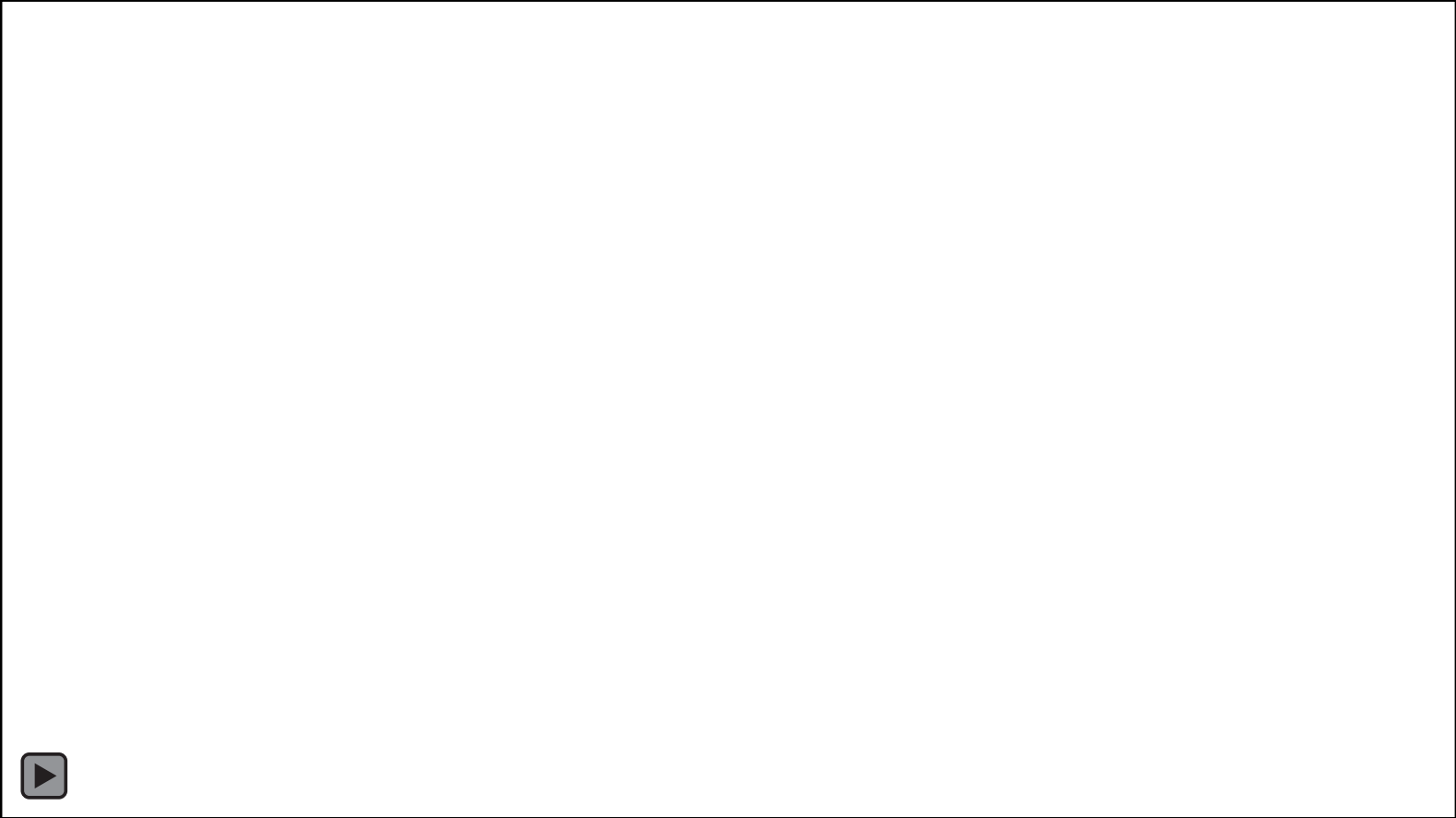
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- Midtown Cultural District Shadow Regulation
- General Shadow Regulation



Scenario 1: Growth-Based Density Bonus System

Maximum heights



Developer can "purchase" capacity through density bonus system

For all of Downtown:

Baseline zoning height starting at 155 ft.

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 Midtown Cultural District Shadow Regulation

 General Shadow Regulation

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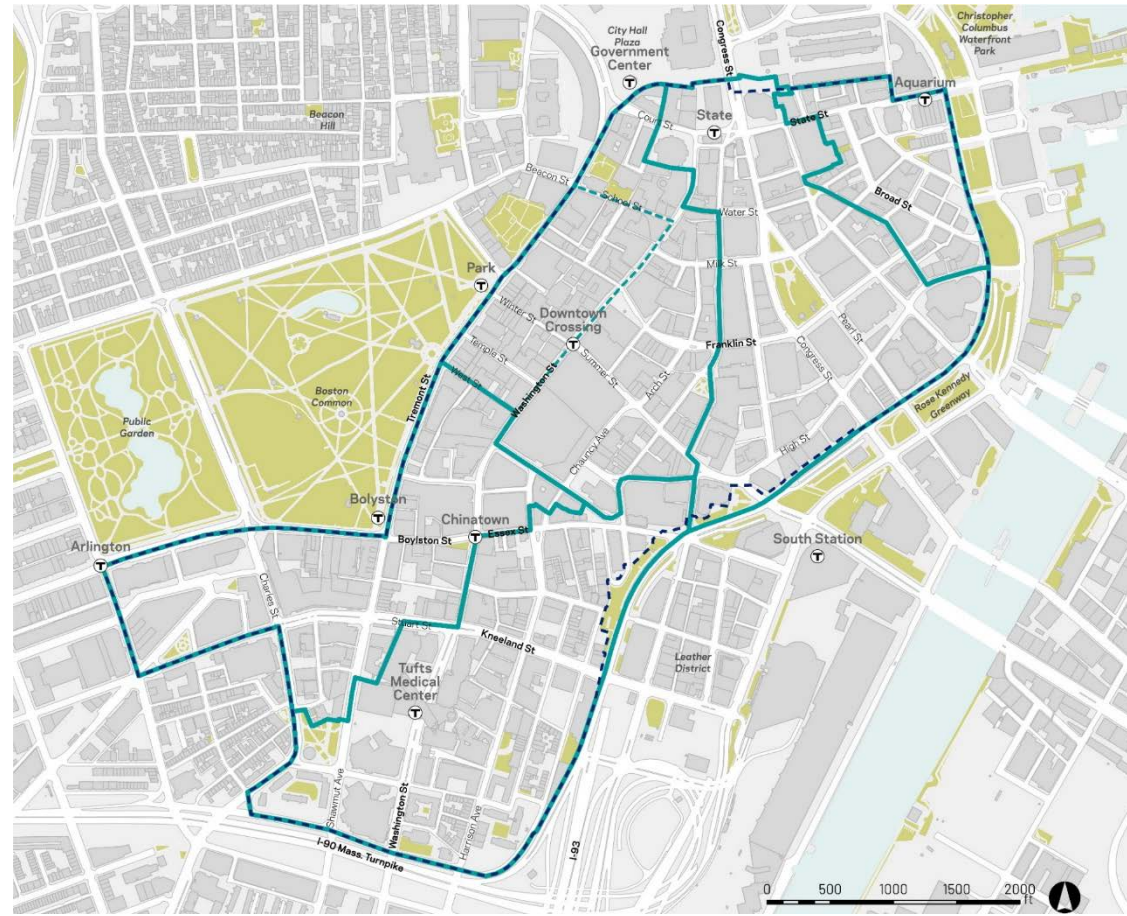
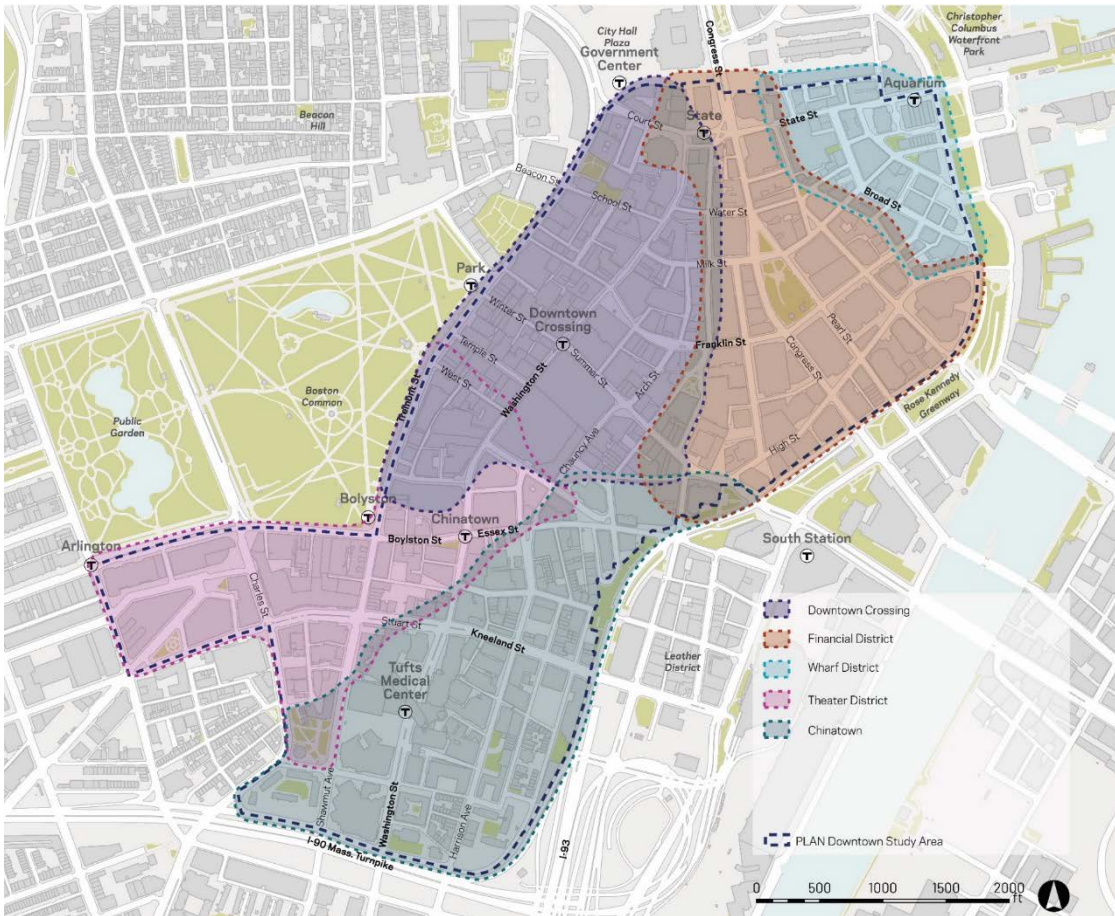
Scenario 2

**Density Bonuses based on varied baseline height
established by Character Area**



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For the purposes of this Scenario, the Downtown is divided into distinct Character Areas. Zoning requires fixed boundaries



Character Area

Sub-Character Area



Two Development Scenarios illustrate the impact of different height restrictions and regulatory regimes

Scenario 2 Preservation & Growth-Balanced Density Bonus System:

Baseline zoning starting points and maximum heights are based on Character Area baseline and Developer can "purchase" capacity through density bonus system (contribution to public benefits).

Downtown Crossing, the Theater District, and the Financial District:

155 ft. baseline zoning

Maximum up to the Shadow Regulation and FAA height limit (excluding Ladder Blocks)

Three Character Preservation Areas with a maximum height of 155ft.

Chinatown: 100 ft. baseline zoning*

The Wharf District: 100 ft. baseline zoning

Ladder Blocks: 125 ft. baseline zoning*

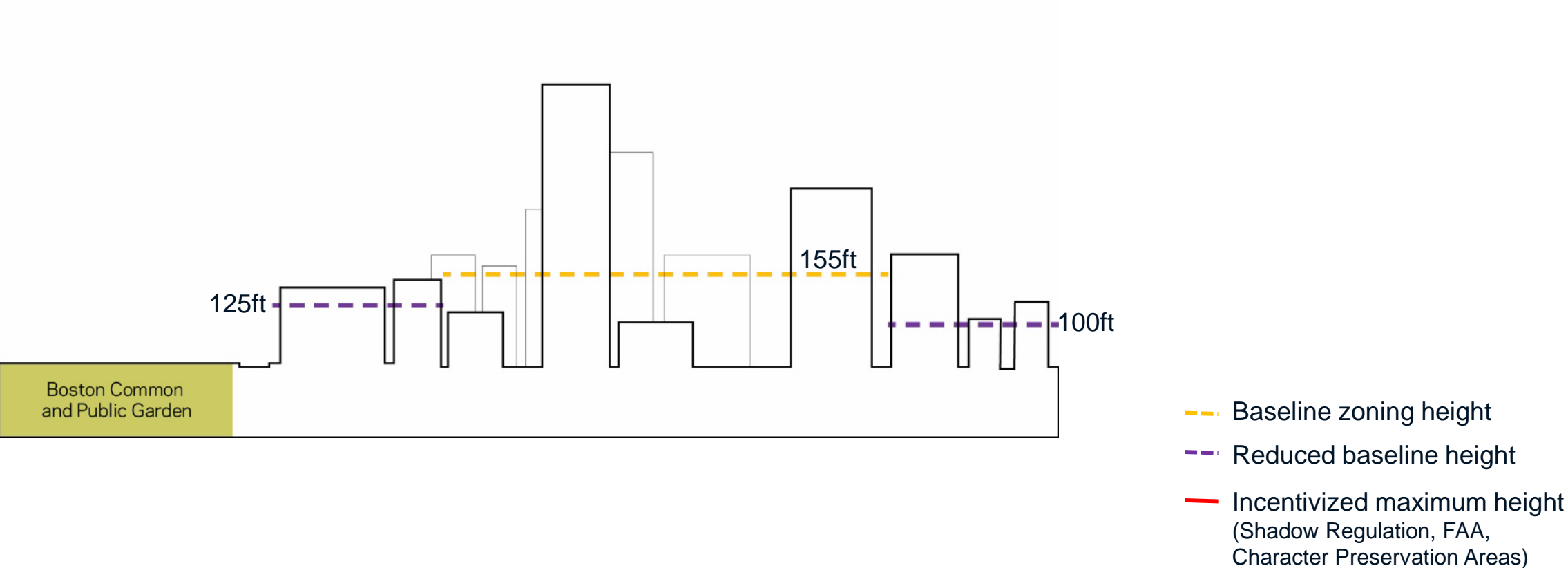
*We are considering special requirements in these areas. Please see the "next steps" slide at the end of this presentation.

**In this context "purchase" is used to as an analogy for public benefits and project mitigation that is negotiated through the Article 80 process. Development opportunity is not purchased from the BPDA, City or Community.



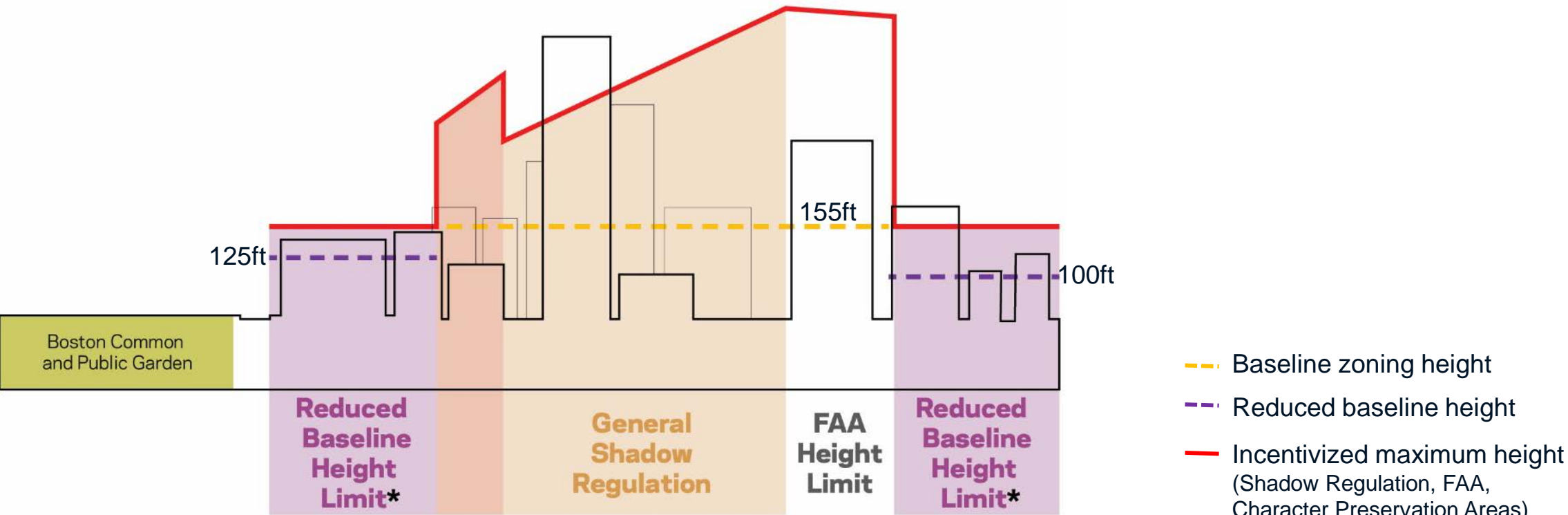
Scenario 2: Preservation & Growth-Balanced Density Bonus System

BASELINE HEIGHT



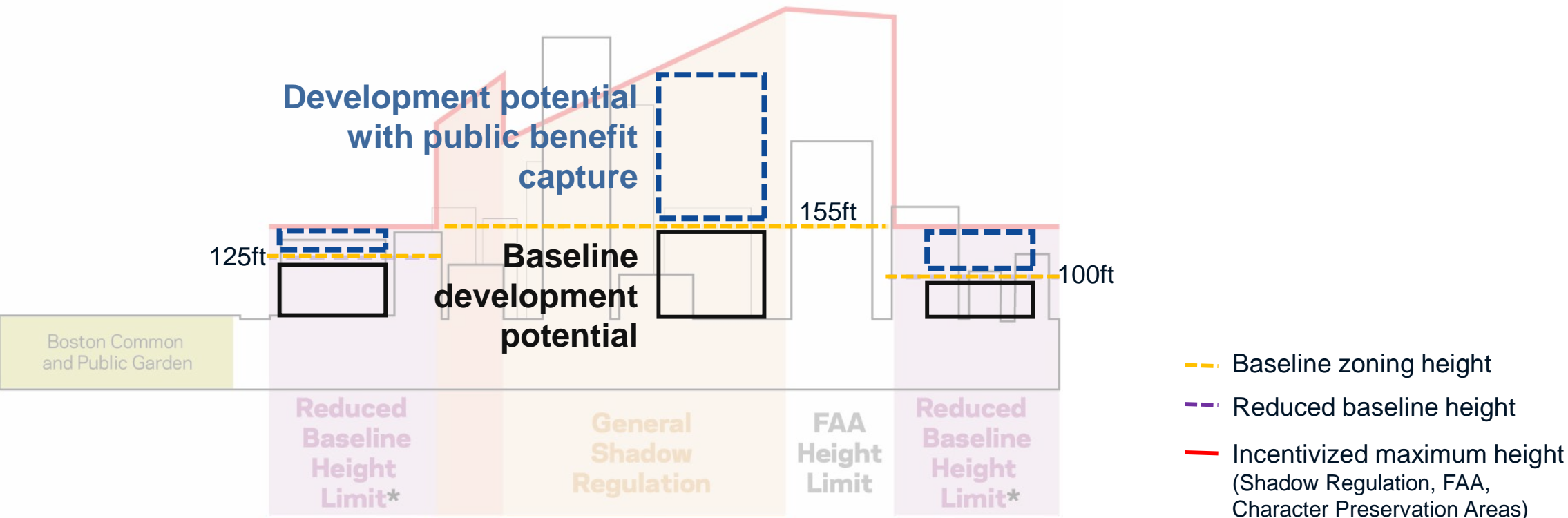
Scenario 2: Preservation & Growth-Balanced Density Bonus System

MAXIMUM HEIGHT



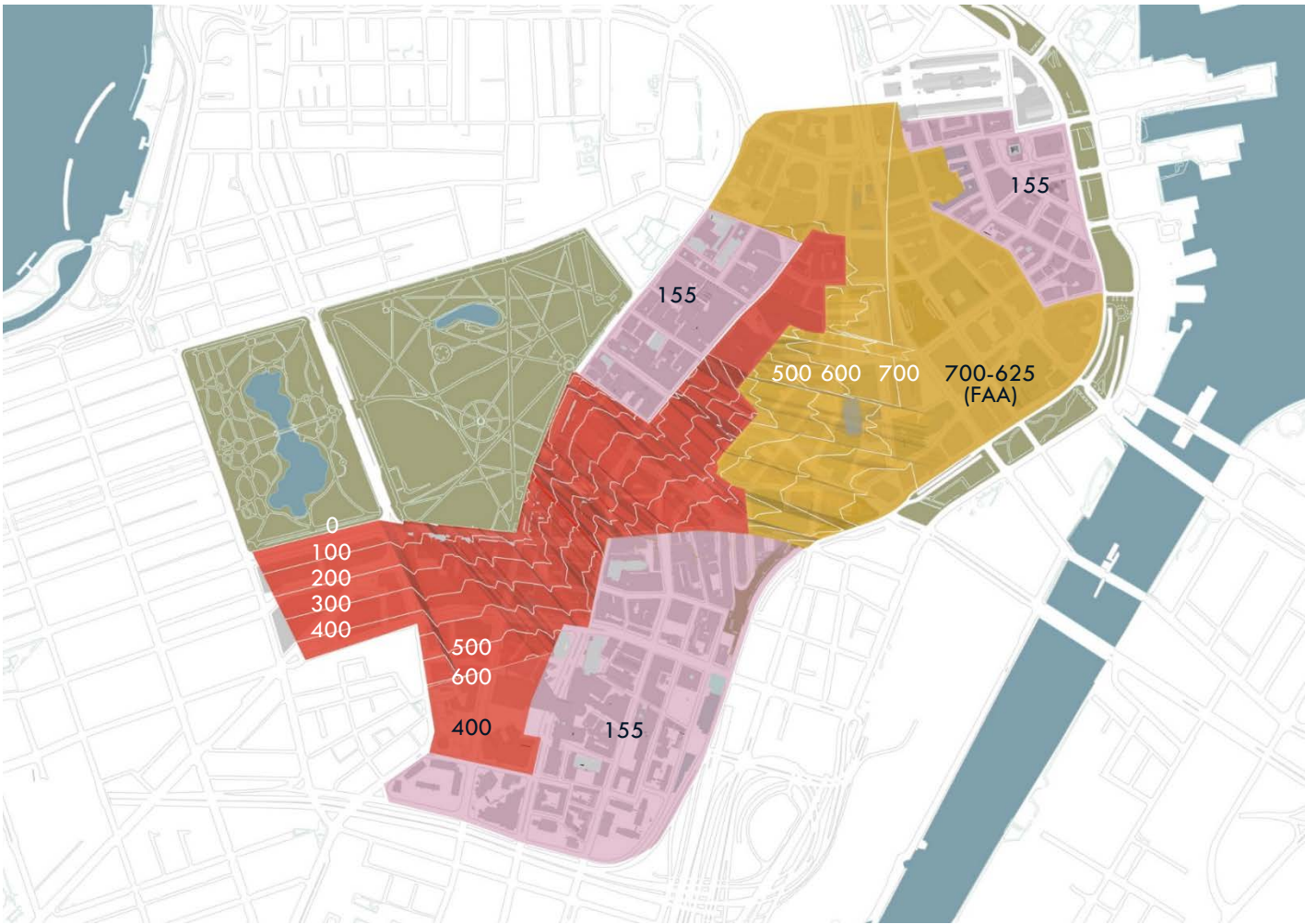
Scenario 2: Preservation & Growth-Balanced Density Bonus System

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL – PUBLIC BENEFIT



Scenario 2: Preservation & Growth-Balanced Density Bonus System

Maximum heights



Baseline zoning starting points and maximum heights are based on Character Area baseline and Developer can "purchase" capacity through density bonus system.

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Midtown Cultural District Shadow Regulation

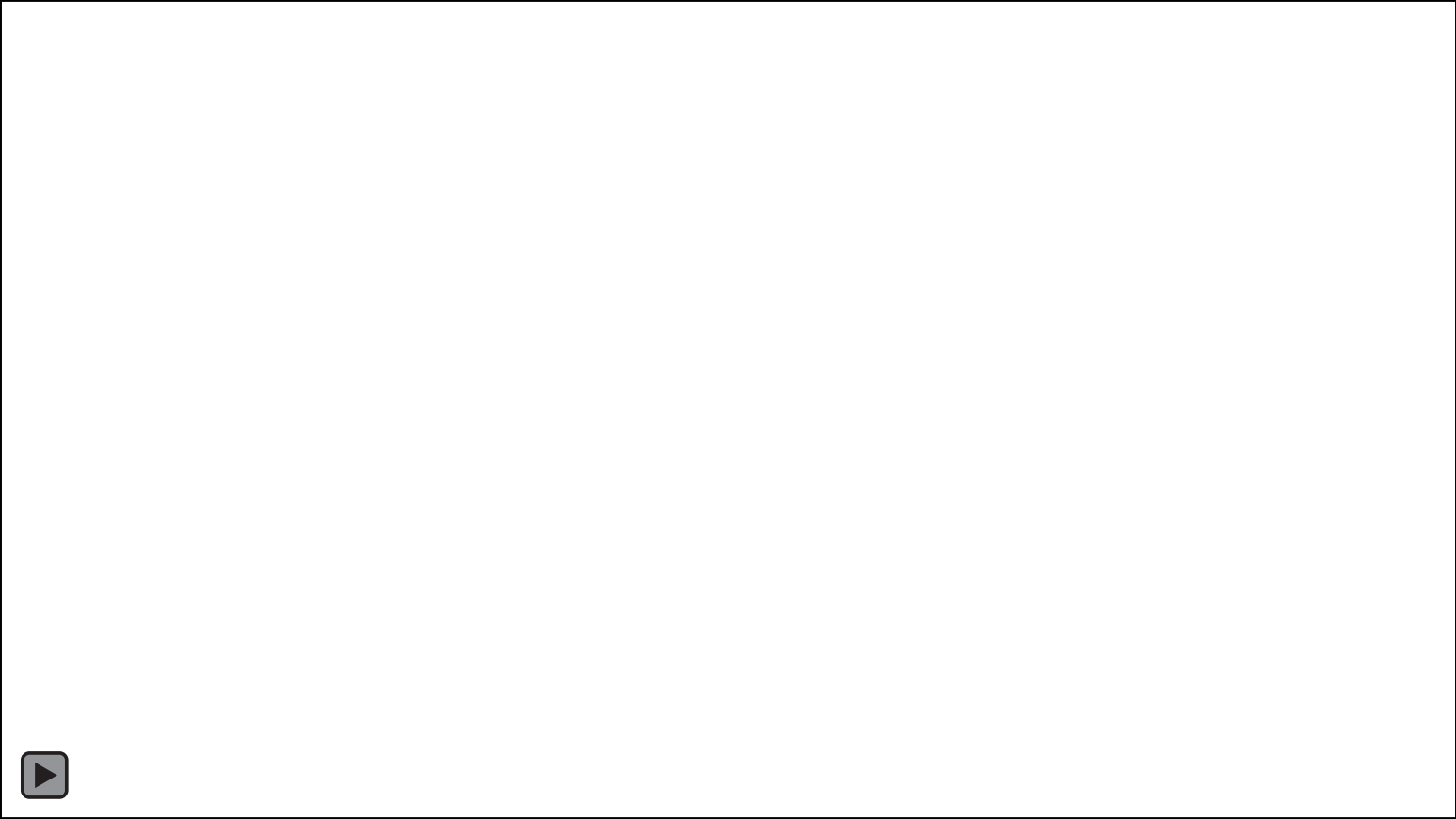
General Shadow Regulation

Character Preservation Areas
(Ladder Blocks, Chinatown, and Wharf District)



Scenario 2: Preservation & Growth-Balanced Density Bonus System

Maximum heights



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 Midtown Cultural District Shadow Regulation

 General Shadow Regulation

 Character Preservation Areas
(Ladder Blocks, Chinatown, and Wharf District)

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Scenarios: Comparison



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Scenarios Comparison

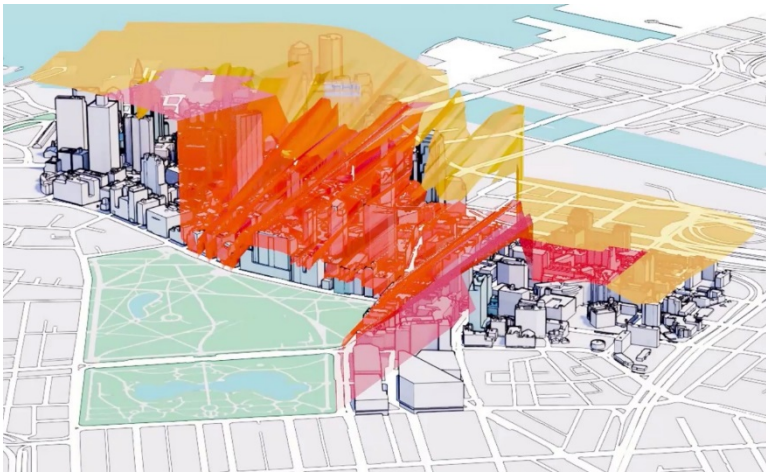
Current Zoning



Base zoning heights:
Various (Multiple General, PDA, Preservation, FAA)

Maximum heights:
Various (Multiple General, PDA, Preservation, FAA) & Midtown Cultural District and General Shadow Regulations

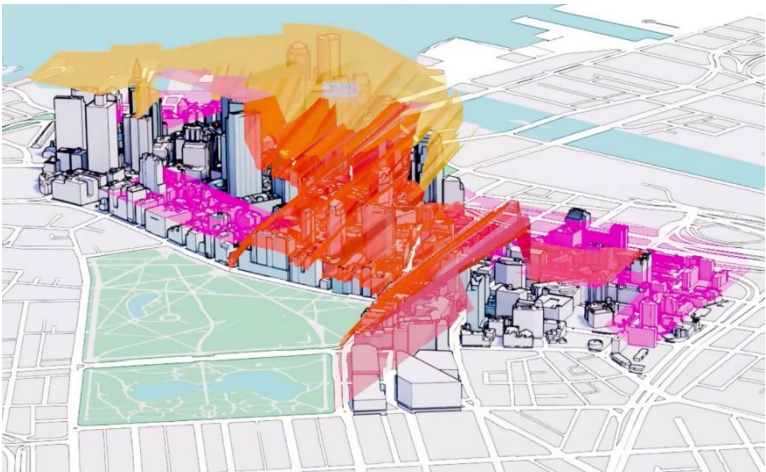
Scenario 1



Baseline heights:
155' in General Area

Maximum heights:
Midtown Cultural District and General Shadow Regulations

Scenario 2



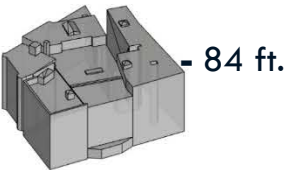
Baseline heights:
155' in General Area and
100/125' in Character Preservation Areas

Maximum heights:
Midtown Cultural District and General Shadow Regulations
and 155' in Character Preservation Areas



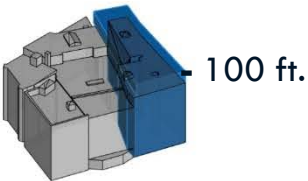
An example parcel within a Character Preservation Area in Downtown is currently zoned for up to 61K SF (baseline, without a PDA) but would have potential for added density under Scenarios 1 and 2

Existing building



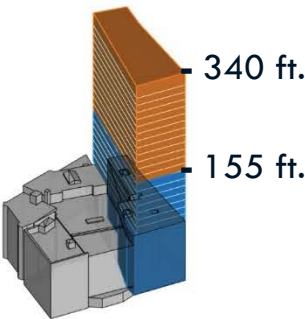
Existing Built Area:
39,000 SF

Under Current Zoning



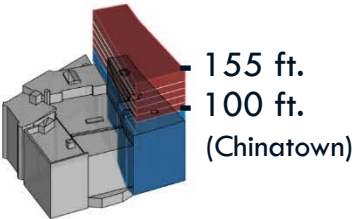
Maximum Buildable Area:
61,000 SF

Under Scenario 1



Shadow Regulation/
FAA, Max. Buildable:
207,000 SF

Under Scenario 2



155' Height Limit,
Max. Buildable:
94,000 SF

- Existing buildings
- Base zoning height
(Differs according to the scenarios)
- Maximum height allowed by the Shadow Regulation/FAA
- Height limit based on Character Preservation Area

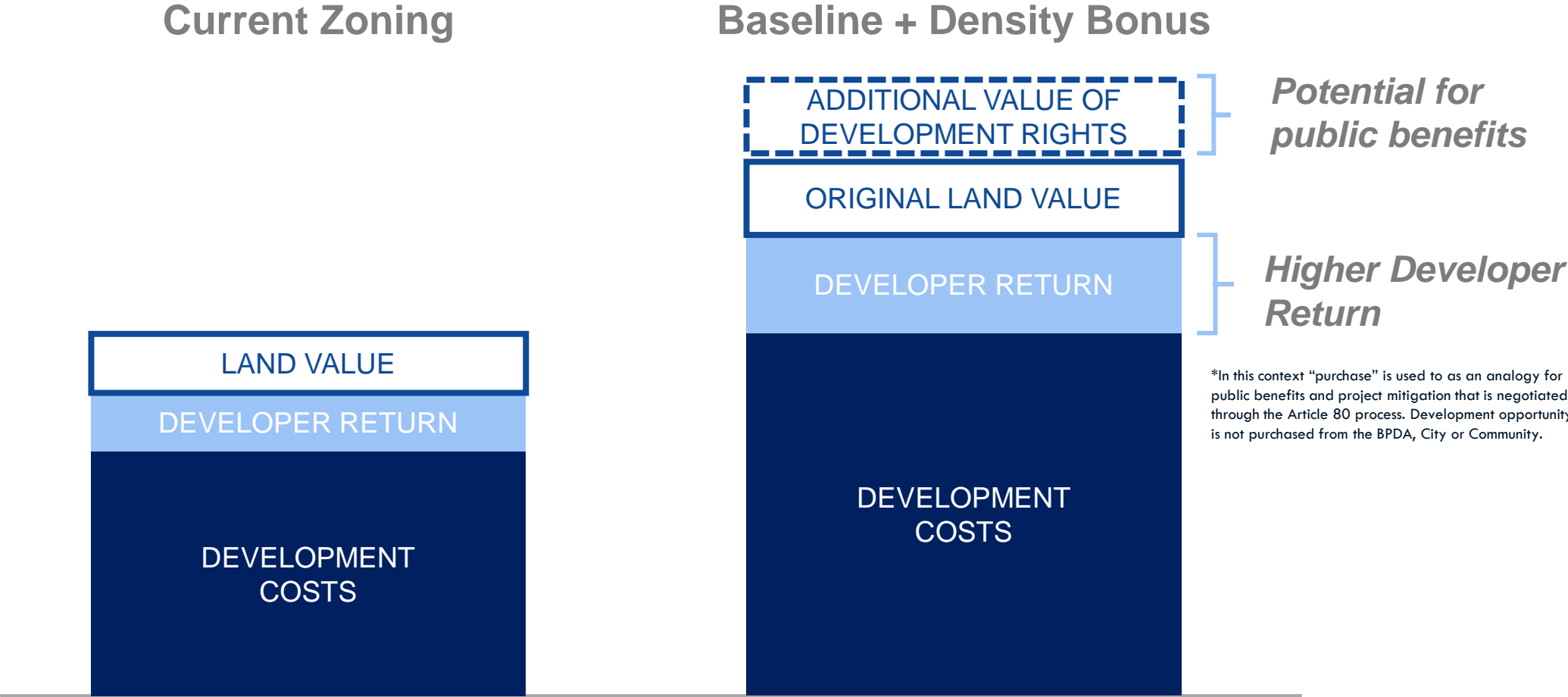


Public Benefit

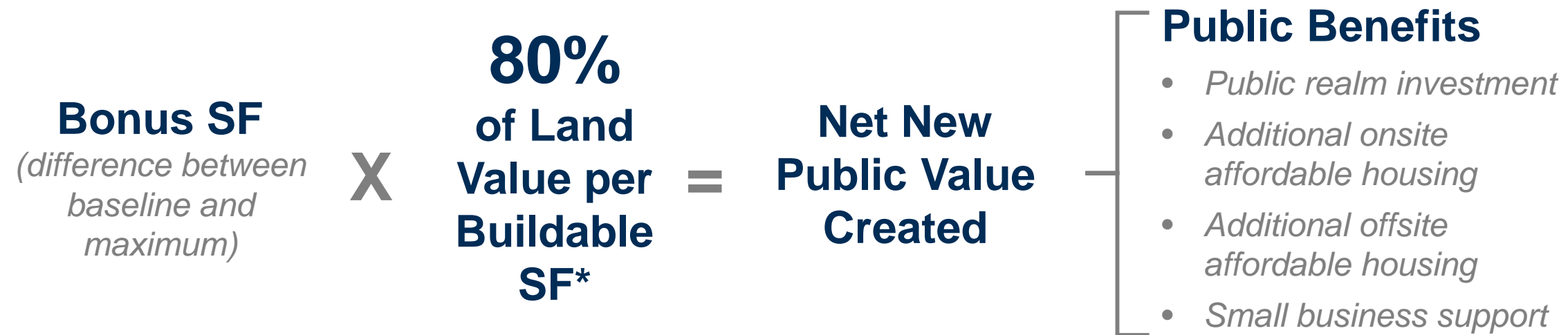


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As developers purchase land to construct a building, they are incentivized to “purchase” bonus density to deliver more space, and therefore generate a larger return



The value of public benefits can be calculated by multiplying the bonus square feet by a proportion of value per buildable square feet, which should be set to encourage participation in the program

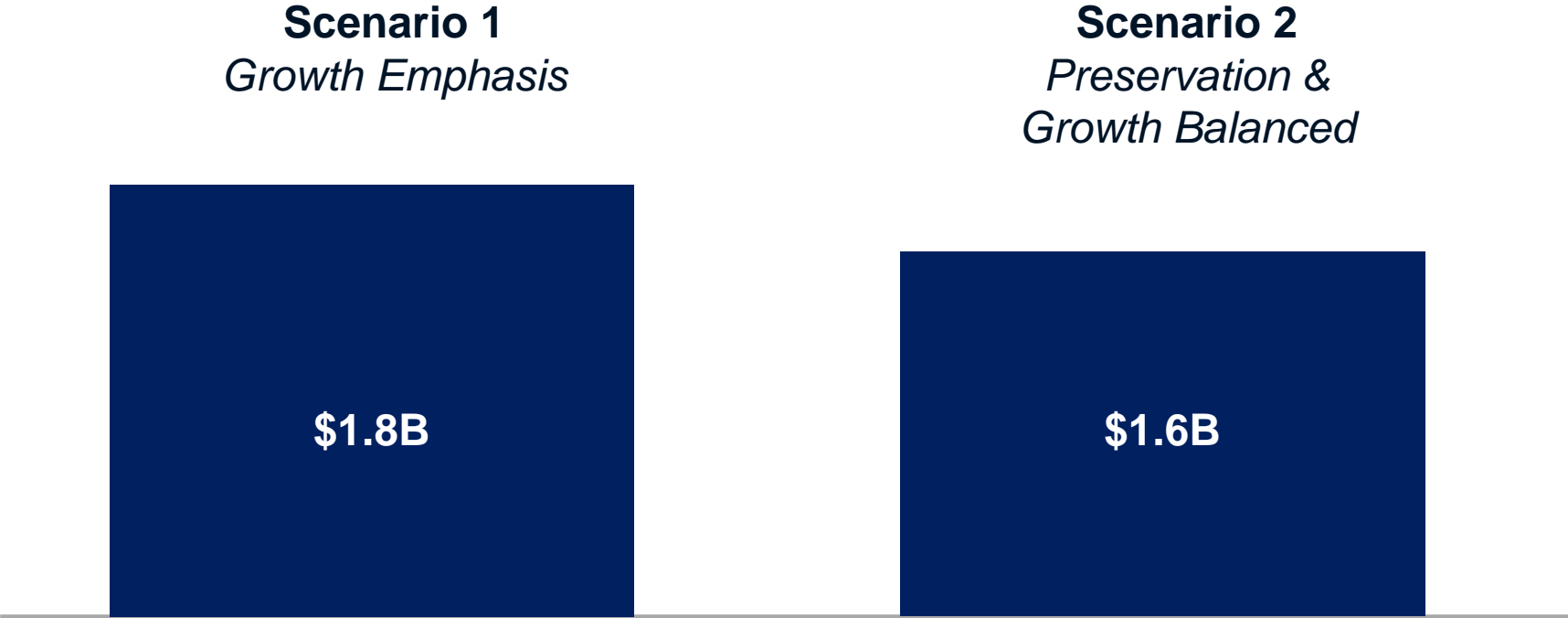


**The remaining 20% is the developers' incentive to build*



At maximum capacity, the density bonuses could generate \$1.6 - \$1.8 Billion of new value based on redevelopment of Downtown soft sites under Scenarios 1 and 2

New Public Value Generated at Full Build Out

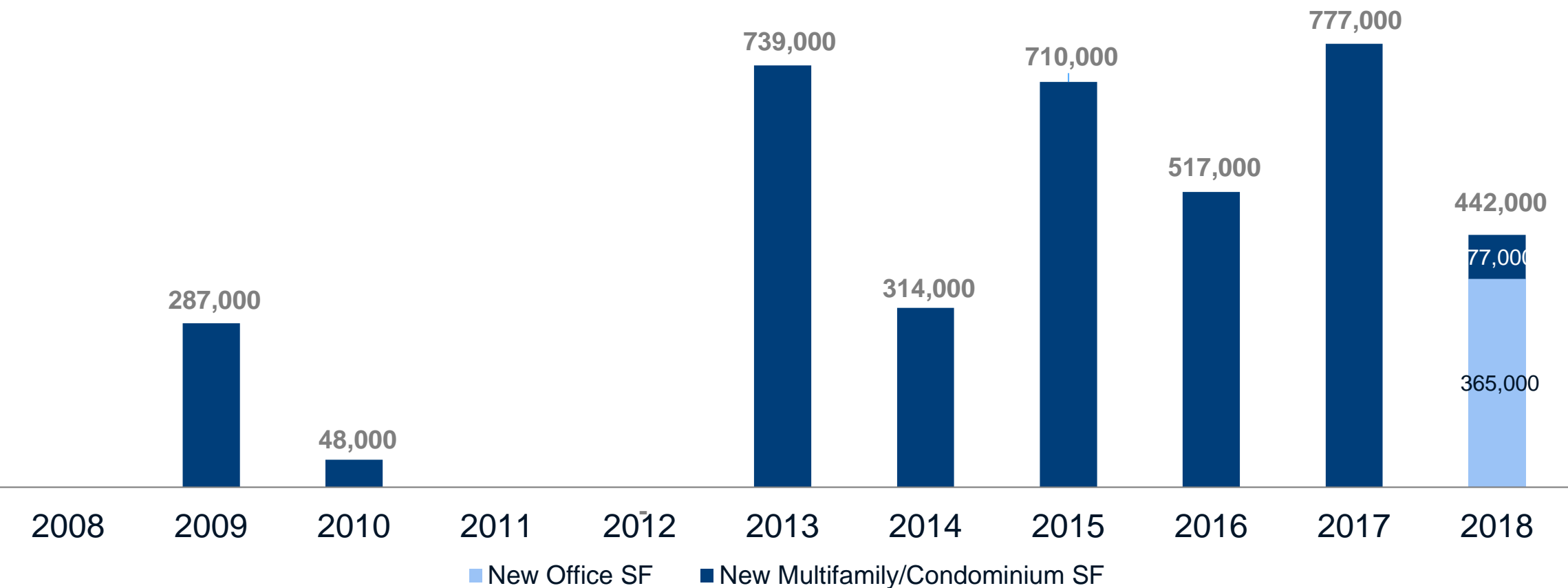


The potential for density bonus system to generate revenue is dependent on continued market demand for new commercial and residential space Downtown



Downtown’s recent pace of development represents one potential benchmark for continued growth and absorption in the coming years

Downtown Office & Multifamily/Condo Deliveries (SF)

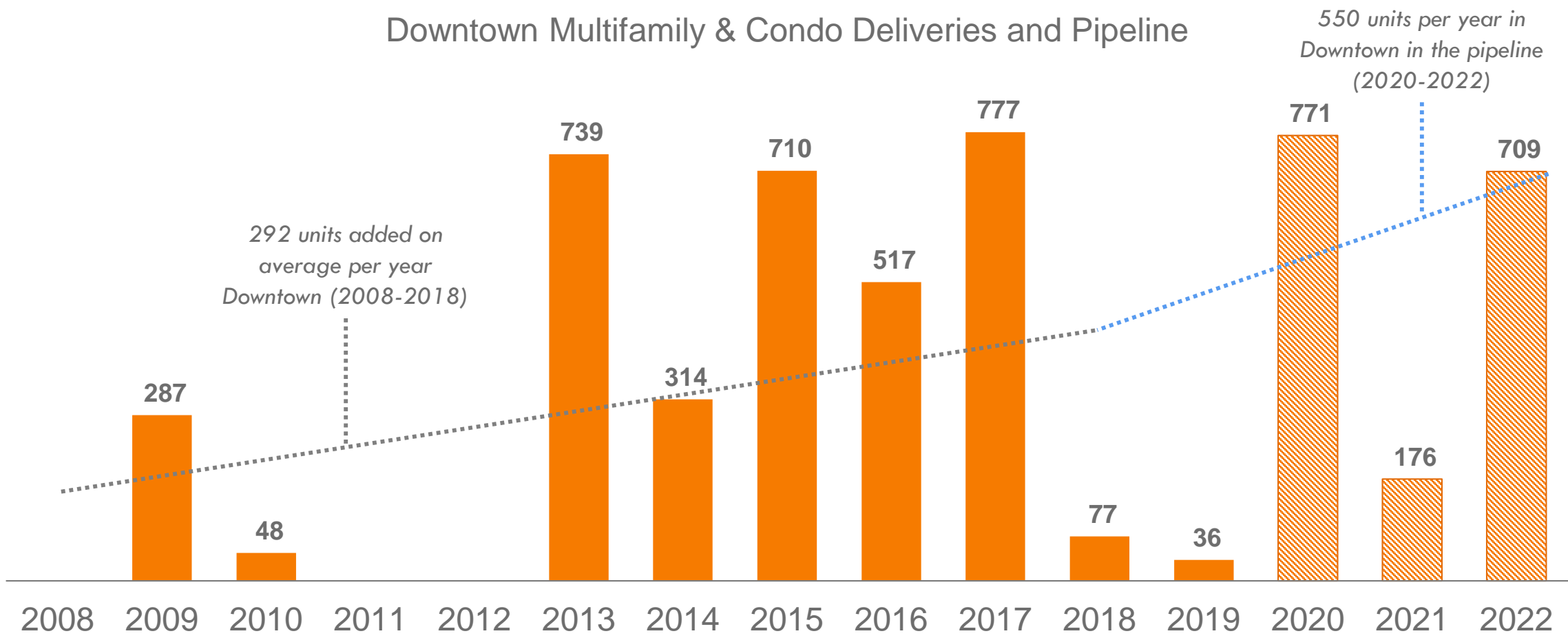


Several factors suggest that future growth in Downtown could meet and even exceed the recent pace of development

1. Downtown is already seeing rapid **multifamily growth**, with pipeline projects indicating an acceleration of recent trends.
2. Substantially more **new office product is already under construction** than has been delivered in the past decade.
3. Available **sites for development are disappearing** in competitive neighborhoods like the Seaport and Kendall Square in Cambridge.
4. A simpler, more predictable **regulatory regime** would make Downtown development easier and more accessible to more developers.



With over 1,600 pipeline units, residential growth in Downtown is poised to continue at a brisk pace following the past decade's unprecedented rate of development



Downtown is already beginning to see a new generation of office development, with several major projects in the pipeline

New construction (*Winthrop Square*)

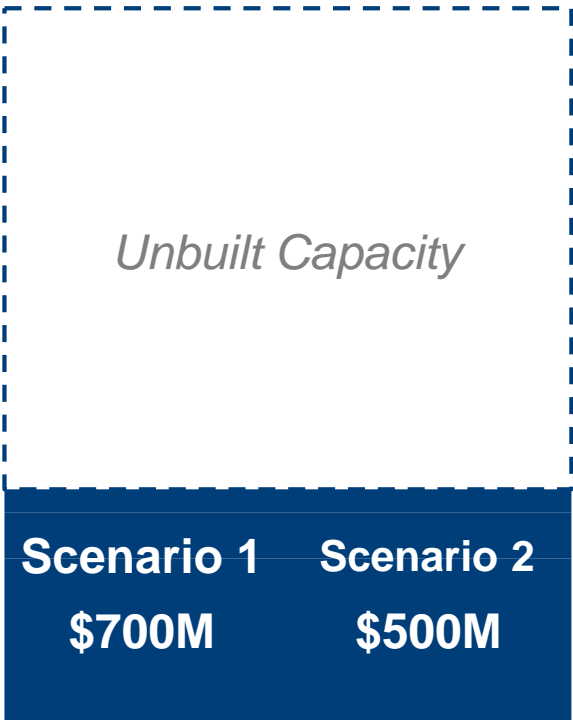
Addition to existing building (*Congress Square*)

Redevelopment within existing envelope (*Little Building*)

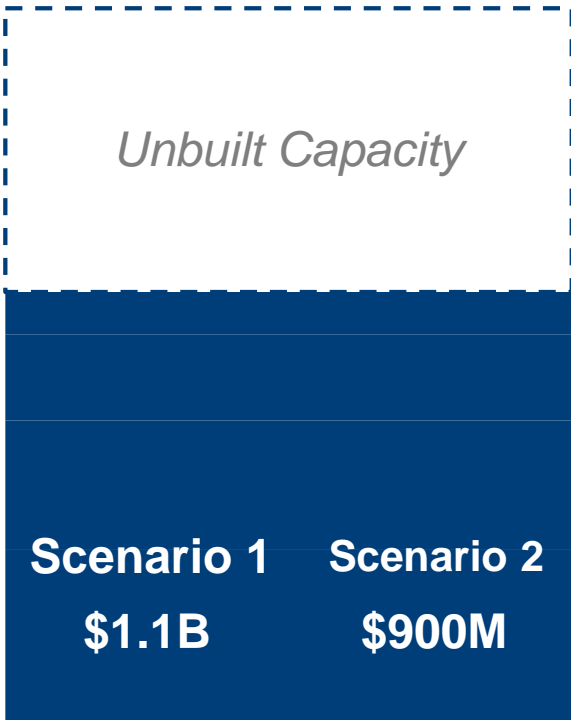


Given projected absorption, newly delivered projects that capitalize on the density bonus system could deliver \$900M to \$1.1 Billion of that value by 2040

New Public Value Generated by 2030



New Public Value Generated by 2040



This value would be available to be distributed amongst additional public benefits; the exact allocation per project could vary based on City priority, geography, and typology



Affordable Housing



Climate + Resilience



**Local Transit +
Mobility**



**Small Business Support
+ Retail Activation**



Historic Preservation



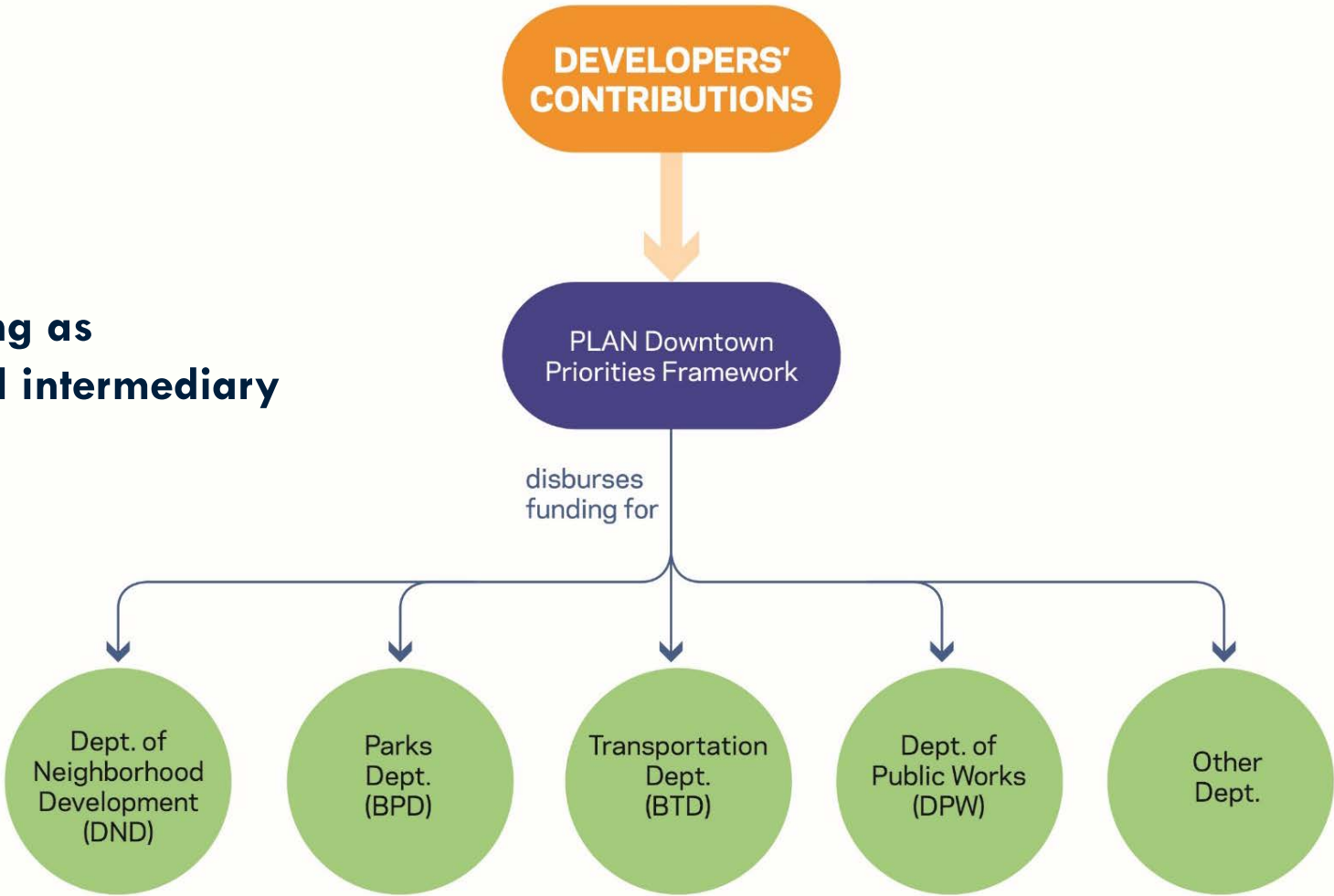
Open Space & Public Realm*

* Percentage of funds assigned to management and maintenance



Management of the funds generated by the bonus system will be a key consideration in implementing the program

**BPDA* serving as
manager and intermediary**



****or authority composed of
department representatives***

Next Steps



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Next Steps

To Be Explored Further by the Planning Team

- **Chinatown:** Locating an “Affordable Housing Growth Area”
- **Ladder Blocks:** Preservation of existing buildings/facades with additional development height available up to the limits set by the Shadow Regulations. (No Complete Demolition)
- **Zoning & Public Benefits Implementation Tools**

Upcoming Meetings

- **Advisory Group Meeting #8:** Working Session, December 18, 2019
- **Advisory Group Meeting #9:** Urban Design, Date TBD, January 2020
- **Public Meeting:** Development Scenarios, Date TBD, January 2020

