

ZBA Report

Biannual 2025

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Planning Department

CITY of **BOSTON**

2023-2025 ZBA DECISIONS

<i>ZBA Decision</i>	2023	2024	2025
Withdrawn	4	8	5
Approved	262	311	359
Approved with Proviso	341	221	155
Denied	10	11	4
Denied without Prejudice	44	41	19
Total	41	592	543

PLANNING DEPARTMENT AND ZBA RECOMMENDATIONS + DECISIONS

<i>Decision</i>	<i>Oct - Mar 2025 Planning Department Recommendations (6 Months)</i>	<i>Oct - Mar 2025 ZBA Decisions (6 Months)</i>
Withdrawn	N/A	4
Approved	167	192
Approved with Proviso	83	70
Denied	11	2
Denied without Prejudice	13	6
Total	274	274

**Excludes four deferral recommendations from the Planning Department and 47 deferrals from the ZBA*

ARTICLE 80

39 Article 80 projects that came before the ZBA over October 2025 - March 2026

<i>Decisions</i>	2023	2024	2025
Withdrawn	2	1	2
Approved	29	48	47
Approved with Proviso	19	19	5
Denied	0	0	1
Denied without Prejudice	0	0	1
Deferred	2	0	19
Total	52	68	75

Differences and Similarities in Recommendation + Decision

72% agreement between the Planning Department and the ZBA.

Planning Department Recommendations	ZBA Decisions	Count
Approved (Total: 185)	Approved	146
	Approved with Proviso	17
	Denied without Prejudice	1
	Denied	1
	Deferred	18
	Withdrawn	2
Approved with Proviso (Total: 92)	Approved	36
	Approved with Proviso	45
	Denied without Prejudice	0
	Denied	1
	Deferred	9
Denied without Prejudice (Total: 20)	Approved	6
	Approved with Proviso	5
	Denied without Prejudice	0
	Denied	2
	Deferred	7
	Withdrawn	0
Denied (Total: 20)	Approved	4
	Approved with Proviso	3
	Denied without Prejudice	1
	Denied	2
	Deferred	9
	Withdrawn	1
Deferred (Total: 4)	Approved	0
	Approved with Proviso	0
	Denied without Prejudice	0
	Denied	0
	Deferred	4
	Withdrawn	0

CASES BY ZONING DISTRICT: OCT 2025 - MAR 2026

The top five violations mentioned in all the cases were: (1) FAR Excessive, (2) Side Yard Insufficient, (3) Rear Yard Insufficient, (4) Parking or Loading Insufficient, and (5) Lot Area Insufficient.

Zoning Districts	Conditional Uses Permit Only	Permits that Include Variance Permit	Total Cases without Deferrals or Withdrawn
Allston/Brighton	0	14	14
Audubon Circle	1	1	2
Bay Village	1	0	1
Boston Proper	5	8	13
Bulfinch Triangle	2	1	3
Charlestown	1	10	11
Chinatown	2	1	3
Dorchester	4	38	42
East Boston	2	17	19
Fenway	2	2	4
Government Center/Markets	2	0	2
Greater Mattapan	0	7	7
Harbor Park: Fort Point Waterfront	0	1	1
Hyde Park	1	20	21
Jamaica Plain	4	17	21
Mission Hill	1	5	6
North End	1	2	3



- Continue to implement zoning reform to reflect current built conditions of Boston allowing more projects to become by-right
- Future reports will continue to feature preliminary data from the zoning reform initiatives



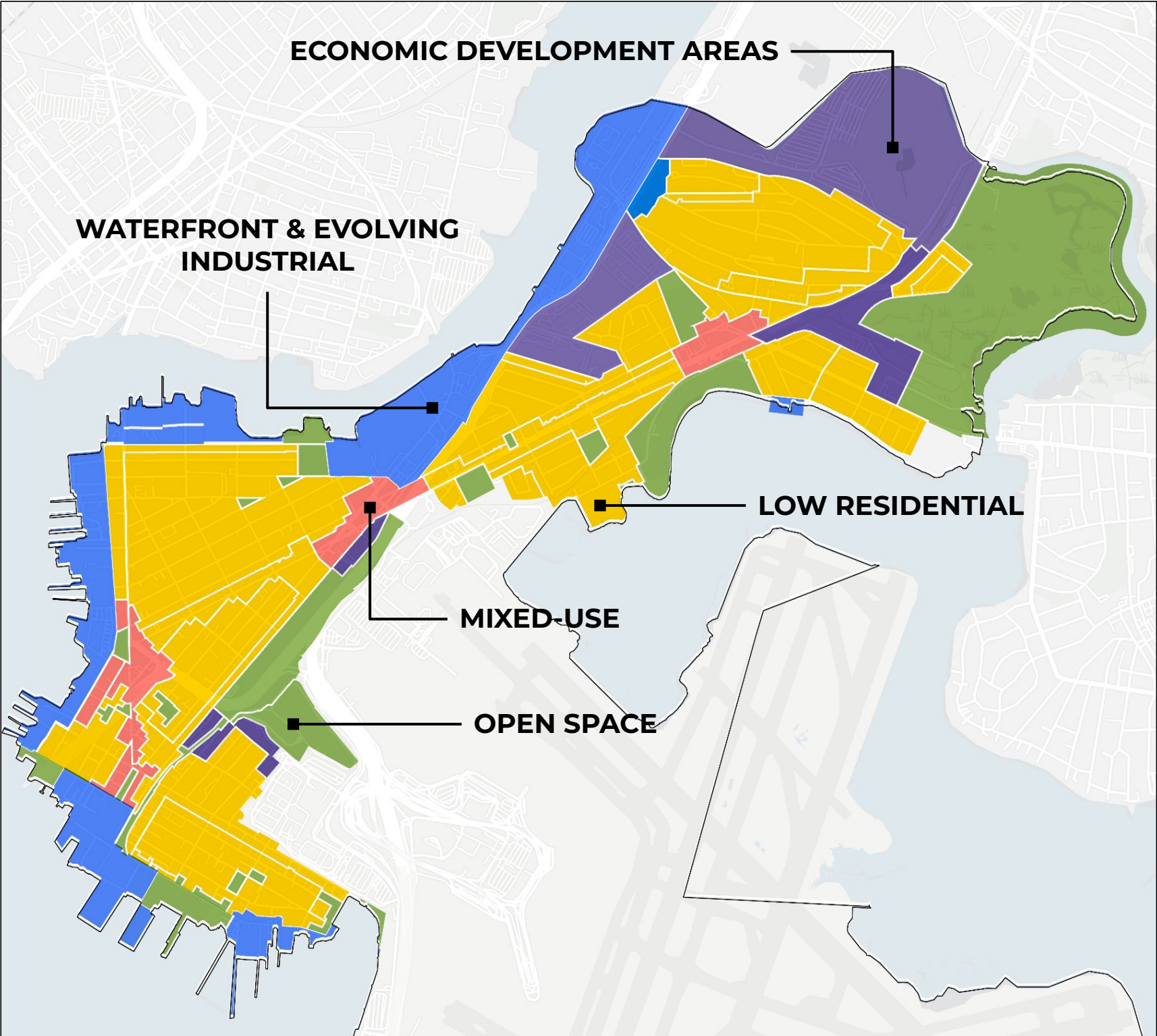
EAST BOSTON PERMITTING REVIEW

Jesus Mendoza Gonzalez | Comprehensive Planner II



Planning Department

81 TOTAL ALLOWED PROJECTS HAVE FILED UNDER NEW ZONING



East Boston Zoning Areas

Project Category	Specific Permit Types	Submitted Requests
Residential Additions & Expansions	Additional Footprint, Additional Units, Extension of Living Space, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	26
New Construction	New Construction	21
Commercial Use & Occupancy Changes	Change of Commercial Use, Confirm Occupancy, Commercial-Residential Conversion	21
Exterior & Accessibility Improvements	Accessibility, Exterior Renovation, Roof Structure Improvements	13
Total		81

Note: Does not include zoning exempt projects such as fire alarms, solar panels, as well as projects that do not physically alter the building such as subdivision of lots.

58 PROJECTS HAVE ALREADY GOTTEN AS-OF-RIGHT PERMITS

As-of-Right permits reflect activity across a range of neighborhood-serving uses:

- **12 Changes of Commercial Use** is the largest specific permit type, pointing to small business openings and other commercial changes.
- **15 New construction** and **Residential Additions + Expansions**, covering both ground-up development and smaller-scale residential additions.

Taken together, these permits suggest that the updated zoning is enabling a **broad spectrum of development activity**, from small-scale residential improvements to new construction and commercial use changes.

Specific Permit Types	Issued Permits
Change of Commercial Use	12
New Construction	8
Additions, ADUs	7
All Other Types	31
Total	58

Note: Permits do not capture the full pipeline or confirm completed construction, but they provide a concrete measure of early implementation activity.

CARE, COFFEE, AND CORNER SERVICES MOVE FORWARD

As-of-right commercial permits show new business activity across several neighborhood-serving uses:

- (2) day care facilities, collectively eligible to provide care for over 50 children
- (3) coffee shops, supporting informal gathering and neighborhood social life
- (6) personal care and grooming services, including beauty spas, beauty salons, nail salons, and barber shops
- (1) ground-floor commercial/office space, helping activate street frontage

This mix shows that the that the updated zoning is supporting **neighborhood-scale businesses that meet routine household needs.**



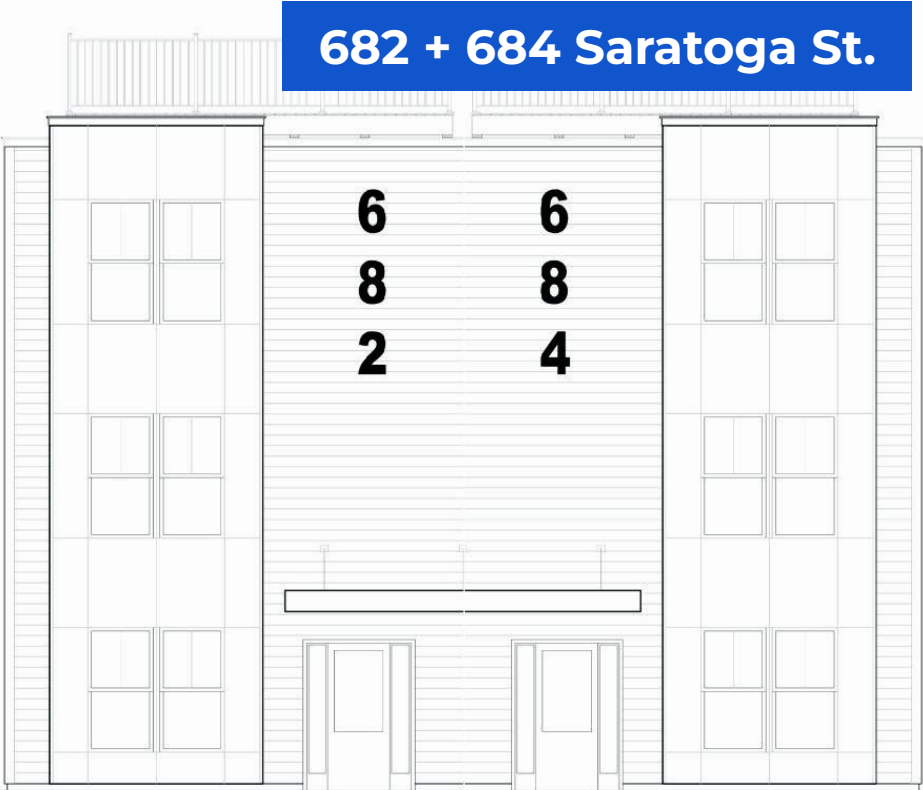
SMALL INFILL AND LARGER BUILDS ADVANCE TOGETHER

Permitted residential projects include:

- (5) triple-deckers
- (1) double triple-decker
- (1) 12-unit multifamily residential building
- (1) 170-unit Article 80 mixed-use development project

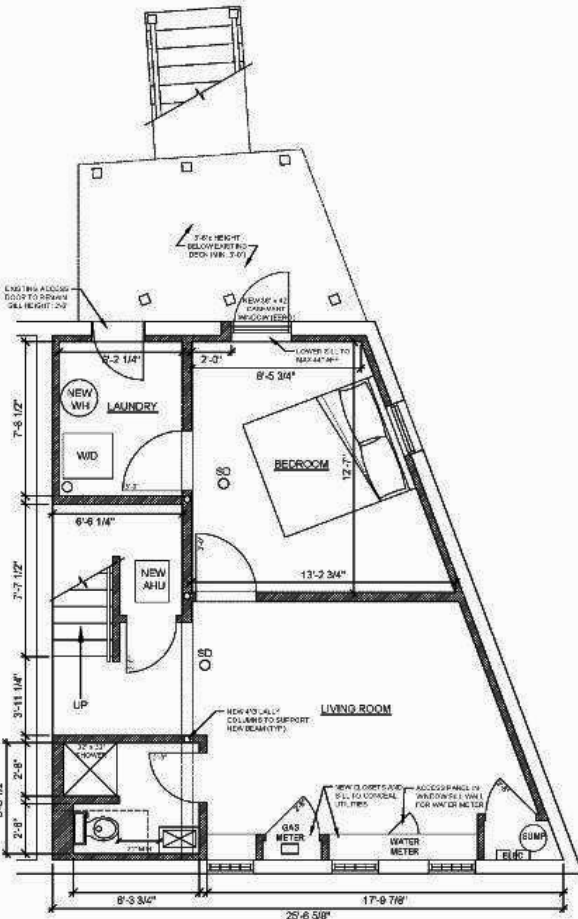
Permitting activity is occurring at **multiple scales**, with smaller infill projects adding homes across several sites and the Article 80 mixed-use development contributing a significant number of new units.

These projects support **incremental housing production and larger-scale residential growth.**



THE EXISTING FABRIC MAKES ROOM

89 Bennington St.



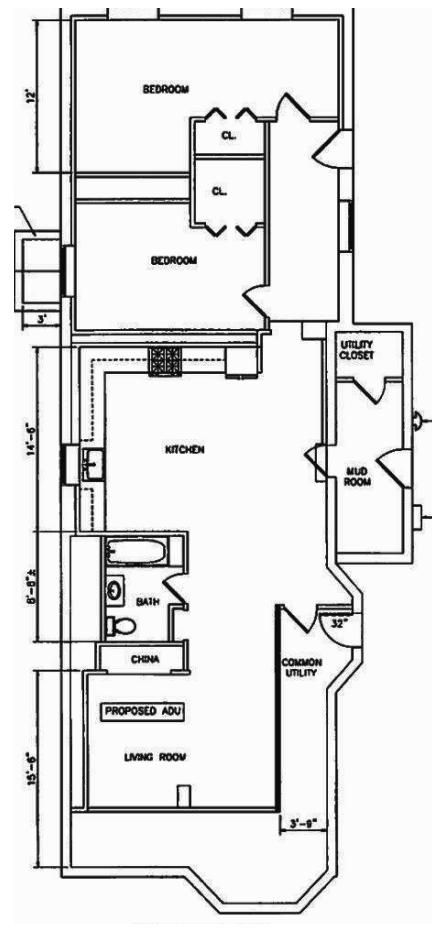
(3) ADU Construction

49 Condor St.



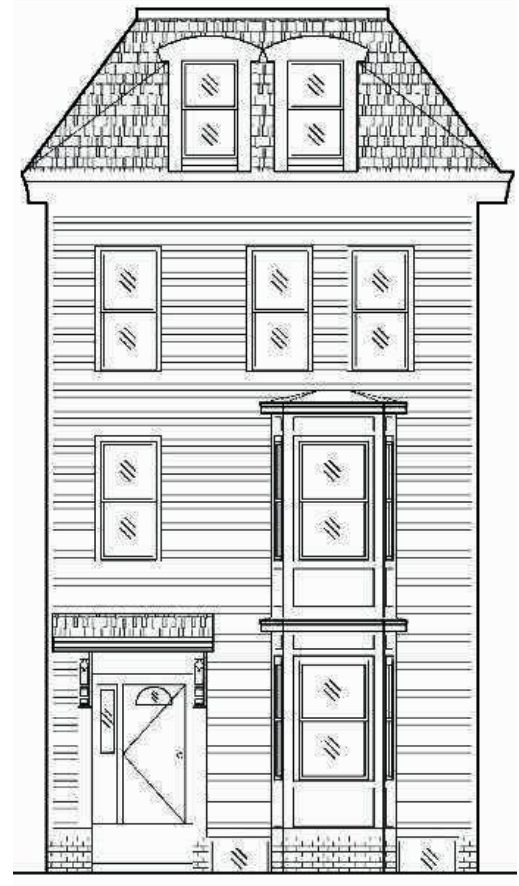
(1) Single-Family to 3-Family Conversion + Rebuild

63 Homer St.



(1) 3-Family to 4-Family Conversion with ADU

17 Princeton St



(2) Renovation + Vertical Addition

Permits for **ADUs**, residential **conversions**, and small-scale **rebuids** show that as-of-right permitting is helping create more homes within East Boston's existing residential neighborhoods and improving the safety of existing homes.

By building on existing housing stock, these projects support a more distributed form of growth through preservation, complementing large-scale new development.

THANK YOU



Planning Department

CITY of BOSTON