

# City of Bristol Zoning Regulations Update

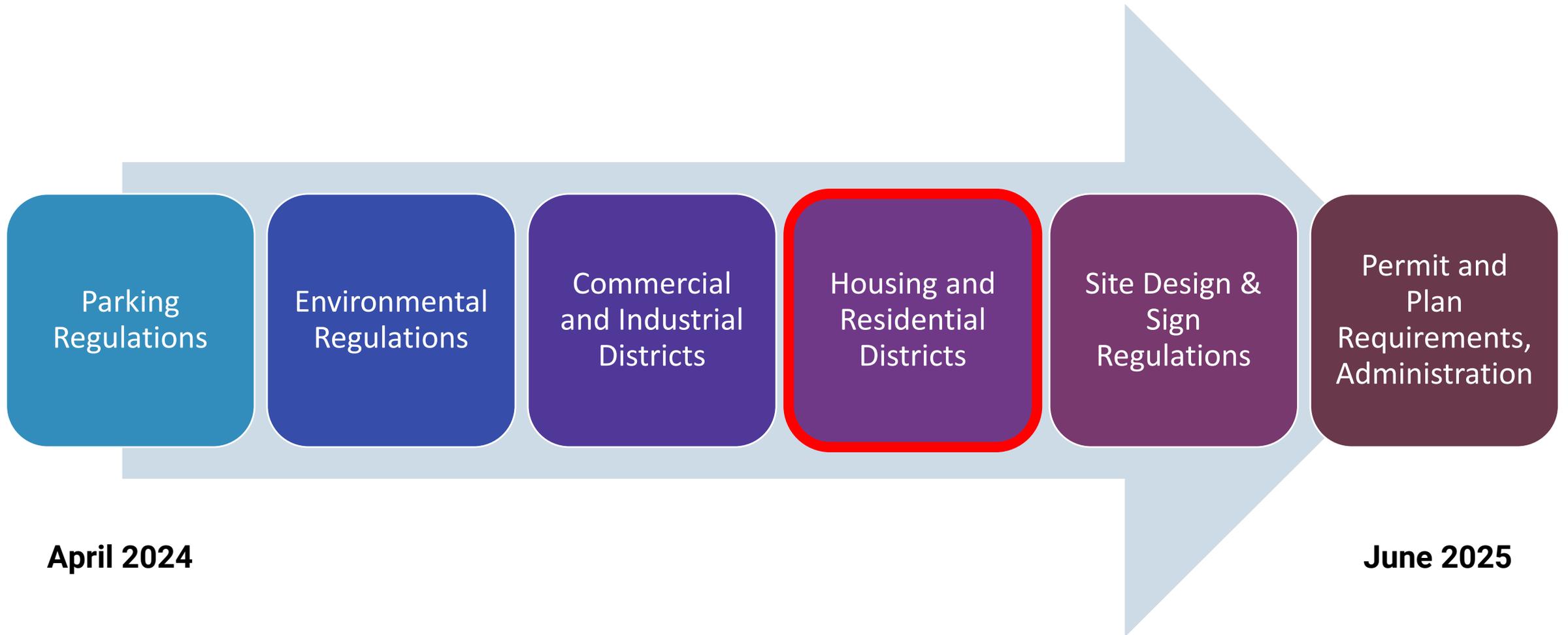
Zoning Commission Meeting 2/6/25



# Agenda

1. Review of zoning update schedule
2. Brief discussion on recommended commercial zone amendments
3. Review of residential zones and residential zoning regulations
4. Next steps

# Phase 3: Work Sequence

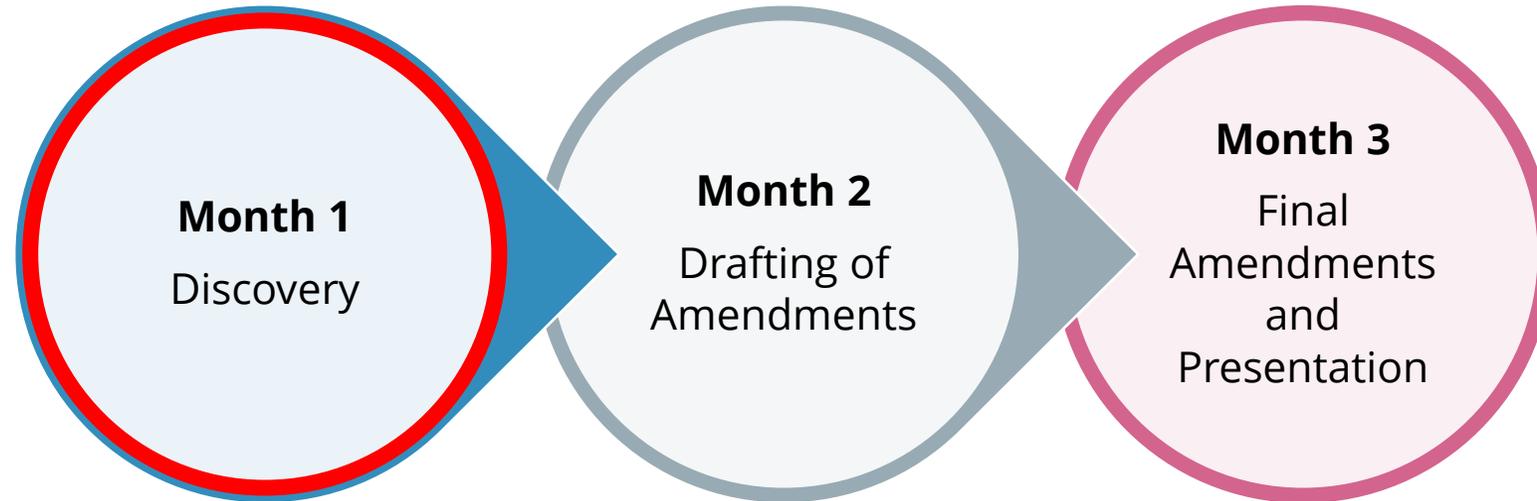


**April 2024**

**June 2025**

# Phase 3: Work Cycles

## Residential Zone Regulations



# Phase 3 Schedule

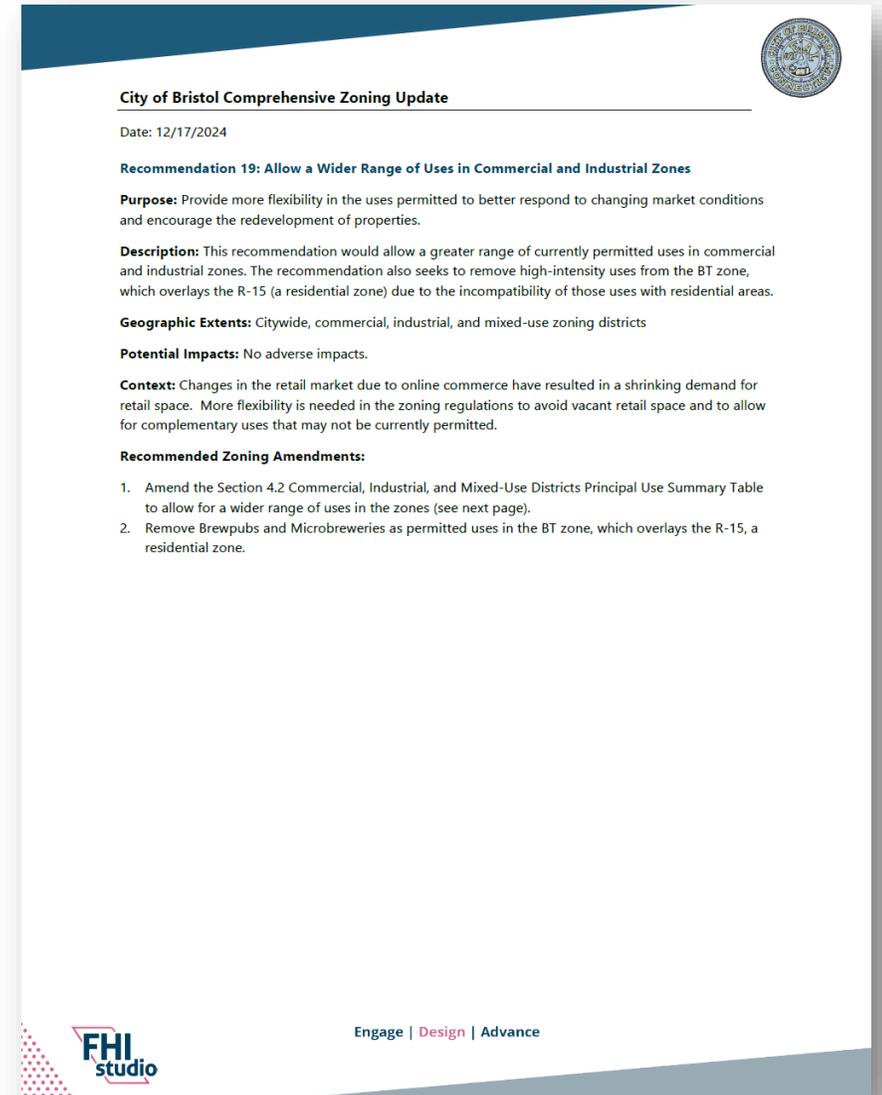
Bristol Phase 3 Schedule		December '24					January '25				February '25				March '25					April '25				May '25				June '25				
		Week of:	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23
Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts and Uses (Task 3.1, 3.2, 3.6)	Commission Meetings																															
	Discovery																															
	Drafting																															
	Public Virtual Presentation																															
Housing and Residential Districts and Uses (Task 3.3)	Commission Meetings																															
	Discovery (Begin in Nov.)																															
	Drafting																															
	Public Virtual Presentation																															
Site Design including Buffer Requirements, Lighting, and Sign Regulations (Task 3.5)	Commission Meetings																															
	Discovery																															
	Drafting																															
	Public Virtual Presentation																															
Permit and Plan Requirements, Proc, & Admin. Items (Task 3.1)	Commission Meetings																															
	Discovery																															
	Drafting																															
	Public Virtual Presentation																															
Final Public Hearing(s) For Adoption																																

We are here



# Recommended Amendments

- We've prepared eight recommended amendments for the commercial and industrial zones (Recommendations 19-26)
- These recommended amendments are based on our discussions over the last two meetings.
- As with the other recommended amendments, adoption will be considered at a later date, upon completion of our review of all sections of the regulations.



  
**City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update**

Date: 12/17/2024

**Recommendation 19: Allow a Wider Range of Uses in Commercial and Industrial Zones**

**Purpose:** Provide more flexibility in the uses permitted to better respond to changing market conditions and encourage the redevelopment of properties.

**Description:** This recommendation would allow a greater range of currently permitted uses in commercial and industrial zones. The recommendation also seeks to remove high-intensity uses from the BT zone, which overlays the R-15 (a residential zone) due to the incompatibility of those uses with residential areas.

**Geographic Extents:** Citywide, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use zoning districts

**Potential Impacts:** No adverse impacts.

**Context:** Changes in the retail market due to online commerce have resulted in a shrinking demand for retail space. More flexibility is needed in the zoning regulations to avoid vacant retail space and to allow for complementary uses that may not be currently permitted.

**Recommended Zoning Amendments:**

1. Amend the Section 4.2 Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts Principal Use Summary Table to allow for a wider range of uses in the zones (see next page).
2. Remove Brewpubs and Microbreweries as permitted uses in the BT zone, which overlays the R-15, a residential zone.

 Engage | Design | Advance

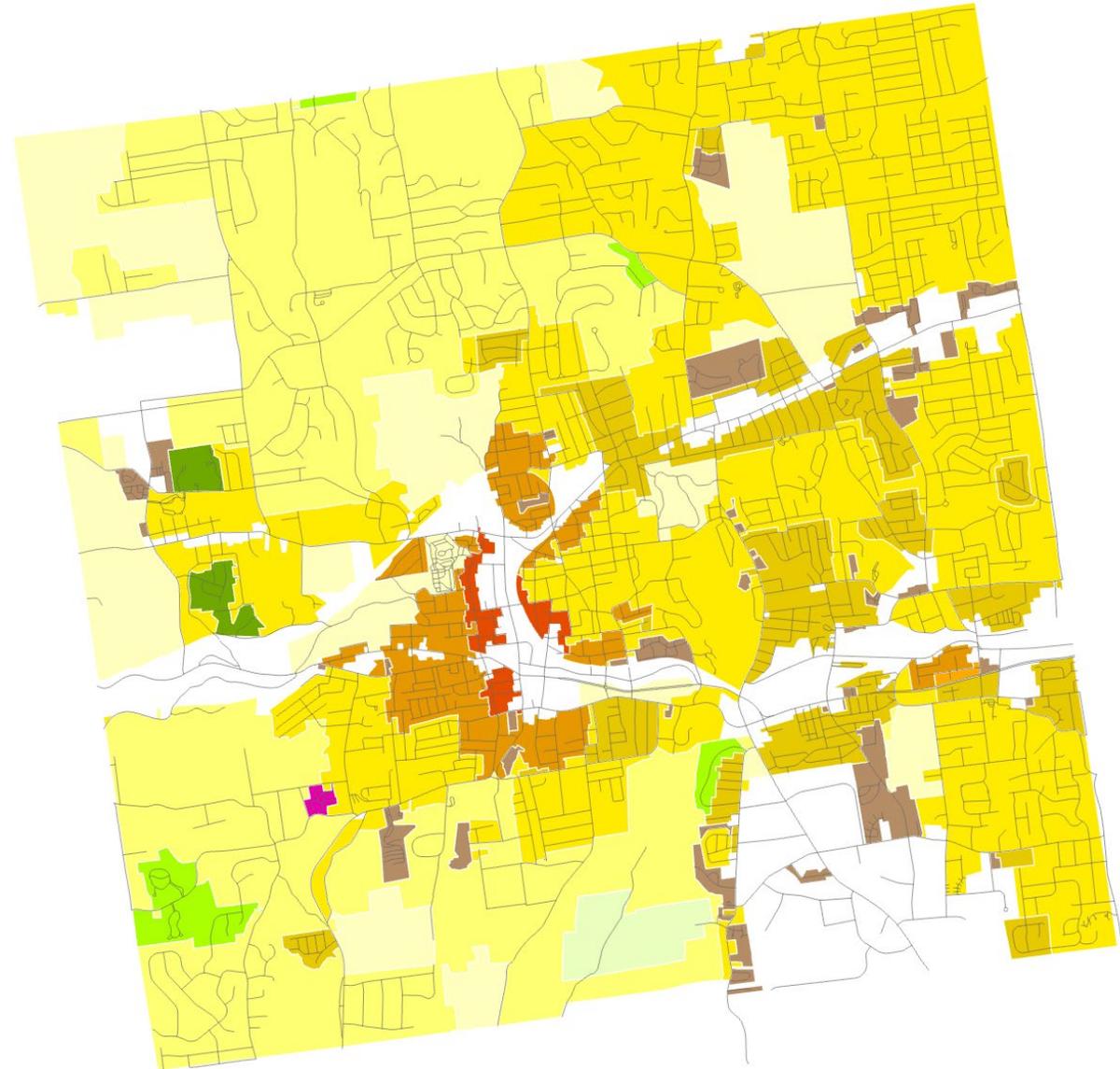
# Residential Zones

## Base Zoning Districts

- R-10: Single-Family Residential Zone
- R-15: Single-Family Residential Zone
- R-25: Single-Family Residential Zone
- R-40: Single-Family Residential Zone
- A: Multi-Family Residential Zone

## Overlay Zoning Districts

- BT: Downtown/Neighborhood Transition Zone (R15)
- RM: Mixed Residential Zone
- R-10   ■ R-15
- OSD: Open Space Development Zone
- R-15   ■ R-25   ■ R-40



# Single Family Residential Zones

The Single-Family Residential Zones are intended to provide suitable areas for appropriate residential development while offering a range of lot sizes that may be served efficiently by municipal utilities and facilities. The zones are also intended to accommodate certain non-residential uses which are compatible with residential uses while preserving property values and maintaining a predominately residential neighborhood setting.

The zones include:

- R-10
- R-15
- R-25
- R-40



# A Multi-Family Residential Zone

The A Multi-Family Residential Zone is intended to provide areas appropriate for low- and medium-density multi-family development outside of the downtown, as identified in the City's Plan of Development, including areas along major commercial thoroughfares and on the fringes of single-family neighborhoods to serve as a transitional use between such neighborhoods and non-residential areas.



# A Multi-Family Residential Zone

## General Requirements

- A. All dwelling units shall be served by public water and/or public sewer service.
- B. Where feasible, all electric, telephone and cable television lines shall be placed underground.
- C. There shall be a minimum separation of 30 feet between residential buildings located on the same lot.



# A Multi-Family Residential Zone

## 7.2.2 Lot, Coverage, and Setback Standards

Standard	8 units per acre or less	Greater than 8 units per acre	Single-family subdivisions
A) Minimum Lot Area	2 acres	4 acres	6,000 sf
B) Minimum Lot Frontage (ft)	50	50	60
C) Minimum Lot Width (ft)	150	200	N/A
D) Minimum Front Yard (ft)	40	40	15
E) Minimum Side Yard (ft)	25/50*	25/50*	6
F) Minimum Rear Yard (ft)	25/50*	25/50*	15
G) Maximum Building Height (ft)	40	40	35
H) Maximum Building Coverage (%)	30	35	40
I) Maximum Impervious Coverage (%)	40	50	N/A

\*Applicable to yards abutting a single-family residential zoning district

# A Multi-Family Residential Zone

## 7.2.4 Single-Family Subdivisions

Single-family dwellings shall be permitted on individual lots in the A zone subject to the following provisions:

- A. Single-family dwellings developed under this provision shall not be subject to the provisions of Section 7.2.1 General Requirements items C, D, or E. ← Wrong section reference and no longer applicable
- B. The development shall comply in all other respects with the City's Subdivision Regulations and shall be subject to subdivision approval from the Planning Commission (in lieu of Site Plan approval).
- C. At the time of subdivision, the developer shall present to the Planning Commission a program for establishing and maintaining the affordability of the single-family dwellings for a period of at least ten years.

← Based upon what requirements? There is no requirement stipulated anywhere in the zone regulations.

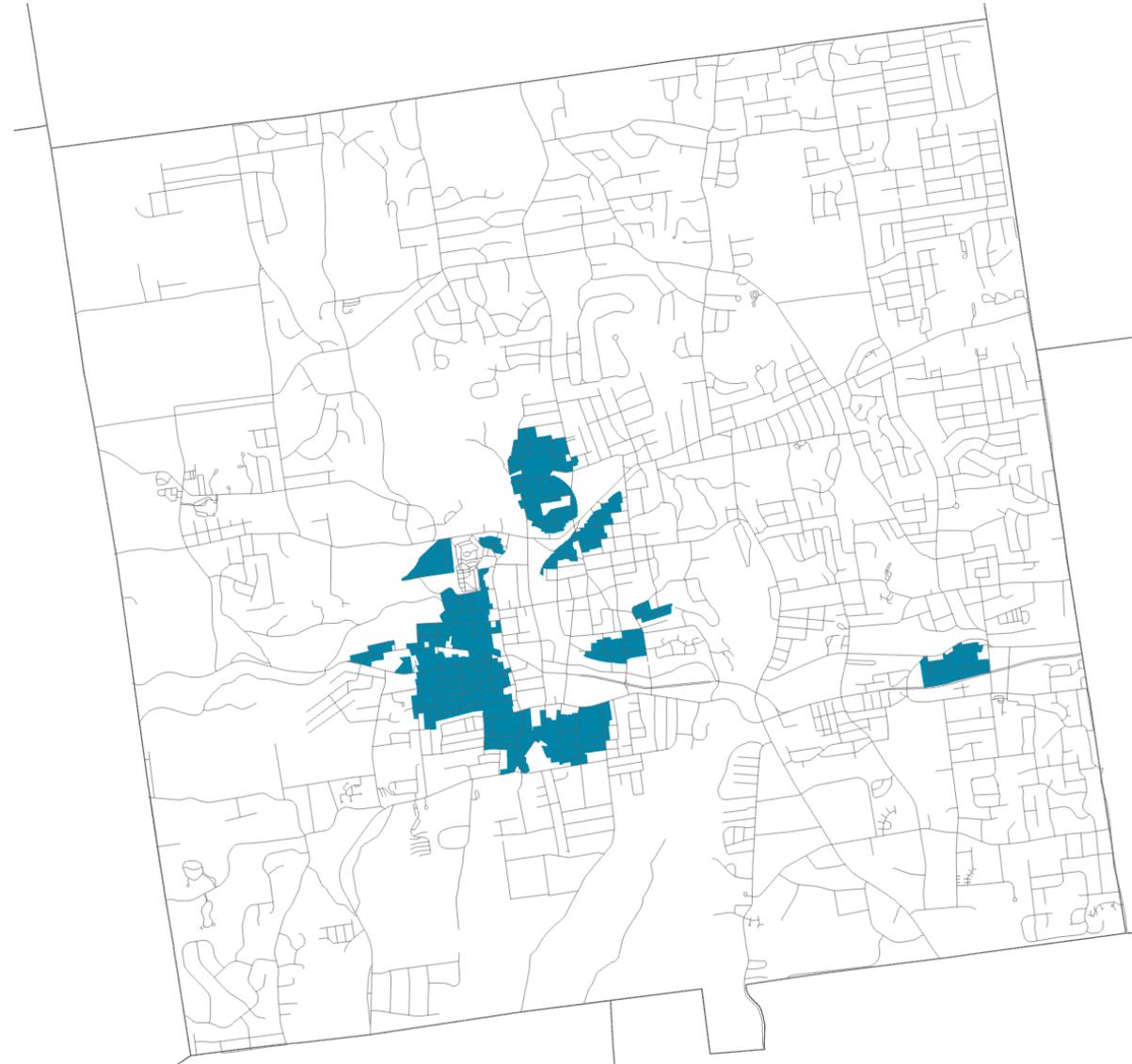
# BT Downtown/Neighborhood Transition Zone

The BT Downtown/Neighborhood Transition Zone is an **overlay zone** of the R-10 and R-15 zones intended to accommodate a transition of uses and residential densities between downtown Bristol and its adjacent residential neighborhoods, as identified in the City's Plan of Conservation and Development, while maintaining the existing residential neighborhood appearance of the area.



# RM Mixed Residential Zone

The RM Mixed Residential Zone is an **overlay zone** of the R-10 and R-15 zones intended to accommodate two- and three-family dwellings in existing neighborhoods designated in the City's Plan of Development as Mixed Residential (MR) and in those neighborhoods elsewhere in the City which contain a predominance of existing two- and three-family dwellings.



# OSD Open Space Development Zone

## Floating Zone

The OSD Open Space Development Zone is an **overlay zone** of the R-15, R-25 and R-40 zones intended to accommodate alternative forms of residential development which:

- A. Reduce required minimum lot sizes or provide for the clustering of dwelling units while, at the same time, providing for the preservation of land for open space, recreational and/or other public purposes in an amount greater than would occur in a conventional development; and,



# OSD Open Space Development Zone

- B. Through the design and layout of streets, lots, dwelling units and open spaces, accomplish the following purposes:
1. conserve and protect natural and scenic features including rivers, streams and lakes, wetlands, forests, historic sites, and ridgetops;
  2. provide, in appropriate areas of population concentration, land for active recreational use;
  3. retain fish and wildlife habitat areas and nature observation areas;
  4. protect natural drainage ways and flood water detention and retention areas; and,
  5. protect surface and subsurface water supplies.



# OSD Open Space Development Zone

## General Requirements in the OSD Zone

The following general requirements shall be applicable to all developments in the OSD zone:

- A. The underlying zone shall be in the R-40, R-25, or R-15 zone.
- B. The provisions of the underlying zone shall be applicable in the OSD zone except as otherwise provided herein.
- C. The site shall be at least 10 acres in total area if the underlying zone is the R-40 or R-25 zone, or at least 6 acres in total area if the underlying zone is the R-15 zone.
- D. The development shall be consistent with the intent of planning and zoning to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare.
- E. All dwelling units shall be served by public water and/or public sewer service.
- F. Where feasible, all electric, telephone and cable television lines shall be placed underground.

# OSD Open Space Development Zone

Frontage, not lot width is standard used in the base zones

Underlying Zone	Minimum Lot Area (sf)	Minimum Lot Width (ft)
R-15	10,000	85
R-25	15,000	100
R-40	25,000	125

100 ft min. frontage in R-15

125 ft min. frontage in R-15

150 ft min. frontage in R-15



# Principal Uses

Principal Use	Residential Districts					
	R-10	R-15	R-25	R-40	RM	A
Adaptive Reuse of Non-Residential Buildings	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	SP
Adult Day Care Center	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Business or Professional Office	SP	SP	—	—	—	—
Cemetery	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Child Care Center	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Civic Facility	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Commercial Greenhouse	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Community Residence	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP+S
Community Youth Organization	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Conversion of Historic Dwellings	SP	SP	—	—	—	—
Cultural Institution	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Farm	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	—	—
General Medical or Surgical Hospital	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Golf Course	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—

# Principal Uses

Principal Use	Residential Districts					
	R-10	R-15	R-25	R-40	RM	A
Government or Non-Profit Housing	—	—	—	—	—	SP
Group Child Care Home	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP+S
Manufactured Home Park	SP	SP	SP	—	—	SP
Medical Office	SP	SP	—	—	—	—
Non-Profit Private School	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Nursery	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Nursing or Convalescent Home	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Park or Open Space	ZP/ZP+S 1	ZP/ZP+S 1	ZP/ZP+S 1	ZP/ZP+S 1	—	—
Public Utility Building or Facility	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Religious Organization or Institution	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Residential, Multi-Family	—	—	—	—	—	ZP+S/S P <sup>2</sup>
Residential, Single-Family	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP+S/S P <sup>2</sup>

# Principal Uses

Principal Use	Residential Districts					
	R-10	R-15	R-25	R-40	RM	A
Residential, Three-Family	—	—	—	—	ZP	ZP+S/S P <sup>2</sup>
Residential, Two-Family	—	—	—	—	ZP	ZP+S/S P <sup>2</sup>
Seasonal Camps and Cottages	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Senior Housing	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	ZP+S/S P <sup>3</sup>
Social Services Agency or Charitable Institution	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Stable	SP	SP	SP	SP	—	—
Unified Residential Development	—	—	—	—	SP	—

*1. See Section 4.3.15 for information on required permit*  
*2. See Section 4.3.20 for information on required permit*  
*3. See Section 4.3.22 for information on required permit*

# Accessory Uses

Accessory Use	R-10	R-15	R-25	R-40	A
Accessory Buildings and Structures	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP
Accessory Buildings for Animals	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	—
Accessory Dwelling Unit	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	—
Antennae or Communications Structure	ZP/SP <sup>1</sup>	ZP/SP <sup>1</sup>	ZP/SP <sup>1</sup>	ZP/SP <sup>1</sup>	—
Family Child Care Home	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP
Farm Stand	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	—
Ground-Mounted Solar Panels	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S
Hobby Kennel	SP	SP	SP	SP	—
Home-Based Business or Home Office	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	—
Keeping of Fowl	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	—
Keeping of Livestock	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	—
Off-Street Parking	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP
Parking Structures	SP	SP	SP	SP	—
Signs	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP
Sports Courts	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Swimming Pool	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP	ZP

1. See Section 5.4.6 for information on required permit

# Unified Residential Development (RM)

- Adopted in April 2024
- **Where Permitted:** RM zone overlay of R-15
- **Purpose:** Unified Residential Developments are intended to allow applicants to aggregate several contiguous parcels of land into a single, larger parcel which can be developed in a unified manner. This methodology will allow multiple buildings to be constructed with common parking areas, common utilities, common trash pickup, etc. while at the same time limiting the total number of utility laterals, curb cuts, and allowing development without requiring reciprocal easement agreements between properties.

RM zone allows for 3-family density up to 26 units per acre

Standard	
a) Maximum Density (units per acre)	18
b) Minimum Lot Area (acres)	0.5
c) Minimum Lot Frontage (ft)	75
d) Minimum Front Yard (ft)	6
e) Minimum Side Yard (ft)	6
f) Minimum Rear Yard (ft)	15
g) Maximum Building Height (ft)	35
h) Maximum Building Coverage (%)	40
i) Maximum Impervious Coverage (%)	80
j) Minimum Building Spacing (ft)	18

15 ft in RM

40 ft in RM

# Unified Residential Development (RM)

## General Requirements:

1. The underlying zone shall be R-15.
2. All dwelling units shall be served by public water and/or public sewer service.
3. The development of such properties shall provide adequate accommodations for persons with disabilities as required by the Connecticut State Building Code.
4. A Unified Residential Development shall be excluded from the city's household rubbish and recycling programs. Provisions shall be made as part of the Special Permit and Site Plan for appropriate removal of household rubbish and recycling. If a dumpster is provided for rubbish service, the dumpster location shall comply with Section 11.4.2.
5. The maximum number of dwelling units per building shall be three.
6. The required number of off-street parking spaces shall be 2 per dwelling unit.

This is the current standard for 1-3 family residences. In Recommendation 1 of our parking work, we recommended changing to 1.0 per dwelling unit + 0.5 per bedroom.

# Unified Residential Developments and Mixed-Use Developments (BT)

Definitions (from Section 19)

**Unified Residential Development:** A building or buildings designed and developed on a single parcel of land in a unified manner and containing single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, three-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, or any combination thereof.

**Mixed-Use Development:** A building or buildings designed and developed on a single parcel of land in a unified manner and containing dwelling units and one or more non-residential uses permitted in the zoning district.



# Unified Residential Developments and Mixed-Use Developments (BT)

## 9.3.4

22 du/ac      32 du/ac      36 du/ac      40 du/ac

BT zone allows for 3-family density up to 26 units per acre

Standard	Base Density	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Notes
A) Minimum Lot Area (sf)	8,500	10,000	15,000	20,000	
B) Minimum Lot Frontage (ft)	50	50	65*	85*	*Requirement must be met on at least one of the following streets: Center St., High St., Main St., North St., Race St., School St., South St., Summer St., and West St.
C) Minimum Side Yard (ft)	6	6	6	6	
D) Minimum Rear Yard (ft)	15	15	15	15	
E) Maximum Building Height (ft)	40	40	40	45	
F) Maximum Building Coverage (%)	40	50	65	75	
G) Minimum number of site and building amenities to provide	1	3	4	6	See Section 9.3.5

Max of 40 ft in the BT

# Unified Residential Developments and Mixed-Use Developments (BT)

## 9.3.6 Building Form Standards for Unified Residential Developments and Mixed-Use Developments

Building Element	Unified Residential Development	Mixed-Use Development
A) Minimum Front Yard (ft)	5	5 ← 6 feet in BT
B) Maximum Front Yard (ft)	15	15 ← Same as BT

# Lot, Coverage, Height, and Setback Standards

Standard	R-10	R-10 RM	R-15	R-15 BT	R-15 RM	R-25	R-40
A) Minimum Lot Area (sf)	10,000	5,000	15,000	5,000	5,000	25,000	40,000
B) Minimum Lot Frontage (ft)	85	50	100	50	50	125	150
C) Minimum Front Yard (ft)	20	15	25	5	15	40	50
D) Minimum Side Yard (ft)	8	6	10	6	6	15	20
E) Minimum Rear Yard (ft)	20	15	25	15	15	40	50
F) Maximum Building Height (ft)	35	40	35	40	40	35	35
G) Maximum Building Coverage (%)	35	40	30	40	40	25	20
H) Maximum Impervious Coverage (%)	75	80	70	80	80	65	60

# Lot Frontage Standards

Standard	R-10	R-10 RM	R-15	R-15 BT	R-15 RM	R-25	R-40
B) Minimum Lot Frontage (ft)	85	50	100	50	50	125	150
Typical Minimum Lot Frontage (ft)	50	65	55	50	50	100	Varies



# Lot, Coverage, Height, and Setback Standards

Standard	R-10	R-10 RM	R-15	R-15 BT	R-15 RM	R-25	R-40
C) Minimum Front Yard (ft)	20	15	25	5	15	40	50
Typical Minimum Front Yard (ft)	20	15	20	5	10	30	Varies

# Lot, Coverage, Height, and Setback Standards

Standard	R-10	R-10 RM	R-15	R-15 BT	R-15 RM	R-25	R-40
D) Minimum Side Yard (ft)	8	6	10	6	6	15	20
Typical Minimum Side Yard (ft)	5	5	5	5	5	10	Varies

# Lot, Coverage, Height, and Setback Standards

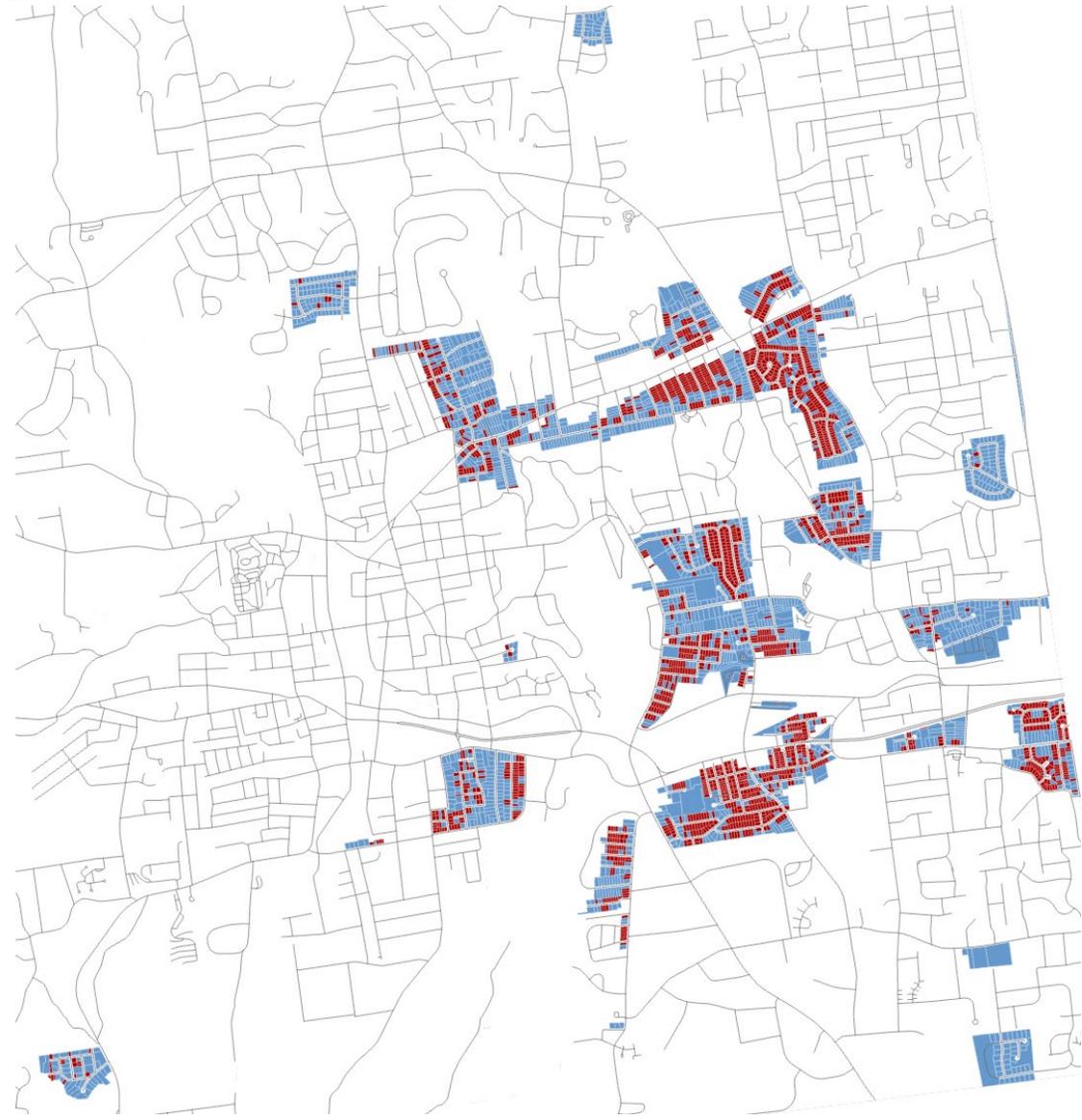
Standard	R-10	R-10 RM	R-15	R-15 BT	R-15 RM	R-25	R-40
E) Minimum Rear Yard (ft)	20	15	25	15	15	40	50
Typical Minimum Rear Yard (ft)	20	50	20	20	25	40	Varies



# R-10

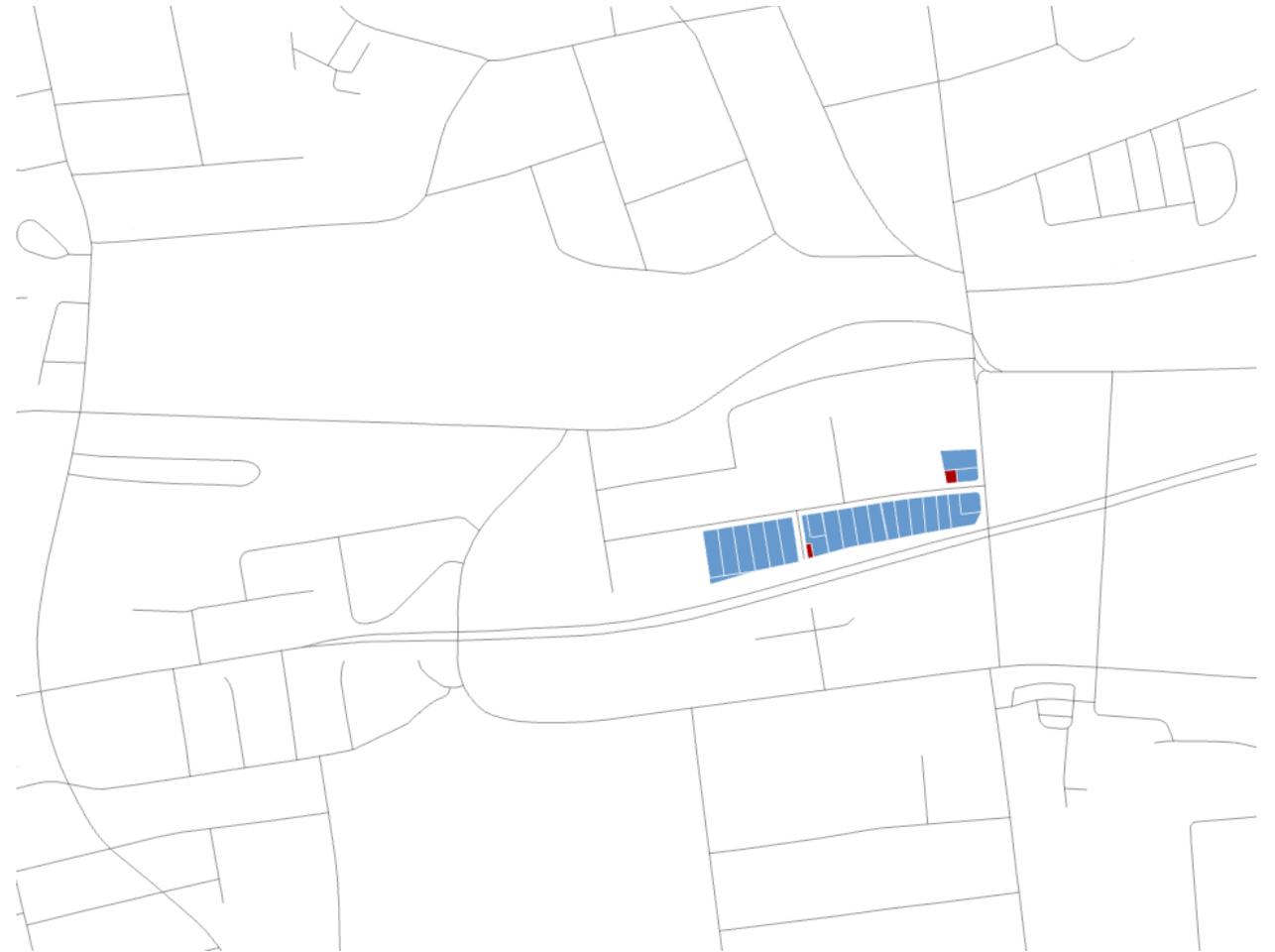
## R-10 Zone

Total Parcels	3,483
Nonconforming Parcels (lot size)	1,613
Share of Nonconforming Parcels	46.3%
Average Area	12,009 sf
Median Area	10,283 sf
Lot Size Required for 90% Conformity	6,000 sf



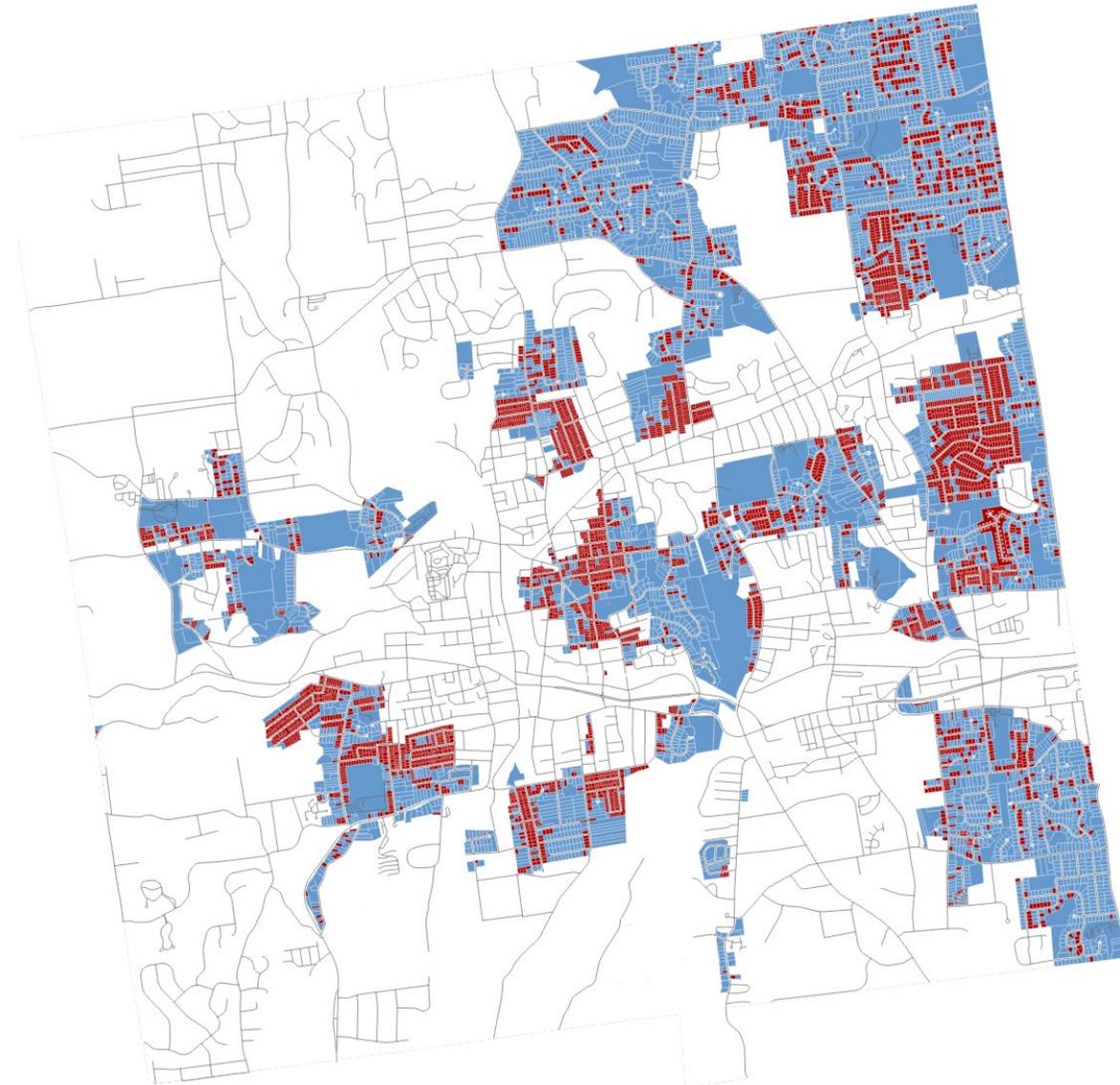
# R-10 RM

R-10 RM	
Total Parcels	23
Nonconforming Parcels (lot size)	2
Share of Nonconforming Parcels	8.7%
Average Area	11,109 sf
Median Area	10,306 sf
Lot Size Required for 90% Conformity	6,000 sf



# R-15

R-15	
Total Parcels	8,757
Nonconforming Parcels (lot size)	4,205
Share of Nonconforming Parcels	48.0%
Average Area	21,592 sf
Median Area	15,236 sf
Lot Size Required for 90% Conformity	8,000 sf



# R-15 BT

R-15 BT	
Total Parcels	250
Nonconforming Parcels (lot size)	206
Share of Nonconforming Parcels	82.4%
Average Area	13,303 sf
Median Area	8,047 sf
Lot Size Required for 90% Conformity	4,600 sf



# R-15 RM

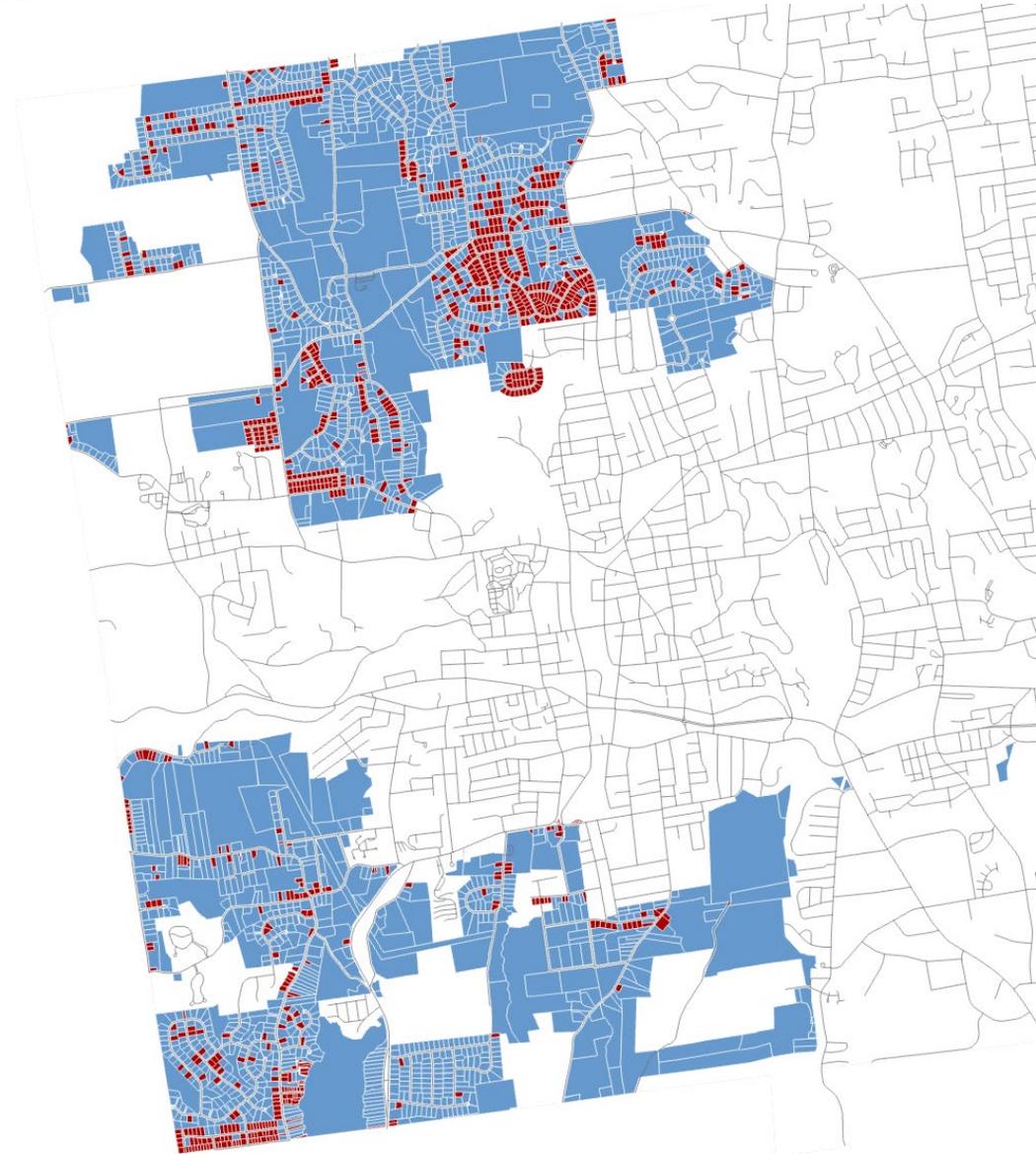
## R-15 RM

Total Parcels	1,980
Nonconforming Parcels (lot size)	309
Share of Nonconforming Parcels	15.6%
Average Area	9,501 sf
Median Area	7,547 sf
Lot Size Required for 90% Conformity	4,500 sf



# R-25

R-25	
Total Parcels	2,833
Nonconforming Parcels (lot size)	842
Share of Nonconforming Parcels	29.7%
Average Area	64,399 sf
Median Area	28,453 sf
Lot Size Required for 90% Conformity	18,200 sf



# R-40

R-40	
Total Parcels	116
Nonconforming Parcels (lot size)	30
Share of Nonconforming Parcels	25.9%
Average Area	663,613 sf
Median Area	124,535 sf
Lot Size Required for 90% Conformity	25,100 sf



# Next Steps

- Draft recommended amendments for residential zones.
- Conduct a public virtual presentation of commercial and industrial zone recommendations.



# Online Survey

We have 265 responses thus far.

## What are *your* thoughts on land use and development in Bristol?

The City of Bristol is in the process of updating its zoning regulations to better manage growth and development across the City. The goals of this effort include simplifying the regulations, better supporting development in commercial districts, and supporting the development of housing that is appropriate to the City's residential areas.

Please participate in the survey below to share your thoughts.

Scan the QR code to take a ten-minute survey or visit:  
[www.surveymonkey.com/r/bristolzoning](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/bristolzoning)



Learn more at:  
[www.ct-bristol2.civicplus.com/1060/Zoning-Regulations-Rewrite](http://www.ct-bristol2.civicplus.com/1060/Zoning-Regulations-Rewrite)

# Next Meeting

## MARCH 2025

Our next meeting is Thursday,  
March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 5:00 pm.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
23	24	25	26	27	28	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5