



CENTRAL CITY DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Preliminary FAR and Height Analysis

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THE BUREAU OF
**PLANNING &
SUSTAINABILITY**

What We've Heard

Additional height and FAR is needed to encourage residential development in the Central City.

More height is needed to utilize base and bonus FAR

Purpose of Analysis

- What are the currently allowable maximum heights and FAR?
- How much height and FAR has the development community historically used?
- Are there areas in the Central City where height and FAR could be increased without impacting protect resources?



Abstract

Is there enough FAR and height potential in the Central City to support and encourage residential development?

Summary of Analysis

- The Central City contains a significant amount of unused FAR/Buildable Floor Area.
- Additional height does not automatically result in denser housing unit production.
- There is a need for family compatible and multi-generational housing in the Central City.
- There may be areas in the Central City where additional height could be assigned when demand returns. More analysis will be necessary to determine appropriate locations to increase height.



The CC2035 Plan increased the amount of height that could be used when projects earned bonus FAR.

- New maximum heights were established in areas where increased height would not impact protected resources, such as public view corridors and historic districts.
- New FAR transfer provisions allowing more floor area to be used on project sites.

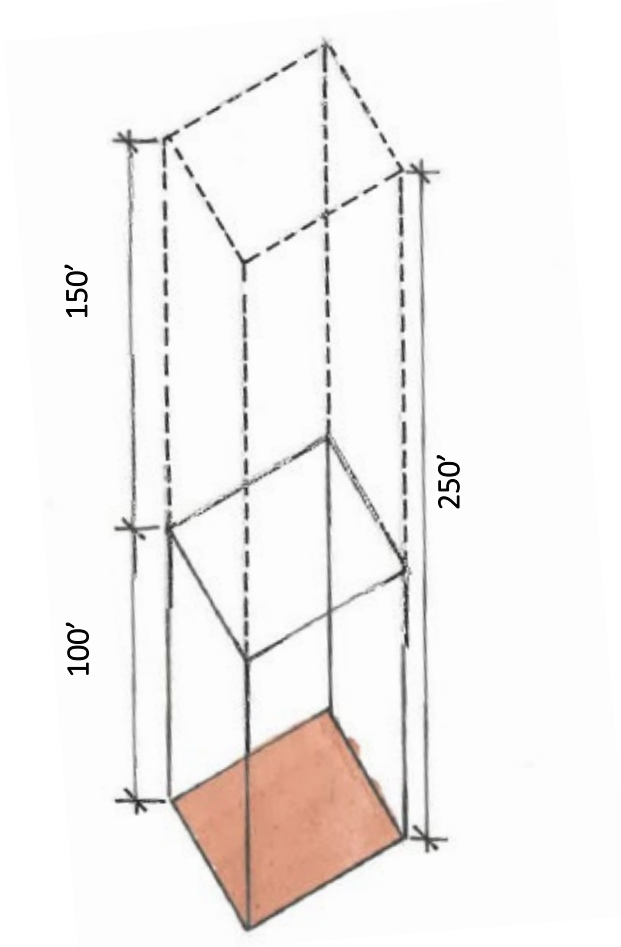


Figure 1

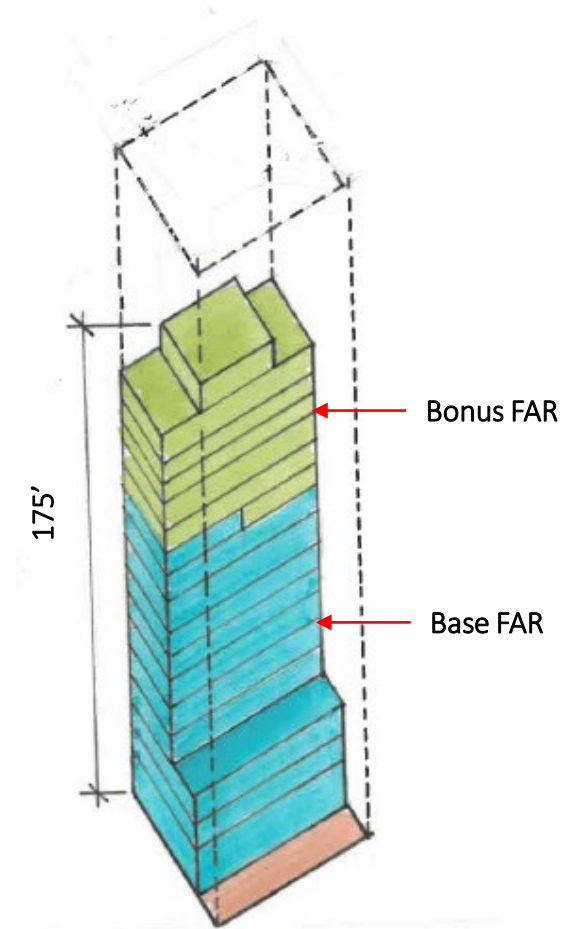


Figure 2

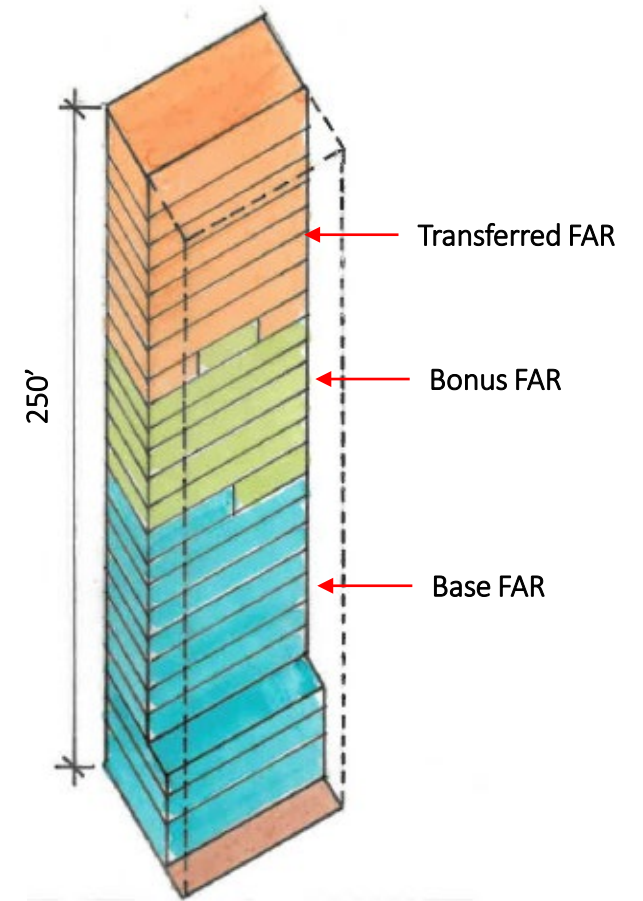


Figure 3

Why are FAR and Height allowances limited in certain areas?

- **Historic Districts.** Maximum height and FAR allowances for new development in these areas are set to ensure new buildings of a similar size and scale as the historic pattern of buildings in these special areas.
- **Neighborhood Transitions.** Development along the transition between the Central City and smaller scale residential neighborhoods is typically stepped down to not overwhelm those areas.
- **Public Open Space and the Willamette River.** Maximum height and FAR along the interface with public open space is frequently stepped down to allow access to light and air.
- **Designated Public Viewpoints and View Corridors.** The Maximum height within designated public view corridors are set to protect and maintain scenic resources.



NW 13TH Street Historic District.



Lloyd District & Neighborhood Interface.



Willamette Greenway Interface.



Public View Corridor.

When are FAR and Height Bonuses Granted?

FAR BONUSES:

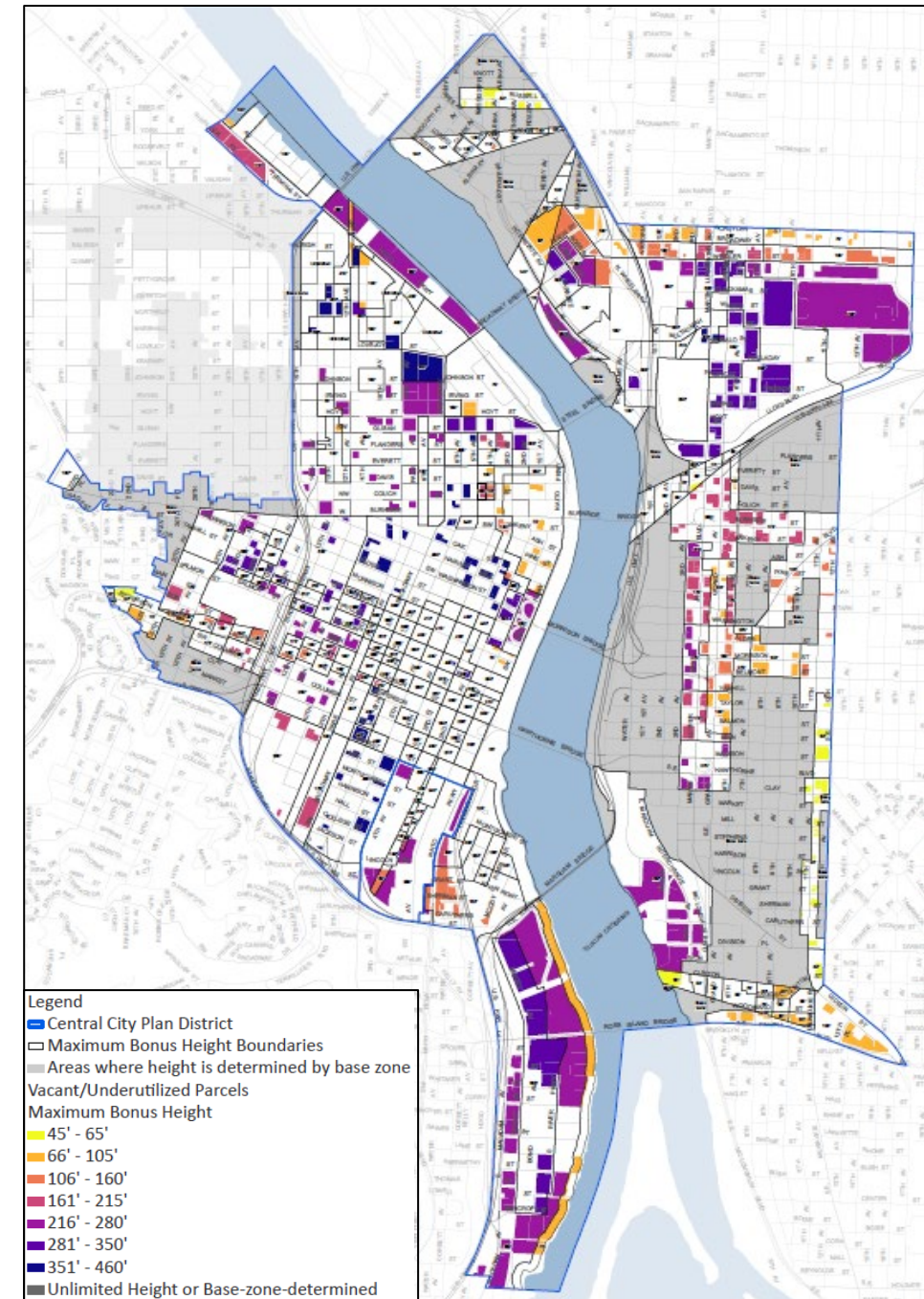
- **Inclusionary Housing.** Up to a 3:1 bonus for affordable/inclusionary housing.
- **Affordable Housing Fund.** Up to a 3:1 bonus when contributions made to Affordable Housing Fund.
- **Riverfront Open Space.** Bonus provided in exchange for publicly accessible open space.
- **South Waterfront Greenway and Open Space.** Bonuses provided in exchange for publicly accessible open space and additional greenway setback.

FAR TRANSFERS:

- **Transferred from a Historic Resource.** Unused FAR from a site containing a designated historic resource may be transferred, plus an additional 3:1, to other sites within the Central City Plan District.
- **Transferred within a Floor Area Transfer Sector.** An unlimited amount of FAR may be transferred within the “transfer sectors” (shown on Map 510-23), so long as maximum height is not exceeded on receiving site.

BONUS HEIGHT:

- **FAR Bonuses and Transfers.** When a site earns FAR for affordable housing or receives FAR transferred from a historic resource.
- **Open Space Height Transfers.** 100 feet of height may be transferred from sites created as public open space.



Where did Central City 2035 Increase Residential FAR?

As part of CC2035 the base FAR allowances were increased in the areas noted on this map. In some cases, industrial/employment land in the Central Eastside and Lloyd District was rezoned to allow mixed-use residential development.

Rezoned from industrial to mixed use, with 3:1

Increased from 4:1 to 5:1

Increased from 6:1 to 9:1

Increased from 6:1 to 9:1

Rezoned from industrial to mixed use, with 2:1

Increased from 12:1 to 15:1

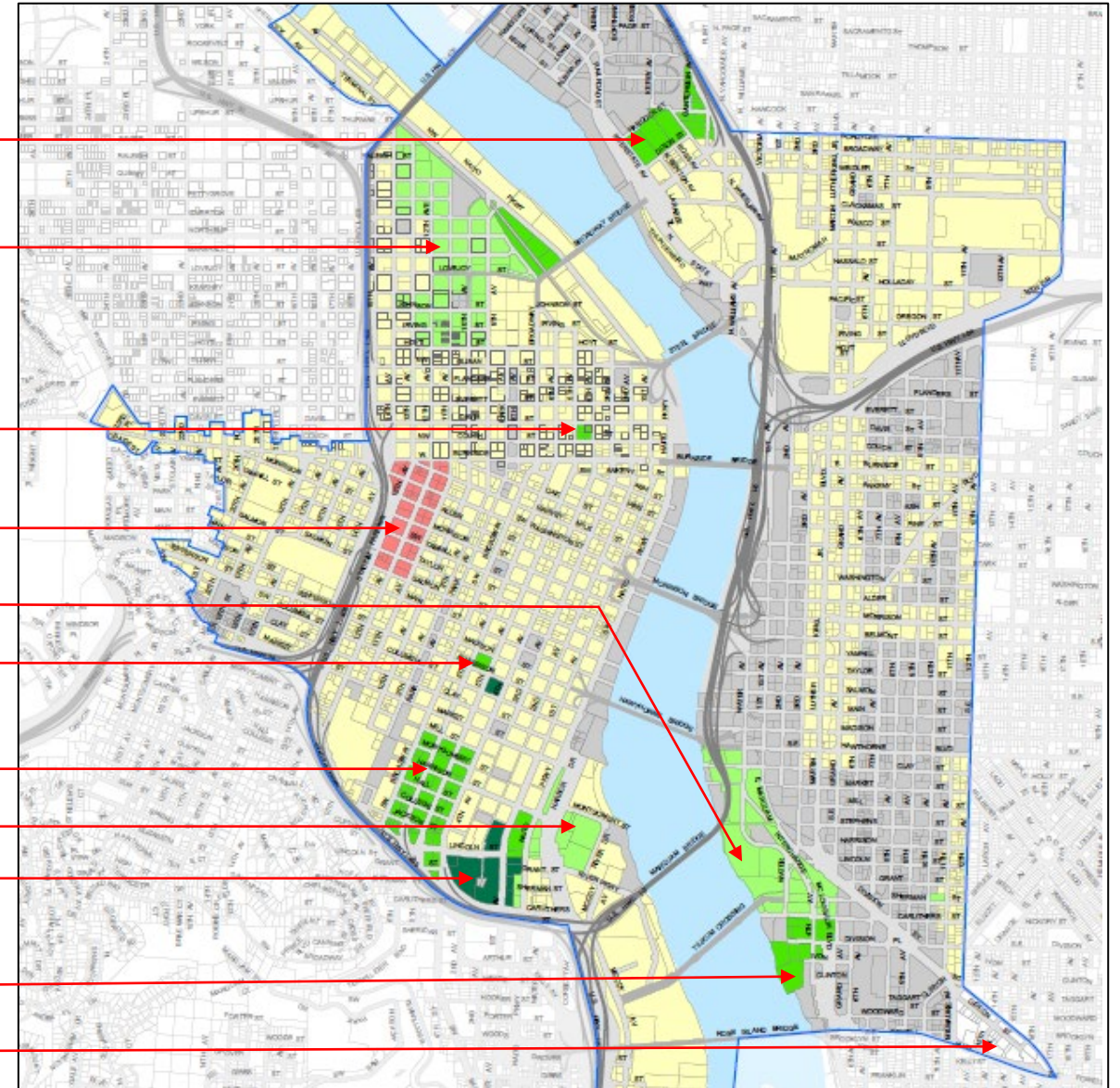
Increased from 6:1 to 9:1

Increased from 46:1 to 5:1

Increased from 2:1 to 6:1

Rezoned from industrial to mixed use, with 3:1

Rezoned from industrial to mixed use, with 2:1



Average Central City FAR Utilization

190 residential projects have been developed in the Central City since the adoption of the Central City Plan District in the early 1990's. Analysis of these projects found:

- Bonus FAR must be earned before FAR can be transferred to a site.
- Since 1990, approximately half of all projects have not used bonus or transferred FAR.
- Full utilization of base FAR, as well as bonused and transferred FAR, tends to drop significantly once a project has a base FAR of 6:1 or greater.
- Because nearly half of all projects developed did not use all the FAR allowed, a significant bank of FAR exists that can be transferred to future development sites.

Residential Projects 1990-2023					
FAR Allocation	Number of Projects	Average FAR Utilization	Projects Using Base FAR or Less	Projects Using Bonus FAR	Projects Using FAR Bonus & Transfer
2	5	2.7	2	2	1
3	8	4.29	1	7	0
4	55	4.71	19	28	8
5	15	7.12	3	8	4
6	58	6.77	29	17	12
8	19	6.53	14	3	2
9	22	8.72	17	3	2
12	7	5.26	7	0	0
15	1	6.6	1	0	0
Totals	190	NA	93	68	29
Percentages	100%	NA	49%	36%	15%

Residential Projects 2017-2023					
FAR Allocation	Number of Projects	Average FAR Utilization	Projects Using Base FAR or Less	Projects Using Bonus FAR	Projects Using FAR Bonus & Transfer
2	9	1.79	7	1	1
3	3	4.48	0	2	1
4	10	6.79	0	8	2
5	3	9.47	0	2	1
6	10	5.69	7	1	2
8	1	10.7	0	1	0
9	5	9.42	3	1	1
12	2	11	0	2	0
15	1	6.6	1	0	0
Totals	45	NA	18	19	8
Percentages	100%	NA	40%	42%	18%

Average Height Utilization

In reviewing the time frame just before and after the Central City 2035 Plan was adopted the analysis found that only 33% of residential projects were constructed above the maximum base allowance.

- The maximum heights allowed in much of the Central City were raised by CC2035 Plan.
- However, since 2017, only 31% of residential projects used bonus height.
- The building envelop created by increased height allowances allows for the use of base and bonus and FAR and provides room for the use of transferred FAR in most situations.

***Preliminary analysis of residential heights in the table above focuses on projects completed between 2017-2023. More analysis is underway, going back to 1990, to correspond to the FAR utilization dataset on the previous slide.**

Residential Projects 2017-2023

Subdistrict	Projects	Below Base Height	Equal to Base Height	Above Base Height
Downtown	7	3	1	3
University District/South Downtown	2	2	0	0
West End	0	0	0	0
Goose Hollow	4	2	1	1
Pearl District	6	1	1	4
Old Town/Chinatown	2	2	0	0
South Waterfront	4	2	0	2
Lower Albina	0	0	0	0
Lloyd District	3	3	0	0
Central Eastside	17	9	4	4
Total	45	24	7	14
Percentages	100%	53%	16%	31%



Pearl District Subdistrict

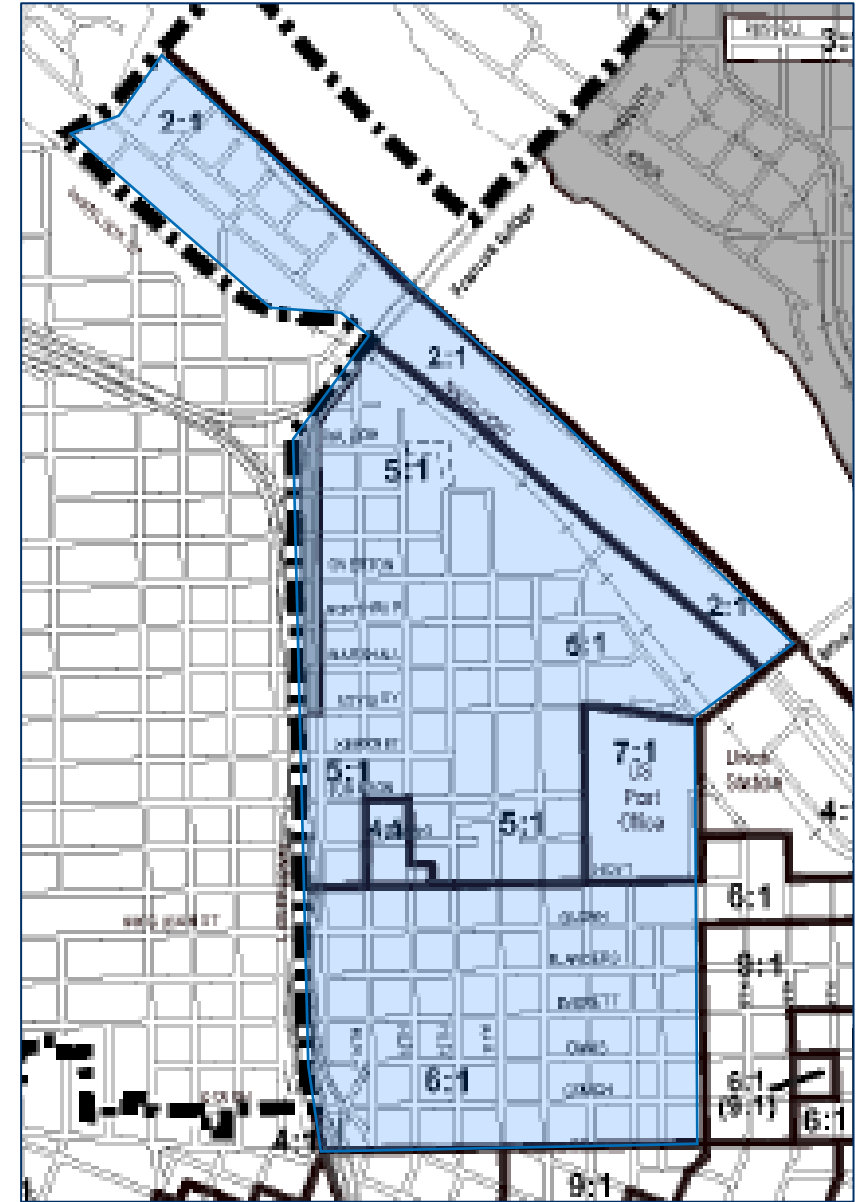
Floor Area Ratios

Approximately 70 residential projects have been developed in the Pearl District since the mid 1990's, resulting in over 10,000 new residential units. Over 1,200 of these units are regulated affordable housing.

- Housing has been incentivized by development agreements, and zoning tools, such as residential FAR and height bonuses, and required housing and housing bonus target areas.
- Analysis of FAR utilization in this subdistrict found that most residential projects (73%) in the Pearl used FAR bonuses and/or transfers to increase the development potential at individual sites.

Residential Projects 1990-2023

FAR Allocation	Number of Projects	Average FAR Utilization	Projects Using Base FAR or Less	Projects Using Bonus FAR	Projects Using FAR Bonus & Transfer
2	6	2.68	2	3	1
4	31	5.06	8	17	6
5	11	8.12	1	6	4
6	22	7.75	8	6	8
7	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	70	NA	19	32	19
Percentages	100%	NA	27%	46%	27%



Pearl District Subdistrict

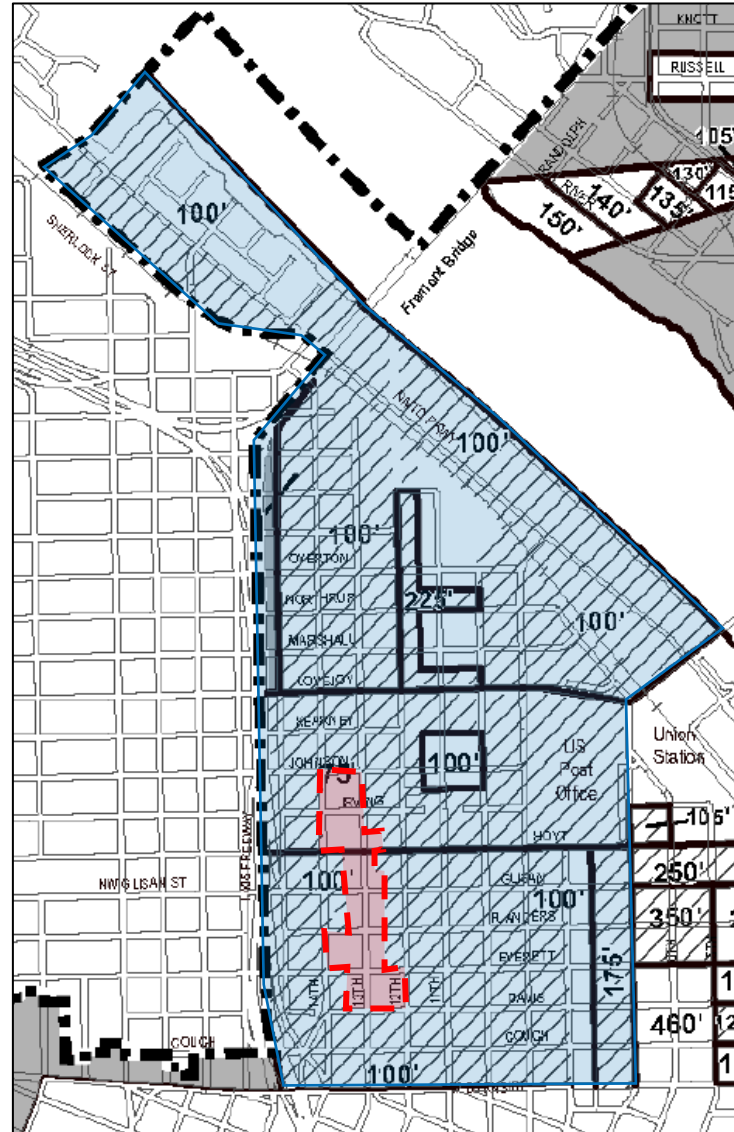
Height Allowances

- The maximum heights within the NW 13th Ave Historic District are kept lower than surrounding areas to protect the character of the district.
- South of NW Lovejoy maximum heights top out at 250', except on the east edge of the North Park Blocks.
- North of NW Lovejoy many areas have unlimited height, except within designated view corridors.

Residential Projects 2017-2023

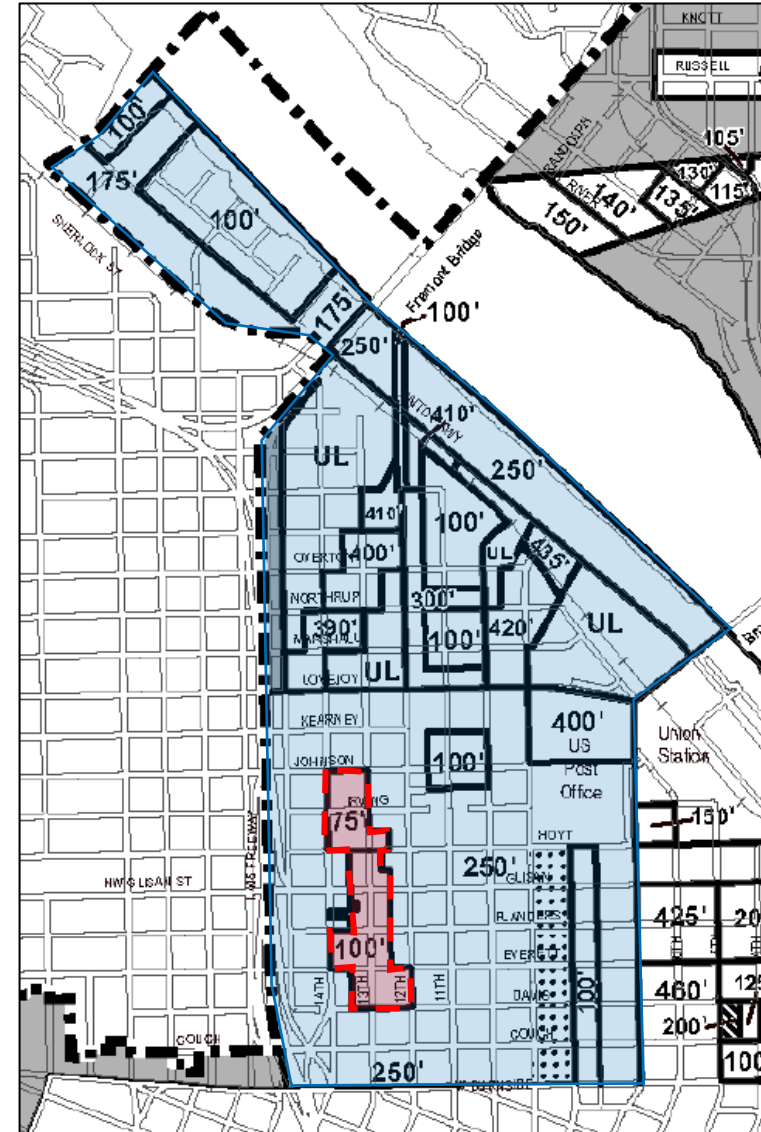
Base Height	Projects	Below Base Height	Equal to Base	Above Base
75'	2	0	1	1
100'	4	1	0	3
105'	0	0	0	0
125'	0	0	0	0
200'	0	0	0	0
250'	0	0	0	0
350'	0	0	0	0
460'	0	0	0	0
Total	6	1	1	4
Percentages	100%	16.7%	16.7%	66.6%

Maximum Base Heights



This map shows the maximum height a building may extent to without using bonus or transferred FAR. The area outlined in red is the NW 13th Historic District.

Maximum Bonus Heights



This map shows the maximum height a building may extent when using bonus and/or transferred FAR.

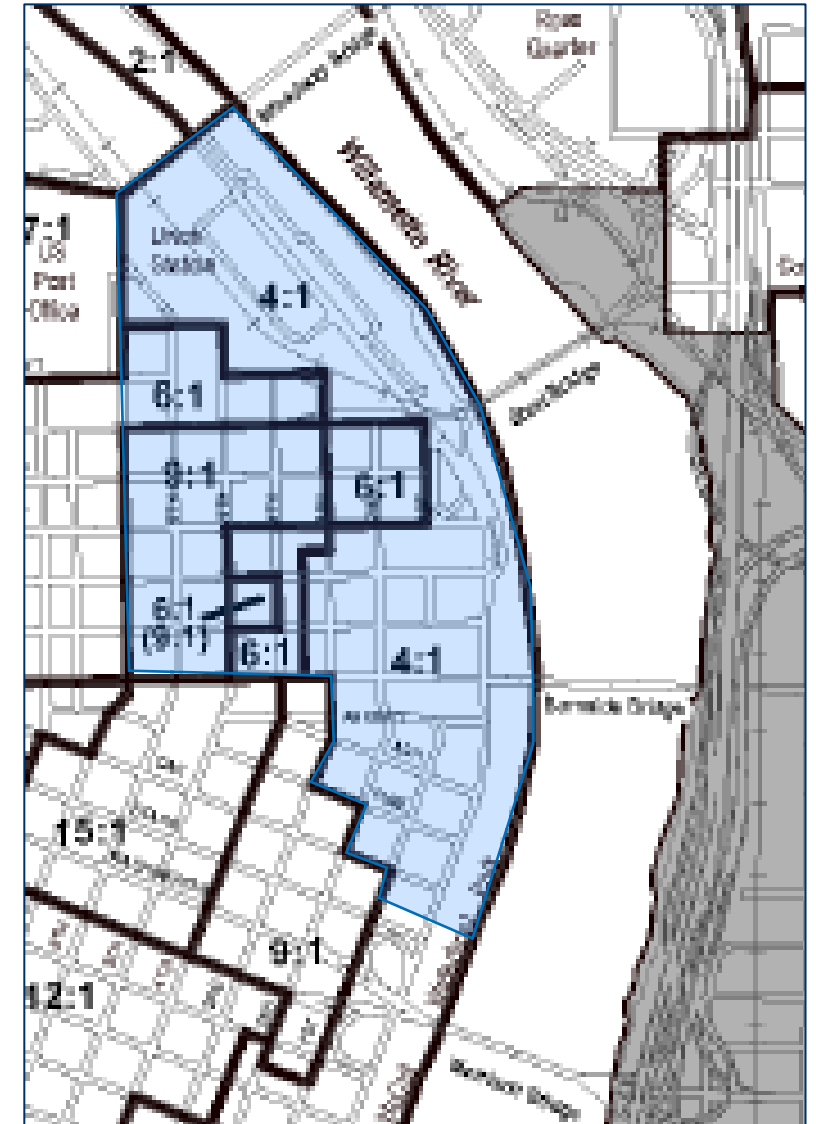
Old Town/Chinatown Subdistrict

Floor Area Ratios

- The Old Town/Chinatown subdistrict has produced at least 1,700 new housing units since 1990, and the district currently contains approximately 3,000 housing units.
- A majority of the district has a base FAR of 4:1 (with the ability to earn a 3:1 bonus) to protect the character of the Skidmore / Old Town National Historic District.
- The analysis of this district found that most new residential projects in the district (75%) used less than the total FAR allocated to their development sites.

Residential Projects 1990-2023

FAR Allocation	Number of Projects	Average FAR Utilization	Projects Using Base FAR or Less	Projects Using Bonus FAR	Projects Using FAR Bonus & Transfer
4	5	3.14	3	2	0
6	1	4.57	1	0	0
9	6	6.5	5	1	0
Totals	12	NA	9	3	0
Percentages	100%	NA	75%	25%	0%



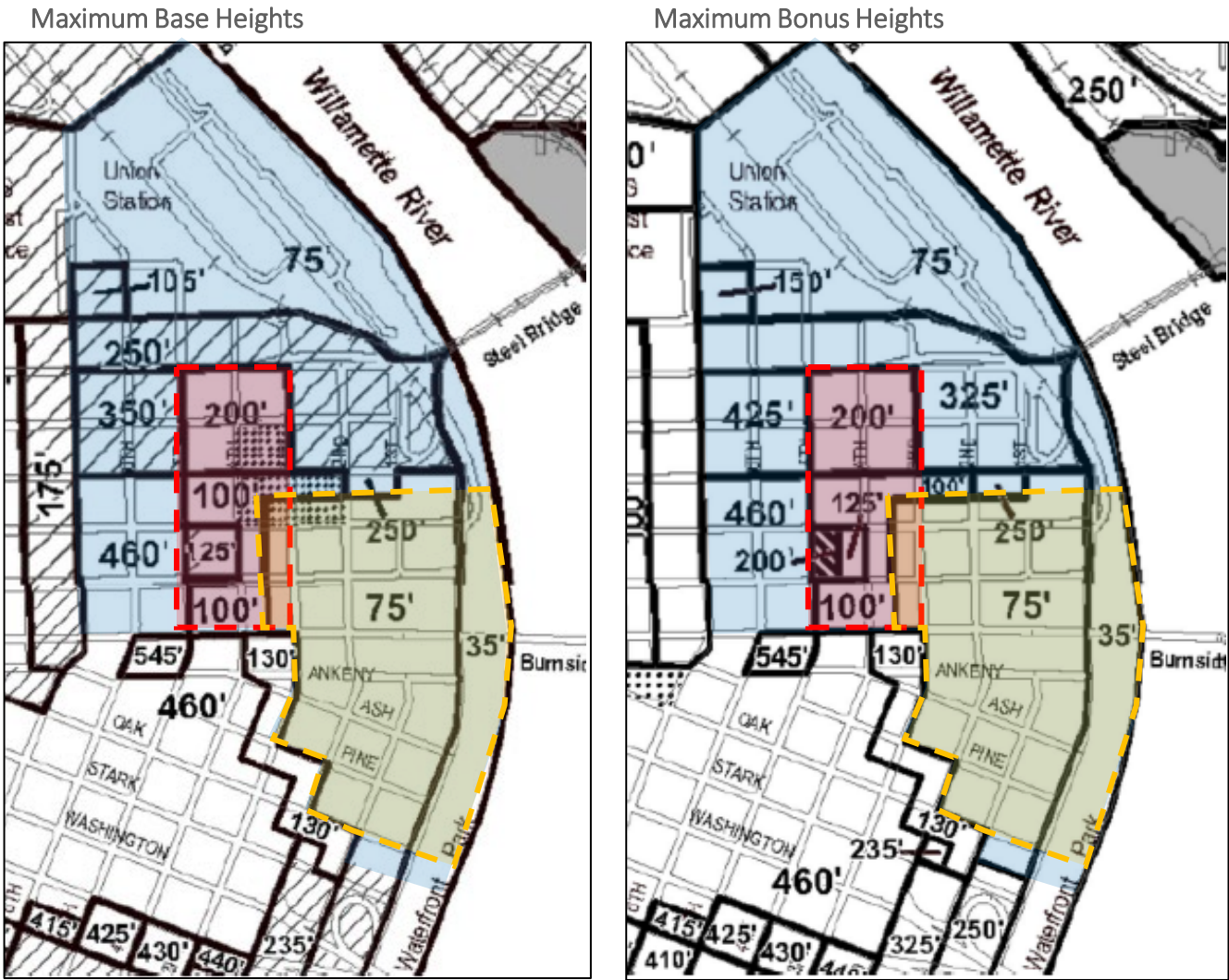
Old Town/Chinatown Subdistrict

Height Allowances

- Within the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District the maximum height is 75' to protect the integrity of historic fabric of the district.
- Elsewhere, especially in the northern part of the Old Town/Chinatown Subdistrict, significantly greater maximum height is allowed.
- Over the last 8 years, only two residential projects have been completed, neither using more than 75' in total height. One of these was built in an area with a 75' maximum height, the other with a maximum height of 350'.

Residential Projects 2017-2023

Base Height	Projects	Below Base Height	Equal to Base	Above Base
75'	1	1	0	0
100'	0	0	0	0
105'	0	0	0	0
125'	0	0	0	0
200'	0	0	0	0
250'	0	0	0	0
350'	1	1	0	0
460'	0	0	0	0
Total	2	2	0	0
Percentages	100%	100%	0%	0%



This map shows the maximum height a building may extent to without using bonus or transferred FAR. The area outlined in red is the New Chinatown/Japantown Historic District. The area outlined in orange is the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District.

This map shows the maximum height a building may extent when using bonus and/or transferred FAR.

Central City Housing Production

- Since 1990, 26,825 new housing units have been created in the Central City Plan District.
- These new units, in addition to the 11,973 existing units retained since 1990, have resulted in a current count of 38,798 units.
- Even in the period following the Great Recession of 2008, an additional 4,296 units were created between 2010-2020.
- Approximately 80% of all Central City housing is rental apartments, with only 20% of housing is owned as condos.

Central City Housing Tenure

Subdistrict	Rental Units	% Rental	Condo Units	% Condo
Central Eastside	3,425	91%	0	0%
Downtown	1,981	89%	563	22%
Goose Hollow	3,207	87%	451	12%
Lloyd	2,284	81%	28	1%
Lower Albina	81	85%	0	0%
Old Town/Chinatown	2,668	82%	362	12%
Pearl	6,829	72%	3,364	33%
South Waterfront	1,922	72%	991	34%
University/ South Downtown	4,149	76%	1,291	24%
West End	4,041	89%	682	14%
Grand Total	30,587	80%	7,732	20%

	1990s		2000s		2010s		2020s*		Grand Totals			
SUBDISTRICT	Affordable	Market	Affordable	Market	Affordable	Market	Affordable	Market	Affordable	Market	Pre-existing	All
CENTRAL EASTSIDE	42	4	0	4	162	1,449	0	809	204	2,266	955	3425
DOWNTOWN	113	156	0	332	0	202	0	348	113	1,038	1,393	2544
GOOSE HOLLOW	115	70	192	278	24	339	0	633	331	1,320	2,007	3658
LLOYD	219	318	0	185	286	902	0	0	505	1,405	402	2312
OLD TOWN/CHINATOWN	213	61	460	457	312	198	0	0	985	716	1,329	3030
LOWER ALBINA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	81	81
PEARL	119	507	764	4,200	265	3,158	0	1,071	1,228	8,856	1 09	10,084
SOUTH WATERFRONT	0	0	0	1,681	209	807	0	804	209	3,292	0	3501
UNIVERSITY DISTRICT/SOUTH DOWNTOWN	40	489	0	352	0	417	176	108	216	1,366	3,858	5440
WEST END	617	30	403	851	39	488	0	347	1059	1,716	1,948	4723
Grand Totals	1478	1635	1819	8340	1297	7,960	176	4120	4850	21,975	11973	38,798

NOTE: * Data only covers the period between 2020-2023

Height and Housing Production

Height rarely has a bearing on the total number of units created.

- There are numerous buildings in the Central City that used the maximum height allowable, as well as significant FAR; however, many of these contain less housing units than lower scale development.
- Conversely, there are numerous lower scale apartment buildings that may use less height and FAR and yet create a significant number of housing units.



The Ardea (tower on left) is a 31-story, 443,572 sq. ft. residential tower containing 313 units. Conversely, the Osprey (to the right), is a 6-story, 282,840 sq. ft. residential building containing 274 units. Although the Ardea contains 160,000 sq. ft. more floor area than the Matisse, it only provides an additional 39 units.

FAR and Housing Production

In the Central City Plan District, floor area ratios (FAR) determine how much floor area is created, not how many residential units are created.

- The Edge Lofts is a 138' residential building containing 287,481 sq. ft. of floor area and 117 housing units.
- The Louisa Apartments is a 145' residential building containing 258,346 sq. ft. of floor area and 244 housing units.



The Edge Lofts (Pearl District)

Maximum Height:	145'
Residential FAR:	7.2:1
Residential Square Feet:	287,481 sf
Total Residential Units:	117



The Louisa (Pearl District)

Maximum Height:	175'
Residential FAR:	6.5:1
Residential Square Feet:	258,346 sf
Total Residential Units:	244

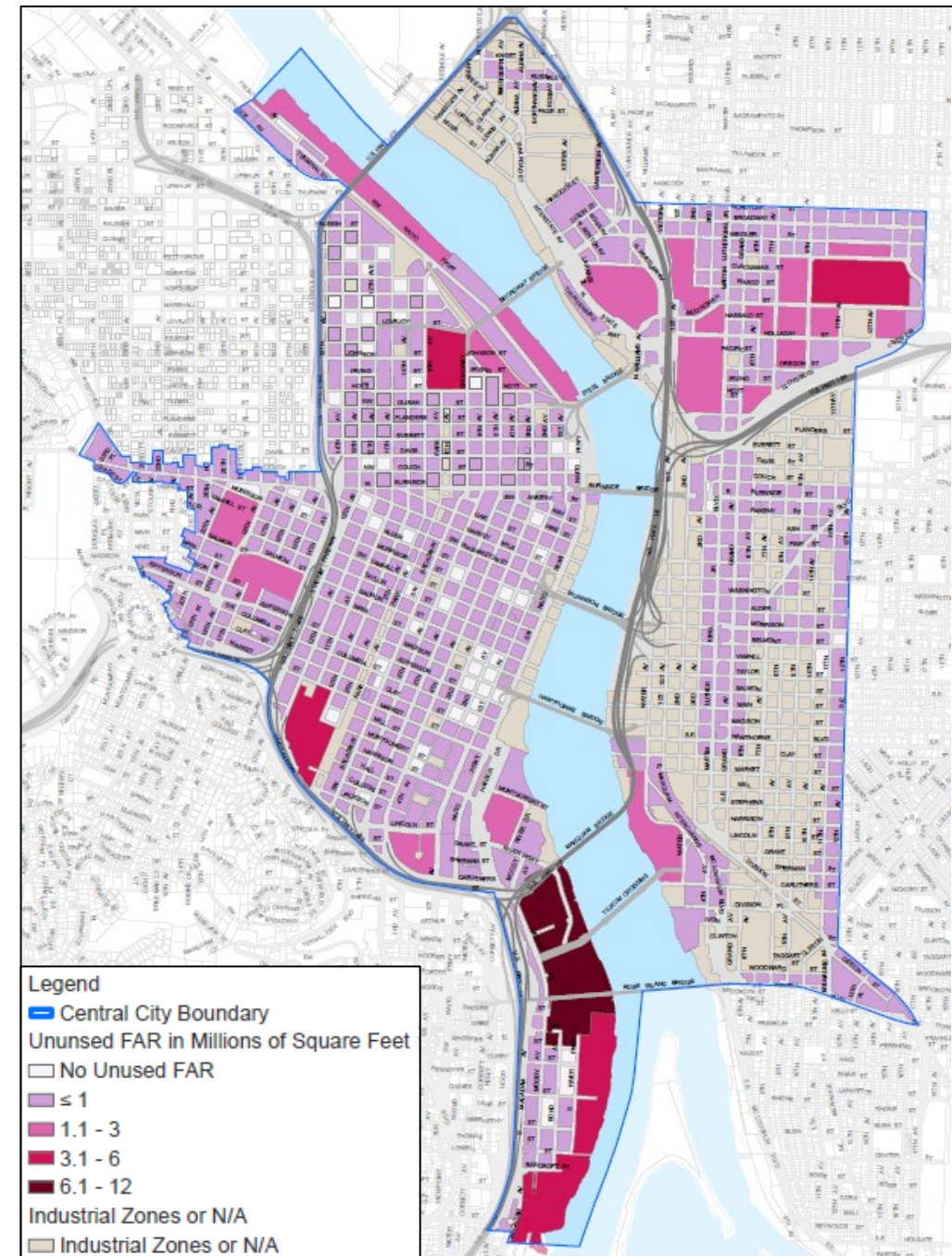
Unused FAR / Development Capacity

- Many residential and office projects developed since 1990 did not use all the FAR available to the project.
- Unused FAR can be transferred to new development sites to be used once those projects have earned 3:1 FAR via development bonuses.
- There is tens of millions of unused floor area in the Central City, providing decades worth of development potential.

Average Square Feet Utilized Compared to Square Feet Allowed by Base FAR

Base FAR	Total Projects	Ave Square Footage Developed	Ave FAR Utilization	Total Square Footage Allowed*
3	6	75,461	62%	120,000
4	53	164,213	102%	160,000
5	14	276,074	138%	200,000
6	55	225,645	94%	240,000
8	18	92,531	29%	320,000
9	23	148,994	41%	360,000
12	7	32,809	7%	480,000
15	1	66,000	11%	600,000

NOTE: *Indicates the total floor area possible on typical 40,000 sq. ft. development site.



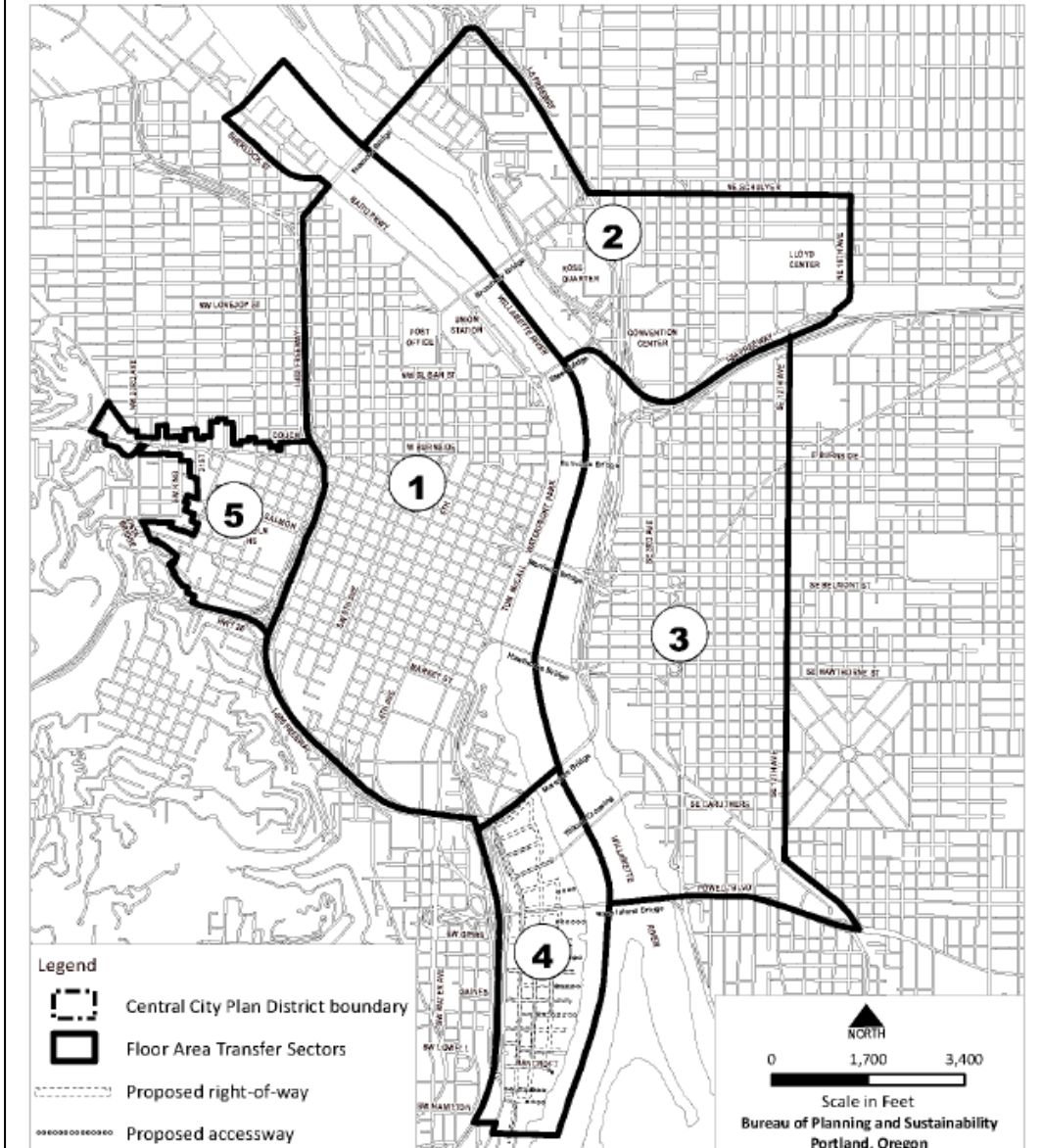
FAR Transfer Sectors

- An unlimited amount of FAR may be transferred within each sector.
- FAR may not be transferred from one sector to another, unless the FAR is being transferred from a designated or contributing historic landmark.

Floor Area Transfer Sectors

Map 510-23

Map Revised August 10, 2020



Key Takeaways

- Height Utilization: 2017 to present- analysis found that
 - Only 31% of residential projects were constructed above base height (utilizing bonus height).
 - 53% of projects were constructed under the base height allowance
- FAR Utilization: 2017 to present – analysis found that
 - 40% of projects used base FAR or less
 - 42% of projects used base FAR, plus some portion of bonus FAR



- Analysis finds that the Central City contains a significant amount of unused FAR and Buildable Floor Area.
- Taller buildings do not result in denser housing unit production.
- The majority of housing in the Central City consists of studio and 1-bedroom units.

Potential Next Steps

Research Potential Areas for FAR and Height Increases. *Identify potential areas where FAR and height increases could be made without having an adverse impact on protected resources.*

Analyze FAR and Height Relationship to Unit Density. *Analyze impacts (positive and negative) of establishing minimum unit density requirements.*

Review FAR Transfer Provisions and Utilization. *Research the true costs of transfers, the ease of purchasing floor area to transfer, and other pros and cons of the system.*

Hold Developer and Community Forums. *Hold series of public forums with development and community interests regarding why additional height and FAR is desired, where maximums could be increased, and how to address potential impacts of increasing allowances.*





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