

# Georgetown Height Limit Exception Land Use Code Amendment

Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD)  
Land Use Committee Briefing  
April 17, 2024

# Proposal Summary

## **Provides a ten foot height limit exception - from an existing 75' limit to a proposed 85' limit**

- Supports development that can maximize cost-effective wood framed construction of upper-level housing; and
- Enables high-clearance ground floor spaces conducive to light industry and arts spaces

## **Applies only to a focused and limited geographic area in Georgetown**

- 9.7 acres of contiguous land along 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.
- Completely surrounded by the industrial zones
- All existing height limits in the surrounding zones are already 85'

## **Criteria to access the height limit exception**

- Development must meet the green building standard
- At least five stories must be residential use
- At least 20% of the ground floor must be active street-level uses
- All dwellings must have sound insulating windows and air cooling and ventilation systems

**SEPA environmental determination was published in September 2023, and no appeals were received**



# Purpose and Policy Basis

## **Increases housing supply**

- The Watershed Community Development Authority (Watershed CDA) owns a large share of the land in the focus area
- Watershed CDA seeks to build up to about 600 homes in total
- Watershed CDA seeks to provide workforce housing affordable to households in the 60%AMI - 80%AMI range

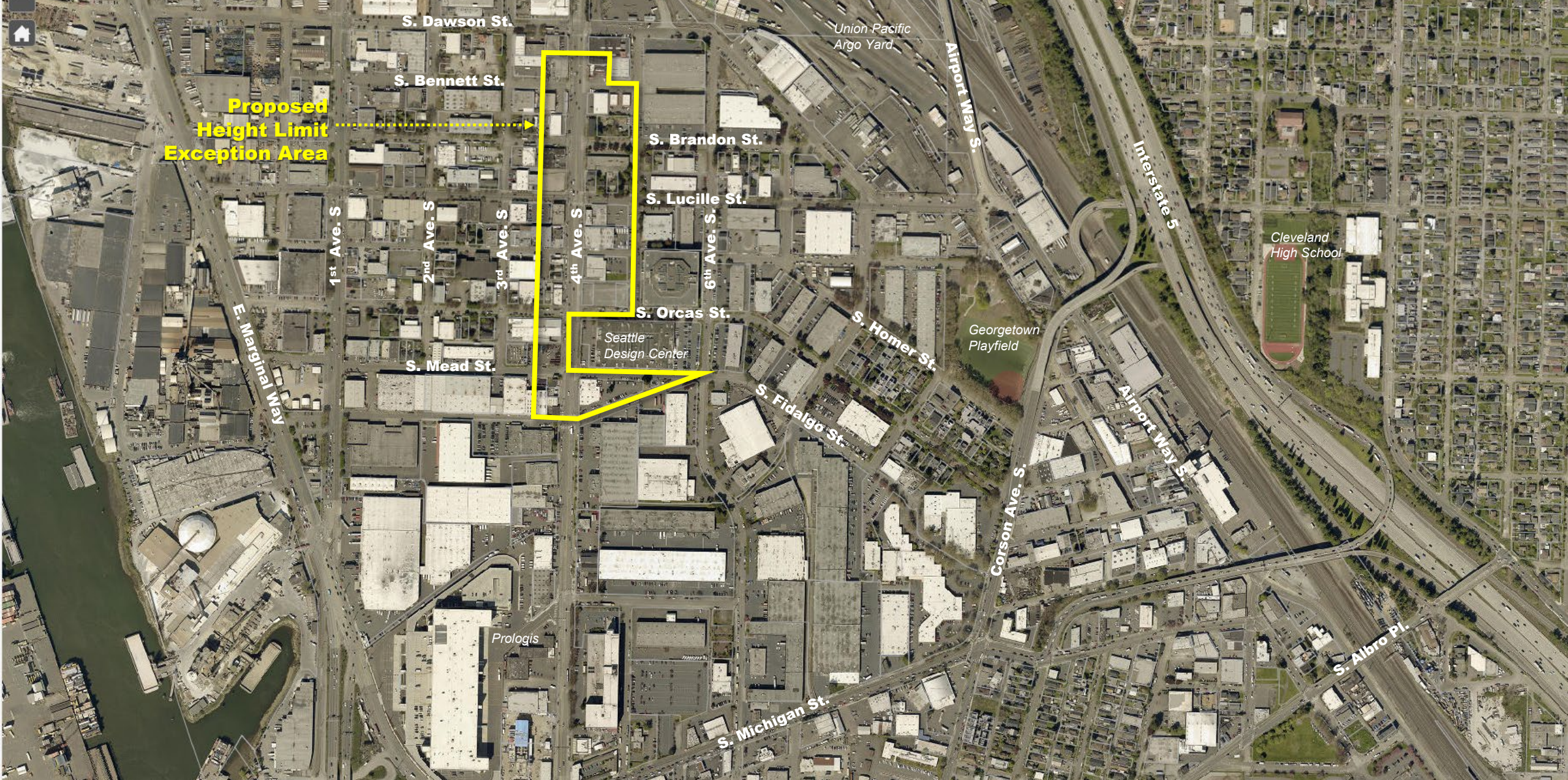
## **Responds to Georgetown's unique context of arts and light industry**

- The neighborhood is more integrated with the industrial area than most other places in Seattle
- The neighborhood has a very high number of art studios, building supply and materials businesses, and maker spaces

## **Georgetown residential community members advocated for a more complete neighborhood**

- Community members supported more mixed-use zoning during the 2023 Industrial and Maritime Strategy process
- Watershed CDA held public meetings and they report broad support for their proposal





**Proposed  
Height Limit  
Exception Area**

S. Dawson St.

S. Bennett St.

S. Brandon St.

S. Lucille St.

S. Orcas St.

S. Mead St.

Union Pacific  
Argo Yard

Airport Way S.

Interstate 5

Cleveland  
High School

Georgetown  
Playfield

S. Homer St.

Airport Way S.

E. Marginal Way

1st Ave. S.

2nd Ave. S.

3rd Ave. S.

4th Ave. S.

6th Ave. S.

S. Fidalgo St.

Corson Ave. S.

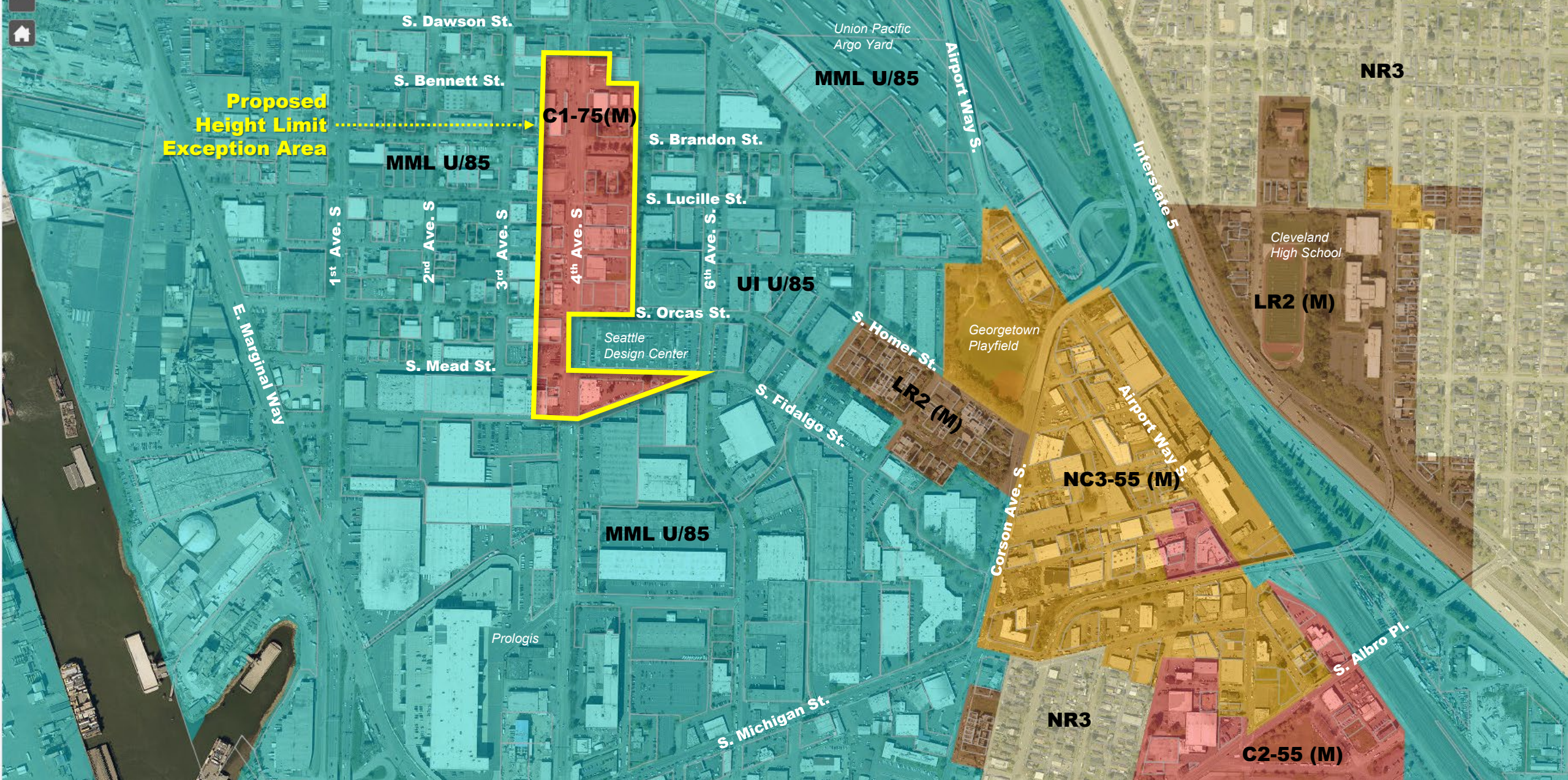
S. Albro Pl.

Prologis

S. Michigan St.



City of Seattle

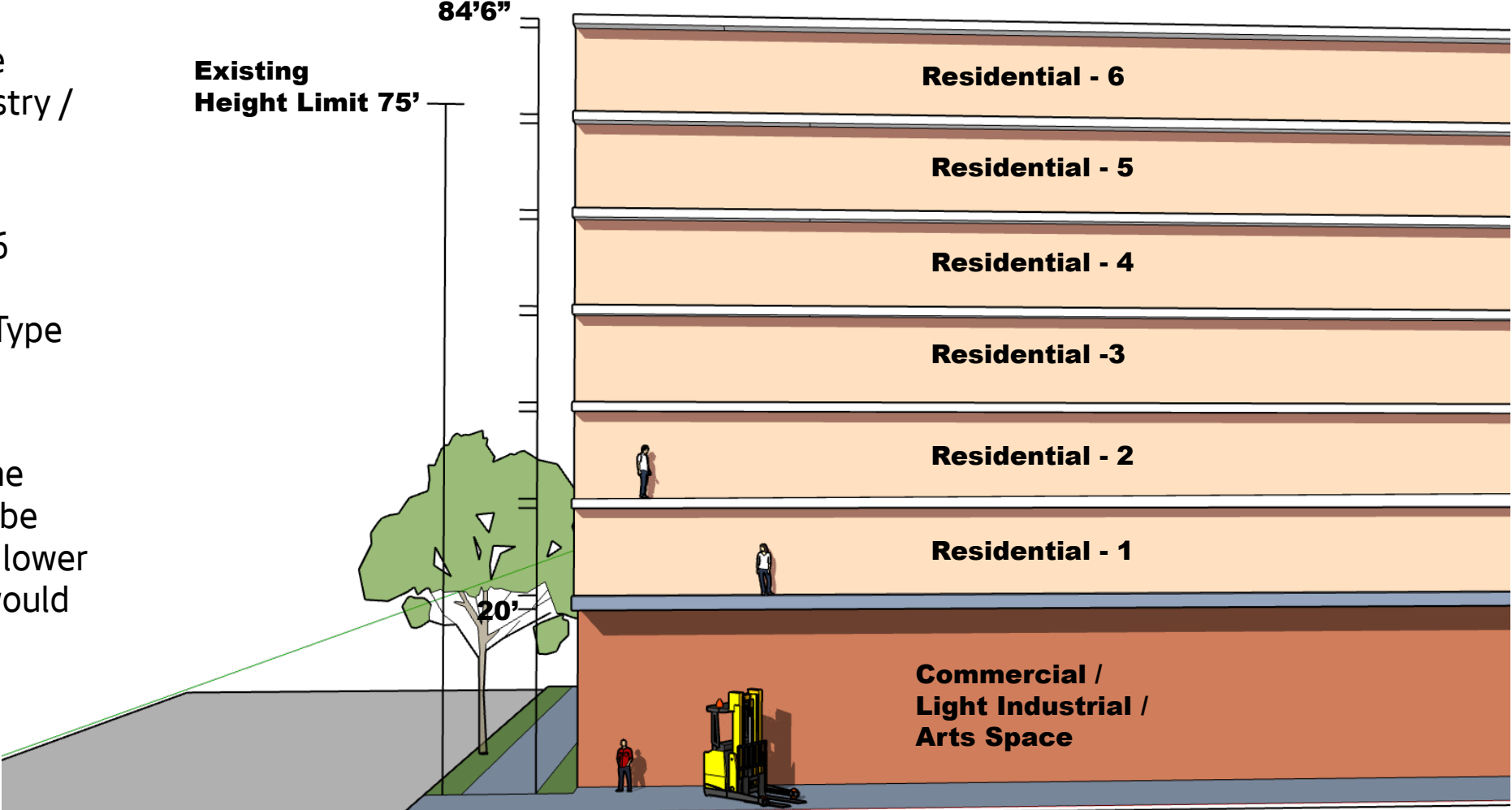


# Existing Context



# Proposed Height Limit Exception

- 20' ground floor clearance accommodates light industry / arts uses.
- Facilitates the maximum 6 stories of wood-framed residential construction (Type V-A) with 9'6" clearances.
- Without the exception, one floor of residential would be removed, or substantially lower ground floor clearances would be required.



# Affordability Considerations

**The City’s MHA requirements mandate either:**

- 5% of on-site units affordable at the 60% AMI level; or
- Payment of \$9.25 per square foot of floor area.
- Watershed CDA will provide on-site affordable homes.

**Additional affordable housing beyond the MHA requirement is intended to be provided by Watershed CDA**

- Affordable housing funding is from a local corporation and non-profit bonds. No City funds are committed.
- Intends to provide most units at the 60%AMI level and some at the 80% level.
- An agreement is in place with Seattle Housing Authority for some three-bedroom units.

	Rent & Income Restriction Levels		Market Rate Rents
	60% AMI	80% AMI	2014 and newer buildings
Family of 2 Income Limit	\$65,760	\$87,680	
1 BR	\$1,541 Rent Limit	\$2,055 Rent Limit	\$2,063
Family of 3 Income Limit	\$73,980	\$98,640	
2BR	\$1,849 Rent Limit	\$2,466 Rent Limit	\$2,837

*2023 rental program levels from OH website.  
Median market rent from CoStar March 2024 data.*



# Thank You

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City of Seattle