



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL  
**CENTRAL STAFF**

# Connected Communities/EDZ

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LISH WHITSON, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

LAND USE COMMITTEE

MARCH 20, 2024

# Topics

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- Background
- Qualification
- Flexibility
- Geography
- Exemptions
- Administrability

# Background – Program Purpose

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Demonstrate the *social benefits of equitable development* including *community-serving uses* and *housing available to a spectrum of household incomes* by setting onsite affordability standards and incentives for development of housing and equitable development uses through partnerships between public, private, and community-based organizations.

Proposed Seattle Municipal Code Section 23.40.090

# Background - Comparable Programs

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- Affordable Housing on Religious Organization Property
- Living Building Pilot Program
- 2030 Challenge Pilot program

# Program Qualifications - Developer

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- Must meet the definition of a “qualifying community development organization” (QCDO) (SMC 23.40.091)
- A QCDO must
  - Own at least 51 percent of the project;
  - Own at least 10 percent of the project, if a development partner has provided land for the project;
  - Have a controlling and active management role in the organization that owns the land where development would occur; OR
  - Have another beneficial interest (to be defined by rule.)

# Program Qualifications - Affordability

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- Projects must
  - Maintain at least 30 percent of dwelling units and 33 percent of congregate residence sleeping rooms as moderate-income units for 75 years; or
  - Qualify as social housing.
- Moderate income housing is
  - Rental units affordable to households earning up to 80% AMI; or
  - Ownership units affordable to households earning up to 100% AMI.
- Social housing has
  - At least 30 percent of dwelling units affordable to households with incomes up to 80% AMI;
  - Built, owned, maintained by a social housing public development authority.

# Program Qualifications - Affordability

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- Affordable Housing on Religious Organization Property legislation requires 100 percent of all units in a project to be affordable at or below 80% AMI
- Mandatory Housing Affordability-Residential performance program requires:
  - Between 2.1 and 11 percent of all units in a project
  - Affordable at 40% AMI for small units, 60% AMI for rentals, or 80% AMI for ownership
- Downtown incentive zoning provisions require:
  - 80% AMI for rental housing or 100% AMI for ownership housing; and
  - 14.0 percent of the extra floor area (for zones with heights up to 85 feet)
  - 8.0 percent of the extra floor area (for zones with heights above 85 feet)

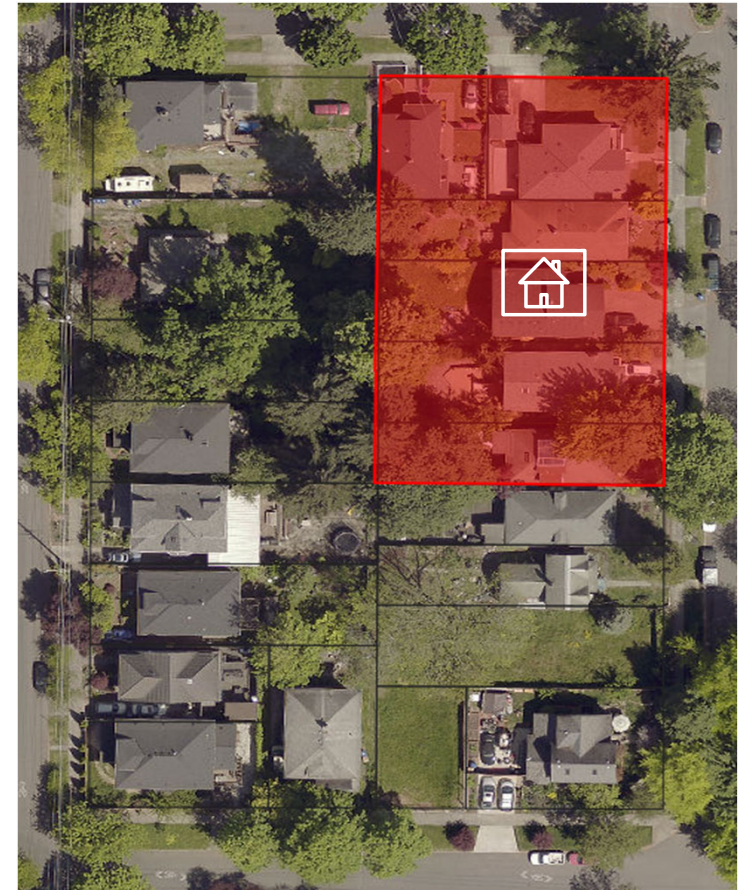
# Program Qualification - Owner's Units

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Allows density bonus if:

- A homeowner with an income at or below 120% AMI;
- Is guaranteed a unit on-site at no cost

Unit may not be resold or sublet by the owner for at least 10 years



# Zoning Flexibility

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Participation allows:

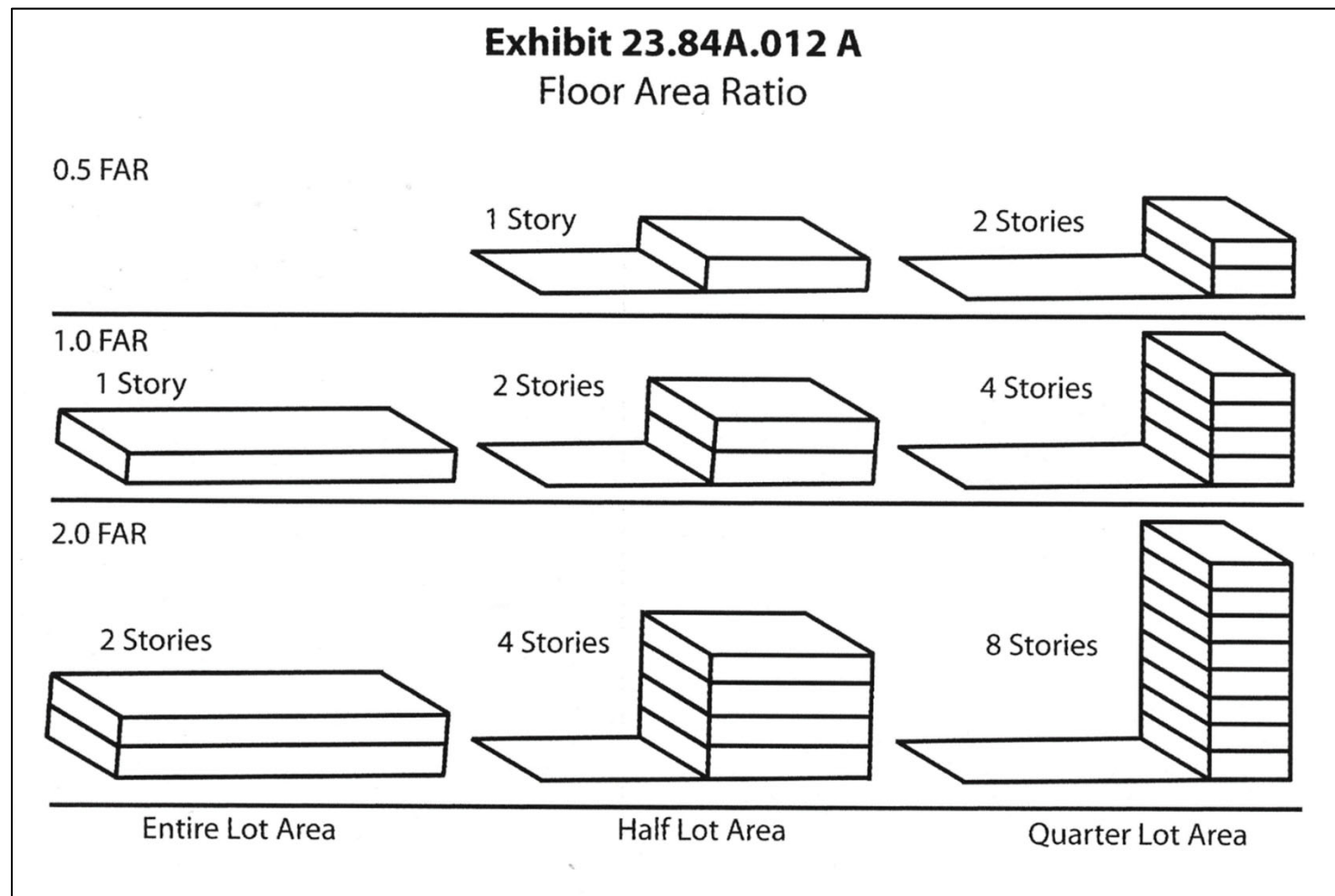
- Taller buildings;
- Larger buildings; and
- In Neighborhood Residential (NR) zones
  - Wider and deeper buildings,
  - Smaller yards,
  - Higher residential densities, and
  - Equitable development and multifamily uses.

# Flexibility - Height

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| Zoned Height Limit | Religious Institution Bonus | Living Building Pilot and 2030 Challenge | Connected Communities |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Less than 85 feet  | 10 feet - 30 feet           | 12.5 feet – 15 feet                      | 10 feet – 30 feet     |
| 85 feet or greater | 40 feet - 60 feet           | 25 feet – 30 feet                        | 50 feet – 60 feet     |

# Flexibility – Floor Area Ratios



# Flexibility – Maximum Floor Area Ratios Allowed

| Zone                     | Standard FAR Limit | Religious Properties | Green Building Incentives | Connected Communities |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Neighborhood Residential | 0.5                | 1.0                  | 0.63                      | 1.25                  |
| Residential Small Lot    | 0.75               | 1.2                  | 0.93                      | 1.5                   |
| Lowrise 1                | 1.3                | 1.8                  | 1.63                      | 2.0                   |
| Lowrise 2                | 1.4                | 2.1                  | 1.75                      | 2.4                   |
| Lowrise 3                | 2.3                | 3.75                 | 2.88                      | 3.8                   |
| Midrise                  | 4.5                | 5.5                  | 5.63                      | 6.3                   |

# Flexibility – Maximum Floor Area Ratios Allowed

| Zone                             | Standard FAR Limit | Religious Properties | Green Building Incentives | Connected Communities |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Commercial zones by height limit |                    |                      |                           |                       |
| 30 feet                          | 2.5                | 3.0                  | 3.13                      | 3.75                  |
| 40 feet                          | 3.25               | 4.5                  | 4.06                      | 4.5                   |
| 55 feet                          | 4.25               | 5.25                 | 5.31                      | 5.5                   |
| 65 feet                          | 4.75               | 5.75                 | 5.94                      | 6.25                  |
| 75 feet                          | 6.0                | 5.75                 | 7.5                       | 6.5                   |
| 85 feet                          | 6.0                | 5.75                 | 7.5                       | 8.0                   |
| 95 feet                          | 6.25               | 7.0                  | 7.81                      | 8.25                  |

# Flexibility - FAR Exemptions

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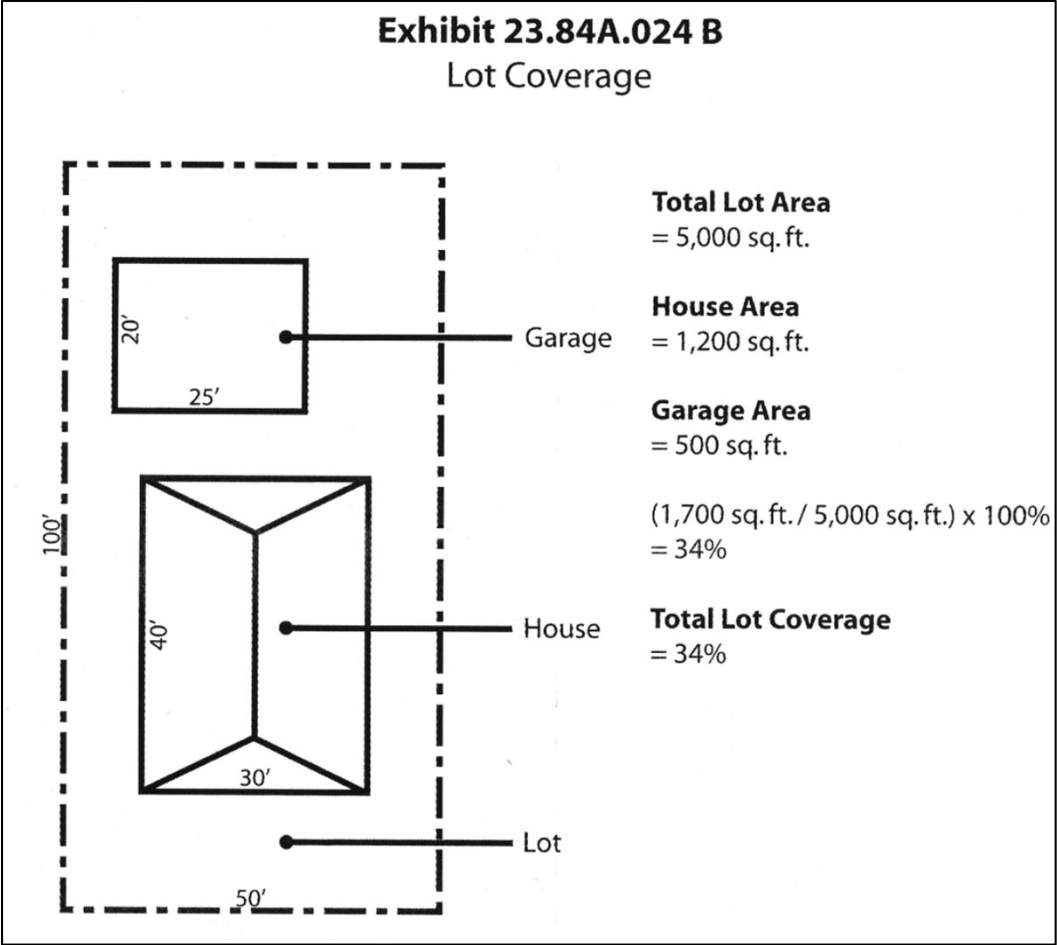
In addition to increased FAR limits, some spaces would be exempt from FAR limits:

- Two bedrooms units that are at least 850 square feet;
- Equitable development uses; or
- Buildings within a quarter mile of a frequent transit stop

The maximum exemption would range from 0.5 FAR to 2.0 FAR depending on the zone

# Flexibility – Lot Coverage and Yards

|                    | Current NR Requirement | Requirement under Pilot |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Lot Coverage Limit | 35%                    | 50%                     |
| Front Yard         | 20 feet                | 5 feet                  |
| Rear Yard          | 25 feet                | 5 feet                  |
| Side Yard          | 5 feet                 | 5 feet                  |



# Flexibility - FAR Exemptions

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- Two bedrooms units that are at least 850 square feet;
- Equitable development uses; or
- Buildings within a quarter mile of a frequent transit stop

The maximum exemption ranges from 0.5 FAR to 2.0 FAR depending on the zone

# Flexibility - Density and Uses in NR zones

| Zone | Current Density                        | Connected Communities                  |
|------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| NR1  | 1 principal unit per 9,600 square feet | 1 principal unit per 1,500 square feet |
| NR2  | 1 principal unit per 7,200 square feet |                                        |
| NR3  | 1 principal unit per 5,000 square feet |                                        |

The pilot would allow apartments, cottage housing development, rowhouse development, and townhouse development in NR zones, where otherwise not allowed.

The pilot would also allow equitable development uses in NR zones:

“Activities... [that] provide mitigation against displacement pressure for individuals, households, businesses, or institutions, that comprise a cultural population at risk of displacement.”

May include institutional or commercial uses not otherwise allowed in an NR zone.

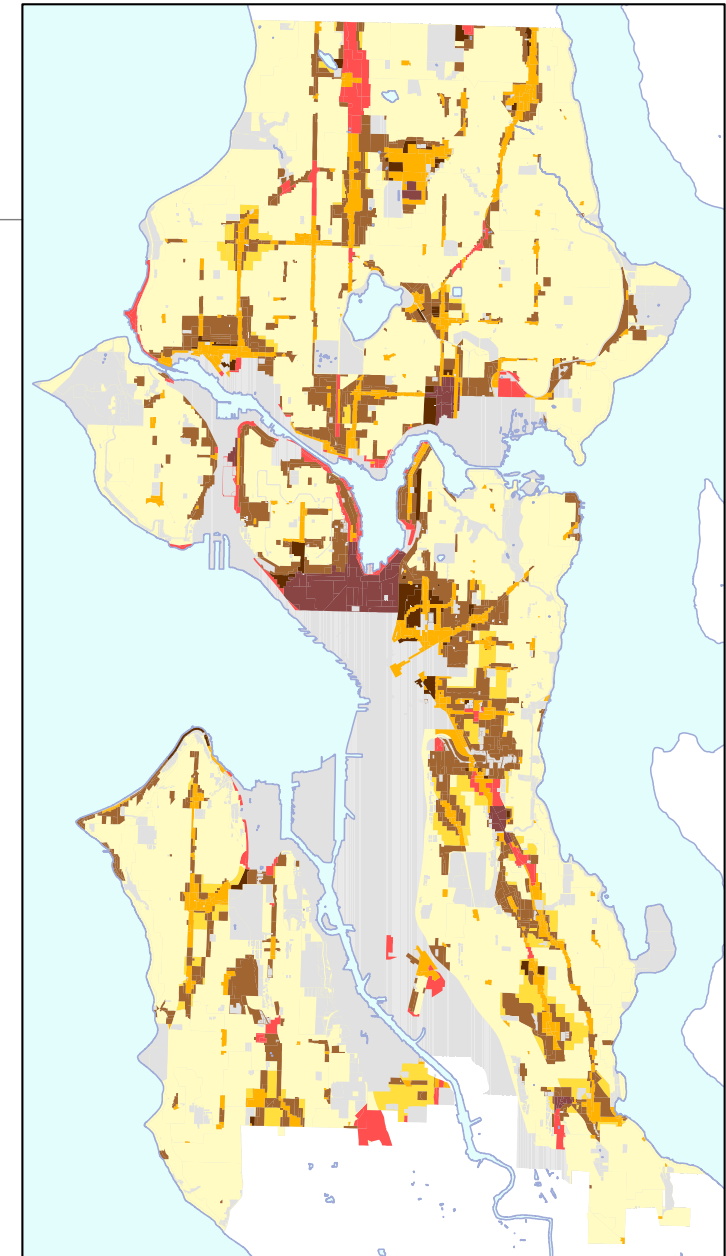
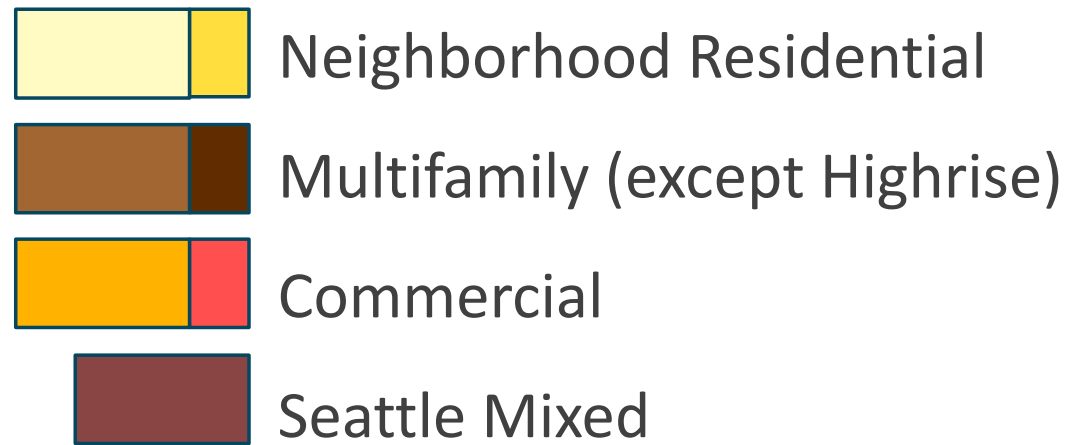
# Flexibility – Lowrise 3 Example



schemata workshop inc

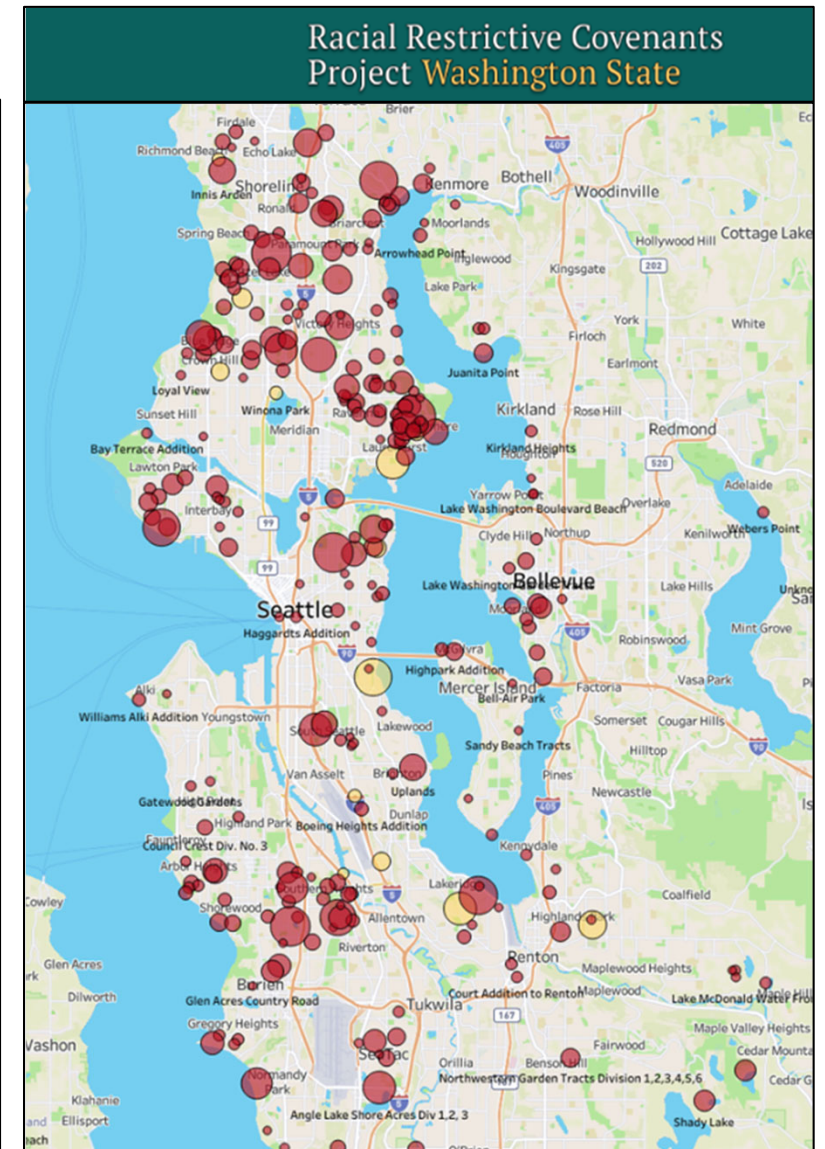
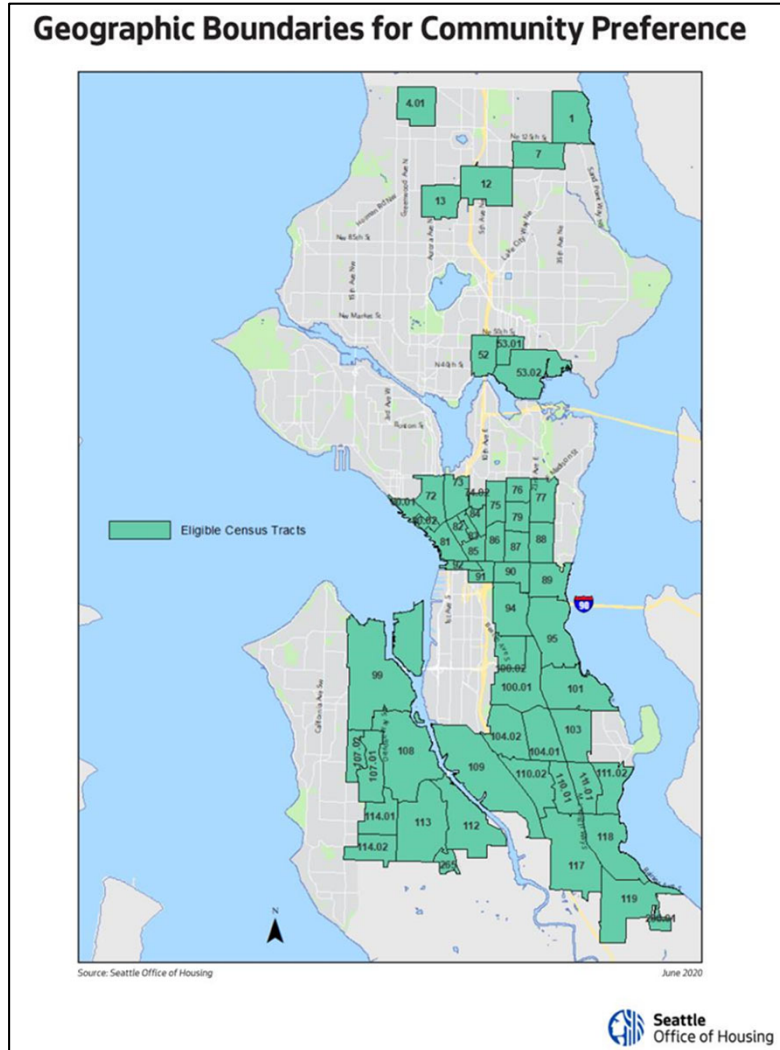
Comparison with current standards

# Geography - Zones



# Geography – Preference Areas

Highest FARs in Multifamily and Commercial zones would be allowed in Community Preference Areas and areas with Racially Restrictive Covenants



# Exemptions

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- Design Review
- Parking requirements
- Incentive zoning (only applicable in the Seattle Mixed zones)
- Mandatory Housing Affordability

# Administrability

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## Rulemaking

- Process and criteria for determining whether an organization meets qualifications
- Process and criteria for owner's unit provisions
- Definition of "equitable development use"

June 30, 2024, effective date

Evaluation in 2030

# Questions?