

# Georgetown Height Limit Exception Land Use Code Amendment

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



**City of Seattle**

# 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**

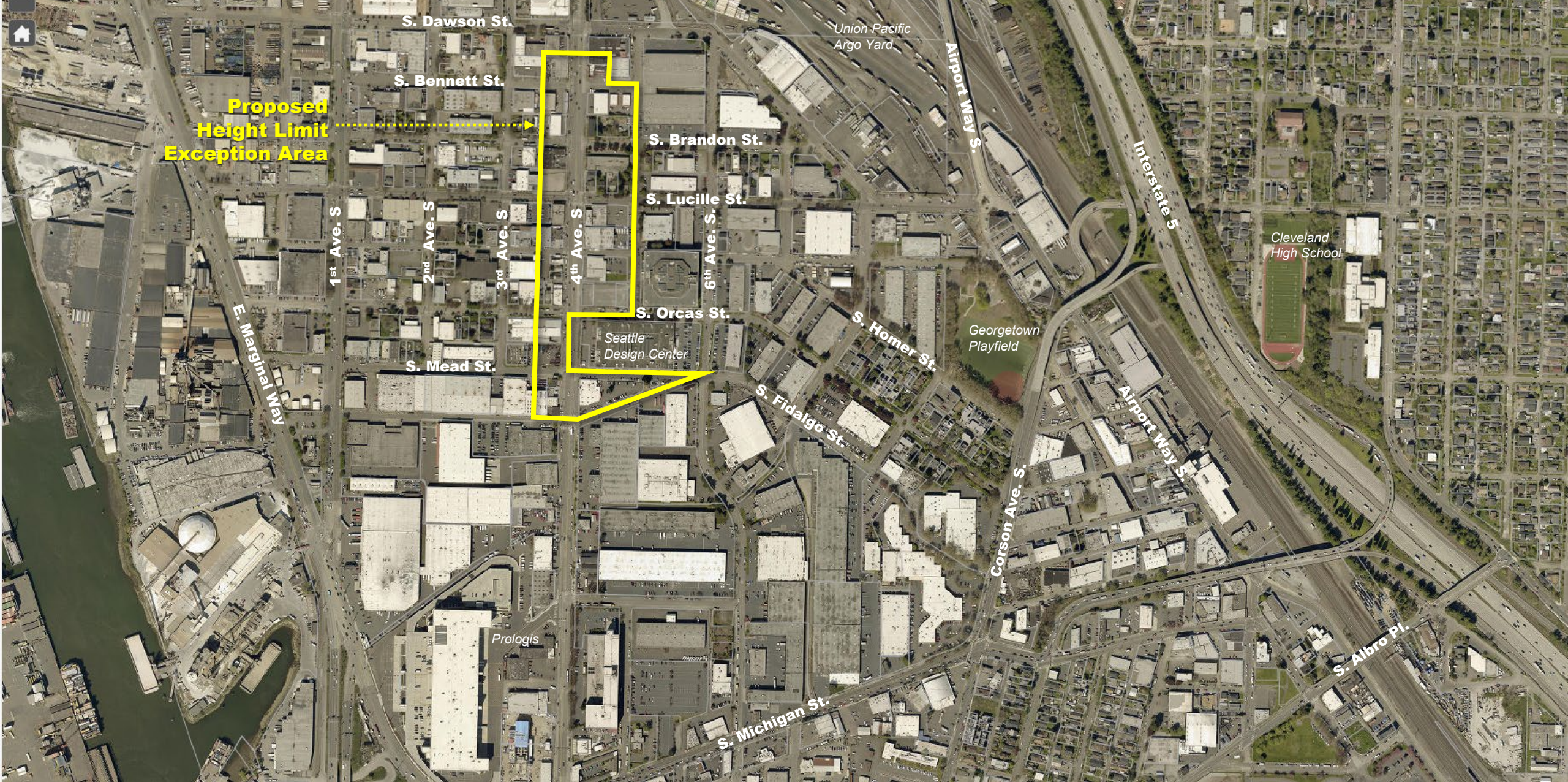
- The neighborhood is more integrated with the industrial area than most other places in Seattle
- The neighborhood has a very high number of art studios, building supply and materials businesses, and maker spaces

## **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

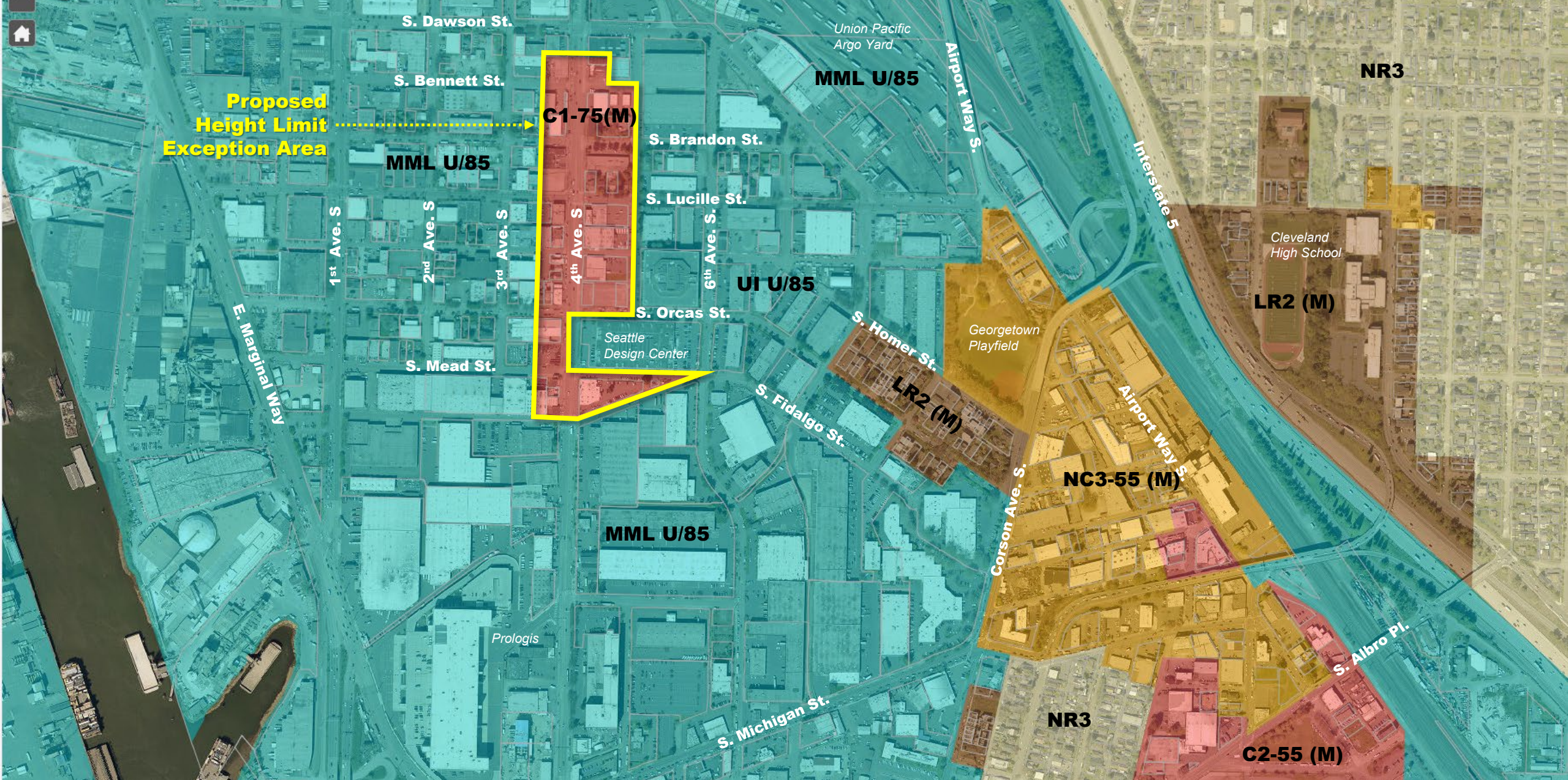






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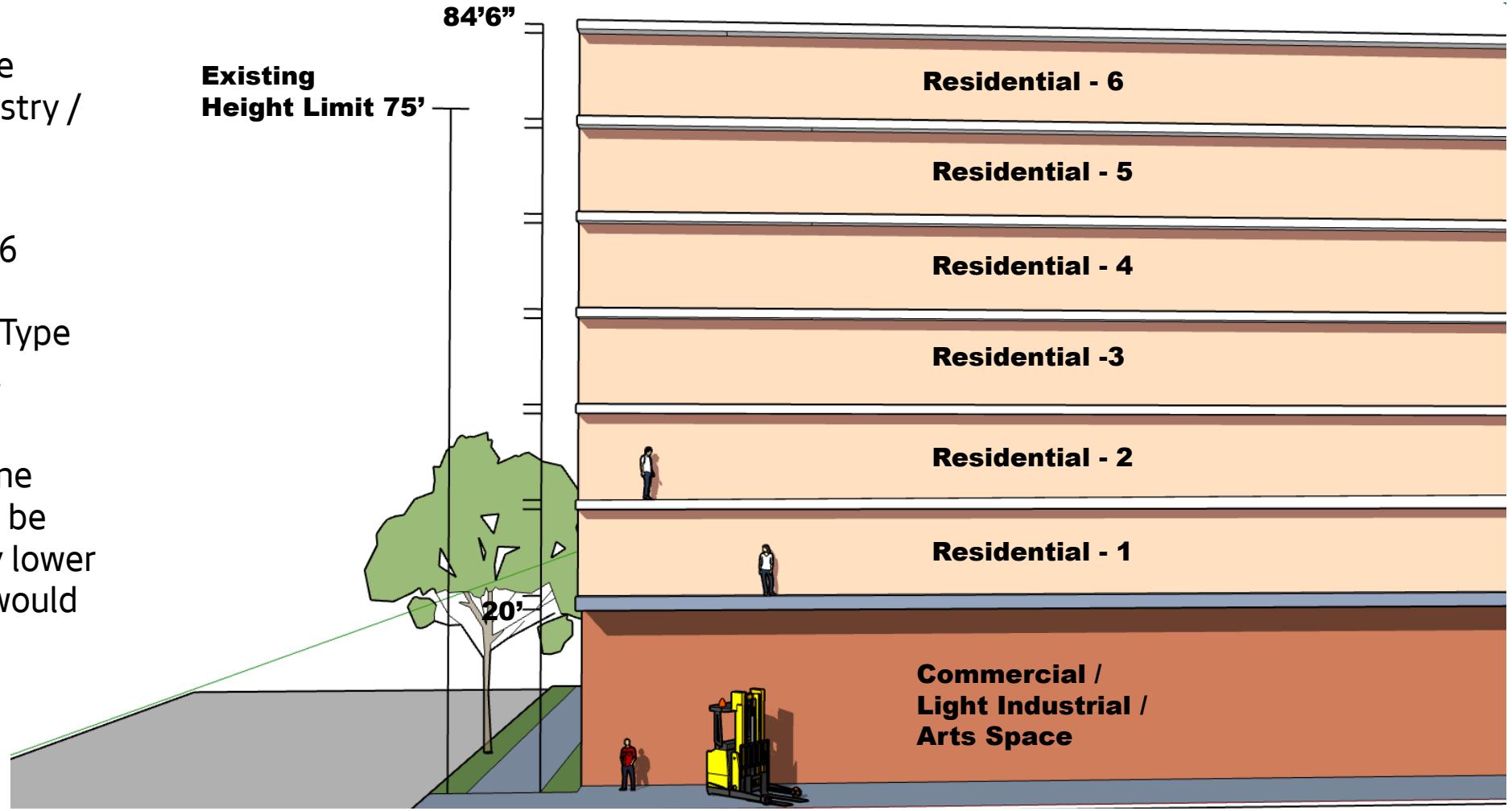


# Existing Context



# 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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