



To: Yi-An Huang, City Manager

From: Melissa Peters, Assistant City Manager for Community Development

Date: December 4, 2025

Re: **Revised Cambridge Street and Massachusetts Avenue Zoning Petitions**

We are pleased to transmit the attached revised Cambridge Street and Massachusetts Avenue Zoning Petitions for the Council's consideration. These revisions come at the end of the required public hearing phase for these petitions, which included a hearing at the Planning Board on October 21, 2025, and three meetings of the Ordinance Committee on October 30, November 13, and December 2, 2025. The Planning Board voted to forward positive recommendations on both petitions to the City Council, which are also attached. The revisions to both petitions reflect the changes discussed and approved by the Ordinance Committee at their meeting on December 2, 2025.

### **Summary of Revisions**

#### Cambridge Street Petition:

- Added language to guarantee required Publicly Beneficial Open Space is made physically accessible to the public;
- Revised Use Regulations to clarify which Office uses are considered Active Uses;
- Excluded Gross Floor Area (GFA) dedicated to Active Uses from the Special Permit threshold;
- Made several clarification edits to maintain existing Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and height limits for specific non-residential uses including institutional uses and hotels; and
- Reverted use regulations for hotel and motel uses to existing zoning standards.

#### Massachusetts Avenue Petition:

- Established stronger Active Use requirements south of Porter Square;
- Deleted reference to the Business A-5 District from the zoning ordinance text;
- Added language to guarantee required Publicly Beneficial Open Space is made physically accessible to the public;
- Revised Use Regulations to clarify which Office uses are considered Active Uses;
- Excluded Gross Floor Area (GFA) dedicated to Active Uses from the Special Permit threshold;
- Made several clarification edits to maintain existing Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and height limits for specific non-residential uses including institutional uses and hotels; and
- Reverted use regulations for hotel and motel uses to existing zoning standards.

### **Next Steps**

If the City Council chooses to accept the proposed changes, it can vote to amend the petitions by substitution before passing them to a second reading at the December 8, 2025 meeting, which would allow the Council to take final action on December 22, 2025. Both petitions will expire on January 28, 2026.

If the Council chooses to advance both petitions at the same time, proposed changes to a few sections of the Zoning Ordinance will need to be merged. In that case, CDD staff will provide further clarifying amendments to those sections before ordination.