

HOUSING FORWARD

OVERVIEW OF JUNE 2025 PROPOSED ORDINANCES

City Council July 15, 2025



Housing **FORWARD**

#1 Increase Housing Choice

- Pursue more code and process changes to support small-scale “missing middle” housing, including duplexes, townhomes, and small apartment buildings

Leg ID 88736

- Look for ways to make lot division and subdivision processes simpler to create more new lots for homes

Leg ID 88735

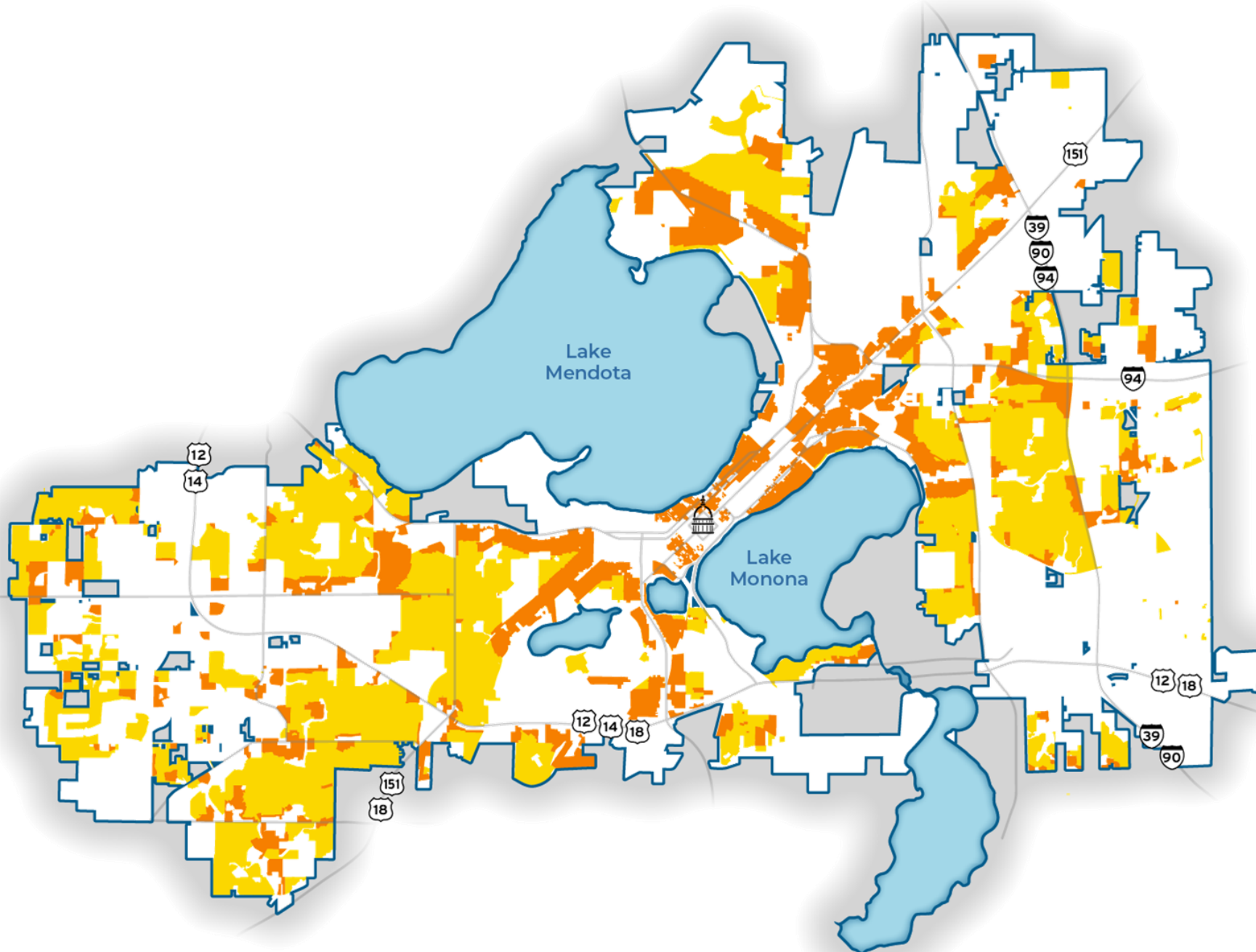
- Continue to simplify zoning standards for infill housing citywide, including specific options that make sense downtown

Leg ID 88737



Allow duplexes & twin homes in all residential zoning districts



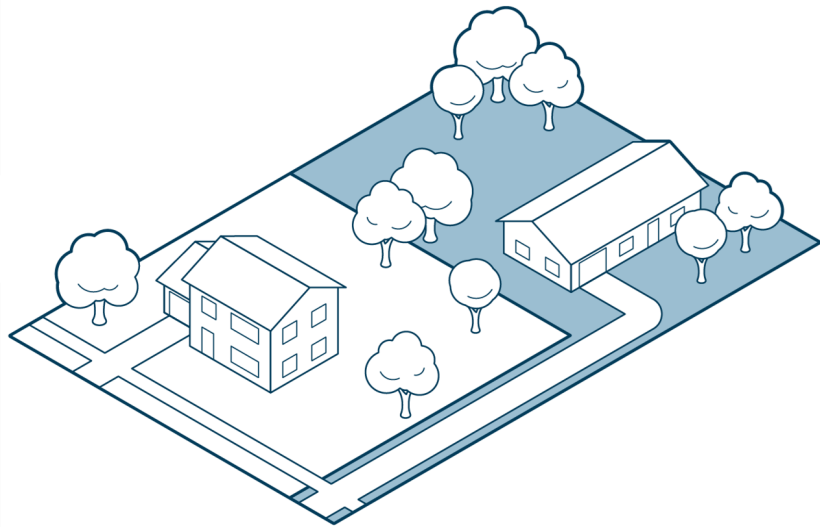
- Amends Zoning Code to allow duplexes & twin homes (2-unit buildings) where single-family homes (1-unit buildings) are allowed
- Expands change made in 2023 for areas closest to transit to entire city
- Intended to promote more small-scale housing choices in the long term



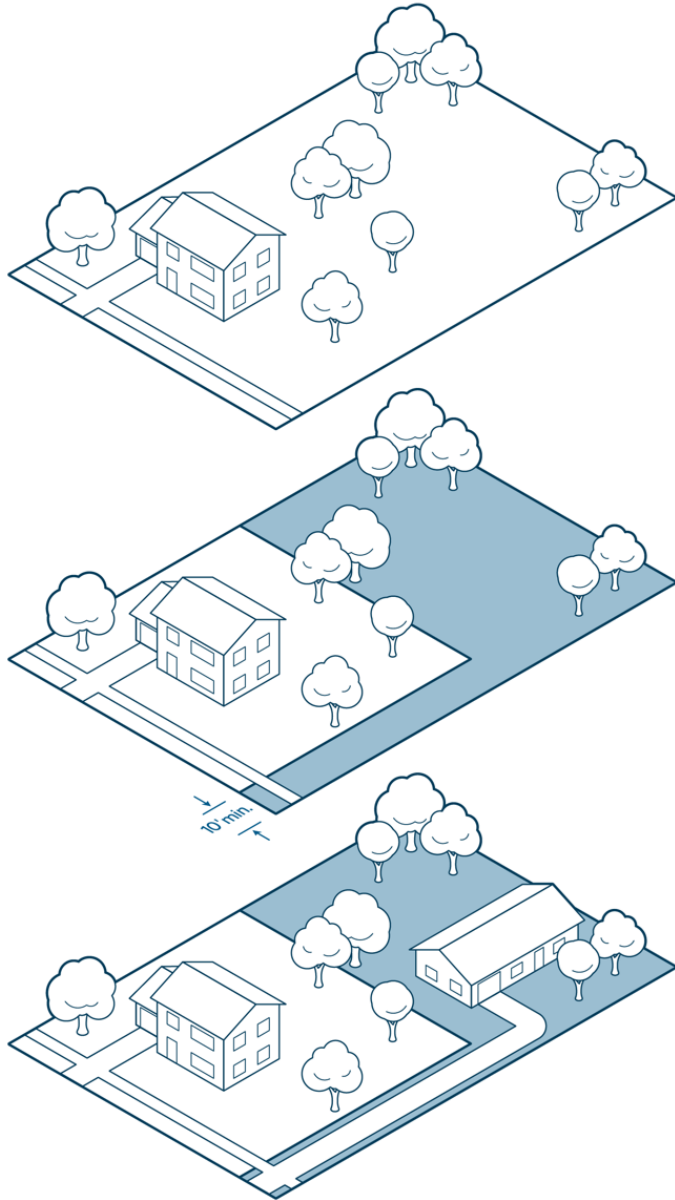
2-unit Buildings

-  Allowed today
-  Proposed expansion

Allow more “backyard lots”

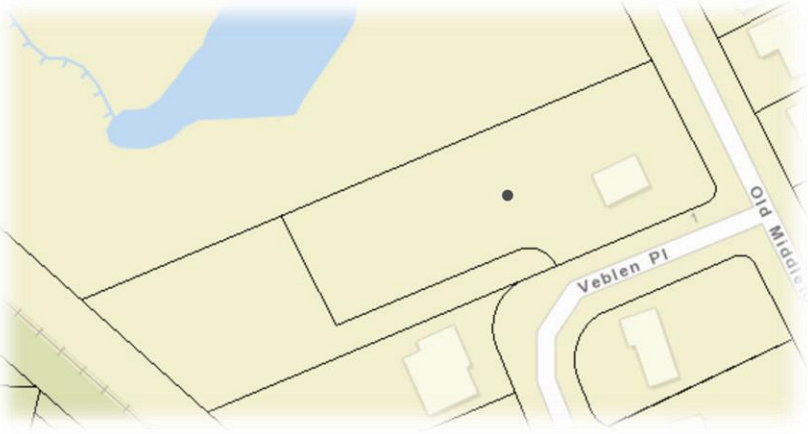


- Changes make it easier to divide a large lot to create a new “backyard lot” (also known as “flag lot; called “deep residential lot” in Madison General Ordinances)
- New housing choices and homeownership opportunities in existing neighborhoods



1. Large residential lot meets all specifications
2. Owner splits lot to create “backyard lot” to sell to new neighbor or keep for future options
3. Owner of “backyard lot” builds new home

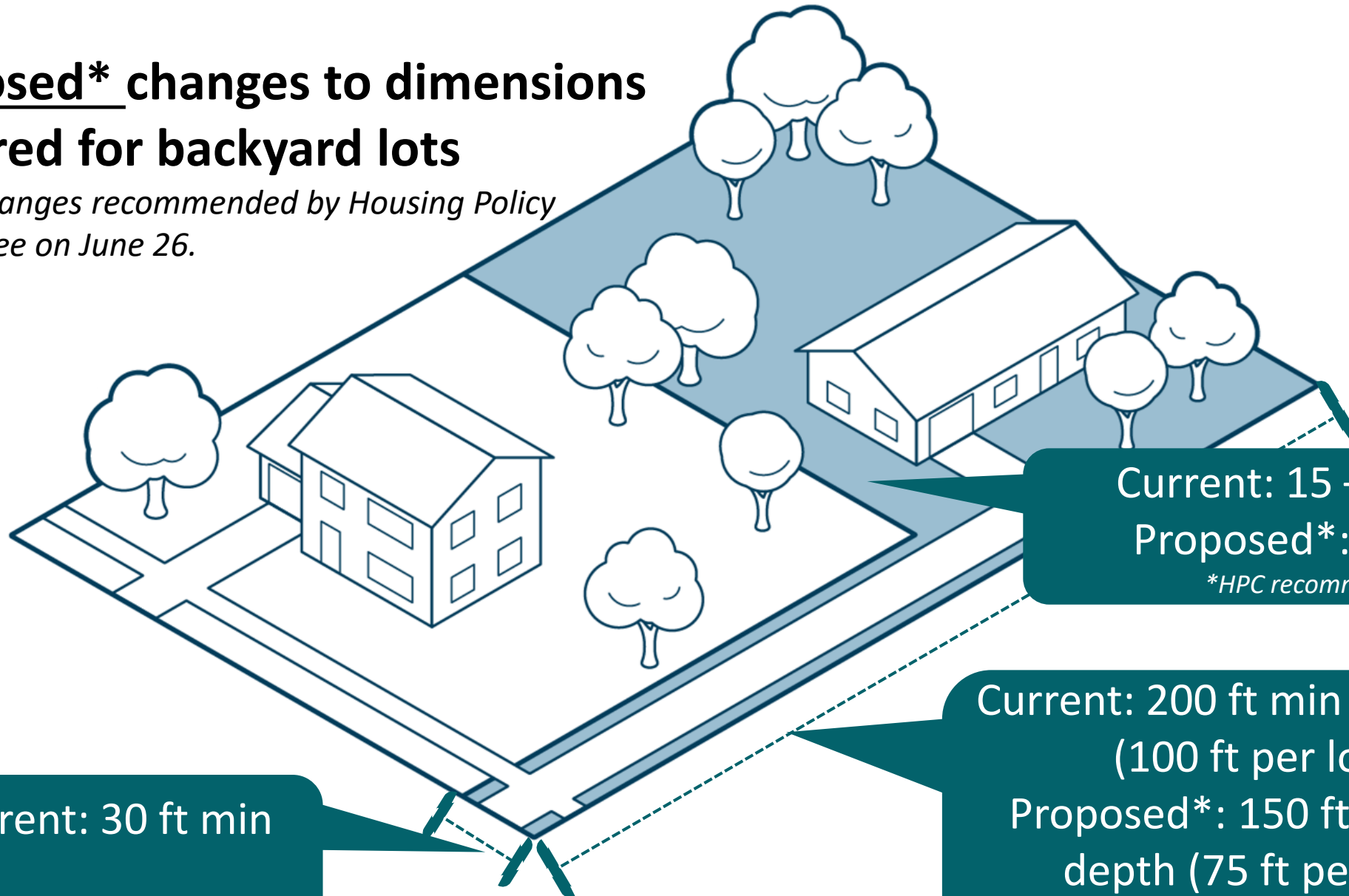






Proposed* changes to dimensions required for backyard lots

**With changes recommended by Housing Policy Committee on June 26.*



Current: 15 – 30 ft min

Proposed*: 15 ft min

**HPC recommendation*

Current: 200 ft min lot depth
(100 ft per lot)

Proposed*: 150 ft min lot
depth (75 ft per lot)

**HPC recommended reducing from
160 ft or 80 ft per lot*

Current: 30 ft min

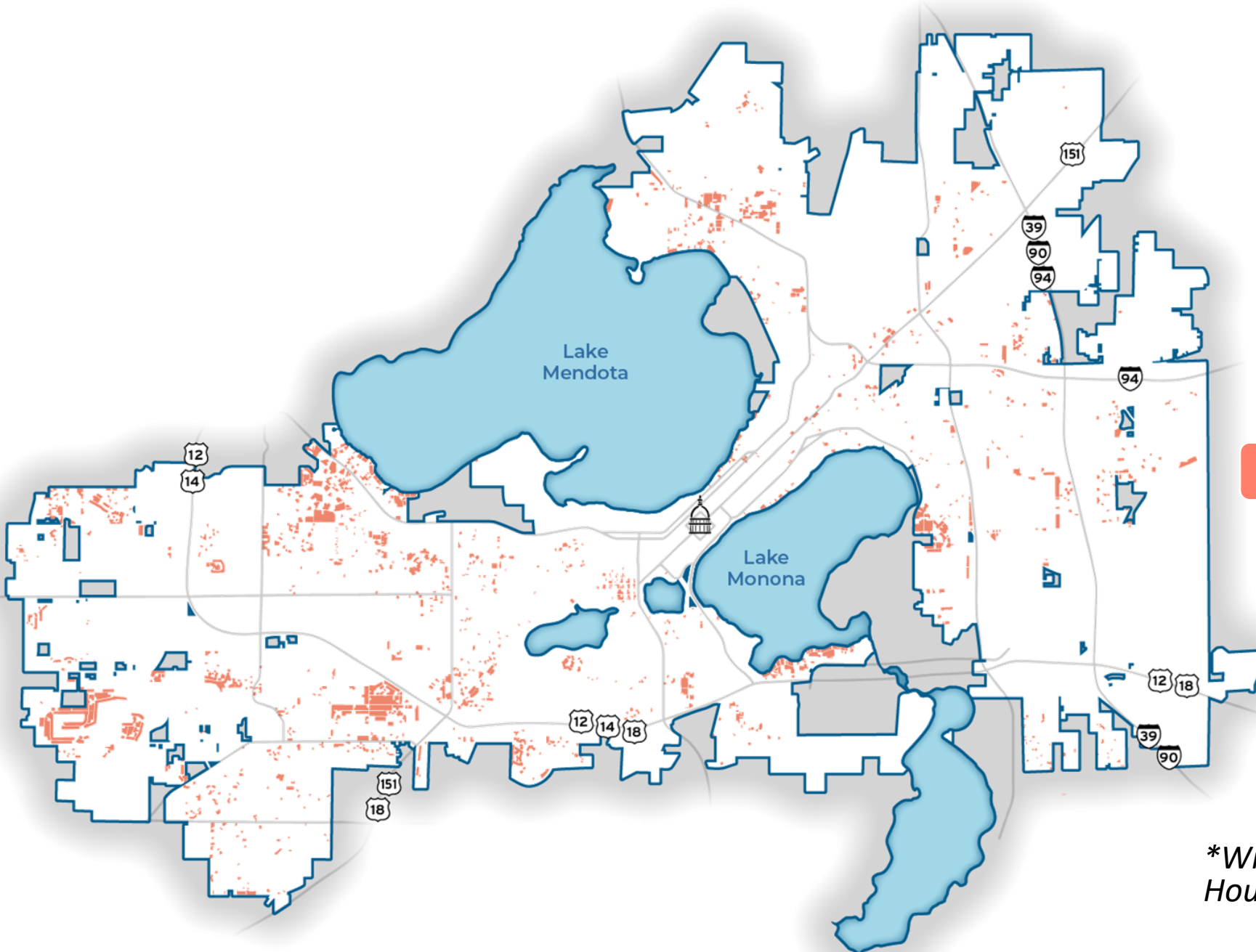
Proposed: 10 ft min




Basic lot characteristics that may enable a property to facilitate a backyard lot with the proposed* changes:

Zoning District(s)	Lot Depth*	Lot Size (must be at least twice the minimum lot size for the zoning district)	Lot Width at Street (must be 10' wider than the minimum lot width for the zoning district)
SR-C1	150'	16,000 sq. ft.	70'
SR-C2 or TR-C1	150'	12,000 sq. ft.	60'
SR-C3	150'	16,000 sq. ft.	60'
TR-C2 or TR-C4	150'	8,000 sq. ft.	50'
TR-C3	150'	6,000 sq. ft.	40'
TRR	150'	52,272 sq. ft.	75'

**With changes recommended by Housing Policy Committee on June 26.*



 Lots meet basic size requirements under proposal* for “backyard lot” creation

**With changes recommended by Housing Policy Committee on June 26.*

Simplify small/medium-sized downtown development process



- Raises thresholds for conditional use review like other mixed-use areas
- More permitted uses to make Downtown development more predictable
- Design standards in zoning code continue to apply, processes for review by Urban Design Commission remain



Permitted Uses



- Allowed “by right”
- Reviewed administratively to make sure all ordinances are met
- Landmarks Commission / Urban Design Commission review when relevant

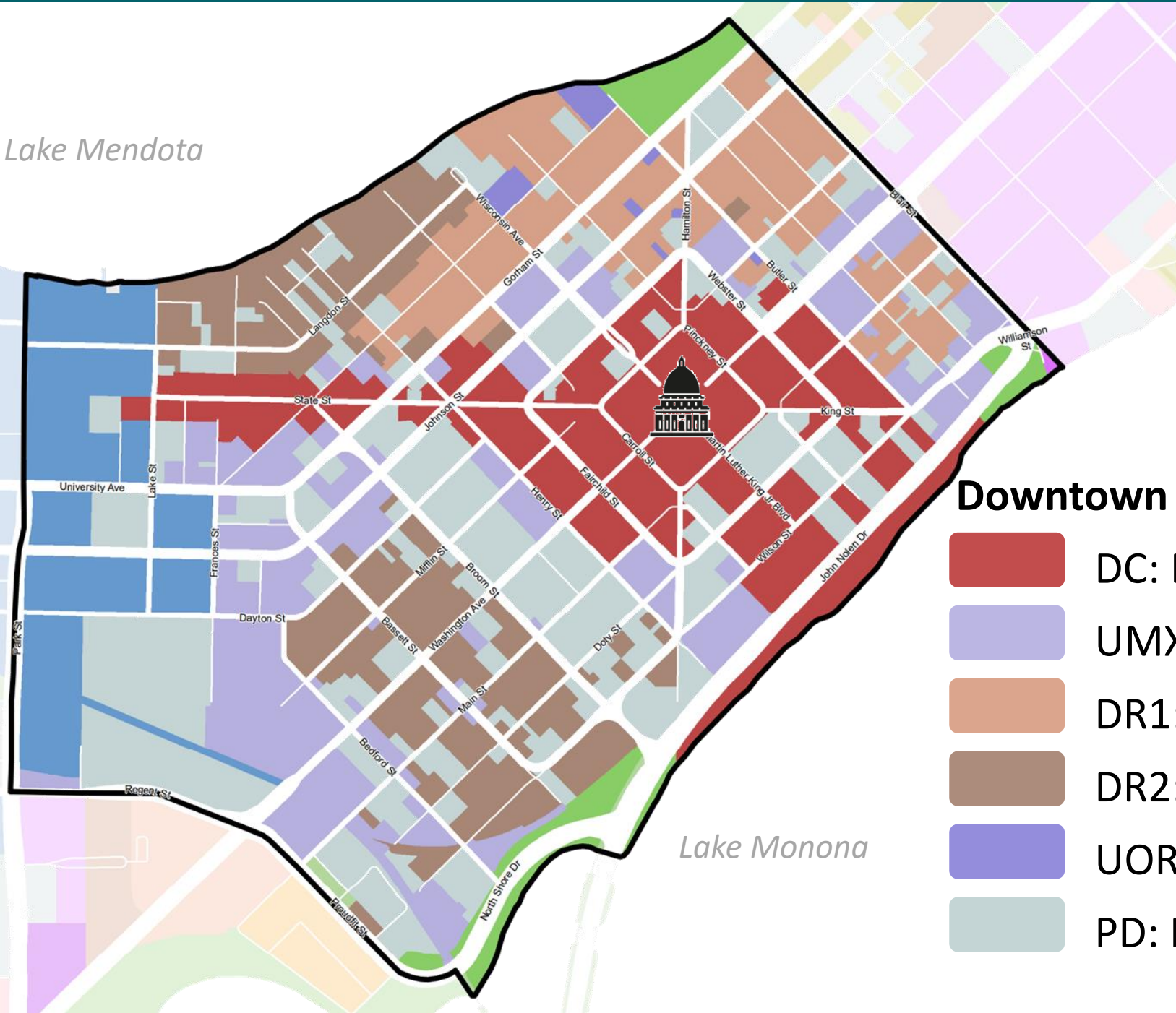
Conditional Uses



- Allowed when standards are met
- Reviewed by Plan Commission with Public Hearing, Landmarks & Urban Design Commission when relevant
- Reviewed administratively to make sure ordinances and special conditions of approval are met



Lake Mendota

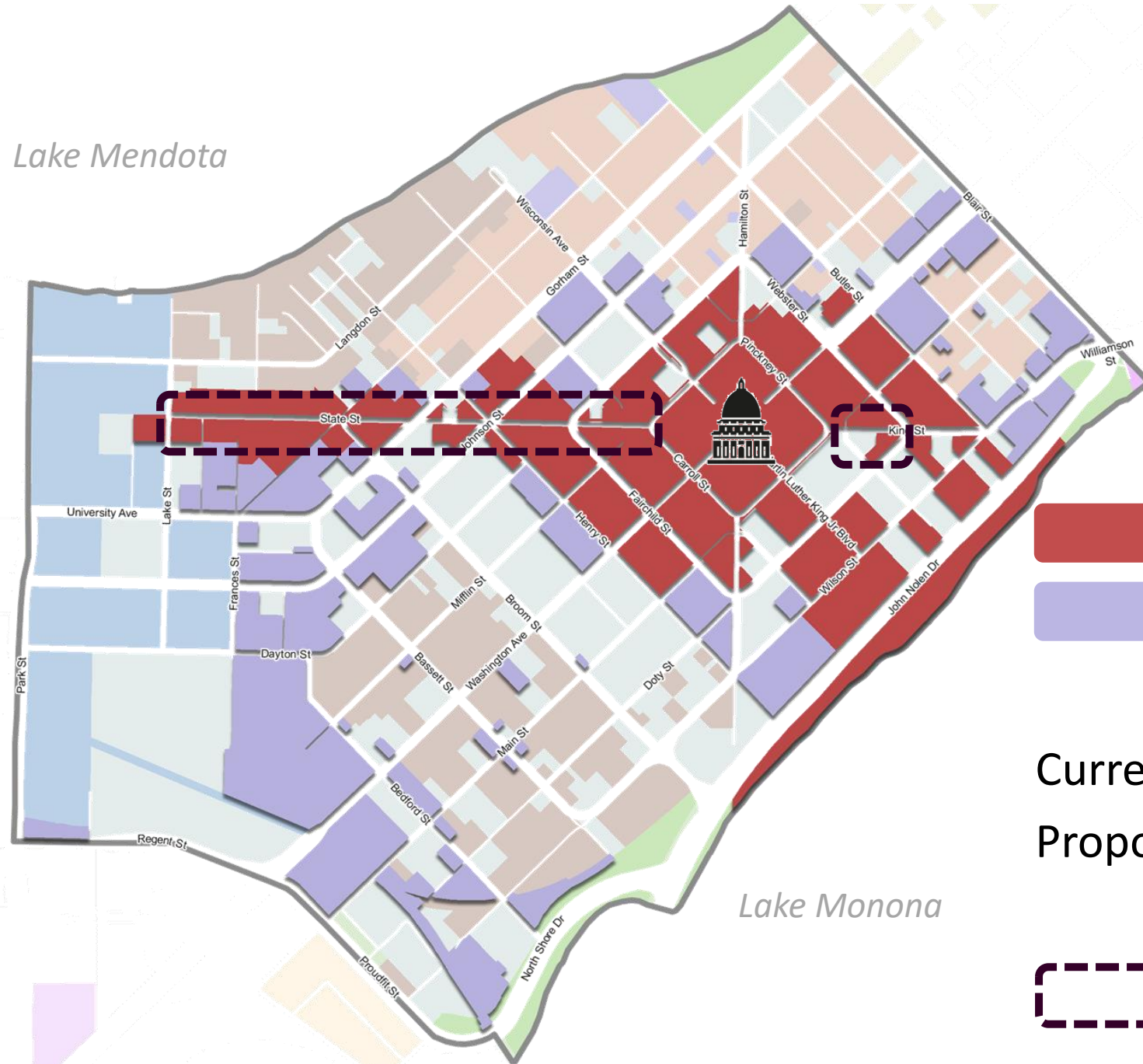


Downtown Zoning Districts

- DC: Downtown Core
- UMX: Urban Mixed-Use
- DR1: Downtown Residential 1
- DR2: Downtown Residential 2
- UOR: Urban Office Residential
- PD: Planned Development



Lake Mendota



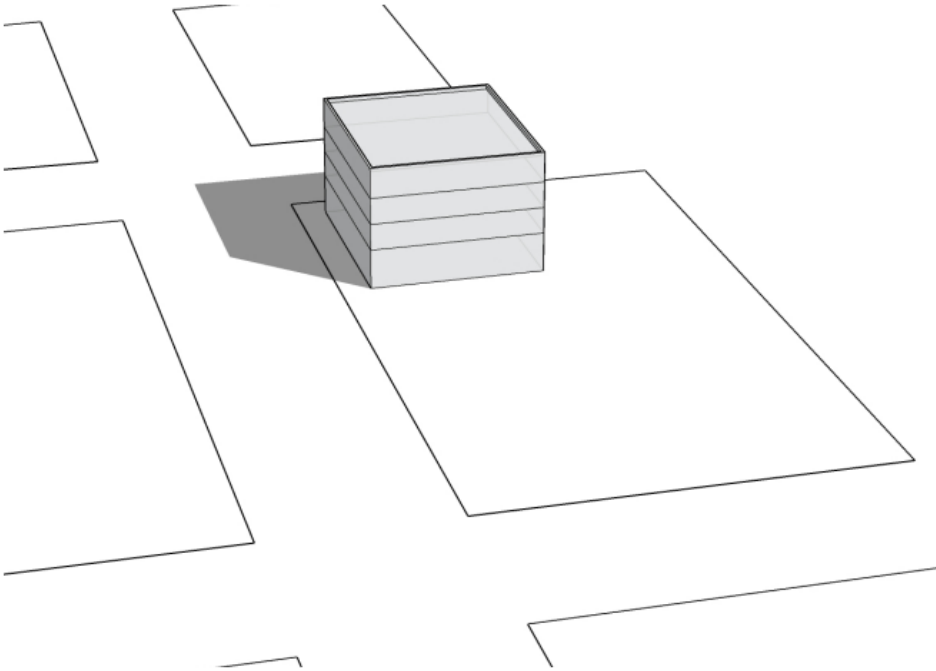
- DC: Downtown Core
- UMX: Urban Mixed-Use

Current threshold: >4 stories, 20K sq ft
Proposed threshold: >6 stories

State/King Exception

Current max size/height as permitted use:

- 20,000 sq ft total
- 4 stories



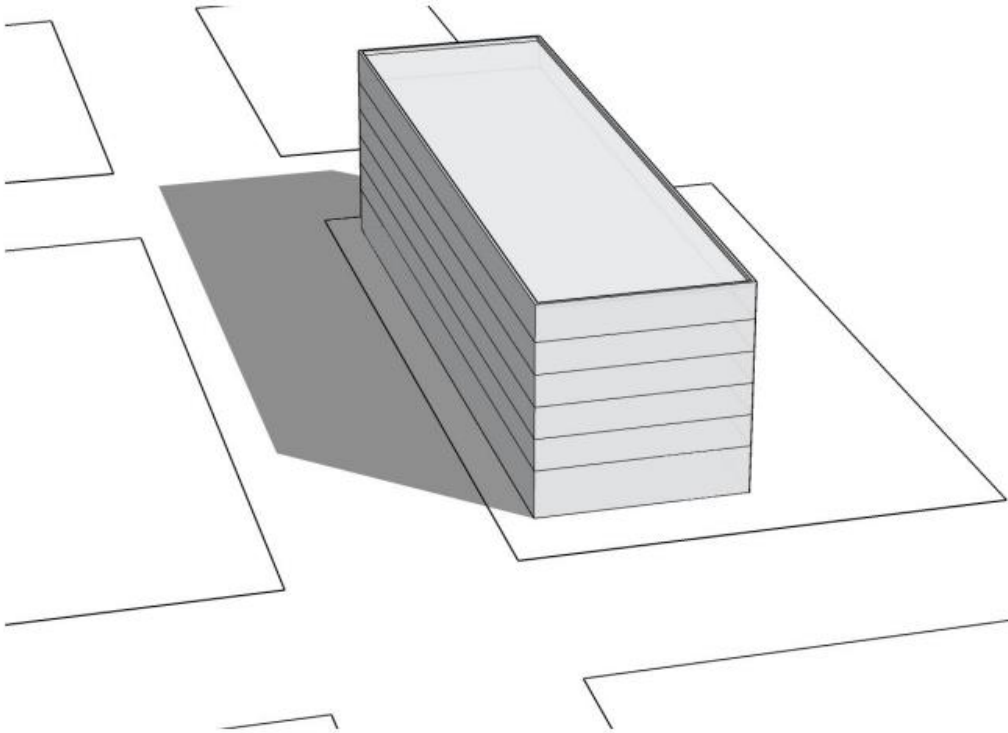
Example building mass that could be a permitted use in UMX zone today.



520 E Washington Ave. is a real-world example of a building below this threshold.

Proposed max height as permitted use:

- 6 stories



Example building mass that could be a permitted use in DC & UMX with this change.

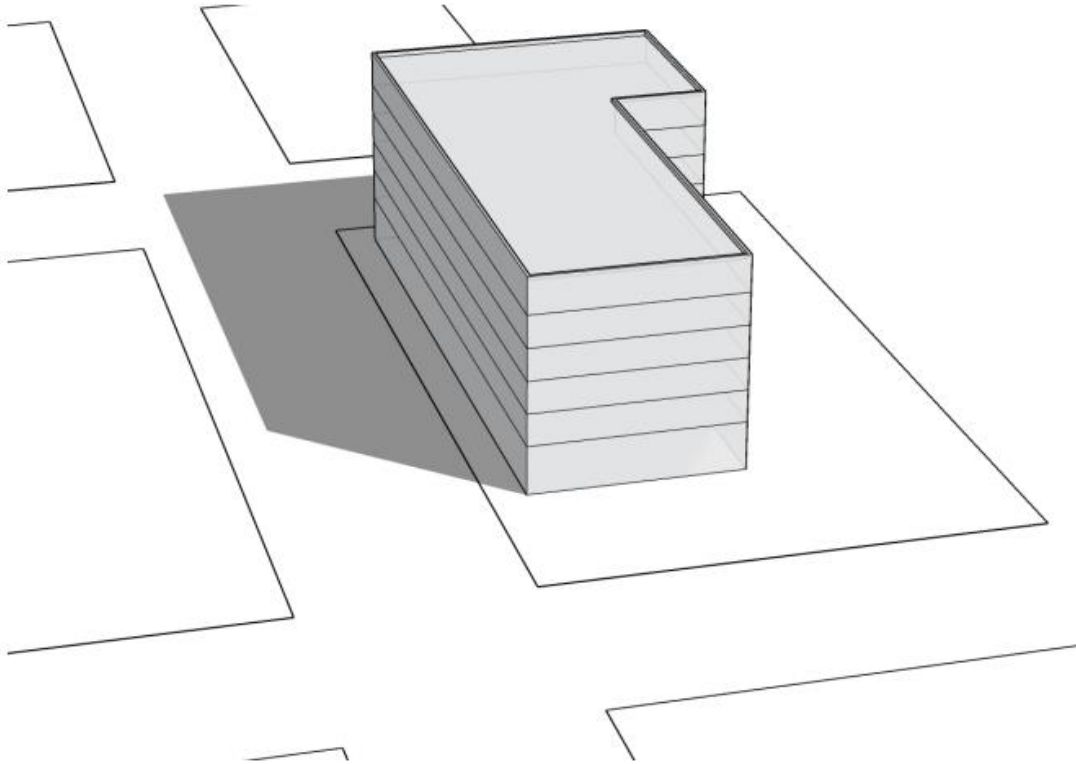


316 E Wilson St. is a real-world example of a building that this change would enable as a permitted use.



Proposed max height as permitted use:

- 6 stories



Example building mass that could be a permitted use in DC & UMX with this change.



27 N Webster St. is a real-world example of a building that this change would enable as a permitted use.

Conditional Use Thresholds Outside of Downtown



8 stories

- East Towne
- West Towne
- Oscar Mayer



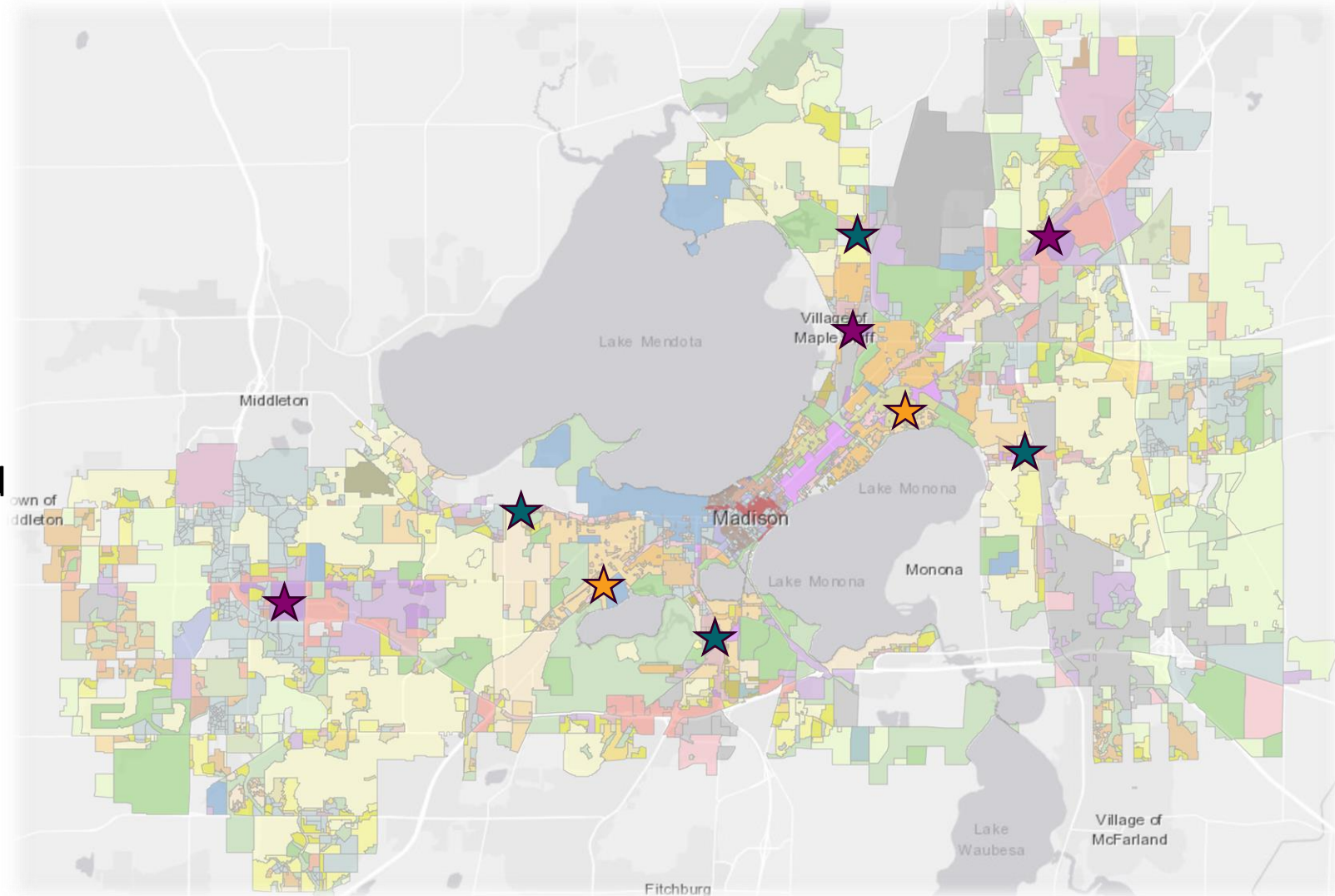
6 stories

- Northport Dr.
- Cottage Grove Rd
- S Park St
- University Ave



4 stories

- Atwood Ave
- Monroe St





Based on recent development activity, Conditional Use review still likely for most (re)development in DC & UMX zones.

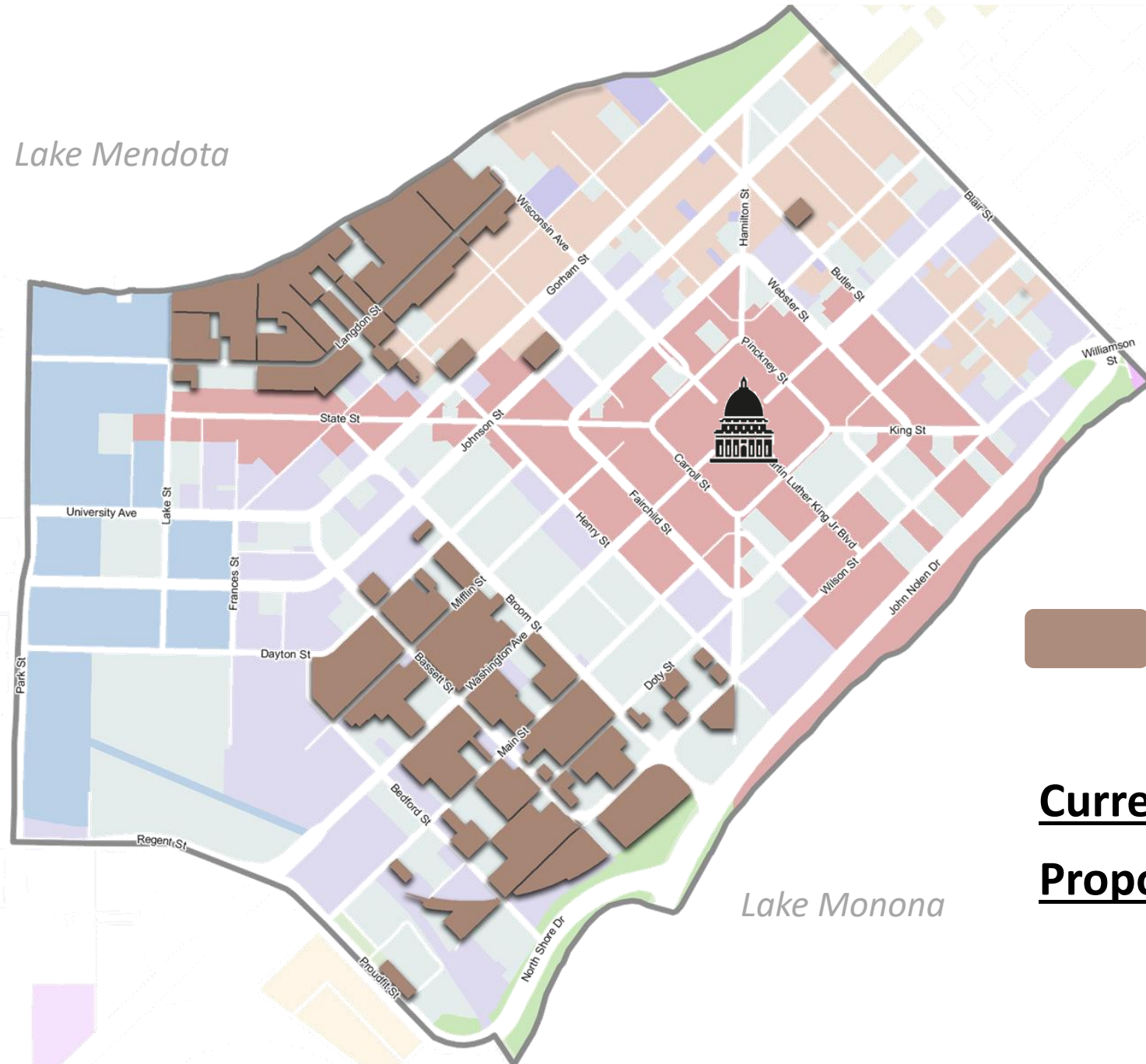




Proposed threshold: >12 housing units



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DR2: Downtown Residential 2

Current threshold: >8 housing units

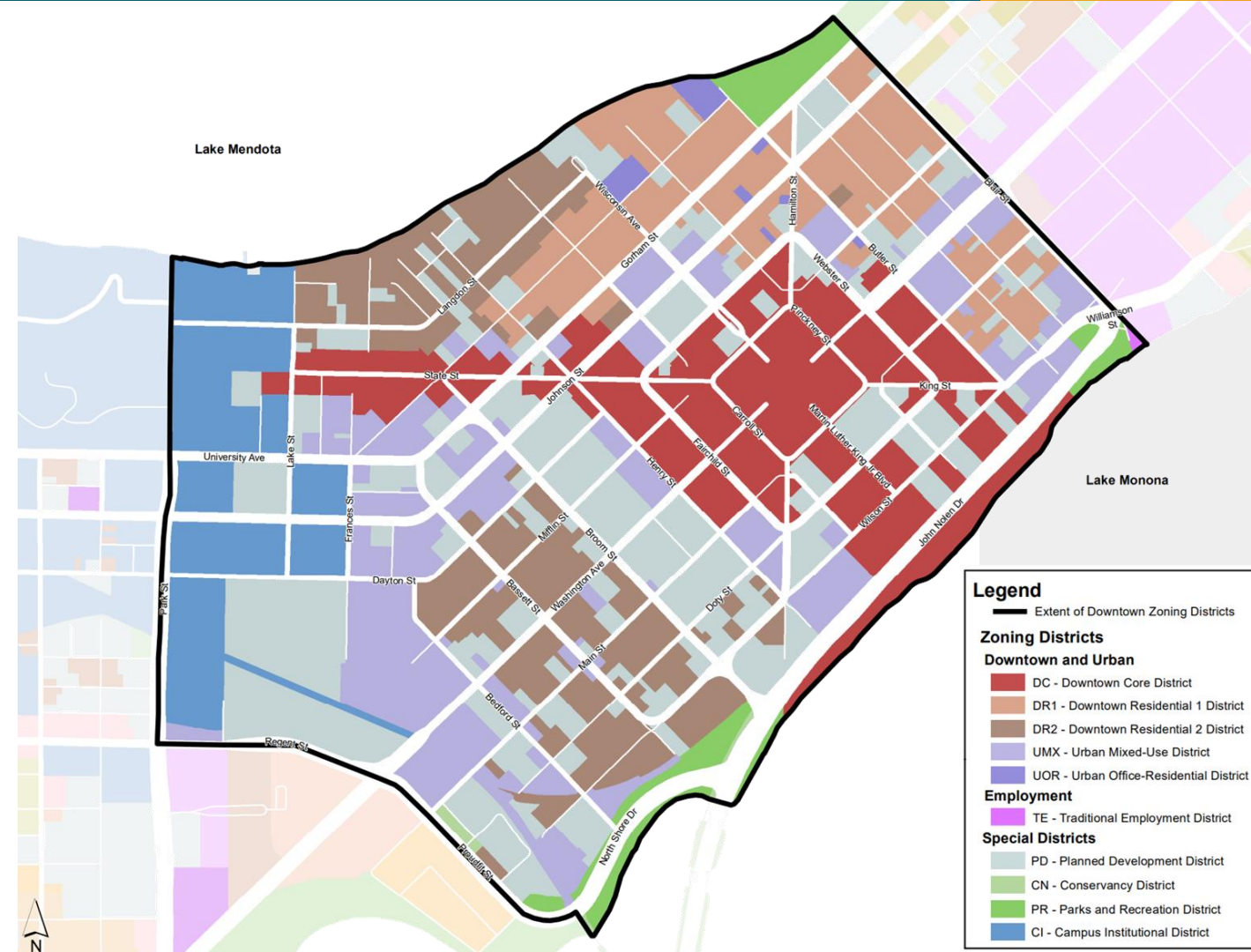
Proposed threshold: >36 housing units

Lake Monona



Design Review

- Downtown zoning districts include design standards that are applicable to permitted and conditional uses, administered by Zoning staff
- All projects within DC and UMX zones are also reviewed by UDC based on Downtown Urban Design Guidelines:
 - If a Permitted Use: UDC issues approval
 - If a Conditional Use: UDC provides advisory recommendation to PC
- In DR1 and DR2 zones, design standards in zoning apply; UDC reviews only if requested
- No proposed change, though some additional projects could become permitted uses



Landmarks Review



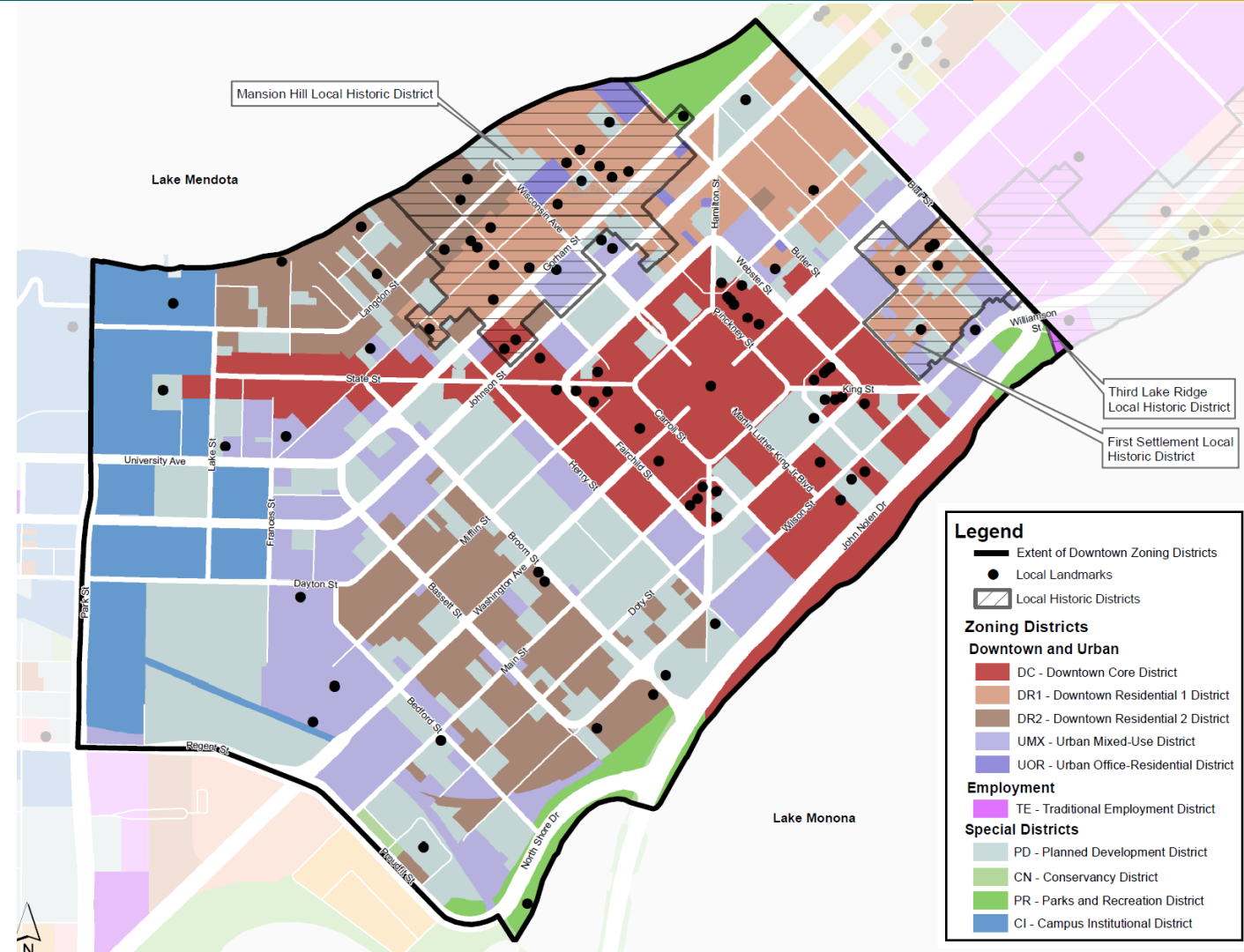
Certificate of Approval

- Required for properties with a local landmark designation and/or within a locally-designated historic district, for Permitted or Conditional Uses.
- Landmarks Commission reviews and issues approval per standards of MGO 41, Subchapter F.

Advisory Recommendations

- Applies to development adjacent to a landmark site when PC or UDC reviews

No proposed change, though some additional projects could become permitted uses.





Previous BCC Recommendations

Housing Policy Committee

Monday, June 26, 4:30 pm

(In Person - Madison Municipal Building Rm 215)

Community Information Meeting

Wednesday, July 2, 6:00 pm

(Virtual – Zoom)

Plan Commission

Monday, July 7, 5:30 pm

(Virtual – Zoom)



Common Council

Tuesday, July 15, 5:30 pm

(Hybrid – City County Building Rm 201 or Zoom)

Questions & Discussion

City Council July 15, 2025

