

Medford Square City Hall Overlay District Zoning Amendment

Adopted by the City Council 4/14/2026

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Amend Section 94-2.3. Overlay and Special Districts.

Add the following row to the list of overlay and special districts:

Medford Square City Hall Overlay District	MSO
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Amend Section 94-3.2 c Table of Use Regulations (Table A) by incorporating the following table into the existing table and renumbering as appropriate:

		Medford Square City Hall Overlay District	
		MSO	
A. RESIDENTIAL USES			
1. Detached one unit dwelling	N		2 per Dwelling Unit
2. Attached one-unit dwelling (Rowhouse)	N		1.5 per Dwelling Unit ⁴
3. Detached two unit dwelling (Duplex)	N		1.5 per Dwelling Unit ⁴
4. Three-unit dwelling, detached	N		1.5 per Dwelling Unit ⁴
5. Multiplex (4-6 units)	N		1.5 per Dwelling Unit ⁴
6. Multiple dwelling, (> 6 units)	Y		1.5 per Dwelling Unit ⁴
7. Dormitory, fraternity or sorority house	N		1 per 4 beds
8. Lodging or boarding house	CDB		1 per Guestroom
9. Senior housing facility	CDB		1 per 2 Units
10. Co-housing	CDB		1.5 per Dwelling Unit ⁴
11. Congregate Housing	N		1.5 per Dwelling Unit ⁴
12. Townhouse	N		1.5 per Dwelling Unit ⁴
13. Historic Conversion	Y		1.5 per Dwelling Unit ⁴
B. COMMUNITY USES			
1. Museum	Y		1 per 750 s.f.
2. Community center or adult recreational center, nonprofit	Y		1 per 750 s.f.
3. Use of land or structures for religious purposes on land owned or	Y		1 per 140 s.f.

leased by a religious sect or denomination				
4. Use of land or structures for educational purposes on land owned or leased by the Commonwealth or any of its agencies, subdivisions or bodies politic or by a religious sect or denomination or by a nonprofit educational corporation	Y		1 per 750 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.

	MSO	PC ⁵	LC
5. Child care center or school aged child care program	Y	1 per 750 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
6. Public fire station	Y	1 per 2 employees	1/50,000 s.f.
7. Public library	Y	1 per 750 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
8. Other municipal uses	Y	NA	NA
9. Essential Services	CDB	NA	NA
10. Hospital, non-profit	N	1 per 4 beds	1/15,000 s.f.
11. Other Institution	CDB	1 per 750 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
C. OPEN RECREATIONAL AND AGRICULTURAL USES			
1. Private open recreational uses, available to the public	Y	1 per 750 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
2. Public open recreational uses	Y	1 per 750 s.f.	NA
3. Exempt Agriculture	Y	NA	NA
4. Production of crops, horticulture and floriculture	N	NA	1/15,000 s.f.
5. Keeping and raising of livestock, including animal stable or kennel	N	NA	1/15,000 s.f.
D. COMMERCIAL USES			
1. Private entertainment or recreation facility excluding adult uses	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
2. Public entertainment or recreation facility	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
3. Private nonprofit members only recreational club or lodge	Y	1 per 750 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
4. Trade, professional, or other school operated for profit	Y	1 per 750 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.

5. Hotel	Y	1 per Guestroom	1/15,000 s.f.
6. Mortuary, undertaking of funeral establishment	N	1 per 140 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
7. Adult use	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
8. Brewery or taproom ¹	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
9. Artisanal Fabrication	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.

	MSO	PC ⁵	LC
10. Artistic/Creative Production	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
11. Work-Only Artists' Studio	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
12. Co-working Space	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
13. Retail Store or Shop for Sale of Custom Work or Articles Made on the Premises	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
E. OFFICE USES			
1. Business, professional, or government office	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
2. Bank and other financial institution	CDB	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
3. Neighborhood Medical Office	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
4. Medical Office	CDB	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
5. Clinic	CDB	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
F. RETAIL AND SERVICE USES			
1. Retail Sales ²	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
2. Convenience retail ²	Y	1 per 500 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
3. Neighborhood retail	Y	1 per 750 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
4. Drive through retail sales and consumer service	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
5. Consumer service establishment	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
6. Body art establishment	Y	1 per 850 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
7. Adult Use Marijuana Establishment—Cultivation	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
8. Adult Use Marijuana Establishment—Manufacture and processing	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
9. Adult Use Marijuana Establishment—Retail	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.

10. Adult Use Marijuana Establishment— Independent laboratory	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
11. Doggy Daycare	N		

	MSO	PC ⁵	LC
G. EATING, DRINKING, AND ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENTS			
1. Eating place, without drive through	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
2. Eating place, with drive through	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
3. Neighborhood Café	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
H. MOTOR VEHICLE RELATED USES			
1. Motor vehicle light service station	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
2. Motor vehicle repair establishment	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
3. Motor vehicle sales or rental of new vehicles only, accessory storage entirely within enclosed structure	N	1 per 1,040 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
4. Outdoor motor vehicle sales and storage accessory to H.3	N	NA	NA
5. Motor Vehicle sales and storage, outdoors	N	NA	NA
6. Class II used motor vehicle sales	N	NA	NA
7. Motor vehicle wash within enclosed structure	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
I. MISCELLANEOUS COMMERCIAL USES			
1. Parking area or garage not accessory to permitted principal use	Y	NA	NA
2. Parking area or garage accessory to a principal use which is on the same lot as a conforming principal use	Y	NA	NA
3. Parking area or garage accessory to a principal use which is within 500 feet of a conforming principal use but not necessarily in the same district	Y	NA	NA
4. Parking area or garage accessory to a principal use which is on the same lot as a nonconforming principal use	Y	NA	NA

	MSO	PC ⁵	LC
5. Parking area or garage accessory to a principal use which is within 500 feet of a conforming principal use in the same MUZ district ³	N	NA	NA
6. Municipal Parking area or garage as a principal use	Y	NA	NA
7. Open Storage	N	1 per 1,400 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
8. Moving of land	N	NA	NA
9. Radio and television tower	N	NA	NA
10. Solar energy system	Y	NA	NA
J. WHOLESALE, TRANSPORTATION, INDUSTRIAL USES			
1. Fuel and ice sales	N	1 per 1,400 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
2. Motor freight terminal	N	NA	NA
3. Printing and publishing	N	1 per 1,400 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
4. Railroad right-of-way	Y	NA	NA
5. Manufacturing	N	1 per 2 employees	1/50,000 s.f.
6. Research and testing laboratory	N	1 per 2 employees	1/50,000 s.f.
7. Plumbing or carpentry shop, and other similar service or repair shops	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
8. Wholesale bakery or food processing plant	N	1 per 2 employees	1/15,000 s.f.
9. Wholesale laundry, cleaner, dyer, or similar use	N	1 per 1,400 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
10. Warehouse, Wholesale establishment	N	1 per 1,400 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
11. Mini or self-storage warehouse	N	1 per 1,400 s.f.	1/50,000 s.f.
12. Distillery or winery	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
13. Food Production Facility ⁷	Y	1 per 2 employees	1/50,000 s.f.

14. Life Sciences Facility	N	1 per 2 employees	1/50,000 s.f.
15. Light Manufacturing ⁷	Y	1 per 2 employees	1/50,000 s.f.
16. Maker Space	Y	1 per 2 employees	1/50,000 s.f.
17. Shared-use Kitchen	CDB	1 per 1,000 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.

	MSO	PC ⁵	LC
K. ACCESSORY USES			
1. Accessory Dwelling Units (see § 94-8.2)	N	Per § 94-8.2	NA
2. Home occupation (see § 94-3.4)		1 per 350 s.f.	NA
As of right	Y		
By special permit	Y	1 per 350 s.f.	NA
3. Accessory child care center or school aged child care program	Y	1 per 2 employees	
4. Family day care home	Y	1 per 2 employees	NA
5. Family day care home, large	Y	1 per 2 employees	NA
6. Adult day care home	CDB	1 per 2 employees	NA
7. Renting of one or two rooms without separate cooking facilities to lodgers within a dwelling unit to one or two total lodgers	Y	1 per Guestroom	NA
8. Noncommercial greenhouse, tool shed, or similar accessory structure	N	NA	NA
9. Swimming pool	Y	NA	NA
10. Scientific research and development, as provided at section 94-3.3.3.1	Y	NA	NA
11. Keno	CDB	NA	NA
12. Open Storage	N	1 per 1,400 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
13. Heavy repair operations	N	1 per 350 s.f.	1/15,000 s.f.
L. OTHER PRINCIPAL USES			
1. Mixed-Use, Community	N		
2. Mixed-Use, Development	Y		

Notes:

¹ For Breweries operating with seven barrels or under - Y.
For Breweries operating with more than seven barrels - BA.

² Requires site plan review; see s. 11.7.2.

³ Measured to the closest point of the structure.

⁴ Incentives for alternative residential parking requirements, except in the MSD.

Affordable housing units	.5 per Dwelling Unit
Located within ½ mile of high-frequency transit	.8 per Dwelling Unit

Incentives for residential parking requirements within the MSD: The minimum parking requirement can be reduced to 0.8 per dwelling unit by meeting the requirements in Section 94-9.7.9 Reductions to parking space requirements.

⁵ Notwithstanding the above tables, nonresidential uses with 5,000 square feet or less of gross leasable floor area exempt from any minimum.

⁶ Parking as a principal use is only permitted north of High Street, between Hillside Ave. and Forest St.

⁷ Five thousand (5,000) or less Gross Floor Area (GFA) – Y.
More than five thousand (5,000) GFA – CDB

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Amend Section 94-4.1 Table of Dimensional Requirements (Table B.3) by incorporating the following table:

Dimensions	MSO
Lot Area sf (Min)	4,000 sf
Frontage (Min)	40ft
Façade Build Out (Min)	80% ³
Active Ground Floor (Min)	60% ³
Residential Density (Units per lot) (Min-Max):	-
Historical Conversion (Max) ¹	Y
Max Base Height (Stories)	8
Max Incentive Height (Stories)	5
Front (Min/Max)	0/20 ft
Side	0 ft
Rear	0 ft
Building Coverage (Max)	90%
Green Score ²	25
Pervious Surface ² (Min)	10%
Open Space (Min)	10%

¹Maximum permissible number of units is determined dividing the Gross Floor Area of the existing principal structure by nine hundred (900) sf. Each unit within the existing building must have a minimum area of nine hundred (900) sf. Additions and expansions to the existing building shall not increase the number of units allowed.

²The Green Score only applies to the construction of any new principal building or major renovation that:

- a) Is located within the FEMA National Flood Hazard Layers; or
- b) Requires Site Plan Review

In those cases, Pervious Surface requirement does not apply.

³ Active Ground Floor and Façade Build Out requirements shall not apply to parking garage structures not accessory to a permitted principal use.

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Amend Section 94-12.0 Definitions by amending the following definitions:

Building Coverage: The maximum area of a lot that is permitted to be covered by the combination of principal buildings, accessory buildings, and accessory structures. The building coverage of a structure is measured from the outside of the exterior walls at the ground story, including covered porches and building components.

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94-9.6 MEDFORD SQUARE CITY HALL OVERLAY DISTRICT

94-9.6.1. Purpose. The purpose of the Medford Square City Hall Overlay District (MSO) is to allow a mix of uses, including lower-scale residential, multifamily, and commercial to meet the following needs for the Square:

1. Wide variety of uses and building types to support jobs and economic development near established residential neighborhoods, providing options for living within walking distance of jobs, goods, and services.
2. Mixed-use, multifamily, and commercial uses at a density appropriate to walkable, urban corridor.
3. To facilitate the redevelopment of multiple City-owned parcels of land within Medford Square.

94-9.6.2. Applicability. The MSO establishes an overlay district to apply over the existing zoning districts and is shown on the Zoning Map, City of Medford, Massachusetts, as amended. An applicant may develop within this district in accordance with the provisions of Section 94-9.6 and other relevant sections of the Zoning Ordinance. Any land contained within the MSO shall be subject to all of the provisions of this Section and only to other sections of this Ordinance where specifically incorporated by reference herein. The provisions of Sections 94-6.2 (Signs), 94-6.1 (Parking and Loading), 94-8.1 (Inclusionary Housing), and 94-11.0 (Administration and Enforcement) shall apply to the MSO.

94-9.6.3. Dimensional Requirements.

1. **Side and Rear Setbacks.** If the purposed development is adjacent to an existing lot with a residential use of fewer than five (5) units, the applicant shall provide a landscaped buffer of at least ten (10) feet wide. The property owner shall maintain the buffer and landscaping.

2. **Multi-Buildings Lots.** In the MSO, lots may have more than one (1) principal building.
3. **Ground Floor Active Frontage.** Active uses are required on the ground floor of any building with its principal façade parallel to Salem Street, High Street, Riverside Avenue, and Clippership Drive subject to the Active Frontage percentages set forth in Section 94-4.1 Table of Dimensional Requirements (Table B). Active uses include retail, restaurant and cafés, personal services, other active commercial uses, publicly-accessible office or residential lobbies, and active building amenity spaces (e.g. gym or residential common space). Where active commercial uses are not feasible, the following may be substituted: residential stoops; a setback of green, open space or public space with seating; landscaping; public art, such as a mural or sculpture; or any use that provides an engaging ground floor.

94-9.6.4 Waivers . The following waivers are available to the Site Plan Review or Special Permit Granting Authority for projects within the MSO

1. **Height Waiver 1.** The limitation on height of buildings shall not apply to chimneys, ventilators, towers, silos, spires, or other ornamental features of buildings, which features are in no way used for living purposes and do not constitute more than twenty-five (25) percent of the ground floor area of the building.
2. **Height Waiver 2.** The minimum height requirement may be waived by a Special Permit from the Community Development Board for projects that are consistent with the purpose of the district and the goals of the Medford Comprehensive Plan.
3. **Drop-off zone.** The required setback distances may be waived to allow for a cut-out along the curb for loading and short term parking for deliveries or drop-off/pick-up zones. Such a cut-out must be coordinated with City staff. The required setback distances may also be waived to allow a development to meet the requirements of Chapter 91 of Mass. Gen. Laws.
4. **Energy-Efficiency.** The Site Plan Review Authority or Special Permit Granting Authority may waive the height and setbacks in 94-9.6.3 Dimensional Requirements to accommodate the installation of solar photovoltaic, solar thermal, living, and other eco-roofs, energy storage, and air-source heat pump equipment. Such installations shall not create a significant detriment to abutters in terms of noise or shadow and must be appropriately integrated into the architecture of the building and the layout of the site. The installations shall not provide additional habitable space within the development.

94-9.6.5. Development Standards and Design Guidelines.

1. ***Design Guidelines.*** The Community Development Board may adopt and amend, by simple majority vote, Design Standards which shall be applicable to all rehabilitation, redevelopment, or new construction submitted under this MSO. Such Design Guidelines may address the scale and proportions of building, the alignment, width, and grade of streets and sidewalks, the type and location of infrastructure, the location of building and garage entrances, off-street parking, the protection of significant natural site features, the location and design of on-site open spaces, exterior signs, and buffering in relation to adjacent properties. Design Guidelines may contain graphics illustrating a particular standard or definition to make such a standard or definition clear and understandable.
2. ***Applicability of Development Standards.*** The below Development Standards shall apply to all projects submitted under this MSO but are waivable by the Community Development Board in the interests of design flexibility and overall project quality and upon a finding of consistency of such variation with the overall purpose and objectives of the MSO. These standards, along with any Design Guidelines adopted under 94-6.5.1, above, are components of the Site Plan Review and Special Permit processes as defined in this Zoning Ordinance and are waivable within those processes.
3. ***Site Standards.***
 - a. ***Connections.*** Sidewalks shall provide direct connections among building entrances, the public sidewalk (if applicable), bicycle storage and parking.
 - b. ***Sidewalk Materials.*** Sidewalks shall be continuous across driveways, using the same materials and grade and level as the sidewalk on either side of the driveway. Sidewalk materials shall follow standards set by the City's Department of Engineering.
 - c. ***Vehicular access.*** Where feasible curb cuts shall be minimized, and shared driveways encouraged. Curb cuts for one-way access shall be no more than twelve (12) feet in width, while curb cuts for two-way traffic shall be no more than twenty (20) feet in width. Designated drop-off and pick-up areas for deliveries and ride-sharing companies should be incorporated to reduce conflicts associated with double-parking and blocking of bicycle lanes, crosswalks, and bus stops. These areas should be clearly marked with signs and conveniently located near entrances to buildings and major destinations.
 - d. ***Circulation.*** Parking and circulation on the site shall be organized to reduce the amount of impervious surface. Where possible, parking and loading

areas shall be connected to minimize curb cuts onto the public rights-of-way.

- e. *Open Space.* Open Space shall be contiguous, to the greatest extent feasible, and connected to the pedestrian network. Isolated pockets of space that cannot be accessed for maintenance are prohibited. Open Space may be either private or public. Public open space shall be in the front or side setback. A minimum third (1/3) of the requested open space, permeable, shall be landscaped.
- f. *Screening for Surface Parking.* Surface parking adjacent to a public sidewalk shall be screened by a landscaped buffer of sufficient width to allow the healthy establishment of trees, shrubs, and perennials, but no less than six (6) feet. The buffer may include a fence or wall of no more than three (3) feet in height unless there is a significant grade change between the parking and the sidewalk. Chain-link and vinyl fences are prohibited.
- g. *Parking Materials.* The parking surface may be concrete, asphalt, decomposed granite, bricks, or pavers, including pervious materials but not including grass or soil not contained within a paver or other structure.
- h. *Plantings.* Plantings shall include species that are native or adapted to the region. Plants on the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List, as may be amended, shall be prohibited.
- i. *Lighting.* Light levels shall meet or exceed the minimum design guidelines defined by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) and shall provide the illumination necessary for safety and convenience while preventing glare and overspill onto adjoining properties and reducing the amount of skyglow.
- j. *Mechanicals.* Mechanical equipment at ground level shall be screened by a combination of fencing and plantings. Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened if visible from a public right-of-way.
- k. *Dumpsters.* Dumpsters shall be screened by a combination of fencing and plantings. Dumpsters or other trash and recycling collection points located within the building are preferred.
- l. *Stormwater management.* Strategies that demonstrate the compliance of the construction activities and the proposed project with the most current versions of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Stormwater Management Standards, the Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook, Massachusetts Erosion Sediment and Control Guidelines, and

the City of Medford's Stormwater Management Rules and Regulations. The applicant shall also provide an Operations and Management Plan for both the construction activities and ongoing post-construction maintenance and reporting requirements.

4. General Building Standards

- a. *Position relative to the principal street.* The primary building shall have its principal façade and entrance facing the principal street.
- b. *Entries.* Where feasible, entries shall be clearly defined and linked to a paved pedestrian network that includes the public sidewalk.

5. Multiple buildings on a lot.

- a. *Location of Mixed Uses.* For a mixed-use development, uses may be mixed within the buildings
- b. *Orientation.* The orientation of multiple buildings on a lot should reinforce the relationships among the buildings. All building façade(s) shall be treated with the same care and attention in terms of entries, fenestration, and materials.
- c. *Position relative to the street.* Building(s) adjacent to a public street shall have a pedestrian entry facing that public street.

6. Mixed-use development.

- a. *Access.* In a mixed-use building, access to and egress from the residential component shall be clearly differentiated from access to other uses. Such differentiation may occur by using separate entrances or egresses from the building or within a lobby space shared among different uses.
- b. *Connections.* Paved pedestrian access from the residential component shall be provided to residential parking and amenities and to the public sidewalk, as applicable. Paved surfaces may include pervious paving materials.
- c. *Material Storage.* Materials for non-residential uses shall be stored inside or under cover and shall not be accessible to residents of the development.
- d. *Shared Outdoor Space.* Multi-family housing and mixed-use development shall have common outdoor space that all residents can access. Such space may be in any combination of ground floor, courtyard, rooftop, or terrace. All

outdoor space shall count towards the project's minimum Open Space requirement.

7. **Corner Lots.** A building on a corner lot shall indicate a primary entrance either along one of the street-facing façades or on the primary corner as an entrance serving both streets.
 - a. *Connections.* Such entries shall be connected by a paved surface to the public sidewalk, if applicable.
8. **Parking.** Accessory parking shall be subordinate in design and location to the principal building façade.
 - a. *Surface parking.* Surface parking shall be located to the rear or side of the principal building. Parking shall not be in the setback between the building and any lot line adjacent to the public right-of-way.
 - b. *Integrated garages.* The principal pedestrian entry into the building shall be more prominent in design and placement than the vehicular entry into the garage.
 - c. *Parking structures.* Accessory above-grade parking structures (stand-alone or within a residential, commercial, or mixed-use building) shall be subordinate in design and placement to the primary uses.
 - d. *Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Spaces.* One (1) EV charging space is required for every twenty (20) parking spaces, rounded up to the next highest number of EV stations.
 - e. *Bicycle parking.* For a multi-family development or a mixed-use development, a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the required bicycle spaces shall be covered or integrated into the structure of the building(s). E-bike storage is only permitted in an area that is separated from the dwelling units by a fire-rated structure.

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