

City of Charleston



ARTICLE 3 HEIGHT REGULATIONS

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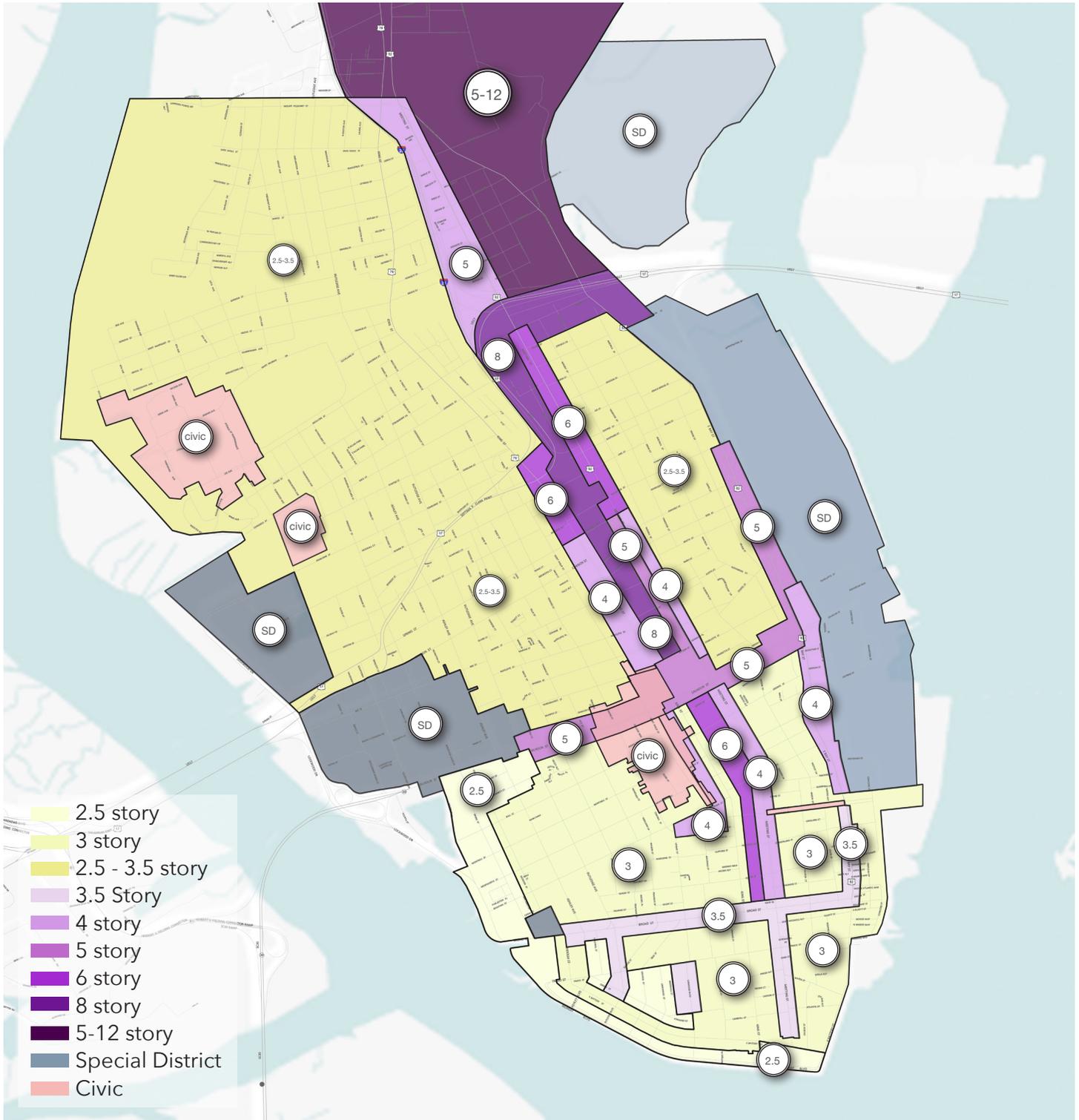
PREPARED BY DPZ PARTNERS
4 OCTOBER 2016



CITY OF CHARLESTON

CITY OF CHARLESTON, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

75 CALHOUN STREET, THIRD FLOOR, CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29401 843-724-3781 FAX: 843-724-3772 WWW.CHARLESTON-SC.GOV





CITY OF CHARLESTON

HEIGHTS MAP

CITY OF CHARLESTON, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

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Sec 54-306: General to all zones

1. Heights shall be measured in stories or feet as specified.
2. Maximum height, if specified in feet shall be taken from the average height of the sidewalk to the highest point of the structure.
3. Where heights of stories are specified in feet, the measurement shall be from finished floor to finished floor.
4. If a building is required to be raised per FEMA requirements that same height shall be applied to the maximum height allowed, up to a maximum of 6 feet.
5. Floors shall be measured in the following manner:
 - i. The maximum height of any residential floor shall be 12 feet, unless otherwise specified. Any dimension above this shall constitute a second floor.
 - ii. The minimum height of any residential floor shall not be less than 10 feet.
 - iii. Residential ground floors shall be raised a minimum 2 feet above the average height of the sidewalk.
 - iv. The maximum height of any commercial story shall be 20 feet, unless otherwise specified. Any dimension above this shall constitute a second floor.
 - v. The minimum height of any commercial floor shall not be less than 14 feet, unless otherwise specified.
6. Half stories shall be permitted as specified by zone. Half stories shall constitute a maximum 50% habitable use of the attic space.
7. Building height to roof eave shall not exceed twice the building width at frontage. The Board of Architectural Review may provide a **variance** based on architectural merit and context.
8. There shall be no minimum height requirement.
9. Appurtenances shall not be permitted to exceed the maximum height, unless otherwise specified.
10. No portion of a structure, which structure is within fifty (50) feet of an existing building rated "exceptional" (Group 1) or "excellent" (Group 2) on the Historic Architecture Inventory adopted by Section 54-235 shall exceed the height of such existing buildings unless approved by the Board of Architectural Review.



CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 2.5

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CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 2.5

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Sec 54-306.A: Height District 2.5

1. Maximum building height shall be 2.5 stories, up to 35 feet maximum.
2. The Board of Architectural Review may permit an additional half story by process of a **variance** based on architectural merit.



CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 3

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HEIGHT DISTRICT 3

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Sec 54-306.B: Height District 3

1. Maximum building height shall be 3 stories.
2. The attic shall not be habitable, eave to roof peak shall be no greater than 7 feet.
3. The commercial ground floor shall not exceed 14 feet.
4. The Board of Architectural Review may permit habitable attic space, as defined, by process of a **variance** based on architectural merit and context.

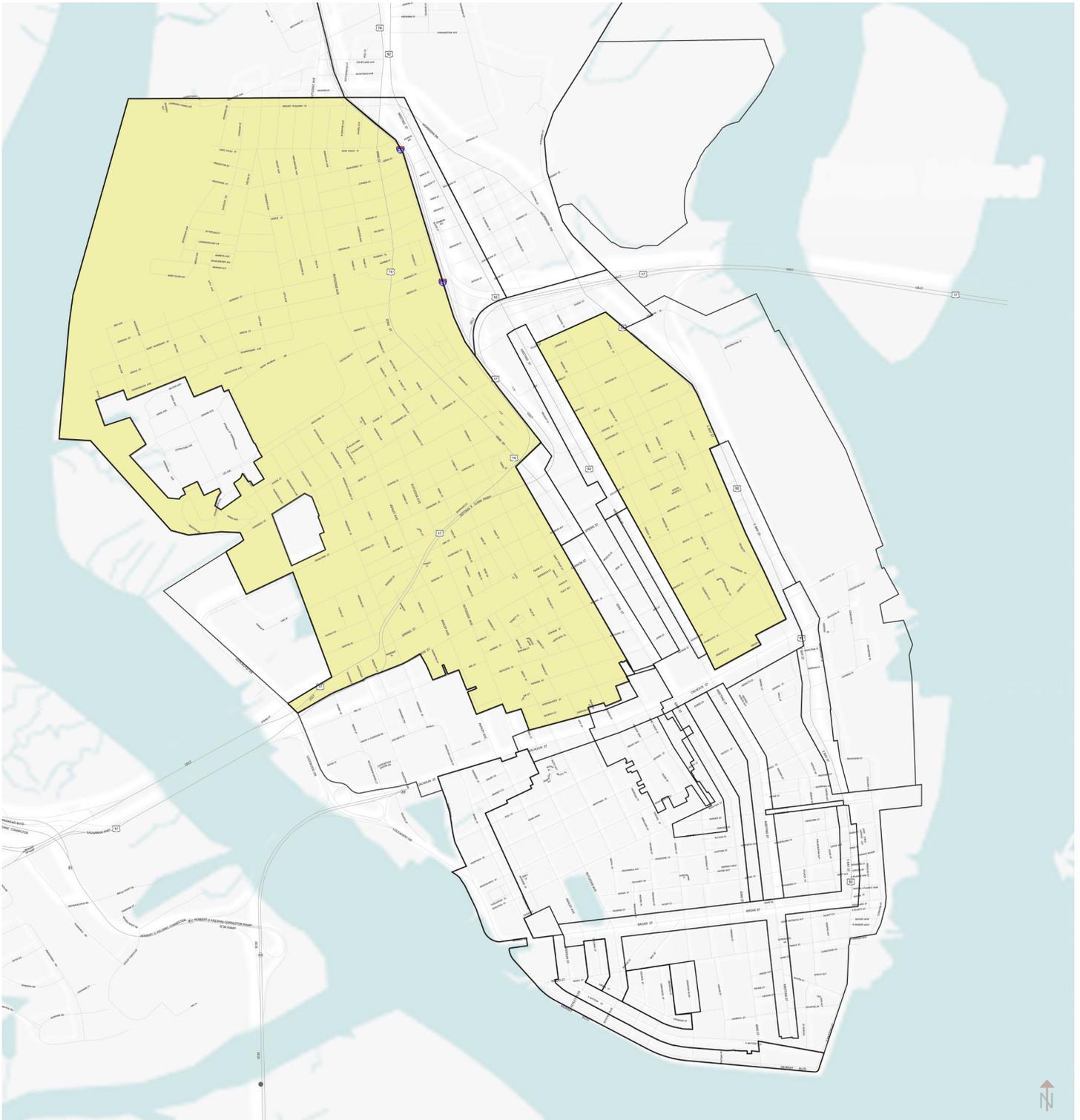


CITY OF CHARLESTON

HEIGHT DISTRICT 2.5 - 3.5

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HEIGHT DISTRICT 2.5 - 3.5

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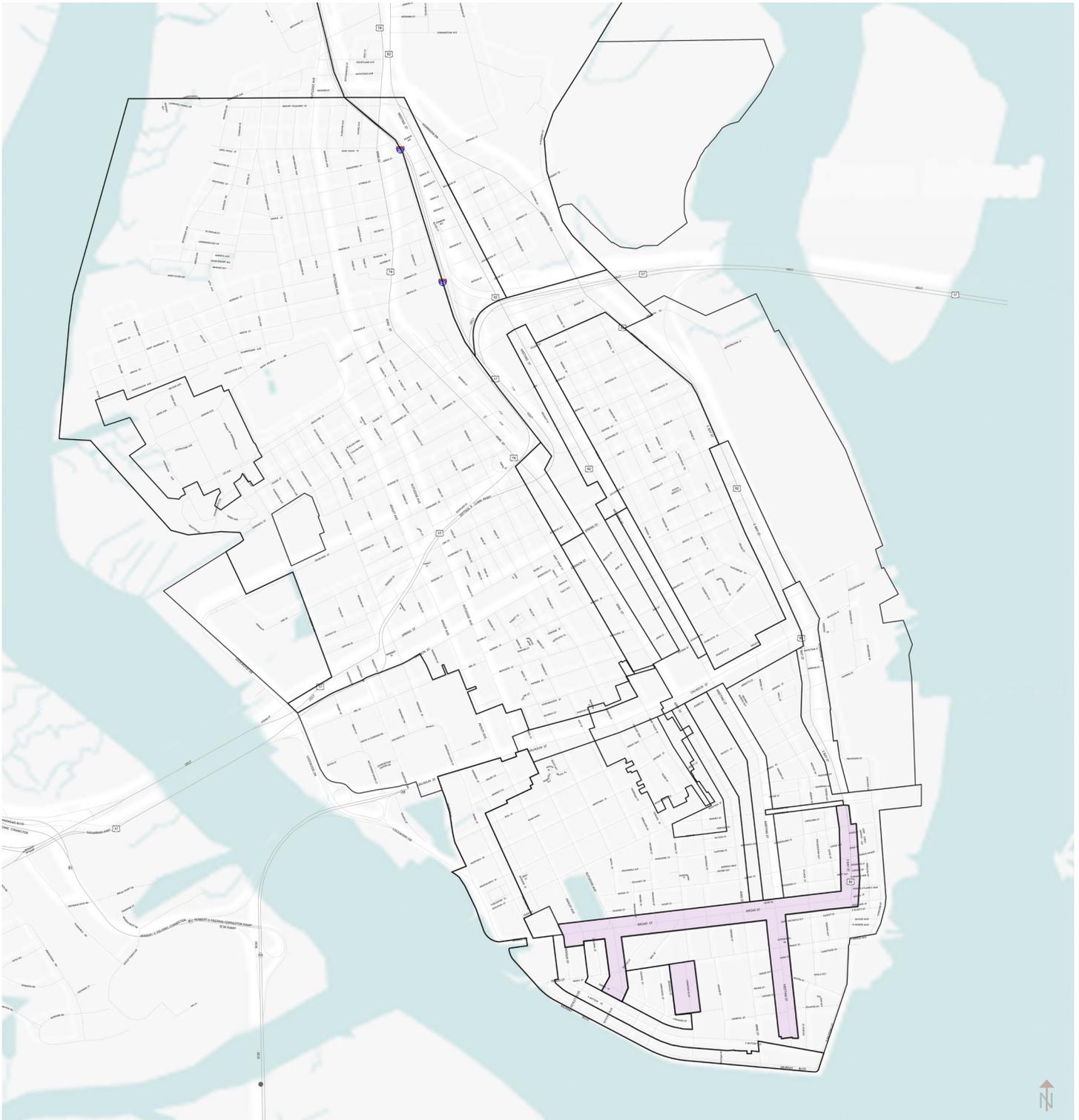
Sec 54-306.C: Height District 2.5 - 3.5

1. On ROW's greater than 50 feet, the building height shall be limited to a maximum 3 stories and a maximum height of 45 feet.
2. On ROW's between 35 feet to 50 feet, the building height shall be limited to a maximum of 3 stories, and shall also be limited by the ROW width of the street in height with a maximum 1:1 ratio. Maximum building height shall not exceed 45 feet. (i.e.: if a ROW is 40ft, the building shall not be taller than 40ft).
3. On ROW's less than 35ft the building height shall be limited to a maximum 2.5 stories.
4. For multi-family buildings, the Board of Architectural Review may permit up to 4 stories and up to a maximum 45 feet, for PUD's, and based on context.
5. Any structure that requires the ground floor be taller than 2 feet above average sidewalk height as per FEMA requirements, shall be allowed the equivalent in height up to a maximum of 50 feet.
6. The commercial ground floor shall not be less than 12 feet in height and shall have a maximum height of 16 feet.



CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 3.5

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HEIGHT DISTRICT 3.5

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Sec 54-306.D: Height District 3.5

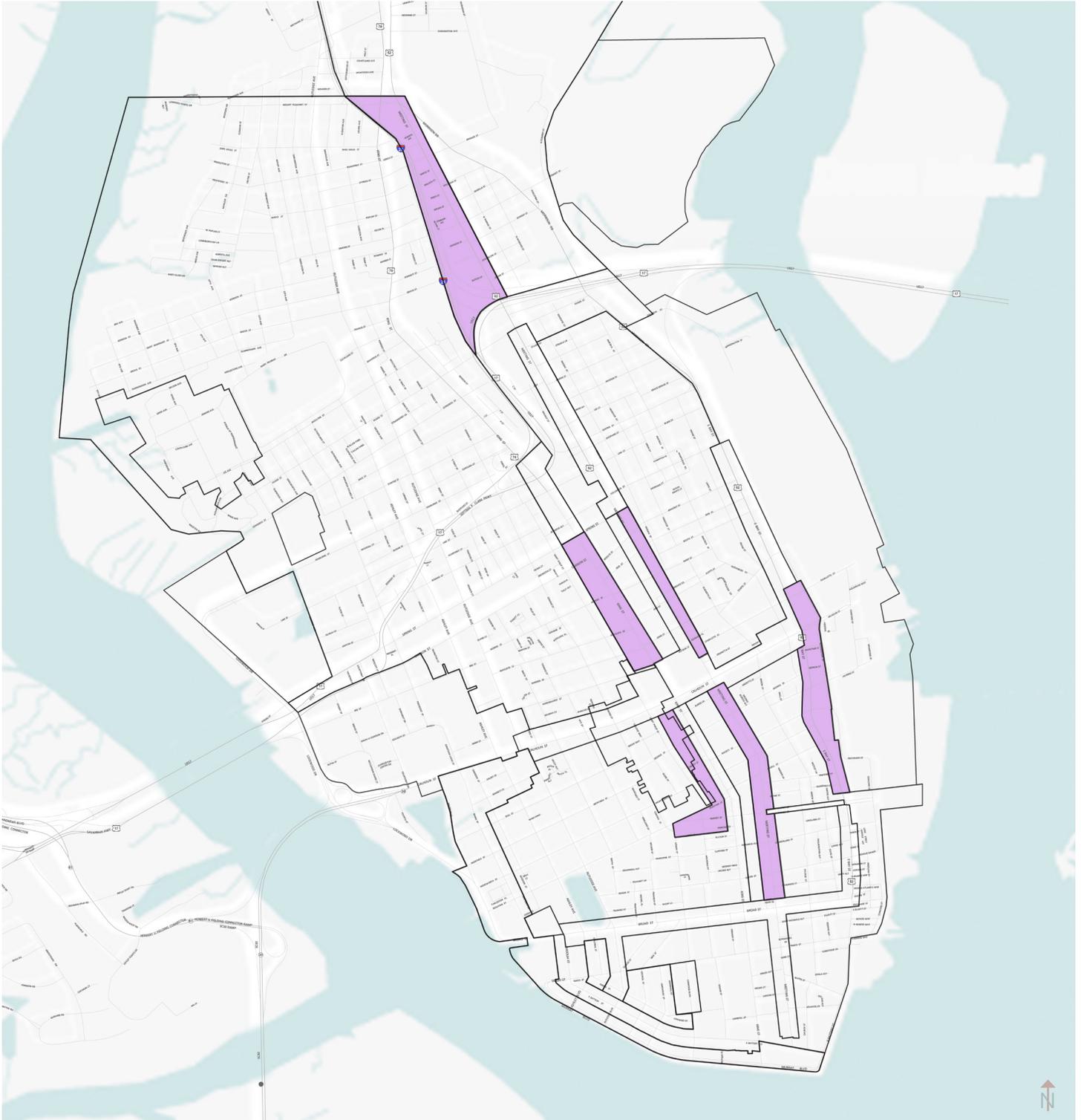
1. Maximum building height shall be 3.5 stories, up to a maximum of 50 feet.
2. The Board of Architectural Review may permit an additional half story by process of a **variance** based on architectural merit and context, up to a maximum of 1 story over the least restrictive abutting property, up to a maximum of 50 feet.



CITY OF CHARLESTON

HEIGHT DISTRICT 4

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CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 4

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Sec 54-306.E: Height District 4

1. Maximum building height shall not exceed 4 stories.



CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 5

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CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 5

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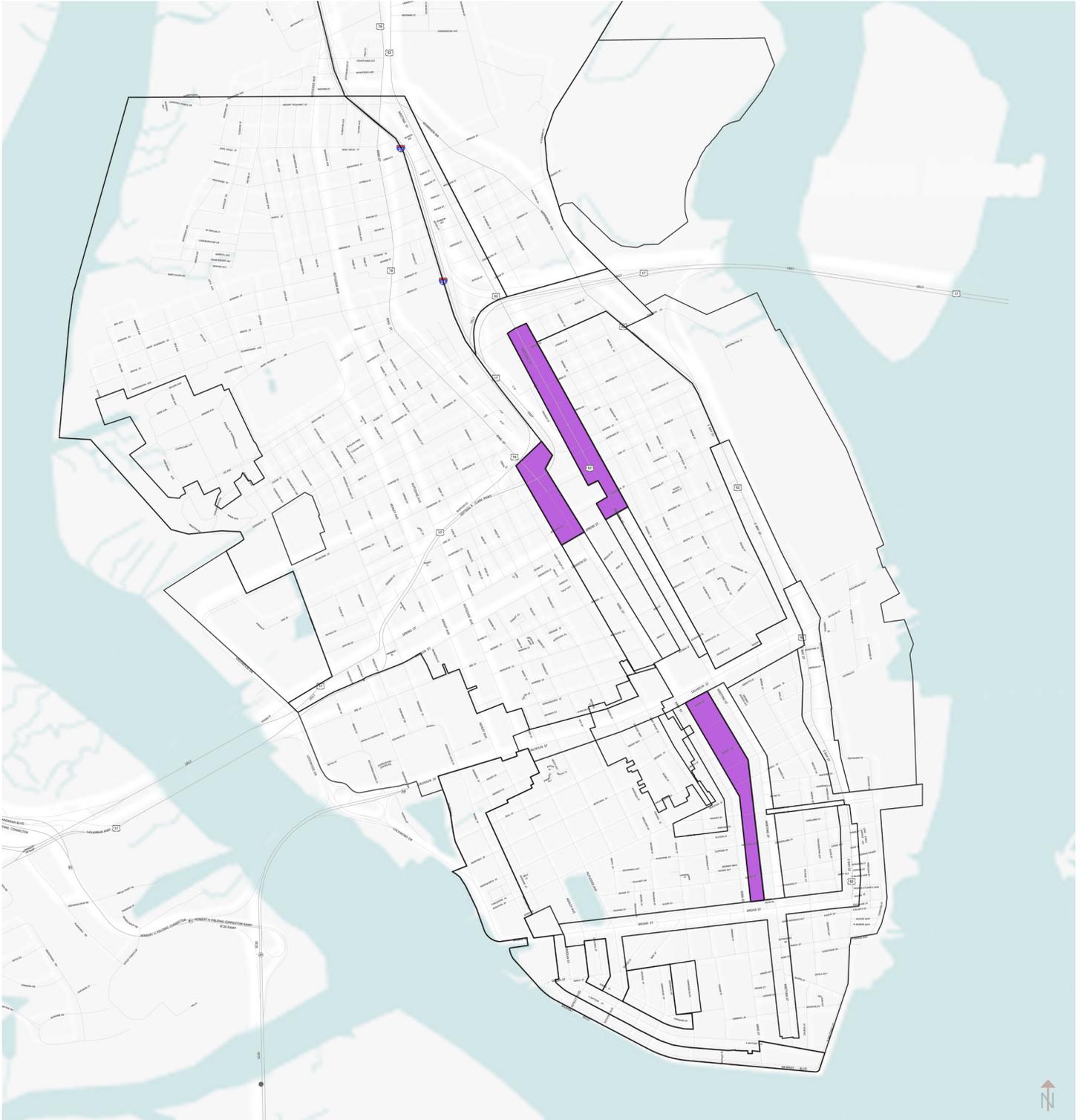
Sec 54-306.F: Height District 5

1. Maximum building height shall not exceed 5 stories.
2. Additional height for ornamental appurtenances that provide “a gift to the street”, and that exceed the maximum allowable height, may be permitted by the Board of Architectural Review, based on architectural merit and context.
3. Additional height for utilitarian appurtenances related to mechanical equipment or structural systems (such as elevator and stair towers, exhaust fans, HVAC equipment) shall be permitted, based on the following standards:
 - i. Appurtenances shall not exceed nine feet in height.
 - ii. Appurtenances shall be placed to the rear or side of the buildings where possible.
 - iii. Mechanical equipment on the roof shall be visually screened from the street with parapets or other types of visual screens of the minimum height necessary to conceal it.



CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 6

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CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 6

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Sec 54-306.G: Height District 6

1. Maximum building height shall not exceed 6 stories.
2. Additional height for ornamental appurtenances that provide “a gift to the street”, and that exceed the maximum allowable height, may be permitted by the Board of Architectural Review, based on architectural merit and context.
3. Additional height for utilitarian appurtenances related to mechanical equipment or structural systems (such as elevator and stair towers, exhaust fans, HVAC equipment) shall be permitted, based on the following standards:
 - i. Appurtenances shall not exceed nine feet in height.
 - ii. Appurtenances shall be placed to the rear or side of the buildings where possible.
 - iii. Mechanical equipment on the roof shall be visually screened from the street with parapets or other types of visual screens of the minimum height necessary to conceal it.



CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 8

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CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 8

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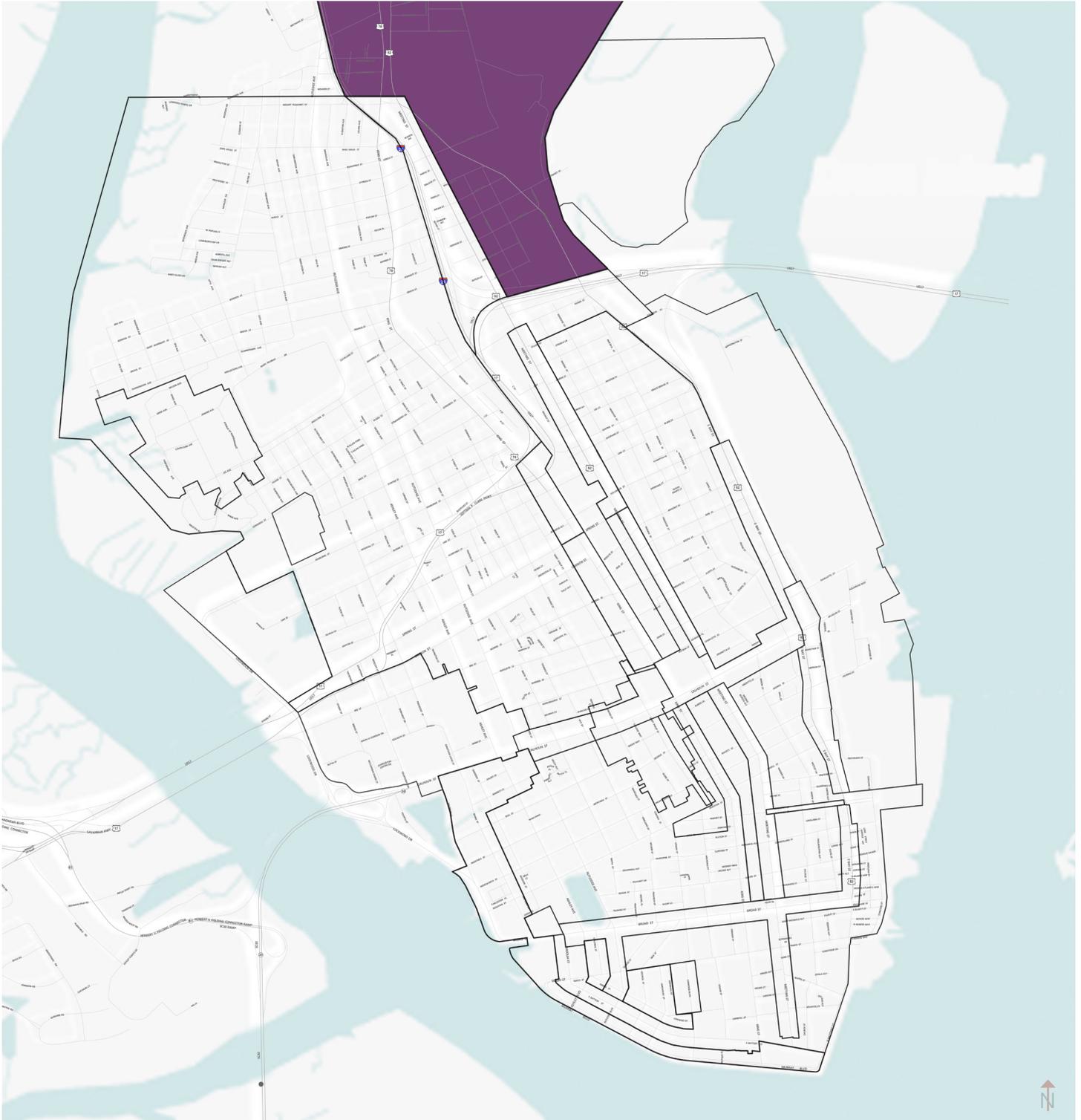
Sec 54-306.H: Height District 8

1. Maximum building height shall not exceed 8 stories.
2. Additional height for ornamental appurtenances that provide “a gift to the street”, and that exceed the maximum allowable height, may be permitted by the Board of Architectural Review, based on architectural merit and context.
3. Additional height for utilitarian appurtenances related to mechanical equipment or structural systems (such as elevator and stair towers, exhaust fans, HVAC equipment) shall be permitted, based on the following standards:
 - i. Appurtenances shall not exceed nine feet in height.
 - ii. Appurtenances shall be placed to the rear or side of the buildings where possible.
 - iii. Mechanical equipment on the roof shall be visually screened from the street with parapets or other types of visual screens of the minimum height necessary to conceal it.



CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 5-12

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CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT 5-12

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Sec 54-306.I: Height District 5-12

1. Maximum building height shall not exceed 5 stories. Additional stories, up to a maximum of 12 stories shall be permitted based on meeting specific performance standards as defined in **Section XXXX**.
2. Additional height for ornamental appurtenances that provide “a gift to the street”, and that exceed the maximum allowable height, may be permitted by the Board of Architectural Review, based on architectural merit and context.
3. Additional height for utilitarian appurtenances related to mechanical equipment or structural systems (such as elevator and stair towers, exhaust fans, HVAC equipment) shall be permitted, based on the following standards:
 - i. Appurtenances shall not exceed nine feet in height.
 - ii. Appurtenances shall be placed to the rear or side of the buildings where possible.
 - iii. Mechanical equipment on the roof shall be visually screened from the street with parapets or other types of visual screens of the minimum height necessary to conceal it.

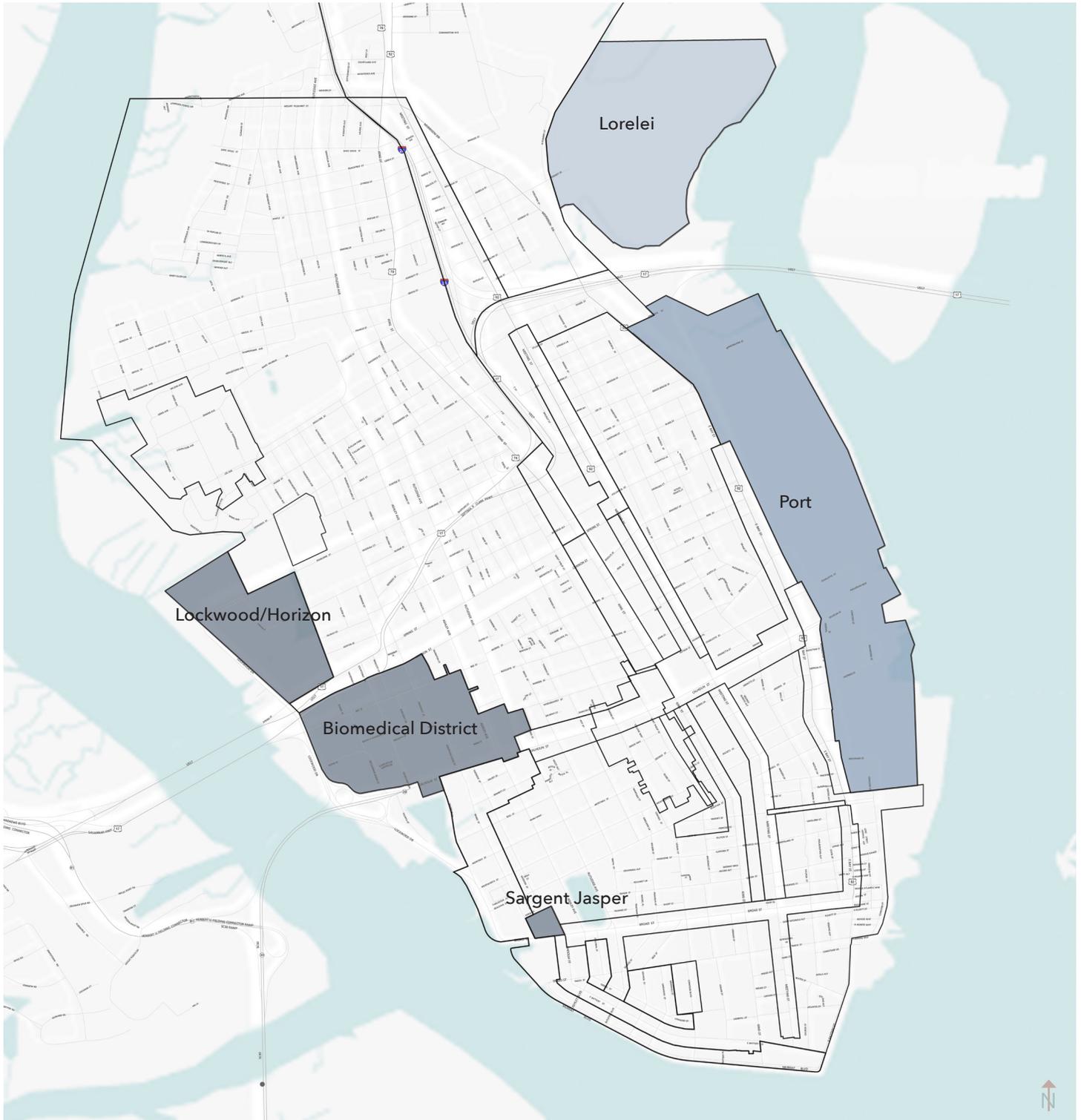


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HEIGHT DISTRICT: SPECIAL

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HEIGHT DISTRICT: SPECIAL

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Sec 54-306.J: Height District: Special

1. They are subject to the existing heights where already established (Lockwood/Horizon and the Biomedical District).
2. Project(s) which will continue to negotiate heights include the Port on the east side of East Bay Street.
3. Projects currently in negotiations for height include Lorelei.



CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT: CIVIC

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CITY OF CHARLESTON
HEIGHT DISTRICT: CIVIC

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Sec 54-306.K: Height District: Civic

1. Civic sites and buildings shall not be subject to the height restrictions. The particulars of their design shall be determined by **variance** by the Board of Architectural Review, based on architectural merit and context.

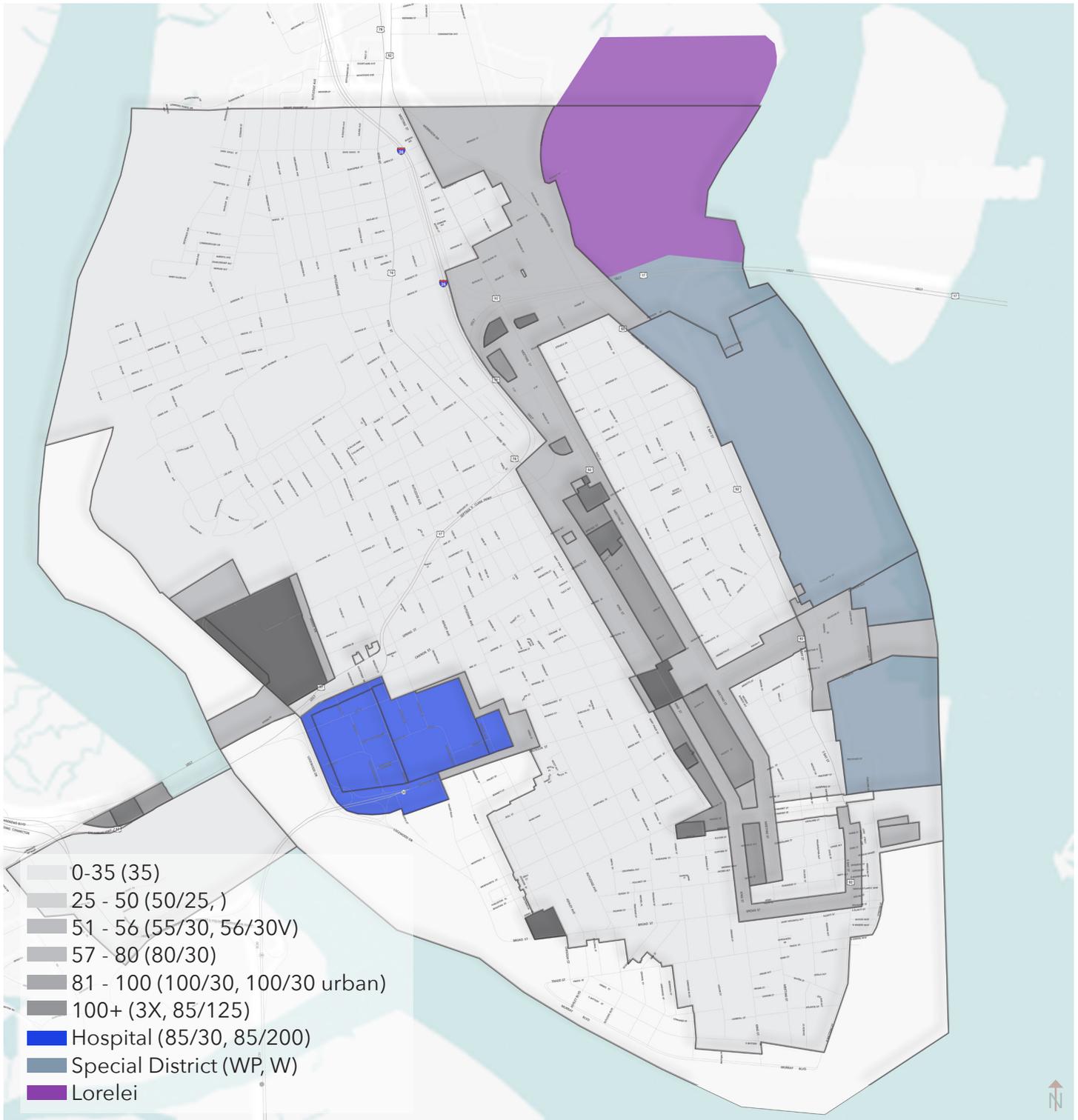


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APPENDIX: EXISTING HEIGHTS GROUPED

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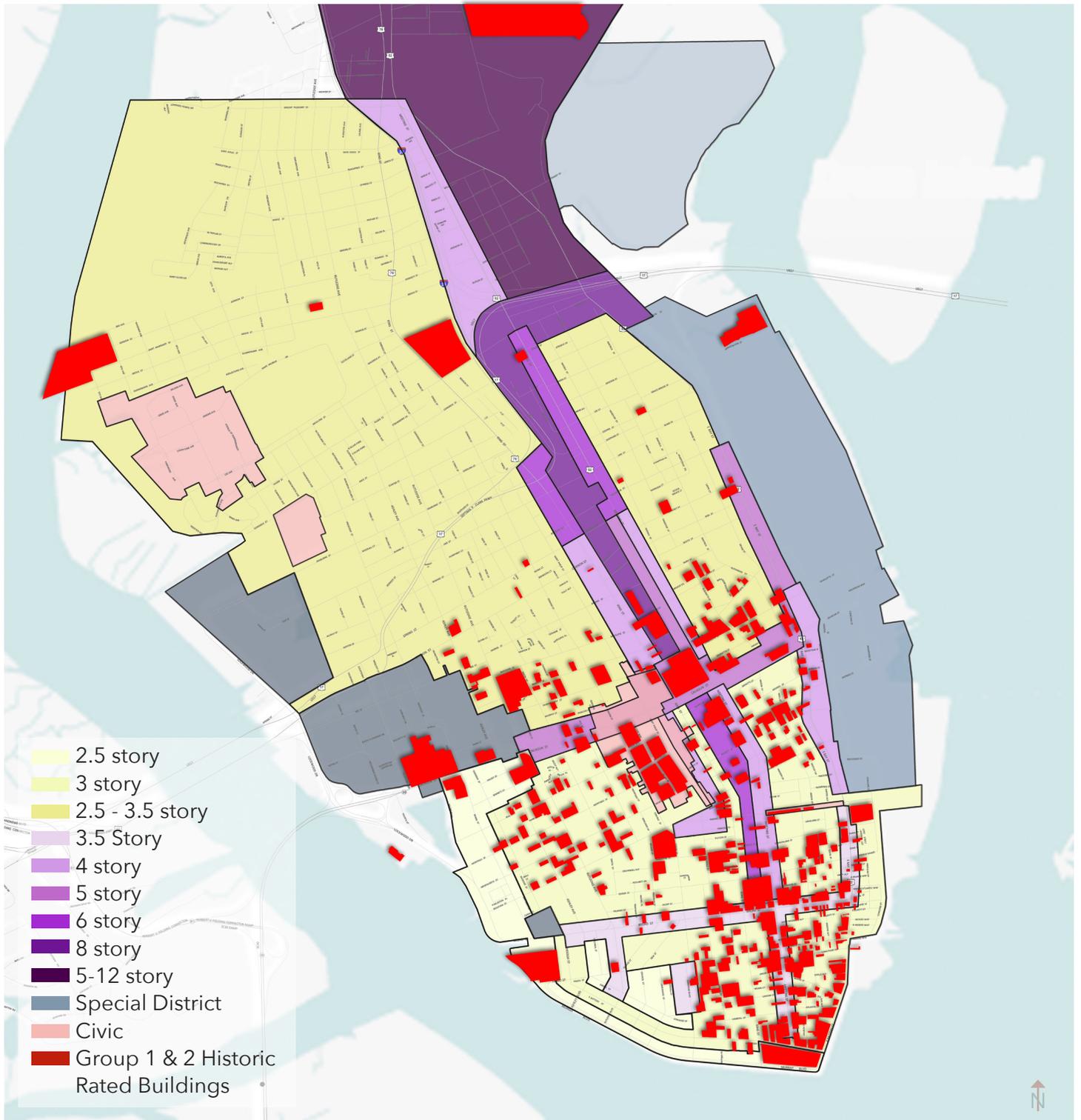


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APPENDIX: GROUP 1 & 2 BUILDINGS

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APPENDIX: NEW ZONING COMPARISON

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Max Height (stories)	Min / Max Height (ft)	Max Attainable Height	Min Permitted Height	
2.5	Res: 10ft / 12ft	35ft	N/A	35
3 (3.5)	Res: 10ft / 12ft	45ft (14, 12, 12, 7)	32ft (12, 10, 10)	50/25, 55/30
	Ground Floor Retail: 12ft / 14ft			
2.5/3.5	Res: 10ft / 12ft	50ft (14, 12, 12, 12)	44ft (14, 10, 10, 10)	50/25
	Ground Floor Retail: 12ft / 14ft			
3.5 (4)	Res: 10ft / 12ft	56ft (20, 14, 12, 10*)	40ft (16, 10, 10, 4)	50/25, 55/30
	Off: 10ft / 14ft			
	Ground Floor Retail: 16ft / 20ft			
4	Res: 10ft / 12ft	62ft (20, 14, 14, 14)	50ft (16, 10, 10, 10, 4)	50/25, 55/30, 80/30
	Off: 12ft / 14ft			
	Ground Floor Retail: 16ft / 20ft			
5	Res: 10ft / 12ft	76ft (20, 14, 14, 14, 14)	56ft (16, 10, 10, 10, 10)	55/30
	Off: 12ft / 14ft			
	Ground Floor Retail: 16ft / 20ft			
6	Res: 10ft / 12ft	90ft (20, 14 x5)	66ft (16, 10 x5)	55/30
	Off: 12ft / 14ft			
	Ground Floor Retail: 16ft / 20ft			
8	Res: 10ft / 12ft	118ft (20, 14 x7)	86ft (16, 10 x7)	80/30, 100/30, 100/30 urban,
	Off: 12ft / 14ft			
	Ground Floor Retail: 16ft / 20ft			
5/12	Res: 10ft / 12ft	174ft (20, 14 x11)	126ft (16, 10 x11)	55/30
	Off: 12ft / 14ft			
	Ground Floor Retail: 16ft / 20ft			

