

# HEIGHT REGULATION AMENDMENTS



## 1.1 HEIGHT REGULATIONS

### 1.1.1 ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

As Amended by the Planning Commission May 17, 2006

Deferred by City Council on July 18, 2006

"To amend the City of Charleston Zoning Ordinance by amending Article 3, Part 1, Table 3.1, Height, Area, and Setback Regulations, to change the maximum height limits for structures located in commercial and industrial zoning districts outside the Old City Height Districts; and amending Article 5, Part 2, Exceptions to Height and Setback Requirements"

- Section 1. Section 54-301, Table 3.1: Height, Area and Setback Regulations of the City of Charleston Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended by inserting "55'" under the column for "Maximum Height Limits Structures" and the row for "GO" zone district designation.
- Section 2. Section 54-301, Table 3.1: Height, Area and Setback Regulations of the City of Charleston Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended by deleting "3X" under the column for "Maximum Height Limits Structures" and the row for "CT Non-residential" zone district designation and substituting in its place and stead "50'/3 str."
- Section 3. Section 54-301, Table 3.1: Height, Area and Setback Regulations of the City of Charleston Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended by deleting "3X" under the column for "Maximum Height Limits Structures" and the rows for "LB Non-residential", "LB Residential", "GB Non-residential", "GB Residential", "UC Urban commercial", "LI Non-residential", "LI Residential", "HI Non-residential", and "HI Residential" zone district designations and substituting in their place and stead "55'".
- Section 4. Section 54-301, Table 3.1: Height, Area and Setback Regulations of the City of Charleston Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended by deleting "3X" under the column for "Maximum Height Limits Structures" and the row for "BP" zone district designation and substituting in its place and stead "45'".
- Section 5. Section 54-301, Table 3.1: Height, Area and Setback Regulations of the City of Charleston Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended by inserting ", Part 2 Exceptions to Height and Setback Requirements." at the end of footnote 5 so that footnote 5 shall read as follows: "5. See Article 5: Exceptions and Modifications, Part 2 Exceptions to Height and Setback Requirements."
- Section 6. Section 54-301, Table 3.1: Height, Area and Setback Regulations of the City of Charleston Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended by deleting footnotes 6, 7, and 15, in their entirety, and deleting references to these footnotes in the table.
- Section 7. Section 54-505 Exceptions to height requirements, is hereby amended by deleting subsection "b." in its entirety and substituting in its place and stead the following: "b. In any General Business, Urban Commercial, Business Park, or Light Industrial district, the maximum height for a communication tower shall not exceed 160 feet, provided the tower is located no closer to a residential or conservation zoned property than a distance equal to one-half the height of the proposed tower. In any Heavy Industrial district, the maximum height for a communication tower shall not exceed 400 feet provided the tower is located no closer to a residential or conservation zoned property than a distance equal to one-half the height of the proposed tower and no closer to the centerline of a public right-of-way than a distance equal to one-third the height of the proposed tower. In any Light Industrial or Heavy Industrial district, the maximum height of any other non-residential structure may be increased to 80 feet provided the structure is set back from all property lines a minimum distance equal to the total height of the structure."
- Section 8. Section 54-505 Exceptions to height requirements, is hereby amended by deleting subsections "d" in its entirety and substituting in its place and stead the following: "d. In any General Office, Limited Business, General Business, Urban Commercial, Light Industrial or Heavy Industrial district, the height limitation for public buildings, churches, hospitals or schools may be increased to eighty (80) feet, but not exceed six stories; provided that the width of each side yard and rear yard is at least twenty-five (25) feet. In addition, the Commercial Corridor Design Review Board is authorized to permit architectural features such as parapets, cupolas, roof structures, and other similar features, on the above referenced buildings under their review authority, to exceed the eighty (80) foot height limitation but not exceed a total building height of ninety-five (95) feet."
- Section 9. Section 54-505 Exceptions to height requirements, is hereby amended by deleting subsection "e" in its entirety and substituting in its place and stead the following: "e. In any General Office, Limited Business, General Business, Urban Commercial, Light Industrial or Heavy Industrial district, the Commercial Corridor Design Review Board is authorized to permit architectural features such as parapets, cupolas, roof structures, and other similar features, on any building under their review authority, to exceed the fifty-five (55) foot height limitation but not exceed a total building height of seventy (70) feet."
- Section 10. Section 54-505 Exceptions to height requirements, is hereby amended by deleting subsection "g" in its entirety and substituting in its place and stead the following: "g. In any business or industrial district, chimneys, stacks, elevator bulkheads, elevator penthouses, stair towers, gas or water towers, cooling towers, stage towers or scenery lofts, and other necessary mechanical appurtenances, where permitted by the use regulations of this Chapter and when erected upon and as an integral part of the building, may be erected or extended above the height limit of the district; provided that any such structure shall be set back from the vertical plane of the permitted building setback line one foot horizontally for each two feet of extra height."



**TABLE 3.1: HEIGHT, AREA AND SETBACK REGULATIONS**<sup>5/9</sup>  
 Abbreviations: N/A - Not Applicable, NR - Not required, Numbers in ( ) indicate number of units per acre, May 15, 1996

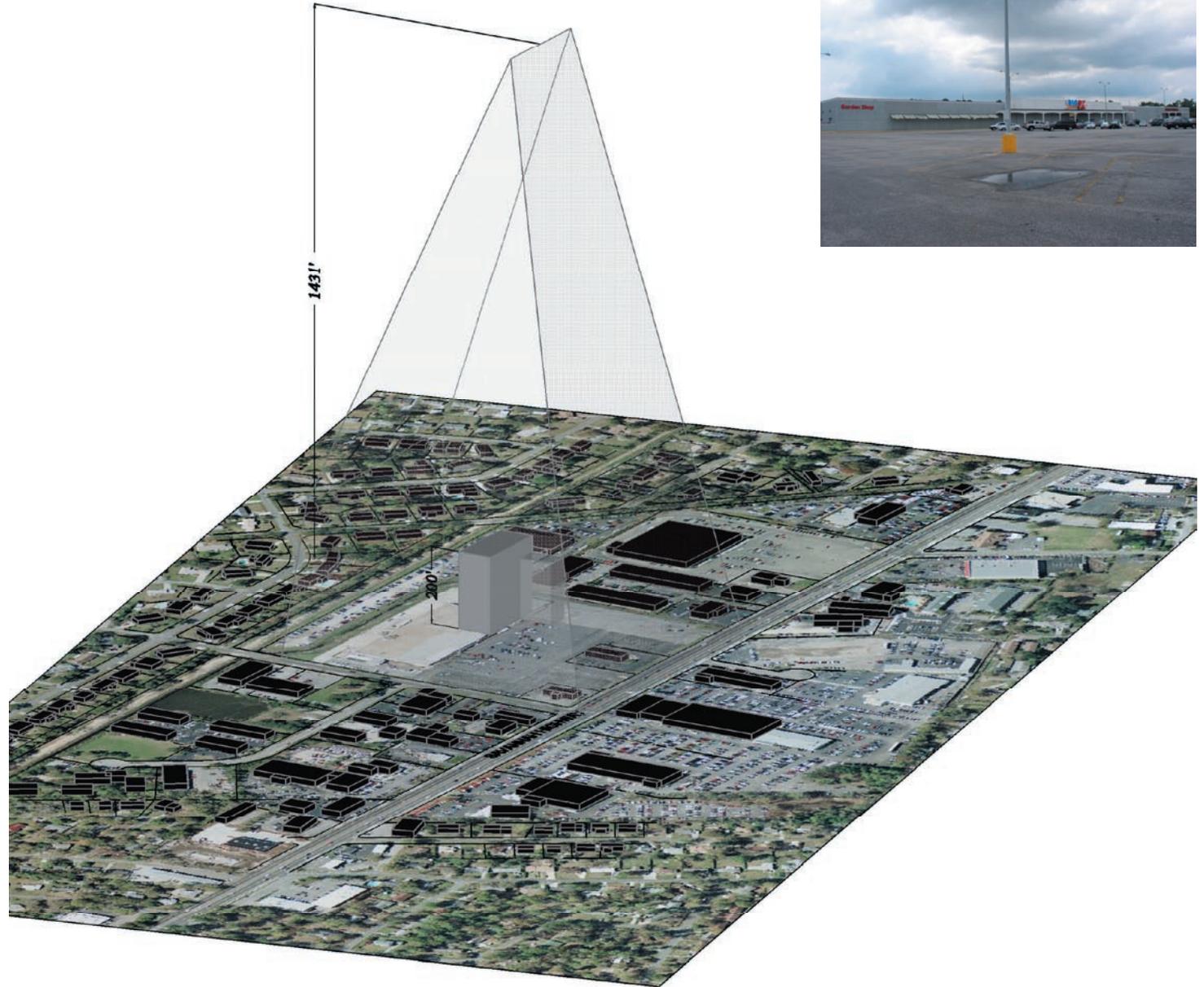
Zone District	Front and Rear Minimum Depths			Side Setbacks- Minimum Widths			Minimum Lot <sup>13</sup> Area per Family in square Feet-Type Dwelling Unit			Existing Max Height Limits <sup>5/15</sup>	Proposed Max Height Limits <sup>5/15</sup>	Accessory Bldgs. to Residences Setback Required			
	Total	Front	Rear	Total	South/ West	North/ East	1-Fam.	2-Fam.	Multi-Fam.			From Front Street	From Side Street	Add't Dwelling Distance from Front Lot Line	
C	85'	50'	35'	30'	15'	15'	1 1/2 acres	3 acres	NA	25%	35'/2		35'		
RR-1	75'	50'	25'	30'	15'	15'		NA	NA	35%	35'/2	1/2 str.	60'	35'	Not Allowed
SR-1	50'	25'	25'	18'	9'	9'		NA	NA	35%	35'/2	1/2 str.	60'	25'	Not Allowed
SR-2	50'	25'	25'	18'	9'	9'		NA	NA	50%	35'/2	1/2 str.	60'	25'	Not Allowed
SR-3 <sup>1</sup>	3'	NR	3'	18'	12'	6'		NA	NA	35%	50'/3	str.	60'	12'	Not Allowed
SR-4 <sup>1</sup>	3'	NR	3'	15'	9'	3'		NA	NA	35%	50'/3	str.	60'	9'	Not Allowed
SR-5 <sup>1</sup>	3'	NR	3'	10'	7'	3'		NA	NA	35%	50'/3	str.	60'	7'	Not Allowed
SR-6	28'	18'	10'	10'	5'	5'		NA	NA	50%	35'/2	1/2 str.	60'	5'	Not Allowed
SR-7	75'	50'	25'	30'	15'	15'		NA	NA	35%	35'/2	1/2 str.	60'	35'	Not Allowed
SR-8	50'	see footnote 18	25' <sup>19</sup>	24'	9'	9'	15,000	NA	NA	25%	35'/2	1/2 str.	see footnote 20		Not Allowed
STR <sup>1</sup>	50'	25'	25'	18'	12'	6'			NA	50%	35'/2	1/2 str.	60'	25'	100'
DR-6 <sup>11/12</sup>	20'	10'	10'	6'	3'	3'	--	--	--(6.1)	35%	50'/3	str. <sup>6</sup>	NA	NA	NA
DR-9 <sup>11/12</sup>	20'	10'	10'	6'	3'	3'	--	--	--(9.1)	50%	50'/3	str. <sup>6</sup>	NA	NA	NA
DR-12 <sup>12</sup>	20'	10'	10'	6'	3'	3'	--	--	--(12.1)	50%	50'/3	str. <sup>6</sup>	NA	NA	NA
DR-1F <sup>17/21</sup>	50'	25'	25'	15'	9'	3'				50%	50'/3	str.	70'	25'	80'
DR-1 <sup>17/21</sup>	3'	NR	3'	15'	9'	3'				35%	50'/3	str. <sup>6</sup>	70'	9'	80'
DR-1 <sup>17/21</sup>	30'	25'	3'	10'	7'	3'				50%	50'/3	str. <sup>6</sup>	60'	25'	70'
2F <sup>16/21</sup>	7'	NR	7'	10'	7'	3'				35%	50'/3	str. <sup>6</sup>	60'	7'	70'
DR-2 <sup>16/21</sup>	20'	10'	10'	10'	5'	5'	7,260	NA	NA	50%	35'		20'	7'	NA
Mobile home park															
DR-3 (6)	50'	25'	25'	50'	25'	25'	1 acre	NA	NA	50%	35'		60'	7'	70'
Mobile home															
DR-4	See Section 54-358														
RO	50'	25'	25'	18'	12'	6'		NA	NA	50%	35'/2	1/2 str.	NA	NA	Not Allowed
GO	60'	30'	30'	30'	15'	15'	1/2 acre			50%		55'	75%		
CT Non-C1	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NA	NA	NA	NA	3X	50'/3 str.	NA	NA	NA
IB <sup>11/12</sup> Non-	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NA	NA	NA	35%	50'/3	str.	70'	9'	80'
IB <sup>11/12</sup>	3'	NR	3'	15'	9'	3'	4,000	3,000	2,250	35%	3X	55'	70'	9'	80'
GB <sup>1</sup> Non-	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NA	NA	NA	NA	3X	55'	NA	NA	NA
Non-	3'	NR	3'	15'	9'	3'	2,500	2,000	1,650	35%	3X	55'	70'	9'	80'
UC <sup>14</sup> Urban	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR				NA	3X	55'	NA	NA	NA
MU-1, MU-2 and GP	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NA		NR	NR	NR
BP	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NA	NA	NA	NA	3X	45'	NA	NA	NA
I <sup>11/12</sup> Non-	15'	15'	NR	NR	NR	NR	NA	NA	NA	NA	3X	55'	NA	NA	NA
I <sup>11/12</sup>	3'	NR	3'	15'	9'	3'	4,000	3,000	2,250	35%	3X	55'	70'	9'	80'
HI <sup>11</sup> Non-	45'	25'	20'	Minimum 25' side yard required on side adjoining residences or residential districts			NA	NA	NA	NA	3X	55'	NA	NA	NA
HI <sup>11</sup>	3'	NR	3'	15'	9'	9'	4,000	3,000	2,250	35%	3X	55'	70'	9'	80'



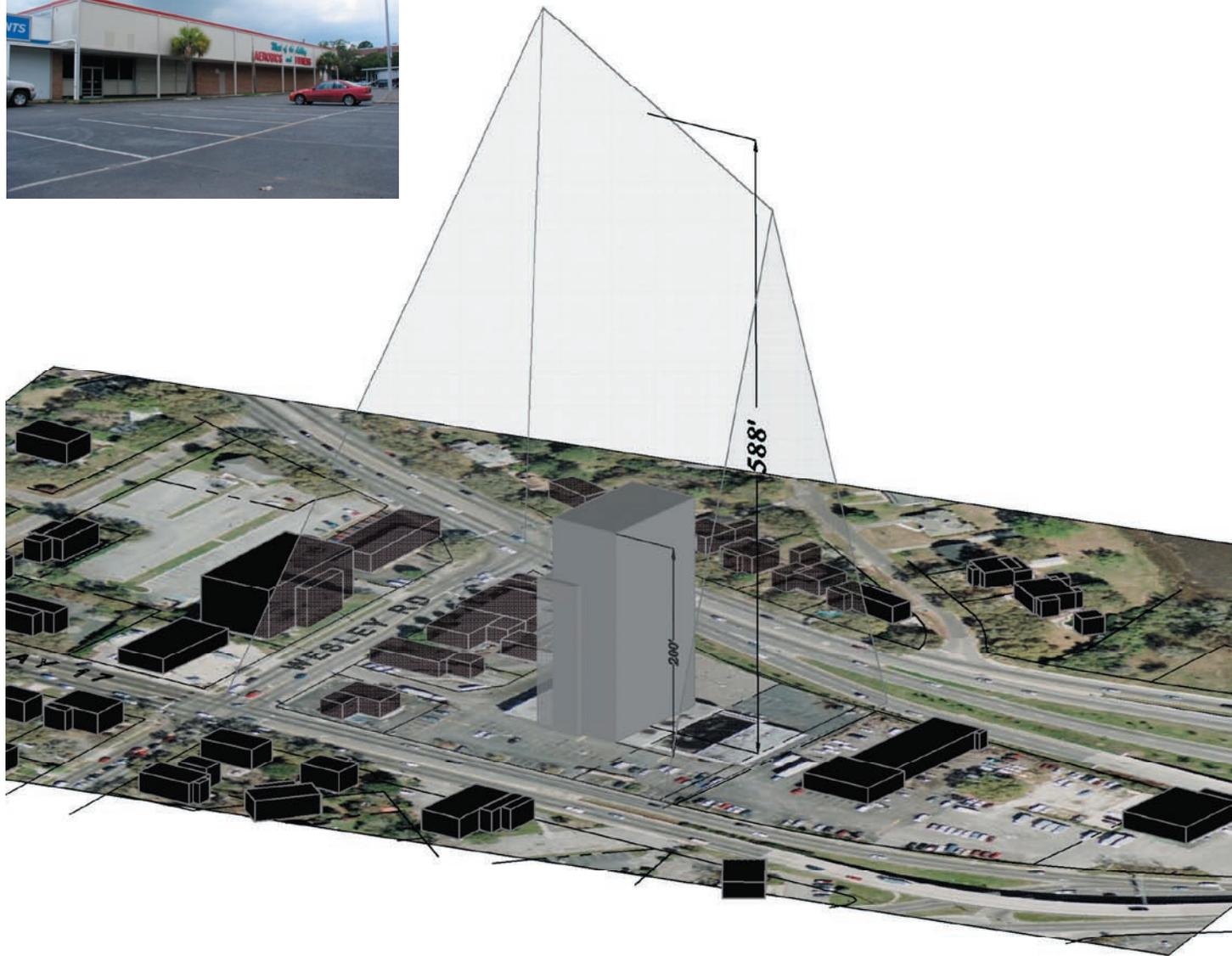
## 1.2 CASE STUDIES

### 1.2.1 1535 SAVANNAH HIGHWAY

The current 3X height regulation permits exceedingly tall buildings, especially on commercial lots where the depth of the site is large. In the illustrated example of the Kmart on Savannah Highway, the 3X zoning envelope would permit heights over 1400 feet without the need for a variance. While one might not reasonably expect a building of such height, the illustration also shows what a building 200' tall would look like in the context; such a building would be achievable within the current height regulation.



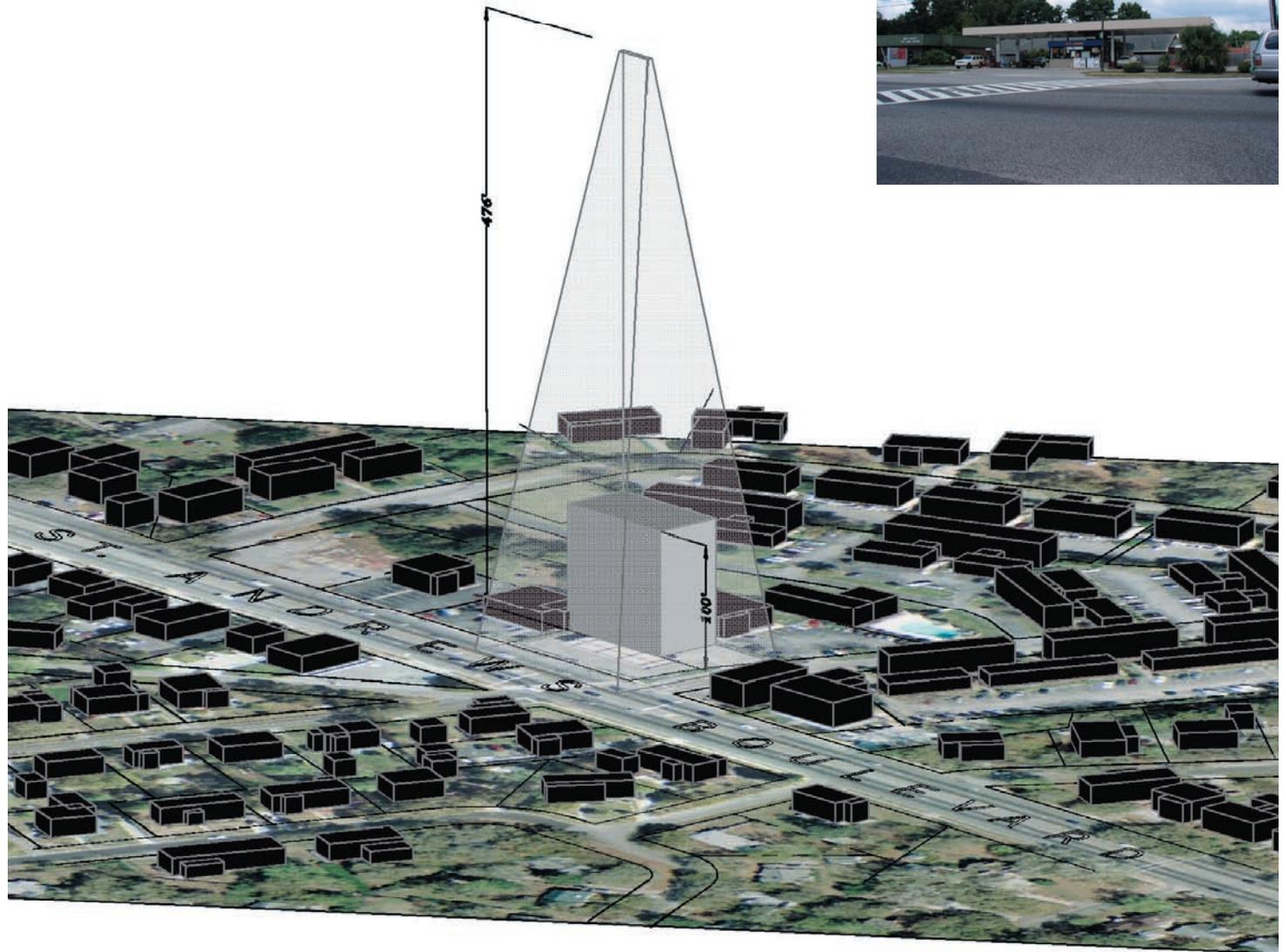
This illustration shows the 3X zoning envelope on a site at Wesley Drive and Savannah Highway. The current height regulation would permit heights up to 580 feet without the need for a variance. While one might not reasonably expect a building of such height in this location, the illustration also shows what a building 200' tall would look like in the context; such a building would be achievable within the current height regulation.



## 1.2 CASE STUDIES

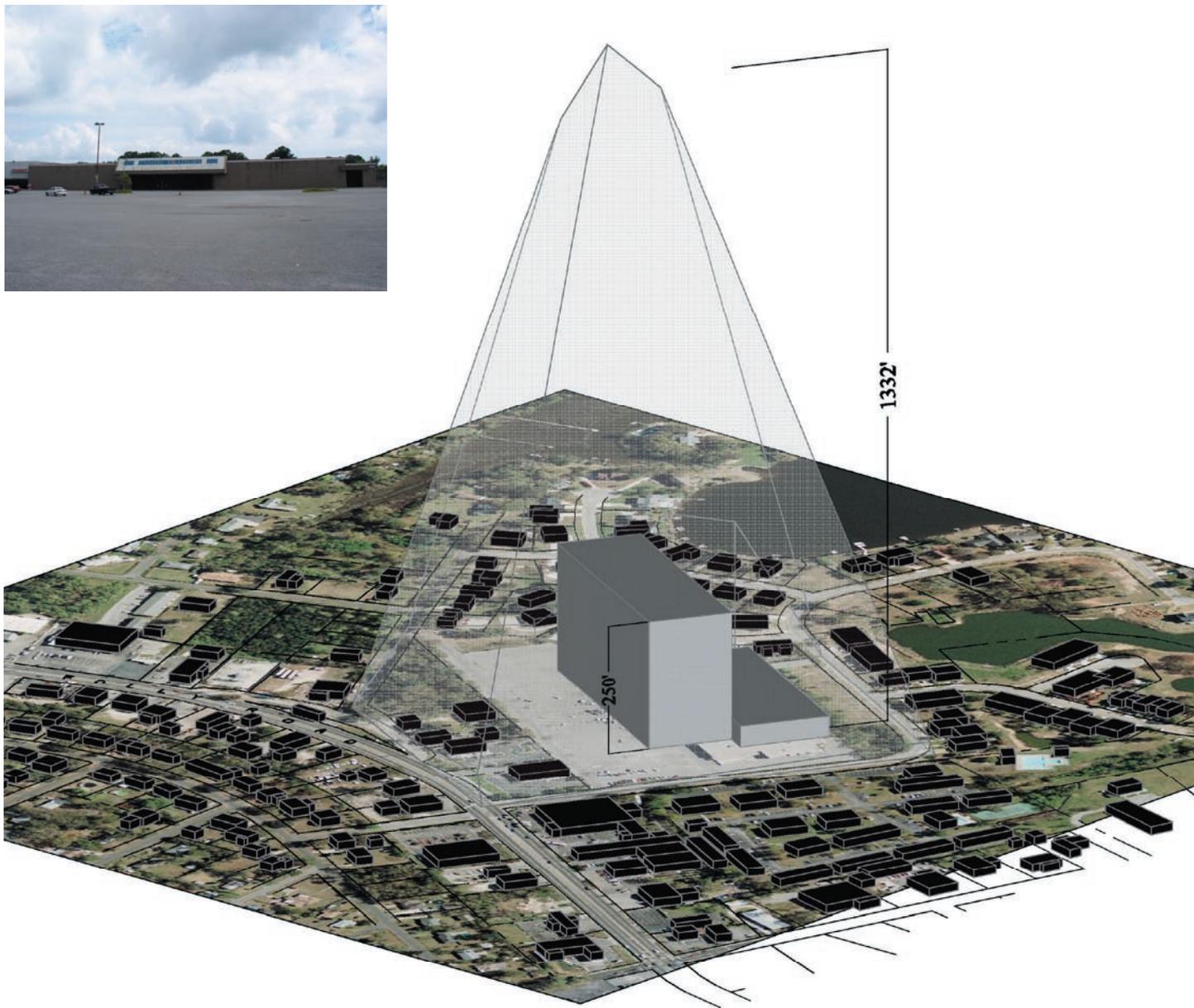
### 1.2.3 812 ST. DENNIS/ST. ANDREWS

This illustration shows the 3X zoning envelope on a site at St Dennis and St. Andrews. The current height regulation would permit heights up to 476 feet without the need for a variance. While one might not reasonably expect a building of such height on a site like this, the illustration also shows that even a building 100' tall would be inappropriate in the context; such a building would be achievable within the current height regulation.



860 RIVER POINT/FOLLY ROAD 1.2.4

Similar to the Kmart site on Savannah Highway, this illustration shows that the 3X zoning envelope on a large commercial site permits heights well beyond what one would expect. In the case of the former Kmart lot off of Folly Road, a building over 1300 feet is permitted without the need for a variance. The illustration also shows what a building 250' tall would look like in the context; such a building would be achievable within the current height regulation.



### 1.3 HEIGHT EXAMPLES

#### 1.3.1 BUILDINGS TALLER THAN 55'



ASHLEY BRIDGE - 162' TALL



WEST ASHLEY - 75' TALL



WAPPOO CUT - 80' TALL



WEST ASHLEY - 61' TALL



BONSECOURS ST. FRANCIS- 75' TALL



ASHLEY BRIDGE - 95' TALL



DOWNTOWN - 204' TALL



DOWNTOWN - 80' AND 155' TALL



DOWNTOWN - 140' TALL



Height Regulations 1.0  
Height Examples 1.3

**HEIGHT EXAMPLES 1.3**

BUILDINGS 55 FEET OR LESS 1.3.2



WEST ASHLEY - 45' TALL



DANIEL ISLAND - 55' TALL



DANIEL ISLAND - 55' TALL



DANIEL ISLAND - 55' TALL



ALBERMARLE POINT - 55' TALL



ALBERMARLE POINT - 55' TALL



DOWNTOWN - 55' TALL



DOWNTOWN - 55' TALL



DOWNTOWN - 55' TALL

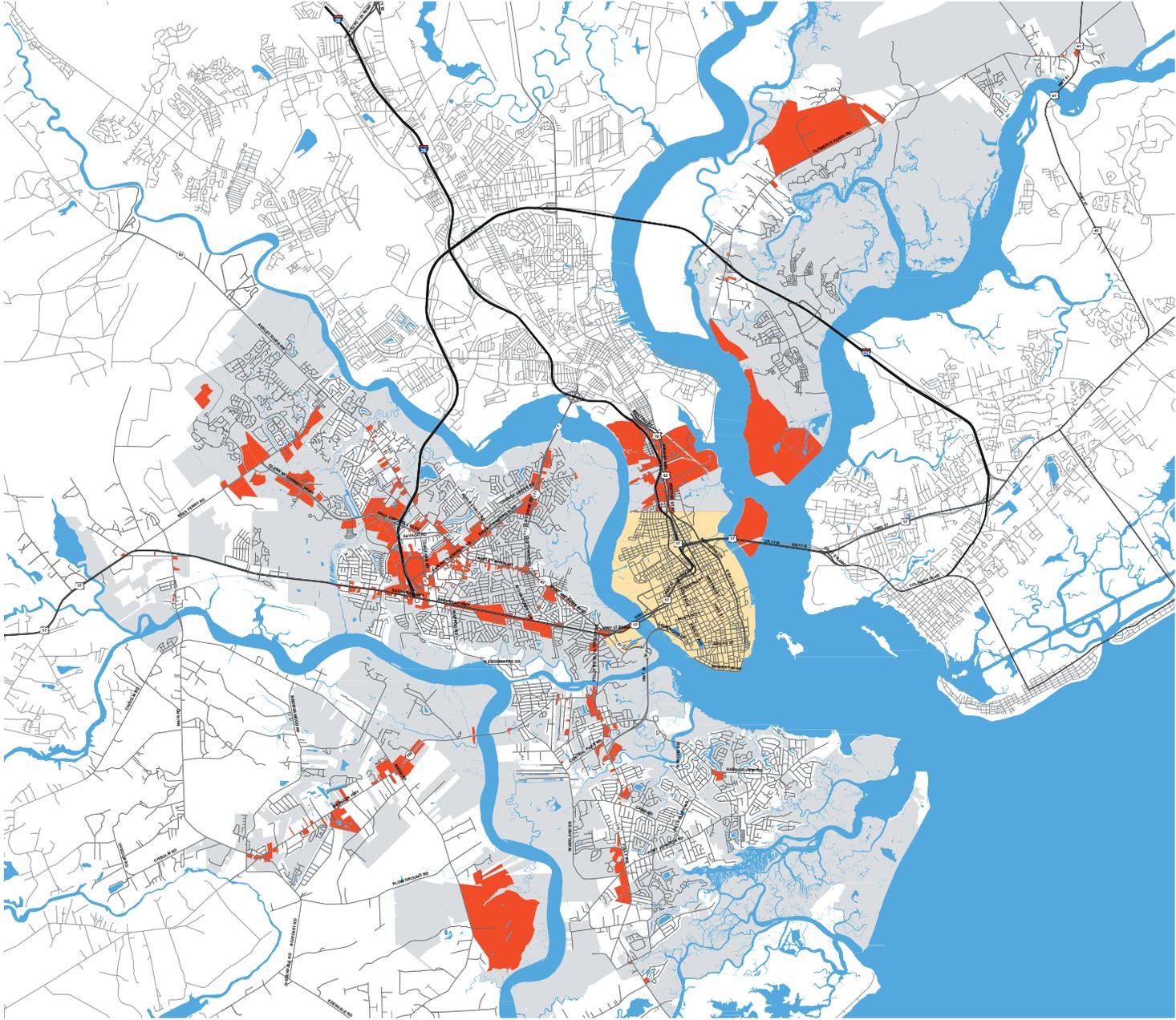
Height Regulations 1.0  
Height Examples 1.3

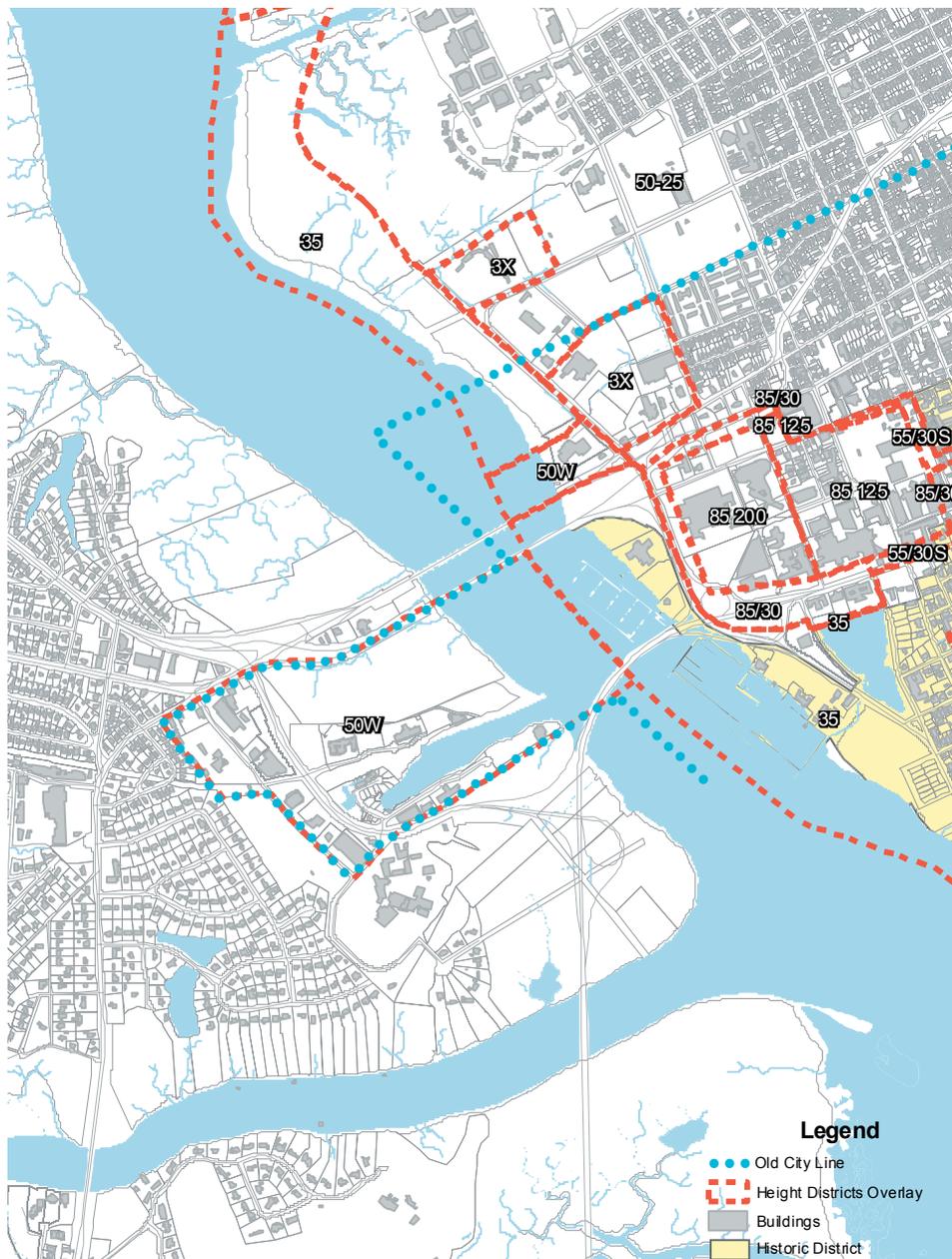


# 1.4 APPLICABLE PARCELS

## 1.4.1 MAP OF EFFECTED PARCELS

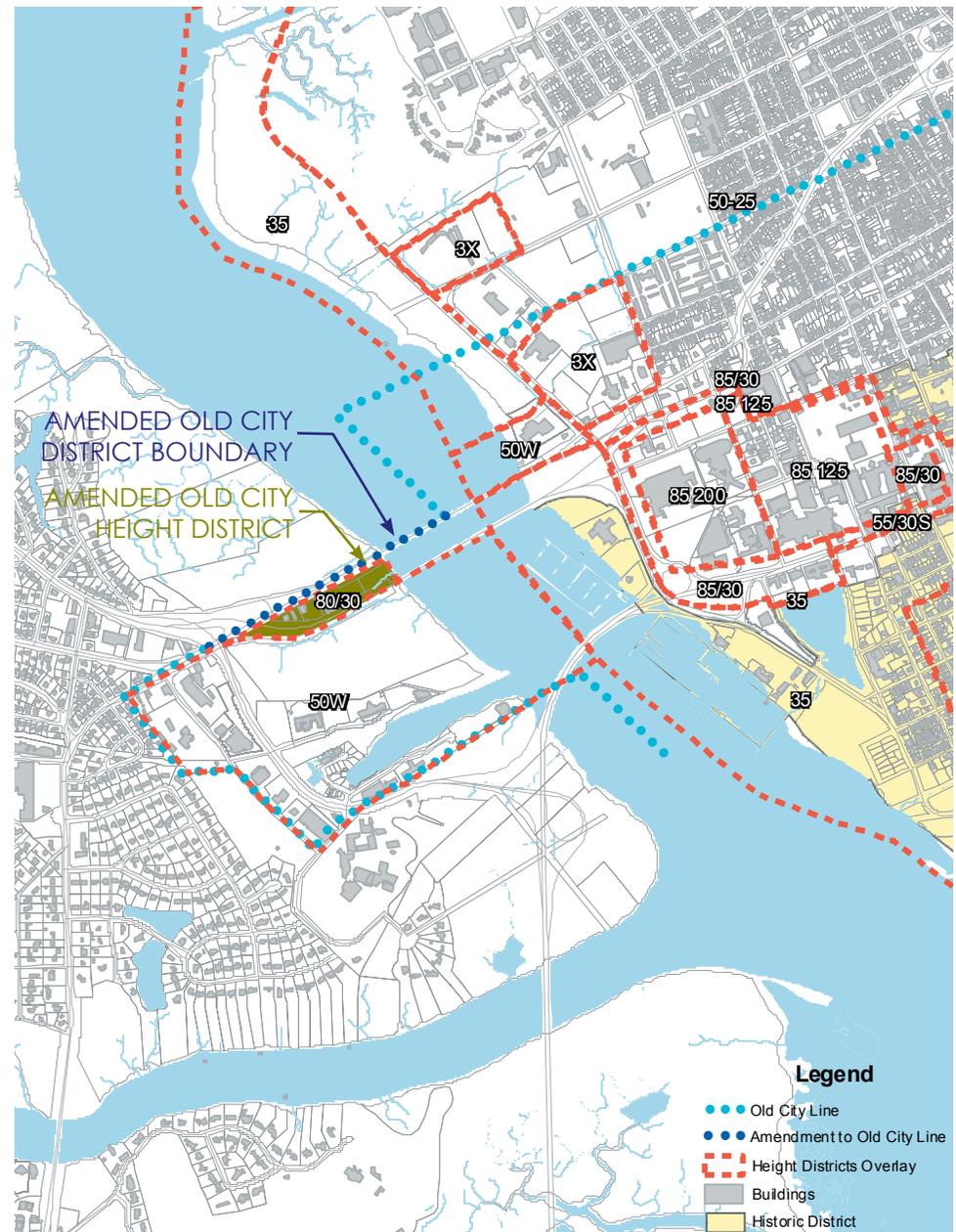
The map at left represents those properties that will be effected by the proposed amendments. Parcels indicated in red are currently zoned commercial or industrial (i.e., GO, CT, LB, GB, UC, BP, LI or HI).





EXISTING OLD CITY BOUNDARY AND HEIGHT DISTRICTS

- Legend**
- Old City Line
  - ▨ Height Districts Overlay
  - Buildings
  - Historic District



PROPOSED OLD CITY BOUNDARY AND HEIGHT DISTRICTS

- Legend**
- Old City Line
  - Amendment to Old City Line
  - ▨ Height Districts Overlay
  - Buildings
  - Historic District

Height Regulations 1.0  
 Old City Height District Boundary Amendment 1.5

