

Technical Summary Comparison of Existing Zoning Ordinance to Proposed

	Element	Existing Ordinance	Proposed Ordinance
1	Format and Structure	Organizes around Districts, so that uses and standards are found only within the district rules. Allowed uses are “cumulative” based upon a hierarchy of districts, one building upon each other requiring reference to other districts. This is confusing and makes comparing allowed land uses and standards across districts difficult.	Organizes around Uses which are laid out in a single location, one article (chapter) in a single master table that lists all uses and all districts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes it easier to reference what uses are allowed in which district • Identifies the review process, by level and type of review • Dimensional standards are also contained in one article and grouped into “residential” and non-residential tables.
2	Permit Process	No site plan review. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many uses are allowed “by right” without ability to improve site plan. • Some uses (mostly auto oriented) go through Special Permit process at the City Council. 	Includes Site Plan Review process where uses are allowed by right, but refinements to design and layout are reviewed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative review for smaller scale • Planning Board review for larger or more intense projects • Special Permits reviewed by Planning Board or City Council
3	Dimensional and Site Standards	Dimensional, parking and landscaping standards are listed by district in each chapter. In some cases the “cumulative” nature of the districts makes it difficult to know what is required. Many districts that need it, fail to have landscaping or screening standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All standards such as setbacks, maximum height and minimum lot size (density) are found in one location in one chapter. • Site standards such as landscaping and parking are also found in one chapter.

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4	Design Standards for Commercial Uses	Applies only to “X” business and district does not address parking location.	<p>Adds additional design standards to the X area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages urban streetscape with buildings at front of lot • Updates existing standards for commercial development, for example parking allowed only beside or behind new buildings
5	Proposed Changes to Zoning Districts	<p>No district describes or envisions a creative mixture of uses except for the Business C – downtown area</p> <p>No corporate campus district that describes the quality of a national headquarters for businesses</p> <p>Existing riverfront zoning does not provide framework for a riverfront vision.</p>	<p><u>New Districts:</u></p> <p>Mixed Use Industrial – potentially applied to Brownfield industrial sites and old mill buildings</p> <p>Business B-1 – Corporate campus – recognizes needs of such large scale institutional users such as and MassMutual site</p> <p><u>Changes in boundaries</u></p> <p>Riverfront District – expanded to include all area along Riverfront, Columbus Urban Renewal District changed to an overlay within this district</p>
6	Changes to Definitions	Many definitions out of date and important terms not defined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many terms added to definitions; • Defined terms are highlighted with SMALL CAPS

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			<p>throughout the text so readers know when to look up terms;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of date definitions updated or removed • Illustrations added to this section
7	Illustrations	Only a few illustrations in ordinance in the definitions section.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft contains illustrations especially in the definitions section. • These are not regulatory in nature but to help the reader understand terms or procedures • Articles 4 and 12 have diagrams or flowcharts for further clarity about the procedures.
8	Parking Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscaping standards only apply to parking lots of 26 spaces and higher. • Some additional parking requirements are found within each district, which causes confusion for users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards are consolidated into a table format instead of within text • Changed to include more flexibility through an administrative review process; • Parking lot landscaping requirements increased and extended to smaller parking lots
9	Sign Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of wall and freestanding signs allowed is very large; • Signage rules need pro-active enforcement • Moving or electronic signs are allowed by special permit with a city council review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reformatted and reorganized to make easier to use and understand (illustrations and cross references added) • Billboard regulations remain unchanged (off premise signs) • Evaluation of new standards shows that most new signs

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			<p>would meet proposed standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deviations from standards allowed with varying levels of review and certain guidelines • Sign standards will still take a pro-active enforcement policy • Incorporation of Digital Sign Standards
10	Site Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no one place for users to go to see all the site design standards in one place. • Special standards from various articles apply to various situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscaping, parking lot location and design and screening are all in one section which should make developing site plans easier for users; • Increased screening and landscaping for certain districts