

for signature development on smaller lots if the bulk requirements can be adequately addressed and incentives provided. Incentives could be design related similar to those described for building heights.

Density

Residential Density
Commercial Density

Residential FAR's and Percentages for Key Locations

The practice of limiting residential FAR's is a good one to encourage more mixed-use density within the downtown and to encourage more owner occupied housing. These limitations are not always realistic, however, and discourage higher density development in some parts of downtown where significant amounts of other uses are not feasible. The Borough should consider more flexibility in increasing residential FAR's for both rental and owner occupied projects if tied to design incentives.

Potential FAR Changes by District

Maintain the residential FAR limits as they currently exist, however, use design incentives to allow for increased residential FAR's as described below:

C District: Increase to 3.0 with incentives in areas currently designated as 2.0 and 2.5 FAR; Increase to 3.5 with incentives in areas currently designated as 3.0 FAR.

CID District: Increase to 3.0 with incentives. For the Signature Development Area, increase to 4.0 with incentives and up to 6.0 with additional incentives. Additionally, reduce requirements that Signature Development must maintain 40% non-residential uses to a minimum of 20% for projects with an FAR up to 4.0. Increase the non-residential requirement incrementally (up to 40%) for projects with residential densities between 4.0 and 6.0.

Urban Village District: Establish residential FAR of 2.0 for the district with increases up to 3.0 with incentives for areas north of Clay Lane.

Increased Residential Incentives

In order to increase residential densities as described above, the following incentives should be considered (the appropriate incentive mix and number of incentives will need to be determined as part of the zoning update):

- Provisions for owner-occupied housing.
- Provisions for/contributions toward workforce housing.
- Provisions for/contributions toward shared parking resources.
- Provisions for/contributions toward public realm improvements within the downtown area.
- Design incentives as described for increased building heights.

Refer to *Exhibit 23: Potential Residential Development Densities* (page 193).

Parking Requirements

The Borough is considering a reduction of on-site parking requirements for downtown housing to 1 space/800 SF. Further reduction or elimination of on-site parking requirements for both residential and commercial development should be considered, provided that the parking can be accommodated elsewhere in downtown using the techniques recommended for the parking study as described under Theme 2. Reduction of the on-site requirement is important, particularly considering the small block sizes and narrow parcel configurations which don't always allow for on-site parking.

4-E: Zoning Code Update

Perform a stakeholder-based update to the existing zoning code to provide for incentive-based design, to better accommodate appropriate redevelopment and to provide for a more user-friendly document.

Implementation: Borough of State College, Planning Commission, Design Review Board

Over-all, the requirements of the zoning code are appropriate for downtown districts with the exception of bulk regulations that make high quality development difficult, some ground floor use requirements and conflicting language (as a result of numerous modifications) that creates confusion. Using a stake-holder based process, the Borough should update the existing zoning code to allow for higher quality and economically viable development while eliminating language

conflicts and making the ordinance more user-friendly. Specifically, the update should include:

- Changes in bulk regulations as described under 4-D.
- Modifications to ground-floor use restrictions for some block faces. The intention to get non-residential and non-parking uses on ground floors is appropriate for most areas within the downtown core. However, the



Right: Good examples of high density residential development in Bethesda, Maryland showing façade and roof articulation and accommodations for ground-floor commercial uses.



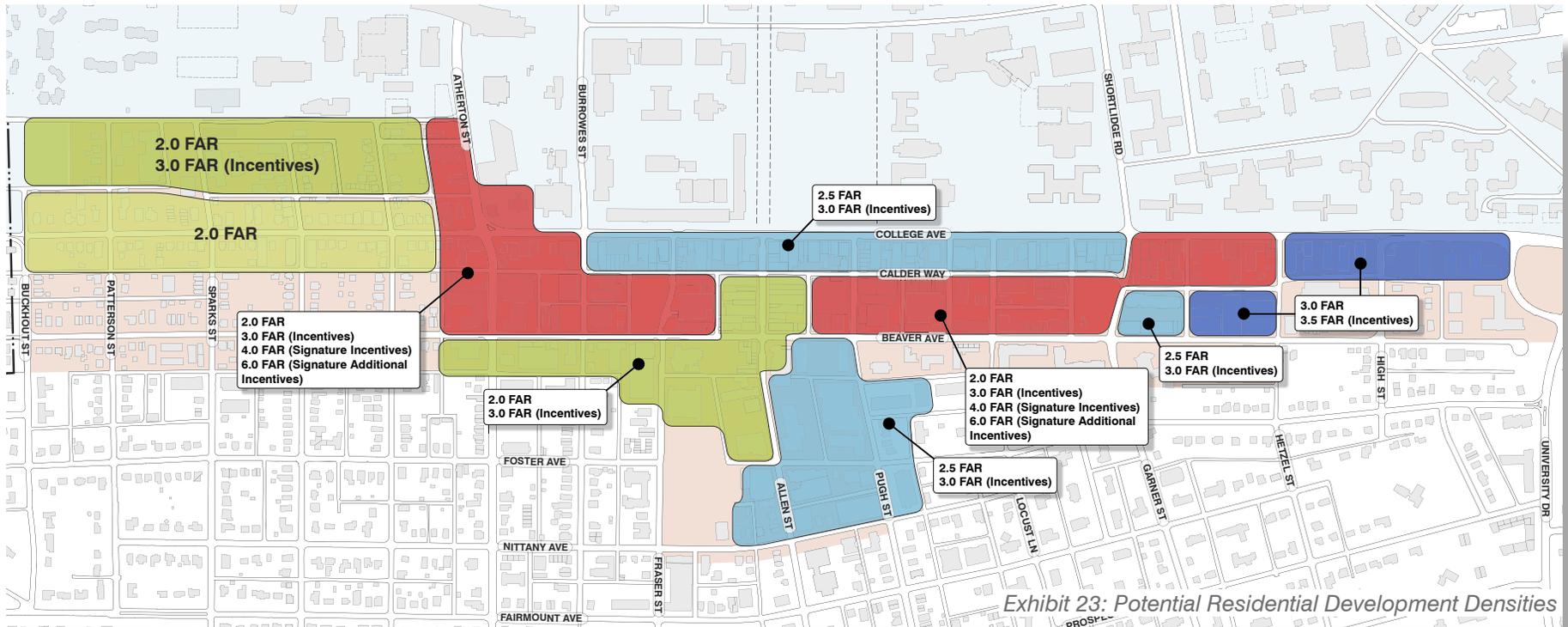


Exhibit 23: Potential Residential Development Densities

requirement as it exists may be too restrictive for some street frontages, particularly for shallow depth blocks where it may be necessary for structured parking to face a portion of that edge. Similarly, while entire block lengths need not all be restricted, restricting the corners to non-residential and non-parking uses (particularly at Calder Way) could enhance the pedestrian environment along this important corridor as well as for streets where it is not necessary to restrict the entire frontage. Refer to *Exhibit: 24 Proposed Ground Level Use Requirements* (page 195).

- Update to all sections of the ordinance to provide consistency in language.
- Update to all sections to minimize cross references.
- The type of ordinance to be developed (Form-Based Code, Conventional Zoning Ordinance or hybrid) should be determined as part of the zoning code update.

4-F: Incentive-Based Design

Develop density bonuses for quality designed student housing and mixed-use development and update the design guidelines to be used by the Design Review Board.

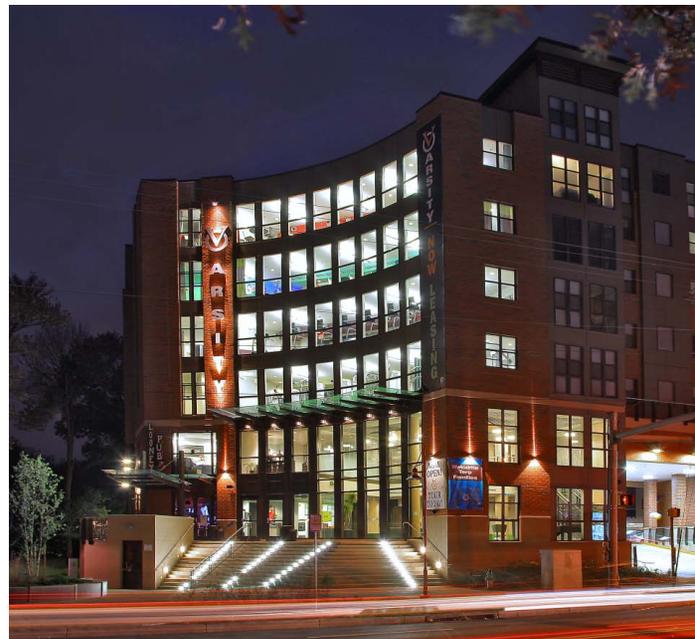
Implementation: Borough of State College, Planning Commission, Design Review Board

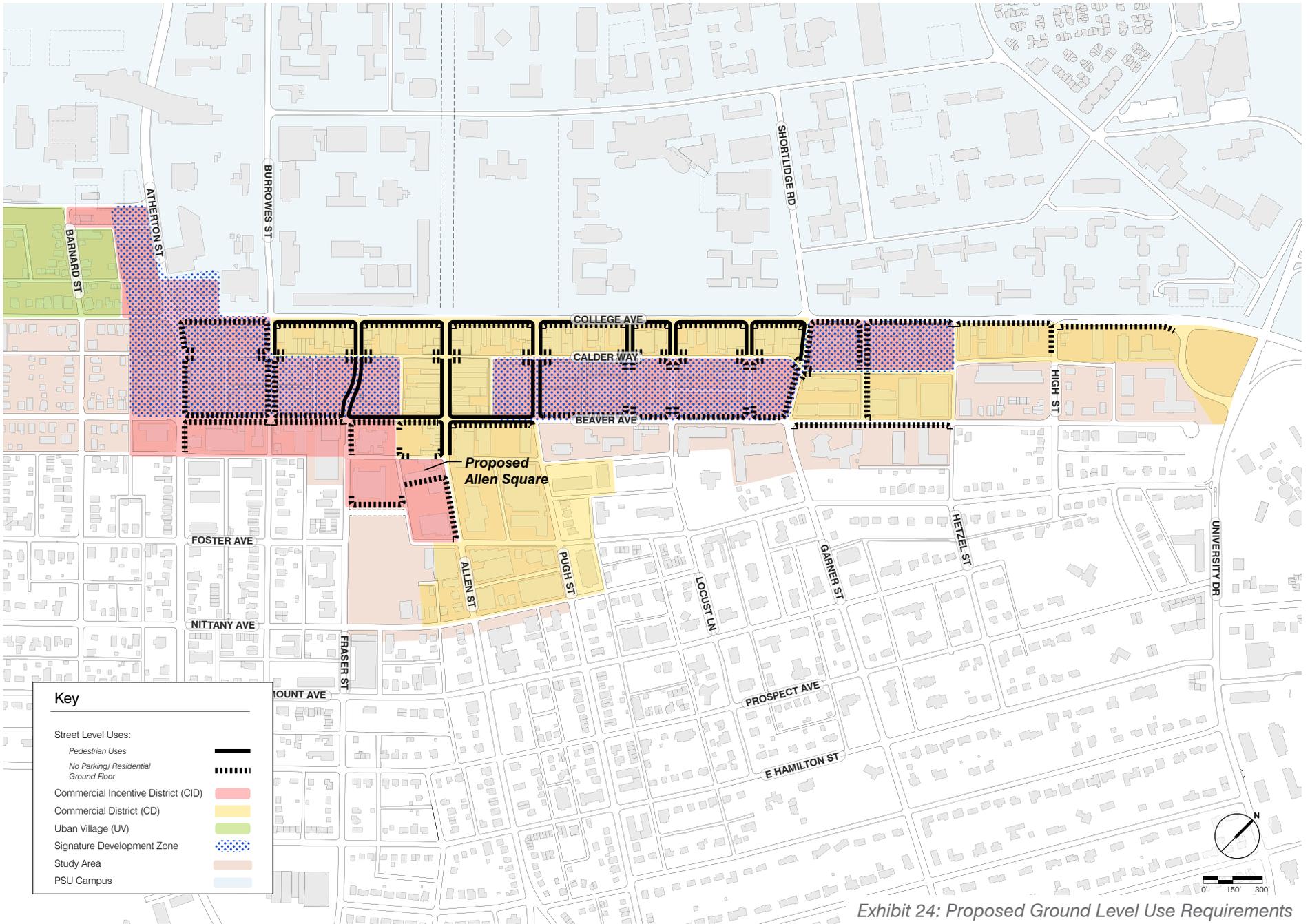
Update design guideline documents to include incentive based design guidelines that promote a higher degree of design quality. More and more mixed use-student residence projects are being developed in College and University towns throughout the US. These projects are being developed by the colleges themselves via public/private partnerships when the land is owned by the college, and via private developments. The most successful projects, no matter what the ownership, are those which are actively attentive to the goals and priorities of both the college and the town; and those that contribute to the quality of the streetscape and thusly to the vitality of the town. Such results can be achieved with building design approaches, features, systems and materials that are cost effective, market competitive and minimally proscriptive. In fact, for downtown student housing to be competitive with suburban “resort-like” complexes



Top left: Well-designed building in State College with active ground floor uses and well-proportioned window openings.

Bottom left: New student housing with active ground floor uses and well-proportioned first floor in College Park, Maryland.





Key

Street Level Uses:

- Pedestrian Uses
- No Parking/ Residential Ground Floor

Commercial Incentive District (CID)

Commercial District (CD)

Urban Village (UV)

Signature Development Zone

Study Area

PSU Campus

Exhibit 24: Proposed Ground Level Use Requirements



*Top and bottom far left:
Examples of student housing
illustrating sound urban design
practices that could serve as a
model for State College.*

*Bottom left: Consideration
should also be given for
enhancing facades of traditional
buildings in downtown's historic
core.*



(plenty of parking, swimming pool, clubhouse and other recreational amenities), it will need to offer amenities and quality spaces. Quality student housing downtown is imperative for the ongoing success of downtown. In Pennsylvania, design review is not allowed unless it is under an incentive based program.

Additionally, consideration should be given to encouraging higher quality of architectural design and incorporation of “green” technologies in downtown for building renovation in addition to new construction. Incentives should also be considered in exchange for façade improvements.

Downtown State College has a varied mix of downtown commercial buildings including Queen Anne era structures, traditional early twentieth century commercial buildings, Art Deco structures, and contemporary buildings from the 1950’s to the present. While attention is often focused on historic buildings for façade improvements, some of the contemporary buildings offer great possibilities for creative façade treatments. Indeed, several successful examples exist already in State College including the Urban Outfitters and the Chipotle and Gingerbread Man on Heister Street. Calder Way offers the potential to be creative with rear facades. Consider a façade improvement program that encourages and/or provides incentives to business and property owners to enhance their facades.

Specific elements of the design guidelines are outlined in Appendix C: Design Guide.

4-G: Create a Housing Trust Fund

Create a Housing Trust Fund to help encourage additional work-force and non-student housing downtown.

Implementation: Borough of State College, Local Housing Organizations

According to the Center for Community Change in Washington, DC, “Housing trust funds are the single most impressive advance in the affordable housing field in the United States in the last several decades.” Nationally, housing trust funds have experienced phenomenal growth

with less than 50 in 1965 to over 600 in existence now. Forty states have communities with housing trust funds and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has had trust fund legislation on the books since the early 1990s.

Local housing trust funds follow a similar overall pattern but are extremely flexible in their goals. Some focus exclusively on providing housing to very low-income families while others delve into workforce housing, public private partnerships and even creative financing for market rate developments.

One of the biggest challenges of any Housing Trust Fund is capitalization. Having a dedicated revenue source stabilizes the fund and makes it feasible. A one-time infusion of capital, grants, or donations will not make for a successful Housing Trust Fund. State College should explore the following suggestions for its Housing Trust Fund:

- Use the funds derived from fee-in-lieu payments on multi-family developments to capitalize the fund. Currently developers in State College Borough are allowed to pay a fee in lieu of providing inclusionary housing product in their development. This money could be specifically allocated to the Housing Trust Fund. Another capitalization option would be through a direct allocation through bonding for a housing trust fund.
- Gather technical assistance from the Center for Community Change (<http://housingtrustfundproject.org>) to explore options on creating a housing trust fund for State College.
- Contemplate working on a partnership between the Community Land Trust and the State College Coalition of Neighborhoods.

The Borough is already taking an important step toward implementing a Housing Trust Fund through a proposed Homestead Investment Program. The program would be established through a \$5 million bond issue in the Borough’s 2014-2018 Capital Improvements Program. \$1 million will be dedicated each year from 2014-2018, with income from homes that are resold coming back into the program. As an