



East Harlem Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!**

REZONING OBJECTIVES

The Department of City Planning has proposed zoning amendments that would affect 57 blocks in East Harlem. It is the first comprehensive revision of East Harlem zoning since the last major revision of the Zoning Resolution in 1961.

The area to be rezoned is generally between East 99th and East 122nd streets, east of Lexington Avenue in Manhattan's Community District 11. Most of the area is now zoned R7-2, a moderate-density residential district, and is characterized by six- to eight-story residential buildings along the avenues and four- to six-story rowhouses on the midblocks.

The Department's proposed zoning strategy balances growth and preservation in East Harlem. By amending the zoning map, the proposal would:

- **Foster new opportunities for residential development.** East Harlem is a growing community with needs for new housing. To help satisfy that need, larger buildings would be permitted at appropriate locations.
- **Ensure that future development is consistent with neighborhood character.** Current zoning encourages tall towers set back from the street, a building form inconsistent with the prevailing character of East Harlem. Schools, health care establishments, and other community facilities can also be considerably larger than residential buildings. The [contextual zoning](#) districts proposed would produce new buildings more in keeping with the character of East Harlem.
- **Preserve the scale of midblocks.** Residential midblocks in East Harlem are typified by rowhouses with consistent heights and [street walls](#) that line up along the sidewalks. To preserve these midblocks, the proposal calls for contextual zoning districts that would decrease the maximum permitted size of buildings.
- **Encourage ground floor retail and service uses.** New small businesses and stores are opening throughout East Harlem to support a growing community. The proposal would extend or modify commercial zoning to provide new locations and greater flexibility for ground floor retail uses.



New residential development on East 119th Street, east of 1st Avenue.

Manhattan CD 11



[View a full size graphic](#)

East Harlem Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!** EXISTING ZONING

Most of the rezoning area is within an R7-2 district, which allows 3.44 *FAR* for residential uses and 6.5 FAR for community facility uses such as schools, hospitals and houses of worship. On wide streets (75 feet or greater in width), residential development that complies with the *Quality Housing program* is allowed up to 4.0 FAR. On narrow streets (less than 75 feet wide), residential Quality Housing developments are allowed at 3.44 FAR.

Within the rezoning area, a C4-4 general commercial district is mapped on Third Avenue between East 115th and East 122nd streets. This district fosters regional shopping with a wide range of commercial uses. C4-4, an R7-2 equivalent, allows 3.44 FAR for residential uses, 6.5 FAR for community facility uses and 3.4 FAR for commercial uses. One off-street parking space per 1,000 feet of commercial floor area for most retail uses is required in C4-4 districts, however parking requirements are waived if less than 40 parking spaces are required.

Neighborhood commercial uses are facilitated by C1-4, C1-5, C2-4 and C2-5 commercial overlays. These overlays are on major avenues and wide cross streets. They are distinguished by range of allowed uses and parking requirements. As local service districts, C2-4 and C2-5 overlays allow a wider range of commercial uses than those allowed in C1-4 and C1-5 districts. C1-4 and C2-4 districts require one parking space per 1,000 square feet of commercial use, whereas C1-5 and C2-5 districts do not require parking.

Few portions of the rezoning area are zoned for manufacturing uses. An M1-4 light manufacturing district is located along East 110th Street between First and Second avenues. M1-4 allows 6.5 FAR for some community facility uses and 2.0 FAR for commercial and manufacturing uses. Adjacent to the M1-4 district, there is an M3-2 heavy manufacturing district that encompasses almost the entire block between East 110th and East 111th streets. M3 districts allow 2.0 FAR for commercial and manufacturing uses.

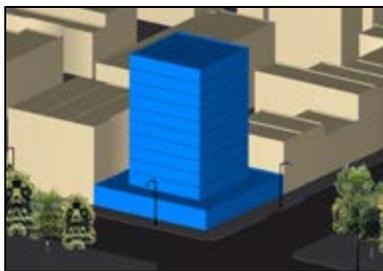
The Special Transit Land Use District is mapped on Second Avenue, portions of which are in the rezoning area. New construction within this district is required to provide a public easement associated with future subway improvements; the Department's proposal does not include any changes to this district.

Existing Zoning



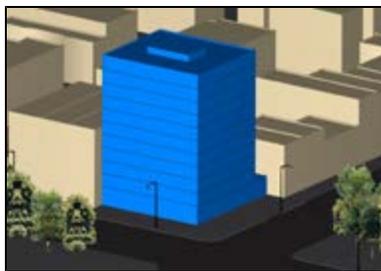
View a [full size graphic](#)

Building Bulk Under Existing Zoning



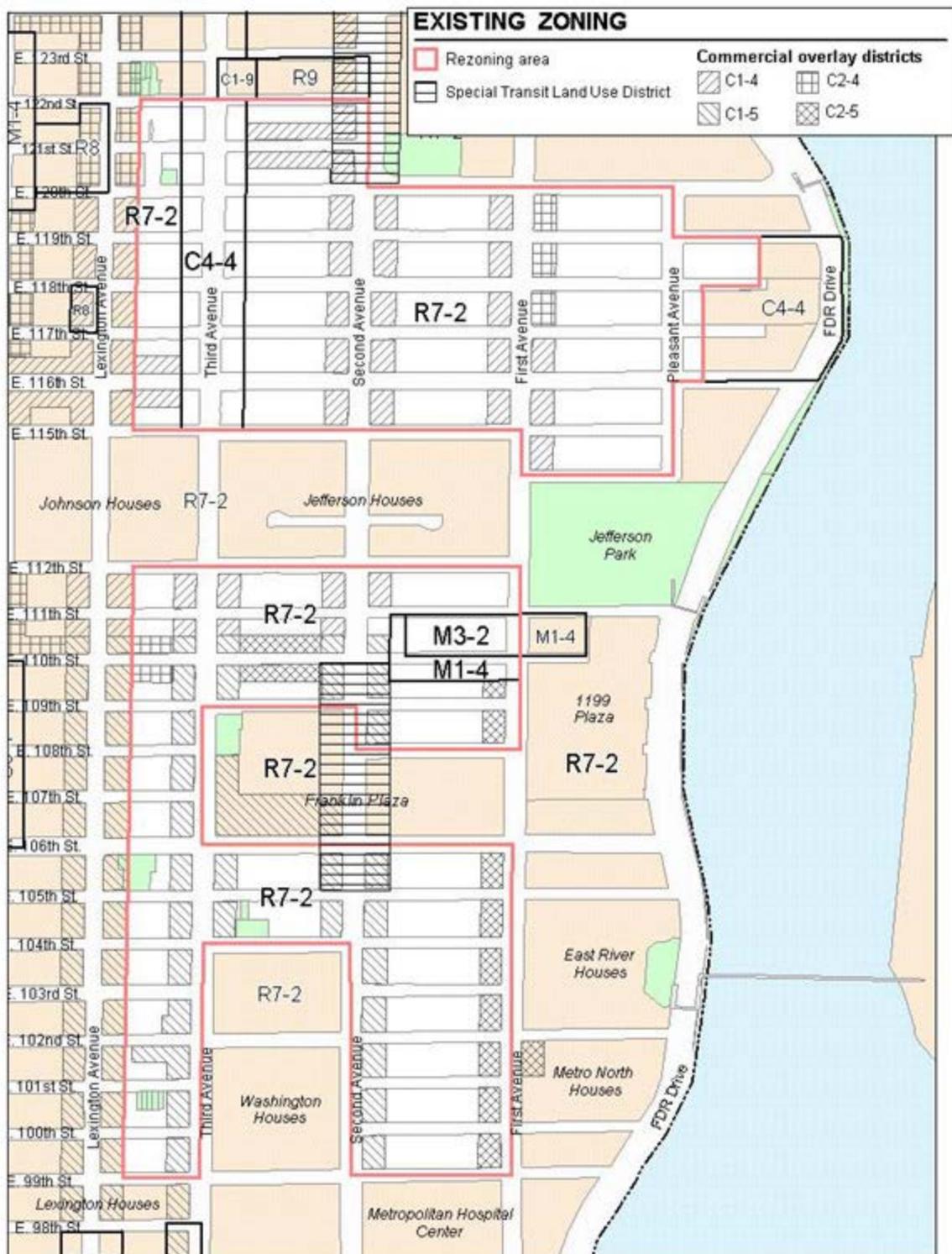
R7-2

- Maximum building height: none
- Maximum residential FAR: 3.44



R7-2 with community facility

- Maximum building height: none
- Maximum community facility FAR: 6.5



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PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES AFFECTING BULK

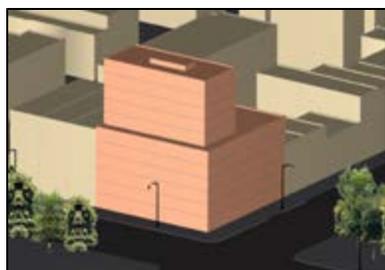
Proposed Zoning



The primary component of the proposal would affect zoning rules governing FAR, building heights, and street walls:

- **R8A** is proposed along Second Avenue and along Third and First avenues in the southern rezoning area. R8A bulk regulations are appropriate because of the width of these streets and their proximity to the subway along Lexington Avenue. The maximum heights permitted in R8A districts are appropriate because they are adjacent to high-rise developments.
- **C4-4D**, a new zoning district, is proposed to replace the existing C4-4 district along Third Avenue between East 115th and East 122nd streets. C4-4D would increase residential FAR on Third Avenue while retaining the commercial FAR currently allowed in C4-4 districts. The existing C4-4 district, an R7-2 equivalent, allows residential FAR of 3.44 (4.0 under the Quality Housing option), community facility FAR of 6.5, and commercial FAR of 3.4.

View a [full size graphic](#)



Prototypical R8A or C4-4D building

- Maximum building height: 120 feet
- Street wall height: 60-85 feet
- Maximum residential FAR: 6.0
- Maximum community facility FAR: 6.5
- Maximum commercial FAR: 3.4 (C4-4D only)

- **R7X** is proposed along First Avenue between East 114th and East 120th streets. The Department recommends more restrictive bulk regulations along this portion of First Avenue because the midblocks to the east are generally low-scale.



Prototypical R7X building

- Maximum building height: 125 feet
- Street wall height: 60-85 feet
- Maximum residential FAR: 5.0
- Maximum community facility FAR: 5.0

- **R7A** is proposed to replace existing R7-2 zoning along Pleasant Avenue between East 114th and East 120th streets and for most midblocks. R7A is equivalent to the maximum residential FAR currently allowed on Pleasant Avenue under R7-2 zoning.

The midblocks proposed for R7A are characterized by mid-rise rowhouse buildings interspersed with vacant or underdeveloped sites that are appropriate locations for future residential construction. R7A regulations encourage residential buildings consistent with the scale of neighboring buildings. Along the midblocks, existing zoning allows residential uses at 3.4 FAR and community facility uses at 6.5 FAR. The proposed R7A district would limit both residential and community facility uses to 4.0 FAR.



Prototypical R7A building on Pleasant Avenue



Prototypical R7A building within a midblock

- Maximum building height: 80 feet
- Street wall height: 40-65 feet
- Maximum residential FAR: 4.0
- Maximum community facility FAR: 4.0

- **R7B** is proposed for select midblocks to preserve the existing context. The building form required in R7B districts is consistent with the low-rise character of these areas and ensures that future development will be consistent with the existing rowhouses.



Prototypical R7B building

- Maximum building height: 75 feet
- Street wall height: 40-60 feet
- Maximum residential FAR: 3.0
- Maximum community facility FAR: 3.0

East Harlem Rezoning Proposal - **Approved!** PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES AFFECTING USE

View the [Proposed Zoning Map](#)

New Commercial Overlay

To address the needs of the expanding small business community in East Harlem, a C1-5 commercial overlay would be added on both sides of East 116th Street between Third and Second avenues.

Ground floor retail uses would be allowed in mixed residential buildings in this area. New developments would be subject to the bulk requirements of the underlying R7A district.

Revised Commercial Parking Regulations

C1-5 and **C2-5** commercial overlays are proposed to replace existing C1-4 and C2-4 commercial overlays throughout the rezoning area. This eliminates commercial parking requirements that could burden some commercial uses and provides more flexibility for new commercial uses.



East 116th Street between Second and Third avenues would be rezoned to allow neighborhood commercial uses.

Changing Existing M1-4 to Residential Districts

R7A and **R8A** zones are proposed to replace the existing M1-4 zone bounded by Second and First avenues between East 109th and East 111th streets. This change would allow residential uses and would prohibit new manufacturing uses. Residential uses within the current M1-4 zone would become conforming uses with the proposed change. Existing commercial uses would become non-conforming uses and would be allowed to continue operation.

Changing Heavy Industrial District to Light Industrial District

M1-4 is proposed to replace the existing M3-2 zone. M1-4 is a light manufacturing district, while M3-2 allows heavy manufacturing uses.

The existing M3-2 zone is surrounded on three sides by residential uses. This change ensures that future uses on this site would be more compatible with the surrounding residential areas.

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PROPOSED ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT

View the  [Proposed Zoning Text Amendment](#)

The proposed zoning text amendment would establish a C4-4D contextual district which currently does not exist in the New York City Zoning Resolution. Residential buildings and the residential portions of mixed buildings in the new district would be governed by the regulations of R8A districts.

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SUMMARY of PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

Residential Districts

	Existing District	Proposed Districts			
	R7-2	R8A	R7X	R7A	R7B
Permitted uses	Residential and community facility	Residential and community facility	Residential and community facility	Residential and community facility	Residential and community facility
Maximum FAR	3.44 for residential uses, 6.5 for community facility uses Optional Quality Housing allows 3.44 on narrow streets or 4.0 on wide streets	6.02 for residential and 6.5 for community facility	5.0 for all uses	4.0 for all uses	3.0 for all uses
Minimum street wall	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows 40 feet on both narrow and wide streets	60 feet	60 feet	40 feet	40 feet
Maximum street wall	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows 60 feet on narrow streets or 65 feet on wide streets	85 feet	85 feet	65 feet	60 feet
Maximum building height	No height limit Optional Quality Housing allows 75 feet on narrow streets or 80 feet on wide streets	120 feet	125 feet	80 feet	75 feet

Commercial Districts

	Existing Districts			Existing and Proposed Districts		Proposed District
	C1-4 Overlay	C2-4 Overlay	C4-4	C1-5 Overlay	C2-5 Overlay	C4-4D
Zoning Resolution description	Local retail	Local service	General commercial	Local retail	Local service	General commercial
Use groups	1-4; 6	1-9	1-6; 8-10; 12	1-6	1-9	1-6; 8-10; 12
Maximum FAR	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	3.44 for residential, 6.5 for community facility, and 3.4 for commercial uses	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	6.02 for residential, 6.5 for community facility and 3.4 for commercial
Minimum street wall	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	60 feet

			40 feet on wide streets			
Maximum street wall	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	No street wall required Optional Quality Housing allows 65 feet on wide streets	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	85 feet
Maximum building height	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	No height limit Optional Quality Housing allows 80 feet on wide streets	Based on underlying residential zone	Based on underlying residential zone	120 feet
Off-street retail and office parking requirement	1 per 1,000 sq. ft. of floor area	1 per 1,000 sq. ft. of floor area	1 per 1,000 sq. ft. of floor area	None required	None required	None required

Manufacturing Districts

	Existing and proposed district	Existing district
	M1-4	M3-2
Zoning Resolution description	Light manufacturing	Heavy manufacturing
Use groups	Use Groups 4-14; 16; 17	Use groups 6-14; 16-18
Maximum FAR	2.0 for manufacturing uses, 6.5 for community facility uses	2.0 for all uses
Minimum street wall	No street wall required	No street wall required
Maximum street wall	No street wall required; sky-exposure plane measured from 60 feet	No street wall required; sky-exposure plane measured from 60 feet
Maximum building height	No maximum building height	No maximum building height
Off-street parking requirement	None for most uses	None for most uses

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PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

On December 16, 2002, the Department of City Planning certified the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) application for the proposed zoning amendments.

Manhattan's Community Board 11 voted to approve the rezoning proposal without conditions on February 18, 2003 by a vote of 25 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining. The Manhattan Borough President also recommended unconditional approval of the proposal. The City Planning Commission held a public hearing on April 2 and voted to approve the proposal on May 7.

On June 17, City Council proposed a modification to the proposal by removing the midblock bounded by East 119th Street, East 120th Street, Pleasant Avenue and First Avenue from the rezoning area. City Council adopted the proposal as modified on June 24. The revised zoning is now in effect.

For more information on the East Harlem rezoning, please contact the Manhattan Office of the Department of City Planning at (212) 720-3480.

Related Notes

-  Items accompanied by this symbol require the [free Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).
- Brief explanations of terms in *green italics* can be viewed by [visiting glossary page](#). Words and phrases followed by an asterisk (*) are defined terms in the Zoning Resolution, primarily in Section 12-10. Consult the Zoning Resolution for the official and legally binding definitions of these words and phrases.