

# Land Division Information Guide: Flag Lot Regulations, Ch 33.110, 33.610, 33.611, 33.677



Bureau of  
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FROM CONCEPT  
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## Flag lots

The Portland Zoning Code defines a flag lot as, a lot with two distinct parts:

1. The flag, which is the only building site; and is located behind another lot; and
2. The pole, which connects the flag to the street; provides the only street frontage for the lot; and at any point is less than the minimum lot width for the zone.

## Purpose of flag lot regulations

Flag lots are allowed in limited circumstances. The limitations minimize the negative impacts of flag lots and additional driveways on an area while allowing land to be divided when other options are not achievable.

## When can a flag lot be created?

- The location of an existing house or attached garage that has been on site at least five years precludes a land division that creates lots that meet the minimum lot width standards for the zone; or
- The site has one of the following dimensional constraints:
  - In R2.5 zones, a site is less than 50 feet wide if two lots are proposed or is less than 75 feet wide if three lots are proposed; or
  - In RF-R5 zones, the dimensions of a site preclude a land division that meets the minimum lot width standards for the zone.

The following requirements must also be met:

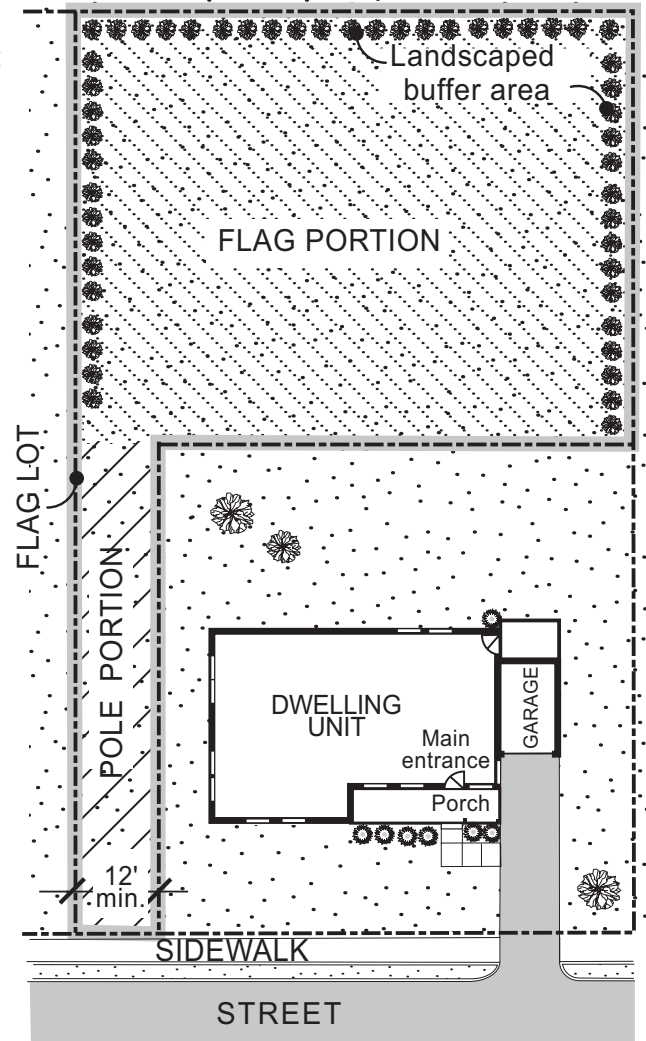
- Up to three lots are proposed, only one of which is a flag lot; and
- Minimum density for the site is met. In addition, flag lots can be established through a Property Line Adjustment (PLA) if located in the R5 and R2.5 zone and an existing house is on one or both of the properties.

## Standards for flag lots

Flag lots must comply with the standards of the base zone unless otherwise specified. Generally, new flag lots may only be created in single-dwelling zones. Standards for multi dwelling zones apply to flag lots created before July 1, 2002 and are found in Zoning Code Section 33.120.284. Standards for flag lots in single-dwelling zones are outlined below. Plan Districts may have additional regulations for flag lots that aren't covered in this document.

## Flag lot access pole

- A 12-foot width is required for the entire length of the pole. A 10-foot wide pole is allowed if the flag lot is established via a Property Line Adjustment and does not provide vehicle access.
- The Fire Code standard that requires access to the house within 150 feet must also be met unless fire suppression sprinklers are installed. Contact the Fire Bureau for more information.
- The pole must be part of the flag lot, connect to a street and be under the same ownership as the flag portion of the lot. Access easements to allow for use of the pole by another lot may be required.



## Minimum lot area and dimensions

Only the flag portion of the lot is included when calculating minimum lot area. Minimum lot width and depth is 40 feet measured at the midpoint of opposite lot lines of the flag portion of the lot.

If the Flag Lot is established via a Property Line Adjustment in R5 or R2.5 zones, the following standards apply:

- Minimum lot size for the flag portion is 1,600 square feet and the maximum lot size is 3,000 square feet.
- The minimum lot width and depth is 36 feet and the minimum lot width for the lot in front of the flag lot is 36 feet.

## Setbacks

Flag lots have required setbacks that are the same along all lot lines. Required setbacks are:

- RF, R20, R10 zones - 15 feet
- R7 through R2.5 zones - 10 feet
- Small flag lots (where the flag portion is less than 3,000 square feet) - 5 feet.

## Building coverage

Only the flag portion of a flag lot is considered when calculating building coverage.

## Maximum Floor Area Ration (FAR)

The maximum FAR for structures on small flag lots (where the flag portion is less than 3,000 square feet) is .5 to 1.

## Height

The maximum height for structures on small flag lots (where the flag portion is less than 3,000 square feet) is limited to 20 feet.

## Design Standards

In the RF through R5 zones, design standards apply to structures more than 15 feet in height on small flag lots (where the flag portion is less than 3,000 square feet) (see Zoning Code section 33.110.255.C.2)

## Landscaping

When the flag lot area is between 3,000 to 10,000 square feet, five feet of landscaping is required along the perimeter of the flag portion of the lot to screen the flag lot from neighboring properties.

The required outdoor area and detached accessory structures may not extend into the landscape buffer. The landscaping must be installed to the L3 standard (see Zoning Code section 33.248.020, Landscaping and Screening Standards for specific requirements).

## Vehicle area

A flag lot is allowed at least a 12-foot wide vehicle area. Otherwise, no more than 40 percent of the land area between the front building line and the property line at the street may be paved or used for vehicle areas. Where practical, shared access via easements must be used.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Question: Where are the flag lot regulations located?**

**Answer:** Most regulations for flag lots are in the following sections of the Portland Zoning Code:

- Section 33.110.255, Single Dwelling Zones – Flag lot development standards
- Section 33.120.284, Multi Dwelling Zones – Flag lot development standards for flag lots created before July 2002
- Section 33.610.400, Lots In RF through R5 Zones – Flag Lots
- Section 33.611.400, Lots In R2.5 Zone – Flag Lots
- Section 33.677.100 and 300.C, Property Line Adjustments- Flag lots in R5 or R2.5 zones,
- Chapter 33.530, Glendoveer Plan District
- Chapter 33.564 Pleasant Valley Plan District

### **Question: Flag lots are created through which land use review procedure type?**

**Answer:** A land division to establish a flag lot is normally processed through a Type Ix Land Division procedure. If any portion of the lots, utilities or services are located within a Flood Hazard Area or Landslide Hazard Area, then the application is processed through a Type IIx procedure. If an Environmental or River Review is required or any portion of the site is in an Open Space Zone, then the land division application is processed through a Type III procedure.

### **Question: Can I move an existing property line to create a flag lot?**

**Answer:** Yes. Property line adjustments can result in a flag lot in R5 and R2.5 zones if an existing house is on one or both properties and only one flag lot is proposed. See Zoning Code Chapter 33.677 for additional details.

### **Question: Are flag lots allowed in commercial, multi-dwelling and industrial zones?**

**Answer:** No. The creation of new flag lots is restricted to Single-Dwelling Residential Zones. Lots created in other zones must comply with the lot dimension standards of the applicable zone. An existing flag lot in a multi dwelling zone may be developed under the standards in 33.120.284.

For more information, contact the [Planning and Zoning](#) Staff at 503-823-7526 or view the Current [Zoning Code](#) website

Development Services Center: 1900 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 1500

All Information is Subject to Change.