



MEMO

DATE: March 7, 2023
TO: Jessi Conner, Portland Housing Bureau
FROM: Tom Armstrong, Supervising Planner
SUBJECT: Inclusionary Housing Calibration Study
Zoning Code Bonus

This memo documents the density and height bonuses that projects that include Inclusionary Housing (IH) units are eligible for.

The bonuses changed in the first year of the IH program because at the time of adopting the initial IH program, BPS was in the process of re-writing the Commercial Mixed-Use zoning code. Subsequently, BPS also re-wrote the Multi-Dwelling Residential zoning code in 2020 with a substantial increase in density.

Commercial Mixed Use

The table below shows the pre-IH zoning, the initial IH zoning and the 2018 re-write that is effective today.

In the Commercial Mixed-Use zones, the City regulates the size of a building through a floor-to-area ratio (FAR) standard and a maximum building height. These two standards work in combination to determine the amount of building space or square footage allowed on a site. The City does not regulate the maximum number of units – the developer determines the number of units, the size of units and the number of bedrooms in each unit. Prior to the IH requirements, the City sought to encourage mixed use development by exempting residential space from the FAR calculations. As part of the IH program adoption, the City changed this approach. Residential space was counted in the FAR standard and a density/FAR bonus was given to projects with IH units.



As part of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan update, the City re-wrote the Commercial Mixed Use zones. The re-write included consolidating different zones and creating a new CM3 zone that is a higher density zone that is applied outside of the Central City.

In general, the changes have increased the allowed and bonus FAR and building height. The conversion from the CS zone to CM2 zone result in a 0.5 FAR reduction of the Base FAR but maintained the 4:1 Bonus FAR.

The 10-foot height bonus is available only on sites that are within a Historic District, Conservation District, or Design Overlay Zone and that have a Comprehensive Plan Map designation of Mixed Use–Urban Center or Mixed Use–Civic Corridor. The larger height bonuses are allowed through a Planned Development review.

Multi-Dwelling Residential

The multi-dwelling residential zones are harder to compare because as part of the Better Housing By Design project, the City shifted from calculating density based on site area (i.e. 1 unit per 1,000 square feet of site area) to the FAR standard with no regulation on the maximum number of units. The table below shows the current base and bonus standards for the RM zones. In addition to the IH bonus, the RM zones offer bonuses for deeper affordability, three-bedroom units and visitable units. There is no height bonus for inclusionary housing.

	RM1	RM2	RM3	RM4*	RX
Base FAR	1 to 1	1.5 to 1	2 to 1	3 to 1 4 to 1	4 to 1
Bonus FAR	1.5 to 1	2.25 to 1	3 to 1	4.5 to 1 6 to 1	6 to 1
Base height	35 ft.	45 ft.	65 ft.	75/100 ft.	100 ft.
Bonus height	None	None	None	None	None

*The lower FAR applies in the RM4 zone in Historic and Conservation districts.



Zone		CN1	CN2	CO1	CO2	CM	CS		CG	CX
Pre IH before Feb. 2017	Base FAR	.75 to 1	.75 to 1	.75 to 1	2 to 1	1 to 1	3 to 1		3 to 1	4 to 1
	Bonus FAR	Residential FAR did not count toward max FAR								
	Base height	30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.	45 ft.	45 ft.	45 ft.		45 ft.	75 ft.
	Bonus height	None	None	None	None	None	None		None	None
IH Feb. 2017 - May 2018	Base FAR	1.5 to 1	1.5 to 1	1.5 to 1	2.5 to 1	2.5 to 1	3 to 1		3 to 1	4 to 1
	Bonus FAR	2.5 to 1	2.5 to 1	2.5 to 1	4 to 1	4 to 1	4 to 1		3.5 to 1	6 to 1
	Base height	30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.	45 ft.	45 ft.	45 ft.		45 ft.	75 ft.
	Bonus height	None	None	None	None	None	None		None	None
Zone		CM1			CM2			CM3	CE	CX
Current	Base FAR	1.5 to 1			2.5 to 1			3 to 1	2.5 to 1	4 to 1
	Bonus FAR	2.5 to 1			4 to 1			5 to 1	4 to 1	6 to 1
	Base height	35 ft.			45 ft.			65 ft.	45 ft.	75 ft.
	Bonus height	None			10 ft. / 30 ft.			10 ft./ 55 ft.	None	10 ft./45 ft.