

# RESIDENTIAL INFILL PROJECT

## CODE CHANGES



Bureau of  
Development  
Services FROM CONCEPT  
TO CONSTRUCTION

# Welcome.

Today's presentation won't cover everything included in the Residential Infill Project code changes – instead, we'll be talking about the most important new concepts and terminology.

What is the Residential Infill Project?

What is Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and why is it important?

What are the new Infill requirements, and do they change my options?

What do I need to know about changes to development standards?

I've been planning on building an ADU – how do these changes affect me?

## Residential Infill Project code changes go into effect August 1, 2021.

The City of Portland has approved new rules that will change the types of housing allowed in single-dwelling residential neighborhoods.

### At a high level, these code changes will:

Increase number of units allowed on residential lots.

Increase possible ADU configurations in many zones.

Limit amount of floor area allowed on a single lot.

Provide a new way to measure height and create consistency in narrow lot standards.



Today's presentation will take place in 4 parts:

1. Introduction to FAR

2. Infill Requirements + Housing Options

3. Changes to Development Standards

4. Accessory Structures and ADUs



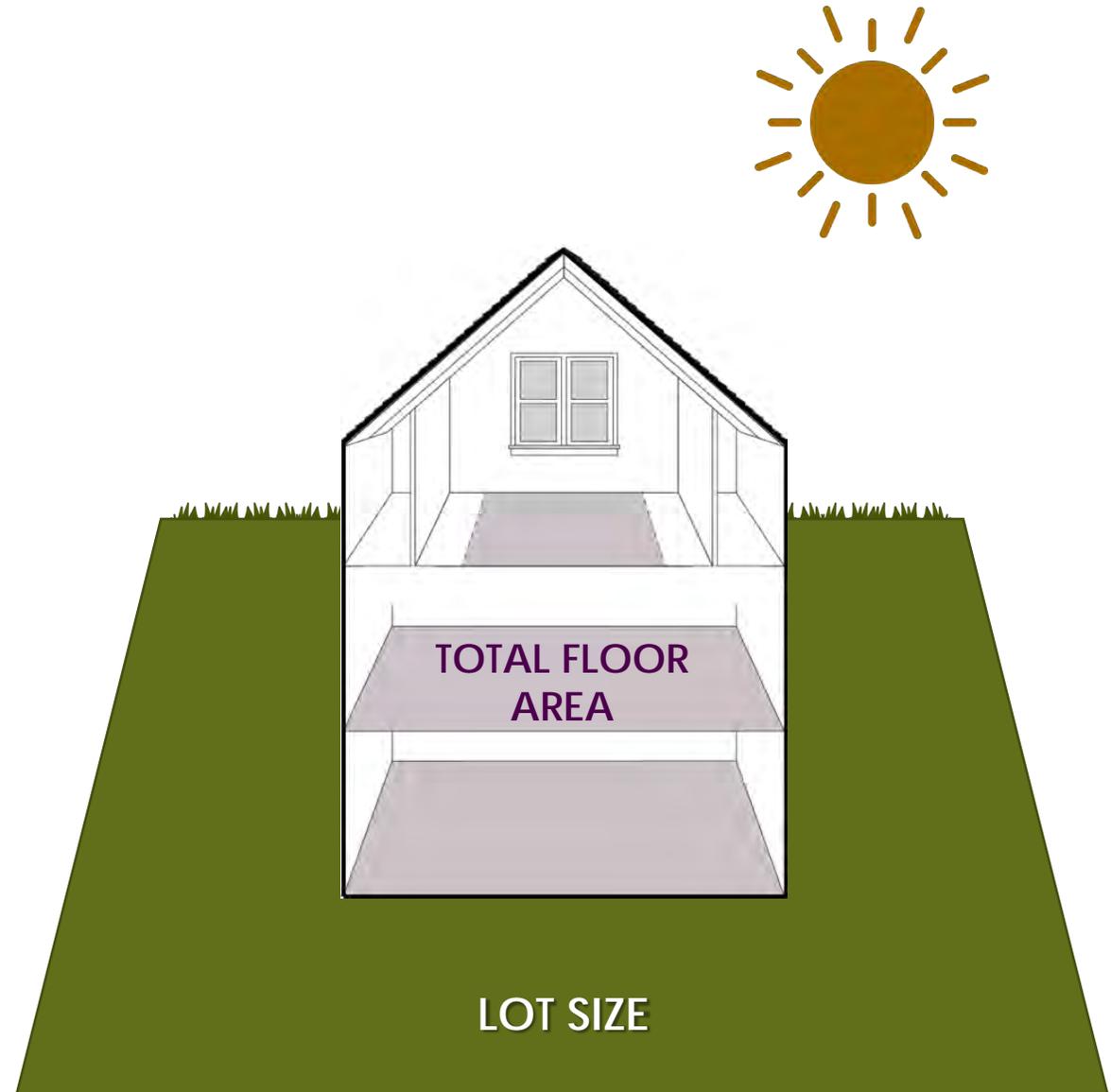
## What is Floor Area Ratio (FAR)?

Floor Area Ratio refers to the ratio of a building's **total floor area** to the **size of the piece of land** upon which it is built.

## How does Floor Area Ratio (FAR) affect my project?

In exchange for more flexibility and units, the Residential Infill code requires applicants to provide information about their property's FAR. **The size of new structures or additions are limited based on a property's FAR measurement.**

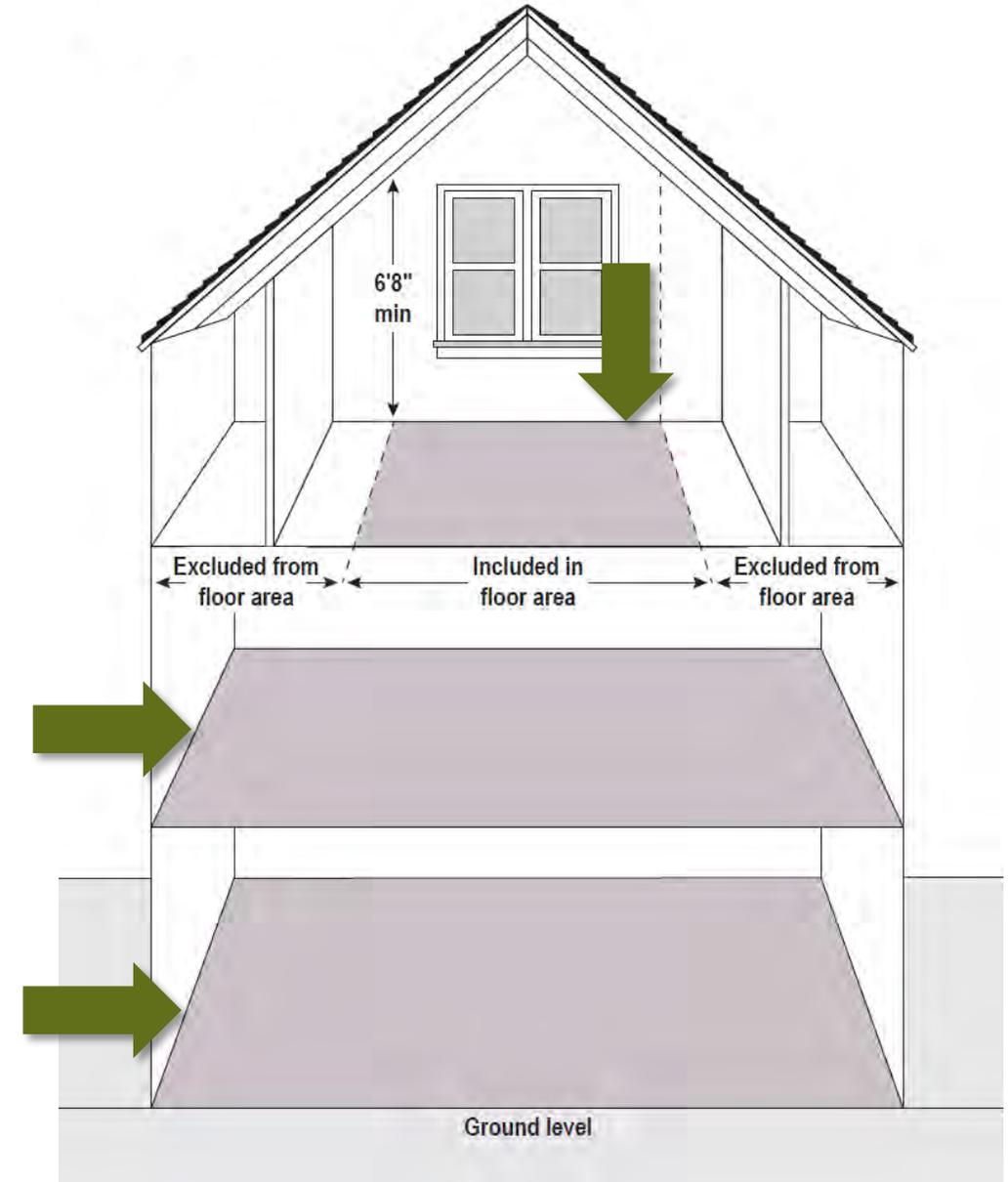
The amount of allowed floor area generally increases as units are added to a property.



**Floor Area** refers to the total area of all floors of a building. FAR includes measurements of a building's floor area from the exterior walls, for each story of the structure.

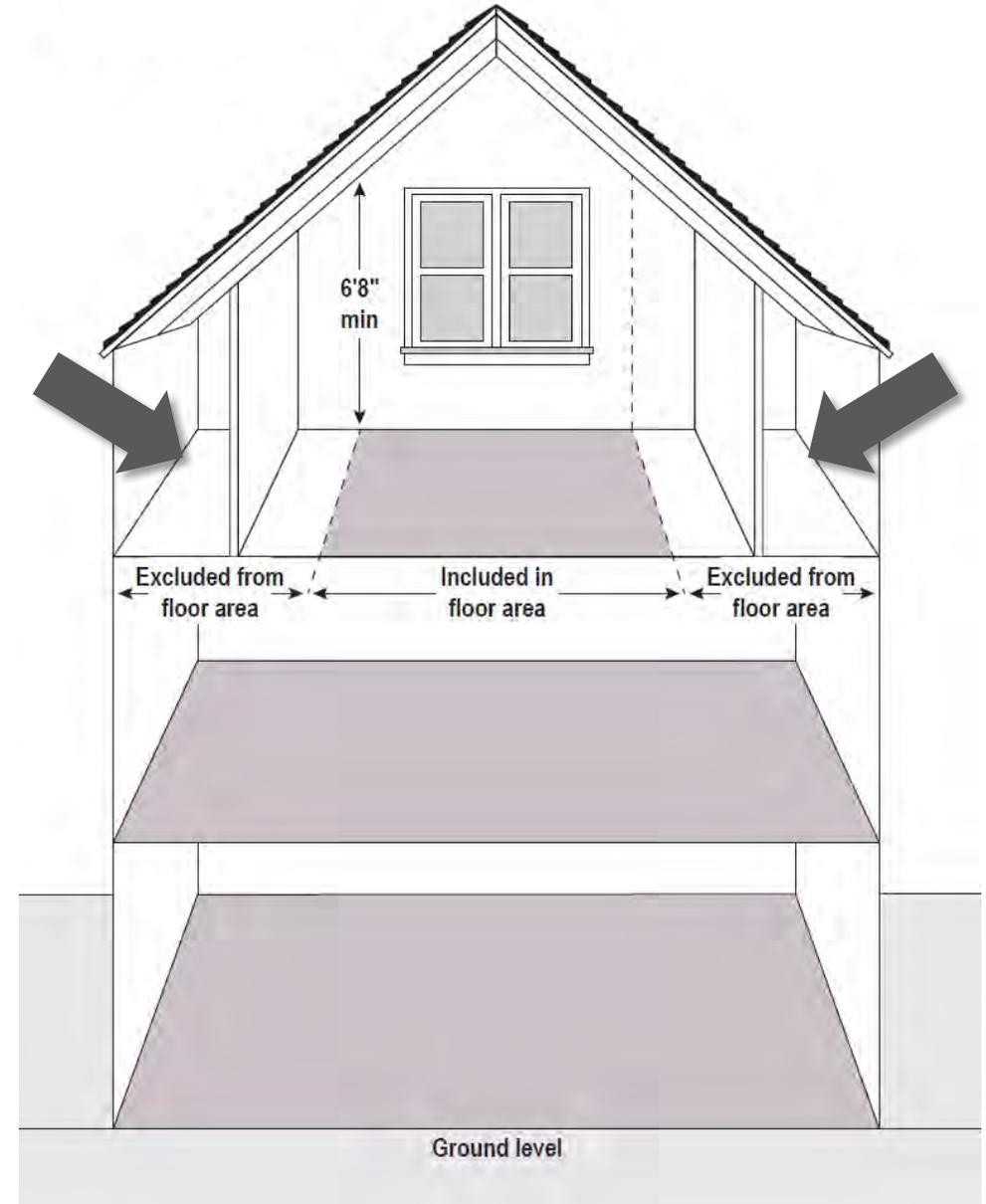
**Floor area includes:**

- Stairways (counted toward floor area on one floor)
- Internal chimney shafts and chases
- Garages/Structured parking



## Floor area does not include:

- Areas where the elevation of the floor is 4 feet or more below the adjacent right-of way
- Some basements
- Portions of attics where the finished ceiling height is less than 6 feet 8 inches
- Roofed porches, exterior balconies, or other similar areas, unless they are enclosed by walls that are more than 42 inches in height, for 75 percent or more of their perimeter.

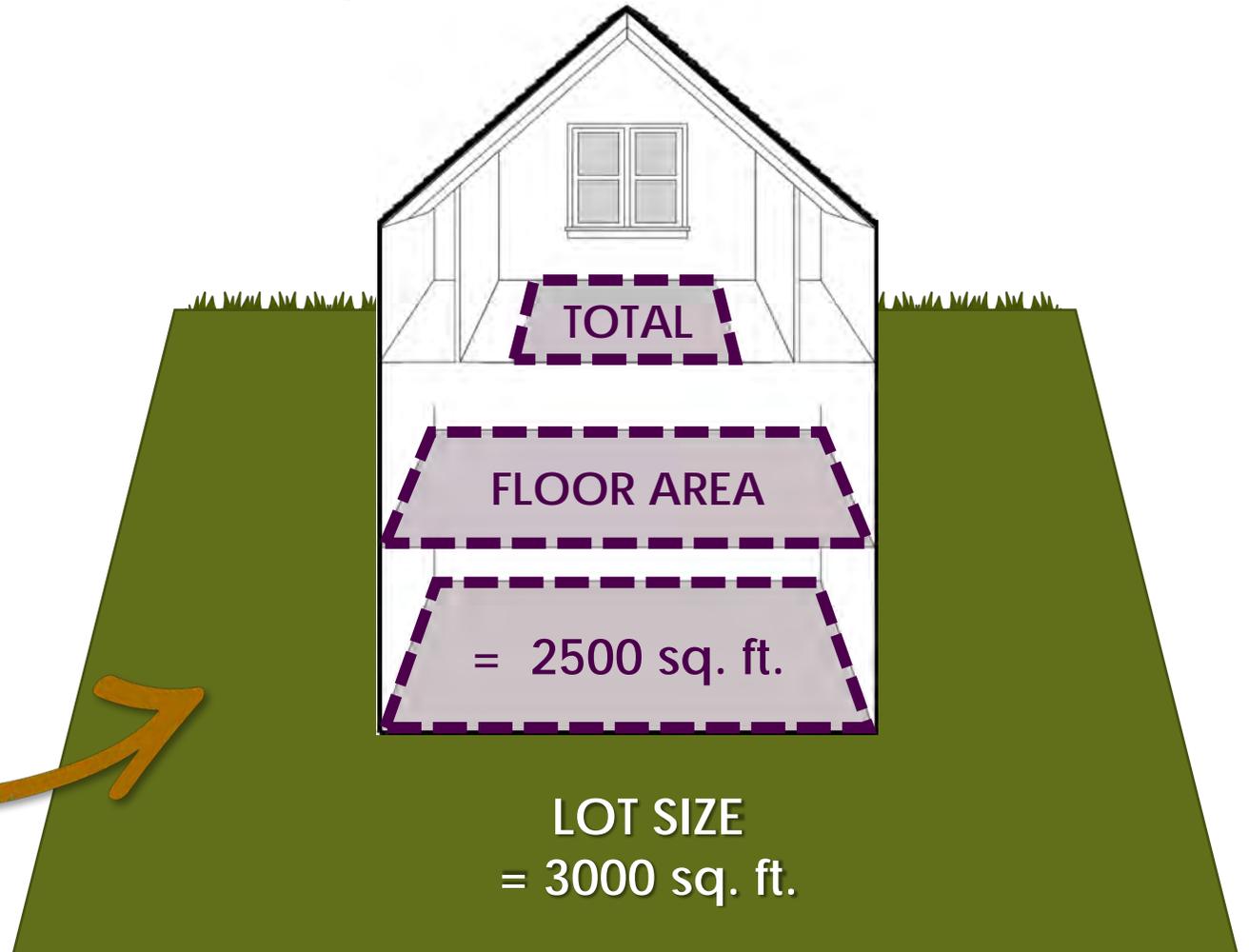


## How do I measure my home's FAR?

Floor Area Ratio refers to the ratio of a building's total floor area to the size of the piece of land upon which it is built. In order to learn your home's FAR, you will need to **divide the total floor area** of structures on your lot **by your lot size** (both measurements should be in sq. ft.).

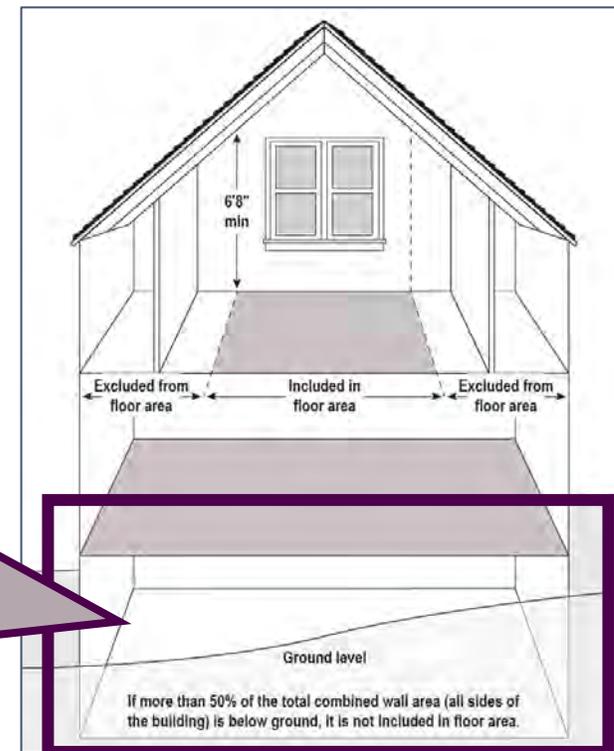
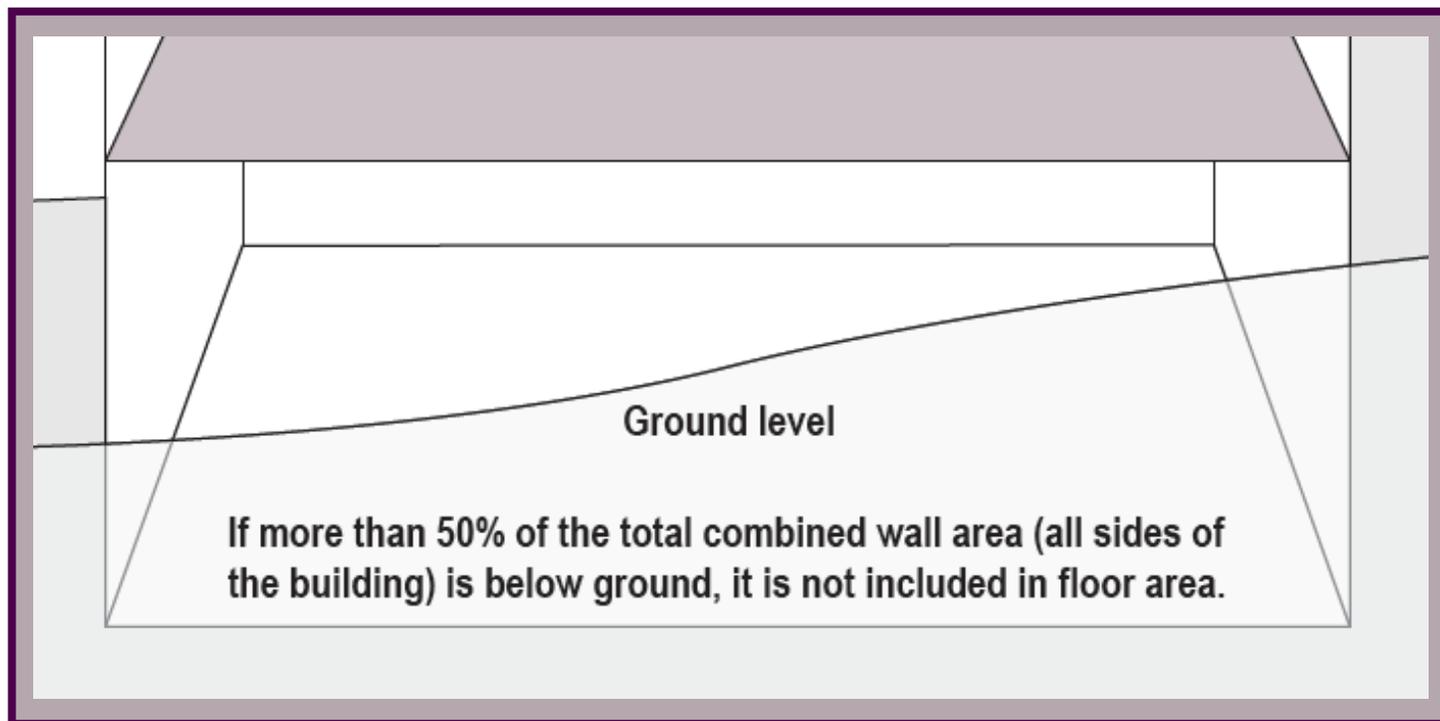
**LIKE THIS.**

$$\frac{2500 \text{ sq. ft. Floor Area}}{5000 \text{ sq. ft. Lot}} = 0.5 \text{ FAR}$$

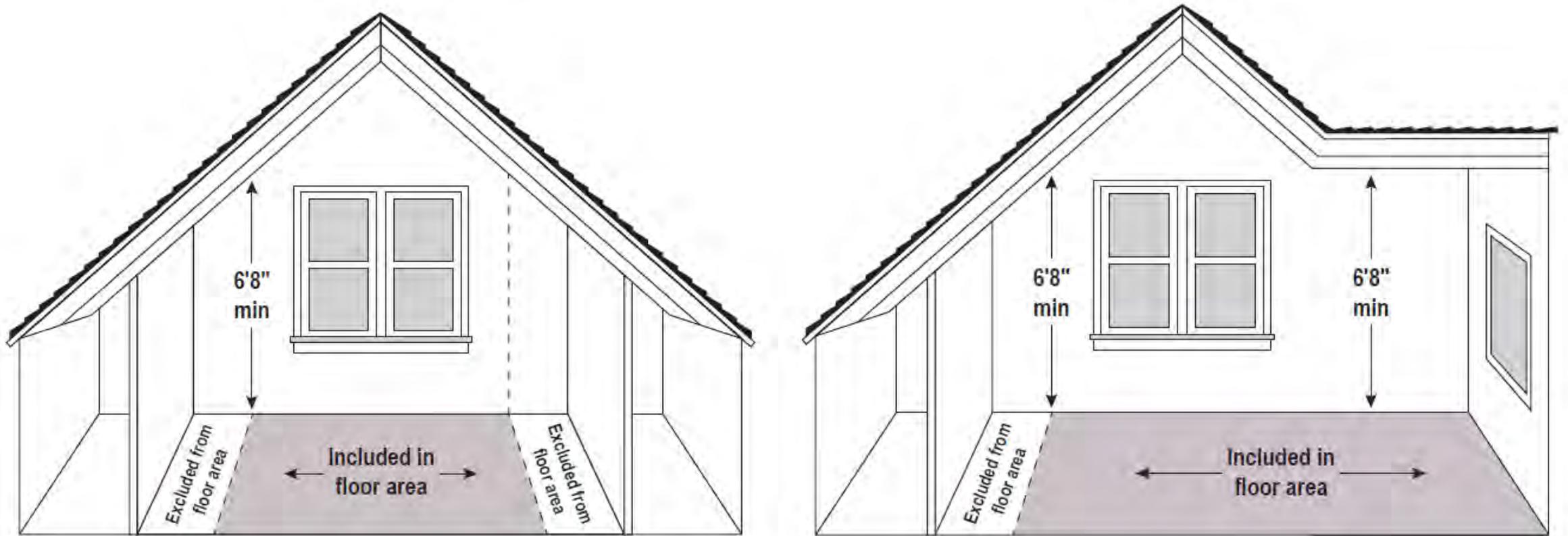


# HOW IS FAR MEASURED? – BASEMENTS

Depending on construction, basements may not be included in FAR measurements. **Basements with more than 50% of the total combined wall area below ground (on all sides of the building) are not included in floor area.**



Attic floor space for any area with a **minimum ceiling height of 6'8"** should be included in floor area and FAR measurements.



## FAR Limits by Zone:

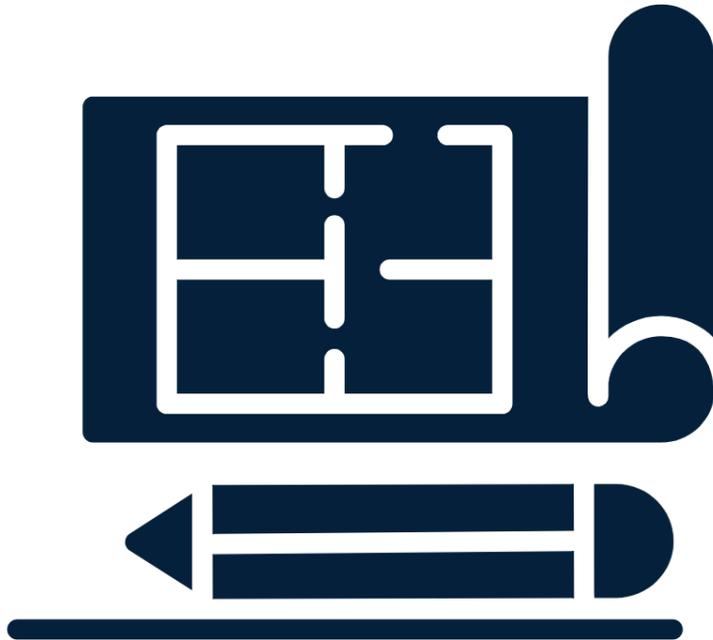
	R7	R5	R2.5
One unit	0.4 to 1	0.5 to 1	0.7 to 1
Two units	0.5 to 1	0.6 to 1	0.8 to 1
3+ units	0.6 to 1	0.7 to 1	0.9 to 1



### KEY TAKEAWAY:

The amount of allowable floor area on a lot generally increases as the number of units increases.

**NOTE:** Other single-dwelling zones will be addressed through Phase 2 of the Residential Infill Project (currently in progress). Floor area is not regulated in the R10, R20 and RF zones.



## **FAR Exception:**

Maximum FAR does not apply to one alteration or addition of up to 250 square feet when the alteration or addition is to a primary structure that received final inspection at least 5 years ago. This exception is allowed once every 5 years.

## **Bonus FAR available for:**

- Providing affordable housing
- Preserving an existing dwelling unit



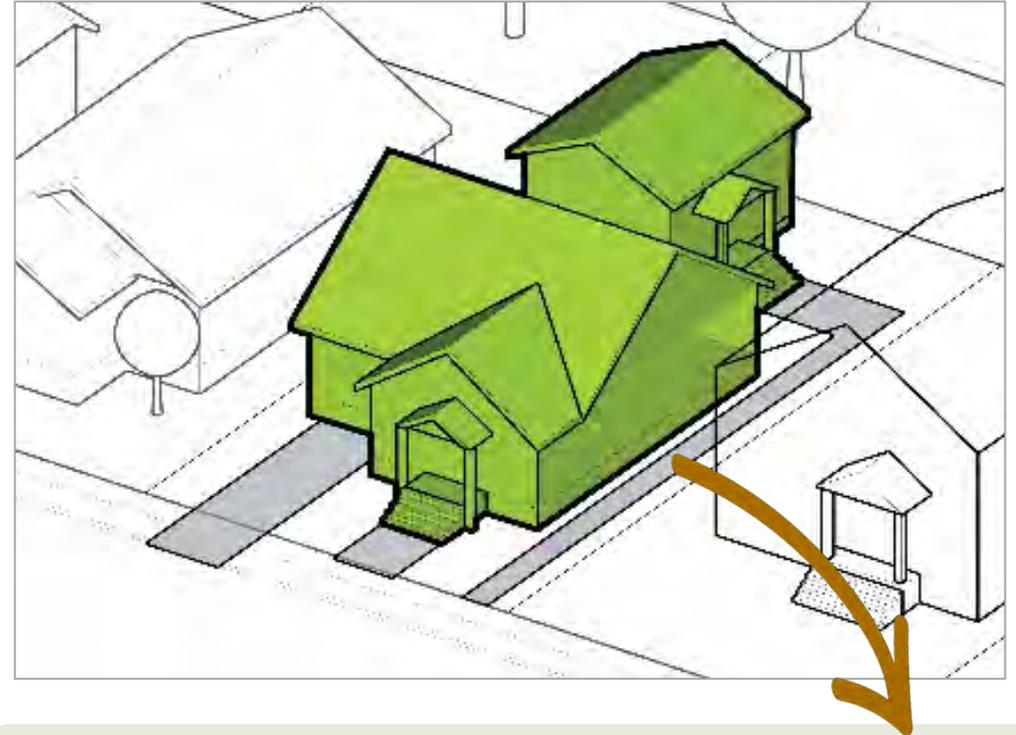
1. Introduction to FAR ✓
2. Infill Requirements + Housing Options
3. Changes to Development Standards
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So...  
what can I  
**BUILD?**

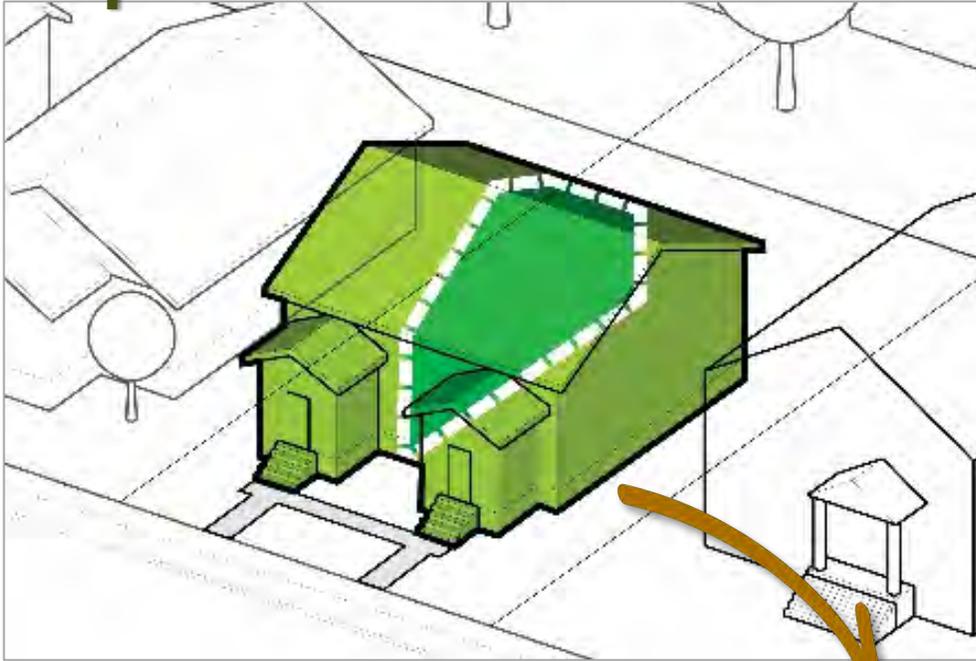
Property owners will have a variety of options under these new code changes. However, what's allowed on a lot can vary based on factors such as lot size, existing square footage, and zoning considerations.

## House + ADU



Under Infill code changes, **a house + ADU are still allowed on all buildable lots** in single-dwelling residential zones.

## Duplex



A **duplex** is currently allowed only on corner lots in R5 and R7 - **but will soon be allowed on any lot where a house is allowed** in these zones.

**NEXT UP:** Feeling more ambitious? Are you interested in having 3 or more units on your property?



Let's talk  
additional  
requirements.

There are a few additional requirements if you plan to build more than two units:

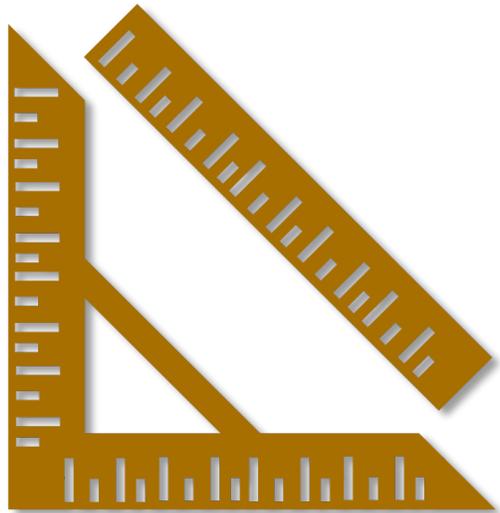
- ✓ Minimum lot size
- ✓ Lot on a [maintained street](#)
- ✓ Not within [z-overlay zone](#)
- ✓ No demolition of historic resources within the past 10 years
- ✓ For 3+ units: Building code & visitability requirements



Let's break that down.

Does your property meet minimum lot size requirements?

## Minimum lot sizes by zone:



Zone	1-2 units	3+ units
R2.5	1,600 sf	3,200 sf
R5	3,000 sf	4,500 sf
R7	4,200 sf	5,000 sf

Is your property on a maintained street?

Only 2 units are allowed on streets not maintained by the City of Portland.

The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) estimates that 88% of Portland's streets are accepted for maintenance.

PBOT has created a map that shows which streets are currently maintained.

Use that resource to check your property's status!



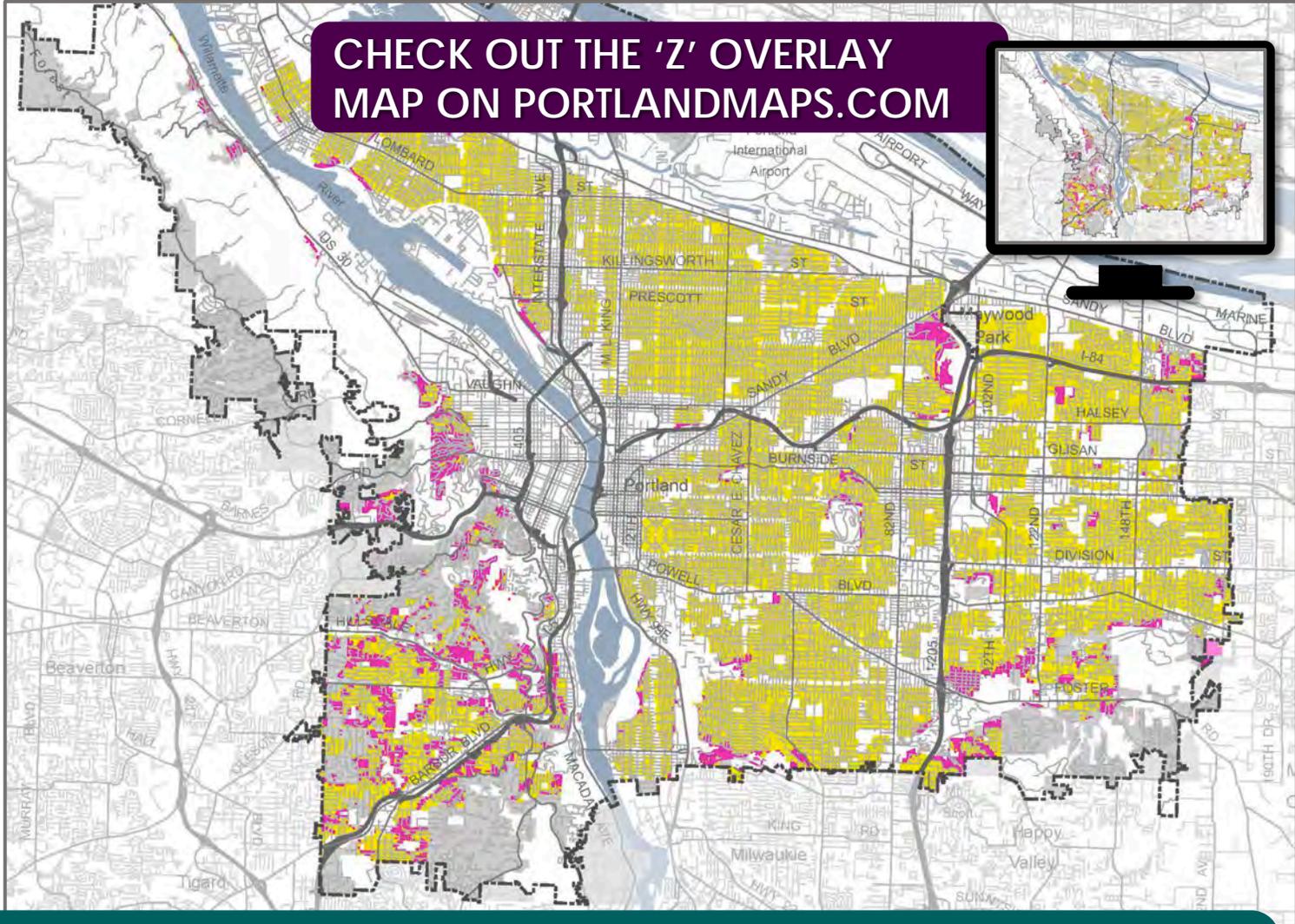
**MAX. 2 UNITS ON NON-MAINTAINED STREETS.**

Are additional units allowed on your property?

There are some locations where more than 2 units will not be permitted on a single lot.

The z overlay map shows where 3+ units will not be allowed due to:

- Flooding hazards
- Landslide hazards
- Significant natural resources



**ADDITIONAL HOUSING TYPES ARE...**

	ALLOWED IF REQUIREMENTS ARE MET		NOT ALLOWED 'Z' OVERLAY		NOT ALLOWED ZONES RF/R20/R10
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Have historic resources been demolished?

**Lots containing historic resources demolished within the last 10 years will not be eligible for more than 2 units, unless:**

- The landmark or contributing structure was destroyed by fire or other causes beyond the control of the owner.
- The only structure that was demolished was an accessory structure.
- The demolition was approved through demolition review.



## Heads up!

Converting a 1-2 family dwelling into 3 or more units could trigger some additional building code requirements...

### Seismic Upgrade Required

Change of occupancy from 1-2 Family to **3 or more units will trigger a seismic upgrade** under City Code Chapter 24.85 (i.e. change of occupancy from R-3 occupancy to R-1 or R-2).



### Commercial Building Permit Required

Upgrading from 1-2 Family to 3 or more units could require a **Commercial building permit**, and your project must follow the **commercial building code** – which has different requirements than the residential code.

Commercial requirements include details such as:

- Sprinkler systems
- Increased fire rating of exterior walls based on distance from property line
- Window and door opening limitations based on property line

**NOTE:** Applicants can seek relief or alternatives to these requirements through a building code appeal process.

# INFILL REQUIREMENTS – VISITABILITY



When there are **three or more units** on a site – including ADUs – **one must be visitable.**

**Visitable entrance:** At least one entrance must be accessible. No stairs, with the slope not to exceed 1:8.

**Visitable bathroom:** At least one bathroom must be specific size/shape and on the same floor as the visitable entrance (or accessible via a ramp, elevator, or lift).

**Visitable living area:** At least 200 square feet of living area on the same floor as the visitable entrance (or accessible via a ramp, elevator, or lift).

**Visitable door:** All door openings between (and including) the visitable entrance, living area, and bathroom must be at least 34" wide.

**Exceptions for:** Sloped lots, conversions, and 3-foot grade changes at the front of the lot.

“What does all of this mean for me?”

“What can I actually do with my property?”

## THE QUESTION:

**Does your property meet Infill requirements, and is it zoned within zones R5, R7, or R2.5?**

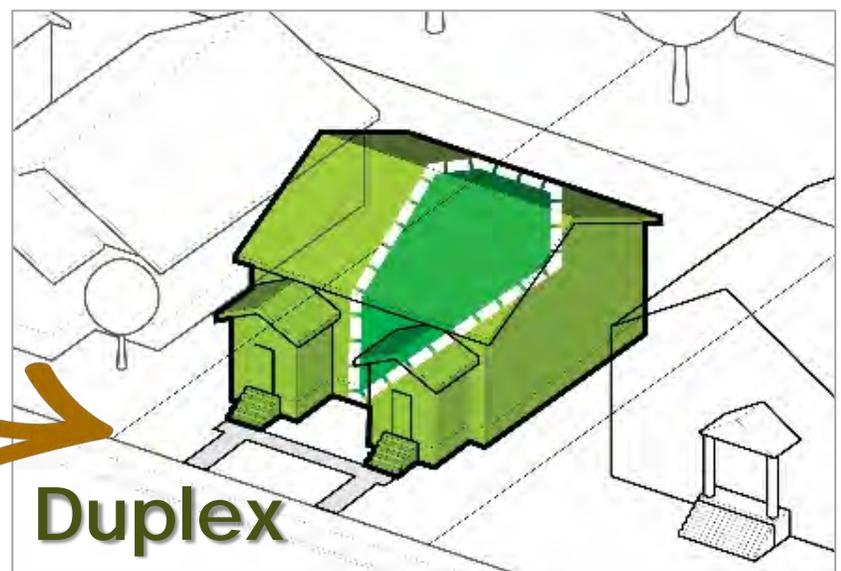
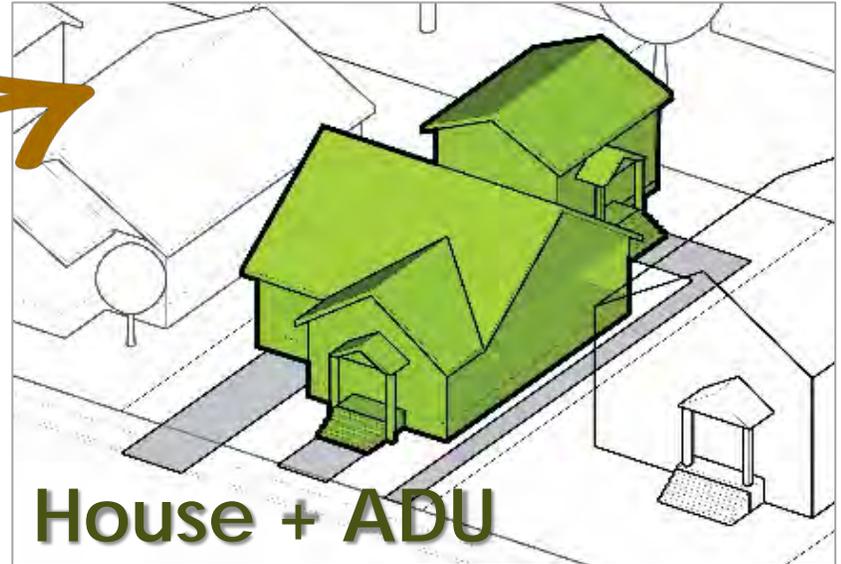
If the answer is “**yes,**”  
you’ve got options.



So...  
what can I  
**BUILD?**

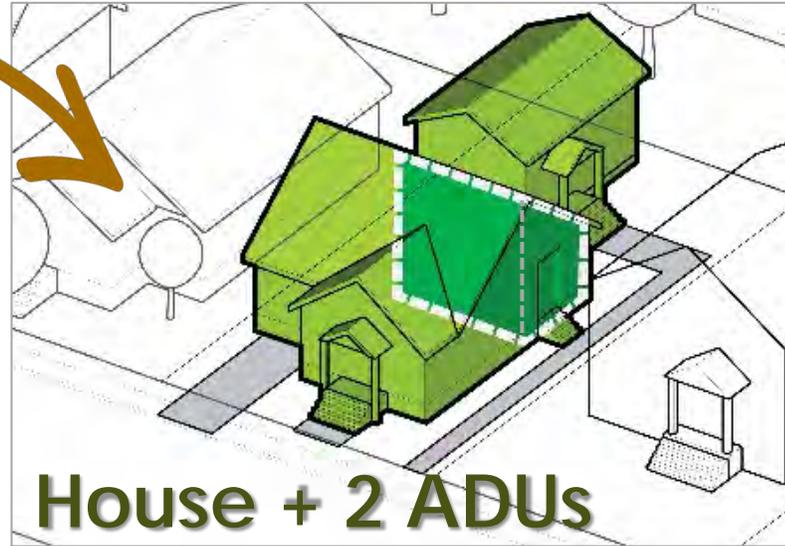
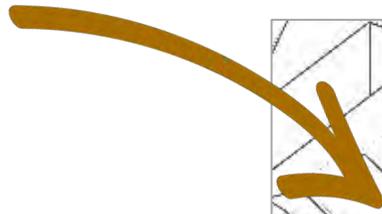
If your property does meet **Infill requirements**, and is zoned within **zones R5, R7, or R2.5...**

**REMINDER:**  
You can easily move forward with **2 units...**



## BIG. CHANGES.

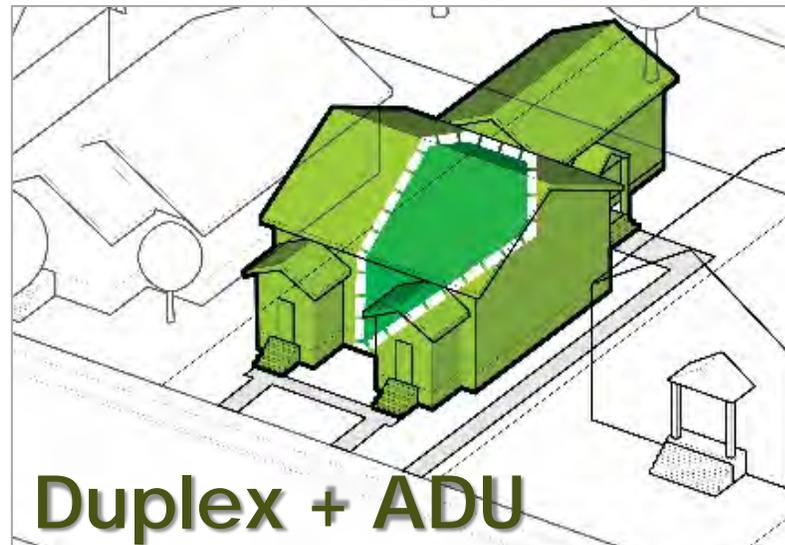
Configurations of 3-4 units are allowed on buildable lots when Infill requirements are met.



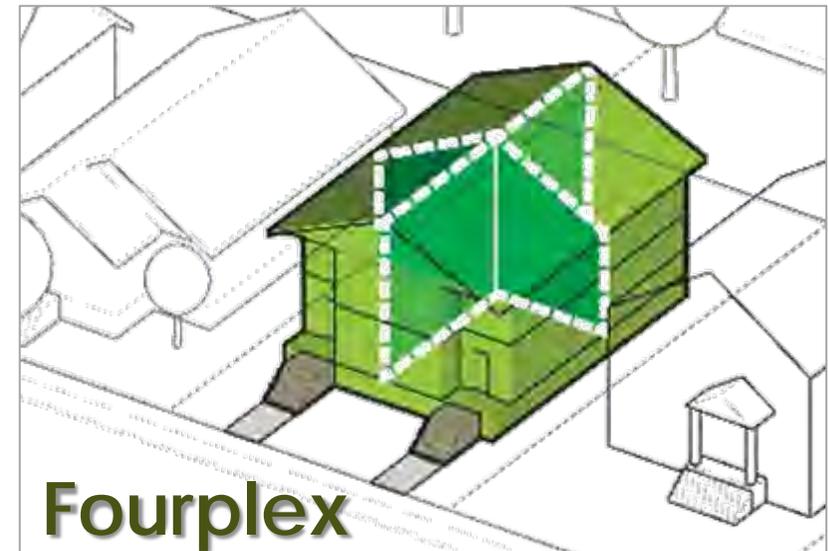
**House + 2 ADUs**



**Triplex**



**Duplex + ADU**



**Fourplex**

# INFILL OPTIONS – 4, 5, OR 6 UNITS

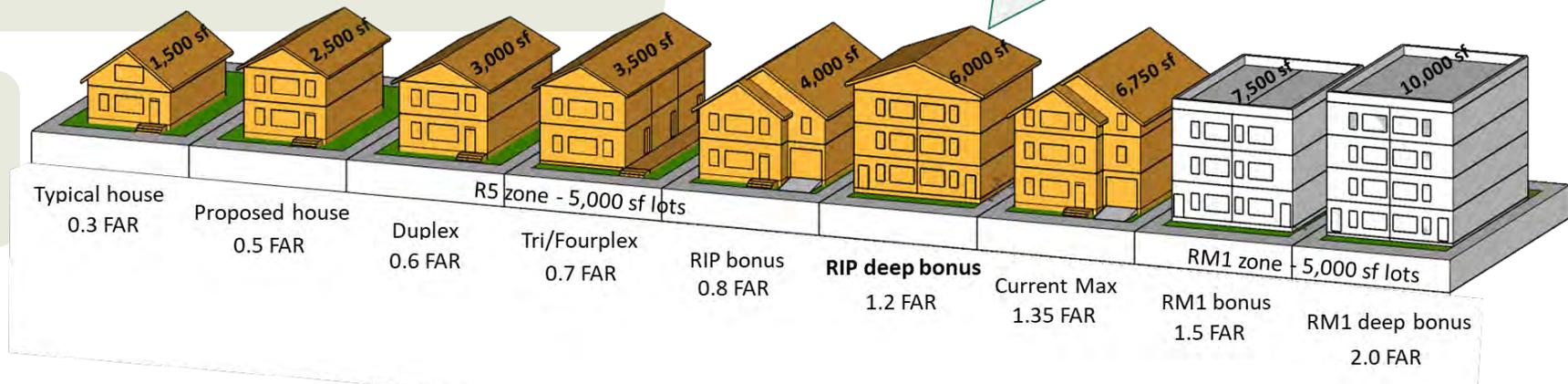
Affordable fourplexes and multi-dwelling structures now allowed. Fourplexes and multi-dwelling structures with no more than six dwelling units are allowed on buildable lots.

Affordable means at least 50 percent of the dwelling units on the site are affordable to those earning no more 60 percent MFI.

Maximum FAR = 1.2 to 1  
Maximum height = 35 feet

## MORE OPTIONS FOR 4, 5, + 6 UNITS, TOO...

**Deeper Affordability Bonus amendment:**  
50% of units @ 60% MFI rental/ 80% MFI ownership  
4 units\*/2 affordable  
5 units\*/3 affordable  
6 units\*/3 affordable  
\*2 of the units must be visitable



1. Introduction to FAR ✓
2. Infill Requirements + Housing Options ✓
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## de·vel·op·ment stand·ard·s

*noun*

/də'veləpmənt/  
/'stændərdz/

Development standards are regulations in the Zoning Code that tell you how tall a building is allowed to be, where it can be located on the lot, and how much of the lot can be covered with structures. They make residential areas more livable by requiring open areas and vegetation, as well as influence the feel and look of a neighborhood.



**Infill changes  
development  
standards  
related to...**

- Eaves
- Main entrance placement
- Changes to measuring height
- Garage width
- Parking requirements
- Parking Area Locations
- Narrow lots (less than 32 feet wide)

## Building Eaves

Building eaves may extend up to 2 feet into a required building setback provided the eave is at least three feet from a lot line.

33.110.220.C.2

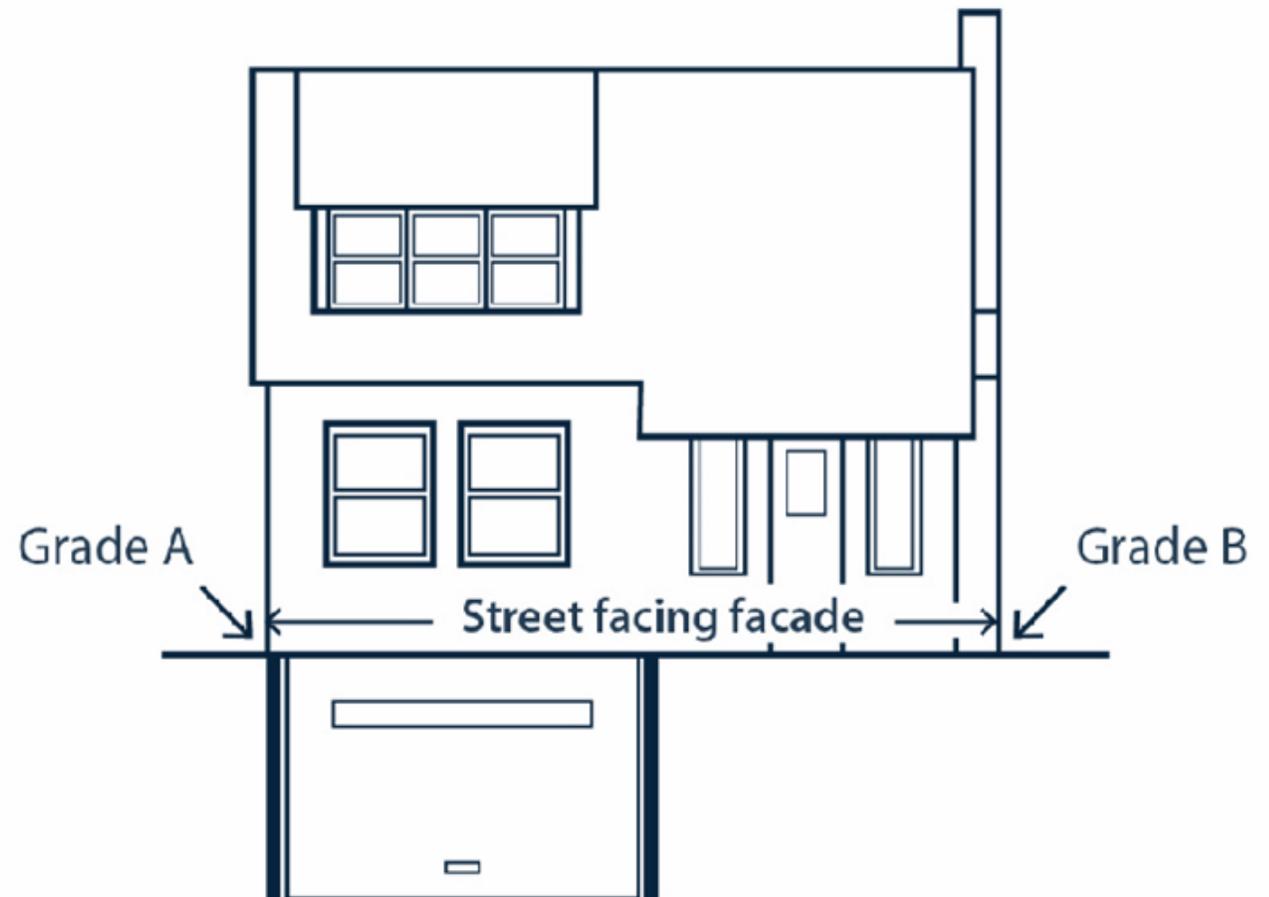


## Main entrance distance from grade:

The main entrance must be within 4 feet of grade. For the purposes of this Subsection, grade is the average grade measured at the outer most corners of the street facing façade See Figure 110-7.

33.110.230.D

Figure 110-7  
Calculation of Grade: (Grade A + Grade B) / 2

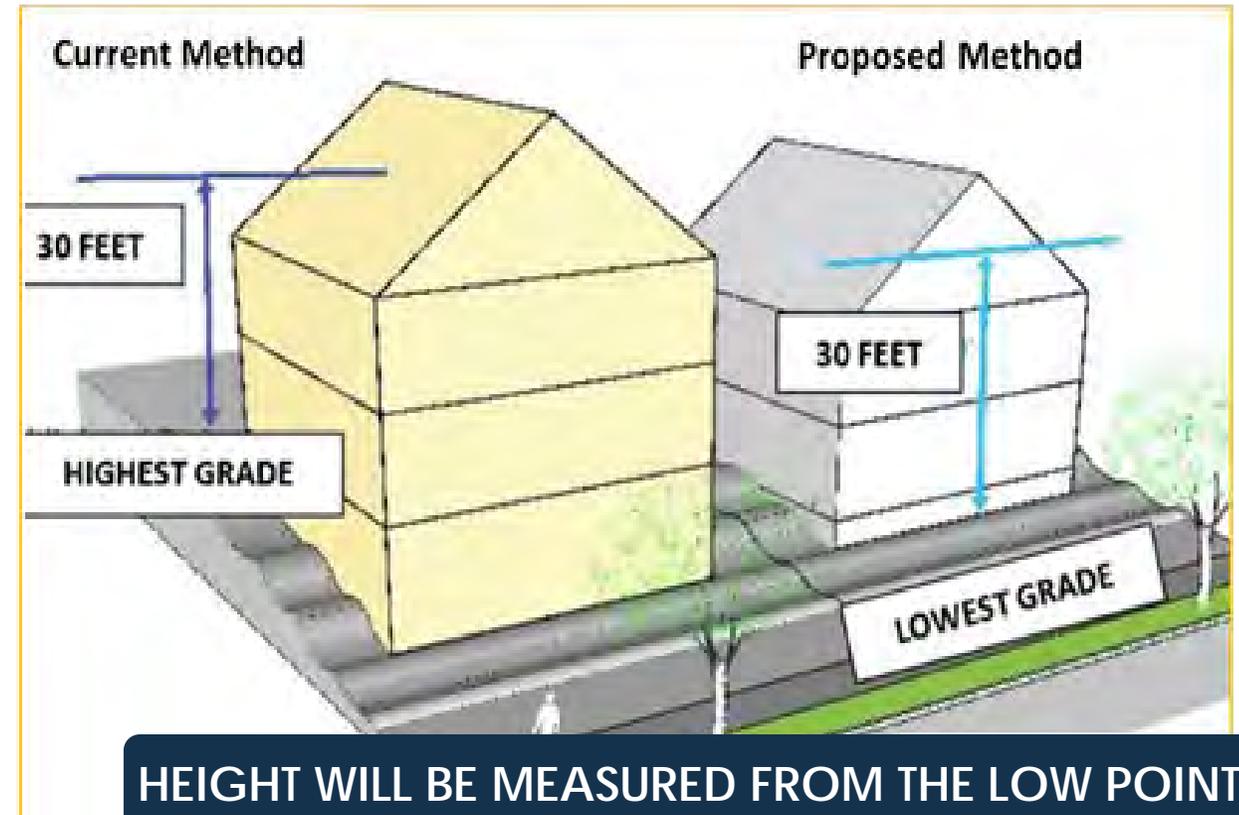


## We've made some **significant changes** to **how building height is measured.**

These changes are aimed at creating a **clearer** and **more consistent** measurement system.

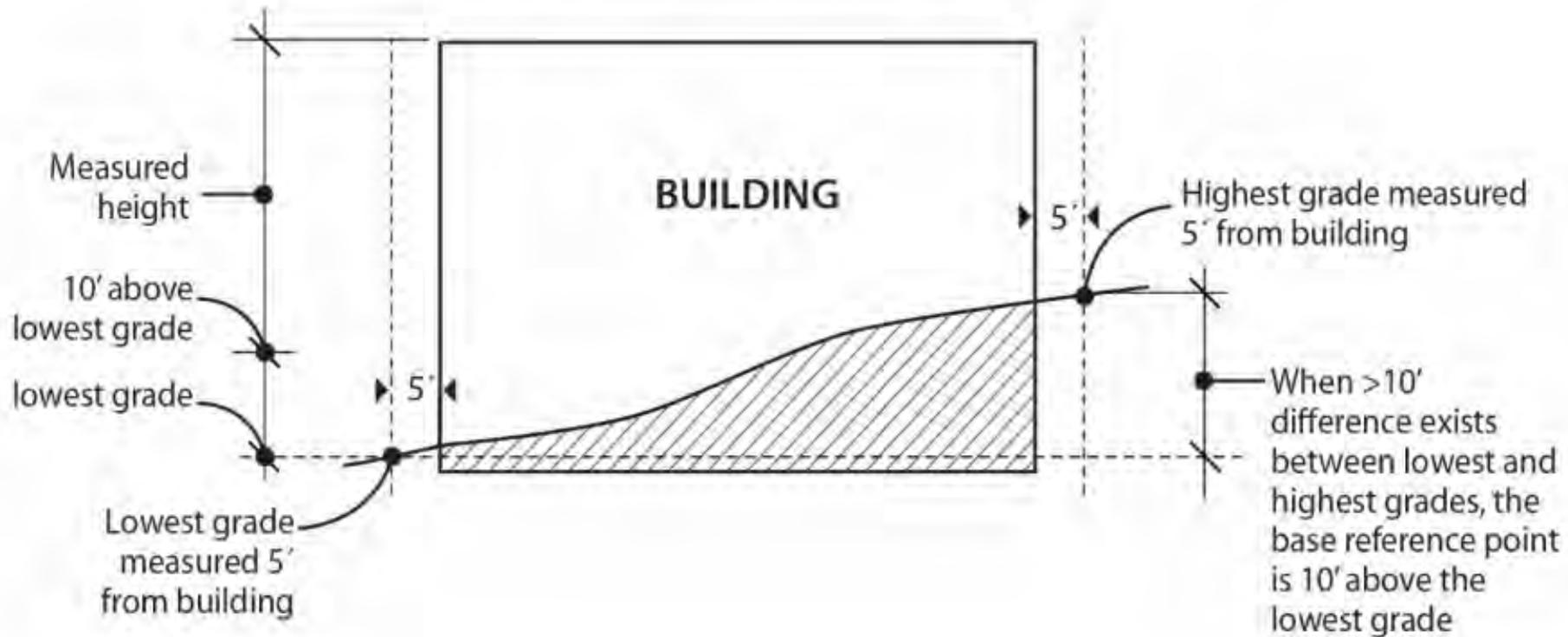
### Callouts include:

- Changing measurement point from **highest** point of grade to **lowest**.
- New height measurement takes different **roof shapes** and **elements** into account.



Height will be measured from the low point:

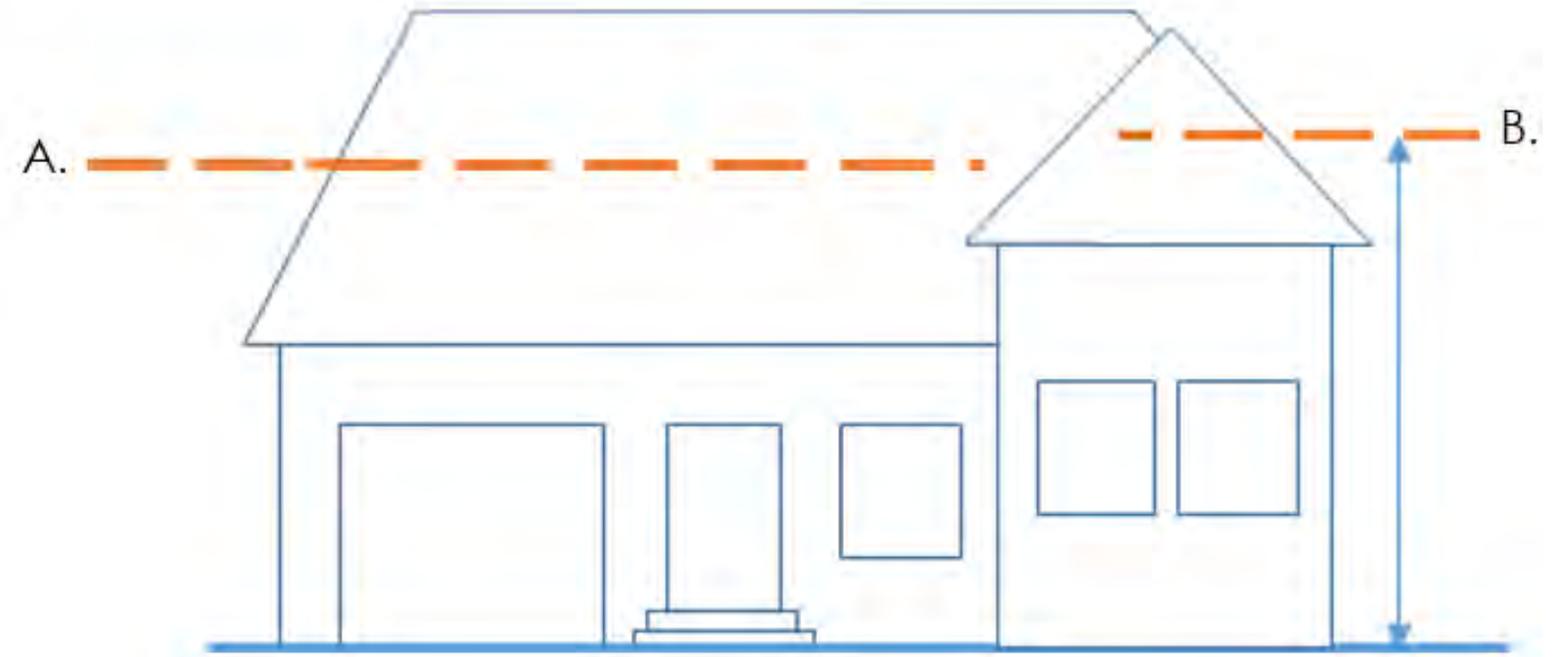
**Figure 930-6**  
**Measuring Height – Determining Base Reference Point**



## Roof-type reference point:

The height of a building is the vertical distance between the base reference point and the highest roof-type reference point.

33.930.050

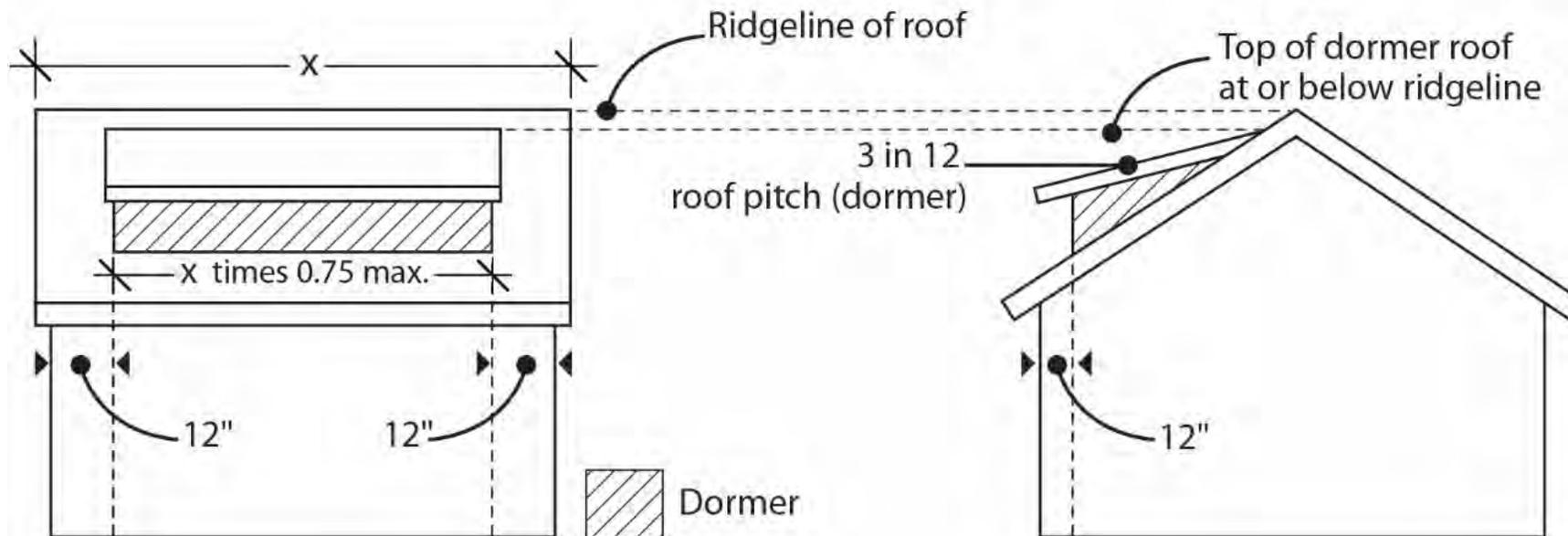


# CHANGES TO MEASURING HEIGHT – DORMERS

Dormers are not included in height calculation when:

1. The roof of the dormer has a pitch of at least 3 in 12 and no part of the dormer extends above the ridgeline of the roof;
2. The walls of the dormer are set back at least 12 inches from the plane of any exterior wall of the floor below; and
3. The width of the dormer is not more than 75 percent of the width of the roof from which it projects. See Figure 110-1

33.110.215.C.2



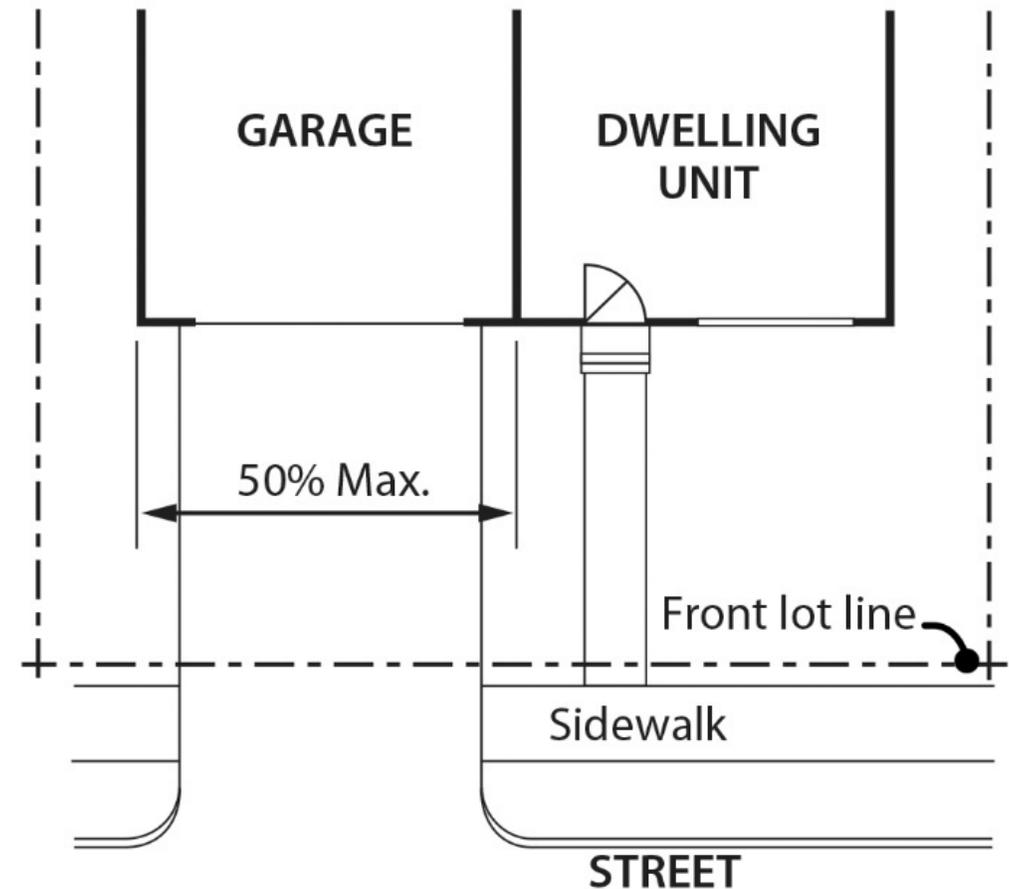
## Houses

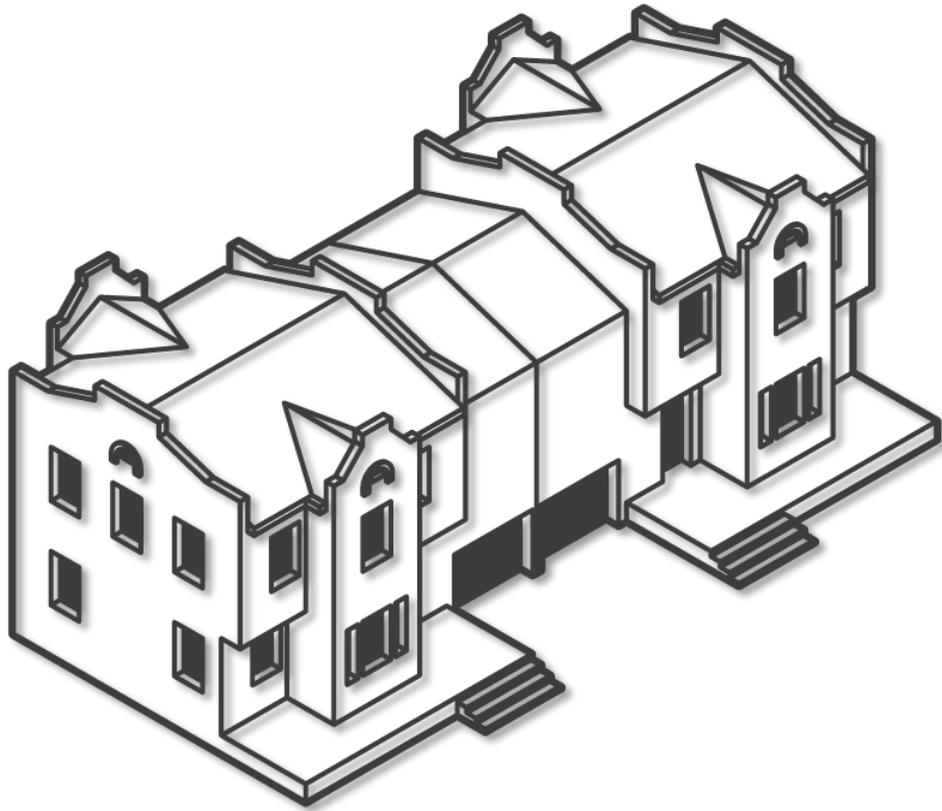
For garages that are accessory to houses and manufactured homes, the length of the garage wall facing the street may be up to 50 percent of the length of the street-facing building façade. See Figure 110-8.

Where the street-facing façade is less than 22 feet long, an attached garage is not allowed as part of that façade.

33.110.250.C

Figure 110-8  
Length of Street-Facing Garage Wall





## Attached Houses

The length of the garage wall facing the street may be up to 50 percent of the length of the street facing building façade. See Figure 110-8. When all the units are 22 feet wide or wider, the standard applies to the street-facing façade of each unit. In all other situations, the standard applies to the total length of the street-facing facades.

33.110.250.C

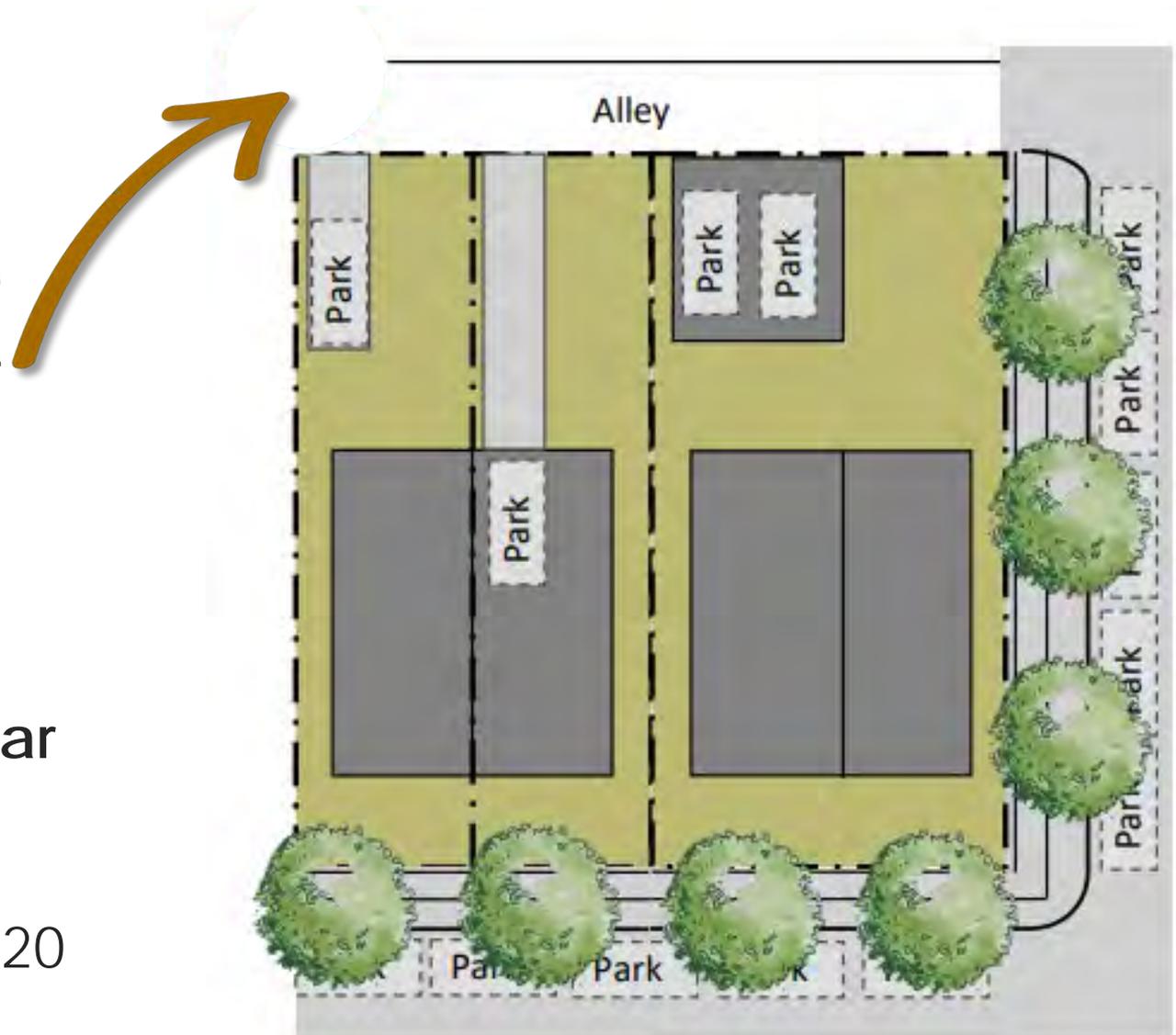
## Alley access

If the lot abuts an alley, all parking and vehicle access to the site must be from the alley.

## Parking

No minimum parking required for household living use in single-dwelling zones, both near and far from transit.

33.266.110. and 33.266.120

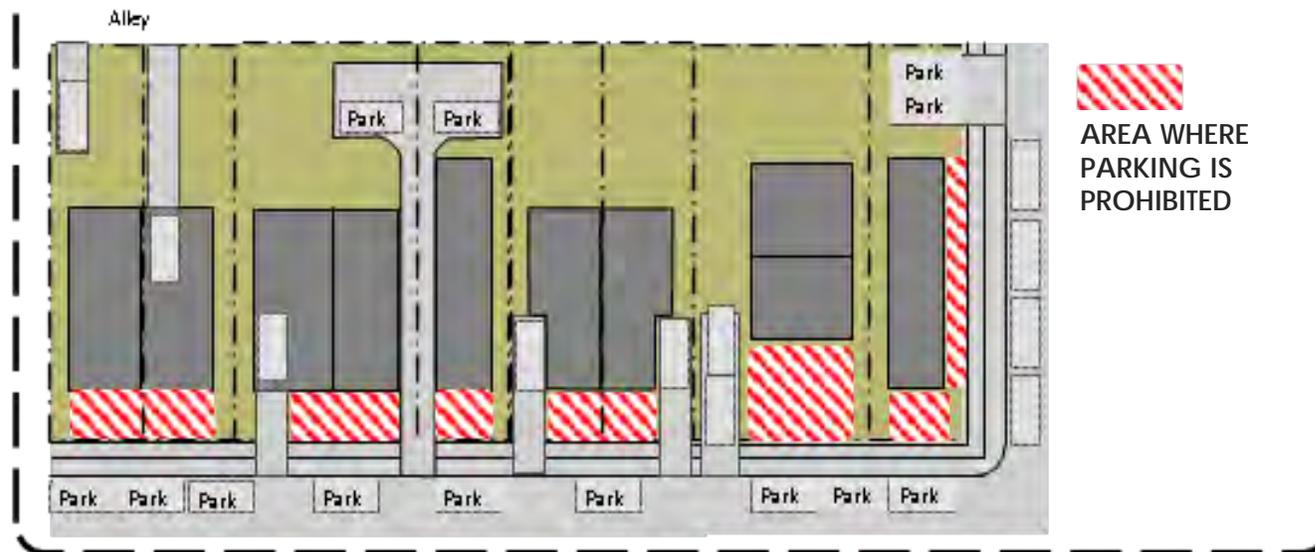


## House, Duplexes, Triplexes, Fourplexes

Vehicle area is prohibited between the primary structure and the street except as follows. This standard does not apply to houses on lots that are at least 32 feet wide:

- (1) Parking spaces located entirely behind the front and side street building lines of a primary structure are allowed; and
- (2) Driveways to parking spaces located entirely behind the front and side street building lines of a primary structure are allowed.

33.266.120.C.1.a



## INFILL

### Narrow Lot Standards:



Infill changes combine existing standards for historically narrow and new narrow lots.

The new standards apply to lots less than 32 feet wide in R20 – R2.5.

Requires attached houses on lots less than 26 feet wide except when precluded by development on adjacent lots.

FAR for attached houses on small lots in R5 is increased to 0.6 to 1.

Limits height to 1.5 times the width of the structure. Attached house are exempt.

1. Introduction to FAR ✓
2. Infill Requirements + Housing Options ✓
3. Changes to Development Standards ✓
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## Infill changes will affect the code related to accessory structures + ADUs:

- Remove basement ADU size limits for existing homes
- Remove restriction on number of doors facing street
- Additional ADUs allowed in some circumstances
- Attached, Connected and Detached structures:
  - ✓ New definitions
  - ✓ Updated development standards



On sites in R2.5, R5, and R7 zones where 3+ units are allowed...

## Two ADUs allowed with a house:

- At least one must be detached
- NOTE: 2 internal ADUs within a house are not allowed.



## One ADU allowed with a duplex when:

- One unit is visitable
- ADU must be detached



## Accessory structure regulations are being changed, creating a new definition of “connected structure.”

This will help the city to more clearly distinguish between **detached**, **connected**, and **attached** accessory structures.

Going forward, the accessory structure standards in 33.110 will apply to detached and connected accessory structures:

- An attached structure that shares a wall, floor or ceiling with a primary building will be considered an extension of that building.
- A structure that is connected via a breezeway or deck will be treated more like a detached structure.



ATTACHED ACCESSORY STRUCTURE



CONNECTED ACCESSORY STRUCTURE

1. Introduction to FAR ✓
2. Infill Requirements + Housing Options ✓
3. Changes to Development Standards ✓
4. Accessory Structures and ADUs ✓



If you need additional assistance or have questions about a specific property/Infill project – **you have resources:**

Zoning Hotline

503-823-7526

[15-Minute Appointments](#)

[Early Assistance \(EA\) Appointments](#)

[Online Resources](#)

