



Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Urgency Ordinance

Effective August 26, 2019

This brochure summarizes key FAR requirements for Single-Family Homes and is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Please contact Planning if you questions particular to your project.

Urgency Ordinance

- **FAR Development Standard** – Any project that exceeds 3,000 sq. ft. or 45%, whichever is greater require Planning Commission approval.
- **FAR Calculation** - The Gross Floor Area will include the total covered area of all floors of a single-family dwelling, including attached garages, and will be measured to the outside of stud walls. The following are exempt from FAR calculation:
 - **Basements** - Basements that are no more than 24” above average finished grade.
 - **Detached structures** - Includes garages, sheds, accessory structures, and Accessory Dwelling Units.
 - **Architectural Features** - Includes decks, bay windows, chimneys, and everything as defined in Section [32.3 E](#)
- **Architectural Permit** - The FAR will be applicable to all Architectural Permit applications for single-family dwelling in any zoning district, including single-family dwellings with an accessory dwelling unit, except as described below:
 - Ground floor additions
 - New single-family or additions built on a lot that is less than 5,000 sq. ft.
 - Second story additions of 100 sq. ft. or less

FAR Definition

The total covered area of all floors of a single-family home which includes attached garages, measured to the outside of stud walls. It is the ratio of the total building size in proportion to the lot size.

Neighborhood Compatibility

Neighborhood Compatibility: Guiding Principles is a City Council Policy created in order to maintain compatibility within the streetscape frontage, massing, and design.

The Guiding Principles link: <https://www.redwoodcity.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=17441>

For more information, visit: www.redwoodcity.org/FAR

Planning Commission Review & Additional Findings

All projects that exceed 3,000 sq. ft. or 45% FAR require Planning Commission review at a public hearing. The project shall meet all objective development standards of the underlying zoning district, Architectural Permit Findings ([Section 45.4](#)), and Additional Findings for Sloping Lots ([Section 45.5](#)), in addition to the findings below (Section 48.4):

- Contextual Setbacks – Use setbacks that are similar to structures that front the same street.
- Garages – Proposed garage placement is generally similar to the pattern common along the same street, including location and setbacks.
- Massing – The massing within the frontage is compatible with the neighborhood context of structures along the same street.