

CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING  
ZONING INFORMATION FILE

Effective Date: June 29, 2008

**ZI NO. 2391**  
**BASELINE MANSIONIZATION ORDINANCE**

**COUNCIL DISTRICT: ALL**

**COMMENTS**

The Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (No. 179,883), effective on June 29, 2008, establishes new regulations for properties citywide zoned single-family residential (R1, RS, RE9, RE11, RE15, RA, RE20, and RE40) not located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone, and primarily focuses on new size and height limitations.

If this ZI is applied to a property then the ordinance applies. If this ZI is not applied to a property then the regulations in this ordinance do not apply.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

**Vested Development Plans**

This ordinance does not apply to development plans submitted for plan check prior to June 29, 2008 and vested under the provisions of Section 12.26 A.3 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

**Projects For Which This Ordinance Applies**

Development plans submitted for plan check on or after June 29, 2008 shall be reviewed in accordance with the size and height limitation as outlined in the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (No. 179,883). A copy of the adopted ordinance is attached to this ZI, along with a technical summary of the new provisions.

**CLEARANCE INFORMATION:**

Plan checks and permit approvals for development plans are done by the Department of Building & Safety. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 1-888-LA-4-BUILD (1-888-524-2845); outside of L.A. County, call 213-482-0000.

ORDINANCE NO. 179883

An ordinance amending Sections 12.03, 12.04, 12.07, 12.07.01, 12.07.1, 12.08, 12.21.1, 12.23, 12.28, 12.32, and adding Section 13.13 to the Los Angeles Municipal Code to establish new regulations for all single-family residential zoned properties (RA, RE, RS, and R1) not located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone.

**THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. Section 12.03 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended by adding the definitions of "Base Floor" and "Floor Area, Residential" in proper alphabetical order to read:

**BASE FLOOR.** That story of a main building, at or above grade, which is not considered a basement, and which has the greatest number of square feet confined within the exterior walls, including the area of the attached covered parking at the same story. All levels within four vertical feet of each other shall count as a single story.

**FLOOR AREA, RESIDENTIAL.** The area in square feet confined within the exterior walls of a building or accessory building on a lot in an RA, RE, RS, or R1 Zone. Any floor or portion of a floor with a ceiling height greater than 14 feet shall count as twice the square footage of that area. The area of stairways shall only be counted once regardless of ceiling height. Area of an attic or portion of an attic with a ceiling height of more than seven feet shall be included in the floor area calculation.

Except that the following areas shall not be counted:

1. The first 400 square feet of covered parking area.
2. Detached accessory buildings not exceeding 200 square feet; however, the total combined area exempted of all these accessory buildings on a lot shall not exceed 400 square feet.
3. The first 250 square feet of attached porches, patios, and breezeways with a solid roof if they are open on at least two sides.
4. Porches, patios, and breezeways that have an open lattice roof.
5. The first 100 square feet of any story or portion of a story of the main building on a lot with a ceiling height greater than 14 feet shall be counted only once.

6. A Basement when the elevation of the upper surface of the floor or roof above the basement does not exceed two feet in height at any point above the finished or natural grade, whichever is lower.

Sec. 2. The definition of "Floor Area" in Section 12.03 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read:

**FLOOR AREA.** The area in square feet confined within the exterior walls of a building, but not including the area of the following: exterior walls, stairways, shafts, rooms housing building-operating equipment or machinery, parking areas with associated driveways and ramps, space for the landing and storage of helicopters, and basement storage areas. Except that buildings on properties zoned RA, RE, RS, and R1, and not located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone are subject to the definition of Residential Floor Area.

Sec. 3. Subsection D of Section 12.04 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read:

**D.** Certain portions of the City are also designated as being in one or more of the following districts, by the provision of Article 3 of this chapter

"O"	Oil Drilling District
"S"	Animal Slaughtering
"G"	Surface Mining District
"RPD"	Residential Planned Development District
"K"	Equinekeeping District
"CA"	Commercial and Artcraft District
"POD"	Pedestrian Oriented District
"CDO"	Community Design Overlay District
"MU"	Mixed Use District
"FH"	Fence Height District
"SN"	Sign District
"RFA"	Residential Floor Area District

The "**Zoning Map**" is amended to indicate these districts and the boundaries of each district.

Land classified in an "O" Oil Drilling District, "S" Animal Slaughtering District, "G" Surface Mining District, "RPD" Residential Planned Development District, "K" Equinekeeping District, "CA" Commercial and Artcraft District, "POD" Pedestrian Oriented District, "CDO" Community Design Overlay District, "MU" Mixed Use District, "FH" Fence Height District, "SN" Sign District or "RFA" Residential Floor Area District is also classified in one or more zones, and land classified in the "P" Automobile Parking Zone may also be classified in an "A" or "R" Zone.

These classifications are indicated on the “**Zoning Map**” with a combination of symbols, e.g., **R2-2-O**, **C2-4-S**, **M1-3-G**, **M1-1-P** and **R2-O**, **C2-G**, *etc.*, where height districts have not been established.

Sec. 4. The first unnumbered paragraph of Subsection C of Section 12.07 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read:

**C. Area (Development Standards).** No building or structure nor the enlargement of any building or structure shall be erected or maintained unless the following yards, lot areas, and floor area limitations are provided and maintained in connection with the building, structure, or enlargement:

Sec. 5. Subsection C of Section 12.07 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended by adding two new subdivisions numbered 5 and 6 to read:

**5. Maximum Residential Floor Area.** For a lot located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone, the maximum floor area shall comply with Section 12.21.1 A 1 of this Code.

For all other lots, the maximum residential floor area contained in all buildings and accessory buildings shall not exceed 25 percent of the lot area, except that when the lot is 20,000 square feet or greater, then the residential floor area shall not exceed 20 percent of the lot area or 5,000 square feet, whichever is greater.

An additional 20 percent of the maximum residential floor area for that lot shall be allowed if any of the methods listed below is utilized. Only one 20 percent bonus per property is allowed.

a. The total residential floor area of each story other than the base floor in a multi-story building does not exceed 75 percent of the base floor area; or

b. The cumulative length of the exterior walls facing the front lot line, equal to a minimum of 25 percent of the building width shall be stepped-back a distance of at least 20 percent of the building depth from a plane parallel to the lot width established at the point of the building closest to the front lot line. When the front lot line is not straight, a line connecting the points where the side lot lines and the front lot line intersect shall be used. When through-lots have two front yards, the step-back shall be provided along both front lot lines.

For the purposes of this provision, all exterior walls that intersect a plane parallel to the front lot line at 45 degrees or less shall be considered to be facing the front lot line. The building width shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measured parallel to

the lot width. The building depth shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measured parallel to the lot depth; or

c. For new single family dwelling construction only, the new construction shall be in substantial compliance with the requirements for the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) for Homes program at the "Certified" level or higher.

Prior to submitting an application to the Department of Building and Safety for a building permit, the applicant shall be required to obtain an authorization to submit for plan check from the Department of Planning. In order to obtain this authorization, the applicant shall provide:

(1) Documentation that the project has been registered with the USGBC's LEED® for Homes Program, and that the required fees have been paid;

(2) A preliminary checklist from a USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider, which demonstrates that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target of certification at the "Certified" or higher level;

(3) A signed declaration from the USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider stating that the plans and plan details have been reviewed, and confirms that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target certification at the "Certified" or higher level; and

(4) A complete set of plans stamped and signed by a licensed architect or engineer that include a copy of the preliminary checklist and signed declaration identified in Subparagraphs (2) and (3) of this paragraph and identify the measures being provided for LEED® Certification. Each plan sheet must also be signed by a USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider verifying that the plans are consistent with the submitted preliminary checklist.

The Department of Building and Safety shall refer applicants to the Department of Planning prior to issuance of a building permit to obtain a clearance to verify the project compliance with the originally approved plans.

If changes are made to the project, the applicant shall be required to submit a revised set of plans, including the four requirements listed above, with all revisions necessary to make the project in substantial compliance with the requirements for LEED® Certification.

**6. Verification of Existing Residential Floor Area.** For additions with cumulative residential floor area of less than 1,000 square feet constructed after January 1, 2008, or remodels of buildings built prior to January 1, 2008, the existing residential floor area shall be the same as the building square footage shown on the most recent Los Angeles County Tax Assessor's records at the time the plans are submitted to the Department of Building and Safety and a plan check fee is paid. Except that residential floor area may be calculated as defined in Section 12.03 of this Code when a complete set of fully dimensioned plans with area calculations of all the structures on the lot, prepared by a licensed architect or engineer, is submitted by the applicant.

Any work that does not qualify as a remodel, as defined in the paragraph below, or additions that are 1,000 square feet or larger shall require a complete set of fully dimensioned plans with area calculations of all the structures on the lot prepared by a licensed architect or engineer.

For the purposes of implementing this subdivision, a remodel shall mean the alteration of an existing building or structure provided that at least 50 percent of the perimeter length of the contiguous exterior walls and 50 percent of the roof are retained.

Sec. 6. The first unnumbered paragraph of Subsection C of Section 12.07.01 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read:

**C. Area (Development Standards).** No building or structure nor the enlargement of any building or structure shall be erected or maintained unless the following yards, lot areas, and floor area limitations are provided and maintained in connection with the building, structure, or enlargement:

Sec. 7. Subsection C of Section 12.07.01 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended by adding two new subdivisions numbered 5 and 6 to read:

**5. Maximum Residential Floor Area.** For a lot located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone, the maximum floor area shall comply with Section 12.21.1 A1 of this Code.

For all other lots, the maximum residential floor area contained in all buildings and accessory buildings shall not exceed the following standards for each RE Zone: RE9 and RE11 - 40 percent of the lot area, except that when the lot is 15,000 square feet or greater then the residential floor area shall not exceed 35 percent of the lot area or 6,000 square feet, whichever is greater; RE15, RE20 and RE40 - 35 percent of the lot area.

An additional 20 percent of the maximum residential floor area for that lot shall be allowed if any of the methods listed below is utilized. Only one 20 percent bonus per property is allowed.

a. The total residential floor area of each story other than the base floor in a multi-story building does not exceed 75 percent of the base floor area; or

b. The cumulative length of the exterior walls facing the front lot line, equal to a minimum of 25 percent of the building width shall be stepped-back a distance of at least 20 percent of the building depth from a plane parallel to the lot width established at the point of the building closest to the front lot line. When the front lot line is not straight, a line connecting the points where the side lot lines and the front lot line intersect shall be used. When through-lots have two front yards, the step-back shall be provided along both front lot lines.

For the purposes of this provision, all exterior walls that intersect a plane parallel to the front lot line at 45 degrees or less shall be considered to be facing the front lot line. The building width shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measured parallel to the lot width. The building depth shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measured parallel to the lot depth; or

c. For new single family dwelling construction only, the new construction shall be in substantial compliance with the requirements for the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) for Homes program at the "Certified" level or higher.

Prior to submitting an application to the Department of Building and Safety for a building permit, the applicant shall be required to obtain an authorization to submit for plan check from the Department of Planning. In order to obtain this authorization, the applicant shall provide:

(1) Documentation that the project has been registered with the USGBC's LEED® for Homes Program, and that the required fees have been paid;

(2) A preliminary checklist from a USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider, which demonstrates that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target of certification at the "Certified" or higher level;

(3) A signed declaration from the USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider stating that the plans and plan details have

been reviewed, and confirms that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target certification at the “Certified” or higher level; and

(4) A complete set of plans stamped and signed by a licensed architect or engineer that include a copy of the preliminary checklist and signed declaration identified in Subparagraphs (2) and (3) of this paragraph and identify the measures being provided for LEED® Certification. Each plan sheet must also be signed by a USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider verifying that the plans are consistent with the submitted preliminary checklist.

The Department of Building and Safety shall refer applicants to the Department of Planning prior to issuance of a building permit to obtain a clearance to verify the project compliance with the originally approved plans.

If changes are made to the project, the applicant shall be required to submit a revised set of plans, including the four requirements listed above, with all revisions necessary to make the project in substantial compliance with the requirements for LEED® Certification.

**6. Verification of Existing Residential Floor Area.** For additions with cumulative residential floor area of less than 1,000 square feet constructed after January 1, 2008, or remodels of buildings built prior to January 1, 2008, the existing residential floor area shall be the same as the building square footage shown on the most recent Los Angeles County Tax Assessor’s records at the time the plans are submitted to the Department of Building and Safety and a plan check fee is paid. Except that residential floor area may be calculated as defined in Section 12.03 of this Code when a complete set of fully dimensioned plans with area calculations of all the structures on the lot, prepared by a licensed architect or engineer, is submitted by the applicant.

Any work that does not qualify as a remodel, as defined in the paragraph below, or additions that are 1,000 square feet or larger shall require a complete set of fully dimensioned plans with area calculations of all the structures on the lot prepared by a licensed architect or engineer.

For the purposes of implementing this subdivision, a remodel shall mean the alteration of an existing building or structure provided that at least 50 percent of the perimeter length of the contiguous exterior walls and 50 percent of the roof are retained.

Sec. 8. The first unnumbered paragraph of Subsection C of Sections 12.07.1 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read:

**C. Area (Development Standards).** No building or structure nor the enlargement of any building or structure shall be erected or maintained unless the following yards, lot areas, and floor area limitations are provided and maintained in connection with the building, structure, or enlargement:

Sec. 9. Subsection C of Section 12.07.1 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended by adding two new subdivisions numbered 5 and 6 to read:

**5. Maximum Residential Floor Area.** For a lot located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone, the maximum floor area shall comply with Section 12.21.1 A1 of this Code.

For all other lots, the maximum residential floor area contained in all buildings and accessory buildings shall not exceed 45 percent of the lot area, except that when the lot is 9,000 square feet or greater, then the residential floor area shall not exceed 40 percent of the lot area or 4,050 square feet, whichever is greater.

An additional 20 percent of the maximum residential floor area for that lot shall be allowed if any of the methods listed below is utilized. Only one 20 percent bonus per property is allowed.

a. The total residential floor area of each story other than the base floor in a multi-story building does not exceed 75 percent of the base floor area; or

b. The cumulative length of the exterior walls facing the front lot line, equal to a minimum of 25 percent of the building width shall be stepped-back a distance of at least 20 percent of the building depth from a plane parallel to the lot width established at the point of the building closest to the front lot line. When the front lot line is not straight, a line connecting the points where the side lot lines and the front lot line intersect shall be used. When through lots have two front yards, the step-back shall be provided along both front lot lines.

For the purposes of this provision, all exterior walls that intersect a plane parallel to the front lot line at 45 degrees or less shall be considered to be facing the front lot line. The building width shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measured parallel to the lot width. The building depth shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measured parallel to the lot depth; or

c. For new single family dwelling construction only, the new construction shall be in substantial compliance with the requirements for the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) for Homes program at the "Certified" level or higher.

Prior to submitting an application to the Department of Building and Safety for a building permit, the applicant shall be required to obtain an authorization to submit for plan check from the Department of Planning. In order to obtain this authorization, the applicant shall provide:

(1) Documentation that the project has been registered with the USGBC's LEED® for Homes Program, and that the required fees have been paid;

(2) A preliminary checklist from a USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider, which demonstrates that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target of certification at the "Certified" or higher level;

(3) A signed declaration from the USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider stating that the plans and plan details have been reviewed, and confirms that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target certification at the "Certified" or higher level; and

(4) A complete set of plans stamped and signed by a licensed architect or engineer that include a copy of the preliminary checklist and signed declaration identified in Subparagraphs (2) and (3) of this paragraph and identify the measures being provided for LEED® Certification. Each plan sheet must also be signed by a USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider verifying that the plans are consistent with the submitted preliminary checklist.

The Department of Building and Safety shall refer applicants to the Department of Planning prior to issuance of a building permit to obtain a clearance to verify the project compliance with the originally approved plans.

If changes are made to the project, the applicant shall be required to submit a revised set of plans, including the four requirements listed above, with all revisions necessary to make the project in substantial compliance with the requirements for LEED® Certification.

**6. Verification of Existing Residential Floor Area.** For additions with cumulative residential floor area of less than 1,000 square feet constructed after January 1, 2008, or remodels of buildings built prior to January 1, 2008, the existing residential floor area shall be the same as the building square footage shown on the most recent Los Angeles County Tax Assessor's records at the time the plans are submitted to the Department of Building and Safety and a plan check fee is paid. Except that residential floor area may be calculated as defined in Section 12.03 of this Code when a complete set of fully dimensioned plans with area calculations of all the structures on the lot, prepared by a licensed architect or engineer, is submitted by the applicant.

Any work that does not qualify as a remodel, as defined in the paragraph below, or additions that are 1,000 square feet or larger shall require a complete set of fully dimensioned plans with area calculations of all the structures on the lot prepared by a licensed architect or engineer.

For the purposes of implementing this subdivision, a remodel shall mean the alteration of an existing building or structure provided that at least 50 percent of the perimeter length of the contiguous exterior walls and 50 percent of the roof are retained.

Sec. 10. The first unnumbered paragraph of Subsection C of Section 12.08 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read:

**C. Area (Development Standards).** No building or structure nor the enlargement of any building or structure shall be erected or maintained unless the following yards, lot areas, and floor area limitations are provided and maintained in connection with the building, structure, or enlargement:

Sec. 11. Subsection C of Section 12.08 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended by adding two new subdivisions numbered 5 and 6 to read:

**5. Maximum Residential Floor Area.** For a lot located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone, the maximum floor area shall comply with Section 12.21.1 A 1 of this Code.

For all other lots, the maximum residential floor area contained in all buildings and accessory buildings shall not exceed 50 percent of the lot area, except that when the lot is 7,500 square feet or greater, then the residential floor area shall not exceed 45 percent of the lot area or 3,750 square feet, whichever is greater.

An additional 20 percent, or 30 percent for lots less than 5,000 square feet in area, of the maximum residential floor area for that lot shall be allowed if any of the methods listed below is utilized. Only one bonus per property is allowed.

a. The total residential floor area of each story other than the base floor in a multi-story building does not exceed 75 percent of the base floor area; or

b. The cumulative length of the exterior walls facing the front lot line, equal to a minimum of 25 percent of the building width shall be stepped-back a distance of at least 20 percent of the building depth from a plane parallel to the lot width established at the point of the building closest to the front lot line. When the front lot line is not straight, a line connecting the points where the side lot lines and the front lot line intersect shall be used. When through-lots have two front yards, the step-back shall be provided along both front lot lines.

For the purposes of this provision, all exterior walls that intersect a plane parallel to the front lot line at 45 degrees or less shall be considered to be facing the front lot line. The building width shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measured parallel to the lot width. The building depth shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measured parallel to the lot depth; or

c. For new single family dwelling construction only, the new construction shall be in substantial compliance with the requirements for the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) for Homes program at the "Certified" level or higher.

Prior to submitting an application to the Department of Building and Safety for a building permit, the applicant shall be required to obtain an authorization to submit for plan check from the Department of Planning. In order to obtain this authorization, the applicant shall provide:

(1) Documentation that the project has been registered with the USGBC's LEED® for Homes Program, and that the required fees have been paid;

(2) A preliminary checklist from a USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider, which demonstrates that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target of certification at the "Certified" or higher level;

(3) A signed declaration from the USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider stating that the plans and plan details have been reviewed, and confirms that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target certification at the "Certified" or higher level; and

(4) A complete set of plans stamped and signed by a licensed architect or engineer that include a copy of the preliminary checklist and signed declaration identified in Subparagraphs (2) and (3) of this paragraph and identify the measures being provided for LEED® Certification. Each plan sheet must also be signed by a USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider verifying that the plans are consistent with the submitted preliminary checklist.

The Department of Building and Safety shall refer applicants to the Department of Planning prior to issuance of a building permit to obtain a clearance to verify the project compliance with the originally approved plans.

If changes are made to the project, the applicant shall be required to submit a revised set of plans, including the four requirements listed above, with all revisions necessary to make the project in substantial compliance with the requirements for LEED® Certification.

**6. Verification of Existing Residential Floor Area.** For additions with cumulative residential floor area of less than 1,000 square feet constructed after January 1, 2008, or remodels of buildings built prior to January 1, 2008, the existing residential floor area shall be the same as the building square footage shown on the most recent Los Angeles County Tax Assessor's records at the time the plans are submitted to the Department of Building and Safety and a plan check fee is paid. Except that residential floor area may be calculated as defined in Section 12.03 of this Code when a complete set of fully dimensioned plans with area calculations of all the structures on the lot, prepared by a licensed architect or engineer, is submitted by the applicant.

Any work that does not qualify as a remodel, as defined in the paragraph below, or additions that are 1,000 square feet or larger shall require a complete set of fully dimensioned plans with area calculations of all the structures on the lot prepared by a licensed architect or engineer.

For the purposes of implementing this subdivision, a remodel shall mean the alteration of an existing building or structure provided that at least 50 percent of the perimeter length of the contiguous exterior walls and 50 percent of the roof are retained.

Sec. 12. The second and third unnumbered paragraphs of Section 12.21.1 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code are amended to read:

In the A1, A2, RZ, RMP, and RW2 Zones, and in those portions of the RD and R3 Zones, which are also in Height District No. 1, no building or structure shall exceed 45 feet in height. In the RA, RE, RS, R1 and R2 Zones in Height District No. 1, located in a Hillside Area or a Coastal Zone, no building or structure shall exceed 45 feet in

height. In the RU and RW1 Zones, no building or structure shall exceed 30 feet in height.

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, the following height regulations shall apply on a lot that is not located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone: In the R2 Zone, no building or structure shall exceed 33 feet in height. In the R1, RS, or RE9 Zones, no building or structure shall exceed 33 feet in height; except that when the roof of the uppermost story of a building or structure or portion of the building or structure has a slope of less than 25 percent, the maximum height shall be 28 feet. In the RE11, RE15, RE20, RE 40 or RA Zones, no building or structure shall exceed 36 feet in height; except that when the roof of the uppermost story of a building or structure or portion of a building or structure has a slope of less than 25 percent, the maximum height shall be 30 feet. Notwithstanding the above, when 40 percent or more of the existing one-family dwellings with frontage on both sides of the block have building heights exceeding these limits, the maximum height for any building on that block may be the average height of the dwellings exceeding these limits. Height limitations in specific plans, Historic Preservation Overlay Zones or in subdivision approvals shall take precedence over the requirements of this section. This section shall apply when there are no height limitations imposed on lots by a specific plan or a Historic Overlay Zone or created by a subdivision approval.

Sec. 13. Subdivision 1 of Subsection A of Section 12.21.1 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read:

1. The total floor area contained in all the main buildings on a lot in a commercial or industrial zone in Height District No. 1 shall not exceed one-and-one-half times the buildable area of the lot; for a lot in all other zones, except RA, RE, RS, and R1 Zoned properties not located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone and developed primarily for residential uses, the total floor area contained in all the main buildings on a lot in Height District No. 1 shall not exceed three times the buildable area of the lot. For RA, RE, RS, and R1 Zoned properties not located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone, the total residential floor area shall comply with the floor area restrictions for each zone.

Portions of Height District No. 1 may be designated as being in an "L" Limited Height District, and no building or structure in Height District No. 1-L shall exceed six stories, nor shall it exceed 75 feet in height. Portions of Height District No. 1 may be designated as being in a "VL" Very Limited Height District, and no building or structure in Height District No. 1-VL shall exceed three stories, nor shall it exceed 45 feet in height. Notwithstanding that limitation, portions of Height District No. 1-VL that are also in the RAS3 or RAS4 Zones shall not exceed 50 feet in height. Portions of Height District No. 1 may also be designated as being in an "XL" Extra Limited Height District, and no building or structure in Height District No. 1-XL shall exceed two stories, nor shall the highest point of the

roof of any building or structure located in this District exceed 30 feet in height. In the RA, RE, RS, and R1 Zones, portions of Height District No. 1 may also be designated as being in an "SS" Single Story Limit Height District, and no building or structure in Height District No. 1-SS shall exceed one story, nor shall the highest point of the roof of any building or structure located in this District exceed 18 feet in height. For the purposes of Height District No. 1-SS, a basement does not count as a story when the elevation of the upper surface of the floor or roof above the basement does not exceed two feet in height at any point above the finished or natural grade, whichever is lower.

Sec. 14. Subdivision 1 of Subsection A of Section 12.23 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended by adding a new Paragraph (c) to read:

(c) A building, nonconforming as to the residential floor area regulations on properties zoned RA, RE, RS, and R1 and not located in the Hillside Area or Coastal Zone, shall not be added to or enlarged in any manner. However, alterations, other than additions or enlargements, may be made provided that at least 50 percent of the perimeter length of the contiguous exterior walls and 50 percent of the roof are retained.

Sec. 15. Subsection A of Section 12.28 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended by adding a second unnumbered paragraph to read:

The Zoning Administrator shall also have the authority to grant adjustments in residential floor area of no more than a ten percent increase beyond what is otherwise permitted by Chapter I of this Code. A request for an increase in residential floor area greater than ten percent shall be made as an application for a variance pursuant to Section 12.27 of this Code.

Sec. 16. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of Subdivision 1 of Subsection S of Section 12.32 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code are amended by replacing the phrase "this article" with the phrase "Article 3 of this chapter" everywhere that the phrase "this article" appears.

Sec. 17. The list contained in Paragraph (b) of Subdivision 1 of Subsection S of Section 12.32 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended by adding a new entry to read "RFA" Residential Floor Area District at the end of the list.

Sec. 18. Subparagraph (2) of Paragraph (c) of Subdivision 1 of Subsection S of Section 12.32 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read:

**(2) Additional Requirements for Application.** One or more of the owners or lessees of property within the boundaries of the proposed district may submit a verified application for the establishment of a district. An application for the establishment of a Commercial and Artcraft District,

a Pedestrian Oriented District, an Equinekeeping District, a Community Design Overlay District, a Mixed Use District, a Sign District, or a Residential Floor Area District shall contain the signatures of at least 75 percent of the owners or lessees of property within the proposed district. An application for the establishment of a Fence Height District shall contain the signatures of at least 50 percent of the owners or lessees of property within the proposed district. An application shall be accompanied by any information deemed necessary by the Department.

If establishment of a district is initiated by the City Council, City Planning Commission, or Director of Planning, the signatures of the property owners or lessees shall not be required.

Sec. 19. Subsubparagraph (iii) of Subparagraph (3) of Paragraph (c) of Subdivision 1 of Subsection S of Section 12.32 is amended to read:

**(iii) Time for Commission to Act on Application.** The City Planning Commission shall act on an application to establish an "O," "S," "G," "K," "CA," "POD," "CDO," "MU," "FH," "SN" or "RFA" District within 75 days from the date of the filing of the application. The City Planning Commission shall act on an application to establish an "RPD" District within 75 days from receipt of the Subdivision Committee report and recommendation. The City Planning Commission shall act on proceedings initiated by the Council within 75 days of receipt of that action from the Council, or within the time that the Council may otherwise specify.

Sec. 20. Article 3 of Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended by adding a new Section 13.13 to read:

**SEC. 13.13. "RFA" RESIDENTIAL FLOOR AREA DISTRICT.**

**A. Purpose.** This section sets forth procedures and guidelines for the establishment of "RFA" Residential Floor Area Districts in residential areas of the City. The purpose of the "RFA" Residential Floor Area District is to permit residential floor area maximums in residential zones to be higher or lower than normally permitted by this Code in areas where the proposed district will further enhance the existing scale of homes and help to preserve the existing character of the neighborhood as effectively as the residential floor area limitations established in this Code; and where the increased or decreased residential floor area maximums will be consistent with the policies and objectives set forth in the applicable Community Plan.

**B. Establishment of the District.** The procedures set forth in Section 12.32 S of this Code shall be followed, however each "RFA" Residential Floor Area District shall include only properties in the RA, RE, RS, or R1 zones. The district shall not generally be less than 100 acres in area. The precise boundary of a district may be adjusted for

urban features such as topography, freeways or streets/highways. Boundaries shall be along street frontages and shall not split parcels. An "RFA" Residential Floor Area District may encompass an area, which is designated, in whole or in part, as a Historic Preservation Overlay Zone and/or Specific Plan. The "RFA" Residential Floor Area District shall include contiguous parcels, which may only be separated by public streets, ways or alleys or other physical features, or as set forth in the rules approved by the Director of Planning. Precise boundaries are required at the time of application for or initiation of an individual district.

**C. Development Regulations.** The Department of Building and Safety shall not issue a building permit for a residential structure within an "RFA" Residential Floor Area District unless the residential structure conforms to the regulations set forth in a specific "RFA" Residential Floor Area District. The development regulations for each "RFA" Residential Floor Area District shall be determined at the time the district is established. The development regulations shall enhance the character of the district.

Sec. 21. The provisions of this ordinance shall sunset two years from the effective date of this ordinance, unless the City Council votes by resolution to extend these provisions.



**DECLARATION OF POSTING ORDINANCE**

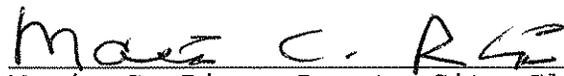
I, MARIA C. RICO, state as follows: I am, and was at all times hereinafter mentioned, a resident of the State of California, over the age of eighteen years, and a Deputy City Clerk of the City of Los Angeles, California.

**Ordinance No. 179883 - Amending and adding various sections to the Los Angeles Municipal Code to establish new regulations for all single-family residential zoned properties (RA, RE, RS, and R1) not located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone** - a copy of which is hereto attached, was finally adopted by the Los Angeles City Council on **May 6, 2008**, and under the direction of said City Council and the City Clerk, pursuant to Section 251 of the Charter of the City of Los Angeles and Ordinance No. 172959, on **May 20, 2008** I posted a true copy of said ordinance at each of three public places located in the City of Los Angeles, California, as follows: 1) one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall; 2) one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall East; 3) one copy on the bulletin board located at the Temple Street entrance to the Hall of Records of the County of Los Angeles.

Copies of said ordinance were posted conspicuously beginning on **May 20, 2008** and will be continuously posted for ten or more days.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Signed this **20th** day of **May 2008** at Los Angeles, California.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Maria C. Rico, Deputy City Clerk

## Technical Summary & Clarifications

(Issued on June 24, 2008)

The Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (No. 179,883; effective date June 29, 2008) establishes new regulations for many single-family residential zoned properties, and primarily focuses on new size and height limitations.

### What Properties Are Subject to the New Regulations?

The regulations apply to properties citywide zoned single-family residential (R1, RS, RE9, RE11, RE15, RA, RE20, and RE40), and which are not located in the Hillside Area, as defined in Section 12.03 of the LAMC, or Coastal Zone, as defined by the California Coastal Commission; approximately 304,410 properties. Affected properties are identified in ZIMAS with a Zoning Information Number “ZI-2391 – Baseline Mansionization Ordinance”; this identification will later be replaced by a specific line item titled Baseline Mansionization Ordinance and will include a Yes/No field.

Most affected lots are zoned R1 (234,575), and half of these (118,816) are in the 5,000 & 6,000 square-foot (sq-ft) ranges.

Properties for which this ordinance does not apply (located in the Hillside Area or Coastal Zone) will continue to be regulated and calculated as outlined in Sections 12.03 and 12.21.1 of the LAMC.

### How to Calculate Residential Floor Area

The Baseline Mansionization Ordinance creates a new Residential Floor Area definition which is a method of calculating floor area specifically crafted for residential development. The following areas **shall** be counted towards the total square-footage for a lot:

- Area within the exterior walls of all structures on a lot, except as stated below.  
*Clarification:* This area does not include the actual thickness of the walls.
- Portions of building, in excess of 100 sq-ft, with ceiling height greater than 14 ft shall count as twice the area.
- Area of stairwells shall only be counted once.
- Any attic, or portion thereof, with ceiling height more than 7 ft.

The following **shall not** be counted towards the total square-footage for a lot:

- First 400 sq-ft, of covered parking area.
- Detached accessory buildings, no greater than 200 sq-ft; the total combined area not to exceed 400 sq-ft.  
*Clarification:* When a detached accessory building exceeds 200 sq-ft, the area of the entire structure shall be counted; in other words a structure that is 250 sq-ft will count as 250 sq-ft of Residential Floor Area.  
*Clarification:* Detached covered parking is not subject to this 200 sq-ft limit, but is calculated as detailed above.
- First 250 sq-ft, of porches, patios, and breeze-ways with a solid roof open on at least 2 sides.
- Porches, patios, and breeze-ways that have an open lattice roof.
- Basements when the elevation of the upper surface of the floor or roof above does not exceed 2 ft in height above the finished or natural grade, whichever is lower.

# BASELINE MANSIONIZATION ORDINANCE

Prepared by the City of Los Angeles – Department of City Planning

## **Verification of Existing Residential Floor Area**

In order to ensure the timely processing of permit applications for relatively minor construction activity, the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance includes two methods of verifying existing Residential Floor Area.

### ***Use Tax Assessor Data – Remodels & Additions/New Structures of 1,000 sq-ft or Less***

For remodels and additions, or construction of new structures, which are 1,000 sq-ft or smaller the square footage of the existing structures shall be assumed to be the same as the building square footage shown on the most recent Los Angeles County Tax Assessor's records at the time the plans are submitted to the Department of Building and Safety and a plan check fee is paid. In order to use this square footage, remodels must retain at least 50% of the perimeter length of the contiguous exterior walls and 50% of the roof of existing structures. The 1,000 sq-ft limit is a cumulative value which will need to be tracked over time.

Clarification: When the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor building square footage information includes multiple structures, those areas shall be added together to make up the total existing square footage. In order to ensure that an applicant discloses the total number of structures on a property, staff should verify the submitted site plan against the most recent aerial photograph available on ZIMAS. When other structures are present on a lot, a site plan should also include any accessory structures on a lot with information regarding their size, but do not need to be detailed floor plans and elevations.

### ***As-Built Plans Required – Major Remodels, Additions/New Structures > 1,000 sq-ft, & All New Construction***

The applicant shall be required to submit a complete set of fully dimensioned plans of all the structures on the lot, prepared by a licensed architect or engineer, with Residential Floor Area calculations as part of an application for a building permit when:

1. Any work goes beyond the 1,000 sq-ft cumulative limit for additions or new construction; or
2. Any work that involves the demolition of more than 50% of the perimeter length of the contiguous exterior walls and more than 50% of the roof of existing structures.

As is currently the case, new construction on a vacant lot or a lot where all structures have been demolished shall always be required to submit a complete set of fully dimensioned plans.

### ***As-Built Plans Optional***

The Tax Assessor method does not preclude an applicant from opting to submit a complete set of fully dimensioned plans of all the structures on the lot, prepared by a licensed architect or engineer, with Residential Floor Area calculations done as defined in the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance for any project, if they wish to do so.

## **What Are The New Residential Floor Area Limitations?**

The new Residential Floor Area limitations can be found in Subsection C "Area (Development Standards)" of each Single-Family Zone. The Floor Area limitations for properties on which this ordinance does not apply (located in a Hillside Area or Coastal Zone) will continue to be limited by Section 12.21.1 of the LAMC.

# BASELINE MANSIONIZATION ORDINANCE

Prepared by the City of Los Angeles – Department of City Planning

The maximum Residential Floor Area (RFA) contained in all building and accessory building shall not exceed the following limits:

Zone	Lot Size	Maximum RFA (% of Lot Size)
R1	5,000 sq-ft min.	50%
	Lots $\geq$ 7,500 sq-ft	45% or 3,750 sq-ft, whichever is greater
RS	7,500 sq-ft min.	45%
	Lots $\geq$ 9,000 sq-ft	40% or 4,050 sq-ft, whichever is greater
RE9	9,000 sq-ft min.	40%
	Lots $\geq$ 15,000 sq-ft	35% or 6,000 sq-ft, whichever is greater
RE11	11,000 sq-ft min.	40%
	Lots $\geq$ 15,000 sq-ft	35% or 6,000 sq-ft, whichever is greater
RE15	15,000 sq-ft min.	35%
RA	17,500 sq-ft min.	25%
	Lots $\geq$ 20,000 sq-ft	20% or 5,000 sq-ft, whichever is greater
RE20	20,000 sq-ft min.	35%
RE40	40,000 sq-ft min.	35%

## 20% Residential Floor Area Bonus

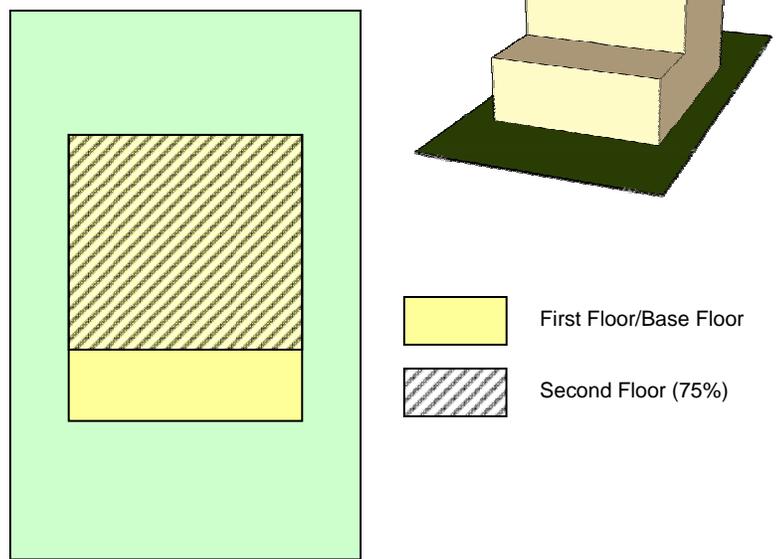
An additional 20% of the maximum residential floor area for the subject lot shall be allowed if at least one of the following the methods listed below is utilized. Only one 20% bonus is permitted per property. When an R1 lot is smaller than 5,000 sq-ft the bonus is increased to 30%.

**Proportional Stories Method** – The total residential floor area of each story other than the base floor in a multi-story building does not exceed 75% of the area of the base floor.

### What is the Base Floor?

That story of a main building, at or above grade, which is not considered a basement, and which has the greatest number of square-feet confined within the exterior walls. When attached covered parking is at the same story as the base floor, that area is included in the base floor for the purposes of massing. However, patios with a solid roof are not counted. All levels within 4 vertical feet of each other shall count as a single story.

**Figure 1 – Proportional Stories Method**



**Note:** This figure is intended to illustrate the Proportional Stories Method in a simple manner, and is one of many second-floor configurations that could comply with this provision.

# BASELINE MANSIONIZATION ORDINANCE

Prepared by the City of Los Angeles – Department of City Planning

**Front Facade Stepback Method** – The cumulative length of the exterior walls facing the front lot line, equal to a minimum of **25%** of the **building width** shall be stepped back a distance of at least **20%** of the **building depth** from a plane parallel to the front lot line.

*What is the Building Width?*

The building width shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measure parallel to the lot width.

*What is the Building Depth?*

The building depth shall be the greatest distance between the exterior walls of the building measured parallel to the lot depth.

*What is Facing the Front Lot Line?*

All exterior walls that intersect a plane parallel to the front lot line at 45 degrees or less shall be considered to be facing the front lot line.

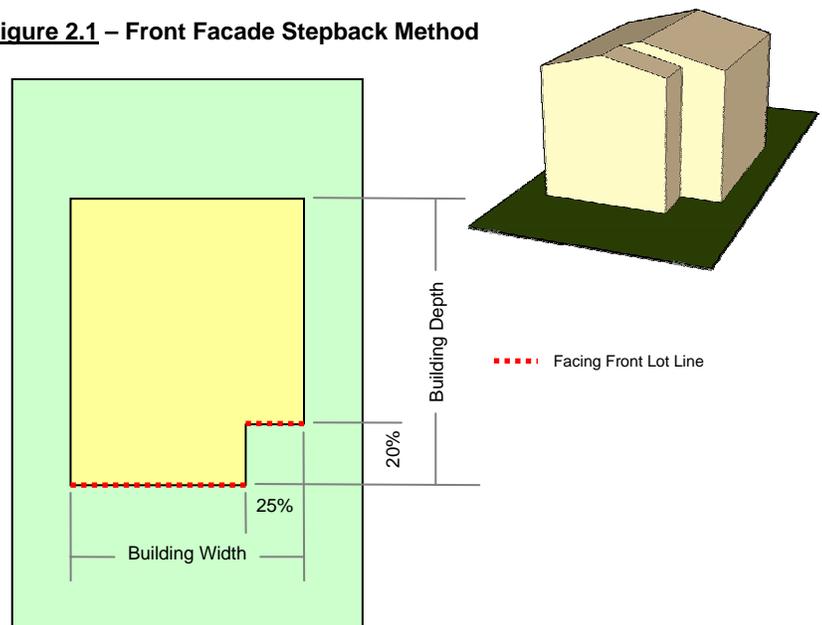
*What about Curved Front Lot Lines?*

When the front lot line is not straight, a line connecting the points where the side lot lines and the front lot line intersect shall be used.

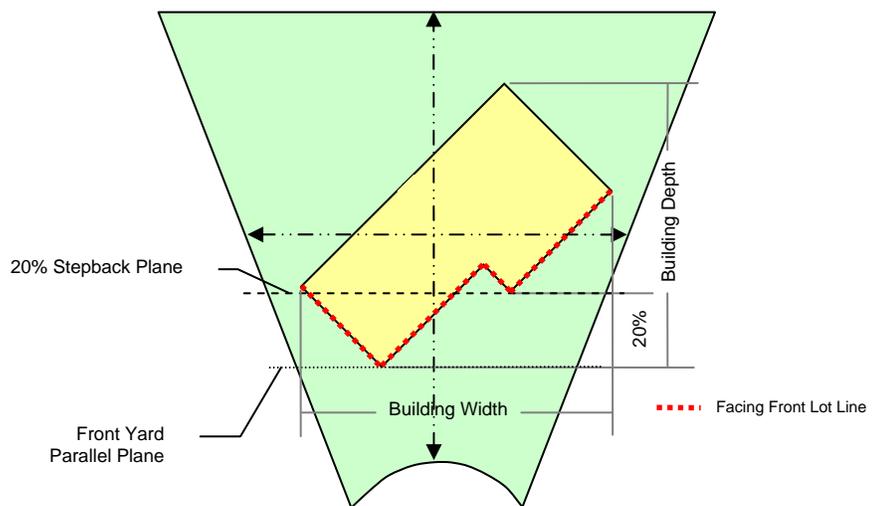
*What about Through-Lots?*

When through-lots have two front yards, the stepback shall be provided along both front lot lines.

**Figure 2.1 – Front Facade Stepback Method**



**Figure 2.2 – Front Facade Stepback Method on Irregular-Lots**



# BASELINE MANSIONIZATION ORDINANCE

Prepared by the City of Los Angeles – Department of City Planning

## What is the Lot Depth?

The horizontal distance between the front and rear lot lines measured in the mean direction of the side lot lines.

## What is the Lot Width?

The horizontal distance between the side lot lines measured at right angles to the lot depth at a point midway between the front and rear lot lines.

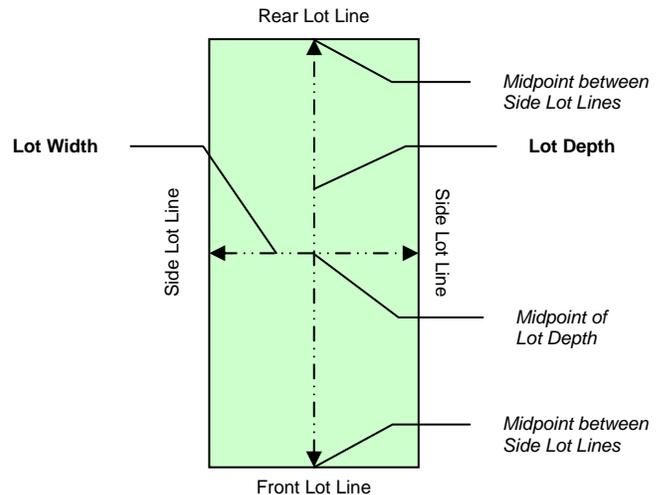
**Green Building Method** – This method is only available for new construction. In order to qualify, a project must be in “substantial compliance” with (also referred to as “meeting the intent of” in the Citywide Green Building Ordinance) the **U.S. Green Building Council’s (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) for Homes program at the “Certified” level or higher.**

In order to submit an application to the Department of Building and Safety for a building permit, the applicant will need to obtain authorization from the Department of City Planning. Planning staff will work with the applicant and their USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider in order to determine that the project has been registered with the LEED® for Homes Program, and that the project will meet the requirements for a target certification at the “Certified” level or higher.

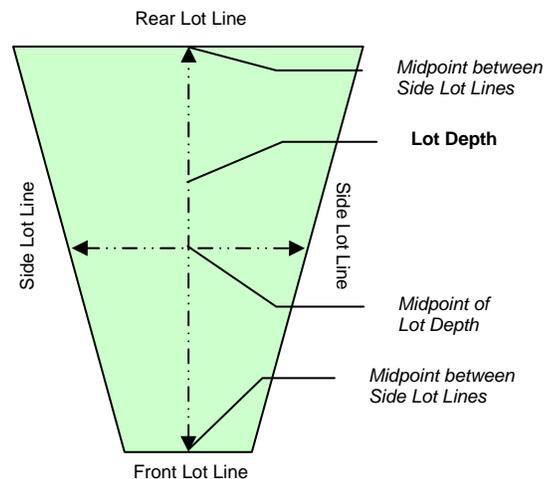
In order to obtain authorization from the Department of City Planning, the applicant shall provide:

1. Documentation that the project has been registered with the USGBC’s LEED® for Homes Program, and that the required fees have been paid;
2. A preliminary checklist from a USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider, which demonstrates that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target of certification at the “Certified” or higher level;
3. A signed declaration from the USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider stating that the plans and plan details have been reviewed, and confirms that the project can be registered with the LEED® for Homes Program with a target certification at the “Certified” or higher level; and
4. A complete set of plans stamped and signed by a licensed architect or engineer that include a copy of the preliminary checklist and signed declaration identified in Subparagraphs (2) and (3) of this paragraph and identify the measures being provided for LEED® Certification. Each plan sheet must also be signed by a

**Figure 3 – Lot Depth & Lot Width on Rectangular-Shaped Lots**



**Figure 4 – Lot Depth & Lot Width on Irregular-Shaped Lots**



# BASELINE MANSIONIZATION ORDINANCE

Prepared by the City of Los Angeles – Department of City Planning

USGBC-contracted LEED® for Homes Provider verifying that the plans are consistent with the submitted preliminary checklist.

The Department of Building and Safety shall refer applicants to the Department of City Planning prior to issuance of a building permit to obtain a sign-off on a Clearance Summary Worksheet in order to verify the project compliance with the originally approved plans.

If changes are made to the project, the applicant shall be required to submit a revised set of plans, including all other required documents, with the revisions necessary to make the project in substantial compliance with the requirements for LEED® for Homes Certification.

## What Are The New Height Limitations?

The maximum height of structures depends on what Height District a property is in and whether it is a sloped roof (25% slope or greater) or a flat roof (less than 25% slope). The following table is a breakdown of the regulations:

Zone	Height Districts					
	Max. Height	1	1L	1VL	1XL	1SS <sup>1</sup>
<b>R1</b> <i>One-Family Zone</i>	Sloped Roof (≥25%)	33 ft	33 ft	33 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	Flat Roof (<25%)	28 ft	28 ft	28 ft	28 ft	18 ft
	<b>Max. Stories:</b>	n/a	6	3	2	1
<b>RS</b> <i>Suburban Zone</i>	Sloped Roof (≥25%)	33 ft	33 ft	33 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	Flat Roof (<25%)	28 ft	28 ft	28 ft	28 ft	18 ft
	<b>Max. Stories:</b>	n/a	6	3	2	1
<b>RE9</b> <i>Residential Estate Zone</i>	Sloped Roof (≥25%)	33 ft	33 ft	33 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	Flat Roof (<25%)	28 ft	28 ft	28 ft	28 ft	18 ft
	<b>Max. Stories:</b>	n/a	6	3	2	1
<b>RE11</b> <i>Residential Estate Zone</i>	Sloped Roof (≥25%)	36 ft	36 ft	36 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	Flat Roof (<25%)	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	<b>Max. Stories:</b>	n/a	6	3	2	1
<b>RE15</b> <i>Residential Estate Zone</i>	Sloped Roof (≥25%)	36 ft	36 ft	36 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	Flat Roof (<25%)	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	<b>Max. Stories:</b>	n/a	6	3	2	1
<b>RA</b> <i>Suburban Zone</i>	Sloped Roof (≥25%)	36 ft	36 ft	36 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	Flat Roof (<25%)	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	<b>Max. Stories:</b>	n/a	6	3	2	1
<b>RE20</b> <i>Residential Estate Zone</i>	Sloped Roof (≥25%)	36 ft	36 ft	36 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	Flat Roof (<25%)	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	<b>Max. Stories:</b>	n/a	6	3	2	1
<b>RE40</b> <i>Residential Estate Zone</i>	Sloped Roof (≥25%)	36 ft	36 ft	36 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	Flat Roof (<25%)	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	30 ft	18 ft
	<b>Max. Stories:</b>	n/a	6	3	2	1

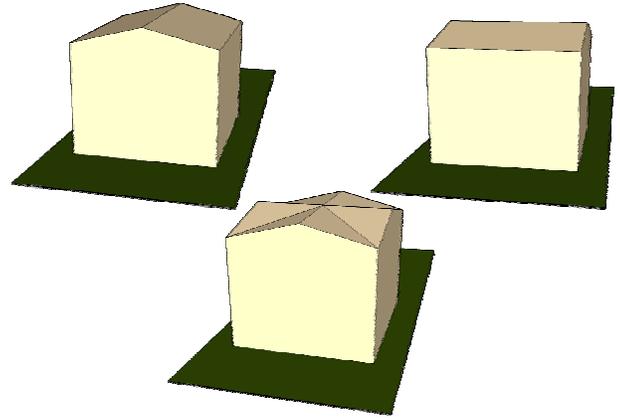
<sup>1</sup> The “1SS” Single-Story Height District was created by the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance. As of this date, the 1SS Height District has not been applied to any properties; June 12, 2008.

## BASELINE MANSIONIZATION ORDINANCE

*Prepared by the City of Los Angeles – Department of City Planning*

The 25% roof slope is a Southern California standard which is also commonly referred to as the 3:12 slope. This slope can be expressed as a ratio of 1 foot of vertical rise for every 4 feet of horizontal distance. In order to determine what the minimum height of the standard gabled roof, as measured from the top-plate of the building wall, simply divide the horizontal distance of the wall by 8.

When a roof is made up of a combination of roof slopes, the portions of the structure with a roof slope less than 25% will be considered flat and as a result be required to comply with the lower height.



### **What About Projects Which Do Not Meet These New Requirements?**

Any project which cannot meet the requirements established in the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance shall be referred to the Department of City Planning for the appropriate entitlements. An applicant can apply for a Zoning Administrator Adjustment for an increase of up to 10% beyond the new Residential Floor Area limits. For example, the Residential Floor Area limit for a 5,000 sq-ft R1 lot will be increased to 2,750 sq-ft, or 3,300 sq-ft when a structure is built utilizing the 20% Residential Floor Area bonus. When a project requires an increase of more than 10% to the Residential Floor Area limit it shall require a Variance.