

Amendment #2 to Council Bill (CB) 118385

Sponsor: Rasmussen
Planning, Land Use, and Sustainability Committee

Expansion of interior spaces subject to floor area ratio (FAR) calculations

This amendment would require all finished interior spaces with a floor-to-ceiling clearance of 36 inches or greater to be included in FAR calculations for projects in Lowrise (LR) zones. As a result, living spaces such as sleeping lofts that commonly feature a low floor-to-ceiling clearance would be counted toward applicable FAR limits.

Note: The content of this amendment does not reflect the additional changes that will be made to Seattle Municipal Code Section 23.45.512 if Amendment #1 to CB 118385 (application of FAR limits to exterior corridors) is adopted by the Committee.

The content of the amendment is shown below in double underline.

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Section 2. Section 23.45.510 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 124378, is amended as follows:

23.45.510 Floor area ratio (FAR) limits

A. General provisions

1. All gross floor area not exempt under subsection 23.45.510.E counts toward the maximum gross floor area allowed under the FAR limits.
2. The applicable FAR limit applies to the total non-exempt gross floor area of all structures on the lot.
3. If a lot is in more than one zone, the FAR limit for each zone applies to the portion of the lot located in that zone, and the floor area on the portion of the lot with the lower FAR limit may not exceed the amount that would be permitted if it were a separate lot.

B. FAR limits in LR zones. FAR limits apply in LR zones as shown in Table A for 23.45.510, provided that if the LR zone designation includes an incentive zoning suffix, then the applicant

shall comply with Chapter 23.58A, Incentive provisions, to obtain gross floor area exceeding that allowed by the FAR shown in the suffix designation. In LR zones the following standards apply to the calculation of gross floor area for application of FAR limits:

1. Exterior corridors, breezeways, and stairways that provide building circulation and access to dwelling units or sleeping rooms, and that meet the standards in the Seattle Building Code for egress balconies and exterior exit stairways and ramps, are excluded from gross floor area.

2. Balconies, patios, and decks that are associated with a single dwelling unit or sleeping room and that are not used for common circulation, and ground-level walking paths, are excluded from gross floor area.

3. Common walls separating individual rowhouse and townhouse dwelling units are considered to be exterior walls.

4. All finished interior spaces with a floor-to-ceiling clearance of greater than 36 inches are counted as floor area for the purpose of FAR limits.

Table A for 23.45.510 Floor Area Ratios in LR zones					
Zone	Location	Category of Residential Use ⁽¹⁾			
	Outside or inside Urban Centers, Urban Villages, and the Station Area Overlay District	Cottage housing developments and single-family dwelling units	Rowhouse developments ⁽²⁾	Townhouse developments ⁽²⁾	Apartments ⁽²⁾
LR1	Either outside or inside	1.1	1.0 or 1.2	0.9 or 1.1	1.0
LR2	Either outside or inside	1.1	1.1 or 1.3	1.0 or 1.2	1.1 or 1.3
LR3	Outside	1.1	1.2 or 1.4	1.1 or 1.3	1.3 or 1.5 ⁽³⁾
	Inside	1.1	1.2 or 1.4	1.2 or 1.4	1.5 or 2.0

Footnotes for Table A for 23.45.510

- (1) If more than one type of residential use is provided on a lot, the FAR limit for each residential use is the higher FAR limit for each residential use in this Table A for 23.45.510 only if the conditions in subsection 23.45.510.C are satisfied for all residential uses on the lot.
- (2) The higher FAR limit applies if the project meets the standards of subsection 23.45.510.C.
- (3) On lots that abut a street with frequent transit service, the higher FAR limit is 1.6.

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