



# San Rafael Municipal Code

## Chapter 4

### **SUBSTANTIAL REMODEL - *EXPLAINED***

This document is intended to provide interpretations and examples for the application of the Substantial Remodel calculations found in the Municipal Code. We hope this will be of assistance to home owners, architects, contractors and code officials by providing details for the consistent application of this code section.

Floor Area for the purpose of this section is defined as the floor area, measured to inside face of studs in square feet, within the inside perimeter of the exterior walls of the building under consideration, exclusive of open air courts, without deductions for corridors, stairways, closets, the thickness of interior walls, columns, or other features. The floor area includes unoccupied accessory areas such as mechanical rooms, attached garages, and finished storage areas with a ceiling height that exceeds six feet.

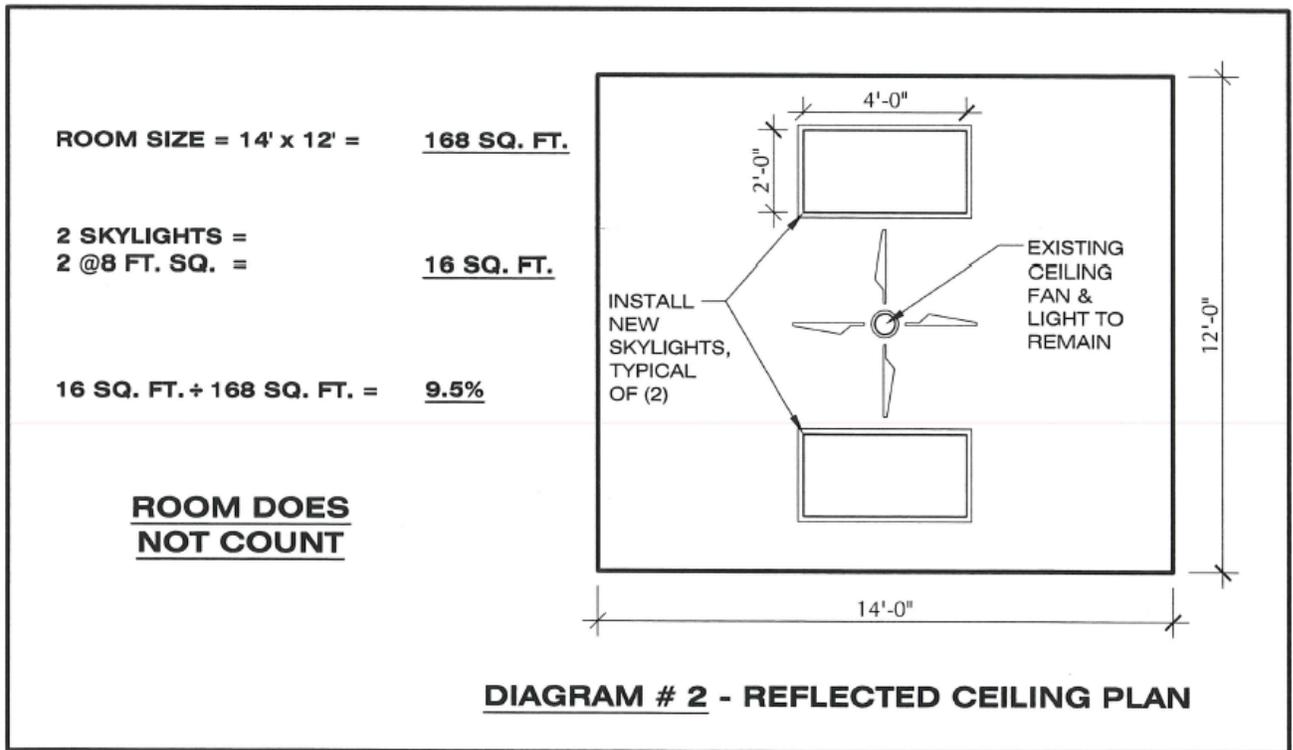
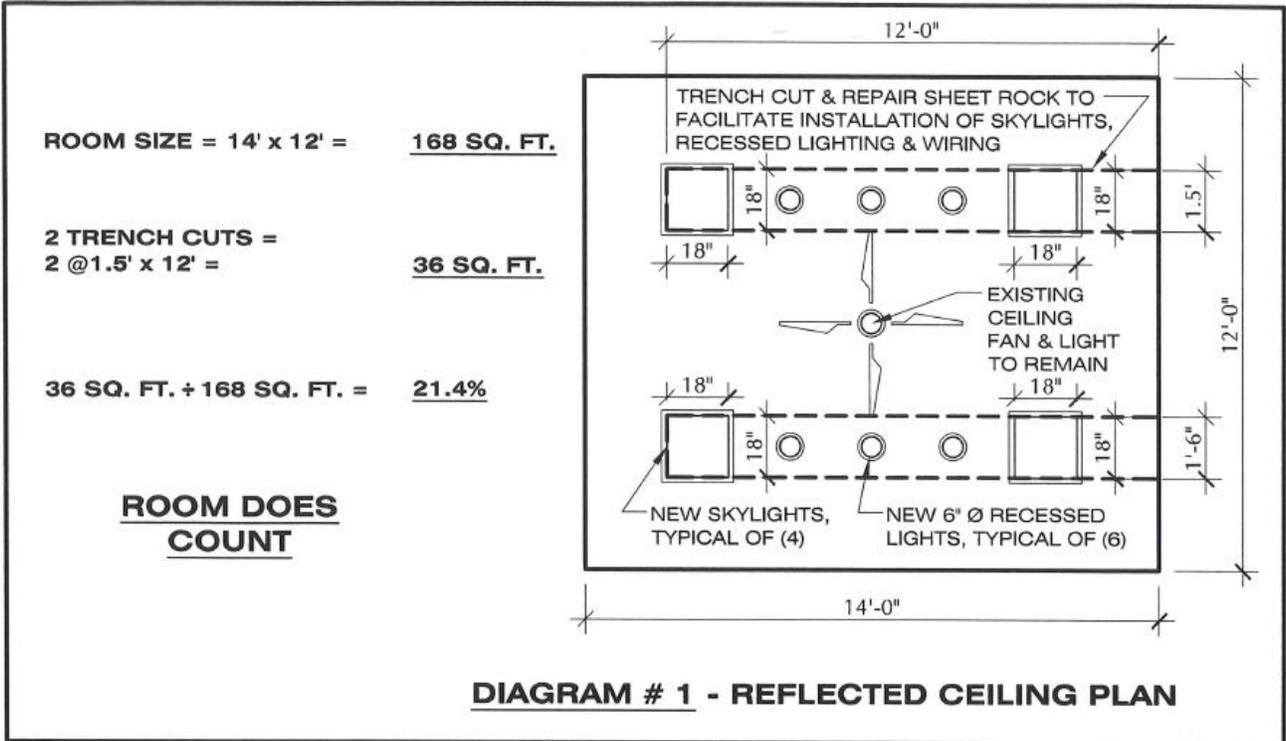
The removal of existing windows and doors for the purpose of replacing windows and doors of the same size, in the same location, that do not require any changes or additions to the existing wall framing shall not be considered a change and would not trigger the inclusion of the square footage of the affected room.

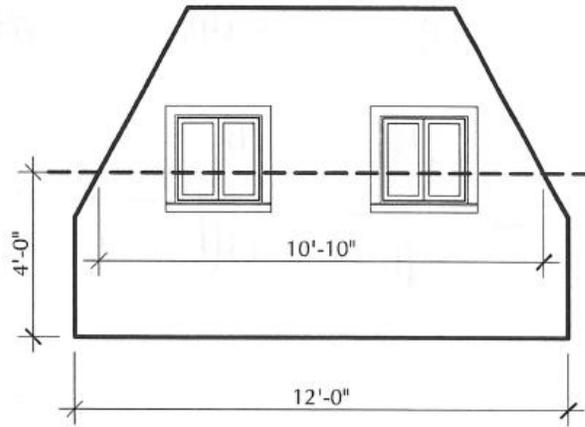
The replacement and/or upgrading of the existing roof coverings shall not apply to this definition. However, any changes in roof framing, rafters, roof diaphragms or similar components is considered a change and the areas affected will be calculated.

The removal of existing wall or walls shall cause the room or rooms affected by the change to be counted in the calculations. Likewise the movement of a wall between two spaces shall cause the room or rooms affected by the change to be counted in the calculations.

Removal or replacement of 10% or more of the square footage of the sheetrock or other material that forms the ceiling in any room for any reason shall cause the room, or area affected by the change, to be counted in the calculations. The 10% may be in one area or a cumulative total of several small areas, such as may be caused by the installation of recessed lighting, skylights, new wiring or similar construction components. (see diagrams #1 and #2)

When the walls of a room are potentially impacted for any reason, they shall be calculated as follows; the length of the walls forming the room shall be measured along the perimeter of the room at a height of four feet above the finished floor (see diagram #3) and, the length of the portion of the walls being impacted shall also be measured. If the total of the impacted wall length is 20% or more of the perimeter measurement, the square footage of the room or area shall be counted in the calculations. For example, if an existing window is to be removed and closed-in, the length of the window area is counted. If a new window or door is to be installed, the length of the opening made in the sheetrock or wall surface shall be counted. If a stud bay or bays are exposed for the installation or electrical or plumbing equipment, the length of the opening shall be counted. The reason for the removal of the wall covering is not important. However, the length of the wall covering removed is the critical criteria. (see diagram #4)





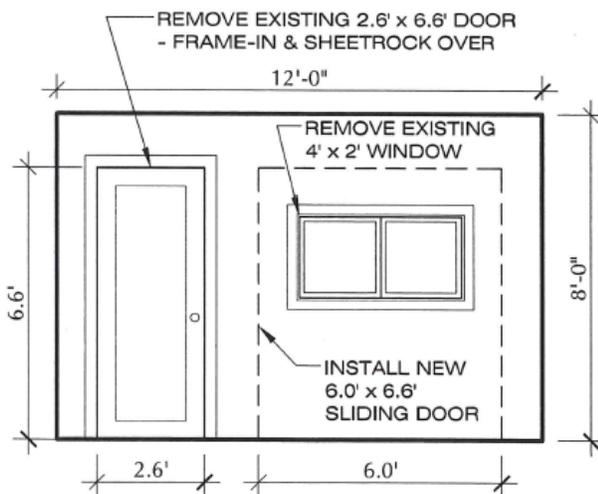
**DIAGRAM # 3 - INTERIOR WALL ELEVATION**

**IMPACTED WALL LENGTH  
DUE TO FRAMED-IN DOORS =  
2.6' + 6.0' = 8.6 FT.**

**IF THIS IS A 12' x 10' ROOM  
WITH NO OTHER WORK  
OCCURRING IN THE ROOM,  
THEN THE ROOM PERIMETER =  
2 @ 12' + 2 @ 10' = 44 FT.**

**8.6 FT. + 44 FT. = 19.7%**

**ROOM  
WOULD NOT  
BE COUNTED**



**DIAGRAM # 4 - INTERIOR WALL ELEVATION**