

Calculating Floor Areas

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CALCULATING FLOOR AREA

A. Purpose

To provide guidelines for the calculation of floor area as applied throughout the Building and Zoning Codes and, in particular, to clarify permissible assumptions which may be applied to floor area calculations used for building and parking requirements.

To illustrate the relationship and distinction between the enforcement of the Building Code and the Zoning Code in the application of floor area.

B. Zoning Code Floor Area Calculation

1. The Zoning Code Defines Floor Area as :

"The sum of the areas of the several floors of building structure, including areas used for human occupancy and basements, attics, and penthouses, as measured from the exterior faces of the walls. It does not include cellars, unenclosed porches, attics not used for human occupancy, or any floor space in accessory buildings or in the main building intended and designed for the parking of motor vehicles in order to meet the parking requirements of this Chapter, or any such floor space intended and designed for accessory heating and ventilating equipment."

In computing total floor area for the purposes of Floor Area Ratio, all floor area within the exterior walls of a building used for "human occupancy shall be included. The term "exterior faces of walls" is applied to mean exterior faces of all walls, including interior partitions. The footprint of the area of the building's walls and structural elements, providing they are solid or enclosed and not capable of human occupancy, are not included in the calculation. Floor areas of interior staircases, storage rooms, vestibules, utility rooms and closets, and all other areas for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, bathrooms and hallways shall be included in the calculations, as are basements and finished attics used for human occupancy.

2. Floor Area Calculations Relating to Parking Requirements:

The term "Gross Floor Area devoted to a use" as it relates to Zoning Ordinance Parking requirements is defined for the purposes of administration as follows:

"All Occupiable spaces of the building that is devoted to said use, including all internal hallways and circulation areas, bathrooms, and accessory spaces such as conference rooms and copier rooms, storage rooms, vestibules, utility rooms and closets, but not counting mechanical equipment rooms and wall thicknesses"

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C. Building Code Floor Area Calculation

1. The Building Code defines Gross Floor Area as:

"Gross floor area shall be the floor area within the perimeter of the outside walls of the building under consideration, without deduction for hallways, stairs, closets, thickness of walls, columns or other features".

Gross Floor Area as referenced through out the 1993 BOCA building code and specifically in Chapter 5 and Table 503. Gross area shall not be used for the purposes of calculating occupancy limitations, habitable areas used for human occupancy or parking calculations.

2. The Building Code defines Net Floor Area as:

"The actual occupied area and shall not include unoccupied accessory areas or thickness of walls"

Net areas are used to determine habitable areas used for human occupancy, occupancy limitations, and fire suppression area calculations.

3. The Building Code defines "Habitable Space" as:

"Space in a structure for living, sleeping, eating or cooking. Bathrooms, toilets compartments, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces and similar areas are not considered Habitable Spaces."

4. The Building Code defines "Occupiable Space" as:

"A room or enclosed space designed for human occupancy in which individuals congregate for amusement, educational or similar purposes, or in which occupants are engaged at labor; and which is equipped with means of egress and light and ventilation facilities meeting the requirements of this code."