

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CITY COUNCIL DIRECTIVE TO EVALUATE
COMMERCIAL BUILDING DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS,
HEIGHT AND MEASUREMENT

PREPARED BY: PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
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(Garen G. Srapyan, Associate Planner)

ISSUE

Evaluation of commercial building development standards related to height and measurement of commercial and mixed-use projects.

CONTEXT

On June 5, 2017, the City Council directed staff to evaluate how the City calculates commercial building height and rooftop projections to determine if the City's zoning standards are appropriate for providing well-scaled commercial and mixed-use developments (Exhibit A). This item was placed on the Division's work program for completion in the fourth quarter of 2018.

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE

The directive included the evaluation of the following items, which will be discussed with the Long Range Planning Projects Subcommittee:

1. Evaluation of commercial building measurement standards, including measurement standards in the California Building Code;
2. Possible impacts when adjacent residential zoning limits result in a height difference on commercial properties of two stories or greater; and
3. Possible impacts of rooftop projections and other rooftop structures and granting of modifications on overall building scale and height.

FINDINGS AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

This report proposes a zone text amendment to amend the standards for rooftop projections above the allowable height limit in both commercial and residential zone districts, but does not recommend an amendment to change how height is currently measured.

Commercial Building Height Measurement

Staff extensively researched grade and height calculation standards in Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, and Long Beach. Refer to Exhibit B for a comprehensive comparison of height measurement methodologies. Based on this comparative research, staff has concluded that there is no one universally accepted methodology for measuring permitted height, with each city employing different methods to establish the underlying grade on which to apply height limits. Cities do normally have one method for flat/low sloping lots and another for sloping lots, but similarly there is no standard definition of what determines a sloping lot. Figure 1 below illustrates a maximum building envelopes generated through six different height calculation methodologies. Despite these differences, the grade and height measurement methods generally produce similar building height envelopes

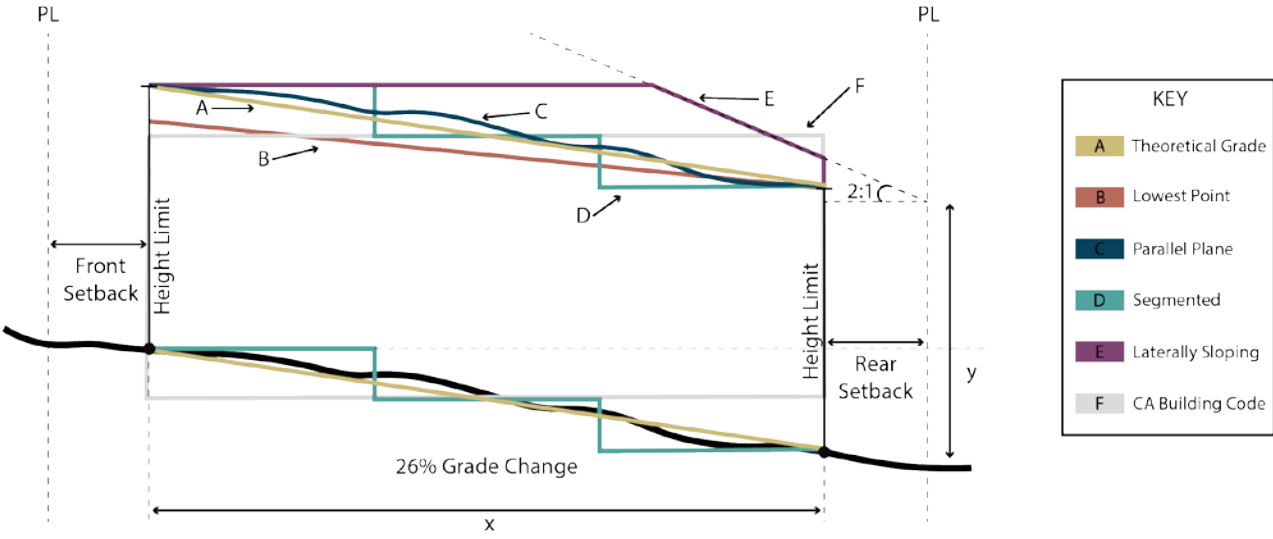


Figure 1 – Comparison of Building Height Envelope Calculation Methods

The City of West Hollywood currently uses three different methods: parallel plane, side sloping and laterally sloping. All projects, regardless of the slope, can use the Parallel Plane method. Side and laterally sloping methods are reserved only for parcels with slope of 5% or greater.

While the City’s Laterally Sloping method is slightly more generous than other methods in determining building height envelope, it is rarely used, with 95% of approved projects in the City following the Parallel Plane method. It is rarely used because, while many commercial parcels on Sunset Blvd have grades steep enough to allow use of the Laterally Sloping method, projects in this area of the City are normally governed under development agreements. The development agreements give the City greater ability to dictate design standards, including building height step-backs, to ensure aesthetically pleasing transitions between commercial and adjacent residential parcels. Therefore, using the laterally sloping method is not necessary. The laterally sloping method is generally not applicable to any other area of the city, given the flatter slope.

California Building Code (CBC) Building Height Measurement

Council also requested that staff review the apparent inconsistency of height measurement standards between the California Building Code (CBC) and the City's Zoning Ordinance. The CBC measures height to determine the type of construction (i.e. Type 4 – Heavy Timber, Type 5 – Wood Framed, etc.). The CBC measures height from an imaginary grade plane established from the average elevation at all four sides of the site. The CBC sets forth guidelines to protect the health, safety, accessibility or structures built in California. It is important to note building aesthetics is not mentioned as a mission of the Code. The focus on safety and structural integrity of buildings, rather than aesthetic design, is evidenced in the Code's approach to grade plane establishment and height limits, described in the paragraph below.

Grade Plane Calculation. The grade plane is the horizontal plane with an elevation that is the average elevation at each exterior wall of the proposed building. This means for a sloping lot, the allowable height of building will be higher than the stated height limit on the lower elevated portion of the lot, and lower than the stated height limit on the higher elevated portion of the lot. There are step-back requirements, so depending on the slope of the lot, the difference between the allowable heights at either end of the lot can be significant. See Figure 2 below.

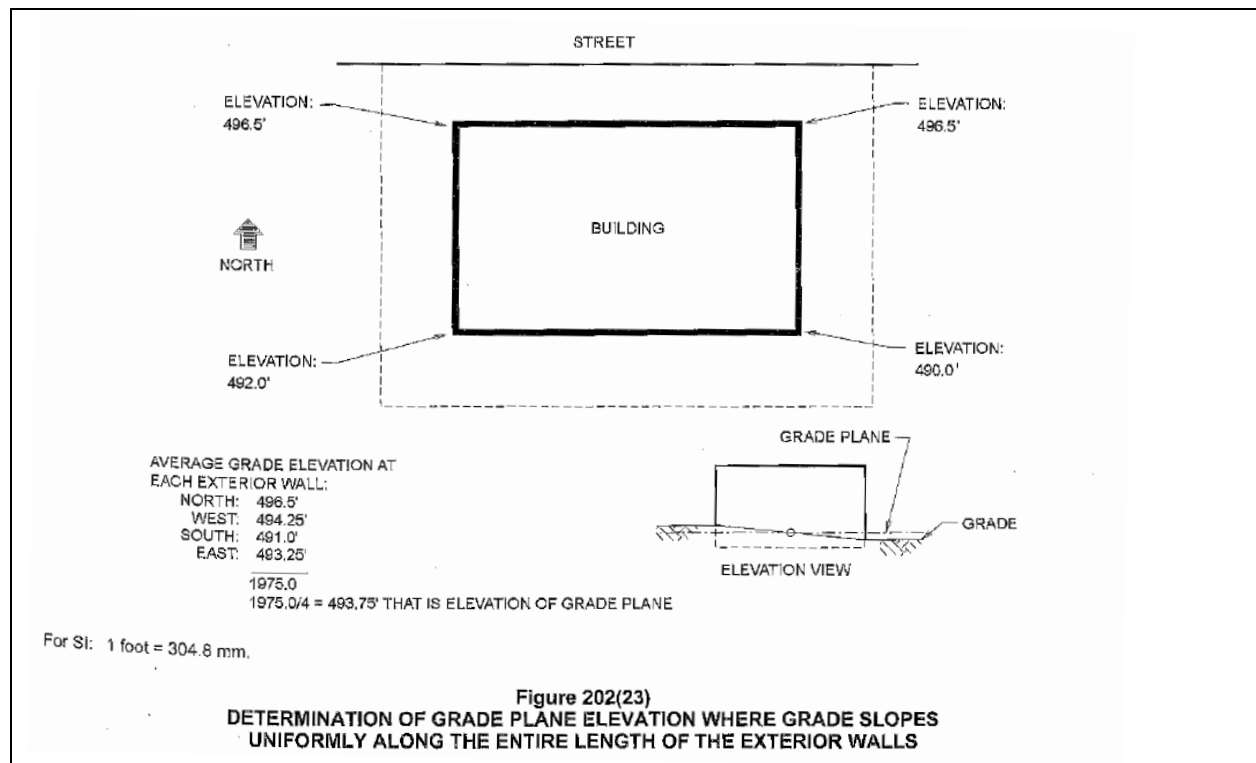


Figure 2 – Grade Plane Calculation, California Building Code 2016

This grade plane is then used to determine type of construction, Type I – V, based on the projects proposed height. The CBC height calculation method establishes the type of construction allowed for a subject site based on the proposed building height. The types of construction are classified by their level of fire resistance. They are as follows:

- Type I – Fire resistive (steel frame or poured concrete construction), unlimited height
- Type II – Non-combustible, 65-85 feet height
- Type III – Ordinary, 65-85 feet height
- Type IV – Heavy timber, 65 feet height
- Type V – Wood frame construction, 50-70 feet height

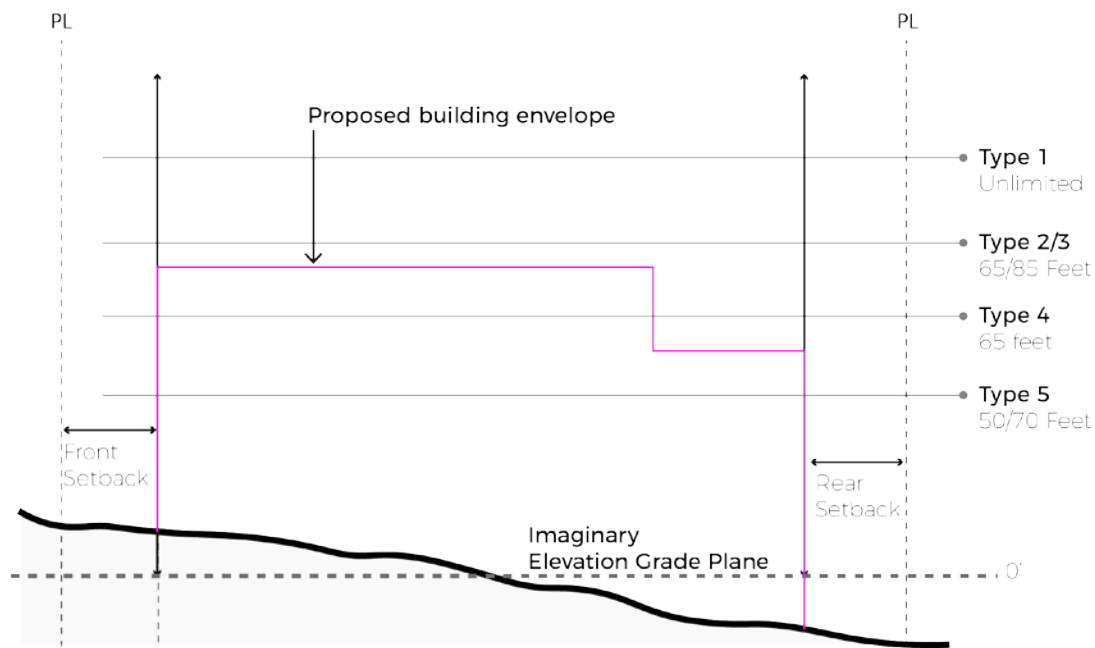


Figure 3 – California Building Code Height Measurement Purpose. A proposed project on this site would be overlaid on this diagram to determine the allowed construction type per the CBC standards.

With a focus on construction type and corresponding fire safety rating, it is clear that safety rather than aesthetic design dictates the use of the Code’s grade plane and height calculation. Municipalities in the region do not defer to the calculation method set forth by the California Building Code because of the complexity of the calculation methodology and certain unintended urban design consequences. It is not a way to measure height from a built environment perspective, but is only a way to determine absolute height limits for certain types of building materials. The CBC method would inadvertently force excess site excavation along the highest elevation. The diagrams in Attachment A illustrate that the standards create additional height above the allowable height along the lowest elevation of the building.

Staff recommends City Council not adopt the California Building Code’s grade plane calculation method as the standard for applying the City’s height limits for land use planning purposes. While the Code is useful for ensuring the health, safety, and accessibility of the City’s structures, it is not designed to handle aesthetic and environmental considerations.

Up-slope and Down-slope Height Measurement

Finally, staff reviewed the impacts of the City’s height measurement standards for up-slope vs down-slope conditions. As illustrated in the diagrams in Exhibit B, up-slope conditions do generally create a taller building envelope along the front setback if the laterally sloping method is used. While this condition is rare in commercial zoning districts, staff does not recommend adding a new height measurement method for up-sloping parcels. The laterally sloping method for an up-slope condition does not result in additional height along the rear setback adjacent to a residential zone district.

Recommendation for Building Height Measurement

Recommendation: Given that the existing height methodology allows for flexibility on sloping sites, is concurrent with other city methods and the limited applicability of the laterally sloping method, staff recommends no change to currently employed grade and height calculations. The current calculation methods established in the Zoning Ordinance provide for design flexibility to allow for creative architecture in the City.

Alternative: As an alternative, staff can develop a zone text amendment to modify the laterally sloping calculation method to require the height calculation from the midpoint of the building setback line instead of the parcel line. The current method provides an additional 3-5 feet of height along the front elevation. This change would ensure that the front and rear elevation of the building will align with maximum allowable height of the zone district. Depending on the grade of the slope, this alternative will still create additional height above the maximum allowable height limit towards the middle of the building, depending on the grade of the slope. See Figure 4 below.

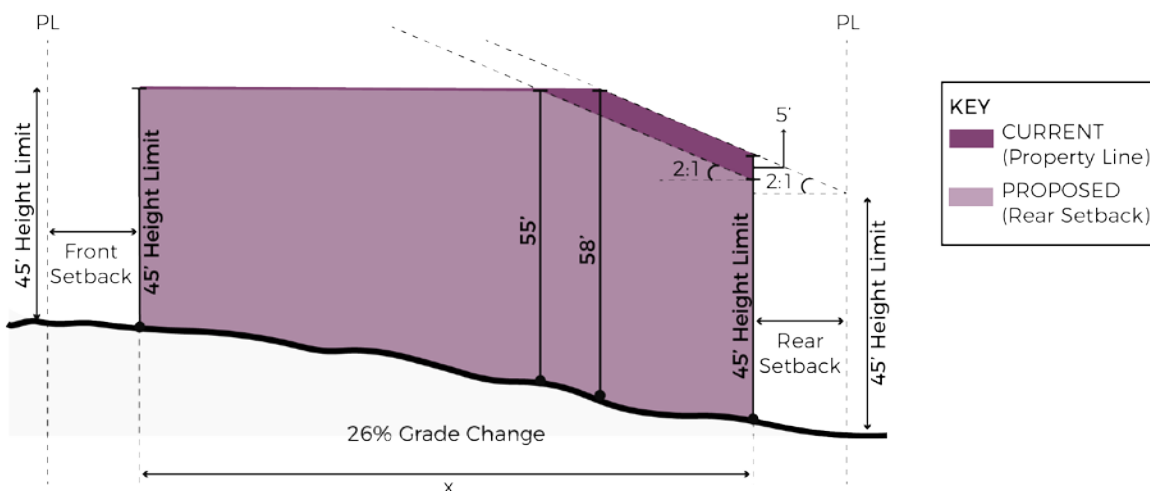


Figure 4 – Laterally Sloping Method (Current and Alternative)

Additionally, a front step-back above the first floor may also be established to relieve bulk along the front elevation. Staff is concerned that this would limit design flexibility and exclude creative and unique architecture.

Commercial zoning districts adjacent to residential

The City Council asked staff to evaluate the impacts of commercial zones adjacent to residential zones where the height limits could result in a commercial structure being two or more stories higher than a residential structure. As illustrated in the diagram in Exhibit C, there are only a handful of parcels on the Eastside along Santa Monica Boulevard that would fall into this category. Parcels on Sunset Boulevard are regulated by the Sunset Specific Plan and are typically conditioned through a Development Agreement.

Another area where this difference in heights could occur is in the Mixed Use Incentive Overlay Zone (MUIOZ), because new projects in this zone may take advantage of the density bonus per the MUIOZ and this could result in a mixed-use building with a height difference of two stories or greater. However, the Zoning Ordinance requires that development projects utilizing mixed-use incentives adjacent to residential zoning districts limit height to 35 feet within 25 feet of the building edge, and that all of the additional area allowed by the height bonus be developed exclusively with residential units. This standard already provides for well-scaled mixed-use projects adjacent to a residential zoning district.

Additionally, if the mixed-use project incorporated a certain number of affordable housing units, a height bonus may be also granted as allowed by the State Density Bonus. Because the bonuses are not part of the base zoning limits, it is difficult to assume in the Zoning Ordinance that all commercial projects will utilize one of more height incentives – resulting in a commercial building with a height limit of two stories or greater in a residential district. Residential properties may also take advantage of these incentives.

Recommendation for Mixed-Use projects

This two story or more height difference could occur on the Eastside, in mixed-use development using incentives, or in mixed-use developments providing affordable units. But even taken together, this could only occur on a very few parcels. Given the limited number of parcels that fall within this category, staff does not recommend making amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to address only a few select parcels that may result in a height difference of two stories or greater when adjacent to a residential zone district. Further, the Zoning Ordinance already requires commercial or mixed-use projects that exceed the maximum height of the adjacent residential zoning district to be set back from any required rear yard a minimum horizontal distance of one foot for each two feet by which the structure exceeds the maximum height of the residential district. Additionally, mixed-use projects utilizing the mixed-use bonus have additional design standards that provide adequate distance from the adjacent residential zone district. See Figure 5 on the next page.

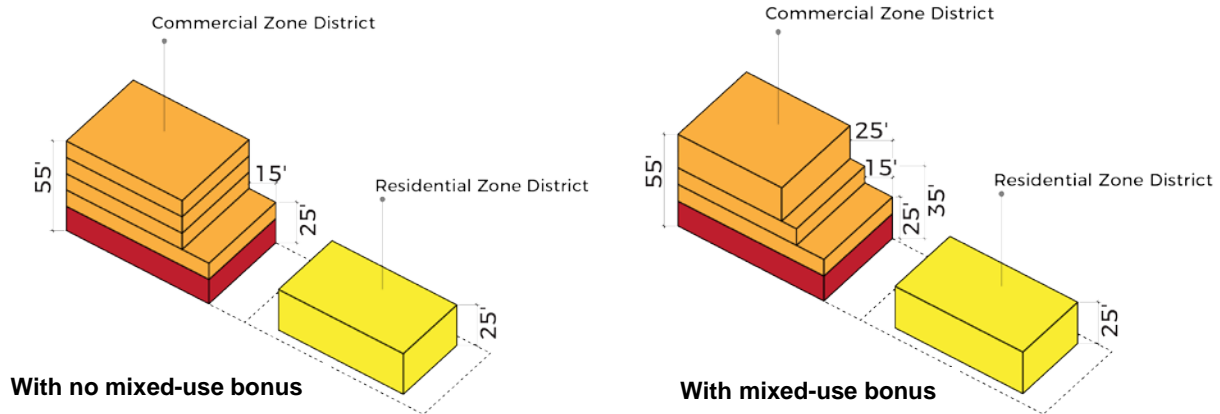


Figure 5 – Existing step-back requirement for commercial/ mixed-use projects adjacent to a Residential Zone District

Alternative: As an alternative, staff could explore additional development standards for additional and/or increased step-backs on the side of the commercial building that is adjacent to a residential zone district. It is important to understand that design standards, including step-backs, aside from required setbacks related to the MUIOZ, could be waived if the proposed mixed-use project uses an allowable concession under State Density Bonus Law.

Modifications and Rooftop projections

Modifications

The Council directive also requested additional information on how modifications to the overall scale and height of building are processed. Currently, the Zoning Ordinance allows the Director to grant up to a 10% modification on any development standards, excluding density and other standards required as part of a bonus. Modifications are granted if a hardship exists and only if the request will not have significant impact on adjacent properties. Figure 6 breaks down the types of modifications that have been granted in 18 commercial/mixed-use projects from 2014 to present day.

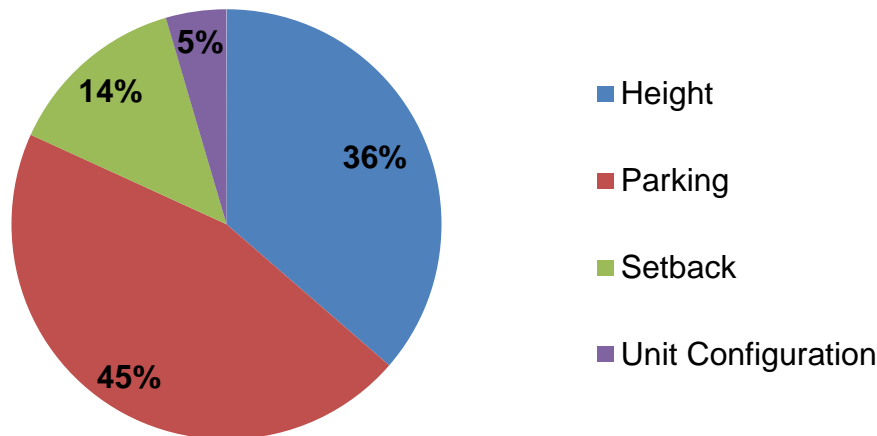


Figure 6 – Sampling of types of modifications granted in commercial projects 2014 - present day. 18 total modifications (7 on Santa Monica Blvd, 7 on Melrose/ Beverly and 4 on San Vicente Blvd)

Common modifications are related to setbacks, parking size reductions and height issues around rooftop projections related to elevator shaft accommodation. The purpose of minor modifications is to provide some design flexibility in the code to enable unique architectural designs, variety of ground floor uses, or accommodate a specific construction type. These are circumstances where minor flexibility in the code is useful in getting a better project design. Modifications do not result in additional floors, although they may allow a higher projection above the roof, and also do not add any additional FAR than what is allowed by base zoning.

An applicant requesting any more than 10% modification would be required to file a variance application to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission.

Rooftop Projections

The City's Zoning Ordinance allows the following types of rooftop projections that exceed the allowable height in the applicable zoning district:

1. Architectural Projections – non-occupiable and up to twenty-five feet in height
2. Mechanical Equipment - elevator shafts, skylights, stairwells and ventilation artia, up to ten feet in height and a maximum of fifteen percent of the total roof area.

Based on feedback from planning staff that process rooftop projections as part of new development projects, these two types of allowable projections in the Zoning Ordinance have been problematic for projects with elevator shafts, mechanical equipment and other rooftop features. Typically, elevator shafts are considered mechanical equipment. The current ten foot maximum for mechanical equipment in the Zoning Ordinance inadvertently causes confusion on how these projections are being calculated and which standard is being used for a particular rooftop projection. Some development projects have incorporated elevator shafts as part of the overall architectural design of the building and can use the allowable height under architectural projections, which have a more generous twenty-five foot maximum.

See Exhibit D for a summary of rooftop projection standards in nearby municipalities.

Recommendation: In general, the allowable heights and areas for these two types of projections leave room for interpretation and inconsistency among staff and the Planning Commission on how to uniformly apply the standard. Staff recommends revising this section, making it clear what is allowed to project above the allowable height, and the maximum area it can take on the roof. Additionally, the Zoning Ordinance does not currently address Sustainable Energy Generation Equipment on the roof. The proposed zone text amendment will include language to allow for these features as well.

The proposed zone text amendment distinguishes between an allowable rooftop projection above the roofline vs above the maximum height limit. See Figure 6.

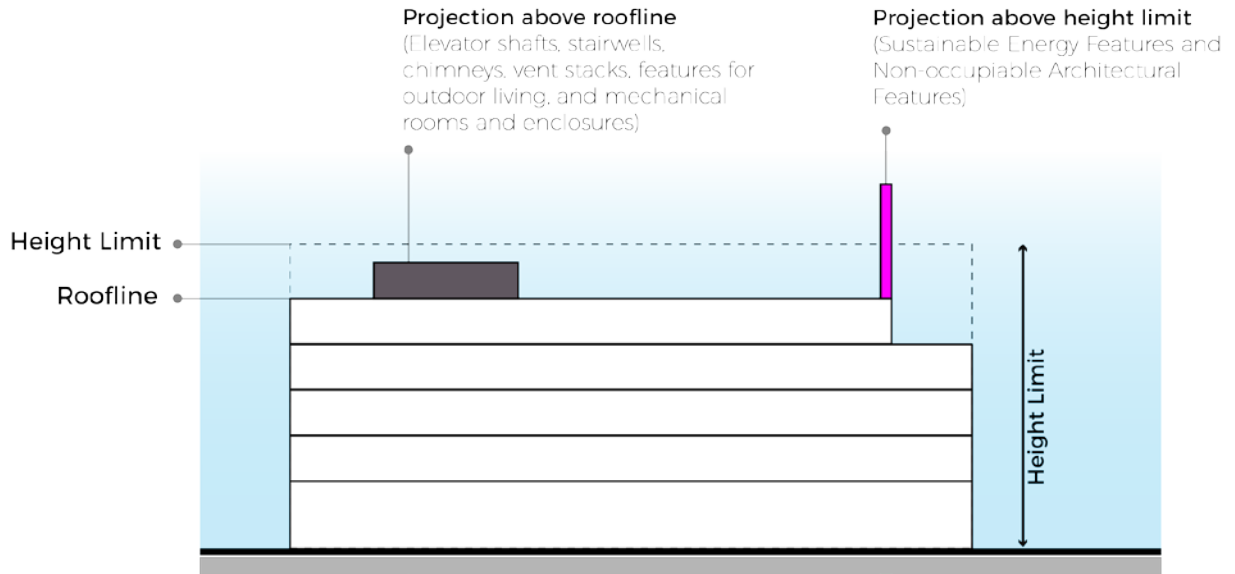


Figure 6 – Projections above the roofline vs projections above the height limit

Below is the DRAFT proposed zone text amendment for Rooftop Projections for discussion:

New language is in underline and deletions are in ~~strikethrough~~.

Subsection (C) (Projections above Allowed Heights) of 19.28.080 (Height Measurement and Exceptions) is amended to read as follows:

C. *Projections Above Allowed Heights.*

1. No structure shall project above the height limits for each zoning district established in this Ordinance except as specified in this Section.

Table A is a summary of the maximum permitted projection(s) above the height limit or roofline of a building for structures that are typically mounted or attached to a building. Table A also establishes limitations in the horizontal coverage of permitted projections.

Table A: Allowed Projections Above Height Limits

<u>Structure</u>	<u>Maximum Aggregate Coverage of Building's Roof Area (% or total gross square footage); Other Locational Restrictions</u>	<u>Maximum Vertical Projection (ft.)</u>
<u>Projections Allowed in All Zoning Districts:</u>		
<u>Skylights</u>	<u>No limit</u>	<u>1 ft. above the roofline</u>
<u>Solar Energy Equipment located on a rooftop</u> <u>For solar access and solar equipment, please see also Section 19.20.170.</u>	<u>No limit; Shall be set back minimum of 2 feet from required setback, with the exception of solar collector panels.</u>	<u>12 ft. above the height limit</u>
<u>Windscoops</u>	<u>5%</u>	<u>5 ft. above the height limit</u>
<u>Elevator shafts</u>	<u>200 gross square feet per elevator shaft</u>	<u>15 ft. above the roofline</u>
<u>Stairwells</u>	<u>200 gross square feet per stairwell</u>	<u>8 ft. above the roofline</u>
<u>Chimneys, vent stacks</u>	<u>5%</u>	<u>5 ft. above the roofline</u>
<u>Parapets, fire escapes, catwalks, and open guard rails required by law</u>	<u>As required by law</u>	<u>As required by law</u>
<u>Non-occupiable architectural features such as steeples, spires, towers, domes, and cupolas</u>	<u>25%</u>	<u>10 ft. above the height limit</u>

Table A: Allowed Projections Above Height Limits

<u>Structure</u>	<u>Maximum Aggregate Coverage of Building's Roof Area (% or total gross square footage); Other Locational Restrictions</u>	<u>Maximum Vertical Projection (ft.)</u>
<u>Rooftop features for outdoor living areas, such as sunshade and open trellises.</u>	25%	10 ft. above the roofline
<u>Mechanical rooms and enclosures, telecommunications facilities, ventilating fans, water tanks, cooling towers, or other equipment required to operate and maintain a building</u> <u>For telecommunications facilities, please see also Section 19.36.350</u>	15%; Shall be set back from the edge of the roofline a minimum of one half foot for every foot in height above the roof above which they are situated;	10 ft. above the roofline

42. Height Averaging. The maximum height of a structure may be averaged, subject to approval by the Director. For example, where a flat-roofed structure could be built to a height of twenty-five feet, a sloping roof could be built to a maximum average height of twenty-five feet with the lowest portions of the roof slope at twenty feet, and the highest portions at twenty-eight feet.

~~2. Architectural Projections. Architectural projections, towers, and other architectural design elements integral to the overall design character of a structure and intended to distinguish its design and contribute to its architectural excellence may be allowed, provided they:~~

- ~~a. Are non-occupiable;~~
- ~~b. Are limited to the following maximum height limits above the height allowed by the underlying zoning district:~~

~~(1) Residential.~~

- ~~(a) If the applicable maximum height limit is thirty-five feet or less: ten feet.~~
- ~~(b) If the applicable maximum height limit is over thirty-five feet: twenty-five feet.~~

~~(2) Non-residential structures may exceed the allowable height limit by a maximum of twenty-five feet.~~

- ~~c. Are limited to 15 percent of the total roof area;~~
- ~~d. Do not result in adverse shadows on adjacent properties; and~~
- ~~e. Are approved by the Director through the development permit process.~~

~~3. Catwalks. Catwalks, parapets, and railings with a maximum height of four feet may be allowed.~~

~~4. Mechanical Equipment. Mechanical equipment, housings, telecommunications facilities and other appurtenant roof-top structures or penetrations (e.g., skylights, stairwells, and ventilation atria) may be allowed, but shall not exceed 15 percent of the total roof area and shall not exceed ten feet in height above the roof above which they are situated. A roof-top structure, equipment, or penetration shall be set back from the edge of the structure a minimum of one foot for every foot in height above the roof above which they are situated. For telecommunications facilities, see also Section 19.36.340.~~

In summary, the research in this report supports a zone text amendment to amend the standards for rooftop projections above the allowable height limit in both commercial and residential zone districts, but does not recommend an amendment to change how height is currently measured.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. June 5, 2017 City Council Staff Report
- B. Summary of building height measurement strategies
- C. Commercial Adjacent to Residential Map
- D. Summary of rooftop projection standards

SUBJECT: **COMMERCIAL BUILDING DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS,
HEIGHT AND MEASUREMENT**

INITIATED BY: **COUNCILMEMBER LAUREN MEISTER**

PREPARED BY: Andi Lovano, Project Development Administrator

STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT:

The City Council will consider directing staff to evaluate ways of minimizing the impacts of building height in commercial zones and review current methods used for measuring building height to determine if the City's methodology is the most appropriate option for providing well-scaled developments. The specific objective of this item is to reduce impacts of commercial and mixed-use projects on adjacent properties. By balancing new building needs and impacts, this approach will enhance neighborhood livability and help maintain the integrity of both residential and commercial zones.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Direct the Community Development Department (CDD) to:

- 1) Evaluate the City's current zoning codes to determine if the City's development standards and methodology for measuring building height are providing well-scaled commercial and mixed-use projects. Items to be evaluated include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Alignment of height measurements in West Hollywood Zoning Ordinance with height measurements in the California Building Code,
 - b. Development of measurement standards for "up slope" conditions vs. "down slope" conditions,
 - c. Impacts when adjacent residential zoning limits result in a height difference of two stories or greater,
 - d. Impacts of projections and other rooftop structures (non-occupiable or occupiable) and granting of modifications on overall building scale and height.

- 2) Provide clarification regarding how staff has been processing rooftop projections, other rooftop structures (non-occupiable or occupiable) and modifications of standards.
- 3) Present findings and recommend options to the Planning Commission (followed by City Council) that address the items above to amend applicable development standards and height measurement methods in the Zoning Ordinance.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:

In response to community concerns about neighborhood livability, over-scaled residential, commercial and mixed-use development, the City Council directed Community Development Department staff to review development standards for R2, R3 and R4 neighborhoods. While the City is looking at development standards in residential zones, projects in commercial zones continue to be a challenge in terms of managing mass and scale as well as minimizing impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The City's zoning codes provide maximum height limits for structures in each residential and commercial zone in the City. For example, structures in the R3-A zone have a height limit of 25 feet or 2 stories and structures in the CC2 zone have a height limit of 45 feet or 4 stories. These are the base zoning height limits. Some projects may be eligible for additional height bonuses if they provide a certain number of affordable housing units or receive mixed-use development incentives. Height bonuses, along with floor area ratio (FAR) bonuses, have resulted in buildings that are large and out of scale with the neighborhood.

Height Measurement

The City of West Hollywood measures height using the Parallel Plane Method. It measures the vertical distance from the grade existing at the time of project submittal to an imaginary plane (not including projections) located the allowed number of feet above and parallel to the existing grade. This is used for sites with less than 5% slope.

While the topography of the southern portion of the City is relatively flat, moving north from Santa Monica Boulevard, the terrain slopes upward, with fairly steep inclines up many of the streets heading toward Sunset Boulevard. This topography can pose challenges to measuring the height of proposed new developments in order to ensure compliance with the City's established height limits. The actual height of a structure could vary depending on how height is measured. The City's Zoning Ordinance (Section 19.20.080) provides various methods for calculating height measurement for sloping sites depending on whether they are "side sloping sites" or "laterally sloping sites." (See Attachments 1 and 2.)

Exceptions

According to West Hollywood's Zoning Ordinance, architectural projections, towers, and other architectural design elements are permitted when they are considered to be integral to the overall design character of a structure. In the case of non-residential structures, projections may exceed the allowable height limit by up to 25 feet but are limited to 15% of the total roof area. Mechanical equipment, housings, telecommunications facilities and other appurtenant rooftop structures or penetrations (e.g., skylights, stairwells, and ventilation atria) may be allowed, but are also not supposed to exceed 15% of the total roof area and cannot exceed ten feet in height above the roof above which they are situated. A rooftop structure, equipment, or penetration is supposed to be set back from the edge of the building structure by a minimum of one foot for every foot in height above the roof above which they are situated.

California Building Code

Whereas the City measures height from the existing grade to an imaginary plane, the California Building Code defines building height as the vertical distance from grade plane¹ to the average height of the highest roof surface. According to state building codes, where the finished ground level slopes away from exterior walls, the reference plane is established by the lowest points within the area between the building and the lot line (or a point 6 ft. from the building if the lot line is more than 6 ft. from the building).

Issues:

- 1) The current methods used by the City to measure height in the Zoning Ordinance differ from and therefore are not consistent with the California Building Code. This difference can create confusion and misunderstandings amongst the public when new projects are approved and move from the Planning Division to Building & Safety.
- 2) While the City's Zoning Ordinance provides provisions for "side sloping sites" and "laterally sloping sites," it does not distinguish between properties with "up slope" conditions versus properties with "down slope" conditions. The unintended consequence of this is, those with up slope conditions are resulting in unnecessarily taller, bulkier projects.

¹ The 2016 California Building Code defines "grade plane" as: A reference plane representing the average of finished ground level adjoining the building at exterior walls. Where the finished ground level slopes away from the exterior walls, the reference plane shall be established by the lowest points within the area between the building and the lot line or, where the lot line is more than 6 feet (1829 mm) from the building, between the building and a point 6 feet (1829 mm) from the building.

- 3) County Fire roof access standards and screening requirements for roof top mechanical equipment have changed over the years. Are new projects under the City's existing zoning codes able to accommodate these changes or do the codes need to be updated?
- 4) New development projects are being processed with "exceptions" (such as architectural projections) and other rooftop structures that create the appearance of additional height above what is intended in the Zoning Ordinance. For example, the 8711 Melrose Avenue project was permitted to construct a rooftop structure (a "retractable roof" over a rooftop restaurant) covering a substantial portion of the total roof area, and for all intents and purposes, is an additional floor.
- 5) The Zoning Ordinance provides for the ability to obtain up to a ten percent modification to development standards, including height. Modifications can create development that is even taller and more out-of-scale with a neighborhood, particularly when height increases above the base zoning have already been granted through height incentives or bonuses. Further, "minor modifications" may be approved by Planning staff after a project has been granted approval at a public hearing, and so transparency in the approval process is also an issue.

Summary

This item directs the Community Development Department to evaluate commercial development standards and current methods of height measurement and provide clarification on "Exceptions" and other rooftop structures in order to ensure the City's approach produces commercial and mixed-use developments that meet the City's zoning codes and are in scale with their surrounding neighborhoods.

The recommended actions would complement previously approved initiatives and directives to evaluate the City's development policies including reviewing the impacts of lot ties across different zones and evaluating the need for a mixed-use bonus as currently defined in the code. In addition, this item is consistent with the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance; i.e., to guide the orderly growth and development of the city, promote high quality urban design, and regulate land uses and the location and use of structures for residential, commercial, and other purposes consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan; to maintain and enhance the City of West Hollywood's "urban village" pedestrian character with a unique, distinctive and secure environment for the city's residents and businesses; and maintain a balance between residential and non-residential land uses.

CONFORMANCE WITH VISION 2020 AND THE GOALS OF THE WEST HOLLYWOOD GENERAL PLAN:

This item is consistent with the Primary Strategic Goal(s) (PSG) and/or Ongoing Strategic Program(s) (OSP) of:

- PSG-1: Maintain the City's Unique Urban Balance with Emphasis on Residential Neighborhood Livability.

In addition, this item is compliant with the following goal(s) of the West Hollywood General Plan:

- LU-1: Maintain an urban form and land use pattern that enhances quality of life and meets the community's vision for its future.
- LU-5: Encourage a high level of quality in architecture and site design in all construction and renovation of buildings.

EVALUATION PROCESSES:

N/A

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH:

N/A

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

N/A

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Building Height Measurement in West Hollywood and Other Jurisdictions
2. West Hollywood Municipal Code § 19.20.080 Height Measurement and Exceptions

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**EXHIBIT B. Summary of building height measurement strategies
Grade and Height Envelope Calculation Comparison Matrix**

Municipality	Method 1				Method 2				Method 3				Method Choice
	Name	Use	Grade + Height Envelope	Setback	Name	Use	Grade + Height Envelope	Setback	Name	Use	Grade + Height Envelope	Setback	
West Hollywood	Parallel Plane (C)	Flat/Low Slope	Natural Grade + Height Limit	Minimum Required per Zoning	Laterally Sloping (E)	High Slope 8.7% grade change (Front to Back)	Perpendicular Line drawn from max height of highest side (front or rear). Line drawn from midpoint of lower side (front or rear) at 2:1 angle to meet with perpendicular line, creating a sloped setback.	None	Side Sloping	High Slope 8.7% grade change (Side to Side along Street Frontage)	Divide parcel into 70ft segments along street frontage from side property line to side property line. For each segment find the highest point between the midpoint of the front or rear property line + Height Limit	None	If there is a 8.7% grade change the developer can choose between either Method 1 or Method 2, otherwise only Method 1. Method 3 is required for all sites with a grade change of >=8.7%
Beverly Hills	Highest Point-Front	All	Highest point of sidewalk abutting the lot/parcel + Height Limit	None	Highest Point - Perimeter	All	Highest point of natural ground level perimeter of a building + Height Limit	None					Highest elevation
Long Beach	Front Average	Flat/Low Slope	Average elevation of front property line + Height Limit	None	Theoretical Grade (A)	High Slope 5' change front to rear	Plane determined by the average front elevation to average rear elevation + Height Limit	None					Slope of lot
Los Angeles	Lowest Point	All	Lowest elevation an area extending 5 ft. around the building perimeter + Height Limit	None	Lowest Point + 12' (B)	20' change in elevation from front to rear	Grade of either Method 1 or 2 (whichever appropriate) + 12' (Building cannot exceed height limit at any point)	None					Use Method 1 unless building is has a large elevation change
Santa Monica	Average Natural Grade	Flat/Low Slope	Average of natural grade taken from the 4 perimeter points of the lot + Height Limit	Minimum Required per Zoning	Theoretical Grade (A)	High Slope 10% grade change	Plane determined from the middle of front setback to middle rear setback + Height Limit	Minimum	Segmented Average Natural Grade (D)	High Slope 10% grade change	Split the lot into 3 segments and take the average natural grade of each	Minimum Required per Zoning	Slope of lot. Method 2 or 3 is with developer discretion

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EXHIBIT C. Commercial Adjacent to Residential Map



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EXHIBIT D. Summary of rooftop projection

Row	Santa Monica Categories	West Hollywood		Santa Monica		Beverly Hills		Long Beach		Los Angeles	
		Max Add'l Height	Max Roof Area	Max Add'l Height	Max Roof Area	Max Add'l Height	Max Roof Area	Max Add'l Height	Max Roof Area	Max Add'l Height	Max Roof Area
1	Mechanical Equipment Skylights	10 ft.	15%, 1:1 setback	1 ft.	No Limit	15 ft.	33%, <45 degrees			5 ft.	1:1 setback
2	Chimneys, vent stacks			5 ft.	5%	Law max	N/S	2 ft.	N/S	5 ft.	N/S
3	Windscoops			5 ft.	5%						
4	Solar energy systems located on a rooftop			5 ft.	Not Specified			As necessary	N/S	5 ft.	1:1 setback
5	Antennas	10 ft.	15%, 1:1 setback	25 ft. (first) and then rest 15 ft.	10%, May not be located between the building and any street-facing parcel line.	15 ft.	N/S	20 ft.	N/S		
6	Parapets, fire escapes, catwalks, and open guard rails required by law	4 ft.	N/S	As required by law	As required by law	45 in. (3.75 ft.)	N/S	part of regular height limit		5 ft.	N/S
7	Non-occupiable features such as steeples, spires, towers, domes, and cupolas	25 ft.	15%	10 ft.	10%	excluded from height of primary structure. Max height undefined		part of regular height limit		5 ft.	1:1 setback
8	Rooftop features for outdoor living areas, such as sunshade, open railings, trellises, and landscaping	25 ft.	15%	10 ft.	25%						
9	Elevator shafts	10 ft.	15%, 1:1 setback	18 ft.* above the roofline	15%	15 ft.	N/S	No Limit	N/S	10 ft. or 20 ft. (depends height limit)	N/S
10	Stairwells	10 ft.	15%, 1:1 setback	14 ft.* above the roofline	25%	15 ft.	N/S			5 ft.	N/S
11	Mechanical rooms and enclosures	10 ft.	15%, 1:1 setback	12 ft.* above the roofline	25%	15 ft.	N/S	No Limit	N/S	5 ft.	1:1 setback
12	Ventilating fans, water tanks, cooling towers, or other equipment required to operate and maintain a building, along with screening of such equipment	10 ft.	15%, 1:1 setback	12 ft.	Total area enclosed by all screening may not exceed 30% of roof area	excluded from height of primary structure. Max height undefined		10 ft.	N/S	5 ft.	1:1 setback
13	Other Categories Flagpole							10 ft.	N/S	5 ft.	1:1 setback

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