



# Residential Design Standards

Proposed Code Amendments



**Planning  
Commission**

**May 7, 2020**

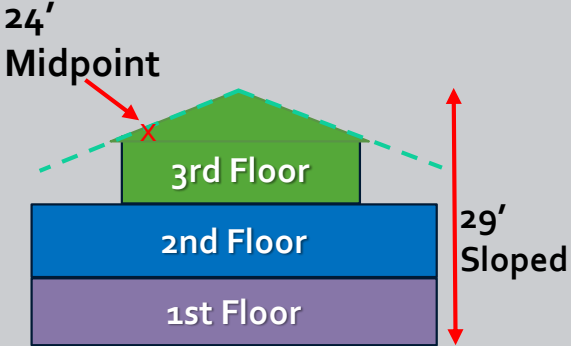

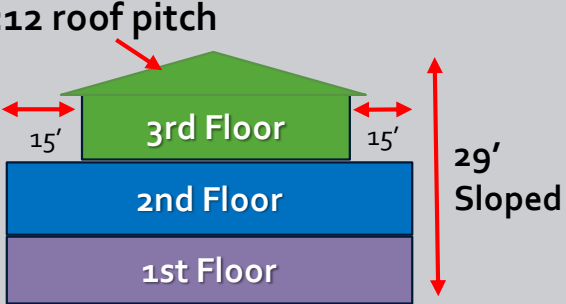

In May 2019, City Council initiated Code amendments and directed staff to:

1. Reduce third floor massing;
2. Reduce height and bulk of single-unit dwellings and duplexes in Multiple Unit Residential (RM) Zoning Districts; and
3. Incentivize the preservation of beach cottages.

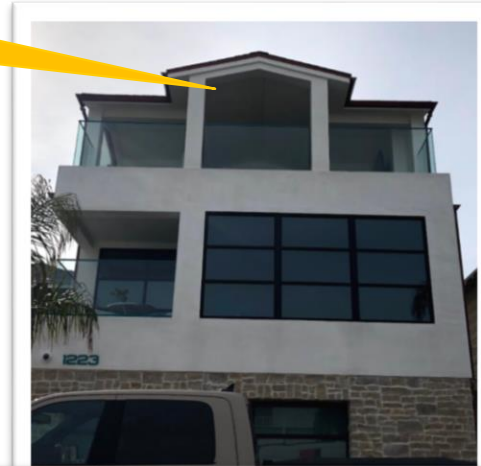
**Where We Started**



# 2010 Code Changes

PRE-2010 ZONING CODE	CURRENT ZONING CODE	PROBLEM
<p>24' flat roof or rails 29' sloped (midpoint @ 24')</p>  	<p>24' flat roof or rails 29' sloped (min 3:12 pitch)</p> <p><u>Bulk controls:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> floor step backs</li> <li>• Maximum 3<sup>rd</sup> floor area</li> </ul> <p>3:12 roof pitch</p>  	<p>Only applicable to enclosed floor area</p> <p>Covered decks and attics excluded</p> <p>Floor Area Definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfinished attics excluded</li> <li>• Silent on required openings</li> </ul> <p>Certain Areas Exempt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balboa Island</li> <li>• RM Zones</li> <li>• 25' wide R-2 lots</li> </ul>

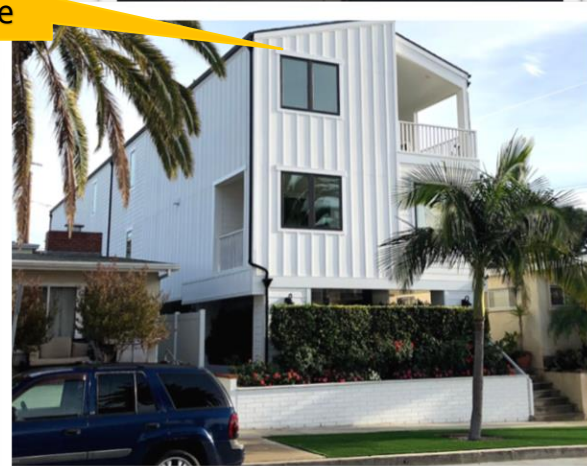
No 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Relief



Bulky 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Decks



Not Always Applicable



Easy to enclose




# Problems

## Intent of Code Amendment



- Eliminate unintended consequences from 2010 ZC Update
- Provide more consistency in application of residential design standards



**Not Intent of  
Code  
Amendment**

- Comprehensive overhaul of design standards
- Not changing allowed heights
- Not prohibiting covered roof decks
- Not changing allowed floor area potential

# What Has Happened



08/19/19

- **1<sup>st</sup> Community Meeting**
  - Support for changes except from RM Owners

09/10/19

- **City Council Study Session**
  - Mixed comments; regulate covered deck openings
  - SB 330 –Housing Crisis Act concerns

02/11/20

- **Cottage Preservation Ordinance Adopted**

various

- **Consultation with community members and designers**
  - Code refinements

03/09/20

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Community Meeting**
  - Mixed support; competing interests
  - Front and rear step-backs to R2 lots (25' wide or less)



## Proposed Code Amendments

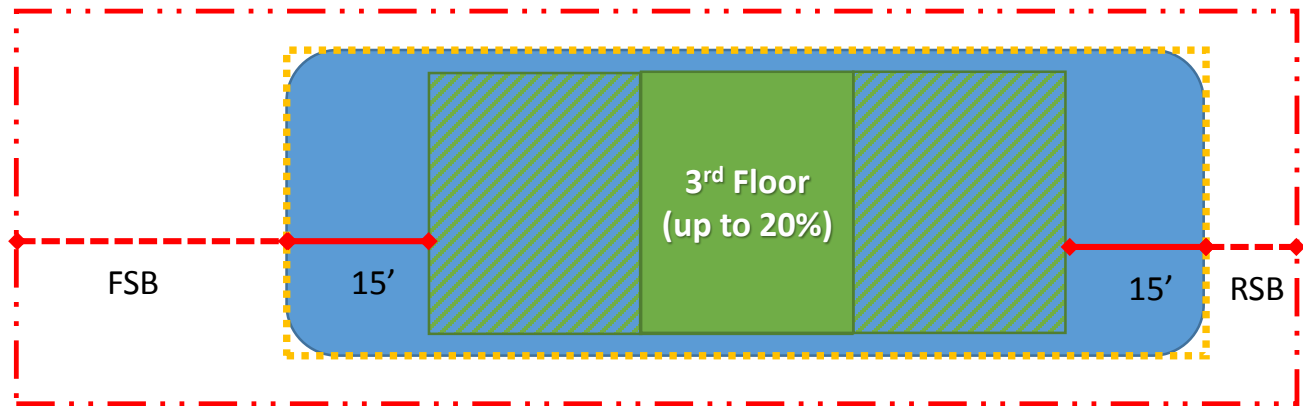
- A. Revisions to 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Standards
- B. Clarification of Gross Floor Area
- C. Applicability to Balboa Island, RM, and R-2 (25' wide) Zones



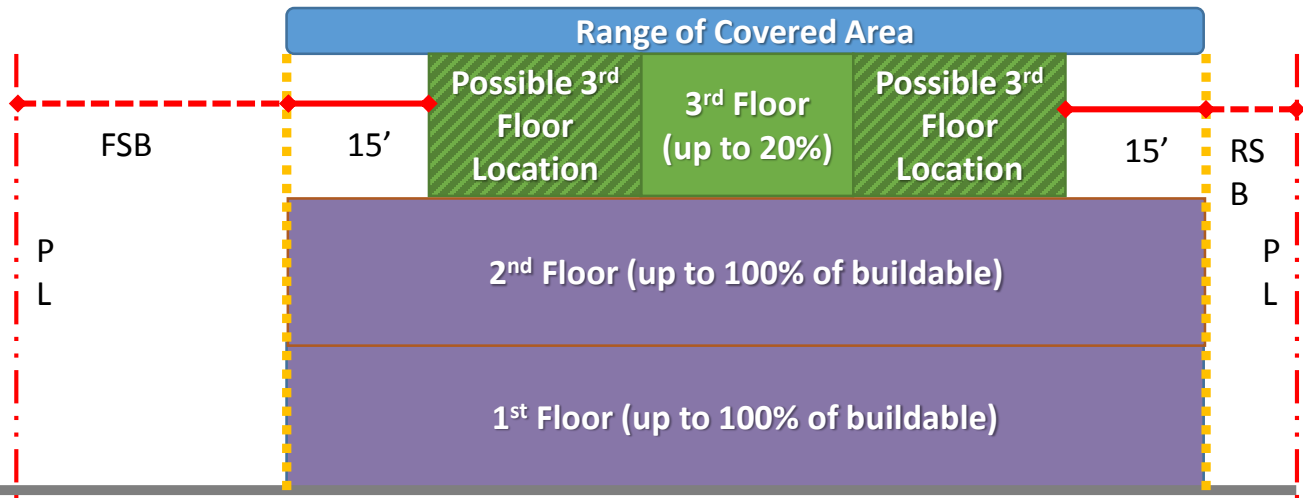
# Current Code

## Third Floor Limits

- 15-ft stepbacks
- Floor area limit (15-20% of buildable area)
- No limits on non-floor area
- No limits on covers



Overhead View

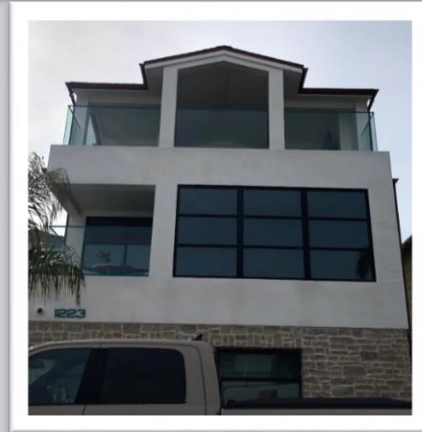


Side View

# Current Code

*Covered decks not subject to 3rd floor limits*

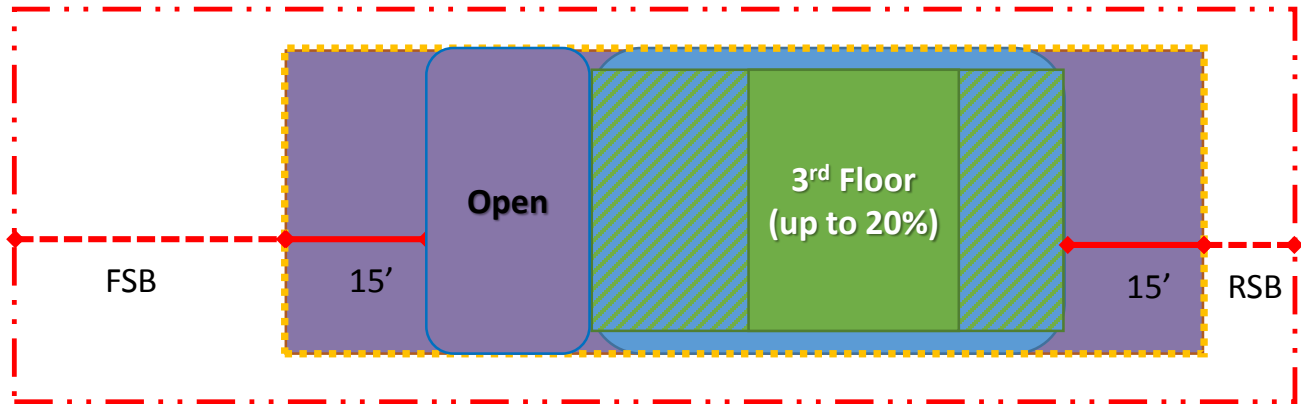
## Problem- Overpowering 3<sup>rd</sup> floor massing



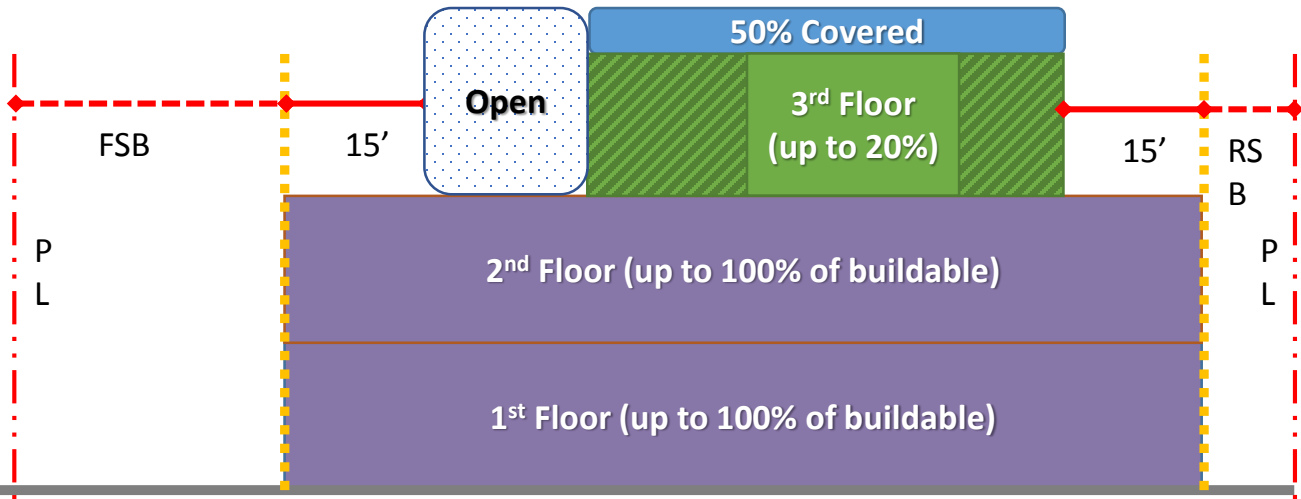
# Proposed Change

## Third Floor Limits

- 15-ft stepbacks
- Floor area limit
- Covered 3<sup>rd</sup> floor deck areas subject to stepbacks
- 50% max coverage



Overhead View



Side View

# Comparison

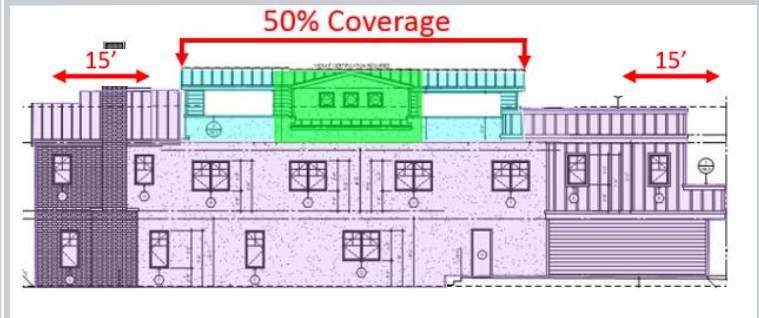
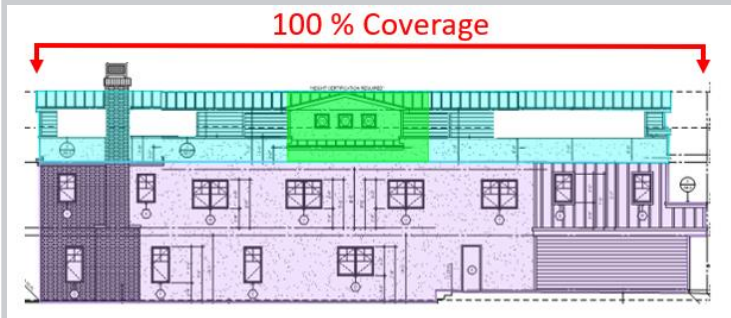
## 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Limits

### CURRENT CODE

- Only applies to enclosed floor area
- Floor area limited to 15-20%

### PROPOSED CODE

Will apply to floor area and covered deck area with a 50% maximum coverage allowance



Side Elevation



Side Elevation

*Proposed  
Change*

*Covered  
decks subject  
to 3rd floor  
limits*

## Desired Outcome- Restrained 3<sup>rd</sup> floor massing



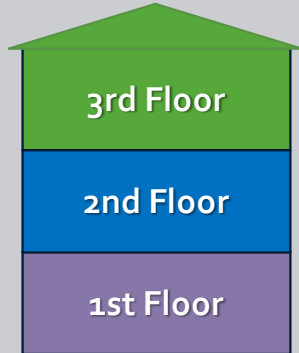
# 3rd Floor Side Stepbacks

Additional 2' from side setbacks

### CURRENT CODE

- Only applies to enclosed floor area
- Only applies to lots wider than 30'

- Majority of lots 30'
- Results in 3 levels of non-articulated walls



Front Elevation

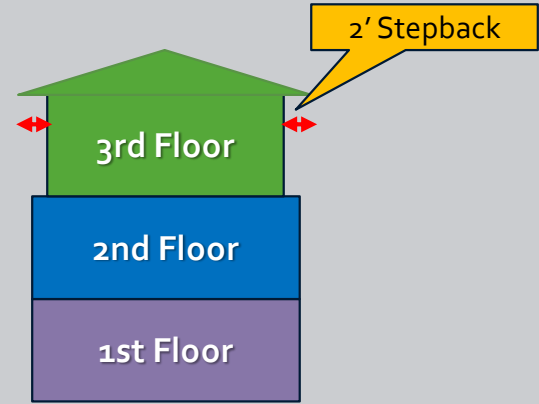


Side Elevation

### PROPOSED CODE

- Will apply to enclosed floor area and covered decks
- Will apply to lots 30' wide or greater

- Results in more designs with 3<sup>rd</sup> floor articulation



Front Elevation

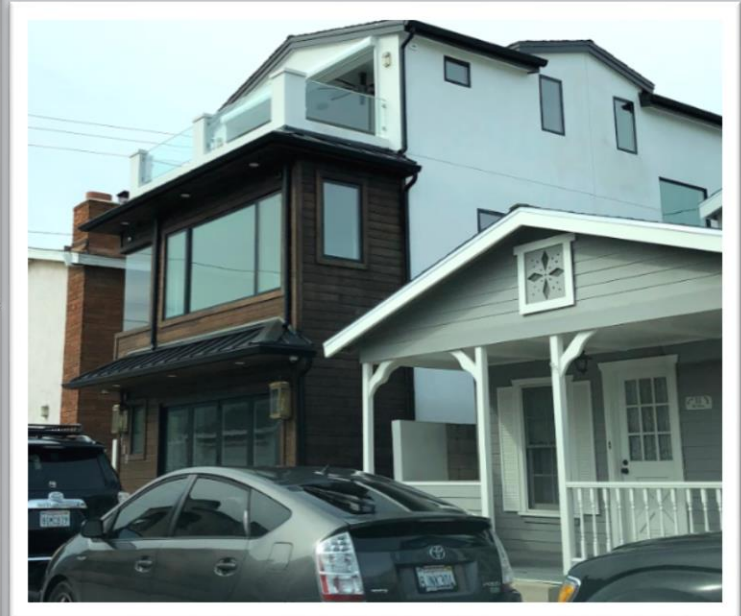


Side Elevation

Problem— Minimal articulation of 3<sup>rd</sup> floor massing

*Current  
Code*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Side  
Stepbacks*



*Proposed  
Change*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Side  
Stepbacks*

Desired Outcome- Increased articulation of 3<sup>rd</sup> floor massing









## Proposed Code Amendments

- A. Revisions to 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Standards
- B. Clarification of Gross Floor Area
- C. Applicability to Balboa Island, RM, and R-2 (25' wide) Zones

# Comparison

## Openings Required for Covered Decks

PRE-2010 CODE	CURRENT CODE	PROBLEM
<p>Two Sides Open</p> 	<p>Silent, but implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One side completely open</li><li>• Two sides substantially open</li></ul> 	<p>Bulky Designs</p> <p>Easy to Enclose</p> <p>Moves required openings from front and rear of structure to sides where less visible</p>

**Current Code**

**Problem- Larger appearance and bulk; unpermitted enclosures**

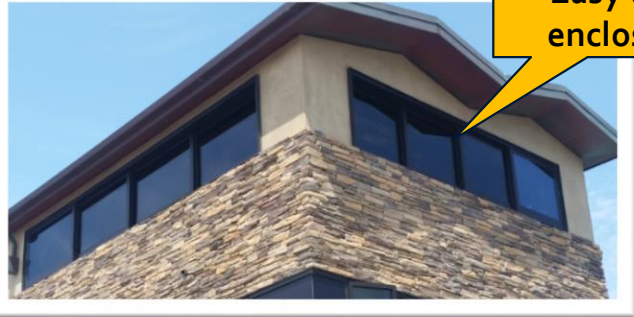
**Openings Required for Covered Decks**



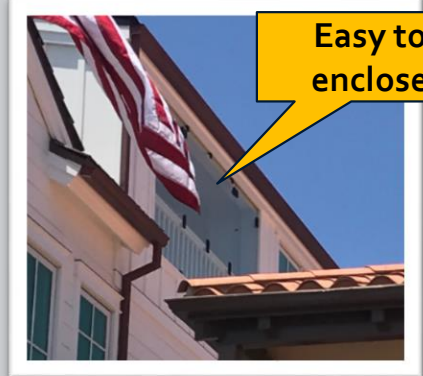
Limited openings



Bulky designs



Easy to enclose



Easy to enclose

*Proposed  
Change*

*Openings  
Required  
for Covered  
Decks*

**Desired Outcome- Reduced bulk; increased transparency**

Two sides open, except:

- Minimal structural supports
- Open guardrails (40%) or glass
- Ground level



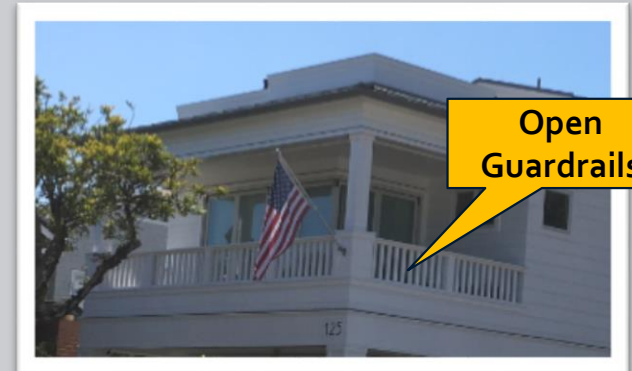
Open above



Required open space moved to front



Glass Guardrails



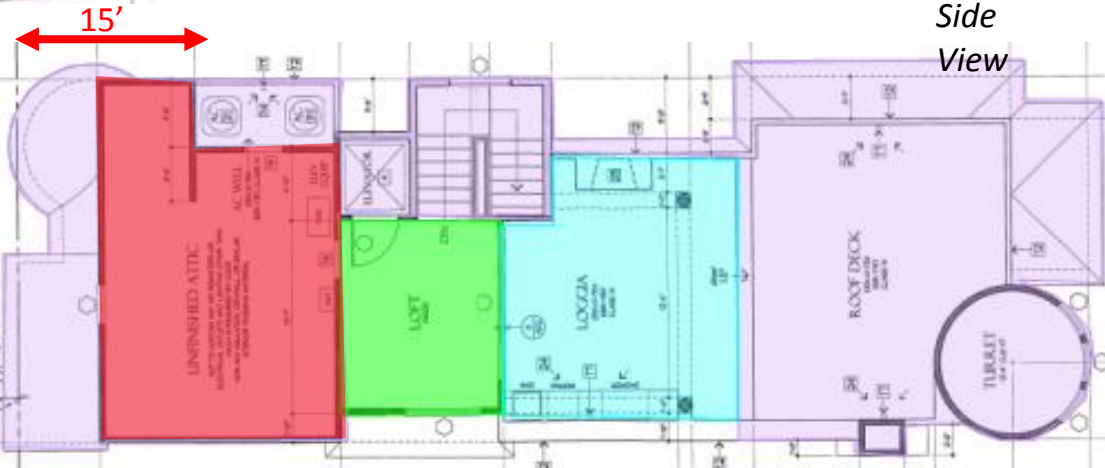
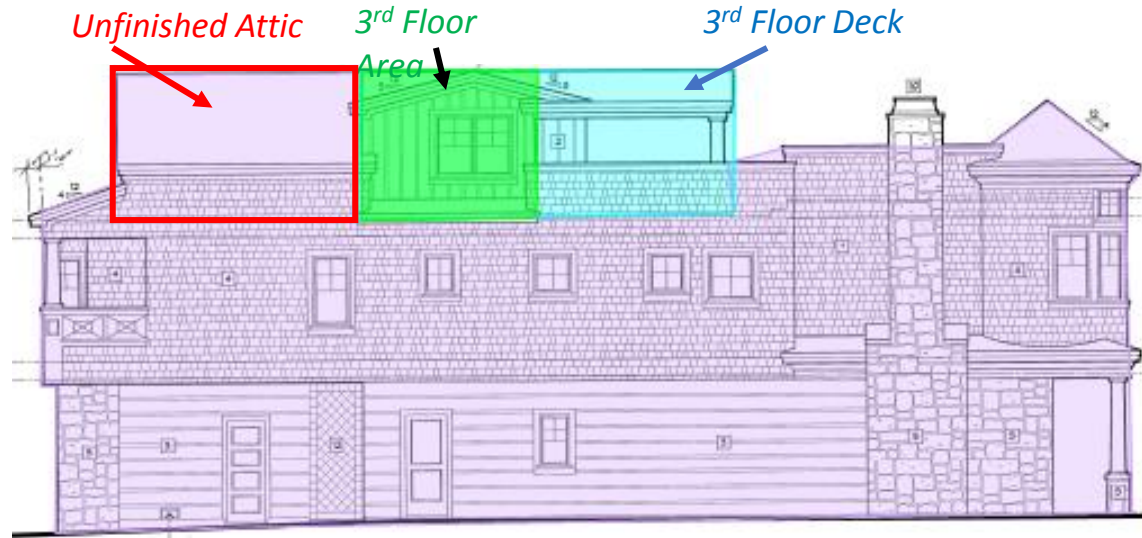
Open Guardrails

# Current Code

## Attics

### Gross Floor Area

- Attics over 6 feet in height do not count as floor area if the area is unfinished.
- Only floor area is subject to 3<sup>rd</sup> floor step backs



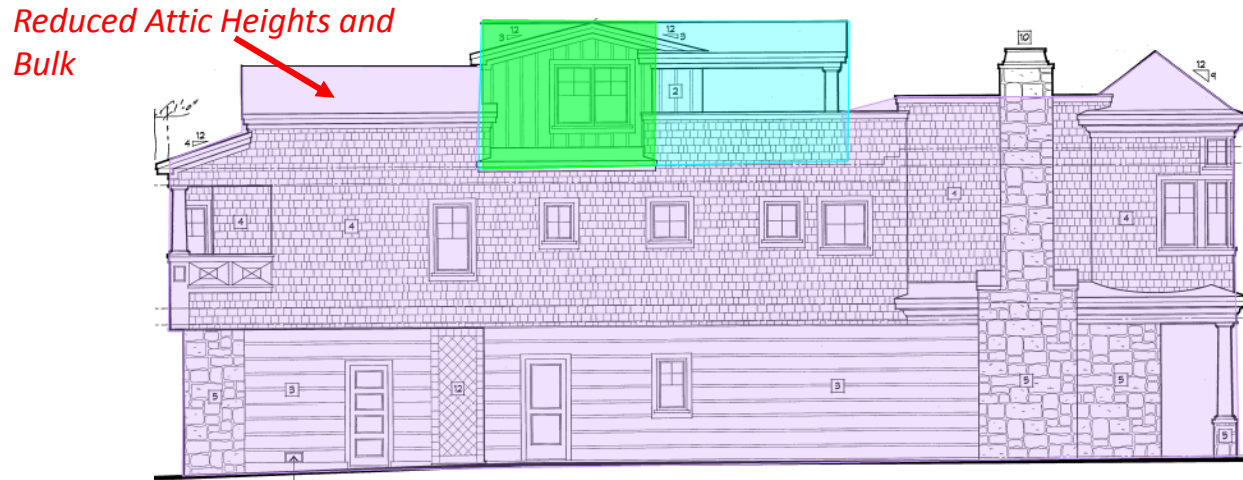
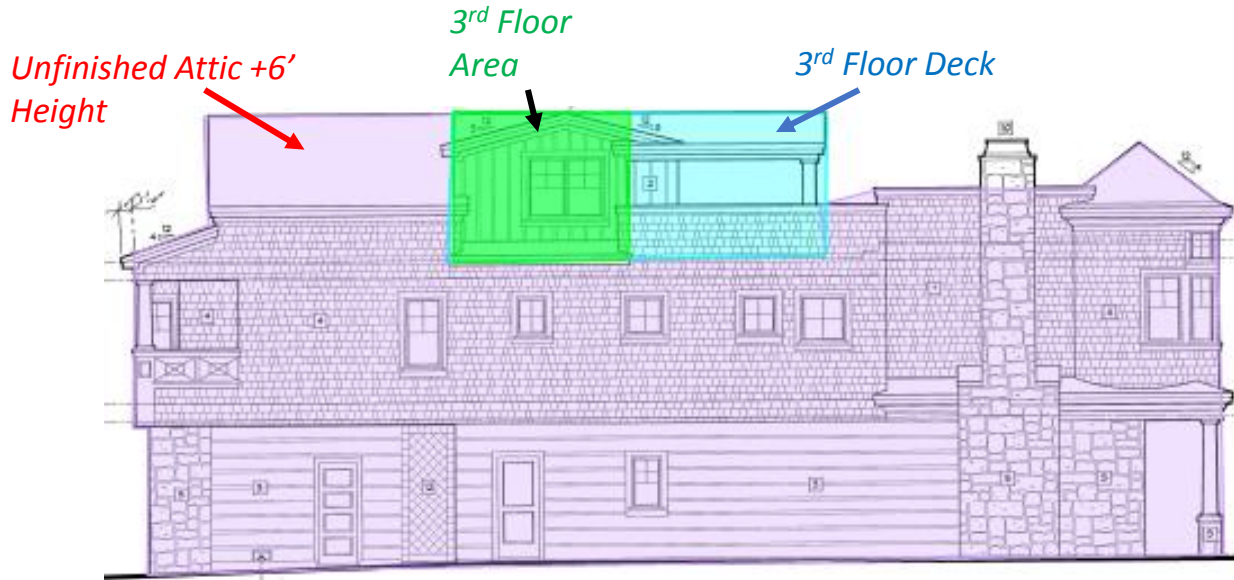
Overhead View

# Proposed Change

## Attics

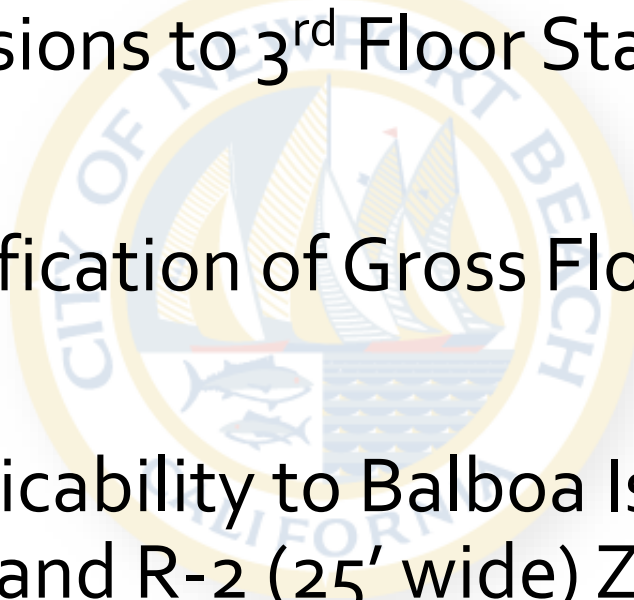
### Gross Floor Area

Any interior **finished** portion of a structure that is accessible and that measures more than six feet from finished floor to ceiling.





## Proposed Code Amendments

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- A. Revisions to 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Standards
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  - C. Applicability to Balboa Island, RM, and R-2 (25' wide) Zones

**CURRENT CODE** – Not applicable to:

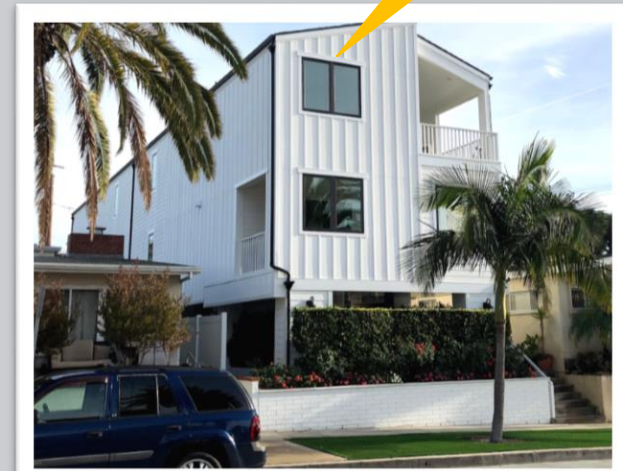
- Balboa Island (R-BI) Zone
- Multiple Residential (RM) Zone
- Two-Unit Residential (R-2) Zone lots that are 25 feet wide or less

**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
and Open  
Space  
Limits**

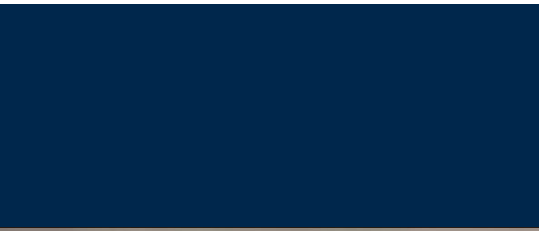
No 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Limits



No 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Stepbacks







# Additional Applicability

Proposed third floor and open volume standards will also apply to:

- Balboa Island
- 1 or 2 unit structures in Multiple-Unit Residential (RM) Zone
  - No changes in height
  - Not applicable to 3+ units

*Front* and *Rear* step-backs will apply to 25-foot wide or less R-2 lots

- Exempt from 3<sup>rd</sup> floor area, side step backs, and open volume



**SB330**

*Housing Crisis  
Act*

## *Stimulate homebuilding to address housing shortage*

- Expedites housing development applications
- Increased tenant protections and no net loss housing
- Suspends downzoning
- **Suspends changes in development standards that result in less intense use**



# SB330

## *Housing Crisis Act*

### Development standard can't:

- Reduce density – number of potential units
- Reduce intensity of development - height, floor area, setbacks, lot coverage, or anything that lessens the dwelling unit potential of development.

### Amendment Compliance:

- No changes in achievable height, setbacks, floor area, density
- Incentivizes more density in RM zone by exempting 3+ units
- 3<sup>rd</sup> floor step-backs are not setbacks (design standard)
- Open Volume encourages modulation, does not impact floor area potential



## Recommendations

- **Public hearings**
  - Planning Commission – recommendations to City Council
  - City Council
- **Recommendations for projects under review:**
  - Discretionary applications deemed complete (e.g., CDPs) and projects submitted for plan check prior to effective date of ordinance allowed to be reviewed under existing regulations.

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