

# Meeting Recording

At the request of community members, the BPDA will be recording this meeting and posting it on the project webpage at [bostonplans.org/zoning20220720](https://bostonplans.org/zoning20220720) for those who are unable to attend the Zoom meeting live. The recording will include the presentation, Q&A, and public comments afterwards. Also, it is possible that participants may be recording the meeting with their phone cameras or other devices. **If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.**

# Zoom Tips

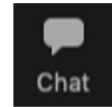
Welcome! Here are some tips on using Zoom for first-time users.

**Your controls should be available at the bottom of the screen.**

Clicking on these symbols activates different features:



Mute/unmute (please remain muted to limit background noise)



Chat to type questions throughout the presentation



Turn video on/off



In the chat box, select the raised hand icon to raise your hand to ask a question during Q&A



Listen to the presentation in a different language

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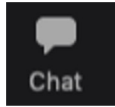
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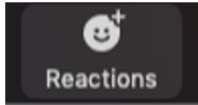
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# Meeting Format

- Presentation followed by Q & A and comments.
- During the presentation, all microphones will be muted.
- Once the presentation is over, we will take questions and comments in two ways:



Through the **Chat tab** at the bottom of your screen; or



You can **raise your hand** and we will take your questions. You can unmute yourself when you are called.



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Public Meeting on

# Articles 2 and 2A Zoning Amendments

*Floor Area and Other Definitions*

*20 July 2022*



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# 01

## Introductions



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# On the Call



**Bryan Glascock**

Deputy Director for Regulatory  
Planning and Zoning, BPDA



**Maya Kattler-Gold**

Zoning and Regulatory Planning Assistant  
Planning and Zoning, BPDA



**Mark McGonagle**

Community Affairs Liaison  
Community Affairs, BPDA



**Angel Guzman**

Planner I  
Neighborhood Planning, BPDA



**Naoise McDonnell**

Language Access Coordinator  
Community Affairs, BPDA



**Jason Ruggiero**

Community Engagement Manager  
Community Affairs, BPDA



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# Why are the Amendments Necessary?

The proposed amendments will update several terms including Filled and Flowed Tidelands, Gross Floor Area, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to make clear that tidelands/land underwater is not included in lot area and FAR calculations and that above-grade parking structures are included in Gross Floor Area.

The amendments will provide consistent language throughout Boston and its Neighborhood Districts, and will clarify questions for residents and developers looking to build.

# Article 2 and Article 2A

In the **Boston Zoning Code**, Articles 2 and 2A are the definitions sections of the Zoning Code:

- **Article 2** contains meanings for words and phrases found throughout the entirety of the Zoning Code. These definitions are part of the original zoning code, which exclusively applies to Downtown Boston and areas outside of Neighborhood Districts. This is also referred to as base zoning.
- **Article 2A** contains definitions that are applicable in Neighborhood Districts and in the Article 80 development review and approval process.



# 02

Definitions

## Concepts



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# What is Gross Floor Area?

The Boston Zoning Code defines **Gross Floor Area (GFA)** as the sum of the areas of all the floors in a structure.

This definition includes the above grade space within a building's walls and enclosed porches, but excludes things such as basements, garages, and other spaces dedicated to accessory uses- both below and at grade.

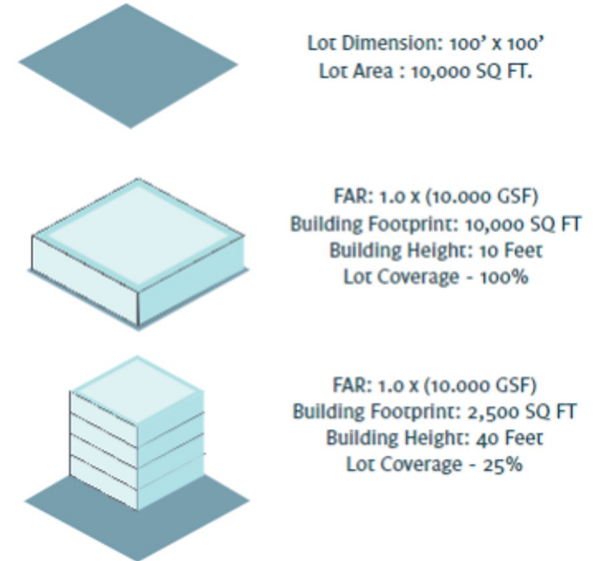
However, above grade parking is included in the GFA.

# What is Floor Area Ratio?

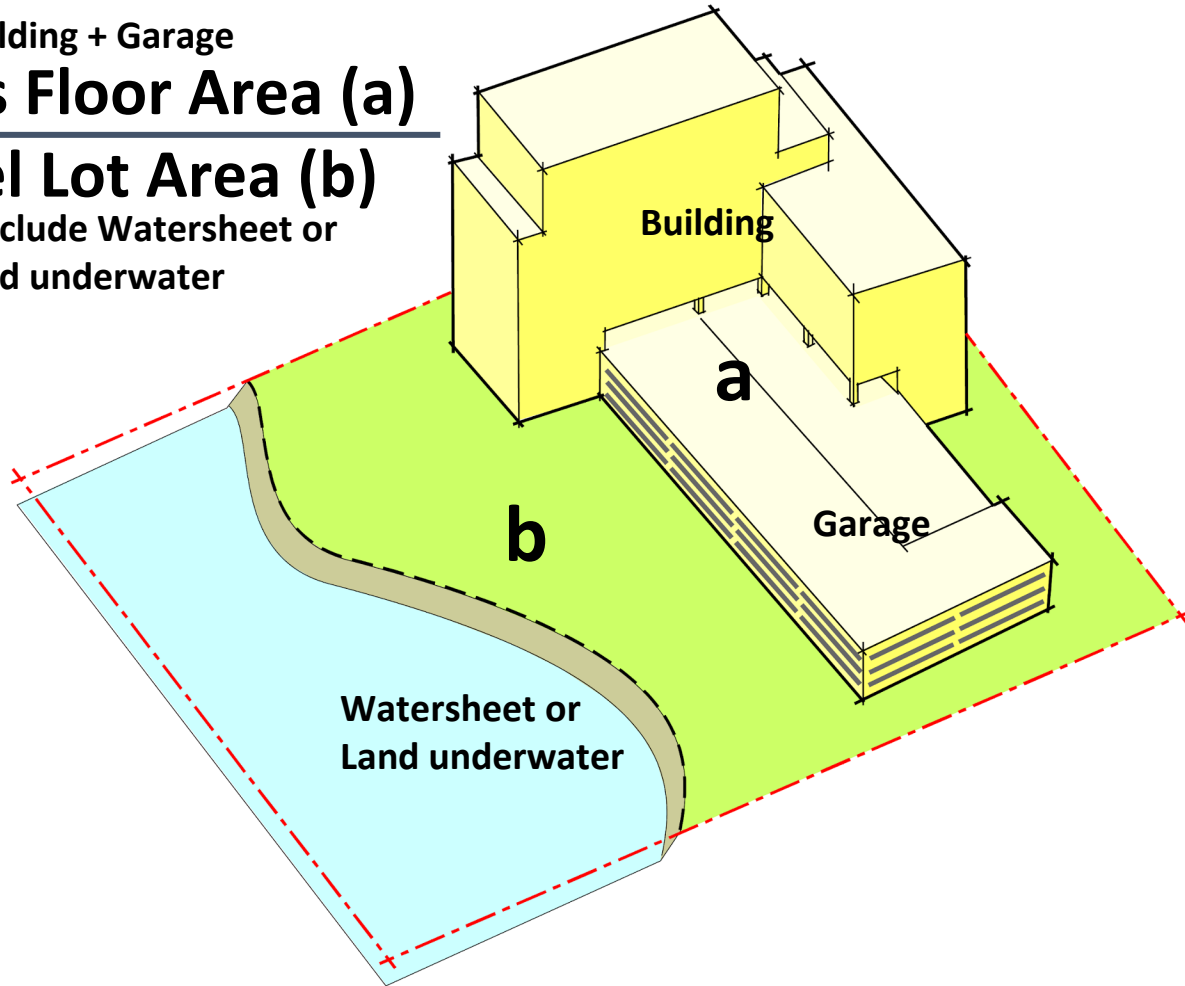
**Floor Area Ratio (FAR)** it is the ratio of gross floor area of a structure to the total area of a lot.

In other words, it is the total square footage of all the floors of a building, divided by the total square footage of the land on which it sits.

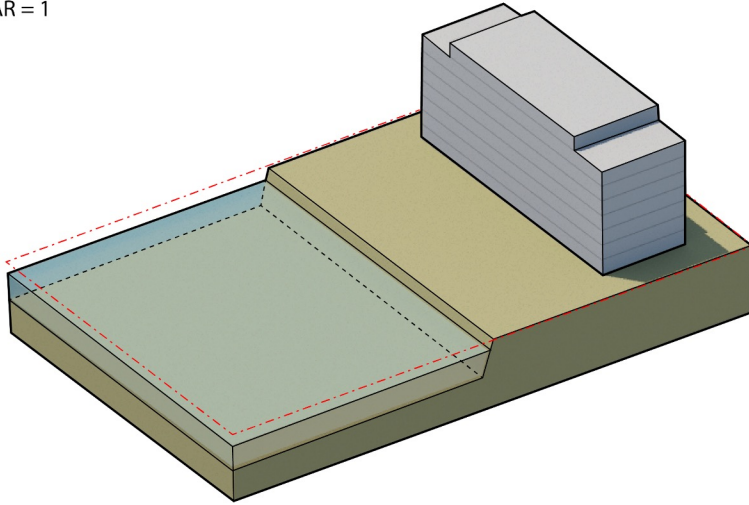
$$\text{FAR} = \frac{\text{Total floor area (a)}}{\text{Parcel lot area (b)}}$$



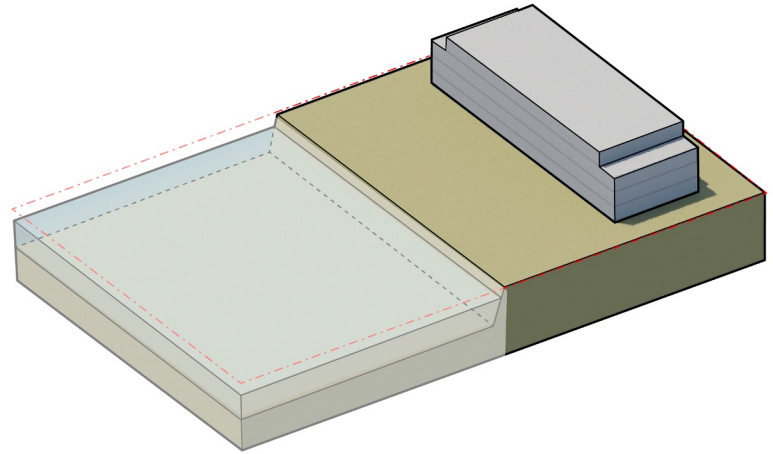
**FAR =**  $\frac{\text{*Building + Garage Gross Floor Area (a)}}{\text{Parcel Lot Area (b)}}$   
**\*exclude Watersheet or Land underwater**



Lot area = 100,000 s.f. ( Including 50,000 s.f. under water)  
G.S.F. = 100,000 s.f.  
FAR = 1



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# 03

Definitions

## Articles 2 and 2A



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# Why is the Amendment Necessary?

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# Article 2 and Article 2A

As currently outlined in both articles, the definition of **Floor Area Ratio (FAR)** is limited to: “The ratio of gross floor area of a structure to the total area of the lot”, and does not clarify exceptions to the FAR calculation.

The articles do not include definitions for **Filled Tidelands** nor **Flowed Tidelands**, despite their importance and relevance to Boston’s development.

Additionally, they do not specify that above-grade parking is included in the Gross Floor Area.

# Article 2 Amendments

## Article 2

**FAR.** Floor area ratio.

**Filled Tidelands.** Former submerged lands and tidal flats which are no longer subject to tidal action due to the presence of fill.

**Floor area ratio.** The ratio of gross floor area of a structure to the total area of the lot.

**Floor Area Ratio.** The ratio of gross floor area of a structure to the total area of the lot. Except as otherwise provided in this Code, the ratio which the gross floor area of all structures on a lot exclusive of floor area required to meet the off-street parking requirements of this Code bears to the area of the lot shall not exceed the maximum floor area ratio specified in this Code. In calculating the area of the lot for the purpose of determining floor area ratio, the following parts of the lot shall be excluded:

- (a) ~~every~~ part required by any other structure or use to comply with any requirements of this Code, and
- (b) every part the ownership of which is transferred subsequent to the effective date of this Code if such part is required for compliance with the provisions of this Code concerning minimum lot size, lot width, lot frontage, minimum usable open space per dwelling unit, and front yard, side yard, and rear yard inclusive, applicable to the lot from which such transfer is made. (Illustrated in Appendix 2 of this Code.), and
- (c) any area of water and associated submerged land or tidal flat lying below the high water mark of any navigable river or stream, any Great Pond, or any portion of the Atlantic Ocean within Boston

**Floor area, gross. Floor Area, Gross.** The sum of areas of the several floors of the structure, as measured by the exterior faces of the walls, including fully enclosed porches and the like as measured by the exterior limits thereof, but excluding

- (a) garage space which is in the basement of a building or, in the case of garage space accessory to a dwelling, is at grade, ~~however above grade parking shall be included in gross floor area,~~
- (b) basement and cellar areas devoted exclusively to uses accessory to the operation of the structure, ~~and~~
- (c) areas elsewhere in the structure devoted to housing mechanical equipment customarily located in the basement or cellar such as heating and air conditioning equipment, plumbing, electrical equipment, laundry facilities and storage facilities, provided, however, that in an H-2-45, H-2-65, H-3-65, L-2-65 or B-3-65 district no area in an existing structure previously included in gross floor area and no area in any addition to an existing structure, except areas not used or designed to be used for human occupancy, such as attics, basements, cellars or space under sloping eaves, shall be excludable from gross floor area as area for storage facilities or laundry facilities, and
- (d) public transit improvements by or for a Public Agency within the Lot, above or below grade, including head houses and/or structures designated for use by, access to or egress from public transit services, provided that any exterior changes are subject to Small Project Review.

**Flowed Tidelands.** Present submerged lands and tidal flats which are subject to tidal action at the time of license application under Chapter 91.

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# Article 2 Amendments

## Article 2

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# Article 2A Amendments

## Article 2a

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# Summary of Amendments

## Article 2:

- Amending definition for **Floor Area Ratio**
- Adding a definition for **Filled Tidelands**.
- Amending definition of **Gross Floor Area** item (a), and adding item (d)
- Adding a definition for **Flowed Tidelands**

## Article 2A:

- Amending definition of **Floor Area, Gross** item (a)
- Amending definition of **Floor Area Ratio** by adding Item (c)

# 04.

## Resources and Q&A



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# Review the Language

*The full zoning language can be reviewed online*

TO THE ZONING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BOSTON:

The Boston Redevelopment Authority, d/b/a/ Boston Planning and Development Agency hereby petitions the City of Boston Zoning Commission to amend the text of the Boston Zoning Code, as established under Chapter 665 of the Acts of 1956, as amended, as follows:

1. In Article 2, **DEFINITIONS**, insert the following new definition:

**FAR.** Floor area ratio.

2. In Article 2, **DEFINITIONS**, insert the following new definition:

**Filled Tidelands.** Former submerged lands and tidal flats which are no longer subject to tidal action due to the presence of fill.”

3. In Article 2, **DEFINITIONS**, delete the definition of "Floor area ratio" and insert the following new definition:

**Floor Area Ratio.** The ratio of gross floor area of a structure to the total area of the lot. Except as otherwise provided in this Code, the ratio which the gross floor area of all structures on a lot exclusive of floor area required to meet the off-street parking requirements of this Code bears to the lot area shall not exceed the maximum floor area ratio specified in this Code. In calculating the lot area for the purpose of determining floor area ratio, the following parts of the lot shall be excluded:



Review the Zoning  
Amendment  
Language



# Additional Questions

For additional questions or comments, please contact:

**BPDA Regulatory Planning and Zoning Department**  
[bpdarpz@boston.gov](mailto:bpdarpz@boston.gov)

Public comments will be accepted on the proposed amendments until Friday, August 5, 2022.