

Updates to Dimensional Definitions and Code Structures

October 2026

The following changes were made between the initial public draft released in July 2026. You can find both the drafts and more information at bosplans.org/dimdefs

Part 1: overview and reasoning

- **Rules for Rounding Numbers:** Simplified definition to reflect typical rounding rules rather than making a distinction between even and odd decimals.
- **Yard Definition:** Added a three foot horizontal limit for ornamental features within required yards to remove the possibility that these can encroach a significant amount into the open space.
- **Height:** Changed first point of exempt roof structures from $\frac{1}{3}$ of “highest occupiable floor” to $\frac{1}{3}$ of “total of all the Building’s roof areas.” This is the same as the existing zoning and allows for greater flexibility in roof mechanical configuration for buildings with multiple roof surfaces. Also added an additional diagram to clarify measurement of exempt roof structures.
- **Lot Area definition:** Added language to ensure that permanent structures like piers are included in Lot Area. Also changed “high water mark” to “mean high water line” to align with standard state and federal terminology.
- **PDA Master Plans in Residential Areas (Article 3):** Expanded places where master plans can be a pathway for PDAs to include residential districts. This is especially important as the City creates more citywide residential districts.
- **Nonconformity as to Dimensional Requirements (Article 9 + Article 53):** Clarified unclear language for extending nonconforming buildings.
- **Parapet Setback Requirements (Article 21 + Article 13):** Deleted the parapet setback requirements currently found in Article 21 and Article 13. The current requirements are difficult to interpret and receive frequent variances. The areas where these requirements apply (the original base code districts) are also primarily in historic districts and receive review by the landmarks commission, which ensures that appropriate setbacks are applied in historic areas.
- **Transitional Zoning (Article 12):** Deleted article. Moved 12-1 to new base code district Article 13 because this section only applies to these areas which were mapped when the code was originally established. Deleted sections 12-2 and 12-3 because they are either not relevant for the existing districts where they apply or do not make sense given existing conditions and landmarks review.
- **ADUs and CFROD (Article 53):** Clarified that ADUs must still comply with the regulations of the Coastal Flood Resilience Overlay District (CFROD).
- **Lot definition*:** changed “not divided by a public right-of-way” to “not divided by a publicly-owned right-of-way” to clarify that a publicly accessible but privately owned right-of-way does not constitute a boundary of a lot.
- **Fixed various typos and missing references***

Part 2: full list of changes

Article 2 “Greenline”

- Building Height definition:

- Page 7: Added “the higher of”
- Page 7: Added “and” after point 1.a in Exempt Roof Structures and commas as needed
- Page 7: Changed roof structure exemption limit from “ $\frac{1}{3}$ the total area of the roof of the top occupiable Story” to “one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) the total of all of the Building's roof areas”
- Page 8: Added diagram of except roof structures
- Page 13: Undeleted Height of Building so that Building Height can be found from the H section
- Page 11*: Gross Floor Area definition: added “portions of”
- Page 14*: Lot definition: changed “not divided by a public right-of-way” to “not divided by a publicly-owned right-of-way”
- Page 14: Lot Area definition:
 - Added “open” before water
 - Changed “high water mark” to “mean high water line”
 - Added “that is not covered by a permanent Structure such as a pier”
- Page 19*: Midtown Shadow Overlay: added missing “v” in “overlay”
- Page 20: Parapet Setback definition: edited comment to say deleted instead of moved
- Page 23: Restricted, more, and less definition: Moved to Article 13 (only relevant for current Section 12-1 which is now being moved to Article 13)
- Page 23: Rounding Numbers, Rule for: Simplified definition
- Page 28: Yards: Added horizontal limit for ornamental features

1964 Base Code: New District Article (Article 13)

- Page 31 and 32: Corrected 1962 to 1964
- Deleting parapet setback requirements:
 - Pages 33-37: Deleted parapet setback requirement column from Table A
 - Page 32: Deleted H from key
 - Page 39: Deleted footnote 16
 - Pages 33-37 and 39: Renumber footnotes after previous footnotes 16 and corrected references on Table A
 - Page 42: Removed existing Article 21 setback requirement language from new Section 13-5
 - Page 80: Deleted setback illustration in Appendix A
- Pages 39-41: Added paragraph numbers to Section 13-4
- Page 42: Added existing Section 12-1 and “Restricted, more, and less” definition as new Section 13-5
- Pages 78-80: Clarified references in illustration appendix

1964 Base Code: Existing Articles Annotated

- Page 81: Corrected 1962 to 1964
- Page 81: Changes “Articles 13-22” to “Articles 12-22”
- Page 82: Added Article 12 to draft of annotated articles
- Pages 94-95: Change color-coding for Article 21 to deleted instead of moved

Other Code Changes “Greenline”

- Page 100: Added Article 3 to draft
- Page 100*: added green color to new text “ or”
- Article 9
 - Page 102*: Added “A” to title of Section 9-1A
 - Pages 102 and 104: Changed “Structure” to “Building” in Article and section titles
 - Pages 103 and 104: Capitalized Building and Structure throughout Article
 - Page 104: Changed “this code, as amended” to “the Article which regulates the district where such Building resides”

- Page 104: Changed “this code” to “such Article, as amended”
- Page 104: Added Article 12 to list of deleted articles
- Page 107*: Changed footnote reference number in Side Yard without party wall from 5 to 6
- Page 113: Added Section 53-5 to draft
- Page 113*: Consolidated 53-5 into one greenlined section (“Primary” addition previously shown on page 116)
- Page 114: Edited Section 53-30.2
- Page 114*: Capitalized “Mid-Block”
- Page 115*: Added 50, 59, 60 to list of articles to amend specific design requirements part. Delete 58.
- Page 115*: Changed “replace ‘Grade’ to ‘Grade Plane’” to “replace ‘Grade’ with ‘Grade Plane’”
- Page 115*: Added Article 51 to front yard overlap amendment.
- Page 115*: Removed strikethrough for the titles of “Nonconformity as to Dimensional Requirements” sections
- Page 116*: Added Article 90 to list of articles to amend Special Provisions for Corner Lots
- Page 116*: Changed “Special Provision for Corner Lots” to “Special Provisions for Corner Lots”

*indicates correction made between the drafts released on 9/30/26 and 10/9/26