



BUILDING AREA AND FLOOR AREA

Building Area – The sum of the floor area of all floors in all buildings on a site. Unlike "Floor Area," building area includes garages, carports, storage buildings, and other attached or detached accessory structures. (Marin County Code Section 22.130.030.B)

Floor Area – Except as specified by the Tamalpais Area Community Plan, the sum of the gross area of all floors in all buildings on a site, measured from the exterior faces of the exterior walls, including enclosed understory, basement, and attic space that can be easily converted to living area, but excluding:

1. All unenclosed horizontal surfaces, including balconies, courts, decks, porches, terraces;
2. For single-family residential structures, the first two hundred fifty square feet of floor area of all detached accessory structures not designed for and/or used for habitable space;
3. For single-family residential structures, the first five hundred and forty (540) square feet of garage areas permanently allocated for vehicle parking;
4. For two-family, multi-family, and non-residential structures, all floor area that is required to meet minimum parking standards under Title 24;
4. Exterior wall thickness of greater than six inches, where the additional wall thickness results in greater energy efficiency (e.g., straw bale construction or earthen wall construction), as demonstrated by the applicant and subject to the approval of the Director; and
5. Bay windows.

The floor area of stairways, elevators, and other vertical accesses, is included in the total floor area only as to the "footprint" (area at the base) of the vertical access, and is not counted at each floor of a building. In order to qualify as an unenclosed horizontal surface, at least one of the longest wall planes of the space shall be kept open with the exception that railings with a surface area that is at least fifty percent open and unobstructed by structural elements and that are necessary for safety or convenience purposes may be allowed within the open wall plane. As defined herein, understory, basement, and attic space that can be easily converted to living area include: (1) unconditioned and unimproved spaces that yield a minimum clear room area of seven feet by seven feet and a minimum ceiling height of seven and a half feet or higher; and (2) all attic areas with a minimum ceiling height of five feet or higher. (Marin County Code Section 22.130.030.F)

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) - The total floor area of all buildings on a lot, divided by the area of that lot. For example, a building with three thousand square feet of floor area on a ten thousand square foot lot has a FAR of 0.30. (Marin County Code Section 22.130.030.F)

Floor area as defined by the California Building Code

The following two definitions (*Floor Area, Gross* and *Floor Area, Net*) are used when determining requirements for occupancy load and egress.

Floor Area, Gross – The floor area within the inside perimeter of the exterior walls of the building under consideration, exclusive of vent shafts and courts, without deduction for corridors, stairways, closets, the thickness of interior walls, columns or other features. The floor area of a building, or portion thereof, not provided with surrounding exterior walls shall be the usable area under the horizontal projection of the roof or floor above. The gross floor area shall not include shafts with no openings or interior courts. (Section 1002.1 of the 2007 California Building Code)

Floor Area, Net – The actual occupied area not including unoccupied accessory areas such as corridors, stairways, toilet rooms, mechanical rooms and closets. (Section 1002.1 of the 2007 California Building Code)

The *Habitable Space* definition is used for considerations related to light, ventilation, and interior health/environment of a building.

Habitable Space – A space in a building for living, sleeping, eating or cooking. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces and similar areas are not considered for habitable spaces.