



## Q & A: Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (BMO) and Baseline Hillside Ordinance (BHO) Code Amendment

### **Q: What is the purpose of the BMO/BHO Code amendment?**

The City's current development standards for single-family zones are referred to as the Baseline Mansionization and Baseline Hillside Ordinances, or BMO and BHO. These regulations were established to address out-of-scale development in single-family zones throughout the City and related construction impacts in Hillside Areas. The purpose of the BMO/BHO Code Amendment is to update and fine-tune the current rules relating to the size and bulk of new homes, as well as grading of hillside lots.

### **Q: Why is the BMO/BHO Code amendment needed?**

The City began crafting new regulations for single-family zones in 2006 to address the proliferation of out-of-scale development and extensive hillside grading. In 2008, new regulations, known as the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (BMO), were adopted, followed in 2011 by the Hillside Area counterpart, known as the Baseline Hillside Ordinance (BHO).

As development pressure increased, vulnerabilities in the regulations became more apparent. Especially for R1-zoned properties, the BMO and BHO were not as effective at curtailing large-scale homes and construction impacts as originally anticipated. These issues have not been unique to Los Angeles; other Southern California cities, as well as those in other regions, have experienced similar pressures and subsequently reassessed their regulations.

A multitude of residents and neighborhood organizations asked their respective City Councilmembers for stronger controls. In response, the City Council instructed the Planning Department to draft an amendment to the regulations.

### **Q: What considerations were taken into account in drafting the BMO/BHO Code amendment?**

In a city as diverse as Los Angeles, no one size fits all; different neighborhoods have differing concepts of what constitutes appropriately scaled development. Because the BMO and BHO are citywide regulations, any amendments to them must strike a balance between those various ideas. This Code amendment offers substantial improvement on the most urgent issues, while the Planning Department works to create more tailored single-family zones for everyone through **re:code LA**.

### **Q: What is the difference between the BMO/BHO Code amendment and other single-family zoning initiatives currently in progress?**

There are several single family zoning initiatives currently in progress:

**Interim Control Ordinances (ICOs)**. A patchwork of Interim Control Ordinances (ICOs) has been established in various residential neighborhoods to temporarily restrict development until a more permanent solution is available. These ICOs expire in March 2017.

**re:code LA.** The ongoing effort to comprehensively rewrite the Zoning Code will include the creation of new single-family zones to better address the diversity of Los Angeles' neighborhoods. The preparation and adoption of a new menu of R1 Zones (a component of the new single-family zones) is being accelerated to be available for neighborhoods that are currently subject to one of the City's residential ICOs. These new R1 Zones will contain regulations tailored to the needs of individual communities, such as neighborhoods where the predominant character is detached garages, single-story houses, or houses that are larger in scale.

**BMO/BHO.** The BMO/BHO Code amendment is intended as a more immediate response to the scale of development for neighborhoods not subject to an ICO. It will serve as carefully considered regulations while the new **re:code LA** single-family zones are developed citywide.

**Q: What about the BMO/BHO Code Amendment released to the public near the end of 2015?**

A previous version of the draft BMO/BHO Code Amendment was released to the public near the end of 2015. A presentation, question and answer period, and public hearing were held around the City on **December 2, 3, 15 and 16**. Staff received valuable feedback from the testimony and comments that were submitted on the previously released version of the BMO/BHO Code amendment. As a result, staff has conducted additional research and analysis and prepared this revised version of the BMO/BHO Code amendment.

**Q: What are the key elements of the revised BMO/BHO Code amendment?**

The revised BMO/BHO Code amendment proposes the following changes to existing Zoning Code provisions:

**For all single-family zones**

- Eliminates the existing Residential Floor Area exemption for the first 100 square feet of over-in-height (over 14 feet in height) ceilings.
- Limits the Residential Floor Area exemption for covered porches, patios, & breezeways to the first 150 (instead of 250) square feet.

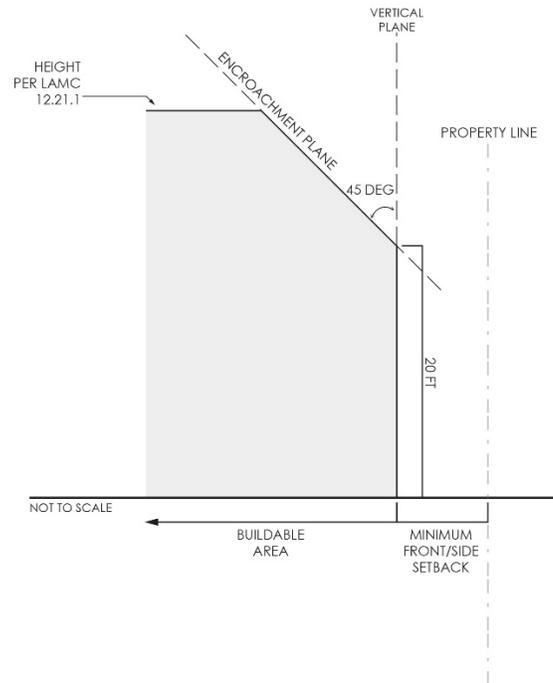
**For all RA, RE, & RS Zones**

- Eliminates the Residential Floor Area bonus for green buildings.

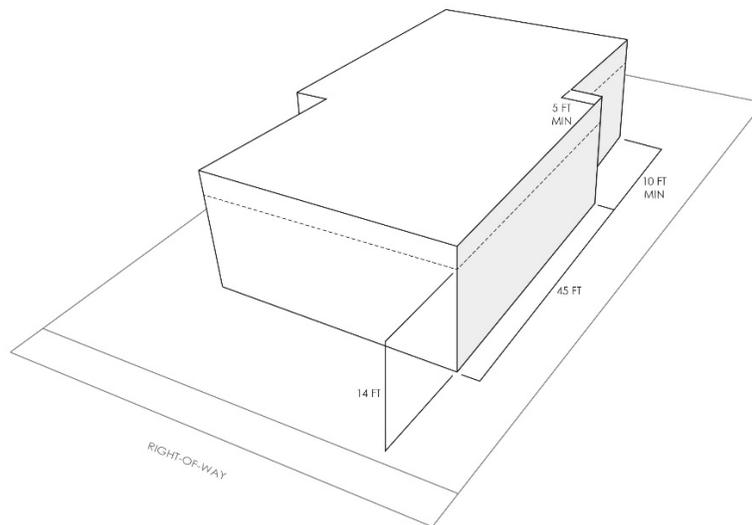
**For all R1 Zones**

- Eliminates all of the Residential Floor Area bonus options.

- Establishes an encroachment plane limit for building height over 20 feet.



- Establishes a side wall articulation requirement for walls more than 45 feet in length and 14 feet in height.



**For R1 Zones not in designated hillside areas**

- Limits driveway width to 25% of lot width.

**For all single-family zones in designated hillside areas**

- Removes the grading exemption for cut and fill underneath a structure, in conjunction with the following:

- Doubles the formula for maximum grading allowed to ~~500~~ **1,000** cubic yards plus the numeric value equal to ~~5%~~ **10%** of the lot size in square feet.
- Doubles the maximum “by-right” quantities to the following:

Zone	Maximum “By-Right” Grading Quantities (cubic yards)
R1	<del>1,000</del> <b>2,000</b>
RS	<del>1,100</del> <b>2,200</b>
RE9	<del>1,200</del> <b>2,400</b>
RE11	<del>1,400</del> <b>2,800</b>
RE15	<del>1,600</del> <b>3,200</b>
RE20	<del>2,000</del> <b>4,000</b>
RE40	<del>3,300</del> <b>6,600</b>
RA	<del>1,800</del> <b>3,600</b>

- Regulates import and export as a combined quantity, subject to the following “by-right” hauling limits:
  - Standard Hillside Limited Streets or Larger: No more than the maximum “by-right” quantities listed in the above table.
  - Substandard Hillside Limited Streets: No more than 75% of the maximum “by-right” quantities listed in the above table.
- “By-right” maximums for grading or hauling may be exceeded with a Zoning Administrator’s Determination.

**Q: Would these changes apply to projects currently in the process of obtaining permits?**

The Code amendment will apply to projects filed after the effective date of the ordinance. Therefore, any projects filed or being processed before the effective date will not be impacted by this proposed Code amendment.

**Q: How can I get more information or share my input?**

The public is invited to learn more about the proposed Zoning Code amendment, ask questions, and testify at any one of four open houses and staff-level public hearings. Locations and times are provided in a separate announcement. Written comments may also be submitted directly to Niall Huffman at [NeighborhoodConservation@lacity.org](mailto:NeighborhoodConservation@lacity.org).

**Q: What are the next steps?**

After the staff-level public hearings, the City Planning Commission will consider the Code amendment at a subsequent public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council. Email us at [NeighborhoodConservation@lacity.org](mailto:NeighborhoodConservation@lacity.org) to join our mailing list and receive related notifications.