

202 GENERAL DEFINITIONS

202.1 Revised definitions. The definitions of the following terms in Section 202 of the *International Building Code* are deleted and new definitions are inserted in their place in Section 202 of the *Building Code*.

ADDITION. An extension or increase in the building area, aggregate floor area, number of stories, or height of a building or structure.

BASE FLOOD. A flood having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The base flood is commonly referred to as the "100-year flood" or the "1-percent-annual chance flood."

BASEMENT. A *story* that is not a *story above grade plane* (see "*Story above grade plane*"). This definition of "Basement" does not apply to the provisions of Section 1612 or Appendix G for *flood loads*.

BASEMENT (for flood loads) (for purposes of Section 1612 and Appendix G). The portion of a building having its floor subgrade (below ground level) on all sides. This definition of "Basement" is limited in application to the provisions of Section 1612 and Appendix G.

BUILDING OFFICIAL. The *code official*.

DESIGN FLOOD ELEVATION. The elevation of the "*design flood*," including wave height, relative to the datum specified on the District of Columbia's legally designated flood hazard map.

EXISTING STRUCTURE. Any *structure* that has been erected and legally occupied (excluding *structures* occupied pursuant to a temporary certificate of occupancy).

LOWEST FLOOR. The floor of the lowest enclosed area, including *basement*, but excluding any unfinished or flood-resistant enclosure, usable solely for vehicle parking, building access or limited storage provided that such enclosure is not built so as to render the structure in violation of Section 1612 and Appendix G.

WALL, LOAD-BEARING. Any wall meeting either of the following classifications: (1) Any metal or wood stud wall that supports more than 100 pounds per linear foot (1459 N/m) of vertical load in addition to its own weight; (2) Any *masonry* or concrete, or mass timber wall that supports more than 200 pounds per linear foot (2919 N/m) of vertical load in addition to its own weight.

202.2 New definitions. The following new terms and definitions are added to Section 202 of the *Building Code*.

ACCESSORY STRUCTURE (for Appendix G). A structure that is (1) not used for human habitation, (2) incidental to a main structure on the premises, and (3) used only for the parking of vehicles or limited storage.

ADDRESS NUMBER (for Section 118). A number used to provide specific identification for a *lot* on a *public thoroughfare* or *private thoroughfare* in the District of Columbia, which may be a *primary address* or a *secondary address*. It shall be stored as a numeric value and may include an *address number suffix*.

ADDRESS NUMBER SUFFIX (for Section 118). A fraction or a letter that is attached to an *address number* in an address.

ADDRESS NUMBER RANGE (for Section 118). The high and low values for the *street numbers* found on a block face. The address range is expressed as a low number and a high number representing the lowest and highest *street numbers* found or possible on a given *block face*.

ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETINS. Notices issued by the *Department* that represent official *Department* policies to assist applicants, staff and the public in following operational, technical and legal procedures.

ALLEY. Each public thoroughfare or private thoroughfare which is not a street.

ALLEY LINE EXTENDED (for Chapter 32). A line through the corner of a *lot*, at the intersection of an alley with the *street*, and perpendicular to the *street*.

ALTERATION OF A WATERCOURSE. A dam, impoundment, channel relocation, change in channel alignment, channelization, or change in cross-sectional area of the channel or the channel capacity, or any other form of modification which may alter, impede, retard or change the direction and/or velocity of the riverine flow of water during conditions of the base flood.

ASSISTIVE LISTENING SYSTEM. An amplification system utilizing transmitters, receivers, and coupling devices to bypass the acoustical space between a sound source and a listener by means of induction loop, radio frequency, infrared, or direct-wired equipment.

BAY WINDOW. A *structure* with windows that projects from the façade of a *building*, starts at or below grade, and is not intended for the display of merchandise or services.

BLOCK FACE (for Section 118). The right-of-way line along a public street or the property line at the edge of a private street segment. Each *street segment* shall have two *block faces*.

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT (BZA). The *Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA)* is an independent, quasi-judicial body that is empowered to grant relief from the strict application of the *Zoning Regulations* (variances), approve certain uses of land (special exceptions), and hear appeals of actions taken by the *Zoning Administrator*.

BUILDING RESTRICTION LINE. A line that defines a required set-back on a lot, a certain distance from the *public right-of-way*, that is recorded on the records of the Surveyor of the District of Columbia. Any area between a *lot line* adjoining a *street* and the *building restriction line* is private property set aside and treated as *public space*.

BUILDING RESTRICTION AREA. The portion of a *lot* between a *building restriction line* and a *lot line* adjoining a *street*.

BUSINESS DAY. A day other than Saturday, Sunday, or a legal public holiday in the District of Columbia. If *business day* is not specified, a day shall mean a calendar day.

CODE OFFICIAL. The *Director* of the District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, or a duly authorized representative, for administration and enforcement of the *Construction Codes*, including *Fire Code* provisions pertaining to approval, installation, design, , testing, and inspection of (a) new fire protection systems and (b) modification of existing fire protection systems. References in the *Fire Code* to the *code official* shall refer to the Fire Chief of the District of Columbia Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services or a duly authorized representative, except where the *Fire Code* provision pertains to approval, installation, design, testing, and inspection of (a) new fire protection systems and (b) modification of existing fire protection systems.. The *Fire Chief* shall be the *code official* for maintenance, testing and inspection of all existing fire protection systems.

COLONNADE. A series of columns placed at regular intervals that supports a *structure* above.

CONDOMINIUM LOT (for Section 118). A condominium unit created through the establishment of a condominium regime pursuant to the District of Columbia Condominium Act of 1980, as amended (Title 42 DC Official Code, Chapter 34) where the condominium unit fronts on and can be accessed directly from an adjacent *public thoroughfare* or *private thoroughfare*.

CONSTRUCTION CODES. The *2017 District of Columbia Construction Codes* as defined in Chapter 1 of the *Building Code*.

CONSTRUCTION CODES ACT. The Construction Codes Approval and Amendments Act of 1986, effective March 21, 1987 (D.C. Law 6-216; D.C. Official Code §§ 6-1401 *et seq.* (2018 Repl.) including any subsequent amendments thereto.

DEMOLITION. *Interior demolition* and *partial demolition*.

DEMOLITION, INTERIOR. Work that involves the removal of interior non-bearing walls, elements or systems, or interior finishes.

DEMOLITION, PARTIAL. Work of a greater scope than *demolition interior* that includes the removal of structural elements (interior or exterior), exterior walls, roofs, or other exterior elements but is not a *raze*.

DEPARTMENT. The District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, except that references to *Department* in the *Fire Code* shall refer to the District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department.

DEVELOPMENT (for Section 1612 and Appendix G). Any man-made change to improved or unimproved *premises*, including but not limited to, buildings or other structures, temporary structures, temporary or permanent storage of materials, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavations, operations and other land-disturbing activities.

DEVELOPMENT SITE (for Section 1612 and Appendix G). A *record lot* wholly or partially within a *flood hazard area* on which any *development* is proposed to occur.

ELEVATION CERTIFICATE. The National Flood Insurance Program Elevation Certificate (FEMA form 086-0-33), any successor to FEMA form 086-0-33, or other approved form, used to certify that new buildings and substantial improvements in *Flood Hazard Areas* are properly elevated in accordance with the *Floodplain Management Regulations of the District of Columbia*.

EMBELLISHMENT. An architectural element that ornaments and articulates the façade of a *building*.

ENCROACHMENT (for Appendix G). The placement of fill, excavation, buildings, permanent structures or other development into a flood hazard area which may impede or alter the flow capacity of riverine *flood hazard areas*.

EXISTING BUILDING. Any *building* that has been erected and legally occupied (excluding buildings occupied pursuant to a temporary certificate of occupancy).

FIRE CHIEF. The Chief of the D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department.

FLOOD HAZARD AREA. The area designated as a *flood hazard area* in 20 DCMR, Chapter 31.

FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR. The Director of the District of Columbia Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE).

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA. The flood-resistant construction provisions of the *Construction Codes* in combination with the flood resilience rules promulgated by the Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE), set forth in Title 20, Chapter 31 of the DCMR, and in Title 6, Chapter 5 of the D.C. Official Code (2018 Repl.).

FLOODPROOFING CERTIFICATE. The National Flood Insurance Program Floodproofing Certificate (FEMA form 086-0-34), any successor to FEMA form 086-0-34, or other *approved* form, used to certify a floodproofing design for non-residential buildings that are permitted as an alternative to elevating to or above the *Base Flood Elevation*.

FUNCTIONALLY DEPENDENT FACILITY (for Appendix G). A facility that cannot be used for its intended purpose unless it is located or carried out in close proximity to water, such as a docking or port facility necessary for the loading or unloading of cargo or passengers, shipbuilding or ship repair. The term does not include long-term storage, manufacture, sales or service facilities.

HISTORIC STRUCTURE (for Appendix G). Any structure that is: (a) individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places (a listing maintained by the U.S. Department of Interior) or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register; (b) certified or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary to qualify as a registered historic district; (c) individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior, such as the D.C. Register of Historic Places ; or (d) individually listed on a local inventory of historic places in communities with historic preservation programs that have been certified either: (i) by an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior; or (ii) directly by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs.

LETTER OF MAP CHANGE. An official determination issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that amends or revises an effective Flood Insurance Rate Map or Flood Insurance Study. Letters of Map Change include:

1. **Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA):** An amendment based on technical data showing that a property was incorrectly included in a designated special flood hazard area. A LOMA amends the current effective Flood Insurance Rate Map and establishes that a specific property, portion of a property, or structure is not located in a special flood hazard area.
2. **Letter of Map Revision (LOMR):** A revision based on technical data that may show changes to flood zones, flood elevations, special flood hazard area boundaries and floodway delineations, and other planimetric features.
3. **Letter of Map Revision Based on Fill (LOMR-F):** A determination that a structure or parcel of land has been elevated by fill above the base flood elevation and is, therefore, no longer located within the special flood hazard area. In order to qualify for this determination, the fill must have been permitted and placed in accordance with the community's floodplain management regulations.
4. **Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR):** A formal review and comment as to whether a proposed flood protection project or other project complies with the minimum NFIP requirements for such projects with respect to delineation of special flood hazard areas. A CLOMR does not revise the effective Flood Insurance Rate Map or Flood Insurance Study; upon submission and approval of certified as-built documentation, a Letter of Map Revision may be issued by FEMA to revise the effective FIRM.

LOT (for Section 118). A parcel of land, being either (a) a *record lot*, (b) a *Condominium Lot*, or (c) a *Tax Lot*.

LOT LINE EXTENDED (for Chapter 32). The extension of a *lot line* through a corner of the *lot* that adjoins the *street*, perpendicular to the street.

MAIN ENTRANCE (for Section 118). The principal point of entry into a *building* or other *structure* on a *lot* from a *public thoroughfare* or *private thoroughfare*; provided that where, due to the physical configuration of a *building* or other *structure*, it would appropriate for reasons of public safety or public convenience for a *building* or other *structure* to have more than one point of entry from a *thoroughfare* be recognized as a *main entrance* of that *building* or other *structure*, then the *code official* is authorized to recognize more than one entry point to that *building* or other *structure* as a *main entrance* and to assign a distinct *address number* for display by means of a suffix or other designation as the *code official* deems appropriate.

MANUFACTURED HOME (for Appendix G). A structure that is transportable in one or more sections, built on a permanent chassis, designed for use with or without a permanent foundation when attached to the required utilities, and constructed to the Federal Mobile Home Construction and Safety Standards and rules and regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The term also includes mobile homes, park trailers, travel trailers and similar transportable structures that are placed on a site for 180 consecutive days or longer.

MANUFACTURED HOME PARK OR SUBDIVISION (for Appendix G). A *record lot* divided into two or more manufactured home lots for rent or sale.

MARKET VALUE (for Appendix G). The assessed value of the building or structure, as established by the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue, Real Property Tax Administration (“OTR”). The assessed value of the land on which the building or structure is located shall not be included in the determination. The relevant assessment shall be the OTR assessment promulgated before the damage occurred or before the repair or improvement is started.

MASS TIMBER. Structural elements of Type IV construction primarily of solid, built-up, panelized or engineered wood products that meet minimum cross section dimensions of Type IV construction.

MAUSOLEUM. A permanent structure or building, located on burial grounds authorized pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 43-121, which is substantially exposed above the ground and used solely for the interment, entombment, or inurnment of human remains.

NONCOMBUSTIBLE PROTECTION (FOR MASS TIMBER). Noncombustible material, in accordance with Section 703.5, designed to increase the fire-resistance rating and delay the combustion of mass timber.

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS (OAH). An independent agency within the executive branch of the District of Columbia government, established by the Office of

Administrative Hearings Establishment Act of 2001 effective March 6, 2002 (D.C. Law 14-76; D.C. Official Code §§ 2-1831.01 *et seq.* (2016 Repl. & 2019 Supp.)), as an administrative tribunal and agency to hear certain contested cases and other administrative adjudication cases arising under the laws of the District of Columbia.

ORIEL WINDOW. A *structure* with windows that projects from the façade of a *building*, does not touch grade, and is not intended for the display of merchandise or services.

PARTY LINE. A *lot line* shared by adjoining *lots*.

PARTY LINE EXTENDED (for Chapter 32). The extension of a *party line* that adjoins the *street*, and perpendicular to the *street*.

PARTY WALL (for Chapters 1 and 33). A wall that straddles, or is in close proximity to, a *lot line*, which is used for structural support by two or more adjoining *buildings* or *structures*.

PORCH (for Chapter 32). An above-grade *structure* with or without a roof that is open on all sides of the *projection* that are over the *lot line* or *building restriction line*, has vertical elements connecting the floor with a roof, is attached to a *building*, and is accessible from the attached *building*.

PORTE-COCHERE. A covered entrance of sufficient size for a vehicle to pass underneath and provide shelter from the weather.

PREMISES. A lot, plot or parcel of land, including any *buildings* or *structures* thereon, or a part of a lot, plot, parcel of land or *structure*.

PRIMARY ADDRESS (for Section 118). The address of the main entrance of a *premises*.

PRIVATE THOROUGHFARE (for Section 118). Streets, alleys and other *thoroughfares* where the underlying land is owned by private citizens or entities, or is part of existing tax or record lots adjoining a *public thoroughfare*.

PROJECTION (for Chapter 32). An encroachment into the *public right of way*, *public space* or a *building restriction area*.

PUBLIC PARKING. The area of a *street* devoted to open space, greenery, or parks which lies between the *lot line* and the edge of the actual or planned sidewalk which is nearer to the *lot line*, as such *lot line* and sidewalk are shown on the records of the District of Columbia.

PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY. The surface, the air space above the surface, and the area below the surface of any *public space*.

PUBLIC SPACE. All the publicly owned property between *lot lines*, including *streets*, *alleys*, parks, and reservations. Any *building restriction area*, where the same exists on a *lot*, shall be treated as *public space*.

PUBLIC THOROUGHFARE (for Section 118). Streets, alleys and other *thoroughfares* that are under the jurisdiction of the District of Columbia, any other public government, including the Federal Government or its branches, or by any adjoining state government.

RAZE. The complete removal of any existing structure, with or without the removal of party walls and below grade portions of a structure.

RECORD LOT (for Section 118). A lot of record created pursuant to the Subdivision Regulations of the District of Columbia, 10-B DCMR §§ 2700 *et seq.*

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE (for Appendix G). A vehicle that is built on a single chassis, 400 square feet (37.16 m²) or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection, designed to be self-propelled or permanently towable by a light-duty truck, and designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel or seasonal use. A recreational vehicle is ready for highway use if it is on its wheels or jacking system, is attached to the site only by quick disconnect-type utilities and security devices and has no permanently attached additions.

RENTAL UNIT. Any *premises* or part of a *premises* which is rented or offered for rent for residential (non-transient) occupancy, including, but not limited to, an apartment, *dwelling unit*, *rooming unit*, *sleeping unit*, *housekeeping unit*, or *dwelling*.

SECONDARY ADDRESS (for Section 118). An address created when a *building* has an entrance from the exterior, other than the *main entrance*, that directly serves a tenant different than that served by the main entrance.

SHOW WINDOW (for Chapter 32). A *structure* with windows that projects from the façade of a *building*, starts at grade, and is intended for the display of merchandise or services.

SIGN LEGISLATION. Any District of Columbia laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, An Act To regulate the erection, hanging, placing, painting, display, and maintenance of outdoor signs and other forms of exterior advertising within the District of Columbia, approved March 3, 1931 (46 Stat. 1486; D.C. Official Code Section §§ 1-303.21 *et seq.* (2016 Repl. & 2019 Supp.)), as amended, and any substantially similar successor legislation, and Mayor's Order 2011-181, dated October 31, 2011.

SPECIAL INSPECTION POLICY MANUAL. The document setting forth policies and procedures associated with providing special inspection services pursuant to Chapter 17 of the *District of Columbia Building Code* (October 15, 2018 edition, as may be amended from time to time by the *Department*).

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER. The person designated by the Mayor to administer the National Register Program within the District of Columbia established pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC §§ 470 *et seq.*).

STREET (for Chapter 32). *A public thoroughfare, other than an alley, as shown on the records of the District of Columbia, including any associated roadway, curb, sidewalk, tree space and public parking.*

TAX LOT (for Section 118). An assessment and taxation lot, and, established by the Office of Tax and Revenue of the District of Columbia as a “ground lot” (*i.e.*, 800, 900 or 1000 series lots), which fronts on and can be accessed directly from an adjacent *public thoroughfare* or *private thoroughfare*.

TERRACE (for Chapter 32). Raised level ground that is located in the *public parking* and is surrounded by a retaining wall or is surrounded by sloped surfaces that transition to adjacent areas.

THIRD PARTY AGENCY. *A person retained by an applicant or permit holder to provide code compliance plan reviews or inspections of a project, at the expense of the applicant or the permit holder as applicable, in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Construction Codes and the Third Party Program Procedure Manual.*

THIRD PARTY PROGRAM. A program established by the *Department* to establish and review qualifications of *persons* for approval to provide code compliance plan reviews and inspections of projects, and to provide oversight of *approved Third Party Agencies*.

THIRD PARTY PROGRAM PROCEDURE MANUAL. The document setting forth policies and procedures for the *Department's Third Party Program* (adopted November 6, 2017, revised December 7, 2018, as may be amended from time to time by the *Department*), including information regarding the qualifications that must be demonstrated for a *person* to obtain approval by the *Department* to conduct code compliance plan reviews or inspections of a project, and the procedures that must be followed as a condition of such approval, pursuant to Sections 6-1405.02 and 6-1405.04 of Title 6 of the D.C. Official Code (2018 Repl.) and Chapter 17 of the *Building Code*.

THOROUGHFARE (for Section 118). *A public thoroughfare or a private thoroughfare, as applicable.*

THOROUGHFARE NAME (for Section 118). The full proper name of a *thoroughfare*, stored as an alphanumeric character string, the *thoroughfare type* and the *street quadrant*.

THOROUGHFARE NUMBER (for Section 118). A number used to provide specific identification for a *premises* on a public or private thoroughfare in the District of Columbia, which may be a *primary address* or a *secondary address*. It shall be stored as a numeric value.

THOROUGHFARE QUADRANT (for Section 118). Two alphabetical characters that identify the geographic sector of the District of Columbia in which the address is located. All addresses in Washington, D.C., with the exception of the United States Capitol which is the central point of the addressing grid, shall have a *thoroughfare quadrant* designation. The *thoroughfare quadrants* are NE (Northeast), NW (Northwest), SE (Southeast) and SW

(Southwest), and each quadrant shall be so abbreviated and capitalized. No *thoroughfare quadrant* shall consist of a single cardinal direction (e.g., North).

THOROUGHFARE SEGMENT (for Section 118). The portion of a *public thoroughfare* or *private thoroughfare* between its intersections with two other *thoroughfares*.

THOROUGHFARE TYPE (for Section 118). The name of the type of *thoroughfare*, such as avenue, street, road, circle, etc. It shall be stored in fully spelled out form as an alphabetical string. *Thoroughfare types* are listed in the U.S. Postal Service Standards and in the National Emergency Number Association Standards (NENA). The *code official* is authorized to use *thoroughfare types* not listed in either standard.

TOWER (for Chapter 32). A *structure* that projects from the façade of the *building* and extends above the roofline of the *building* to which it is attached.

UNDERGROUND GARAGE (for Section G105, Appendix G). An enclosed area that is below grade on all sides and is below the *design flood elevation* or *base flood elevation* that will be used solely for parking, building access, or storage.

UNIT NUMBER (for Section 118). The designation of an individual unit, such as “A”, “Rear”, or “102”. It shall be stored as an alphanumeric string.

UNIT TYPE (for Section 118). The type of occupancy, such as an apartment, suite, or office space. It shall be stored as an alphabetic string.

VAULT (for Chapter 32). A *structure* with a roof, completely below-grade, that encloses space.

ZONES, COMMERCIAL. ARTS-1 through ARTS-4, CG-2, CG-3, D-3 through D-8, MU-3 through MU-9, MU-17 through MU-21, MU-24 through MU-28, NC-1 through NC-17, RC-2, RC-3 and USN zoning districts (or the successor thereto) as defined by the *Zoning Regulations*.

ZONES, MIXED-USE. CG-4, HE-1 through HE-4, MU-10, MU-22, MU-29, SEFC-1, StE-1 through StE-19 and WR-2 through WR-5 zoning districts (or the successor thereto) as defined by the *Zoning Regulations*.

ZONES, PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION AND REPAIR (PDR). PDR-prefixed zoning districts (or the successors thereto) as defined by the *Zoning Regulations*.

ZONES, RESIDENTIAL. CG-1, D-1-R, RC-1, SEFC-2, SEFC-3, W-1, W-7, W-8 and R, RF or RA-prefixed zoning districts (or the successor thereto) as defined by the *Zoning Regulations*.

ZONE, SPECIAL PURPOSE. D-2, MU-1, MU-2, MU-15, MU-16 or MU-23 zoning districts (or the successor thereto) as defined by the *Zoning Regulations*.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR. The *Zoning Administrator* of the District of Columbia reviews applications for conformance with the *Zoning Regulations* including applications for permits and certificates.

ZONING REGULATIONS. The regulations adopted through the publication of a notice of final rulemaking published in the *D.C. Register* on March 2, 2016 and which became effective at 12:01 a.m., September 6, 2016, as those regulations may thereafter be amended. See 11 DCMR.

SOURCE: Final Rulemaking published at 67 DCR 5690 (May 29, 2020 – Part 2); as amended by Final Rulemaking published at 68 DCR 7439 (July 30, 2021).

The *District of Columbia Building Code (2017)*, referred to as the “*Building Code*,” consists of the 2015 edition of the *International Building Code (International Building Code)*, published by the International Code Council (ICC), as amended by the *Building Code Supplement of 2017 (12-A DCMR)*. The *International Building Code* is copyrighted by the ICC and therefore is not republished here. However, a copy of the text may be obtained at: <https://codes.iccsafe.org/public/document/IBC2015>.