

May 15, 2023

TO: Juan Madrigal, Assistant Deputy Director
Building and Safety Division
Department of Public Works

Current Planning Division Staff

FROM: David J. DeGrazia, Deputy Director 
Current Planning Division

REGIONAL PLANNING REFERRAL POLICY UPDATE

This memo updates the Regional Planning Referral Policy memo dated June 3, 2019 (attached), which identified projects that do not need LA County Planning (Planning) review and approval, as follows:

- The Santa Monica Mountains North Area is now subject to the exceptions on page one of the memo and projects in this area need Planning review and approval.
- Pools, spas, and attached covered patios in Hillside Management Areas do not need Planning review and approval if they do not expand the existing building pads or require retaining walls.
- Projects within a Community Standards District (CSD) that are listed under categories A and B on pages two and three of the memo do not need Planning review and approval if they are not subject to CSD-specific regulations.
- The following small-scale County projects do not need Planning review and approval:
 - 1) Playground equipment replacement if there is no expansion, no changes to vehicular access, and no adjoining road improvements.
 - 2) New and/or replacement utility and mechanical units, including maintenance and repair, if there are no changes to vehicular access and no adjoining road improvements.
 - 3) Reroofing or reshaping an existing roof with nonreflective material if there is no height increase.
 - 4) Roof-mounted solar panels unless they are on historically designated buildings.
 - 5) Tenant improvements with no change of use, no floor area expansion, no height increases, and no changes to the parking lot or other parts of the property.

If you have any questions, please contact Samuel Dea at sdea@planning.lacounty.gov.

DJD:MG:MM:SM:lm

Attachment:

1. June 3, 2019, Memo

K_CP_05152023_REGIONAL_PLANNING_REFERRAL_POLICY_UPDATE_MEMO



Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Amy J. Bodek, AICP
Director of Regional Planning

Dennis Slavin
Chief Deputy Director,
Regional Planning

June 3, 2019

TO: Rossana D'Antonio, Deputy Director
Land Development Division
Department of Public Works

FROM: Mitch Glaser, AICP, Assistant Administrator
Current Planning Division

REGIONAL PLANNING REFERRAL POLICY

The purpose of this memo is to establish a referral protocol to clarify which projects do not need to be referred to the Department of Regional Planning (DRP) for formal review and approval. **This memo is not applicable to County or capital projects and projects located within the following areas or with the following conditions (consult with DRP staff as needed for determination on whether a project falls into these geographic areas or conditions):**

1. Coastal Zone (Santa Monica Mountains, Marina del Rey, Santa Catalina Island);
2. Significant Ridgeline;
3. Significant Ecological Area;
4. Hillside Management Area;
5. Community Standards District;
6. Within an open space building restricted area;
7. Where the lot contains a valid Conditional Use Permit or other discretionary permit;
8. Where proposed construction activity is within the protective zone of oak trees located on site or adjacent properties; and
9. Where the proposed project is on a parcel that has an existing Notice of Violation issued by DRP

After consultation with DRP staff, if a project is not within any of the above listed areas or includes any of the above conditions, the project does not need a referral to DRP for a formal review.

The following are examples that don't require referral to DRP.

A. Residential and Agricultural Zoned Interior or Key Lots (see [Attachment A](#)):

1. Reroofing or reshaping the roof with nonreflective material without increasing the existing building height.
2. New or replacement generator, air conditioning (AC) unit, BBQ island, fire pit, pool equipment, water heater, and similar equipment located within the rear yard setback, provided that:
 - The equipment does not exceed six feet in height and is located at least five feet away from the rear and side yard lot lines; and
 - The equipment is uncovered or located in an existing enclosure or shelter (see [Attachment B](#)).
3. Maintenance and/or repair of an existing generator, AC unit, BBQ island, fire pit, pool equipment, water heater, or similar equipment located within the rear yard setback.
4. Window/door relocations and/or change-outs within an existing structure, provided that:
 - A garage door shall maintain its existing width or may be enlarged while maintaining vehicle access; and
 - A garage door change-out from double garage door size (16 feet wide) to two-single garage doors (eight feet) maintains vehicular access (back up space) (see [Attachment C](#)).
5. Minor interior modifications, including removing or adding walls that do not alter access or create additional rooms within an existing primary dwelling unit.
6. Placing a washer/dryer within the garage while maintaining the required parking spaces and vehicular access, as follows (see Attachment C):
 - Single car garage: 8.5 feet x 18 feet minimum clearance;
 - Two-car garage: 17 feet x 18 feet minimum clearance; and
 - Tandem car garage: 8.5 feet x 36 feet minimum clearance.
7. Swimming pools, spas, and pool equipment including water features within the rear yard setback that are located at least five feet away from the rear and side lot lines and do not exceed six feet above grade. For pool equipment, refer to item A.2, above.
8. Fence/wall/hedges not more than 42 inches in height within the front yard setback and not more than six feet in height within the rear and side yard setbacks (see [Attachment B](#)).
9. Retaining walls (protecting a cut) not more than six feet in height and retaining walls containing a fill that do not exceed 42 inches in height (see [Attachment B](#)).
10. Roof-mounted small-scale (on-site use only) solar panels five feet or less in height as measured from the roof surface.
11. Repair or maintenance of an existing permitted structure where no increase in height and/or floor area is proposed.

12. Covered patios attached to the rear of residences that will be unenclosed on at least three sides and located at least five feet from side lot lines and 15 feet from the rear lot line.
13. Reduction of not more than 50% of the existing building floor area where it does not alter access or create additional rooms.
14. Uncovered concrete pads or decks within rear and/or side yards that do not exceed 36 inches in height.

B. Commercial and Industrial Zoned Lots:

1. Reroofing or reshaping the roof with nonreflective material without increasing the existing height.
2. New parapet walls, or the maintenance and/or repair of parapet walls with no signage that do not exceed the existing building roof height.
3. Alteration of existing parking spaces and landscaping to accommodate accessibility improvements per state law regardless if the alteration triggers a reduction in the number of required parking spaces.
4. Restriping of an existing parking lot with the same configuration or with no reduction in the required number of parking spaces.
5. Alterations of existing parking spaces to accommodate electric vehicle charging stations with no reduction in the number of required parking spaces.
6. Tenant improvements (where no change in land use is proposed) except for eating/drinking, dining, entertainment establishments, gym/fitness/health centers, schools, tutoring facilities, churches, and other assembly/occupancy type uses.
7. Storage racks/shelves within an existing building which are not being used to display alcoholic beverages.
8. Roof-mounted small-scale (on-site use only) solar panels five feet or less in height as measured from the roof surface.
9. New, maintenance, repair, and/or replacement of generator, AC unit, pool equipment, water heater, and similar equipment.
10. Where no more than 50% of the existing building floor area is proposed to be remodeled, repaired or altered and does not alter access, internal connection or create additional rooms.

C. Miscellaneous Project Exemptions:

This memo does not capture all project scenarios and DRP staff has discretion to exempt projects from DRP review that are not listed above.

In scenarios where DRP staff has determined that a project does not require DRP review, the planner shall inform Building & Safety's (B&S) office manager directly via email or in person and copy their DRP supervisor. The email shall include an

Ms. Rossana D'Antonio
June 3, 2019
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image or copy of the plan that shows the proposed development that does not require DRP review. Other information may be requested from B&S as needed based on the project scope.

If you have any questions, please contact Carmen Sainz directly via email at csainz@planning.lacounty.gov.

MG:CS:lm

Attachments: [A](#): Key or Interior Lots
 [B](#): Yard Setbacks/Retaining Walls
 [C](#): Back-Up Space

c: DRP Current Planning Division Staff

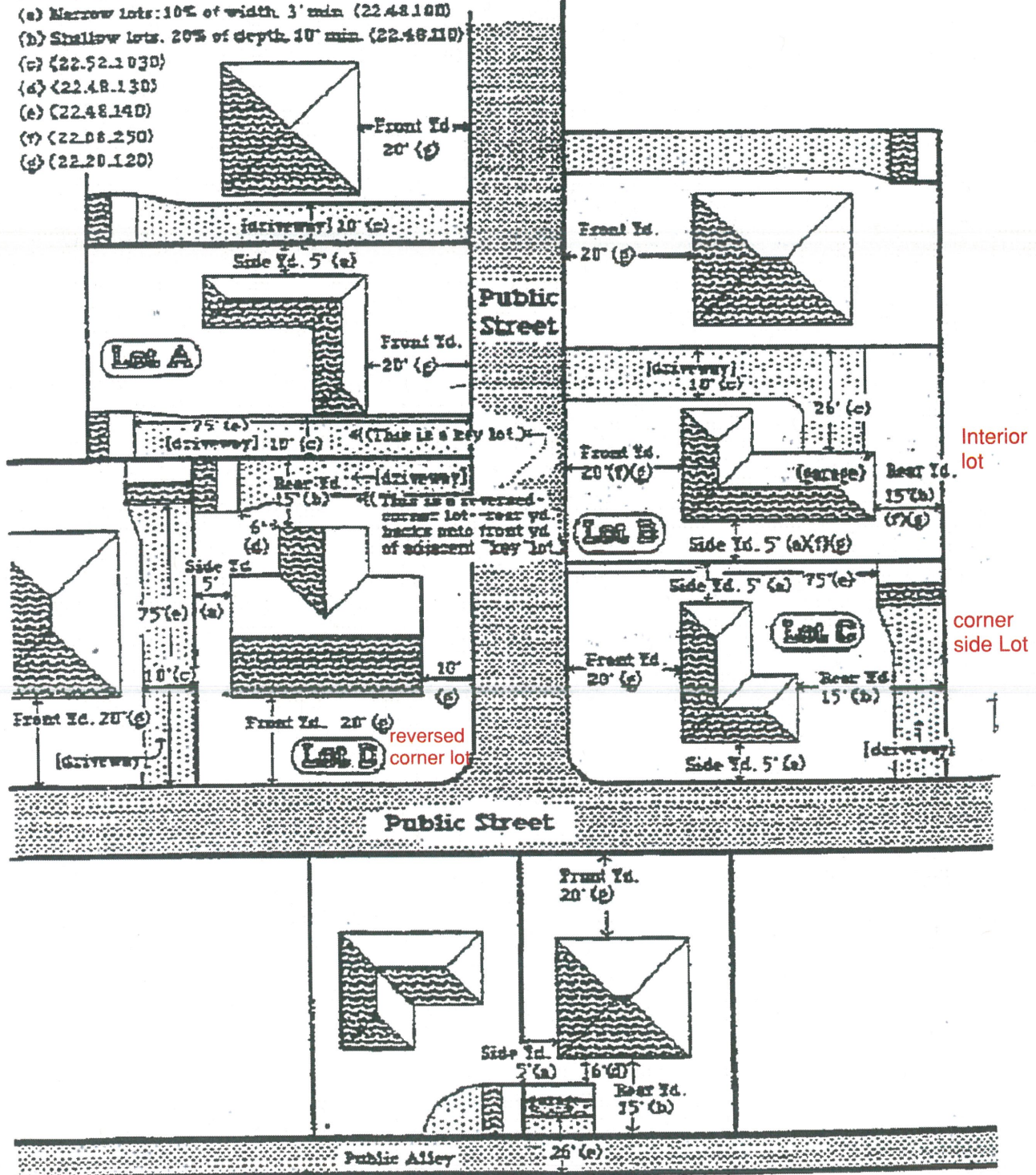
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Attachment "A"

R-1 Setbacks

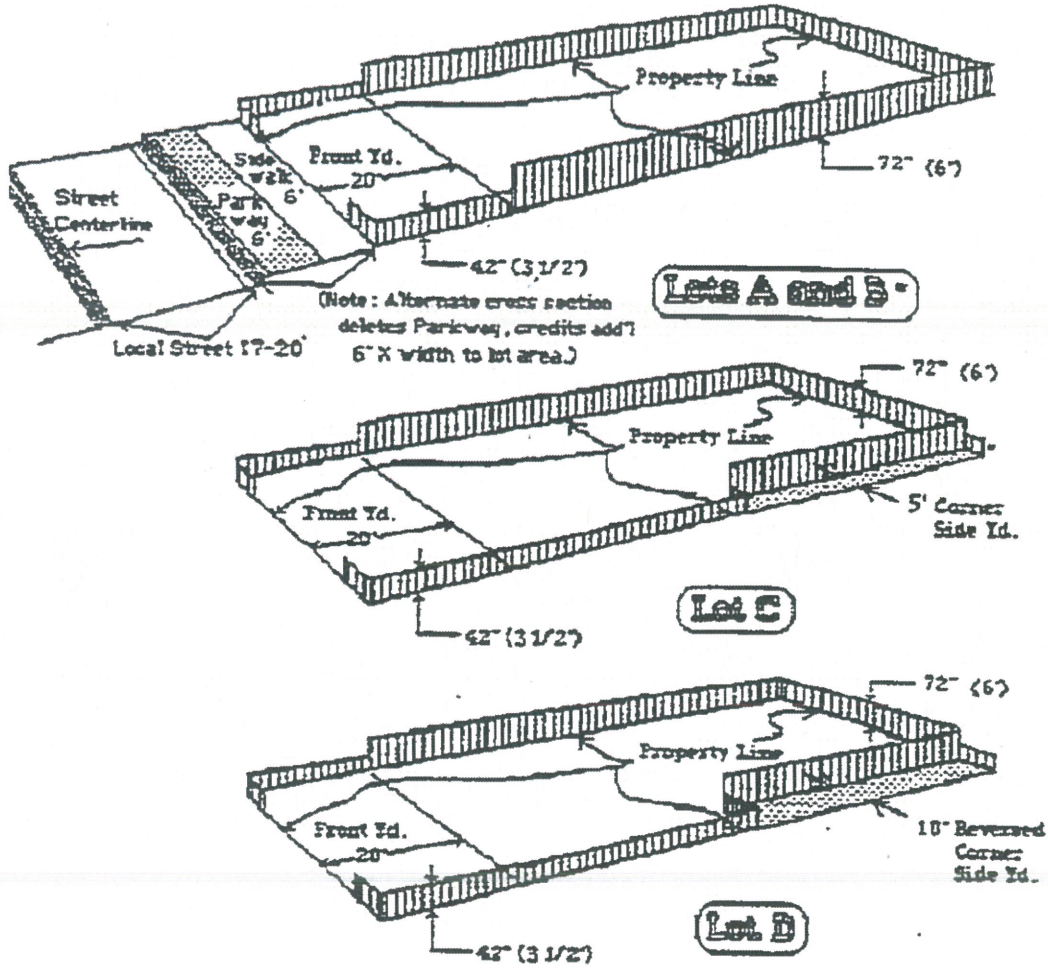
NOTES: General—consult specific zone for normal yard requirements.

- (a) Narrow lots: 10% of width, 3' min. (22.48.10D)
- (b) Shallow lots: 20% of depth, 10' min. (22.48.11D)
- (c) (22.52.1.03D)
- (d) (22.48.1.30)
- (e) (22.48.14D)
- (f) (22.08.25D)
- (g) (22.20.12D)

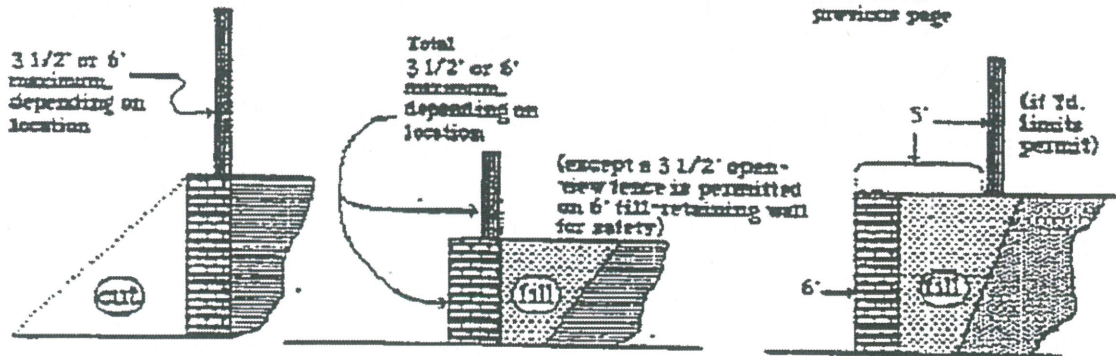


Attachment "B"

R-1 Fence and Wall Heights

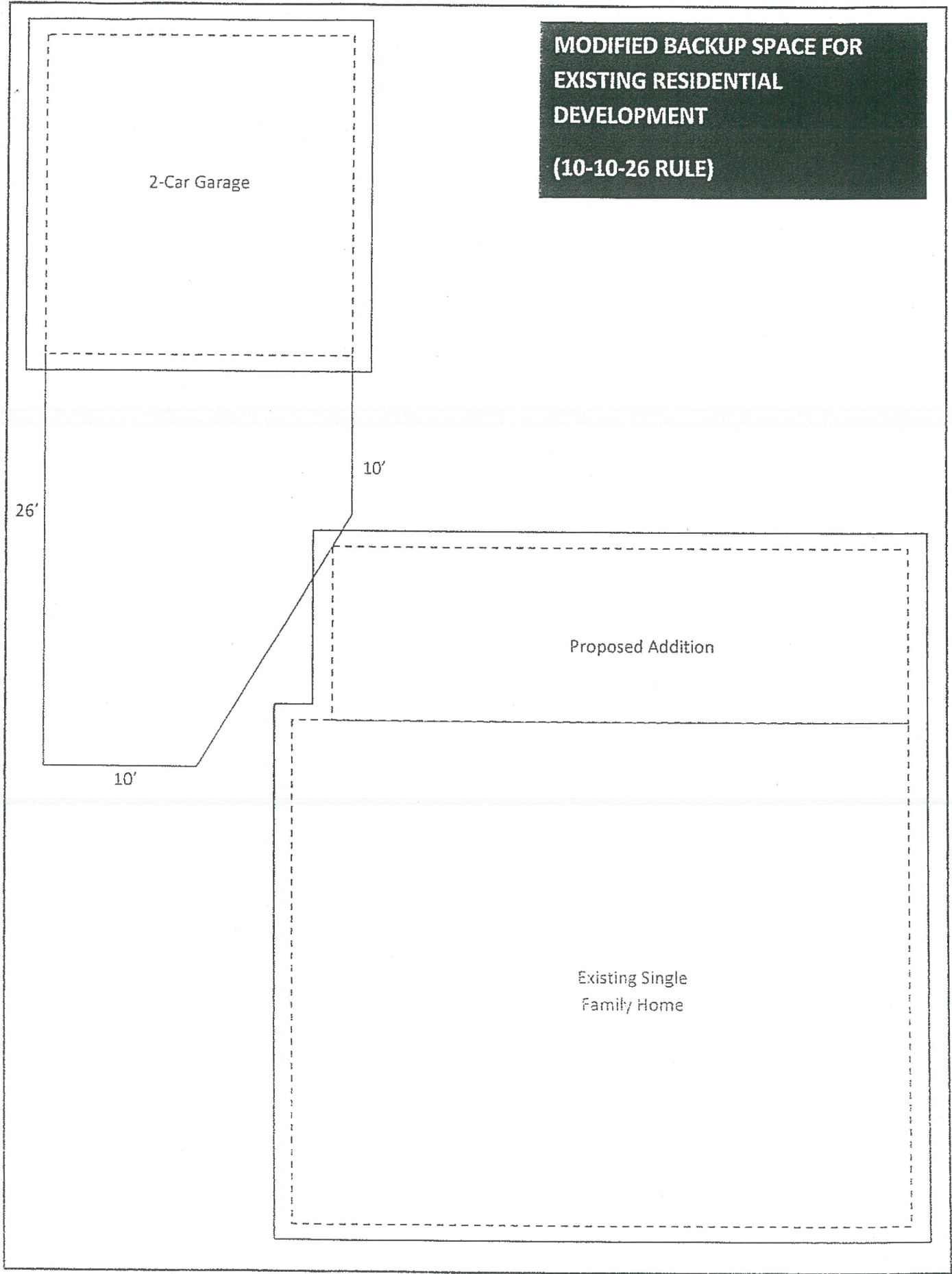


Retaining Walls:



Attachment "C"

**MODIFIED BACKUP SPACE FOR
EXISTING RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT
(10-10-26 RULE)**



2-Car Garage

Proposed Addition

Existing Single
Family Home

26'

10'

10'

**DRP REFERRAL EXEMPTION POLICY MEMO FLOWCHART
(FOR COUNTY STAFF ONLY)**

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