



PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Building Bureau
250 Frank H Ogawa Plaza
Suite 2340
Oakland, California 94612

BUILDING BUREAU CODE DIRECTIVE 25-002

Directive Number: D-25-002 (D18-001 Revised)

Subject: Reclassification of Existing Buildings to New Construction Based on Extent of Demolition

Date of Issuance: July 17, 2025

Effective Date: Immediately

Reference: California Existing Building Code (CEBC), California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 10 – Chapters 6 (Repairs), 7 (Alterations – Level 1), 8 (Alterations – Level 2), 9 (Alterations – Level 3), and 10 (Additions).

1.0 PURPOSE:

This Code Directive clarifies the criteria for determining when a project involving the removal or relocation of parts of an existing structure within the City of Oakland transcends the scope of an alteration (Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3) or an addition, and is instead reclassified as new construction due to the extent of demolition. This directive ensures consistent application of the California Existing Building Code (CEBC) and the Oakland Municipal Code, safeguarding public health, safety, and welfare.

2.0 DEFINITION OF 'EXISTING BUILDING' FOR RECLASSIFICATION PURPOSES:

For the purpose of applying the California Existing Building Code (CEBC) and the Oakland Municipal Code, a building shall be considered no longer an 'existing building', and any associated project shall be reclassified as new construction, if the scope of work involves:

- **2.1 Exterior Wall Removal:** The removal of a majority (more than 50 percent) of the total exterior wall area of the building. OR
- **2.2 Volume Removal:** The removal of greater than 50 percent of the total volume of the building.

Projects exceeding these thresholds shall be definitively classified as demolitions resulting in new construction, rather than repairs, remodels, alterations (Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3), or replacements of damaged wood or other materials. This classification applies regardless of whether the building's original footprint is maintained.

3.0 EXCLUSIONS FROM DEMOLITION CALCULATION:

The following elements shall not be counted when calculating the percentage of exterior walls or building volume removed for the purpose of reclassification under this directive:



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- Interior wall covering
- Roof covering
- Foundations

4.0 SPECIAL CONSIDERATION – LIFTING OF BUILDINGS:

The lifting of an existing building to create a new first story (e.g., for a new ground-floor level or basement conversion) shall not be considered a demolition for the purpose of reclassification to new construction, provided that the project results in the removal of:


- Less than 50% of the exterior walls; AND
- Less than 50% of the volume of the original building.

5.0 ENFORCEMENT AND PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS:

5.1 Exceeding Approved Demolition Limits During Construction: For projects currently under construction with permits issued for work classified as an addition, alteration, or repair, if a City of Oakland field inspector determines that the approved demolition plan limits, as defined in Section 2.0 of this directive, have been exceeded, the inspector shall: Immediately issue a STOP WORK ORDER. Issue a correction notice to the contractor/permit holder, requiring: The immediate application for and obtainment of a demolition permit. A revised project submittal as new construction to Planning and Building respectively for review and approval.

5.2 Reclassification and New Permit Requirements: When the demolition thresholds specified in Section 2.0 of this directive are exceeded, the contractor or applicant is required to: Re-submit all project documentation to the City of Oakland Planning & Building Department. Apply for new permits for the structure, which shall now be classified and reviewed as new construction. The project must then comply with all applicable requirements of the current California Building Code (CBC) and other relevant codes for new construction, rather than the California Existing Building Code (CEBC) or other alteration/repair provisions.

Issued By:


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