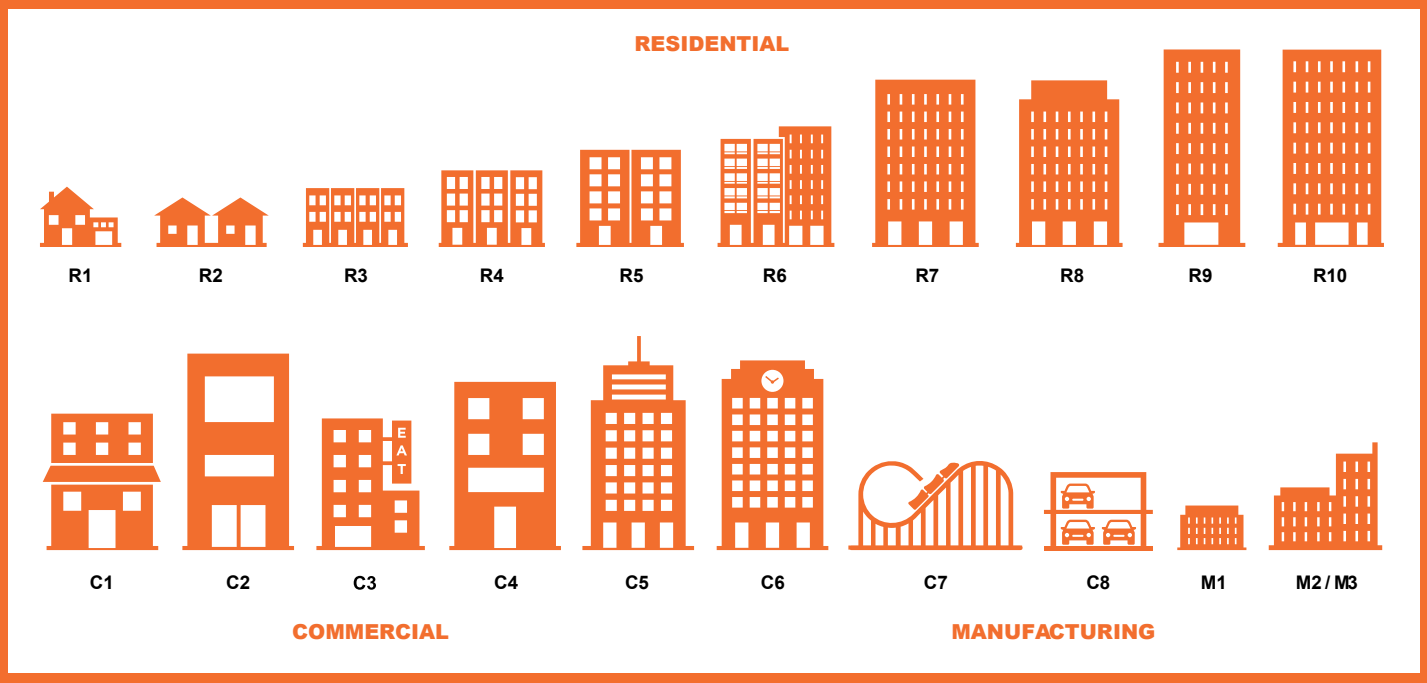


# Zoning and Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

The **Zoning Resolution** is a document that defines how land in New York City can be used. It is accompanied by a series of **maps** that establish districts for different kinds of land uses and building sizes. In districts where buildings are permitted, the allowable size of and shape of those buildings is based on a numeric value called Floor Area Ratio, or FAR.

In New York City, there are three main zoning districts: Residential (R), Commercial (C), and Manufacturing (M). Each type of district also consists of a number of sub-types that permit different sizes and types of buildings and facilities. For example, some C districts allow housing as well as commercial uses. Districts that allow different uses are often called “mixed-use.”

## New York City's Zoning Designations



## HISTORY OF ZONING IN NEW YORK CITY

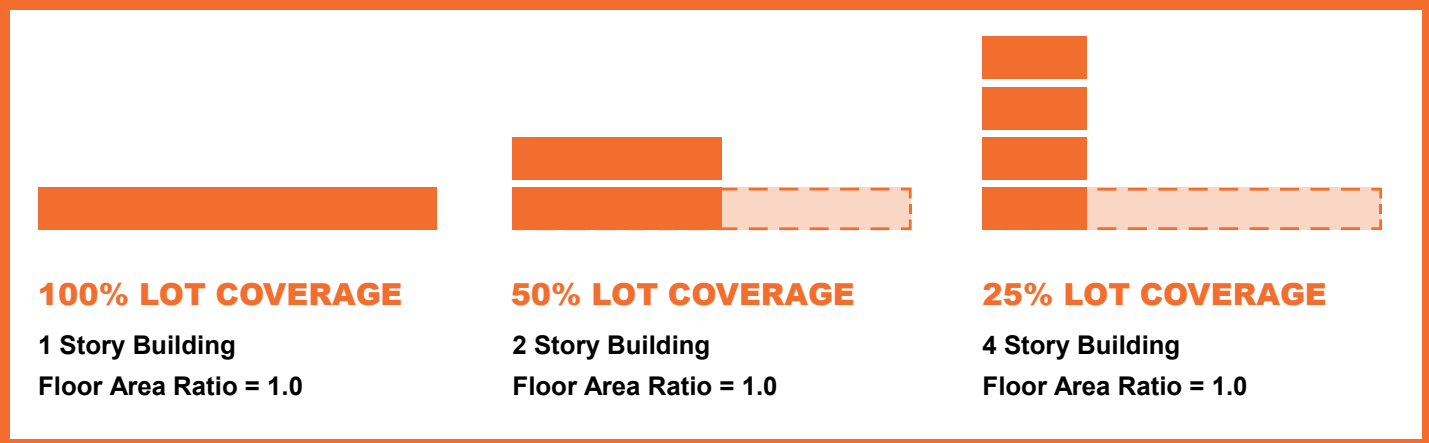
In 1916, primarily in response to new skyscraper construction in lower Manhattan that blocked sunlight from reaching the street and other properties, New York City became the first city in the United States to implement citywide zoning regulations. The 1916 Zoning Resolution established setbacks above a certain building height to ensure that sunlight could reach the street. As a result, most large buildings built between 1916 and 1961 have the appearance of a layer cake, with setbacks as they increase in height. The Empire State Building and the Chrysler Building were built in this style.

In 1961, the Zoning Resolution was amended and remains in effect today. It created a number of incentives for developers that would allow them to add extra floor area to their buildings in exchange for public amenities. For example, a developer could promise to build indoor or outdoor public space (known as a Privately-Owned Public Space, or POPS) in exchange for a larger or taller building than would be allowed under normal zoning regulations.

## FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)

While the 1916 Zoning Resolution regulated building size based on height, the 1961 Zoning Resolution introduced Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as the primary regulating factor determining the size and density of buildings. FAR defines building size based on the relationship between a building's total floor area and the area of its zoning lot.

### What is Floor Area Ratio (FAR)?



FAR allows architects and developers design flexibility in terms of the shape and height of a building as long as it conforms to the setback requirements and density permitted in its zoning district. As a result, New York City's built environment can become more diverse.

Parts of New York City still have height limits for buildings. In some cases, neighborhoods may have a height limit to preserve historic character or to protect public parks from shadows. In others, height limits may be mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) based on flight patterns and proximity to airports.