TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS
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Maximum Floor Area (MFA), Maximum Development Area (MDA), & Parcel Water Budget (PWB)

Call Town Hall at 650-941-7222 to schedule a Pre-Application appointment with a planner.

Instructions for Worksheet #1: Maximum Development Area and Maximum Floor Area Calculations

1. CALCULATION OF AVERAGE SLOPE

   a. Minimum contour interval is five (5) feet when the average slope exceeds 10%, two (2) feet when the average slope is less than 10%.

   b. Measure the total length of contours within the net area of the lot. The net area is the gross area less the vehicle access easements or rights-of-way.

      Exception: When an access easement is exclusively for emergency access, it is not deducted from the gross lot area.

   c. Calculate the average slope of the lot using the following formula:

$$S = \frac{(0.0023)\,(I)\,(L)}{An}$$

Where	I	=	Contour interval in feet
	L	=	Total contour length of lot in feet (within net area)
	An	=	Net area of lot in acres
	S	=	Average lot slope in percent

2. CALCULATION OF LOT UNIT FACTOR (LUF)

   a. For lots with S equal to 10% or less: LUF = An

   b. For lots with S between 10% and 55%: LUF = (An) [1 – 0.02143(S – 10)]

   c. For lots with S greater than 55%, use 55% for all areas with slopes 55% or greater *Contact the Planning Department for further information.*

   d. If LUF is **equal to or less than 0.50**, proceed to EXCEPTIONS (#5).

3. CALCULATION OF MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA (MFA) ALLOWED

   Calculate the maximum allowable floor area (MFA) using one of the following formulas:

   a. For lots with S equal to 10% or less:

      MFA = LUF x 6,000 square feet

   b. For lots with S greater than 10% and less than 30%:

      MFA = LUF [6,000 – 50(S-10)] square feet

   c. For lots with S equal to or greater than 30%:

      MFA = LUF x 5,000 square feet

4. CALCULATION OF MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT AREA (MDA) ALLOWED

   Calculate the maximum allowable development area (MDA) using one of the following formulas:

   a. For lots with S equal to 10% or less

      MDA = LUF x 15,000 square feet

   b. For lots with S greater than 10% and less than 30%:

      MDA = LUF [15,000 – 375(S – 10)] square feet

   c. For lots with S equal to or greater than 30%:

      MDA = LUF x 7,500 square feet

5. EXCEPTIONS

   If the LUF is **equal to or less than 0.50**, the following applies to the lot:

   a. Minimum MDA:
      The allowable development area of any parcel or lot shall not be reduced to less than 7,500 square feet, except as set forth in Section 10-1.502(e) or except in the case of parcels or lots that have a LUF of 0.50 or less. ***Parcels or lots which have a LUF of 0.50 or less require a Conditional Development Permit (CDP) and allowable development area may be restricted below 7,500 square feet as a condition of the permit.*** Maximum development area for lots that require a CDP shall be established as the maximum floor area allowed by Section 10-1.503(c) plus 2,100 square feet. The Site Development Authority may approve development area of up to a total of 4,500 square feet for any lot or parcel without requiring a variance, so long as the findings for a CDP are made.

   b. Minimum MFA:
      The allowable floor area on any parcel or lot shall not be reduced to less than 5,000 square feet, except as set forth in Section 10-1.503(e) or except in the case of parcels or lots which have a LUF of 0.50 or less. ***Parcels or lots which have a LUF of 0.50 or less require a Conditional Development Permit (CDP) and allowable floor area may be restricted below 5,000 square feet as a condition of the permit.*** Maximum floor area for lots that require a CDP shall be established as the ratio of the LUF for the lot divided by 0.50 and multiplied by 5,000 square feet. The Site Development Authority may approve floor area of up to 2,500 square feet for any lot without requiring a variance, so long as the findings for a CDP are made.

Worksheet #1
Maximum Development Area and Maximum Floor Area

Submit with Application

Property Owner's Name: _____

Property Address: _____

Calculated By: _____ Date: _____

1. Calculation of Average Slope
   a. Contour Length Within Net Area of Lot (An)

Contour	Length (feet)	Contour	Length (feet)	Contour	Length (feet)	Contour	Length (feet)
						Total:	

(L) = _____ feet

   b. Average Slope Within Net Area of Lot

$$S = \frac{(0.0023)(I)(L)}{An}$$

I =	Contour interval in feet	L =	Total length of contours in feet	An =	Net acreage of lot to nearest 0.001 acres

$$S = \frac{(0.0023)(\quad)(\quad)}{(\quad)} = \_\_\_\_\_$$ Nearest 0.1%

2. Calculation of Lot Unit Factor (LUF)

$$LUF = (An)\{1 - [0.02143(S - 10)]\} = \_\_\_\_\_$$ Nearest 0.001

- If the average slope is less than 10%, the LUF for the lot is equal to the net area.
- If the LUF is **equal** to **0.50** or **less**, you will need a **Conditional Development Permit**. Please make an appointment with the Planning Department for further information.

3. CALCULATION OF MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT AREA (MDA)

   a. For S equal to or less than 10%

      MDA= (LUF) (15,000) = _____ Square feet*

   b. For S greater than 10% and less than 30%

      MDA= (LUF) [15,000 – 375 (S - 10)] = _____ Square feet*

   c. For S equal to or greater than 30%

      MDA= (LUF) (7,500) = _____ Square feet*

   *If the MDA is less than 7,500 square feet and the LUF is greater than 0.50, use 7,500 square feet for your MDA.

4. CALCULATION OF MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA (MFA)

   a. For S equal to or less than 10%

      MFA= (LUF) (6,000) = _____ Square feet**

   b. For S greater than 10% and less than 30%

      MFA= (LUF) [6,000 – 50 (S – 10)] = _____ Square feet**

   c. For S equal or greater than 30%

      MFA= (LUF) (5,000) = _____ Square feet**

   **If the MFA is less than 5,000 square feet and the LUF is greater than 0.50, use 5,000 square feet for your MFA.

   NOTE:
   The MDA and MFA are maximums allowed by the Town Municipal Code. The City Council or the Planning Commission may further limit development area or floor area due to site specific constraints or site visibility (*see "Site Development Policy Statement").*

Town Use Only	
Checked By: _____	Date: _____

Instructions for Worksheet #2
Existing and Proposed Floor Area and Development Area

1. FLOOR AREA

   a. Floor area shall be defined as the gross horizontal area of the several floors of all buildings, including garage and carport spaces, measured to the outside of exterior walls. Stairwells and elevators are only counted once.

   b. Floor area is counted twice when the vertical distance between the upper surface of the floor and the underside of the roof directly above it, is greater than seventeen (17) feet, except when counted floor area occupies the intervening space.

   c. The portion of an attic and similar areas are considered floor area when the distance between the upper surface of the attic floor and the underside of the roof above it is seven (7) feet or more in height. For purposes of this definition, all attic space is considered to have floor surfaces.

   d. Area meeting the definition of a basement is exempted from floor area.

2. DEVELOPMENT AREA

   Development area is measured on a horizontal plane and includes the following:

   - Total floor area as defined above.
   - The total area of land covered by structures other than those counted as floor area, such as parking areas, patios, decks, balconies, walkways, swimming pools, and tennis courts; together with other surfaces comprised of artificially emplaced building materials such as paving, masonry, stone, wood, decomposed granite, gravel, or artificial turf.
   - The first one hundred (100) feet of driveway closest to the primary dwelling, as measured from the face of the garage and extending down the centerline of the driveway.
   - That portion of a driveway exceeding fourteen (14) feet in width (or as required by the Fire Department), which is located beyond the 100 feet of driveway closest to the primary dwelling.
   - Where there is a common driveway in a driveway easement or panhandle and the driveway, or portion of the driveway, serves more than one residence, the amount of driveway area (based on the amount determined in the previous bullets) shall be proportioned to the residences based upon the use of the driveway.
   - Some materials may be given partial exemption towards MDA. Refer to the Town's Development Area Policy and make an appointment with a Planner to discuss material selection.

3. BASEMENT / BUNKER

   - Basement shall mean a floor level that is directly below a building and where the finished floor elevation of the building level above the basement is not greater than 28 inches above the adjoining natural or finished grade, whichever is lower. In addition, at least 75% of the basement's perimeter length shall be wholly underground (*See "Los Altos Hills Municipal Code Section 10-1.202").*

- Basements, including cellars and bunkers, which are not located within the footprint of the building above, may be permitted by the Planning Commission when it finds that such structures do not encroach into setbacks, are a minimum of eighteen (18) inches below natural grade, are wholly underground except for required exiting, lighting, and ventilation, and are counted as development area except when placed under a surface already counted as development area. Bunker area that exceeds 1,500 square feet shall be counted as floor area.

4. NET AREA

"Net area" shall mean the gross area of any parcel or lot of land, less panhandles and all public and private easements for vehicular access within the parcel or lot, excluding easements primarily for emergency access. Notwithstanding the foregoing, for purposes of calculating the LUF on projects other than subdivisions, "net area" shall only exclude the paved portions of panhandles and the paved portions of all public and private easements for vehicular access.

Worksheet #2
Existing and Proposed Development Area and Floor Area

Submit with Application

Property Owner's Name: _____

Property Address: _____

Calculated By: _____ Date: _____

1. DEVELOPMENT AREA

		Existing	Proposed	DA Credit	Total
A.	House and Garage from part 2.A			N/A	
B.	Accessory Dwelling Unit from part 2.B			800	
C.	Accessory Building from part 2.C			N/A	
D.	Driveway, Turnaround, and Parking				
E.	Patios and Walkways				
F.	Recreation Court			N/A	
G.	Pool and Pool Decking				
H.	Decks			N/A	
I.	Solar Panels (ground mounted)				
J.	Any Other Coverage				
	TOTALS				
	MDA from Worksheet #1				

2. FLOOR AREA

		Existing	Proposed	FA Credit	Total
A.	**House and Garage**				
	a. First Floor				
	b. Second Floor				
	c. Basement *(LAHMC 10-1.202)*				
	d. Garage				
	e. Area Over 17 ft *(LAHMC 10-1.202)*				
	f. Attic Over 7 ft *(LAHMC 10-1.202)*				
B.	**Accessory Dwelling Unit (800 credit)**			800	
C.	**Accessory Buildings**				
	a. First Floor				
	b. Second Floor				
	c. Basement *(LAHMC 10-1.202)*				
	d. Attic				
	TOTALS				
	MFA from Worksheet #1				

Town Use Only

Checked By: _____ Date: _____

Worksheet #3
Parcel Water Budget

Submit with Application

Property Owner's Name: _____

Property Address: _____

Calculated By: _____ Date: _____

10-2.809 Water Efficient Landscaping

The project applicant shall submit a Parcel Water Budget (PWB) in units per year for the site using the following equation:

PWB = [(1.0-slope) (0.8) (43.0) (0.62) [0.55 x (An-MDA) + (0.45 x SLA)] / 748] + 120

PWB = _____ units

Slope	=	Average slope of the parcel or lot as a percentage of 1.0 to the nearest hundredth
0.8	=	Water conservation factor
43.0	=	Reference evapotranspiration (ETo) in Los Altos Hills, in inches/year
0.62	=	Conversion factor (to gallons)
0.55	=	ET adjustment factor (ETAF)
An	=	Net lot area (square feet)
MDA	=	Maximum development area (in square feet) allowed for the property
0.45	=	Additional water allowance for SLA
SLA	=	Special landscape area (in square feet)
748	=	Number of gallons in a unit (100 cubic feet) of water
120	=	Number of units for indoor water use per property per year, or as many may be modified by the Planning Director upon a demonstration of difficulty or unnecessary hardship pursuant to subsection (f). *Not applicable if a landscape/outdoor use meter is installed.*

Example PWB Calculation:

1-acre (43,560 sq. ft.) lot with 14% slope and 12,339 sq. ft. of MDA and no special landscape area, conservation or open space easements:

PWB = [(1.0-0.14) (0.8) (43) (0.62) [0.55 x (43,560-12,339) + (0.45 x 0)] / 748] +120= 541 units/year