

District of Columbia Building Code Schedule of Limitations and Provisions Relative to Projections and Encroachments Beyond Building Lines

As defined in the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, Title 12: Building Code (2017), Chapter 32 Encroachments into the Public Right-of-Way

Designation of Projection	Height of Projections	Width of Projections	Distance of Projections Outward from Building Line (to be measured at each story)										Bay Projection Table		
			Com. and Ind. Zones	Residential, Waterfront, Mixed Use, and Special Purpose Zones				Residential, Waterfront, Mixed Use, and Special Purpose Zones					Width of Bay Projection (based on 2013 code allowances)		
			All Streets	On Parked Streets				On Unparked Streets					Width of Building	Double Projections	Single Projections
			All Streets	When parking is 20' or more wide	More than 70' wide	70' and less to 60' wide	Less than 60' wide	More than 80' wide	80' and less to 70' wide	70' and less to 60' wide	Less than 60' to 45' wide	45' and less to 40' wide			
Areaways	Limited to surface of adjacent grade	Unlimited	4'	7'	6 -1/2'	6'	....	4'	4'	4'	....	....	16'	...	9'
Bases, Water Tables, and Sills	Up to 4' above grade at building wall, but not above the window sill level of the main story	Unlimited	8" beyond building line				8" beyond building line					17'	....	9' 6"	
												18'	...	10'	
												19'	...	10' 6"	
												20'	...	11'	
												21'	...	11' 6"	
												22'	...	12'	
												23'	...	12' 6"	
												24'	...	13'	
Bay Windows	Unlimited	See Bay Projection Table	Same as Residential	4'	4'	3'	....	4'	4'	3'	....	....	25'	13' 6"	13' 2"
Belt Courses, Cornices, and Roof Overhangs	Unlimited	Unlimited	Belt courses are limited to 8" and cornices and roof overhangs are limited to 60"										26'	14'	13' 4"
Colonnades	Two Stories	Unlimited except for 8" separation fro party or lot line extended	Colonnade projections are limited to 6' where parking is 17' or more wide. Projecting colonnades shall not be permitted on streets where parkign is less than 17' wide.										27'	14' 6"	13' 6"
													28'	15'	13' 8"
Balconies	....	See Bay Projection Table	Same as Residential	4'	4'	3'	....	4'	4'	3'	....	....	29'	15' 6"	13' 10"
													30'	16'	14'
													31'	16' 6"	14' 2"
													32'	17'	14' 4"
													33'	17' 6"	14' 6"
													34'	18'	14' 8"
													35'	18' 6"	14' 10"
													36'	19'	15'
													37'	19' 6"	15' 2"
													38'	20'	15' 4"
													39'	20' 6"	15' 6"
													40'	21'	15' 8"
Oriels	Unlimited	See Bay Projection Table	Same as Residential	4'	4'	3'	....	4'	4'	3'	....	....	41'	21' 6"	15' 10"
													42'	22'	16'
													43'	22' 6"	16' 2"
													44'	23'	16' 4"
													45'	23' 6"	16' 6"
													46'	24'	16' 8"
													47'	24' 6"	16' 10"
													48'	25'	17'
													49'	25' 6"	17' 2"
													50'	26'	17' 4"
Porch and Step (shall have open balustrades or railings and be open to the roof)	Floors of porches shall be up to 5' above terrace, public parking, adjacent grade or pavement. Wood porches limited to one-story. Porches more than one story must be constructed of non-combutible material.	Where there are no bay, oriel or tower projections, porches are unlimited in width. Where thre are such projections in the same story, the total width of porch and bay window, oriel, or tower projections shall not exceed that given for multiple bay window projections.	....	5'	5'	5'	5'	4'	4'	3'	....	....	51'	26' 6"	17' 6"
													52'	27'	17' 8"
													53'	27' 6"	17' 10"
													54'	28'	18'
													55'	28' 6"	18' 2"
													56'	29'	18' 4"
													57'	29' 6"	18' 6"
													58'	30'	18' 8"
													59'	30' 1"	18' 10"
													Pilasters	Unlimited	5'	Pilaster projections are limited to 4" beyond building line. Pilaster bases are permitted to project 8" beyond the building line.										Buildings wider than 59' can use the window projection calculator on the Office of Planning's website
Show Windows	18'	3'	Maximum width of an individual show window is 20'. Maximum aggregate width of all show windows is unlimited, but 48" must be maintained between individual show windows.												
Steps and Ramps	Up to the story above grade plane (or 6')	Unlimited	Same as Residential	10'	10'	10'	10'	6'	5'	4'	4'	3'	Additional Notes: Two or more projections will be allowed on houses 34' or more in width. The increase in width of projections will be at the rate of 6" for each additional foot in width of houses. Single projections on houses more than 24' wide will increase at a rate of 2 inches for each additional foot in width of a house. Stairways shall not be permitted in bay window projections. If a corner tower is built, the portion beyond the building line will be allowed in addition to the amount allowed other houses. Width of bay windows will be measured at 1' from the lot line or building restriction line. On house located along public alleys, the wall located on alley may extend beyond the street building line forming one side of projection. A clear space equal to or greater than the distance that a projection extends over a lot line or building restriction line shall be preserved between bay window, tower, oriel window, balcony, and porch projections.		
Towers	Unlimited	See Bay Projection Table	Same as Residential	4'	4'	3'	....	4'	4'	3'	....	....	
Vaults	Limited to surface of adjacent grade	The size and extent of vaults, and the number and size of openings, will be a matter of special determination in each case by the code official. Vaults extending under alleys shall have no openings and not extend within 2.5 feet of the center of the alley. If openings in the roofs of vaults are used for sidewalk elevators or for runways, they shall be located as near to the curb as possible and covered with heavy metal safety doors and frames. The paving over vaults shall conform with specifications of the Department of Transportation for surface paving and established grades. All coverings shall be constructed flush with pavement, and have a roughened surface. The roof of a vault between the curb and building lines shall at no place be less than 4" below the sidewalk grade. Whenever the grade is changed, the vault shall be changed and repaved at the expense of the owner of abutting property, to comply with the new grade. Vaults shall be constructed so as not to interfere with sewers, water mains, gas mains, electric or telephone conduits, signal conduits, manholes, lamp posts, trees, or any other public or public utility works or improvements. Vaults with grated tops located shall be surrounded by a minimum 3' of landscaping.													
Foot Note 1 - Streets where projections are prohibited: No projections except cornices, bases, sills, belt courses, pilasters, and water tables, are permitted beyond the building line of the following streets: North side of Good Hope Rd. between MLK Jr. Ave. and 18th St., S.E.; Florida Ave., NW, from 7th St. to 9th St.; Maine Ave., SW, from 7th St. to 14th St.; M Str., NW, from 29th St. to 36th St.; K St., NW, from Rock Creek west to Wisc. Ave.; Water St., NW, from Wisc. Ave. west to the termination of said street; Wisc. Ave., NW, from the angle south of N St. to the north roadway of Q St.; 12th St., NW, from Monroe St. to the angle north of Otis St.;and, MLK Jr. Ave., SE from Marion Barry Ave. to the north boundary of St. Elizabeth's Hospital. (3202.6)															
Foot Note 2 - Minimum clearance to curb: No projection other than steps, cornices, bases, water tables or pilasters, are allowed on streets less than 60' wide. A minimum clear space for other streets from the outer edge of the curb to the outer face of all projections and steps shall be preserved, as follows: 1. Ten feet on streets 40 feet to and including 80 feet; 2. Twelve feet on streets over 80 feet to and including 90 feet wide; and, 3. Fifteen feet on streets over 90 feet wide. (3202.7.1.1)															
Foot Note 3 - Clearance to lot lines extended: A clear space of at least 8 inches shall be preserved between party lines or alley lines extended and the outer walls or sides of all projections. (3202.7.2)															
Foot Note 4 - Additional requirements for areaways: Areaways shall be protected by substantial metal guardrails between 42 and 48 inches high. Proper protection by metal railings that meet the guardrail requirements of Section 1013 of the Building Code shall be provided where steps or platforms are built over areaways, subject to the requirements of 24 DCMR §103. Basement or cellar steps in areaways shall be protected in the same way and shall have gates at top of the steps unless otherwise protected. (3202.9.1.4) Areaways shall not be located in an alley. (3202.9.1.5)															
Foot Note 5 - Projecting doors and windows: Permanent doors or windows shall not open outward into public space where the base of the door or window opening is less than 12 feet above the sidewalk grade. Exceptions are allowed where the line of travel is protected by an adjoining porch, terrace, bay window, areaway, or similar construction. In Residential, Mixed Use, Waterfront, or Special Purpose zones, doors and windows are allowed to open on public parking.															