

**CITY & COUNTY OF DENVER  
COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
BUILDING PERMIT POLICY**

<b>Subject: EXTERIOR WALL REQUIREMENTS FOR DRC BUILDINGS</b>		
<b>Approved: Eric Browning, P.E., Chief Building Official</b>	<b>Drafted by: Renn, Firnhaber, Krausz, Walton</b>	
<b>Number: DRC R302.1</b>	<b>Previous Version: January 16, 2018 Effective Date: March 13, 2024</b>	<b>Page 1 of 4</b>

**Reference: 2022 Denver Residential Code (DRC) Section R302.1**

**Scope:**

This policy applies to DRC one- and two-family dwellings, DRC townhouses, and DRC accessory buildings, and establishes application of exterior wall requirements under DRC R302.1. See policy number DRC R302.2 for additional DRC townhouse requirements.

**Definition:**

**IMAGINARY LINE.** A line extending from the ends of the walls separating townhouse units to a lot line or to another imaginary line, that is used for the determination of fire separation distance.

**Policy:**

1. For the purposes of determining fire separation distance and exterior wall requirements under DRC Section R302.1, townhouse units shall have assumed imaginary lines established as required by DRC Section R302.1.1. See Figures 1 and 2.
2. Where fire separation distance is greater than or equal to 3 feet and less than 5 feet, DRC Table R302.1(1) limits openings to “25% maximum of wall area”. The wall area used for this limitation is based on the entire area of a wall, rather than the wall area of each story. See Figure 3.
3. DRC Section R302.1.1 has requirements for projections from exterior walls; however, “projections” is not defined. The following items are considered to be projections and are required to comply with projection requirements: roof overhangs, balconies, decks, patio covers with open side(s), carports with not less than 2 open sides, cornices, and similar projections from the exterior wall. *(An attached trellis at least 50% open is not a projection.)*
4. Enclosed patios or sunrooms are considered to be part of the dwelling and are subject to exterior wall requirements under DRC R302.1.
5. DRC R302.1 applies to exterior walls of dwellings and accessory buildings; however, “accessory buildings” is not defined. Due to their open nature, the following detached structures are not considered to be “accessory buildings” and are not subject to exterior wall requirements: trellis structures, pergola structures, patio covers with open side(s), and carports with not less than two open sides.

**Figures:**

Figures 1 through 3 provide a visual guide to the language described in the Policy section above.

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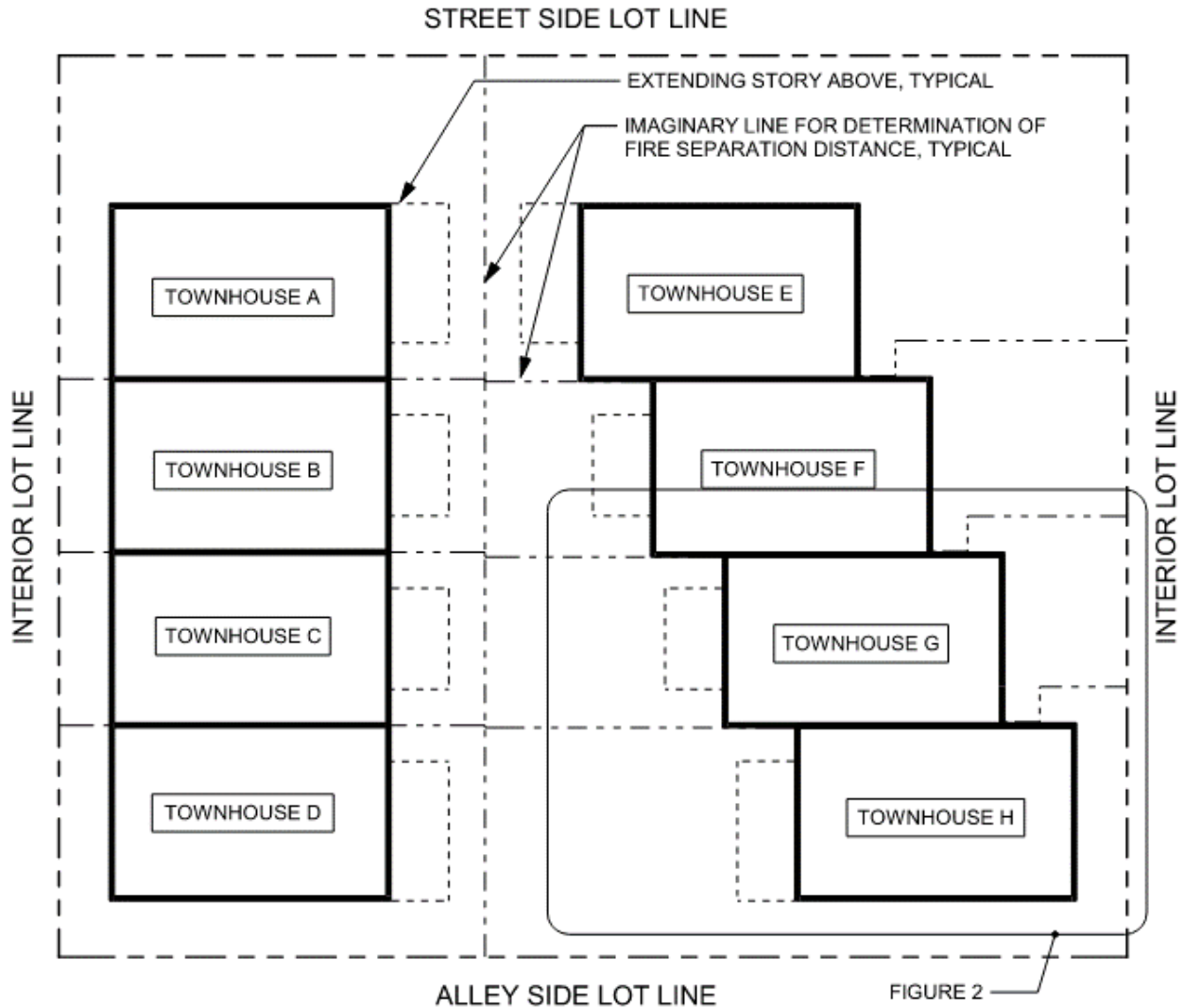


FIGURE 1 - IMAGINARY LINES BETWEEN TOWNHOUSES

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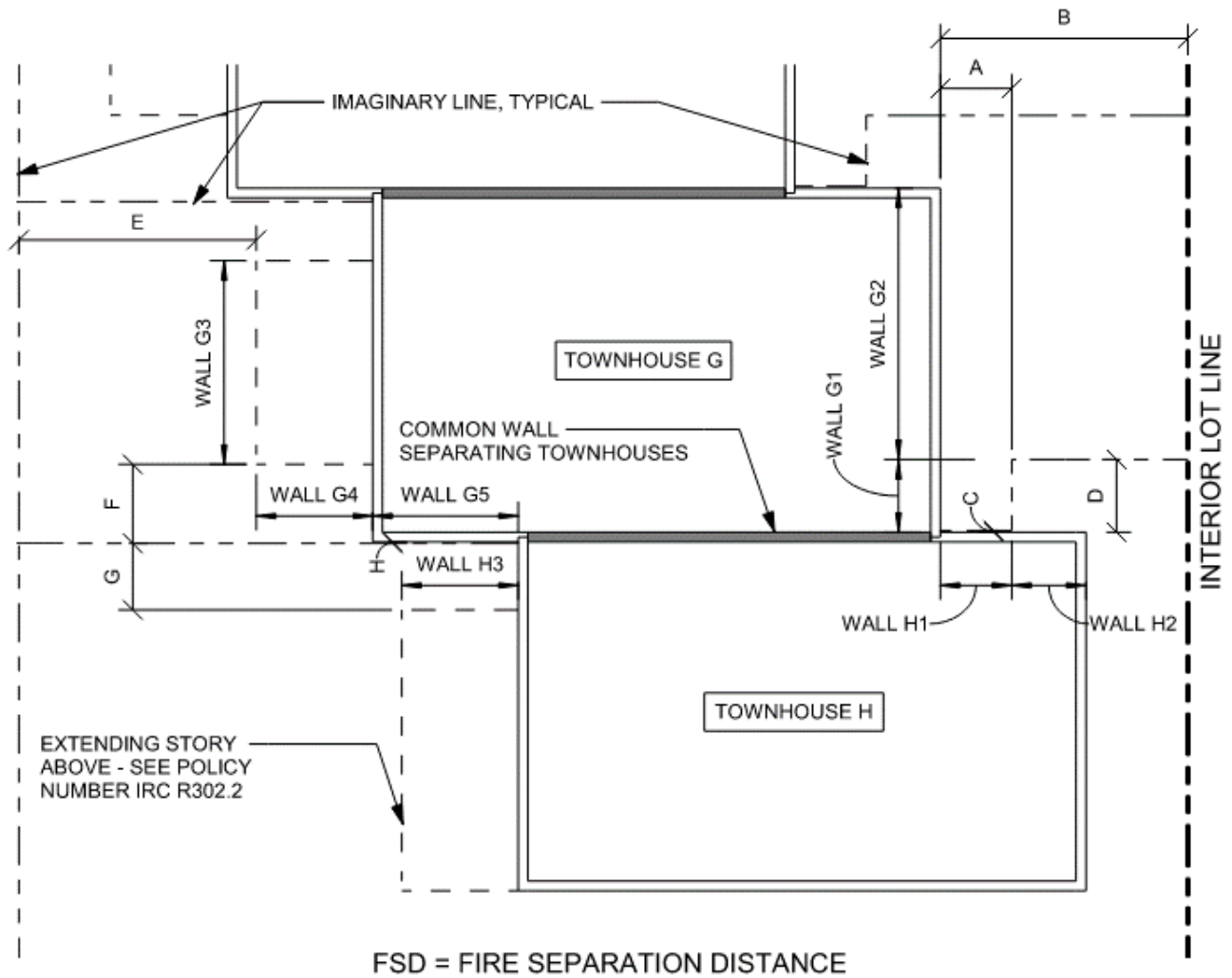
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- A = FSD FOR WALL G1
- B = FSD FOR WALL G2
- C = FSD = 0 FOR WALL H1
- D = FSD FOR WALL H2
- E = FSD FOR EXTENDING STORY WALL G3
- F = FSD FOR EXTENDING STORY WALL G4
- G = FSD FOR EXTENDING STORY WALL H3
- H = FSD = 0 FOR WALL G5

**FIGURE 2 - EXAMPLE FIRE SEPARATION DISTANCES**

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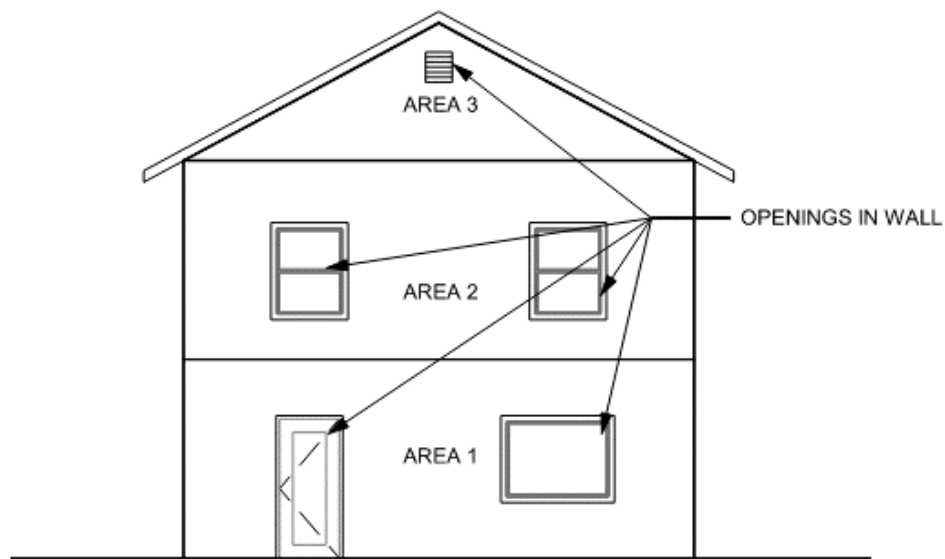
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**WALL AREA FOR OPENING LIMITATIONS = AREA 1 + AREA 2 + AREA 3**

**FIGURE 3 - WALL AREA**