

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

Subject: EXTENDING STORIES IN DRC TOWNHOUSES		
Approved: Eric Browning, P.E., Chief Building Official		Drafted by: Renn
Number: DRC R302.2	Previous Version: January 16, 2018 Version: March 12, 2024	Page 1 of 6

Reference: 2022 Denver Residential Code (DRC) R302.2

Scope:

This policy applies to DRC townhouses and establishes the provisions for exterior wall opening limitations, fire-resistance rating of exterior walls and soffit protection of story/stories extending beyond the exterior wall of the story below. This policy is based on the exterior wall provisions under DRC R302.1, with fire separation distance measured to imaginary lines between townhouse units as required by DRC R302.1.1. See policy number DRC R302.1 for additional exterior wall requirements.

Definitions:

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*.

EXTENDING STORY. A story that extends horizontally beyond the exterior wall of the story below.

OPENINGS IN EXTERIOR FACING-WALL. The area beneath the exterior wall of an *extending story* and openings in the exterior wall of an *extending story*.

FIRE SEPARATION DISTANCE. The distance measured from the *extending story* facing-wall to the *imaginary line*, measured at right angles from the face of the wall.

Policy:

The fire-resistance rating of the extending story facing-wall and the *openings in exterior facing-wall* shall satisfy one of the conditions defined by Case 1, Case 2, or Case 3, below. Where the area under the *extending story* is used for a drive aisle or parking, the soffit under the extending story and its supporting structure shall be protected as required by DRC Section R302.6 for dwelling-garage separation. Structure supporting an *extending story* that continues beyond the *extending story* shall be protected as required by DRC Section R302.6 for dwelling-garage separation; in addition, bearing elements shall be protected per DRC Section R302.1 as required for exterior walls.

Case 1. Where *fire separation distance* is greater than 0 feet and less than 3 feet, a fire-resistance rated one-hour wall assembly tested in accordance with ASTM E 119 or UL 263 for exposure from both sides, in the plane of and below the facing-walls, shall extend down to the foundation for the full length of the *extending story*. *Openings in exterior facing-wall* are not allowed.

As an alternative to two exterior facing-walls, walls separating townhouse units may be provided through the *extending story* provided they extend down to the foundation for the full length of the extending story.

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Case 2. At *fire separation distance* greater than or equal to 3 feet and less than 5 feet:

Where fire sprinklers are not provided, the facing-wall shall be a fire-resistance rated one-hour wall assembly tested in accordance with ASTM E 119 or UL 263 for exposure from both sides. The total area of *openings in exterior facing-wall* shall be 25% or less of the exterior wall area. The area of walls separating townhouse units required by DRC Section R302.2 may be included in the exterior wall area.

Where fire sprinklers are provided, the facing-wall is not required to be fire-resistance rated construction, and *openings in the exterior facing-wall* are unlimited.

Case 3. Where *fire separation distance* is greater than or equal to 5 feet, the facing-wall is not required to be fire-resistance rated construction, and *openings in exterior facing-wall* are unlimited.

Figures:

Figures 1 through 4 provide a visual guide to the language described in the Cases 1, 2, and 3 in Policy section above.

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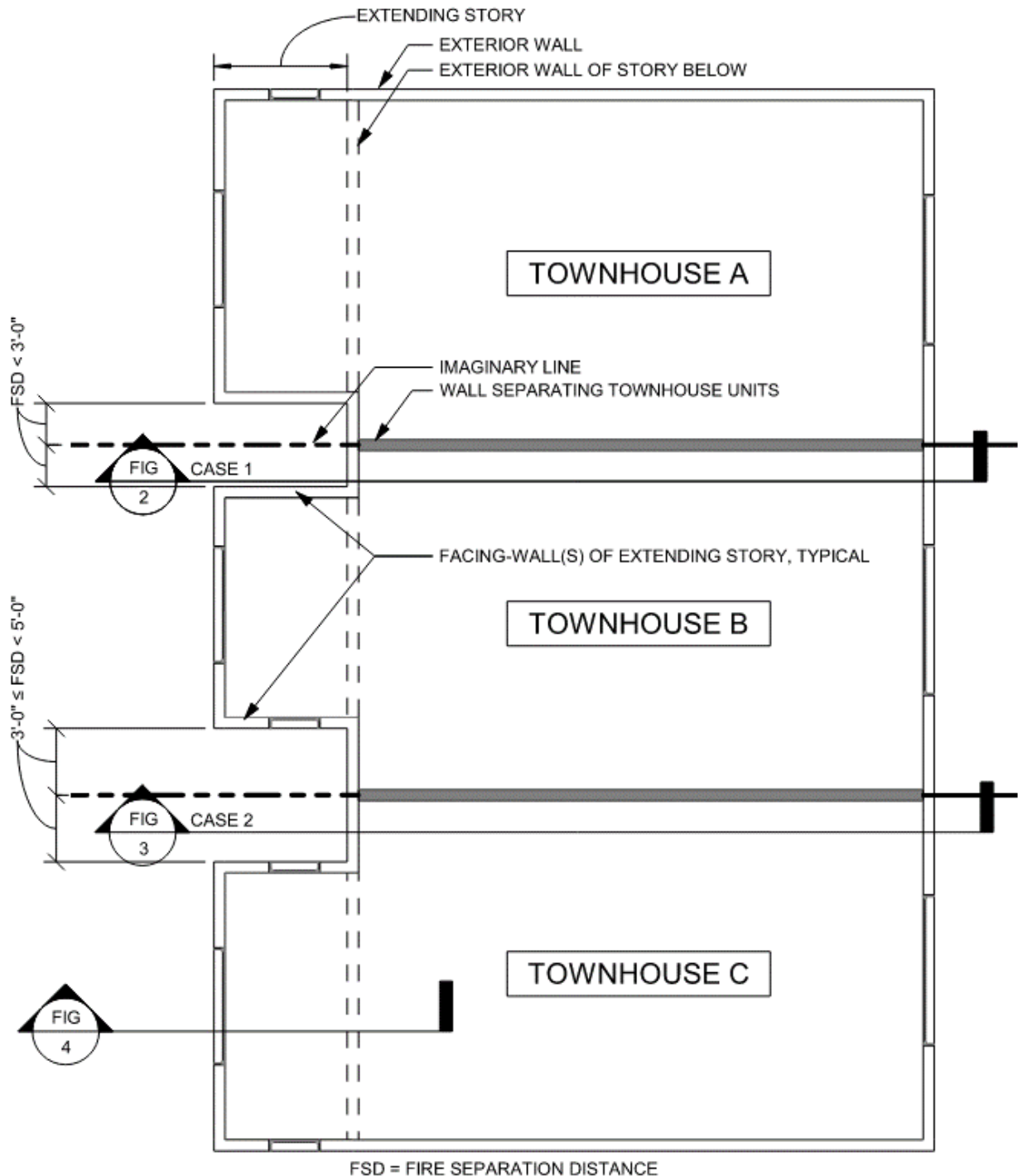


FIGURE 1 - UPPER LEVEL PLAN

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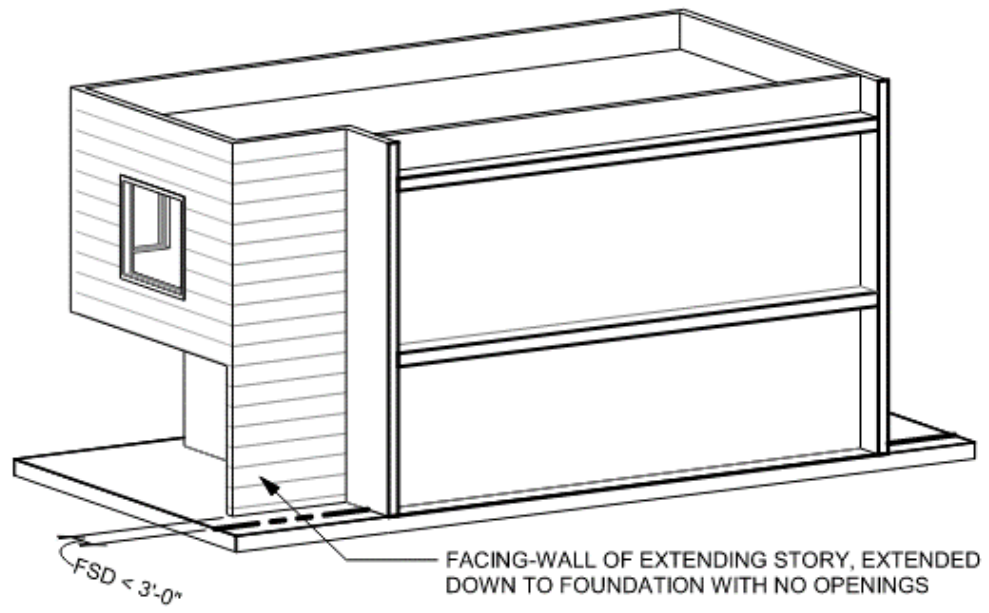
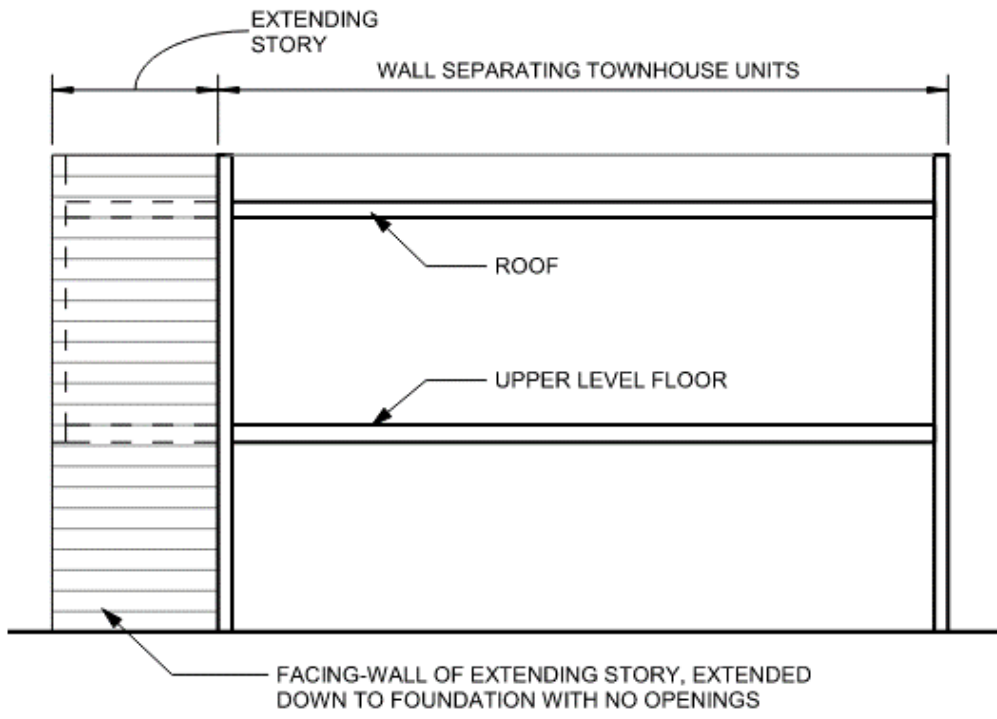


FIGURE 2 - CASE 1 SECTION AND ISOMETRIC VIEW

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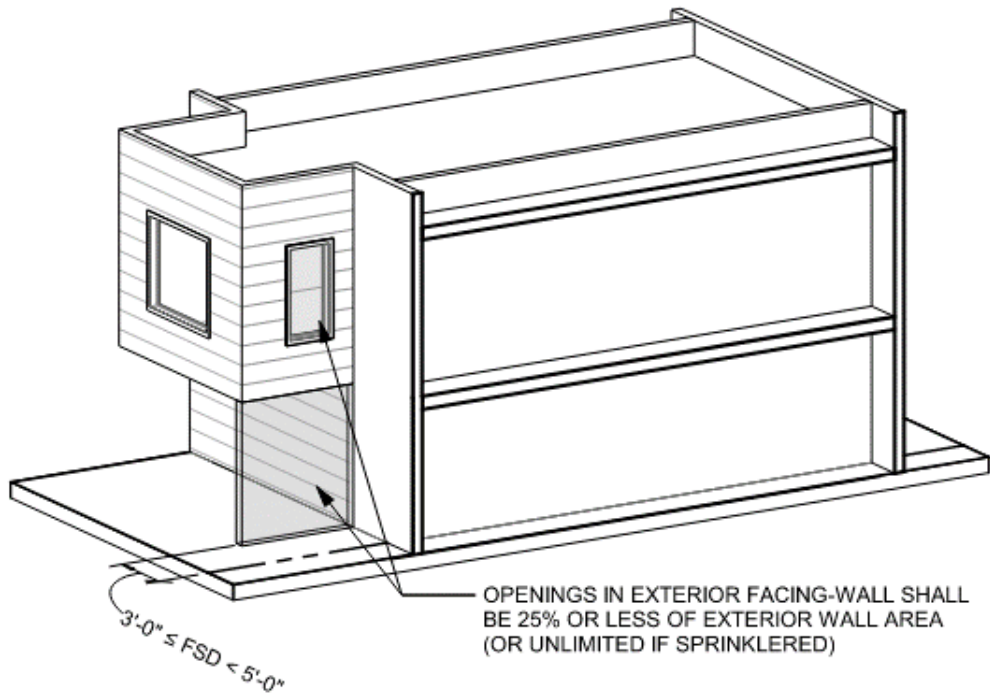
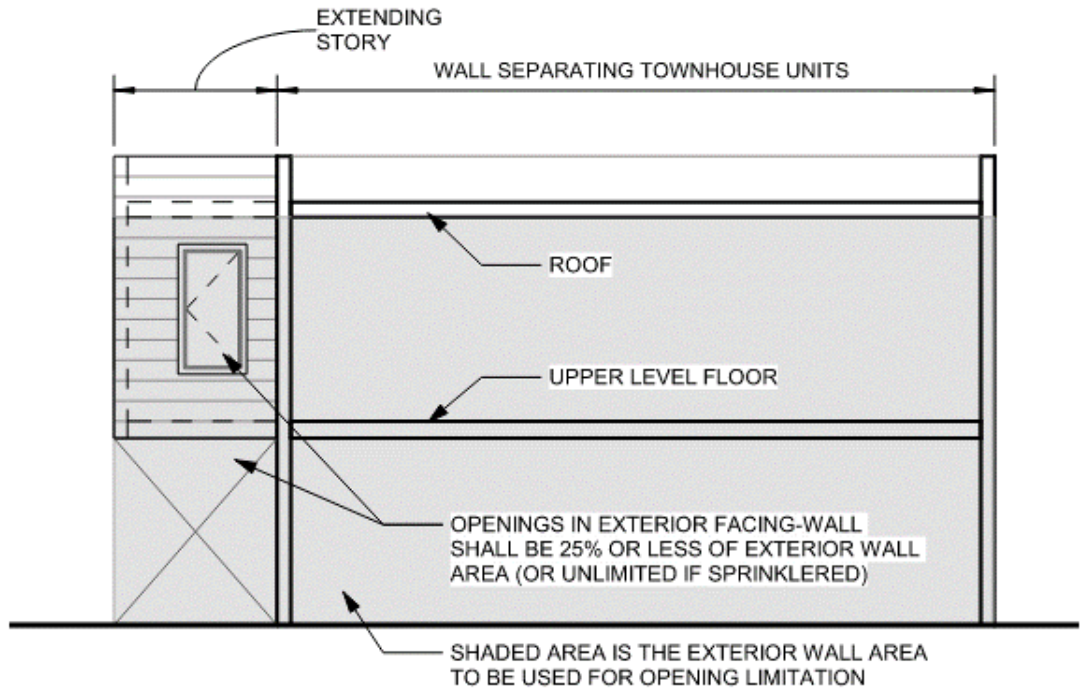


FIGURE 3 - CASE 2 SECTION AND ISOMETRIC VIEW

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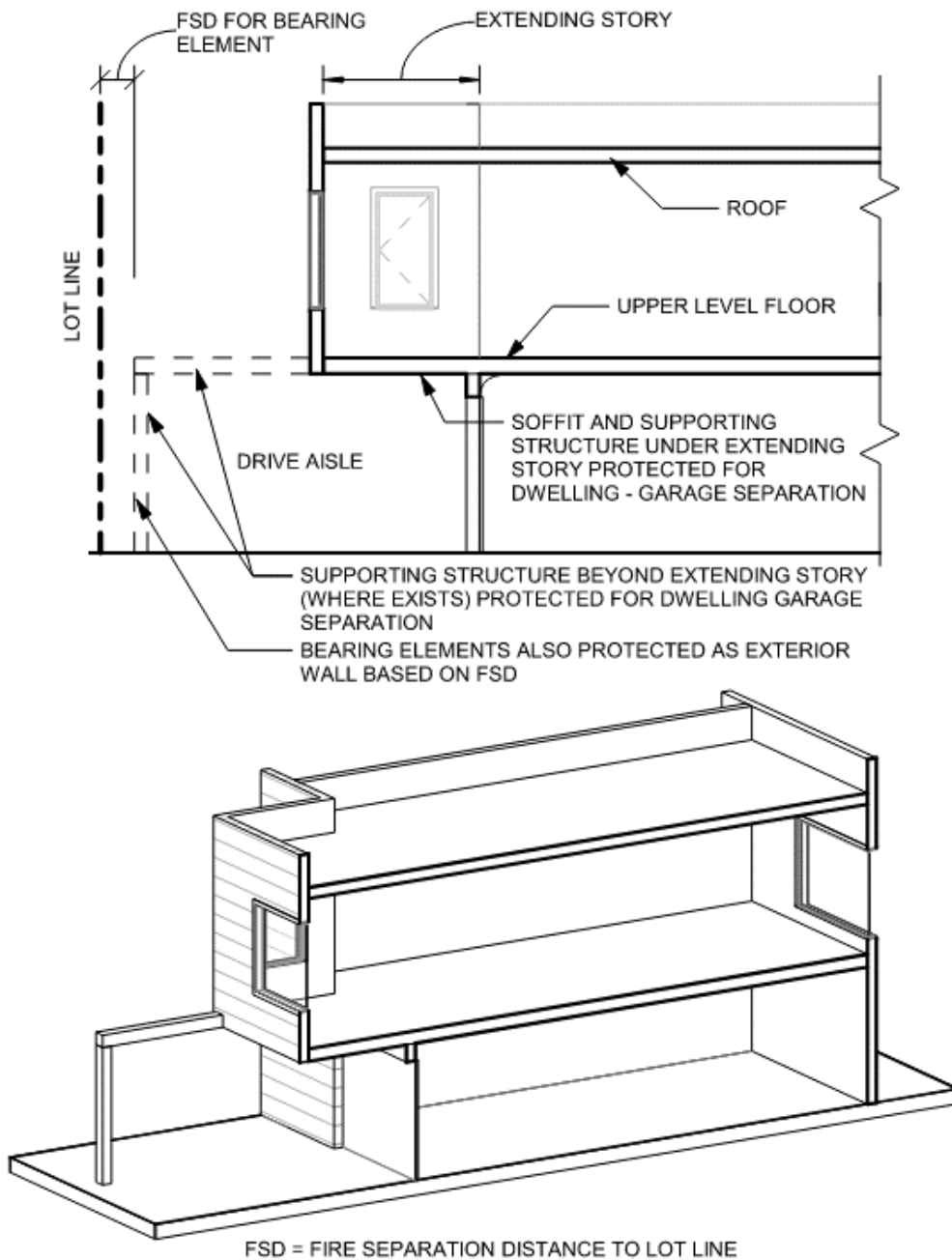


FIGURE 4 - EXTENDING STORY SECTION AND ISOMETRIC VIEW