



CITY OF CAMPBELL
Community Development Department

**Building Official's Determination for New Home Versus
Addition/Remodel Classification**

REASON FOR REVIEW

Campbell's adopted municipal code regarding a building being classified as New versus an Addition-Remodel is often challenged. The language can be interpreted in a number of ways but ultimately, it is the Building Official's interpretation of the Ordinance that this handout will explain.

DETERMINATION OF A NEW HOUSE

The City of Campbell's adopted Building Code provides specific thresholds for when a single-family residential "addition and remodel" project shall instead be classified as construction of a "new dwelling using portions of the original structure", subject to all Zoning and Building standards applicable to construction of a new house. To ensure that permit applications are correctly processed, the City has implemented a preliminary screening process. If an addition and remodel project exceeds 50% of the existing home's gross floor area (inclusive of living areas and garages), a "New House Determination" request to the Building Inspection Division is required. This determination will be made using the following criteria that are provided in [Campbell Municipal Code Chapter 18.32](#):

A project submitted as a "Remodel" or "Remodel and Addition" shall be considered and defined as a "New Dwelling using portions of the original structure" when at least **three** of the four following criteria are satisfied:

A project submitted as a "Remodel" or "Remodel and Addition" shall be considered and defined as a "New Dwelling using portions of the original structure" when at least **three** of the four following criteria are satisfied:

- The valuation of the proposed work exceeds one hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (valuation calculated using established Valuation Tables published by the International Code Council (ICC) and modified by the Building Division);
- Seventy-five percent or more of the existing roof framing (Area) is proposed to be removed. Existing roof covered by a new roof shall be considered as removed for the purposes of this calculation;
- Seventy-five percent or more of the existing exterior walls (Lineal Footage of Wall Length) are removed, altered, filled in, or rebuilt. In no event shall new exterior walls exceed more than seventy-five percent of the length of the existing exterior walls as determined by the building official. Nonconforming exterior walls shall not be included in the twenty-five percent remaining calculation (this subsection shall not apply to a proposed conversion of an accessory structure to an accessory dwelling unit);
- Seventy-five percent or more of the existing interior walls (Lineal Footage of Wall Length) are removed, altered, filled in, or rebuilt. In no event shall new interior walls exceed more than seventy-five percent of the length of the existing interior walls as determined by the building official.

The classification of a *New* dwelling versus an *Addition Remodel* is also called an *NvR*. The classification naming for *New, Using Portions of the Existing* is commonly shortened to *New*. Campbell does about one a week. We do them all the same. In order to allow projects considered to be *New* by a strict interpretation of the code, the Building Official is committed to review the *NvR* fairly and extend special circumstances to every project. The *NvR* can be subjective but the objective is to have at least 25% of the new building to be from the original building.

This is challenging, and we are willing to work with designers through many rounds of submittals to create a compliant design. Each review will be charged \$232 (FY 2025-2026 Fee) for each round thereafter. We recognize that this narrative can be confusing and therefore we encourage designers and homeowners to schedule appointments so we can explain this in person, allow questions, and show examples.

The NvR application will require three drawings:

1. The Site Plan,
2. The Existing Floor Plan,
3. The Proposed Floor Plan, and
4. The Final Roof Plan that shows what areas are existing and what areas are new. Dimension as best you can and label the use of each room (ie. kitchen or bedroom). Include the existing and the new window sizes.

If the design is deemed *Addition/Remodel (Add/Rem)*, we will re-measure the existing walls on-site during the rough frame stage of the project in-order-to verify that the approved design limits were followed. Projects that exceed the limits of demolition beyond the 25-75% rules will be re-classified as *New* along with the *New* requirements that could include: fire sprinklers, Public Works frontage improvements, MWELo watering and landscaping, Reach code ordinances, Tax Assessor re-evaluation, and possible increased Planning approvals. The time needed to go through the plan approval for a new home can take many months and along with new administration and plan check fees that have been triggered for a second plan review process.

1. When most projects are deemed subject to review against this ordinance, the cost to construct already exceeds \$185,000. So item 1 is often checked. Applicants have claimed that since they doing the work themselves, their cost is way below the threshold. The construction cost is levied against Campbell's market rate square foot construction and remodeling costs as published and adjusted annually. The 2025 valuation costs are: Residential addition \$300/sf, Major remodel \$161/sf.
2. The % of roof area to be removed is calculated to include the eaves and will extend to the unaffected hips or rafters. Because the roof is supported by the walls below, we will carefully look at what walls are to be removed and align with the supporting roof. Item 2 roofing most often exceeds the minimum 25% retention requirement and helps with the Addtio/Remodel determination. If a design will remove all of the roof, the plan reviewer may still classify the design as Addition/Remodel but at least 30% of the exterior and interior walls must remain unaltered. We add to the % so that the project has a safety factor to prevent a change in classification after demolition.
3. This explanation is very similar to item 4 Interior walls. The exterior wall criteria is often challenged. If elements of a wall (end-to-end) *...are removed, altered filled in, or rebuilt*, they are not considered unaltered and therfor considered new. If a window or door or fireplace is added, removed, filled in, or the opening made larger or smaller, it is considered altered. If a wood stud, top plate, or bottom plate or header or jack stud is added, re-inforced, or replaced, the wall is considered altered. If the engineer needs to add support columns, or holddowns, or new beams, the wall is considered altered. If the wall fasteners are removed and the wall is picked up and re-located, it is considered alterd. If the wall receives an extension pony wall on top to make that wall taller, it is considered altered. If a new perpendicular wall needs to be braced by an existing wall and will need to be fitted with a new hollywood stud, it is not considered altered. **Altered walls are considered new.** To remain an existing wall, we look at the framing only and it is ok to remove the siding, stucco, sheetrock, and wiring. Adding new wiring will not affect the classification.

The statement: *In no event shall new exterior walls exceed more than seventy-five percent of the length of the existing exterior (unaltered) walls as determined by the Building Official.* Is interpreted to mean that the 25% of the building that is to remain unaltered, will be measured against the final size of the new home. As a math problem, the linear length of exiting unaltered walls divided by the linear length of altered walls plus the new walls, must not exceed 25%. Example: If there was a very small home of 500 sf and none of it was planned to be altered and there was to be an addition of 2005 sf, this design would be classified as *New, Using Portions of the Existing.*

Accepting that, *one small alteration on a long wall that classifies that wall as altered*, may be too conservative of an interpretation, the building official may assign portions of long walls as existing-unaltered if it is of appreciable length (more than say 3/4 the total length). What we will not do, is allow a hopscotch method of a few feet from each wall sprinklered around the entire building. We are looking for entire lengths of walls without alterations to be added together, then divided by the lengths of the altered and the new walls to achieve a % of more than 25%.

Only the side portals of the front garage wall (garage door) will enter the calculation. The linear footage of the door is not classified as wall. Since a door for a 2 car garage is normally 16', this policy often makes or breaks the NvR calculation.

The Building Official will classify the NvR as Addition-Remodel at 25% or above only if the existing unaltered walls are calculated at full end-to-end length. If the design includes partial lengths of walls, an Add/Rem classification will need at least 28% but best at 30%. The reasoning is this...

Wall studs are normally placed 16" on center. A portion of a wall shown to be, *12' to-remain unaltered*, ends up being a few inches less on each end of that wall because, studs placed 16" on center have as much as 14" of airspace on each end. The wall as-drawn is always longer than the measurement between the actual studs. This is a secondary reason why unaltered walls are best to be considered by full length end-to-end and not partial lengths. If this scenario takes place on a few walls, the loss of linear footage as-calculated from the drawing versus the actual measurement between physical studs, there becomes a loss of a few feet and inches for every wall, creating a loss in % points. Projects given the Addition-Remodel classification at 25% without the safety factor would not stand up to the actual measurement done at the rough frame stage. The result is a re-classification, and that is a bad day for the project.

A second danger of making an Add/Rem classification on exactly 25% is that sometimes, during the demo phase, some of the old 2x4 studs simply split and crumble, or the termite damage is just so bad they must be replaced. At the rough frame inspection, the inspector will re-measure and verify that the accepted Add/Rem design on paper aligns with the actual field conditions. They will take measurement from stud to stud. If a stud or two has been replaced because of termites or splintering and that action changes the 25% design calculation, the project will be stopped and the build will be re-classified as new, requiring a new submittal and plan routing to all agencies. So, to prevent a re-classification, it behoves the project to keep more than the 25% minimum as a sort-of insurance.

Often the NvR will go through a few reviews until the design qualifies for the addition/remodel classification. The fee for each review will be based on the hourly fee of the fiscal year.

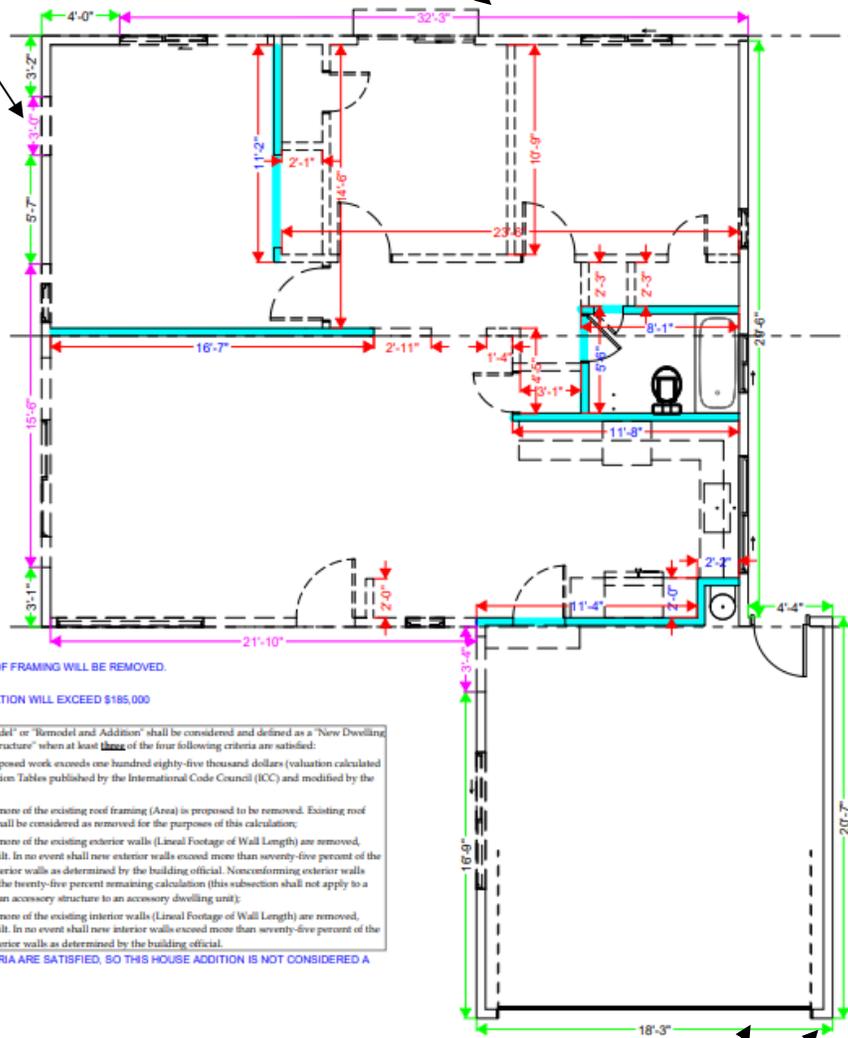
The following, is the warning notice for all Add/Rem projects that went through the NvR process.

WARNING ! If a project has been classified as an **Addition & Remodel**, the plans submitted will be compared during construction. If more walls or roof are removed or altered than approved, or window sizes changed, or engineering alterations, the construction classification could be changed from **Addition & Remodel** to **New Home**. If the classification is changed to **New Home**, the project will be stopped and require a new submittal under the requirements of **New Home**, which is subject to more stringent energy codes, rooftop solar, loss of gas appliances, increased engineering, increased Planning and Public Works requirements (frontage improvements), fire sprinklers, increased fees, and landscape design. Normally, the time needed to make the mid-project application and get back to work is about a year.

No hopscotch calculations will be allowed, this entire wall is considered altered.

If a wall has an alteration, yet, an appreciable amount will remain unaltered, the unaltered part may classify as existing to remain.

Existing interior walls to be removed: 02'-11" 02'-01" 14'-06" 10'-09" 23'-06" 02'-03" 02'-03" 01'-04" 04'-06" 03'-01" 02'-00" 09'-01"	Existing exterior walls to be removed: 32'-03" 03'-04" 21'-10" 15'-06" 03'-00" 75'-11"
Existing interior walls to be remained: 16'-07" 11'-02" 08'-01" 05'-06" 11'-08" 02'-02" 02'-00" 11'-04" 68'-06"	Existing exterior walls to be remained: 04'-00" 29'-06" 04'-04" 20'-07" 18'-03" 16'-09" 05'-07" 03'-02" 102'-2"
Existing interior walls removed ratio: $\frac{69'-11"}{(69'-11")+(68'-6")}$ =69'-11" / 137'-7" 50.2%	Existing exterior walls removed ratio: $\frac{75'-11"}{[(75'-11")+(102'-2")]}$ =75'-11" / 178'-1" 42.7%



100% OF EXISTING ROOF FRAMING WILL BE REMOVED.
CONSTRUCTION VALUATION WILL EXCEED \$185,000

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>> ONLY 2 OF THE 4 CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED, SO THIS HOUSE ADDITION IS NOT CONSIDERED A NEW DWELLING.

This NvR application was classified as a New Home, Using Portions of the Existing

The length of the garage portals will count as walls, but the length of the

CONSTRUCTION HOURS

Monday thru Friday 8 A.M. TO 5 P.M.
Saturday 9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

No construction Sundays & Holidays - Contact the Building Inspection Division at (408) 866-2130. If the construction occurs outside of the office business hours, please contact PD Non-Urgent line at (408) 866-2121.