



Building  
Codes  
Division

Department of Consumer  
and Business Services



# Single Stairway Code Update

**Senate Committee on Housing and Development**



# Single Stairway- Background

## HB 3395 (2023)

### **SINGLE EXIT MULTIFAMILY DWELLINGS**

**SECTION 8. On or before October 1, 2025, the Department of Consumer and Business Services shall review and consider updates to the State of Oregon Structural Specialty Code through the Building Codes Structures Board established under ORS 455.132, to allow a residential occupancy to be served by a single exit, consistent with the following policies of this state:**

**(1) The reduction, to the extent practicable, of costs and barriers to the construction of midsize multifamily dwellings, including those offering family-size housing with sprinklers on smaller lots, while maintaining safety, public health and the general welfare with respect to construction and occupancy.**

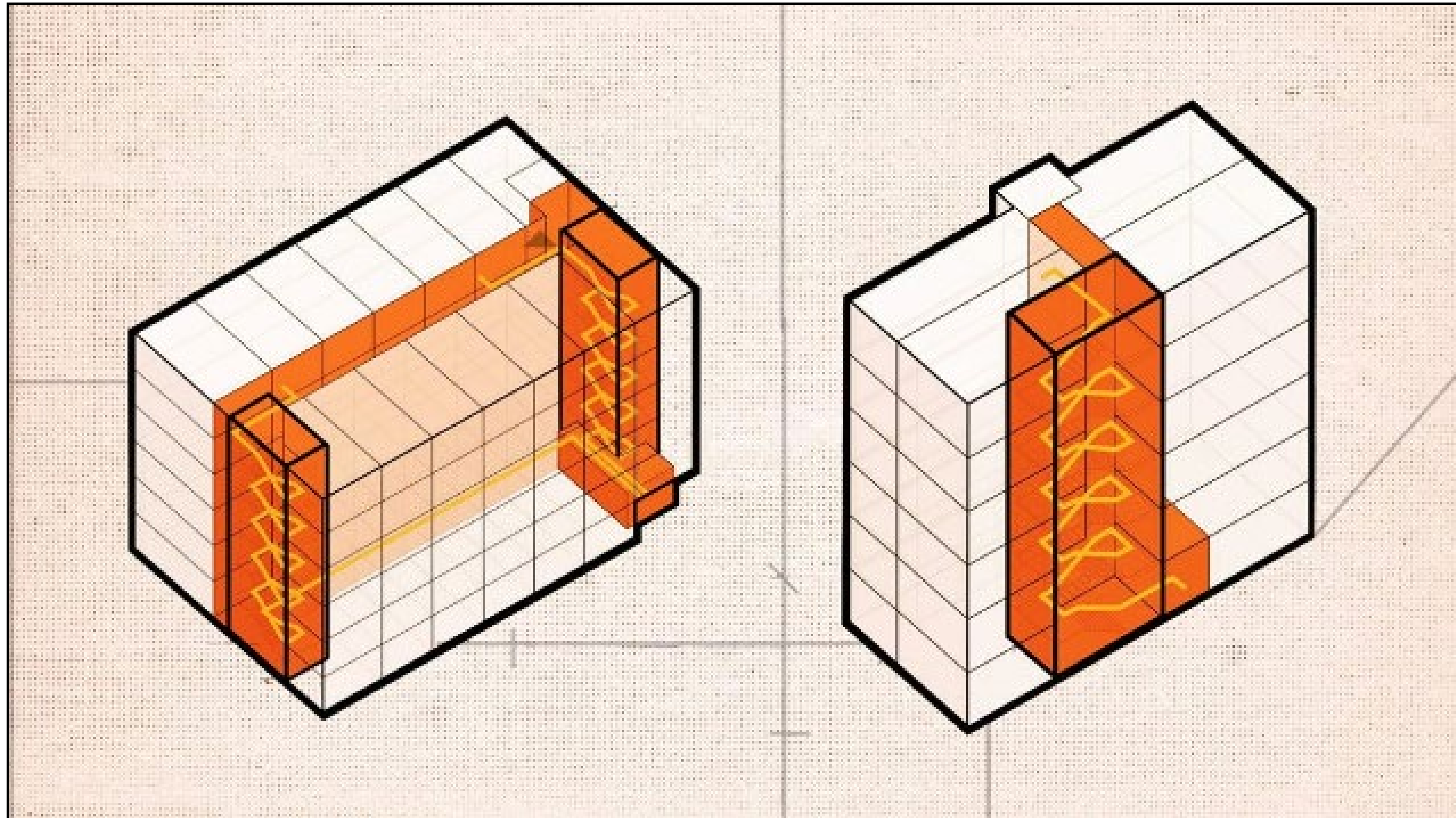
**(2) Encouraging a variety of less expensive housing types that allow single-exit residential buildings under certain circumstances consistent with other adopted building codes.**

**(3) In adopting or considering updates to the building code under this section, the department shall consider regional variation in firefighting capacity and equipment and may make amendments to the code contingent upon a certification by a local fire official that the municipality has sufficient firefighting capacity and equipment.**



# Single Stairway- Background

**What is a single egress or single exit stairway building?**





# Single Stairway- Background

**Today, the Oregon and model code require multifamily buildings over 3 stories above grade plane to contain two exits from each story**

- Means of egress in case of fire or other emergency/evacuation
- Used by fire service and police to enter building, fire service brings equipment to fight fire, guide evacuation, etc.
- Statewide code, variation in local fire service operational capacity



# Single Stairway- Background

## **National Conversation**

- NFPA Symposium and Report
- ICC model code development (2027 IBC) – national engagement

## **Benefits of single stairway**

- Design choices to build multifamily housing, including with larger bedroom counts, on smaller lots. Allows for more windows. May reduce build costs.



# Single Stairway- Background

Building Code Structures Board → Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC)

- Code proposal and review committee process
- Special workgroup in March
- Board approval

Steps to come:

- Rulemaking process
- October 1, 2025 code becomes effective statewide
- Local governments choose to adopt appendix through local process



# Single Stairway- Code Change

- Aligned with *anticipated 2027* national model code technical framework

## SECTION Q101—GENERAL

**Q101.1 Applicability.** Where approved by the local fire service and adopted by the local *municipality*, the provisions of this appendix shall be permitted.

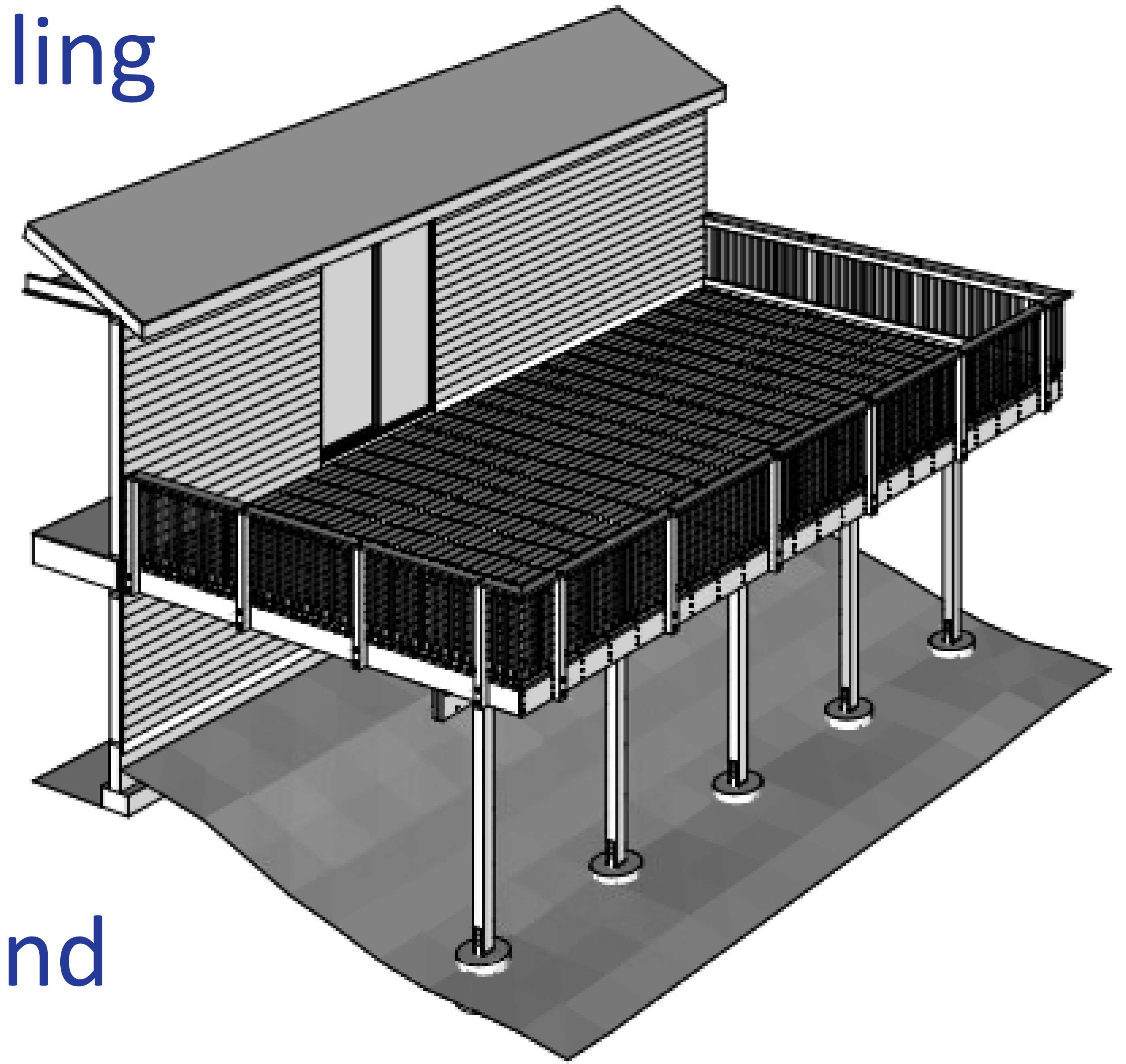
**Q101.2 General.** In addition to the *means of egress* requirements of Chapter 10, buildings containing Group R-2 *dwelling units* shall be permitted to be served by a single exit stairway under the following conditions:

1. The building shall not exceed four stories above grade plane in *building height*. The application of Section 510 is not permitted.
2. The *net floor area* of each story shall not exceed 4,000 square feet (418.5 m<sup>2</sup>).
3. Not more than four *dwelling units* shall be located on any *story*.
4. Exit access travel distance shall not exceed 125 feet (38 100 mm) feet.
5. Openings to *interior exit stairway* enclosures shall be limited to those required for exit access into the enclosure from normally occupied spaces, those required for egress from the enclosure, and openings to the exterior. Elevators shall not open into the *interior exit stairway* enclosure.
6. *Emergency escape and rescue openings* shall be provided in accordance with Section 1031.
7. A *manual fire alarm system* and *automatic smoke detection system* that activates the occupant notification system in accordance with Section 907.5 shall be provided. Smoke detectors shall be located in common spaces outside of *dwelling units*, including but not limited to; gathering areas, laundry rooms, mechanical equipment rooms, storage rooms, interior corridors, *interior exit stairways*, and *exit passageways*.
8. Regardless of the building or stairway type of construction, *automatic sprinkler* locations in *interior exit stairways* shall comply with the requirements of NFPA 13 for combustible stairways.
9. Electrical receptacles shall not be permitted in *interior exit stairways*.
10. Mezzanines and sleepings lofts are not permitted.



# Other BCD Housing Related Updates

- Attached, stacked two-family dwelling (e.g., “duplex”) code amendment
- Building Evaluation Support Agreement (BESA)
- Oregon Design Criteria Hub
- Housing Accountability and Production Office (July 1)
- Expansion of master plan review and permit-ready plans







Thank you!  
I'd be happy to answer any questions.



Department of Consumer  
and Business Services

