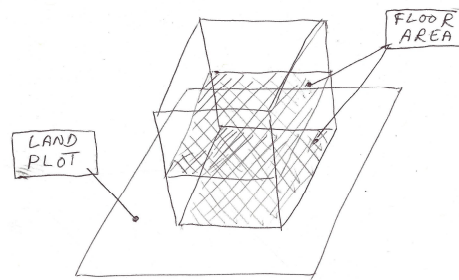


# 1. What are the Rules of the Game?

## 1.1 The FAR Game Defined

Any and all architectural projects in Seoul, whether large-scale demolition and reconstruction projects or piecemeal regeneration, first have to consider the viability and the return-on-investment (ROI) for the land owner and developer. The unparalleled migration to the capital city in recent history and the ensuing high demand for living and working space led to a rapid rise in the cost of land.

As a consequence, it is natural that land owners and developers would urgently seek to maximize the useable floor space in the buildings that will be constructed for them in relation to the actual size of the land plot. In architectural terms, the relationship between these two values is called Floor Area Ratio (FAR).



The problem for land owners is that Korea, especially in its hyper-dense urban centers, has long maintained strict limits on FAR for each zoning area, as part of the urban rules that all building designs are subject to. And so, it is the interplay between the triad of land, rules, and building that makes floor area ratio so important. The endeavor to design buildings with the most useable floor space possible in the context of these variables is known in Korea as *the FAR Game*.

