

A G E N D A



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council

Item ID

24121

Agenda Number

74.

Meeting Date:

5/9/2013

Department:

Planning and Development Review

Subject

Conduct a public hearing and consider an ordinance amending Article 11 of City Code Chapter 25-12, the Residential Code, to require additional accessibility or visitability standards for residential single-family and duplex construction. Related to Item # 74.

Amount and Source of Funding

Fiscal Note

**Purchasing
Language:**

**Prior Council
Action:**

October 18, 2007 – Council adopted 2006 International Residential Code with local amendments.
June 18, 2008 – Council adopted the residential accessibility requirements.

**For More
Information:**

Dan McNabb, 974-2752; Tony Hernandez, 974-2323.

**Boards and
Commission
Action:**

February 7, 2013 – Approved by the Building and Fire Code Board of Appeals on a 4-1 vote with Board Member Thorn-Leeson abstaining from the vote.
February 7, 2013 – Recommended by the Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities.

MBE / WBE:

Related Items:

Additional Backup Information

The City Council adopted the accessibility ordinance June 18, 2008 which codified accessibility in the *Residential Code* for new construction effective January 1, 2009. The International Residential Code (IRC) provides a statewide standard for the home construction industry. The proposed ordinance establishes additional visitability requirements to the current accessibility standards for residential single family and duplex construction.

City staff recommends adopting the additional requirements, which is supported by the Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities.

One recommendation is to require that new dwelling units with habitable space on the first floor must be constructed with a bathroom or a half bath on the first story. The code currently states that the opening be at least 30 inches wide.

The current code also states that the walls will be reinforced with wood blocking to accommodate grab bars.

The second recommendation is to require that light switches, located in the bathroom or half bath must be no higher than 48 inches above the interior floor level, and that receptacles shall be a minimum of 15 inches above the interior floor level.

The third recommendation is to provide a visitability route to include all the common areas in a home such as the kitchen, living room, dining room, and bathroom, and to have a clear minimum width opening of 32 inches. Lever handle doors shall be provided in the interior for the visitability routes.

The fourth recommendation is to provide a no step entrance for newly developed lots when practicable based on topography, applicable to all subdivisions submitted for review after January 1, 2016.