

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	68326	Agenda Number	48.
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Meeting Date:	4/6/2017	Department:	Development Services
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Subject

Conduct a public hearing and consider an ordinance adopting the 2015 International Residential Code with specific amendments.

Amount and Source of Funding

Fiscal Note

A fiscal note is not required.

Purchasing Language:	
Prior Council Action:	June 6, 2013 - Council adopted the 2012 International Residential Code with local amendments.
For More Information:	Jose Roig, (512) 974-9754; Tony Hernandez, (512) 974-1230.
Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:	August 24, 2016 - Approved by the Building and Fire Code Board of Appeals on a 7-2 vote with Commissioners Schumann and Hart voting nay and Cannatti absent.
MBE / WBE:	
Related Items:	

Additional Backup Information

The International Residential Code (IRC) provides the minimum construction standard for homes. The proposed ordinance adopts the 2015 version of the IRC and amends it to make certain changes.

Key Changes between the 2012 and 2015 versions of the International Residential Code:

- Aligns Wind Design Criteria with the International Building Code.
- Clarifies "Sunroom" definition.
- Clarifies the limited stud size provisions related to "Story Height."
- Removes provisions related to structurally independent fire-resistant-related walls in town homes in favor of the common wall provisions (R302.2), which will require a common wall of a townhouse be rated to withstand fire for 2 hours if a sprinkler system is not installed in the dwelling units.
- Sets the minimum habitable room area to not less than 70 square feet (6.5 m²), with the kitchen as an exception.
- Reduces the minimum ceiling height for bathrooms, toilet rooms, and laundry rooms to 6 feet, 8 inches.
- Expands the exception for allowing beams, girders, ducts, or other obstructions to project to within 6 feet, 4

inches of the finished floor to include basements with habitable space.

- Adds a definition of spiral stairway that omits any requirement for a center post to allow for design flexibility and limits the size of spiral stairways by restricting the radius at the walkline to a dimension not greater than 24 inches.
- Permits a ramp that does not serve the required egress door to have a slope not greater than 1 unit vertical in 8 units horizontal.
- Permits battery-operated smoke alarms when alterations, repairs, and additions occur. Carbon monoxide alarms now require connection to the house wiring system with battery backup.
- Establishes provisions for mezzanines consistent with the International Building Code, and further defines the mezzanine parameters of clear height above and below mezzanine floor construction of not less than 7 feet. It also allows for mezzanines to be enclosed per qualifying provisions.
- Raises the height limit for retaining walls that are not laterally supported at the top from 24 inches to 48 inches.

Highlights of the local amendments:

- Amends Section R105.2 to increase the footage that is exempt from permitting and exempt additional work types from permit requirements. The additional work types include repairs to a foundation, repairs to floor decking, non-structural exterior deck repair, garage door installation or repair, siding repair, roof decking repair, and repair of exterior fascia, trim and soffits.
- Amends Section R105.2 to add flexibility for a property owner to obtain a permit under the homestead allowances.
- Adds appendices C, E, H and J. Appendix C pertains to exit terminals of mechanical draft and direct-vent venting systems; Appendix E relates manufactured homes; Appendix H pertains to patio covers; and Appendix J relates to existing buildings.