



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Joel G. Baker, Fire Chief *Joel G. Baker*

DATE: March 4, 2020

SUBJECT: Wildland-Urban Interface Code Implementation

The City of Austin adopted the Austin/Travis County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in 2014. The CWPP focuses on creating and ensuring resilient landscapes, fire adapted communities, and effective response to wildfire. Additionally, the CWPP recommends adopting and enforcing local building code that requires fire-resistant home design and materials.

The proposed 2015 International Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code ordinance amendment is CWPP compliant. It proposes the consolidation of relevant WUI Code provisions into one section for efficiency. Specific requirements that improve overall fire prevention and safety in the community are also included in the amendment. During initial one-on-one meetings with Mayor and Council, Austin Fire Department (AFD) provided the detailed table below illustrating the primary sections within the WUI Code that have been amended and highlighted elements of the WUI Code which exist in currently adopted city codes.

Section Name	Section Numbers	2015 WUI	2015 IFC	Current LDC
Authority, Alternatives and Appeals	Sec. 104, 105 & 106	X	✓	
Permit Exemptions	Sec. 107.3	Amend	✓	
Permits	Sec. 107.4 thru 107	X	✓	
Plans and Specifications	Sec. 108.1 thru 108.7	Amend	✓*	O
Plans and Specifications	Sec. 108.8 thru 108.12	X	✓	
Inspections, Enforcement & Compliance	Sec. 109	X	✓	
C of O, Temp Struct., Fees, Utility Connections & Stop Work	Sec. 110, 111, 112, 114	X	✓	
Definitions	Chapter 2	Amend ⁺⁺	✓	O
WUI Area Designations	Chapter 3	Amend ⁺⁺		O
Applicability	Sec. 402	Amend	✓*	
FD Access	Sec. 403.3	Amend	✓*	
Water Supply	Sec. 404	Amend, X	✓*	
Fire Hazard Severity	Sec. 502.1 Table 502.1	Amend	✓*	
Ignition Resistant Construction and Materials	Sec. 502, 502.1 & Table 502.1	Amend	✓*	
Ignition Resistant Construction	Sec. 504	Amend	✓*	
Class 2 and Class 3 Ign. Resistant Construction	Sec. 505 & 506	X	✓*	

Legend: X = Deleted ✓ = Covered in this Code * Exceeds WUI Code
 Amend = Amended O = Also covered in this code ++ Very Minor Changes Made
 Two designations together (i.e. Amend, X) means partial amended and partial deletion of section.

Funding for implementation of the WUI Code focuses on the requirement that new construction and exterior remodels/additions built within identified WUI areas will be reviewed and inspected. Permit fees will be determined by time and complexity of each project.

The revenue projection is dependent upon development patterns and site locations. As with any forecast, the number of reviews and resulting revenue may vary. The estimated 300-400 reviews and inspections per month would produce revenue consistent with other AFD permit fees.

In order to implement the WUI Code, one-time costs for equipment and vehicles are estimated at \$438,000 and annual on-going personnel costs are estimated at \$1.5M. Staffing currently includes: four (4) plans reviewers, two (2) administrative assistants, one (1) Fire Captain, and four (4) Fire Lieutenants. Future workload may necessitate adding positions if supported by revenue collected.

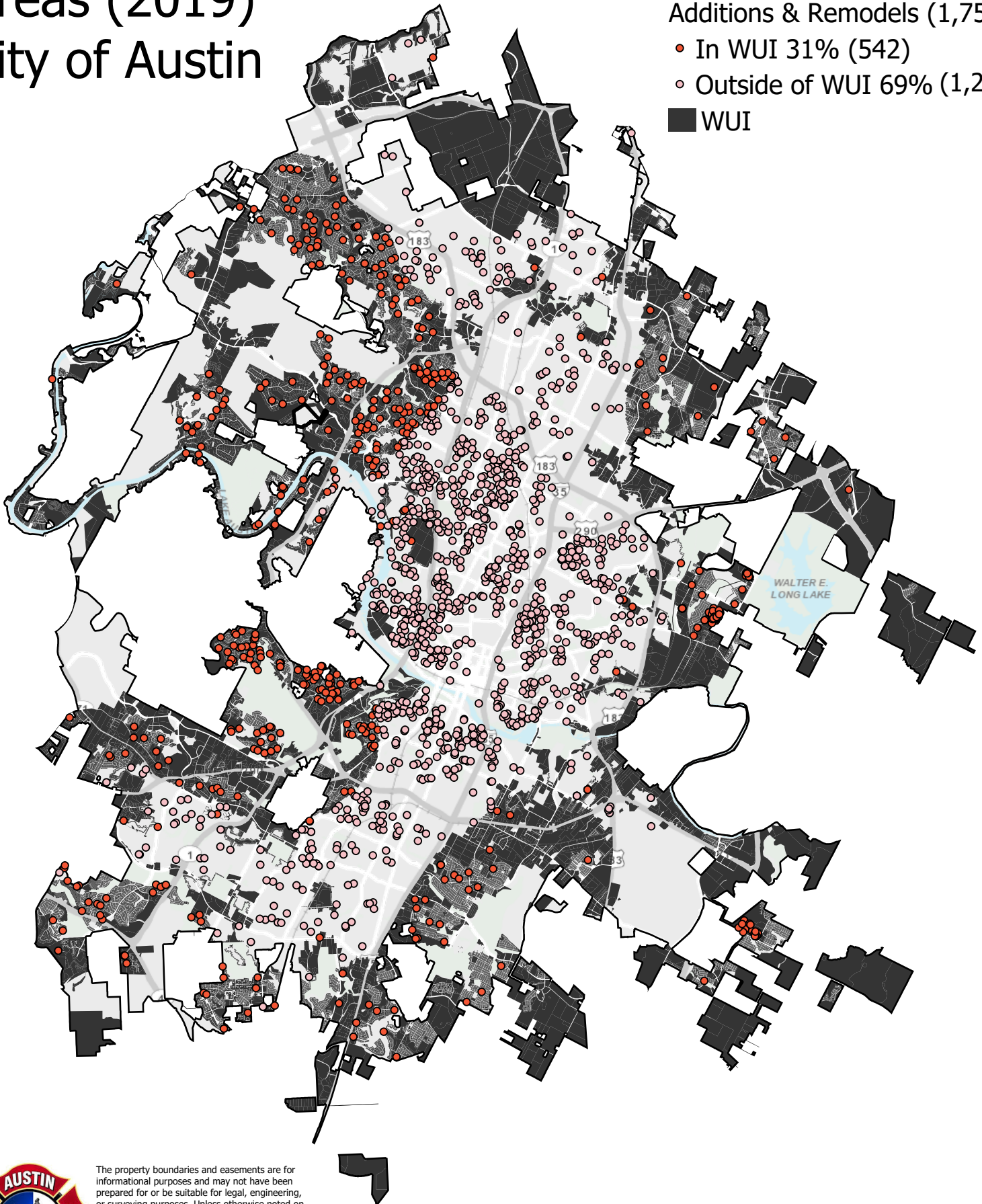
AFD is exploring a phased approach to stagger initial start-up costs in order to begin training civilian personnel prior to the implementation of fees.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager
Anne Morgan, City Attorney

Attachments: 2019 Permits Issued in WUI (Additions & Remodels)
2019 Permits Issued in WUI (New)

Permits Issued in Wildland Urban Interface Areas (2019) City of Austin

Additions & Remodels (1,753)
• In WUI 31% (542)
• Outside of WUI 69% (1,211)
■ WUI



The property boundaries and easements are for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. Unless otherwise noted on the drawing they do not represent an on-the-ground survey and represent only the approximate relative location. The boundaries have been produced by the Austin Fire Department Wildfire Division for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

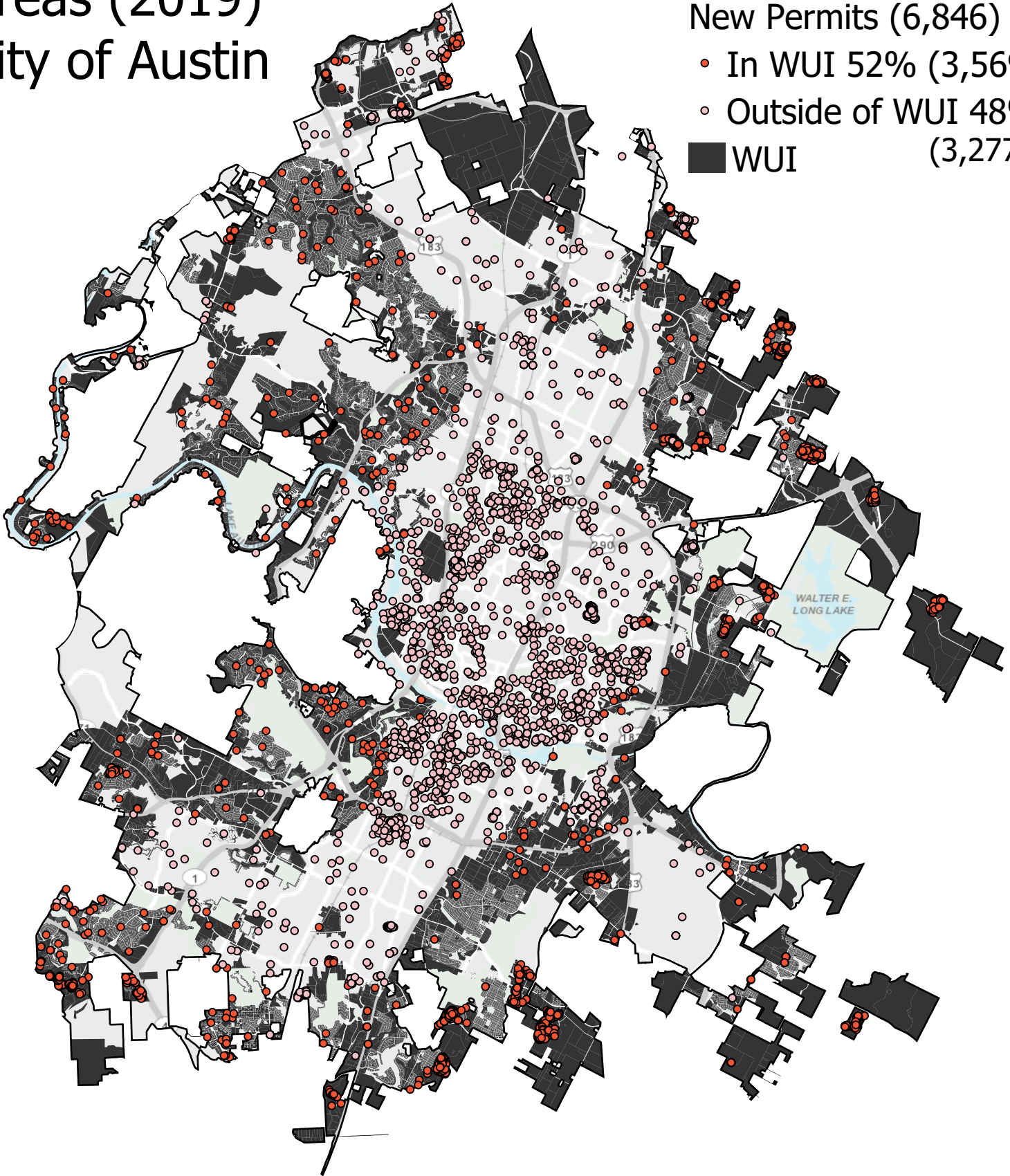


Permits Issued in Wildland Urban Interface Areas (2019) City of Austin

New Permits (6,846)

- In WUI 52% (3,569)
- Outside of WUI 48% (3,277)

■ WUI



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