

Atlas 14 – Summary of Code Changes

This document provides a summary of the code amendments that were approved by City Council on November 14, 2019.

Parts 1 and 2 – City Code Section 25-2, Subchapter F (sections 2.2 and 3.4.2)

- These sections revise the determination of the maximum building height for a building that is subject to Subchapter F and is in the 100-year floodplain. The maximum building height for a building in the 100-year floodplain increases from 32 feet to 35 feet as measured from natural grade.

Parts 3 and 4 – 25-7-2 (*Definitions*)

- Add a definition of “Atlas 14,” which is referenced in subsequent sections.
- Revise the definitions of “100-year floodplain” and “25-year floodplain” to refer to new code sections that describe how the floodplain areas are determined (see Part 6).

Part 5 – existing City Code Section 25-7-6, renumbered to 25-7-8 (*Computation of Stormwater Runoff*)

- Clarify that the calculation of the 500-year floodplain is based on the existing impervious cover in a watershed or drainage area to be consistent with the current FEMA floodplain calculation method, rather than the maximum amount of impervious cover allowed under zoning or watershed regulations.

Part 6 – new City Code Section 25-7-6 (*Determination of the 100-Year Floodplain*)

- Revise the methodology for determining the 100-year floodplain to reflect the Atlas 14 rainfall data. This code amendment provides three options for determining the 100-year floodplain in the interim period until floodplain studies have been updated by the city. An applicant can use (1) the Atlas 14 data to calculate the 100-year floodplain under fully developed conditions; (2) use the current FEMA 500-year floodplain; or (3) use the current 500-year rainfall data to determine the limits of the floodplain. The exception to this methodology is the floodplain of the Colorado River; the code amendment specifies that the 100-year regulatory floodplain for the Colorado River remains the same (i.e., the current 100-year floodplain).

New City Code Section 25-7-7 (*Determination of the 25-Year Floodplain*)

- Revise the methodology for determining the 25-year floodplain to reflect Atlas 14 data. This amendment provides two options for determining the 25-year floodplain. An applicant can either use (1) the Atlas 14 data to calculate the 25-year floodplain under fully developed conditions; or (2) use the current 100-year floodplain. The exception to this methodology is the floodplain of the Colorado River; the code amendment specifies that the 25-year regulatory floodplain for the Colorado River remains the same (i.e., the current 25-year floodplain).

Part 7 – City Code Section 25-7-93 (*General Exceptions*)

- Subsection (A) is revised to replace the words “site plan” with the words “development application” since this section applies to all development applications and is consistent with other parts of this chapter.
- Subsection (A)(2) is revised to remove an existing exception and create a new exception for constructing a residential building within the 100-year floodplain. The existing exception allows for the construction of a single-family or duplex residential building within the 100-year floodplain if the lot was platted before September 25, 1983. This provision is removed and replaced with a broader redevelopment exception that allows a new residential building to encroach within the 100-year floodplain if it is replacing an existing legally constructed residential building and does not increase the number of dwelling units on the property – regardless of plat date. This exception applies to all residential uses, not just single-family, and does not apply to commercial uses.
- Subsection (A)(4) is revised to expand the existing exception for development within the 100-year floodplain of Lady Bird Lake or the Colorado River to also apply to Lake Austin and Lake Travis.
- Subsection (B) is revised to clarify that development approved under the listed exceptions must meet specific criteria. Current code lists two criteria under this section: floodproofing and no adverse flooding impact. This amendment includes those two criteria and adds two additional criteria: compensation for floodplain volume and freeboard. The compensation for floodplain volume criterion is currently part of the no adverse flooding impact criterion and is added here for emphasis. The freeboard criterion is also part of the current code. However, the freeboard requirement is being increased from one foot to two feet.

Part 8 – City Code Section 25-7-95 (*Requirements for Parking Areas*)

- This section is revised to allow staff to have the administrative authority to approve parking areas in the 25-year or 100-year floodplains that are accessory to buildings that are approved under the exemptions in sections 25-7-93 and 25-7-96.

Part 9 – City Code Section 25-7-96 (*Requirements in the 25-Year Floodplain*)

- Subsection (B) is reworded for clarity.
- Subsection (C) is revised to establish an equivalent redevelopment exception for residential development within the 25-year floodplain (see the description of Part 7, above).
- Subsection (D) is revised to clarify that development approved under the listed exceptions must meet specific criteria, as explained above in Part 7, subsection (B).

Part 10 – City Code Section 25-8-1 (*Definitions*)

- The definition of “floodplain modification” is revised to refer to the new section on determining the 100-year floodplain (Section 25-7-6).

Part 11 – City Code Section 25-8-92 (*Critical Water Quality Zones Established*)

- Subsections (A), (C), and (F) regarding critical water quality zone boundaries are revised to refer to the new section on determining the 100-year floodplain (Section 25-7-6).

Part 12 – City Code Section 25-8-121 (*Environmental Resource Inventory Requirement*)

- Subsection (A) is revised to remove floodplains from the list of property characteristics that require preparation of an environmental resource inventory.

Part 13 – Subsection 202.1 (*Amended Definitions*) of City Code Section 25-12-3 (*Local Amendments to the Building Code*)

- The definitions of “base flood,” “design flood,” “flood hazard area,” and “floodway” are amended to be consistent with the new methodology for determining the 100-year and 25-year floodplains.

Part 14 – Subsection 1612.3 (*Establishment of Flood Hazard Areas*) of City Code Section 25-12-3 (*Local Amendments to the Building Code*)

- Subsection 1 is being revised at the request of FEMA to ensure that the current Flood Insurance Studies and Flood Insurance Rate Maps are referenced.
- Subsection 2 is revised to clarify that the establishment of flood hazard areas is linked back to the definitions of 100-year floodplain and 25-year floodplain.

Part 15 – Subsection 1612.4.1 (*Freeboard*) of City Code Section 25-12-3 (*Local Amendments to the Building Code*)

- The minimum freeboard requirement for buildings in the floodplain is increased from one foot to two feet. This means that the finished floor elevation of the building must be at least two feet above the 100-year floodplain.

Part 16 – Subsection 1612.4.2 (*Provisions of safe refuge*) of City Code Section 25-12-3 (*Local Amendments to the Building Code*)

- The freeboard amount of two feet is included in this section for consistency.

Part 17 – Subsection G103.3 (*Determination of Design Flood Elevations*) of Appendix G (*Flood Resistant Construction*) of City Code Section 25-12-3 (*Local Amendments to the Building Code*)

- Subsection 2 is revised to clarify that the determination of design flood elevation is linked back to the definition of 100-year floodplain.

Part 18 – Subsection 320.2 (*Establishment of Flood Hazard Areas*) of City Code Section 25-12-133 (*Local Amendments to the 2015 Uniform Mechanical Code*)

- Subsection 2 is revised to clarify that the establishment of flood hazard areas is linked back to the definitions of 100-year and 25-year floodplain.

Part 19 – Subsection 321.8 (*Establishment of Flood Hazard Areas*) of City Code Section 25-12-153 (*Local Amendments to the Uniform Plumbing Code*)

- Subsection 2 is revised to clarify that the establishment of flood hazard areas is linked back to the definitions of 100-year floodplain and 25-year floodplain.

Parts 20, 21, 22, and 23 – various sections of City Code Section 25-12-243 (*Local Amendments to the International Residential Code*)

- Various definitions are revised to be consistent with the revised definitions and new methods of determining the 100-year floodplain and 25-year floodplain.

Part 24 – Subsection R322.2.1 (*Elevation requirements*) of the City Code Section 25-12-243 (*Local Amendments to the International Residential Code*)

- The minimum freeboard requirement for residential buildings in the floodplain is increased from one foot to two feet. This means that the finished floor elevation of the building must be at least two feet above the 100-year floodplain.

Part 25 – subsection R322.2.5 (*Provisions of safe refuge*) of the City Code Section 25-12-243 (*Local Amendments to the International Residential Code*)

- The freeboard amount of two feet is included in this section for consistency.
- This requirement states that only residential buildings or structures that are substantially improved must comply with the provisions of safe refuge

Part 26 – Subsection R322.2.6 (*Means of egress*) of City Code Section 25-12-243 (*Local Amendments to the International Residential Code*)

- This states that the means of egress requirements do not apply to an addition or alteration to an existing residential building or structure that does not constitute a substantial improvement
- This section states that the means of egress criteria for residential building permits is determined accordingly:
 - *For single-family condo regime buildings:* Means of egress is determined at the time of site plan approval if the site plan was approved between December 1, 2017 and the effective date of this ordinance
 - *For single-family buildings:* Means of egress is determined accordingly:
 - at the time of preliminary plan if the preliminary plan was submitted for approval between December 1, 2014 and the effective date of this ordinance; or
 - at the time of final plat if the final plat was approved between December 1, 2017 and the effective date of this ordinance.
 - Means of egress for residential buildings for all other situations not described above is determined at the time of building permit application.

Parts 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and 33 – various sections of City Code Chapter 30-4 (*Drainage*) and the 30-5 (*Environment*)

- Corresponding sections of Chapters 30-4 and 30-5 are amended to match the proposed changes to Chapters 25-7 and 25-8.

Part 34 – This section clarifies that the 500-year floodplain that is represented on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map is to be determined based on the most recent effective date of these maps, January 6, 2016, or maps that will soon be updated for the South Brushy Creek watershed and Onion Creek watershed.