

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	29802	Agenda Number	70.
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Meeting Date:	1/23/2014	Department:	Planning and Development Review
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Subject

Approve third reading of 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. THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THIS ITEM WAS HELD AND CLOSED ON MAY 23, 2013.

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 residential accessibility requirements.
 May 23, 2013 - Council conducted a public hearing and approved an ordinance on first reading;
 December 12, 2013 - Council approved an ordinance on second reading;

For More Information:

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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.
 August 12, 2013 – Recommended by the Austin Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities supporting staff’s visitability ordinance and to also include a fee in lieu program.

MBE / WBE:

Related Items:

Additional Backup Information

The City Council adopted the visitability 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 for residential single family and duplex construction.

First reading of the ordinance was approved on May 23, 2013 with amendments. Second reading was approved on December 12, 2013.

City staff recommends adopting the additional visitability requirements, which include the following:

- 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.
- Require that light switches on the visitable floor 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.
- Require a visitability route on the visitable floor, and to have a clear minimum width opening of 32 inches.
- Require an exterior route to the no step entrance for newly developed lots and all new structures built on existing lots when practicable based on topography.