

A G E N D A



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	67868	Agenda Number	41.
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Meeting Date:	3/2/2017	Department:	Development Services
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Subject

Set a public hearing to consider an ordinance that adopts the 2015 International Residential Code with specific amendments. (Suggested date and time, April 6, 2017, 4:00 p.m. at Austin City Hall, 301 W. Second Street).

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 a statewide minimum construction standard for homes. The proposed ordinance adopts the 2015 version of the IRC and amends it to make certain changes.

Key Changes to the published 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:

- Amendments to Section R105.2 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.
- Amendments to Section R105.2 also add flexibility for a property owner to obtain a permit under the homestead allowances.
- Addition of 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.