



Affordability Impact Statement

Windowless bedroom regulations, adopted 2021 International Building Code

Initiated by: Resolution No. 20230914-082

Lead Department: Development Services

Date: March 8, 2024

Proposed Regulation

The proposed amendment would modify the adopted 2021 International Building Code (IBC), located in Title 25 of city code (Land Development Code, [Chapter 25-12, Article 1](#)). Current language allows spaces intended for human occupancy to supply light via artificial means only; the amendments would require these spaces to supply natural light as well as artificial light.

Land Use/Zoning Impacts on Housing Costs

The proposed changes would have a **neutral** impact on housing costs via land use and zoning.

Impact on Development Cost

The proposed changes would have a **neutral** impact on development costs.

The Development Services Department held two outreach sessions. In addition, requiring at least one window per room is common practice in U.S. city and state law, as well as in international best practices.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} The ordinance and resolutions that initiated AIS review as part of the S.M.A.R.T Housing Initiative Policy emphasize minimum standards of safety and accessibility for housing. Resolution No. 040115-44 states:

The City hereby establishes the S.M.A.R.T. Housing Initiative Policy (Policy) for housing in the City. (B) S.M.A.R.T. Housing means housing that meets the following standards: safe, mixed-income, accessible,

reasonably priced, transit-oriented and Green Building Standards at the time of initial occupancy.⁸

As it is commonly accepted that windows in habitable rooms are a minimum standard of quality and safety, it was determined that the proposal would have a neutral impact.

Impact on Affordable Housing

The proposed changes would have a **neutral** impact on affordable housing.

City Policies Implemented

The proposed amendment aligns with Imagine Austin goals related to livability, public health, and providing safe housing that meets Austinites' needs. Imagine Austin specifically identifies the physical environment as an important component of quality of life.⁹

Other Housing Policy Considerations

None.

Manager's Signature Marla Torrado

Citations

1. [2021 San Antonio Property Maintenance Code, 402.1](#). Development Services Department, City of San Antonio, TX, 2021.
2. [Code of Ordinances, Chapter 10, Article IX, Division 4, Sec. 10-363 \(f\)](#). City of Houston, TX.
3. [Code of Ordinances, Title 12, Chapter 244, Article VIII, 244.810](#). City of Minneapolis, MN.
4. [Minnesota Administrative Rule 1309.0310](#). Labor and Industry Department, State of Minnesota.
5. [Wisconsin Administrative Code, Adm 92.04](#). Department of Administration, State of Wisconsin.
6. [2021 International Residential Code \(IRC\), R303.1](#). International Code Council, 2021.
7. [City Code, Title 29, Chapter 29.30, 29.30.090](#). City of Portland.
8. *Resolution No. 040115-44*. City of Austin, 2014.
9. [Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan \(2018\). \(p. 84, 172, 194\)](#). City of Austin, 2018.