

Community Engagement Summary: 2024 Technical Code Changes Engagement #1 (IBC & ISPSC)

Overview

The City of Austin updates the technical codes in accordance with the International Code Council (ICC) and International Association of Plumbing & Mechanical Officials (IAPMO) code cycle schedules. The International Codes are the most trusted source of model codes and standards.

In preparation for the adoption of 2024 Technical Codes later this year, DSD provided stakeholder engagement opportunities for updates to the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSC). These codes, along with any needed local amendments, will be reviewed by the Austin City Council prior to adoption.

2024 Technical Code Changes stakeholder engagement opportunities (IBC & ISPSC):

- [Public Input web page](#)
Open to community comments from March 20, 2024 to April 26, 2024.
- [Stakeholder Webinar with Q&A](#)
Tuesday, April 9, 2024 from 11:30 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.

Stakeholders & Advertising

The week of March 25, 2024 an email invitation to participate in the engagements was sent to 3,322 stakeholder email addresses (148 specified stakeholders, 2,750 active building permit holders, and 528 pool permit holders; note: discrepancy due to duplicate removal). The engagement opportunities were also included in the January, February, and March 2024 Building Connections external e-newsletter; each issue was sent to between 5,655 and 5,726 subscribers. Additionally, the engagements were included in the internal e-newsletter, the DSD Insider, in January and March 2024 and were posted on the DSD Events Calendar webpage in March 2024. A bilingual (English and Spanish) social media post was published on Facebook (891 followers) and Instagram (464 followers) on March 29.

Feedback Summary

In total, 200 community members participated in the first round of engagement for the 2024 Technical Code Changes which focused on the IBC and ISPSC.

[The Public Input Web Page](#)

Open to community comments or questions from March 20 to April 26, 2024, the IBC page received 901 views and 172 comments. During that same comment period, the ISPSC page received 74 views and zero comments. The IBC page comments and questions are summarized below.



The overwhelming majority IBC comments were in support of single stair buildings, with only one comment in opposition. The responses could be categorized into several common themes around single stair reform: Support for Single Stair Buildings (159 responses), Safety and Fire Regulations Concerns (68 responses), Affordable Housing Advocacy (65 responses), Efficiency in Floor Plan Utilization (62 responses), and Desire for Family-Friendly Housing Options (18 responses). There were also comments on bedroom window/lighting requirements, dog park drainage, and support for solar readiness.

Edited and condensed for clarity and conciseness, the following points were expressed for each category:

Support for Single Stair Buildings:

- Allow stairs to be exempt from side setback minimums (or to reduce minimums) for stairs.
- Single stair buildings are reasonable, safe, and in accordance with best practices worldwide.
 - Examples cited include New York City, Seattle, San Francisco, BC in Canada, Europe, Germany, Switzerland, East Asia, Japan.
- Single stair buildings can look visually appealing in contrast to massive apartment blocks which are often considered an aesthetic eyesore.
- This reform would help create a diversity of housing types, allowing for harmonious architectural forms within the neighborhoods the buildings are raised in.
- Increased density via single stair design can increase the use of public transportation, improve walkability, and foster a sense of community.

Safety and Fire Regulations Concerns:

Opposing Commentary:

- I hope you don't consider changes that negatively impact safety like single stair "reform".

Supportive Commentary:

- Modern fire safety comes almost entirely from better materials and sprinkler systems; two staircases are no longer needed.
- Most other developed countries allow similar (single-stair) structures with better fire safety outcomes than in the US.

- Statistics from Seattle and BC in Canada show that single stair buildings are safer than the currently allowed double loaded corridor buildings since they allow residents to be closer to the exit stairwell and modern technology for sprinklers and fire-resistant materials has advanced.
- Single stair buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves.
- Support for single staircase by height:
 - "...up to 6 floors, as it is just as safe as two staircases..."
 - "...for three story residential scale housing."
 - "...up to 5 stories with up to 4 dwelling units in a 6 or 7 story building."
 - "...ideally as tall as 10 stories."

Affordable Housing Advocacy:

- Single-stair buildings allow for the creation of more affordable housing and increased density.
- The two-stairwell requirement is one of the biggest barriers to affordable, small scale missing middle housing due to cost and space requirements.
- Reducing the requirement to a single stairwell in apartment buildings can significantly lower construction costs and expedite development.
 - Single stair multifamily homes can be up to \$20,000 cheaper per unit.
- Single-stair buildings allow more affordable development and increased developability/more efficient land use of odd/smaller/narrower lot sizes in urban settings.
 - Single-stair, multi-unit buildings allow for a greater diversity of housing options. It creates more housing where buildings can currently be built and enables buildings to be built where currently they are unprofitable or inconvenient.
- In order to increase density *without* having to rezone for mixed-use/mid-rise apartments, single stair reform would allow local homeowners to establish their own density. This would also allow the gradual conversion of single-family home lots into multi-level multiple family units.
- If single stair reform also changes the ADA requirement for an elevator for any construction above 3 floors, it would allow for housing to be built without the cost of an elevator. To accommodate for people with disabilities, the 1st floor could be accessible.
- With the centralized ownership & management of gigantic block buildings, I worry they are yet another small nudge leading us to increasing inequality.
- Enable private citizens to build 2 to 5 story apartment buildings with a single stair so we aren't completely reliant on developers to get enough land to build a massive (and usually unaesthetic) apartment building.
- Single stair reform and allowing up to 8 units in the IRC would help make small multifamily housing projects much more feasible.

Efficiency in Floor Plan Utilization:

- Single-stair buildings result in small-scale apartment buildings with better ventilation and daylighting, more effective floor plans, greater variety of floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. They can also feature more outdoor access per unit.

- According to The American Institute of Architects (AIA), single staircase buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots.
- Single Point Access gives increased flexibility to the types of buildings that can be built and removes unnecessary regulation that curtails housing production.

Desire for Family-Friendly Housing Options:

- Single-stair buildings allow for the creation of more family-friendly housing.
- I have siblings that live in fantastic pre-war apartment buildings with spacious and livable layouts made possible by single stair. They have been able to grow in place (i.e. have kids without moving to the suburbs) because of the family size apartments you can do with single stair.

Support for Solar:

- I support provisions to mandate solar ready homes and building whereby the builder must install conduit from the breaker panel/ electrical room to the roof. I would like to see all new home construction require solar panels. The Texas electrical grid growth necessary to meet demand is increasing at an alarming rate. If all new construction had solar, we could impact the Texas grid and reduce dependency on carbon fuels.

Regarding Section 1204.1:

- Can the language “intended for human occupancy” be modified to refer to “habitable space”, which is defined in Chapter 2 to exclude bathrooms/closets/halls/etc., for greater clarity regarding what spaces need natural light and which do not?
- **Regarding Section 1204.1 exception 2:** the comma after “70 square feet” needs to go after the “or less”.
 - Requiring natural light for any room greater than 70 sq ft may limit developing dense multifamily housing on tight sites with limited perimeter glazing available. Is there any way, particularly for high-rise multi-family developments, to maintain the priority of sleeping and living spaces being provided with natural light, while allowing other habitable spaces with less priority for natural light (such as cooking/eating spaces, home offices, etc.) to be excluded? For example, kitchens often are located away from exterior walls and near the building core in high rises due to connecting mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) services back to the core.

Sections 1204.2.2 through section 1204.5:

- appear to match the 2021 IBC base code. Should that language as an amendment be removed?

Dog Park Drainage:

- Can the requirements for overhead cover and drainage connections below an above-grade exterior animal gathering areas (dog parks) please be clarified with a City of Austin amendment? Design teams seem to be regularly surprised during permitting when dog parks are required to

be located fully under cover to prevent rainfall landing in the animal area and then have its drainage area routed separately from the other above-grade exterior areas.

Stakeholder Webinar with Q&A

28 stakeholders attended the Tuesday, April 9, 2024 Stakeholder Webinar which took place from 11:30 a.m. – 12:05 p.m. The engagement began with a presentation and slide deck which reviewed the proposed code amendments, language, and meaning, starting with the IBC and followed by the ISPSC. The presentation was followed by about 5 minutes of Question & Answer (Q&A), during which two stakeholder questions were raised. Attendees were invited to ask verbal or written questions which were answered by Subject Matter Experts on staff.

Feedback Compilation

The following pages include the entirety of the community feedback received from Public Input as well as the Q&A Summary for the Webinar Engagement.

2024 Technical Code Changes Webinar #1
Question/Comment Summary
April 9, 2024



Question/Comment:
Regarding the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSC), what State Law is requiring the code to be adopted?
Response:
Please find the respective Texas Law (Health and Safety Code) and code (TAC, Title 5) regarding the ISPSC adoption. HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE CHAPTER 341. MINIMUM STANDARDS OF SANITATION AND HEALTH PROTECTION MEASURES (texas.gov) Health and Safety Code, Sec 341.0645(a)(2) Pool Safety Microsoft Word - 25 TAC Ch 265 Sub L.doc (texas.gov) Ch 265.181(b) Adoption by Reference The City of Austin (the local regulatory authority) is required to adopt standards which are no less stringent than the 2021 ISPSC, which is the version of the code adopted by the state.

Question/Comment:
Are there updated timelines for when the International Building Code (IBC) amendments will be adopted, and when they will go into effect?
Response:
The schedule that we have so far, which you can find on our Public Input webpage (https://publicinput.com/w3320) is for all of the technical codes to go to Council in September and for them to be implemented January 1, 2025. There will be other engagements in May, so please stay tuned for more webinars and we will also have an in-person session for the other technical codes that are listed on the Public Input webpage. That is the timeline as of now.

International Building Code (IBC) (2024 Amendments)

Seems like single-stair apartments are a good idea. They've worked just fine in Europe for a century, right? Let's get some smaller, more affordable, more unique options around here. We have enough Greystars and AMLIs.

2 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves. And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

2 days ago

Please make this sensible change to the building code so smaller apartment buildings can be developed to fit more people and larger families. The people in the city need more housing. Don't let Austin turn into an endless, sprawling metropolis. Enable private citizens to build 2 to 5 story apartment buildings with a single stair so we aren't completely reliant on developers to get enough land to build a massive (and usually unaesthetic) apartment building.

2 days ago

Please allow for this change as it will help make housing cheaper.

2 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency.

According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves.

And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

Let us go up to 6 stories with a single stair!

2 days ago

Please update the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process to allow them in all building types. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency.

According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves.

And most importantly, single stair housing improves affordability of housing and other developments! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

If you want to learn more about single-stair, here are some great resources!

- Why North America Can't Build Nice Apartments (because of one rule) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRdwXQb7CfM>

- The Single-Staircase Radicals Have a Good Point: A surprising theory of what's wrong with North American apartment buildings. <https://slate.com/business/2021/12/staircases-floor-plan-twitter-housing-apartments.html>

2 days ago

Please allow this change. We need denser smaller buildings.

2 days ago

Please review egress requirements to allow buildings to have a single staircase up to 6-10 floors above grade. This would unlock vast quantities of infill development and far more livable, affordable, and family-friendly apartments. It does not compromise safety, as countries that currently allow single-stair buildings up to 6-10 floors have fewer fire-related deaths than the US and Canada.

2 days ago

Allow single stair buildings!

2 days ago

Regulations requiring multiple staircases, while well meaning in the name of safety, can be removed for the sake of improving our buildings without any impact to building safety. It will open up amazing opportunities for developers to build better buildings and unit floor plans while keeping our buildings just as safe.

2 days ago

Please consider allowing single staircase buildings to promote the building of smaller apartment buildings

2 days ago

I'm writing in favor of the changes to the IBC to allow single stair buildings in the revision process. I think that the change would allow for more types of housing to be built, types of housing that already exist in other places in the world like Switzerland, but also other places in the US like Seattle. The changes would allow for more efficient use of floor space, and for more housing, and will help with affordability. I don't think that these changes would be detrimental in any way, even safety wise - single stair buildings have been built in other places and they have shown themselves to be just as safe as any other kind of building. I urge the city council to accept the proposed changes.

2 days ago

I strongly support the loosening of height restrictions on single-stair apartments. Single-stair apartments are invaluable for making more efficient use of a residential building's space as cutting out extra staircases eliminates the need for hallways. This allows rooms and units to have better lighting and ventilation and makes it easier to build more multi-bedroom units with windows in each room. Additionally single-stair apartments have a smaller footprint which allows more housing to be built in a given area which is crucial to helping alleviate Austin's housing affordability crisis. Building more housing close together also helps improve walkability and foster a sense of community. Think about the walk-up apartments you see in NYC. You probably find them charming and by loosening single-stair height restrictions, we can have more of these in Austin. Making it easier to build single-stair apartments will have untold benefits for Austin and I strongly implore the city council to support these changes

2 days ago

Please make single stair buildings legal. Apartments can be much more pleasant to live in than they are today, and we can do it without sacrificing fire safety.

2 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the 2024 DSD IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (AKA single stair) result in housing with better daylighting, better ventilation, more efficient floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. They also increase opportunities for small property owners, homeowners, small developers, community land trusts, and coops to meet today's housing needs.

According to a memo from AIA, such buildings have 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization of the units, and fewer people on the stairs themselves. We need to legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines.

2 days ago

I hope the City of Austin will allow point access block development. I welcome many of the other proposed changes, including but not limited to lowering our minimum lot size and loosening setback and compatibility rules, but I find the exclusion of reforms to our Means of Egress puzzling. Point access blocks would enable cheaper, more energy efficient, and more pleasant living spaces, and would help Austin continue to set itself apart as a leader in affordable and climate-conscious city development.

2 days ago

add single-stair reform please

2 days ago

Can the requirements for overhead cover and drainage connections below an above-grade exterior animal gathering areas (dog parks) please be clarified with a City of Austin amendment? Design teams seem to be regularly surprised during permitting when dog parks are required to be located fully under cover to prevent rainfall landing in the animal area and then have its drainage area routed separately from the other above-grade exterior areas.

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Sections 1204.2.2 through section 1204.5 appear to match the 2021 IBC base code. Should that language as an amendment be removed?

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Regarding Section 1204.1: can the language “intended for human occupancy” be modified to refer to “habitable space”, which is defined in Chapter 2 to exclude bathrooms/closets/halls/etc., for greater clarity regarding what spaces need natural light and which do not?

Regarding Section 1204.1 exception 2: the comma after “70 square feet” needs to go after the “or less”.

Additionally, regarding section 1204.1 exception 2, I appreciate the prioritizing of sleeping rooms and living areas getting natural light; however, if any room greater than 70sqft is going to be required to provide natural light, I am concerned about how this may limit developing dense multifamily housing on tight sites that only have so much perimeter glazing available. Is there any way, particularly for high-rise multi-family developments, to maintain the priority of sleeping and living spaces being provided with natural light, while allowing other habitable spaces with less priority for natural light (such as cooking/eating spaces, home offices, etc.) to be excluded? For example, kitchens often are located away from exterior walls and near the building core in high rises due to connecting MEP services back to the core.

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2 days ago

I'd like to see single-stair apartment buildings allowed

3 days ago

Yes to single stair reform!

3 days ago

Please consider single-stair reform! Single stair buildings will allow for more housing from a wider variety of developers, as well as lead to more multi-bedroom apartments. Note Seattle's 6 floor single stair apartments that are aesthetically pleasing, safe, and fulfilling to live in.

3 days ago

I am an Austin renter who would love to see units in single-staircase buildings become available.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots in our city.

Single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive & harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines & unlock such "missing middle" housing in Austin.

3 days ago

One staircase is plenty. Legalize housing.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single-stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our city.

Single-stair housing is key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" housing in Austin.

3 days ago

Austin should allow single stair buildings with sprinkler systems in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision. Sprinklers are a far more effective fire safety measure than permanently allocating space to hallways that constrain site usage and impede the building of family sized apartment floorplans.

3 days ago

Please significantly loosen the requirement for two stairwells. Improvements in fire safety and materials mean that at many sizes where two stairwells are currently required, only one is necessary. Raise the limit on how large/tall a unit can be before needing a second stairwell. This is important to lowering the cost of constructing housing and to incentivizing and enabling construction on smaller lots.

3 days ago

Single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. Single stair results in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency.

Such buildings achieve 95% efficiency (source AIA) for floor plans, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. This will unlock "missing middle" developments across Austin.

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process.

Want to see this perspective better? please check out this video:
Why North America Can't Build Nice Apartments (because of one rule)
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRdwXQb7CfM>)

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves. And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

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Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves. And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin

3 days ago

Please legalize single stair apartment buildings.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Small-lot multifamily typologies would be a step towards more equitable access to housing throughout the city; they offer more innate charm for neighborhoods and closer-knit community for residents than the big blocks that are loaded down with multiple stairways and that give multifamily development a bad name.

3 days ago

Please legalize single-stair apartments in Austin to allow more and more affordable housing.

3 days ago

I write to encourage the City of Austin making single stair buildings allowed & practical as part of the 2024 IBC revision process. I recently visited my family in Seoul, South Korea, where they live in a tall, gleaming new condo building served by a single staircase. This design allowed for a truly remarkable living space, with windows on three walls, allowing abundant light and air. Nothing like that is allowed to be built here, and after experiencing it first-hand I think we are much the poorer for it in quality of life and housing availability. A second, less important reason I request this change is because the space requirements of the two-stair rule is part of what pushes so much of the new construction to be gigantic block buildings, which I find aesthetically an eyesore compared to if the block were full of more diverse but narrower buildings, and with the centralized ownership & management of these vast buildings, I worry they are yet another small nudge leading us to increasing inequality.

3 days ago

Please consider incorporating changes to the guidelines concerning single-stair buildings in the upcoming 2024 IBC revisions for the City of Austin. Point Access Blocks, commonly known as single-stair buildings, provide numerous advantages over typical multifamily constructions in the U.S., including superior daylighting, enhanced ventilation, more efficient floor layouts, larger apartments, and improved energy efficiency. According to an AIA memo, these structures achieve a 95% efficiency in floor plate utilization, enabling the creation of roomier living spaces and optimized usage of smaller urban lots. Additionally, single-stair buildings potentially offer increased safety benefits due to the shorter distance from apartments to the stairwell, enhanced compartmentalization, and reduced stairwell congestion. Crucially, the affordability of housing is significantly impacted; the requirement for a second staircase escalates costs and complicates the development of small-footprint, multifamily rental properties. We advocate for the full legalization of this building typology in the revised IBC guidelines to facilitate the emergence of 'missing middle' housing developments throughout Austin.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves. And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

3 days ago

Would like to see an expansion to single stair apartment/condos on small lots. Like we used to have before outlawing single stair buildings.

Also would like to see provisions to mandate solar ready homes and building where by the builder must install conduit from the breaker panel/ electrical room to the roof. Would like to see mandate all new home construction to require solar panels. Texas electrical grid growth to meet demand in the next few years is going up at alarming rate. If all new construction had solar, we could impact the Texas grid and reduce dependency on carbon fuels.

3 days ago

Hi!
I'm excited to share to my comments on the proposed IBC changes!

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency.

According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves.

And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

3 days ago

This is a good idea, more flexibility in how buildings are able to be constructed will benefit the city immensely.

3 days ago

Please! Would love an open cozy apartment with a shared staircase with my neighbors!!

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. We need "missing middle" housing, and cities like Seattle and New York have demonstrated that these types of buildings are effective and safe.

3 days ago

Dear Members of the Austin City Council,

I'm Kevin Kipp, a resident of Austin, TX, and I'm writing to ask for your consideration of an important update in our building codes as you revise the International Building Code (IBC) for 2024. Specifically, I would like the council to endorse regulations that promote the development of single stair buildings, or Point Access Blocks, in our city.

In my research, and in supporting documentation from the AIA, it's clear that these types of buildings not only make better use of our urban space but also provide numerous benefits. They offer improved daylighting, ventilation, and floor plan efficiency, delivering up to 95% efficiency for floor plates. This leads not only to more spacious living environments but also significantly better energy efficiency.

Furthermore, the safety benefits of single stair buildings include shorter escape routes in emergencies and less congestion on escape routes due to fewer residents using a single stairway. Additionally, these building types help reduce construction costs, making housing more affordable by eliminating the need for a second staircase, which often makes smaller, multifamily developments financially unfeasible.

I believe that adapting our building regulations to support single stair buildings is crucial. It will unlock potential for the 'missing middle' housing that is much needed in Austin, aiding our efforts in making living in the city more affordable and sustainable.

Thank you for considering this critical adjustment to our building codes. I look forward to seeing our city lead by example in housing innovation.

Best regards,

3 days ago

Remove outdated code amendments that require two enclosed stairs for all multi unit residential buildings.

3 days ago

I am writing to encourage a code update around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process in line with what other cities in the US and globally have done.

Single-stair developments offer our city such a chance to improve density and quality of life, not to mention safety and affordability.

Please create new policy that legalizes this typology in the revised IBC guidelines and unlock "missing middle" developments.

3 days ago

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And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots in our city.

3 days ago

I wholeheartedly endorse changes to the code which will allow more single stair access to multi-unit dwellings.

This sort of reform is already common in Seattle, where the code allows single stair buildings up to 6 stories. Critically, that change has no impact on fire safety: death rates from fires in these multi-unit developments is no different in Austin vs Seattle.

Critically though, this reform will allow Austin to build more 2, 3, and 4 bedroom multi-family units, allowing families and cohabitants to have a greater choice of choosing the spaces where they live!

3 days ago

I support the "single staircase" change to the IBC that you are considering.

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves. And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings.

3 days ago

Single-stair buildings should be included in the 2024 revision process. It is a simple change that will allow greatly increased affordability and efficiency when it comes to Austin housing.

3 days ago

I am a parent of teenagers and this have always required a minimum of 3 bedrooms. My husband and I both work from home and so the layout is critical and a 4th bedroom or office/den would be great. I'm pretty sure I've inventoried every apartment building in this city, and we are woefully deficient in units for families. We don't want a yard and we don't want a house, we want to be in a walkable area for the dog and for errands to support our life with two working parents and a household with 4 independent people who each have their own mobility needs. Additionally I've lived in a large building here and it's such a hassle getting outside. I imagine that access to either of the stairs would be more fraught than in a smaller single stair building.

All research I've read points to this code being outdated and not relevant for use cases of 5-6 floors. I lived through a fire on the other side of the duplex building I grew up in, and the fire department response was amazing and the fire left our connected unit unaffected with building codes from well over 30 years ago. We can absolutely solve this without the tangible and far reaching effects to our choices of living spaces.

3 days ago

Please update the regulations to allow single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. Such buildings can achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates (according to the AIA), resulting in more space for residential units and much better use of smaller lots in our city.

3 days ago

Please ensure that the 2024 IBC revision for the City of Austin includes an update regarding regulations for single stair buildings. Point Access Blocks, also known as "single stair" structures, offer improved daylighting and ventilation, more efficient floor plans, larger units, and enhanced energy efficiency compared to traditional multifamily developments in the United States.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves. And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

3 days ago

Single stair reform is needed in Austin so we can build apartments with more airflow and sunlight.

3 days ago

I am writing to express support for including updates to the code that would allow for the construction of single-stair buildings in Austin. Allowing this additional flexibility would provide additional tools for builders to use in providing new housing affordability. This style of construction has reliably delivered cost-effective and safe housing in many other locations around the world.

3 days ago

I would like to express support for the idea of single staircases in many apartment buildings. The requirements for multiple staircases were more related to a time before. We had a great deal of fire conditioning and buildings that is no longer the case. They also Force less than ideal land use. We can get more interesting, better aerated apartments with this change.

3 days ago

I am in favor of the proposed change which would allow better living conditions at a more affordable cost with a positive impact to fire safety.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves. And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

3 days ago

I'd like to offer my support for "single stair reform". As I understand it, it creates more housing where buildings can currently be built and enables buildings to be built where currently they are unprofitable or inconvenient. All this at a minimal increase in fire risk. And we've dramatically improved fire risk by other means over the last few decades, such as by the materials used.

3 days ago

Writing in support of single-stair multifamily buildings.

3 days ago

Please allow more and taller single-stair buildings! Single-stair buildings are a win over current designs in livability, cost, safety, and more. Also, Austin could use more family-friendly apartments, and single-stair will make it a lot easier to build them!

3 days ago

Please allow single-stair buildings in Austin. Very good idea.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency.

According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves.

And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

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3 days ago

Good day, I am writing to express my support of reforms that would allow for Point Access or "single stair" apartment buildings. This change is key to affordability, meeting our climate goals as a city, and promoting livable, pleasant spaces. Modern building design and modern fire prevention systems are more effective than requiring large buildings with corridors and several stairwells, and it's time we legalize single-stair design and construction to solve our missing-middle housing problems and affordability issues. Thank you!

3 days ago

Legalize single-stairway apartment buildings!!!!

Single stair designs unlock tons of neighborhood-friendly multifamily designs that are impossible in our city today. Smaller footprints, more open designs, density without massive apartment blocks!!

Ignore the fire-worrywarts, there is zero evidence that these designs are more dangerous, only "vibes". Please make decisions based on data.

3 days ago

Hi, AURA is a really bad organization led by horrible people; but please allow single stair building code updates despite the fact that AURA is for it.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency.

According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves.

As importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

As a practicing architect in Austin, I believe this would unlock an incredible amount of positive opportunities for infill housing developments in Austin.

3 days ago

Single stair buildings are fire safe and create better designs that allow us to house more people in each building. Please allow this change.

3 days ago

I am a huge fan of single-stair/single loaded corridor construction. The benefits, as have been shown in other places where it is incorporated into the code, are enormous and would help fix many of the current restrictions on housing development imposed by a faux sense of safety in said outdated code. Please consider this change!!!

3 days ago

Please allow single stair buildings.

3 days ago

I am in favor of removing the requirement that buildings higher than 2 stories have multiple stairways. I think this doesn't have a significant effect on fire prevention in our modern age with sprinklers and better fire resistant materials and places significant restraints on smaller builders or construction on smaller lots.

3 days ago

Allow single stair buildings! The more variety of buildings that are able to be built, the better buildings can suit their environment, and more effective multi family housing options can be available.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves. And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin. Thank you!

3 days ago

I support the single stair change for multifamily buildings. It would greatly help with affordability and density in the city.

3 days ago

In the 2024 IBC revision process for the City of Austin, an update regarding regulations on single stair buildings is imperative. These structures, known as Point Access Blocks, offer numerous advantages over conventional multifamily developments in the U.S. They facilitate improved daylighting, ventilation, floor plan efficiency, larger unit sizes, and enhanced energy efficiency.

According to a memo issued by AIA, such buildings boast an impressive 95% efficiency for floor plates. This efficiency allows for the creation of more spacious residential units and enables better utilization of smaller lots within our urban core. Additionally, single stair buildings may enhance safety by reducing the distance from units to stairs, promoting compartmentalization, and decreasing foot traffic on staircases.

Of utmost significance, embracing single stair housing is crucial for affordability. The inclusion of a second staircase elevates unit costs and complicates the development of small-footprint, multifamily rental properties. It is essential to fully endorse this typology in our revised IBC guidelines to unlock the potential for "missing middle" developments throughout Austin.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency.

According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves.

And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

3 days ago

Please revise the code to allow single staircase apartment buildings as is done in other developed countries.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency.

According to a memo from AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units and better use of smaller lots in our urban core. And such buildings may be safer due to shorter distance from the unit to the stairs, compartmentalization, and fewer people on the stairs themselves.

And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

3 days ago

This will unlock so much building potential for Austin. PLEASE pass this code change.

3 days ago

Howdy,

I think the building code needs to be amended to allow point access blocks (single stair buildings) for buildings ideally as tall as 10 stories. We should look to cities like Seattle (legalized 6 stories) and BC in Canada (going to legalize 8-12).

3 days ago

The proposal to allow single stair access building should be adopted - this sort of construction using modern methods is not shown to be less safe than the status quo in other jurisdictions where it has been the norm, and it would enhance the forms available to build in ways that are both economically and aesthetically advantageous.

3 days ago

Fully support denser development options.

3 days ago

Legalize single stair buildings

3 days ago

These sound wonderful for building up areas for new homes.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots in our city.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Compared to typical multifamily development in the U.S., Point Access Blocks (aka "single stair") result in housing with better daylighting and ventilation, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency.

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And most importantly, single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive and harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to fully legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines and unlock such "missing middle" developments across Austin.

3 days ago

Single stair housing is one key to enable affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive & harder to develop on small infill lots, multifamily rental buildings. We need to legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines & unlock such "missing middle" housing in Austin

3 days ago

I am in favor of the single stair reform to make infill multi family development more affordable and feasible.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots in our city.

Thanks!

3 days ago

This is a request to allow an amendment to IBC to allow for single stair apartment buildings

3 days ago

Please include single-stair reform in this round of code changes. Housing is still too expensive in Austin and antiquated regulations are the root cause.

3 days ago

I support single stair reform in sprinklered multifamily and mixed use buildings of 6 stories or less

3 days ago

I support these changes.

3 days ago

We need single stair reform!

3 days ago

Single staircase ra ra ra

3 days ago

I believe Houston needs to make changes such as this one in order to unlock more housing for people. More housing supply will further drive rents / costs down in a way that benefits folks.

3 days ago

I support the code changes

3 days ago

Would love to see an amendment allowing single stair buildings! Would bring much needed housing in a classic neighborhood style, and the data shows, with no compromise to safety!

3 days ago

Hi,

I'm an electrician and I've worked in construction for 11 years. There's no good reason why single stair apartment buildings should be banned and countless reasons why they should be allowed.

Please, make this change.

Thank you

3 days ago

Single stair - yes please! I have siblings that live in fantastic pre-war apartment buildings with spacious and livable layouts made possible by single stair. They have been able to grow in place (ie have kids without moving to the suburbs) because of the family size apartments you can do with single stair. It's for real! I would love that here.

3 days ago

Please update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots in our city. This makes better looking buildings, lowers construction prices, and makes better apartments and condos than the motels and double-loaded corridors we have now. Thank you!

3 days ago

Single stair building reform would open up the doors to more housing types! Would love to see these pop up in my neighborhood than the blocky apartment buildings and parking garages i see everywhere!

3 days ago

Please support modern and safe single stair designs to allow for affordable housing for all!

3 days ago

Reducing the requirement to a single stairwell in apartment buildings can significantly lower construction costs and expedite development, making housing more affordable and accessible in Austin. This change in city code can directly address the urgent need for increased housing supply, thereby alleviating the housing crisis facing our rapidly growing city.

3 days ago

Allow single staircase in apartment buildings up to 6 stories.

3 days ago

I support one stair way reform!

3 days ago

Please consider allowing single stair multi-unit buildings. This allows for a greater diversity of housing options and more efficient land use as opposed to double stairwell corridors. Odd or small lot sizes can then be utilized and put to work housing our neighbors. Thank you.

3 days ago

I hope that the City Council will bring it's fire code in-line with the basic and quality standards already used in regions like Europe and Japan and legalize single stair, single entry multi-family homes and apartments. As a resident of District 5 I think building smaller condo or apartment buildings as they do in Germany or Seattle is good for residents and there is no safety justification for banning them.

3 days ago

I want expanded options for single stair housing!

3 days ago

Please work to add single stair provisions to the building code, to enable point access blocks that allow our apartments to be bigger, brighter, and cheaper. Seattle and New York City already do this, as do most other countries globally. The fire safety concerns have been addressed in those jurisdictions and they can be addressed here as well. These outdated dual egress requirements force costly hallways and low quality floor plans on renters throughout Austin and right now we have the chance to change that for future buildings.

3 days ago

Please make it easier and cheaper to build by allowing buildings with just one stair.

3 days ago

Allowing single stair reform would unlock tons of housing for Austin. It would add some badly needed density and infill to solve the housing crisis. Not only that, but it will significantly make Austin more beautiful and a better place to live.

3 days ago

Single stair now!

3 days ago

Please provide expanded options for single stair buildings in Austin

3 days ago

Ten-year resident here, I'm very interested in seeing expanded options for single-stair buildings here in Austin!

3 days ago

Please amend the code to allow for single-stair multifamily housing to be built. These building types are great for increasing density throughout the city.

John, 78702

3 days ago

I'm in favor of single stair buildings up to six stories.

3 days ago

I support amending to code to allow single stair buildings

3 days ago

please legalize single stair buildings!

3 days ago

Please legalize single stair buildings as these will unlock so many highly functional form factors and will greatly help with urban residential infill development

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots in our city. Single stair housing is the key to affordability! A second staircase makes units more expensive & harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines & unlock such "missing middle" housing in Austin. This would bring Austin's code in line with Seattle, New York, and global best practices. Countries in Europe and East Asia where single-stair buildings are common see fewer fire deaths than the United States, partly because those buildings have to meet higher safety standards. We can adopt similar requirements to unlock the benefits of single stair building without sacrificing fire safety.

This one, small, technical change could make Austin's apartments cheaper, brighter, and bigger.

3 days ago

Please expand options for single stair buildings Austin

3 days ago

These amendments are important

3 days ago

I hope you don't consider changes that negatively impact safety like single stair "reform".

3 days ago

Single stair reform will enable lots more construction, and it should be appropriate for modern construction with smoke detectors and sprinklers. Please pass it!

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots in our city

3 days ago

We need an update that makes single stair case buildings legal in Austin. This will help unlock less expensive housing.

3 days ago

I support reforming our codes to allow single stair buildings up to six stories like Seattle and many other cities around the world. This would help enable more housing construction which we urgently need.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots in our city.

A second staircase makes units more expensive & harder to develop small-footprint, multifamily rental buildings. We need to legalize this typology in our revised IBC guidelines & unlock such "missing middle" housing in Austin.

3 days ago

Please legalize single stair buildings as they are proven to be just as safe as double corridor loaded buildings. This reform would help decrease construction costs and also create harmonious architectural forms with the neighborhoods the buildings are raised in. I'm in austin as a renter and long time resident. Double loaded corridor apartments are more often than not poorly designed and cumbersome to renters bc of the additional walking around the complex that needs to be made for them. Thank you

3 days ago

I would love to see Single Stair/Point Access be allowed for buildings higher than 3 stories. Other cities in North America now allow this for buildings up to 6 stories! This allows for more efficient building and unit layouts, higher density on smaller lots, and is overall a benefit for diverse housing typologies.

3 days ago

Revising the code to allow for single staircase homes will allow for more homes plus greater density in areas. These buildings will make housing more affordable for residence and are more sustainable for cities...

3 days ago

I am in support of these changes to allowing single stair buildings. This will enable more affordable apartments and housing by wasting less space and expense on staircases.

3 days ago

I'm writing to support the inclusion of reforms allowing taller single stair buildings. The ability to build taller buildings with only one stairwell/elevator would open up many new housing opportunities around the country, including in my home town where I work on housing and urban development issues. Outdated requirements that force buildings over a few stories to include corridors connecting multiple points of egress make it much harder to build on small lots and limit the quality of housing.

3 days ago

As Austin is growing city and more people move in due to the booming industries and jobs it has to offer, we must quickly add density to areas that might not have seen it before. In order to do this WITHOUT having to massively rezone for mixed-use/mid-rise apartments, this reform would allow local homeowners to establish their own density within their community. This would also allow the gradual conversion of single family home lots into multi level multiple family units. Assuming that this also changes the ADA requirement for an elevator for any construction above 3 floors, this would allow for lots of housing to be built without having the cost of an elevator, and in order to accommodate for disabled persons, the 1st floor could be accessible. Single stair buildings can also look visually appealing, as most new single stair buildings within Seattle, NYC, San Fran, etc. all add the needed density while contributing to the coziness and character of the neighborhoods. It also increases bus ridership! Thank you for reading this, I do hope that this change happens so we can start to see gradual intensification of neighborhoods that need it.

3 days ago

Allow for single stair apartment buildings.

3 days ago

Approve the changes.

Pretty Please?

It would be nice for Austin to have more resources to finally catch up with the rest of the world. At the very least, the city will be leading the United States in housing options and availability.

Plus the Single Stair Reform does look very very appealing.

3 days ago

I'm writing from the single-stair apartment building where I live in New York City, in support of changes to bring Austin's building code in line with global standards and allow single-exit multifamily buildings with strict floor area limits up to six stories. New York City has allowed this for decades, and has built over 4,000 single-exit multifamily buildings between 4 and 6 stories since the introduction of the sprinkler requirement around 2000. The buildings are the only efficient way to build on the city's many 25'x100' lots, and anecdotally, apartments built in them tend to be more affordable than those in larger double-loaded corridor buildings. As Austin densifies grapples with the same affordability challenges that NYC has for years, I think single-exit buildings could be a solution to the problem of growing unaffordability for family-sized units in particular, which are difficult to deliver in double-loaded corridor buildings.

While FDNY does not keep any records on fires in single-exit buildings specifically, I am not aware of any fire fatalities in such buildings related to the lack of a second exit. If anybody has any questions about the experience in NYC, please reach out (stephen@centerforbuilding.org). I am currently working on a fire loss history for the city, and would be happy to share my findings in a few months when I have them.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. According to AIA, such buildings achieve 95% efficiency for floor plates, allowing for more spacious residential units & better use of smaller lots in our city.

3 days ago

Please include an amendment that would allow a single stair to serve up to five stories with up to four dwelling units in a six or seven story building.

3 days ago

Please allow single stair buildings. Modern fire prevention methods and technology no longer make a single stair building unsafe. Look to major cities across Europe (and Seattle) for examples. This will unlock so many new styles of housing, especially small multi family buildings.

3 days ago

The inclusion of single stair multifamily homes is important. They are an efficient use of our space, and can be \$20,000 cheaper per unit.

3 days ago

Single stair reform and allowing up to 8 units in the IRC would help small multifamily housing projects much more feasible. Thank you.

3 days ago

We need single stair buildings! Will allow more missing middle to be built and center stairwells are beautiful.

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations for single stair buildings in the 2024 IBC revision process. Seattle has made similar adaptations for a very long time without any problems, and most other developed countries allow similar structures with better fire safety outcomes than in the US.

3 days ago

Please provide expanded options for single stair buildings in Austin!

3 days ago

Single stair reform please

3 days ago

Please allow single stair apartment buildings up to six floors. My wife refuses to live in an apartment with the scary double-loaded Shining hallway.

And please allow triplexes and fourplexes to build under the residential code otherwise they are cost prohibitive.

3 days ago

I am 100% for single stair reform! This will greatly benefit the community.

3 days ago

Very excited that Austin is pursuing single stair reform! This should allow condos and apartments with more appealing floor plans

3 days ago

I'm really excited about the idea of single-stair reforms allowing more apartments fit for families!

3 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. We need to unlock more efficient family friendly buildings to increase our housing stock and improve its quality. Other cities in the US allow taller single stair buildings without any adverse impacts. Thanks for your consideration!

3 days ago

Hi, please consider single-stair reform. It could unlock a whole lot of housing while aligning us with many other developed countries

3 days ago

Single stair reform is a much needed tool to solve the housing affordability crisis.

3 days ago

Hello,

I would like to ask that the building code be amended to allow point access blocks (single-stair buildings) for buildings taller than the current limit of 3 stories. Cities such as Seattle have already amended this to be 6 stories, and BC in Canada is looking to go even higher (8-12 stories). The benefits of this would be allowing more affordable development of apartments that can fit in smaller/narrower lots, and higher quality of apartments that can have more bedrooms and windows for a given floor plate/area. In addition, statistics from the example cities I mentioned show that the single stair buildings are actually safer than the currently allowed double loaded corridor buildings since they allow residents to be closer to the exit stairwell and modern technology for sprinklers and fire resistant materials has advanced.

4 days ago

I support the updated technical code changes that will unlock single stair buildings that are common across most parts of the globe. These single stair buildings allow for more family-friendly units to be build with more windows and outdoor access per unit. Single stair buildings also greatly improve the quality of multi-family buildings that can be built on a smaller lot.

4 days ago

I am an attorney and have worked on fire code related issues for 12 years. In my person opinion, Austin should allow single stair building in certain circumstances. Todays modern fire sprinkled buildings are very safe. In addition, single stair buildings make it much easier to have cross ventilation and allow for floor plans with 3+ bedrooms, something much more difficult with double loaded corridors.

4 days ago

Single stair reform is key to keeping up with the growth our city is experiencing! This would allow for significant business opportunities and open more avenues to make Austin a more affordable cost of living. I'm from Austin and earn above average for my age yet I'm having to seriously consider moving out of Austin when I want to purchase real estate. Not only would it open options for me but many others.

4 days ago

As a small infill developer, the two stairwell requirement is one of the biggest barriers to affordable, small scale missing middle housing due to cost and space requirements. I believe a single stairwell is just as safe for three story residential scale housing and it is allowed in other cities across the country. Please consider allowing it in our code.

4 days ago

In this update please include regulations related to Point Access Blocks (aka single stair buildings.) PACs allow for a larger variety of floor plans, larger units, more natural light, and higher energy efficiency. These days, fire safety comes almost entirely from better materials and two staircases are no longer needed. In fact, the US is an outlier in requiring double stairs to such a degree, even though our fire deaths per 100,000 are actually slightly worse than many other countries (although far better than it used to be.) In short, fire safety no longer comes from double stair requirements and we should remove them, at least for buildings below 6 floors.

4 days ago

Please include an update to the regulations around single stair buildings in the City of Austin 2024 IBC revision process. Single-stair buildings result in small-scale apartment buildings with better ventilation and daylighting, more effective floor plans, larger units, and better energy efficiency. Single-stair buildings would, importantly, allow for the creation of much more family-friendly and affordable housing at a time when housing scarcity has driven families out of Austin and AISD. Single-stair reform is shown to lower building costs with no change in fire safety—it's the key to unlocking family-friendly missing-middle housing in Austin. Let's legalize it in the revised IBC guidelines!

4 days ago

I request expansion of the Single Point Access as an option in our 2024 Technical code update. There is no reason not to. Many other countries and some American cities allow this and we should join them. It's been proven safe and gives so much more flexibility to the types of buildings we can build and removes unnecessary regulation that curtails housing production.

4 days ago

Please allow for more single stair buildings to be built!

4 days ago

Please include single stair buildings - they're great! Many thanks,

13 days ago

Please amend the IBC to allow single-stair access buildings up to at least 6 (six) floors in height. This is a reasonable, safe, proven strategy to increase the developability of small lots in urban settings, and is in accordance with best practices all over the world and, increasingly, the United States. An example of potential language is similar to that in the city of Seattle's local amendments to 2018 IBC section 1006.3.2 "Egress Based on Occupant Load" and section 1006.3.3 "Single Exits."

one month ago

I support provisions for single stair reforms. Please consider allowing stairs to be exempt from side setback minimums (or to reduce minimums) for stairs.

one month ago

Please provide a comment or question about the **Proposed International Building Code (IBC) 2024 Technical Code Changes** in the space below. Please respond by **Friday, April 26, 2024**.

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