City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 26-2952, **Agenda Item #:** 25. 11/5/2026

Posting Language
Set a public hearing to consider an ordinance to amend Article 9 (Property Maintenance Code) of City Code Chapter 25-12 (Technical Codes), to add a new local amendment to the 2024 International Property Maintenance Code to establish an emergency demolition process. (Suggested date: November 19, 2026, at Austin City Hall, 301 W. Second Street, Austin, Texas) Funding: This item seeks an amendment to City Code and has no fiscal impact.

Lead Department
Austin Development Services.

Fiscal Note
This item seeks an amendment to City Code and has no fiscal impact.

For More Information:
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Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:
September 23, 2026 - Approved by the Building and Standards Commission on a 6-1 vote, with Commissioner Martinez voting no. Chair Francis and Commissioner Ibarra were absent.

Additional Backup Information:
Staff developed a process for emergency demolition, which is a proactive mechanism to rapidly address unsafe structures that pose an imminent threat or danger to the community. This process addresses a need for an expedited process to swiftly handle compromised, unstable structures. It protects the public, prevents further damage, improves compliance, reduces repeat service calls, speeds community recovery, and strengthens overall public safety.

This process is reserved for structures that require rapid demolition because of the imminent threat or danger they pose to life and safety. In these circumstances, the City cannot afford to wait to obtain a standard demolition order from the Building and Standards Commission, which involves a lengthy administrative process. Other major Texas cities (e.g., San Antonio, Dallas, and Houston) have long used emergency demolition as a best practice to swiftly address dangerous and unsafe structures.

Austin Development Services established criteria for the building official to rapidly assess structures identified as posing an imminent threat or danger to the community and to order demolition to begin within 96 hours of having determined that a structure qualifies for emergency demolition.

The International Property Maintenance Code establishes minimum standards for the safety and maintenance of existing structures. On April 10, 2025, Council adopted the 2024 edition, with local amendments, to enhance public safety and align with City operational needs. An additional amendment is now proposed to add a process for emergency demolition.

Setting a public hearing is required to comply with state law requirements and ensure transparency prior to Council action on the ordinance.