City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 26-3039, **Agenda Item #:** 85. 11/19/2026

Posting Language
Conduct a public hearing to receive public comment regarding 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. Funding: This item is to receive public comment regarding a possible future amendment to City Code and has no fiscal impact.

Lead Department
Austin Development Services.

Fiscal Note
This item is to receive public comment regarding a possible future amendment to City Code and has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action:
November 5, 2026 - Council set a public hearing to receive public comment regarding the proposed ordinance amending City Code for November 19, 2026 on a 10-0 vote with Council Member Harper-Madison absent.

For More Information:
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Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:
September 23, 2026 - The Building and Standards Commission approved a recommendation to adopt the proposed ordinance 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, 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 is a significantly longer administrative process. Other major Texas cities (e.g., San Antonio, Dallas, and Houston) have long implemented emergency demolition as a best practice to swiftly address 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 an emergency demolition process.

In accordance with state law, Council must take action in three separate meetings to i) set a public hearing to receive public comment regarding the proposed ordinance amending the Property Maintenance Code, ii) conduct the public hearing to receive public comment regarding the proposed ordinance, and iii) vote on adoption of the proposed amendments. Council set the public hearing to receive public comment at its November 5, 2026, meeting, is conducting the public hearing at the November 19, 2026, meeting, and may vote on adoption of the proposed ordinance at a future meeting.

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