Austin's 3-4 Dwellings Ordinance

Austin

Austin Development Services

November 12, 2026

Format for Today's Session

- Presentation followed by question-and-answer session.
- Two ways to participate:
  - Speak by raising your hand on the control panel.
  - Written questions using the Q&A function at the bottom of your screen.



Significant Proposed Code Provisions

Steve Leitch, Deputy Building Official & Chief Plans Examiner

Residential Code Pathway

This ordinance creates a residential code pathway for qualifying three- and four-unit buildings, with specific requirements addressing the additional units.

- Adds Appendix BP for qualifying buildings with three or four attached dwelling units
- Applies two-family dwelling requirements with additional safeguards
- Limits qualifying buildings to 6,000 gross square feet
- Applies to buildings other than townhouses

Fire Protection and Separation

- Allows an NFPA 13D system with some modifications to address Common Egress Spaces, parking spaces and exterior balconies and decks. Requires fire-resistance-rated separation between dwelling units
- Does NOT permit reductions in fire-resistance rated separations based on the presence of the sprinkler system
- Requires interconnected smoke alarms when units are stacked or when there is a Common Egress Space

Common Egress Space

- COMMON EGRESS SPACE: a portion of the means of egress that is a shared space, with or without stairs, that serves more than one dwelling unit.
- Requires a one-hour fire-resistance-rated separation from the remainder of the building
- Requires 45-minute-rated doors at openings to dwelling units and other interior spaces
- Requires gasketed, self-closing, self-latching doors
- Requires shared egress to discharge directly outdoors

Building Configuration and Ongoing Access

- Limits vertical stacking to two dwelling units
- Adds restrictions for habitable attics and occupiable roofs
- Retains structural engineering requirements when applicable
- Requires access agreements for inspection and maintenance of life-safety systems



Q&A

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Thank you!

Submit Feedback

https://publicinput.com/3-4_dwellingcode

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