Emergency Demolition Process

Austin Development Services

December 2, 2026

Emergency Demolition Process

Objective:

Establish a proactive process to rapidly address dangerous structures when immediate action is necessary to protect the community



What Are We Solving For?

The City's standard demolition process is not designed for emergency **situations**.

- Requires extensive interdepartmental coordination
- Requires multiple regulatory and operational approvals
- Relies on a monthly Commission review process
- Delays action on dangerous properties
- Lacks an expedited emergency response pathway
- Takes months to address imminent public safety threats

Expected Outcomes

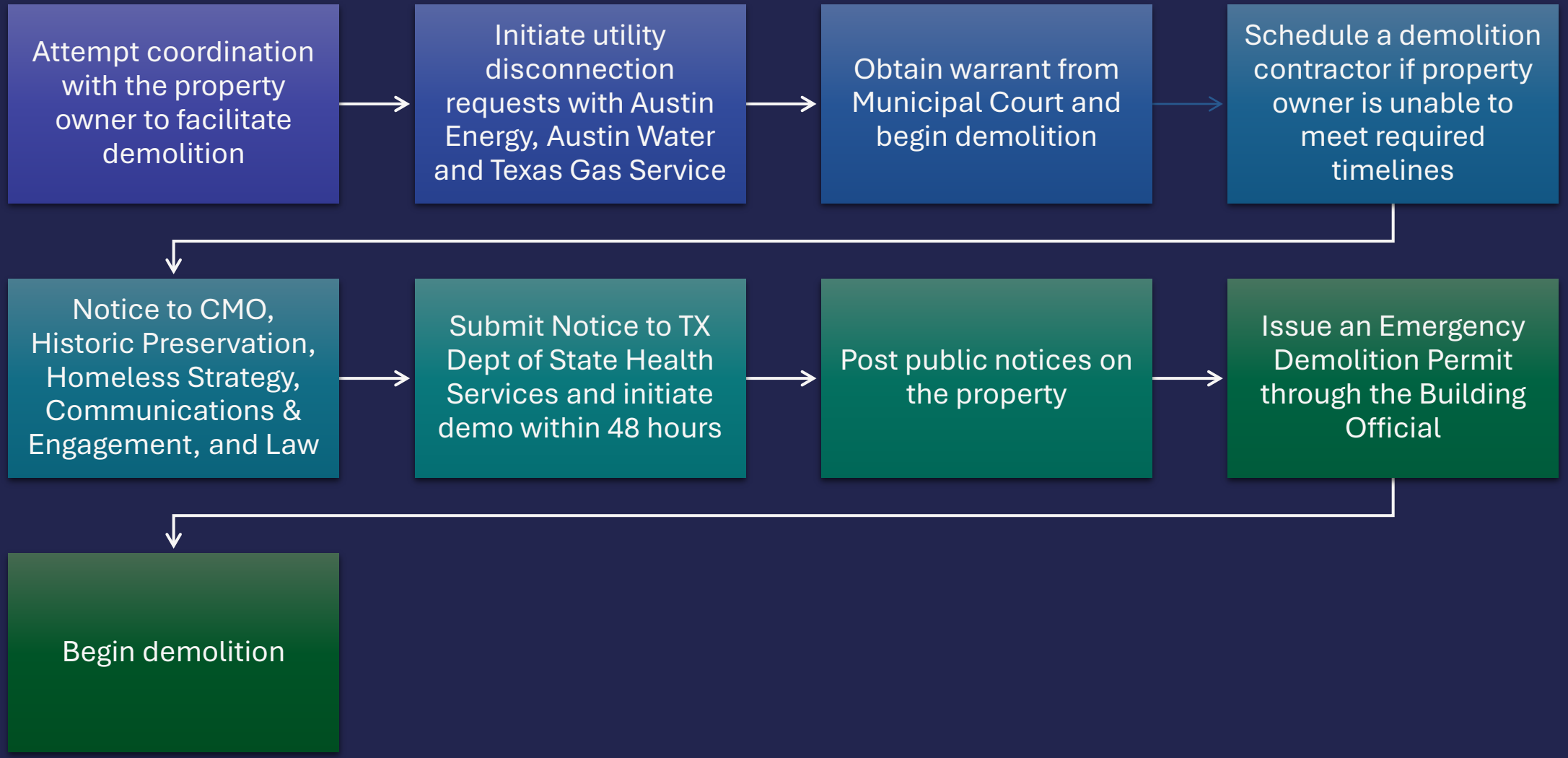
- **Strengthens public safety** through faster responses to dangerous structures, reducing risks to residents and first responders.
- **Accelerates community recovery** by quickly removing hazards and restoring safe conditions.
- **Aligns Austin with other major Texas cities** by adopting established emergency demolition practices



Assessment Process

1. Assigned Code Inspector **identifies a potential emergency demolition** case and notifies the chain of command
2. **Convene the Dangerous Premises Team** to conduct an on-site assessment and determine whether emergency action is warranted
3. Present an **emergency demolition affidavit** to the DSD Director and Building Official for approval and signature
4. **Issue an emergency demolition order** upon confirmation that the property poses an imminent threat to public safety

96-Hour Emergency Response Window

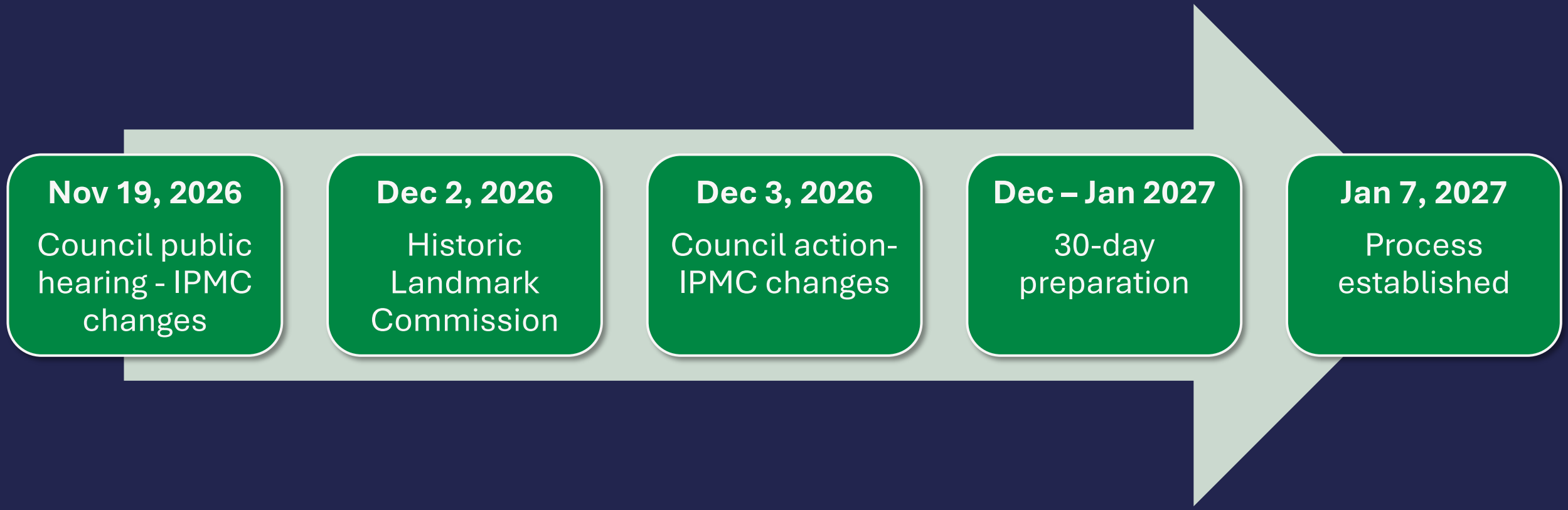


Who Is Involved?

- Austin Development Services
- Austin Fire Department
- Austin Police Department
- Austin Facilities Management
- Austin Water
- Austin Energy
- Texas Gas Service
- Austin Homeless Strategy Office
- Austin Communications and Engagement
- Austin Planning Historic Preservation Office
- Austin City Attorney’s Office
- Austin Resource Recovery

Timeline

Adoption of the required International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) amendments will establish the regulatory foundation for the new emergency demolition process.



2024 International Property Maintenance (IPMC) Code Amendments

2024 International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) Amendment:

Austin

- Proposed amendment adds a Chapter 12 – Emergency Demolition
- Aims to protect public life and safety when unsafe structures pose an imminent threat or danger
- New chapter:
  - Exempts Occupied Structures
  - Assigns implementation, administration and enforcement to the Building Official
  - Requires placarding and internal review prior to emergency demolition
  - Requires emergency demolition to begin no later than 96 hours after the order to demolish is issued

Questions?