

Question/ Comment:

Are General Contractors for commercial projects able to self-assign for Building Permits?

Response:

Yes, as long as they are registered with the Service Center (Building and Trade Contractor Services) and have a linked online user account where all information fields have been completed at the creation of the Building Permit by the respective Intake or Plan Review Division. This service is currently unavailable for Demolition and Relocation permits.

Question/ Comment:

If/when triplexes are allowed on Single Family (SF)-1, 2, and 3 lots, would these be eligible for review with the residential review team?

Response:

Depending on the specific configuration, buildings will be reviewed by the residential team for buildings that are regulated by the International Residential Code, or by the commercial team for buildings that are regulated by the International Building Code.

Question/ Comment:

Will Archistar be used by architects before submitting a permit? Or is it just for the reviewers to use after an application is submitted?

Response:

Archistar's tool would be available for use by both customers and internal staff.

Question/ Comment:

With the emphasis on faster project approvals, is there any discussion about upgrading notification for nearby property owners, residents, or other interested parties?

Response:

There are ongoing discussions about the notification process. The City Council recently voted to reduce the notice distance from those within 500 feet to those within 250 feet. We are also investigating how electronic notification may be utilized. One outcome resulted in the creation of a new notification webpage, and that page now has a link to every notice sent out by the notice team. There are continuing discussions as to what we can do to improve the notice process and enhance efficiency.

Question/ Comment:

For the "Site Plan Lite" via site plan exemption for 3 or 4 dwelling units on a site, where is this noted in the Land Development Code (LDC)? How would one know where to find this exemption? The online Site Plan Application wizard does not provide clarity.

Response:

This code language is located in the Site Plan Exemption provisions in LDC Section 25-5-2(B)(1). The online LDC hosted by Muni Code has not been updated yet, but a link to the adopted ordinance No. 20230720-158 is posted at the beginning of the online LDC under the "Adopted Ordinances Not Yet Codified" section. The inline text should be updated with the next LDC supplement.

Question/ Comment:

Will individual water meters and individual water connections still be required for the new residential units allowed in Single Family zoning?

Response:

Yes, they will still be required. However, depending on the number of bathrooms, services can be shared. For example, a two-inch service line can service up to two one-inch meters at a property with up to eight bathrooms per meter.

Question/ Comment:

Are previous Volume Builder approved plans subject to the new 2023 National Electric Code (NEC)?

Response:

Plans submittal with an "in" date before Nov. 1st will be under the 2020 NEC. Stand-alones and plan review "in" date on Nov. 1st and after will be under the 2023 NEC. What drives code requirements is the date when the Volume Builder Master Plan Review (VBM PR) application is submitted. All permit applications within the VBM PR for a site plan or section/phase of a subdivision will not require applicants update their plans to comply with the new code. However, those prototypes will no longer be good for reuse in newer VBM PRs. Any new site plan/section/phase submitted after the effective date of the 2023 NEC will require new prototypes to be submitted.

Question/ Comment:

Will Subchapter F (commonly referred to as "McMansion") be waived for properties with accessory dwelling units, or only for properties with more than one primary residential unit?

Response:

In the proposed amendments, McMansion standards would apply if there were only one unit on a lot. An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) would be considered a second unit, so McMansion would not apply. Note that the amendments may change during the review and adoption process, so this should not be considered a final answer.

Question/ Comment:

Where do General Contractors for residential projects self-assign for Building Permits? Is this through AB+C portal?

Response:

Yes, General Contractors for residential projects will self-assign for Building Permits via the AB+C portal.

Question/Comment:

On the Site Plan webpage, do you plan to include more detail on each of the initiatives? I have questions on what some of them meant that weren't outlined very clearly in the McKinsey report itself.

Response:

The Site Plan webpage will be updated as needed based on the implementation of any changes.

Question/Comment:

The way Commercial Plan Reviewer consultations are currently being handled it has become common to request a consultation with a reviewer for a specific project's comments during their stated consultation time slot, only to have some other reviewer be assigned to the consultation. This is extremely frustrating for both the customer and the reviewer who knows nothing about the project. What, if anything, is being done to fix this problem? Not being able to discuss comments with the actual reviewer who made the comments just wastes everyone's time.

Response:

We do our best to maintain our consultation schedule. We have 15 reviewers that service both virtual and live customers. Staff are occasionally ill or out on vacation and we try our best to service and reschedule appointments. If you have specific concerns, please direct them to Eliud Buenrostro at eliud.buenrostro@austintexas.gov for Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MEP) disciplines OR Sue Hagerty at sue.hagerty@austintexas.gov for Building Review.

Question/Comment:

When will the residential code amendments go into effect that will reduce the minimum lot size to 2,500 SF, increase max unit count on SF lots, add 3-family residential use and Limiting Sub Ch F to one-dwelling developments?

Response:

The code amendments are being considered in two phases. Three-family use and limiting Subchapter F to developments with only one unit are being considered by the Planning Commission and City Council now, with adoption potentially as early as Dec. 7. Reducing the minimum lot size to 2500 SF won't be considered until Phase 2, possibly in Spring 2024. See our website for more details: <https://publicinput.com/v1473>

Question/Comment:

What about accessory uses listed in 25-2-893 (D) Guest House, 25-2-893 (E) On Site Employee House, and 25-2-901 Accessory Apartments for Seniors and Person with Physical Disabilities? Would the presence of these residential units waive the need to comply with Subchapter F?

Response:

Those uses are proposed to be removed as part of these amendments and would now be counted as second units. See our website for more details about the proposal: <https://publicinput.com/v1473>

Question/Comment:

Does the exterior wall section detail need to be provided to all Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) classes when submitting for a permit or would it only apply for Class "A" projects?

Response:

The exterior wall section or drawing details shall be provided for all (WUI) Proximity Classes. For Class B or C, you may only need to show the wall detail at the roof/eave to adequately demonstrate compliance. For a remodel, you may not need to show a wall section if it does not show modified work.

Question/Comment:

Are residential new construction projects eligible for expedited review if a floodplain review is required?

Response:

Yes, they are. The Floodplain Review Group does not directly participate in the expedited process, however. The Floodplain Review Group's comments are typically obtained through the prerequisite process.

Question/Comment:

Are residential new construction projects eligible for expedited review if a fire review is required?

Response:

Yes, Fire is part of the Expedited Review and included in the residential review process.

Question/Comment:

The Austin City Council is considering eliminating mandatory parking requirements. If council moves forward with eliminating mandatory parking requirements next year, how will it align with the Texas Accessibility Standards, Fair Housing and Americans with Disability Act (ADA)?

Response:

Currently, the council has not adopted this ordinance. The current proposed language includes requiring that all sites continue to comply with their on-site ADA parking requirement based on the old appendix "A" that is currently in the city's Land Development Code. Sites will continue to be required to provide on-site ADA parking even if they don't provide any other parking. Bicycle parking will be assessed the same way.