

Legislation Text

File #: 19-049, **Version:** 1

Presenter/Contact

TJ Grossi, Building Official
(830) 221-4062 - tgrossi@nbtexas.org

SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider approval of the first reading of an ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances Chapter 14 Building Regulations, Chapter 54 Fire Prevention and Protection; Emergency Medical Services, and Appendix D Fee Schedule.

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:

Council District: City-wide

Applicant: City of New Braunfels

Staff Contact: T.J. Grossi, Building Official
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tgrossi@nbtexas.org

Pursuant to City Council adoption in 2015, the City of New Braunfels is currently operating under the 2015 International Building Codes with two exceptions: the 2014 National Electric Code and the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code. The International Code Council (ICC) along with the National Fire Protection Agency has published updated versions of these Codes, a process they complete every 3 years. In an effort to keep the City of New Braunfels construction standards current with the internationally recognized building codes, an amendment to Chapter 14 Building Regulations, Chapter 54 Fire Prevention and Protection; Emergency Medical Services, and Appendix D Fee Schedule is in order. The amendments include adoption of the 2018 International Building Code (IBC), 2018 International Residential Code (IRC), International Plumbing Code (IPC), International Mechanical Code (IMC), International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC), International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC), International Existing Building Code (IEBC), International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), International Private Sewage Code (IPSC), International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSC), International Fire Code (IFC), and 2017 National Electric Code (NEC) with associated amendments as read in Attachment 1.

Within each code there are sections that require words or amounts inserted, which can be seen in the draft ordinance. There are also some amendments within the International Fire Code which the Fire Department has enforced with past adoptions of the IFC; with the exception of the new requirement to retrofit a fire sprinkler system within A2 Occupancies with an occupant load over 300 and the consumption of alcohol. Staff informed each business impacted by this new safety rule. The proposal is to allow the impacted business owners 3 years to come into compliance with this new requirement.

Appendix D would be amended to capture the current Building Valuation Data that is published twice a year. This Data Table provides the average cost of construction per square foot based on use and construction type. Currently, New Braunfels uses the Data Table published in February of 2012. The proposed amendment would change the language of the dated BVD table to the most current, so New Braunfels would continue to capture the most current data without needing to amend the Code of Ordinances.

In addition to adoption of the updated ICC Codes, the proposed amendments better organize all of the building codes within the City's Code of Ordinances. This will improve transparency allowing customers and staff easier access to the code requirements, as well as the information for contractor registrations.

Staff held a meeting with builders and contractors in October, 2018 to discuss the updates. Staff has also had continued conversations with customers, including design professionals and the New Braunfels Builders Association.

ADDRESSES A NEED/ISSUE IN A CITY PLAN OR COUNCIL PRIORITY:

City Plan/Council Priority: Envision New Braunfels Comprehensive Plan	Updating New Braunfels' building codes every three years ensures the most current building standards are adhered to, which makes our communities more resilient, sustainable, safe and livable for generations to come. Action 1.11: Update policies and codes to achieve development patterns that implement the goals of Envision New Braunfels. Action 6.12: Implement measures to maintain an ISO rating of 1 for Fire Protection to ensure the safety of all residents and to keep property insurance rates low.
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FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed amendments as presented, including the aforementioned 3-year grace period for the fire sprinkler system retrofit in A2 Occupancies with an occupant load over 300 and the consumption of alcohol. Updating the Building Codes every three years keeps New Braunfels up to date with building standards and safety, and maintains consistency for the development and contracting community and design professionals, all of whom build in other communities in the region as well.