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**MEETING DATE:** April 2, 2025

**PRESENTED BY:** Xavier Cervantes, Director of Planning

**AGENDA ITEM:** Discussion on proposed amendments to the lot size requirements for the different zoning categories - **Cervantes**

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**NATURE OF REQUEST:**

Project Timeline:

- March 19, 2025 – A directive was given by the City Council to staff to revisit the residential lot size regulations.
- April 2, 2025 – Discussion and possible direction on residential lot size regulations by the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z).
- April 4, 2025 – In accordance with State and local law, notice of required public hearings published in the Progress Times.
- April 16, 2025 – Public Hearing and consideration of amendment to the residential lot size regulations by the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z).
- April 28, 2025 – Public Hearing and consideration of amendment to the residential lot size regulations by the City Council.

Summary:

- Several concerns have been voiced to staff in regards to the residential regulations requirements from developers. Most of the concerns are regarding the width, length and square footage requirements being difficult to comply with especially in the R-1 and R-1A zones.
- In light of those concerns, staff was given a directive by the City Council to revisit the residential regulations and reduce the requirements especially in the R-1 and R-1A zones.
- Staff did a comparison with the City of McAllen and learned that the City of McAllen has less strict requirements in their R-1 zoning. With their new adopted code McAllen only requires 45 feet of lot frontage and 5,000 square feet.
- Mission and Brownsville are the only cities in the Rio Grande Valley that has large lot zoning categories.
- Staff is recommending that modifications be made to the R-1 (Single Family Residential District), R-1A (Large Lot Single Family District), R-1T (Townhouse Residential District), R-3 (Multi-family Residential District), and the R-4 (Mobile & Modular Residential District).
- The Texas legislature is considering SB15 that would prohibit cities from regulating lot sizes in the spirit of providing affordable housing opportunities to Texans.

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**RECORD OF VOTE:**

**APPROVED:**

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**DISAPPROVED:**

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**TABLED:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ AYES

\_\_\_\_\_ NAYS

\_\_\_\_\_ DISSENTING \_\_\_\_\_

# RESIDENTIAL REGULATIONS PROPOSAL

## MISSION RESIDENTIAL REGULATIONS

	R-1	R-1A	R-1T	R-2	R-3	R-4
<b>Lot frontage</b>	<del>60</del> <u>50</u> ft. Internal <del>65</del> <u>55</u> ft. Corner	<del>75</del> <u>65</u> ft. Internal <del>80</del> <u>70</u> ft. Corner	<del>20</del> <u>25</u> ft. Internal 30 ft. Corner	50 ft. Internal 60 ft. Corner	70 ft. Internal 80 ft. Corner	50 ft. Internal 60 ft. Corner
<b>Lot depth</b>	100 ft.	120 ft.	<del>60</del> <u>80</u> ft.	100 ft.	100 ft.	100 ft.
<b>Lot area</b>	<del>6,000</del> <u>5,000</u> sq. ft. Internal <del>7,000</del> <u>5,500</u> sq. ft. Corner	<del>8,500</del> <u>7,800</u> sq. ft. Internal <del>9,000</del> <u>8,400</u> sq. ft. Corner	2,000 sq. ft. Internal <del>3,000</del> <u>2,400</u> sq. ft. Corner	6,000 sq. ft. for single family and duplex; 6,700 sq. ft. for a triplex; 7,800 sq. ft. for a fourplex Corner lots 6,700 sq. ft. for single family and duplex; 7,500 sq. ft. for triplex; 8,200 for fourplex	7,000 sq. ft. Internal 8,000 sq. ft. Corner	5,000 sq. ft. Internal 6,000 sq. ft. Corner
<b>Front setback</b>	20 ft.	<del>25</del> <u>20</u> ft.	<del>10</del> <u>20</u> ft.	20 ft.	<del>30</del> <u>20</u> ft.	15 ft.
<b>Side setback</b>	6 ft. 10 ft. Corner	6 ft. 10 ft. Corner	6 ft. except 0 ft. with fire wall 10 ft. Corner	6 ft. 10 ft. Corner	6 ft. Internal 15 ft. Corner	6 ft. Internal 10 ft. Corner
<b>Rear setback</b>	10 ft.	10 ft.	0 ft.	10 ft.	<del>15</del> <u>10</u> ft.	<del>5</del> <u>10</u> ft.

R-1 Single-family Residential District

R-1A Large Lot Single-family Residential District

R-1T Townhouse Residential District

R-2 Duplex-fourplex Residential District

R-3 Multi-family Residential District

R-4 Mobile & Modular Home Residential District

3/28/25, 2:16 PM

Texas Senate OKs bill to allow smaller homes on smaller lots | The Texas Tribune

## Texas Senate advances bill to allow smaller homes on smaller lots

Lawmakers, who are preempting locals on lot sizes in new subdivisions, have been eyeing ways to allow more homes to be built as the state faces a shortage.

BY **JOSHUA FECHTER** AND **ZACH DESPART** MARCH 19, 2025 8 PM CENTRAL

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The Texas Senate on Wednesday advanced the chamber's signature bill aimed at reining in the state's high housing costs: allowing smaller homes on smaller lots.

Senate Bill 15 — a top priority for Lt. Gov. [Dan Patrick](#), who leads the Senate — would reduce the amount of land cities require single-family homes in new subdivisions to sit on. The idea is to reduce the final cost of new homes by allowing homebuilders to construct smaller homes on smaller lots. The bill cleared the Senate by a 28-3 vote.

"The crisis can be summarized in one stat: the average age of a homebuyer in Texas is 54," said state Sen. [Paul Bettencourt](#), a Houston Republican who authored the bill. "That's a classification ... that's not going to be able to be sustained to help first-time homebuyers."

The bill is part of a slate of proposals aimed at addressing the state's high home prices and rents by allowing more homes to be built. Texas needs about 320,000 more homes than it has, according to one estimate. That shortage helped drive up home prices and rents, housing advocates and experts argue, because the state hasn't built enough homes to meet demand amid the state's economic boom.

State lawmakers are eyeing ways to relax local rules that say what kinds of homes can be built and where — which critics say get in the way of allowing more homes to be built. Legislators are considering proposals intended to make it easier to build accessory dwelling units — otherwise known as ADUs, casitas or mother-in-law suites — in the backyards of single-family homes. Other proposals would allow developers to put homes in places that now only allow offices, shopping malls, warehouses and houses of worship.

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SB 15 would prevent cities from requiring homes in new subdivisions to sit on more than 1,400 square feet. The most common lot-size requirements in major cities sit between 5,000 and 7,500 square feet, a Texas Tribune analysis found. The idea behind reducing those requirements would be to give homebuilders the flexibility to build smaller homes and thus reduce the overall cost of the home. The bill would only apply in new subdivisions, not in existing neighborhoods, that sit on at least five acres of land.

For some city officials as well as neighborhood activists who oppose new housing, the idea of state lawmakers weighing in on what kinds of homes cities allow and where is an undue incursion on local authority. Other states like California, Oregon, Montana and Florida have passed laws aimed at curtailing local rules in order to add more homes and reduce housing costs. Few parts of Texas have gone untouched by higher housing costs in recent years, proponents note — providing ample pretext for state lawmakers to intervene.

In Texas, the GOP-led Legislature has pushed for more than a decade to sap authority to make laws from local officials in the state's urban areas, often Democrats. Democratic House lawmakers led the charge in 2023 to kill legislation that would've addressed some local zoning rules when it comes to housing.

Sen. [Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa](#), D-McAllen, expressed concern that Bettencourt's bill would take zoning powers away from cities that have an interest in regulating land uses like military facilities and industrial parks. But Bettencourt said the legislation relates solely to density, leaving local leaders free to reserve land for residential and commercial use.

Georgetown Republican Sen. [Charles Schwertner](#) said he worried that the density rules would unfairly limit city officials' ability to shape growth.

"I still feel this might be a step too far, although I am willing to vote for it today," he said.

Some Democrats in the Legislature have shown openness to relaxing city zoning rules at the state level. Two Democratic senators, Roland Gutierrez and Royce West, signed on to Senate Bill 15 as co-authors. (The bill also has nine Republican co-authors.)

The bill now moves to the Texas House of Representatives, where similar legislation died last session. Lawmakers in that chamber, too, have shown an appetite for changes to allow more homes to be built. Making it easier for builders to obtain permits and more difficult for neighboring property owners to oppose new housing are among House Speaker Dustin Burrows' top priorities.



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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- Staff recommends amending the R-1 (Single Family Residential District), R-1A (Large Lot Single Family District), R-1T (Townhouse Residential District), R-3 (Multi-family Residential District), and the R-4 (Mobile & Modular Residential District) as shown of the Residential Regulations Proposal.