



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 05/23/2023

REQUESTER: Jane Hudson, Planning and Community Development Director

PRESENTER: Greg Clark, Development Services Manager

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF ORDINANCE O-2223-41 UPON SECOND AND FINAL READING: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA AMENDING SECTION 16-601 OF ARTICLE 16-VI OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN SO AS TO ADOPT AND AMEND THE 2018 INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE; AND PROVIDING FOR THE SEVERABILITY THEREOF.

BACKGROUND:

The Oklahoma Legislature, in May 2009, passed legislation creating the Oklahoma Uniform Building Code Commission (OUBCC). The Commission is tasked with creating and maintaining a statewide minimum Uniform Building Code that jurisdictions must follow.

The current edition of codes adopted by the State of Oklahoma include the 2018 Editions of the International Residential Code, International Building Code, International Mechanical Code, International Plumbing Code, International Existing Building Code, International Fuel Gas Code, International Fire Code all published by the International Code Council (ICC) and the 2020 Edition of the National Electrical Code (NEC) published by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

The City of Norman Code of Ordinances currently references the 2015 Editions of ICC Codes and the 2014 Edition of the NEC. Consistent with the legislative action creating the Uniform Building Code, the City of Norman is obligated to adhere to the State Codes.

Similarly, local code enforcement pertaining to existing structures and minimum housing standards are administered through the local adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code. To remain consistent with updating to the 2018 Building Codes, the Property Maintenance Code is typically updated as well.

DISCUSSION:

In preparation of updating the adopted Codes, City Staff conducted outreach in many forms over the past year, including the following.

- 7/28/2022: Hosted meeting with the building community to review significant code changes and solicit feedback.
- 8/16/2022: Hosted 2nd meeting with the building community to review significant code changes and solicit feedback.
- 12/01/2022: Presented to Business and Community Affairs a summary of the Building Code Updates with some of the significant changes.
- 1/17/2023: Presented to City Council a summary of the Building Code Updates.
- Recorded and shared on the front of the Development Services website a webinar outlining significant changes occurring in the codes.
- Distributed to Contractors, Owners, and Subcontractors who pulled permits in the previous year summaries of significant changes to the code for their review and consideration.
- Provided by email, in-person during meetings, and posted online a Code Change request form so individuals and contractors could propose amendments to the codes.
- Placed at the top of Development Services website significant meeting dates and times, statement of intent to update to the 2018 Codes with a general timeline, Webinar links and code change request forms.
- As a staff, we made an active effort to inform contractors, designers and the public about the pending code update over the past year.

The proposed code update has a number of changes, most of which are “cleanup” language and amendments but the most substantial include:

- Updating our fee schedule for our Base Fee/Re-inspection fee to \$35.00. This fee has not been updated since 2006. This update keeps Norman on par with other jurisdictions in the metro.
- Utilizing the International Fire Code (IFC) for both Building Permits and Fire Prevention. In the past, we had adopted NFPA 1 for Fire Prevention and the IFC for permitting. Having separate codes for these activities could create differing requirements and plausible conflicts that was unnecessary.
- For new homes, mechanical contractors are now required to provide a Manual J and S (documentation proving the systems are properly sized) before a mechanical permit is issued. While the requirement to run these has been in the code, the requirement to submit to the Authority having Jurisdiction (AHJ) is new.
- Language has been updated to reflect that small-unoccupied structures less than 600 square feet and occupied structures less than 400 square feet are exempt from the foundation requirements of the residential Code. These scenarios still require that these buildings have some connection methods to the ground or footing/slab. The clarification allows for economically feasible small accessory type storage buildings and limited small occupancies, like a small workshop or tiny home, to be built without a prescriptive footing or engineering.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends changes to Chapters 2, 6, 14, 16 of the Norman City Code, updating the City’s Building, Fire and Property Maintenance Codes to stay in compliance with Title 748 of the Oklahoma Administrative Code. Updating these Codes helps insure minimum standards for new and remodeled structures are up to date and are in-line with current safety and industry practice.