



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-6212, **Agenda Item #:** 74.

12/12/2024

Posting Language

Conduct a public hearing and consider an ordinance amending City Code Title 25 (*Land Development*) to require the installation of safety barriers at the pedestrian entrances of medical facilities with nearby vehicular traffic; and waiving the requirement in City Code Section 25-1-502 (*Amendment Review*) for Planning Commission review of Land Development Code amendments. Funding: This item has no fiscal impact.

Lead Department

Transportation and Public Works.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action:

July 18, 2024 - Resolution No. 20240718-092, to require safety barriers at medical facilities and initiating amendments to City Code, including Title 25 (*Land Development*), to prevent vehicle crashes at medical facilities, was approved on an 11-0 vote.

For More Information:

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Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

December 10, 2024 - To be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

November 12, 2024 - Postponed at Planning Commission.

October 16, 2024 - Recommended unanimously by the Codes and Ordinances Joint Committee.

October 1, 2024 - Reviewed by the Urban Transportation Commission. No vote.

Additional Backup Information:

On July 18, 2024, Council directed the City Manager to develop an amendment to City Code Title 25 that would require safety barriers, such as bollards, at new medical facilities. Resolution No. 20240718-092, directed staff to return to Council with proposed changes to add the new requirements. The proposed code amendment will make changes to City Code and is necessary to add new requirements to the site plan review process, which will be codified in the Transportation Criteria Manual through a rulemaking process.

The resolution directed staff to explore the feasibility of requiring safety barriers in public right-of-way areas adjacent to medical facilities to enhance pedestrian safety and prevent vehicle crashes; whether permit applications to expand, remodel, or upgrade existing facilities can trigger this requirement; incentives for existing facilities to voluntarily comply; recommendations for the City's state and federal legislative agenda; and any other necessary changes that achieve the objectives of this resolution. Staff was also directed to engage with stakeholders, including medical facility operators, with the goal of bringing about compliance with any new requirements.

Staff performed initial research in August, and then met with both internal and external stakeholders in mid-

September. Positive feedback was received from various stakeholders, including hospital administration representatives, as well as from various City Department representatives. Additionally, presentations to both Urban Transportation Commission and Codes and Ordinances Joint Committee yielded positive feedback and recommendations to move forward towards Planning Commission and ultimately City Council review.

Staff's recommendation and the proposed code amendment will amend City Code Section 25-6-1 (*Definitions*) to add new definitions for "medical facility" and "pedestrian entrance" and renumber the remaining uses accordingly. The amendment will also create a new section of City Code Section 25-6-324 (*Pedestrian Safety Barrier for Medical Facilities*) to describe requirements that apply to the new definitions. The new section of code will:

- apply to all new construction of pedestrian entrances on construction that meets the definition of a medical facility;
- refer applicants to technical guidance in Transportation Criteria Manual, to be posted in a subsequent rule; and
- allow for alternative compliance if designed in a manner that mitigates the risk of vehicular crashes into the pedestrian entrance.