



TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Susan Connors, AICP, Director, Planning and Community Development

DATE: March 30, 2018

RE: Requiring Sprinkling in Duplexes with 4 or more Bedrooms

The Community Planning and Transportation Committee requested that staff provide information on requiring two-family homes (duplexes) with more than three bedrooms per unit to be sprinkled. Attached is a chart that provides a condensed summary of common building fire protection sprinkler requirements. As can be noted on the chart, generally, a two family duplex does not require fire protection through a sprinkler system under the International Residential Code (IRC). However fire protection through a sprinkler system is generally required for apartments, boarding or lodging houses, hotels, motels, and townhouses (defined as more than two attached dwelling units with grade level access at each dwelling unit).

With the emphasis of increased density in the Center City Zoning District and an interest in development in the Central Core Area of duplexes that appear to be designed to house more than a single family unit on each side, (three or more bedrooms with a bathroom for each bedroom) it does seem prudent to ensure an additional level of fire protection in these types of structures, similar to that required for apartments, boarding houses, or lodging houses.

Therefore, Staff would recommend that the fire protection through a sprinkler system requirement be contained to the Central Core Area of Norman as defined in the map exhibit in Sec. 431.7 of the Zoning Ordinance. The area is defined by Robinson Street on the north, 12th Avenue East on the east, Imhoff Road on the south and Berry Road on the west. Within this area any two-family (duplex) structure with more than three bedrooms per unit would be required to be sprinkled per the requirement in Section P2904 or the International Residential Code (IRC) or NFPA 13D or as these documents are amended.

With the adoption of the 2015 International Residential Code (IRC) any structure with more than two units or with more than two units connected must be sprinkled. If a structure falls under the International Building Code (IBC), then it must also be sprinkled.

The language to require two-family structures (duplexes) to be sprinkled would be added to the Zoning Ordinance in each section where duplexes are a permitted or allowed by Special Use and would specify this requirement is only applicable to the Central Core Area as defined in the map exhibit in Sec. 431.7. The zoning districts which allow two-family dwellings (duplexes) include R-2, RM-2, RM-6, R-3, and RO, MUD, PUD and SPUD.

office memorandum