

# IZC<sup>®</sup>

INTERNATIONAL  
**ZONING**  
CODE<sup>®</sup>

A Member of the International Code Family<sup>®</sup>



2021



2021 International Zoning Code®

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# PREFACE

## Introduction

The *International Zoning Code*® (IZC®) establishes minimum requirements for zoning ordinances. This 2021 edition is fully compatible with all of the International Codes® (I-Codes®) published by the International Code Council® (ICC®), including the *International Building Code*® (IBC®), *International Energy Conservation Code*® (IECC®), *International Existing Building Code*® (IEBC®), *International Fire Code*® (IFC®), *International Fuel Gas Code*® (IFGC®), *International Green Construction Code*® (IgCC®), *International Mechanical Code*® (IMC®), *International Plumbing Code*® (IPC®), *International Private Sewage Disposal Code*® (IPSDC®), *International Property Maintenance Code*® (IPMC®), *International Residential Code*® (IRC®), *International Swimming Pool and Spa Code*® (ISPSC®), *International Wildland-Urban Interface Code*® (IWUIC®) and *International Code Council Performance Code*® (ICCPC®).

The I-Codes, including this IZC, are used in a variety of ways in both the public and private sectors. Most industry professionals are familiar with the I-Codes as the basis of laws and regulations in communities across the US and in other countries. However, the impact of the codes extends well beyond the regulatory arena, as they are used in a variety of nonregulatory settings, including:

- Voluntary compliance programs such as those promoting sustainability, energy efficiency and disaster resistance.
- The insurance industry, to estimate and manage risk, and as a tool in underwriting and rate decisions.
- Certification and credentialing of individuals involved in the fields of building design, construction and safety.
- Certification of building and construction-related products.
- US federal agencies, to guide construction in an array of government-owned properties.
- Facilities management.
- “Best practices” benchmarks for designers and builders, including those who are engaged in projects in jurisdictions that do not have a formal regulatory system or a governmental enforcement mechanism.
- College, university and professional school textbooks and curricula.
- Reference works related to building design and construction.

In addition to the codes themselves, the code development process brings together building professionals on a regular basis. It provides an international forum for discussion and deliberation about building design, construction methods, safety, performance requirements, technological advances and innovative products.

## Development

This 2021 edition presents the code as originally issued, with changes reflected in the 2003 through 2018 editions and further changes approved by the ICC Code Development Process through 2019. A new edition of the code is promulgated every 3 years.

## Maintenance

The IZC is kept up to date through the review of proposed changes submitted by code enforcement officials, industry representatives, design professionals and other interested parties. Proposed changes are carefully considered through an open code development process in which all interested and affected parties may participate.

The ICC Code Development Process reflects principles of openness, transparency, balance, due process and consensus, the principles embodied in OMB Circular A-119, which governs the federal government’s use of private-sector standards. The ICC process is open to anyone; there is no cost to participate, and people can participate without travel cost through the ICC’s cloud-based app,

cdpAccess®. A broad cross section of interests are represented in the ICC Code Development Process. The codes, which are updated regularly, include safeguards that allow for emergency action when required for health and safety reasons.

In order to ensure that organizations with a direct and material interest in the codes have a voice in the process, the ICC has developed partnerships with key industry segments that support the ICC's important public safety mission. Some code development committee members were nominated by the following industry partners and approved by the ICC Board:

- American Institute of Architects (AIA)
- National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)

The code development committees evaluate and make recommendations regarding proposed changes to the codes. Their recommendations are then subject to public comment and council-wide votes. The ICC's governmental members—public safety officials who have no financial or business interest in the outcome—cast the final votes on proposed changes.

The contents of this work are subject to change through the code development cycles and by any governmental entity that enacts the code into law. For more information regarding the code development process, contact the Codes and Standards Development Department of the ICC.

While the I-Code development procedure is thorough and comprehensive, the ICC, its members and those participating in the development of the codes disclaim any liability resulting from the publication or use of the I-Codes, or from compliance or noncompliance with their provisions. The ICC does not have the power or authority to police or enforce compliance with the contents of this code.

## **Code Development Committee Responsibilities (Letter Designations in Front of Section Numbers)**

In each code development cycle, proposed changes to this code are considered at the Committee Action Hearings by the International Property Maintenance/Zoning Code Development Committee, whose action constitutes a recommendation to the voting membership for final action on the proposed change. Proposed changes to a code section that has a number beginning with a letter in brackets are considered by a different code development committee. For example, proposed changes to definitions that have [BG] in front of them (e.g., Section 202 [BG] DWELLING) are considered by the IBC—General Code Development Committee at the Committee Action Hearing.

The bracketed letter designations for committees responsible for portions of the code are as follows:

[A] = Administrative Code Development Committee; and

[BG] = IBC—General Code Development Committee

For the development of the 2024 edition of the I-Codes, there will be two groups of code development committees and they will meet in separate years, as shown in the following Code Development Hearings Table.

Code change proposals submitted for code sections that have a letter designation in front of them will be heard by the respective committee responsible for such code sections. Because different committees hold Committee Action Hearings in different years, proposals for the IZC will be heard by committees in both the 2021 (Group A) and the 2022 (Group B) code development cycles.

For example, every section of Chapter 1 of this code is designated as the responsibility of the Administrative Code Development Committee, which is part of the Group B portion of the hearings. This committee will hold its code development hearings in 2022 to consider all code change proposals for Chapter 1 of all I-Codes except the IECC, IRC and IgCC. Therefore, any proposals received for Chapter 1 of this code will be assigned to the Administrative Code Development Committee for consideration in 2022.

It is very important that anyone submitting code change proposals understands which code development committee is responsible for the section of the code that is the subject of the code change proposal. For further information on the Code Development Committee responsibilities, please visit the ICC website at [www.iccsafe.org/current-code-development-cycle](http://www.iccsafe.org/current-code-development-cycle).

**CODE DEVELOPMENT HEARINGS**

<b>Group A Codes (Heard in 2021, Code Change Proposals Deadline: January 11, 2021)</b>	<b>Group B Codes (Heard in 2022, Code Change Proposals Deadline: January 10, 2022)</b>
<b>International Building Code</b> – Egress (Chapters 10, 11, Appendix E) – Fire Safety (Chapters 7, 8, 9, 14, 26) – General (Chapters 2–6, 12, 27–33, Appendices A, B, C, D, K, N)	Administrative Provisions (Chapter 1 of all codes except IECC, IRC and IgCC; IBC Appendix O; the appendices titled “Board of Appeals” for all codes except IECC, IRC, IgCC, ICCPC and IZC; administrative updates to currently referenced standards; and designated definitions)
<b>International Fire Code</b>	<b>International Building Code</b> – Structural (Chapters 15–25, Appendices F, G, H, I, J, L, M)
<b>International Fuel Gas Code</b>	<b>International Existing Building Code</b>
<b>International Mechanical Code</b>	<b>International Energy Conservation Code—Commercial</b>
<b>International Plumbing Code</b>	<b>International Energy Conservation Code—Residential</b> – IECC—Residential – IRC—Energy (Chapter 11)
<b>International Property Maintenance Code</b>	<b>International Green Construction Code</b> (Chapter 1)
<b>International Private Sewage Disposal Code</b>	<b>International Residential Code</b> – IRC—Building (Chapters 1–10; Appendices AE, AF, AH, AJ, AK, AL, AM, AO, AQ, AR, AS, AT, AU, AV, AW)
<b>International Residential Code</b> – IRC—Mechanical (Chapters 12–23) – IRC—Plumbing (Chapters 25–33, Appendices AG, AI, AN, AP)	
<b>International Swimming Pool and Spa Code</b>	
<b>International Wildland-Urban Interface Code</b>	
<b>International Zoning Code</b>	

**Note:** Proposed changes to the ICCPC will be heard by the code development committee noted in brackets [ ] in the text of the ICCPC.

## Marginal Markings

Solid vertical lines in the margins within the body of the code indicate a technical change from the requirements of the 2018 edition. Deletion indicators in the form of an arrow (➔) are provided in the margin where an entire section, paragraph, exception or table has been deleted or an item in a list of items or a row of a table has been deleted.

A single asterisk [\*] placed in the margin indicates that text or a table has been relocated within the code. A double asterisk [\*\*] placed in the margin indicates that the text or table immediately following

it has been relocated there from elsewhere in the code. The following table indicates such relocations in the 2021 edition of the IZC.

<b>RELOCATIONS</b>	
<b>2021 LOCATION</b>	<b>2018 LOCATION</b>
106	110
107	111
108	106
109	107
110	108
111	109

## Coordination of the International Codes

The coordination of technical provisions is one of the strengths of the ICC family of model codes. The codes can be used as a complete set of complementary documents, which will provide users with full integration and coordination of technical provisions. Individual codes can also be used in subsets or as stand-alone documents. To make sure that each individual code is as complete as possible, some technical provisions that are relevant to more than one subject area are duplicated in some of the model codes. This allows users maximum flexibility in their application of the I-Codes.

## Italicized Terms

Terms italicized in code text, other than document titles, are defined in Chapter 2. The terms selected to be italicized have definitions that the user should read carefully to better understand the code. Where italicized, the Chapter 2 definition applies. If not italicized, common-use definitions apply.

## Adoption

The ICC maintains a copyright in all of its codes and standards. Maintaining copyright allows the ICC to fund its mission through sales of books, in both print and electronic formats. The ICC welcomes adoption of its codes by jurisdictions that recognize and acknowledge the ICC's copyright in the code, and further acknowledge the substantial shared value of the public/private partnership for code development between jurisdictions and the ICC.

The ICC also recognizes the need for jurisdictions to make laws available to the public. All I-Codes and I-Standards, along with the laws of many jurisdictions, are available for free in a nondownloadable form on the ICC's website. Jurisdictions should contact the ICC at [adoptions@iccsafe.org](mailto:adoptions@iccsafe.org) to learn how to adopt and distribute laws based on the IZC in a manner that provides necessary access, while maintaining the ICC's copyright.

To facilitate adoption, several sections of this code contain blanks for fill-in information that needs to be supplied by the adopting jurisdiction as part of the adoption legislation. For this code, please see:

Section 101.1. Insert: **[NAME OF JURISDICTION]**

Section 110.2.2. Insert **[NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS]**

Table 302.1. Insert **[MINIMUM AREAS]**

Section 1008.1.1. Insert **[SIGN AREA]**

Table 1008.1.1(1). Insert **[SIGN AREAS IN THREE LOCATIONS]**

Table 1008.1.1(2). Insert **[PERCENTAGE OF BUILDING ELEVATION IN THREE LOCATIONS]**

Table 1008.1.2. Insert [NO. OF SIGNS, HEIGHT AND AREA IN 10 LOCATIONS]

Section 1008.1.3. Insert [SIGN AREAS IN TWO LOCATIONS]

Section 1008.2.1. Insert [SIGN HEIGHTS AND SIGN AREAS IN EIGHT LOCATIONS]

Section 1008.2.2. Insert [SIGN HEIGHTS AND AREA IN 10 LOCATIONS]

Section 1008.2.3. Insert [SIGN AREAS IN THREE LOCATIONS]

Section 1008.2.5. Insert [SIGN HEIGHT AND AREA IN TWO LOCATIONS]

Section 1008.2.6. Insert [SIGN HEIGHT AND AREA IN TWO LOCATIONS]

Section 1008.3.3. Insert [SIGN AREA, HEIGHT, PROJECTION AND VERTICAL DISTANCE IN SIX LOCATIONS]

Section 1008.3.4. Insert [SIGN AREA AND VERTICAL DISTANCE IN TWO LOCATIONS]

Section 1008.3.5. Insert [SIGN HEIGHT IN TWO LOCATIONS]

## **Effective Use of the International Zoning Code**

The IZC is a model code that regulates minimum zoning requirements for new buildings.

The IZC is a planning and community development document. The IZC is intended to provide for the arrangement of compatible buildings and land uses and establish provisions for the location of all types of uses, in the interest of the social and economic welfare of the community.



# ARRANGEMENT AND FORMAT OF THE 2021 IZC

Before applying the requirements of the IZC, it is beneficial to understand its arrangement and format. The IZC, like other codes published by ICC, is arranged and organized to follow logical steps that generally occur during a plan review or inspection. The IZC is divided into 14 different parts. The following table lists those subjects. The ensuing chapter-by-chapter synopsis details the scope and intent of the provisions of the IZC.

**Arrangement and Format of the 2021 IZC**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Subjects</b>
1	Scope and Administration
2	Definitions
3	Use Districts
4	Agricultural Zones
5	Residential Zones
6	Commercial and Commercial/Residential Zones
7	Factory/Industrial Zones
8	General Provisions
9	Special Regulations
10	Sign Regulations
11	Nonconforming Structures and Uses
12	Conditional Uses
13	Planned Unit Development
14	Referenced Standards

## Chapter 1 Scope and Administration

Chapter 1 contains provisions for the application, enforcement and administration of subsequent requirements of the code. In addition to establishing the scope of the code, Chapter 1 identifies which buildings and structures come under its purview. Chapter 1 is largely concerned with maintaining “due process of law” in enforcing the zoning criteria contained in the body of the code. Only through careful observation of the administrative provisions can the code official reasonably expect to demonstrate that “equal protection under the law” has been provided.

## Chapter 2 Definitions

All terms that are defined in the code are listed alphabetically in Chapter 2. While a defined term may be used in one chapter or another, the meaning provided in Chapter 2 is applicable throughout the code.

Additional definitions regarding signs are found in Chapter 10. These are not listed in Chapter 2.

Where understanding a term’s definition is especially key to or necessary for understanding of a particular code provision, the term is shown in italics. This is true only for those terms that have a meaning that is unique to the code. In other words, the generally understood meaning of a term or phrase might not be sufficient or consistent with the meaning prescribed by the code; therefore, it is essential that the code-defined meaning be known.

Guidance regarding tense, gender and plurality of defined terms as well as guidance regarding terms not defined in this code is provided.

## **Chapter 3 Use Districts**

Chapter 3 identifies classifications for typical zoning districts and provides for the application of minimum district areas in order to regulate and restrict the uses and locations of buildings and to regulate the minimum required areas for yards, courts and and important open-areas property spaces.

This chapter also requires coordination of the established zoning districts with approved zoning maps. Further, this chapter also contains information on the minimum requirements for conditional-use areas, which includes particular considerations as to their proper location to adjacent, established or intended uses, or to the planned growth of the community.

Chapter 3, along with Chapters 4 through 7, establish the criteria to classify properties into compatible use districts.

## **Chapter 4 Agricultural Zones**

Chapter 4 identifies three divisions of agricultural zones including any area to be designated as open space, agricultural uses and land used for public parks and similar uses. After the specific zoning areas are established, this chapter provides minimum bulk zoning regulations to establish lot area, structure-to-open space density, lot dimensions, and setback and building height requirements.

For example, within an agricultural zone 2 there is a limit of one dwelling unit per 10 acres with a minimum lot area of 10 acres. Lot dimensions are required to be 400 feet wide by 400 feet deep minimum for this parcel of ground.

## **Chapter 5 Residential Zones**

The objective of Chapter 5 is to define residential uses for a jurisdiction to utilize in arranging compatible land uses in order to achieve the maximum social and economic benefit for the community. This chapter identifies three divisions of residential zones including single-family, two-family and multiunit residential uses. Once the particular zones are established, provisions for the minimum bulk zoning regulations, such as lot area, structure-to-open-space density, lot dimensions, setback and building height requirements, are indicated. For example, based on Table 502.1, a Division 2b residential lot would restrict the overall building height to 35 feet and establish a minimum front yard of 15 feet, side yard of 5 feet and rear yard of 20 feet while requiring a minimum overall lot size of 6,000 square feet.

## **Chapter 6 Commercial and Commercial/Residential Zones**

Chapter 6 identifies four divisions of commercial zones, including C1, which includes minor automotive repair and automotive fuel dispensing facilities; C2, which includes light commercial and group care facilities; C3, which includes amusement centers including bowling alleys, golf driving ranges, miniature golf courses, ice skating rinks, pool and billiard halls; and C4, which includes major automotive repair, manufacturing and commercial centers. This chapter also contains two divisions of commercial/residential zones that accommodate residential uses in light and medium commercial zones (Divisions 1 and 2). Once the particular zones are established, Chapter 6 provides specific minimum bulk zoning restrictions to include lot area, structure-to-open-space density, lot dimensions, and setback and building height requirements.

## **Chapter 7 Factory/Industrial Zones**

The objective of Chapter 7 is to define factory/industrial uses for a jurisdiction to utilize in arranging compatible land uses for the social and economic welfare of the community. This chapter identifies three divisions of factory/industrial zones, including a range of factory/industrial zones from light manufacturing or industrial, such as warehouses and auto body shops (Division 1), to heavy manufacturing or industrial, such as automotive dismantling and petroleum refineries (Division 3). Once the particular zones are established, Chapter 7 provides minimum bulk zoning regulations that establish lot area, structure-to-open-space density, lot dimensions, and setback and building height requirements.

## **Chapter 8 General Provisions**

Chapter 8 contains general zoning provisions along with requirements for elements that are common to most uses recognized by this code, to include parking stall dimensions, driveway width requirements, allowable projections into required yard spaces, landscaping and loading space size requirements. This chapter also establishes the minimum number of required off-street parking spaces for specific uses, fence height requirements specific to front, side and rear yard locations, accessory buildings and minimum separation distance requirements from accessory buildings to the main building on the same lot, maximum allowable projection encroachment into the required front and rear yards, and landscaping requirements for new buildings and additions and maintenance requirements for existing landscaping. Chapter 8 also provides for the jurisdiction to specifically review and approve the availability of essential services infrastructure for all new projects with a focus on sewer, potable water, street lighting and fire hydrants.

## **Chapter 9 Special Regulations**

Chapter 9 recognizes two unique uses, home office and adult-use businesses, and establishes requirements to address each based on their characteristics and potential impact related to other uses/zoning districts. With respect to home occupations, Chapter 9 contains restrictions that include maximum allowable floor area for both the home occupation and the storage for same, exterior display and patron and parking allowances.

With respect to adult uses, Chapter 9 requires adult uses to obtain a conditional-use permit and contains a list of four specific location requirements for adult uses.

## **Chapter 10 Sign Regulations**

The primary purpose of Chapter 10 is to establish the regulation for the use of signs and sign structures. This chapter addresses the various sign types, provides numerous figures that show examples of general signs, roof signs, wall signs and fascia signs, and addresses the computation methodology of sign area for code compliance. Chapter 10 also contains the general provisions that apply to sign placement, maintenance, repair and removal, as well as requirements for wall, free-standing, directional and temporary signs.

## **Chapter 11 Nonconforming Structures and Uses**

Chapter 11 contains provisions for nonconforming structures and uses regulated under this code. The primary purpose of this chapter is to ensure that existing structures and current land use practices legally established prior to the adoption of the *International Zoning Code* are allowed to be continued. This chapter also describes the criteria that a nonconforming structure or use must meet in order to be allowed to be maintained unchanged. Specific criteria is provided for the discontinuance of a nonconforming use to include vacancy and damage. Chapter 11 also describes the restrictions on enlargements and modifications to a nonconforming structure.

## **Chapter 12 Conditional Uses**

Chapter 12 establishes the requirements for conditional uses based on the occasional need for a use not normally permitted in a particular zoning district and due to the unique characteristics and service that use provides to the public. This chapter contains requirements for conditional-use permits, minimum documentation required to support a conditional-use property and fees. Further, Chapter 12 establishes the criteria for expiration and revocation of a conditional-use permit and includes a provision that allows the applicant to submit an amendment to a conditional-use permit.

## **Chapter 13 Planned Unit Development**

Chapter 13 identifies the code requirements for planned unit developments and describes the important role of the planning commission. The primary purpose of this chapter is to permit and encourage diversification, variation and imagination in the relationship of uses, open spaces, structures and their heights. It is further intended to encourage more rational economic development with relationship to

public services, and to encourage and facilitate the preservation of open lands. This chapter contains the specific conditions for planned unit developments, including area, uses, ownership and open space requirements.

## **Chapter 14 Referenced Standards**

The code contains numerous references to standards that are used to regulate materials and methods of construction. Chapter 14 contains a comprehensive list of all standards that are referenced in the code. The standards are part of the code to the extent of the reference to the standard. Compliance with the referenced standard is necessary for compliance with this code. By providing specifically adopted standards, the construction and installation requirements necessary for compliance with the code can be readily determined. The basis for code compliance is, therefore, established and available on an equal basis to the code official, contractor, designer and owner.

Chapter 14 is organized in a manner that makes it easy to locate specific standards. It lists all of the referenced standards, alphabetically, by acronym of the promulgating agency of the standard. Each agency's standards are then listed in either alphabetical or numeric order based on the standard identification. The list also contains the title of the standard; the edition (date) of the standard referenced; any addenda included as part of the ICC adoption; and the section or sections of this code that reference the standard.

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