



City Council

Date: April 20, 2015
To: City Council
Through: John Pombier, Deputy City Manager
From: Harry Beck, Fire Chief
Mike Dunn, Assistant Fire Chief
Subject: Fire Code Amendment Regarding Fire Access
"Citywide Project"

Strategic Initiatives



Purpose and Recommendation

The purpose of this report is to recommend an amendment to the 2006 International Fire Code section 503.1.1. After a review of the strengths and weaknesses of the Mesa Fire and Medical Department, it is felt that this change will not negatively impact the Fire Departments ability to provide service.

Background

Mesa Fire and Medical's Fire Prevention Division uses section 503.1.1 of the 2006 International Fire Code to ensure proper fire access is provided to one and two family residences. As economies have changed in the recent past we have seen an increase in existing homeowners moving towards adding additions to their homes rather than moving to a larger home. The unintended consequence of this code section is that many of our existing homes would not be in compliance with this code section when building an addition even as small as 400 square feet in size. Thus, these homeowners would have to provide additional fire access onto their property or present the Building and Fire Code Officials with a code modification.

In addition to existing construction, new construction at times misses the same required measurements thus putting the builder and developer into a similar issue as a private homeowner.

Discussion

By placing an exception to code section 503.1.1 that reads, "All one and two family residences with a square footage of less than 5,000 square feet of conditioned space and having a frontage of no less than 50 feet are exempt from section 503.1.1" we will in effect be providing less restriction on smaller square footage occupancies and still maintaining the appropriate fire access requirements to buildings and facilities

that are large enough to be a danger to its occupants and fire fighters.

Alternatives

Not providing this exception will in effect place individual homeowners into a position where individual property improvements will become fiscally unattainable due to the increased costs associated with having to meet the requirements of section 503.1.1.

Fiscal Impact

There will be no financial impact to the citizens of the City of Mesa regarding this proposed amendment to the 2006 International Fire Code.