

TOWN OF FLORENCE ADAPTIVE REUSE PROGRAM

The adaptive reuse of existing buildings and the greater utilization of infill sites for new development is a priority of the Town of Florence. The proper redevelopment and repurposing of buildings and development of infill sites promotes a more vibrant and healthy community. Strict adherence to codes and development standards largely intended for new development and greenfield (previously undeveloped) sites may cause practical and financial challenges to prospective investors, businesses, builders and developers when trying to renovate older buildings or develop more restrictive infill properties.

This proposed Adaptive Reuse Program is established in order to respond to the issues and challenges related to development and redevelopment within the core area of Florence. Buildings eligible for the Adaptive Reuse Program are those that were constructed before 1990 and have 10,000 square feet or less in usable area. The *planned* use of the building is open to Business, Mercantile, Residential and Mixed Use occupancies, such as Live/Work units. In certain cases, the Adaptive Reuse Program might only be necessary to facilitate non-building site improvements on a developed or undeveloped infill parcel, e.g., special accommodations for parking on a constrained site.

In addition to aforementioned limitations, the Adaptive Reuse Program is limited to the Town's Infill Incentive District area, excluding any portion of Territory Square, undeveloped parcels larger than one acre and/or undeveloped subdivisions platted after 1990. In general, this area represents the downtown core of Florence and includes the Historic District. The following information is intended as a guideline for development/redevelopment and provides interpretations to facilitate consistent application of the Adaptive Reuse Program by Town staff.

BUILDING CODES

The Town has adopted the International Existing Building Code (IEBC) to provide flexibility to permit the use of alternative approaches to achieve compliance with the minimum requirements needed to safeguard the public health, safety and welfare insofar as they are affected by the repair, change of occupancy, addition and relocation of existing buildings. Chapter 4 of the IEBC determines the level of work to be completed for any alterations. The often referred to 50% improvement 'rule of thumb' is not applicable to the IEBC.

All applicants intending to reuse (hereafter can be interpreted to include repair, change of occupancy, addition or relocation) an existing building or buildings constructed before 1990 within the Adaptive Reuse Program area are permitted to use Chapter 13 of the IEBC. Permit applications and construction documents

should specify the use of the IEBC and the use of the Adaptive Reuse Program upon submittal. Chapter 13, as utilized with this Adaptive Reuse Program, will provide increased flexibility over the prescriptive approach within the IEBC or Chapter 34 of the International Building Code (IBC). Undoubtedly, code flexibility is significantly increased over the usage of the IBC for new construction. Thus, the intent of this Adaptive Reuse Program is to establish the least restrictive tier of code choices available for alterations to existing buildings, while not compromising life safety.

CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY

The IBC, Section 202, defines change of occupancy as follows: *“A change in the purpose or level of activity within a building that involves a change in application of the requirements of this code.”*

The IBC requirements for a change of occupancy pertain only to those items that are required to be added or altered by the new occupancy. Therefore, care must be taken to correctly identify the purpose or level of activity in the existing building when determining the occupancy classification to minimize the application of new code requirements. An applicant should clearly outline the intended use and occupancy of the building on permit descriptions and plan documentation.

LIFE SAFETY

Life safety issues that must be addressed are always dependent upon the use of the building. Different life safety issues are associated with each occupancy classification. The primary areas of focus should include structural integrity, electrical safety, exiting and accessibility.

The Town of Florence adopted IEBC provides relief from code provisions required for new buildings. The IEBC, the change of occupancy chapter, provides relief in building elements and materials, fire protection and means of egress based on the relative hazard level associated with each occupancy classification.

OPTIONS TO REQUIRED PLUMBING FACILITIES

All occupied buildings require toilet rooms and fixtures. The number of toilet fixtures is based on the number of occupants associated with the designated occupancy. The occupant load is calculated based on the occupant load factors outlined in the IBC Table 1004.1.1. This calculation consists of determining the floor area for a function within an area of a building and dividing that area by the appropriate occupant load factor. The IEBC and Adaptive Reuse Program provides for options that will facilitate the reuse of older buildings.

Option 1: A single unisex toilet room may be used where the occupant load is 20 people or less and in mercantile occupancies where the occupant load is 60 or fewer people.

Option 2: An exception to the calculation method is to provide the actual number of occupants using the space and as approved by the Building Official. In order to use this exception, statistical data must be submitted by the owner of the space. This option may eliminate the need for additional fixtures. An example of this would be a 'women's only' dance studio where the requirement for separate male fixtures would be eliminated.

Option 3: Provide a bank of toilet fixtures to provide the minimum number of fixtures in a campus setting. The number of fixtures required would serve a group (or campus) of separate buildings as long as the travel distance to the fixtures is less than 600 feet. This scenario is similar to where there is a single common restroom facility for a mall food court.

The building and plumbing codes allow for many alternatives and exceptions to required plumbing fixtures. The above stated options provide added flexibility. For example, a row of suites may have shared facilities as long as the number of fixtures required are met and the travel distance is not exceeded. At least one toilet room must be made accessible, unless technically (structurally) infeasible per IEBC Section 912.8, item 7 and IBC Section 3409.4 item 7. Applications should outline any alternate plumbing requests in the submittal of plan documentations for permits.

This program will allow a water cooler to be used in place of a water fountain that may have been required by conventional codes for new development.

CLARIFICATION FOR SPECIAL OCCUPANCIES

An Artist Gallery, used to display the artist's work for sale, shall be viewed as a Mercantile Occupancy with an occupant load factor of 30 square feet per occupant. Occupant loads shall be posted in the space and noted in the body of the permit.

An Artist's Studio, used to produce the artist's work in various stages of completion, as well as dance studios, may be viewed as a Business Occupancy with an occupant load factor of 100 square feet per occupant.

A building or portion of a building, used for the viewing of performing arts, even on an occasional basis, will be regarded as an Assembly occupancy to determine exiting requirements.

Some businesses that require ovens, kilns, or open flames for the production of articles for sale may require the addition of fire-rated walls and ceilings. This will be of particular consideration in the cases of mixed use occupancies.

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Existing buildings that have a change of occupancy that allows public use of any part of the space shall provide the following basic accessibility features:

- At least one accessible entrance into the building.
- At least one accessible route to the primary function areas from the accessible entrance.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) signage for exits, parking (where required) and accessible (or non-accessible) areas.
- Accessible parking, where parking is provided.
- An accessible route between the parking and the accessible entrance.
- See information under Plumbing Facilities for ADA restroom requirements.

While existing buildings that undergo alterations or additions must still conform to applicable ADA requirements, the extent of improvements required may be indirectly reduced by the use of other sections of this Program, e.g., fewer parking spaces on a whole. The Building Official will provide consultation on proposed changes to a structure and provide added direction in instances where accessibility features are technically or structurally not feasible.

PERMITS

The Town will waive building permit requirements for the following within the Adaptive Reuse Program area: All cosmetic improvements (flooring, paint, etc.); replacement of like equipment involving no new electrical/plumbing/gas work; changing of existing doors or windows with like doors and windows; changing of light fixtures with like fixtures; and/or any work that is expressly not subject to plan reviews and permitting per any adopted Town codes.

However, visible exterior improvements within a property located within the Historic District shall remain subject to the Town’s Design Review procedures. Furthermore, it shall be the responsibility of the property owners, businesses, developers, building owners, contractors, etc. to ensure that all work is performed to applicable codes. If this work is part of a larger project requiring permitting, these improvements shall be included on such plans. It is also noted that this Adaptive Reuse Program cannot override the requirements of external agencies and applicable business license requirements.

PERMITS USING EVALUATION REPORTS

Background

Part of the mission of the Adaptive Reuse Program is to make it easier to obtain permits for adaptive reuse projects. One of the common challenges in the permitting process is obtaining a full set of plans for an existing building when very little construction is proposed. This process will provide a method for issuing a building permit based on an evaluation report in lieu of a full plan submittal. It is targeted towards small projects with very little construction proposed, and the evaluation report would be used to issue the permit and conduct inspections.

Guidelines

- Single tenant, existing building of 5,000 sq. ft. or less without any added square footage.
- Building constructed before 1990.
- Limited to Assembly, Business, Mercantile and Storage occupancies.
- Can include minor interior remodel and minor code upgrade work.
- Report must be sealed by an Arizona registered architect or structural/electrical engineer.
- All planning, civil and traffic requirements must be met under separate requirements, as applicable

Report Requirements

The registrant will evaluate the building for the intended occupancy to determine if it meets the minimum requirements of locally Adopted Building Codes. Items that shall be addressed in the report include (but are not limited to):

- Egress.
- Fire protection requirements.
- Exterior wall fire-ratings and opening protection requirements.
- Interior finish flamespread and smoke.
- General structural evaluation to determine adequacy of the structural system for the proposed use. Include increased floor loads (if applicable) and seismic considerations where change of occupancy is to a higher hazard level.
- Accessibility per locally Adopted Codes.
- Adequacy of electrical system, wiring methods, loads and overcurrent protection.
- Ventilation requirements including kitchen exhaust, if applicable.
- Plumbing demands.
- Grease interceptor requirements.

For buildings that are not in compliance with the prescriptive requirements of locally Adopted Codes, the registrant must specify the modifications required to obtain compliance. As an alternative, the building can be evaluated using the Performance Compliance Methods of the IEBC.

Process

- Customer obtains site approval from planning, civil and traffic issues.
- Customer submits sealed report with permit application.
- Submittal is reviewed for minimum information and compliance, and verifies that the scope of the project fits within the limitations of this guideline.
- Permit is issued.
- An appropriately licensed contractor is required for any proposed remodel or code upgrade work.
- Using the report, inspections are conducted. Any deficiencies must be addressed by the contractor under the direction of the registrant. Extensive

work not identified in the original report may require additional plans and/or permits.

PLAN REVIEW AND PERMIT FEES

Plan review fees shall be adjusted downward by 25 percent of the project valuation according to the most current ICC Valuation Tables. An adjustment of the plan review fee will therefore reduce the permit fee. Furthermore, any project having a modified valuation of less than \$5,000 shall not be charged any Building, Engineering or Fire Plan Review or inspection fees (only permit fees). These reductions do not apply to projects using the Evaluation Report process. Furthermore, the cumulative value of any reductions of fees cannot exceed \$10,000.

DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES

Single-Family Residential (SFR) Development Impact Fees are not applicable to any building addition or remodel to any once previously developed SFR lot within the Adaptive Reuse Program area.

Development Impact Fees are not applicable to any new SFR building constructed on a qualifying infill lot within the Adaptive Reuse Program area that also conforms to the following:

- The lot is outside of the Floodplain.
- There are municipal water and sewer facilities on and/or adjacent to the lot.
- The lot meets zoning requirements and there are no zoning violations on the lot.

It is noted that this relief is expressly allowed per the Town of Florence adopted Town Core Infill Incentive Plan. It is noted that the cumulative value of any reductions of fees cannot exceed \$10,000.

EXISTING BUILDINGS ACROSS PROPERTY LINES

Many existing buildings are built across property lines. The Pinal County Assessor can typically combine properties of a single owner through a simple process that does not require the use of land surveys. For information about this process, contact the Pinal County Assessor's office.

The general rule of thumb is to combine lots where buildings cross property lines. In adaptive reuse cases, official lot combinations will not be required. However, the following statement shall be entered into the body of the permit on adaptive reuse projects and be shown on the Certificate of Occupancy to express the implied and effective unity of the lots: "The development built across a recorded property line precludes the selling of the lots individually permitted".

PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Certain occupancies and/or certain zoning districts will require parking areas to be provided in excess of available street parking. These occupancies will be dealt with on an individual basis by Town staff with the submittal of a site plan. In many cases, zoning relaxes on-site parking requirements, such as within the DC Zoning District. Where the site precludes providing the number of parking spaces required per the occupancy, a parking study can be conducted to show alternative means of meeting parking needs, such as the use of on-street parking, the use of public parking lots, recorded shared parking agreements/easements or other viable means. The Parking Study shall be provided with the Design Review and/or Plan Review submittal and is subject to the review and approval of the Community Development Department. Where applicable, the Planning and Zoning Commission's or Historic District Advisory Commission's review and approval may be required.

Parking surfaces must comply with Pinal County Air Quality/Dust Control policies. This does allow for the use of alternate materials that meet dust control standards, such as stabilized decomposed granite, compacted ABC, decorative stone, pavers, gravel, recycled paving material, etc. Parking surfaces are required to be maintained and handicap accessible parking spaces must meet ADA requirements.

Though alternative policies shall apply to the quantity and type of parking spaces provided, where there are increases in impervious surfaces, a grading permit may be required to confirm drainage and retention, if needed, are handled appropriately.

LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS

Landscaping requirements for all zones are stated in the Town's Development Code.

Where existing conditions prohibit the required amount of landscaping, alternate methods of providing an attractive and welcoming setting will be considered. Such scenarios include where buildings or other hardscape improvements extend or nearly extend to property lines. In all cases, a backflow preventer shall be installed on supply lines. A Landscape Plan shall be provided with the Design Review and/or Plan Review submittal and is subject to the review and approval of the Community Development Department. Where applicable, the Planning and Zoning Commission's or Historic District Advisory Commission's review and approval may be required.