

Code Change Policy

Governance of Columbus City Codes is one of Council's primary responsibilities, and the impact that code changes have can be broad, significant, and can carry risk. Even minor changes can have unknown negative consequences on interested parties that may or may not have been involved in the formation of new or amended code provisions. For these reasons, we propose to follow a comprehensive policy around code changes. This policy will be enacted for all code changes that would be proposed after the 5/20/24 Council meeting, and will be included in the Clerk's office guidelines for drafting legislation moving forward.

Universal Principles:

1. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, code changes are never adopted as emergency measures.
 - a. If code changes must be passed as an emergency, the content of the code change and a corresponding fact sheet must be published in a widely-available format for no less than 14 days prior to passage.
2. All significant code changes should be subject to a public hearing, ideally prior to appearing on a Council agenda for a first reading. Recognizing that "significant" is subjective, significant code changes would be considered anything for which we would rationally expect feedback or input from interested external parties.
 - a. An exception to this would be changes that do not enact what we would normally consider to be substantive policy changes, or anything objectively non-controversial; for example, an ordinance to clean up previously authorized code changes because of drafting errors.
3. All code changes should be accompanied by a fact sheet, the format of which will be prescribed by the Clerk's Office, and distributed to Councilmember offices and staff well in advance (i.e. at least 5 working days) of a public hearing. It is incumbent upon drafters to complete the fact sheet and ensure that it has been distributed to Councilmember offices.
4. Drafters should be able to demonstrate that they have completed a thorough community engagement process to determine the scope of interested parties and that questions or concerns by said parties have been addressed well in advance of requesting a code change to appear on a Council agenda.

For Code Changes Proposed by the Administration, Attorney, or Auditor:

1. It is strongly recommended that drafters work with Council offices to set up no fewer than two briefing sessions during which Councilmembers can be briefed on the details of a proposed code change and to allow them to ask questions of administration/Attorney/Auditor staff.

SHANNON G. HARDIN, PRESIDENT | ROB DORANS, PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
NICHOLAS J. BANKSTON | LOURDES BARROSO de PADILLA | OTTO BEATTY III | NANCY DAY-ACHAUER
MELISSA GREEN | EMMANUEL V. REMY | CHRISTOPHER L. WYCHE

CITY CLERK | TOYA JOHNSON

City Hall | 90 West Broad Street | Second Floor | Columbus OH 43215 | T (614) 645.7380 | F (614) 645.6164 | columbuscitycouncil.org

DRAFTING OFFICE/DEPARTMENT**Fact Sheet:** Proposed Changes to [insert title, chapter, etc.]**Drafter:****Department Requesting Code Change:**

Department

Drafter: Jeremy Heater-Druhot**Ordinance Number:**

3328-2025

Email and Phone: Jrheater-druhot@columbus.gov ; 614-645-8530**Columbus City Code Title Being Amended/Created/Repealed:**

Chapter 4565

What is the overall purpose of this code change? *Summarize the general themes of the code change(s) and the need for these changes. Please utilize language and descriptors that would be easily understandable by the general public.*

Updating of approval path language; creation of Qualified Program and Qualified Development Project designations; creation of "Incentive" defined term

Why is this code change needed? *Examples: Correcting a drafting error; bringing code into alignment with changes to state law. For other policy changes, it may be necessary to provide a*

Simplification of approval path language; reduction in administrative burden of reviewing projects already participating in another Division of Housing program

much more in-depth rationale in the section.

What would be the impact of not adopting this code change?

Are there any operating or capital budget cost/savings implications for this code change?

These may be direct or in-direct, and please also consider long-term impact.

Slower approval rates for projects including the most affordable housing units; misaligned approval path language across different parts of City Code and CRA ordinances

None

Feedback from applicants during their review process; observation of approval rates and their impacts on administration

Describe the community engagement process regarding this code change. What residents, impacted parties, and constituents may be affected? Have they been engaged, and how so? How was their feedback incorporated (or not incorporated) into this code change?

SHANNON G. HARDIN, PRESIDENT | ROB DORANS, PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
NICHOLAS J. BANKSTON | LOURDES BARROSO de PADILLA | OTTO BEATTY III | NANCY DAY-ACHAUER
MELISSA GREEN | EMMANUEL V. REMY | CHRISTOPHER L. WYCHE

CITY CLERK | TOYA JOHNSON

City Hall | 90 West Broad Street | Second Floor | Columbus OH 43215 | T (614) 645.7380 | F (614) 645.6164 | columbuscitycouncil.org

DRAFTING OFFICE/DEPARTMENT

Fact Sheet: Proposed Changes to [insert title, chapter, etc.]

Drafter:



Will this code change take effect with the ordinance, or is there a delayed effective date?

30-day ordinance, estimated effective date of January 14, 2026.

**SHANNON G. HARDIN, PRESIDENT | ROB DORANS, PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
NICHOLAS J. BANKSTON | LOURDES BARROSO de PADILLA | OTTO BEATTY III | NANCY DAY-ACHAUER
MELISSA GREEN | EMMANUEL V. REMY | CHRISTOPHER L. WYCHE**

CITY CLERK | TOYA JOHNSON

City Hall | 90 West Broad Street | Second Floor | Columbus OH 43215 | T (614) 645.7380 | F (614) 645.6164 | columbuscitycouncil.org

*****EXAMPLE FACT SHEET*****

Department Requesting Code Change: Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Drafter: John Doe

Email and Phone: 5-5555

Columbus City Code Title Being Amended/Created/Repealed:

Title 4 and Title 39, Chapter 329

What is the overall purpose of this code change? Summarize the general themes of the code change(s) and the need for these changes. Please utilize language and descriptors that would be easily understandable by the general public.

Definitions:

- SLBE: Small, local business enterprise
- SRBE: Small, regional business enterprise

SLBEs were defined as businesses headquartered and domiciled in the City of Columbus. SRBEs are defined similarly, but with a physical presence in one or more of the following counties: Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, or Union. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion seeks to reach small business outside of the boundaries of Franklin County and the City of Columbus.

Why is this code change needed? Examples: Correcting a drafting error; bringing code into alignment with changes to state law. For other policy changes, it may be necessary to provide a much more in-depth rationale in the section.

A regional model like an SRBE certification is used in other large metro areas, like Atlanta, to be more inclusive of the area's collective economy and reach small business owners in counties neighboring Columbus.



SHANNON G. HARDIN, PRESIDENT | ROB DORANS, PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
NICHOLAS J. BANKSTON | LOURDES BARROSO de PADILLA | OTTO BEATTY III | NANCY DAY-ACHAUER
MELISSA GREEN | EMMANUEL V. REMY | CHRISTOPHER L. WYCHE

CITY CLERK | TOYA JOHNSON

What would be the impact of not adopting this code change?

Regional businesses operating partly in Columbus, hiring employees living in Columbus, and regional minority-owned businesses will continue to be excluded from the ODI's certification process.

Are there any operating or capital budget cost/savings implications for this code change? *These may be direct or in-direct, and please also consider long-term impact.*

While there is no direct impact on the budget, potential procurement incentives related to SRBE-certified businesses could impact the costs of certain projects.

Describe the community engagement process regarding this code change. What residents, impacted parties, and constituents may be affected? Have they been engaged, and how so? How was their feedback incorporated (or not incorporated) into this code change?

Business support organizations in the local and regional area are key stakeholders, including the Columbus Chamber of Commerce. Existing, certified SLBEs will be impacted and potential SRBEs may be impacted. No community engagement has occurred at this time, but the Columbus Chamber of Commerce is broadly aware of the proposed changes.

Will this code change take effect with the ordinance, or is there a delayed effective date?

Effective date



**SHANNON G. HARDIN, PRESIDENT | ROB DORANS, PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
NICHOLAS J. BANKSTON | LOURDES BARROSO de PADILLA | OTTO BEATTY III | NANCY DAY-ACHAUER
MELISSA GREEN | EMMANUEL V. REMY | CHRISTOPHER L. WYCHE**

CITY CLERK | TOYA JOHNSON