

ORDINANCE NO. 775 N.S.

AN URGENCY INTERIM ZONING ORDINANCE TO TAKE EFFECT  
IMMEDIATELY DECLARING A MORATORIUM ON ACCEPTANCE OF  
APPLICATIONS TO CONSTRUCT MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
PROJECTS, TO BE EFFECTIVE FOR 45 DAYS UNLESS EXTENDED BY FURTHER  
ACTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, multi-family residential developments have a unique set of development standards, provided in Chapter 21.16I of the Paso Robles Municipal Code (Zoning Code); and

WHEREAS, by virtue of the relatively higher density of multi-family residential developments, increased numbers of persons are concentrated into a smaller geographic area, exacerbating concerns over the adequacy of design parameters, including but not limited to consideration for fire protection, crime prevention, recreation and open space areas, and other amenities that provide residents of multi-family dwelling units with the Quality of Life described in General Plan Policy RES-3; and

WHEREAS, General Plan Land Use Element Policy RES-3 states that “As the City Council determines necessary and appropriate to preserve the community’s quality of life, the City will consider General Plan and Zoning changes ... to adequately address growing concerns regarding traffic congestion, over-crowding, crime, inadequate off-street parking, insufficient open-space, and other indicators of potential decline in the community”; and

WHEREAS, General Plan Land Use Element Policy RES-8 calls for the City to “improve the development standards for multi-family residential as follows:

- a. Provide more usable open space (especially play areas for young children), better community appearance, and less traffic congestion;
- b. Encourage clustered multiple family residential development with increased yards/setbacks, passive and active open space, and streets that meet City street standards;
- c. Avoid excessive concentrations of high density multi-family developments, particularly housing low income families; the housing needs of low income families are better met through dispersed distribution and mixed use development.”; and

WHEREAS, multiple family residential development increases the demand for Emergency Services responses by concentrating greater numbers of persons in smaller geographic areas, warranting particular study and attention; and

WHEREAS, the City is in the process of soliciting proposals to prepare a Strategic Master Plan study for Emergency Services, which will address the long-term emergency services needs of the City; and

WHEREAS, the concept of “defensible space” calls for increased attention to crime prevention in the design and development of multi-family residential developments; and

WHEREAS, concerns have been expressed regarding the adequacy of the City’s current multi-family residential development standards to address the City’s General Plan policies, facilitate response to future Emergency Service needs, and to adequately anticipate and implement crime prevention techniques that should be considered as a part of the multi-family residential development process; and

WHEREAS, the City of Paso Robles wishes to ensure that the character of existing neighborhoods is preserved and that multi-family residential developments, where permitted, are subject to appropriate zoning standards, including standards that address General Plan policies including those regarding Quality of Life and Multiple Family Residential development, Emergency Services and crime prevention needs;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASO ROBLES DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Finding, Declaration of Urgency. The City Council of the City of Paso Robles hereby finds and declares that there is an urgent need to enact an urgency interim ordinance establishing a moratorium on the acceptance of applications for multi-family residential development within the City, subject to the findings and conditions contained in this ordinance because the City intends to review and potentially prepare amendments to the multi-family residential development standards to address concerns focusing on quality of life, development standards, emergency services, and crime prevention. Continuing to accept applications for development of multi-family residential projects while this review is being conducted may preclude the City from implementing appropriate revised standards proposed during the study period. In certain neighborhoods, this may result in

significant irreversible change to or loss of neighborhood character and significant impacts on properties adjacent to multi-family zoned or designated properties. Accepting applications for multi-family residential projects during this study period could seriously impact neighborhood character and living conditions within the City. Based on the foregoing, the City Council does hereby declare that this urgency ordinance is necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare to prohibit new applications for multi-family residential projects while the current development standards for multi-family residential projects are reviewed and proposals are made for modifications to these regulations.

SECTION 2. Moratorium. Except as provided in Section 3 of this Ordinance, the City Council hereby declares a moratorium on the filing, processing and approval of any application for discretionary approval of a multi-family residential project (i.e.: a Development Plan, as required by Chapter 21.23B of the City's Municipal Code - Zoning Code). No City officer or employee shall accept or process any application for any permit described herein.

SECTION 3. Hardship Exception. Any person may apply for an exception from the provisions of this Ordinance on the grounds of economic hardship. Such application shall state the nature of the hardship and the reasons why an exception to this Ordinance is warranted. The application shall explain the relationship of the proposed multi-family residential development in relation to the character of its surroundings, the impacts, or mitigation of any impacts, the multi-family residential development may have on surrounding properties in terms of the General Plan policies regarding Quality of Life, Multiple Family Residential, future emergency services needs and crime prevention techniques generally described as "defensible space". The application shall state why the delay in pursuing the multi-family residential development until the study period is complete would constitute a taking in contravention of the law. The application shall also explain whether there are alternatives to the multi-family residential development which have been investigated and the applicant's opinion of such alternatives. The application for a hardship exemption shall be heard by the Planning Commission pursuant to the procedures established in Chapter 21.23 for the hearing of applications for conditional use permits. The Commission shall consider the provisions of this Ordinance together with the provisions of Section 21.23.250 in determining whether to grant a hardship exception under this Ordinance. Any action of the Planning Commission is appealable to the City Council under the terms and within the time frames set forth in Chapter 21.23A of the Paso Robles Municipal Code (Zoning Code).

SECTION 4. Exemption. Notwithstanding Section 2 of this Ordinance, the following applications for multi-family residential development projects may be processed and approved:

1. Applications for discretionary review (e.g. Development Plan applications) that have been filed and deemed complete prior to August 17, 1999; and
2. Applications for multi-family residential development that do not require a discretionary review pursuant to Chapter 21.23B of the Paso Robles Municipal Code (Zoning Code).

SECTION 5. Effective Date. This Interim Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption and shall remain in force and effect through September 30, 1999, forty-five (45) days following adoption, unless extended prior to the expiration date.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council held on August 17, 1999, and passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles on the 7th day of September, 1999, by the following roll call vote, to wit:

AYES:	Baron, Macklin, Mecham, Swanson and Picanco
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	None

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Duane J. Picanco, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sharilyn M. Ryan, Deputy City Clerk