

CHAPTER 1

ADMINISTRATION

Note: Chapter 1 is entirely Seattle amendments to the *International Existing Building Code* and is not underlined.

SECTION 101 GENERAL

101.1 Title. This subtitle shall be known as the “*Seattle Existing Building Code*.”

101.2 Applicability. If requested by the permit applicant, this code applies as a code alternate to Chapter 34 of the *Seattle Building Code* for repair, alteration, change of occupancy, relocation of and additions to existing buildings as defined in Chapter 2.

Exceptions:

1. Buildings within the scope of the *International Residential Code* are not permitted to comply with this code.
2. Buildings undergoing substantial alteration as defined in the *Seattle Building Code* shall comply with *Seattle Building Code* Chapter 34.
3. Repair of earthquake damage shall comply with the *Seattle Building Code*.
4. Historic buildings shall comply with the *Seattle Building Code*.

101.2.1 Compliance with other codes. Although this code may apply as an alternate to Chapter 34 of the *Seattle Building Code* for repairs, alternations, changes of occupancy and relocation of certain existing buildings, compliance with the applicable provisions of other codes, including but not limited to the *Washington State Energy Code* with Seattle Amendments, the *Seattle Electrical Code*, and the *International Fire Code*, is also required.

101.2.2 Buildings previously occupied. The legal occupancy of any building existing on the date of adoption of this code is permitted to continue without change, except as specifically provided otherwise in this code, the *International Fire Code*, or the *Seattle Housing and Building Maintenance Code*, or as deemed necessary by the code official to correct an unsafe building. For the purpose of this section, “unsafe building” is not a mere lack of compliance with the current code.

101.3 Purpose.

101.3.1 General. The purpose of this code is to provide minimum standards to safeguard life or limb, health, property and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, occupancy, location and maintenance of certain existing buildings and structures within the City and certain equipment in those buildings, as specifically regulated herein.

101.3.2 Protection of the public. The purpose of this code is to provide for and promote the health, safety and welfare of the general public, and not to create or otherwise establish

or designate any particular class or group of persons who will or should be especially protected or benefitted by the terms of this code.

101.3.3 Flexibility. The intent of this code is to provide flexibility for the use of alternative approaches to achieve compliance with minimum requirements to safeguard the public health, safety and welfare insofar as they are affected by the repair, alteration, change of occupancy, addition and relocation of existing buildings.

101.4 Internal consistency. If in any specific case, different sections of this code specify different materials, methods of construction or other requirements, the most restrictive governs. If there is a conflict between a general requirement and a specific requirement, the specific requirement applies.

101.5 Referenced codes. The codes and standards referenced in this code are considered part of the requirements of this code to the extent prescribed by each such reference. If differences occur between provisions of this code and referenced codes and standards, the provisions of this code apply.

101.6 Appendices. Provisions in the appendices do not apply unless specifically adopted.

Exception: Where Appendix A, Guidelines for the Seismic Retrofit of Existing Buildings, is specifically referenced in this code, it is adopted as part of this code.

101.7 Conflict with Ventilation Code. In the case of conflict between the ventilation requirements of this code and the *Washington State Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality Code* (VIAQ), the provisions of the VIAQ govern.

101.8 Metric units. Wherever in this ordinance there is a conflict between metric units of measurement and English units, the English units govern.

101.9 Impracticality. In cases where total compliance with all the requirements of this code is impractical, the applicant may arrange a pre-design conference with the design team and the code official. The applicant shall identify design solutions and modifications that conform to Section 102.2 or 102.3. The code official may waive specific requirements in this code that the code official determines to be impractical.

SECTION 102 COMPLIANCE METHODS

102.1 Compliance methods. The addition to or repair, alteration, change of occupancy or relocation of all existing buildings shall comply with one of the methods listed in Sections 102.1.1 through 102.1.3 selected by the applicant.

102.1.1 Prescriptive compliance method. To use the prescriptive compliance method, the repairs, alterations, addi-

tions, changes of occupancy and relocated buildings shall comply with Chapter 3 of this code.

102.1.2 Work area compliance method. To use the work area compliance method, the repairs, alterations, additions, changes of occupancy and relocated buildings shall comply with Chapters 4 through 10 and Chapter 12 of this code.

102.1.3 Performance compliance method. To use the performance compliance method, the repairs, alterations, additions, changes of occupancy and relocated buildings must comply with Chapter 13 of this code.

102.2 Modifications. The code official may modify the requirements of this code for individual cases provided the code official finds: 1) there are practical difficulties involved in carrying out the provisions of this code; 2) the modification is in conformity with the intent and purpose of this code; and 3) the modification will provide a reasonable level of fire protection and structural integrity when considered together with other safety features of the building or other relevant circumstances. The code official may, but is not required to, record the approval of modifications and any relevant information in the files of the code official or on the approved permit plans.

102.3 Alternate materials, methods of construction and design. This code does not prevent the use of any material, design or method of construction not specifically allowed or prohibited by this code, provided the alternate has been approved and its use authorized by the code official.

The code official may approve an alternate, provided the code official finds that the proposed alternate complies with the provisions of this code, and that the alternate, when considered together with other safety features of the building or other relevant circumstances, will provide at least an equivalent level of strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability, safety and sanitation.

The code official may require that sufficient evidence or proof be submitted to reasonably substantiate any claims regarding the use or suitability of the alternate. The code official may, but is not required to, record the approval of modifications and any relevant information in the files of the building official or on the approved permit plans.

The material on pages 3 through 10 of the
2006 *International Existing Building Code* was not adopted by the City of Seattle.

