



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
P.O. BOX 839966 | SAN ANTONIO TEXAS 78283-3966



TO: Development Services Customers

SUBJECT: **INFORMATION BULLETIN 141**  
Determination of Valuation for Building Permit Applications

DATE: April 3, 2008/*Revised June 29, 2017/ October 1, 2018*

CREATED BY: Plan Review Division

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**Purpose:**

As a customer service initiative, the Development Services Department (DSD) created this **revised** bulletin to update Information Bulletin (IB) 141 on determination of valuation for building permit applications. This bulletin has been updated for new national construction costs for the San Antonio area.

The purpose of this information bulletin is to assist you in knowing in advance how DSD evaluates a project cost (valuation) provided by the applicant during intake/completeness review to determine permit fees for commercial projects or non-wood frame-masonry residential projects. The document provides the City of San Antonio with guidelines as to reasonable valuation for projects. The IB is NOT meant to replace the actual value of construction costs of a specific project.

**Scope:**

The requirements for determination of the valuation of work being proposed as part of a building permit application is provided in Section 109.3 of the 2018 *International Building Code* (IBC). An estimate of the valuation of the work is required from the applicant as part of the submission package. Section 109.3 further states that if in the opinion of the building official the value is underestimated, the applicant can provide detailed estimates to meet the approval of the building official. The final building permit valuation shall be provided by the building official.

If the applicant provided valuation seems too low, DSD will estimate the valuation of the project, based on Table 1 in this document to compare “reasonable” project valuations with that provided by the applicant. The table is based on square footage, type of occupancy and type of construction and therefore not meant to replace accurate valuations for a specific construction project. Table 1 is based on national valuations as published by the *International Code Council* (February 2018) and used with the Army Corp of Engineers’ modifier for the City of San Antonio. The determination of valuation does not include the price of the land on which the building or structure is built, but does include site-work, foundation, structure, roof and

coverings, interior finish-out for architectural, mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems as well as labor and contractor profits. If in the opinion of the building official the applicant provided valuation seems low, DSD prefers that the applicant submit documentation of that lower valuation to calculate correct and fair permit fees, but without such documentation, DSD will use the City estimated valuation from Table 1. Alternatively, if the applicant considers the City estimated valuation to high, the applicant may provide documentation of actual project valuation. Documentation of valuation may be provided by detailed cost estimates from the architects and engineers, or a copy of the contract from the selected contractor (or other DSD approved documentation).

Projects are often split into phases for permits and construction. Permits for a foundation-only shall be taken as 10 percent of the estimated valuation for the completed building. A shell building (including white boxes) is defined as a building that will not receive a certificate of occupancy upon completion, and for which separate tenant improvement plans will be submitted for plan review and permits at a later date. The estimated valuation for shell buildings shall be taken as 80 percent of the valuation for the completed building. If there was a previous foundation submittal, the shell permit shall be considered at 70 percent. The finish-out permit shall be considered the remaining 20 percent for valuation purposes. DSD reserves the right to increase the percentage for shell permits depending on the actual design.

Table 1 does not in most cases apply to additions, alterations or repairs to existing buildings. The method used to estimate valuation using Table 1 is not appropriate since the underlying national data is based on new construction. However, the valuation using Table 1 may be used to determine the cost of an addition that is basically a stand-alone building which happens to be attached to an existing building.

The City of San Antonio's on-line fee calculator is used by applicants to pre-determine DSD fees and often to have a check cut to pay those estimated fees. DSD recommends that this information bulletin be utilized in advance to determine if your project cost will be lower or equal to that estimated by the method in this document. If your estimated project costs are lower or equal, you should plan on providing proof of that valuation with your submittal, especially if a check you bring in is based on the on-line calculator using your lower estimated valuation. Regardless though, the City will process a submittal as long as a check is sufficient to cover a "reasonable" amount of the plan review fees, and will create an escrow account if the check is over the amount of plan review fees. Overpayment or underpayment of the plan review fees will be adjusted when the permit is issued and the building permit fees are calculated.

Applicants should be aware that major changes to a project after fees are calculated and paid, may affect the valuation of the project and may result in recalculation and adjustment of plan review and building permit fees. Major changes include changes in construction type and size of the building made by the designer during plan review and/or after issuing the permits.

DSD reserves the right to request a project's documentation of detailed cost estimates for any project where the total value of the work appears low, even if the valuation is greater than that estimated by Table 1. This request will not normally hold or delay the intake process, review, or inspection process. However, questions concerning valuation during the construction/inspection phase could delay the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

We hope this information bulletin is of assistance in helping you understand the process of estimating your project's valuation and subsequent calculation of building plan review and permit fees. If you have any questions regarding this information bulletin, please contact the Completeness and Assignment Review (CAR) staff at the following:

City of San Antonio  
Development Services Department  
Customer Advocate Section  
1901 S. Alamo St.  
San Antonio, TX 78204  
Email: [dsdplansmanagement@sanantonio.gov](mailto:dsdplansmanagement@sanantonio.gov)

**Summary:**

This Information Bulletin is for informational purposes only.

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Table 1 City of San Antonio Development Services - Square Foot Construction Costs\*

Group	2018 International Building Code	Type of Construction								
		IA	IB	IIA	IIB	IIIA	IIIB	IV	VA	VB
A-1	Assembly, theaters, with stage	217.86	210.70	205.69	197.17	185.40	180.05	190.94	169.36	163.01
	Assembly, theaters, without stage	199.35	192.19	187.17	178.66	167.12	161.76	172.43	151.07	144.72
A-2	Assembly, nightclubs	171.29	166.32	162.11	155.55	146.63	142.58	150.08	132.75	128.26
A-2	Assembly, restaurants, bars, banquet halls	170.38	165.41	160.29	154.64	144.81	141.67	149.17	130.93	127.35
A-3	Assembly, churches	200.25	193.08	188.06	179.55	169.25	163.90	173.32	153.21	146.86
A-3	Assembly, general, community halls, libraries, museums	168.40	161.23	155.31	147.70	135.21	130.81	141.47	119.21	113.77
A-4	Assembly, arenas	198.44	191.28	185.35	177.75	165.30	160.85	171.52	149.25	143.81
B	Business	174.74	168.39	163.16	155.21	141.90	136.60	149.25	124.67	119.26
E	Education	179.74	173.56	169.05	161.36	150.44	142.84	155.82	131.39	127.64
F-1	Factory and Industrial, moderate hazard	103.81	99.03	93.36	89.72	80.54	76.85	85.94	67.53	63.18
F-2	Factory and Industrial, low hazard	102.90	98.12	93.36	88.81	80.54	75.94	85.03	67.53	62.27
H-1	High Hazard, explosive	97.12	92.35	87.59	83.04	74.97	70.36	79.26	61.95	0.00
H-234	High Hazard	97.12	92.35	87.59	83.04	74.97	70.36	79.26	61.95	56.69
H-5	HPM	174.74	168.39	163.16	155.21	141.90	136.60	149.25	124.67	119.26
I-1	Industrial, supervised environment	174.08	168.18	163.31	156.43	144.11	140.19	156.51	129.09	125.08
I-2	Industrial, hospitals	292.34	285.99	280.75	272.80	258.59	0.00	266.85	241.37	0.00
I-2	Industrial, nursing homes	202.92	196.57	191.35	183.38	170.98	0.00	177.43	153.75	0.00
I-3	Industrial, restrained	198.63	192.28	187.05	179.10	166.92	160.72	173.15	149.70	142.46
I-4	Industrial, day care facilities	174.08	168.18	163.31	156.43	144.11	140.19	156.51	129.09	125.08
M	Mercantile	127.65	122.68	117.55	111.89	102.54	99.40	106.42	88.67	85.09
R-1	Residential, hotels	175.70	169.81	164.93	158.05	145.50	141.58	158.13	130.48	126.46
R-2	Residential, multiple family	147.37	141.47	136.59	129.71	117.86	113.95	129.80	102.85	98.84
R-3***	Residential, one and two family	137.50	133.76	130.31	127.05	122.40	119.16	124.92	114.52	107.79
R-4	Residential, care/assisted living facilities	174.08	168.18	163.31	156.43	144.11	140.19	156.51	129.09	125.08
S-1	Storage, moderate hazard	96.21	91.44	85.77	82.13	73.15	69.45	78.35	60.13	55.78
S-2**	Storage, low hazard	95.30	90.53	85.77	81.22	73.15	68.54	77.44	60.13	54.87
U	Utility, miscellaneous	76.13	71.89	67.39	62.24	57.76	53.98	61.19	45.67	43.50

\* Add 0.8% to total cost for each story over three

\*\* Deduct 11% for mini-warehouses

\*\*\* R-3 Residential does not include 1 and 2 family dwellings (single family and duplexes), but may include adult, childcare and congregate living facilities