

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1575
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

El Paso County has a strong need for a useable inventory of land which may be developed into residential and commercial uses to address future growth.

During the 1950s through the early 1980s, large tracts of land were purchased in far east El Paso and subdivided into small lots and sold to thousands of individuals on speculation that they would be good investments. In 1995, in an effort to stop new colonias from developing, the Texas Legislature passed H.B. 1001, which prohibits lots without water or sewage systems from being sold.

It is estimated that there are near or slightly over 54,000 acres of lots that fit this category within El Paso County. Speculators acquire bundles of these lots; they will make minimum required improvements with water and sewer but do not install other improvements that would be required under the current regulations (i.e., paved streets and curbing). Eventually, as these lots are re-sold and occupied, the residents begin asking for streets, curbs, drainage, lights and other improvements. The areas become de-facto colonias and the local government (in this case the county) is pressured to provide these amenities, which comes at a higher cost given the years of non-utilization.

S.B. 1575 allows the commissioners court to adopt reasonable specifications so that areas which have laid dormant for decades would be put on a more equal footing with subdivisions coming on line now.

As proposed, S.B. 1575 amends current law relating to county regulation of lots in platted subdivisions that have remained undeveloped for 25 years or more.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter E, Chapter 232, Local Government Code, by adding Section 232.110, as follows:

Sec. 232.110. APPLICABILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS TO LOTS UNDEVELOPED FOR 25 YEARS OR MORE. Authorizes a commissioners court by order to implement a process:

- (1) applicable to a subdivision in which 50 percent or more of the lots are undeveloped or unoccupied on or after the 25th anniversary of the date the plat for the subdivision was recorded with the county; and
- (2) through which the county, to the extent practicable, may apply to the subdivision more current street, road, drainage, and other infrastructure requirements.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2015.