

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** DECEMBER 3, 2007

THROUGH: PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: PREPARATION OF AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PASADENA ADOPTING THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 24 INCORPORATING THE 2007 CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE CHAPTERS 1-35 AND APPENDIX CHAPTERS 1, C, I, J; THE 2007 CALIFORNIA ELECTRICAL CODE; THE 2007 CALIFORNIA MECHANICAL CODE; THE 2007 CALIFORNIA PLUMBING CODE, AND THE 2007 CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE ALL AS PUBLISHED BY THE CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS COMMISSION.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance adopting Title 24 of the 2007 California Code of Regulations with modifications and changes reflecting local conditions within the City of Pasadena.

BACKGROUND

The State's Health and Safety Code (Section 17958) mandates that the California Building Standards Commission adopt and publish the California Building Standards Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations) every three years. The 2007 edition of the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, becomes effective statewide on January 1, 2008. Local jurisdictions must adopt the code but are allowed to amend the code if they make express findings that the amendments are necessary to address specific local climatic, geologic and/or topographical conditions.

Staff has been working in coordination with ~~eighty-eight~~ other cities in Los Angeles County through the Los Angeles Regional Uniform Code Program to minimize variations and promote consistency among proposed amendments adopted by cities in the region. The reasons and justification for Pasadena's recommended amendments are as follows:

Topographic and climatic – Narrow and winding access roads to hillside areas, and hot, dry weather and seasonal winds result in increased exposure to fire risk. The proposed amendments carry forward existing restrictions on the use of wood as exterior wall and roof covering material in fire hazard areas and require a “class A assembly” for other materials. In addition, an existing practice is codified which provides an exception for the fire official to approve the use of fire-resistive wood as part of class A listed assemblies in moderate fire hazard zones.

The amendments would also expand fire sprinkler coverage to all new construction except in the following occupancies:

- One and two family dwellings not located in the City's brush hazard areas;
- Town-homes less than three stories tall;
- Residential garages;
- Certain residential care facilities for six or fewer clients; and/or
- Certain child care facilities.

In addition, certain existing structures undergoing significant renovation will be required to install fire sprinklers after January 1, 2008 if:

- 1,000 square feet of building area (cumulative) is added to existing non-conforming structures;
- The cumulative value of building alterations exceeds 50% of the replacement value of existing non-conforming structures;
- There is a change of use or occupancy to a more hazardous use;
- Apartments are converted to condominiums; and/or
- A residential use is added to a previous non residential building as mixed use occupancy.

Finally, the new California Code will allow for partial fire sprinkler systems instead of full building systems. Staff proposes to maintain the requirement for full fire sprinkler systems throughout the building.

Geologic – Pasadena is situated on or near several fault lines. The proposed amendments carry forward existing, more restrictive building standards for roof

sheathing, diaphragms, suspended ceilings, footings and foundations, shear walls, and building separation to reduce the risk of injury, loss of life and property damage in the event of an earthquake. In addition, a new engineering formula is provided for determining "out-of-plane deflection" of walls.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Several of the recommended amendments provide for carrying forward existing administrative amendments not subject to the above findings. Those amendments include:

- Establishment of the City Council as the Board of Appeals;
- Bonding requirements for moving buildings;
- Codification of existing procedures for posting safety assessment placards;
- Establishment of a requirement for a zoning permit for items exempted from building permit requirements (i.e. fences, paving, and accessory structures less than 120 square feet).

In addition, as a result of changes in radio technology that conflict with current building practices, the proposed amendments would require certain structures to be capable of sustaining acceptable radio communications from within. To this end, it is proposed that all new structures with more than three stories or with subterranean areas be required to ensure adequate radio communications within the structure. It is proposed that existing buildings meet this requirement after January 1, 2008 when:

- 1,000 square feet of building area (cumulative) is added;
- The cumulative value of building alterations exceeds 50% of the replacement value of the structure;
- There is a change of use or occupancy to a more hazardous use;
- Apartments are converted to condominiums;
- A residential use is added to a previous non residential building; and/or
- It is determined by the Fire Chief to be necessary based upon the hazard posed by the lack of communication to emergency responders.

Lastly, the proposed amendments include updating references to the Building and Zoning Codes and changing references to the Board of Directors to City Council.

Green Building Requirements

No amendments to the green building requirements are proposed at this time. It is anticipated that changes to the City's Green Building Practices Ordinance will be presented to City Council in December 2007 and in the Spring of 2008 following review by the Environmental Advisory Commission.

Adoption of the California Code of Regulations will include an appendix which provides for the reuse of gray water to enhance water conservation and Title 24 energy standards that require maximum energy efficiency. However, projects subject to the current Pasadena Green Building Practices Ordinance (PMC 14.90) are required to exceed Title 24 energy standards by 14 percent for new buildings and seven percent for existing buildings.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A fee analysis was conducted to evaluate cost impacts resulting from adoption of the proposed code changes. The fee analysis will be presented to the City Council with the adoption of the FY09 General Fee Schedule in April, 2008. All costs associated with implementing these code changes will be recovered through the adoption of the proposed fees.

Respectfully submitted,



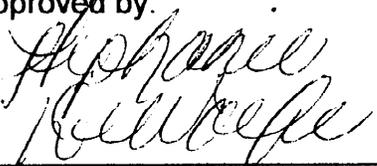
CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager

Prepared by:


Sarkis Nazerian, Building Official,
Planning and Development Department


Mark Fasick, Fire Marshal,
Fire Department

Approved by:


for Richard Bruckner, Director,
Planning and Development

Concurrence:


Dennis Downs, Fire Chief,
Fire Department