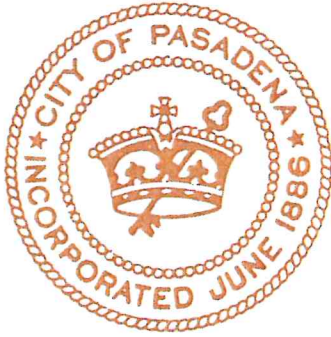




Agenda Report

November 10, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Public Safety Committee (September 17, 2025)

FROM: Planning & Community Development Department

SUBJECT: **ADOPTION OF THE 2025 CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS CODE AND RELATED CODES AND DIRECTION TO THE BUILDING OFFICIAL TO FILE THE ADOPTED ORDINANCE AND LOCAL FINDINGS WITH THE CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS COMMISSION**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Hold the public hearing on the adoption of the 2025 California Building Standards Code with certain local amendments; and
2. Find that the amendments proposed herein are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) the Common Sense Exemption that CEQA only applies to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA; and
3. Conduct second reading to adopt "An Ordinance implementing the California Building Standards Code incorporating the: 2025 California Administrative Code; 2025 California Building Code with Appendix Chapters G, H, I, J, N, P, Q; California Residential Code with Appendix Chapters BB, BF, BG, CH, CI, CJ; 2025 California Electrical Code with Annexes A, C, I; 2025 California Mechanical Code with Appendix Chapters B, C, F, G, H; 2025 California Plumbing Code with Appendix Chapters A, D, G, H, I, J, M, R; 2025 California Energy Code; 2025 California Wildland-Urban Interface Code, 2025 California Historical Building Code; 2025 California Fire Code with Local Amendments to State Adopted Chapters including Chapter 1, 3, Section 503 of Chapter 5, Sections 1101 and 1104 of Chapter 11, Appendix Chapters 4 and certain Appendix Chapters B through P; 2025 California Existing Building Code; 2025

California Green Building Standards Code; 2025 California Referenced Standards Code"; and

4. Direct the Building Official to file the Ordinance and local findings with the California Building Standards Commission.

BACKGROUND:

Every three years the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) adopts a new set of technical codes which includes building, residential, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, energy, fire and green building code standards. This triennial adoption is proposed to incorporate the latest safety, and energy efficiency standards in building design and construction. Local jurisdictions must adopt and enforce these newly adopted codes that will apply to all construction projects that file an application for a building permit on or after January 1, 2026.

Local jurisdictions may amend the State regulations to address issues of local or regional importance, such a fire or earthquake hazards or a desire to seek increased energy efficiencies, but the changes cannot be less restrictive than otherwise mandated by the State. However, the City's ability to adopt local amendments has been significantly reduced as a result of Assembly Bill 130, which was signed into law on June 30, 2024. AB130 prohibits the City from making new changes to Building Standards that are applicable to residential units unless necessary as emergency standards to protect health and safety or fall within another statutory exemption. This restriction is in effect through June 1, 2031, and any proposals affecting residential units shall not be considered, approved, or adopted by the CBSC.

Any amendment proposed by a local jurisdiction must be technical in nature and per the California Health and Safety Code (H&SC) Section 17958.5, must be justified by local climatic, geological, or topographic findings. Findings must be unique to a jurisdiction and are to be presented in the ordinance to City Council for adoption. Following the adoption of the resolution and corresponding ordinance, pursuant to H&SC Section 17958.7, the adoption documents must be filed with the CBSC for review and acceptance. Local amendments are only then considered legal for enforcement upon said procedures.

Historically, the City has adopted local amendments to the State Building Code in order to provide a higher level of safety and application of the codes. Staff has been working in coordination with all 89 jurisdictions within the County through the Los Angeles Regional Uniform Code Program. This program provides local amendments to ensure consistency among the region. As with past code adoption cycles, staff is recommending specific amendments to the California Building, Residential, CALGreen, and Fire codes.

Key code changes were presented to the Pasadena Public Safety Committee on September 17, 2025 and received unanimous support of the Building Code Adoption process mandated by State law.

City Council held the introduction and first reading of the Ordinance on November 3, 2025, with certain amendments read into the record, -with unanimous support. Motion recommended to hold the public hearing and adopt of the ordinance on November 10, 2025.

SUMMARY OF CODE UPDATES:

An overview of new requirements in the 2025 State codes are provided in attachment A with a description of the various codes and changes as noted below:

California Building Code

Pasadena amendments to the State Building Code are necessary because of Pasadena's local climatic, geological, and/or topographical conditions. The local amendments primarily address safety in building design and construction related to seismic activity and other local hazards. There are no new technical amendments proposed in this adoption and staff is recommending that the existing amendments to the California Building Code be carried forward from the previous code cycle.

California Residential Code

Staff is recommending that the existing amendments to the California Residential Code be carried forward from the previous code cycle.

California Green Building Standards Code

The 2025 California Green Building Standards Code or CALGreen Code, contains several changes that increase measures for carbon footprint reduction. Staff will ensure that the new requirements of the CALGreen code are met.

California Fire Code

Portions of Pasadena are located within Fire Hazard Severity Zones as designated in the "Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map" dated July 21, 2025. As such, previous amendments address higher protection for fire prevention and fire safety. Additionally, with the size and frequency of special events within the City, it is imperative to adopt State requirements with local amendments to mitigate hazards for these events. Staff is recommending carrying forward previous amendments from the last code cycle while proposing a few new amendments.

California Wildland-Urban Interface Code

This is a new code developed from existing code chapters currently in the Building, Residential, and Fire Codes and compiled as a consolidated code book. One of the major changes is to ensure the code updates align as a single source of code requirements.

Administrative Changes

Staff is recommending some administrative changes to clean-up and better organize the municipal code requirements, to align certain requirements of the Building & Safety Division and the Fire Department and to remove old requirements that are no longer applicable. Administrative changes and recommendations are separate from local amendments to the Building Standards Code because they do not alter building standards.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The recommended action furthers the City Council's strategic plan goal to ensure public safety by adopting the most currently available codes for all types of construction in the City and supports the City's commitment to increase conservation and sustainability.

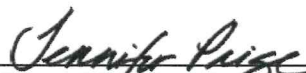
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The action proposed herein is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3). The adoption of the ordinance is covered by the Common Sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to the provisions of CEQA. The State published the new codes on July 1, 2025 which will ensure that property improvements meet the State of California's health and safety requirements and adopt the State codes by the deadline provided by statute. The actions proposed herein are minimal amendments to the State version to address issues of local and regional importance and will not have a potential environmental effect.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no fiscal impacts associated with the adoption of these building code standards.

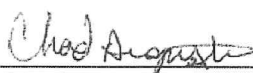
Respectfully submitted,


JENNIFER PAIGE, AICP
Director of Planning & Community
Development Department

Prepared by:


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Concurred by:


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Fire Department

Approved by:


MIGUEL MARQUEZ
City Manager

Attachments:

Attachment A – California Building Standards Code Major Change Highlights