



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Department of Community Development / Building Division

Reference: Building Codes Update

To: Mayor Gregory Mills and Members of City Council
Through: Michael Martinez, City Manager
Prepared By: Matt Rowland, C. B. O., Chief Building Official
Date Prepared: July 25, 2022

PURPOSE

This report is to inform the City Council of the intent to propose the update of the adopted Building Safety Codes for the City.

BACKGROUND

The City has updated its construction codes periodically, since 1954, in order to ensure our codes are consistent with other jurisdictions around the country and provide for the latest standards for construction materials and methods. Construction codes are written by national and international model code development organizations, with opportunity for input from building and fire officials, the construction industry, building material suppliers and the public. Staff coordinates with our construction industry stakeholders to ensure they are aware of upcoming code changes so engineers and architects can design to the appropriate standards.

We currently enforce the following codes:

- International Building Code 2018 Edition
- International Residential Code 2018 Edition
- International Plumbing Code 2018 Edition
- International Mechanical Code 2018 Edition
- International Energy Conservation Code 2018 Edition
- International Fuel Gas Code 2018 Edition

- International Existing Building Code 2018 Edition
- International Property Maintenance Code 2018 Edition
- National Electric Code 2020 Edition (NFPA 70)
- International Fire Code 2018 Edition
- International Swimming Pool and Spa Code 2018 Edition
- ASME A17.1 Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators 2019 (as required by State Statute).

The International Codes are published by The International Code Council every three years. The ICC updates a variety of construction and maintenance codes which that organization prints. The updates are done after an extensive review, discussion and voting process at the national level. Among other things, the changes to the codes reflect the latest technical advancements in materials and methods of construction. The National Fire Protection Association prepares and prints the National Electric Code (NEC) through various code making panels and has been the National Standard for Electrical Safety since 1911.

While both organizations publish updated codes every three years, they are not synchronized for the same year.

The intent and direction we propose to take is to replace all International Codes with the current (2021) Editions, along with amendments that are tailored specifically to our community. The National Electric Code will need to be updated at a later date when the 2023 edition is published. No modification of the ASME A17.1 is proposed at this time.

The Fire District has indicated that they intend to follow the same type of procedures for the adoption of the Fire Code.

While we review the codes, it is the intent to review the Contractor's licensing requirements and make a recommendation for changes, if necessary.

The process of the adoption is to study the new codes and propose any amendments that are in the best interest of the community. This process will include input from certified staff, contractors, developers, trade organizations and the community. An example of an amendment might be adding specific climate data for our region, referring to the Municipal Code and/or removing the requirement for fire sprinklers in single-family detached residences as we have done in past code cycles.

Note: The 2021 version of the International Energy Code will need to be amended to meet new mandates set by recent state statute (see attachment). This will create an extensive increase in requirements and information delivery.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The adoption of updated codes at regular intervals is necessary to keep up with constantly improving construction technology and Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings may also improve when the building codes are current. Through the ISO's Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule program, ISO assesses the building codes in effect in individual communities and how those communities enforce their building codes. The concept is simple: municipalities with well-enforced, up-to-date codes should demonstrate better loss experience, and insurance rates can reflect that.

Therefore, staff recommends that we proceed with the code update process.

OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

1. Instruct staff to move ahead with the proposed update as presented.
2. Instruct staff to move ahead with the proposed update with modifications as directed by the City Council.

3. Instruct staff to keep the current Building Safety Codes intact.

ATTACHMENTS

- House Bill 22-1362
- PowerPoint