



**Department:** Community Development  
**Cost Center:** 4006, 8305  
**For Agenda of:** 12/2/2025  
**Placement:** Consent  
**Estimated Time:** NA

**FROM:** Timmi Tway, Community Development Director  
Todd Tuggle, Fire Chief

**Prepared By:** Timmi Tway, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT:** SECOND READING OF O-1751 (2025 SERIES) AND O-1752 (2025 SERIES) ADOPTING BY REFERENCE THE 2025 CALIFORNIA BUILDING AND FIRE CODES WITH LOCAL AMENDMENTS

### RECOMMENDATION

1. Adopt Ordinance No. 1751 (2025 Series) entitled, "An Ordinance of the City of San Luis Obispo, California, amending Title 15 of the Municipal Code to adopt by reference and amend the latest edition of the California Building Standards Code and adopting findings of fact to support the amendments" (Attachment A) amending Chapters 15.02 and 15.04 of the Municipal Code adopting, by reference, the 2025 editions of the California Code of Regulations Title 24, the 1997 editions of the Uniform Housing Code and the Uniform Code for the Abatement of Dangerous Buildings, and the 2024 edition of the International Property Maintenance Code, with amendments. This ordinance also includes adoption of the WUI Code.
2. Adopt Ordinance No. 1752 (2025 Series) entitled, "An Ordinance of the City of San Luis Obispo, California, Adopting Local Amendments to Part 6 of the Building Construction and Fire Prevention Code 2026" (Attachment B) providing local energy efficiency amendments to the California Energy Code.

### POLICY CONTEXT

Updated building codes ensure the safety of the built environment. This is mandated by State law and adoption and implementation of the codes is supported by goals and policies in the City's Housing Element and Safety Element.

## DISCUSSION

The City is required to periodically adopt and enforce the updated California Building Standards Code to ensure safety of the built environment. On [November 18, 2025](#), the City Council voted to introduce two Ordinances, No. 1751 (2025 Series) and No. 1752 (2025 Series). Ordinance No. 1752 amends Chapters 15.02 and 15.04 of the Municipal Code and also includes adoption of the new Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Code (which was [amended](#) under an emergency rulemaking procedure by the California Building Standards Commission on October 15th<sup>1</sup>). Ordinance No. 1751 adopts local amendments to Part 6 of the Building Construction and Fire Prevention Code to provide local energy efficiency amendments to the California Energy Code. The local amendments to the Energy Code are intended to continue the City's progress towards its climate action goals by carrying forward the existing "Energy Efficient Alterations" program, which includes a requirement for major additions and alterations in certain single-family homes to include cost-effective energy efficiency upgrades in the existing building. The local amendments include updated compliance thresholds (moving from a square footage metric to a project valuation metric), and a simpler standard for requiring electric-readiness measures.

All local amendments to the California Building Standards Code must be approved and filed by the Building Standards Commission prior to enforcement. In addition, the proposed local amendments to the Energy Code are also required to be approved by the California Energy Commission at a regularly scheduled business meeting. The state approval process would proceed as follows:

1. Upon Council's approval of the second reading, staff will:
  - a. Submit all non-energy local amendments (Attachment A) to the California Building Standards Commission; and
  - b. Submit energy local amendments (Attachment B) to the California Energy Commission.

Upon the California Energy Commission's approval of the local amendments, staff will submit the local energy amendments to the Building Standards Commission.

As a result of this staggered approval process, the entirety of the building code and nonenergy local amendments would go into effect on January 1, 2026, and the local energy amendments would go into effect shortly thereafter, likely in February or March of 2026.

## CONCURRENCE

The Public Works Department supports the proposed Ordinances. The Community Development, Fire, and Administration Departments prepared and support the proposed ordinances. The City Attorney's office reviewed and approved the proposed ordinances as to form and legal effect.

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<sup>1</sup> The previously-communicated exception to the building hardening requirements found in Chapter 5 of the WUI Code for additions and remodels of buildings constructed prior to July 1, 2008, has been removed, meaning that all new construction and remodels Citywide will be subject to those requirements upon adoption of the WUI Code.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The project is exempt from environmental review per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines under the General Rule (Section 15061(b)(3)). The project involves updates and revisions to existing regulations. The proposed code amendments are consistent with California Law, specifically the CA Health & Safety Code Sections 17958.7 and 18941.5. It can be seen with certainty that the proposed Municipal Code text amendments will have no significant effect on the environment. Adoption of the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code is statutorily exempt from CEQA under Public Resources Code §21080.49 (wildfire risk reduction projects). Adoption of the local amendments to the California Energy Code is also exempt from CEQA under categorical exemptions in Section 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines in the proposed ordinance would institute regulatory requirements intended to protect the environment and natural resources. To the extent a component of the Building Standards Code is adopted as-is, the recommended actions are exempt from CEQA as ministerial acts under CEQA Guidelines 15268, since the City must locally adopt and enforce the Building Standards Code (see Health and Safety Code Section 18938 *et seq.*).

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Budgeted: NA

Budget Year: 2025-26

Funding Identified: NA

**Fiscal Analysis:**

<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>Total Budget Available</b>	<b>Current Funding Request</b>	<b>Remaining Balance</b>	<b>Annual Ongoing Cost</b>
General Fund	\$	\$	\$	\$
State				
Federal				
Fees				
Other:				
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$NA</b>	<b>\$NA</b>	<b>\$NA</b>	<b>\$NA</b>

The Fire Department will need additional resources to educate current staff on the new 2025 California WUI Code in order to conduct Fire Protection Plan review, Vegetation Plan (Landscape plan) review, and to conduct additional site inspections for projects that trigger this need in the VHFHSZ. Given past patterns of development, it is estimated that at least 25-40 permits a year would trigger the need for additional Fire Department plan review process and inspection following adoption of the updated codes. The Fire Department already has two miscellaneous fees established to assist with cost recovery - Fee #44 (as noted in the [current Comprehensive City Fee Schedule](#)) Supplemental Fire Plan Review and Fee #45 Supplemental Fire Inspection. The additional training will include remote learning opportunities through the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and through the local SLO County FireSafe Council who coordinating Defensible Space Inspections with the local government Fire Departments in the County. Both training opportunities are at no cost, but will involve staff time.

The Fire Prevention and Safety Grant, accepted by this Council on October 21 2025, will also help offset upfront costs in the amount of \$60,240.00 for the next two years. Staff will continue to pursue external funding to support and subsidize the inspection costs for the property owners.

## ALTERNATIVES

1. ***The Council may elect to adopt the CA Building Standards Code without some or all the proposed or carried-over local amendments.*** Under this alternative, Title 24 will become the minimum mandated building and construction standards statewide on January 1, 2026. Choosing not to adopt local amendments will result in a decreased level of elements that are necessary to maintain a safe and healthy built environment with the unique topographical, climatic, and geological conditions that exist in the City of San Luis Obispo.
2. ***The Council may elect to change some of the proposed and/or carried-over local amendments and adopt the CA Building Standards Code with these changed local amendments.*** This alternative would allow the City Council to make changes to the local amendments as currently proposed by City Staff prior to adoption of the Code. If the changes are significant, the ordinance will need to be re-introduced at a future public hearing, which may delay local adoption of the code past the January 1, 2026, date of statewide implementation.
3. ***The Council may elect to change some of the proposed updates to the local amendments to the California Energy Code.*** This alternative would allow Council to make changes to the proposed local amendments to the California Energy Code and could include (but is not limited to):
  - a. Changing the compliance thresholds to different project valuation amounts.
  - b. Directing staff to revert to a project square footage threshold.If the changes are significant, the ordinance will need to be re-introduced at a future public hearing, which may delay local adoption of the code past the January 1, 2026, date of statewide implementation.

4. ***The Council may elect to direct staff to return with more information prior to adoption of the proposed Codes with Amendments.*** This would provide time for the Council to receive and consider any additional information prior to adopting the Code. This would delay the ultimate adoption of the code, which would make the local municipal code inconsistent with the State adopted Code. However, the City must still enforce the state standards that go into effect January 1, 2026. Without adoption of local amendments (including carried-over and new amendments), the City would be required to enforce the state standards as written, and failure to incorporate the standards into the municipal code would limit the City's ability to enforce the standards to only those enforcement pathways provided by state law.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A - Ordinance No. 1751 (2025 Series)
- B - Ordinance No. 1752 (2025 Series)