FRONTRUNNER: CITY OF SANTA MONICA

CITY OF SANTA MONICA ENRICHES ITS SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS WITH AMBITIOUS 2019 REACH CODE PACKAGE

OVERVIEW

The quintessential southern California beach town, Santa Monica hugs the Pacific Coast while ringed by Los Angeles on its remaining three sides. With nearly 93,000 residents, world-famous beach and Pier, the City also boasts one of the oldest commitments to sustainable building practices in the state and nation. The City first proposed its Sustainable City Plan in 1992 and in 1994, was one of the first cities in the nation to formally adopt a comprehensive sustainability plan, setting waste reduction and water conservation policies for both public and private sector through its Office of Sustainability and the Environment. In 2016, Santa Monica adopted its first reach ordinances and continues to demonstrate its commitment with its 2019 adoption of a comprehensive package of reach ordinances.

CREATING A ROBUST GREEN BUILDING PROGRAM: REACH CODES, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

In the fall of 2019, Santa Monica celebrated a quarter-century of groundbreaking policies contained in its 1994 Sustainable City Plan, in part by developing and adopting its second cycle of reach ordinances based on the statewide 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards.

Drew Johnstone, Senior Sustainability Analyst notes, “We focused on extending efforts in areas where we have already had great success. In regards to reach ordinances, this focus involves advancing the use of renewable generation

resources and incentivizing decarbonization. With regards to community awareness and acceptance, this focus means renewed efforts to educate and inform our community and provide robust resources to help stakeholders comply with the new ordinances.”

The City developed cost-effectiveness studies for residential and nonresidential new construction with the help of the statewide Codes and Standards reach codes team, then conducted a series of workshops for architects, energy modelers, designers, builders, developers, and other local stakeholders. After gaining approval from the City's Building and Fire-Life Safety Commission and its Task Force on the Environment, City staff submitted the draft ordinances for approval from the City Council. In October 2019, Council approved the package, which provides two construction options for builders and developers:

- all-electric option
- mixed-fuel option

The tables on the next page provide a snapshot of the compliance requirements under each option.

CODE COMPLIANCE PATHWAYS

	All-Electric	Mixed-Fuel (Electric & Natural Gas)
Single-Family & Multi-Family (3 stories or less)	**Efficiency + Solar:** Meet State Code	**Efficiency + Solar:** Meet CALGreen Tier 1
Multi-Family (4+ stories) & Hotel	**Efficiency:** Meet State Code **Minimum Solar:** 2 watts/ft^2 of bldg footprint	**Efficiency:** 5% better than State Code **Minimum Solar:** 2 watts/ft^2 of bldg footprint
All Other Non-Residential	**Efficiency:** Meet State Code **Minimum Solar:** 2 watts/ft^2 of bldg footprint	**Efficiency:** 10 % better than State Code **Minimum Solar:** 2 watts/ft^2 of bldg footprint
New Heated Pools	**Heat pump and/or Solar**	**N/A, Gas pool heating prohibited**
Major Additions	**Solar for Single Family/Duplexes:** 1.5 watts/ft^2 of addition **Solar for all others:** 2 watts/ft^2 of addition's footprint	

Regardless of which compliance pathway is chosen, the project must use a Certified Energy Analyst (CEA) to document compliance with the reach ordinances.

Providing education and resources to community stakeholders has always been an integral element of Santa Monica's sustainability efforts. To support compliance with the new 2019 reach ordinances, the City added new resources to its already-robust Green Building website and teamed with Southern California Edison and the Los Angeles chapter of the USGBC (U.S. Green Building Council) to host compliance workshops for stakeholders to learn

about the new reach code compliance pathways in detail. The first workshop, held in January 2020, was sold out and City staff plan to conduct additional workshops to meet the demand.

“We’ve collaborated with numerous regional and statewide organizations, including the statewide Codes & Standards reach code team, the Building Decarb Coalition, and participate actively as a member of the Zero Emission Reach Code Task Force. All of these relationships have been valuable in helping us continue to develop and implement ongoing programs and ordinances to advance toward our ultimate goal,” notes Johnstone.

RESOURCES

Santa Monica maintains a comprehensive website devoted to green building, reach code compliance resources and design guides: https://www.smgov.net/Departments/OSE/categories/buildGreen.aspx

The Energy Commission docket includes numerous filings related to the City’s 2019 reach ordinance adoption: https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/ Lists/DocketLog.aspx?docketnumber=19-BSTD-06:

City of Santa Monica final approved ordinance

Final staff report

OTHER FRONTRUNNERS

City of San Rafael Pursues Collaboration in its Development and Adoption of a Flex Path Residential Reach Code City of Cotati City of San Luis Obispo

Archives