



Administrative Report

TO: Honorable City Council

FROM: Lucas Seibert, Community Development Director
Eric Simonson, Building Official

MEETING DATE: October 28, 2025

SUBJECT: Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance of the 2025 California Building Codes

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council introduce Ordinance No. 25-__ to adopt 2025 California Building Codes with amendments to Chapter 15.08 of the Municipal Code.

DISCUSSION

The State's Health and Safety Code, Section 17950, mandates the California Building Standards Commission adopt and publish the California Codes, Title 24, known as the California Code of Regulations.

Every three years, the codes are published to incorporate all code changes accepted by a majority vote of members at the annual code development meetings. As a result, the new codes will become effective statewide on January 1, 2026. (See attached Bulletin 25-01 from the Building Standards Commission), (Exhibit "A"). Each jurisdiction in the State is mandated to adopt the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, and make amendments to the codes that are reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions.

With the adoption of Assembly Bill 130 this year, the City's ability to modify Residential building standards in the California Building Code is now limited. From October 1, 2025, through June 1, 2031, cities and counties may not change residential building standards—including green building requirements—unless the changes are substantially equivalent to standards in effect before September 30, 2025, are deemed necessary for emergency health or safety, relate to home hardening, are proposed by a local fire prevention district, or are needed to implement an approved general plan that permits mixed-fuel construction while promoting all-electric construction to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

ANALYSIS

The following codes are mandated by the State of California Building Standards, Commission Information Bulletin 25-01, for local adoption by January 1, 2026. The codes include:

- 2025 California Building Code, Volumes 1 and 2

- 2025 California Fire Code
- 2025 California Existing Building Code
- 2025 California Historical Code
- 2025 California Energy Code, including the amendments for Single Family Residential Flex-Path provisions
- 2025 Administrative Code
- 2025 California Referenced Standards Code
- 2025 California Residential Code
- 2025 California Green Building Standards Code
- 2025 California Mechanical Code
- 2025 California Electrical Code
- 2025 California Plumbing Code
- 2025 California Wildland-Urban Interface Code
- 2024 International Property Maintenance Code
- 1997 Uniform Code for Abatement of Dangerous Buildings

The 2025 California Fire Code and 2025 California Wildland-Urban Interface Code listed above will be introduced by the Fire Department in a separate staff report.

The State has established the 2024 Editions of the International Codes as the basis for the 2025 California Codes. Likewise, the 2024 Editions of the Uniform Mechanical and Plumbing Codes developed by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials as the basis for the 2025 California Plumbing and Mechanical Codes. The 2023 Edition of the National Electrical Code developed by the National Fire Protection Association are the basis of the corresponding 2025 Edition of the California Electrical Code.

The California Residential Code (CRC) will address the structural and life safety aspects of one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses not more than three stories. Electrical, plumbing, and mechanical conditions will still be addressed by the appropriate California Code Books. Amendments proposed were adopted prior to the September 30, 2025 deadline in AB 130, so they are permissible under Ca. Health and Safety Code section 17985(b)(1).

The California Green Building Standards Code addresses such conditions as site development, water savings, recycling, and material selection. In addition, issues such as moisture control, interior and exterior air quality and compliance with California Title 24 requirements as addressed. Environmental quality issues of concern involve the use of materials that produce volatile organic compounds such as composite wood products, paints, adhesives, and carpets.

The proposed amendments are added to the existing chapters of the Ojai Municipal Code Title 9, by adding the 2025, California Code of Regulations.

The California Wildland-Urban Interface Code is required to be adopted by all jurisdictions within the State of California and will only be enforced for areas that are in fire hazard severity zones as identified by the state fire marshal severity hazard zone maps. The intent

of the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code is to be able to construct new buildings and additions that are located in fire zones with fire resistant materials such as noncombustible siding and overhangs, tempered or 20-minute rated glazing (windows), ember resistive attic and crawl space vents as well as provide defensible spaces around the structure. Majority of the code requirements that are set forth in the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code are carried over from Chapter 7A of the California Building Code and Section R337 of the California Residential Code, which had previously been adopted.

Single-Family Residential “FlexPath” Program

The City of Ojai’s Single-Family Residential “FlexPath” program is a local energy-efficiency ordinance that applies to remodels and additions of existing single-family homes. Instead of mandating one rigid set of upgrades, it provides a flexible compliance path allowing homeowners to choose from various energy-saving and electrification measures—such as improved insulation, efficient HVAC systems, and electric appliances—to meet performance goals. The program aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve home energy performance, and support the city’s sustainability objectives while accommodating different project types and budgets. Certain projects, such as small additions or affordable housing units, may qualify for exemptions. Flexpath amendments to the California Residential Code were adopted prior to the September 30, 2025 deadline in AB 130, so they are allowed under state law, and have been submitted to the appropriate state commissions for approval.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT

Goal No. 2 - Wildfire Safety and Risk Mitigation

Goal No. 5 - Public Safety

Goal No. 7 - Climate Resiliency

OPTIONS

1. Take no action;
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

Willdan Engineering will be purchasing a new set of the 2025 code books for the City of Ojai’s Building & Safety Division at a cost of approximately \$1,600, and the enforcement of these codes is covered under the existing Willdan Engineering, Inc. contract services; therefore, there is no additional fiscal impact on the City of Ojai.

Prepared by: Lucas Seibert, Community Development Director

ATTACHMENT(S)

- A. Building Standards Commission Bulletin 25-01
- B. Draft City Council Ordinance