

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JESSE OSWALD, CHIEF BUILDING OFFICAL - PLANNING &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;
IAN HARDAGE, ASSISTANT FIRE MARSHAL AND
PAUL LOWENTHAL, ASSISTANT FIRE MARSHAL - FIRE
DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: ANNA MCAULIFFE, RESEARCH & PROGRAM COORD.
REVIEW OF PROPOSED BUILDING AND FIRE CODE
ADOPTION AND COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN
(CWPP)

AGENDA ACTION: NO ACTION REQUIRED

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Fire and Planning and Economic Development Departments that the Council hold a Study Session to provide an opportunity for Council to review proposed adoption of the Building and Fire Codes. This item is provided for Council's information only and no immediate action is requested.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every three years the State of California updates the California Code of Regulations, Title 24 (CCR-T24) including its twelve-component building and safety codes (collectively, the California Building Standards Code). Through the State code adoption cycle, the State of California adopts and publishes amendments to national model codes and updates codes specific to California. Such model codes with State amendments and California specific codes go into effect in every City and County in the State of California 180 days after publication. The new California Building Standards (CCR-T24) was published on July 1, 2019 and will take effect on January 1, 2020.

Similarly, every three years the International Code Council updates the International Property Maintenance Code with the most recent update occurring in 2019. Adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code is at the discretion of the local agency. In addition, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board North Coast Region recently issued the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination (NPDES) Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from the Municipal Separate Storm

Sewer Systems, NPDES No. CA0025054, which staff will be recommending be incorporated into the Santa Rosa City Code by reference.

The model State codes will go into effect in all California cities and counties effective January 1, 2020. The Health and Safety Code allows local jurisdictions to change or modify the State adopted model codes based on local geologic, climatic, or topographic conditions. The Fire Department is requesting adoption of the 2019 California Fire Code with local amendments and administrative changes. The Planning and Economic Development Department is requesting adoption of the 2019 California Building Standards Code as well as the updated 2018 International Property Maintenance Code, with certain local amendments and administrative changes.

The objectives of this study session include the following:

- Identify amendments and administrative changes previously established in the Santa Rosa City Code to be reinserted or that are now needing revised code section numbers.
- Identify amendments that can be reduced and eliminated from previous local ordinances that are no longer necessary due to their inclusion into model code and/or that create a conflict with model code language.
- Include permits and provisions for emerging industries and technologies within our community.
- Identify ways in which the City of Santa Rosa can improve resiliency in the face of wildfires.
- Share information for proposed adoption of California Building Code Appendix N and California Residential Code Appendix X “Emergency Housing.”
- Share information for proposed development and adoption of an “All-Electric Reach Code.”

Building and Fire Code adoptions are an intense undertaking that requires a collaborative effort by Fire and Building Officials. Numerous steps have already been taken by both departments in approaching upcoming code adoptions. A regional approach to gain consistency combined with each jurisdiction’s individual characteristics are evaluated during the process.

BACKGROUND

In February 2019 a committee was formed through the Sonoma County Fire Prevention Officers’ Association to evaluate, update, edit and create more consistency between the various ordinances within Sonoma County for adoption into the 2019 California Fire and Building Codes. Representatives from all major fire authorities and Redwood Empire Code Officials participated in five monthly meetings reviewing current and proposed

building standard amendments with the intent to be as consistent as possible with proposed amendments, focusing on a more harmonious alignment with model code as well as incorporating scientific based language at the local level for our Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas.

Collaborative efforts to evaluate our local conditions and make informed decisions with a scientific approach will address reasonable home hardening and defensible space concerns in our WUI areas.

This study session is to provide the Council with an opportunity to review and discuss proposed-upcoming Building and Fire Code adoptions. The document presented as part of this study session is a consensus draft document that was the result of this committee's work that achieves the highest level of consistency and community protection.

The City's intent is to only allow the use of ignition-resistant building materials and limit specific building materials within WUI areas, such as wood shake roofing and wood wall coverings, to reduce materials that are more easily cast-off during large scale fire events. Reduction or elimination of combustible building materials within 3-5 feet of structures, (i.e. fence and/or gate connections to structures). Develop a comprehensive hazardous vegetation and fuels management ordinance through our CWPP process. Minimum Class A roof throughout the jurisdiction to help protect structures outside the WUI areas from cast-off burning embers. Inclusion of significant remodels to include Chapter 7A provisions for home hardening, not previously applicable to existing structures. Various system design amendments to further clarify design standards to be met. New code language fixes as it relates to life safety from explosion and efficient egress to hazardous processing rooms.

The City Council expressed interest in adopting Emergency Housing measures provided by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. These measures were initially provided as an optional adoption measure in 2017. The measures are now embedded in the Codes as Appendices that must be adopted by local agencies.

The Climate Action Subcommittee met on June 11, 2019 and provided direction to staff to develop an All-Electric Reach Code for consideration and possible adoption by Council during the upcoming code adoption period.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable

ANALYSIS

In January 2019, the State of California Building Standards Commission adopted updated building and safety codes with amendments and published them as California

Codes. The Codes are compiled in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, and are known collectively as the California Building Standards Code.

The new California Code of Regulations, Title 24, was published in July 2019. The codes adopted by the Building Standards Commission go into effect 180 days after publication by the State and must be enforced by each City and County.

Staff participated in the Sonoma County Fire Prevention Officer's Fire Code Committee to create a consensus document to be utilized county-wide by cities, fire districts and the County in an effort to ensure uniformity in requirements.

Local jurisdictions may amend the State building standards only upon an express finding that such amendments are reasonably necessary because of local topographic, geologic, or climatic conditions. In general, amendments may not be less restrictive than the State standards.

In 2018, International Code Council published the triennial update of the International Property Maintenance Code and made it available for local adoption. Staff has reviewed the new codes adopted by the State of California and the new International Property Maintenance Code and has prepared the ordinance for adoption of these codes into the Santa Rosa City Code with appropriate amendments to address local conditions. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board North Coast Region recently issued the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination (NPDES) Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems, NPDES No. CA0025054. To ensure enforceability of the provisions of that permit to all development within the City, staff recommends that the permit be incorporated into the Santa Rosa City Code by reference.

Government Code Section 50022.3 requires that a resolution be adopted to establish a public hearing to consider adoption of the ordinances associated with the code updates. This public hearing is planned for October 1 and 22, 2019, subject to Council adoption of the resolution.

Emergency Housing measures have been developed and refined to provide guidance and minimum requirements for local jurisdictions. Implementation of the first, optional measures provided State agencies the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures and refine them into what is now provided as permanent code language.

All-Electric Reach Codes are being proposed for adoption by numerous jurisdictions to address climate concerns. The City of Santa Rosa has partnered with the Regional Climate Protection Agency, Sonoma Clean Power, Bay Area Regional Energy Network and others to evaluate, analyze and develop Reach Codes for adoption by this and other regional jurisdictions.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no fiscal impacts from the proposed amendments.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Draft Ordinance, 2019 Fire Code Amendments
- Attachment 2 - Emergency Housing measures

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