

**CITY OF PALM DESERT
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: December 11, 2025

PREPARED BY: Jason K. Finley, Chief Building Official

SUBJECT: INTRODUCE AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 15 OF THE PALM DESERT MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADOPT THE 2025 CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS CODE BY REFERENCE WITH APPENDICES AND LOCAL AMENDMENTS AND SCHEDULING A PUBLIC HEARING

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Introduce an Ordinance entitled “AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING TITLE 15 OF THE PALM DESERT MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADOPT THE 2025 CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS CODE BY REFERENCE WITH APPENDICES AND LOCAL AMENDMENTS.”
2. Schedule a public hearing and second reading for the City Council meeting of January 8, 2026, at 4 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Every three (3) years, the California Building and Standards Commission revises, adopts, and publishes the California Building Standards Law (Health and Safety Code, Division 13, Part 2.5, commencing with Section 18901) and the State Housing Law (Health and Safety Code, Division 13, Part 1.5, commencing with Section 17910). These laws govern and regulate various types of building construction, building uses, energy efficiency, and green, sustainable construction. Moving from the current 2022 series, the list below identifies the new 2025 model codes:

California Building Standard Code

Reference Model Code

2025 California Building Code	2024 International Building Code (ICC)
2025 California Residential Code	2024 International Residential (ICC)
2025 California Mechanical Code	2024 Uniform Mechanical Code (IAPMO)
2025 California Electrical Code	2023 National Electrical Code (NFPA)
2025 California Plumbing Code	2021 Uniform Plumbing Code (IAPMO)
2025 California Fire Code	2021 International Fire Code (ICC)
2025 California Wildland-Urban Interface Code	2024 Wildland-Urban Interface Code (ICC)
2025 California Existing Building Code	2021 International Existing Building Code (ICC)
2025 California Energy Code*	
2025 California Green Building Standards*	
2025 California Historical Building Code*	*California Building and Standards Commission

The codes mentioned above align with the provisions of the California Building Standards Code Triennial Cycle. Adopting these codes will benefit our building and fire officials, inspectors, and plan examiners by providing them with the necessary resources to ensure a clear understanding of their intent, applicability, and enforcement. This ultimately supports the establishment of minimum life, health, and safety standards for all buildings within the City of Palm Desert.

In addition to adopting the 2025 California Model Code Series, the Building and Safety Division recommends reasonable and necessary modifications to address local conditions within the City of Palm Desert. Extreme temperatures, high winds, and the City's physical proximity to known active earthquake faults are some of the local conditions necessitating these modifications. Other modifications are administrative or procedural and do not address topics not included in the Code.

The proposed Ordinance adopts the 2025 California Building Standards Code by reference, and repeals and recasts Title 15 of the Palm Desert Municipal Code. These modifications are also in cooperation and collaboration with the City's Planning and Zoning requirements. Such modifications do not affect minimum safeguards but streamline administrative processes, plan review, and permitting.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The cost of implementing, training, and enforcing model code updates has been included in the annual Building and Safety Division budget for FY2025-26 in Account No. 1104420-431200 (Training) and Account No. 1104420-4632000 (Subscriptions and Publications). No other fiscal impact is anticipated to impact the General Fund.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2025 Palm Desert Model Code Adoption Ordinance