



**STAFF REPORT
HOLLISTER CITY COUNCIL
MEETING DATE: September 2, 2025
REPORT # Community Development-2025-56**

AGENDA ITEM: INTRODUCE AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING BY REFERENCE THE 2025 CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODES WITH AMENDMENTS

DEPARTMENT: Community Development
DEPARTMENT HEAD: Rod Powell, Assistant City Manager
STAFF CONTACT: Gabe Martinez, Building Official

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Hold a public hearing and introduce an ordinance amending and replacing Chapter 15.04 of the Hollister Municipal Code to update Hollister Building Codes and direct staff to schedule a second reading for September 15, 2025.

DISCUSSION: Every three years, the International Code Council updates the model building codes, which are then adopted and amended by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) to form the California Building Standards Code, which is Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. This triennial code cycle aims to improve safety, sustainability, and resiliency, and incorporates the latest technology, design, and construction methods and materials.

The California Building Standards Code is the minimum standard established in law and governs the design and construction of buildings and structures throughout California. In accordance with California Health and Safety Code, a city may establish more restrictive building standards than those in the California Building Standards Code if the city finds that local amendments are reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions.

The 2025 edition of the California Building Standards Code was published in July 2025, representing a pivotal point for statewide and local implementation. While the set of codes becomes effective statewide on January 1, 2026, this year's local adoption process is significantly accelerated due to Assembly Bill (AB) 130.

Signed into law on June 30, 2025, AB 130 introduces new restrictions on when local jurisdictions can amend residential building standards. AB 130 mandates that local amendments to residential building standards must be filed and effective by September 30, 2025, to be permissible. Otherwise, local jurisdictions shall not amend residential building standards from October 1, 2025, through June 1, 2031 (which is nearly two code cycles). To ensure timely adoption, Community Development staff has taken a proactive approach to meet this accelerated schedule to ensure that Hollister's safety, sustainability, and resiliency goals from the current code cycle are carried forward to the next two code cycles for residential structures and to the next code cycle for non-residential structures.

Staff recommend that the City Council adopt the latest codes with local amendments to ensure that buildings and structures in Hollister will safeguard the public's health, safety,

and general welfare. The 2025 California Building Standards Code, with local amendments, will become effective and applicable on January 1, 2026.

Every three years, the International Codes (model codes) are updated, revised, and published by the International Code Council. Corresponding to the publishing of these model codes, the California Building Standards Commission amends and adopts the model codes as the California Building Standards Code.

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, also referred to as the California Building Standards Code, is the minimum standard established in law for the design and construction of buildings and structures throughout California. It is updated and published on a triennial basis by the California Building Standards Commission by order of the California legislature. This regular update is referred to as a “code cycle.” Each code cycle update improves safety, sustainability, and resiliency, and incorporates new technology, design, and construction methods and materials.

In July 2025, the CBSC published the 2025 edition of the California Building Standards Code, making this year a code adoption year. The building regulations in the California Building Standards Code have the same force of law and take effect 180 days after their publication. On January 1, 2026, the 2025 California Building Standards Code will become effective statewide. This 2025 Code has prompted jurisdictions statewide to adopt the new code and complete local amendments as necessary.

In accordance with California Health and Safety Code, a city may establish more restrictive building standards than those in the California Building Standards Code if the city makes an express finding that each amendment is reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions.

This year’s code adoption process presents unique challenges due to the enactment of AB 130. Signed by Governor Newsom on June 30, 2025, as part of the state budget trailer bills, AB 130 contained provisions in Sections 29, 30, and 31 that prohibit local jurisdictions from making local amendments to residential building standards except under very specific circumstances. This legislation amends the Health and Safety Code and establishes that local jurisdictions shall not amend residential building standards from October 1, 2025, through June 1, 2031 (which is nearly two code cycles), unless the local modifications are substantially equivalent to modifications that were previously filed and are effective by September 30, 2025.

The AB 130 provisions significantly accelerate the local amendment and code adoption timeline, compressing a typically three-to-four-month process to just a few weeks. In a normal code cycle, jurisdictions receive the new set of codes between July and August, and subsequently, building officials and fire marshals across jurisdictions review the new codes, collaborate regionally, and develop local amendments between August and November. As a result of AB 130, the timeline has been significantly compressed, requiring local amendments to residential building standards to be effective no later than September 30, 2025, to be permissible under AB 130.

To meet AB 130 timeline, Community Development staff has taken a proactive approach, dedicating several weeks and weekends to review and analyze a digital version of the

new codes. They also developed a code adoption ordinance with local amendments to ensure Hollister's safety, sustainability, and resiliency goals from the current code cycle are carried forward through the next two code cycles for residential structures and the next code cycle for non-residential structures. Given the expedited timeline, minor adjustments or corrections may be necessary if errors or inconsistencies are identified later.

Analysis:

As part of the triennial code adoption cycle, and pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Sections 17958 and 18941.5, staff recommend that the City of Hollister adopt the 2025 California Building Standards Code, incorporating the amendments approved during the prior code cycle(s). The parts of the 2025 California Building Standards Code that are included in this proposed adoption ordinance are the California Building Code, Residential Code, Electrical Code, Mechanical Code, Plumbing Code, Energy Code, Historical Building Code, Existing Building Code and Green Building Standards Code.

In addition to the California codes, staff proposes the continued adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code and Swimming Pool and Spa Code. These codes are critical for maintaining property standards and safety in residential and public spaces.

Furthermore, staff proposes that several local amendments that have been adopted in the previous code cycle(s) be continued, with all supporting findings included in the ordinance documentation. If approved, the Building Official will file a copy of this ordinance with the California Building Standards Commission.

The following sections summarize the code adoption and local amendments proposed to be carried forward.

Building Code

The 2025 California Building Code is proposed to be adopted by reference with the same local amendments carried forward. A close examination of the current and prior California Building Code and Municipal Code was performed. One set of amendments is made to the administrative portion to clarify that fees will be assessed per the locally adopted comprehensive fee schedule and that the plan review fees shall be paid at the time of submitting plans and before review. Another set of amendments is to parallel the sprinkler system amendments to the Fire Code by the Fire Prevention team. Another amendment is to require higher classification roof covering for hillside construction to address a local climatic condition. Higher classification roof covering is effective against higher fire-test exposure. The recent fire danger in the hillside makes this local amendment important. Another amendment is made to implement more stringent special inspection requirements for spread concrete footings due to the expansive (clay) soils and seismic activity common to this geological area. Another amendment is to implement more stringent foundation requirements, again to address the expansive (clay) soils and seismic activity common to this geological area. Provisions already addressed in the referenced codes are deleted. All design methods, such as national standards and all materials allowed under the California Building Code, are amended to be permitted in Hollister.

Residential Code

The 2025 California Residential Code is proposed to be adopted by reference. A thorough review of the current and prior California Residential Codes, along with the Municipal Code, was conducted. Amendments are proposed to the administrative section to specify that fees will be determined based on the local comprehensive fee schedule, and that plan review fees must be paid at the time of submission and before the review process begins. Additionally, work requiring a permit shall not be started until the permit holder or an authorized agent has posted or made available the inspection record card issued by the building official in a manner that allows the Building Official to easily record inspection details as work progresses.

Electrical Code

The 2025 California Electrical Code is proposed to be adopted by reference with the same three local amendments carried forward. First, all new electrical services are required to be underground. As some buildings in Hollister are located in high-wind areas, amending the code to eliminate overhead services that are inherently less safe in the event of disasters will provide a higher level of safety. Second, amending the Electrical Code to require the disconnects of electrical power for each building to be in a readily accessible location on the first floor will provide a quicker means of finding the main power disconnects in a seismic, fire, or another emergency event. Third, requiring grounding systems in new buildings to be an electrode encased in concrete allows significantly higher assurances that the grounding of the building's electrical system will not deteriorate and fail due to the acidic and expansive properties of local soils. Providing equipment grounding conductors enhances the capability of keeping electrical systems grounded, which is important in high-amperage electrical services.

Plumbing Code

The 2025 California Plumbing Code is proposed for adoption by reference. A thorough review of the current and previous California Plumbing Codes, along with the Municipal Code, was conducted. As part of this review, two existing amendments will continue to be proposed. The first requires the installation of Earthquake-actuated gas shutoff valves to address a significantly higher risk of severe ground shaking due to The City of Hollister uniquely situated directly on the Calaveras Fault.

The second amendment mandates that clean-outs be installed on private property near the property line where the sewer connects to the public lateral. These clean-outs must be extended to grade with approved materials and terminated within a listed and labeled box, ensuring compliance with the City of Hollister sewer standard SWR-5B.

In addition to the proposed amendments, the following appendices are recommended for adoption, consistent with previous code cycles. Appendix A provides guidelines for the recommended sizing of water supply systems to ensure adequate flow and pressure throughout the building. Appendix B offers explanatory notes on combination waste and vent systems, promoting proper installation and compliance. Appendix C discusses alternative plumbing systems, including innovative methods that meet code requirements and enhance sustainability. Appendix D outlines procedures for sizing stormwater drainage systems to effectively manage runoff and prevent flooding. Appendix I sets

standards for the proper installation of plumbing components to ensure safety and durability. Lastly, Appendix M includes a Peak Water Demand Calculator, a valuable tool for estimating maximum water usage to facilitate appropriate pipe sizing. Incorporating these appendices will support best practices in plumbing design and installation, maintaining consistency with prior code updates in the City of Hollister.

Energy Code

The 2025 California Energy Code is proposed for adoption by reference. A comprehensive review of the current and previous California Energy Codes, as well as the Municipal Code, was conducted. As part of this review, two existing appendices are recommended to continue to be adopted, consistent with previous code cycles.

Appendix 1-A, "Standards and Documents Referenced in the Energy Code," provides a list of standards and supporting documents that inform the code's requirements.

Appendix 1-B, "Energy Commission Documents Incorporated by Reference in Their Entirety," includes specific documents from the California Energy Commission that are essential for enforcement and implementation. These appendices help ensure clarity and the consistent application of standards.

Existing Building Code

The 2025 California Existing Building Code is proposed for adoption by reference. A comprehensive review of the current and previous California Existing Building Codes, along with the Municipal Code, was conducted. As part of this review, four existing appendices are recommended to continue to be adopted, consistent with previous code cycles. Appendix A1, "Seismic Strengthening Provisions for Unreinforced Masonry Bearing Wall Buildings," provides guidelines to enhance seismic resilience for these structures. Appendix A2, "Earthquake Hazard Reduction in Existing Reinforced Concrete and Reinforced Masonry Wall Buildings with Flexible Diaphragms," offers measures to mitigate earthquake risks in buildings with specific structural features. Appendix A3, "Prescriptive Provisions for Seismic Strengthening of Cripple Walls and Sill Plate Anchorage of Light, Wood-Frame Residential Buildings," outlines techniques to improve seismic performance of typical residential constructions. Finally, Appendix A5, "Referenced Standards," lists the standards referenced throughout the code, ensuring clarity and consistency in enforcement and compliance.

Mechanical Code and Historical Building Code

The California Mechanical and Historical Building Codes are proposed to be adopted by reference in the ordinance with no local amendments.

Property Maintenance Code and Swimming Pool and Spa Code

In addition to the California codes, the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) and the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSC) are proposed to continue to be included in the code adoption. Staff determined that the inclusion of the ISPSC is needed and deemed appropriate as it contains more detailed provisions regarding the plumbing and mechanical elements and is in line with the California Codes. The IPMC is proposed to be adopted again and deemed needed and appropriate because the Hollister Municipal Code and the State's Health and Safety Code do not have the requirements for property maintenance and housing habitability in the IPMC.

Green Building Standards Code

The 2025 California Green Building Standards Code is proposed to be adopted by reference with specific local amendments. The majority of the previous 2022 “Reach Codes” have been incorporated into the 2025 California Green Building Standards Code through the California Building Standards Commission code hearing and adoption process. This process establishes the California Building Standards Code on a triennial cycle. It involves public hearings and stakeholder input to update standards that promote energy efficiency, sustainability, and climate resilience throughout the State.

The first proposed local amendment introduces the definition of Level 2 Electric Vehicle (EV) Ready, providing detailed requirements for electric vehicle readiness in single-family homes. Amending the code is essential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate climate change effects, and improve access to EV receptacles. Specifically, in new construction of one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses with private garages, whether attached or detached, a Level 2 EV Ready receptacle will be required to support sustainable transportation.

Additional amendments address long-term and short-term bicycle parking provisions to ensure consistency with the previously adopted 2022 Green Building Standards Code. The current requirement for short-term bicycle parking in multifamily buildings, hotels, and motels, of one bicycle parking space for every 5% of visitor parking, will be maintained by amending the new code to require one bicycle parking space for every 5% of visitor parking.

For long-term bicycle parking, the current standard of one bicycle parking space per dwelling unit will be retained, with amendments establishing one space for every one dwelling units. For hotels and motels, the existing standard of one onsite long-term bicycle parking space for every 25 rooms or fraction thereof will be maintained by amending the code to require one space for every 25 rooms or fraction thereof.

These amendments maintain consistency with existing green building standards and promote sustainable transportation. They support safe, accessible bicycle facilities that encourage active travel, reduce traffic, and improve residents' quality of life.

Conclusion

Adopting the 2025 codes with these local amendments will strengthen Hollister’s commitment to promoting public health, safety and overall welfare through updated and consistent building standards. Therefore, staff recommends that the Council introduce the proposed ordinance to adopt these codes and amendments and set a public hearing for August 18, 2025.

This timeline will allow notice of the public hearing to be published once a week for two successive weeks pursuant to Government Code Section 6066, ensuring transparency and compliance with State requirements. The ordinance will be effective on September 17, 2025, if adopted on August 18, 2025.

As established by the California Building Standards Commission, the 2025 California Building Standards Code, with any approved local amendments, will become effective

and applicable on January 1, 2026.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

PREVIOUS COUNCIL OR COMMISSION ACTION: The City Council of the City of Hollister last amended Chapter 15.04 of the Hollister Municipal Code to adopt the 2022 California Building Codes on November 7, 2022.

CEQA: Categorically Exempt

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Ordinance