



City of Sebastopol

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: November 18, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Building Official
Subject: Ordinance to Implement the 2025 California Building Code as Adopted by the City of Sebastopol

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council introduce and conduct the first reading of an Ordinance to update and amend the California Building Code to implement changes for the 2025 Building Code cycle.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff recommends that the City Council introduce and conduct the first reading of an Ordinance to adopt the 2025 California Building Standards Code (Title 24), Volumes One through Twelve, along with selected Appendices and CALGreen Tier One requirements. This update ensures compliance with the State’s triennial code cycle and reflects Sebastopol’s continued commitment to regional consistency and sustainability.

The proposed amendments include the adoption of Appendices H (Signs), I (Patio Covers), J (Grading), O (Emergency Housing), and Q (Tiny Homes), which provide clarity and uniformity in regulating elements beyond the core building code. Additionally, the adoption of CALGreen Tier One standards—developed in collaboration with the Climate Action Committee—will significantly enhance energy efficiency requirements for new construction.

This Ordinance maintains alignment with Sonoma County’s “common code” approach, streamlining the permitting process and reducing the learning curve for developers and contractors.

BACKGROUND:

The California Building Standards Code (Title 24) is organized into 13 parts and is updated every three years. Local jurisdictions that choose to amend Title 24 are required to adopt this building code by ordinance for local enforcement within 180 days after the updated Title 24 is published by the State, which occurred on July 1, 2025.

In adopting the Title 24 for local enforcement, a local jurisdiction may amend the State standards to address local geologic, topographic, or climatic conditions, but in no case may these amendments be less restrictive than the State code. The authority to make such amendments is provided through a combination of Government Code Sections; however, each amendment requires specific justification. In addition, there are several Appendices which are not required to be adopted by local agencies; however, their adoption may serve to simplify or clarify local regulation processes by providing consistent regulations across jurisdictions.

Since the 2008 Code adoption, Sonoma County jurisdictions have collaborated in adopting local amendments. The goal is to limit local amendments to the State Codes as much as practical and use common language in their



City of Sebastopol

adoptions. This “common code” is designed to give developers, contractors, and citizens consistent requirements and code language, which streamlines the permitting process and requires less education for the local building community. Minor changes have been made to the code language, but Sonoma jurisdictions have attempted to limit code amendments to remain uniform with the State. It should be noted that most of the changes in this year’s code deal with energy conservation and improving the overall efficiency of the structure.

DISCUSSION:

The Ordinance proposes to update the City of Sebastopol Building Code to meet the requirements and criteria of the 2025 California Building Code Standards. The 2025 Code is very similar to the 2022 Code.

Separately, the Ordinance proposes to adopt several Appendices to the 2022 California Building Standards Code with the intent to establish clear and consistent regulation of elements outside of the typical building code. Specifically, these amendments will establish (or re-establish) local City of Sebastopol regulations addressing:

1. Appendices in the California Building/Residential Code proposed to be adopted include:
 - H. Signs
 - I. Patio Covers
 - J. Grading
 - O. Emergency Housing
 - Q. Tiny Homes
2. CALGreen
 - Adopt Tier One Requirements

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Staff recommends that the City Council introduce an Ordinance to adopt the 2025 California Building Code (Title 24), Volumes one through twelve.

Upon Council approval of resolution, the public hearing for the adoption of the ordinances is scheduled for December 2, 2025, and related public hearing notices will publish on November 18, 2025 and November 25, 2025.

BUDGET COMMITTEE REVIEW:

Not Applicable

CITY COUNCIL GOALS / PRIORITIES / GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:

This item advances Goal: N/A

Action Plan: N/A

General Plan consistency:

Chapter 11: Housing

D. Housing Diversity and Affordability

Action D-14: Enforce Title 24 of the California Building Code, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Municipal Code Chapter 15.80 when reviewing proposed development plans.

Timing: Ongoing



City of Sebastopol

*Responsible Entity: Planning Department, Building Department, Planning Commission, City Council
Funding Source: Department Budget (General Fund)*

FISCAL IMPACT:

The cost of a new Building Code book set is \$1,544, and we will need two sets—one for the Building Department and another for the Sebastopol Regional Library. Additionally, we will purchase book tabs for the Building Department’s set at a cost of \$109.50. The total expense comes to \$3,197.50, which is already included in the adopted FY 2025–2026 budget.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

As of the writing of this staff report, the Building Department has not received any public comment. However, through the Climate Action Committee, both public and committee members have played a large part in the implementation of these codes. The biggest change based on the Climate Action Committee input is the adoption of Cal Green Standards Tier 1, which will require much higher energy standards for new construction.

If staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of this item

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

CITY COUNCIL OPTIONS:

1. That the City Council not introduce the Ordinance and not adopt the 2025 CA Building Code changes. This is not recommended.

ATTACHMENTS:

Draft Ordinance
Redlined Sebastopol Municipal Code Chapter 15.04 International Building Code

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 11/3/2025
CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 11/3/2025

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project that 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. Further, building permits are ministerial actions not subject to CEQA review.

Administrative Services (Financial) Approval Date: 11/3/2025



City of Sebastopol

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: Yes No N/A

Account Code (if applicable) 100-2202-4430

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 11-13-2025

City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 11-13-2025

ORDINANCE NUMBER XXX

An Ordinance of the City Council of Sebastopol; providing for the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare: providing for the repeal of Ordinance No. 1144 and adopting by reference the 2025 Edition of the California Building Code parts 1, 2, 2.5, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 as published by the International Code Council, The California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 24, Parts 1, 2, 2.5, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 of the 2025 Edition as published by the International Code Council; providing for the issuance of permits and collection of fees thereof: together with amendments and additions to the various codes; providing penalties for the violation thereof and repealing all ordinances in conflict therewith, including all appendices, errata and supplements thereto, as published by the CBSC applicable to the 2025 California Building and Fire Codes with amendments, additions and or deletions as promulgated by the Sebastopol City Council. Amending City of Sebastopol Municipal Code Chapter 15 sections 15.04 and 15.08.

A. Recitals.

- (i) Article 2 of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code § 50020, et. seq. Requires a local agency to take legislative action by ordinance to adopt by reference the most current edition of the California Building and Fire Codes.
- (ii) Article 2 of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code, § 50022.6 requires that at least one copy of the primary adopted code shall be filed with the City at least 15 days preceding the hearing and shall be kept there for public viewing while the ordinance is in force.
- (iii) Article 2 of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code, §50022.3 requires that after the first reading of the title of the adopting ordinance and of the title of the code to be adopted thereby, and of the title of the secondary codes therein adopted by reference, the legislative body shall schedule a public hearing thereon.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

B. Ordinance.

Now THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Sebastopol does hereby find, determine, and ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. In all aspects, as set forth in the Recitals, Part A, of this Ordinance.

SECTION 2. One (1) certified copy of each of the Codes so adopted, along with any Amendment thereto, shall be kept on file for the use and examination by the public and located at the Sebastopol Building Department.

SECTION 3. Adoption of California Code Of Regulations Title 24, Part 1: California Administrative Code. 2025 Edition, as published by the International Code Council.

SECTION 4. Adoption of California Code of Regulations Title-24 Parts 1-12 and the current edition of the International Building Code, the 2025 Edition, Volumes 1 and 2, including Appendices H, I, J, O, and Q hereof as published by the International Code Council, with the following amendments:

California Building Code, Division II, Scope and Administration is amended to amend and add the following:

Section 105.2 Building 1. Shall be revised to read as follows: One-story detached accessory buildings used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet (11.15m²). The height of the one-story detached accessory building shall not exceed 12 feet at any point or as specified by local zoning ordinance.

Section 109.4 Work commencing before permit issuance. Any person who commences any work on a building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system before obtaining the necessary permits shall be subject to a fee established by the building official that shall be in addition to the required permit fees. An investigation fee, in addition to the permit fee, shall be collected whether or not a permit is then or subsequently issued. The investigation fee shall be at least equal to and not to exceed five times the permit fee required by this code. The minimum investigation fee has been set forth in the fee schedule adopted by this jurisdiction. The payment of such investigation fee shall not exempt any person from compliance with all other provisions of this code nor from any penalty prescribed by law.

Section 109.6 Refunds. The Building Official may authorize refunding of any fee paid hereunder that was erroneously paid or collected. The Building Official may authorize refunding of not more than 80 percent of the permit fee paid, excluding issuance fees or plan review fees, when no work has been done under a permit issued in accordance with this code and the applicant has submitted a written request to cancel said permit, along with the original signed permit and inspection record card. The Building Official may authorize refunding of not more than 80 percent of the plan examination fee paid, excluding any application fee, when an application for a permit for which a plan review fee has been paid is withdrawn or canceled prior to commencing any plan review. The Building Official shall not authorize refunding of any fee paid except on written application filed by the original applicant or permittee not later than 90 days after the date the permit or application for a permit has expired.

Section 109.8 Violation penalties. Any persons who violates a provision of this code or fails to comply with any of the requirements thereof or who erects, constructs, alters or repairs a building or structure in violation of the approved construction documents or directive of the building official, or of a permit or certificate issued under the provisions of this code, shall be subject to penalties as prescribed by law. An investigation fee, in addition to the permit fee, shall be collected whether or not a permit is then or subsequently issued. The investigation fee shall be at least equal to and not to exceed five times the permit fee required by this code. The minimum investigation fee set forth in the fee schedule adopted by this jurisdiction. The payment of such investigation fee shall not exempt any person from compliance with all other provisions of this code nor from any penalty prescribed by law.

The Sebastopol Design Review Board is hereby designated by the City Council as the board of appeals for activities regulated by this Ordinance.

SECTION 5. Adoption of **California Code of Regulations Title-24 Part 2.5**, including Appendices AQ, AJ, AH, and AV thereof as published by the International Code Council.

APPROVED FOR FIRST READING AND INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE at the Regular City Council Meeting of November 18, 2025.

SCHEDULED FOR SECOND READING AND ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE at the Regular City Council Meeting of December 2, 2025.

VOTE:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

APPROVED: _____
Stephen Zollman, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Mary Gourley, Interim City Manager/City Clerk, MMC

APPROVED AS TO FORM: _____
Alex Mog, City Attorney

Chapter 15.04 INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE

Sections:

- **15.04.010 Repealed.**
- **15.04.020 Certified copies on file.**
- **15.04.030 Adoption of the California Administrative Code.**
- **15.04.040 Adoption of the California Building Code.**
- **15.04.050 Adoption of the California Residential Code.**
- **15.04.060 Adoption of the California Electrical Code.**
- **15.04.070 Adoption of the California Mechanical Code.**
- **15.04.080 Adoption of the California Plumbing Code.**
- **15.04.090 Adoption of the California Energy Code.**
- **15.04.110 California Historical Building Code.**
- **15.04.120 California Fire Code.**
- **15.04.125 Fire hazard severity zones.**
- **15.04.130 California Existing Building Code.**
- **15.04.140 Repealed.**
- **15.04.150 California Referenced Standards Code.**
- **15.04.155 Adoption of the International Existing Building Code.**
- **15.04.160 Adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code.**
- **15.04.165 Repealed.**
- **15.04.170 Adoption of the National Fire Code.**
- **15.04.180 Building and Safety Division.**
- **15.04.190 Nonliability of City of Sebastopol.**
- **15.04.200 Violations and penalties.**
- **15.04.210 Repeal of conflicting ordinances.**
- **15.04.220 Fees.**
- **15.04.230 Findings of fact.**

15.04.010 Adoption of codes by reference.

Repealed by [Ord. 1144](#).

15.04.020 Certified copies on file.

One certified copy of each of the codes so adopted, along with any amendment thereto, shall be kept on file for the use and examination by the public and located at the Sebastopol Building Department. (Ord. 1144 § 2)

15.04.030 Adoption of the California Administrative Code.

Adoption of California Code of Regulations Title [24](#), Part 1: California Administrative Code, 2025 Edition, as published by the International Code Council. (Ord. 1144 § 3)

15.04.040 Adoption of the California Building Code.

Adoption of California Code of Regulations Title [24](#), Part 2, Volumes 1 and 2, and the current edition of the California Building Code, the 2025 Edition, Volumes 1 and 2, including Appendices H, I, J and O thereof, as published by the International Code Council with the following amendments:

California Building Code, Division II, Scope and Administration, is amended to amend and add the following:

Section 105.2 Building 1. Shall be revised to read as follows: One-story detached accessory buildings used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet, (11.15m²). The height of the one story detached accessory building shall not exceed 12 feet at any point or as specified by local zoning ordinance.

Section 109.4 Work commencing before permit issuance.

Any person who commences any work on a building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system before obtaining the necessary permits shall be subject to a fee establish by the building official that shall be in addition to the required permit fees. An investigation fee, in addition to the permit fee, shall be collected whether or not a permit is then or subsequently issued. The investigation fee shall be at least equal to and not to exceed five time the permit fee required by this code. The minimum investigation fee has been set forth in the fee schedule adopted by this jurisdiction. The payment of such investigation fee shall not exempt any person from compliance with all other provisions of this code nor from any penalty prescribed by law.

Section 109.6 Refunds.

The Building Official may authorize refunding of any fee paid hereunder which was erroneously paid or collected.

The Building Official may authorize refunding of not more than 80 percent of the permit fee paid, excluding issuance fees or plan review fees, when no work has been done under a permit issued in accordance with this code and the applicant has submitted a written request to cancel said permit along with the original signed permit and inspection record card.

The Building Official may authorize refunding of not more than 80 percent of the plans examination fee paid, excluding any application fee, when an application for a permit for which a plan review fee has been paid is withdrawn or canceled prior to commencing any plan review.

The Building Official shall not authorize refunding of any fee paid except on written application filed by the original applicant or permittee not later than 90 days after the date the permit or application for a permit has expired.

Section 109.8 Violation penalties.

Any persons who violates a provision of this code or fails to comply with any of the requirements thereof or who erects, constructs, alters or repairs a building or structure in violation of the approved construction documents or directive of the building official, or of a permit or certificate issued under the provisions of this code, shall be subject to penalties as prescribed by law. An investigation fee, in addition to the permit fee, shall be collected whether or not a permit is then or subsequently issued. The investigation fee shall be at least equal to and not to exceed five times the permit fee required by this code. The minimum investigation fee set forth in the fee schedule adopted by this jurisdiction. The payment of such investigation fee shall not exempt any person from compliance with all other provisions of this code nor from any penalty prescribed by law.

The Sebastopol Design Review Board is hereby designated by the City Council as the board of appeals for activities regulated by this Ordinance.

(Amended as part of January 2023 update; Ord. 1144 § 4)

15.04.050 Adoption of the California Residential Code.

Adoption of California Code of Regulations Title [24](#), Part 2.5, including Appendices AQ, AJ, AH, and AV thereof, as published by the International Code Council with the following amendments:

Division II, Administration.

California Residential Code Section R105.2 exception 1 is amended to read as follows:

R105.2, exception 1. Shall be revised to read as follows:

One-story detached accessory buildings used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses, and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet, (11.15m²). The height of the one story detached accessory building shall not exceed 12 feet at any point or as specified by local zoning ordinance.

California Residential Code Section R108.5 is amended to read as follows:

Section R108.5 Refunds.

The Building Official may authorize refunding of any fee paid hereunder which was erroneously paid or collected. The Building Official may authorize refunding of not more than 80 percent of the permit fee paid, excluding issuance fees or plan review fees, when no work has been done under a permit issued in accordance with this code and the applicant has submitted a written request to cancel said permit along with the original signed permit and inspection record card.

The Building Official may authorize refunding of not more than 80 percent of the plans examination fee paid, excluding any application fee, when an application for a permit for which a plan review fee has been paid is withdrawn or canceled prior to commencing any plan review.

The Building Official shall not authorize refunding of any fee paid except on written application filed by the original applicant or permittee not later than 90 days after the date the permit or application for a permit has expired.

California Residential Code Section R108.6 is amended to read as follows:

108.6 Work commencing before permit issuance.

Any person who commences any work on a building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system before obtaining the necessary permits shall be subject to a fee established by the building official that shall be in addition to the required permit fees. An investigation fee, in addition to the permit fee, shall be collected whether or not a permit is then or subsequently issued. The investigation fee shall be at least equal to and not to exceed five times the permit fee required by this code. The minimum investigation fee set forth in the fee schedule adopted by this jurisdiction. The payment of such investigation fee shall not exempt any person from compliance with all other provisions of this code nor from any penalty prescribed by law.

California Residential Code Section R108.7 is added to read as follows:

R108.7 Violation penalties.

Any persons who violates a provision of this code or fails to comply with any of the requirements thereof or who erects, constructs, alters or repairs a building or structure in violation of the approved construction documents or directive of the building official, or of a permit or certificate issued under the provisions of this code, shall be subject to penalties as prescribed by law. An investigation fee, in addition to the permit fee, shall be collected whether or not a permit is then or subsequently issued. The investigation fee shall be at least equal to and not to exceed five times the permit fee required by this

code. The minimum investigation fee set forth in the fee schedule adopted by this jurisdiction. The payment of such investigation fee shall not exempt any person from compliance with all other provisions of this code nor from any penalty prescribed by law.

(Ord. 1144 § 5)

15.04.060 Adoption of the California Electrical Code.

Adoption of the California Code of Regulations Title [24](#), Part 3: California Electrical Code, 2025 Edition, as published by National Fire Protection Association. (Amended as part of January 2023 update; Ord. 1144 § 6)

15.04.070 Adoption of the California Mechanical Code.

Adoption of the California Code of Regulations Title [24](#), Part 4: California Mechanical Code, 2025 Edition, including Appendices A and B thereof, as published by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials. (Amended as part of January 2023 update; Ord. 1144 § 7)

15.04.080 Adoption of the California Plumbing Code.

Adoption of California Code of Regulations Title [24](#), Part 5: California Plumbing Code, 2025 Edition, including Appendices A, C, D, H and I thereof, as published by the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials. (Amended as part of January 2023 update; Ord. 1144 § 8)

15.04.090 Adoption of the California Energy Code.

Adoption of California Code of Regulations Title [24](#), Part 6: California Energy Code, 2025 Edition, as published by the International Code Council. (Amended as part of January 2023 update; Ord. 1144 § 9)

15.04.110 California Historical Building Code.

Adoption of California Code of Regulations Title [24](#), Part 8: California Historical Building Code, 2025 Edition, as published by the International Code Council. (Amended as part of January 2023 update; Ord. 1144 § 10)

15.04.120 California Fire Code.

Adoption of California Code of Regulations Title [24](#), Part 9: 2025 California Fire Code as published by the International Code Council, including Appendix Chapters 4, B, BB, C, CC, D, E, F, G, H, and O, with the following amendments:

Chapter 1, Administration.