



STAFF REPORT
12/11/2019

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Luis Lopez, Development Services Director

SUBJECT: Ordinance No. 1147 amending Chapters 15.04, 15.08, 15.12, 15.16, 15.20, 15.24 and 15.32 of Title 15 (Buildings and Construction) to adopt the 2019 Edition of California Building Code and Appendix J of the California Building Code (Grading), the 2019 Edition of the California Electrical Code, the 2019 Edition of the California Mechanical Code, the 2019 Edition of the California Plumbing Code, the 2019 Edition of the California Fire Code, and adding Chapter 15.53, with certain amendments thereto and conforming amendments.
(1st Reading)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council introduce for first reading, by title only, Ordinance No. 1147 amending Chapters 15.04, 15.08, 15.12, 15.16, 15.20, 15.24, and 15.32 of Title 15 of the Coachella Municipal Code (Buildings and Construction) to adopt the 2019 Editions of the California Building and Fire Codes with selected Appendices and Amendments thereto, adding Chapter 15.53, and making conforming amendments.

BACKGROUND:

On December 14, 2016, the City Council approved an Ordinance amending Title 15 of the Coachella Municipal Code to adopt the 2016 Editions of the California Building and Fire Codes. Every three years, the California Building Standards Commission requires that all city and county agencies enforce the latest editions of the California Codes as codified in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

The California Building Standards Commission has adopted the 2018 International Code Council (ICC) Codes with California amendments, mutually referred to herein as the 2019 California Building and Fire Codes. This includes the latest California Building Code, California Plumbing Code, California Mechanical Code, California Electrical Code, California Administrative Code, California Energy Code, California Fire Code, California Existing Building Code, and other codes adopted by reference (e.g. California Green Building Standards Code, California Residential Code, and California Energy Code). These will go into effect on January 1, 2020 by default. However, in the absence of a local ordinance, the City is not afforded certain changes and amendments to the Code that are necessary due to local geological and climatic conditions.

Moreover, the Fire Marshal's office has substantive local amendments that apply to Riverside County cities.

DISCUSSION:

Attached for City Council's approval is draft Ordinance 1147 amending various chapters of Title 15 for repeal of existing text, and concurrent amendment in their entirety, to adopt the 2019 California Building and Fire Codes. The City's Fire Marshall has provided Riverside County's local amendments to the 2019 Fire Codes and the City is incorporating all prior local amendments with updates from the City's Building Official. Additionally, the City is continuing to include a modified Chapter 1 to the California Building Code to require more stringent permitting and regulatory schemes as follows:

Require a building permit for the following:

1. Hardscape work including concrete flatwork, patio slabs, and pavers.
2. New driveways made of concrete, pavers, grass-crete or comparable permeable or impermeable surfaces.
3. Removal and repair of existing masonry walls for the purpose of installation of gates and driveways.
4. Tent structures and canvas shade structures and coverings over 200 square feet, unless exempt as part of a Special Event Permit.
5. Metal storage sheds and containers in excess of 120 square feet.
6. Re-surfacing and re-striping of existing parking lots.

Prohibit the construction of post-tension masonry walls.

Provide Exemptions to building permit for the following projects:

1. Fences conforming to design requirements of Title 17 of this Code, not exceeding a height of 2 feet (610 mm).
2. Retaining walls that are not over 2 feet (610 mm) in height measured from the top of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge.
3. Sidewalks in the side or rear yard not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade not part of an accessible route.

Additionally, staff is including a new Chapter 15.53 regarding "Protection of Preformed Concrete Block" to address the high number of block walls that have been compromised or destroyed by the reactive soil within the City.

Clarification to the California Plumbing Code:

Staff is further adding a local permit requirement to “connect to a public sewer system” for any remodels or additions to existing homes that are on a septic system, where the addition of bedrooms or fixtures requires an upsizing of the private drainage system septic. This is already required under the CA Plumbing Code for new construction and major additions that trigger an upsizing of septic tank (i.e., whenever a public sewer is within 200 feet of the structure, they must connect to public sewer). However, because of new ADU regulations, staff wants to include this provision whenever the addition of bedrooms triggers an upsizing of the septic tank, and there is a public sewer available within 50 feet of the property frontage. This will not conflict

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with adoption of the 2019 California Building and Fire Codes as these are regulatory requirements used in plan checking and permitting of future projects only. Lack of adoption would not relieve the City from complying with the uniform Codes, as explained above.

Attachments: Ordinance No. 1147 (1st Reading)