



CITY OF SIGNAL

2175 Cherry Avenue • Signal
Hill, California 90755-3799

STAFF

12/9/2025

AGENDA ITEM

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: CARLO TOMAINO
CITY MANAGER**

**BY: CARLOS LUIS
ACTING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING, SECOND READING, AND ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 2025-11-1555 AMENDING TITLE 15 (BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION) OF THE SIGNAL HILL MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADOPT BY REFERENCE THE 2025 CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS CODE AND OTHER UNIFORM CODES

Summary:

Form of Notice: Notice was published in the Signal Tribune newspaper per Government Code §65091(a)(4) on November 21 and November 28, 2025; and was posted in accordance with Signal Hill Municipal Code Section 1.08.010 at City Hall, Signal Hill Library, Reservoir Park, and Discovery Well Park on November 21, 2025.

Staff introduced Ordinance No. 2025-11-1555 at the City Council meeting of November 13, 2025. The next step in the adoption process is to conduct a public hearing, consider public testimony, and consider adoption of Ordinance No. 2025-11-1555. The proposed Ordinance would adopt the 2025 editions of the California Building Standards Code by reference, which become effective on January 1, 2026.

The recommended actions also waive reading of this Ordinance in full and authorizes reading by title only. Waiving the reading would streamline the City Council meeting process, to avoid unnecessary delay, and allow more time for substantive discussion of items on the agenda. Wherein the title of this Ordinance appears on the public agenda; said title is determined to have been read by title, and further reading is waived.

Strategic Plan Goal(s):

Goal No. 2 Community Safety: Maintain community safety by supporting public safety services and increasing emergency preparedness.

Goal No. 5 High-Functioning Government: Strengthen internal communication, recruitment, retention, systems, and processes to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of City services.

Recommendations:

1. Adopt Ordinance No. 2025-11-1555 amending Title 15 (Buildings and Construction) of the Signal Hill Municipal Code and adopting the 2025 California Building Codes by reference, entitled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING CHAPTERS 15.02, 15.04, 15.06, 15.10, 15.12, 15.16, 15.20, AND 15.36, OF TITLE 15 (BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION) OF THE CITY'S MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADOPT BY REFERENCE THE 2025 EDITION OF THE CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS CODE (CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 24), VOLUMES I AND II AND ALL APPENDICES WITH CERTAIN AMENDMENTS TO APPENDIX J, CONSISTING OF THE 2025 CALIFORNIA RESIDENTIAL CODE, THE 2025 CALIFORNIA PLUMBING CODE, THE 2025 CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS CODE, THE 2025 CALIFORNIA ELECTRICAL CODE, AND THE 2025 CALIFORNIA ENERGY CODE; TOGETHER WITH CERTAIN CHANGES THERETO; AND ADOPTING BY REFERENCE THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL SWIMMING POOL AND SPA CODE, THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE, 2024 INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE, 2024 INTERNATIONAL GREEN STANDARDS CODE, AND 2024 INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE TOGETHER WITH CERTAIN CHANGES THERETO; AND DELETING CHAPTERS 15.22 AND 15.32 OF TITLE 15 (BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION)

2. Authorize staff to submit the Buildings and Construction Code Ordinance to the California Building Standards Commission.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommended actions.

Background:

Every three years, the California Building Standards Commission updates the California Building Codes to reflect the latest in building and fire safety standards. In July 2025, the Commission published the 2025 California Building Standards Code, which will take effect on January 1, 2026. While the 2025 Code becomes effective statewide regardless of local action, State law allows cities to adopt the codes by reference and make local amendments as needed. Specifically, the City may establish more restrictive standards than those contained in the Code, provided the amendments are supported by express findings showing they are "reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions" (Health & Safety Code, §§ 18941.5, and 17958.7.) and in accordance with Assembly Bill 130. In accordance with these statutes, the local amendment findings specified in the proposed Ordinance demonstrate that the City's modifications are necessary and appropriate for Signal Hill.

The proposed Ordinance repeals and amends certain chapters of Title 15 (Buildings and Construction) of the SHMC to adopt the 2025 CBSC and related uniform codes, together with local amendments necessary to address unique geological, and topographical conditions in Signal Hill. Adoption ensures that the City remains consistent with State law and maintains the ability to enforce building and safety standards locally.

On November 13, 2025, the Ordinance was introduced at the City Council meeting, and two ten-day notices were published as required when adopting by reference. The first notice was published in the Signal Hill Tribune on November 21, 2025, and the second was published on November 28, 2025. Staff recommended additional amendments to the proposed Ordinance. Specifically, changes to the exemptions from a Grading Permit were recommended by staff and the City Council introduced the Ordinance with the additional changes.

Analysis:

On December 13, 2022, the City adopted codes based on the 2022 editions of the CBSC and comprise the current Signal Hill Building and Safety Code (Building Code).

Local Building Code Modifications

Municipalities may adopt their own local building standards in addition to the CBSC standards which may be more restrictive, but they may not be less restrictive. The City of Signal Hill regularly adopts local building standards for the purpose of addressing local conditions. Cities are required by the State to justify modifications to their local building codes based upon local climatic, geologic, or topographic conditions.

The proposed Ordinance will adopt the 2025 edition of the CBSC and make minor amendments. These amendments consider the City's unique geological and topographical conditions. In addition to the CBSC, this Ordinance adopts a number of other specified uniform codes. The City of Signal Hill local conditions that justify modifications to the Code are as follows:

- Local administrative processes
- Petroleum production areas
- Earthquake fault hazards
- Soils conditions
- Drainage
- The City's View Policy

Many of the local modifications to the Code are administrative in nature, are clarifications, or are based upon local geologic or topographic conditions. Modifications also include public feedback received during implementation of previous code cycles. Specifically, removing redundant requirements to the exploratory excavations by creating certain while maintaining safety during exploratory excavations.

Staff is providing a brief explanation of various local conditions that justify the proposed local Building Code modifications. To be clear, staff is not proposing new local standards to Title 15 of the SHMC. The City is re-adopting the same local modifications the City previously adopted by the City via Ordinance No. 2022-12-1542, which were reviewed and accepted by the California Building Standards Commission on May 1, 2023; however, two sections of the local modifications are being deleted as these are now included in the 2025 CBSC (see the first bullet below). In addition, minor edits and clarifications to the previous local modifications and their justifications are included in the proposed Ordinance amendment.

The following is a summary of the 2025 local modifications:

Staff proposes to delete Chapters 15.22 (Housing Code) and 15.32 (Code for the Abatement of

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Dangerous Buildings) of the SHMC from Title 15 (Buildings and Construction) because these are now included in the 2025 CBSC being adopted by reference and are therefore redundant.

Staff updated a reference to the former editions of the CBSC and other uniform codes to refer to the correct edition.

- Building Code:
 - A building permit is not required for replacement windows of the same size or for doors installed in existing openings under certain conditions.
 - References to the Los Angeles County Grading Manual.
 - Clarifications of the requirements for exploratory excavations to streamline the process subject to conditions and ensure safeguards are in place.
 - Methane Assessment and Mitigation requirements pursuant to Chapter 16.24.080 of the Signal Hill Oil and Gas Code.
 - Clarifications on the requirements for obtaining an electrical permit.
 - The addition of residential Energy Storage Systems, i.e., Batteries, and residential EV chargers to the expedited permit and inspection process in conformity with State laws.
 - Clarification of the barrier requirements for residential pools.
- Plumbing Code:
 - The requirement for an expansion tank with the addition of a pressure regulator.
- Electrical Code:
 - The addition of a requirement that electrical permits only be issued to State licensed electrical contractors or an owner/resident of a single family or two-family dwelling employing a state licensed electrical contractor.

Conclusion:

Adoption of the 2025 Building Codes would include local amendments that take into consideration Signal Hill's local geologic and topographic conditions. Local amendments would continue to safeguard development throughout the City. The recommendation would be to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-11-1555 adopting the 2025 Building Codes by reference.

Reviewed for Fiscal Impact:

Siamlu Cox
Administrative Services Officer/Finance Director

Attachment:

A. Ordinance No. 2025-11-1555