SUBJECT: Ordinance No. 2019-11, Amendments to Chapter 11 Fire Prevention and Chapter 12, Building and Housing, of the Municipal Code related the Adoption and Local Amendments to the of the 2019 California Building Standards Code

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SUMMARY
The action before the City Council is to adopt an ordinance to update the City’s Municipal Code to reference the 2019 California Building Standards Code.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

BACKGROUND
Pursuant to State law, the City is required to adopt and enforce a series of building and fire codes prepared by the California Building Standards Commission, which collectively are known as the California Building Standards Code. The Codes are updated by the State every three years. The 2019 codes become effective January 1, 2020. The attached publication prepared by the California Building Standards Commission provides more detailed information on the State’s requirements. Local adoption and modification of building standards are contained in the Albany Municipal Code Chapter 11 (Fire Prevention) and Chapter 12 (Building and Housing).

DISCUSSION
For typical building permit applications in Albany, the most notable change in the 2019 version of the California Building Standards Code is a continuation of the trend in recent code update cycles of improvements to more stringent energy efficiency requirements.
Municipalities can make modifications to the Codes if specific findings related to local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions can be made. Reauthorizing the findings for the modification to the State codes is required with every code cycle.

**Proposed Changes to Chapter 11 Fire Prevention:**

- The proposed ordinance maintains previously adopted amendments related to types of smoke detectors permitted, requirements for installation of fire sprinklers in new construction or substantial remodels, and requirements for self-closing doors in multi-family residential structures.
- The ordinance codifies that fire alarm systems are required to be installed in all non-residential buildings any time a building permit is required.
- Reorganization of Section 11-2 to match standard structure used elsewhere in the Municipal code.
- Technical clarifications, updating of references and definitions, and elimination sections no longer needed, due to changes in the California Fire Code.

**Proposed Changes to Chapter 12 Building:**

- Minor technical updates related to adoption of optional appendices related to specialized construction types.
- Codification of a state law requirement that the Municipal Code authorize the Building Official to create a streamlined permitting process for EV chargers.

**Potential Future Mid-Cycle Amendments**

- Wildland-Urban Interface – The California Department of Forestry is in the process of updating state-wide maps that designate Wildland-Urban Interface zones. Within these zones, more stringent codes apply. The new maps are expected to be released in mid-2020.
- California Green Building Code Optional Tiers – The California Green Building Code includes two optional, more stringent, sets of requirements associated with more sustainable building materials and practices. The optional tiers do not address energy efficiency or greenhouse gas generation. The Climate Action Committee is reviewing the optional tiers.
- Balcony Inspection Requirements – Following the 2015 Library Gardens tragedy in Berkeley, State Legislation was approved that requires inspections of exterior stairs, decks and balconies by 2025. The City of Berkeley approved a more stringent inspection process.
- Automatic Natural Gas Shut-Off Values – Some cities are adopting requirements that natural gas lines into structures be retro-fit to include a natural gas shut-off value.
- Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling – Section 12-11 of the Municipal code regulates the management of construction-related debris. This code section was last updated in 2006 and should be modernized. Staff is researching the
effectiveness of programs and standards adopted by nearby cities and plan to prepare amendments to this section in 2020.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT**

The 2019 Green Building Code and updates to the California Energy Code help ensure new construction are energy efficient, built with recycled or renewable materials, and use materials that are healthy for building occupants.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

None.

**Attachments**

1. Ordinance No. 2019-11
2. Existing version of Chapters amended
3. It’s Your Building Department published by the California Building Standards Commission