



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Peter Huffman, Planning and Development Services *PH*  
Toryono Green, Tacoma Fire Department *Te*  
**COPY:** Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee  
**PRESENTER:** Chris Seaman, Planning and Development Services  
**SUBJECT:** Building and Fire Code Amendments for the Adoption of the State Building Codes  
**DATE:** May 10, 2023

**PRESENTATION TYPE:**

Request for Ordinance

**SUMMARY:**

Planning and Development Services (PDS) staff will present an ordinance proposal to adopt City of Tacoma amendments to the State adopted building and fire codes, which are scheduled for adoption on July 1, 2023. The State adopted codes include the 2021 International Building Code, 2021 International Fire Code, 2021 International Existing Building Code, 2021 International Mechanical Code, 2021 International Fuel Gas Code, and 2021 Uniform Plumbing Code. Additional changes are proposed to increase clarity to existing code requirements and create a more uniform development code.

**BACKGROUND:**

On a regular cycle, the Washington State Building Code Council (SBCC) develops amendments to new building and fire codes for adoption by the state legislature. The State has adopted the 2021 international codes with amendments which take effect on July 1, 2023. These adopted codes set the minimum building and fire protection standards throughout the state. In addition, local jurisdictions may amend the codes with requirements that are specific to the needs of that community.

**ISSUE:**

Building and fire codes help ensure buildings and facilities constructed in Tacoma are safe and healthy for building occupants, accessible, and energy efficient. Areas of focus during this code cycle include:

- Eliminating local amendments where the State codes have been updated to incorporate similar requirements
- Improving clarity of existing amendments
- Mitigation of impacts to properties adjacent to development

**ALTERNATIVES:**

No action. The City could choose not to update existing amendments to the State codes, however this would lead to confusion for staff and developers. Many code sections in the model code have been relocated and therefore renumbered in the model code. No action would lead to existing local amendments that do not point to the appropriate building code sections.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

PDS and the Tacoma Fire Department recommend adoption of the proposed City amendments to the State adopted codes and request the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee vote to recommend approval by the City Council. These amendments incorporate important local considerations in enforcing the State codes as well as support the adoption of codes to enhance the usability and safety of Tacoma buildings and facilities.