

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-470A

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS
AMENDING CHAPTER 12.22 ENERGY CODE OF TITLE 12 OF THE LOS ALTOS
MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO AMENDMENTS TO THE 2019 CALIFORNIA
ENERGY CODE FOR ALL-ELECTRIC SINGLE-FAMILY BUILDINGS, MULTI-
FAMILY BUILDINGS HAVING FROM TWO TO NINE RESIDENTIAL UNITS, AND
DETACHED ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT BUILDINGS**

WHEREAS, the California Building Standards Commission adopted and published an updated Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, known as the 2019 California Building Standards Code, that became effective statewide on January 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, California Health and Safety Code Sections 17958.5, 17958.7 and 18941.5 authorize cities to adopt the California Building Standards Code with modifications determined to be reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Altos has adopted the 2019 California Building Standards Code with local amendments; and

WHEREAS, the City has adopted the 2019 California Energy Code in the 2019 California Building Standards Code, Part 6 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, which implements minimum energy efficiency standards in buildings through mandatory requirements, prescriptive standards, and performances standards; and

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code Section 25402.1(h)(2) and Section 10-106 Locally Adopted Energy Standards of the California Administrative Code, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, Part I, establish a process which allows local adoption of energy standards that are more stringent than the statewide standards, provided that such local standards are cost effective and the California Energy Commission finds that the standards will require buildings to be designed to consume no more energy than permitted by the California Energy Code; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to amend portions of the California Energy Code and affirms that such local modifications are cost effective and will result in designs that consume no more energy than that permitted under the 2019 California Energy Code; and

WHEREAS, the City's Climate Action Plan sets forth the goal to support initiatives that promote environmental sustainability and reduce the City's greenhouse gas emissions.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Los Altos does hereby ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT OF CODE. Chapter 12.22 of Title 12 of the Los Altos Municipal Code is hereby amended in its entirety to read as follows:

Chapter 12.22 ENERGY CODE

Section 12.22.010 Adoption of the California Energy Code.

There is hereby adopted by reference as if fully set forth herein, the 2019 California Energy Code, contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6, published by the International Code Council, and each and all of its regulations and provisions. One copy is on file for use and examination by the public in the office of the Building Official.

Section 12.22.020 Amendments for All-Electric Buildings.

- A. Amend Section 100.1(b) of the Energy Code by adding the following definitions to read as follows:

ALL-ELECTRIC BUILDING is a building that has no natural gas or propane plumbing installed within the building.

NEWLY CONSTRUCTED BUILDING (Applicable to Chapter 12.22 Energy Code Section 12.22.020 Amendments) is a building that has never been used or occupied for any purpose and supported by 1) a new structural foundation, 2) an existing, structural foundation where a building has been demolished and removed to floor or below, or 3) a combination of 1) and 2).

PUBLIC BUILDING is a building used by the public for any purpose, such as assembly, education, entertainment, or worship.

SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY BUILDING is a building or area where research, experiments, and measurement in medical, life, and physical sciences are performed and/or stored requiring examination of fine details. The building may include workbenches, countertops, scientific instruments, and supporting offices.

Subchapter 1 Section 100.0(e)2. A. is deleted and replaced to read as follows, based on express finding of necessity set forth of this Ordinance.

- B. Amend Section 100.0(c)2. A. of the Energy Code to read as follows:

2. Newly constructed buildings.

- A. Sections 110.0 through 110.12 apply to all newly constructed buildings within the scope of Section 100.0(a). In addition, newly constructed buildings shall meet the requirements of Subsections B, C, D or E, as applicable and shall be an all-electric building as defined in Section 100.1(b).

Exception 1: Residential Single-Family Dwellings, Detached ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units), Multifamily Dwellings with two to nine units may install non-electric (natural gas-fueled) cooking and fireplace appliances if the applicant complies with the prewiring provisions, Subsection 12.22.020 B.3.

3. Wiring to accommodate future electric appliances or equipment.

(a) If a non-electric appliance or piece of equipment is allowed to be installed, the appliance or equipment location must also be electrically pre-wired for future electric appliance or equipment installation, including:

- i. A dedicated circuit, phased appropriately, with a minimum amperage requirement for a comparable electric appliance with an electrical receptacle or junction box that is connected to the electric panel with conductors of adequate capacity, extending to within 3 feet of the appliance and accessible with no obstructions. Appropriately sized conduit may be installed in lieu of conductors; and
- ii. Both ends of the unused conductor or conduit shall be labeled with the words "For Future Electric appliance or equipment" and be electrically isolated; and
- iii. A reserved circuit breaker space shall be installed in the electrical panel adjacent to the circuit breaker for the branch circuit and labeled for each circuit, an example is as follows (i.e. "For Future Electric Range;"); and,
- iv. All electrical components, including conductors, receptacles, junction boxes, or blank covers, related to this section shall be installed in accordance with the California Electrical Code.

SECTION 2.

The following findings support that the above amendments and modifications are reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological or topographical conditions:

The City of Los Altos is located in Climate Zone 4 as established in the 2019 California Energy Code. Climate Zone 4 includes Santa Clara County, San Benito County, portions of Monterey County and San Luis Obispo. The City experiences an average of 19 inches of precipitation per year. In Los Altos, January is the rainiest month of the year while July is the driest month of the year. Temperatures average about 80 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and about 40 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter. These climatic conditions along with the effects of climate change caused by Green House Gas (GHG) emissions generated from burning natural gas to heat buildings and emissions from Vehicle Miles Traveled results in an overall increase in global average temperature. Higher global temperatures are contributing to rising sea levels, record heat waves, droughts, wildfires and floods.

The above local amendments to the 2019 California Energy Code are necessary to combat the ever-increasing harmful effects of global climate change. Implementation of the proposed code amendments will achieve decarbonization and provide an accelerated path to reduce GHG emissions. The proposed Ordinance containing these amendments would ensure that new buildings use cleaner sources of energy which helps meet the goal of cutting carbon emissions in half by 2030.

All-electric building design benefits the health, welfare, and resiliency of Los Altos and its residents.

SECTION 3. CONSTITUTIONALITY.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this code is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this code.

SECTION 4. CEQA.

The City Council hereby finds and determines that this Ordinance has been assessed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Cal. Pub. Res. Code, § 21000 et seq.) (“CEQA”) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15000 et seq.) and is categorically exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines, § 15061(b)(3), which exempts from CEQA any project where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. Adoption of the proposed Ordinance would not be an activity with potential to cause significant adverse effect on the environment because the changes made to the California Energy Code within are enacted to provide more protection to the environment, and therefore is exempt from CEQA. It is also exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, § 15308 which exempts actions taken by regulatory agencies for the enhancement and protection of the environment. As such, the Ordinance is categorically exempt from CEQA.

SECTION 5. PUBLICATION.

This Ordinance shall be published as provided in Government Code section 36933.

SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

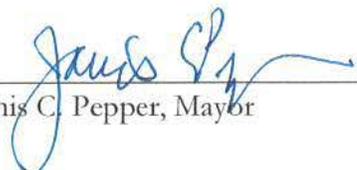
This Ordinance shall be effective upon the commencement of the thirty-first (31st) day following the adoption date. The City Council’s findings of cost-effectiveness and energy savings will be filed with the California Energy Commission pursuant to Title 24 Chapter 10-106 before this ordinance takes effect.

The foregoing Ordinance was duly and properly introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Los Altos held on October 27, 2020 and was thereafter, at a regular meeting held on November 10, 2020 passed and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Member Bruins, Vice Mayor Fligor and Mayor Pepper
NOES: Council Members Enander and Lee Eng
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

ATTEST


Andrea Chelemengos MMC, City Clerk



Janis C. Pepper, Mayor

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