



TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

SUBMITTED BY: Peter Imhof, Director of Planning & Environmental Review

PREPARED BY: Dana Murray, Sustainability Manager
Angeline Foshay, Sustainability Analyst

SUBJECT: Re-Adoption of Electric Vehicle (EV) Reach Code

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Hold a public hearing on Ordinance No. 25-__.
- B. Conduct second reading by title only, waive further reading of, and adopt Ordinance No. 25-__ entitled, “An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Goleta, California Amending Chapter 15.12 Entitled “Green Building Code” of the Goleta Municipal Code to Make Certain Local Amendments to the 2025 Edition of the California Green Building Standards Code (“Reach Code”) and Determine the Ordinance to be Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act.”

BACKGROUND:

Definitive climate data has revealed the urgent need for regulatory action. In 2016, California (CA) responded to this demand by adopting comprehensive goals to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and support local governments in carrying out emissions reduction strategies. With the passage of Senate Bill 32 in 2016, CA set targets to reduce statewide GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. To reach these emissions targets, decarbonizing the building sector is essential. The primary method for building decarbonization is electrification, as escalating renewable portfolio standards continue to reduce GHG emissions content of our electricity.

Following the initial *CRA v. City of Berkeley* decision in 2023 that impacted jurisdictions’ abilities to require all-electric new construction, many cities in CA evaluated alternative policy approaches to support new construction electrification. Staff has monitored new policy developments and collaborated with other jurisdictions in the Green Cities CA Network to find alternative pathways to incentivize electrification for new construction. With the support of utility partners, Green Cities CA, and the Santa Barbara County Regional Climate Collaborative, staff developed and Council adopted two policies: 1) an Electric Vehicle (EV) Reach Code amending the CA Green Building Standards Code

(“CALGreen”) (Ord. 24-04, Fall 2024 and Ord. 25-01, Winter 2025), and 2) an Energy Performance Reach Code amending the CA Energy Code (Ord. 25-02, Spring 2025).

The CA Building Code, which includes the CA Energy Code, is updated every three years. The City’s current, adopted Reach Codes will expire with the current Building Code on December 31, 2025, in accordance with the “sunsetting” of the 2022 CA Building Code and the adoption of the 2025 CA Building Code. Given that the 2025 CA Building Code is set to be adopted and in effect starting January 1, 2026, the City has the opportunity to re-adopt its Reach Codes for the new Code cycle.

In support of Reach Code development, the CA Energy Codes and Standards Statewide Utility Program develops and publishes cost-effectiveness studies in accordance with the triennial code cycle. Staff anticipates that some of the 2025 studies will be available at the end of 2025 for certain building types, and the remainder will be published in Q1 2026. Once the cost-effectiveness studies are published, the City can work on bringing the Energy Performance Reach Code to Council for re-adoption (anticipated Q1 2026).

Since the EV Reach Code amends CALGreen and does not require cost-effectiveness studies in order to be approved by the CA Building Standards Commission (Commission), the City can re-adopt the EV Reach Code alongside the adoption of the 2025 CA Building Code for an effective date of January 1, 2026.

As discussed below, Assembly Bill (AB) 130 created new limitations on the ability of cities and counties to enact local amendments to Building Codes applicable to residential units. However, AB 130 does not prevent the City from re-adopting its two Reach Codes (EV Reach Code and Energy Performance Reach Code), provided that the re-adopted Reach Codes are “substantially equivalent” to versions that were in effect as of September 30, 2025 ([CA Code, HSC 17958.](#), [CA Code, HSC 17958.5.](#), [CA Code, HSC 17958.7.](#), and [CA Code, HSC 18941.5](#)). With limited exceptions, AB 130 otherwise imposes a moratorium on amending local residential building standards until June 1, 2031.

Current EV Reach Code (Adopted 2024, Revised 2/2025)

The City’s current, adopted EV Reach Code requires increased EV infrastructure for all building types with the purpose of increasing EV adoption in the community and providing more accessible charging. There are three distinct EV infrastructure readiness descriptions in the Building Code ([2025 CALGreen Section 202](#)):

1. **EV Capable Space:** a parking space that has an installed electrical panel capacity with a dedicated branch circuit and a continuous raceway/conduit from the panel to the future EV parking spot.
2. **EV Ready Space:** a parking space that has installed electrical panel capacity, raceway/conduit and wiring “terminating in a receptacle or a charger”, such that in the case of a receptacle, off-board charging equipment can be used to charge an EV.
3. **Electric Vehicle Charging Station (EVCS):** a parking space that includes an installed and operable Level 2 EV charging station.

The requirements of the EV Reach Code, which amended CALGreen, are as follows:

Table 1. EV Reach Code Standards (adopted 2024)

Building Type	Reach Code Standards
Single-Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Level 2 EV Ready • 1 Level 1 EV Ready
Multi-Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of spaces for residents are low power Level 2 EV Ready • 25% of common use spaces include Level 2 EVCS • 75% of common use spaces are low power Level 2 EV Ready
Hotels & Motels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40% of spaces are low power Level 2 EV Ready • 25% of spaces include Level 2 EVCS
Non-Residential – Office & Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23% of spaces include Level 2 EVCS • 7% of spaces are Level 2 EV Capable
Non-Residential - Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15% of spaces include Level 2 EVCS • 15% of spaces are Level 2 EV Capable

Following initial adoption of the EV Reach Code, staff were instructed to return with an amendment that would exempt any projects in the Hospital Overlay Zone from the EV Reach Code, which Council adopted on February 4, 2025 (Ord. 25-01).

Per the Planning and Environmental Review (PER) Department’s adopted FY 2025-26 Annual Work Program, staff has been coordinating regionally and statewide with other jurisdictions, technical experts, and legal counsel on re-adopting the City’s Reach Codes with the CA Building Code cycle. The City Council Energy & Green Issues Committee met and discussed the City’s Reach Codes and AB 130 on September 22, 2025, and recommended the City Council re-adopt the City’s Reach Codes.

On November 18, 2025, City Council voted unanimously to conduct the first reading of the new EV Reach Code Ordinance (Attachment 1). Per state requirements around amendments to the Building Code, the second reading will be conducted after a public hearing regarding amendments to CALGreen, should Council choose to proceed.

DISCUSSION:

Cities and counties can make amendments to the CA Building Code to address local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions, and adoption of local amendments requires specific findings in adopting ordinances, which must be filed with the Commission. (Health & Safety Code, § 17958.7.) However, changes in state policy for residential buildings have constrained the ability of local jurisdictions to adopt new amendments to the CA Building Code for residential buildings, an effort that was closely monitored by cities and counties across the state for the 2025 legislative session. Signed into law on June 30, 2025, AB 130 added restrictions to the residential code cycle for the next six years in the hope of streamlining production of more housing in the coming years.

As a note, the 2025 CA Building Code will go into effect as planned for both Residential and Nonresidential Standards effective January 1, 2026. The Nonresidential Building Code is not impacted by this legislation and will proceed with the usual three-year cycle.

From October 1, 2025, through June 1, 2031, AB 130 prohibits a city or county from adopting changes or modifications to CA Building Codes, including green building standards, *applicable to residential units* unless one of the following conditions is met:

1. The modifications are substantially equivalent to local amendments previously filed with the Commission and in effect as of September 30, 2025.
2. The Commission deems the modifications necessary “as emergency standards to protect health and safety.”
3. The modifications relate to “home hardening” (which changes may be proposed by a fire protection district pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 13869.7.)
4. The modifications are local amendments “adopted to align with a general plan approved on or before June 10, 2025, and that permits mixed-fuel residential construction consistent with federal law while also incentivizing all-electric construction as part of an adopted greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy.”
5. The changes or modifications are related to administrative practices, are proposed for adoption during the intervening period between code cycles, and exclusively result in any of the following:
 - a. Reductions in time for a local agency to issue a post-entitlement permit.
 - b. Alterations to a local agency’s post-entitlement fee schedule.
 - c. Modernization of, or adoption of, new permitting platforms and software utilized by the local agency.
 - d. Reductions in cost of internal operation for a local agency.
 - e. Establishment, alteration, or removal of local programs related to enforcement of building code violations or complaints alleging building code violations. (Health and Safety Code, § 17958.7(b).)

If one of the above-referenced conditions is satisfied, the local jurisdiction must still make express findings that the changes or modifications are reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological or topographical conditions, and submit such findings with the proposed change to the Commission. (Health and Safety Code, §§ 17958.5, 17958.7.)

One of the five limited pathways that AB 130 allows is residential Reach Code adoption after October 1, 2025, if “the changes or modifications are substantially equivalent to changes or modifications that were previously filed by the local jurisdiction and were in effect as of September 30, 2025.” (Health & Safety Code, § 17958(b).) Based on interagency meetings and discussions, staff’s understanding is that the City can re-adopt its two Reach Codes (EV Reach Code and Energy Performance Reach Code), since both were adopted by the City Council and approved by State agencies before September 30, 2025, as long as they are “substantially equivalent.”

The proposed Ordinance (Attachment 1) is to adopt the same EV Reach Code that the City previously passed with the exception of multifamily and hotels/motels standards. The City has no need to pass local amendments on multifamily and hotels/motels specific standards because the CALGreen standards/2025 California Building Code contain the

same requirements. Therefore, the proposed Ordinance meets AB 130 in that the proposed Ordinance contains exactly the same regulations that were adopted last year and are already in place, thereby meeting AB 130’s “substantially equivalent” standard.

2022 EV Reach Code (adopted Fall 2024) Comparison to 2025 Mandatory CALGreen Baseline

In some areas the new CALGreen standards now match the City’s EV Reach Code.

1. Single-family

2025 CALGreen Mandatory Baseline	Goleta 2022 EV Reach Code Requirements	2025 CALGreen Voluntary Tier 1 & Tier 2 Measures
listed raceway & panel capacity to accommodate a dedicated 208/240-volt branch circuit	1 L2 EV Charging Receptacle in one parking space IF second space is provided, install a L1 EV Charging Receptacle	install a dedicated 208/240-volt branch circuit

- Goleta's EV Reach Code exceeds 2025 CALGreen Mandatory Baseline.

2. Multifamily

2025 CALGreen Mandatory Baseline	Goleta 2022 EV Reach Code Requirements	2025 CALGreen Voluntary Tier 1 Measures	2025 CALGreen Voluntary Tier 2 Measures
<p>EV Ready + Receptacle Assigned parking: one LPL2 EV charging receptacle shall be provided at an assigned parking space for each dwelling unit</p> <p>Unassigned parking: one LPL2 EV charging receptacle for each dwelling unit</p> <p>EV Ready + EV Chargers Unassigned/common use parking: 25% of spaces equipped with Level 2 EV chargers</p>	<p>EV Ready + Receptacle Assigned parking: one LPL2 EV charging receptacle shall be provided at an assigned parking space for each dwelling unit</p> <p>Unassigned parking: one LPL2 EV charging receptacle for each dwelling unit</p> <p>EV Ready + EV Chargers Unassigned/common use parking: 25% of spaces equipped with Level 2 EV chargers</p>	<p>EV Ready + Receptacle Circuits to be full power Level 2 EV ready</p> <p>EV Ready + EV Chargers Unassigned/common use parking: 40% of spaces equipped with Level 2 EV chargers</p>	N/A

- 2025 CALGreen Mandatory Baseline Code matches Goleta's EV Reach Code.
- Multifamily section removed from proposed EV Reach Code Ordinance.

3. Hotels & Motels

2025 CALGreen Mandatory Baseline	Goleta 2022 EV Reach Code Requirements	2025 CALGreen Voluntary Tier 1 Measures	2025 CALGreen Voluntary Tier 2 Measures
<p>EV Ready + Receptacle 40% of total spaces LPL2 EV charging receptacle</p> <p>EV Ready + EV Chargers 25% of total spaces Level 2 EV chargers</p>	<p>EV Ready + Receptacle 40% of total spaces LPL2 EV charging receptacle</p> <p>EV Ready + EV Chargers 25% of total spaces Level 2 EV chargers</p>	<p>EV Ready + Receptacle 60% of total spaces LPL2 EV charging receptacle + circuits full power Level 2 EV Ready</p> <p>EV Ready + EV Chargers 40% of total spaces Level 2 EV chargers</p>	N/A

- 2025 CALGreen Mandatory Baseline Code matches Goleta's EV Reach Code.
- Hotels & Motels section removed from proposed EV Reach Code Ordinance.

4. Non-Residential

2025 CALGreen Mandatory Baseline	Goleta 2022 EV Reach Code Requirements	2025 CALGreen Voluntary Tier 1 Measures	2025 CALGreen Voluntary Tier 2 Measures
Office & Retail 20% Total EV Capable/EVCS 5% EV Capable 15% EVCS Other 20% Total EV Capable/EVCS 10% EV Capable 10% EVCS	Office & Retail 30% Total EV Capable/EVCS 7% EV Capable 23% EVCS Other 30% Total EV Capable/EVCS 15% EV Capable 15% EVCS	Office & Retail 30% Total EV Capable/EVCS 7% EV Capable 23% EVCS Other 30% Total EV Capable/EVCS 15% EV Capable 15% EVCS	Office & Retail 45% Total EV Capable/EVCS 11% EV Capable 34% EVCS Other 45% Total EV Capable/EVCS 22% EV Capable 23% EVCS

- Goleta's EV Reach Code exceeds 2025 CALGreen Mandatory Baseline Code and matches 2025 CALGreen Voluntary Tier 1.

GOLETA STRATEGIC PLAN:

City-Wide Initiative: 1. Support Environmental Vitality

Strategic Goal: 1.1. Promote renewable energy, energy conservation and local energy resiliency

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item other than staff time.

NOTICE:

Notice of the public hearing has been provided twice prior to the public hearing on December 2, 2025.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT:

This ordinance has been assessed in accordance with the CA 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. Further, this ordinance is also exempt from CEQA under the categorical exemptions set forth in Sections 15307 and 15308 of the State CEQA Guidelines in that the proposed Ordinance would institute regulatory requirements intended to protect the environment and natural resources, as the Ordinance would reduce the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the City that are produced from gas-powered vehicles by supporting the use of zero-emission and electric vehicles (EVs). Adoption of the City's EV Reach Code would not be an activity with potential to cause significant effect on the environment. Therefore, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the ordinance in question may have a significant effect on the environment; accordingly, the ordinance is categorically exempt from CEQA. A copy of the Notice of Exemption is provided as an Attachment 2.

ALTERNATIVE:

Do not re-adopt the City's EV Reach Code, which would result in the State's 2025 CALGreen Mandatory Baseline standards applying to single-family and non-residential buildings, rather than the City's Reach Code standards that exceed those requirements.

LEGAL REVIEW BY: Isaac Rosen, City Attorney

APPROVED BY: Robert Nisbet, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Ordinance No. 25 -__ entitled "An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Goleta, California Amending Chapter 15.12 Entitled "Green Building Code" of the Goleta Municipal Code to Make Certain Local Amendments to the 2025 Edition of the California Green Building Standards Code ("Reach Code"), and Determine the Ordinance to be Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act"
2. CEQA Notice of Exemption
3. PowerPoint Presentation