

CITY OF COOS BAY CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Staff Report

MEETING DATE	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
February 3, 2026	3.c

TO: Mayor Benetti, Council President DiNovo, and City Councilors

FROM: Jeff Adkins, Fire Chief

THROUGH: Nichole Rutherford, City Manager

ISSUE: Public Hearing to Consider Enactment of Ordinance Repealing and Replacing the Adoption of Oregon Fire Code within Coos Bay Municipal Code Chapter 15

SUMMARY:

The proposed action repeals the existing Coos Bay Municipal Code Chapter 15.35, which is based on an outdated 2007 Oregon Fire Code and includes numerous legacy local amendments that are no longer aligned with current practice, and replaces it with a simplified adoption of the current Oregon Fire Code. This update brings the City into alignment with the 2025 state-adopted fire code, improves clarity and consistency in enforcement, and removes unnecessary local modifications that complicate administration. The revised approach relies on the Oregon Fire Code as adopted by the State, with the option to address any future local needs through a targeted amendment process. The update also clarifies enforcement authority consistent with ORS 476.030 and OAR 837-040-0010, aligning the municipal code with how fire code administration is currently carried out.

ACTION REQUESTED:

If it pleases Council, enact an ordinance repealing and replacing the adoption of Oregon Fire Code within Coos Bay Municipal Code Chapter 15.

BACKGROUND:

The City Council is being asked to consider repealing in its entirety the current language contained in Coos Bay Municipal Code Chapter 15.35, Oregon Fire Code – International Fire Code, including all sections, subsections, local amendments, deletions, appendices, and locally adopted provisions enacted through Ordinance No. 405 (2008). In its place, staff recommends adoption of a simplified version that relies on the Oregon Fire Code as adopted by the State of Oregon.

The current adopted fire code presents several operational and legal challenges. First, the version presently codified is based on the 2007 Oregon Fire Code. The State of Oregon updates the fire code on a three-year cycle, and the currently adopted statewide version is the 2025 Oregon Fire Code. As a result, the City's municipal code is nearly two decades out of alignment with current state standards, best practices, and enforcement expectations. This gap creates confusion for enforcement staff, developers, business owners, and the public, and increases the risk of inconsistent application.

Second, the existing municipal code contains numerous locally adopted amendments, deletions, and modifications. While many of these changes may have addressed specific concerns at the time of adoption, they no longer reflect current operational needs, construction practices, or regulatory frameworks. In several cases, the local changes create unnecessary complexity or conflict with how the Oregon Fire Code is intended to be applied. Maintaining these legacy provisions makes the code harder to administer, interpret, and enforce.

Staff is recommending adopting the Oregon Fire Code, as adopted by the State. This approach simplifies the municipal code, improves clarity, and ensures consistency with statewide standards. If, in the future, the City determines that certain provisions should be more restrictive based on local conditions or policy direction, those changes can be addressed through a focused amendment process rather than through broad and outdated modifications embedded in the code.

Finally, updating Chapter 15.35 aligns the City's municipal code with current statutory and administrative authority. Oregon Revised Statutes 476.030 and Oregon Administrative Rule 837-040-0010 establish a clear chain of authority from the State Fire Marshal to the municipal fire chief, and from the fire chief to authorized delegates for code administration and enforcement. The proposed update reflects that structure, removes ambiguity, and aligns the City's code with how fire code enforcement is currently carried out in practice.

Repealing the existing chapter and adopting a simplified, up-to-date version improves legal clarity, supports consistent enforcement, reduces administrative burden, and places the City in line with current Oregon Fire Code standards.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

None

ATTACHMENT(S):

- ____ Ordinance to Repeal and Replace Chapter 15.35.pdf