



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

www.washoecounty.gov

STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 27, 2025

DATE: May 2, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Kelly Mullin, AICP, Planning and Building Division Director,
Community Services Department
(775) 328-3619, kmullin@washoecounty.gov

THROUGH: Eric Crump, Community Services Department Director

SUBJECT: Introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 100 (Buildings and Construction), pursuant to NRS 244.105, to update the editions of the specialized or uniform codes adopted by reference. The newer editions for adoption by Washoe County include: the 2024 Northern Nevada Amendments; the 2024 versions of the International Building, Residential, Existing Building, Energy Conservation, Fuel Gas, Mechanical, Wildland-Urban Interface, and Swimming Pool and Spa Codes; the 2024 Uniform Plumbing and Mechanical Codes; the 2023 National Electrical Code; and the 2024 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 54 and 58 Codes; and all matters necessarily connected therewith and pertaining thereto. And if introduced, set the public hearing for second reading and possible adoption on June 10, 2025. (All Commission Districts.)

SUMMARY

The Washoe County Board of County Commissioners (Board) is asked to introduce and conduct a first reading of amendments to Washoe County Code ("WCC") Chapter 100 (Buildings and Construction), also known as the Washoe County Building Code, to adopt more current editions of the various specialized and uniform codes than those that are adopted by reference. New editions have historically been adopted every six years, in tandem with the other northern Nevada jurisdictions. The last editions were adopted in 2018, and the amendments in this ordinance would adopt the 2024 series. Post-adoption, a six-month grace period will provide flexibility by allowing projects to conform to either the new editions or the old editions. Full implementation is anticipated on January 1, 2026, after which time, new building permit submittals must conform to the new editions.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Economic Impacts

PREVIOUS ACTION

May 13, 2025 – The Board initiated amendments to WCC Chapter 100 to update the editions of the specialized or uniform codes adopted by reference, along with any changes necessary to make them applicable to conditions within Washoe County.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

December 11, 2018 – The Board adopted Ordinance No. 1627, amending WCC Chapter 100 to adopt the 2018 Northern Nevada Amendments, and the 2018 versions of the International Building, Residential, Existing Building, Energy Conservation, Mechanical, Fuel Gas, Wildland-Urban Interface, and Swimming Pool and Spa Codes; the 2018 Uniform Plumbing and Mechanical Codes; the 2018 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 54 Code; the 2017 NFPA 58 Code; and the 2017 National Electrical Code.

May 10, 2016 – The Board adopted Ordinance No. 1579, amending WCC Chapter 100 to adopt the 2012 edition of the International Energy Conservation Code (the “IECC”) and the 2015 Northern Nevada Energy Conservation Code Amendments.

May 14, 2013 – The Board adopted Ordinance No. 1510, amending WCC Chapter 100 to adopt the 2012 Northern Nevada Amendments, and the 2012 versions of the International Building, Residential, Existing Building, Fuel Gas, Green Construction, Mechanical, Wildland-Urban Interface, Swimming Pool and Spa Codes; the 2012 Uniform Plumbing and Mechanical Codes; and the 2011 National Electrical Code.

June 12, 2012 – The Board adopted Ordinance No. 1487, amending WCC Chapter 100 to adopt the 2009 edition of the IECC and the 2011 Northern Nevada Amendments.

BACKGROUND

The International Codes (I-Codes) are a family of comprehensive building life-safety codes used in all 50 states, by the federal government, and in many other countries. They are updated every three years and take into account the latest technology and advancements in building science.

Through the Northern Nevada International Code Council Chapter, the region has historically adopted codes on a six-year cycle (instead of a three-year cycle) to minimize industry disruption. I-Codes:

- Establish minimum standards to safeguard life and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction and installation of new buildings and alterations to existing buildings.
- Are continually improving to incorporate lessons learned from recent natural disasters, new construction materials/technology and occupant accidents.
- Assure our structures are safe and can be insured with the lowest risk rating (ISO rating for lower rates).
- Define the minimum acceptable standard for building and structure safety. This in turn drives our community’s marketability and resilience.

Currently, the 2018 editions of the International Codes, the 2017 National Electrical Code, and the 2018 Northern Nevada Amendments are enforced. For the purposes of this report, these codes are referred to as the 2018 codes. The newer editions identified in the subject of this report are referred to as the 2024 codes. Following the upcoming adoption process, a six-month grace period would allow an application for a building permit to be accepted using either the currently adopted 2018 Codes or the newly adopted 2024 codes (not both). This grace period would last from the ordinance effective date of July 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. The date by which the grace period would be over is January 1, 2026, after which time, only the new code editions could be used. Offering a

six-month grace period is a recognized industry approach in Northern Nevada that allows the construction industry to transition to the new codes.

Specific Changes

The updated specialized and uniform codes proposed to be adopted by reference include:

- 1) 2024 International Building Code ("IBC First Print"), Chapters 1 through 35 and Appendices A, C, E, I, and P.
- 2) 2024 International Residential Code ("IRC First Print"), Chapters 1 through 44 and Appendices BB, BF, BG, BH, BO, CA, CB, and CD.
- 3) 2024 International Existing Building Code ("IEBC First Print"), Chapters 1 through 16 and Appendices A, B, C, and E.
- 4) 2024 International Energy Conservation Code ("IECC First Print"), Chapters 1 through 6.
- 5) 2024 International Fuel Gas Code ("IFGC First Print"), Chapters 1 through 8 and Appendix A.
- 6) 2024 International Mechanical Code ("IMC First Print"), Chapters 1 through 15.
- 7) 2024 International Wildland-Urban Interface Code ("IWUIC First Print"), Chapter 5.
- 8) 2024 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code ("ISPSC"), Chapters 1 through 11.
- 9) 2024 Uniform Plumbing Code ("UPC First Print"), Chapters 1 through 17 and Appendices A, B, D, E, I, and L.
- 10) 2024 Uniform Mechanical Code ("UMC First Print"), Chapters 1 through 18.
- 11) 2023 National Electrical Code ("NEC First Print").
- 12) 2024 National Fire Protection Association ("NFPA") 54 and 2024 NFPA 58.
- 13) 2024 Northern Nevada Amendments by the Northern Nevada Chapter of the International Code Council.

Regional Coordination and Industry Outreach

In November 2023, Washoe County, together with eleven other northern Nevada government jurisdictions and 24 industry partners began the review and development process for the proposed amendments of the 2024 International Codes. These codes are adjusted regionally not just to bring a more consistent approach to the way building codes are adopted and interpreted in this region, but to better suit the northern Nevada climatic and geographical characteristics, including frost depths, wind speeds and seismic requirements. The local amendments are the result of a transparent, consensus-based, and technical vetting process in conjunction with the local Northern Nevada International Code Council (NNICC) Chapter, construction associations, private industry professionals and other building departments in the northern Nevada area, including the cities of Reno, Sparks, Carson, Elko, Fernley, and Fallon, the counties of Washoe, Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, and Storey, and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony.

Dozens of contractors, builders, developers, architects, engineers and building staff from twelve jurisdictions participated in seven subcommittees and one steering committee over an 18-month period.

At the conclusion of this 18-month process, the NNICC steering committee, comprised of representatives from each northern Nevada jurisdiction, voted to approve the amendments, which were subsequently presented to and approved by the Nevada Governor's Office of Energy.

The northern Nevada amendments were then presented in spring 2025 to industry professionals and other interested parties over three informational sessions hosted by the Associated General Contractors (AGC), Builders Association of Northern Nevada (BANN), and Nevada Association of Industrial and Office Parks (NAIOP).

The scope of this extensive vetting process was to provide local review and adjustments of the codes into a single amendment package for regional consistency and user-friendliness among different jurisdictions.

Should the Board conduct the introduction and first reading of the proposed amendment, the Board is asked to set the public hearing for second reading and possible adoption on June 10, 2025, with an effective date anticipated for July 1, 2025.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board conduct the introduction and first reading of amendments to WCC Chapter 100 (Buildings and Construction) to update the adopted building code editions as identified in the subject description; and set the public hearing for second reading and possible adoption on June 10, 2025.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

“Move to introduce and conduct a first reading of Bill Number [insert bill number as provided by the County Clerk], which is an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 100 (Buildings and Construction) to update the editions of the specialized or uniform codes adopted by reference. And to set the public hearing for second reading and possible adoption on June 10, 2025.”

Attachment A: Working Copy – Washoe County Code Chapter 100