

**CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA  
CITY COUNCIL**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-002**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA AMENDING CARMEL MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 15.08.010 AND SECTION 15.10.020 TO ADOPT THE 2025 FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE MAP FOR THE CITY AS IDENTIFIED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE FIRE MARSHALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 51178**

WHEREAS, the City has adopted a General Plan and Municipal Code that prioritizes and the protection of its unique village character and public safety through effective land use planning and hazard mitigation; and

WHEREAS, the City previously adopted revisions to the California Building Code on February 5, 2008, including requirements for new construction in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to incorporate ignition-resistant and noncombustible materials; and

WHEREAS, Government Code Sections 51178 and 51179 require local jurisdictions to designate Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones based on recommendations by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE); and

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2025, the California State Fire Marshal updated and officially released the 2025 Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) map (Exhibit A), using the latest science, data, and modeling methodologies, and transmitted the new map to the City as required by law; and

WHEREAS, the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea is required to adopt the 2025 FHSZ map within 120 days of receipt in order to remain in compliance with Government Code Section 51179 and to enhance wildfire resilience and planning measures.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA  
DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** **Findings.** The City Council finds that the foregoing recitals are true and correct and incorporates them herein by reference.

**SECTION 2.** Chapter 15.08.010 (Building Code), of the Carmel-by-the-Sea Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

**15.08.010 Adoption.** Except as otherwise amended by this chapter and Chapter [15.04](#) CMC, the following model codes are hereby adopted and are incorporated in this chapter by reference and made a part hereof as if fully set forth herein:

- A. 2022 California Building Code and Appendices;
- B. 2022 California Historical Building Code;
- C. 2022 California Existing Building Code;
- D. 2022 California Residential Code;
- E. 2022 California Plumbing Code;

- F. 2022 California Electrical Code;
- G. 2022 California Mechanical Code;
- H. 2022 California Green Building Standards Code;
- I. 2022 California Fire Code;
- J. 2021 International Property Maintenance Code;
- K. 2022 California Energy Code.

The Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map, as transmitted to the City on ~~November 18, 2008~~ **March 10, 2025**, by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, is also adopted as required by law.

**SECTION 3.** Chapter 15.10.020 (Residential Code) of the Carmel-by-the-Sea Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

**15.10.020 Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Adopted. (Residential Code)**

The Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map, as transmitted to the City on ~~November 18, 2008~~ **March 10, 2025**, by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, is also adopted as required by law.

**SECTION 4.** **Determinations.** Based on the findings above, in addition to information provided to the City Council at the public meeting, the City Council determines as follows:

1. Pursuant to California Government Code Sections 51178 and 51179, the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea hereby adopts the 2025 Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map as developed and recommended by the California State Fire Marshal.
2. This adoption includes all zones identified as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones within the incorporated boundaries of the City, as depicted in the official map attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference.

**SECTION 5.** **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).** The City Council finds that the designation of Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Sections 2 and 3 of this Ordinance is:

1. A ministerial action required by Government Code Section 51179(a) that is Statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(1) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15268.
2. An action necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency that is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(4) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(c).
3. An action taken by regulatory agencies for protection of natural resources (CEQA Guidelines Section 15307) and of the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15308) and that none of the

exceptions to the exemptions found in Section 15300.2 apply. Adoption of the Ordinance does not present or entail any unusual circumstances. The Ordinance is a regulatory change that would not directly cause any reasonably foreseeable physical change, nor would it determine or cause any future development. Indirect physical changes would require application of existing regulations for structure hardening and vegetation maintenance. This would reduce environmental threats caused by wildfires and would be beneficial to the environment.

**SECTION 6. Severability.** If any section, subsection, provision, sentence, clause, phrase or word of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be illegal or otherwise invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall be severable, and shall not affect or impair any remaining sections, subsections, provisions, sentences, clauses, phrases or words of this Ordinance.

**SECTION 7. Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall take effect 30 days after its adoption by the City Council of the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea.

**SECTION 8. Codification.** The City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to codify the provisions of Sections 2 and 3 of this Ordinance into the Carmel-by-the-Sea Municipal Code.

**INTRODUCED at a Regular City Council Meeting on June 3, 2025.**

**PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA this  
9th day of July 2024 by the following vote:**

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

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Dale Byrne, Mayor

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Nova Romero, MMC, City Clerk

EXHIBIT A: 2025 FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY MAP

