

Help Us Identify Cost-Driving Building Code Requirements in California

The **Metropolitan Abundance Project (MAP)** and the **Center for Building in North America** are researching state and local building code requirements that may increase the cost of housing construction in California.

We are looking for examples where:

- California has changed a national model code or standard; or
- A city, county, or fire district has adopted requirements that go beyond California's statewide code.

We are interested in all construction-related codes and standards, including building, residential, fire, plumbing, electrical, elevator, and sprinkler requirements.

What We Are Looking For

Specific differences between:

A national model code and California's code; or
California's code and a local code

We are *not* looking for new policy ideas or general recommendations. Examples of what we *are* looking for include:

State Changes to Model Codes

California Building Code §3002.4(a) requires stretcher-sized elevators in certain two- and three-story buildings. The International Building Code generally begins this requirement at four stories.

California Plumbing Code §701.2(2)(a) limits PVC and ABS sanitary drainage piping in residential buildings above two stories. The Uniform Plumbing Code contains no similar height limit.

Local Changes to State Codes

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District requires full NFPA 13 sprinkler systems in some small multifamily buildings, while the California Fire Code allows NFPA 13R systems in buildings up to four stories.

San Francisco generally permits circuit venting only through an engineered alternative, while the California Plumbing Code allows it through the standard code.

Torrance lowers the definition of a high-rise building to 40 feet. We are especially interested in similar examples from other jurisdictions.

What We Are Not Looking For

Proposals to allow taller single-stair buildings, because that is not yet part of the model or California code.

Proposals to remove sprinklers from single-family homes, because sprinklers are required by the model International Residential Code.

Reforms from states that have amended the national model codes.

What to Send Us

Please email william@centerforbuilding.org with the subject line "**California codes**." Helpful information includes:

- The code section and jurisdiction
- The model or state requirement it differs from
- Any estimate of the added cost
- A project that was delayed, redesigned, or made infeasible
- Background on why the requirement was adopted

Anecdotal or incomplete information is welcome. You do not need to prepare a formal analysis.

We may publish information that is already publicly available. We will only publish private cost estimates or stories with your explicit permission, and we will not identify the person who shared the information.