

# MEMO



**TO:** Mayor Hahs and Members of the Board of Aldermen  
**FROM:** Janet Sanders, Building & Planning Manager  
**DATE:** September 12, 2022  
**SUBJECT:** Tiny Houses

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Our department has been approached by a resident who would like to install a tiny home on an existing residential lot. We do not have a code that prohibits tiny homes, and the only square footage limitation for dwellings comes from the International Residential Code which requires 120 square feet of habitable space per person. A tiny house that meets all aspects of the 2015 International Building Code could currently be constructed on any existing lot, where it could meet the standard setback and lot coverage requirements, or as part of a Special Use Permit for a community unit plan.

However, the construction design of most tiny homes does not meet certain requirements of the 2015 International Residential Code related to stairway design, emergency egress, and ceiling heights.

If the Board of Aldermen desires to allow tiny homes as a living option within the city which have the typical tiny home features of lower ceilings, loft sleeping, and ship ladder stairways, the attached Appendix AQ from the 2021 International Residential Code would need to be adopted. If this appendix is adopted, staff recommends excluding Section AQ106 (Energy Conservation) since we have not adopted any edition of the International Energy Code.

Attached is the 2021 International Residential Code Appendix AQ. Appendices for Tiny Houses did not come into existence until the 2018 version of the ICC Codes.

Tiny Houses meet the ICC and city zoning definitions for dwelling units and do not meet the definitions for manufactured homes unless built on a chassis.