

RESOLUTION NO. 20230914-083

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is committed to promoting attainable and diverse housing opportunities for residents of all income levels; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the growing interest and demand for alternative and sustainable housing options; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to address the evolving housing needs of residents while promoting responsible land use and community development; and

WHEREAS, a tiny home is defined as a small, efficient space, typically under 400 square feet, that often enables homeowners to live a more environmentally conscious, financially stable, and minimalist lifestyle; and

WHEREAS, tiny homes, classified as recreational vehicles (RVs), are often built on a mobile foundation or chassis, which allows them to be transported to various locations; and

WHEREAS, Austin's current Land Development Code only allows RVs within lots zoned for campgrounds, mobile homes, and some other commercially zoned uses but not within single-family residential districts; and

WHEREAS, tiny homes could allow a property owner to easily and affordably add an additional unit to their property; and

WHEREAS, there is research that suggests a correlation between living in a tiny home and having a lowered ecological footprint; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, the City Council approved Resolution No. 20140807-101, which directed the City Manager to identify obstacles that may impede the use of tiny houses in residential zoning districts; and

WHEREAS, as a response to Resolution No. 20140807-101, staff reported zoning to be the largest obstacle and that adding RVs as an allowable use with single-family residential districts could resolve the issue; and

WHEREAS, allowing tiny homes to be inhabited on existing residential lots can provide affordable housing options and contribute to a diverse and inclusive community; and

WHEREAS, City Council understands these goals are fundamental to meeting the affordability challenges of our City and the needs of our working families; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

City Council initiates amendments to Title 25 (*Land Development*) to allow recreational vehicle use within single-family zoning districts including any changes needed for utility connection.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

As part of the amendments initiated by this Resolution, the City Council directs the City Manager to propose requirements that achieve the following:

1. registration with the City if the unit will be used as a Short-Term Rental;
2. compliance with the City's Residential Code, including fire distance requirements between dwelling units; and
3. designation as a dwelling unit that is subject to the City's limits on the maximum number of dwellings allowed in Chapter 25-2 (*Zoning*).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to establish reasonable permit fees to cover administrative costs associated with reviewing and issuing permits.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to provide educational resources and information to residents interested in inhabiting recreational vehicles and/or tiny homes, outlining the regulations, permitting process, and responsibilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to periodically review and assess the impact of recreational vehicle and/or tiny home inhabitation on existing neighborhoods, infrastructure, and community dynamics, and propose City Code adjustments to City Council as necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to bring the proposed code changes to the November Housing and Planning Committee meeting and to City Council by November 30, 2023.

ADOPTED: September 14, 2023 **ATTEST:** Stephan W Hall for
Myrna Rios
City Clerk