

CITY OF WATKINS
MEEKER COUNTY, MINNESOTA

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-6

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WATKINS ZONING ORDINANCE

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATKINS DOES ORDAIN:

SECTION 1. Article XXII, Definitions, is hereby amended to add the following:

Cargo Container:

Cargo Container. A cargo container is a six-sided steel unit originally constructed as a general cargo container used for the transport of goods and materials. Cargo containers do not include similar structures such as railroad cars, recreational vehicles, bus bodies, semi-trailers, and similar prefabricated items.

SECTION 2. Article II, Section 2.02 is hereby amended to add the following:

B.9: Cargo container as an accessory use

Cargo containers are allowed as an accessory use in the R-1 Residential District subject to the following performance standards:

1. Container shall be accessory to a permitted use where a principal building is located.
2. Container must be repurposed to be used for outdoor entertainment.
3. Container must be modified by a professional contractor, off-site. No exterior modifications are allowed to be made on-site.
4. Container may have electric supplied to them, but no other utility, including but not limited to, natural gas, propane gas, or water.
5. Container must be located in the rear yard setback of the property.
6. Only one (1) container per lot where an existing principal structure exists.
7. Container shall not exceed twenty feet in length by eight feet in width by eight feet in height and, when fully open, the floor area shall not exceed three hundred twenty square feet.
8. No container shall be placed on top of another container.
9. Container is allowed to retain its vertical ribbed metal siding but must be newly painted with a solid, flat, non-reflective monochrome earth-tone color or a color consistent with the principal building that is aesthetically appropriate to the intended use and must be pre-approved by the city council.
10. Container shall be secured, structurally sound, stable and in a good repair. Any container that falls into disrepair and/or becomes unsecured, unsound, unstable or otherwise dangerous shall be immediately repaired or removed from the property. The City shall provide notice to the permit holder of the container which is in violation of any condition of this section. After notice is provided to the permit holder, any container stored or kept in such a manner deemed in disrepair or in a dangerous condition and a public nuisance as determined by the City may be immediately removed by the City.
11. No signage, lettering, text, or artwork may be placed on any container.

12. Any writing or graffiti that may be placed on the container is the responsibility of the property owner and shall be removed promptly.
13. Container shall meet all applicable performance standards and requirements of the Watkins Zoning Ordinance and Watkins City Code, including but not limited to, yard and setback requirements, all incorporated herein by reference.
14. Container shall not be used for any type of storage at any time.
15. Permanent installation of container repurposed for use as an outdoor entertainment structure shall only be allowed with an approved land use permit.
16. Container must be placed on a stable, level surface, such as concrete or compacted ground to prevent damage to the property.
17. Debris and refuse cannot be stored in, against, on, under, or around the container.
18. Container shall not be used for human habitation or commercial purposes.
19. Container shall have a minimum of one window.
20. Container shall be included in the total count and total square feet of accessory buildings allowed on a property.
21. Container shall not occupy required off-street parking area.
22. No livestock or pets may be stored in a container.
23. The container shall not block, obstruct, or reduce in any manner any required exits, windows, vent shafts, parking spaces, and/or access driveways.
24. The container may not be placed closer than 1,000 feet to any existing inventoried wetland or identified floodplain/floodway.
25. The container shall not be used to store any hazardous materials.
26. Container must be a one trip (new) container.
27. Any container in violation of this article shall be removed by the City, and any cost or expense associated with the removal shall be the responsibility of the property owner where the container is located. All associated costs, including but limited to legal fees and court costs shall constitute a debt due and owed to the City, and shall be recordable as a lien upon the land where said container is stored.

SECTION 3. Article XVI, Section 16.02, is hereby amended to add the following:

K. Cargo containers of any size for accessory use as set forth in Section 2.02(B)(9).

SECTION 4. Summary Publication. Upon approval by at least four-fifths (4/5) of all the members of the City Council, the Council determines that the following summary clearly informs the public of the intent and effect of this ordinance and authorizes the publication of the summary in place of the entire text thereof:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE XXII, DEFINITIONS, ADDING CARGO CONTAINER AND ARTICLE II, SECTION 2.02, DETACHED ACCESSORY BUILDINGS – RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS. CARGO CONTAINER AS AN ACCESSORY USE, AND SECTION 16.02. A copy of the entire Ordinance is available for inspection during regular business hours at City Hall. A copy of the entire text of the Ordinance shall be posted at Watkins City Hall, 111 Central Avenue South, Watkins MN.

SECTION 5. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be effective from and after its adoption and publication.

ADOPTED BY THE WATKINS CITY COUNCIL THIS 11TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2025.

Christopher Rowan, Mayor

ATTEST: (SEAL)

Debra Kramer, City Clerk