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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CITY COUNCIL APPROVES ORDINANCE AMENDING CHICAGO PLUMBING CODE TO FACILITATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

*Interim amendments approved while stakeholder discussions continue regarding comprehensive revision to the Chicago Plumbing Code in final phase of City's "Modernizing Chicago's Construction Codes" initiative*

**CHICAGO** – City Council today approved an ordinance with several amendments to the Chicago Building and Plumbing Codes that will enhance public health and safety while also reducing construction costs as part of the City's overall strategy to promote housing development and incentivize reinvestment in all neighborhoods across Chicago.

"The City of Chicago remains a national leader in modernizing building codes and promoting safer, more affordable, sustainable and innovative construction," said Mayor Lightfoot. "The ordinance passed by City Council today ensures that Chicago continues building for the future, while simultaneously creating more affordable housing and catalyzing the economic investments that many of our communities need to thrive."

These amendments are designed as interim measures while the Department of Buildings continues to engage with stakeholders regarding a comprehensive revision to the Chicago Plumbing Code as part of the final phase of the "Modernizing Chicago's Construction Codes" initiative. The initiative has already produced comprehensive revisions to the Chicago Electrical, Elevator and Building Codes adopted by City Council in 2017, 2018 and 2019, respectively.

"These amendments are the result of years studying the Chicago Construction Codes and working with industry stakeholders to find ways to reduce construction costs and encourage community reinvestment, especially in the neighborhoods that need it the most," said Building Commissioner Matthew Beaudet. "We remain committed to the 'Modernizing Chicago's Construction Codes' initiative and will continue these efforts, which promote equity and sustainability while also protecting the health and safety of Chicago residents, visitors, and businesses."



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The amendments to the 2001 Chicago Plumbing Code have been carefully planned to reduce the number of administrative variances necessary for construction and renovation projects, thus streamlining the building permit process. Specifically, the amendments will:

- Allow the use of PVC drainpipes for low- and mid-rise residential buildings and the residential portion of low- and mid-rise mixed-use buildings based on cost and performance data from a four-year study with approximately 3,000 participants. Data gathered indicates savings for residential buildings that can range from 5 to 75 percent of plumbing costs (average 44 percent).
- Adopt provisions for optional multi-stall all-gender restrooms and require gender-neutral signage for single-user toilet rooms. All-gender restroom facilities are more welcoming to transgender people, people who need assistance from a caregiver, and parents in public with small children.
- Reduce toilet requirements for small storefront businesses, including restaurants, with 30 or fewer occupants.
- Clarify requirements for water-conserving plumbing fixtures in residential and commercial occupancies consistent with U.S. EPA WaterSense program.
- Align requirements for protecting sewer system from grease with latest national standards.
- Align Requirements for Public Swimming Pools with 2014 Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Regulations.
- Streamline administration of drainlayer licenses.

The ordinance will also expand eligibility for the homeowner-initiated lead service line replacement permit fee waiver program adopted in 2020 to also allow small not-for-profit organizations, such as churches, to receive the permit fee waiver.

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