



DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND ZONING

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COMMISSIONER

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MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle, President  
From: Tim Bleuher, Commissioner  
Subject: Code Adoption  
Date: May 19, 2021

I am writing this letter regarding the adoption of various regulatory codes as they relate to the Cook County Building and Environmental Ordinance ("Building Code") and the entities involved for unincorporated Cook County. Currently the County uses the International Codes which include provisions of the 2009 International Building Code, Provisions of the 2012 International Mechanical Code and Provisions of the 2009 International Residential Code. These were adopted by the Board in November of 2014. As of 2016, Cook County administers the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code.

We are now requesting approval for the adoption of the 2021 International Building Code, 2021 International Residential Code, 2018 International Energy Conservation Code, 2021 International Mechanical Code, 2021 International Fire Code and 2021 International Existing Building Code.

The Code is made up of four components: building, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical; and only the building and mechanical components will be modified by the above request. It is my recommendation that we adopt these current provisions to create a consistent set of regulations with respect to bordering governing bodies and municipal entities. This endeavor continues to encourage economic development in unincorporated Cook County and could also add a level of interest to municipalities to incorporate these properties as they would be developed under uniform guidelines. Furthermore, it adds a level of transparency to the County as we would be adopting "universal regulations" that are the standard for all of Cook County. The adopting components go before the Board as a whole with the underlining theme of open government, improvement of services, innovative leadership, economic development and consistency with bordering municipalities.

I would recommend that the formal implementation of all these codes by the County would not be until the late Fall/Winter of 2021 to allow for further training of staff and preparation by design professionals. As each of these codes is currently utilized by most all outside governmental agencies, my staff and our clients are not unfamiliar to the regulations therein. I am currently choosing classes offered by the International Code Council ("ICC") to refresh, train and certify my examiners and inspectors with regard to the building component adoptions. The three other components, according to my staff and union representatives, would only require a refresher course.