RESOLUTION 2026-18 TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO DEFINE AND REGULATE CARGO CONTAINERS

Section 1.

Addition of Definitions to Article II of the Township Zoning Ordinance The following definitions are added to Article II of the Township Zoning Ordinance, consistent with the existing ordering of definitions in that section:

1. Cargo Container. Any metal or primarily metal container designed or constructed to ship, store, or handle bulk goods or items, or which appears substantially similar to such containers in appearance. Such containers include reusable steel boxes, freight containers, and bulk shipping containers; originally, a standardized reusable vessel that was designed for and used in the parking, shipping, movement, transportation or storage of freight, articles of goods or commodities; generally capable of being mounted or moved on a rail car or loaded on a ship.

2. Portable Storage Container. A portable or moveable, weather-resistant receptacle designed and used for the storage or shipment of household goods, wares, valuables or merchandise (i.e. PODS or MODS), and which are typically leased on a short-term basis for temporary storage purposes.

Section 2.

Addition of New Section XII, entitled “Cargo Containers and Portable Storage Containers.”

New Section XII, currently designated as “Reserved,” entitled “Cargo Containers and Portable Storage Containers,” is added to the Township’s Zoning Ordinance and reads as follows:

Section XII — Cargo Containers and Portable Storage Containers

A. Permanent Cargo Containers. Cargo containers are permitted as accessory use in (AG) Agricultural, (C) Commercial and (I) Industrial zoning districts subject to the requirements of this Section. Cargo containers are not permitted in Residential or Waterfront zoning districts.
B. The number of Cargo containers is limited to two for Agricultural, three for both Commercial and Industrial. Additional containers may be authorized with site plan approval from the Township Planning Commission.

C. Temporary Cargo Containers are permitted in all zoning districts as an accessory use subject to the requirements of Sections D and E.

D. The following regulations apply to all cargo container use:
    1. Cargo containers shall not be stacked above the height of a single container.

2. Cargo containers shall meet all required setbacks.
3. Cargo containers shall be located in rear yards.
4. Cargo containers must be screened so as to not be visible from the street or nearby buildings, drives, and roads.
5. No plumbing may be run or connected to a cargo container.
6. Cargo containers shall not be used to store hazardous materials, as defined by the Michigan Fire Prevention Code, 1941 PA 207, MCL 29.1 et seq.
7. Cargo containers shall not occupy required off-street parking, fire lanes, loading or landscaping areas.
8. No cargo container shall be placed in a location which may cause hazardous conditions or constitute a threat to public safety.
9. No cargo container may be used as living quarters.
10. No structural modifications may be made to cargo containers.
11. No livestock or pets may be housed in a Cargo container.

D. Cargo Containers for Permanent Storage.
Cargo containers may be permanently placed on the property for storage purposes upon issuance of Zoning Permit from the Zoning Administrator. The following regulations shall also apply:

1. All applicable building regulations are followed.
2. A solid foundation (road base material/gravel or better) is required.
3. Cargo containers shall be painted in solid colors (colors which blend into the surrounding area).
4. Cargo containers shall not be used for any advertising purpose and shall be kept clean of all alpha-numeric signage and writing.
5. Any writing or graffiti on the container shall be removed.

E. Cargo Containers for Temporary Use.
Property owners will be required to obtain a temporary use permit from the Zoning Administrator for the temporary use of cargo containers. The following regulations shall also apply:

1. Cargo containers shall be removed from the property within 180 calendar days from the date of initial placement. Property owners can apply for an extension for up to an additional period of up to 180 days.
2. Cargo containers associated with an approved building construction project shall be permitted to remain on-site until approval of the project's final building inspection or the expiration of the building permit, whichever occurs first

D. Portable Storage Containers.
Portable cargo containers are permitted as an accessory use in all zoning districts subject to the requirements of this Section upon and issuance of zoning permit from the Zoning Administrator and shall adhere to the following restrictions:

1. No portable storage container may be stacked on top of another or on top of any other object.

2. Portable storage containers shall not be used to store hazardous materials, as defined by the Michigan Fire Prevention Code, 1941 PA 207, MCL 29.1 et seq.
3. No electricity or plumbing may be run or connected to a portable storage container.
4. Portable storage containers used in a non-residential district or associated with a nonresidential use shall not occupy required off-street parking, loading or landscaping areas.
5. No portable storage container shall be placed in a location which may cause hazardous conditions or constitute a threat to public safety.
6. No portable storage container may be used for living quarters.
7. No livestock or pets may be housed in a portable storage container.
8. Portable storage containers may not be placed on a vacant lot, unless that lot is associated with an approved building construction project.
9. Time Limits.
    a. Portable storage containers shall be removed from the property within 180 calendar days from the date of initial placement. Property owners can apply for an extension for one additional period of up to 180 days.
    b. Portable storage containers associated with an approved building construction project shall be permitted to remain on-site until the earlier occurrence of approval of the project's final building inspection or the expiration of the building permit.

E. Referral to Planning Commission.
At any time after receiving an application for a cargo container or portable storage container pursuant to this Section, the Zoning Administrator may elect to refer to the application for review and approval by the Planning Commission.

Section 3. Validity and Severability.

If any portion of this Ordinance is found invalid for any reason, such holding will not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

Section 4. Repealer.

All other ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent necessary to give this Ordinance full force and effect. Section 5. Effective Date. This Ordinance takes effect seven days after publication as provided by law.

ORDINANCE CERTIFICATION

At a regular meeting of the Soo Township Board, Chippewa County, held in Soo Township Hall, located at 639 Three and one-half Mile Road, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan on October 14, 2026 at 6 p.m.

PRESENT; **Jim Callon, Allen Walther, Larry Perron, Don Kucharczyk, Krista Broos-Adams**
ABSENT: **None**

It was moved by Jim Callon and supported by Don Kucharczyk that the ADU amendment to the Zoning Ordinance be adopted:

YES: **Jim Callon, Allen Walther, Larry Perron, Don Kucharczyk, Krista Broos-Adams**

NO: **None**

ORDINANCE DECLARED ADOPTED
SOO TOWNSHIP

By:_____
Larry Perron, Supervisor

I, the undersigned, the clerk of the Township of Soo, Chippewa County, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true complete copy of certain proceedings taken by the Soo Township Board of said County at its regular meeting held on Oct 14, 2026, relative to adoption of the ordinance amendment therein set forth; that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with the Open Meetings Act, being 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976 and that the minutes of the meeting were kept and will be made available as required by said act; this ordinance was published in the Sault News on 22 OCT 2026 and will take effect on 30 OCT 2026.

Dated: _____

_____
Allen Walther, Soo Township Clerk