

MEMORANDUM

TO: Economic Development Committee Members

FROM: Glenn Denman, Supervising Code Inspector
DATE: February 22, 2019

SUBJ: Proposed Amendments to YMC Title 11, adding Sections 11.04.105 #13 and 11.04.1801.1 (special provisions for prefabricated steel shipping containers for use as storage buildings)

Honorable Councilmembers:

The City of Yakima codes division is working on an ordinance that will ease building code restrictions related to the placement of prefabricated steel storage containers (containers) to be used as accessory storage buildings at places of business. The committee has seen a rough draft, but they desired to see how it will be worded in its final form. The version that will be presented will be its final wording, only lacking the overall ordinance form.

The use of containers as permanent buildings for the purposes of storage (and other uses) has become commonplace. Containers in their original constructed state are unique in that they are built to the highest international structural standards so that they can withstand the pressures of being stacked on ships and transported hundreds of times across our oceans. The conversion of containers into temporary or permanent storage buildings is economical, structurally sound, and provides a high level of security.

The International Building Code requires that all new buildings be provided with a foundation that is able to resist the pressures of wind, snow and seismic loads. The codes division believes that with the unique methods used to construct containers, the requirement to install expensive foundations for containers used as limited storage buildings is excessive.

The proposed ordinance would enable businesses to place and use containers on prepared surfaces without foundations, but they would need to comply with other applicable portions of building and zoning codes, provided that the containers are used only for low to moderate hazard storage and are accessed only by business owners or their employees.

These provisions amend only the applicable sections of our building code with regard to permits and foundations, and do not change our zoning codes which apply to land use.

We look forward to bringing a draft of these proposed changes to the Economic Development Committee for discussion. If the committee approves, we will present the final ordinance version to the full council.

1. Enclosures

With this memo in your packet is the following document:

- a. Proposed wording for changes to Chapter 11.04 of the City's building code. One change is regarding foundations, the other regarding permitting.

Proposed container ordinances:

YMC Title 11.04.1801.1.1 Addition to Section 1801.1

Foundations are not required to be provided for intermodal shipping containers provided that containers:

- a. Are not accessed or used by the general public, e.g. people other than owners or employees of the business entity to which the containers are an accessory use;
- b. Are placed on an improved surface such as gravel, blacktop or concrete;
- c. Have not been modified from their original construction;
- d. Are used as S-1 or S-2 low to moderate hazard storage occupancies only; and
- e. Are accessory to an approved and permitted use.

This exception applies to containers approved for use other than as temporary S-1 or S-2 storage and must comply with all other provisions of the code, including, but not limited to: permits, site plans, building areas, building occupancy and zoning.

YMC Title 11.04.105.2 Addition to permit exemptions of Section 105

Intermodal shipping containers that are approved for temporary S-1 or S-2 storage under the umbrella of a valid Temporary Use Permit and/or construction permit.