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**ITEM: Zoning By-law Amendment - Recommendation Report**  
**DATE: April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**TO: Planning Advisory Committee**  
**FROM: Planning & Development Department**  
**FILE NO.: C-2026-02**

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## **1. Background**

On February 24, 2026, the Council for the Municipality of East Ferris passed resolution 2026-50, directing staff to amend section 3.2.8 of Zoning By-Law 2021-60 to permit the locating of freight containers within Rural, Commercial, Institutional and Industrial Zones subject to a series of conditions regulating their placement and use. This report to Council is attached as **Appendix A**.

The draft Zoning By-Law Amendment text is enclosed as a separate attachment to this report in **Appendix B**.

Under Zoning By-Law 2021-60, the accessory use of freight containers is outlined:

*3.2.8 The locating of transport trailers, freight containers, or similar, as an accessory use for the storage of materials on a lot in a Residential or Rural Zone is not permitted. The accessory use of a transport trailer or freight container for storage are permitted in Commercial and Industrial Zones, however under no circumstances may freight containers be stacked one on top of the other.*

A variety of municipal By-Laws pertaining to freight containers were examined for their approach. The results found a range of zoning standards, from municipalities prohibiting freight containers in any zone, to permitting them in specific zones. In addition to broad land use permission based on zone, most municipalities implement a series of additional conditions and regulations for the locating of freight containers on a property. The recommended conditions are proposed for the purpose of regulating the placement and use of freight containers within the municipality and ensure their compatibility with adjacent uses.

## **2. Planning Review**

### **A. Provincial Planning Statement**

The Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS 2024) was issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act and came into effect October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The Act requires that decisions affecting planning matters “shall be consistent with” policy statements issued under said Act.

The PPS 2024 speaks broadly to permitting development that can be sustained by the service levels available in rural areas and diversifying uses and taking advantage of economic opportunities available while ensuring compatibility among uses.

The proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment would apply to the entire municipality. Conditions for the locating of freight containers on a property would apply to ensure compatibility among uses. The implementation of this Zoning By-Law Amendment will result in improved best practices and acknowledge the reality of uses within the municipality.

Planning staff are of the opinion that the proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment is generally consistent with the high-level policies of the PPS 2024.

### **B. Growth Plan for Northern Ontario**

The Growth Plan for Northern Ontario 2011 received Royal Assent on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, and is issued under the Places to Grow Act, which ensures a long-term vision for strong communities while implementing policies directed at economic prosperity. The proposal is in conformity with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario 2011.

### **C. Municipal Planning Framework**

Freight containers have become increasingly popular within the Municipality of East Ferris. They are a relatively inexpensive option for outdoor, covered and secure storage. In many cases, freight containers have been placed on properties in contravention of Zoning By-Law 2021-60. Generally, this Zoning By-Law Amendment is intended to allow for some flexibility for freight containers in the Rural Zone and to acknowledge the reality of what is occurring within the municipality, while restricting them in the most dense Residential Zones.

Section 4.2 of the Municipality of East Ferris Official Plan states that where a use is permitted within a land use designation, buildings or structures that are normally incidental or accessory to that use would also be permitted. The East Ferris Zoning By-Law regulates the use of land, as well as the erecting, location and the use of buildings and structures.

Zoning By-Law 2021-60 currently permits the locating of freight containers in Commercial and Industrial Zones. The focus of the text of this Zoning By-Law Amendment is to provide for the expansion of the zones in which freight containers are permitted, to include Rural and Institutional Zones. Further, the amendment proposes specific conditions that must be met to permit the placement of freight containers on properties. The proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment to permit the locating of freight containers in Rural and Institutional Zones would conform with the permitted uses for accessory structures in those zones.

All standards of Zoning By-Law 2021-60 will apply to the use of freight containers as an accessory structure. The conditions proposed in the Zoning By-Law Amendment will aim to

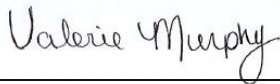
balance the presence of freight containers with the use and character of the zone in which the freight container is located and aim to ensure the compatibility of freight containers with neighbouring uses.

The proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment would result in balancing the need for accessory structure options for secure outdoor storage in a rural setting, while ensuring that provisions are in place to maintain neighbourhood character in more dense and uniform residential areas.

### **3. Recommendation**

It is recommended that Zoning By-law Amendment Application C-2026-02 be recommended for approval to East Ferris Council.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Valerie Murphy  
By-Law Enforcement Officer

I concur with this report,  
and recommendation



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Greg Kirton, RPP, MCIP  
Director of Community Services