

# Municipality of East Ferris

## Report to Council

Report No.: BL-2025-01

Date: November 25, 2025

Originator: Valerie Murphy, By-Law Enforcement Officer

Subject: Freight Containers on Residential Lots

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### RECOMMENDATION

That the Council for the Municipality of East Ferris directs staff to undertake a review and evaluate options for the expanded placement and use of freight containers under Zoning By-Law 2021-60 and prepare a recommendation, including appropriate standards and criteria for their placement and use in zones, beyond Commercial and Industrial.

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### BACKGROUND

Freight containers have become increasingly popular within the Municipality of East Ferris. Freight containers 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.

Under Zoning By-Law 2021-60, freight containers are treated as an accessory use, and their placement is limited to specific land uses set out in Section 3.2 as follows:

#### 3.2 Accessory Uses

*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 circumstance may freight containers be stacked one on top of the other.*

Section 3.32 speaks to the temporary use of storage containers for construction purposes:

#### 3.32 Temporary Buildings and Structures

*The following uses are permitted in all Zones within the Municipality:*

*3.32.1 Temporary structure uses in the construction of public works, but only for so long as it is necessary for such works to be completed or abandoned. A temporary structure associated with a construction project may be permitted for a period of one year, maximum. This may include freight containers associated with temporary construction projects in all zones.*

Given the increasing popularity of freight containers and the challenges related to enforcement and compliance, this report presents an overview of possible options for Council's consideration related to the expanded use of freight containers within the Municipality of East Ferris.

East Ferris staff are seeking to be more proactive with by-law enforcement efforts and prior to starting enforcement related to freight containers, staff want to ensure that our policies are appropriate. Currently, staff are aware that there are many properties in the municipality that are not in compliance with section 3.2.8 of Zoning By-law 2021-60; however, staff also recognize that it may be desirable to differentiate between residential uses in tighter rural estate subdivisions versus large and isolated lots with significant acreage for the purpose of applying zoning by-law section 3.2.8. For this reason, staff are recommending a review of the current policies in order to provide council with the information required to provide direction regarding freight containers and the dozens of properties that are impacted by these policies.

Nearby municipalities generally regulate the placement and use of freight containers from a zoning perspective; however, the regulation of freight containers can vary widely between different municipalities.

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## **OPTIONS**

1. That the Council for the Municipality of East Ferris directs staff to evaluate options for the expansion of the placement and use of freight containers in Zones other than Commercial and Industrial.
2. That the Council for the Municipality of East Ferris directs staff to strive to gain compliance with Zoning By-Law 2021-60 with respect to the placement and use of freight containers within the Municipality of East Ferris.

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## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

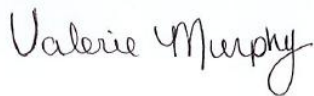
There are no direct financial implications associated with this report at this time.

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## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council for the Municipality of East Ferris directs staff to undertake a review and evaluate options for the expanded placement and use of freight containers under Zoning By-Law 2021-60 and prepare a recommendation, including appropriate standards and criteria for their placement and use in zones beyond Commercial and Industrial.

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



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Jason H. Trottier, HBBA, MPA, CPA, CMA  
CAO/ Treasurer