

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

Planning,
Zoning,
Building Safety,
Construction Inspection Services,
Public Health,
Housing Inspections,
Code Enforcement

To: Planning and Zoning Commission

From: Andrew Fangman, Assistant Community Development Director

Date: April 9, 2019

Re: City Council Request for a Recommendation of a Potential Change to Parking Lot Surfacing Standards

At the November 15th City Council meeting Councilman Saucedo made a request to initiate a change in City Code to exempt Light Industrial (M-1), General Industrial (M-2), and General Commercial (C-1) zoned parcels from the present requirement for the hard surfacing of parking lots used for the storage, maintenance, and/or repair of any semi-truck trailer or other heavy industrial equipment. The intent of this request is an attempt to stay consistent and have all comparable businesses have the same requirements for hard surfacing, regardless of when their parking lots were constructed. Under this proposal vehicle parking lot still have to comply with hard surfacing requirements currently contained within City Code.

The Planning and Zoning Commission has extensively discussed this is at both its December and February meetings. At the February meeting the Commission directed staff to prepare code language, in line with best practices, that would permit the storage of vehicles, trailers, and other equipment in non-hard surfaced areas in the M-2 zoning districts, so that they might give it consideration. With further direction that such an allowance for non-hard surfaced storage areas be done in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts on nearby properties and on the community as a whole.

The Commission reviewed this draft code changes at the March 12th Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, and directed staff to make a number of changes. The attached draft code language incorporates these requested changes. The new revised draft code language differs from the March 12th draft in the following ways:

- Removed the requirement that non-hard surfaced outdoor vehicles storages areas be screened from public streets by a solid 6' fence. The requirements for such areas be screened from public streets by a landscaped buffer yard was left in place.
- Added a requirement that adjoining residential areas be screen from non-hard surfaced outdoor vehicles storages areas with a landscaped buffer yard.
- Changed the portion of the proposed code language that is intended to limit the use of non-hard surfaced outdoor vehicle storage areas to storage uses with minimal vehicle movements by removing the requirement that "Any vehicle, trailer or equipment stored in an outdoor storage area surfaced with gravel, crushed stone, chip seal, oil or other

such surfacing material shall not be moved more than a monthly average of four times. If a storage area contains vehicles, trailers, or heavy equipment that is moved more often, then the area shall be hard surfaced.” This requirement has been replaced with a prohibition on using non-hard surfaced outdoor vehicles storages areas for customer parking, employee parking, loading or unloading of vehicles, or vehicle maintenance.

Staff recommends still that no changes to the hard-surfacing requirements be made, based on the rational set forth at December, February, and March meeting. However, should the Commission wish to recommend any change to current standards for hard surfacing it is staff’s recommendation that it be on the attached proposed code language, it would allow for flexibility in the construction of outdoor storage areas for vehicle, trailers, and equipment in industrial areas, while minimizing as much as possible the impact on the surrounding areas and the community as a whole.

Open storage of vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment.

Except for as provided for by this section outdoor areas used for the storage of vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment shall be surfaced in accordance with the standards set forth in Section 10-27-8 (*hard surfaced*). Gravel, crushed stone, chip seal, oil or other such surfacing material may be used in other outdoor areas used for the storage of vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment if such areas conform to the following standards:

- A. The use of gravel, crushed stone, chip seal, oil or other such surfacing material is permitted for use in outdoor areas used for the storage of vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment shall only be permissible in the M-2 zoning district.
- B. The use of gravel, crushed stone, chip seal, oil or other such surfacing material may be used in other outdoor areas used for the storage of vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment shall only be permissible on the portions of a parcel that are:
 - 1. Not located in the front yard, or
 - 2. Located more than 100' from the nearest right of way line or any parcel containing a residence.
- C. Outdoor areas used for the storage of vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment shall be screened from all public streets, or adjoining parcels that contain a residence, by either of the following methods:
 - 1. Being located behind a building, or
 - 2. Being located behind a landscaped buffer yard meeting the following standards is required:
 - a. Be visually screened from all abutting public streets or adjoining parcels containing a residence by a landscaped buffer area of least 6 feet in width.
 - b. A minimum of one tree and 6 shrubs shall be planted in the landscaped buffer per 25 linear feet of street frontage.
 - c. All fractional amounts of required trees or shrubs shall be rounded up to the next whole number. For example, 2.15 trees rounds up to 3 trees.
- D. All access drives leading to outdoor storage areas, meeting all criteria contained within this section to be used for the storage of vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment shall be surfaced in accordance with the standards set forth in Section 10-27-8 of City Code.
- E. Gravel, crushed stone, chip seal, oil or other such surfacing material shall not be installed for the use in other outdoor areas used for the storage of vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment without prior approval from the City of Muscatine. The City of Muscatine shall approve such an installation upon making a determination that said

installation complies with the standards set for in this Section of City Code. When requesting such an installation an applicant shall submit the following to the City of Muscatine:

- 1.** Detailed specification regarding the type of surfacing material proposed for use. In no circumstances shall slag be used for such a purpose.
- 2.** A diagram of the proposed storage area for outdoor vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment. the diagram must contain the following information:
 - a.** The location and dimensions of the proposed outdoor storage area;
 - b.** How the screening requirements of Subsection (C) are to be met; and
 - c.** Documentation that access drives leading to the outdoor storage are surfaced in accordance with the standards set forth in Section 10-27-8 of City Code.
 - d.** An application fee as set forth in Appendix D.
- F.** All outdoor storage areas shall be maintained so that they are free of weeds and standing water.
- G.** The use of any area approved, under the provisions of Section E, for surfacing with gravel, crushed stone, chip seal, oil or other such surfacing material, shall be limited to the storage of vehicles, trailers, and other heavy equipment or another use that does not require hard surfacing as per Section 10-27-8(A). The following activities are specifically prohibited:
 - 1.** Employee parking
 - 2.** Customer parking
 - 3.** Loading or unloading of vehicles
 - 4.** Vehicle maintenance

