

July 27, 2026

Morrow County Planning Commission
Stacie Eckstrom, Chair
PO Box 40
Irrigon, Oregon 97844

RE: Proposed Code Amendments for Truck Businesses in Residential Zones

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment during this work session regarding proposed amendments to the Morrow County Zoning Ordinance. I am concerned about expanding home occupation rules to allow commercial trucking operations, particularly within urban growth boundaries (UGBs), and I am not convinced that Conditional Use Permits are the right path forward.

UGBs designate urbanized land for future city growth and must be managed to preserve land-use integrity upon annexation. Implementing code amendments in direct conflict with the planned transportation network constitutes short-sighted planning that compromises long-term infrastructure. The City of Boardman has identified freight routes, and local streets are not engineered for the weight of commercial freight vehicles. Allowing fleet parking within the UGB will accelerate severe pavement failure on city streets, creating an unfair financial burden on citizens.

The first standard of Article 6 requires that a **"home occupation is to be secondary to the main use of the property as a residence and shall be conducted within the same dwelling or in an accessory building on the same property."** Parking or staging commercial trucks and trailers simply is not a home occupation. Rewriting Article 6 to accommodate this use fundamentally undermines the integrity of the County's adopted plans.

Furthermore, expanding home occupations to include commercial fleet parking creates an irreconcilable conflict with existing county legislation. Specifically, **Morrow County Ordinance Number MC-C-8-96** established explicit industrial definitions entirely incompatible with residential zones:

- **Freight Depot/Truck Terminal:** Defined as *"an area where cargo is stored or, where trucks load and unload cargo on a regular basis and trucks and/or trailers are parked when not in use."* By definition, parking commercial trucks and trailers on a property when not in use constitutes a freight terminal activity.
- **Truck Stop:** Defined as *"any building, premise or land in which or upon which maintenance, servicing, storage or repair of commercial licensed trucks or motor vehicles is conducted or rendered."* Parking commercial vehicles on an open, unimproved residential lot falls squarely under the "storage" of commercially licensed vehicles.

By trying to categorize activities that meet the legal definitions of a freight depot or a truck stop under the umbrella of a residential "home occupation," the proposed changes create an internal contradiction within the code.

As the Planning Commission reviews these code options, I reiterate the need to protect our shared urban infrastructure. There are significant impacts to local streets, Kunze Lane, Olson Road, and Paul Smith Road that must be considered as these types of activities are reviewed:

- **Incompatible Industrial Creep:** Commercial trucking blurs the line between residential livability and industrial operations. Transportation businesses belong in dedicated industrial zones, not residential yards.
- **Inadequate Street Width:** Local roadways like Kunze Lane, Olson Road, and Paul Smith Road are too narrow for the turning radii, passing clearance, and structural demands of multi-axle semi-trucks, creating bottlenecks and endangering pedestrians and commuters.

I urge the Planning Commission to preserve and maintain the integrity of the Urban Growth Areas and definitions established in Ordinance MC-C-8-96. I respectfully request that the Planning Commission reject any code changes that would redefine commercial trucking, truck stops, or freight terminal operations as a home occupation within the UGB.

Thank you for your time, your collaboration, and your commitment to orderly, sustainable land-use planning in Morrow County.

Cordially,



Brandon Hammond
City Manager

Proposed Amendment

12. Commercial trucks and commercial trucking businesses are prohibited within residential zones, except as authorized through approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a small, family-based commercial trucking business. Such uses shall be limited to no more than two (2) commercial truck and/or trailer units and shall be subject to the following standards and conditions:

- a. All commercial activity will occur within the hours of 6:00 AM – 6:00 PM.
- b. All commercial activity should be limited to single trips per unit per day and operated seasonally (no more than 3 months) out of the year.
- c. No major mechanical work or operation is permitted or allowed in a residential zone.
- d. Applicant shall submit a final site plan showing the parking area and the septic drain field area and obtain a Zoning Permit.
- e. Commercial trucks/and or units are required to be parked on the property as presented in the site plan and not in the right of way or in such a way as to cause visual detriment to the roadway.

