



STAFF REPORT

TO: ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: BRIGID REYNOLDS, CONSULTING TOWN PLANNER
SUBJECT: STORAGE CONTAINERS
MEETING DATE: MAY 21, 2026

PURPOSE

To receive the APC's input to a proposed policy and bylaw amendment to permit storage containers on a temporary basis during renovations and moving.

BACKGROUND

The Zoning Bylaw does not permit storage containers, unless permitted by a site-specific zoning amendment.

- Section 4.3.17 Restricted Uses – d) storage containers
- Section 4.3.6 e. - A storage container, where expressly permitted, shall be entirely enclosed, or wholly screened.

The only zone that permits a storage container is on a site-specific basis on a Public Use (P-1) zoned property - Lot B, Section 6, Renfrew District (situated in Cowichan Lake Land District), Plan VIP61171. This is the Palsson School located at 30 Grosskleg Way. The bylaw also states that it must be properly screened. Despite the Zoning Bylaw prohibiting containers, there are many located around Town on private and public property including the wastewater treatment plant and fire hall. Staff do not have an exact number of containers distributed around Town and collecting this information requires time and staff resources.

At its regular meeting on December 16, 2025, Council directed staff to undertake a roadside inventory of the extent of the use of storage containers in Town. This work is expected to be completed by a summer student. Council also directed staff to work with a property owner to

remove a storage container on their property. The property owner has confirmed that the storage container will be moved so they can continue building their accessory building (shop).

At the regular Committee of the Whole (COW) on May 12 the following Notice of Motion was passed

That staff investigate a policy, fee system, and timeline, for temporary use of storage units for those moving from, or to Lake Cowichan, as well as for homes under renovation, to remove the possibility of bylaw complaints regarding their use.

DISCUSSION

The Zoning Bylaw clearly does not permit the use of storage containers. A policy permitting storage containers, even on a temporary basis, would require an amendment to the Zoning Bylaw. Possible considerations to create a policy could include:

- Submission of a bond to be held until the storage container is removed.
- Providing proof that of their moving and renovations.
- Providing a site plan to show where on the property it would be located.

Does the APC have other thoughts on what else the policy could include.

Signed:

Brigid Reynolds

Brigid Reynolds RPP MCIP
Contract Planner