PURPOSE:

This policy is to establish the requirements for temporary or permanent use of a Sea-Land Cargo Container for storage purposes, to address building code occupancies allowed for these types of structures, and to identify zoning code, building code and permit requirements for such structures.

POLICY:

Definition: A Sea-Land Cargo Container, sometimes known as a “Seatrain”, “Conex”, etc., is a prefabricated metal structure designed for use as an individual shipping container in accordance with international standards or a metal structure designed and built for use as an enclosed truck trailer in accordance with Department of Transportation standards.

Temporary Storage Use. A proposal for temporary use of a cargo container for storage shall require review and approval of a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) from the Planning Division. See section 20-52.040 of the City of Santa Rosa City Zoning Code for TUP application and approval procedures. The maximum time a cargo container can be used as temporary storage shall be determined in the conditions of the TUP and may be less than 12 months. No use shall extend beyond the 12 month period established with the TUP approval. Once a TUP is approved the applicant shall apply and obtain a building permit from the Building Division.

A. Only those uses classified in the California Building Code (CBC) as Group ‘S-2’ or ‘U’ shall be permitted.
B. A building permit application for use of a container for temporary storage use may require approval by the Planning Division, Fire Department, and Engineering Development Services as applicable.
C. Cargo containers (unless they are located in a floodplain) for temporary use may be installed without a foundation.
D. The location of the storage container must comply with all required zoning and building code setbacks for a ‘U’ or ‘S-2’ Occupancy storage building.
E. Temporary storage containers must be removed within the time frame established by the TUP.

Permanent Storage Containers. A proposal for a permanent container installation for storage shall require Design review discretionary approval from the Planning Division. See section 20-52.030 of the City of Santa Rosa City Zoning Code for application and approval procedure.
Once discretionary review is approved the applicant shall apply and obtain a building permit from the Building Division.

A. Occupancy uses classified in the California Building Code (CBC) as Group ‘S-2’ or ‘U’ shall be permitted. Group S-1 without refrigeration may also be permitted.
B. A building permit application for use of a container for permanent storage use may require approval by the Planning Division, Fire Department, and Engineering Development Services as applicable.
C. The location of the storage container must comply with all required zoning and building code setbacks for a ‘U’ or ‘S-2’ Occupancy storage building.
D. Permanent storage containers are prohibited in flood hazard areas and in some zoning districts.
E. Permanent storage containers shall comply with the following:
   a. The container shall be anchored on a concrete foundation (or equivalent) capable of withstanding all imposed vertical and lateral loads as dictated by CBC. The anchoring system shall be designed by a California registered design professional.
   b. Any alterations to the container shall be designed and detailed by a California registered design professional.
   c. Permanent storage containers shall be fire sprinklered or provided with an alternate fire suppression system approved by the Santa Rosa Fire Department.
   d. Any storage of hazardous materials will require submittal of a Hazardous Materials Management Plan to be reviewed and approved by the SR Fire Department.

Building permit application, review and permit requirements for temporary or permanent use:

A. The application shall be processed the same as other ‘U’, ‘S-1’ or ‘S-2’ Occupancies.
B. The plan review and permit fee amounts shall be based upon the building valuation per square foot cost for a Warehouse type IIIB building
C. Development impact fees may apply for structures over 400 sq. ft. in floor area.
D. Mechanical for air conditioning or refrigeration or plumbing for water or sewer shall not be permitted.
E. A site plan shall be submitted showing all setbacks and dimensions locating the structure and its relation to the property lines and other structures. The site plan shall indicate what will be removed, if anything, to install the container.

Michael K. Whitaker, Chief Building Official