



Planning & Development Services Dept.

17500 Midvale Avenue North
Shoreline, WA 98133-4905
(206) 801-2500 ♦ Fax (206) 546-8761

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER#000117 022311

CODE INTERPRETATION

CODE SECTION: 20.50.100

I. **ISSUE:** Is a Shipping Container placed on leveled ground (with or without a foundation), a roof and covered with siding a permitted use in the R-4 and R-6 zones (assuming it is located outside of any required setback or it meets the exception in 20.50.100(1) & (2) for accessory structures in setbacks and the site remains in conformance w/ hardscape and building coverage maximums), or is it still a shipping container and not permitted?

II. **FINDINGS:**

These were formerly not allowed in single-family zones due to their size and appearance – they were typically too big to meet the exemption for accessory structures, and because they couldn't meet building code as habitable space. Now these containers come in all sizes and some could meet the size exemption as accessory structures. These do not need to be habitable space if used as a shed.

III. **CONCLUSIONS**

If a person wanted to use code approved materials to roof and side around a “shipping” container so it looked like a shed and it met all the other requirements (height, sq footage, setbacks, hardscape, etc) then it could be used as a shed. If the shipping container, when contained within its “shed” exterior, is greater than 200 sq ft and 10 ft in height, then it would need to meet all the requirements of the building code.

IV. **DECISION:**

A shipping container that is completely enclosed with walls & a roof made out of approved materials that meets all other requirements of the Development and Building Codes (height, square footage, setbacks, hardscape, impervious surface, surface water, etc.) is allowed in the R-4 and R-6 zones. A foundation is required. The eave overhang does not count as part of the building area, but the eave overhang does count toward the total hardscape and fire separation requirements for accessory structures in the setback.

Director's Signature

2/23/11

Date