



Referral
Early Consultation

Date: September 10, 2025
To: Distribution List (See Attachment A)
From: Kristen Anaya, Senior Planner
Planning and Community Development
Subject: GENERAL PLAN TEXT AMENDMENT APPLICATION NO. PLN2025-0070 –
HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL PLANNED DEVELOPMENT UPDATE
Respond By: September 30, 2025

****PLEASE REVIEW REFERRAL PROCESS POLICY****

The Stanislaus County Department of Planning and Community Development is soliciting comments from responsible agencies under the Early Consultation process to determine: a) whether or not the project is subject to CEQA and b) if specific conditions should be placed upon project approval.

Therefore, please contact this office by the response date if you have any comments pertaining to the proposal. Comments made identifying potential impacts should be as specific as possible and should be based on supporting data (e.g., traffic counts, expected pollutant levels, etc.). Your comments should emphasize potential impacts in areas which your agency has expertise and/or jurisdictional responsibilities.

These comments will assist our Department in preparing the conditions for a Staff Approval. Therefore, please list any conditions that you wish to have included as well as any other comments you may have. Please return all comments and/or conditions as soon as possible or no later than the response date referenced above.

Thank you for your cooperation. Please call (209) 525-6330 if you have any questions.

Applicant: Stanislaus County Department of Planning and Community Development
Project Location: Unincorporated Stanislaus County
APN: Unincorporated Stanislaus County
Williamson Act Contract: N/A
General Plan: Highway Commercial Planned Development Land Use Designation
Current Zoning: N/A

Project Description: This is a request to amend the text of the Highway Commercial Planned Development land use designation in the Land Use Element of the Stanislaus County General Plan to clarify and update policies addressing the development or establishment of large-scale truck parking facilities in the unincorporated areas of Stanislaus County.

In August of 2024, the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors requested that staff take steps to evaluate existing allowances for truck parking in the unincorporated agricultural areas of the County, in light of an influx of complaints resulting in code enforcement cases for unpermitted truck parking facilities. The General Plan Update Committee, at their December 5, 2024 meeting, directed Planning staff to form an ad hoc committee to study and develop recommendations to address issues surrounding truck parking facilities in the A-2 zoning district. Throughout the January through July period, staff, directed by the ad hoc committee, have conducted research, collected

data, and performed outreach to agencies and stakeholders to identify areas of concern. These areas include, but are not limited to, existing ordinances having a lack of clear threshold to prevent concentrations of truck parking facilities developing in any given area; having a lack of development criteria to satisfactorily minimize conflicts between proposed facilities and surrounding property and agriculture; and a need to incorporate stronger locational and operational limitations to reduce potential regulatory and zoning noncompliance.

Following this process, staff, in coordination with input from the ad hoc committee, developed recommendations which were presented to the General Plan Update Committee for consideration at their August 7, 2025 meeting. These recommendations included amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan Land Use Element Highway Commercial Planned Development (HCPD) land use designation to incorporate new restrictions and criteria for the following existing permitting pathways:

1. Parking for up to three trucks by owner-operator residents which may be permitted on A-2 zoned land as home occupations with a business license;
2. Small scale truck parking facilities for up to 12 trucks and 24 trailers which may be permitted on A-2 zoned land with a use permit approved by the Planning Commission; and
3. Large scale truck parking facilities for 13 or more trucks and/or 25 or more trailers which require Board of Supervisors approval of general plan amendments and/or rezones to permit.

The General Plan Update Committee supported the amendments and directed that staff bring the amendments before the Planning Commission for a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors; however, they requested that a concentration threshold be developed and incorporated into the draft text amendments to the HCPD designation which is tentatively scheduled to be presented to the Planning Commission on October 16, 2025.

The HCPD designation is presently described as appropriate for land located at freeway interchanges, for uses serving highway travelers. Truck parking, as part of a truck stop, is presently considered an allowed use under the HCPD designation. This request is to amend the General Plan text for the HCPD land use designation to call out truck parking as a standalone use, broaden applicability for the HCPD designation to property within a half-mile of a state highway or interstate when solely used to develop truck parking as a principle use, and set criteria to address land use compatibility and environmental concerns, and limit intensity and concentration of development.

This project is being deemed Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061, the Common-Sense Exemption.

Under a separate application, General Plan Amendment No. PLN2025-0069 – *Truck Parking*, the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will consider amendments to Chapters 21.20 General Agriculture District (A-2) and 21.94 Home Occupations of the Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance, and adoption of a new Chapter 21.89 Truck Parking, to update regulations applicable to parking of trucks in the A-2 zoning district allowed under a use permit or as a home occupation.

Full document with attachments available for viewing at:
<http://www.stancounty.com/planning/pl/act-projects.shtm>



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1010 10TH Street, Suite 3400, Modesto, CA 95354
 Planning Phone: (209) 525-6330 Fax: (209) 525-5911
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GENERAL PLAN TEXT AMENDMENT APPLICATION NO. PLN2025-0070 – HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL PLANNED DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Attachment A

Distribution List

X	CA DEPT OF CONSERVATION Land Resources / Mine Reclamation	X	STAN CO ALUC
X	CA DEPT OF FISH & WILDLIFE		STAN CO ANIMAL SERVICES
X	CA DEPT OF FORESTRY (CAL FIRE)	X	STAN CO BUILDING PERMITS DIVISION
X	CA DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION DIST 10	X	STAN CO CEO
X	CA OPR STATE CLEARINGHOUSE		STAN CO CSA
X	CA RWQCB CENTRAL VALLEY REGION	X	STAN CO DER
X	CA STATE LANDS COMMISSION		STAN CO ERC
X	CEMETERY DISTRICT: ALL	X	STAN CO FARM BUREAU
X	CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION	X	STAN CO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
X	CITY OF: ALL WITHIN STANISLAUS CTY.	X	STAN CO PARKS & RECREATION
X	COMMUNITY SERVICES DIST: KEYES	X	STAN CO PUBLIC WORKS
X	COOPERATIVE EXTENSION	X	STAN CO PUBLIC WORKS - SURVEY
X	COUNTY OF: ALL SURROUNDING		STAN CO RISK MANAGEMENT
X	DER GROUNDWATER RESOURCES DIVISION	X	STAN CO SHERIFF
X	DISPOSAL DIST: ALL	X	STAN CO SUPERVISOR DIST: ALL
X	FIRE PROTECTION DIST: ALL	X	STAN COUNTY COUNSEL
X	GSA: ALL WITHIN STANISLAUS COUNTY	X	StanCOG
X	HOSPITAL DIST: ALL	X	STANISLAUS FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU
X	IRRIGATION DIST: ALL	X	STANISLAUS LAFCO
X	MOSQUITO DIST: ALL	X	STATE OF CA SWRCB DIVISION OF DRINKING WATER DIST. 10
X	STANISLAUS COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES		SURROUNDING LAND OWNERS
X	MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL: ALL	X	INTERESTED PARTIES
X	PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC	X	TELEPHONE COMPANY: ALL
X	POSTMASTER:ALL	X	TRIBAL CONTACTS (CA Government Code §65352.3)
X	RAILROAD: ALL	X	US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
X	SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY APCD	X	US FISH & WILDLIFE
X	SCHOOL DIST 1: ALL		US MILITARY (SB 1462) (7 agencies)
	SCHOOL DIST 2:	X	USDA NRCS
	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	X	WATER DIST: ALL
X	STAN CO AG COMMISSIONER	X	TUOLUMNE RIVER TRUST



STANISLAUS COUNTY CEQA REFERRAL RESPONSE FORM

TO: Stanislaus County Planning & Community Development
1010 10th Street, Suite 3400
Modesto, CA 95354

FROM: _____

SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN TEXT AMENDMENT APPLICATION NO. PLN2025-0070 –
HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL PLANNED DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Based on this agency’s particular field(s) of expertise, it is our position the above described project:

- _____ Will not have a significant effect on the environment.
- _____ May have a significant effect on the environment.
- _____ No Comments.

Listed below are specific impacts which support our determination (e.g., traffic general, carrying capacity, soil types, air quality, etc.) – (attach additional sheet if necessary)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Listed below are possible mitigation measures for the above-listed impacts: *PLEASE BE SURE TO INCLUDE WHEN THE MITIGATION OR CONDITION NEEDS TO BE IMPLEMENTED (PRIOR TO RECORDING A MAP, PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF A BUILDING PERMIT, ETC.):*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

In addition, our agency has the following comments (attach additional sheets if necessary).

Response prepared by:

Name	Title	Date
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**Added text is shown in bold and underline and deleted text is shown in strikeout.*

HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

Intent. This designation is intended for land located at freeway interchanges where it is necessary to provide services to highway travelers **and lands near freeway interchanges are suitable for limited truck parking.**

Zoning. Land within this designation shall be zoned for General Agriculture (A-2) until rezoned to Planned Development (PD). Population density and building intensity will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Uses within this designation shall be limited to the following as principle uses:

- Truck Stops
- Truck Parking**
- Restaurants
- Motels
- Service Stations
- Overnight R.V. Camping
- Fruit Stands

The following uses may be permitted, but only when accessory to the uses listed above:

- Towing Service
- Minor Emergency Automobile Repair
- Convenience Market
- Wine Tasting

Appropriate Locations. The Highway Commercial Planned Development designation is appropriate ~~only~~ for parcels **located at adjacent to a freeway interchanges, with the exception of parcels located near freeway interchanges developed with truck parking facilities as the principal use when meeting the standards established within this designation.** No property shall be designated Highway Commercial Planned Development and rezoned PD unless findings are made that the change will not be detrimental to the agricultural productivity of the surrounding property, **the County's agricultural conversion criteria has been met,** and that the subject property is not considered to be one of the County's most productive agricultural areas.

This designation allows for the development of limited truck parking facilities in order to address impacts to roadway safety and community character which occur when trucks park on the shoulders of public roadways due to lack of available parking facilities. When limited to the principal use of truck parking, this designation is appropriate for parcels located within one-half mile of Interstate 5, State Route 33, State Route 99, State Route 108, State Route 120, State Route 132, State Route 165; or State Route 219, provided:

- 1. The use does not establish a concentration of more than two truck parking facilities within any one-mile radius as defined by Chapter 21.89 of the Zoning Ordinance;**

- 2. The establishment of the use does not require the cancellation of a Williamson Act Contract;**
- 3. The parcel on which the use is to be located is no more than 10 acres in size and the number of tractor-trailer combinations to be parked onsite, at any one time, does not exceed 80 trucks and 160 trailers;**
- 4. Permanent, fixed restrooms are developed in accordance with all county and state standards;**
- 5. The roads used to access the use meet all county, city and state requirements for access;**
- 6. High quality landscaping and screening treatments, along with parking surface materials, are incorporated into the design to enhance community character, minimize conflicts with adjacent properties, provide dust control, and protect groundwater and soils from contamination; and**
- 7. The parcel shall not be developed with any other non-agricultural use unless it is located at a freeway interchange.**

When evaluating the agricultural conversion findings required for the redesignation of land to Highway Commercial Planned Development in order to develop truck parking as a principal use, the state-wide shortage of available truck parking facilities and the limited quantity of land adjacent to roadways near interstate and state route corridors with the infrastructure needed to support the movement of trucks should be given great weight and considered on a case-by-case basis. Limitations on the location and concentration of truck parking facilities are intended to discourage piecemeal conversion of larger agricultural areas to non-agricultural uses.