



Planning Commission Agenda Report

From: Darcy Delgado, Associate Planner

Subject: This is a public workshop for the Planning Commission to review the standards for home businesses and provide direction to staff on whether changes to the Code are necessary. (P25-0021/ RZN 25-01)

CEQA: This item is not considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as it is a workshop for discussion purposes only and does not involve any discretionary action or commitment to a course of action.

Location: Citywide

Date: March 25, 2025

Facts

1. The City recently underwent a three year project to update the [Zoning Code](#) (Title 21 of the Paso Robles Municipal Code), which was adopted by City Council on October 1, 2024.
2. As part of the update process, the Planning Commission held various study sessions which included a recommendation to the City Council on September 17, 2024 to make changes to the home business standards section of the Zoning Code.
3. At the adoption hearing on October 1, 2024, the City Council final decision was to defer action on the proposed changes to home businesses (Chapter 21.21 Home Occupation Permits) and instead, default to the original text that the City had in place before the Zoning Code update process began.
4. As part of the Zoning Code update, City Council advised staff to revisit the Code approximately every 6 months to ensure all of the intended changes were working sufficiently, and if not, to bring them back one by one to be refined and bring them back through the review process.
5. Based on previous feedback from the City Council and the public regarding home business standards, staff has determined the home business section of the Zoning Code merits further discussion with the Planning Commission in a workshop setting so that they may revisit the standards and advise staff if any improvements are necessary.
6. At this workshop, the community will have an opportunity to provide feedback on what is working and what needs improvement. Since this meeting is a workshop and not a public hearing, no decisions or changes to the Zoning Code will be made. If changes are suggested, the item will be noticed for a future Planning Commission hearing in which a recommendation will need to be made to the City Council.

Community Outreach

The following list details the outreach efforts that have been taken to communicate this item with the public and significant stakeholders:

- City Press Release
- News notice
- Mail notification to existing active home businesses

- Social Media postings (Facebook)

Options

1. Leave home business standards as-is.
2. Advise staff to make changes to the home business standards.

Analysis and Conclusions

Chapter 21.21 of the [Zoning Code](#) contains the standards for home businesses. A home business is a business conducted within a residential unit or residential site with the business subordinate to the residential use of the property. Some examples include tutoring/teaching, home offices for services provided outside of the home or on the internet, cottage food operations, tailor/dressmaker, or similar uses.

The current home occupation standards are included in Attachment 1 to this staff report, reflecting what the City Council adopted at their October 1, 2024 hearing. Leading up to this adoption meeting, the Planning Commission had initially recommended some changes to the home business standards, which are reflected in Attachment 2. Attachment 2 includes some substantive changes such as additional uses allowed and uses not allowed, as well as criteria for parking commercial vehicles. The more substantive changes were based on staff's input that these changes would help to improve the enforceability of the code section and to improve staff's interpretation of what is allowed, since the existing text is somewhat sparse. Less substantive changes were made in line with the overall Zoning Code Update to provide clearer steps on home business permit application procedures. However, due to overall concerns from the public that the changes were not sufficiently thought out and could lead to grievances with existing home business permit holders, Council was unsupportive of making any changes to the text and reverted to the original standards that had been in place prior to the update process.

As part of the Zoning Code update, City Council advised staff to revisit the Code approximately every 6 months to ensure all of the intended changes were working sufficiently, and if not, to bring them back one by one to be refined and go back through a public hearing process. At this time, staff is requesting the Planning Commission lead a public workshop with the community, spend time to review the existing standards, listen to public input, and provide direction to staff on whether changes to the home business standards are necessary. There are several issues that the Planning Commission may wish to consider in leading the discussion, including the following:

- Expanding the list of *allowed* uses including personal trainer, specialized repairs, handcraft or artwork production;
- Expanding the list of *not allowed* uses including barber/beauty shops, massage, small auto repair, or pet-sitting;
- Adding specific performance standards for some of the allowed uses;
- Adding a limit to the number of customers or frequency of customers coming to receive a service (i.e. teaching/tutoring or personal training);
- Whether there should be a limit on the number of commercial vehicles that can be kept at the property; or
- Specifying the allowed location of parking commercial vehicles.

Next Steps

After holding a public workshop and listening to all interested parties, the Planning Commission is requested to advise staff on which option to move forward with. If the Planning Commission desires to leave the home business standards as they are, then no further meetings are required after the workshop. If the Planning Commission directs staff to make changes to the home business standards, then the item will need to be noticed for a future Planning Commission hearing in which a recommendation will need to be made to the City Council.

Recommendation

The Planning Commission is requested to review home business standards and provide direction to staff.

Attachments

1. Current home business standards (Chapter 21.21 of the Zoning Code)
2. Initial recommendation of updates to the home business standards from Planning Commission to City Council, dated September 2024