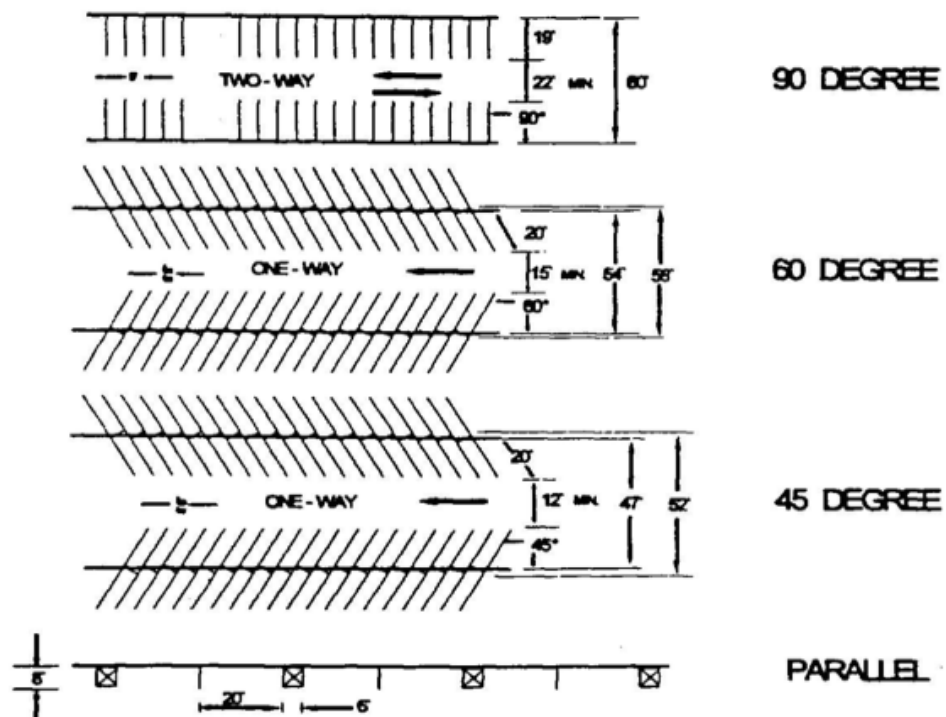




Truck Parking Blueprint
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TRUCK PARKING BLUEPRINT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This guide offers vital insights and approaches for seamlessly opening a truck parking and/or storage lot by way of leasing land that is already approved, zoned, and prepared for use. It delves into the technical details and acts as a crucial reference for planners at local, regional, and state levels.

Since the implementation of Jason's Law in 2012, The urgent need for safe truck parking became widely recognized after the tragic murder of truck driver Jason Rivenburg in 2009. He was killed while resting at an abandoned gas station, having no access to safe parking. This event led to the creation of Jason's Law through the MAP-21 Act in 2012, championed by his widow and others, which prioritizes truck parking safety and mandates regular assessments by the USDOT.

This law highlighted how shortages in truck parking affect driver safety, community safety, and the efficiency of the U.S. supply chains. Adequate, well-lit, and secure parking spots are essential for truck drivers to rest safely, which is crucial for their continued safe operation on roads and contribution to the economy. Inadequate parking options not only increase risks and stress for drivers but also lead them to park in unsuitable places like highway shoulders and vacant lots, which can be unsafe and increase maintenance costs. Safety risks increase because truckers may keep driving when they're too tired or might have to park in unsafe spots, putting themselves and others in danger. Reasons trucks may need parking:

- Staging: Truck drivers picking up and delivering freight at manufacturers, warehouses, and distribution centers need to park nearby to await an appointment, often in busy urban areas.
- 30-minute break: As part of the Federally mandated 30- minute break, the driver must be off duty, meaning they are no longer working and will not have to move the truck for any reason.
- Emergency: Drivers may be impacted by an incident that has closed or severely congested the roadway. Their original itinerary is disrupted, and parking is needed immediately.
- Time-off: Independent drivers do not have a company facility for off- duty parking. They need a place to park while off-duty, but ordinances may prohibit parking at their home.

Well-planned and well-sited truck parking facilities not only address these issues but also support economic development and community goals. Understanding the local demand for truck parking, which depends on local supply chains and land use, is key to determining the necessary amount and type of parking required.

NATIONAL TRUCK PARKING SHORTAGE

Every day, thousands of truck drivers experience frustration as they look for parking to rest, comply with State and Federal safety laws, or stage loads for customer appointments. Transportation planning professionals should be aware that truck drivers are held to strict adherence to HOS regulations using electronic logging devices (ELDs) that precisely track the time, location, speed of travel, and other travel attributes.

As a result, truck drivers nearing the end of their allowable drive time may need to stop immediately. Alternatively, drivers may choose to stop in a location far from their destination to ensure they can find parking, losing productivity and creating demand for truck parking outside of congested urban areas. The failure to locate safe parking near a route or a shippers' facility often leads to desperation, and drivers may need to park in undesignated areas like ramp shoulders, side streets, or abandoned lots.

For public agencies, the lack of designated truck parking typically makes a challenging issue worse; through premature damage to roads not designed to handle heavy loads, higher crash risk from trucks parked in the right-of-way or on side streets, and complaints from residents. For drivers, the stress of finding legal parking is just one of many concerns. The time spent looking for parking results in lost productivity and lost wages. Parking illegally or in undesignated areas often presents the risk to personal health and safety, fines, cargo theft, or vehicle damage.

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), 885 large- truck drivers died in 2018 and 4,678 total people died in collisions with trucks.¹² Providing over- the-road truck drivers with safe opportunities to park improves safety for all road users. In one of the most extensive crash analyses of its kind, the *Large Truck Crash Causation Study* found that 13 percent of commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers were considered fatigued at the time of their crash.

To prevent incidents involving fatigued truck drivers, Federal regulations at 49 CFR part 395 require that drivers hauling loads in interstate commerce adhere to HOS rules set by the FMCSA. The HOS requirements largely dictate when, where, and how long truck drivers must park for rest. The FMCSA also requires interstate carriers to use ELDs to record driving hours to ensure compliance (49 CFR 395.8).

In 2015, FHWA conducted the first *Jason's Law Truck Parking Survey and Comparative Assessment*. Among the study conclusions:

- Most States report problems with truck parking shortages.
- Those States that did not report shortages were mostly rural (except for Ohio).
- States report higher levels of shortages in public parking facilities than in private facilities.
- States with the highest numbers of spaces are clustered along major corridors with high truck volumes.

In 2019, FHWA updated the *Jason's Law Truck Parking Survey and Comparative Assessment*. The new assessment found that the truck parking shortage identified in the 2015 report persists. Shortages occur at every time of day, in every State, and throughout the year. Challenges are more acute on major freight corridors, such as busy interstates, and in cities that act as freight hubs. Key observations from the 2019 survey include:

- More than 90 percent of drivers reported that parking was difficult to find between 7 PM and midnight, and more than 60 percent reported difficulty between midnight and 5 AM.
- Truck-stop operators reported a similar pattern of parking constraints, with the busiest times occurring overnight and some level of constraint throughout the day.
- The inventory found an average of 10.0 publicly owned parking spaces per 100,000 daily truck vehicle miles traveled.
- The Southwest region has the lowest number of parking spaces per miles of travel, with Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma having the lowest ratio.
- Approximately 2,000 public and 27,000 private truck parking spaces were added since 2015.
- The 2019 *Jason's Law Survey Update* also found that challenges related to planning, funding, and finding locations for truck parking persisted.

The 2019 *Jason's Law Survey Update* notes that local government involvement and education are needed to improve conditions. The need is particularly prevalent in urban areas where truck parking likely conflicts with nearby land uses and where the need for load staging most directly conflicts with higher land costs.

The 2019 study noted that the 32 urbanized areas with the greatest number of freight origins/destinations only have 8.5 percent of the total truck parking spaces. Since zoning and land use development guidelines are most often decided at the local level, the study results indicate that outreach and education of local officials may be beneficial to addressing truck parking needs.

The demands for truck parking extend beyond just complying with HOS regulations. Truck drivers may need to park while waiting on their shipping and receiving appointment schedule which is set by the customers. Despite customer needs, shippers and receivers often do not provide space for drivers to park and wait for scheduled appointments. Additionally, despite popular belief, truck parking at big box retailers is not widely allowed, and permission to park at large retailers can change at any time based on policies set by shopping center owners or local ordinances.

Nationwide, respondents to the *Jason's Law Survey Update* echoed common issues, noting that citizens and local governments need to better understand trucking operations and the value communities receive from prioritizing infrastructure like truck parking. Increasing awareness and understanding of this vital industry can also improve local planning, zoning, and regulatory decisions to serve the community at large. At the same time, truck parking facilities can be designed to mitigate community impacts and concerns.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS

People often don't want truck parking near their homes because it can cause issues like noise and pollution. As towns grow and warehouses and delivery centers want to be close to where people live, this problem gets more common. Finding the right spot for truck parking can make roads safer, help local businesses, and bring in tax money. But it's important to think about possible downsides like increased traffic, light at night, noise, litter, and safety worries.

Good planning can solve these problems. Truck parking should be away from homes and schools, near big roads for easy access, and set up in a way that's fair for everyone. It's also smart to put truck parking near other industrial areas to lessen the impact on communities. Proper facilities, like restrooms and trash services, are essential, and the traffic from trucks shouldn't interfere with important services like ambulances. By carefully choosing where to put truck parking and designing it well, communities can keep everyone safe and happy.

TRUCK PARKING SAFETY AND SECURITY

Control of truck access to the truck parking area is a major planning and design consideration needed to implement secure environments where truck drivers can rest safely in accordance with the goals of Jason's Law. The safety, security, and utility of truck parking areas are maximized if access is limited to truckers who need them. Allowing passenger vehicles, buses, and recreational vehicles into truck parking areas increases the risk of pedestrian and vehicular accidents as well as theft and other criminal activity.

Truck parking planning and design should reflect intended uses of the facility (e.g., whether it is for short-term staging versus overnight parking for rest). Parking areas near a major logistics hub, such as a marine terminal, rail yard, or distribution complex, may tempt drivers to use the facility for short-term storage of trailers. Allowing trailer parking may limit utility facility as a rest or holding area and may add security risks. Prohibiting trailer parking requires detection and enforcement.

Control options include:

Soft Control: Access control can be achieved with a combination of the following: 1) an ordinance limiting truck parking area access; 2) signage advising approaching vehicles of access limitations; and 3) enforcement of the ordinance by citations or other actions. Such soft control of access would not require major infrastructure and would not affect the design of the site.

Hard Control: Access control also can be achieved by installing an access gateway that: 1) can only be opened by truckers that are permitted to use the facility, and 2) can be opened by any trucker needing to use the facility. The challenge is establishing a trucker access system that limits access without excluding those who need it. Ideally, the access system would need to be usable by any trucker in the country, making use of any State- or region- based truck

identification, such as a radio-frequency toll tag, impractical. Charging for access may be impractical or contrary to State or Federal regulations. Using vehicle front axle weight would not allow differentiation between truck tractors and laden intercity buses. In summary, hard control of access is probably not practicable.

Control Recording: Soft access control can be augmented by capturing the image and license tag of any vehicle attempting to enter the truck parking area. This would require installation of imaging and recording equipment, activated by a ground loop, weight sensor, or another instrument. Having a record of entries and exits would assist in access enforcement.

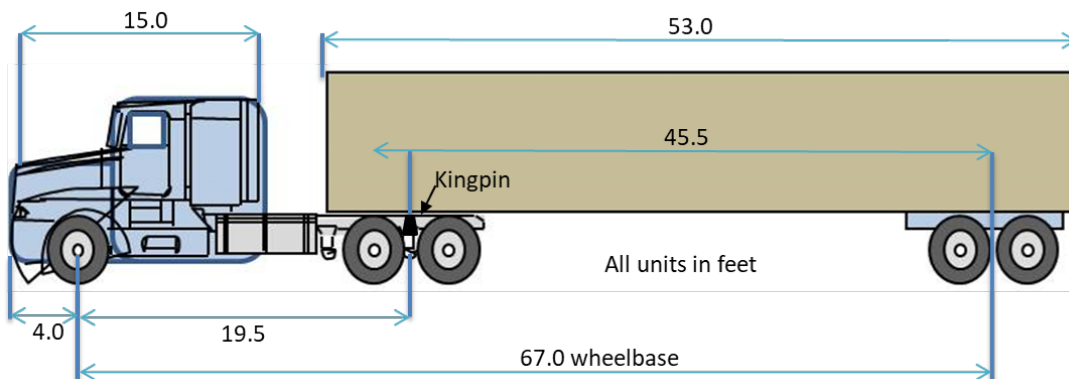
TRUCK PARKING AMENITIES



Truck parking areas should be well-equipped with essential amenities like lighting, toilets, and communication services, and may also offer additional facilities such as food, laundry, and showers based on local needs and existing services. Restrooms must meet accessibility standards set by the ADA and should be designed with user security in mind, considering the isolated locations of some parking areas. They should be built as permanent structures with proper plumbing and climate control to ensure comfort.

Communication services like Wi-Fi and strong cellular signals are crucial for both personal and commercial purposes, enhancing safety especially in remote areas. Open spaces for exercise and outdoor seating can make these areas more welcoming for drivers, who may also have pets or service animals with them.

TRUCK PARKING SIZE AND DIMENSIONS



The chart below shows a layout for vehicle parking stalls. The specified stall width for “long vehicles,” like semi-trucks and trailers, is 12 feet. A space of 8 feet is suggested between each stall to allow safe foot traffic between parked vehicles. These dimensions allow room for safe vehicle maneuvering where other drivers or pedestrians may be present while still providing efficient parking density.

Vehicle Type	Minimum Stall Width	Aisle Width	Aisle Location
1 Auto	9	5	Passenger side
2 Autos	9	5	Between stalls
1 Van	9	8	Passenger side
1 Van/1 Auto	9	8	Between stalls
1 Long Vehicle	12	8	Passenger side
2 Long Vehicles	12	8	Between stalls

The size of each space has an impact on how many can fit in your parking plan. Trying to squeeze too many semi-trucks into one storage and parking area can result in accidents or drivers becoming blocked in.

- Parking spots for trucks need to be at least 12 feet wide and 30-40 feet long.
- The typical semi-trailer will need a 55 x 14 feet space for storage.
- Truck and trailer combos will need a 75x14 feet space for storage.
- Drivers also want a place to leave their cars if they are on the road.
- These drivers need about 100 feet to back into a space so the middle area must remain clear.

The following standards are recommended when designing parking facilities for trucks:

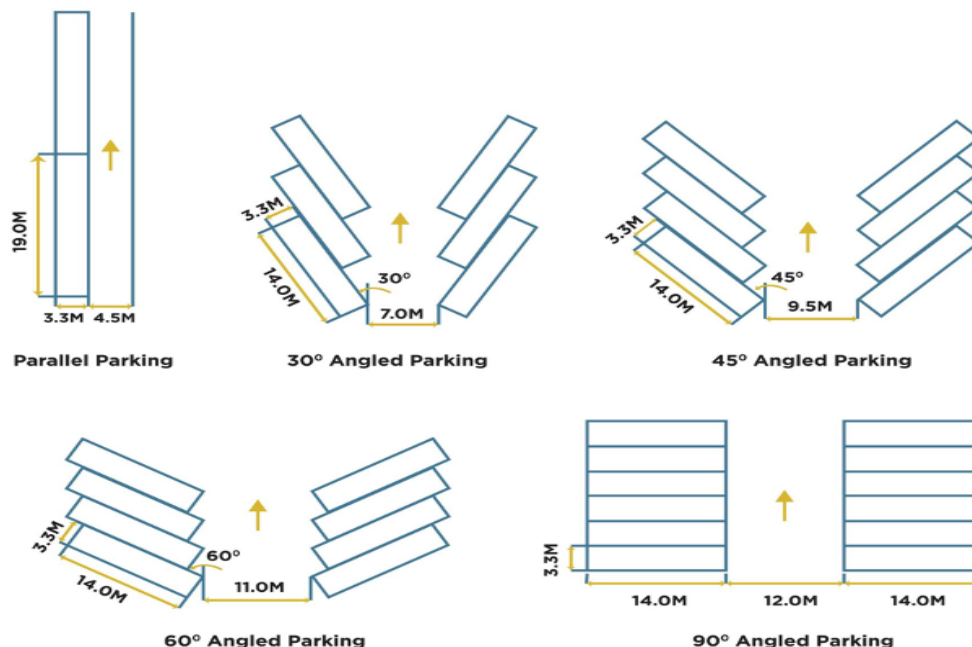
- Parking space length- 50 feet
- Parking space width - 9 feet
- Outside turning radius - 60 feet
- Vertical clearance - 14 feet
- Backing and maneuvering area - 50 feet

The first item to remember when calculating the storage capacity of land depends on the configuration. A 30' x 1452' -acre storage capacity will drastically differ from a 209' x 209' acre. Estimates typically vary from 34-40 trailers per acre with no truck cab, assuming the acre is useful in shape, meaning closer to a square than a rectangle. The second aspect to mention is that as the total area of acreage increases, so does the number of trailers that may be kept per acre. For example, an 8-acre land piece can be used to build a layout with 394 trailer parking spots, resulting in 49 trailers per acre, including 23 double-stacked trailer parking spots.

TRUCK PARKING LAYOUT RECOMENDATION

The three primary parking layouts are parallel, perpendicular (90 degrees), and at an angle to the aisle (30, 45, or 60 degrees). Angled spaces allow you to fit more drivers, but you will want at least 2 gates or roadways on the property as well.

- Parallel parking spaces are helpful and space-efficient in narrow, linear parking lots. However, many drivers find it challenging to navigate into parallel spaces, which can clog up traffic.
- Parking spaces with a 30° angle are those where cars are parked with respect to the direction of the road. This kind of parking spot provides better maneuverability and fewer delays. It allows you to fit many things into small areas.
- Compared to parallel parking and 30° parking, 45° parking spaces may hold more trucks. It is simpler to maneuver because it doesn't call for fast turns from parked cars.
- Parking spaces at 60 degrees are typically in the midway of straight and 45- degree parking spaces. Its benefit is that it takes up less space and makes it easy for trucks to enter and exit, with the vehicles facing at an angle of 60 degrees to the road.
- 90-degree parking spaces, or perpendicular parking, are typically the most space-efficient type of parking, but they significantly increase the risk of collisions and accidents.



QUALITY OF TRUCK PARKING

The main aspect to quality truck parking should be to maximize parking capacity and convenience while efficiently using the available area and the ease of use in which tenants and their vehicles can navigate your lot.

Parking lot thickness: The pavement and/or gravel thickness is determined by the facility's anticipated volume, traffic, and the soils' capacity to handle truckloads. To avoid pavement collapse brought on by the weight and dynamic loads, the pavement for entrances, frontage roads, trash dumpster locations, delivery truck parking, and the approach areas to these spaces must be thickened. Severe pavement failure could occur if this reinforcement is not provided.

Truck parking signage and markings: Designing, building, and implementing practical applications while driving on the road all need the use of pavement markings and signs. They assist drivers in determining what behaviors are legal on residential and commercial roadways, driveways, parking lots, and highways. They provide direction and eliminate confusion when navigating, therefore helping prevent and reduce accidents, injuries, and damages.

Amenities for truck drivers: If your yard is going to be used for overnight parking, you will need more amenities compared to a semi-yard built for long term semi-truck and trailer storage.

- Outdoor trash cans, ash trays and benches
- 24/7 Access
- Security fences or security cameras
- Fuel and on-site maintenance shop
- Lights
- Showers
- Food
- Restrooms

TRUCK PARKING REGULATORY MAINTENANCE

Cleanliness and waste management are essential aspects of maintaining any parking lot, particularly those used for truck and trailer parking. A well-kept parking area leaves a positive impression on drivers and visitors, contributing to a sense of order and safety. To achieve this, robust and accessible trash receptacles should be placed throughout the lot to encourage proper waste disposal. Regular cleaning schedules should be maintained to prevent the accumulation of trash and debris. This may involve sweeping, power washing, and the prompt removal of any waste.

Moreover, graffiti and other forms of vandalism not only tarnish the visual appeal of the parking lot but can also be indicative of neglect, potentially deterring drivers and undermining the reputation of the establishment. To address this, consider implementing anti-graffiti coatings on walls and other surfaces, along with rapid response teams to remove any vandalism promptly.

The management can approach the upkeep of the parking lot in two ways: by hiring in-house groundskeepers or by outsourcing these duties to professional landscaping and maintenance vendors.

In-house teams provide direct control over the cleaning schedule and quality of work, fostering a sense of pride and ownership over the space. Outsourcing, on the other hand, can offer specialized expertise and equipment, potentially reducing long-term maintenance costs and freeing up staff to focus on core business activities.

Regardless of the chosen approach, it is crucial to establish and adhere to a routine maintenance schedule. This schedule should account for daily cleaning tasks, periodic deep cleaning, seasonal maintenance needs, and emergency response protocols for unexpected issues. Additionally, clear signage should be posted to guide drivers to dispose of their trash properly and to report any issues.

In summary, maintaining a clean and attractive parking lot requires a proactive and systematic approach to waste management and groundskeeping. By doing so, a parking area can enhance the user experience, extend the lifespan of the facility, and reflect positively on the overall brand of the entity responsible for its upkeep.

TRUCK PARKING LOCATION SCOUTING

Finding a suitable site for a truck parking facility can be difficult, especially with city ordinances, zoning rules, and budgetary budgets. When looking for a semi yard you want to gauge the following criteria:

- Proximity to Highways
- Competition within 20 miles
- Distance from Industrial Area
- Price per square foot
- Zoning Code (Industrial Required)
- Parking Slot Types

The two main types of parking slots used in truck parking areas are straight back-in (SBI) slots and herringbone drive-through (HDT) slots.

SBI slots achieve the highest parking density with many maritime and intermodal facilities using this configuration with 10-foot-wide slots. Factory loading docks, warehouses, retail facilities, and distribution centers also use this configuration with slots ranging from 15 to 20 feet wide. Many truck stops also use SBI slots ranging from 10 to 12 feet wide. While truckers are adept at backing into and pulling out of such spaces, the sometimes-narrow parking space can lead to damaged mirrors, broken lights and other vehicle damage as vehicles come and go in busy lots. SBI slots do provide the highest parking density and offer the lowest per-slot development cost.

Driver surveys routinely show a preference for HDT slots. The slots are at an acute angle to the access aisle, typically 45-degree radius. The truck enters from one end of the slot and departs through the far end, never having to back up. This configuration is easier for the drivers and reduces the incidence of collisions between moving and parked trucks. Highway rest areas use HDT slots for long vehicles, including trucks, buses, and long recreational vehicles. HDT parking density is about 50 percent of SBI parking density, and per-slot development costs are proportionally higher. However, the difference in development cost is generally outweighed by the geometric benefits to safety and truck operating efficiency.

Another consideration is the driver's personal safety. Truck drivers in interstate commerce are required by Federal law to conduct daily vehicle inspections (49 CFR 396.11(a)). Drivers frequently use truck stops and rest stops to inspect loads and vehicles. A driver will walk around the vehicle to check tires, lights, mirrors and other safety equipment, load security, and generally ensure no damage has occurred to the vehicle or load. SBI slots limit driver visibility at the rear of the parking slot, potentially creating a hazard for drivers on foot. The HDT slot allows the driver to readily see the entire parking slot and the edges of adjacent slots.

Here are some pointers on how to locate these sites:

1. First, familiarize yourself with the numerous zone classifications in the city's many neighborhoods. Another critical step is to learn the abbreviations for each zone categorization.
2. Second, be aware of the steps involved in submitting and receiving approval for a rezoning request. Many commercial development and business use zones may be feasible for conversion to an industrial zone, which is why rezoning is necessary. As a result, educate yourself on what it may take to effectively rezone a related location to one that allows for creating a truck parking lot, such as an industrial zone.
3. Avoid residentially zoned and some agriculturally zoned regions since they will have a lesser likelihood of rezoning success.

OPEN A TRUCK PARKING LOT BY LEASING

These points make leasing land beneficial and efficient for starting a truck parking lot, especially if you want to avoid the hassle and high costs of developing new land from scratch.

Quick Start: Leasing land that's already prepared lets you set up a truck parking lot much faster. You skip the long steps like getting permits or making the land suitable for use.

Reduced Initial Investment: Starting with leased land costs less at the beginning compared to buying and fixing up new land. This helps save money for other important business expenses.

More Flexibility: Leasing gives you the freedom to move or change your business setup without heavy losses if things don't go as planned.

Lower Risk: You can try out a truck parking business without the big commitment of buying land. This way, you can see if your idea works well with less risk.

Immediate Revenue Generation: Since the land is ready to go, you can start making money almost right away. This is great for getting a quick return on your investment.

Avoidance of Regulatory Hassles: When you lease land that's already set for truck parking, you don't have to deal with as many complicated rules and regulations about land use.

Good Location: Leased lands are often in places that are good for business, attracting more customers without having to hunt for the perfect spot.

Ready-to-Use Features: Leased properties may already have necessary features like electricity and water, plus they might even come with added security.

STEP 1: RESEARCH MARKET DEMAND

When considering the establishment of a truck parking facility, one of the most crucial steps before even beginning to search for a suitable location is conducting thorough market research. This step is fundamental in understanding the potential of the area you are interested in investing in. To achieve this, a major go-to tool is [semrush.com](https://www.semrush.com), a comprehensive and versatile platform that has revolutionized the way market research is conducted.

[Semrush.com](https://www.semrush.com) offers a multifaceted approach to market analysis, providing invaluable insights that are crucial for making informed decisions. The platform's robust capabilities allow you to delve deep into understanding the market dynamics specific to the truck parking industry in the chosen area.

One of the primary features of SEM Rush that many rely on is its Keyword Explorer. This tool enables us to gauge the search volume related to truck parking in the area. By understanding what potential customers are searching for, you can assess the demand for truck parking facilities. This information is crucial in determining not just the need for such a facility, but also the specific requirements and preferences of truck drivers.

Furthermore, SEM Rush aids in identifying potential leads by analyzing search trends and keywords. This aspect is particularly beneficial as it helps in tailoring marketing strategies to target the right audience effectively. It's not just about knowing that there is a demand but understanding the nature of this demand – what specific services are truck drivers looking for, what are their concerns, and how can a truck parking facility meet these needs.

Another significant advantage of using SEM Rush is its Site Explorer feature. This functionality allows to analyze competitors in the region, providing insights into their performance, the strategies they employ, and how they are perceived by the audience. Understanding the competitive landscape is vital in carving out a unique position for the new truck parking facility, ensuring it stands out and addresses gaps in the market.

SEM Rush also offers a Content Explorer tool, which is incredibly useful for keeping up to date with the latest discussions, trends, and news in the truck parking industry. By staying informed about industry developments, you can ensure that the planned facility is aligned with current and emerging trends, further solidifying its relevance and appeal to the target market.

In summary, [semrush.com](https://www.semrush.com) is an indispensable tool in the market research arsenal. Its comprehensive suite of features provides deep insights into market demand, competitive landscape, and industry trends, which are critical for making an informed decision about the location and specifics of a new truck parking facility. This data-driven approach significantly minimizes risk and maximizes the potential for success in this venture.

STEP 2: COMPETITOR RESEARCH

In the initial phase of establishing a truck parking and storage facility, another approach is meticulous, and data driven. After identifying a potential area, the first step is to ensure there's a significant and consistent flow of traffic that necessitates such a facility. This involves not just recognizing the presence of trucks in the area, but also understanding their specific needs for parking and storage.

Once established that there is indeed a substantial demand for truck parking and storage in the area, the next step is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the competition. This is a critical phase where understanding the landscape of existing services becomes key to positioning the facility effectively. The process begins with a thorough examination of the competitors' websites. Here, you focus on several core aspects:

- Pricing: Understanding how competitors' price their services provide insights into the market's current rate standards and helps in setting competitive yet profitable pricing for your facility.
- Amenities: Knowing what amenities competitors offer allows you to identify any gaps in their services that your facility could fill. This might include security features, maintenance services, or additional conveniences for drivers.
- Processes: By analyzing how competitors manage bookings, payments, and customer service, you can develop more efficient or user-friendly processes.

With this foundational knowledge, you can also leverage [semrush.com](https://www.semrush.com) to deepen the competitive analysis. SEM Rush offers a comprehensive suite of tools that allow you to:

- Analyze Traffic Flow: Understanding how much online traffic competitors' websites receive offers an indication of their market presence and popularity.
- Assess Advertising and Marketing Strategies: Use SEM Rush to see how competitors are advertising their services. This includes identifying the keywords they rank for, the kind of content they produce, and their backlink profile.
- Generate Leads: By understanding the competitors' marketing methods, you can develop more targeted and effective marketing strategies for your facility. This might involve focusing on specific keywords, leveraging certain types of content, or exploring unique advertising channels they may not be utilizing.

This comprehensive approach ensures that you're not just entering the market with a basic understanding of demand but with a deep, nuanced perspective of how to position your truck parking and storage lot uniquely and effectively. It helps in crafting strategies that are not only competitive but also responsive to the market's unmet needs and preferences.

In summary, the journey from recognizing a potential area to thoroughly understanding the competitive landscape is paved with detailed research and strategic analysis. Using both direct observation and advanced tools like [semrush.com](https://www.semrush.com), you ensure that your business plan is grounded in real-world data, giving it the best possible chance for success.

(Refer to webinar via the truck-estate network to learn in depth how to use SEMrush software for demand and competitor research)

STEP 3: SEARCHING FOR IDEAL LOCATION

The third step in establishing a truck parking and storage facility, which is the most exciting part, involves the actual search for the ideal location. Having thoroughly researched the market demand and analyzed your competitors, you now have a clear understanding of what you're looking for in a site. Your search is focused and strategic, leveraging a selection of specialized online resources that many have come to trust over time. Each of these websites offers a unique set of features and listings, making them invaluable in the search for the perfect location:

- [Crexi.com](https://www.crexi.com): Known for its wide range of commercial real estate listings, Crexi is a great resource for exploring various options in the desired area. Its user-friendly interface and detailed property information make it easy to compare potential sites quickly.
- [LoopNet.com](https://www.loopnet.com): This platform is renowned for its extensive database of commercial properties. LoopNet provides comprehensive information on each listing, including pricing, location, and amenities, allowing for a thorough evaluation of each potential site.
- [LandSearch.com](https://www.landsearch.com): Specializing in land listings, LandSearch is ideal for finding undeveloped plots that could be suitable for a truck parking lot. The site offers a range of filters to narrow down the search according to specific requirements.
- [CityFeet.com](https://www.cityfeet.com): CityFeet is particularly useful for its focus on urban commercial properties. This is helpful when considering locations within or near city limits, which can be prime areas for truck parking facilities due to their proximity to major routes and commercial centers.
- [LandCentury.com](https://www.landcentury.com): LandCentury is a real estate web platform that effectively connects sellers with buyers.
- [Landio.com](https://www.landio.com): Landio, offers tremendous discounts on Vacant Land of various zoning types.

In this stage of the process, our preference leans strongly towards leasing ready lots. Although these lots may come with a higher leasing cost compared to undeveloped land, they offer significant advantages in terms of startup costs and time. Ready lots typically already have the necessary infrastructure in place, such as paved surfaces, lighting, and security features, which can be extremely costly to develop from scratch. This means you can get the business up and running much faster, without the delays and expenses associated with preparing and developing raw land.

Furthermore, leasing a ready lot allows for greater flexibility. It reduces the initial capital investment, freeing up funds that can be allocated towards other aspects of the business, such as marketing and operational enhancements. It also provides the opportunity to test the market without the long-term commitment of purchasing land.

In summary, the third step is not just about finding a location; it's about finding the right location. By utilizing specialized real estate websites, you can efficiently sift through numerous options to identify lots that meet the specific criteria. Opting to lease ready lots aligns with the leasing business strategy of minimizing initial costs and risks while enabling a quicker launch of the facility.

STEP 4: LOT INSPECTION AND INSURANCE

The next crucial step in setting up a truck parking and storage facility, after identifying potential properties through preferred online platforms, involves engaging directly with the landowners or their leasing agents. This stage is critical as it involves in-depth inquiries and negotiations to ensure the chosen property aligns perfectly with your business requirements.

Upon finding a few properties that meet the initial criteria, you initiate contact with the respective parties responsible for leasing. The best approach here is methodical, involving a series of specific questions designed to glean as much information as possible about each site. These questions include:

- Previous Usage: Understanding the property's former uses helps in assessing its suitability for a truck parking lot. It can also reveal potential challenges or advantages, like existing infrastructure that can be leveraged or issues that might need addressing.
- Reason for Previous Tenant's Departure: This question is aimed at uncovering any underlying issues with the property that might not be immediately apparent, such as disputes over lease terms, problems with the property itself, or changes in the area that affected its viability.
- Owner's Openness to a Storage Lot: Ensuring the landowner is comfortable with the property being used as a storage lot is vital. This discussion also opens conversations about any potential modifications that might be required.
- Lease Restrictions: It's essential to understand any limitations or restrictions that might be imposed under the lease, as these could impact the operation of the storage lot.
- Lease Terms: Negotiating the lease terms, both shortest and longest durations, allows for flexibility in business planning. Understanding the range of lease terms available helps in aligning the lease with business goals and projections.

The negotiation phase often involves discussing the possibility of adjustments in terms, conditions, or pricing. It's a delicate balance of ensuring the terms are favorable while maintaining a good relationship with the landowner.

Typically, the property that stands out is the one with the most accommodating and lenient landowner. This flexibility can be crucial in the early stages of setting up the business, as it may allow for necessary modifications or adjustments to the property.

Following a successful initial discussion, the next step is to schedule an on-site inspection. This visit is not just a cursory glance over the property but a thorough evaluation. Spend as much time as needed on-site, meticulously examining every aspect of the property to ensure it meets all requirements and standards for a truck parking and storage facility.

After selecting the property, the final step before finalizing the deal is to consult with an insurance agent. The aim here is to determine the cost of the necessary insurance coverage for the lot. This typically includes a general liability policy and a garage keepers' policy. These insurance policies are crucial for protecting the business from potential liabilities and risks associated with operating a truck parking and storage facility.

In summary, this stage of the process is about due diligence and careful consideration. From initial inquiries to in-depth property inspections and arranging appropriate insurance, every step is geared

towards ensuring that the chosen property is not only suitable for the intended purpose but also offers the flexibility and terms that align with the business's long-term goals.

STEP 5: BRAND BUILDING AND MARKETING CAMPAIGN

The final step in establishing a successful truck parking and storage facility involves a critical aspect that goes beyond the physical attributes of the lot itself – digital branding and marketing. This stage is essential in ensuring that the lot gains significant visibility and attracts a steady flow of customers.

The digital branding process begins with the development of a professional and user-friendly website. The objective here is to create an online presence that mirrors the convenience and professionalism of leading competitors in the market. This involves not just emulating the aesthetic and functional aspects of their websites but also offering unique value propositions that set your facility apart. Features like clear information about services, pricing, and amenities, coupled with an intuitive navigation system, are key.

Along with the website, setting up a business email and office number is important for establishing credibility and providing potential customers with easy means of communication. Additionally, drafting a comprehensive parking tenant agreement is crucial. This document outlines the terms and conditions of using the lot, ensuring clarity and legal protection for both the business and its clients.

Another vital component is setting up a payment and booking system. For this, we prefer using platforms like [TruckBays.com](https://www.TruckBays.com) or [TruckParkingClub.com](https://www.TruckParkingClub.com). These platforms function similarly to Airbnb but for truck parking spaces, offering an effective way to gain exposure and quickly fill slots. Listing the lot on truck parking hosting sites like [TruckParkingClub.com](https://www.TruckParkingClub.com), [Secur.space.com](https://www.Secur.space.com), and [ParkRoll.com](https://www.ParkRoll.com) can significantly enhance visibility and attract a wider audience.

Beyond listing on various platforms, effective marketing strategies are key to driving traffic to the lot. Local SEO and Google Maps ranking are particularly impactful in making the lot easily discoverable by locals and drivers passing through. These strategies ensure that when someone searches for truck parking options in the area, your lot appears prominently in search results, thereby increasing the likelihood of them choosing your facility.

An experienced digital marketing agency can be invaluable in setting up and managing these campaigns. They have the expertise to optimize the website and online profiles for search engines, ensuring maximum online visibility. In highly competitive areas, Google Ads campaigns can be extremely effective. These campaigns target specific keywords related to truck parking, directly reaching individuals actively searching for such services. This targeted approach can significantly increase the rate of customer acquisition.

Another effective strategy to attract business to your truck parking lot is to directly visit local trucking companies (including traditional, intermodal, and rail operators), diesel mechanics, truck and trailer rental businesses, warehouses, and manufacturers. Inform them that you have commercial parking space available and offer discounts for bulk space rentals to meet their needs whenever they arise.

In summary, the final step of establishing a truck parking and storage facility is a comprehensive digital branding and marketing campaign. It involves creating a strong online presence, leveraging various

hosting platforms, and employing targeted marketing strategies to ensure high visibility and customer acquisition. This digital footprint is as crucial as the physical attributes of the lot, ensuring a steady flow of customers and the success of the business.

COST OF GETTING STARTED

Opening a truck parking requires careful financial planning and an understanding of the initial costs involved. This section will guide you through the primary expenses you'll encounter when setting up your business, primarily focusing on leasing land as the initial step.

1. Leasing the Land

- Security Deposit: The most immediate cost is the security deposit for your chosen location. Lease agreements vary; some landlords might require first and last months' rent upfront, while others may request a percentage of the total lease term or a low, flat fee deposit. This initial cost is crucial to secure your location.

2. Marketing Budget

- Strategies and Costs: A vital part of attracting clients to your new business involves setting aside a marketing budget. The most effective strategies for this business type include Google Ads and Search Engine Optimization (SEO). Expect to allocate \$500 to \$1,500 monthly for local marketing efforts, ensuring your business is visible to potential clients.

3. Landscaping and Yard Maintenance

- Importance and Options: Keeping your parking lot clean and aesthetically pleasing is not only advisable but can significantly enhance its appeal to potential clients. This task can be managed by the lot operator or outsourced to professional landscaping services. The cost varies depending on the lot size and required services, emphasizing the need for a tailored approach to budgeting for yard maintenance.

4. Security Measures

- Types and Costs: Security is a paramount concern for clients storing their equipment. Installing surveillance systems is highly recommended to foster trust and security. Costs range from \$300 to \$1,500 per month, depending on the sophistication of the technology. Alternatively, opting for manned security introduces payroll expenses, with costs varying based on staffing needs.

5. Insurance

- Coverage and Premiums: Ensuring your business is essential for protecting both your property and your clients' assets. Required policies include general liability and garage keepers' insurance, covering a broad range of potential incidents. Annual premiums for

these policies can range from \$1,500 to \$4,000, a critical investment in your business's longevity and credibility.

6. Property/Land Modifications (If needed)

- Modifications and/or upgrades: Modifications to land or property for enhancing a truck parking lot can include various additions to improve functionality. These enhancements might involve land clearing, laying gravel, reinforcing concrete, applying pavement markings, installing lighting poles, fencing or adding concrete pads. The cost of installing lighting varies by state and can range between \$5,000 and \$80,000, depending on the project's complexity. For other land modifications, such as grading, fencing, clearing or adding crushed concrete, local gravel and grading companies typically provide estimates. These estimates are usually priced per acre and depend on the extent of the work required.

PRICING MODEL AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Building a robust pricing model starts with understanding the local market dynamics and how competitors' price their services, this will help you set competitive yet profitable rates. Each market will vary and fluctuate with the trucking market and area specifics.

The most critical aspect of operating a truck parking lot is ensuring profitability. Aim to generate at least 1.5 times your lease or finance payment. Acquiring more acres in strategic locations will enable you to expand your revenue. More acres mean more parking spaces and increased potential earnings.

Example Calculation:

- Lease Payment: \$1,000/month
- Target Revenue: \$1,500/month (1.5 times the lease payment)

Scenario:

- Lease Payment: \$1,000/month
- Parking Rate: \$215 per truck per month
- Truck Capacity: 34-40 trucks per acre

Revenue Calculation:

- Required Trucks for 1.5x Revenue: $\$1,500 / \$215 \approx 7$ trucks
- Revenue from 7 Trucks: $7 \text{ trucks} * \$215 = \$1,505/\text{month}$

By renting out just 7 truck spaces at \$215 each, you generate \$1,505 per month, achieving over 1.5 times your lease payment. This calculation demonstrates how a well-researched pricing model can ensure profitability and competitiveness in the market.

TRUCK PARKING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Truck parking and storage lots/facilities have been added to the FMCSA's HP (High Priority) Grant list. If you are unfamiliar with what this is and how this process works. Here's a breakdown overview into this process.

What is a High Priority (HP) Grant?

A "high priority" FMCSA grant refers to funding that is specifically designated for projects or programs that address critical safety needs or priorities within the commercial motor vehicle industry. These grants may target areas with high rates of CMV-related crashes, emerging safety concerns, or initiatives aimed at implementing innovative solutions to improve motor carrier safety.

Examples of projects that might qualify for high priority FMCSA grants include:

1. Implementation of new technologies to enhance CMV safety, such as advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS), electronic logging devices (ELDs), or collision avoidance systems.
2. Development and implementation of training programs for commercial drivers to improve their skills and knowledge of safety regulations.
3. Enforcement activities targeting unsafe carriers, drivers, or practices that pose significant risks to roadway safety.
4. Research initiatives to identify and address emerging safety threats in the CMV industry, such as distracted driving, driver fatigue, or drug and alcohol impairment.
5. Newly added, truck parking and storage facilities due to lack of designated parking leading to road damage and sadly higher accident risks.

These grants play a crucial role in supporting efforts to improve motor carrier safety nationwide and help reduce the number of crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving commercial motor vehicles. The FMCSA typically allocates funding for high priority grants based on specific criteria and priorities outlined in its annual grant announcements or funding opportunities and can be applied for here: <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/Grants/HighPriority.aspx>

(We suggest enlisting the services of an expert grant writer to prepare and manage the grant application process)

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