

## Memo – Cul-De-Sac Requirements

City of Elk Ridge, Utah  
Planning Commission Discussion  
May 9, 2016

**Regarding: Discussion and Decision concerning Amendment of the code to include a single requirement for cul-de-sacs**

**Background:**

Currently there are three sections in the code that address cul-de-sac length. These are found in the Hillside Residential Zone, Hillside Cluster Overlay and Planned Mountain Home Developments Sections. There is no reference to cul-de-sac length in the other zones or in a section that would apply to all zones. A maximum length is also specified in the City Construction Standards which is not consistent with where design standards such as block length and lot size requirements are discussed.

The intent of the proposed amendment would be to insert language regarding cul-de-sac length in a section of the code that applies to all zones and remove the other conflicting requirements in the three zones mentioned.

The purpose of governing the length of cul-de-sacs is to limit the number of residences that may need to be evacuated in the case of an emergency. The reason this is important with a single access point is that in the case of a fire every minute counts not only in getting people safely out but also for emergency crews being able to come in and set up to fight the fire. Similar issues may arise with gas leaks, hazmat situations, and flooding. If an evacuation must occur the emergency services will not bring additional emergency equipment into a street with a cul-de-sac that may slow down or inhibit the evacuation. While there is not a great deal of science behind this, it is a balance between density of residences and length. The standard lengths allowed in other Cities codes seem to average between 400 to 600 feet and 20 lots. The surrounding local communities seem to prefer a 400 feet maximum length. Salem allows up to 800 feet with 400 feet being standard. The proposed 500 feet is based on what is the practical minimum perimeter length to allow 16 lots with the limited frontage lengths allowed in the PUD Overlay. In other single family zones it will very hard to reach the maximum of 16 lots fronting a 500 foot long cul-de-sac. In the case of multi-family housing the practical limits seem to be the number of dwelling units that emergency crews will need to check in an evacuation to keep the time required to a minimum and be able to reasonably account for the residents being evacuated.

Proposed language to be added to Title 10 (Development Code) – Chapter 15 (Subdivisions) – Article C (Design Standards and Requirements):

The maximum length of a cul-de-sac shall be 500 feet as measured from the nearest right-of-way line of the adjacent street to the center point of the turn-around with more than 16 dwelling units accessing

the cul-de-sac. The Planning Commission may grant an exception up to a maximum length of 800 feet in single family dwelling developments where the configuration or topography of the land reasonably limits the ability to provide a second access point to the local street system. The number of dwelling units may not be increased from the maximum of 16 dwelling units when the increased length exception is granted. The Planning Commission may grant an exception to the maximum number of dwelling units accessing the cul-de-sac in multi-family dwelling developments to 24 units along the 500 foot maximum length. In no case shall the Planning Commission grant a combined exception expanding the maximum length and maximum number of dwelling units.

**Recommendation:**

Based upon the outcome of the Planning Commission discussion it is recommended that the proposed language including Planning Commission comments be placed before the public in a public hearing. This would include the deletion of the existing requirements out of the three zones as mentioned and removal of the maximum length requirement from the City Construction Standards.

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