

ANACORTES PLANNING COMMISSION



August 22, 2018

Municipal Building Council Chambers

6th Street and "Q" Avenue

AGENDA

6 P.M.

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Minutes of August 8, 2018 will be presented at a later date**
3. **Correspondence**
4. **Old Business**
Development Regulations Update: Review of Title 19, Division 5: Community Design

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Planning Commission Agenda Bill

Meeting Date: 8/22/2018 **Agenda Item:** 1

Subject: Development Regulations Update: Div. 5 Community Design

Staff Contact: Don Measamer, Libby Grage

Approved for Submittal to Council by	
	Laurie Gere, Mayor
x	Don Measamer, PCED Director
	Darcy Swetnam, City Attorney

Action Type	
	Public Hearing
	Staff Report
x	Discussion

Summary Statement: At the 8/22/18 Planning Commission meeting, the Commission will begin its review and discussion of Division 5 of AMC Title 19 *Unified Development Code*. It is anticipated that the Planning Commission will ask questions, provide feedback, and that time for community member comments will be provided.

Please see the attached memo and updated project schedule for additional information.

Background: Over the next few months, the Planning Commission will be reviewing and discussing proposed updates to the development regulations contained in the Anacortes Municipal Code (AMC) Title 19. The goals of the proposed amendments are to provide clear, user-friendly development regulations and to implement key goals and policies of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.

The full 2nd Draft and additional project background information can be viewed on the [project website](https://www.anacorteswa.gov/202/Development-Regulations-Design-Standards). (<https://www.anacorteswa.gov/202/Development-Regulations-Design-Standards>)

Previous Council/Committee/Commission Action: None.

Competing Viewpoints Considered: Public comments have been submitted over the last 1.5 years and have contributed to the development of the 2nd Draft. Members of the public may provide comments at upcoming Planning Commission meetings during the PC's review of the draft, and may also submit written comments to Libby Grage, Planning Manager, libbyb@cityofanacortes.org at any time. A formal public comment period and public hearing will be advertised in the coming months. All comments received prior to the end of the advertised public comment period will be considered, summarized and responded to in a comment matrix, and forwarded on to the PC and CC during the review process.

Recommended Motion: None

Alternative Actions: N/A

Attachments:

Staff Memo dated 8/10/18

Updated Topic Attachments

Public comments received 8/15/18



Planning, Community, & Economic Development Department

Don Measamer, Director

Date: August 10, 2018
From: Development Regulations Update Project Team
Subject: Development Regulations Update
AMC Title 19 Unified Development Code, Division 5 – Community Design
Key Proposed Updates and Comp Plan Policy Links

Staff Report: Division 5 – Community Design

Table of Contents

General Introduction.....	1
Contents & Update Summary	2
2016 Comprehensive Plan Guidance	2
Community Feedback & Considerations	6
Key Topics & Policy links.....	6
19.50 Introduction.....	6
19.51 Public Street Improvements Required.....	6
19.52 Public Street Design	9
19.53 Private Driveways and Access	9
19.54 Subdivision and Block Standards	9

General Introduction

The purpose of this document is to identify key updates proposed to development regulations within Division 5 – Community Design of Title 19 Unified Development Code. The detailed proposed regulations can be found on the city's Development Regulations Update project website:

<https://www.anacorteswa.gov/202/Development-Regulations-Design-Standards>.

The proposed changes to Division 5 are intended to integrate into Title 19 the public street, private access, and subdivision design provisions currently located in [AMC Title 17 Zoning](#), and [Title 16 Subdivisions](#). The updates include strategic updates to improve organization and usability, clarity, and add new content to implement the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. This document provides a general overview of proposed changes to existing adopted street and access requirements and subdivision design standards, corresponding Comprehensive Plan guidance, and it identifies key issues that may warrant Planning Commission review and discussion.

Contents & Update Summary

Div./Ch.	Title	Ord. # or New	Other code location(s)	Proposed Updates Summary
19.50	<u>Introduction</u>	New	N/A	See Key Topics Discussion below.
19.51	<u>Public Street Improvements Required</u>	New	19.24	
19.52	<u>Public Street Design</u>	New	16.20, 16.32	
19.53	<u>Private Driveways and Access</u>	New	Various locations in 17, 16.10	
19.54	<u>Subdivision Design and Block Structure</u>	New	16.10, 16.20, 16.24, 16.32	

2016 Comprehensive Plan Guidance

The regulations contained in Division 5 Community Design are intended to implement many of the land use, housing, transportation, and economic development goals and policies in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, including, but not limited to:

Goal LU-2. Community Design. Promote compatible pedestrian-oriented development that respects Anacortes's historic character and small town scale while strengthening its unique marine identity.

Policy LU-2.2.A Recognize that the character of public-rights-of-way play a role in determining community character. Whenever feasible, promote complete streets and incorporate streetscape improvements.

Goal LU-3. Historic Preservation. Protect, preserve and celebrate Anacortes's historic, cultural and archaeological resources.

Policy LU-3.2. Craft and maintain zoning regulations to balance the need to accommodate anticipated growth while preserving the City's historic resources and character. Consider techniques to integrate incentives and/or site design flexibility for preservation and/or reuse of historic structures.

Goal LU-4. Resource protection & sustainable design. Maintain and enhance Anacortes's robust environmental stewardship.

Policy LU-4.2. Update development regulations to emphasize sustainable design in new developments, including forms of Low Impact Development.

Policy LU-4.4. Emphasize sustainable design/practice in public improvements and in the design/use of public facilities and events.

- Update public works standards, as necessary, to emphasize best practice sustainable design/practice.

Incorporate consideration of physical health and well-being into the location and design of public facilities.

Goal LU-5. Community Gathering Space. Preserve and develop inviting and distinctive gathering spaces, with the greatest emphasis in Downtown and commercial areas.

Policy LU-5.3. Maintain and enhance streetscape design standards that enable safe access for all users and enhance character and identity of the city.

Goal LU-7. Downtown and South Commercial Avenue. Enhance the character and economic vitality of Downtown and the South Commercial Avenue corridor.

Policy LU-7.1. Maintain and strengthen downtown as the center for civic, retail, cultural, dining, and entertainment activity in Anacortes.

- H. Identify and improve walking and biking routes to downtown as a pedestrian and biking friendly destination. Provide safe methods such as textured crosswalk paths and bulb-outs where people can cross major streets at regular and convenient intervals.

Policy LU-7.2. Strengthen the visual appearance and economic vitality of South Commercial Avenue.

- D. Design, implement, and maintain streetscape improvements to:
 - Enhance the visual appearance of the corridor and character/identity of the city.
 - Promote private investment in the corridor.
 - Enhance and promote non-motorized access and transit use.

Goal LU-8. Fidalgo Bay and Guemes Channel Waterfronts. Maintain and enhance Anacortes's waterfront as a unique and irreplaceable environmental, economic, and recreational amenity for the city.

Policy 8.4. Adopt form-based design standards for the central Fidalgo Bay waterfront that promote coordinated development that enhances Anacortes's unique maritime character.

- B. Create a coordinated network of internal roadways and walkways that serves the envisioned mix of uses and creates a distinctive setting and identity for the district.

Goal LU-10. Healthy Communities. Promote land use and community design that encourages healthy living and good connectivity between compatible uses.

Policy LU-10.2. Adopt design provisions that provide for safe and attractive non-motorized connectivity between uses and amenities, with frequency of connections commensurate with envisioned intensity of land uses (e.g. housing, employment, community services, and amenities.)

Goal LU-11. Growth Management & Regional Coordination. Emphasize compact growth to minimize sprawl and protect Anacortes's Community Forestlands.

Policy LU-11.1. Plan for accommodating anticipated growth within the City to protect surrounding forest and parklands and minimizing sprawl, while strengthening Anacortes's unique marine character and identity.

- A. Provide for residential infill development opportunities throughout the City, but focus the highest intensity residential uses close to commercial and community services, and transit.

Policy LU-11.2. Adopt user-friendly and coordinated development regulations that facilitate Anacortes's preferred land use pattern (e.g. allowed density, uses, and site provisions).

- C. Integrate an appropriate balance of predictability and flexibility when updating development regulations that allow ease of administration and interpretation and offer optional ways of meeting requirements when possible.

Policy LU-11.3. Allow new development only where adequate public services can be provided.

Goal H-1. Housing Supply and Variety. Provide for a sufficient quantity and variety of housing to meet community needs.

Policy H-1.5. Encourage infill development on vacant or under-utilized land.

Policy H-1.6. Evaluate barriers to achieving increased density in multifamily residential and mixed use zones and revise regulations if appropriate.

Policy H-1.8. Provide for flexibility in subdivision development in order to promote environmental protection, encourage infill development, enhance neighborhood character, employ low impact development techniques, and other similar goals.

Goal H-3. Housing Affordability. Provide for a range of housing opportunities to address the needs of all economic segments of the community.

Policy H-3.1. Encourage preservation, maintenance, and improvements to existing affordable housing.

Goal ED-7. Enhance Regulatory Predictability. Streamline regulations and permitting.

Policy E-7.1. Provide an efficient, clear and economical permitting process as a means of enhancing the City's goal for quality customer service.

Policy E-7.2. Craft land use and development regulations that offer a balance of predictability and flexibility.

Goal EC-4. Water quality. Protect and enhance water quality.

Policy EC-4.3. Reduce pollution of surface and groundwater resources through regulations, programs and public education.

Policy EC-4.5. Require new and redevelopment to utilize stormwater best management practices, such as Low Impact Development and other natural drainage techniques.

Policy EC-4.6. Strive to minimize impervious surfaces in the City.

Goal EC-13. Climate Change. Anacortes should be a regional leader in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Policy EC-13.3. Advocate for administrative practices, land use patterns, transportation systems, and building practices that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Goal PR-1. Park & Recreational Facilities. Provide a range of high quality and easily accessible park and recreational areas, facilities and opportunities that will serve a wide range of age groups, recreational interests and ability levels.

Policy PR-1.6. Improve the arterial and neighborhood street system in the city to make provision for bicycle and pedestrian connections.

Goal T-2. Greater Safety, Options and Mobility. Invest in transportation systems that offer greater options, mobility, and access in support of the city's growth strategy.

Policy T-2.2. In our concern for safety for all travelers, while making planning and budget decisions the City will utilize the following prioritization for different travel modes: A. Pedestrian, B. Bicycle, C. Motorcycle, D. Transit, E. Freight, F. Carpool, G. Single Occupant Vehicle.

Policy T-2.5. Consider roundabouts and traffic calming devices to reduce excessive speeding and other unsafe driving choices.

Policy T-2.10. Encourage local street connections and walkways between existing neighborhoods and new developments to provide an efficient network of travel route options for pedestrians and bicycles.

Policy T-2.20. Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle accommodations into all new construction (complete streets) as appropriate.

Policy T-2.21. Use bump outs, curb extensions, and/or pedestrian refuge islands in the design of pedestrian crossings when appropriate and feasible.

Policy T-2.22. Fill in gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian network whenever possible (example: West 2nd Street between Alaska and Florida Avenues).

Goal T-4. Sustainability. Design and manage the city's transportation system to minimize the negative impacts of transportation on the natural environment, promote public health and safety, and achieve optimum efficiency.

Policy T-4.1. Foster a less polluting system that reduces the negative effects of transportation infrastructure and operation on air quality, the climate, and also the natural environment including the use of techniques to reduce pollutants in storm drains.

Policy T-4.2. When feasible, design and operate transportation facilities in a manner that emphasizes community character and is compatible with and integrated into the natural and built environment including features, such as street trees, natural drainage, native plantings, and local design themes.

Policy T-4.3. When feasible, design and operate transportation facilities in a manner that emphasizes community character and is compatible with and integrated into the natural and built environment including features, such as street trees, natural drainage, native plantings, and local design themes.

Policy T-4.5. Plan and develop a citywide transportation system that reduces greenhouse gas emissions by shortening trip length and replacing vehicle trips with other modes of transportation by implementing higher density and mixed-use development, and encouraging ride-sharing, public transit, and non-motorized transportation to decrease vehicle miles traveled.

Policy T-4.14. Plan transportation and street improvements to consider the existing and desired character of the area and cost of future maintenance.

Community Feedback & Considerations

Based on input received since the release of the 2nd Draft, the following topical attachments have been developed to describe certain proposals, community feedback and potential considerations:

- Attachment 1: Updates to Public Street Standards
- Attachment 2: Shared Driveways
- Attachment 3: Lot Design Options

Key Topics & Policy links

Each section below includes a summary of key proposed changes, guiding Comprehensive Plan goals and policies (when applicable), and clarifying comments. Text highlighted in *red italics* refer to further edits that might be considered in response to public comments or other internal staff/consultant discussion.

19.50 Introduction

AMC Ch. 19.50 Introduction provides the general purpose and applicability of the subsequent chapters. The chapter generally applies to all street improvements, subdivisions, and to other development where public improvements are required.

19.51 Public Street Improvements Required

AMC Ch. 19.51 updates and replaces the provisions within AMC 19.24 and AMC 16.20. The proposed regulations identify when street and utility improvements are required as a condition of development activity. In general, development activity that will result in an increased impact to the city's

transportation system is required to construct public street improvements along a site frontage on a public right-of-way.

19.51.020 Applicability. Key updates to the applicability provisions include:

- Land divisions are specifically identified as requiring construction of public street improvements.
- For alterations or additions to commercial, industrial, or multi-family development, the threshold for requiring public street improvements is lowered to 25% of the Skagit County Assessor's value of existing structures within a 12-month period and tenant improvements resulting in no floor area increase are exempted.
- Accessory dwelling units are exempted.
- Changes of use that result in an increased impact to the transportation system and construction of new access points to a public street area added.

19.51.040 Extent of Required Improvements. This section provides detailed requirements for where improvements must be installed along a property frontage and when they must be extended past the property to ensure a smooth transition to adjacent improvements. The issues addressed in this section were identified by City staff as needing better direction in the code to facilitate a more efficient, clear and economical permitting process for applicants.

19.51.050 Dedication of Right-of-Way. This is a new section that is proposed to clarify the City's authority to require dedication of right-of-way that is necessary as a result of development's impacts on the transportation system.

19.51.060 Modifications, deferments, waivers, and construction-in-lieu. AMC 19.52 proposes updates to the public street geometric standards in order to reduce impervious surfaces and maintenance costs, enhance walkability, and better facilitate infill development while maintaining safe and efficient access to property. While the proposed changes are intended to reduce the need for requests to modify or waive street improvements required as part of development activity, clear procedures and criteria for addressing such requests are needed.

19.51.060.B Review Process – Currently, modification and exception requests to street standards within AMC Title 16 Subdivisions are a Type 4 review process. As proposed in the update, a request for a modification, deferment, waiver or construction-in-lieu proposal would be processed as part of the underlying permit application according to the review procedures in AMC Table 19.20.030. *Staff recommends that this section be updated to require consideration of a recommendation from the Public Works Director in making the decision on a request.*

19.51.060.C Modifications – A modification could be requested to the nature or extent or improvements required. This could include situations where:

- o The improvement as required would not match existing improvements, topographical, other physical conditions, or other unusual circumstances preclude the improvements construction.

- o The applicant proposes special features like wider planter strips or sidewalks, bump-ins to save significant trees or other natural features, or stormwater infrastructure that exceeds minimum standards.
- o A modified standard for the particular street or neighborhood has been approved. (See attachment 1)

19.51.060.D Deferments – Deferments may be approved when:

- o The improvement is part of a larger project that has been scheduled for implementation in the City's six-year Capital Facilities plan. *Staff recommends that this section be updated to clarify that the project must also be fully funded (e.g. included in the biennial budget).*
- o Construction or alteration of a single family dwelling unit on a large lot (1 acre+) when there are no frontage improvements meeting city standards within 200 feet of the lot, or identified through approved plats, and potential exists for future development of the lot. *Staff recommends moving this up to 19.51.060.D.1.c.*

When an applicant meets the criteria for a deferment, they would need to sign an agreement that is recorded to the title specifying future construction of, or reimbursement to the city for construction of, required improvements.

19.51.060.E Waiver – Waivers may be approved when construction of the required improvements would cause a safety hazard or an environmental impact that cannot be mitigated or the current level and extent of the improvements in the ROW adjacent to the subject property are not likely to be changed in the future. *Upon further review, staff recommends removing item 19.51.060.E.3 related to a waiver when cost of improvements would exceed 20% if the value of proposed building alterations or additions. This was determined to be too complicated to administer in the very limited circumstances where it might apply.*

19.51.060.F Sidewalk construction in lieu program. Off-site construction of sidewalks may be allowed in lieu of on-site when:

- o On-site construction would require substantial off-site roadway modifications, would result in a safety hazard, there are other unusual circumstances, or the improvement would not be extended past the property in the future due to adjacency of critical areas, ACFL, or similar attribute or land designation.

City staff plans to update sidewalk gap mapping and identify high priority areas for completion of sidewalks to help identify potential off-site locations when an application requests this option.

Staff recommends including the following language where there was currently a placeholder:

19.51.070 Timing of improvements and bonding.

19.51.070 A. In lieu of completing the required public improvements prior to approval, the applicant may request final approval, subject to the approval of a suitable guarantee. The guarantee must be in a form acceptable to the city and in an amount commensurate with improvements to be completed. The amount of the guarantee is established at one hundred

fifty percent of the cost of the city having to construct the improvements. The guarantee amount will require yearly review by the city and the applicant will be required to revise the guarantee amount to reflect the current inflation rate. Based on the revised amount, the applicant will resubmit suitable guarantee to the city. Also, the guarantee will be restricted as far as the amount of permissible time in which the improvements must be completed. If not a regular surety bond from an acceptable stat-approved surety, the guarantee must be in a form acceptable to the city attorney.

19.51.070 B. Guarantee funds will not be released by the city unless approval has been received from all applicable departments that are responsible for acceptance and/or maintenance of such improvements. Partial releases may be allowed.

19.51.070 C. All improvements begun by the applicant must be completed. Once the applicant has begun making improvements, the applicant shall not be eligible for submitting a guarantee to the city to cover the incomplete improvements.

19.51.070 D. Public improvements must be in a place at time of certificate of occupancy or acceptable assurances for completion with a temporary certificate of occupancy.

19.51.070 E. At the time of final acceptance of the improvements, the applicant shall provide to the city a one-year warranty guarantee at ten percent of the established final cost of the public and/or off-site improvements which must be acceptable to the city.

19.52 Public Street Design

AMC 16.32 currently outlines the geometric design standards for new public streets, including minimum right-of-way width, pavement width, landscaping, and sidewalk requirements. AMC 19.52 updates and replaces AMC 16.32. Proposed updates implement Comprehensive Plan policies related to consideration of existing and desired character of areas and the cost of future maintenance, prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle travel modes, and facilitating desired infill development.

Initially, updated standards were drafted to incorporate larger landscape strips to accommodate low-impact development (LID) stormwater facilities; however based on public feedback, the proposal was revised in the 2nd draft to allow for, but not mandate, increased landscape strips for this purpose.

See Attachment #1 for details on key proposed updates to the standards

19.53 Private Driveways and Access

Some standards that are currently contained in the Anacortes Engineering Design Standards are updated and integrated into Chapter 19.53, including driveway location, driveway spacing and separation, number of driveways, and driveway width.

A new "shared driveway" option is added for access for up to 6 units/lots within a residential subdivision. See Attachment #2 for details.

19.54 Subdivision and Block Standards

The provisions here set base block and connectivity standards for residential and commercial zones (which aren't addressed in the existing code) to emphasize block sizes consistent with Anacortes's general development pattern and good connectivity. Given there are site/topographical challenges

on many of the remaining development sites, the provisions here integrate flexibility to allow other designs, provided they can maximize vehicular and pedestrian connectivity. The provisions allow for alternative designs with larger blocks provided they integrate a public open space or other public amenity that such development can be oriented around.

Section 19.43.030 includes design standards for the successful integration of parks and open space into subdivisions (again, a topic lacking design guidance in the current code). The provisions here emphasize convenience, accessibility, safety, and maintenance.

Lastly, Section 19.43.040 allows for some alternative lot designs, which allow flexibility in the design of small lots. These include zero lot line configurations, shared access lots, pedestrian-only entry lots, and reciprocal use easement lots. See Attachment #3 for details.

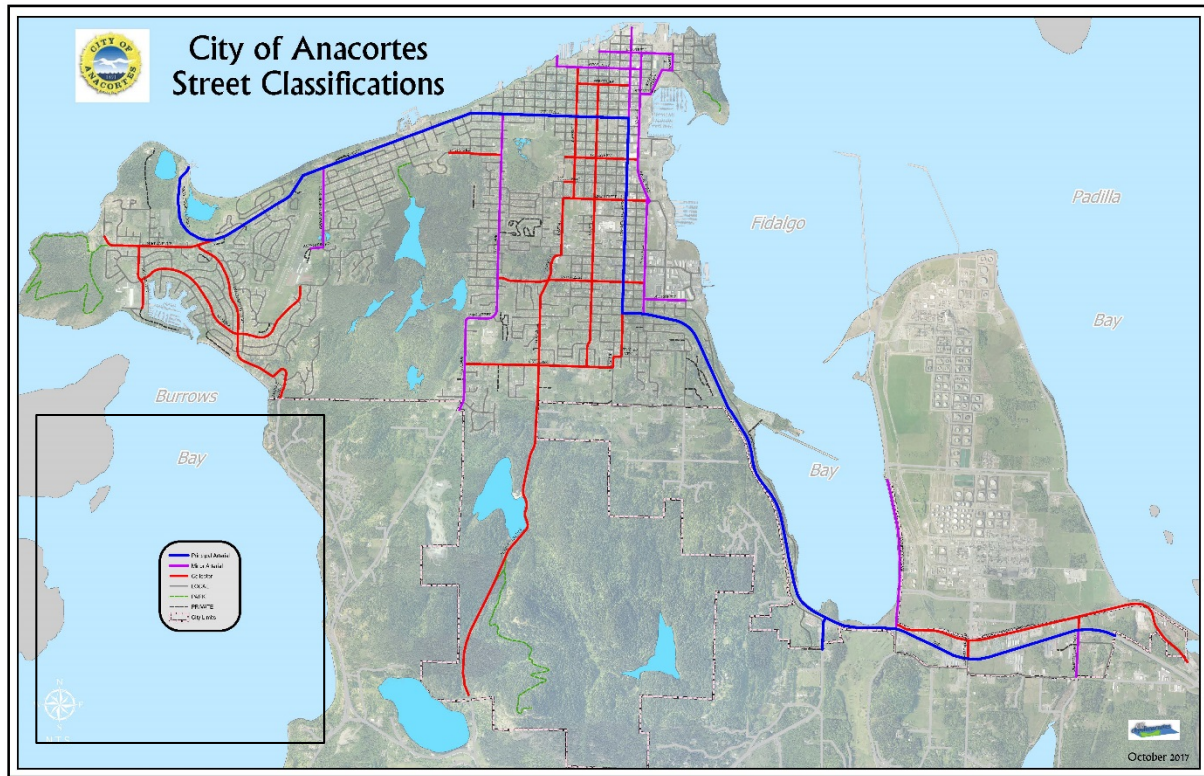
Attachment 1: Updates to Public Street Standards

Current Provisions (for subdivisions)

AMC 16.32: Current minimum street standards for subdivisions include the following:

Type	Min. ROW width	Min. Pavement width	Description	Min. Landscape strip width	Min. Sidewalk width
Principal Arterial	80'	48'	Four driving lanes. Curb and gutter required. No parking.	6'	R2 & R3 zone: 5' R4 zone: 6' C & CBD zone: 8'
Minor Arterial	60'	44'	Two driving lanes. Curb and gutter required. Parking on both sides.		
Collector Arterial	60'	36'	Two driving lanes. Curb and gutter required. Parking on both sides.		
Commercial Access	60'	40'	2 driving lanes; curb and gutter required; parking on both sides.		
Residential Access	50'	32'	2 driving lanes; curb and gutter required; parking on both sides.		
Alleys	Varies	20'	No parking.		

See the current street classification map on the following page.



Comprehensive Plan: Goals and policies emphasize minimizing street widths to enhance character and the public realm, reduce environmental impacts of streets, and safely balance the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Specific policies:

Issue: Current provisions require large rights-of-way and mandatory on-street parking, increasing impervious area and maintenance requirements, as well as reducing flexibility for desired infill development. Updated provisions with supporting graphics will add clarity to the standards.

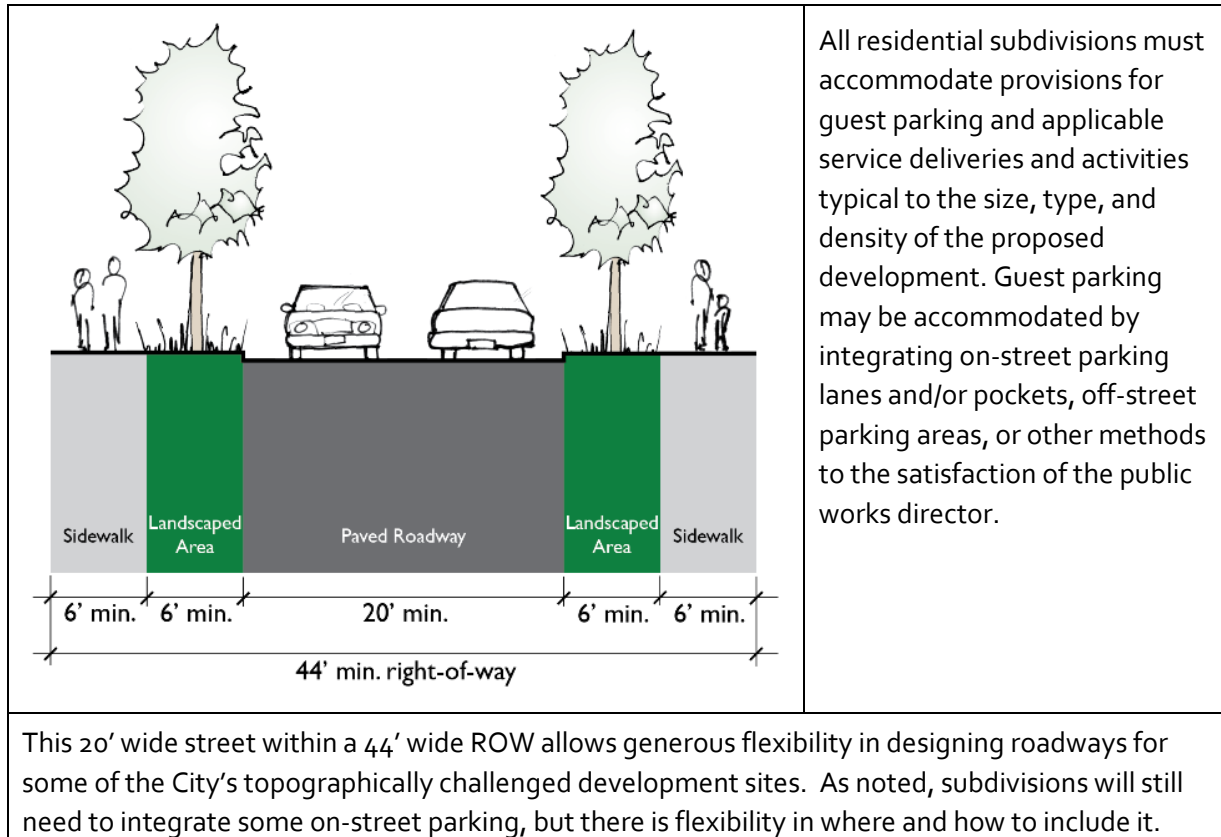


This is wider than what's allowed now – but shown here to emphasize the type of streetscape (too wide, no planting strip) that is inconsistent with Anacortes's vision, goals, and policies.

Draft Proposal

AMC 19.52.040: The eight current street types are proposed to be consolidated into five updated street types, with flexibility in providing on-street parking and wider minimum sidewalks. A critical component is the minimum width of landscaped areas, which are necessary for locating street trees, stormwater treatment areas, lights, utilities, furniture, and other fixtures outside of pedestrian walkways.

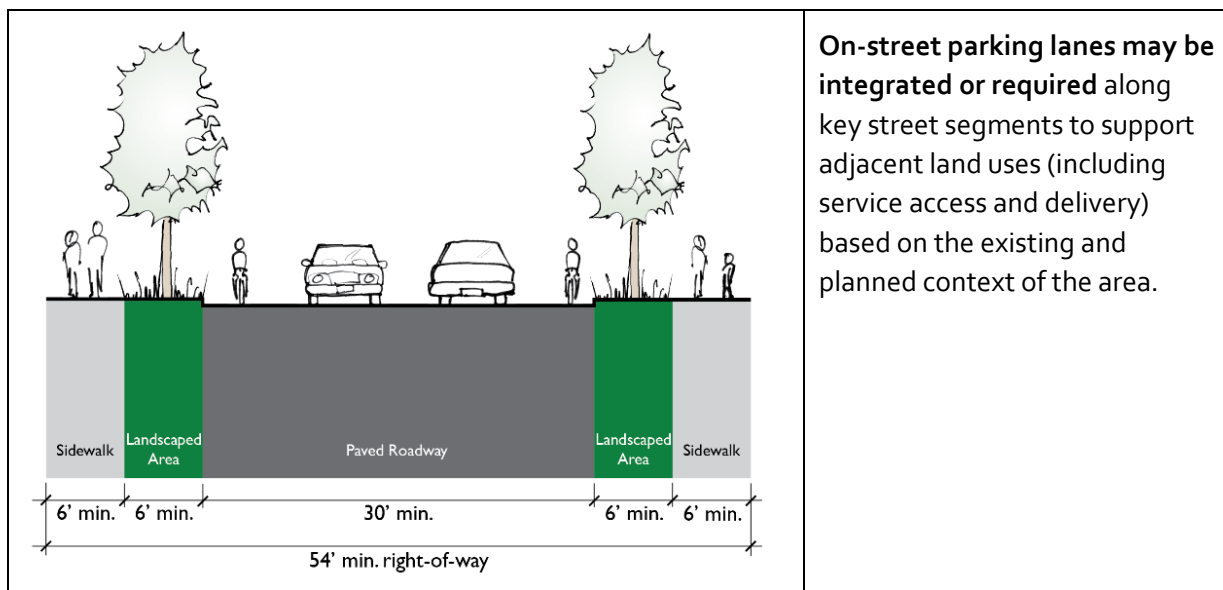
Low-Volume Local Street



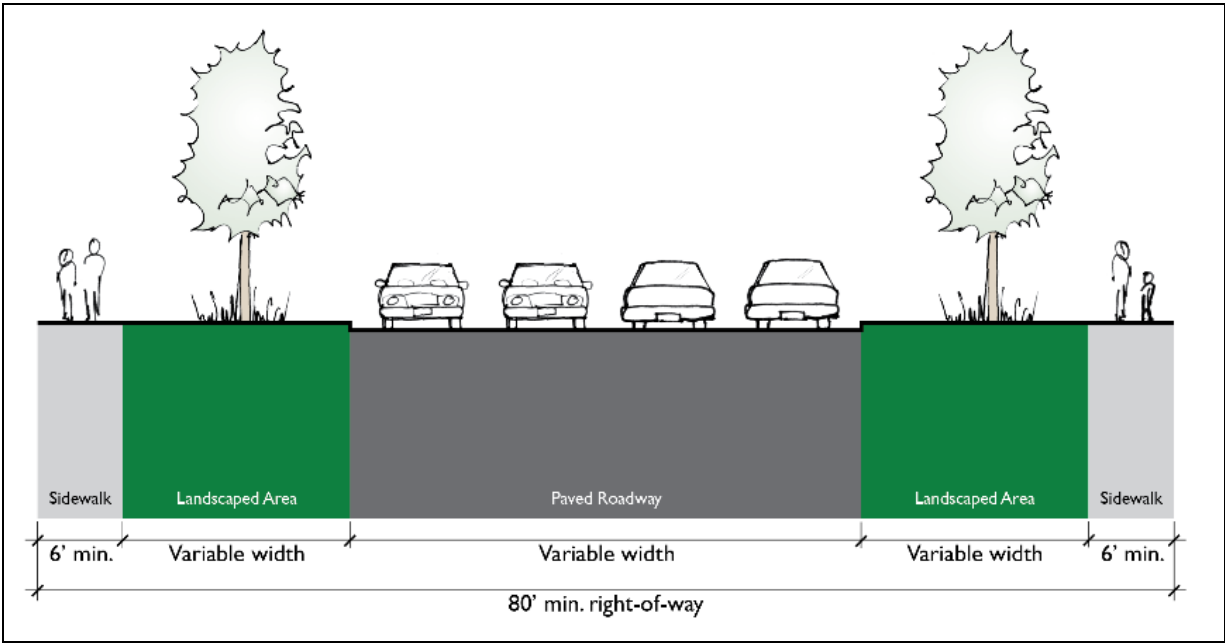


A low-volume local street example integrating parking pockets.

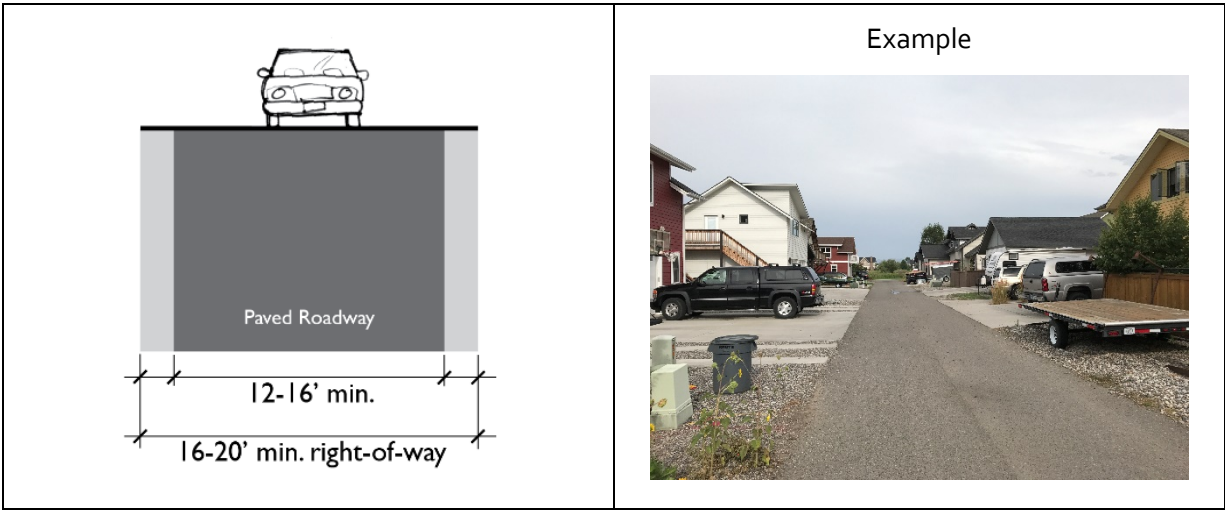
Minor Arterial, Collector, or High-Volume Local Street



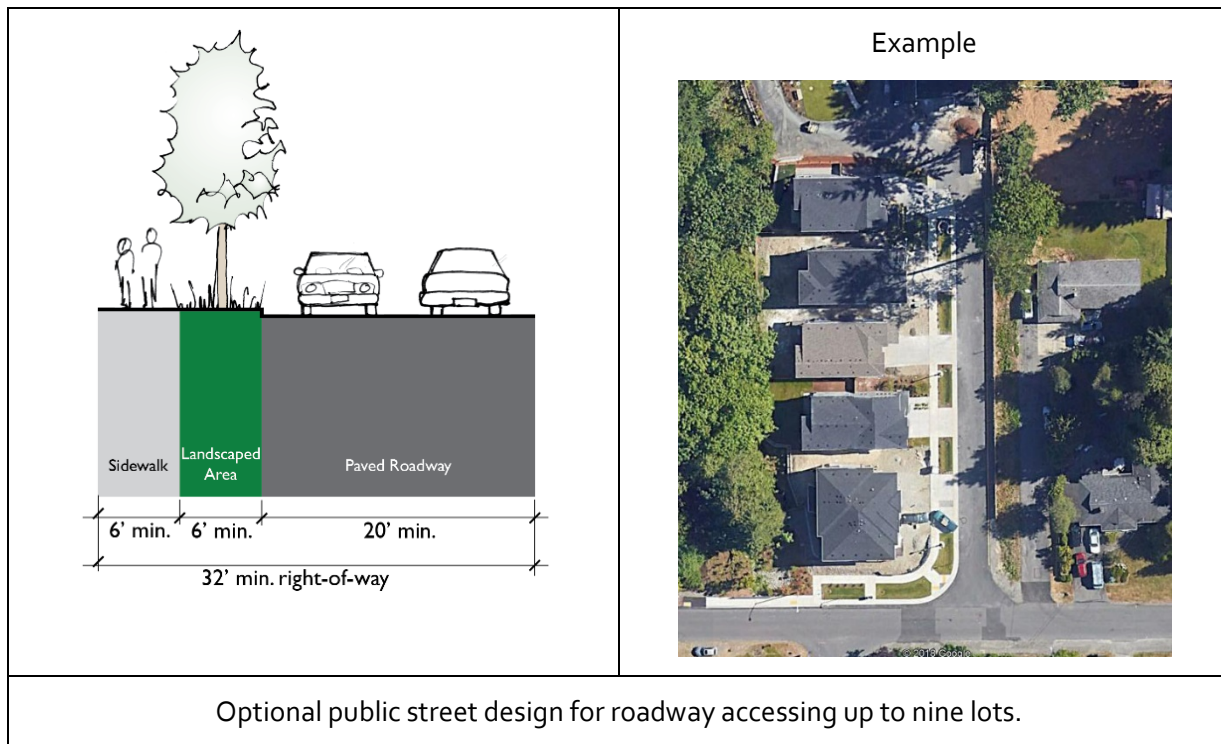
Principal Arterial Street



Alley



Lane



Public Feedback

Public comments received on the initial draft expressed concern over the minimum width of the planting strips (which have now been reduced). Most recent comments expressed the need to clarify street standards from shared driveway designs and specify what the access requirements are for some of the alternative lot types.

Considerations

At this time, no changes to the updated street design standards are suggested. However, we will suggest changes to Table 19.52.040 (Street Design Standards) to make it easier to use.

Attachment 2: Shared Driveways

Current Provisions

AMC Title 17: No current provisions for shared driveways.

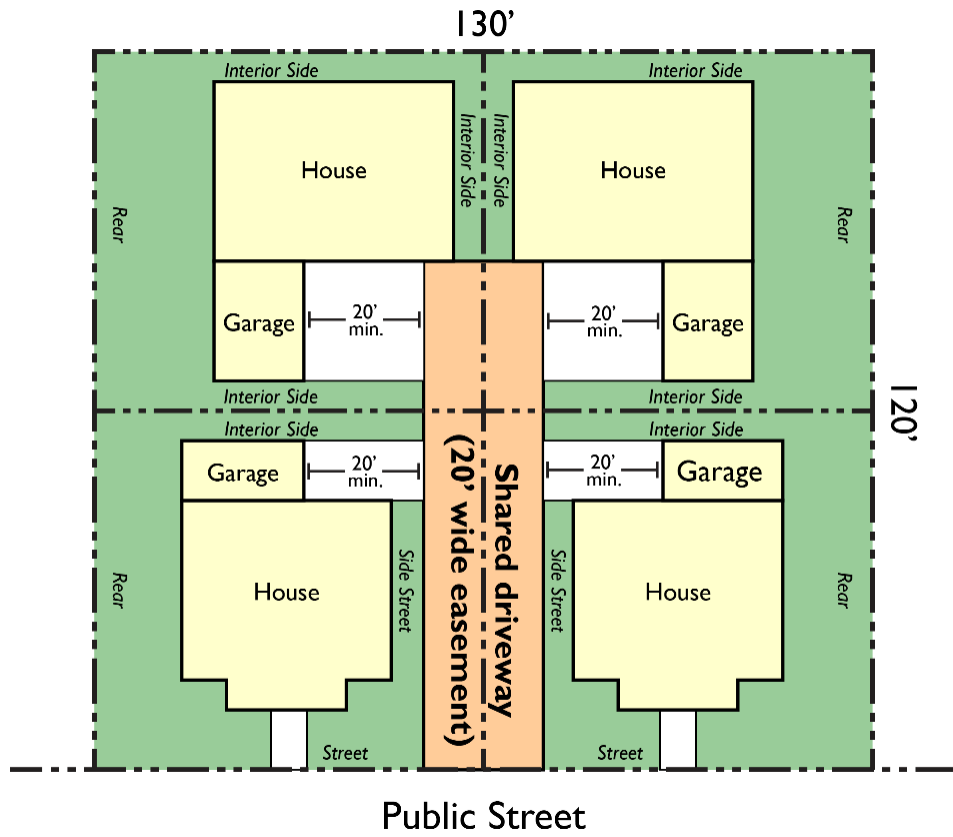
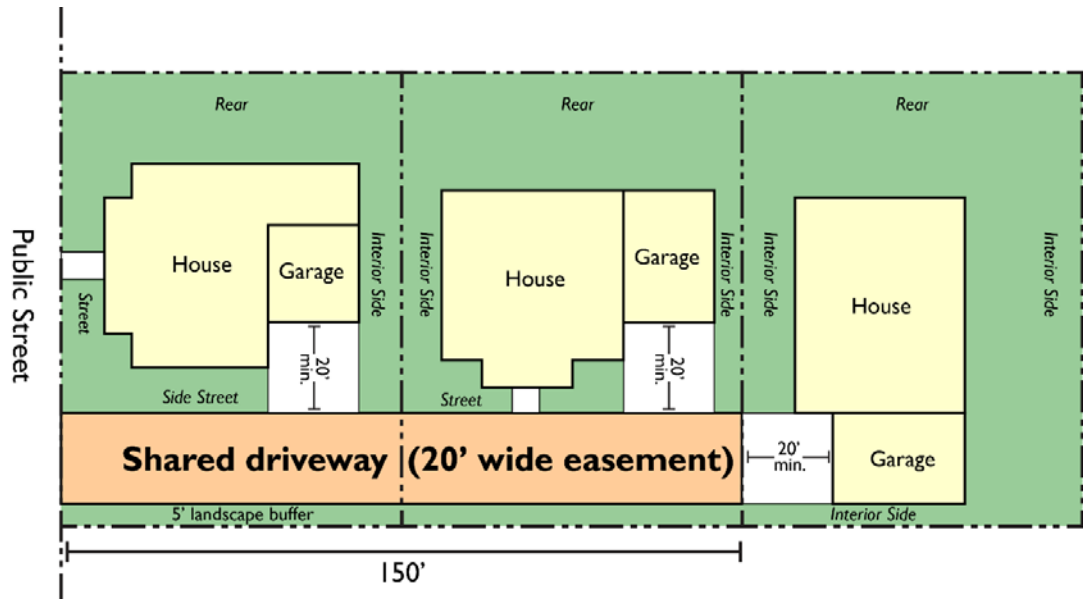
Comprehensive Plan: No specific guidance provided for shared driveways, though some policies discuss the need to minimize the impact of driveways on the streetscape and promote a variety of housing options.

Issue: Shared driveway provisions can help standardize access and provide more flexibility for small lots and oddly shaped sites where a full street or cul-de-sac would be excessive.

Draft Proposal

AMC 19.53.040 & 19.54.040(C): Shared driveways may be allowed for single-family, duplex, or triplex developments (or any combination thereof) when the City determines a public street is not necessary and sufficient emergency vehicle access is provided (per guidance from the Anacortes Fire Department). Shared driveways may provide access for a maximum of six dwelling units in any combination of single-family, duplex, and triplex buildings.

Table 19.53.040(B) Residential shared driveway standards.				
Max. # units	Max. length	Min. Paved width	Min. Easement width	Turnaround?
Up to 3	150'	16'	20'	No
Up to 6	150'	20'	20'	No
Up to 6	>150'	20'	20'	Yes – approved turnaround
Shared driveways can serve up to 6 lots. Beyond that, lots must be served by a public street, including:				
7-9	"Lane standard" – public road with approved turnaround			
10+	Low volume residential public road			



Examples of shared access lots/driveways (Figure 19.54.04o(C))

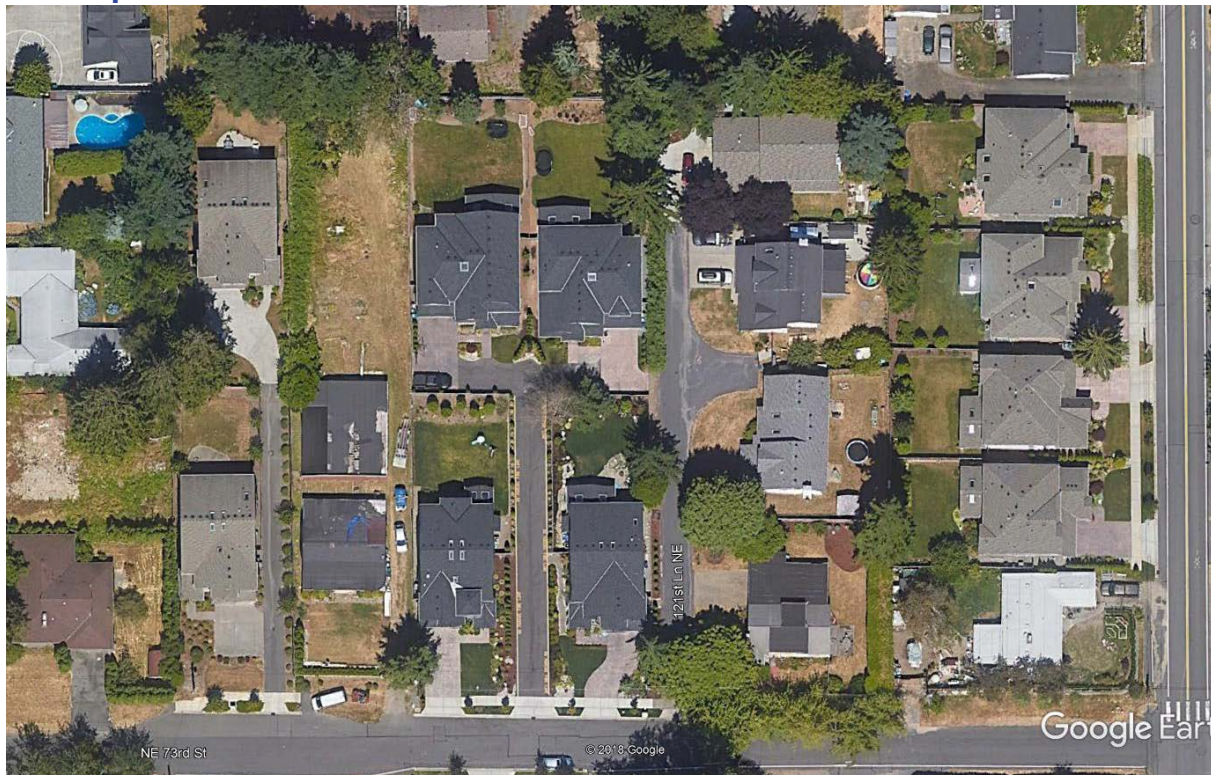
Public Feedback

One public comment has requested the requirement for a five foot landscape buffer of the shared driveway be removed.

Considerations

Consideration	Benefits	Drawbacks
2a Consider eliminating the requirement for the 5' buffer between the shared driveway and property line.	Allows greater flexibility to integrate the easement & driveway. This design would also be easier for maintenance.	Takes away landscaped buffer/aesthetic impacts
2b Update language in Chapter 19.51 to clarify that internal shared access drives for cottages, townhouses, and multifamily developments are subject to city standards for commercial development standards for internal drive aisles and parking lots.	Provide the necessary flexibility to accommodate such developments. Such developments are already subject to use type and/or general Division 6 design standards for internal pedestrian and vehicular circulation.	More relaxed than access requirements for public streets.

Examples



The area here shows the type of situation where some shared access lane flexibility is needed.

Examples of shared driveways with varying levels of landscaping buffers



Attachment 3: Lot Design Options

Current Provisions

AMC Title 17: Existing provisions provide general setback requirements and lot size and shape requirements for subdivisions. There are no alternative lot designs included in the existing code.

Comprehensive Plan: Policy H-1.8 calls for flexibility in subdivision design to promote environmental protection, encourage infill development, and enhance neighborhood character.

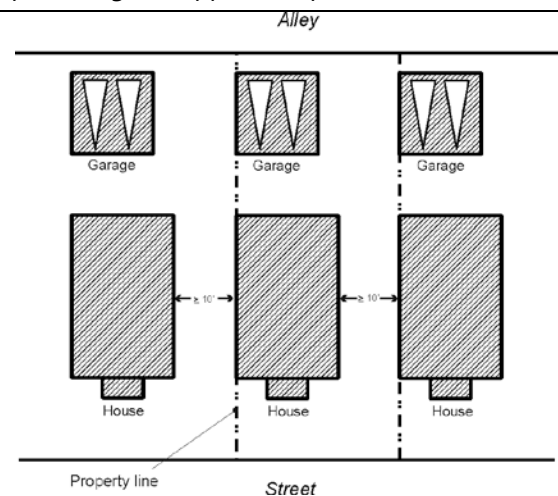
Issue: Given the desire for promoting compatible infill development over sprawl type growth onto other parts of the island, additional flexibility is needed to accommodate small lot developments. The placement and orientation of lots and homes on small lots should consider access, usable open space, orientation, privacy, and other factors that can contribute to the overall livability of the home and its relationship to the surrounding environment.

Draft Proposal

AMC 19.54.040: Several new lot design provisions are proposed for subdivisions:

Zero lot line.

This is a configuration where the house and/or garage is built up to one of the side property lines, providing the opportunity for more usable side setback space. Examples are below.

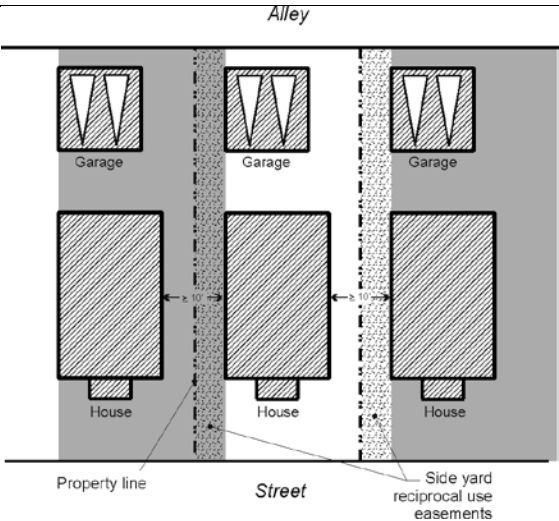


Example of side yard on a zero lot line configuration (adjacent home to the right doesn't contain transparent windows on the side wall)

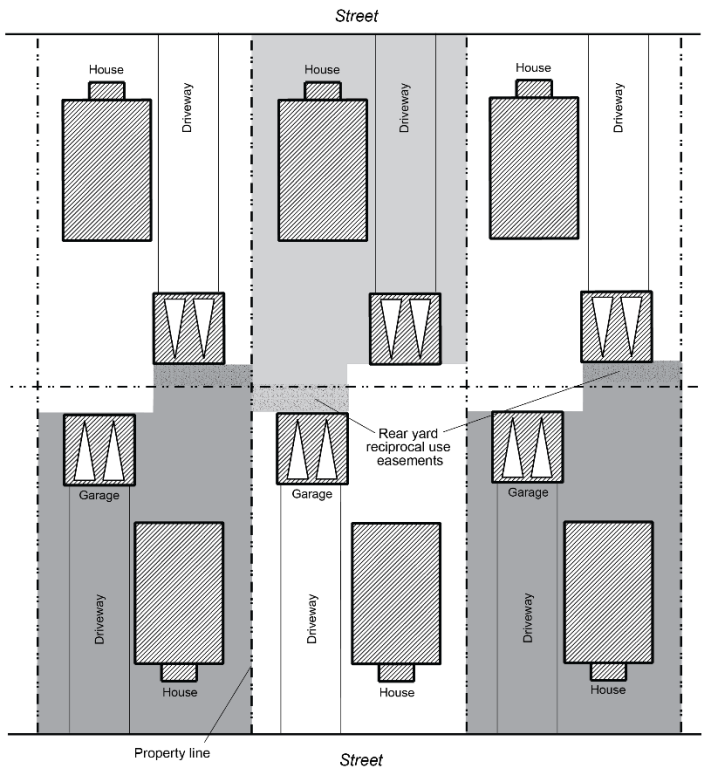
The lots in the left image (from Bellingham) date back to early 1900s and include zero lot line configurations where the side yard successfully functions as the residents private and usable open space.

Reciprocal use easement lots.

Reciprocal use easements work similar to the zero lot line configuration. Principal and accessory structures must meet the standard setbacks, and easements are granted on one side to allow use of the side setback by the adjacent property. Reciprocal use easements may also be used in the rear setback to maximize usable open space.



Example of a side yard reciprocal use configuration



Example of a rear yard reciprocal use configuration

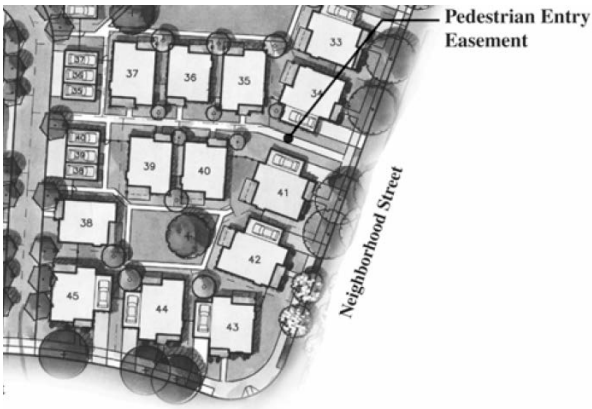
Shared access lots.

This includes a series of lots clustered around a shared driveway.



Pedestrian-only entry lots.

This includes configurations where one or more lots are clustered around a pedestrian easement and/or common open space and do not front on a street. Most cottage housing developments are an example of this. Parking may be accessed off an alley or shared driveway in a manner similar to examples illustrated below.



See considerations below regarding some clarifications that are likely needed for this concept.

Alley access lots.

This includes configurations where lots front onto an alley and are not adjacent to public street.



See considerations below regarding some clarifications that are likely needed for this concept.

Public Feedback

One comment asked for clarification on what zones/situations these lot types were allowed.

Considerations

Consideration	Benefits	Drawbacks
3a Zero lot line, reciprocal use easement lots, and shared access lots: Clarify that they are allowed in all residential zoning districts provided the lots on the outside edge of such subdivisions meet the standard setback requirements.	Allows greater flexibility in lot design and the integration of open space. For shared access lots, it provides extra flexibility for the subdivision of parent parcels not deep enough to warrant inclusion of a full street design.	Limits the ability to have transparent windows on one side of homes
3b Pedestrian-only entry lots –clarify that they are allowed in all residential zoning districts provided the lots meet zoning density standards, lots on the outside edge of such subdivisions meet the standard setback requirements AND require such homes to meet the same minimum usable open space requirements for alley loaded lots (see AMC 19.43.010.C.3.c) either with: (1) Delineated private open space accessible to each unit OR (2) An equivalent amount of shared open space designed to meet AMC 19.62.040.B.2 (see image examples above)	Allows greater flexibility in subdivision design – to create a cottage like configuration with larger homes.	Provision may get too complicated, as it will require a substantial amount of clarifying details – and perhaps it's not worth the effort given the limited available land in Anacortes?
3c Alley access lots – clarify that they are only allowed where the lots front onto a park or trail (on opposite end of alley). Dead-end alleys are subject to turn-around standards and through alleys are limited by maximum block length standards (AMC 19.54.020)	Allows greater flexibility in subdivision design and promotes the integration of parks and trails.	Could increase traffic on alleys

Follow-up comments to 8-8-18 Planning Commission Meeting

During the discussion of the MMU zone at the August 8th Planning Commission meeting, commissioner Cleland-McGrath observed that this zone, unlike others, presents a "**blank slate**" (because it is currently vacant land). That hits the nail on the head.

This absence of existing development to provide a context for new development in the zone is exactly the reason that it is important to include a clear, detailed description of the expectations for development of this zone - so that both the developer and the citizens will understand what is intended.

The wording in the Comprehensive Plan was developed through an intensive public process, and establishes these criteria for development of the *blank slate* in the MMU zone:

Purpose: This designation provides for a special mix of commercial, cultural, recreational, and residential uses in a high amenity area along the waterfront or with special waterfront relationship. The design of uses is intended to emphasize the unique marine setting by providing marine access and views from public spaces and establishing/maintaining a pedestrian-friendly character.

Principal uses & density: The primary uses are commercial, hospitality, cultural, and recreational uses. Residential uses are encouraged in mixed-use structures and allowed in single purpose structures provided developments include a horizontal mix of uses. Multi-story buildings are encouraged provided they are designed and oriented to provide public marine views and integrate human-scaled design details. New residential uses must feature transit-supportive densities (at least 15 units/acre).

There are several key phrases above that must be addressed by the zoning regulations:

1. a special mix of commercial, cultural, recreational, and residential uses
2. primary uses are commercial, hospitality, cultural, and recreational uses
3. Residential uses ... provided developments include a horizontal mix of uses

Number 1 requires a mix of uses.

This means that the zone should include both residential and non-residential uses.

Number 2 indicates that non-residential uses must be the primary uses.

This means that residential uses must not be the primary uses. The only way to determine which uses are *primary* is by adding up the building **gross floor area** devoted to residential vs. non-residential uses.

Using site area as a measurement is inappropriate, because it does not take into account the number of stories of each use on the site or what uses are in the building. For example, a 4-story office building would count the same as a 1-story office building, even though the taller building contributes more non-residential space to the mix of uses. Or an office building with one apartment would count the same as an apartment building with a coffee shop - both would be considered a mixed use, although they contribute very differently to the actual mix of uses in the zone.

Number 3 requires a horizontal mix of uses in order to include residential.

This means that the uses should be distributed around the site, not just mixed vertically. It does not require them to be any particular place on the site.

I urge the Planning Commission to direct staff and consultants to develop new code language for the MMU zone which includes the following:

Both paragraphs above from the Comprehensive Plan (to make it clear what is expected, without a person having to consult a separate document).

Descriptive language similar to that in the current zoning code to illustrate the general characteristics expected of future development.

Delete this language in draft 2:

3. MMU zone standards: Multifamily dwellings are allowed:

1. On upper floors throughout the site.
2. Within single purpose buildings covering up to one-third of the site area (parcel or contiguous parcels held under common ownership) provided they meet access, site and building design standards in this title.

Add the following new language

3. MMU zone standards: Multifamily dwellings are allowed in mixed-use buildings and single purpose residential buildings, provided that the gross square footage of residential uses does not exceed one-half of the gross square footage of all uses in the zone (structured parking is excluded from the calculation).

This change will remove the first floor restriction that MJB finds problematic and allow the property owners to distribute any of the uses anywhere on the site vertically or horizontally, as they find best suits their vision for development of the site - provided that the total building square footage devoted to the *primary* non-residential uses occupies at least half of the building area.

This seems like the most simple and straight-forward way to honor both the intent of the Comprehensive Plan and the property owners' desire for flexibility in how they develop their property.