



ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER #301216

INTERPRETATION OF DEVELOPMENT CODE

CODE SECTIONS: 20.50.020, 20.50.350, Engineering Development Guide

1. Zoning & Land Use

A. 20.50.350 Tree Retention

Request that the City consider whether an open space set-aside equal to 20% of the forested area would satisfy the significant tree retention requirement, given the large numbers of trees involved.

Interpretation:

The Code does not allow for area to be substituted for trees to meet the minimum tree retention requirement. A inventory of significant trees is required.

Section 20.50.290, Purpose statement includes the following:

- Protection of water quality from the adverse impacts associated with erosion and sedimentation;
- Promotion of building and site planning practices that are consistent with the City's natural topography and vegetative cover;
- Preservation and enhancement of trees and vegetation which contribute to the visual quality and economic value of development in the City and provide continuity and screening between developments.
- Retention of tree clusters for the abatement of noise, wind protection, and mitigation of air pollution;
- Conservation and restoration of trees and vegetative cover to reduce flooding, the impacts on existing drainageways, and the need for additional stormwater management facilities;

The code encourages preservation of clusters of significant trees. Setting aside one tract and clear-cutting the remainder of the parcel does not meet the intent of the code. The lot layout and

roads should be designed in such a way as to incorporate clusters of existing trees throughout the development, and to meet the intention of screening from other properties.

B. 20.50.020 Minimum Density

Request that the City provide an interpretation of the minimum density requirement of the code, considering the impact of deductions from the buildable area of a proposed site.

Interpretation:

Achieving minimum density, much like achieving maximum density, is dependent on a number of factors that affect the availability of buildable land, including access roads, open space, tree retention and other code requirements.

Minimum density may be demonstrated by “shadow platting,” that is, you may design the subdivision in such a way as to not preclude future subdivision. For example, you may choose to make some of the lots double or triple-sized, with double or triple the minimum lot width, and site the houses so that the lots could be short-platted in the future.

Another way to achieve minimum density is to provide for a two or three step division. This would entail setting aside part of the initial plat as private open space, with the caveat that it could be further platted at some time in the future.

Area needed for road and storm water facilities need not be included in minimum density calculations.

2. Engineering Development Standards

A. Road Geometry

Request that the City provide a code interpretation regarding the use of low speed curves on residential streets.

Interpretation:

The City encourages creative road design in harmony with the preservation of existing clusters of significant trees and other natural features. A 25-foot curve radius is appropriate for a residential street. The standard right-of-way width is 45 feet, with a 24-foot paved road width, with curb, gutter and sidewalk on both sides. Any variation from the standards outlined in the Engineering Development Guide would be pursued through application for an Engineering Standards Variance.

B. Offsite Roads

Request that the City review the condition of NW 155th St. in light of the anticipated impact and provide guidance as to what offsite improvements may be required.

Interpretation:

The only public street access to the site is via 155th St, which is substandard as to pavement width and lacks sidewalk, curb and gutter. Improvements that will be required will include upgrading the road up to full City standards. The extent (length) of the improvements will depend on the intensity of the new development and review of the required traffic study.

Additional Notes from the Director:

Storm Water: A preliminary storm water plan should be presented at time of pre-application meeting. The site plan submitted with this application shows a water facilities tract in the northeast corner of the property, an area which, if higher in elevation than the rest of the property, would make it unsuitable for storm water detention.

Tax Parcel: The King County Assessor's Map shows that the Highlands school is part of tax parcel #1326039003. To separate this area off from the rest of the parcel, you may do a 20-acre division of the parcel through King County (divide the whole parcel in half, short plat not required), then do a lot line adjustment through the City.

Subdivision Design: The City encourages design that has minimal impact on existing neighboring properties, and that preserves natural features as much as possible.

original signed by Tim Stewart 06/01/04

Director's Signature

Date