

VENTURA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ORDINANCE NUMBER 29

AN ORDINANCE OF THE VENTURA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ADOPTING FIRE APPARATUS ACCESS REQUIREMENTS TO PROVIDE FOR EMERGENCY RESPONDER AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The Board of Directors of the Ventura County Fire Protection ordains as follows:

ARTICLE 1 – ADMINISTRATION

This Ordinance is adopted pursuant to the authority vested in the Board of Directors of the Ventura County Fire Protection District by the State of California in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 13861. This Ordinance shall be known as the "Ventura County Fire Apparatus Access Code," may be cited as such, and will be referred to herein as "this Code."

1.1 Purpose. The purpose of this Code is to establish the minimum and cumulative design and maintenance standards for emergency fire access roads within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Ventura County Fire Protection District. These provisions permit emergency resources to respond to an incident in a safe and effective manner.

1.2 Scope. This Code shall apply to all Fire Apparatus Access Roads, whether public or private, located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Ventura County Fire Protection District. It includes road design, signage, and marking requirements and provisions for enforcement. Access roads subject to the requirements of Section 1270 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, as that section may be amended from time to time, shall comply with the most restrictive requirements.

1.3 Local ordinances. Nothing in this Code shall be considered as abrogating the provisions of any ordinance, resolution, rule, public road standard or regulation of any local jurisdiction, provided that such provision is equal to or more stringent than the minimum standards in this Code. Where conflicts exist between this Code and public road standards developed by a city or county, the most restrictive requirements shall apply.

1.4 Validity. In the event any part or provision of this Code is held to be illegal or void, this shall not have the effect of making void or illegal any of the other parts or provisions hereof, which are determined to be legal; and it shall be presumed that this Code would have been adopted without such illegal or invalid parts or provisions.

1.5 Liability. The Fire Code Official or any authorized representative and each member of the board of appeals (as established in the Ventura County Fire Code), charged with the enforcement of this Code, acting in good faith and without malice in the discharge of his or her duties, shall not thereby render himself or herself personally liable for any

damage that may accrue to persons or property as a result of any act or omission in the discharge of such duties. The Ventura County Fire Protection District shall defend and indemnify the Fire Code Official or any authorized representative or member of the board of appeals against any suit brought against such person because of such act or omission performed by such person in the enforcement of any provision of this Code or other pertinent laws or ordinances implemented through the enforcement of this Code.

1.6 Intent. It is the intent of the Board of Directors to establish minimum standards for the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare. This Code shall not be construed to establish standards of performance, strength, or durability other than those specified. Neither this Code nor any service rendered in connection with or pursuant to its terms by District or County officers, inspectors, agents or employees is intended to be nor shall be construed against the District or any of its officers, inspectors, agents, or employees as the basis for any express or implied warranty or guarantee to any person relative to or concerning any Fire Apparatus Access Road or part, portion, or appurtenance thereto or thereof constructed, altered, enlarged, repaired, moved, replaced, or removed pursuant to this Code or any permits because any Fire Apparatus Access Road or portion thereof constructed, altered, enlarged, repaired, moved, replaced, or removed hereunder does not meet the standards prescribed herein, or does not meet any other standards prescribed elsewhere as to performance, strength, durability or other characteristics.

1.7 Responsibility. This Code shall not be construed to relieve from or lessen the responsibility of any person owning, operating, or controlling any Fire Apparatus Access Road for any damages to persons or property caused by defects, nor shall the District or the County of Ventura be held as assuming any such liability by reason of the inspections authorized by this Code or any permits or certificates of inspection issued under this Code.

1.8 Enforcement. The Fire Code Official is hereby authorized to enforce the provisions of this Code and shall have the authority to render interpretations of this Code and to adopt policies, procedures, rules and regulations, including design standards, in order to administer and clarify the application of its provisions. Such interpretations, policies, procedures, rules and regulations shall be in compliance with the intent and purpose of this Code and shall not have the effect of waiving requirements specifically provided for in this Code.

1.9 Notices and orders. The Fire Code Official is authorized to issue such notices or orders as are required to effect compliance with this Code in accordance with the Ventura County Fire Code and Health and Safety Code Sections 13870 and 13872.5.

1.10 Citations. The Fire Code Official and his or her authorized representatives shall have the authority to issue citations for violations of this Code in accordance with the Ventura County Fire Code and Health and Safety Code Section 13872.

ARTICLE 2 – DEFINITIONS

ACCESS POINT(S). The point or points along a Fire Apparatus Access Road where fire and emergency equipment is located within 150 feet of all portions of the grade level of a Building or Structure as measured along an approved route.

ALL-WEATHER ACCESS ROAD. A road capable of supporting a 20-ton vehicle after a 10-year storm.

BUILDING. Any Structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy that is defined in the California Building Code.

CRITICAL FIRE WEATHER. As determined by the fire code official, a set of weather conditions (usually a combination of low relative humidity, warmer temperatures and/or high winds) favorable to the ignition and the effect of which on fire behavior makes control of a fire difficult and threatens fire fighter and public safety. This includes “Red Flag Warnings” and “Fire Weather Watches” as issued by the National Weather Service.

DEAD-END. A Road that has only one point of ingress/egress, including cul-de-sacs and looped roads.

DRIVEWAY. A private right-of-way serving not more than 2 residential parcels, serving not more than 4 Dwelling Units, and any number of accessory structures.

DWELLING UNIT. A single unit providing complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation.

EXISTING PARCEL. Parcels, including those located in a State Responsibility Area that were legally created and recorded prior to October 1, 1980.

EXISTING ROAD. Roads, including those located in a State Responsibility Area, that were legally constructed and recorded prior to October 1, 1980.

FIRE APPARATUS ACCESS ROAD. A Roadway that provides fire apparatus access from a fire station or other staging area to a facility, Building, Structure or portion thereof. This is a general term inclusive of all similar terms such as fire lane, public street, private street, parking lot lane, access roadway and Driveway. A Fire Apparatus Access Road, in addition to providing access for fire apparatus, may provide ingress and egress for the general public during emergency events and normal use.

FIRE CODE OFFICIAL. The Fire Prevention Bureau Chief (Fire Marshal), as appointed by the Fire Chief of the Ventura County Fire Protection District, charged with the administration and enforcement of this Code, or a duly authorized representative.

MOST WEATHER ROAD. A Road capable of supporting a 20-ton vehicle during most weather conditions for firefighting or rescue operations.

PRIMARY ACCESS. A Road used routinely for access into and out of an area.

ROAD. Vehicular access, inclusive of Roadway structures, that provides access to;

- (a) more than two parcels;
- (b) more than 4 Dwelling Units; or
- (c) any industrial or commercial occupancy

ROADWAY. Any surface designed, improved, or ordinarily used for vehicle travel. Inclusive of both Roads and Driveways.

ROADWAY STRUCTURES. Bridges, culverts, and other appurtenant structures which supplement the Roadway bed or shoulders.

SECONDARY. A secondary Road used for access into and out of an area in which the construction standard is the same as the Primary Access.

STRUCTURE. That which is built or constructed, an edifice or building of any kind, or any piece of work artificially built up or composed of parts joined together in some definite manner.

TRAFFIC LANE. The portion of a Roadway that provides a single lane of vehicle travel.

TURNAROUND. A Roadway, unobstructed by parking, which allows for a safe opposite change of direction for emergency equipment. Design of such area may be a hammerhead/T or terminus bulb.

TURNOUTS. A widening in a Roadway to allow vehicles to pass or emergency equipment to stage off the Roadway Traffic Lane.

VERTICAL CLEARANCE. The minimum clearance area above the Roadway to any overhead projection or obstruction.

ARTICLE 3 – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1 General. Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall be provided and maintained in accordance with this Code.

3.2 Fire apparatus access. Fire Apparatus Access Roads, whether public or private, primary or secondary, shall provide for safe access for emergency equipment and

civilian evacuation concurrently, and shall provide for unobstructed traffic circulation during a fire or other emergency.

3.2.1 Maintenance. Private Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall be designed and maintained in accordance with public road standards. When such Fire Apparatus Access Road or Driveway serves 2 or more parcels, provisions for maintenance of the access road shall be assured by a permanent homeowners association or equivalent organization and a covenant running with the land establishing and setting forth the maintenance requirement shall be recorded on each parcel. Such a covenant running with the land shall also be placed upon multiple parcels served by the same Fire Apparatus Access Roads that are under the same ownership.

3.2.2 Location. Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall be constructed within the dedicated right-of-way, common area parcels or recorded access easements.

3.2.3 Timing. Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall be provided prior to construction and maintained throughout the life of the development.

3.2.4 Obstructions. Gates and other traffic calming devices shall be prohibited on Fire Apparatus Access Roads unless approved by the Fire Code Official.

3.3 Where required. Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall be provided for every facility, Building or Structure hereafter constructed or relocated.

3.3.1 Modifications. When Fire Apparatus Access Roads cannot be installed due to practical difficulties, the Fire Code Official shall have the authority to grant modifications for individual cases, provided the Fire Code Official shall first find that special reasons make the strict application of this Code impractical and the modification is in compliance with the intent and purpose of this Code. The details of action granting such modification shall be recorded on the parcel deed.

3.4 Access to Buildings or Structures. Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall be provided such that any portion of the exterior walls, at grade level, of a Building or Structure is not more than 150 feet (46 m) from Fire Apparatus Access Roads as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the Building or Structure.

Exception: When Buildings or Structures are protected with an approved automatic fire sprinkler system the Fire Code Official is authorized to increase the distance.

3.4.1 Roadway extensions. Where Roadways extend from the Access Point to the Building or Structure, the extended Roadway shall comply with all requirements of the Fire Apparatus Access Road.

3.5 Dead ends. Turnarounds shall be provided on all Dead-End Fire Apparatus Access Roads in excess of 150 feet (46 m). The Fire Code Official is authorized to increase the length of a Dead-End Fire Apparatus Access Road to a length of 250 feet (76 m).

3.6 Turnouts. Turnouts shall be provided on all Fire Apparatus Access Roads in excess of 300 feet (91 m).

3.7 Additional Fire Apparatus Access Roads. The Fire Code Official is authorized to require more than one Fire Apparatus Access Road based on the potential for impairment of a single access road by vehicle congestion, condition of terrain, climatic conditions or other factors that could limit access.

ARTICLE 4 – FIRE APPARATUS ACCESS ROAD SPECIFICATIONS

4.1 Specifications. Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall be installed and arranged in accordance with this article.

4.2 Dimensions. Fire Apparatus Access Roads serving facilities, Buildings or Structures shall comply with this article.

4.2.1 Fire Apparatus Access Roads, existing. Fire Apparatus Access Roads serving Existing Parcels shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet (6.1 m).

Exceptions:

- (1) Fire Apparatus Access Roads meeting the definition of Existing Roads shall be required to be improved within the right-of-way or easement, to a width of not less than 20 feet (6.1 m), along the entire length of the access road from property line to property line.
- (2) Fire Apparatus Access Roads meeting the definition of Driveways when approved by the Fire Code Official.

4.2.2 Fire Apparatus Access Roads, one-way traffic. Fire Apparatus Access Roads designed for one-way traffic shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet (6.1 m).

4.2.3 Fire Apparatus Access Roads, two-way traffic. Fire Apparatus Access Roads designed for two-way traffic shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 24 feet (7.7 m).

Exception: Driveways shall be permitted to be reduced to a width of not less than 12 feet (3.7 m) when approved by the Fire Code Official.

4.2.4 Fire Apparatus Access Roads, parking. Fire Apparatus Access Roads designed to allow parking shall provide a minimum clear width of not less than 32

feet (9.8 m) for parking on one side and a clear width of not less than 36 feet (11.1 m) for parking on both sides.

4.2.5 Fire Apparatus Access Roads, aerial access. Fire Apparatus Access Roads serving Buildings, Structures or portions of Buildings or Structures exceeding 30 feet (9.2 m) in height above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access shall have a minimum width of not less than 30 feet (9.2 m), and complete Vertical Clearance (notwithstanding Section 4.2.6), capable of accommodating aerial fire apparatus.

4.2.5.1 Fire Apparatus Access Roads required for aerial fire apparatus shall be located a minimum of 15 feet (4.6 m) and a maximum 30 feet (9.2 m) from the Building or Structure.

4.2.6 Fire Apparatus Access Roads, height. Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall have a Vertical Clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches (4.15 m).

4.3 Surface. Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall be designed, constructed and maintained in accordance with public road standards with a surface suitable for all-weather access driving capabilities and shall have a cross-section complying with one of the following:

- (a) Asphalt or concrete in accordance with public road standards.
- (b) An alternate surface certified by a registered civil engineer as an "All-Weather Access Road" based upon Standard R Value Analysis. A copy of the certification shall be provided to the Fire Prevention Bureau of the Ventura County Fire Protection District and a statement that the access road is an All-Weather Access Road shall be recorded on the parcel and shall be maintained by the property owner. Drainage and erosion controls shall be recommended by the registered civil engineer and shall be provided to and maintained by the property owner. Alternate surfacing will be acceptable on grades up to 10%. NOTE: Compacted dirt or base does not constitute an All-Weather Access Road.

4.4 Turning radius. The horizontal turning radius of a Fire Apparatus Access Road shall be a minimum 40 feet (12.3 m) radius measured at the center line of the access road.

4.4.1 When transitioning from one curve to another in the opposite direction, a minimum of 40 feet (12.3 m) recovery distance shall be provided.

4.5 Grade limitations. Fire Apparatus Access Road grade limitations shall comply with Sections 4.5.1 through 4.5.3.

4.5.1 Maximum grade. The grade for a Fire Apparatus Access Road shall not exceed that allowed by the public road standards for the jurisdiction in which the

access road is located. Where no limitation is provided in the public road standards, a maximum 16% grade shall be used.

Exception: The Fire Code Official shall be permitted to increase the grade limitations for Driveways to a maximum of 25%.

4.5.2 Grade transitions. Transitions between grades along Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall not exceed a 6% elevation change along any 10 feet (3.1 m) section.

4.5.3 Cross slope. The maximum allowable cross slope of any portion of a Fire Apparatus Access Road shall not exceed 5%.

ARTICLE 5 – RESTRICTIONS AND AUTHORIZATION

5.1 Marking. Where required by the Fire Code Official, approved signs or other approved notices or markings that include the words NO PARKING – FIRE LANE – TOW AWAY shall be provided for Fire Apparatus Access Roads to identify such roads or prohibit the obstruction thereof. The means by which fire lanes are designated shall be maintained in a clean and legible condition at all times and shall be replaced or repaired when necessary to provide adequate readability and visibility.

5.2 Restricted parking – Critical Fire Weather. The Fire Code Official may designate certain Fire Apparatus Access Roads as “Restricted or No Stopping -Tow Away” zones during periods of Critical Fire Weather. Once such designation has been, signs clearly depicting the designation shall be posted along such access roads and notice if such designation shall be given to affected property owners.

5.3 Gates. Gates across Fire Apparatus Access Roads shall not be limited to emergency exit only and shall provide for egress for all persons at all times without the use of keys, codes, remote controls or special knowledge.

5.4 Vehicle Code. The Fire Code Official is authorized to use provisions of the California Vehicle Code for marking and enforcing fire lanes, including provisions for tow away zones, upon public and private Fire Apparatus Access Roads and Driveways.

ARTICLE 6 – EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall be effective 30 days from the date of its final passage or January 1, 2017, whichever is later.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 1 day of November, 2016, by the following vote:

AYES: Directors Long, Foy, Parks

NOES: Directors None.

ABSENT: Directors Bennett, Zaragoza



Linda Parks
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS
COUNTY OF VENTURA

ATTEST:

MICHAEL POWERS
Clerk of the Board of Directors
County of Ventura, State of California

By: Jon Harris
Deputy Clerk of the Board