

Memorandum

To: Phil Kern, City Administrator

From: Kim Lindquist, Planning Consultant

Date: January 7, 2026

Mtg Date: January 13, 2026

Re: Ordinance Amendment to City Code Section 51.03 Subdivision E

BACKGROUND:

In May 2024, the City passed an ordinance requiring an administrative driveway permit to assist in obtaining compliance with zoning ordinance curb cut regulations. At the time, curb cut width remained unchanged, up to 25' for residential properties and 32' for commercial, industrial, and public or semi-public zoning district uses.

Since that time, staff has noted that there are numerous pre-existing residential curb cuts in excess of the maximum 25' width. Enforcing the 25' width is problematic when there are many, often on the same street, which had greater widths. While the 25' dimension hasn't changed, the fact that we are permitting driveways means we are more aware of the number of non-compliant driveways while trying to enforce current ordinance standards.

Staff has discussed some options to address this situation. One would be no change, which includes enforcement for new and existing driveways; two would be to make clear from the date of the administrative permitting ordinance going forward, all residential driveways must meet the 25' width and enforcement will occur if new or pre-existing driveways do not, or three to modify the ordinance to permit larger driveways were appropriate. Staff is recommending modifying the ordinance and allowing driveway curb cuts up to 30' for properties that are over 65' in lot width at the front property line. The 65' restriction is so there is ample room for the driveway, snow storage and maneuvering without negatively impacting adjacent neighbors. The language will mean that some residential lots, particularly cul de sac lots and some properties in older neighborhoods in the community will not be eligible for the larger curb cuts. However, narrower lots may also mean that a third stall garage will not "fit" on the site and the need for a wider curb cut is diminished.

One of the goals for enforcement of ordinances is to be able uniformly apply regulations across like properties. Since starting the administrative permit process for residential driveways, it has become clearer that there are many driveways that do not comply with the ordinance standard and would be considered illegal. A solution to some of the issues is to permit larger curb cuts for properties with larger frontage. Staff is recommending an ordinance amendment to increase the residential curb cut width to 30' on any lot that has a 65' or greater front lot line. This increase will bring many driveways into compliance and will reduce the potential conflicts between proposed new driveways and existing conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the draft ordinance.

Attachments:
Draft Ordinance Amendment