

City of Valdosta Land Development Regulations

Article 2 Development Design Standards

Section 302-8 Subdivision and Site Design

- (A) Purpose. The purpose of quality subdivision and site design is to create a functional and attractive development, to minimize adverse impacts, and to ensure a project that will be an asset to the community. To promote this purpose, any proposed subdivision and site plan shall conform to the following standards that are designed to result in a well-planned community without adding unnecessarily to development costs.
- (B) Basis for Proper Planning and Design.
- (1) Site context.
 - (2) Geology and soil.
 - (3) Topography.
 - (4) Climate.
 - (5) Ecology and environment.
 - (6) Existing vegetation.
 - (7) Existing structures.
 - (8) Road networks.
 - (9) Existing and planned utilities
 - (10) Visual features.
 - (11) Past and present use of site.
 - (12) Local and regional plans for the City of Valdosta and surrounding communities.
- (C) Suitability of the Land. Land physically unsuitable for subdivision or development because of flooding, poor drainage, topographic, geological, or other features that may endanger the health, life, or property, aggravate erosion, increase flood hazard, or necessitate excessive expenditures of public funds for supply and maintenance of services shall not be approved for subdivision or development unless adequate methods are implemented in the site design for solving these problems.
- (D) Conformance to the Comprehensive Plan. All subdivision plats and site development plans shall conform to the maps, policies, and text of the Comprehensive Plan.
- (E) Conformance to Zoning. All subdivision plats and site development plans shall conform to the Official Zoning Map of the City of Valdosta and Title 2 of the LDR.
- (F) Conformance to the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Functional Classification System for the City of Valdosta. Streets and rights-of-way for streets that are part of the state or federal highway system shall conform in location, width, design, and construction standards of the latest GDOT Functional Classification System for the City of Valdosta.
- (G) Conformance to Regulations of Health Department and State and Federal Agencies. All subdivision plats and site development plans shall conform to the regulations promulgated by the Lowndes County Board of Health, and the requirements of state and federal agencies, such as but not limited to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

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(H) Dedication or Reservation of Public Lands.

- (1) When public land uses or facilities required by the Comprehensive Plan or other plans adopted by the City of Valdosta or other public agencies of the State of Georgia are located in whole or in part in a subdivision or site development plan requiring a permit from the City of Valdosta, such features shall be either dedicated or reserved by the developer for acquisition within a reasonable length of time by the appropriate public agency.
- (2) Land dedicated for public rights-of-way or easements shall be suitable for their public purpose. No cross-slopes with a ratio less than 3:1 (horizontal: vertical) shall be permitted within rights-of-way or easements.

(I) Subdivision Name. The name of the subdivision shall be reviewed and approved by the Director. Any proposed names shall not duplicate nor closely approximate the name of an existing subdivision or development.

Section 302-9 Design of Lots

(A) Unbuildable Lots Prohibited. No preliminary plat shall be approved on which is shown a flag lot or other lot or parcel of land that would require a variance to be developed or used or that is otherwise unlawful or unbuildable, whether due to the presence of a floodplain, configuration, lack of public utilities, or other physical impediments.

(B) Lot Design Standards. All lots established in connection with the development of a subdivision shall comply with the following design standards unless the proposed subdivision is covered by approved variances or conditions of zoning that take precedence:

- (1) Insofar as practical, side lot lines shall be perpendicular to street lines, unless otherwise approved by the Director.
- (2) Each lot shall contain at least sixty (60) feet of street frontage, except for lots fronting on cul-de-sacs that shall abut a public street with at least forty-five (45) feet of street frontage. All lots shall comply with Section 214-1.
- (3) Each lot intended for building development shall contain a building site with the required buildable area that is outside the limits of floodways, easements, buffers, and building setback lines as required by this LDR.
 - (a) For residential districts, as defined in Chapter 214, the minimum buildable area per lot shall be 1,000 square feet in a single polygon.
 - (b) For non-residential districts, as defined in Chapter 214, the minimum buildable area shall be equal or greater than 125% of the square footage of the first floors of all structures on the lot.
- (4) Subdivisions shall be designed to minimize direct lot access to major thoroughfares. Reverse frontage lots shall be required for residential subdivisions along the State Highway System or other arterials or collectors where internal access can be provided. An easement of at least fifteen (15) feet in width, across which there shall be no right of access, shall be provided along the line of lots abutting such a traffic artery. Said easement shall be landscaped with trees, fencing and plant materials consistent with Chapter 328 and any applicable design guidelines.
- (5) Lot remnants that constitute reserve strips shall be prohibited. Such remnant areas shall be added to adjacent lots, or dedicated rights-of-way rather than remain as unusable parcels.
- (6) No lot shall be created that is of a lesser dimension than that required to meet the frontage, minimum setbacks and yards established in Chapter 214 and Chapter 206 unless a variance is granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals. However, this provision shall not apply when a conforming lot is made non-conforming as a result of public acquisition.

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- (7) No lot shall be reduced in size less than the minimum lot area established in Chapter 214 and Chapter 206 except due to public acquisition.
 - (8) All finished floor elevations shall be a minimum of 6" higher than the highest point of the curb between property lines.
- (C) Political Boundaries. No lot line of a lot established in connection with the development of a subdivision shall cross over the corporate limits of the City of Valdosta.

Section 302-10 Required Easements

- (A) General.
- (1) All required easements must be shown on the preliminary plat or site development plan.
 - (2) Areas required for easements cannot be counted as part of any setbacks or yards required by the applicable zoning district regulations.
 - (3) Areas required for easements shall not be obstructed by fences or walls other than those permitted for an approved stormwater management plan per Chapter 310 of the LDR.
 - (4) Any trees or other vegetation planted in the easement that need to be removed due to work in the easement shall be removed and replaced by the property owner or a contractor hired on his or her behalf.
 - (5) The use of common trenches for the installation of communication and electric utility equipment is permitted and encouraged.
- (B) Utility Easements. Unless underground utilities are provided, utility easements for overhead services that are not adjacent to street rights-of-way shall be a minimum width of 20 feet and located at the rear or side of lot lines. These requirements shall not prevent the use of initial blanket easements as long as, when fixed, they meet the minimum width of 20 feet and are located at the rear or side of lot lines. Utility easements shall be shown on all plans and dedicated to the appropriate utility company or to the City of Valdosta.
- (C) Drainage Easements. Drainage easement shall be provided as required by the City Engineer. Drainage easements located outside of the right-of-way shall follow side and rear lot lines, shall not be bisected by property lines, and shall be a minimum of 20 feet in width, unless the City Engineer determines a greater width is necessary for construction and maintenance.

Section 302-11 Streets and Driveways

- (A) Connectivity. See also Section 332-2.
- (1) Where feasible, a proposed subdivision shall provide a street system that is interconnected with the existing or planned street system, subject to the following requirements:
 - (a) Proposed streets shall be extended to the boundary lines of the tract to be subdivided unless prevented by topography or other physical conditions.
 - (b) Whenever a tract of land that is to be subdivided abuts a street stub or dead-end street, the design of the streets within the subdivision shall be arranged so that the abutting streets or rights-of-way are continued through the new subdivision and connected with other adjoining streets.
 - (c) Cul-de-sacs are discouraged, except where streams, lakes, geological or topographical features make through-connections infeasible.

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- (d) Cul-de-sacs longer than 500 feet are prohibited. Length is measured from the nearest street right-of-way line with which the cul-de-sac intersects to the center of its diameter. See Section 332-4(E).
 - (e) When cul-de-sacs are necessary, the City Engineer may require that access easements be provided through one or more lots from the cul-de-sac to another nearby public street in order to ensure interconnected access for pedestrians, bicycles, and emergency vehicles to through-streets and multi-use trails.
- (2) In order to ensure emergency access, every subdivision meeting the standards of Section 302-23 shall have the minimum number of access points required by the table set forth in LDR Section 332-2(E). If two or more public street entrances to a subdivision occur along the same existing street, the entrances shall have adequate sight distance, and be no less than 400 feet apart if on a local street, or 600 feet apart if on a street classified as collector or arterial street on the GDOT Functional Classification System, or as required by the City Engineer.
- (3) The Director is authorized to grant administrative variances to sub-Sections 302-11(A),(B) and (D) as provided in Section 242-13.
- (B) Access Management.
- (1) Driveways shall meet access management standards in Section 332-2.
 - (2) Street jogs with centerline offsets of less than 150 feet are prohibited.
 - (3) An un-signalized driveway entrance onto a street classified as an arterial or collector shall provide a deceleration lane as required in Section 332-3(D).
 - (4) Deceleration lanes also may be required by the City Engineer if considered necessary for traffic safety based on traffic volumes and sight distance.
- (C) Private Gates.
- (1) Use of private gates across a private driveway that provides access to two or more lots shall be subject to approval of the City Engineer. See 332-2(G).
 - (2) Gates placed across the entrance to a private development or a private driveway at the intersection with a public street shall be setback a minimum of 35 feet from the right-of-way of the public street in order to provide queuing space and not impede traffic on public streets.
- (D) Private Streets. Private streets are permitted at the discretion of the City Engineer and must meet all requirements of this section and Chapter 332 Public Improvements and shall be inspected by the City Engineer.
- (E) Roadway Construction. All phases of roadway construction shall be in accordance with the current Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) specifications except what is shown herewithin.

Section 302-12 Monumentation

- (A) Boundary Monument. All subdivisions of residential property resulting in a total of three or more parcels and all subdivisions or site developments consisting of non-residential property without regard to the number of resulting parcels shall have a boundary monument installed on its boundary with public rights-of-way.
- (B) Construction. All monuments set shall be composed of a durable material and shall incorporate a ferrous material to aid in location by magnetic locators. Said monuments shall have a minimum length of 18 inches. Longer monuments are required in soils less likely to hold and maintain the true position of the monument. Said monuments composed of solid metal rods shall have a minimum cross sectional area of 0.2 square inches. Concrete, composite or stone monuments

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shall have a minimum dimension of 3 inches by 3 inches. Every boundary monument set shall be identified with a durable marker or cap bearing the Georgia registration number of the responsible land surveyor of the name of the business entity and/or Certification of Authorization number (COA#).

- (C) Map Registration and Accuracy. Measurement units should be in U.S. Survey feet. The location, bearing and distance of the point of beginning from either: the intersection of two public rights-of-way, the intersection of those street/road surface centerlines, a point-of-reference of the surveyors choosing located with GPS equipment capable of sub-meter accuracy or better with notations on the plat referencing this position expressed in Georgia State Plane (West), datum NAD 1983 coordinates, shall be shown.
- (D) Street Corners. Solid steel rods at least ½ inch in diameter and 24 inches long or concrete posts at least 3.5 inches square and 18 inches long shall be set at all street ROW corners.
- (E) Lot Corners. All other lot corners shall be marked with solid steel rods not less than ½ inch in diameter, and at least 24 inches long.

Section 302-13 Street Naming

- (A) Street Names. The names of streets shall be reviewed and approved by the Director. Proposed street names shall not duplicate nor closely approximate the name of an existing street.

Section 302-14 Property Numbering

- (A) The intent of this section is to establish a uniform system of property numbering for the City, to provide the method for instituting such a system, and for the enforcement thereof.
- (B) A uniform system of numbering properties, as shown on the official City zoning maps, shall be on file in the office of the Director.
- (C) All legal lots of record within the City may be identified by reference to the property numbering system in this section.
- (D) Any new structure built in the City shall conform to the provisions of this section before occupancy.
- (E) The assignment of numbers shall be as follows:
 - (1) A separate number shall be allowed for each 20-foot interval along a road or street (except where dictated otherwise by street alignment) within each land lot.
 - (2) Lots located on the north and west side of a street shall be assigned only even numbers, and the lots located on the south and east side of the street shall be assigned only odd numbers. This odd/even numbering pattern shall be maintained in a consistent manner along the full extent of each street and new streets shall be consistent with the pattern set by existing streets.
 - (3) The City shall be divided into four quadrants: N.E., S.E., S.W., and N.W., and the quadrant designation shall follow the street address for each property. The east-west base quadrant line shall be Patterson Street. The north-south base quadrant line shall Hill Avenue.
 - (4) The numbers shall increase as distance from the base quadrant lines increases.
 - (5) Any structure that is occupied by more than one business or dwelling unit shall be assigned one number. However, each business or dwelling unit shall be assigned a separate unit letter.

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- (F) The owner of any improved parcel of land in the City shall cause the official assigned street numbers required by this section for such parcel to be posted in a conspicuous place in front of the principal entrance for each primary structure located thereon. Such number shall be affixed or painted on or adjacent to the front entrance or shall be affixed or painted on the mailbox for that entrance provided that such mailbox is clearly associated with the structure to which it refers; and such street number shall be painted on the street curb at the closest point of such curb to the relevant entrance. This requirement shall not be applicable if no street curb exists.
- (G) Numerals used for property numbering purposes shall be made of a durable material or shall be painted of a durable and weather-resistant paint and shall contrast in color with the background upon which they are placed or painted. Such numbers shall be posted or painted in numerals of no less than 2½ inches in height, except that where such numbers are more than 50 feet from a public right-of-way they shall be a minimum of 6 inches in height. All numerals required by this section shall be maintained in good condition at all times. All numerals shall be kept free of obstructions at all times so that they are clearly visible from the street right-of-way.
- (H) The Department shall issue to any property owner in the City upon request the number assigned to that property in accordance with the provisions of this section. The Director shall assign additional numbers in the same manner whenever a property is subdivided or a new front entrance opened.
- (I) The Department shall be responsible for recording and maintaining the numbering system on the zoning maps. In the performance of this responsibility, Director shall be guided by the provisions of this section.

Section 302-15 through 302-19 Reserved