



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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TO: Planning Commissioners Agenda of: February 27, 2014

FROM: Roger Trout Item No.: 2  
Development Services Division Director

DATE: February 27, 2014

RE: **TM12-1508/Valley View Village Lot X; Recommended Design Waiver Findings**

### DISCUSSION

Staff inadvertently left off a design waiver from the staff report. The design waiver is depicted on the Tentative Map, but was not identified in the staff report discussion of design waivers or the design waiver findings. It is staff's opinion that there is no requirement to continue the hearing or post new legal advertisement for this particular design waiver. This design waiver is regarding the road geometry of the subdivision as shown on the Tentative Map. Anyone interested in the design standards of this subdivision would see by looking at the Tentative Map that the proposed primary access gate location and access roads depict a relatively close set of road curves in the subdivision. In addition, the Tentative Map specifically calls out the three locations where the road centerline curves are less than 100 feet (99 feet, 81 feet, and 81 feet respectively). Based on the nature of these design waivers, staff is recommending that the Planning Commission accept staff's recommendation and approve the street geometry design waiver along with the project.

### ANALYSES

The County Subdivision Design Improvement Standards Manual (DISM) includes a standard for minimum centerline curve radius length of subdivision streets (DISM Section 3.B.7) and standards for tangent length between reversed curves (DISM Section 3.B.6). They are being addressed as a single design waiver because they are interrelated road geometry standards.

DISM Section 3.B.6 requires the minimum tangent length between reversed curves to be 100 feet. The purpose of this standard is to provide a safe transition while negotiating a County road with a reversed curve at normal speed, such as minimum 25 mph for a local road. This design waiver can be justified because of the location of the reversing curves. They occur at the gated

entrance of the residential subdivision, where most vehicles will travel slowly or be at a stop, waiting for the gates to open.

DISM Section 3.B.7 requires the minimum centerline curve radius of 100 feet for local streets and 300 feet for minor collector streets. The purpose of the standard is to ensure comfortable and safe vehicular traffic movement. When the radius is shorter, the turn in the road is tighter. Longer radii are needed for faster traffic and higher traffic volumes. This subdivision's traffic will be very low speed and very low volume. The subdivision is gated, has only 61 dwelling units. It is designed in a compact development style not typical of other El Dorado County developments for which the Design Manual was intended. The reduction in the standard will still maintain an 80 foot radii minimum.

The road geometry design waiver has been reviewed by the project engineer, Fire Department and County Transportation Division and they have determined the design waiver to be safe and appropriate. The following Findings are recommended by staff pursuant to Title 16 and the Design Manual:

**4.2 Reductions in road geometry standards:**

- a. reduce minimum 100 foot distance between reversed curves (DISM Section 3.B.6), and**
- b. reduce the minimum center line curve radius length from 100 feet to 80 feet, (DISM Section 3.B.7).**

**4.2.1 There are special conditions or circumstances peculiar to the property proposed to be subdivided which would justify the waiver.**

The project is within the Valley View Specific Plan with specified densities and overall development cap. The reduced road geometry standards would assist in accommodating the desired density for the specific plan. This village has a limited development area. Even with relatively flat topography this property has a limited development area when coupled with other existing constraints (easements, MM BR-9 wetland setbacks, improvements and proposed future county improvements) the road geometry standards would reduce an effective development area even further.

**4.2.2 Strict application of the design or improvement requirements of Chapter 16 of the County Code would cause extraordinary and unnecessary hardship in developing the property.**

Maintaining the standard road geometry standards would limit available area for housing, eliminating the ability to create smaller lots and houses to target a specific, underserved market in the plan area. Standard 100 foot radii and reversed curve requirements would unnecessarily reduce the land area available for the proposed lots in the proposed Core Residential area, which is intended to accommodate a higher density of residential development pursuant to the Valley View Specific Plan.

**4.2.3 The waiver would not be injurious to adjacent properties or detrimental to the health, safety, convenience and welfare of the public.**

The road geometry design waiver has been reviewed by the Transportation Division and El Dorado Hills Fire Department and they find that adequate access, parking and emergency vehicle circulation can be accommodated. Sufficient pedestrian circulation has been provided to minimize vehicular/pedestrian conflicts. This village and residential product is different than most areas of the County with smaller lots (less than 6,000 square feet compared to 12,000 square foot typical), narrower street surfaces (25 feet compared to 28 and 36 foot typical), reduced road right-of-ways (38 feet compared to 50 foot typical), and reduced front yard setbacks (15 feet compared to 20 feet typical). The more compact development tends to reduce local road traffic speeds and allows safe implementation of reduced road geometry standards. Therefore, the proposed design waiver is not expected to be detrimental to the health, safety, convenience, and welfare of the public due to the low traffic volume and low vehicular speeds local streets found in this gated village.

**4.2.4 The waiver would not have the effect of nullifying the objectives of this Article II of Chapter 16 of the County Code or any other law or ordinance applicable to the subdivision.**

The waiver would not nullify other provisions of Title 16 or the development standards of the Valley View Specific Plan, which does not have specific standards for road geometry. The proposed improvements otherwise meet existing County standards to a practicable extent and therefore would not have the effect of nullifying the overall objectives of Article II of Chapter 16 of the County Code or any other ordinance.