



CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA - City Manager

DATE OF MEETING: January 12, 2026

ITEM TITLE: First Reading of an Ordinance amendment to Chapter 175 - Subdivision Regulations

BACKGROUND:

This item was discussed at the January 5, 2026, City Council Work Session. The City recently adopted the Statewide Urban Design and Specifications (SUDAS) program to standardize our engineering design and construction practices. Following this adoption, staff conducted a comprehensive review of Chapter 175 (Subdivision Regulations) to identify areas where our existing Code differed from these new statewide standards. This review revealed several sections within Chapter 175 that relied on outdated "City standards" or contained specific dimensional requirements that conflicted with SUDAS.

DISCUSSION:

This ordinance amends Chapter 175 to reference SUDAS directly, ensuring clarity for developers and engineers working in Independence. The amendment addresses the following key areas to align with the technical manuals we have adopted:

- **Street Design:** Pavement widths, street grades, and geometric design criteria are updated to align with SUDAS Design Manual Chapter 5. This includes adjusting cul-de-sac standards to meet fire code and SUDAS recommendations.
- **Stormwater Management:** The update mandates the use of SUDAS design methodologies for hydrology and intake spacing to ensure drainage systems meet modern performance standards.
- **Utilities:** Water and sanitary sewer standards are aligned with SUDAS, including critical separation requirements mandated by the Iowa DNR and updated fire hydrant spacing.
- **Sidewalks:** Construction standards are updated to match SUDAS specifications, supporting better accessibility and long-term durability.

Adopting these amendments ensures consistency in our regulations and reduces confusion during the plan review process.

RESULTS:

The City has established priorities during strategic planning sessions. This item supports the Vision from that session of **supporting and enhancing City infrastructure** and **efficient and effective planning and prioritizing of all available resources**. This item helps achieve that vision by ensuring that future public improvements are built to the high standards established by the SUDAS program and by streamlining the development requirements into a single, consistent standard.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

Once the new supplement has been mailed to City Hall, fees will need to be paid to Simmering-Cory Iowa Codification. Additional publication costs will also be incurred.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends a motion to approve the first reading of an ordinance that amends provisions pertaining to Chapter 175 – Subdivision Regulations.

Staff recommends a motion to suspend the statutory rule requiring an ordinance to be considered and voted on for passage at two council meetings prior to the meeting at which it is to be finally passed.

Staff recommends a motion to have this ordinance, which amends provisions pertaining to Chapter 175 – Subdivision Regulations, be placed on its final passage for adoption pursuant to Iowa Code Section 380.3 and to authorize the Mayor to sign the Ordinance. The changes will be effective upon the ordinance summary being published in the newspaper.