

From: John Shepardson [REDACTED] >

Sent: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 3:53 PM

To: Council <Council@losgatosca.gov>

Subject: The Meadows (Broadway Access Road//EIR Environmentally Superior Alternative No. 3//Maintenance of Open Space)

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Dear Mayor and Council:

Please add these comments to the record for this project and I suggest one or more of the points be raised in the consent calendar.

One, it was not clear after the meeting discussion what the parameters of the access road off Broadway were.

Two, upon review of this: <https://mccmeetingspublic.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/losgatos-meet-8a715afca81849df8aa0439c7e187c27/ITEM-Attachment-004-b57c28d997cc4f45ac9c89f23775e57c.pdf>

it is clear there will be a 15 foot secondary access road and apparently the SCC Fire Department signed off. I think it is very important that all the roads to the facility be sufficiently wide to allow for rapid evacuation of large numbers of people.



Three,

Santa Clara County's minimum width for access roads is 18 feet, with 3-foot shoulders on each side. These requirements apply to private roads and driveways that serve new or expanded residential properties.

Additional requirements

- Shoulders must be able to support full loading and be drivable in all weather conditions
- The Fire Marshal's Office may require wider roads to ensure adequate emergency access
- These standards apply to all properties in unincorporated Santa Clara County

Where to find more information

- The County Land Development Engineering Standards (LDE) govern access roads in Santa Clara County

- The Santa Clara County Fire Marshal's Office has standards that apply to access roads and driveways
- The Fire Marshal's Office may have additional requirements for access roads

Related information

- The Santa Clara County Assessor's Office Property Assessment Information System can help determine APN numbers
- The Santa Clara County Assessor's Office can be contacted at (408) 299-5500
- County of Santa Clara

Apr 20, 2021 — 2. Access Roads: minimum width shall be 18 feet with a 3-foot shoulder on each side, in compliance with County Land De...



- Santa Clara County Fire Department
- County of Santa Clara - NET

Apr 20, 2021 — SANTA CLARA COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE ... This standard is applicable to access roads and driveways serving new or ...

stgenpln.blob.core.windows.net

-

Four, Fire Trucks

The California Code of Regulations (CCR) allows fire trucks to have a maximum width of 120 inches. The pertinent statement is copied below:

(g) Fire trucks may exceed width limitations provided in Division 15 of the California Vehicle Code but cannot exceed 120 inches.

Five, EIR: I respectfully prefer alternative 3, but that train has left the station.

DRAFT
CEQA FINDINGS OF FACT

for

*110 Wood Road – Los Gatos Meadows Senior
Living Community*

Planned Development Application PD-20-001

SCH # 2021020007



Town Council
Town of Los Gatos

February 2025

EXHIBIT A

[ITEM-Attachment-002-a1292ea214004735a9c8ae19b767f8af](#)

[PDF Document · 853 KB](#)

Alternative 3: Reduced Scale - Removal of Villas B and C

from Proposed Site Plan

The reduced scale alternative (“reduced scale alternative”) consists of a reduction in development capacity sufficient to avoid or reduce significant, but mitigable, impacts associated with grading and removal of trees required to accommodate Villas B and C and a

Draft – February 2025 17

CEQA Findings of Fact Town of Los Gatos | 110 Wood Road – Los Gatos Meadows Senior Living Community EIR

corresponding area of the grade level below on the northwestern corner of the proposed site plan. The reduced scale alternative would reduce the number of living units by 20 units (Villa B) and 29 units (Villa C), for a total reduction of 49 units, and would result in the reduction of approximately 98,374 square feet of floor space in Villas B and C, approximately 26,000 square feet of floor space from the grade level including portions of the health center, and approximately 26,000 square feet of developed area (building footprints). In addition, this alternative could result in removing approximately 62 fewer trees. Removal of Villa B (70.5 feet in height) and Villa C (81.5 feet in height) would also help reduce visual impacts associated with scenic views from downtown Los Gatos towards the project site and scenic hillside areas beyond as these two buildings would be two of the most publicly visible buildings from multiple vantage points.

D. Environmentally Superior Alternative

Based on a comparison of the impacts of each alternative, Alternative 1, the no project alternative is the environmentally superior alternative. It would avoid all of the project’s less-

than-significant impacts, and significant but mitigable impacts. However, this alternative would not meet the project objectives.

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(e)(2) states that if the environmentally superior alternative is the “no project” alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. Alternative 3, the Reduced Scale alternative, is considered to be the environmentally superior alternative among the remaining alternatives. It is the only alternative that could accomplish some of the basic project objectives while minimally reducing some of the less-than-significant and/or significant and mitigable environmental impacts identified for the proposed project. (emphasis added)

Five,



California roads not designed to handle wildfire evacuations | Destined to Burn
chicoer.com



[Fire-Safe Roads for Wildfire Resiliency](#)

greenbelt.org

When wildfires force people to flee their homes, they must depend on reliable and accessible roads to lead them to safety. To protect lives and homes, firefighters must be able to maneuver large fire trucks and equipment on these same roads. When the roads twist and are narrow and there is only one way out, tragedy can strike. Evacuees get caught in traffic jams and firefighters can't get there fast enough. California roads are not designed for [massive wildfire evacuation](#). (Emphases added)

As the loss of life and home to wildfires has escalated due to the climate crisis, the safety of roads and the number of homes and people who live in high fire risk areas is under scrutiny like never before. That's why over the next year the State of California is revisiting and revising decades-old regulations that set standards for fire-safe roads and the homes and businesses they serve in high-risk fire areas.

To help achieve more fire-safe roads and wildfire resilience across the state, Greenbelt Alliance is weighing in on the updating of regulations that govern roads and new development in fire-prone lands mapped as "State Responsibility Areas" (SRA) by [CalFire](#). An estimated 2.7 million Californians live in what CalFire designates as "[Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones](#)". These lands are also known as the [wildland-urban interface](#).

CalFire sets standards for things like road grades, road surfaces, passing areas, gates, signage on dead-ends and "critical" secondary access to any subdivision. The standards provide for rebuilding of homes that burned down while requiring that they meet the latest fire-safe construction methods. The fire-safe-roads revisions will apply primarily to new development.

Six, I respectfully would like to see some legal requirement that the apparent five acres of open space be maintained to minimize fire risk and an annual report be issued to the town confirming it. This is a minimal cost and time item and yet serves as an annual reminder to get it done.

Respectfully,

John

John Shepardson

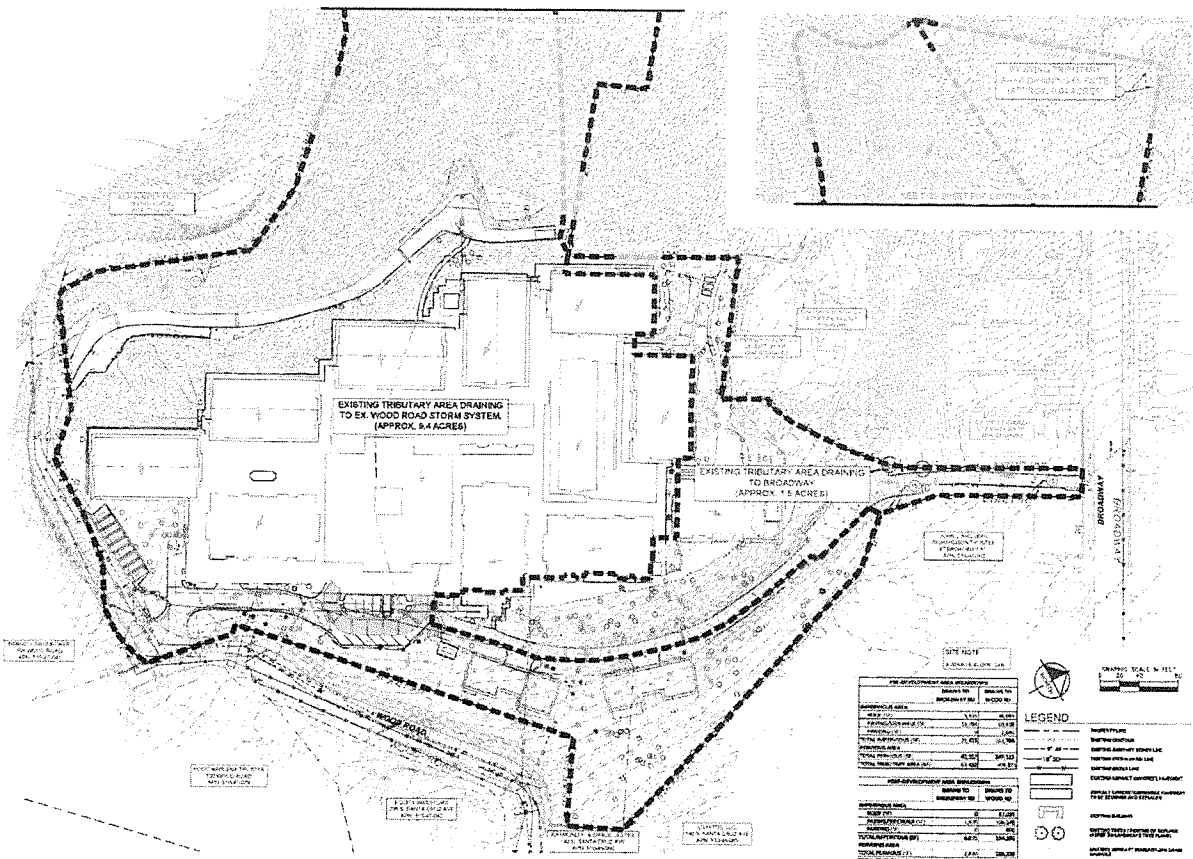
Attorney at Law

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Project: C101.1 - New Single-Family Residential Development - 118 Wood Road, Los Gatos, CA 95030
 Date: 08/20/2014
 Author: JLD



PER DEPARTMENT AREA PERMITS

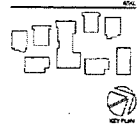
Category	Area (Acres)	Volume (cu ft)
Stormwater	14.40	10,000
Grading	14.40	10,000
Earth Retention	14.40	10,000
Other	14.40	10,000
TOTAL PERMITS	14.40	10,000

LEGEND

- Proposed
- Existing
- Utility
- Other

NO. DATE

1	08/20/14
2	
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8	
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Project:
 118 WOOD ROAD
 LOS GATOS, CA 95030

Client:
 [Redacted]

Design:
 JLD

Check:
 [Redacted]

Scale:
 1" = 40' (AS SHOWN)

PROJECT TITLE
LOS GATOS MEADOWS
 118 WOOD ROAD
 LOS GATOS, CA 95030

PROJECT No. T056 L03
DRAINAGE No.
EXISTING DRAINAGE PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 40' (AS SHOWN)
C101.1
 PLANNING SUBMITTAL
 2014-08-20



STANDARD DETAILS & SPECIFICATIONS SUBJECT: Access Roads and Driveways for One and Two-Family Dwellings and Associated Structures	Spec No	A-1
	Review Date	_____
	Revis. Date	04/20/21
	Eff. Date	07/01/03
	Approved By	J. Linney
	Page	1 of 6

SCOPE

This standard is applicable to access roads and driveways serving new or expanded one and two-family dwellings and/or associated structures on residential properties where any portion of the protected structure(s) is in excess of 200 feet from the centerline of a public or private roadway (measured by an approved route around the exterior of the building). Specifications contained in this standard apply to all properties located within unincorporated Santa Clara County.

AUTHORITY

California Fire Code (CFC) and Applicable Municipal/Town Codes and Standards.

DEFINITIONS

Access Road: A vehicular access roadway serving more than two developed residential parcels of land.

Driveway: A vehicular access serving not more than two developed residential parcels of land.

Ranchlands: Designated as "AR" by the County Planning Department per the Santa Clara County Zoning Ordinance.

Turnaround: A clear, unobstructed driving surface which allows for a safe change of direction for emergency equipment.

County of Santa Clara

Department of Planning and Development

Santa Clara County Fire Marshal's Office
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, CA 95110
Phone: (408) 341-4420
<https://plandev.santaclaracounty.gov/>



Turnout: A widening of the driving surface to allow fire department vehicles to pass one another.

State Response Area: All lands in which the financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires is primarily the responsibility of the state. SRA lands are subject to the requirements set forth under Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations [REF: **Public Resources Code § 4290**].

REQUIREMENTS

These are minimum Fire Marshal standards. Should these standards conflict with any other local, state, or federal requirements, the most restrictive shall apply

I. Timing/Penalties

- A. The minimum requirements of this standard shall be met prior to commencement of wood framing in order to provide adequate emergency service response during construction. A stop-work order may be placed on construction projects found not in compliance by the Fire Marshal's Office.
- B. Properties located within the State Response Area (SRA) are subject to concurrent review by CAL FIRE to enforce regulations set forth under Public Resources Code § 4290.

II. Driveways and Access Roads

A. Width of Driving Surface

1. Driveways: driveway width shall provide a minimum drivable surface of 12 feet excluding shoulders.
2. Access Roads: minimum width shall be 18 feet with a 3-foot shoulder on each side, in compliance with County Land Development Engineering Standards (LDE): LDE-SD-1 *Private Road*, LDE-SD-2 *Private Access Road (Hillside Conditions)*, or LDE-SD-3 *Private Access Road (Non-Hillside Conditions)*. NOTE: shoulders shall be capable of supporting full loading and shall be drivable in all weather conditions. Greater widths may be required by the Fire Marshal's Office to provide adequate emergency access.

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- a. State Response Area (SRA) – Access road width shall be a minimum of 20 feet per Public Resource Code §4290.

B. Vertical Clearance:

1. Driveways and Access Roads: the vertical clearance shall be a minimum of 13 feet, 6 inches [CFC § 503.2.1].
 - a. State Responsibility Area (SRA) excluding Ranchlands (AR): the vertical clearance shall be a minimum of 15 feet in accordance with Public Resource Code §4290.

C. Grade:

1. Maximum grade shall not exceed 15% (6.75 degrees). On grades up to 15%, the surface shall provide all-weather driving capability, including sufficient drainage and surface course consistent with good engineering practices. The Fire Marshal's Office may permit grades up to a maximum of 20% with mitigation to prevent slippage and scraping. Grades in excess of 15% shall be engineered asphalt, concrete, or another surface meeting LDE-SD-5 Single Lot Driveway. In no case shall each portion exceeding 15% gradient be longer than 300 feet in length. There is to be a minimum of 100 feet driveway length of 15% or less gradient between each 300-foot section.
 - a. State Responsibility Area (SRA) excluding Ranchlands (AR): maximum grade shall not exceed 16%.

D. Turning Radius for Curves:

1. Driveways and Access Roads: the minimum inside turning radius shall be 42 feet as measured from the edge of the approved surface.
 - a. State Responsibility Area (SRA) excluding Ranchlands (AR): no roadway shall have a horizontal inside radius of curvature of less than 50 feet, and an additional surface width of 4 feet shall be added to 50-100 feet radius; 2 feet to those from 100-200 feet.

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E. Turnouts:

1. Driveways: driveways in excess of 500 feet shall be provided with passing turnouts at no more than 500-foot intervals. Turnouts shall be 10 feet wide by 30 feet long with a minimum 25-foot taper on each end in accordance with CFMO-SD16; *Standard Turnarounds & Turnouts*.
 - a. State Responsibility Area (SRA) excluding Ranchlands (AR): driveways exceeding 150 feet in length, but less than 800 feet in length, shall provide a turnout near the midpoint of the driveway. Where the driveway exceeds 800 feet, turnouts shall be provided no more than 400 feet apart. Turnouts shall be a minimum of 10 feet wide and 30 feet long, with a minimum 25-foot taper on each end.

F. Turnarounds:

1. Driveways and Access Roads: dead-end fire apparatus driveways and access roads in excess of 150 feet in length shall be provided with an approved turnaround meeting CFMO-SD16. Due to practical difficulties, variations to CFMO-SD16, may be approved by the Fire Marshal's Office and Land Development Engineering on a case-by-case basis. All turnarounds shall have a maximum slope of 5% in any direction. Placement of any architectural feature within a turnaround is not permitted unless all requirements are met.

G. Surface:

1. Driveways and Access Roads: driveways and access road surfaces shall be designed and maintained to support a 75,000 pound fire apparatus, designed for the latest edition of Caltrans Standard. Access roads shall be engineered asphalt, concrete or another surface meeting County Ordinance.

NOTE: For driveways and access roads not subject to Land Development Engineering review and permit, provide geotechnical engineer's proposed roadway design section, sufficient to meet loading capacity and all-weather driving capability. An observation letter for the construction of the design section shall be submitted prior to project final.

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2. For alternative roadway surfaces such as "Turf Block" or other materials that blend into landscaping and/or that do not readily appear to be driving surfaces, the boundary edges of the alternate material shall be delineated as approved by the fire code official. Delineation shall be concrete curbs, borders, posts or other means that clearly indicate the location and extent of the driving surface. Alternate surface materials may be approved by an alternate means/method request submittal on a case-by-case basis.

H. Angle of Approach:

1. Driveways: the approach to a driveway shall be designed and constructed per LDE-SD-4 *Driveway Approach*.

I. Bridges and Culverts:

1. Where a bridge or an elevated surface is part of a fire apparatus access road, the bridge shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with AASHTO HB17.
2. All bridges, elevated surfaces and culverts shall be designed for a live load sufficient to carry the imposed load of a fire apparatus weighing at least 75,000 pounds. Vehicle load limits shall be posted at the entrance to the bridge. Additional signs may be required by the fire code official. Where elevated surfaces designed for emergency vehicle use are adjacent to surfaces which are not designed for such use, approved barriers, approved signs or both shall be installed and maintained when required by the fire code official.

J. Gates:

1. Driveways and Access Roads: all gates crossing driveways shall comply with Fire Marshal's Office Standard Detail and Specification CFMO-A3 *Installation of Security Gates for Access Roads and Driveways*.
 - a. State Responsibility Area (SRA) excluding Ranchlands (AR): gate entrances shall be at least two feet wider than the width of the traffic lane(s) serving the gate. All gates providing access from a road to a

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driveway shall be located at least 30 feet from the roadway and shall open to allow a vehicle to stop without obstructing traffic on that road.

K. Secondary Access Roads:

1. Access Roads: more than one fire apparatus road shall be provided when it is determined by the Fire Marshal that access by a single road might be impaired by vehicle congestion, condition of terrain, climatic conditions or other factors that could limit access [CFC §503.1.2].
 - a. State Responsibility Area (SRA) excluding Ranchlands (AR): the maximum length of a dead-end road, including all dead-end roads accessed from that dead-end road, shall not exceed the following cumulative lengths regardless of the number of parcels served:
 - i. Parcels zoned for less than one acre – 800 feet.
 - ii. Parcels zoned for 1 acre to 4.99 acres – 1,320 feet.
 - iii. Parcels zoned for 5 acres to 19.99 acres – 2,640 feet.
 - iv. Parcels zoned for 20 acres or larger – 5,280 feet,

All lengths shall be measured from the edge of the road surface at the intersection that begins the road to the end of the road surface at its farthest point. Where a dead-end road crosses areas of differing zoned parcel sizes requiring different length limits, the shortest allowable length shall apply.

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