



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 8/9/2011
Agenda Placement: 9B
Set Time: 10:00 AM PUBLIC HEARING
Estimated Report Time: 30 minutes

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Ridenhour, Don - Director
Public Works
REPORT BY: Nate Galambos, Engineering Manager Public Works - 259-8371
SUBJECT: County Road & Street Standards Update

RECOMMENDATION

Director of Public Works requests adoption of a resolution updating the Napa County Road and Street Standards.
(CONTINUED FROM JUNE 28 AND JULY 12, 2011)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Board of Supervisors (Board) held a public hearing on June 28, 2011, regarding the request to adopt a resolution updating the Napa County Road and Street Standards (Standards). During the June 28th meeting, the Board continued the agenda item to July 12, 2011, with direction to staff to make minor corrections addressing typographical errors and minor comments.

On July 12, 2011, the Board received the revised Standards from Public Works staff, entertained additional public comment, and held discussions regarding the Standards. The results of the July 12th meeting was the Board continuing the agenda item to August 9, 2011.

PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Staff reports.
2. Public comments.
3. Motion, second, discussion and vote on the item.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: General Rule. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the proposed action may have a significant effect on the environment and therefore CEQA is not applicable. [See Guidelines For the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, 14 CCR 15061(b)(3)].

(CONTINUED FROM JUNE 28, 2011 AND JULY 12, 2011)

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

On June 28, 2011, the Director of Public Works recommended that the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopt a resolution to update the Napa County Road and Street Standards (Standards). Discussion of the June 28th agenda item and public comments resulted in the Board directing Public Works to make typographical corrections and minor changes to address the public's concerns, and the item was continued to July 12, 2011.

During the Board meeting on July 12, 2011, Public Works presented the edited version of the proposed Standards, and additional public comment was heard. The public comment was focused on portions of the Standards that did not have proposed changes beyond typographical corrections. The Board held discussion of the item, which resulted in the Board continuing the item to August 9, 2011.

Following the Board meeting on July 12, staff met with one of the stakeholders who had participated in both hearings, and discussed potential language changes to address the concerns which had been raised. Slight modifications to the language in Sections 3 (Exceptions to Standards) and 15 (Design Criteria) are incorporated into the version which is recommended for approval today.

For reference, presented below is the background information from the July 12, 2011, agenda item.

June 28, 2011 Public Hearing

During discussions of the proposed update to the Standards at the Board meeting on June 28, 2011, Board members provided comments and corrections to the proposed update, as well as received several issues raised by Napa County residents. The comments, concerns and issues raised during the above-mentioned Board meeting covered both proposed changes to the Standards as well as portions of the existing Standards that were unchanged, and ranged from typos to subdivision road standards. The following is a summary of the concerns from the Board and the public along with staff responses:

Comment – Environmentally friendly alternative road surfaces for driveways, such as porous pavement, reduce impacts such as increased impervious pavement.

Staff Response – This item was not a proposed change to Standards, however, it was mentioned as a comment to the Standards overall. The intent of the existing Standards is to provide an all-weather road surface on driveways that is capable of carrying the load of a fire truck. While the existing Standards identify a specific material, they also indicate "equivalent," so the practice of staff is to require anyone requesting an alternative road surfacing to show how it can carry a fire truck load. Application of the Standards in this way allows staff to accommodate requirements of other portions of Napa County Code such as the Stormwater Ordinance (Chapter 16.28 of Napa County Code).

Comment – The concepts for subdivision design have changed over the years to meet the changing needs of how urban areas are designed to be more pedestrian friendly with walking and bike paths.

Staff Response – This item was not a proposed change to Standards, however, it was mentioned as a comment to the Standards overall. The requirements for subdivision road design in the existing Standards are based on concepts developed in 1971. While the County rarely processes subdivision applications, Public Works recognizes the paradigm shift in how subdivisions are designed and will be addressing this issue in the future through a complete revision of the Standards.

Comment – Why does the County require geologic investigations on 40 acre parcels in a Type II category per Section 20 of the Standards?

Staff Response – This item was not a proposed change to Standards, however, it was mentioned as a comment to the Standards overall. The requirement for a geologic investigation per Section 20 of the Standards is for developments 40 acres in size or larger (i.e. subdivisions) in hill areas. Additionally, the section also indicates that this requirement can be applied to developments smaller than 40 acres if the County Engineer considers it necessary. The geologic investigation ensures that roads will be designed in the most suitable location to ensure a stable road system for public safety and reduce the possibility of road reconstruction resulting from geologic failure.

Comment – The proposed changes are requiring driveways to be paved as shown on Detail P-2 of the Standards.

Staff Response – The detail P-2 was redrawn to incorporate a reduction in the required radius for the driveway apron, provide more flexibility for locating a culvert under the driveway apron and clarify the use of vertical curves for driveways that slope either up or down from the County road. Paving of the driveway apron as shown in Detail P-2 has been a requirement for driveway approaches connected to County roads since the Standards were first adopted in 1971. Paving of the driveway apron as it connects to the County road is needed to prevent the deterioration of the edge of pavement of the County road, from vehicles exiting and entering the driveway. It also helps prevent unwanted gravel being spread on the roadway and paved shoulder, creating a potential hazard for both motorists and bicyclists.

Comment – The triggers for requiring improvements to the driveway are confusing and seem to imply that property owners will have to improve the entire length of their existing driveways to the publicly maintained road.

Staff Response – The proposed update is intended to require a reasonable amount of improvements to an existing residential driveway (that does not meet the current Standards) based on the amount of improvement to a dwelling unit or accessory structure. Under the existing Standards, construction of any new dwelling unit or substantial improvement to an existing dwelling unit would require the property owner to improve their existing residential driveway to meet the driveway width requirement for the entire length of the driveway. The proposed change to the Standards is intended to have a property owner provide some improvement to an existing driveway (that does not meet the Standards) reasonably related to the level of improvement proposed on their property. The intention is to improve the ability of Cal Fire equipment and personnel to safely reach the residence in case of an emergency.

Comment – Widening a driveway that is on a steep slope would have significant environmental impacts and may not qualify for an exception under Section 3 of the Standards because no level of improvements would meet the "maximum extent practicable" criteria and therefore the project would be denied.

Staff Response – Under the existing Standards, construction of any new dwelling unit or substantial improvement to an existing dwelling unit would require a property owner to improve their existing driveway to meet the current driveway width standard, if the existing driveway did not meet this standard. If the driveway was located on a steep slope and meeting the standard was not practical, then the property owner would have to apply for a road exception

under Section 3 of the Standards. Under the proposed update of the Standards, the property owner would not have to apply for a road exception. The property owner would work with Cal Fire and Public Works to develop a level of improvement to the existing driveway that is reasonably related to the proposed dwelling unit and accessory structure improvements on the property. The term "accessory structure" was added as a generic term for detached garages and other similar type structures. As mentioned in the June 28, 2011 Board meeting, a shed would not be considered an accessory structure that would trigger improvements to an existing driveway.

Comprehensive Update to Follow

Public Works staff understands that the existing Standards are based on past concepts that do not entirely address today's views of development, construction and public safety. For this reason, Public Works is proposing to initiate a comprehensive update of the Standards that will reflect the concept shift in today's development projects. It is our intention to move forward with the comprehensive update immediately following completion of the minor update that is the subject of today's agenda item.

The comprehensive update will provide a single document that combines aspects of construction and development located in different areas of Napa County Code. Preparation of this document is estimated to take roughly two years to develop, vet with stake holders and finalize for adoption by the Board of Supervisors. The following is a rough time table for this process:

- Research, document development, legal review - Approximately 14 - 16 months
- Vetting with stakeholders - Approximately 3 to 4 months
- Document clean up and proof reading - Approximately 2 months
- Presentation to the Board of Supervisors for approval - Approximately 2 months

Attached is a conceptual draft of the Table of Contents for the new Standards.

Section 12 – “Trigger” for Driveway Improvement

A great deal of the public input at the June 28th hearing dealt with the added verbiage in Section 12 regarding the level of improvements to a residence that triggers the requirement of bringing an existing driveway (that does not meet the Standards) into compliance with the Standards. In response, Public Works reviewed the matter with Cal Fire. With today's agenda item it is proposed to delete the reference to accessory structures and simply clarify the definition of "substantial improvement" which is already in the current Standards (please see the tracked version for this change). Public Works will continue to work with both Cal Fire and the stakeholders to develop the criteria that will establish when improvements to an existing residential driveway are needed that will meet State Fire Regulations and be reasonable to property owners.

Public Works would like to reemphasize the intent of the minor update presented to the Board today is to provide the department more flexibility to work with property owners in alignment with the objectives listed in Section 1 of the Standards.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- A . CEQA Memorandum
- B . Resolution to Adopt Road and Street Standards Update
- C . Road and Street Standards Update - Clean
- D . Road and Street Standards Update - Tracked
- E . Draft Table of Contents for Future Road and Street Standard Revision

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Helene Franchi