



# CITY OF RAPID CITY

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA 57701-2724

## Growth Management Department

300 Sixth Street

Monica Heller, Community Planning Coordinator  
Growth Management Department  
City web: [www.rcgov.org](http://www.rcgov.org)

Phone: 605-394-4120  
Fax: 605-394-6636  
e-mail: [monica.heller@rcgov.org](mailto:monica.heller@rcgov.org)

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Works Committee

FROM: Monica Heller, Community Planning Coordinator

DATE: December 5, 2008

RE: Review of the requirement to provide a second access for more than 40 dwelling units

The 40 dwelling unit standard was established in 2000 as a result of traffic issues associated with the Copperfield Subdivision, Chapel Valley area, Springbrook Subdivision and the Elks Country Estates/Plum Creek developments. The City of Rapid City, by resolution dated August 21, 2000, approved an amendment to the Street Design Criteria Manual stating that "...a street shall not provide exclusive access to more than forty (40) dwelling units. A second street access shall be provided when more than forty (40) dwelling units are exclusively accessed from a street". The original proposal used to allow 20 to 30 units to be developed prior to the provision of a second permanent access to assist the developer with cashflow to get a subdivision project started. The International Fire Code requires a second access when more than 30 single family or two-family dwelling units are present. The City Council approval finally approved the requirement with the provision that 40 dwelling units be allowed prior to the provision of a second access built to City Standards.

The intent of the amendment to the Street Design Criteria Manual limiting the number of dwelling units with one point of access is to insure safe ingress and egress into these residential development(s) during times of an emergency. In particular, the Fire Department has indicated that during times of a fire and/or any other catastrophe, one point of access to more than forty dwelling units is not adequate to handle emergency vehicle traffic and residential traffic. Multiple points of access also provide for traffic distribution so that one portion of the neighborhoods is not inordinately impacted by traffic from a development.

At the October 1, 2008 Legal and Finance Committee Meeting, staff was directed to review the 40 unit rule especially with regards to commercial uses including but not limited to hotels and motels. The current rule only applies to dwelling units. Dwelling units are defined as one or more rooms, designed, occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, with cooking, sleeping and sanitary facilities provided within the dwelling unit for the exclusive use of a single family maintaining a household.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Staff from the Fire Department, Police Department, Public Works Department and Growth Management Department have researched and reviewed requirements to provide a second access from various jurisdictions across the country. Based on that research the following options are offered for consideration:

**Option 1 (Current Requirement)**

Option 1 outlined in the table below, reflects the currently adopted standard as outlined in the International Fire Code and amended by the Street Design Criteria Manual.

> 30' high or 3 Stories	Commercial	2 Access
> 62,000 sf	Commercial	2 Access
0 - 124,000 sf	Commercial with sprinklers	1 Access
>124,000 sf	Commercial with sprinklers	2 Access
0-40	Residential units (Single Family or Multi-Family)	1 Access
> 40	Residential units (Single Family or Multi-Family)	2 Access from 2 Directions

**Option 2 (International Fire Code)**

Option 2 outlined in the table below reflects the standards contained in the International Fire Code with no revisions.

> 30' high or 3 Stories	Commercial	2 Access
> 62,000 sf	Commercial	2 Access
0 - 124,000 sf	Commercial with sprinklers	1 Access
>124,000 sf	Commercial with sprinklers	2 Access
0-30	Residential units (Single Family or Two Family)	1 Access
> 30	Residential units (Single Family or Two Family)	2 Access from 2 Direction
>100	Residential units (MF)	2 Access
0-200	Residential units (MF) with sprinklers	1 Access
>200	Residential units (MF) with sprinklers	2 Access

**Option 3**

Option 3 outlined in the table below, provides requirements for commercial development without overnight occupancy that are consistent with the International Fire Code. It leaves the current 40 dwelling unit rule for single family and multifamily. However, commercial uses with overnight occupancy are allowed 100 units before two access points are required. If sprinklers are provided 200 units are allowed before two access points from two directions are required. This would make some of the existing developments like the hotels on Disk Drive (Holiday Inn Express-128 rooms/suites and Econolodge – 118 rooms) and the new LaQuinta (141 rooms/suites)/Fairfield Inn (129 room/suites) development non-conforming.

> 30' high or 3 Stories	Commercial uses without overnight occupancy	2 Access
> 62,000 sf	Commercial uses without overnight occupancy	2 Access
0 - 124,000 sf	Commercial uses without overnight occupancy with sprinklers	1 Access
>124,000 sf	Commercial uses without overnight occupancy with sprinklers	2 Access
>100	Commercial uses with overnight occupancy	2 Access
0-200	Commercial uses with overnight occupancy with sprinklers	1 Access
>200	Commercial uses with overnight occupancy with sprinklers	2 Access from 2 Directions
0-40	Residential units (Single Family or Multi-Family)	1 Access
> 40	Residential units (Single Family or Multi-Family)	2 Access from 2 Directions

#### Option 4

Option 4 outlined in the table below, provides requirements for commercial development, excluding retirement homes and hotels/motels, consistent with the International Fire Code and combines all types of development that allow overnight occupancy into one category and requires two access points from two directions if the number of units exceeds 40. This would make some of the existing developments like the hotels on Disk Drive (Holiday Inn Express-128 rooms/suites and Econolodge – 118 rooms) and the new LaQuinta (141 rooms/suites)/Fairfield Inn (129 room/suites) development non-conforming.

> 30' high or 3 Stories	Commercial	2 Access
> 62,000 sf	Commercial	2 Access
0 - 124,000 sf	Commercial with sprinklers	1 Access
>124,000 sf	Commercial with sprinklers	2 Access
0-40	Residential units (SF, MF, Retirement or hotel/motel)	1 Access
>40	Residential units (SF, MF, Retirement or hotel/motel)	2 Access from 2 Directions

The current 40 unit rule states that “a” street cannot provide access for more than 40 units, therefore two accesses on one street does not meet the current 40 unit rule. The International Fire Codes would allow both accesses to be on one street for commercial uses provided there was sufficient distance between the two accesses. The requirement for access to residential developments as required by the International Fire code requires two access points **and** two directions, thus not allowing a Chapel Valley area situation where the only direction to get out is to the north. It should be noted that only option 4 above would restrict developments that are similar to the condominium hotel complex proposal for the Chapel Valley area.

#### **Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends continuing the current policy as outlined in Option 1.