

CODE ORDINANCE

Sponsored by: Assemblymember Sumner
Referred to the Planning Commission
for 90 Days: 05/05/26
Introduced: 08/04/26

Public Hearing:
Action:

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
ORDINANCE SERIAL NO. 26-031**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY AMENDING MSB 17.73 MULTIFAMILY DEVELOPMENT DESIGN STANDARDS TO ALIGN PERMITTING AND DESIGN STANDARDS WITH THE SCALE AND COMPLEXITY OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

BE IT ENACTED:

Section 1. Classification. This ordinance is of a general and permanent nature and shall become a part of the Borough Code.

Section 2. Amendment of section. MSB 17.73.030 is hereby amended as follows:

(A) This chapter applies to all multifamily developments, including substandard dwellings, which meet or exceed the density threshold of this chapter, regardless of the form of ownership. This chapter applies to:

(1) all new multifamily developments started after the effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter.

(2) all structural additions totaling 300 square feet and greater to an existing multifamily development.

(B) The provisions of this chapter are not applicable and may not be used for multifamily developments or buildings within the cities of Houston, Palmer, or Wasilla.

(C) The provisions of this chapter are the responsibility of the developer.

(D) Multifamily developments constructed with two dwelling units or fewer per lot, regardless of lot size, are exempt from this chapter.

Section 3. Adoption of paragraph. MSB 17.73.040(A)(5) is hereby adopted as follows:

(5) Density thresholds for Common interest ownership sites, commonly referred to as condominium sites, are as follows:

(a) individual units of a condominium site that are less than 40,000 square feet in size are considered dwelling units and shall be governed by paragraphs one through three of this subsection.

(b) individual units of a condominium site that are 40,000 square feet in size or greater, shall be treated as individual lots, and are not considered dwelling units.

Section 4. Amendment of subsection. MSB 17.73.050(B) is hereby amended as follows:

(B) A complete application includes the following:

(1) nonrefundable multifamily development permit fee;

(2) [THREE COPIES OF THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:

(a) PERMIT APPLICATION;

(b) CERTIFIED SITE PLAN (SEE DEFINITION);

(i) THE LANDSCAPE AND DRAINAGE PLANS MAY BE INCLUDED AS PART OF THE CERTIFIED SITE PLAN;]

(c) [Repealed by Ord. 12-169, § 2, 2013]

(d) [DRAINAGE PLAN;]

(3) [Repealed by Ord. 12-169, § 2, 2013]

(4) additional information as determined by the director.

(5) permit application;

(6) certified site plan;

(a) the landscape and drainage plans may be included as part of the certified site plan;

(7) drainage plan;

(a) the drainage plan shall include certification by a professional engineer, licensed by the state of Alaska, verifying that the provisions of MSB 17.73.155 have been met.

Section 5. Repeal of paragraph. MSB 17.73.130 (A) (1) is hereby repealed in its entirety.

Section 6. Adoption of paragraph. MSB 17.73.130(A)(13) is hereby adopted as follows:

(13) All exterior walls of each dwelling unit shall be located within 150 feet of the drivable surface of a vehicular circulation road.

Section 7. Repeal of subsections. MSB 17.73.150(B), (C), and (D) are hereby repealed in their entirety.

Section 8. Amendment of subsection. MSB 17.73.150 (F) is amended as follows:

(F) Vehicle Parking Space Design Requirements.

(1) Standard:

- (a) length: 20 feet;
- (b) width: ten feet; and
- (c) vertical clearance: seven feet;

(2) Barrier-free (ADA compliant) design is required in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. [:]

(a) [ONE BARRIER-FREE PARKING STALL SHALL BE PROVIDED FOR EVERY 25 REQUIRED PARKING STALLS.

(i) WIDTH: EIGHT FEET PLUS A FIVE-FOOT ADJACENT ACCESS AISLE;

(ii) LENGTH: 20 FEET; AND

(iii) VERTICAL CLEARANCE: EIGHT

FEET.]

Section 9. Adoption of subsections. MSB 17.73.150 (G), (H), and (I) are adopted as follows:

(G) All multifamily developments shall comply with MSB 11.12 for access standards.

(H) Vehicular circulation.

(1) Multifamily developments consisting of four detached dwelling units (commonly referred to as a detached fourplex), or any multifamily development with five to ten dwelling units, whether attached or detached, shall provide vehicular circulation. Vehicular circulation roads shall:

(a) be constructed and compacted to support vehicles weighing up to 75,000 pounds;

(b) have a drivable surface of at least 20 feet in width; and

(c) include a turnaround, in accordance with the borough's Subdivision Construction Manual, for dead-end access routes exceeding 150 feet in length.

(i) The turnaround may be an alternate turnaround design as described in the borough's Subdivision Construction Manual.

(2) Multifamily developments consisting of more than 10 dwelling units shall construct vehicular circulation roads in accordance with paragraph one of

this subsection and at a minimum to the pioneer road standards of the borough's Subdivision Construction Manual.

(a) For emergency service purposes, vehicular circulation roads exceeding 150 feet in length, shall conform to MSB 11.20 and be named.

(I) All bridges and water crossings providing vehicular access to more than one dwelling unit shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the borough's Design Criteria Manual standards.

Section 10. Adoption of section. MSB 17.73.155 is hereby adopted as follows:

17.73.155 DRAINAGE PLAN.

(A) Runoff mitigation measures shall meet the following criteria:

(1) Treat the initial 0.5 inch of post-development runoff for each storm event;

(2) Provide a minimum of 12 hours of detention for the post-development runoff in excess of pre-development runoff volumes for a 1-year, 24-hour storm;

(3) Maintain the post-development runoff peak flow to less than 1.10 times pre-development runoff peak flow at all project discharge points;

(4) Storm water conveyance and drainage

ditches shall be sized to pass a 10-year, 24-hour storm event. Control flows in conveyance channels so that the transport of particles will not occur during a 10-year, 24-hour storm.

(B) Multifamily developments consisting of fewer than five dwelling units contained within fewer than three structures are exempt from this section.

Section 11. Amendment of section. MSB 17.73.170 is hereby amended to read as follows:

(A) Lighting standards provide visual safety in high traffic areas within the development while preventing excessive lighting and glare on adjacent properties.

(B) Exterior lighting shall comply with the following standards:

(1) All parking areas exceeding 18 on-site parking stalls must have lighting.

(2) Lights in parking lots must be [NON-GLARE] shielded to direct the light towards the ground and must be mounted no more than 20 feet above the ground.

(4) [Repealed by Ord. 12-169, § 2, 2013]

[(5) GLARE AND ILLUMINATION ASSOCIATED WITH EXTERIOR LIGHTING SHALL BE CONTAINED ON THE SUBJECT PROPERTY AND NOT IMPACT ADJACENT PROPERTIES.]

(C) Multifamily developments consisting of fewer than five dwelling units contained within fewer than three structures are exempt from this section.

Section 12. Repeal of section. MSB 17.73.180 is hereby repealed in its entirety.

Section 13. Amendment of paragraph. MSB 17.73.190(B)(4) is hereby amended as follows:

(4) Perimeter Fences and Walls.

(a) A perimeter fence or wall is not required but may be installed **in lieu of perimeter landscaping**. If a perimeter fence or wall is installed, in [addition to] **lieu of** the perimeter landscaping, then the following standards apply:

(i) walls and fences shall be constructed of high-quality materials, such as treated wood, decorative blocks, brick, stone, wrought iron, chain link, and other natural and appropriate building materials.

(ii) walls and fences shall be a minimum of six feet in height.

(iii) walls and fences shall provide visual screening of the development from abutting properties.

Section 14. Amendment of section. MSB 17.73.250 is hereby

amended as follows:

- " Dwelling unit " means a single unit providing complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation or a portion of the land area **less than 40,000 square feet in size** of a planned development, residential development or site condominium project designed and intended for residential construction.

- **"Vehicular circulation road" means the on-site system of access roads designed to provide safe and efficient movement of vehicles to more than one dwelling unit within a property.**

Section 15. Amendment of section. MSB 17.125.010 is hereby amended as follows:

- "Primary vehicle access" means, in the context of multifamily development, a vehicle access to the development that is, at a minimum, characterized by the following elements: (1) full-turn vehicle access (i.e., turns allowed in all directions); (2) entryway signage with name of development and address; and (3) principal entry for prospective owners or renters. All public and private roads must meet [DESIGN STANDARDS AS OUTLINED IN THE BOROUGH'S SUBDIVISION CONSTRUCTION MANUAL AND]

addressing/street naming requirements as designated by
the geographic information systems department.

Section 16. Effective date. This ordinance shall take effect
upon adoption.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this - day
of -, 2026.

EDNA DeVRIES, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)