



# REPORT TO LAW & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE City of Sacramento

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671

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**STAFF REPORT**  
**May 1, 2007**

Honorable Members of the  
Law and Legislation Committee

**Title: Right-of-Way Improvements for the Development of Single-Family and Two-Family Residences. (M07-027)**

**Location/Council District:** Citywide

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Law and Legislation Committee review and recommend approval of an ordinance amending Sacramento City Code Section 18.04.040 to be forwarded to the City Council.

**Contact:** Robert W. Williams, Assistant Planner, (916) 808-7686, Scott Tobey, Associate Engineer, (916) 808-8307

**Presenters:** Robert W. Williams, Assistant Planner, (916) 808-7686, Scott Tobey, Associate Engineer, (916) 808-8307

**Department:** Development Services

**Division:** Current Planning, Development Engineering

**Organization No:** 4881, 4815

## **Description/Analysis**

**Issue:** At the request of Councilmember Tretheway, the Law and Legislation Committee directed staff to draft an ordinance to amend an exception to Section 18.04.020 of the City Code pertaining to single and two-family residential development. This section of code requires that as a condition of a building permit the owner/developer must dedicate and improve one half of the street or streets abutting the lot on which the building is being constructed or enlarged. These required improvements include curb, gutter and sidewalk as set forth in the right-of-way guidelines established pursuant to Section 18.04.170.

Section 18.04.040 provides a series of exceptions to the general improvement requirements of Section 18.04.020. One of the exceptions includes a provision that any lot used exclusively for single-family and two-family residential purposes is exempt from the provisions of Section 18.04.020. (This exemption does not

apply to condominiums, townhomes, cluster housing, and similar residential uses).

Due to the exception provisions of section 18.04.040, developers of new single-family and two-family residences have been able to avoid street frontage dedications and standard right-of-way improvement requirements, such as sidewalks, when constructing new homes on existing lots that were created before current subdivision regulations. In North Sacramento there are a number of "heritage lots" which were created prior to annexation in the City and these lots often lack standard City improvements.

If the mandatory exception provisions for single-family and two-family residential purposes were removed, builders of new homes on existing lots would be required to dedicate the necessary land and construct standard improvements. The City engineer will have the authority to grant a variance to dedication and improvement requirements, or to accept in-lieu payments for improvements if the cost of such improvements is deemed excessive in relation to the project, or if it has been determined that the improvements should be constructed at a future date in coordination with other right-of-way improvements as outlined in the variance process of section 18.04.200.

**Policy Considerations:** The proposed amendments would provide the City with greater discretionary authority relative to right-of-way improvements for certain types of development. The proposed amendments conform with the City of Sacramento Strategic Plan by adhering to the goals of providing for city neighborhoods with a sense of place and character, enhanced mobility and enhanced public health and safety.

**Committee Action:** On January 4, 2007 the Law and Legislation Committee directed staff to prepare an ordinance amending Section 18.04.040.

**Environmental Considerations:** The proposed ordinance is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Section 15061(b)(3)).

**Rationale for Recommendation:** The current language of Section 18.04.040 provides for a mandatory, rather than a discretionary, waiver of right-of-way dedication and improvement requirements when constructing a single-family or a two-family residential use. Council members have expressed concerns about the likelihood that the City will end up bearing the cost of installing the sidewalks for infill projects for as well as larger developments being constructed without standard right-of-way improvements. By removing the exemption, right-of-way improvements can be more consistent in older neighborhoods, without leaving gaps in the frontage improvements that currently affect some city neighborhoods.

**Financial Considerations:** None

**Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD):** No goods or services are being purchased under this report.

Respectfully Submitted by: Edward H. Williams  
Edward Williams  
Development Engineering Manager

Approved by: William Thomas  
William Thomas  
Director of Development Services

Recommendation Approved:

Gustavo F. Vina  
Gustavo F. Vina  
Assistant City Manager

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**Redlined ORDINANCE NO.**

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

**AMENDING SECTION 18.04.040 OF TITLE 18 OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY CODE  
RELATING TO STREET DEDICATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS (M07-027)**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 1. Section 18.04.040 of the Sacramento City Code is amended to read as follows:

The provisions of Section 18.04.020 of this chapter shall not apply to the following:

~~A. Any lot used exclusively for single family and two family residential purposes, excluding condominium, townhouse, cluster housing and similar residential uses.~~

A B. The creation of an off-street parking area in connection with the construction or improvement of a single-family or two-family residence.

B C. Additions and accessory buildings incidental to a residential building legally existing on the lot, provided no additional dwelling units or guest rooms are created.

C D. Additions and accessory buildings incidental to other than a residential building existing on the lot on the effective date provided that the total cumulative floor area of all such additions and accessory buildings shall not exceed five hundred square feet.

D E. The creation of, the alteration of, or the addition to an off-street parking area, off-street loading or unloading area, off-street pickup and delivery area, or storage, sale, rental or service area, subject to the permit requirements of Chapter 10.24 of this code, when the additional surfaced area created thereby does not exceed one thousand (1,000) square feet, or ten (10) percent of the gross area of the lot, whichever is the lesser sum.

**ORDINANCE NO.**

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- B. Additions and accessory buildings incidental to a residential building legally existing on the lot, provided no additional dwelling units or guest rooms are created.
- C. Additions and accessory buildings incidental to other than a residential building existing on the lot on the effective date provided that the total cumulative floor area of all such additions and accessory buildings shall not exceed five hundred square feet.
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