Chapter 18.14
Plat Design (LMC)

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18.14.010 Lot width

A. No lots shall be created deeper than three times its width unless specifically varied under the provisions of Chapter 17.17 LMC.

B. No lots shall be created that have less than fifty feet of frontage, except where approved by Council in a planned residential development.

C. A lot located on a cul-de-sac may have forty feet of frontage width; provided however, that the lot shall meet the minimum frontage requirement listed above at the line of the minimum front yard setback.

18.14.020 Right-of-way requirements

All lots shall abut on a dedicated street with right-of-way that meets the City’s standards for width. In the event the abutting street does not meet said standards, additional right-of-way shall be required prior to the approval of a subdivision or short subdivision, unless specifically varied through the process described in Chapter 17.17 LMC.

18.14.030 Pipe stem lots

A pipe stem lot is defined as a lot having a narrow entrance to a wide lot that is behind another lot. A maximum of one pipe stem lot may be permitted per short plat or one
pipe stem lot per 25 lots or portion thereof of a long plat, so long as the following standards are met:

A. There shall be a minimum of twenty four feet of frontage on a dedicated right-of-way; and

B. The stem shall be no longer than one hundred fifty feet in length; and

C. The lot stem shall not be included in the calculation for building or zoning purposes; and

D. The address is clearly marked at the street for emergency location.

18.14.040 Division resulting in below minimum lots sizes for dedication

Within subdivision, the City may consider the required dedication of right-of-way in the minimum lot size; provided that the resulting lot after dedication (exclusive of dedicated area) shall not be less than ninety-five percent of the required lot size.

18.14.050 Flood prone and bad drainage conditions

Land which has been found to be unsuitable due to flooding, bad drainage or high water table conditions that are harmful to the health, safety and general welfare of the future residents, shall not be subdivided unless:

A. A mitigation plan demonstrates adequate means of flood control, consistent with the City’s stormwater management plan, the Puget Sound Manual for Best Stormwater Management Practices, Chapter 86.16 RCW, and Chapters 16.12 LMC (Floodplain Management Ordinance) and 16.16 LMC (Critical Areas Ordinance), now or as hereafter amended; and

B. The design and mitigation plan has been reviewed and recommended by the Technical Review Committee; and

C. The City Council approves the proposed mitigation plan

18.14.060 Slope and unstable soil conditions

In the event the land to be subdivided has a slope or slopes of more than twenty percent and/or has rock or other unstable soil conditions, the subdivider shall provide soils data to the City as required by the City’s Critical Areas Ordinance, codified in Title 16. A qualified professional as required under that title shall prepare this information.

A. Land which has topographical conditions that are hazardous to the health, safety and general welfare of the persons or properties, in or near the proposed subdivision shall not be subdivided unless the construction of protective improvements shall eliminate the hazards or unless the land subject to the hazard is reserved for those uses which will not expose persons or property to the hazard.
B. If conditions warrant control measures to correct slide, erosion, or other similar problems, the subdivider shall be responsible for the design, installation, and expense of any devise or corrective measures.

C. Protective improvements and restrictions on uses shall be clearly noted on the face of the final plat and recorded as a covenant on the deed for each affected parcel.

18.14.070 Access Easements

A. Easements serving up to three lots, or a multi-family development, may be permitted under the following conditions:
   i. The easement area must be a hardened surface, a minimum of twenty-four feet in width;
   
   ii. The easement area shall be paved for a minimum of fifty feet from the street and must be paved the entire length of the driveway when serving multi-family development; and

   iii. The proponents shall have a signed and recorded maintenance agreement filed with the City and the County Auditor. This agreement shall be referenced by the Auditor’s file number on the face of the plat.

   iv. An existing easement shall not be expanded to serve additional lots without the written and recorded permission of the grantors or current owners of the property over which the easement runs; and

   v. The location and configuration of the parcel will be considered when allowing an easement to serve more than a single lot.

B. All easements must meet the minimum standards for the Uniform Fire Code and Project Manual for Engineering Design and Development Standards for the City of Lynden for access and driving surfaces.

18.14.075 Utility Easements

A five-foot utility easement shall be placed on the interior property line of all lots for the installation and maintenance of utilities. This easement provision does not restrict the property owner from placing fences or landscaping within the easement area.

18.14.080 Cul-de-sac Design

A. Cul-de-sac streets shall be designed so as to provide a circular turnaround at the closed end that has a minimum radius as required by the City’s Project Manual for Engineering Design and Development Standards.
B. A hammerhead may be permitted, by the Planning Commission and City Council under certain circumstances and such hammerhead must meet the requirements of the Project Manual for Engineering Design and Development Standards and the Uniform Fire Code.

C. Cul-de-sac streets shall not exceed four hundred fifty feet in length unless specifically varied through the process described in Chapter 17.17 LMC.

D. Plats with opposing cul-de-sacs, or cul-de-sacs backing onto an adjoining property, shall provide for a minimum fifteen feet sidewalk or trail easement through the cul-de-sac to provide more efficient pedestrian circulation patterns.

18.14.090 Lot Design

A. Residential lots shall access residential access or collector streets rather than arterial streets. This access restriction shall be noted on the face of the plat and does not exempt the subdivision from any off-site improvement requirements.

B. Lots shall be designed to provide a building site that meets the minimum zoning standards after the consideration of building orientation, setbacks, drainage and other critical areas.

C. No residential lots shall have street frontage along two opposite boundaries, unless topographical features or the need to provide access separation of lots from arterials, railways, commercial activities, or industrial activities justify designing of double frontage lots.

18.14.095 Lot Averaging

As long as the subject property has sufficient land area to subdivide and meet the lot area requirements as specified in the zoning ordinance, a lot averaging mechanism may be utilized for the creation of more functional and desirable lot design as determined by the City. This mechanism may be permitted if all the following conditions are met:

A. No lot less than the required size may be placed adjacent to previously developed lots meeting the minimum lot size requirements.

B. Lots shall not be less than ninety percent of the minimum area required; except that, up to five percent of the total number of lots may be reduced to seventy percent of the minimum required lot size.

C. The average size of all lots within the subdivision must meet the minimum lot size required by that zone.

18.14.100 Circulation System Design

A. The street system within a subdivision shall be designed to permit the safe, efficient, and orderly movement of traffic; to meet the needs of the present and
future populations; to have a simple and logical pattern; to respect natural features and topography.

B. Every lot shall be provided with convenient vehicular access by a public street connected to an existing public street or highway. Access should be designed first to access streets, then to collector streets, then to arterial streets and highways.

C. Access may be granted by permanent appurtenant easement as allowed in 18.14.070 for a maximum of one easement per short plat or one lot per 25 lots or portion thereof of a long plat.

D. In residential subdivisions, the street system shall be designed to serve the needs of the neighborhood and to discourage use of residential access streets by through traffic.

18.14.110 Conformity to Comprehensive Plan and all Utility Plans

A. The proposed subdivision shall conform to the policies reflected by the Comprehensive Plan, including the Transportation Element, and shall provide for such requirements as are contained in the implementation of the plan in part by the zoning and subdivision ordinances. Natural features such as trees, ridgelines, hilltops and views shall be preserved and kept in a natural state to the extent possible.

B. All utility extensions shall be designed and developed in conformance with the adopted plans for that utility. This shall include water, sanitary sewer and stormwater management.

18.14.120 Street Trees Required

A. Street trees shall be provided by the subdivider in all subdivisions within the dedicated public utility easements adjacent to the street; preferably between the curb and the sidewalk. There shall be a minimum of one tree per lot with a maximum of one hundred feet between trees, and street trees shall be selected, installed, and maintained in accordance with the standard engineering specifications. Trees shall be placed on the property with consideration of potential driveway cuts and utility services.

B. Maintenance of street trees shall be the responsibility of the adjoining property owner and shall be done in accordance with the City’s Engineering Design and Development Standards.

18.14.130 Street Naming

A. No street within a new subdivision shall be approved which bears a name using a word that is the same as, similar to or pronounced the same as a word in the name of any other street within the City. All subdividers shall present their proposed street names to the Lynden Technical Review Committee to reduce the
duplication of names within the City and throughout the County. The City shall solicit comment from dispatching agencies prior to giving final approval of the street names.

B. Streets extended or continuing across a street perpendicular to it shall bear the same name as the previously existing street segment.

18.14.140 Compliance with Development Standards – Generally

All plans for improvements listed below shall be designed and stamped by a professional engineer.

A. Easements for electric, telephone, telecommunications, water, sanitary and storm sewer, gas and similar utilities shall be a minimum of ten feet to assure future maintenance.

B. Subdivisions shall provide underground utility lines, including, but not limited to those for electricity, communications, cable TV and street lighting.

C. All streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, bridges, drains, culverts, and related structures and facilities shall be constructed in accordance with the City’s Project Manual for Engineering Design and Development Standards and applicable state and federal requirements.

D. All streets shall be constructed in accordance with the City’s Project Manual for Engineering Design and Development Standards.

E. Water supply facilities adequate to provide potable water from a public supply to each lot within a subdivision shall be installed in conformity with the City’s Project Manual for Engineering Design and Development Standards. Each lot shall be provided with a connection to the City’s sanitary sewer, water and stormwater system in conformity with the City’s Project Manual for Engineering Design and Development Standards.

F. Prior to construction of any structures within the subdivision, all public utilities shall be installed in conformance with the City’s Project Manual for Engineering Design and Development Standards.

18.14.150 Street and Utility Extensions Required

All streets and utility extensions required by the City shall be made to the furthest extent of the property or the edge of the subdivision except where there is no expectation of extension of the street or utilities or the service of additional lots.