

Arvada Fire Protection District
Fire Marshal's Office
Administrative Interpretation

Number	2021-02		
Subject	Fire Apparatus Access Roads and Residential Driveways		
Code Reference	2018 IFC, Chapter 2 definition of Fire Apparatus Access Road		
Jurisdiction	Arvada, Wheat Ridge, Jefferson County		
Effective Date	1/20/2021	Issued By	Steven Parker
Revision Date		Revised By	
Approval Date	1/20/2021	Approved By	Steven Parker

Purpose

To provide guidance and code interpretation for requests to use residential driveways as fire apparatus access roads.

Scope

This administrative interpretation applies to residential single-family dwelling driveways being used as fire apparatus access roads.

Description of Issue

There are instances when a proposed residential single-family development does not meet the requirements for approved fire apparatus turnarounds per D103.4, or the fire apparatus access road cannot meet the 150-foot requirement to all portions of the exterior of the structure per section 503.1.1. In those instances, it has been requested to utilize the driveway to achieve compliance with the above requirements. The 2018 IFC commentary explains that the definition of a Fire Apparatus Access Road “is a general term intended to include any private roadway providing the required access to a building. As such, private driveways could be included and subject to the provisions of Section 503”.

Decision

It has been decided after discussions with the Operations Division and the Fire Chief that AFPD will not accept private driveways to be considered for approved turnarounds or fire apparatus access roads. This decision is based upon the complexities that can be attributed to private residential driveways. Some of the complexities presented are that there is a high probability that, if needed, there will be immovable obstructions in the driveway (i.e., vehicles, RV’s, trailers, etc.). Furthermore, AFPD does not have the ability to enforce that these be always clear on single-family properties. The most significant challenge is that if emergency responders are

Arvada Fire Protection District
Fire Marshal's Office
Administrative Interpretation

not able to access the property during an emergency it can negatively affect the outcome of a particular incident. Lastly, during an emergency response, AFD personnel do not have the ability to know which driveways are fire apparatus access roads and able support the needs of our emergency operations. Because of these challenges, private driveways will not be considered for approval as a turnaround or fire apparatus access road.

Exceptions:

1. The property is a flag lot and will meet the prescriptive requirements of the adopted fire code and Administrative Interpretation 2018-02.
2. Private roads accessing private driveways can be considered to be used as a fire apparatus access road depending on the site layout and dimensions of the road.
3. A detached, separate fire apparatus access road that meets the requirements of Section 503 and does not provide direct access to the single-family dwelling or another structure. This fire apparatus access road shall also be platted as a fire lane and signed as such.

This decision is effective for all development currently under review and all future developments submitted for review.