

Chapter 1.1 — How to Use the Development Code

Welcome to the City of Sisters Development Code. This is a comprehensive land use and development code that governs all of the land within the incorporated limits of Sisters. The six chapters of this Code are used together to review land use applications. They are organized as follows:

Chapter 1 - In addition to this brief introduction, Chapter 1 provides definitions for selected terms and information on the legal construct of the Code. It also explains the City's authority to enforce the Development Code.

Chapter 2 - Every parcel, lot, and tract of land within the City's incorporated boundaries is within a "land use district". Each of the City's land use districts are shown on the City's official Land Use District map. Chapter 2 identifies the land uses that are permitted within each district, and the standards that apply to each type of land use, such as lot standards, setbacks, and use-specific design standards. As required by State statutes, the zones or "land use districts" conform to the Sisters Comprehensive Plan. The districts reserve land for planned land uses, provide compatibility between different uses, and implement planned housing densities.

Chapter 3 - The design standards contained in Chapter 3 apply throughout the City. They are used in preparing development plans and for reviewing applications; to ensure compliance with City standards for access and circulation, landscaping, parking, public facilities, surface water management and signs.

Chapter 4 - Chapter 4 provides all of the application requirements and procedures for obtaining permits required by this Code. Four types of permit procedures are covered: Type I Procedure (Ministerial). Type I decisions are made by the Community Development Director, or someone he or she officially designates, without public notice and without a public hearing. The Type 1 procedure is used when there are clear and objective approval criteria, and applies city standards and criteria that require no use of discretion; Type II Procedure (Administrative). Type II decisions are made by the Community Development Director or designee with public notice, and an opportunity for a public hearing if appealed. The appeal of a Type II decision is heard by the Planning Commission; Type III Procedure (Quasi-Judicial). Type III decisions are made by the Planning Commission after a public hearing, with appeals heard by the City Council. Type III decisions generally use discretionary approval criteria; and Type IV ("legislative" decision by City Council). Type IV procedures apply to legislative matters. Legislative matters involve the creation, revision, or large-scale implementation of public policy (e.g., adoption of land use regulations, zone changes, and comprehensive plan amendments which apply to entire districts). Type IV matters are considered initially by the Planning Commission with final decisions made by the City Council.

Chapter 5 - Chapter 5 provides standards and procedures for variances and non-conforming situations (for example, existing uses or developments that do not comply with this Code). This Code cannot provide standards to fit every potential development situation. The City's varied geography and complexities of land development require flexibility. Chapter 5 provides that flexibility while maintaining the purposes and intent of the Code.

Chapter 6 - Chapter 6 contains Map Amendments that have been approved by Administrative or Legislative decision. The Land Use District (zoning) map found in Chapter 6 is the official designated District Map for the City of Sisters.