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ORDINANCE NO. 348.4299

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE  
AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 348  
RELATING TO WESTERN RIDGELINE OVERLAY ZONE

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside ordains as follows:

Section 1. A new section 19.700 is added to Ordinance No. 348 to read as follows:

“Section 19.700 Western Ridgeline Overlay Zone.

- a. INTENT. The Western Ridgeline Overlay Zone is intended to implement the Hillside Development & Slope policies of the Riverside County General Plan, enhance and protect the scenic and visual qualities of the Western Ridgeline, provide standards to ensure permitted development is sited and designed to protect the public from fire dangers, maintain ridgelines, reduce soil erosion, minimize the alteration of natural land forms and be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding areas.
- b. APPLICABILITY. In addition to the requirements set forth in Ordinance Nos. 457 and 460, the Western Ridgeline Overlay Zone shall apply to all grading and building permit applications filed after the effective date of Ordinance No. 348.4299 for parcels located in the following areas:
- (1) The Northern Santa Rosa Escarpment Area as depicted on Exhibit A which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.
  - (2) The Southern Santa Rosa Escarpment Area as depicted on Exhibit B which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.
- c. DEFINITIONS. As used in this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- 1 (1) CLUSTERING. A development that achieves maximum levels of  
2 open space while minimizing the development envelope. The  
3 maximum overall density of a clustered one family planned  
4 residential development shall be the maximum density specified for  
5 the site of the development by the Land Use Designation of the  
6 General Plan. A clustered one family planned residential  
7 development shall include a minimum of 30 percent of the gross  
8 acreage of the development site in open space.
- 9 (2) GRADED SLOPE. All of the faces of a graded slope, from the  
10 toe of the slope to the top of the slope, whether the faces are  
11 covered by natural vegetation, rip-rap, retaining walls or other  
12 materials.
- 13 (3) HILL. A well-defined natural elevation.
- 14 (4) HILLSIDE. The side or slope of a well-defined natural elevation
- 15 (5) LAND DISTURBANCE. An alteration of the natural surface of  
16 the land or the natural vegetation by any means, including, but not  
17 limited to, grading, clearing, brushing, or grubbing. Land  
18 disturbance does not include an alteration of the natural surface of  
19 the land or the natural vegetation using hand tools only, for the  
20 purposes of complying with County ordinances and the directives of  
21 the Riverside County Fire Department for fuel clearance and/or  
22 modification.
- 23 (6) OVERLAY ZONE. A set of zoning requirements that are  
24 superimposed upon an underlying zone. Overlay zones are generally  
25 used when a particular area requires special protection or has a  
26 special environmental constraint. Development of land subject to  
27 overlay zoning requires compliance with the regulations of both the  
28 underlying zone and overlay zone.

1 (7) PRIMARY RIDGELINE. Ridgelines which can be seen with a sky  
2 backdrop from any publicly designated road in the Cities of  
3 Temecula and Murrieta.

4 (8) RESTORATION. The process of repairing a disturbed site to  
5 replicate its natural conditions.

6 (9) RIDGELINE. A line delineating the elongate crest of a range of  
7 hills or mountains or the crest of a plateau escarpment, that is visible  
8 from one or more specified points.

9 (10) SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION. A significant change to the  
10 architecture of a building, accessory building or guest quarter,  
11 including, but not limited to, altering the colors, features or  
12 elevations, increasing the existing square footage by ten percent  
13 (10%) or greater.

14 d. PERMITTED USES. Any use permitted by the underlying zone is allowed  
15 with an applicable approved permit.

16 e. PLOT PLAN PROCESSING.

17 (1) The approval of a plot plan pursuant to Section 18.30 of this  
18 ordinance shall be required for the following developments, uses,  
19 and activities: one-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings,  
20 planned residential developments, accessory buildings, guest  
21 quarters, land disturbances and substantial modifications to existing  
22 buildings, accessory buildings or guest quarters.

23 (2) All plot plan applications processed pursuant to this section shall be  
24 subject to an onsite investigation, to determine whether the proposed  
25 development, use or activity complies with the standards set forth  
26 herein and with the requirements of Section 18.30 of this ordinance.  
27 All proposed land disturbances, proposed location of development,  
28 proposed location of access roads or driveways shall be accurately

1 indicated by stakes. Poles and stakes shall remain in place for the  
2 duration of the approval process.

3 (3) All plot plan applications processed pursuant to this section shall  
4 comply with the California Environmental Quality Act.

5 f. ADDITIONAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS. In addition to the  
6 requirements of Section 18.30 of this ordinance, all of the following shall be  
7 submitted with a plot plan application within the Western Ridgeline Overlay Zone:

8 (1) A topographical map of the site, drawn to scale by a California  
9 licensed Land Surveyor or Civil Engineer, showing all topographical  
10 features within two hundred feet (200') of the project site. The scale  
11 of said map shall be no smaller than one inch (1") equals forty feet  
12 (40') with contours intervals of no more than four feet (4') for  
13 projects located within slopes less than fifteen percent (15%). For  
14 any project specified herein that is located within slopes greater than  
15 fifteen percent (15%), contour intervals shall be more than two feet  
16 (2').

17 (2) A proposed erosion and sedimentation control plan showing and  
18 describing interim and ultimate erosion and sedimentation control  
19 measures.

20 (3) A proposed restoration plan, including a timeline for the site to be  
21 restored to natural condition, if applicable. This plan shall illustrate  
22 and describe how the remainder of the site will be mitigated and  
23 repaired to the natural conditions that existed prior to the land  
24 disturbance.

25 (4) An architectural site plan showing how residential dwellings,  
26 accessory buildings and guest quarters will be located. Architectural  
27 elevations illustrating colors and materials shall also be submitted.  
28

1 (5) A line of sight, visual analysis, geological report, or other  
2 requirement, such as photo simulations, as deemed appropriate by  
3 the Planning Director.

4 (6) Any additional documents as may be required by the Planning  
5 Director.

6 g. RIDGELINE PRESERVATION STANDARDS. In order to minimize land  
7 disturbances, maintain existing drainage patterns, and ensure a project blends  
8 visually with its surroundings the following standards shall apply within the  
9 Western Ridgeline Overlay Zone:

10 (1) Development Siting.

11 i. Development shall be sited and designed to minimize  
12 alteration of the natural landforms and natural vegetation.

13 ii. Development shall be sited to minimize visual impacts on  
14 properties located in the valley below the Northern and  
15 Southern Santa Rosa Escarpment Areas.

16 iii. Rooftops shall be below a primary ridgeline when viewed  
17 from the valley below the Northern and Southern Santa Rosa  
18 Escarpment Areas.

19 iv. If there is no feasible building site location on the proposed  
20 project site where development will not be visible from the  
21 lower valley , then the project shall be sited and designed to  
22 minimize significant impacts to ridgelines, canyon edges and  
23 hilltops, through measures including, but not limited to,  
24 siting development in the least visible portion of the site,  
25 breaking up the mass of any multiple buildings, designing  
26 buildings, accessory buildings and guest quarters to blend  
27 into the natural hillside setting, restricting the building  
28 maximum size, reducing maximum height standards to one-

1 story or twenty-five feet (25') from the finished floor  
2 whichever is less, clustering buildings, minimizing land  
3 disturbances, incorporating landscape elements, and where  
4 appropriate, berming.

5 (2) Design Standards.

- 6 i. Building heights shall be limited in order to minimize visual  
7 impacts on properties located in the valley below the  
8 Northern and Southern Santa Rosa Escarpment Areas.
- 9 ii. Fences, exterior walls, roofs, buildings, accessory buildings  
10 and guest quarters shall incorporate textures, colors and  
11 materials that blend with the surrounding terrain and natural  
12 landscape.
- 13 iii. Native plant materials shall be retained as much as possible  
14 so as to protect slopes from slippage and soil erosion and to  
15 minimize visual effects of land disturbances and construction  
16 on hillside areas, including preserving prominent trees and,  
17 to the extent possible, reducing maintenance costs to  
18 property owners. The provisions of Ordinance Nos. 457 and  
19 859 concerning landscaping and erosion control measures  
20 shall be incorporated into the project design.
- 21 iv. Driveways and curvilinear streets shall be designed to  
22 minimize land disturbance and follow the natural contours  
23 and character of the hillsides.

24 (3) Lighting Standards.

- 25 i. Exterior lighting (except traffic lights, navigational lights,  
26 and other similar safety lighting) shall be minimized,  
27 restricted to low intensity features, concealed or hooded, to  
28 the maximum extent feasible, so no light source is visible

1 from the valley below the the Northern and Southern Santa  
2 Rosa Escarpment Areas.

3 ii. Night perimeter lighting, night aesthetic lights, night lighting  
4 for sports courts or other private recreational facilities for  
5 residential use shall be prohibited.

6 iii. Permitted lighting shall conform to the following  
7 standards:

8 1. Lighting shall be restricted to the minimum necessary  
9 to light walkways used for entry and exit to  
10 buildings, accessory buildings and guest quarters,  
11 including parking areas, on the project site. This  
12 lighting shall be limited to fixtures that do not exceed  
13 two feet (2') in height, are directed downward, and  
14 use bulbs that do not exceed sixty (60) watts, or the  
15 equivalent, unless a higher wattage is authorized by  
16 the Planning Director.

17 2. Security lighting attached to the residence shall be  
18 controlled by motion detectors and is limited to sixty  
19 (60) watts, or the equivalent.

20 3. Lighting shall be restricted to the minimum lighting  
21 necessary for safe vehicular use of the driveway and  
22 lighting shall be limited to sixty (60) watts, or the  
23 equivalent.

24 4. Lighting shall not exceed sixty (60) watts or the  
25 equivalent at the entrance to the residential dwellings,  
26 accessory buildings and guest quarters.

1 (4) Land Disturbance Standards.

- 2 i. Natural hillsides exceeding twenty-five percent (25%) shall  
3 not be disturbed, unless such disturbance is necessary to  
4 create the only access to the parcel. Such land disturbance  
5 shall be minimized and shall be conditioned with  
6 landscaping, restoration, earth-colored retaining walls, or  
7 other aesthetic treatments to lessen the visual impact of the  
8 land disturbance.
- 9 ii. The vertical distance of a graded slope shall not exceed  
10 fifteen feet (15') from the toe of the slope to the top of the  
11 slope, unless a five foot (5') bench is placed between two  
12 graded slopes and the bench is planted with natural  
13 vegetation similar to that growing on the portion(s) of the  
14 site that have not been disturbed.
- 15 iii. The maximum height of a graded slope, including required  
16 benching, shall not exceed twenty feet (20').
- 17 iv. Land disturbances shall be designed to avoid disruption to  
18 adjacent properties.
- 19 v. Natural topographic features and appearances shall be  
20 conserved by means of contour grading so as to blend any  
21 manufactured slopes or required drainage benches into the  
22 natural topography.
- 23 vi. Significant, natural, or topographically prominent features,  
24 including, but not limited to primary ridgelines, rock  
25 outcroppings and significant landforms shall be retained to  
26 the maximum extent possible, as determined by the Planning  
27 Director.
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2. A deposit with the County of cash.
  3. An irrevocable instrument of credit from one or more financial institutions subject to regulations by the state or federal government pledging that the funds necessary to carry out the agreements are on deposit until released by the County of Riverside.
  4. An irrevocable letter of credit issued by a financial institution subject to regulation by the state of federal government guaranteeing that all or any portion of the funds will be paid upon written demand of the County of Riverside.
- iii. Such security shall be executed and retained by the Planning Director.
  - iv. The Planning Director is authorized to release or reduce the security in accordance with this section.
  - v. Requests for release shall be made to the Planning Director setting forth a description of the restoration completed.
  - vi. Security given for faithful performance of restoration shall be released upon the performance of the act and final completion and approval of the restoration by the Planning Director.
  - vii. The Planning Director shall have two months after final completion to approve or disapprove the restoration.
  - viii. In the event the Planning Director disapproves the restoration, after providing written notice to the applicant, the County may use security to correct any restoration deficiencies.

1 h. CONFLICT BETWEEN ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS. If there is a conflict  
2 in the requirements of this section or between the requirements of this ordinance and any other ordinance,  
3 the more stringent requirements shall apply.”

4 Section 2. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after  
5 its adoption.

6  
7 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY  
8 OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

9 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
10 Chairman, Board of Supervisors

11 ATTEST:  
12 KECIA HARPER-IHEM  
13 Clerk of the Board

14 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
15 Deputy

16 (SEAL)

17  
18 APPROVED AS TO FORM

19 November 2, 2011

20 By:   
21 MICHELLE P. CLACK  
22 Deputy County Counsel