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**YAKIMA COUNTY**

**ROAD NAMING AND SITE ADDRESSING ORDINANCE**

**ORDINANCE 4-2007**

## YAKIMA COUNTY ROAD NAMING AND SITE ADDRESSING ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Yakima County, Washington pursuant to RCW 36.32.120 is authorized to regulate the location and use of buildings, structures and land for trade, industry, residence, recreation, public activities, or other purposes, for the purpose promoting the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity or welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the state; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Yakima County, Washington, pursuant to RCW 36.75.040, is authorized to assign and change road names and addresses as part of administering roads within Yakima County, protecting the public health, safety and welfare, and providing an adequate and accurate emergency telephone system; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Yakima County, Washington, has determined that current road naming and addressing and road re-naming and re-addressing procedures are outdated and cumbersome and impair the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Yakima County; and,

WHEREAS, an official file of road names and address ranges is vital to the successful implementation of public safety and government records management; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Yakima County Commissioners has determined that it is in the best interest of the citizens of Yakima County to establish and implement comprehensive road naming and site addressing regulations in order to ensure that road names and addresses are unique and consistent and that signage for road names and addresses are uniform and visible;  
NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Yakima County, Washington, hereby adopts Ordinance 4-2007, the Yakima County Road Naming and Site Addressing Ordinance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Ordinance shall be codified under Title 13 of the Yakima County Code.

### **Section 1: Title**

- 1) This Ordinance shall be known as the Yakima County Road Naming and Site Addressing Ordinance.

### **Section 2: Purpose**

- 1) This Ordinance is enacted for the purpose of establishing and maintaining Road Naming and Site Addressing standards intended to:
  - a) Provide property owners, the general public and Yakima County government with an accurate and systematic means of identifying and locating property.
  - b) Govern the display of property address numbers and provide for accurate road name signage, installation, and maintenance thereof.
  - c) Assist in the proper delivery of mail, packages, utilities, and other services.
  - d) Facilitate expedient emergency response by medical, law enforcement, fire, rescue, and any other emergency services.

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### **Section 3: Applicability**

- 1) This Ordinance shall apply to the assignment of addresses to all new or existing buildings, lots or other tracts of land within unincorporated Yakima County, excluding all Federal or State owned lands.

### **Section 4: Definitions**

- 1) **Address:** The physical location of structures within the community addressing grid which includes number, street name, city, state and zip code.
- 2) **Address Management System (AMS):** Address Management System (AMS) offices of the United States Postal Service (USPS) each serve several regional post offices. Their primary purpose is to maintain official records of valid mailing addresses for their region. In addition to maintaining current records of valid mailing addresses, AMS offices also review and approve address changes for adherence to USPS standards.
- 3) **Address Number:** The numeric designation for an addressable structure or unit e.g.; If 101 N Main ST is the site address, 101 is the Address Number).
- 4) **Addressing Scheme:** A generic term used to describe the address number system in any particular area such as a grid system, block system or mile point system.
- 5) **Addressable Structures or Units:** Generally, the habitable or legally occupied structure on a lot, parcel or tract, but may also include other structures as determined necessary by the Yakima County Building Official and/or Yakima County Fire Marshal to comply with applicable Building and/or Fire Codes.
- 6) **Building Permit:** A permit issued by the Yakima County Building Official before any building construction activity can commence.
- 7) **Cardinal Direction:** The basic compass directions of North, South, East and West abbreviated as N, S, E & W.
- 8) **Certificate of Occupancy:** The document issued by the County Building official in accordance with applicable Building and other Codes that allows a structure to be legally occupied for its intended use.
- 9) **County Addressing Coordinator:** person(s) designated by the Director of Public Services to administer the Yakima County Road Naming and Site Addressing System.
- 10) **Nonstandard Road Name Sign:** any road name sign that is not a standard Yakima County Road name sign.
- 11) **Directional:** A 1 or 2 letter descriptor within a road name consisting of any combination of the cardinal directions of North, South, East, West. Generally used in specific road naming schemes. (i.e. N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, SW)
- 12) **Driveway:** A means of vehicular access, beginning at the property line of a lot, tract or parcel of land abutting a public or private road that provides access to an addressable structure or unit on that lot. A driveway does not serve any other lot, parcel or tract of land and shall not be identified by a separate road name.
- 13) **Duplicate:** Duplicate shall mean a road name that is either identical to another road name or has a name which because of its pronunciation or spelling is deceptively similar to another road name.
- 14) **Homonym:** Road names that are phonetically similar names.

15) **Operating Procedures:** Yakima County administrative rules and procedures, promulgated by the Public Services Director, which govern the creation, assignment and maintenance of the County Site Addressing system within unincorporated Yakima County.

16) **Private Road:** Any road, access way or easement that provides access to two or more addressable structures or units that is not included in the County Road Network.

17) **Inconsistent Site Address or Road Name:** A site address or road name that causes confusion to or hinders the efficient operation of the post office or delivery service, fire response agency, emergency medical service or law enforcement agency serving Yakima County (e.g. duplicate road names, address numbers or ranges that are out of sequence).

18) **Public Road:** Any road included in a right of way dedicated to the public and accepted into the County Road Network.

19) **Road Approach:** The point of access of private property to a Public Road that has been approved and permitted by the County Engineer.

20) **Road Name:** The word or words either existing or in the case of new or renamed roads, approved by the Yakima County Addressing Coordinator, used in conjunction with a Directional and/or a Road Name Descriptor to identify a Public or Private road.

21) **Road Name Descriptor:** An abbreviated word used in conjunction with a road name to describe the character of the road. The following Road name descriptors shall be used:

- a) **Avenue (AVE):** A road or thoroughfare often associated with urban areas. Also used as a descriptor for certain roads in specific road naming schemes. (Public Roads only).
- b) **Boulevard (BLVD):** A broad, landscaped road generally containing a median. (Public Roads only).
- c) **Circle (CIR):** A generally short road that begins and ends with the same intersecting road. (Public or Private Roads).
- d) **Court (CT):** A very short road, generally less than 500 feet that ends in a cul-de-sac. (Public Roads only).
- e) **Drive (DR):** A through road that generally is not straight but curvilinear in nature. (Public or Private Roads).
- f) **Lane (LN):** A short road, generally less than 1000 feet that ends in a cul-de-sac or dead end. (Private Roads only).
- g) **Loop (LOOP):** A road that intersects with itself subsequent to an intersection with another road. (Public or Private Roads).
- h) **Place (PL):** A short road, generally less than 1000 feet that ends in a cul-de-sac or dead end. (Public Roads only).
- i) **Road (RD):** A generic road name descriptor that generally describes a rural road. (Public or Private Roads).
- j) **Street (ST):** A road or thoroughfare often associated with urban areas. Also used as a descriptor for certain roads in specific road naming schemes. (Public Roads only).
- k) **Way (WAY):** A road that runs at an angle, or is not parallel to a grid. Also used as a generic road descriptor in urban areas. (Public or Private Roads).

22) **Site Address:** Property identification comprised of an address number, a directional, a road name, a road name descriptor and a unit designator if applicable.

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- 23) **Subdivision:** all types of land divisions subject to the Yakima County Land Use Code.
- 24) **Unit Designator:** secondary address numbers that are used to identify separate buildings or units on a single lot, parcel or tract of land. A Unit Designator shall consist of alphabetic abbreviation such as BLDG or UNIT and a numeric identifier. (i.e. 101 N Main ST BLDG 2)

#### **Section 5: Administration**

- 1) The Yakima County Department of Public Services, under the direction of the Public Services Director, shall administer the provisions of this ordinance unless otherwise provided herein. The Public Services Director shall be responsible for establishing numeric addressing systems and promulgating Operating Procedures necessary to carryout the intent of this ordinance.

#### **Section 6: Road Names and Site Address Required**

- 1) All new and existing Addressable Structures or Units within unincorporated Yakima County shall have a Site Address in accordance with the applicable provisions of the currently adopted Building and Fire Codes and this Ordinance.
- 2) All existing Site Addresses not in conformity with the provisions of this ordinance and/or are contrary to the purpose of this ordinance shall be subject to change to conform to the intent and provisions of this ordinance.
- 3) All newly created Public Roads shall be designated with approved road names prior to approval of the final Subdivision containing said roads.
- 4) All newly created Private Roads shall be designated with approved road names prior to approval of any final Subdivision containing said roads and/or issuance of any building permit by Yakima County.
- 5) Existing Private Roads that provide legal access to five or more addressable structures or units, or that are more than 1000 feet long from the point of connection with any named Public or Private road, shall be named in accordance with this Ordinance.
  - a) Any Private road meeting the criteria of this paragraph that is not named, shall be named and all existing addressable structures or units shall be readdressed prior to the issuance of any Building Permit for construction of any new addressable structure or unit located along said road.
  - b) In the case of new construction in progress at the time of adoption of this ordinance, road naming and readdressing shall occur prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for said new construction.
- 6) Existing roads with confusing or inconsistent road names that may adversely impact the efficient delivery of services by Law Enforcement, Fire or Emergency Medical responders, the US Postal Service or other private service providers may be renamed.

#### **Section 7: Road Name Requirements**

- 1) New Road Names;
  - a) All newly constructed or currently unnamed public and private roads shall be named in accordance with the following standards:

- i) Road names shall use words with common spelling and pronunciation. Only letters of the alphabet and blank spaces may be used in road names. Road names shall not contain punctuation, accents, symbols or special characters.
- ii) There shall be no duplication of existing road names within the boundaries of the County, including incorporated areas of the County.
- iii) Variations of the same name with a different road designation shall not be used (i.e., Maple Avenue, Maple Road, Maple Drive).
- iv) Road names shall not be a proper name or family surname unless historically significant.
- v) Road names shall not use corporate trade names unless coincidental.
- vi) Road names shall not include obscene, racial, and/or derogatory terms.
- vii) Numbers shall not be used in road names except for those used in County, State or Federal road systems.
- viii) Adjectives may be duplicated in a road name as long as they are not duplicated in the same subdivision (e.g. Red Stone Road and Red Fox Road).
- ix) Homonyms/phonetic duplications of road names are prohibited (e.g. Maple Trace Road and Maple Chase Lane).
- x) Cardinal directions shall only be used in road names where consistent with existing road naming grids or schemes, Cardinal directions shall not be a part of the road name (i.e. Westpark Dr. or Southbank Rd.).
- xi) Abbreviations used for road name prefixes and suffixes must be United States Postal Service compliant.
- xii) The main title of a road name shall not be abbreviated (e.g. Mount Shasta Dr., NOT Mt. Shasta Drive).
- xiii) Continuous roads must retain the same road name and shall not change at any point unless the County addressing Coordinator determines that it is in the public interest to do so.
- xiv) Driveways shall not be assigned road names.

2) Renaming Existing Named Roads;

- a) The renaming of existing named roads, both public and private, shall be done only by a resolution of the Board of Yakima County Commissioners and only after a Public Hearing on the matter is held by the Board in the manner prescribed in RCW 36.32.120(7)
- b) The Board of Yakima County Commissioners shall find in their decision to approve or deny the renaming of an existing named road that such approval or denial is consistent with the purpose of this ordinance.

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- c) The notice of the public hearing on the renaming of an existing named road shall contain at least one, and no more than three, new road name(s) recommended to the Board by the County Addressing Coordinator. The recommended name(s) may be compiled by the Addressing Coordinator using the procedure in Section 7 (3) of this Ordinance.
- d) When existing named roads are renamed to comply with this Ordinance, all of the standards of Section 7 (1) shall apply. In addition, the following standards shall also apply:
  - i) Historically significant road names shall be retained where feasible. The desire to maintain these road names to commemorate local history shall be balanced with the stated purpose of this Ordinance.
  - ii) Except for the continuation of existing roads, road names shall not be duplicated within any of the following boundaries: Zip Codes, Fire, Law and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) response areas.
  - iii) If two existing roads have duplicate names such that one road name must be changed, the first road to use the name shall retain that name. If it cannot be determined or verified which road used the name first, the road with fewer addressable structures or units shall be renamed.

3) Selection of Road Names for New or Existing Unnamed Roads;

- a) The person or persons requesting the assignment of a road name for a new or existing unnamed road shall submit a prioritized list of at least three possible road names to the County Addressing Coordinator for review.
- b) The Addressing Coordinator shall select the name with the highest priority on the list that meets the requirements of this ordinance.
- c) Where the road to be named serves multiple properties that are owned by different persons, the person submitting the list of possible road names shall be responsible for demonstrating, by petition or otherwise, to the satisfaction of the Addressing Coordinator, that the list of names and their priority is acceptable to at least fifty percent of the property owners affected by the selection of the road name.
- d) In the event that the person submitting the list of possible road names cannot demonstrate the consent of at least fifty percent of the affected property owners, the County Addressing Coordinator shall select a road name that meets the criteria of this ordinance and that best represents the preferences of the affected property owners.

4) General Requirements for the display of Road Name Signs;

- a) Yakima County standard road name signs shall be required at all road intersections on public and private roads.
- b) The composition, size and height of road name signs on public, county maintained roads must comply with Yakima County Road Standards and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- c) Road name signs shall be placed in the right-of-way. The location of road name signs must not obscure any potential traffic hazard. At any location where the typical placement of a sign interferes with a safe sight distance, an alternate location must be selected and approved by the County Engineer.

- d) Only those road name signs assigned or approved by the County Engineer are allowed at roadway intersections. The County may remove any road name signs displaying unapproved road names or road name signs that do not comply with the Yakima County Road Standards.
- 5) Road Name Signs for Public Roads;
  - a) No one shall willfully destroy or remove any road name sign on any public, county maintained road.
  - b) The cost, manufacture and installation of Yakima County standard road name signs on public, county maintained roads shall be the responsibility of Yakima County except as in (d) below.
  - c) The on-going maintenance of Yakima County standard road name signs on public, county maintained roads shall be the responsibility of Yakima County.
  - d) Yakima County standard road name signs for new and existing public roads in all subdivisions approved by Yakima County shall be installed and paid for by the developer, including all road name signs that must be changed or added between the location of the subdivision and the County road or State or Federal highway providing access to the subdivision.
- 6) Road Name Signs for Private Roads;
  - a) No one shall willfully destroy or remove any road name sign on any private road.
  - b) Yakima County standard road name signs are required on all private roads. These signs shall be displayed at all road intersections both Public and Private.
  - a) Nonstandard road name signs are not allowed.
  - b) The composition, size, height and location of road name signs on private roads must comply with Yakima County Road Standards and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
  - c) Only those road names approved by the Yakima County Addressing Coordinator shall be displayed at private roadway intersections
  - d) Yakima County may remove any road name signs that do not comply with this ordinance.
  - c) In addition to the name of the road, the abbreviation "PVT" shall be added to the road name sign for private roads.

#### **Section 8: Address Number Requirements**

- 1) The following shall apply in general to the assignment of all Address Numbers:
  - a) Addresses shall be assigned with Fire, EMS and Law Enforcement response as the primary consideration.
  - b) Only one Address Number shall be assigned to any one lot, tract or parcel of land.
    - i) In addition to the Address Number, a Unit Designator may be assigned to identify multiple structures or units on a single lot, tract or parcel to comply with applicable Building and/or Fire Codes
    - ii) The County Addressing Coordinator shall only assign Unit Designators when determined to be necessary by the County Building Official and/or Fire Marshal. Unit

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Designators assigned by the County Addressing Coordinator shall be restricted to Building (BLDG) or Unit (UNIT), along with a numeric identifier.

- iii) This section is not intended to preclude the assignment of Unit Designators such as Apartment, Suite or Room to separate units within a single addressable structure by the US Postal Service.
- c) If the property to be addressed contains a structure located within 50 feet of the road, and the access is in good view, the address shall be assigned relative to the structure's placement in the addressing scheme. If the structure is more than 50 feet from the road, or if terrain restricts visibility from the road, the structure shall be addressed relative to the location of the driveway in the addressing scheme.
- d) Address numbers on the north side of east/west roads and on the east side of north/south roads shall be odd. Address numbers on the south side of east/west roads and on the west side of north/south roads shall be even.
- e) When assigning address numbers, sufficient gaps should be allowed in addressing sequences to allow for infill due to future development in order to preserve a progressive address number sequence.

2) The following shall apply to the assignment of Address Numbers to new addressable structures or units on existing lots:

- a) All new addressable structures or units on all existing lots, tracts or parcel of land shall be assigned an Address Number after the property owner or developer, with the approval of the County Engineer, has made a final determination of the road approach and applied for a building permit.
- b) An address number shall be assigned before a building permit is issued.
- c) The address numbers shall be displayed visibly at the site prior to the commencement of construction and ultimately on new structures prior to the first use or occupancy.

3) The following shall apply to the assignment of Address Numbers to lots created by plat:

- a) A Long Plat shall not be forwarded to the Board of Yakima County Commissioners for final plat approval until the County Addressing Coordinator has approved names for all proposed roads within said plat, and has assigned address numbers to all proposed lots within the plat.
- b) A Short Plat may receive final plat approval from the Yakima County subdivision Administrator prior to having addresses assigned at the discretion of the County Addressing Coordinator, in accordance with applicable provisions of this Ordinance and current Operating Procedures.

4) The following shall apply to the assignment of an Address Number to vacant land:

- a) An address number may be assigned to a vacant lot, tract or parcel of land upon a showing by the property owner that assignment of an address number would not be contrary to the public interest or violate any other provision of the Yakima County Code and if the final determination of the driveway access point has been made.
- b) If, in the determination of the Director of Public Services, the assignment of an address number to any vacant lot, tract or parcel of land would be contrary to the public interest

or would violate any other provision of the Yakima County Code, an address number shall not be assigned.

5) Display of Address Numbers ;

- a) All owners of addressable structures or units shall display their assigned address number in conformity with the following requirements:
  - i) The address numbers shall be displayed on the structure and shall be a minimum of four inches tall and shall be of a contrasting color to their background in accordance with applicable Building and Fire codes.
    - (1) If a unit designator is used as part of the address, then each separate unit shall display its unit designator number.
  - ii) Where the structure is more than 50 feet from the public road or the address number is obscured or illegible, an address number shall also be displayed at the driveway entrance with the address number clearly visible.
  - iii) On unnamed private roads the address numbers shall be displayed at the intersection of the private road and the connecting public road on a posted sign or a mailbox so they are visible from the public road.
  - iv) Address number signs posted along through roads shall be positioned so that the sign is roughly parallel to the centerline of the road so that it may be readily viewed from a vehicle traveling in either direction along the road.
  - v) Address number signs posted along dead end roads shall be positioned so that they may be readily viewed from a vehicle traveling in the direction towards the end of the road.
  - vi) On named private roads where the structure is more than 50 feet from the road or the address number is obscured or illegible, an address sign shall also be displayed at the driveway entrance with the address number clearly visible.
  - vii) Where an address number is assigned to vacant land, the address number shall be displayed at the driveway entrance to the parcel.
  - viii) Any address number posted in accordance with paragraph iii) and iv) above shall consist of four inch high white numbers on a blue reflective background.
  - ix) Yakima County will issue one address number sign complying with the requirements of this section for each new address number assigned. The posting and maintenance of said number sign shall be the responsibility of the property owner
- b) Any address number associated with an incorrect site address shall be removed and replaced with the correct number by the property owner within 30 days of the notification of the correct address by the County Addressing Coordinator. The property owner shall be responsible to purchase, install, and maintain the correct structure address numbers.

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### **Section 9: Appeals**

- 1) Any decision of the County Addressing Coordinator regarding the application of this ordinance may be appealed to the Director of Public Services. Any such appeal shall be made in writing within 10 calendar days of the Addressing Coordinator's decision, and shall set forth the basis of the appeal and what relief is sought..
- 2) The Director's decision may be appealed to the Board of Yakima County Commissioners. Any such appeal shall be made in writing within 10 calendar days of the Director's decision, and shall set forth the basis of the appeal and what relief is sought.
- 3) Any appeal to the Board of Yakima County Commissioners under this Section, shall be heard at a Public Hearing on the matter. The date, time and place for hearing the appeal shall be established by a resolution of the Board a regular business meeting. Notice of the Public Hearing on the appeal shall be published in the official newspaper of the County at least ten days prior to the date of the hearing.
- 4) It shall be the burden of the appellant to show, in any appeal of a decision made under this ordinance, how or why the decision is clearly in error or is in conflict with the purpose and provisions of this ordinance.
- 5) Decisions regarding the selection and assignment of address numbers shall be upheld unless it can be shown the selection or assignment of the address number was clearly in error.

### **Section 10: Enforcement**

- 1) Existing addresses or road names that do not comply with the provisions of this ordinance shall be brought into compliance when:
  - i) During the review of any building permit, subdivision or land use application by the Department of Public Services nonconforming site addresses, road names or other inconsistencies are identified.
  - ii) During any code enforcement action undertaken by the Department where a nonconforming site address or road name is identified.
  - iii) An inconsistent site address or road name is brought to the attention of the Department, and in the determination of the Public Services Director conformance is necessary to ensure public safety.
- 2) Violations of this Ordinance shall be subject to the provisions and remedies contained in Chapter 13.25 of the Yakima County Code. In addition to the remedies in the Yakima County Code, Yakima County may deny and withhold all permits, certificates of occupancy or other forms of authorization to use or develop any land, structure or improvements thereon.

### **Section 11: Severability**

- 1) If any section, subsection, clause, phrase or word in this ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such section or portion shall be deemed a separate provision of this ordinance and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this ordinance.

### **Section 12: Effective Date**

- 1) This Ordinance shall become effective upon adoption by the Board of Yakima County Commissioners.

BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Michael D. Leita, Chairman

Excused

Ronald F. Gamache, Commissioner

J. Rand Elliott, Commissioner

*Constituting the Board of County Commissioners for Yakima County, Washington*

Attest:

  
Christina S. Steiner  
Clerk of the Board

Approved as to Form:

  
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney