



## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** December 12, 2019

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Bill Detweiler, Director of Development Services

**Subject:** Residential Interface Code

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### **Executive Summary**

Town Council directed staff to research and create a code to mitigate the impacts between adjacent dissimilar residential properties. The proposed code is not intended to regulate the impacts of dissimilar residential properties in an approved Planned Development (PD) that purposely intermixes adjacent dissimilar residential properties within the PD or properties zoned R-1, R-2 or R-3.

Staff conversed with representatives of the HBA and development community to review draft language and ensure the code provides a balance between homebuilding activities and continued residential investment in Castle Rock, while meeting the direction of Council to mitigate the impacts between dissimilar residential developments.

Town Council will review the proposed code at the December 17 public hearing and staff will update Council with Planning Commission suggestions or recommendations at that public hearing.

### **Discussion**

To provide clarity and ensure the Council goal is met, staff created a definition for dissimilar residential interface and definitions for single family detached, single family attached, and multifamily, as follows:

- Dissimilar residential property means properties where single family detached is adjacent to either single family attached or multifamily or where single family attached is adjacent to multifamily.
- Single family detached means a residential unit defined in the building code as a one-family home.
- Single family attached means a residential unit defined in the building code as a two-family home including paired home, triplex, fourplex, or townhome.
- Multifamily means a residential unit defined in the building code as multiple residential units within one building with one foundation.

The interface code applies to properties if they share a property line in whole or in part or are separated by an open space parcel less than 50 feet in width. Properties separated by a railroad right-of-way or a minimum 50-foot road right-of-way shall not be considered adjacent. The code does not apply to mixed-residential development, straight zoned R-1, R-2, R-3 properties, or properties located in the Downtown Overlay District.

The minimum width of a buffer is 50 feet, as measured from the developed residential property line to the proposed residential building setback. The buffer may be identified as a separate tract or shown and dimensioned on a site plan. When a dissimilar residential development is proposed on a property adjacent to developed residential property, 100% of the buffer shall be provided on the proposed residential property.

The buffer is intended to mitigate the visibility of adjacent dissimilar residential property. Critical design issues that need to be included in the staff analysis and discussion with the applicant include:

- Preserve the natural topography, native vegetation, and scale of the adjacent dissimilar residential property;
- Create a visually attractive buffer with placement of walls, fences, berms and/or landscaping;
- Include a landscape design that provides a varied plant spacing, clustering, and height, with berms and decorative walls as needed;
- Mitigate the view of site elements from dissimilar residential property such as trash enclosures, utility boxes, play fields, play structures, pocket parks, gazebos, playgrounds, trails or gathering areas. Such uses shall be screened so they are not highly visible from adjacent dissimilar residential property, and when possible, located to the interior of a site; and
- The buffer shall be kept free of buildings and parking lots, due to the associated impacts.
- Elements allowed within the buffer include utility easements and related facilities, drainage facilities, retaining walls, and required building setbacks.

Council discussion identified that building design and orientation is a critical part of a successful interface. In order to mitigate visual impacts of buildings closest to dissimilar residential property, where possible, consideration should be given to building orientation, architectural detailing and incorporation of materials and colors to avoid blank facades, or other methods to reduce the visual scale of a building.

During our discussions with stakeholders it was noted that instances may arise where it is impractical to completely buffer an adjacent residential development. The code allows Council to wave one or more of the requirements in the regulations if unusual or exceptional lot configuration, lot size, topography, native vegetation, or buildings on properties are impacted by the regulations. Flexibility is needed to ensure the goal of the interface regulations is maintained and to recognize that Castle Rock is not flat and void of native vegetation. On the contrary, Castle Rock is blessed with a unique natural landscape consisting of mesas, ridges and valleys and a variety of native plant species.

## **Summary**

The goal of the proposed code is to establish regulations to mitigate the impacts between adjacent dissimilar residential properties. Staff finds the proposed code language meets the Council goal and is consistent with the Vision 2030 Vision and Comprehensive Master Plan to provide a diversity of housing while protecting and maintaining the natural environment and aesthetic values of the community.

## **Proposed Motion**

I move to recommend Town Council adopt the proposed Residential Interface Code as presented.

## **Attachments**

Attachment A:	Residential Interface Code
Attachment B:	Map of Potential Residential Interface Locations