

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

Meeting Date: May 5, 2025

Agenda Item: 6	Prepared by: L. Suzanne Pritchard, PLA, AICP, CFM
Agenda Section: Unfinished Business: Ordinance. Second Reading	Date: April 30, 2025
Subject: Amendments to Chapter 23, Zoning, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, addressing minimum driveway length [ZTX-25-3]	Division: Planning and Development

History:

The ordinance passed first reading on April 7, 2025. During discussion, a suggestion was made to include a reference to the City’s existing driveway width standards, which are found in a separate chapter of the Code under Public Works. In response, staff has added a clarifying sentence to acknowledge those applicable requirements.

Background:

Residents raising awareness about vehicles overhanging sidewalks while parked in driveways led to the City Council requesting a designated minimum driveway length be established. The proposed ordinance sought to create a minimum standard that would apply to newly built homes with individual driveways and potentially affect voluntarily requested modifications to driveway lengths on existing residential properties.

The ordinance was first reviewed and recommended for approval by the Planning Commission on July 21, 2020. It proceeded to City Council, where it passed first reading on August 17, 2020, with a 7-0 vote. During the discussion, Council members raised concerns about vehicles obstructing sidewalks and streets, particularly in cases where homeowners used covered parking areas for purposes other than vehicle storage, forcing vehicles to extend into the right-of-way. Specific questions arose regarding how parking under raised homes would count toward the required 24’ driveway length and whether additional clarifications were needed to prevent sidewalk and road obstructions. Council requested staff to refine the ordinance language and diagrams before second reading to ensure that the intent—keeping vehicles from encroaching into pedestrian and vehicular paths—was clearly addressed. However, the ordinance was never brought forward for second reading due to the lack of a follow-up workshop, and it ultimately died without further action.

Proposal:

Staff is proposing a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to establish a minimum driveway length for residential uses, measured from the sidewalk inward. Where no sidewalk exists, the measurement will be taken from the property line. When no property line exists, the measurement will be taken from the back of curb or edge of paving. The amendment also clarifies requirements for U-shaped driveways and elevated homes with parking underneath while maintaining an exception for side-loaded garages on interior lots.

Planning Commission Action:

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on March 18, 2025, and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the building amendment. There was no public comment.

Recommended Action:

Approve or deny the proposed ordinance on first reading

Reviewed by Department Head

Reviewed by Interim
City Manager

Reviewed by City Attorney

Council Action:

Motion By _____ 2nd By _____ To _____

ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH PROVIDING THAT THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA, BE AMENDED BY REVISING CHAPTER 23, ZONING, ARTICLE VII, GENERAL AND SUPPLEMENTAL REGULATIONS, OF SAID CODE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA, IN COUNCIL DULY ASSEMBLED, THAT:

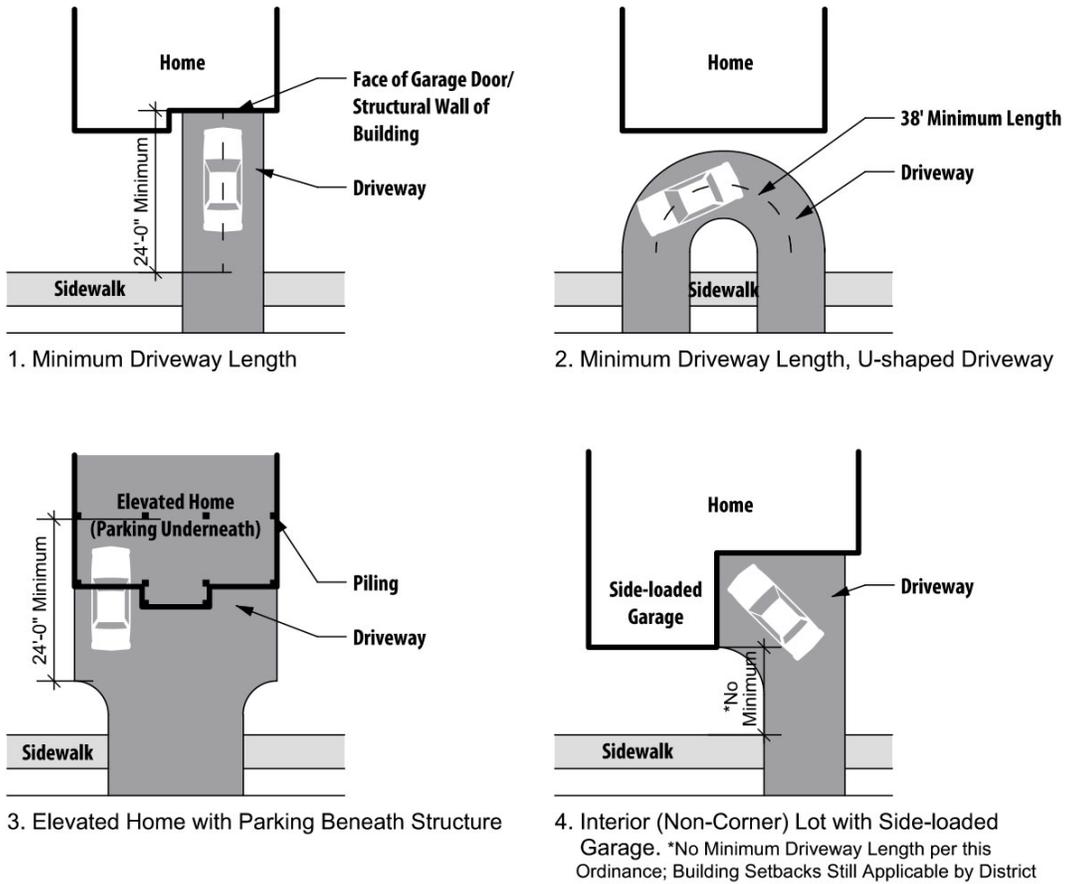
Section 1. That *Sec. 23-129.3.2. - Minimum driveway length for residential uses*, be added to read as follows (*new matter underlined*).

Sec. 23-129.3.2. Minimum driveway length for residential uses.

To minimize vehicles overhanging sidewalks or pedestrian paths, the following shall apply for residential units with driveways:

1. The minimum driveway length shall be at least 24 feet, measured from the face of the garage door, a structural wall of the building, or any other obstruction to the back of the sidewalk. If no sidewalk is present, the measurement shall extend to the property line or, in the absence of a property line, to the back of the curb. If no curb is present, the measurement shall extend to the edge of the pavement.
2. For U-shaped driveways with two points of access to a street, the minimum driveway length shall be at least 38 feet. The driveway must be arranged to ensure that no portion of a parked vehicle obstructs any part of a sidewalk or pedestrian path.
3. For elevated homes with parking beneath the structure, the area under the structure may count toward the required 24-foot minimum driveway length, but only up to the first obstructing element.
4. The minimum driveway length requirement does not apply to side-loaded garages on interior (non-corner) lots. The driveway must be arranged to ensure that no portion of a parked vehicle obstructs any part of a sidewalk or pedestrian path.
5. Refer to Section 19-26 for requirements regarding driveway width.

Figure 1. Minimum Driveway Length for Residential Uses



Section 2. That the North Myrtle Beach Planning Commission has provided the required public notice of this request and has held the necessary public hearings in accordance with applicable State Statutes and City Ordinances.

DONE, RATIFIED AND PASSED, THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025.

ATTEST:

Mayor Marilyn Hatley

City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Attorney

FIRST READING: 4.7.2025
SECOND READING: 5.5.2025

REVIEWED:

Interim City Manager

ORDINANCE: 25-20

6B. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT ZTX-25-3: City staff has initiated a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to establish a minimum driveway length for residential uses.

Background:

Residents raising awareness about vehicles overhanging sidewalks while parked in driveways led to City Council requesting a designated minimum driveway length be established. The proposed ordinance sought to create a minimum standard that would apply to newly built homes with individual driveways and potentially affect voluntarily requested modifications to driveway lengths on existing residential properties.

The ordinance was first reviewed and recommended for approval by the Planning Commission on July 21, 2020. It proceeded to City Council, where it passed first reading on August 17, 2020, with a 7-0 vote. During the discussion, Council members raised concerns about vehicles obstructing sidewalks and streets, particularly in cases where homeowners used covered parking areas for purposes other than vehicle storage, forcing vehicles to extend into the right-of-way. Specific questions arose regarding how parking under raised homes would count toward the required 24' driveway length and whether additional clarifications were needed to prevent sidewalk and road obstructions. Council requested staff to refine the ordinance language and diagrams before second reading to ensure that the intent—keeping vehicles from encroaching into pedestrian and vehicular paths—was clearly addressed. However, the ordinance was never brought forward for second reading due to the lack of a follow-up workshop, and it ultimately died without further action.

Proposed Changes:

Staff is proposing a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to establish a minimum driveway length for residential uses, measured from the sidewalk inward. Where no sidewalk exists, the measurement will be taken from the property line or back of curb. The amendment also clarifies requirements for U-shaped driveways and elevated homes with parking underneath while maintaining an exception for side-loaded garages on interior lots.

The proposed amendment addresses a section in *Chapter 23, Zoning, Article VII. – General and Supplemental Regulations* and would appear in the Ordinance as follows (new matter underlined):

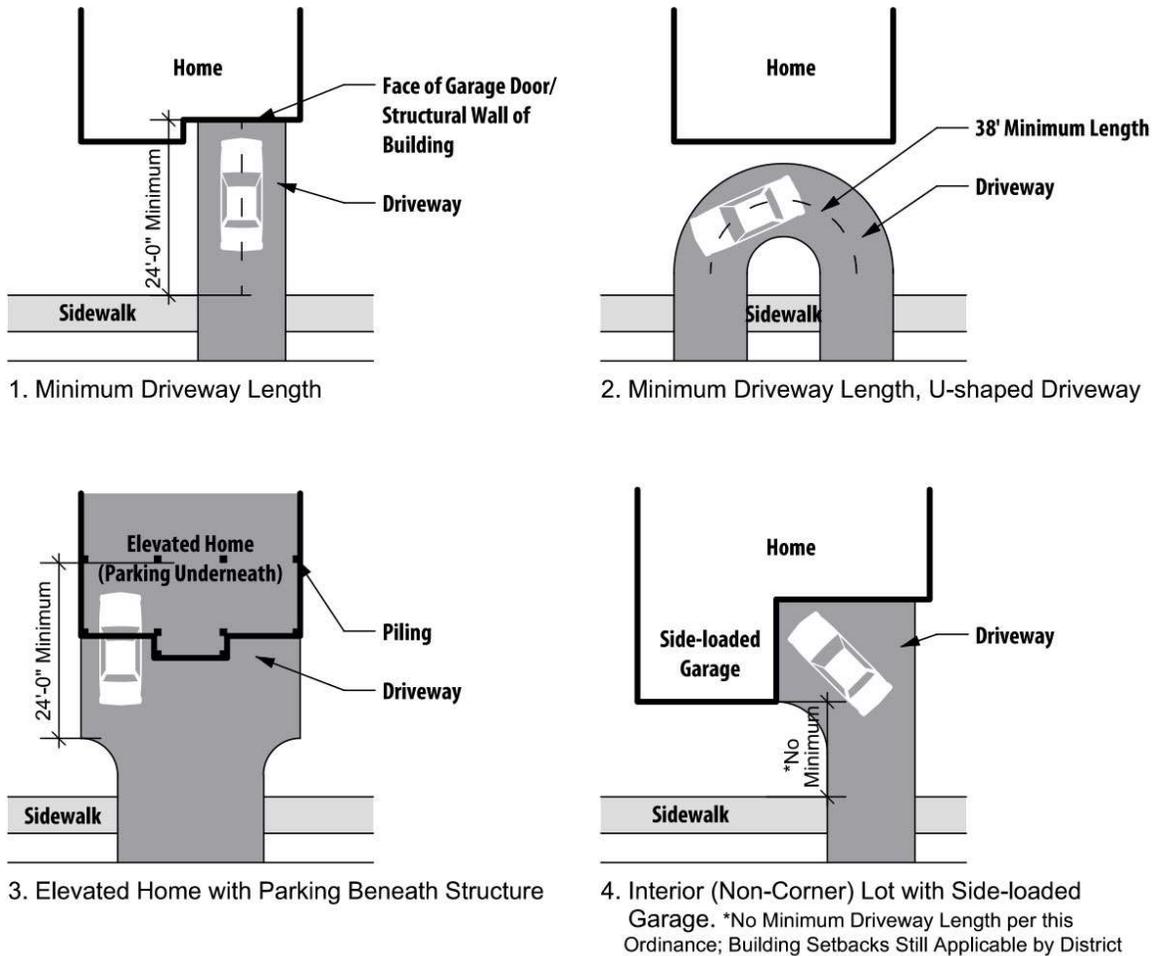
Sec. 23-129.3.2. Minimum driveway length for residential uses.

To minimize vehicles overhanging sidewalks or pedestrian paths, the following shall apply for residential units with driveways:

1. The minimum driveway length shall be at least 24 feet, measured from the face of the garage door, a structural wall of the building, or any other obstruction to the back of the sidewalk. If no sidewalk is present, the measurement shall extend to the property line or, in the absence of a property line, to the back of the curb.
2. For U-shaped driveways with two points of access to a street, the minimum driveway length shall be at least 38 feet. The driveway must be arranged to ensure that no portion of a parked vehicle obstructs any part of a sidewalk or pedestrian path.

3. For elevated homes with parking beneath the structure, the area under the structure may count toward the required 24-foot minimum driveway length, but only up to the first obstructing element.
4. The minimum driveway length requirement does not apply to side-loaded garages on interior (non-corner) lots.

Figure 1. Minimum Driveway Length for Residential Uses



According to § 23-4, *Amendments*, of the Zoning Ordinance, the advertisement requirement for Zoning Ordinance amendments is 15 days, and that advertisement notice has been met. The amendment is presented to the Planning Commission for a recommendation that will be forwarded to City Council at their next meeting scheduled for April 7, 2025.

Planning Commission Action:

The Planning Commission may recommend approval, recommend approval with modifications and/or conditions, or recommend denial of the proposal as submitted.

Alternative Motions

- 1) I move that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the zoning ordinance text amendment [Z-25-3] as submitted.

OR

- 2) I move that the Planning Commission recommend denial of the zoning ordinance text amendment [Z-25-3] as submitted.

OR

- 3) I move (an alternate motion).