



SMALL LOT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

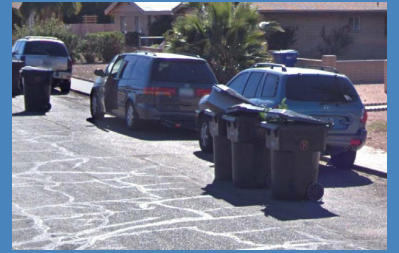
1. INTRODUCTION



The following residential design guidelines are specifically for “small lot” single residence developments. Residential Small Lots (RSL) range in size from 2,500 to 6,000 square feet. Generally, these homes have smaller lot areas, compact building footprints, and minimal street frontage and setback requirements. They are distinct from condominiums in that they are fee simple, compact homes, meaning that residents have complete ownership of their lot.

While Residential Small Lot zoning districts provide a smart-growth alternative to the suburban single-family home by allowing more compact development and providing new options for attainable housing, it also brings a new set of spatial complexities. Small Lot design is fundamentally a site planning challenge. It requires addressing practical spatial requirements while simultaneously creating high-quality living environments.

These spatial requirements include: small lot sizes and complex configurations; parking and automobile access; pedestrian circulation; adequate access to air, light, and ventilation; outdoor space and privacy; and refuse bin placement and utilities location. Developers must address these issues in ways that ultimately enhance the living environment of each dwelling unit.



1.1 CHALLENGES

The City of Mesa has, in the recent past, approved a number of Residential Small Lot developments. These developments are often accompanied with a request for narrower street widths and other modifications to development standards. As these new development types are built, City staff and officials have identified a number of issues, including:

- A lack of architectural character and detail, variety in materials and colors;
- Little or no architectural variety between buildings;
- Insufficient building separation;
- Decreased usability of private yards and open space;
- Buildings that appear too big and blocky;
- Garage doors that dominate the streetscape;
- Cluttered streetscapes;
- Insufficient or inconveniently located guest parking;
- A lack of substantial landscaping;
- Unsafe and insufficient solid waste barrel location for storage, pick up, and truck access;
- Public utility location, access, and maintenance;
- Private infrastructure reliability; and
- Homeowners Association (HOA) financial stability.



1.2 APPLYING THE GUIDELINES

The Guidelines outlined in this document identify the level of design quality expected for Residential Small Lot development. They provide guidance and direction for achieving policies contained within the General Plan and provide recommendations for site organization, including setbacks, building transitions, parking and driveways, building design and materials, landscaping, and access for utilities and other public services.

Incorporating these Guidelines into a project's design will encourage more compatible architecture, attractive residential projects, context-sensitive design, opportunities for pedestrian activity, and overall contribute to an enhanced sense of place.

The Guidelines are intended for use by the City staff, City officials, developers, architects, engineers, and community members in evaluating project applications. The Guidelines

should be used in conjunction with relevant policies from the General Plan, Subarea Plans, Zoning Ordinance, Community Plans, Engineering Standards, and other applicable design guidelines.

Small lot projects must substantially comply with these Design Guidelines in order to receive project approval. However, some leniency and creativity is permitted in implementing these Guidelines. In the event that these Guidelines conflict with any other City standards, the Guidelines will be considered subordinate to other requirements.

To assist the City's review, a project description is required for each submittal which discusses how the development proposal meets the various design Guidelines for each topic, or why it varies from the Guidelines, and the additional benefit the proposed project design provides to the community.



2. SITE DESIGN

Small lot developments are presented with numerous spatial complexities that require innovative design solutions. Regardless of spatial constraints, developments must strive for neighborhood compatibility and be able to fit all required site design elements, such as parking and driveways, trash and utility locations, and adequate indoor and outdoor living space within the project site.



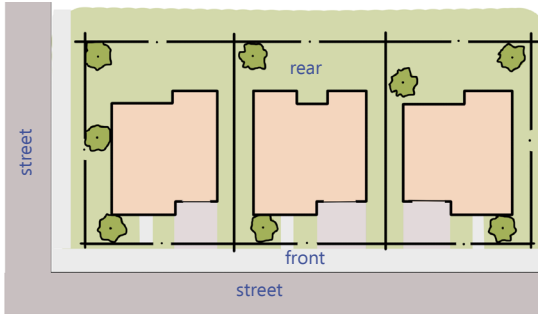
2.1 LOT DESIGN & CONFIGURATION

With reduced setback requirements and small lot areas, small lot developments are ultimately shaped by subdivision design and how well lots, buildings, streets, and open space relate to one another. The development team should consider how the arrangement of interior space affects exterior massing and how the configuration of building elements respond to adjacent buildings.

Small lot homes may be attached or detached and can be developed on several lot configurations. Small lot development in Mesa has exhibited traditional building practices and can be primarily found in one of three configurations: traditional detached residences, cottage courtyard, and auto court development.

However, as shown on the next page, there are several other lot and building configurations that can promote variety of building types and creativity within neighborhoods. Developers should consider how creative subdivision design can increase neighborhood interaction and communal space while minimizing the dominance of auto-related infrastructure.

Traditional Detached Residences



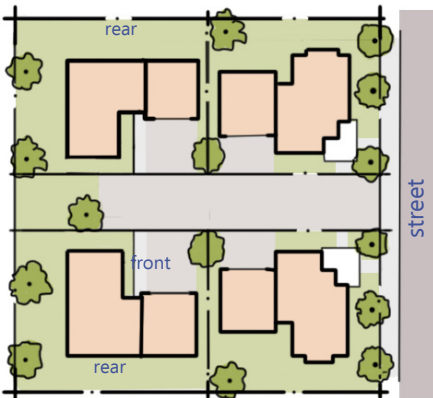
Standalone residences, containing private front, back and side yards.

Cottage Courtyard



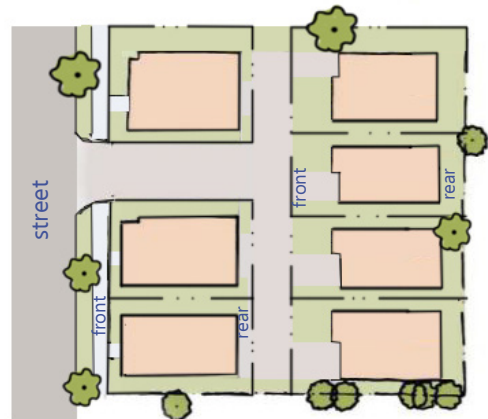
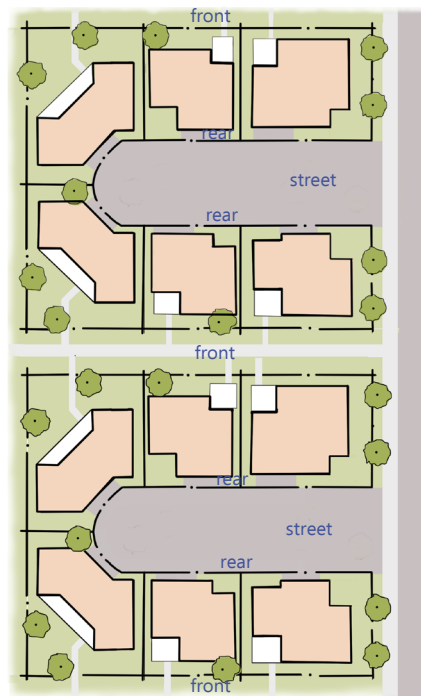
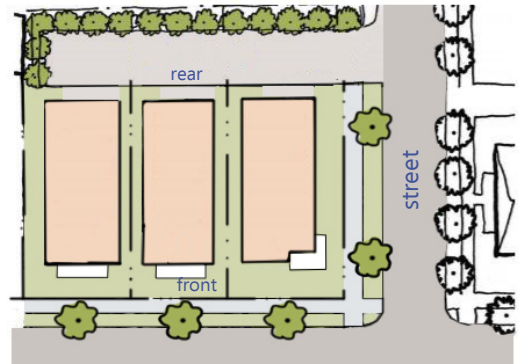
Standalone residences arranged around a landscaped common open space. Garages are placed in the rear of the home and accessed by an alley, public or private street.

Auto Court



Cluster development arranged around a common driveway. Homes may be detached or attached. Garages are front loaded and accessed via a common driveway.

Additional Possible Configurations



Please note that these drawings are not to scale and for illustrative purposes only. They do not represent the required setbacks of any particular RSL zoning district.

2.2 LOT DIMENSIONS, SETBACKS & LOTCOVERAGES

Residential Small Lot zoning allows for reduced lot dimensions and setbacks and greater lot coverages than traditional residential zoning districts. The intent is to provide for smaller lots and smaller homes that result in attainable housing. Small lot developments must comply with the lot dimension, setback, and coverage requirements of Table 11-5-3.A.2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance. Modifications to these standards may be allowed in some situations with the approval of a Planned Area Development (PAD) or Bonus Intensity Zone (BIZ) overlay which allows for flexible, innovative, and superior design.



2.2.1 Houses may develop as zero lot line homes if developed with a zero lot line on one side yard and a minimum 10-foot setback on the opposite side yard. The lot adjacent to the zero setback side yard must be under the same ownership at the time of initial construction (ensuring that a developer does not infringe on the property rights of owners of adjacent tracts).

2.2.2 Each detached unit should have at least one usable side yard between the house and fence to provide outdoor passage between the front and rear yards.

2.2.3 Ensure appropriate building separations to provide yard areas which are usable, receive ample sun light and allow for substantial landscaping for screening, privacy, etc.

2.2.4 Paved areas may not occupy more than 50% of the front yard. In cluster developments, paved areas may not occupy more than 80% of the front yard.

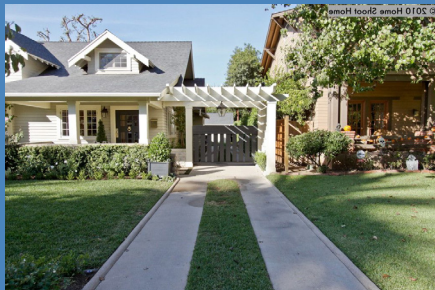
2.2.5 The maximum floor area ratio (F.A.R.), a building's total floor area in relation to the lot area, should not exceed 0.7 for any one lot.



2.3 DRIVEWAYS, PARKING & GARAGE PLACEMENT

In poorly designed small lot subdivisions, vehicular parking, driveways, and garages dominate the landscape, creating conflicts between pedestrians and cars, and decreasing the overall aesthetic quality of the development. Improperly placed vehicular parking at the front of homes can have unsightly effects on the street front. Frequent curb cuts and driveways jeopardize pedestrian safety and eliminate space for street trees, on-street parking, and trash collection. Ideally, small lot developments should locate parking behind dwellings, accessible from alleys or shared driveways.

- 2.3.1** A minimum 24-foot backing distance must be provided for each garage in auto court configurations. Driveways should be designed to be no wider than circulation and backup requirements, while still allowing for landscaping and pedestrian access on-site.
- 2.3.2** Permeable paving (such as porous asphalt, porous concrete) or accent paving is encouraged.
- 2.3.3** The width of driveway curb cuts should be minimized to increase the spacing between curb cuts, thus preserving room for landscaping and on-street parking.
- 2.3.4** When multiple units share a common driveway that is lined with individual garages, provide distinguishable pedestrian paths to connect parking areas to articulated individual entries to the house.
- 2.3.5** Grid systems filled with gravel or grass and driveways with landscape strips (Hollywood drives) are strongly encouraged in order to minimize pavement and maximize the amount of green space.
- 2.3.6** Shared driveways which also serve as the front entry to a unit, such as in auto courts, should resemble a traditional residential street with front door landscaping for each unit.
- 2.3.7** Shared driveways should have accent paving on the parking apron, behind the curb cuts, to diminish the appearance of large concrete surfaces.
- 2.3.8** Side-entry, alley accessed, and rear yard garages are encouraged.
- 2.3.9** All garages must be consistent and compatible with the architecture and materials of the individual unit. Front facing garage doors should generally be set back three feet from the front elevation.
- 2.3.10** Cluster homes and small lot developments with narrow private streets must provide parking at a ratio of three spaces per unit. Two parking spaces must be provided on lot and one guest space may be located elsewhere within the development.



3. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN



While building height is often criticized for a project's incompatibility with adjacent neighborhoods, it is more often the building's overall volume that can cause the new structure to seem out of place. Well-designed buildings do not "max out" the allowable building massing permitted by the code--height limits, yard, setbacks--but employ variations in height, massing, rhythm, and texture to reduce the perceivable massing of the building. These variations serve dual functions: they help small developments fit in with their surroundings, while also enhancing the overall quality of the street by providing visual interest and a pedestrian scale.

3.1 MASSING, SCALE & ARTICULATION

- 3.1.1** The main facade of the home should be broken up into three to four distinct elements: entry; main building; a single-story element and the roof. Roof forms that create modulation and enhance the building's architecture are strongly encouraged.
- 3.1.2** Building facades should have offsets and step backs, particularly above the first floor, to reduce the appearance of building mass and bulk.



3.1.3 Architectural features such as bay windows and porches are encouraged to provide a visually rich environment and an opportunity for neighborhood interaction.

3.1.4 Front porches should be designed to be usable with a minimum depth of six feet, as measured from the building facade to the posts, and width of eight feet.

3.1.5 Porch and building columns and other trellis framework should be proportioned appropriately for the scale of the element.

3.1.6 Second-story window and door locations should be offset from unit to unit to protect privacy.

3.1.7 Massing should be varied by using elements such as bays, dormers, etc. Changing materials on these elements provides further articulation and adds variety.

3.1.8 Small lot developments containing more than six homes in a single row shall provide at least two variations in building design, such as changes in orientation, primary entryways, fenestration pattern, façade articulation, or varied roof line.





3.2 MATERIALS

Buildings in small lot developments are placed close together and often close to the street. As such, details in architecture and materials are highly visible making architectural detailing important. Recent residential developments have lacked a variety of materials within their facade palettes. The predominance of stucco exteriors, many with limited detailing or limited variety of treatments has produced a monotony of appearance. Architecture needs to provide interest through changes in plane and elevation, use of pop-outs and details, and a variety of authentic, durable building materials to create different patterns and textures.

- 3.2.1** Building design within the development should be architecturally varied but complementary. Building materials should be compatible with or enhance the architectural character within the development.
- 3.2.2** Select building materials that convey a sense of permanence. Quality, authentic materials such as, brick, stone, wood, stucco etc. should be used to withstand weather and wear regardless of architectural style.
- 3.2.3** Apply changes in material purposefully and in a manner corresponding to variations in building mass.
- 3.2.4** Building materials should be used so that they do not appear to be “applied” and are used in an appropriate manner or style.
- 3.2.5** In cluster developments, dusk to dawn garage lights and porch lights should be used to provide lighting into the auto court as a safety measure.

4. STREET DESIGN



Several recent small lot developments have isolated themselves from adjacent neighborhoods or not utilized the opportunity to connect with adjacent commercial and residential developments. This has created a sense of isolated enclaves, rather than developments that are part of a larger neighborhood or district. Small lot residential development is encouraged to be integrated with other housing types rather than stand-alone development. Integrating small lot residential into larger development can provide several benefits, such as increased housing choices, architectural diversity, and social interaction.

4.1 STREET LAYOUT & CONNECTIVITY

- 4.1.1** Developments should connect into the adjacent neighborhoods and provide for future connections to currently undeveloped properties via streets or pedestrian and bike paths.
- 4.1.2** Projects adjacent to existing or future retail properties are encouraged to provide vehicular and pedestrian/bike access to adjacent developments, coordinating with walkways and plaza locations.
- 4.1.3** To promote connectivity, internal street layout should provide loop circulation wherever possible rather than dead ends or cul-de-sacs.



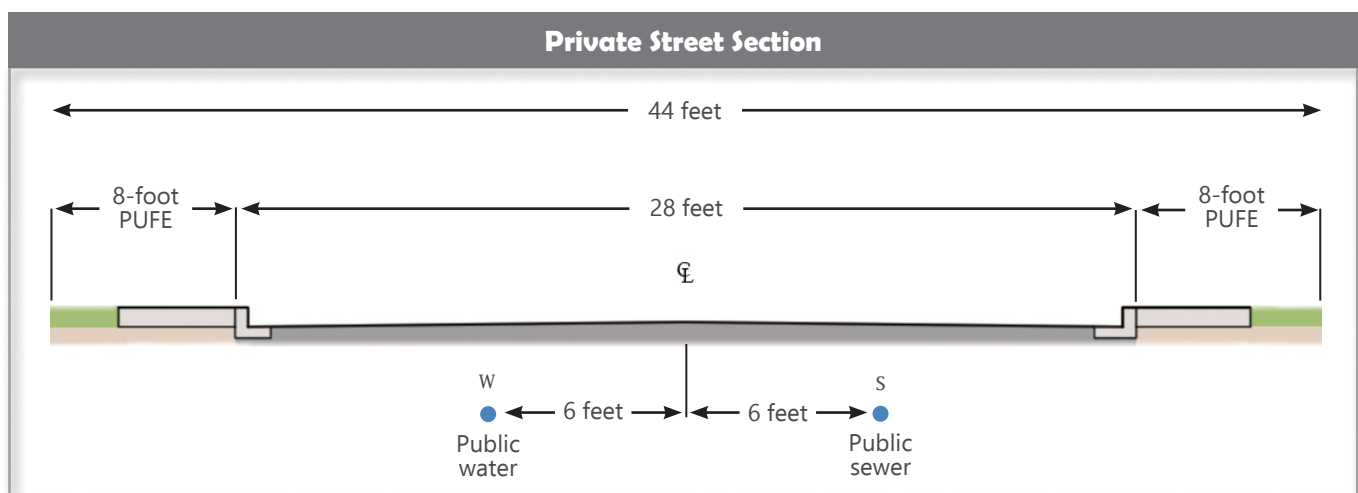
4.2 PUBLIC STREETS

- 4.2.1** Public streets are strongly encouraged for all but the most minor streets, those serving less than six residences.
- 4.2.2** Projects that have a private alley system within or contiguous to the project which:
 - Will be used as a primary means of access are required to be 24 feet wide.
 - Will not be used as a primary means of access are to be 16 feet wide.
- 4.2.3** Local street classification requires a five-foot wide sidewalk attached to the back of the curb. Sidewalks on local streets may be wider, and detached, and may require additional right-of-way or easement dedication from the development.
- 4.2.4** Where loop street connections are not feasible, pedestrian and bike paths may be used as "shortcuts" to make walking and biking more convenient.
- 4.2.5** Streets should terminate on important vistas such as community buildings, mountains, trees or open spaces.
- 4.2.6** When designing streets, consider overlapping service requirements such as emergency service access, solid waste collection, and parking.

4.3 PRIVATE STREETS

Residential small lot projects are often developed utilizing a Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay to provide private streets that deviate from City standards. These private streets often only have sidewalks and on-street parking on one side, and these sidewalks have typically been of a minimal width. The private street designs have not provided the community with the desired street trees, street lights, bike lanes, and sidewalks which enhance the quality of the neighborhoods. Furthermore, the long-term stability of privately owned and maintained infrastructure by homeowners' associations (HOAs) is of concern regarding the continued sustainability of small lot developments.

- 4.3.1** Private streets must be placed within tracts and be owned and maintained in perpetuity by a Homeowners Association.
- 4.3.2** Private streets must have a minimum width of 44 feet. This provides for a minimum 28-foot wide paved private street tract that is dedicated as a public water and sewer easement with a minimum eight-foot PUFÉ on both sides of the street. Private streets less than 44 feet may be considered but may not contain public water and sewer lines.
- 4.3.3** Service drives and alleys that do not access garages or parking spaces must be at least 12 feet wide.
- 4.3.4** Service drives and alleys to do provide direct access to garages or parking spaces must be at least 20 feet wide to allow vehicular circulation and fire access.
- 4.3.5** Where private streets are used, they should incorporate special design features such as special paving, neckdown intersections, and separated sidewalks with street trees.
- 4.3.6** Where on-street parking is limited to a single side of the street, a sidewalk should be provided on that side of the street.
- 4.3.7** Parking is limited to one side of the private street when the drivable width of the road is between 28 feet and 34 feet.



5. LANDSCAPING & OPEN SPACE



Small lot developments generally lack the open space and landscaping provided on larger lot properties. High lot coverage and minimal building separation, typical of small lot development, contribute to a sense of barren streetscapes. Furthermore, several recent small lot developments used a single plant palette when establishing the subdivision. This utilitarian use of landscaping adds to the appearance and assumption that each home is the same.

5.1 LANDSCAPE MATERIAL

5.1.1 Provide one street tree for each lot to soften the appearance of dense vertical development and create a pleasant streetscape.

5.1.2 When street trees cannot be provided within the right-of-way or private roadway tract, place trees in private yards and adjacent open spaces as an alternative.



5.1.3 There should be an equal number of individual front yard landscape palettes, varying in style, color, and general appearance, as home models or unit types for each development. However, the variety of front yard landscape palettes should be cohesive to maintain continuity within the subdivision.

5.1.4 All yards and open space areas not used for buildings, parking, driveways, and utilities abutting the public right-of-way and/or private streets should be improved with landscaping.

5.1.5 In cluster developments, a minimum of eight feet of landscaping must be provided between the front elevation of each unit and the shared driveway or common open space.

5.1.6 Low-wateruseand drought tolerate landscaping is encouraged, if turf is used it should be used sparingly and as a focal point to the larger landscape design.

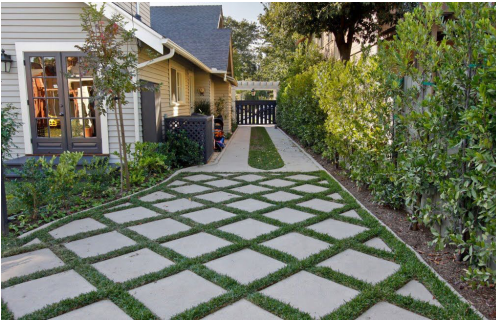
5.1.7 Trees should be used as amenities in common open space and to screen and soften the perimeter of parking areas

5.1.8 Trees should be provided in private open space between buildings and the street and between

buildings to help create a lively streetscape and a sense of separation between properties.

5.1.9 Native trees and other vegetation shall be preserved to the extent practicable.

5.1.10 Low-impact development techniques for storm water management should be used wherever possible. Such techniques may include the use of porous solid surfaces in parking areas and walkways, directing roof drains and parking lot runoff to landscape beds, green or living roofs, and rain barrels.



5.2 OPEN SPACE

5.2.1 Common open space should provide a sense of openness, visual relief, and community for residents. When small lot development request a PAD or BIZ overlay for reduced lot size, common open space areas must:

- Be located readily accessible to all residents of the subdivision;
- Be at least 0.25 acres in size with a minimum usable width of at least 75 feet in any direction;
- Be at least 50% open to the sky; and
- Be landscaped and maintained with live plant materials if not used for active recreation facilities.

5.2.2 If modifications to the minimum lot size is requested, 400 square feet of open space shall be provided for each lot. Open space may be

provided in one large area or multiple areas and may be fulfilled through a combination of private and common open space.

5.2.3 Front yard parking aprons may not be considered open space. However, driveways located in rear and side yards that are constructed of permeable concrete pavers and grid systems filled with gravel or grass may be considered hardscape back yard area when calculating open space requirements.

5.2.4 Private open space is required on each lot. This space should remain clear of structures, driveways or parking.

6. UTILITIES & SERVICES



6.1.4 There must be a minimum five-foot horizontal separation between the base of a tree trunk to the outside of water and sewer lines.

6.1.5 Private water and sewer main lines and services in private drive aisles and downstream of the water meter must be privately owned and maintained by individual property owners or the HOA. The City of Mesa shall not be responsible for ownership or maintenance of any privately owned utilities.

6.1 WATER & SEWER SERVICE

6.1.1 Water meters may not be placed in a driveway or sidewalk.

6.1.2 Water line taps must be placed at least three feet apart.

6.1.3 Water meters must be installed so service lines are perpendicular to the water line and in a straight line between the service tap and meter.

6.2 SOLID WASTE

- 6.2.1** When service drives are used to provide solid waste service, the drive must provide a loop system so that the solid waste vehicles do not have to back up. Hammerhead and dead ends are not allowed as solid waste collection routes.
- 6.2.2** Service drives must provide a 20-foot-wide clear drive aisle free from parking.
- 6.2.3** A 4 x 4.5-foot pad, preferably concrete, for solid waste and recycle barrel collection, must be provided adjacent to service drives.
- 6.2.4** Barrel collection locations must be at least four feet away from any structure, tree, equipment, etc.
- 6.2.5** The maximum barrel pull distance from the corner of a parcel to the middle of a collection pad shall not exceed 100 feet.
- 6.2.6** If bin collection is used, the location, size, and configuration of the trash enclosures must meet the M62 series of the Mesa Standards Details. Bins must be located in areas that do not pose unsightly or nuisance problems to the residential community.
- 6.2.7** In order for bin services to be provided, the HOA must pay for City of Mesa trash/recycling services and is responsible for maintenance/cleanliness of the enclosure area(s). One water meter, such as a landscape meter, will be associated with the solid waste services in order to bill the HOA for service. The HOAs responsibility for trash service must be recorded in the CC&Rs and noted on the Final Plat.
- 6.2.8** If bin collection is used, the following text shall be recorded in the CC&Rs and noted on the Final Plat: All Residents understand that the hours of operation for Solid Waste Services is defined by the Mesa City Code. Typical hours of operation are Monday through Sunday, 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Service times vary within that time frame and are subject to change without notice.
- 6.2.9** If bin collection is used, bins shall be evenly spaced throughout the project area to ensure adequate access for the residents.
- 6.2.10** Where bin collection is used, 50 feet of unobstructed area is required in front of each enclosure for safe maneuverability.

6.3 FIRE LANES

- 6.3.1** Fire apparatus access roads shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet, exclusive of shoulders, except for security gates approved by City of Mesa Fire that have an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than 15 feet.
- 6.3.2** Residential developments where the number of dwelling units exceeds 30 shall provide a minimum of two separate and approved fire apparatus access roads.
- 6.3.3** Enforcement of fire lane parking restrictions on private streets will be the responsibility of the homeowners' association or individual property owner adjacent to the property affected by the restriction. If there is not a homeowners' association or individual property owner, the City of Mesa shall be responsible for the maintenance of the fire department access parking restrictions.
- 6.3.4** Shared driveways that do not connect into a looped street system that serve as a fire lane shall provide a turnaround with a minimum 55-foot radius.
- 6.3.5** Shared driveways also serving as a fire lane must have a minimum 20-foot unobstructed width.