

# Planning Commission Workshop



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## STAFF REPORT

## DRAFT PRIVATE ROAD NAMING AMENDMENTS

**Date:** March 29, 2024

**Staff:** Mindy Brooks, Senior Long Range Planner

**Attachments:** A – Proposed Amendments to LCC 12.60.280, Driveways and private roads  
B – Proposed Amendments to LCC 16.12, Large Lot Subdivisions  
C – Proposed Amendments to LCC 16.02, General Provisions (Subdivisions)  
D – Private Road Naming Policy

## SUMMARY

Site addresses are a critical component of public safety because addresses aid emergency services in locating homes and businesses. Over time, different approaches to and inconsistent implementation of private road naming requirements in Lewis County have resulted in many unnamed private roads. This decreases public safety.

The issue of road naming is more complex than simply requiring all private roads to be named. There are different ways that new lots are created and those may or may not trigger the need for naming a private road. There are different ways existing unnamed roads are extended or branched, which expands the problem.

This code amendment package is intended to create a consistent approach that requires new private roads that provide access to two or more lots to be named. In addition, when an existing unnamed private road is going to be extended then the entire road must be named. This will increase public safety by creating site addresses that include a private road name. This will also benefit the current or future property owner when selling the property because it will provide locational information to perspective buyers. It will also benefit people living on the newly created lots because delivery vehicles will be able to locate the home more easily.

This code amendment package does not address the issue of naming unnamed roads when no new lots are being created nor does it address private road names when no road extension is necessary.

## HISTORY

Countywide readdressing was initiated in the 1970s when rural routes were eliminated. The county chose an addressing method of 200 #s per mile. Over time it was realized that structures which shared private roads or driveways did not fit into this scheme, because not enough #s were available to allow for several structures on a single private road or driveway. At first, a solution of alphanumeric subunits of A, B, C, etc. were assigned to structures on shared drives, but this caused problems because the letters could not reliably be assigned in order.

A solution in the 1990s, known as dashed addressing, was devised to assign subunit numbers based on how far down the drive and what direction each branching private road or driveway turned. This theoretically allows for orderly assignment of subunit numbers, but it is confusing to use in practice.

General dissatisfaction with the dashed addressing method has been noted on numerous occasions by county staff from all offices that manage site addresses, especially from 911 Communications, and by staff from other agencies, including emergency responders, postal officials, and utilities. It also differs significantly from methods used by other surrounding address authorities, so it is unfamiliar and unintuitive. Since the format is unfamiliar, addressing is often misunderstood with parts of the number being left out. In addition, because these long and complicated addresses are difficult to memorize and transcribe in the 911 Spillman database, addresses are often incorrectly noted with the risk of truncating numbers.

Currently, private road names are required when a land division creates three or more lots. The Private Road Application and process is found [here](#) and summarized below:

1. The proposed road name shall not duplicate any other road name in Lewis County.
2. The proposed road name shall not exceed 10 characters or letters, including spaces between letters or characters excluding the words private, road, drive, lane, etc.
3. Lewis County reserves the right to veto any proposed name they believe would be either confusing to the public or inappropriate.

The Private Road Naming Program and process has not been applied to land divisions that create two lots. For example, a simple segregation land division may split a lot that is 10 acres or larger in size into two 5-acre lots, when located within the Rural Development District – 5 acre (RDD-5) zoning district. In this scenario, the lots must have access from a public road or a private road, but unlike land divisions that create three or more lots, when two lots are created the lots do not need an address and the road does not need to be named.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Update LCC Title 12.60.280, Driveways and private road standards to clarify that any land division that creates three or more lots must be accessed by a private road. If one lot is being divided into three, then it must be accessed by a private road. This is already the practice, but the code was not sufficiently clear. See Attachment A – Proposed Amendments to LCC 12.60.280.
2. Require that during a simple segregation, the created lots be addressed and the private road named. This is already required during short and long plat subdivisions and would now be required for simple segregations. However, the private road serving the simple segregation would not need to be built during a simple segregation. See Attachment B – Proposed Amendments to LCC 16.12.
3. Prohibit extension of dashed road names. If any new land division is proposed that requires extension of a private road, and that private road is named with dashes, then the entire private road shall be renamed. This will require agreement from 50% of the property owners on that private

road. Note, this is already an administrative requirement for short and long plats; however, this practice has not been codified. Adding it to the development regulations will ensure property owners know the requirements upfront. See Attachment C – Proposed Amendments to LCC 16.02.

4. The Private Road Naming Program and the Addressee’s Acknowledgement Form should be updated to clarify the applicability and process, as described in Attachment D – Policy. In addition, the program approval criteria will require a new spur off an existing private road to receive a new private road name. If the private road is an extension of an existing private road then it will need to have the same name, unless it’s a dashed road name then a new name must be chosen (see Attachment C).

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Planning Commission is scheduled to hold a workshop on amendments to LCC 16.12 and Private Road Addressing Program on April 9, 2024. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for May 14, 2024 to receive public testimony. Following the public hearing, the Planning Commission may deliberate and vote to transmit a recommendation to the Board of County Commission. The recommendation may be to approve a proposal, approve the proposal with changes or deny the proposal. After the Board of County Commissioners reviews the recommendation, they will hold a public hearing before making a final decision.

## Commentary

### ATTACHMENT A – LEWIS COUNTY CODE 12.60.280 Road Development Standards

(2) is based on the number of parcels, existing and new. If there are more than two parcels, including both existing and new, then the private road standards apply. For example, if there is one existing parcel accessed by a driveway and two new parcels are created, resulting in three total parcels, then the driveway must be converted to a private road and all applicable private road standards must be met. In addition, the standard is not based on the number of dwelling units, it is based on the number of parcels.

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## **12.60.280 Driveways and private roads**

- (1) A driveway is defined as an access from a public right-of-way or private access easement serving one to two lots or parcels constructed to the requirements in Standard Detail 3-2, Rural Road Section. If the driveway is longer than 300 feet, it shall be dimensioned to safely accommodate local fire safety and emergency vehicles, and approved by the county engineer. Driveway construction as required for a single family residential building permit is exempt from the requirements of LCC 12.60.140.
  - (a) Easements are required where parcels require legal access to the road over and across another parcel, or where the same access is shared between one or more parcels. Single parcels which front a county road and have safe and legal access do not require a separate easement for a driveway.
- (2) Private roadways are constructed to access more than two lots or parcels. Existing and newly created parcels are counted towards this standard.
- (3) A road approach permit shall be obtained from Lewis County public works prior to accessing any county road per Article VI of this chapter. Location, horizontal and vertical alignment, and width of the approach shall be as designated by the county engineer and stated on the permit.
- (4) All driveways and private roadways shall have an approved residential or commercial road approach constructed per Standard Detail 3-3, Residential and Commercial Driveway Approaches.
- (5) The location of driveways and private roadways shall be on property owned or with approved easement rights to serve the applicant. Joint use driveways are encouraged, and may be needed to meet vehicular safety. Minimum dimensions shall be per Standard Detail 3-3, Residential and Commercial Driveway Approaches, or as required by the county engineer.
- (6) Driveways and private roadways shall be of sufficient length so a vehicle in the driveway does not project into the road right-of-way, sidewalk, or pathway.
- (7) Access to a county road will normally be limited to one approach for each parcel. Multiple approaches for one parcel shall be approved only by the county engineer if public vehicular safety is met.
- (8) Surface drainage shall be consistent with the current stormwater regulations in Chapter 15.45 LCC unless otherwise stated in the road approach permit or by the county engineer. The applicant shall construct improvements to roadway ditches and replace affected roadway structures should the approach impact county road drainage.

## Commentary

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- (9) Driveways and private roadways shall not be permitted to access arterials or collectors unless the parcel has no other reasonable access to the public roadway. The parcel shall only be allowed to access an arterial or collector if located at the appropriate distance from the nearest intersecting road as per the Highway Access Management Guidelines in Chapter 468-52 WAC. A driveway or private roadway shall access the arterial or collector road with the lower functional classification.

## Commentary

### ATTACHMENT B – LEWIS COUNTY CODE 16.12 AMENDMENTS

Legislative intent.

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## **Chapter 16.12 LARGE LOT SUBDIVISIONS**

### **Article I. Purpose**

[NO CHANGE]

### **Article II. Scope**

[NO CHANGE]

### **Article III. Procedure**

[NO CHANGE]

### **Article IV. Large Lot Application, Map, and Supporting Information**

[NO CHANGE]

### **Article V. Design Standards and Guidelines**

[NO CHANGE]

### **Article VI. Environmental Health Standards**

[NO CHANGE]

### **Article VII. Assessor Notification**

[NO CHANGE]

### **Article VIII. Simple Segregations - Alternate Procedure**

#### **16.12.500 Definition.**

A simple segregation is the creation of up to four tracts, five acres in size or larger, leaving no tract less than five acres in size.

## Commentary

### Code Section

Legislative intent

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**16.12.510 Purpose.**

The purpose of this section is to create an alternate process to facilitate the occasional segregation of a simple segregation tract, where the purposes of this section are otherwise met.

**16.12.520 Application and approval.**

- (1) Simple segregations shall be processed as a Type I application.
- (2) The applicant shall show all of the following:
  - (a) ~~that~~ the proposed tract is lawfully zoned for five-acre tracts or larger, and
  - (b) The proposed tract has lawful access to public road.
  - (c) Each tract has been assigned an address including a private road name if applicable.
- (3) To show suitability of the land for current development, the owner of the tracts to be sold or the applicant for a building permit on a lot must show all of the following:
  - (a) The tract has access to water as required by state law.
  - (b) The tract has a suitable building site outside of critical areas and is consistent with criteria in the critical areas ordinance.
  - (c) The tract has a conforming septic and reserve area consistent with Health Department requirements, Chapters 8.40 and 8.41 LCC.
  - (d) The tract has been assigned an address including a private road name if applicable.
- (4) Upon written findings that the ~~two~~ items in subsection (2) of this section are satisfied, the administrator shall approve the simple segregation, which shall be recorded. The conditions of approval shall provide all tracts are legal lots of record for purposes of sale, but with no warranty that the lots are buildable under county rules and regulations. If the applicant submits the additional information required in subsection (3) of this section, the administrator may include a written finding and conditions that the lot is a lawful building lot as of the date of approval.

**16.12.530 Limit on further segregation.**

No lot in a recorded segregation may be further divided within a period of five years from the date of recording without filing for a plat, short subdivision, or large lot subdivision as provided in this chapter.

## Commentary

### ATTACHMENT C – LEWIS COUNTY CODE 16.02 AMENDMENTS

Legislative intent.

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## Chapter 16.02 GENERAL PROVISIONS

### Sections:

- 16.02.010 Title.
- 16.02.020 Purpose.
- 16.02.030 General scope.
- 16.02.040 Specific exemptions.
- 16.02.050 Legal lot criteria for building or transfer of ownership.
- 16.02.055 Innocent purchaser and public interest exceptions.
- 16.02.060 Regulations mandatory.
- 16.02.070 Division of lots with more than one residential structure.
- 16.02.0850 Vacation of subdivision.
- 16.02.090 Alteration of subdivision.
- 16.02.095 Variances.
- 16.02.100 Development standards.

### **16.02.010 Title.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.020 Purpose.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.030 General Scope.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.040 Specific exemptions.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.050 Legal lot criteria for building or transfer of ownership.**

[NO CHANGE]

## Commentary

### **16.02.055 Innocent purchaser and public interest exceptions.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.060 Regulations mandatory.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.070 Division of lots with more than one residential structure.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.0850 Vacation of subdivision.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.090 Alteration of subdivision.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.095 Variances.**

[NO CHANGE]

### **16.02.100 Development standards.**

Any subdivision approval under this title shall specifically include:

- (1) Road construction standards as set forth in Resolution 97-441, as it may hereafter be amended;
- (2) Health standards for wells and drain fields as set forth in Chapters 8.40 and 8.41 LCC;
- (3) Stormwater standards as set forth in Chapter 15.45 LCC; ~~and~~
- (4) Flood hazard standards as set forth in Chapter 15.35 LCC; provided, however, Lewis County is in the process of updating the flood hazard maps in concert with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Where the U.S. Army Corps has identified a floodway or a floodplain on an official report on file with the County Public Works Director, said designated floodway or floodplain map shall supersede the FEMA/FIRM flood hazard maps; and
- (5) If a new private road is proposed that is an extension of an existing private road and the existing private road is named with dashes, the entire private road shall be renamed in conformance with the current Lewis County private road naming standards.

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## ATTACHMENT D – Private Road Addressing Program

### EXHIBIT “A-1”

#### PRIVATE ROAD ADDRESSING NAMING PROGRAM

**Purpose:** This program is designed to establish or change a private road name provide addresses to residents on private roads for the proposes of assigning or changing site addresses and to aid emergency services and others in locating residences.

**Applicability:** When three or more lots are accessed by a private road, each lot is required to have an address and the associated private road is required to be named in accordance with this Private Road Naming Program.

**NOTE:** Use of this program will result in your permanent address being changed.

**Process:** Prior to site address assignment, over 50% of the property owners served by the private road ~~will have to~~ are required to sign the attached ~~Exhibit "B-1" Addressee's Acknowledgment Form~~ acknowledging the conditions attached hereto which state; that the ~~address is for location purposes only,~~ that the ~~status of the private road will not be changed,~~ that ~~mail delivery and school bus service still will not be available,~~ and that ~~Lewis County will take over road maintenance responsibilities. The approval of the private road name and address assignment does not certify nor guarantee the private road as adequate access to the lots it serves.~~

~~Together with the executed Exhibit "B-1" a designated contact person~~ In addition to the Addressee's Acknowledgment Form, the contact person identified on the form shall provide Lewis County a copy of a with two maps showing the following information:

1. A copy of the Lewis County Assessor's map showing the road location and properties to be addressed.
2. A map showing the following information:
  - a. North Arrow
  - b. A minimum of two (2) of the nearest crossroads. Please label all road names and any other significant landmarks for locational reference.
  - c. The boundary lines of all properties served by the proposed private road.
  - d. The location and name of all existing roads that intersect with the private road.
  - e. The exact location of the proposed private road on each affected property.
  - f. The location of any fences in close proximity to the proposed private road.
3. ~~A copy of the Lewis County Assessor's map showing the road location and properties to be addressed.~~

**Approval Criteria:** Private road names will be reviewed for approval and subject to the following restrictions:

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1. If the road is a new spur off an existing private road, a new road name must be assigned to the spur.
2. The proposed road name shall not duplicate any other road name in Lewis County. Unless, the proposed road is an extension of an existing private road, then the same road name must be used. Note – Dashed road names may not be extended. See Lewis County Code Title 16.02.
3. The proposed road name shall not exceed 10 characters or letters, including spaces between letters or characters excluding the words private, road, drive, lane, etc.
4. Lewis County reserves the right to veto any proposed name they believe would be either confusing to the public or inappropriate.
5. If a majority of owners cannot agree on an acceptable name, Lewis County may suggest a name or administratively assign one from a pre-approved list of names.

**Next Steps:** ~~After all applicable information has been provided, and the proposed road name has been approved, the Lewis County Community Development Department, Permit Center and Building and Fire Safety Section will~~ shall assign addresses based on the same system and formula presently used to assign addresses on public roads.

**Road Sign Installation:** Lewis County Public Works, Traffic Control Division, will only install the necessary road name signs at private roads intersecting county roads and state highways. Please refer to the Private Road Sign Installation memo for instructions. ~~Sign installation will only take place after the contact person has notified the Permit Center that the address stake identifying the proposed private road is in place.~~ All interior private branch road name signs shall be purchased and installed at the residents' expense and shall conform to Lewis County road sign standards.

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**EXHIBIT “B-1”                      \$35.00 Processing Fee (~~fee revised 12/31/10~~)**

**ADDRESSEE’S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM OF ASSIGNMENT OF PRIVATE ROAD ADDRESS AND CONDITIONS ATTACHED THERETO**

This form is for the assignment of a private road name and associated site addressing. The primary contract person listed below shall complete the form and provide all necessary information to Lewis County prior to the assignment of a private road name and associated site addressing.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name), have read the foregoing Private Road Addressing Program (~~Exhibit “A”~~) and the conditions requirements under which it is issued. I understand that the assignment of a private road name and associated addresses is made with the following conditions:

1. Use of this program will result in your permanent address being changed and may result in your mailing address being changed.
2. If applicable, the US Postal Service will not extend deliveries mail onto a residence on a private road; delivery will remain at the public road access point.
3. If applicable, school bus service, and all other services associated with county roads will not be available added on a private road; services will remain at the public road access point.
4. The assignment of a private road address does not mean that the private road is accepted into the County Road System, ~~and that~~ Lewis County has no responsibility to build, improve, maintain, or otherwise service the private road.
5. Permission is given for Lewis County to utilize GPS for mapping of the new private road.

**PROPOSED PRIVATE ROAD NAME (LIST BY ORDER OF PREFERENCE):**

*Use one (1) letter/character or space per box – not to exceed a total of 10. Do not include the words private, road, drive, lane, etc. The road name may not duplicate any other road name in Lewis County.*

1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lane									
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lane									
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lane									

**Contact Person (Please Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Daytime Phone Number:**(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Signatures from OVER 50% of property owners are required.** If a majority of owners cannot agree on an acceptable name, Lewis County may suggest a name or, if needed, administratively assign a pre-approved private road name.

**Note: Your signature below acknowledges that you have read and understand the conditions of the Private Road Addressing Program as stated above.** OWNERSHIP

<u>SIGNATURES</u>	<u>NAME PRINTED</u>	<u>PARCEL#</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**If more than 6 signatures are required, please use the reverse side of this document.**

**FOR COMPLETION BY PERMIT TECHNICIAN**

Origin \_\_\_\_\_ Grid Location \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_  
 Assessor's Map Showing Nearby Crossroads \_\_\_\_\_  Stakes Issued Placed \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Neighboring Address \_\_\_\_\_  (Shown on Attached Map)

**FOR COMPLETION BY INSPECTORS**

Milepoint \_\_\_\_\_ End of Road \_\_\_\_\_ Nearest 100 Block \_\_\_\_\_  
Address(es) Assigned \_\_\_\_\_