



Codes and Ordinances Governing Your City

Hillside Development

Developing in the Hillside Areas (HR-1 Zone) Requires Extra Attention

The city through the general plan process, public meetings, and leadership has placed extra regulations on development in the hillside area to protect the sensitive environment of the area. The hills, ridgelines, and drainages cannot be replaced and gain protection under this code. Areas suitable for development are the flatter areas, generally under 20 percent slopes, set back from ridgelines, faults, unstable soils, drainages, and wildlife corridors.

What Size Lots Can I Develop?

One acre and larger lots are allowed in the HR-1 Zone. The building envelop or buildable area of the lot can only have half of its area with slopes between 20 and 30%. Lots down to half an acre can be designed with the use of the Hillside Cluster Overlay Zone. The overlay zone has additional regulations including that no portion of the lot can have 20% or greater slopes and the development as a whole must have at least 40% open space. The idea here is to cluster the lots together on the flat land and preserve the steeper slopes as open space.

Sensitive Areas Protection

As mentioned above, areas that include ridgelines, faults, sensitive soils, drainages, and steep slopes are to be protected. Roads can traverse these areas but are limited to 8% grades with short stretches of 10% as an exception (must be approved). Cuts and fills for roads can only be up to 30 feet (10feet on one side and 20feet on the other). The steepest slopes that a road can be built on are 40%.

What Plans are Required to Develop?

The normal plat requirements are required, but also a Sensitive Areas Plan, Slope Analysis Plan, Erosion Control Plan, Geotechnical Report, and a Re-Vegetation/Retention Plan are required. The Sensitive Areas Plan shows the current native conditions and how you propose to avoid sensitive areas. The Slope Analysis Plan is just that, a plan that shows the various slopes coupled with the proposed development demonstrating avoidance of the steep slopes. The Erosion Control Plan shows how you will handle runoff during construction and the Geotechnical Report uses soil samples to alert to hazardous soils that could fail if roads or utilities are built on or near them. The Re-Vegetation/Retention Plan shows what you propose to disturb and how you plan to mitigate for such disturbance.

When Construction is Underway

You must adhere to your plans. Silt fencing must be used to cordon off areas that are not proposed in the plan to grade for roads or utilities. Individual lots are not to be graded at the subdivision phase as to protect the native features, but are to be left to the individual home builder to prepare as part of their plans at the building permit stage.

So What Are All The Rules?

You can view the complete city code at the city office or go to the city website at www.elkridgecity.org look under Quick Links and City Code:

City Code 10-09A Hillside Residential-1 Zone
City Code 10-11C Hillside Cluster Overlay Zone
General Plan – Sensitive Areas Map