



Fire Apparatus Access Requirements

One of the most critical areas of construction design plan review for emergency responders is the Fire Apparatus Access requirements. Technical requirements are in SJFC Section 503 as amended, plus design guidelines. This review must be completed and approved during the Planning stage, as opposed to the Permitting stage. The purpose of this information bulletin is to outline the primary Apparatus Access requirements.

Every portion of all building exterior walls shall be within 150 feet of an access road (2007 CFC Chapter 5 Section 503). The fire access shall:

- have an approved all weather surface;
- be at least 20 feet wide (curb face-to-curb face with no parking);
- have a minimum of 13’-6” vertical clearance;
- be designed and maintained to support the fire apparatus loads of at least 75,000 pounds;
- have a minimum inside turning radius of 30 feet and an outside turning radius of 50 feet;
- be designed with approved provisions for turning around fire apparatus if the access road dead ends and is in excess of 150 feet (See attached sketches for approved turn-arounds);
- The grade of the fire apparatus access road shall not exceed 15%;
- A second point of access is required when a fire apparatus road exceeds 1,000’;
- Emergency Vehicle Access shall be in accordance with all Fire Apparatus access requirements
- Curbs are required to be painted red and marked as “Fire Lane - No Parking” under the following conditions: (show exact locations on plan)
 - i) Roads, streets, avenues, and the like that are 20 to less than 26 feet wide measured from face-of-curb to face-of-curb shall have curbs on both sides of the road painted and marked.
 - ii) Roads, streets, avenues, and the like that are 26 to less than 32 feet wide measured from face-of-curb to face-of-curb shall have one curb painted and marked.

If the project does not meet these requirements, the applicant has the option to apply for a Variance, and propose alternate means of mitigation for non-compliance with the Fire Code. Any of these Variances must be approved prior to Planning approval. For further information, please see additional Fire Department handouts, which are posted on our website.

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