



LDCT-2026-3: Text Amendment Justification

This is a text amendment to the Land Development Code for Recreation, High Intensity, to allow certain recreational activities to have access via easements subject to meeting a list of criteria. This is for the types of uses that are, by their nature, dependent upon the rural/wild/remote/natural setting and are best functioning when there are few urban improvements and impediments. For example, hunting and wildlife interactions when vehicles can travel at higher speeds down a paved road. Even the paving of the road itself creates a permanent negative impact on the land, severing wildlife habitats and putting wildlife at greater risk.

In addition to the environmental impacts that are incongruent with these types of uses, the cost of paving deep into the woods is a substantial financial burden, and is cost prohibitive in most cases because of the low financial return from uses like ropes training courses, retreat areas, shooting clubs, primitive campgrounds, hunting areas and similar uses. The uses that are under consideration for this text amendment are limited by the revised text language to those groups or classes with lower daily volumes of people (and traffic) that also depend upon being as remote as possible. For some of the allowable uses in Recreation, High Intensity, the use itself requires them to be far away from public access and exposure due to gun fire.

Requiring road frontage or mandating access on a County paved road over a private road (built to County standards) doesn't ensure the actual recreational use will begin at the road's edge or be any more suitable for public safety access just because they meet that road frontage standard. The Flaming Arrow Boy Scout Camp's pavement stops over 0.50 miles away from the camp activities. Unpaved access (and often via easement) for emergency vehicles and the visitors is more than adequate, and most often preferred. The value and purpose of these types of Recreational uses is greatly enhanced by the remote, lower impact natural setting that engulf them, and limiting pavement and other urban characteristics is the contrast from daily life that people expect when visiting these areas.

The low traffic generation and infrequency of use that characterize these access drives also contributes to them not being financially feasible to pave for their longer distances. The better solution is to have a stabilized road surface that is sufficient for emergency service vehicle access, similar to what the County and State have done with some of their recreational areas. For example, some of the original Van Fleet Trailheads (Deen Still and Green Pond Road trailheads) were built on open grade mix or unpaved roads, and most of the Teneroc Recreation Area and Hilochee Wildlife Management Areas are accessed via unpaved roads.

This text amendment continues to support the Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan intents to provide safe access, and it proposes to allow a lower-impact types of access for a limited array of uses that can meet a narrow set of criteria. These types of uses are low traffic volume generators, often with private access that reach far back into the wilderness in order to maintain the natural, wild, and open habitat that are at their foundation and support their purpose.



Proposed Text:

Amending Section 303 – Recreation, High Intensity, #3:

Current text:

3. All access points shall have at a minimum 50 feet of road frontage on a paved public road.

Proposed text:

3. All **development sites** ~~access points~~ shall have at a minimum 50 feet of road frontage on a paved ~~public~~ road **meeting County standards. For lots without frontage on a paved road meeting County standards, access shall be provided to the development site meeting the following criteria:**

a. Have a minimum width of 20 feet;

b. Not exceed 0.50 miles (2,640 feet) in length from the nearest paved road without a waiver approved by the Planning Commission pursuant to LDC Section 932;

c. Provide for sufficient ingress and egress for fire trucks, ambulances, police cars and emergency vehicles;

d. Have no more than 50 Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT);

e. Be supported by the joinder and consent of all fee owners under easements to the use of the easement by the subject parcel(s). If joinders are provided for the easement, it shall be accompanied by an ownership and encumbrance report based on the legal description of the easement. In lieu of joinders, an applicant may provide a legal opinion from a licensed

Florida attorney stating a lot has legal access, along with supporting documentation; and,

f. Be subject to a Level 1 Review and be provided written approval of same prior to obtaining a building permit.