

LOCAL STREET CONNECTIVITY ELEMENT

The street network plays a very important role in determining the character and form of a community. Residential local streets are instrumental in shaping the identity of a neighborhood, determining how people travel and how they feel about their neighborhood. Local streets, which include all the streets that are not designated as Collectors or Arterials, serve to provide access to property and neighborhood facilities such as parks and schools. Although local streets are not designed for through or heavy traffic, the connectivity of these streets with each other and with Collectors is crucial to ensure that residents can easily reach local destinations.

Local streets should form a well-connected network that provides for safe, direct, and convenient access by automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian. A poorly-connected street network encourages use of the automobile over other travel modes; creates the need for excessive out-of-direction travel; divides neighborhoods; and limits accessibility to property and neighborhood facilities. A well-connected street network provides more travel choices, helps to disperse traffic, and encourages pedestrian and bicycle travel.

The design of local streets also plays an important role in affecting traffic speed and choice of travel modes. Narrow streets tend to slow traffic and be more conducive to pedestrian travel. Narrow streets also cost less to build and maintain, encourage more efficient land use, and improve neighborhood character. Narrow streets are an efficient way of connecting the local street system without encouraging the use of local streets for through or fast-moving traffic. Local streets should not be excessively wide, but must be wide enough to accommodate emergency vehicles and provide for on-street parking.

Policy Framework

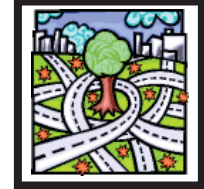
In developing the local street connectivity goal for the city, emphasis was placed on connectivity of streets in and through new development. There are many existing cul-de-sacs in the City and streets that were constructed without due consideration to connectivity. Due to existing physical obstacles such as houses and other development, there is little that can be done to remedy the existing lack of connectivity in some areas. Topography also plays a role in limiting connectivity of existing and new streets since much of the remaining undeveloped land in Salem is hilly.

There are undeveloped parcels in the city that, when developed, can provide vital connections to already developed areas. It is the intent of this Element of the Plan to ensure that those connections are made and that new developments provide adequate connections to neighboring undeveloped land. This policy framework reflects the State Transportation Planning Rule requirement that Transportation Systems Plans (TSPs) plan for extension of existing streets and connections to the street network and neighborhood destinations.

The State Transportation Planning Rule requires that the City of Salem incorporate the following into its Transportation Plan:

A road plan for a system of arterials and collectors and standards for the layout of local streets and other important noncollector street connections. Functional classifications of roads in regional and local TSPs shall be consistent with functional classifications of roads in state and regional TSPs and shall provide for continuity between adjacent jurisdictions. The standards for the layout of local streets shall provide for safe and convenient bike and pedestrian circulation necessary to carry out OAR 660-12-045(3)(b). The intent of this requirement is to provide guidance on the spacing of future extensions and connections along existing and future streets which are needed to provide reasonably direct and safe routes for bicycle and pedestrian travel. The standards for the layout of local streets shall address:

- (A) Extensions of existing streets;



- (B) Connections to existing or planned streets, including arterials and collectors; and
- (C) Connections to neighborhood destinations. [OAR 660-12-020(2)(b)]

In addition, it is specified that:

Local governments shall establish standards for local streets and access ways that minimize pavement width and total right-of-way consistent with the operational needs of the facility. The intent of this requirement is that local governments consider and reduce excessive standards for local streets and access ways in order to reduce the cost of construction, provide for more efficient use of urban land, provide for emergency vehicle access while discouraging inappropriate traffic volumes and speeds, and which accommodate convenient pedestrian and bicycle circulation. Notwithstanding subsection (1) and (3) of the section, local streets standards and adopted to meet this requirement need not be adopted as land use regulations. [OAR 660-12-045(7)]

Implementation Strategies

The Local Street Connectivity Element of this Plan acts as a policy framework in the design and implementation of individual development projects. After adoption of the Plan, staff will submit to the Planning Commission and the City Council a package of Code revisions necessary to bring the *Salem Revised Code* in conformance with the Transportation Plan. Revisions to the *City of Salem Street Design Standards* will also be necessary.

Goal, Objectives, and Policies

The City of Salem has the following goal, objectives, and policies for achieving connectivity of the local street system:

GOAL: To provide an interconnected local street system that allows for dispersal of traffic and encourages a mix of travel modes.

OBJECTIVE NO. 1

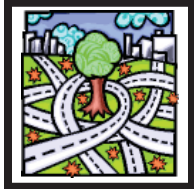
A local street circulation pattern that provides access to property and connections to Collector and Arterial streets, neighborhood activity centers, and emergency access.

Policy 1.1 Connectivity to the Street System and Neighborhood Activity Centers

Applicants submitting preliminary development plans shall provide for local street connections toward existing or planned streets and neighborhood activity centers located within one-half-mile of the development. Street alignments should be sensitive to natural features, topography, and layout of adjacent development.

Policy 1.2 Connectivity of New Developments to Adjoining Undeveloped Land

Applicants submitting preliminary development plans shall provide for extension of local streets to adjoining undeveloped properties and eventual connection with the existing street system. Street alignments should be sensitive to natural features, topography, and layout of adjacent development.



Policy 1.3 Spacing of Connections

Connections to existing or planned streets and undeveloped properties along the border of a parcel shall be provided at no greater than 600-foot intervals unless the City determines that adjacent layout or topographical conditions justify greater length.

OBJECTIVE NO. 2

A local street system designed to meet the needs of pedestrians and encourage walking as a transportation mode.

Policy 2.1 Sidewalks

All development shall include sidewalk and walkway construction as required by the *Salem Revised Code* and the adopted *City of Salem Design Standards*. All new road construction or reconstruction projects shall include sidewalks as specified in the Pedestrian Element of the *Salem Transportation System Plan*.

Policy 2.2 Block Standards

The City shall set a maximum block-length standard of 600 feet between street centerlines unless the City determines that adjacent layout or topographical conditions justify greater length.

Policy 2.3 Public Accessways

The City may require pedestrian and bicycle accessways to connect to cul-de-sac streets, to pass through long blocks, and to provide for networks of public paths creating nonmotorized access to neighborhood activity centers.

OBJECTIVE NO. 3

Provide for minimal paved area and dimensional requirements for local streets consistent with efforts to reduce street construction and maintenance costs, storm water runoff and environmental impacts, and provide for pedestrian-friendly streets.

Policy 3.1 Street Width

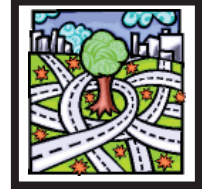
In order to facilitate pedestrian crossing, discourage through traffic, and reduce speeds, local streets shall not be excessive in width. However, public local streets must have sufficient width to allow for emergency access and provide parking on at least one side.

Policy 3.2 Discouraging Cut-through Traffic

Local streets shall be designed to minimize cut-through traffic. Limiting street length, width, and the installation of traffic calming measures may be used to discourage through traffic from using local streets.

Policy 3.3 Purpose of Cul-de-sac Streets

The purpose of cul-de-sac streets shall be to increase density by accessing land not otherwise accessible through a connected street pattern due to topography or other constraints. Construction of cul-de-sac streets shall be minimized to the extent practicable.

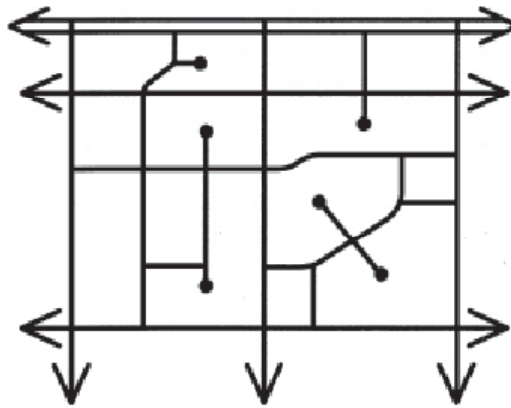


Policy 3.4 Cul-de-sac Street Length

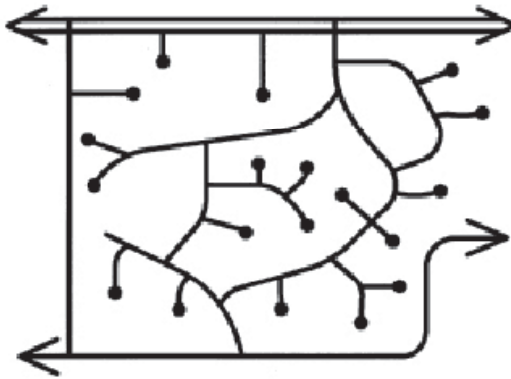
Cul-de-sac streets shall not exceed 800 feet in length. However, no portion of the cul-de-sac street shall be more than 400 feet from an intersecting street or public accessway unless physical constraints make it impracticable.



Figure 6-1 Example Local Street Circulation Patterns



Preferred



Discouraged

Original Source: Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon (Tri-Met), *Planning and Design for Transit*, 1993. (Modified by City of Salem)

