City of Rolling Hills
Equestrian Facility Guidelines

Drafted by the Stable Ad Hoc Committee
2017

INTRODUCTION

The Rolling Hills City Council noted a recent trend of development in late 2016 toward constructing larger stables in the City of Rolling Hills. This trend has caused some residents and Planning Commissioners to question what is appropriate massing and size for equestrian facilities. At a Joint Meeting between the City Council and the Planning Commission, an item was discussed regarding this recent trend of constructing large size stables. Members of the public and members of Caballeros were able to comment. Discussion led to the desire for the creation of an ad hoc committee that included members of the Planning Commission and members of Caballeros alongside City staff to meet and discuss issues relevant to stables.

The discussion throughout the ad hoc sessions focused largely on how to create healthy spaces for horses and how to encourage equestrian uses within the City. These concepts drove the process for developing guidelines. It is the intention of the City to use the overarching value of creating a space to encourage the health of horses when considering future proposals for stable construction even if horses are not currently contemplated for an individual property.

Ultimately, the ad hoc committee was tasked with developing concepts to be used to create stable guidelines as to what makes a working and functional stable and in turn what is the appropriate size for equestrian facilities. The enclosed set of guidelines are the concepts to be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council for implementation in the future construction of equestrian facilities. If an applicant for stable construction is finding difficulty in meeting the guidelines, the applicant is encouraged to consider a smaller barn or an alternate layout so as to provide for healthy equestrian uses.
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Definitions

For the purposes of these guidelines, unless it plainly evident from the context that a different meaning is intended, the following definitions shall apply:

“**Administrative Review**” means “City staff review only which does not require evaluation and determination of approval by a commission or council”

“**Corral**” means “an enclosure constructed of open fencing that allows horses to pasture, graze, and/or exercise”

“**Exercise Space**” means “an exterior open three-rail fenced area intended to allow a horse to walk, trot, canter, gallop, etc. for training and/or purposes of physical activity. The intent of exercise space is to allow for active movement of horses not necessarily outdoor exposure. It may be located within the corral.”

“**Flat**” means “a pad of land with a slope no greater than 10% grade.” The primary purpose of a flat slope is to allow for stationary horse activity.

“**Riding Ring or Arena**” means “an exercise space, generally circular or rectangular, sufficiently large to allow for competitive event and/or performance event training activities”

“**Stall**” means “a covered and enclosed space meant to divide animals in a barn and provide shelter for the horse”

“**Stable**” means “a building where horses (and other animals permitted under the zoning code) are kept. ‘Barn’ is considered, for the purposes of these guidelines, to be an interchangeable term with a Stable.”

“**Tack Room**” means “a room in or near a stable that stores horse equipment or tack such as saddles, stirrups, bridles, halters, reins, bits, harnesses, martingales, and breastplates. It may also be a non-equestrian-use space as allowed under the zoning code. Turnouts may be covered.”

“**Turnout**” means “an outdoor extension of the stall meaning the outside area directly connected to a stable stall with dimensions similar to those of the stall for the purpose of allowing horses exterior standing space.”
Location of Stables

General Principles to Follow

• Outside space around the barn is critical for locating a stable. Exercise space, in particular, is essential for a healthy equestrian facility. Applicants should maximize use of the space around a stable including, but not exclusive to, constructing turnouts.

• Stable buildings should be oriented to increase ventilation. Breezeways in the barn / allowing for continued breeze is better for a barn. Air flushed out of a barn more frequently is healthier for the animals. There is no problem with a hillside being used as one of the stables structural sides so long as it is vented properly.

• Proximity to any neighbors livable structures should be taken into account. Stables are encouraged to be placed away from neighboring uses as much as feasible. The direction of air flow and odor should be considered.

• Getting hay delivery and storage close enough to the barn to get it to a feed room efficiently is important. – Strategic delivery circulation.

• Applicants should identify a loft entrance when the stable is not located on a hillside.
• The contours and terrain of the property should be taken into account when orienting a stable.

• Manure clean up and proximity to blue line streams should be taken into account (e.g. wash station) when locating a stable and its waste areas.

• Location of hydrants on the roadway easement for fire access will help to minimize the need for vehicular fire access to a stable. The Los Angeles County Fire Department will regulate all requirements related to access, water flow, fire flow calculation area, and any other items relevant to fire prevention and suppression.
Size of Stables

Standards

- The size of the stable can only make up 40% of the total equestrian space. The breakdown of equestrian space on a property (“60/40 rule”) is based on the footprint of the stable and corral since stables may be more than one level.
  - 40% - Stable Building Footprint
  - 60% - Exercise/Corral area

- 15’ x 15’ – Ideal stall size (can accommodate all sized horses)
  - 12’ x 12’ – Minimum stall size

- For Stables with greater than 4 stalls:
  - A parking area should be identified to accommodate caretakers and service providers or trailers for the animals and the operations of the Stable.
  - The applicant for stable construction must also identify the proposed location for the trash/manure bin.

General Principles to Follow

- A smaller lot should equal a smaller barn. Lot size and residence size should be taken into account when considering the overall size of stable so that it is proportionate to the development on the property.

- Each section of a stable must be clearly identified. No joint feed and storage areas will be allowed – these need to be distinct spaces (as shown on floor plans).

- Horse wash station locations and runoff should take into account nearby natural drainage courses so as to not negatively affect stormwater quality

- Stable orientation and access must not promote any vehicular use of trails.
**Size of Corrals**

*Standards*

- Exercise and corral space must be flat for a minimum of 25% of the space.
  - A 25% slope is the maximum slope allowable for the remaining portion of the exercise and corral areas.
  - Turnouts must be flat.

- Minimum standard for outdoor space = 400 square feet per stall in the stable.

- Turnouts should run the width of the stall and allow for easy access to and from the stall.

- The stable will make up to a maximum of 40% of the equestrian space.

- Corral/Exercise Space must make up 60% of the total equestrian space on the subject property.

- A Corral may be any combination of Outdoor or Exercise Space including riding rings, arenas, or Turnouts so long as there are useable dimensions included in the development plan and the proper ratio of corral to stable sizes.

- Square footage for corridors or paths of travel does not count toward corral and/or exercise space. Corral space must be useable. A portion of the corral can be sloped (steepness dictated by zoning code).

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**Example of useable corral space**

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**Example of unusable corral dimensions**
General Principles to Follow

• Insufficient corral sizes can be a problem. Too often found in development are massive barns with small corrals. The size of the corral space needs to reflect an analogous proportion of the size of the stable.

• Many properties have topography that presents challenges and may result in stable configurations that don’t allow for contiguous exercise space. This is okay so long as exercise space is still located within a distance to the stable that does not deter use of the space. Whenever possible, outdoor space should be contiguous to the stable.
Building Design and Materials

- Modular, pre-fabricated stables may be allowed so long as they meet the guideline requirements and the standards set forth by the Rolling Hills Community Association.
Stable Access

Standards
- Stable ‘set aside’ space must provide reasonable access. This means access to the stable cannot be located on the property that is difficult for delivery vehicles or horses to reach.
  - For example, there cannot be a stable and corral ‘set aside’ area identified on a pad that is surrounded by a slope with a grade of more than 25%.

General Principles to Follow
- Trail/vehicle access and deliveries are important considerations for stable access.
  - Applicants are encouraged to locate stables and corrals in a manner that facilities Fire Department and vehicular delivery access without requiring extraordinary amounts of paving and/or grading.
    - Trucks are not just for feed delivery but also needed for manure transport off the property and for transport of equipment/vehicles for the care of animals and any agricultural use of the property. It is also important for veterinary purposes.
**Location of Corrals**

*Standards*

- Exercise spaces should be flat for at least 25% of the corral space. The remaining corral space may be greater than 10% but is encouraged to be flat as well if it is being used for exercise space.

- All properties with stables must have outdoor exercise areas, not a ‘potential’ corral area. It must be there.

- A corral could be a turnout space or could be separate from the stable stall. A turnout may count toward overall corral square footage but cannot be counted toward exercise space.

- No Manure spreading is allowed.

- Corrals should be contiguous to barns as much as possible and must be fenced.

*General Principles to Follow*

- A Corral shouldn’t just be the space around the barn. It is important for the health of horses that corrals provide sufficient space for horses to exercise, not just have outdoor exposure. Thus, walkways should not be counted as corral square footage unless sufficient exercise square footage has been demonstrated elsewhere on the property.

- Turnouts are encouraged in addition to exercise spaces for horses.
Height of Stables

Standards

• A maximum plate height of up to 9 feet is allowed for the bottom level of a stable.
  o In conjunction with Rolling Hills Community Association approval.

• Affirmation of existing regulation – a maximum plate height of up to 7 feet is allowed for a loft.

General Principle to Follow

• Consider the length of the Covered Porch/Walkway coverage and the depth of the stall when deciding on plate heights and roof pitches.
Non-Equestrian Uses of Stables

Prohibited Uses of Stables
- No commercial uses of any kind shall be allowed. All services must be tied to occupants of the residential use. No renting of equestrian facilities (including stalls, training services, etc.).

Allowable Uses of Stables
- All equestrian uses that are non-commercial are allowed. Training for private use only is allowed. Use of stalls by other City of Rolling Hills residents is allowed so long as it is not for rental purposes.
- Storage that is compatible with the zoning code is allowable. When storage is the main wish of the applicant, the stable must still be constructed with the intention of providing healthy space for horses and should assume a future owner will want to use the stable for equestrian purposes.

Passive Recreation Space
- Affirmation of existing regulations – Maximum size of tack rooms and/or recreational space is up to 800 square feet or 40% of the size of the stable, whichever is less.
Stable and Corral ‘Set Asides’

**Standards**

- Based on these guidelines, the following requirements are recommended, subject to City Council approval:
  - 450 s.f. stable
  - 675 s.f. corral

This reinforces the “40/60 Rule” of stable to corral/exercise space ratio.

**General Principles to Follow**

- The overarching concern for ‘set aside’ areas is the question: “Could it truly be used for that purpose?” Slopes have been previously discussed and must be included in ‘set aside’ considerations. The intent is to discourage approvals that allow structures and flatwork to cover over every last inch of a residential or stable pad and then applicants designate some unusable space for stable and corral use. City staff, Commissioners, and Council Members must be able to answer the question, “Is it really accessible or not?”

- Applicants should provide a topographic map that can be used to discern if sufficient ‘set aside’ space is truly accessible and useable. As previously stated, hay, feed, medical services and similar services and items must be possible to get to the barn – not just horse access. Therefore, trail access alone isn’t good enough for a ‘set aside’ area.
Summary of Encouraged Development Practices
SECTION A

STABLE MAY NOT EXCEED 40% OF STABLE PAD

MAX SLOPE OF CORRAL = 25%

MIN 25% OF CORRAL MUST BE FLAT

CORRAL FENCE
Summary of Discouraged Development Practices