

# City of Bellingham Policy

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## **Policy No. 2014-003**

**Title:** Depiction of interior lot lines on building site plans

**Code:** International Building Code

**Chapter:** 6 and 7

**Level of Policy:** Departmental

**Date Issued:** September 5, 2014

**Developed by:** Jim Tinner, CBO

**Date Revised:** N/A

**Revised by:** N/A

**Approved by:** -----

Supersedes: All prior

See Also:

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## **Purpose**

To determine fire separation distance on properties that contain interior lot lines while reducing unnecessary costs for building owners or builders.

## **Scope**

IBC buildings on all properties within the corporate limits of the City of Bellingham which have multiple legal lots on a commonly owned property.

## **Definitions**

IBC means: The 2012 International Building Code

Interior lot line means: A line between two or more legally established lots that are all in common ownership.

For the purposes of this policy, "fire separation distance" means: The distance measured from the building face to the closest interior lot line when such lot line is not perpendicular to the wall and does not pass through any portion of the building.

## **Policy/Conditions**

Site plans must clearly depict all lot lines where fire separation distances are less than 30'. This requirement extends to 60' in the case of unlimited area buildings.

- Interior lots that do not establish a fire separation distance need not be shown.
- For cases where interior lot lines are not legally demonstrated as binding the lots, the fire separation distance will be taken from the closest interior lot line and the building face.
- This policy is not to be construed as taking precedence over any established land use code.

## **Rationale**

It is extremely common that buildings will span two or more legal lots. In the past, there has been a requirement for such buildings to record a "Covenant to Bind" which was intended to permanently join the affected lots and therefore eliminate the need for code require fire resistive elements based on the building's proximity to the lot lines.

It has been determined that for IBC buildings, the City's land use codes automatically bind lots when buildings cross lot lines. Therefore the Covenant to Bind is often duplicitous and unnecessarily burdensome.

## **References/Sources**