



Regulations for Gravel Driveways

City ordinances have for some time required that driveways be constructed of concrete or asphalt (see Section 1135.02(B)(2)). However, within the city, there are numerous driveways constructed of gravel that were in place before the enactment of an ordinance requiring hard pavement. These are considered a permitted non-conforming condition, sometimes referred to as “grandfathered” in lay terms. As such, their use may be continued as long as they are maintained as required by other ordinances, such as those for exterior property maintenance (see Chapter 1363), and have not been expanded or changed, since a non-conforming use may not be expanded (see Chapter 1165.04(A)).

Since gravel tends to spread and poor maintenance makes the limits of a gravel drive even more difficult to establish, the extent of the permitted non-conforming drive needs to be determined by reasonable evidence, such as photographs or surveys. Absent any other historical evidence, the Building Department will accept an aerial photograph from the Cuyahoga County GIS website (<https://myplace.cuyahogacounty.us/>) establishing that the drive has been in existence since at least 1993 (the earliest date of aerial photography available on the site). This site allows the extent of the drive to be measured, and a copy of the photograph can be submitted to the Building Department. Once reviewed and accepted, this record will be placed in the street file to permanently record this use, and protect a resident in their expectations of what they are permitted to have on their property. An example is attached.

It is recommended that the gravel drive be provided with landscape edging to limit the intrusion of the gravel onto landscaped or lawn areas so that they can be maintained in accordance with the Property Maintenance Code. Expansion or changes to a gravel drive, including those which are existing but which have been placed after the enactment of the requirement for paved drives, must be removed or must be paved in accordance with the current North Olmsted City Ordinance.

