

TxDOT's NEW ACCESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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BRIEF HISTORY

- 2001 - Frontage Road Policy
- 2002 – Access Management Program
- 2003 – Second version
 - Legislative involvement
- January 1, 2004 – Effective Date
- 2004 – Transition Year

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- Access Rules
 - State that TxDOT Will Use Access Management Practices in Roadway Design . . .
- Access Management Manual
 - On-line
 - Coordinated with Roadway Design Manual
- Dynamic Process
 - Continual Training
 - Manual will Continually Evolve

ACCESS MANAGEMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR TEXAS

- IMPROVE SAFETY AND MOBILITY
- PROVIDE REASONABLE ACCESS TO DEVELOPMENTS
- PROMOTE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

ACCESS MANAGEMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR TEXAS

- "PROMOTE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS"
 - Coordinate Development and Access Review
 - Ensures Both Agencies are "On The Same Page"
 - Statewide Implementation Consistency
 - San Antonio Model

WHAT LEGISLATION SAYS

- SB 361 states:
 - “An order of the Commission ... does not supersede a conflicting rule or ordinance of a municipality ... unless the USDOT FHWA notifies the department that enforcement would impair the ability of the state or the department to receive funds for highway construction or maintenance from the federal government.”

WHAT LEGISLATION MEANS

- Cities with access management program elements will be allowed to permit driveways on State highways

HOW WILL IT WORK?

- Two Primary Options regarding local permitting:
 1. City does not state a desire to follow any local AM plan, rule, ordinance, etc.
 2. City can take over permit process on state highways

HOW WILL IT WORK?

- TxDOT has no control past the ROW
- Permit review cooperation with cities
- Cities have to present AM rule, plan, ordinance so TxDOT knows what it is
- Cities need to understand liabilities

HOW WILL IT WORK?

- Another possible approach (2-Tier)
 - City applies one set of standards to off-system streets
 - City or TxDOT applies another set of standards to on-system roads
- Many cities may be developing AM plans – opportunities exist to have input – additional cooperation

WHO IS DOING IT?

- A Tale of Two Cities . . .

- Longview
- Midland

LOCAL PERMITTING DEVIATION PROCESS

- If local agency permits, they handle deviations and appeals
- Deviation process to be coordinated with TxDOT to evaluate impacts on state system
- Developers cannot go back and forth between local agency and TxDOT seeking answer they want

Deviation Process (TxDOT Permitting Authority)

- Distances shorter than minimums
- Submitted to TxDOT District office
- Ideally handled at the District level
- Dispute can go through Design Division to Administration
- Administration ruling is final—no further appeal

Deviations

- When deviation is approved:
 - Include conditions of approval (max. volume, etc.) in the permit
 - Violation of conditions or safety/operational issues may require reevaluation of the access permit
 - Opportunity to encourage cities to approve with conditions

Application of Access Criteria

- Conditions for granting access will be stated in the permit
- Violations may require reevaluation of the access by TxDOT



When Deviations are Not Required

- Smaller spacing allowed without deviation:
 - Avoid land-locking a property where TxDOT does not control access
 - Replace or re-establish access for reconstruction/rehabilitation projects

AM Classification System

- New highways on new alignments
- Freeway mainlanes
- Frontage roads
- Other state system highway



New Highways on New Alignments

- Designed per TxDOT *Roadway Design Manual*
- If Commission determines highway to be access-controlled:
 - Access rights will be obtained by TxDOT and described in the ROW deed
- Where TxDOT controls access rights:
 - Only Commission may approve the sale of rights



New Highways on New Alignments

- Initially could have at-grade intersections (prior to freeway criteria)
- Temporary access to avoid landlocking
- Temporary access permit will specify conditions and that it will be closed when permanent access is provided

Freeway Mainlanes

- No direct access to property
- Access provided at interchanges/ ramps
- Ensure appropriate weave space
- Designed according to *TxDOT Roadway Design Manual*



Frontage Roads

- May be considered when:
 - Alternative access is not available and property would otherwise be landlocked
 - Not feasible to purchase access
 - Where FR allows for improved mobility together with the property access



Frontage Roads

- Direct access prohibited near ramp connections
 - TxDOT *Roadway Design Manual*
 - Channelization and/or delineators possible
- Spacings based on posted speed and one- or two-way operation



Other State System Highways

- All state highways that are not new highways on new alignments, freeway mainlanes, or frontage roads
- Lesser spacings without deviation:
 - To keep from land-locking a property
 - Replacement or re-establishment of access under highway reconstruction/rehabilitation projects

Minimum Connection Spacing

- Spacing criteria are not required on:
 - Low volume rural roads with little potential for development
 - *Outside MPO boundaries and*
 - *ADT < 2,000*
- Shorter connection spacing may be approved based on safety and operational considerations

FINAL COMMENTS

- Working Well To Date
 - *World has not stopped spinning!*
- Very Few Cities Showing Interest in Taking Over Permits on State Highways
- Increased Awareness of Need to Coordinate Review Between State and Cities