

Residential Driveway Permit Applications

In reviewing applications for a residential driveway permit (not associated with a subdivision of land), the reviewer needs to balance the needs and wants of the applicant with the responsibility to provide a safe and efficient public street access. It is well documented that driveways with inadequate sight distance have a greater probability of crashes and the more the access points along a stretch of road, the greater the potential for crashes along that stretch.

The best approach a reviewer can take is to weigh the factors associated with the application and work collaboratively with the applicant to locate the optimal location(s). If this cannot be accomplished, then the reviewer, in consultation with key P&P staff and management, must impose a decision on the applicant as to the location for access.

It is important to know that all lots of record, unless specifically noted otherwise, and parcels, have a right to access the public street system. However, there is no legal right of a landowner to have full access (as opposed to limited, such as right-in/right-out) or more than one access. Should an applicant request a second point of access, the burden of proof is on the applicant to demonstrate the need.

Unless a residential access is to a low speed subdivision street, all driveways must have a turnaround area to prevent backing into or out of driveways. If this cannot reasonably be accomplished, say because of environmental, topographic, cost or space limitations, a circular/half-moon driveway with two access points may actually be preferred, to one access.

In reviewing requests for access, first and foremost, all driveways must achieve AASHTO (Chapter 3) intersection SSD standards. Every effort must be made to conform to County spacing guidelines (simplified chart attached from the unpublished Draft LDM), either providing driveways opposite each other or with sufficient distance from other nearby private or public intersections, but never to the detriment of causing inadequate or approaching inadequate SSD.

When an applicant requests more than one access, the following considerations need to be weighed:

- Adequate intersection SSD can be maintained
- Reasonability of an on-site turnaround
- Applicant's justification of need
- Facility type
- Road ADT (<400 considered low volume by AASHTO)
- Property frontage length
- Previous subdivision plat or site plan access restrictions, such as denied access locations, required shared drives/entrances, etc.

All multiple access points must be recommended for approval by the reviewer based on weighing the above factors, and approved by the Deputy Director or his/her designee.

Procedurally the process to accomplish the task is as follows:

IN ALL CASES:

- Provide pre-application feedback to the property owner to work out any issues/concerns/alternatives before they commit to paying fees and hiring consultants.

FOR DRIVEWAY REQUESTS ON LOTS OF RECORD THAT HAVE NOT BEEN SUBJECT TO SUBDIVISION OR SITE PLAN REVIEW:

- Permit Reviews will be accomplished by DRE/Zoning (to be added as new reviewer) in consultation with DRTE when needed
- Zoning will be reviewing for Planning related issues (pull plat, examine existing and approved use, denied access notes and spacing policy etc.)
- DRE will be reviewing for engineering related issues (Adequate SSD (or ISD) can be maintained, Reasonability of an on-site turnaround, Applicant's justification of need – generally for a circular driveway multiple uses, Facility type, Road ADT (<400 considered low volume by AASHTO), Property frontage length etc.)
- While Subdivisions and site plans must meet FCPC spacing policy, as discussed above, driveway permits would not be required to obtain FCPC mod approval, unless there are unusual circumstances that the staff and department director does not feel comfortable approving

FOR DRIVEWAY REQUESTS ON LOTS THAT ARE SUBJECT TO PREVIOUS SUBDIVISION OR SITE PLAN REVIEW:

- Zoning will be reviewing for Planning related issues (pull plat, examine existing and approved use, denied access notes and spacing policy etc.) In the case where the new entrance/driveway is contrary to the approved access layout (such as eliminating the use of a common drive/entrance, violates previously approved entrance spacing, located in an area labeled denied access, etc.) then a Correction Plat must be filed prior to the approval of the entrance/driveway permit.
- Permit Reviews will be accomplished by DRE/Zoning (to be added as new reviewer) in consultation with DRTE when needed
- DRE will be reviewing the permit for engineering related issues (Adequate intersection SSD can be maintained, Reasonability of an on-site turnaround, Applicant's justification of need – generally for a circular driveway multiple uses, Facility type, Road ADT (<400 considered low volume by AASHTO), Property frontage length etc.)
- Subdivisions and site plans must meet FCPC spacing policy. Changes to the previously approved access point(s) that do not meet all codes or policies may require FCPC approval.