

Access Management Manual

TRB Committee Documents the State of the Art

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With growing congestion and traffic demand, the need for effective corridor management strategies is greater than ever. These strategies include access management, which involves the systematic control of the location, spacing, design, and operation of driveways, median openings, interchanges, and street connections, as well as median and auxiliary lane treatments and the spacing of traffic signals.

Agencies are updating or expanding access management activities to realize a variety of benefits:

- ◆ Preserving or improving public safety,
- ◆ Extending the life of major roadways,
- ◆ Reducing traffic congestion and delay,
- ◆ Supporting alternative transportation modes, and
- ◆ Improving the appearance and quality of the built environment.

In the past few decades, substantial research has advanced the state of the practice. This research, combined with new agency policies, plans, and programs, has provided insights into the impacts of access management techniques, has identified best practices, and has produced guidelines. The information, however, is dispersed across a variety of sources, making it difficult for practitioners to locate, evaluate, and apply.

In 1996, the TRB Committee on Access Management initiated a project to compile the best information on the subject into a single, comprehensive resource documenting the state of the art. The *Access Management Manual*, published by TRB in May, is the culmination of this multiyear effort. The manual was prepared by the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida, with oversight and assistance from the committee and its subcommittees. The Federal



Aesthetics with access management and without (inset).

Why Is Access Management Necessary?

Failure to manage access is associated with the following adverse social, economic, and environmental impacts:

- ◆ Increased numbers of vehicle crashes;
- ◆ More collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists;
- ◆ Accelerated reduction in roadway efficiency;
- ◆ Unsightly commercial strip development;
- ◆ Degradation of scenic landscapes;
- ◆ More cut-through traffic in residential areas, because arterials are overburdened;
- ◆ Homes and businesses adversely affected by the widening of roads; and
- ◆ Increased commuting time, fuel consumption, and vehicle emissions, as driveways and traffic signals intensify congestion and delay along major roads.



The *Access Management Manual* is available in print and in CD-ROM from TRB [www.TRB.org/trb/bookstore/ or call 202-339-3213; book, \$80 (\$60, affiliates); CD-ROM, \$60 (\$45, affiliates); book and CD-ROM, \$100 (\$75, affiliates)].

Highway Administration provided funding for the project, and the Florida Department of Transportation served as project manager.

Practitioners and Stakeholders

Access management has many dimensions, cutting across jurisdictions, organizational lines, and professions. A goal of the project, therefore, was to provide information for a diverse audience.

The primary audience is the practitioner engaged in access management with a state transportation agency, local government, or metropolitan planning organization (MPO), or as a consultant in planning, engineering, or urban design. The manual offers practical information about the development and implementation of programs, including corridor access management plans, codes, and access design.

Another key audience consists of stakeholders, such as developers, elected and appointed officials, attorneys, and neighborhood groups involved in or affected by access management actions. The manual provides information to help stakeholders understand and evaluate proposed access management actions and potential alternatives. Educational information covers principles of access management, the impacts of access management techniques, regulatory best practices, right-of-way and legal considerations, and effective access design.

Techniques and Guidance

The *Access Management Manual* presents techniques for implementation, as well as guidance on how to develop and administer effective access management programs. The manual addresses a

variety of circumstances that state, regional, and local agencies may encounter. The chapters offer practical information that draws on the knowledge of the many experienced practitioners who participated in development of the manual.

In particular, the manual presents detailed information on

- ◆ Principles and effects of access management;
- ◆ Steps in developing an access management program or corridor access management plan;
- ◆ Access management techniques and their potential advantages, disadvantages, and applications, with examples;
- ◆ How to develop and assign access categories to roadways;
- ◆ The role of states, MPOs, and local governments;
- ◆ The interrelationship with land development and how to address access management in the context of comprehensive planning and land development regulation;
- ◆ The rationale for spacing standards and how to choose appropriate standards for connections, signals, corner clearance at intersections, and interchange areas;
- ◆ Information on the location and design of access features, such as driveways, medians, auxiliary lanes, and service roads (Figure 1);
- ◆ When to choose a median instead of a continuous two-way left-turn lane;
- ◆ Case examples of agency policies, plans, practices, and programs;
- ◆ State statute and regulatory prototypes;
- ◆ The permitting and administrative processes and how to handle deviations from standards;
- ◆ How to work with the public on access management issues; and
- ◆ Legal considerations that guide program development and implementation.

Updating and Advancing

The manual is part of an ongoing effort by the TRB Committee on Access Management to disseminate useful, high-quality information on the state of the art. Plans are under way to promote access management research and to identify best practices; case studies and field studies are being encouraged.

Other initiatives look to integrate access management into traditional transportation processes and programs. The committee plans to update the manual regularly, to incorporate the latest research findings and agency experiences.

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