CITY OF GEORGETOWN
ACCESS MANAGEMENT POLICY
STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM WITHIN GEORGETOWN ETJ

Prepared for:

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City of Georgetown—Access Management Policy
S.B. No. 361, effective September 1, 2003, amends the Transportation Code to state that a state highway access management plan does not surpass a city’s rule. In other words, S.B. 361 prohibits TxDOT endorsement of a city’s highway access rules as a stipulation for enforcement of a city’s regulations.

As a result, City of Georgetown desires to implement access permitting for state highway system roadways within their City limits and their extra territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) through the development of an access management policy incorporating guidelines currently contained in The City of Georgetown’s Unified Development Code (UDC). The UDC is based in large part on the recommendations contained in the City of Georgetown’s 2001 Driveway Spacing Study. This study included investigation into area and national access policies as well as those found in industry design manuals such as AASHTO’s Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets. In addition, the TxDOT’s Access Management Manual was consulted as guide in the development of this policy.

Proper access management aids in protecting the substantial civic investment in transportation by safeguarding roadway efficiency and augmenting traffic safety, consequently reducing the necessity for costly improvements. Additionally, access management can significantly lower traffic accidents, personal injury, and property damage, as well as encourage the orderly layout and sustainability of a
community. It is for these reasons, the City of Georgetown has compiled the following access management policy governing the state highway system within the City's jurisdictional limits.

**DESIGN DOCUMENTATION**

Adherence to the City of Georgetown's access management policy does not preclude the need for engineering access locations. Any changes to drainage or hydraulics on the state highway system resulting from access connections must be approved by TxDOT prior to any local access connection approval. Consideration also needs to be given to the actual access connection design, utility location/relocation, traffic control during construction, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS), environmental requirements, wetland considerations if appropriate, and the need to follow all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.

Engineering studies or analyses can be used as needed to assist in the evaluation of future access connections to the state highway system within the City of Georgetown. Regardless, if the preceding criteria can or cannot be met, an engineering study may be required. The need for an engineering study will be determined by the City of Georgetown.

The purpose of an engineering study is to determine the safety, mobility, and operational impacts that the access connection will have on the highway system. In addition, such studies can also assist in the determination of the compatibility between the proposed land use and the transportation network.

**Early Coordination**

As early as possible, when in the development process, applicants are encouraged to meet with the City of Georgetown to discuss specific requirements associated with obtaining access to the state highway system. This initial coordination effort should also include representation from TxDOT and they will be involved along with the City in the access permitting process. This meeting, in addition to bringing all affected parties together regarding access connection issues, will also help to define the requirements of any needed engineering study.

When determining the need for and level of detail of an engineering study, the following questions should be considered:

- Does the proposed access meet the minimum spacing requirements per Tables 1, 2 and 3?
- Will the proposed access require a deceleration or acceleration lane?
✓ What are the traffic volumes and classification of the intersecting street at the proposed access location?
✓ Are there any sight distance or physical obstructions and/or constraints that will result in a safety problem?
✓ Are there any environmental or hydraulic issues associated with the proposed access?
✓ Is there an unusual lot configuration?

The responses to the above list of questions will determine whether an engineering study would be required and the level of detail required in the engineering study. If necessary, specifics regarding needed level of study, time of day analysis, phasing of development, and project area can be defined and agreed upon at the initial coordination meeting. Additional information and analyses may be required if the access connection cannot meet the minimum spacing requirements, or there is an operational or safety impact. The City of Georgetown will make that determination jointly with the applicant.

**Engineering Study versus Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA)**

A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) is defined in the requirements described below. The following section outlines the purpose and requirements of an engineering study and a TIA.

In all cases where the access spacing requirements set forth herein are satisfied, a TIA will not be required. Typically, the impacts of an access point along a state facility can be ascertained by means of an engineering study that indicates the forecasted turning movements at the proposed access connections. The forecasted turning movements, used in conjunction with the TxDOT Roadway Design Manual, will determine the need for and the required length of left-turn and/or right-turn deceleration lanes.

Where possible, existing studies and data completed by the City of Georgetown will be utilized for consistency and reduced financial impact.

**Requirements for Engineering Studies and TIAs**

The intent of this section is to identify the possible criteria for engineering studies and TIAs. The City will require only those elements of an engineering study or TIA that are necessary to answer the specific questions that arise during the permitting process for specific access points. The City will not require an exhaustive TIA for every application for an access permit on a state roadway. The early coordination meeting, as discussed above, will be the mechanism to identify whether or not an engineering study or TIA is required and, if so, the level of detail that will be required.
Engineering Study

When the determination is made that an engineering study will required, it will include the following elements: trip generation, trip distribution, and traffic assignment at the proposed access points. In order to assess the above, the engineering study may require that existing traffic volume data be collected. The traffic engineer conducting the study will determine this need.

- The trip generation will be conducted using the latest edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineer's Trip Generation Manual unless there is acceptable data that supports the use of another trip generation source.
- Trip distribution will be performed with input from the City of Georgetown. The traffic assignment will be conducted to determine the forecasted turning movements attributable to the proposed development.
- The existing traffic counts will be grown using an annual growth rate as agreed to by the City to the build-out year of the proposed development.
- The resulting traffic volumes will be used as background traffic volumes, and the assigned forecasted turning movements will be added to the background traffic volumes resulting in the total traffic volumes.
- The total traffic volumes will be used to determine the need for left-turn and right-turn lanes. If such lanes are needed, refer to the TxDOT Roadway Design Manual to determine their lengths and other design criteria. As an example, if the proposed development will take two years to construct and occupy, the existing traffic volumes will be grown by the agreed upon growth factor for two years.

TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

In the instances where a TIA is required, it will include the above-mentioned elements as well as the same type of data for intersections adjacent to the proposed site. Additionally, the TIA may require operational analyses (including LOS and capacity analyses) for the study intersections as determined during the initial meeting between the applicant and the City of Georgetown. Furthermore, the applicant's TIA will include recommendations for mitigation measures should the impact of the proposed access point(s) on the state highway system result in unacceptable levels of service.

ACCESS PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Applications for access permits within the jurisdictional limits of the City of Georgetown will be submitted to the Planning and Development Department. The City of Georgetown shall review access permit applications as to their impact on
vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic and safety and approve or deny the permit based on these considerations. No permit will be denied unless it is determined that the proposed location of the access will have an adverse effect on the public safety. In making this determination, the following will be evaluated:

1. The topography of the land;

2. Land use (including but not limited to the intensity of development and trip attraction/generation potential, mix of vehicles and turning movements);

3. Function of public street (including but not limited to the number of lanes, medians, median openings, vertical and horizontal curvature, sight distance, operating speeds, traffic volumes, entrance/exit ramps and frontage roads);

4. The location of nearby streets and driveways;

5. The site plan (including but not limited to on-site circulation, delineation of the intended paths, parking stalls, location of buildings, location of loading areas);

6. Actual or anticipated excessive increase in vehicular traffic being routed onto streets occurring as a result of any such permit;

7. Physical constraints on the site;

8. Unusual lot configurations;

9. Potential traffic movements which are unsafe or have an adverse effect on traffic operations;

10. Joint access at the time of subdivision or site plan approval for abutting lots which have insufficient frontage to allow a driveway approach for each lot;

11. Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Compliance with the Texas Accessibilities Standards; and,

12. Drainage and hydraulic analysis relating to the effects on the roadway being connected to by the new access.

No access permit shall be issued unless the design of the access approach has been approved based on the City's current approved UDC design standards or is established in accordance with an approved site plan.
ACCESS SPACING / FRONTAGE ROADS

This section describes the spacing of driveway and/or side street connections directly accessing freeway frontage roads within Georgetown's jurisdictional limits, including how access connections will be applied along these frontage roads. Frontage roads are roadways that are constructed generally parallel to a freeway or other highway. TxDOT must be involved in the process for access permitting on frontage roads and approval from TxDOT will be required in these situations.

In many cases TxDOT owns the access rights along IH 35 and access may not be permitted along IH 35 unless the access rights are purchased and the access is deemed safe. Frontage roads will then be considered in order to provide direct access to abutting property where 1) alternative access is not available and the property would otherwise be landlocked, 2) where it is not feasible to purchase the access, and 3) where the frontage road allows for improved mobility together with the property access.

Connection Spacing Criteria for Frontage Roads

Table 1 gives the minimum connection spacing criteria for frontage roads. However, a lesser connection spacing than set forth in this document may be allowed without deviation in the following situations:

➢ To keep from land-locking a property; or
➢ Replacement or re-establishment of access to the state highway system under highway reconstruction/rehabilitation projects.

It should be noted that for areas with conventional diamond ramp patterns the most critical areas for operations are between the exit ramp and the arterial street and between the arterial street and the entrance ramp. In X-ramp configurations, the most critical areas are between the exit ramp and the subsequent entrance ramp. While Table 1 gives minimum connection spacing criteria, the critical areas with respect to the ramp pattern may need greater spacing requirements for operational, safety, and weaving efficiencies.

The distance between access connections is measured along the edge of the traveled way from the centerline of pavement of the first access connection to the centerline of pavement of the second access connection (Refer to Figure 1). Additionally, the access connection spacing in the proximity of frontage road U-turn lanes will be measured from the inside edge of the U-turn lane to the centerline of the first access connection (Refer to Figure 2).
Figure 1: Access Connection Spacing Diagram

Figure 2: Frontage Road U-Turn Spacing Diagram
### Minimum Connection Spacing Criteria for Frontage Roads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posted Speed (mph)</th>
<th>Minimum Connection Spacing (feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*One-Way Frontage Roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤ 30</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>250</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>305</td>
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<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>360</td>
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</table>

**Table 1: Frontage Road Connection Spacing Criteria**

*In conformance with UDC

(1) Distances are for passenger cars on level grade. These distances may be adjusted for downgrades and/or significant truck traffic.

In the case where frontage roads are provided, access will be controlled for operational purposes at ramp junctions with frontage roads through access restrictions to control access location and design. Figures 3 and 4 show recommended access control strategies for planned exit and entrance ramps, respectively, and should be used where practical.

(1) For entrance ramp to driveway, side street, or cross street spacings, see Table 2.

(2) When the recommended minimum separation distance cannot be obtained, consideration should be given to channelization methods that would restrict access to driveways within the minimum separation distance.

**NOTE:** THIS SHEET IS NOT INTENDED TO SHOW CHANNELIZATION, STRIPING, OR PAVEMENT MARKING DETAILS.

**Figure 3. Recommended Access Control At Exit Ramp Junction With Frontage Road.**

City of Georgetown—Access Management Policy
(1) For exit ramp to driveway, side street, or cross street spacings, see Table 2.
(2) When the recommended minimum separation distance cannot be obtained, consideration should be given to channelization methods that would restrict access to driveways within the minimum separation distance.

NOTE: THIS SHEET IS NOT INTENDED TO SHOW CHANNELIZATION, STRIPING, OR PAVEMENT MARKING DETAILS.

Figure 4. Recommended Access Control At Entrance Ramp Junction With Frontage Road.

The placement of streets and driveways in the vicinity of freeway ramp/frontage road intersections will be carefully considered and permitted only after overall local traffic operations are considered. Table 2 shows the spacing to be used between exit ramps and driveways, side streets, or cross streets if practical. The number of weaving lanes is defined as the total number of lanes on the frontage road downstream from the ramp.
### Desirable Spacing between Exit Ramps and Access

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Volume (Fr tg rd + Ramp) (vph)</th>
<th>Driveway or Side Street Volume (vph)</th>
<th>Spacing (ft)</th>
<th>Number of Weaving Lanes</th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2 - Desirable Spacing between Exit Ramps and Access*

Driveway or side street access on the frontage road in close downstream proximity to exit ramp terminals increases the weaving that occurs on the frontage road and may lead to operational problems. For this reason, it is important to maintain appropriate separation between the intersection of the exit ramp and frontage road travel lanes, and downstream driveways or side streets where practical.

It is recognized that there are occasions when meeting these exit ramp separation distance values may not be possible due to the nature of the existing development, such as a high number of closely spaced driveways and/or side streets especially when in combination with closely spaced interchanges. In these cases, at least 250 ft of separation should be provided between the intersection of the exit ramp and frontage road travel lanes and the downstream driveway or side street. Since the use of only 250 ft of separation distance may negatively impact the operation of the frontage road, exit ramp, driveway and/or side street traffic, careful consideration should be given to its use. When the 250 ft separation distance cannot be obtained, consideration should be given to channelization methods that would restrict access to driveways within this 250 ft distance. Refer to the Texas Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (TMUTCD) for specific types of channelization.

There will be similar occasions when meeting the entrance ramp separation distance values may not be possible due to the same existing development conditions associated with exit ramps. In these cases, at least 100 ft of separation distance should be provided between the intersection of the entrance ramp and frontage road travel lanes and the upstream driveway or side street.
Since the use of only 100 ft of entrance ramp separation distance may also negatively impact the operation of the frontage road, entrance ramp, driveway, and/or side street traffic, careful consideration should be given to its use. As with exit ramps, when the 100 ft entrance ramp separation distance cannot be obtained, consideration should be given to channelization methods that would restrict access to driveways within this 100 ft distance. Refer to the Texas MUTCD for specific types of channelization. The use of and type of channelizing device on frontage roads will require approval by TxDOT.

Existing Driveways

If a driveway is being reconstructed in its original location, documentation must be submitted verifying the driveway location and width is not being altered for the proposed reconstruction. This documentation can be in the form of a drawing (to scale) showing the roadway, the existing drive location and the location and materials proposed for construction.

If however, the reconstruction is due to a change in property usage or zoning, resulting in the modification of the configuration of the driveway, the same policies and procedures will be followed as if the driveway access was being requested for the first time. However, existing driveways will not be removed unless additional driveway accesses are included in the request for change of land use.

In cases where roadway widening or realigning is necessary at the discretion of an entity other then the property owner, relocation or removal of existing driveways will be at the expense of the appropriate entity. Any compensation for loss of access will be applied to the project as compensation to the private landowner in accordance with Section 11.53 of the Texas Administration Code Title 43.

Relocating Driveways

On roadway reconstruction projects, it may be necessary to close or relocate driveways in order to meet these guidelines. However, if the closure/relocation is not feasible, and adjustment of the location of the ramp gore along the frontage road is not practical, then deviation from these recommended guidelines may be necessary. Any closure or relocation would be at the City’s expense and compensation would be made to the landowner to be made whole. Coordination must be made with TxDOT in regards to previous access rights which may currently be in effect.
Ramp Location

In the preparation of schematic drawings, care should be exercised to develop design in sufficient detail to accurately tie down the locations of ramp junctions with frontage roads and thus the location of access control limits. These drawings are often displayed at meetings and hearings and further become the basis for right-of-way instruments or, in some cases, the City's regulation of the access location.

In some instances, ramps must be shifted to satisfy level of service considerations or geometric design controls. When this is necessary, the access control limits should also be shifted if right-of-way has not been previously purchased.

ACCESS SPACING - OTHER STATE SYSTEM HIGHWAYS

This classification applies to all state highway system routes that are not new highways on new alignments, freeway mainlanes, or frontage roads within the city limits.

Connection Spacing Criteria

Table 3 provides minimum connection spacing criteria for other state system highways. However, a lesser connection spacing than set forth in this document may be allowed without deviation in the following situations:

✓ To keep from land-locking a property; or
✓ Replacement or re-establishment of access to the state highway system under highway reconstruction/rehabilitation projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other State Highways Minimum Connection Spacing&lt;sup&gt;(1)&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Distance (ft)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posted Speed (mph)</td>
<td>&lt; 30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>≥ 50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Other State Highways Connection Spacing Criteria
(1) Distances are for passenger cars on level grade. These distances may be adjusted for downgrades and/or significant truck traffic.

**Corner Clearance**

Table 3 provides minimum corner clearance criteria.

Where adequate access connection spacing cannot be achieved, the City of Georgetown may allow for a lesser spacing when shared access is established with an abutting property. Where no other alternatives exist, construction of an access connection may be allowed along the property line farthest from the intersection. This may provide reasonable access under these conditions but also provide the safest operation, consideration will be given to designing the access connection to allow only the right-in turning movement or only the right-in/right-out turning movements to provide continued flow of traffic without interruption.

**Width of Access**

The City of Georgetown shall determine the width of access driveways in accordance with Table 4. However, in no case shall an individual driveway width be greater than 35 feet, except that the width of a landscaped center median shall not count towards this standard. The usual width of the center median will be five (5) feet. New street widths shall be in accordance with the City of Georgetown’s UDC and shall be based upon the functional classification of the proposed street.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Driveway Dimension Guidelines</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum Width (ft)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Width (ft)</td>
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<td>30</td>
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</table>

*Table 4: Basic Driveway Dimension Guidelines*

The minimum width of commercial driveways is intended to apply to 1-way operation. In high-pedestrian activity areas, such as in a central business district or in the same block with auditorium, school, or library, the maximum basic widths will be 30 feet. The width shown applies to rural routes and most city streets including neighborhood business, residential, and industrial streets. The width is intended to be measured along the right-of-way line, in most instances, at the inner limit of a curbed radius or between the line of the radius and near the edge of a curbed island at least 50 feet square in area.
The minimum radius for proposed drives shall be determined based upon the intended usage including the volume and size of truck traffic. However, in no case shall the drive return radius be less then 15 feet.

Existing Driveways

If a driveway is being reconstructed in its original location, documentation must be submitted verifying the driveway location and width is not being altered for the proposed reconstruction. This documentation can be in the form of a drawing (to scale) showing the roadway, the existing drive location, the new drive location and materials proposed for construction.

If however, the reconstruction is due to a change in property usage or zoning, resulting in the modification of the configuration of the driveway, the same policies and procedures will be followed as if the driveway access was being requested for the first time. However, existing driveways will not be removed unless additional driveway accesses are included in the request for change of land use.

In cases where roadway widening or realigning is necessary at the discretion of the City or TxDOT, relocation or removal of existing driveways will be at the expense of the public entity. Any compensation for loss of access will be applied to the project as compensation to the private landowner in accordance with Section 11.53 of the Texas Administrative Code Title 43.

Relocating Driveways

On reconstruction projects, it may be necessary to close or relocate driveways in order to meet these guidelines. However, if the closure/relocation is not feasible, deviation from these recommended guidelines may be necessary. Any closure or relocation on a roadway reconstruction project would be at the City’s expense and compensation would be made to the landowner to be made whole.

Traffic Signal Installations and/or Modifications

On projects requiring modifications and/or the installation of new traffic signals, coordination must include TxDOT as well as the City of Georgetown. Documentation should include as appropriate, existing signal installations, proposed modifications, signal warrants, proposed new location and any other data required to determine the justification for modification and or installation.
WAIVER

In the event circumstances do not allow the preceding criteria to be met, a waiver from the criteria may be requested. The documentation required for application for a waiver will be determined by the Development Engineer in accordance with the previous section titled: Design Documentation.

As the potential exists for factors other than those listed above to be sufficient to warrant consideration of an exception to the policy, the City Development Engineer should be consulted for a recommendation as to documentation requirements for each particular situation.

APPEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION

Within 30 days after the date of the administrative decision, appeal of an administrative decision may be initiated by any person aggrieved by the administrative decision, or any officer, department, board or bureau of the City affected by the decision. Appeals of administrative decisions should be submitted to the City of Georgetown's Planning and Zoning Commission.