





## Access Management – State of Practice Research Briefing

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### Description

The Countywide Planning and Policy Division has been working on access management research in anticipation of the upcoming Access Management Study for the FY22 work program. A presentation will be given by Daniella Acosta Saavedra. Ms. Acosta is currently an intern working for the Countywide Planning and Policy Division, and she is nearing completion of her master's degree in Urban Studies and Planning at the University of Maryland. Ms. Acosta has conducted a detailed literature search on the subject matter with a focus on Access Management within a Vision Zero and Complete Streets context.

### Access Management Study: Background

The Access Management research work conducted to-date is a key first step in conducting the Access Management Study, programmed for FY22. Staff is currently developing a detailed scope of work for this Study that will be presented to the Planning Board this summer.

Access management is the “coordinated planning, regulation and design of access between roadways and land development.”<sup>1</sup> Its goal is to provide a systemic way to improve the safety and efficiency of moving people and goods while reducing conflicts between all modes using and crossing the roadway, including cars, heavy vehicles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians. Techniques to control or manage access include:

- Parcel-based techniques (typically zoning restricting number, priority, access sharing between adjacent parcels, or location of site access driveways),
- Driveway-based techniques (spacing between driveways and managing conflicts near intersections), and
- Corridor-based techniques (spacing between access points and minimum standards for traffic signals and median breaks).

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<sup>1</sup> Access Management Manual, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Transportation Research Board, 2014, p 1-3.

Montgomery County currently addresses access management during site plan review/local area transportation review using a combination of M-NCPPC, MCDOT and DPS regulations and policies including the following:

- *Montgomery County Road Code – Chapter 49, Article 3, Road Design and Construction Code*
- *Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance – Chapter 59-6, Section 6.1.4 – Driveway Access*
- *Montgomery County Code, Chapter 50, Subdivision of Land*
- *Montgomery County Department of Transportation, Private Access Design and Location Guidelines for Commercial, Industrial, Multifamily and Cluster Development (Including Private Driveways)*
- *Department of Permitting Services, Maryland Driveway Construction Policy*

There is a need to consolidate access policies and regulations into one comprehensive multimodal, vision zero-focused strategy to implement access management systematically countywide (for new development and for redevelopment) across all executive branch agencies and the M-NCPPC. Staff also believes that new and improved tools are needed for managing access on county roads. The Access Management study will identify opportunities to implement state of the practice techniques that will simplify, for developers and engineers, the planning and design of road access for intersections and site driveways on all Montgomery County roads, and facilitate cross-agency concurrence on access management decisions. This has the potential to significantly improve the consistency of access-related decisions through the site plan review/DRC process and to obtain access consolidation more effectively from developers during redevelopment. The development of this Access Management Study is supportive of the county's Vision Zero Action Plan, in that multimodal conflicts and decision points is directly related to crash causation.

It should be noted that, initially, the Complete Streets Design Guidelines was intended to have a significant access management component. Due to budget limitations, that effort was limited to the identification of minimum traffic signal spacing and minimum protected crossing spacing. Those two guideline standards are very significant to managing access on county roads, but more work is needed to address access management comprehensively.

The Access Management work effort is a Study, so the outcome of this work will be recommendations for new standards, policies to enhance how access is managed on county roads.

### **Summary of Access Management Research**

The research into the state of practice in Access Management has been extensive. While we are only presenting key findings today, it is important to note the depth and extent of the research that has been compiled over the past several months. This research is vital to ensuring the Access Management Study hits the ground running in FY22.

The following work efforts have been conducted to-date:

- Review of national practice in access management,
- Review of access management programs at the state level,
- Review of existing access management regulations and guidelines within Montgomery County,
- Review of access management practices in neighboring jurisdictions, including some coordination efforts,
- Review of innovative access management practices related to Vision Zero and Complete Streets with a focus on multimodal systems,
- Informal discussions within the Planning Department on how access management works within the development review process and overall effectiveness in obtaining desired access improvements,
- Initial coordination with Montgomery County Department of Transportation to introduce the topic within context of FY22 work program item and budget request.

What is clear from the research is that multimodal access management is an evolving field, and it is largely being driven by the need to provide safer streets for all users. This is critical for a transportation network that will be enhanced by an expanding bicycle network and strengthened by recommendations from the Pedestrian Master Plan. It also must be cognizant of the need to be contextually based. Uniform access management standards don't really mesh well with the varying land use contexts within Montgomery County, so future standards need to reflect the differing needs of urban, town center, suburban, and rural areas. These issues will be explored in detail in the upcoming Access Management Study.