



CITY OF HARRISONBURG  
**PUBLIC  
WORKS**

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TO: Eric Campbell, City Manager  
FROM: Thomas Hartman, PE, Director of Public Works  
DATE: June 8, 2021  
RE: Information regarding intention to update the Design and Construction Standards Manual, Chapter 3, Access Management and Entrances, Curb Cuts, and Intersections sections

**Summary:**

The Public Works Department is working to develop updated access management standards for new development to improve traffic safety and facilitate multimodal travel. This is an informational presentation only, intended to familiarize City Council with the concept of access management, and inform Councilors of Public Works' intention to present a new standard to Council for consideration to be adopted into the Design and Construction Standards Manual early next year.

**Background:**

Access management involves regulating the minimum spacing between intersections and entrances (commercial and residential driveways), in order to provide separation between vehicle conflict points within the street network. Its primary purpose is to create a safer street design, resulting in fewer crashes. There is currently an access management standard included in the Design and Construction Standards Manual (DCSM). However, it is dated and not suitable for the amount of traffic presently managed on City streets. The standard is not effective in preventing crash hot spots and is therefore in need of being updated to reflect current access management best practices.

Public Works has conducted research on how the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and other localities regulate entrances to the public street to ensure the safety of those using the entrance, as well as the users of the street being accessed. It appears that VDOT's access management standards can be used to achieve the City's goals. Public Works is evaluating the option of adopting these standards, with modifications to allow them to be more applicable to the City's context, as we have done with other street design standards in the DCSM.

VDOT has two sets of standards for access management. One of them is suited more to lower density, suburban-type contexts, and the other for higher-density, more urban contexts. Public Works is evaluating the possibility of using both of these where they are best suited to the land uses in different parts of the City, including the land uses identified in the [Future] Land Use Guide found in the Comprehensive Plan. The standards for the more urban context are

specifically geared toward multimodal street design, which is also supportive of the Comprehensive Plan and Environmental Action Plan goals of increasing nonmotorized modes of travel.

**Key Issues:**

- Safety (traffic safety)
- Multimodal transportation

**Environmental Impact:**

The standard should have a positive influence on the environment by producing more bicycle and pedestrian oriented community design.

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

**Prior Actions:**

N/A

**Alternatives:**

No action is currently being sought. However, the alternative to this initiative would be to not update the access management standard and continuing using the standard currently found in the DCSM.

**Community Engagement:**

So far, the only engagement conducted has been a presentation to the Transportation Safety and Advisory Commission. However, Public Works plans to share the draft standard with stakeholders, including developers and engineers, when it is ready, and to hold a public comment period to receive and answer questions, comments, and feedback. Public Works will summarize the public input to present to City Council and consider it for inclusion/modification of the standard before the standard is finalized.

**Recommendation:**

N/A

**Attachments:**

None

**Review:**