

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OFFICE OF LAND USE

INSTRUCTIONAL AND INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

GENERAL SUBJECT: Land Development Review	NUMBER: IIM-LU-500.3
SPECIFIC SUBJECT: Review of site plans and subdivision plats	DATE: June 1, 2020
	SUPERSEDES: IIM-LU-500.2
APPROVED:	Robert W. Hofrichter Director, Office of Land Use Approved June 1, 2020

EFFECTIVE DATE

This memorandum applies to all VDOT reviews of site plans and subdivision plats submitted on or after July 1, 2020.

PURPOSE/SCOPE/REQUIREMENTS

VDOT reviews site plans and subdivision plats for three related purposes.

- For work related to a [land use permit](#) request (usually dealing with entrances and associated road improvements).
- For new streets that are intended to be taken into the secondary system of state highways through the [Subdivision Street Requirements](#) or the [Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements](#).
- To assist a locality in the development of its territory.

VDOT's review of site plans and subdivisions plats benefits the applicant, the locality, and the various agencies (including VDOT) involved in the land development process. Reviews coordinated with other agencies (Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Health Department, emergency service providers), when appropriate, provide the following.

- Review helps ensure that the proposed design of the development meets safety and operational requirements.
- Site plans are evaluated to make sure the project will comply with:
 - Public agency requirements (e.g. entrance design, utility specifications, storm water management), and
 - Proffered conditions impacting the highway (e.g. buffers, off-site turn lanes, road widening, right of way dedication)

Title 15.2 of the State Code contains requirements for the local review of site plans and plats. [Section 15.2-2259](#) gives VDOT 45 days to review a plan or plat that is submitted to it as part of a locality's review process and [§ 15.2-2260](#) gives VDOT the same time for the review of a preliminary subdivision plat. Note that in both sections, the locality generally has a total of 60 days to respond.

Site plans submitted as part of VDOT's land use permit process do not have a statutory deadline, but should be processed as quickly as possible in order to support economic development in the Commonwealth.

Subdivision plats and subdivision construction plans submitted as part of the SSR/SSAR process for eventual acceptance into the state system also do not have a statutory deadline for review, but should also be processed as quickly as possible.

PROCEDURES

Localities may send subdivision plat and site plan packages to the Area Land Use Engineer or Assistant Resident Engineer—Land Use at the appropriate VDOT office to determine if the designs are adequate to accommodate traffic generated by the proposed development without creating a hazard to the traveling public, to ensure site layout provides for appropriate circulation so as to avoid impacting traffic on adjacent highways, to ensure that the proposed development is coordinated with planned highway improvements, and to ensure that the proposed development meets relevant VDOT requirements and standards.

As localities across the Commonwealth have different procedures and processes, it is important for VDOT's local land use staff to understand how these require adjustments in normal practice in order for VDOT guidance to be incorporated in locality approvals.

All submitted site plans received by VDOT from (or under the direction of) a locality or directly from a developer (if appropriate, depending upon locality process) for review shall be logged appropriately in [LandTrack](#) in order to track and record basic information regarding the proposal. Furthermore, the plans/plats and associated documents (traffic impact analyses, technical appendices, and similar) should be uploaded into [LandTrack](#) to make such information available to the public on VDOT's external [LandTrack](#)

website, except in cases where [Critical Infrastructure Information](#) (CII/SSI) is contained in such documents.

VDOT will check site plans and subdivision plats to see how any on-site and off-site transportation related improvements proffered during the property's rezoning are proposed to be handled. VDOT will also determine if the proposed plans are in an area that is part of a planned VDOT highway project and ensure proper coordination occurs so that the site plan and highway project do not conflict and that the final features constructed under the site plan match the planned highway project.

A critical part of the review of subdivision plats is to assure that the layout and design of new subdivision streets are in compliance with the [Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements](#) (or, if grandfathered, the [Subdivision Street Requirements](#)) and the appropriate [Road Design Manual](#) appendix (Appendices A, A(1), B, B(1), or B(2)).

VDOT will also review site plans to ensure that drainage meets VDOT requirements such as:

- On-site drainage is away from the roadway
- Culverts crossing under entrances are properly sized
- Features are incorporated to prevent ponding of water on the roadway

VDOT will use the standards set out in the Design Guidelines (Appendix A), Complete Streets; Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities, etc. (Appendix A(1)), and Access Management Design Standards for Entrances and Intersections (Appendix F), all of the *Road Design Manual* (supplemented by Appendix B(2), if appropriate), in its review of subdivision plats and site plan entrances. The evaluation will assess the entrances to and within the development in terms of:

- Design geometrics & sight distance
- Corner clearance
- Signalization
- Turn Lanes
- Internal circulation design, e.g. limiting the traffic that will use the entrance
- Additional lanes on the highway
- Additional right-of-way for future road improvements
- Medians and crossovers
- Pedestrians, bicycles, and transit accommodations

VDOT's subdivision plat/site plan analysis should also determine what improvements are needed to preserve the functionality of the highway, accommodate the development's traffic, and protect the highway corridor through the application of the [Access Management Regulations](#), including:

- Location and spacing of entrances, crossovers, and intersections
- Shared entrances with adjacent properties
- Inter-parcel connections
- Limiting entrance movements
- Traffic signal spacing

Site plan review associated with a request for an entrance permit under the Access Management Regulations may require the addition of a traffic study showing the impact

of the entrance on the safety and operation of the fronting highway. The traffic study, depending upon its elements, should be conducted in accordance with the [Traffic Operations and Safety Analysis Manual](#), available at <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/TOSAM.pdf>. Furthermore, any proposed traffic signals must be determined to be both warranted and justified in accordance with IIM-TE-387.1 (which can be found at Traffic Engineering Division's IIM page, http://www.virginiadot.org/business/traffic_engineering_memoranda.asp) and the relevant portions of Appendices A and F of the [Road Design Manual](#).

For plan submissions on or adjacent to highways that have [Arterial Management Plans](#) in place, the site's access should be consistent with the arterial management plan. In cases where a site plan is being reviewed concurrently with the development of an arterial management plan, the land use staff should consult with the Arterial Preservation Program Manager to coordinate recommendations.

If site plans associated with proposed work on VDOT right-of-way and subdivision construction plans for streets intended to be taken over for maintenance by the state contain elements that cannot meet AASHTO design standards, a design exception will need to be processed in accordance with the latest version of [IIM-LD-227](#) before such plans are finalized. If such plans contain elements that cannot meet VDOT design standards, a design waiver will need to be processed in accordance with IIM-LD-227. Entrance spacing exceptions will be processed in accordance with the [Access Management Regulations](#) and Appendix F of the [Road Design Manual](#).

In order to streamline land use plan approvals, District Administrators are encouraged, in consultation with their District Location and Design Engineer, to designate the District Transportation and Land Use Director (TLUD) or, if the TLUD is not a licensed Professional Engineer, an experienced Area Land Use Engineer or Assistant Resident Engineer—Land Use (ALUE/ARE-LU), to review and approve land use design waivers. Copies of waivers approved by the TLUD or ALUE/ARE-LU are required to be submitted to the District L&D Engineer and the State Geometric Design Engineer in the Location and Design Division.

Since Residency Administrators/Resident Engineers (RA/RE) serve as the local VDOT contact with localities and will ultimately be required to maintain any facilities accepted by VDOT, if plans are being reviewed by district land use staff, they shall coordinate with the Administrator/Engineer regarding plan reviews within the RA/RE area of responsibility.

As a locality is responsible for the orderly development of land within their jurisdiction, local government staff should be made aware of site plans and plats reviewed by VDOT, if such plans were not submitted through the locality. Furthermore, VDOT comments on such plans or plats should be provided to the locality.

District and residency land use staff is encouraged to work cooperatively with local governments in the review of site plans and subdivision plats. Such cooperation can

include attending pre-submission meetings, consolidated review meetings, striving to meet local deadlines that may be shorter than state requirements, and copying local officials on correspondence dealing with development within their jurisdiction.

Approved construction plans and any associated waivers or exceptions for permits which involve permanent changes to highway infrastructure shall be saved by the district or residency to the appropriate district folder in [ProjectWise](#). The naming convention for the files shall be *County # Route Number # Development Name – Phase # Land Use Permit Number or County Project Number (if available or applicable)*. For construction plans associated with subdivision development where route numbers are not yet known or reserved, replace “Route Number” with either “SSR” or “SSAR”, depending upon which regulation applies to the development and, optionally, the route number of the road being connected to.

NOTES

- Chapter 527 (TIA Regulations) applied to site plan and subdivision plats through June 30, 2011, that were expected to substantially affect transportation on state-controlled highways.

REFERENCES

- Information on Chapter 527 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly and the Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations is available on VDOT’s external website at http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/info/traffic_impact_analysis_regulations.asp.
- Information on the Access Management Regulations and associated design standards is available on VDOT’s external website at http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/info/access_management_regulations_and_standards.asp
- The Traffic Operations and Safety Analysis Manual, is available on VDOT’s external website at <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/TOSAM.pdf>
- The Road Design Manual and its appendices are available on VDOT’s external website at <http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/business/locdes/rdmanual-index.asp>
- Location and Design Division IIM 227 (Design Exceptions / Waivers) is available on VDOT’s external website at <http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/LocDes/IIM/IIM227.pdf>

- The Drainage Manual is available on VDOT's external website at <http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/business/locdes/hydra-drainage-manual.asp>
 - Other manuals and standards are available on VDOT's external website at <http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/business/manuals-default.asp>
 - Information on Critical Infrastructure Information and Sensitive Security Information can be found on InsideVDOT at <https://insidevdot.cov.virginia.gov/div/OSD/ADM/Document%20Library/Transportation%20Critical%20Infrastructure/CII%20SSI%20Policy%20V6%20Interim%20Revision%20FINAL.pdf>
 - Access to the internal (VDOT-only) version of LandTrack is available at <http://landtrack/?District=S>
 - Access to the external version of LandTrack is available at <http://landtrx.vdot.virginia.gov/>
 - Access to ProjectWise (internal only) is available at <https://projectwise.vdot.virginia.gov/login.aspx>, once permission has been granted by Location & Design Division
 - Chapter 22 of Title 15.2, regarding planning, subdivision of land, and zoning, is available on the General Assembly's Legislative Information System at <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title15.2/chapter22/>
 - Traffic Engineering Division IIM 387.1 (Signal Justification Reports) can be found on Traffic Engineering Division's IIM page, http://www.virginiadot.org/business/traffic_engineering_memoranda.asp
-