



mn DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MARCH, 2021

LOCAL GOVERNMENT GUIDE (LGG)

A guide for local governments or developers submitting plats, site plans, preliminary sketch plans, comprehensive plans, traffic studies, and environmental documents to the Metro District of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

This guide pertains to all development adjacent to MnDOT right-of-way located in Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott or Washington County.



Introduction

This guide has been prepared by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Metro District as an aid to local governments and others involved in the submittal of plats, site plans, preliminary sketch plans, environmental documents, comprehensive plan amendments, and traffic studies. The Local Government Guide (LGG) is intended to provide an understanding of MnDOT's development review process. It also includes a general checklist of recommended items to submit in order to make the development review process more effective and efficient.

MnDOT's objective in the development review process is to protect the safety, operations, and integrity of the existing and planned state transportation system. According to state statute, section 505.03, MnDOT must be presented with any proposed preliminary plat in a city, town, or county, which includes land abutting upon any existing or established trunk highway or proposed highway, whereupon written comments and recommendations will be given.

Review Submittal Options

MnDOT's goal is to complete reviews within 30 calendar days. In order of preference, review materials may be submitted as:

1. Email documents and plans in PDF format to metrodevreviews.dot@state.mn.us. Attachments may not exceed 20 megabytes per email. Documents can be zipped as well. If multiple emails are necessary, number each message.
2. For files over 20 megabytes, upload the PDF file(s) to MnDOT's web transfer client site at: <https://mft.dot.state.mn.us>. Contact MnDOT Planning development review staff at metrodevreviews.dot@state.mn.us for uploading instructions, and send an email listing the file name(s) after the document(s) has/have been uploaded.
3. A flash drive or hard copy can be sent to the address below. Please notify development review staff via the above email if this submittal method is used.

MnDOT
Metro District Planning Section
Development Reviews Coordinator
1500 West County Road B-2
Roseville, MN 55113

Please do not submit files via a cloud service or SharePoint link.

Early Coordination

It is recommended that the property owner/developer/municipality coordinate with MnDOT prior to the formal submittal of plans when: the proposed development directly accesses a state highway, is expected to generate high volumes of traffic, could result in/worsen a safety problem, or could affect drainage onto MnDOT property.

Additionally, discussions to identify future primary/secondary accesses, backage/frontage roads, and various other access management improvements along a state highway corridor can be coordinated ahead of time. These access plans help to: preserve safety and mobility, insure consistency with MnDOT's access management guidelines, and improve the overall efficiency of the review process.

Early coordination can help to identify significant issues ahead of time, and possibly streamline the review process.

Types of Reviews

Plats and Site Plans

MnDOT reviews plats (in compliance with Minnesota State Statute 505.3, subdivision 2 (Plats)) as well as site plans that are adjacent to established/proposed state trunk highways.

Preliminary Sketch Plans

MnDOT encourages the submittal of sketch plans early in the project development process. MnDOT will review the submittal and provide preliminary comments based on the information provided. This can save time and money as issues are identified before significant planning and design work has occurred.

Environmental Documents (EAW, EIS, and AUAR)

MnDOT reviews environmental documents (i.e., Environmental Assessment Worksheets, Environmental Impact Statements, and Alternative Urban Areawide Reviews) through the Environmental Quality Board's (EQB) process.

Traffic Impact Studies:

A Traffic Impact Study (TIS) is a specialized engineering analysis that determines the potential traffic impacts of a proposed development. The TIS identifies capacity deficiencies at affected intersections and recommends potential solutions. A TIS is required by MnDOT if an environmental document is prepared and the estimated peak hour traffic generated by the proposed development exceeds 250 vehicles or the total daily trips exceed 2,500 (Based on ITE Trip Generation Manual). If an environmental document is not being prepared MnDOT will encourage the local governmental unit to require a TIS when similar traffic generation numbers are estimated. MnDOT's TIS guidelines can be found at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/accessmanagement/pdf/manualchapters/chapter5.pdf>.

Comprehensive Plans:

MnDOT reviews city and county Comprehensive Plans and Plan updates that impact state trunk highways and MnDOT property.

Review Process

Following MnDOT review of the plans, official written comments with requirements, recommendations, and permit needs are sent directly to local government agencies. MnDOT's development review needs to be completed before applications for MnDOT permits can be processed.

The following lists the sections within MnDOT that typically review development proposals, along with a general description of the responsibilities that each section has in the review process. Other MnDOT offices (such as State Aid, Rail, Freight, Aeronautics...) may also review the plans depending upon the impact to their office.

Planning

The planning section coordinates MnDOT's development review process. The planning section also reviews the plans and checks for the following:

- Consistency with regional transportation improvement plans and studies

- Consistency with MnDOT’s Access Management Manual (Includes public and private access spacing, right and left turn lane warrants, traffic impact study warrants, access considerations...) <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/accessmanagement/resources.html>
- Safety, mobility, and other transportation related impacts of the proposed development on the state’s transportation system
- Consistency with scheduled or planned MnDOT improvements

Right-of-Way

The Right-of-Way Section reviews the plans to verify the location and existence of MnDOT right-of-way, property, access rights (controls), and easements.

Traffic

The Traffic Section reviews the plans to evaluate the safety and operational impacts of traffic entering and leaving a development. Additionally, the Traffic Section identifies the need for Intersection Control Evaluations (ICE) reports for new public intersections as well as Traffic Impact Studies (TIS).

Area Engineers/Coordinators

The Area Engineers/Coordinators review the plans to ensure that it is consistent with: corridor studies, upcoming MnDOT projects, prior commitments, and earlier coordination discussions with the city, county, developer, and other agencies.

Design

The Design Section reviews the plans to ensure that geometrics applied to the projects, including site distances, clear zones, setbacks, and side slopes to the highway entrances will result in a safe and well-designed transportation system. They also determine whether any needed work on MnDOT right-of-way (e.g. turn lanes, traffic signals, roundabouts) will require a Design Section review of the layout. A layout is a drawn plan of a proposal and is used to present design alternatives and evaluate designs. There are three design levels, determined by the type of project. If a design layout review is required, MnDOT recommends that the design work be completed by a consultant that is experienced working with MnDOT Design and CADD standards.

A layout must be prepared following MnDOT criteria. The following websites identify layout requirements:

- <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/design/geometric/index.html>
- Reference the first link under “Guidance” which is also listed here: <http://dotapp7.dot.state.mn.us/edms/download?docId=636152>

Final plans should not be started until MnDOT’s Design Section approves the layout.

Bicycle/Pedestrian

The Bicycle/Pedestrian Section reviews the plans to ensure consistency with state, regional and local bicycle and pedestrian policy and plans. Additionally, the development plans are checked for consistency with ADA requirements.

Transit

The Transit Section reviews the plans to evaluate impacts on transit service and to ensure coordination with transit operations and plans.

Water Resources

The Water Resources Section reviews the plans to ensure that off-site run-off entering MnDOT's drainage system(s) and/or right-of-way will not increase. They ensure that drainage plans are adequate to protect MnDOT facilities/property from being over-burdened or damaged. The Water Resources Section also inspects plans for temporary and permanent erosion control measures.

Permits

The Permits Section reviews the development plan to identify any needed MnDOT permits. Construction can occur only after the appropriate permit(s) has been obtained. Some of the most common types of permits are:

- Access Permit: required for access to or across state highways or rights-of-way. Minnesota Rules 8810.5200 CHANGES IN USE states that "In the event of a change in land use or major change in the traffic pattern of the existing facility, existing driveways are not automatically perpetuated and new driveway access applications shall be submitted."
- Drainage Permit: required when the drainage flow and path affecting MnDOT right-of-way are changed in any way including increased or decreased flow and volume. This includes grading, filling, adding a structure or the removal of soil or vegetation on MnDOT right-of-way.
- Short Form Permit: required for any work on MnDOT right-of-way.
- Transportation Permit: required when oversized vehicles (over 8 ½ feet wide) or overweight vehicles (varies with seasons and highways) travel on the state highway system.
- Other Permits: Utility, Limited Use, Preliminary, etc. can also be required.

Surveys

The Surveys Section reviews plats for compatibility of common property lines as they relate to MnDOT right-of-way or property.

The comments from each of the Metro District review sections are incorporated into the official written correspondence that MnDOT provides to the local governmental agency.

Review Submittal Checklist

The following is a list of items that may be needed to ensure a thorough, timely, and accurate review of the development proposal.

For the submittals, please provide the following information:

- A location map of the site relative to local roadways and MnDOT right-of-way.
- A written description of the current and proposed use of the property.
- The amount of traffic currently being generated on the site and the traffic expected to be generated with the proposed development.
- Legal descriptions, monuments, and bearings.
- MnDOT right-of-way.
- Dimensions from the centerline of the highway to the MnDOT right-of-way line at one or more locations as needed.
- Highway Access Control (if known).
- Land tie(s) to section corner(s).
- Contours (existing and proposed), drainage boundaries and flow patterns, as well as drainage facilities (existing and proposed).
- Drainage computations (existing and proposed for 10, 50 and 100 year rainfall events), including evidence that the rate of storm water run-off to MnDOT right-of-way will not increase.

- Applicable street construction layout with dimensions and radii.
- Proposed street cross sections or contours and profile grades.
- Time schedule for the proposed work (temporary and permanent construction).
- Proposed parking areas, driveways, and street access.
- Proposed turn lanes, sight distances, and geometrics.
- Number of proposed residential units and/or square footage of commercial or industrial building space.
- Point of contact to send MnDOT response letter including name, address, email, and phone number.

For plats please provide the following additional information:

- Right-of-way on all highways.
- The document number or recorded right-of-way descriptions
- Right-of-way as occupied versus described.
- Note concerning whether the highway title is easement or fee.
- The date of the survey.
- The section, township, and range.
- The right-of-way monument found.
- Utilities.
- The reference post (e.g. Reference Post 128+00.750).
- Any access control; including access openings.
- The point where the description starts – tied to the land line.

Questions?

This Local Government Guide can be found on-line at:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/programmanagement/pdf/localgovguide.pdf>

For questions concerning this guide and MnDOT's development review process, please contact Tod Sherman, Planning Director, at (651) 234-7794 or metrodevreviews.dot@state.mn.us