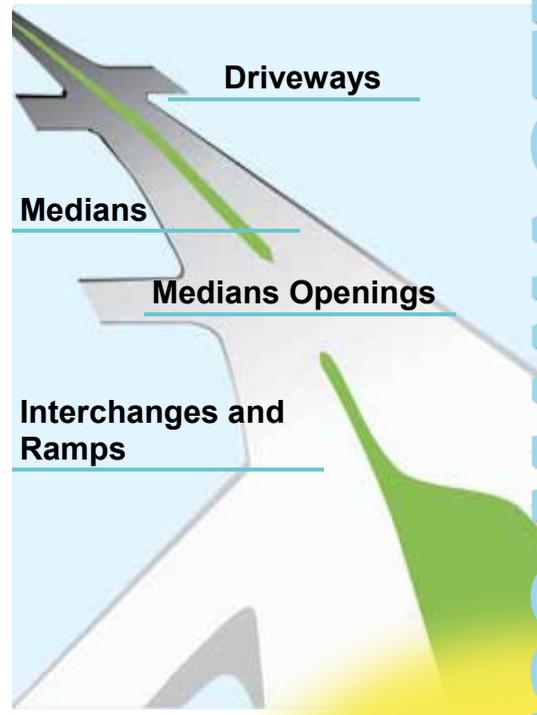




ACCESS MANAGEMENT

"...is the careful planning of the location, design and operation of driveways, median openings, interchanges and street connections."



THE PURPOSE

The purpose of access management is to provide access to land development in a manner that preserves the safety and efficiency of the transportation system.

WHY IS ACCESS MANAGEMENT CRITICAL IN INTERCHANGE AREAS?

FDOT places a special emphasis on access management in the vicinity of interchanges. The main purpose of an interchange is to move large volumes of traffic between the high speed freeway and low speed crossroad. If there are intersections and driveways close to the interchange ramps, the efficiency of the interchange can deteriorate. Congestion near ramps can cause crashes and problems not only on the crossroad but also on the freeway. In order to preserve the capacity and safety of the interchange, the area surrounding the interchange must be free of conflicting movements.



Many restaurants have learned being in the right "vicinity" is more important than direct access.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS?

One way is to attend public meetings held in advance of new access management projects. There you can discuss issues specific to your property or business with FDOT staff. Typically these meetings are announced using fliers, either mailed or hand-delivered, along the roadway. Another method is to contact your District FDOT office to speak to someone individually regarding your concerns or issues.

Each District also has an access management committee responsible for making decisions regarding access management on our state roadways. If you are concerned about an access management decision that affects your property or business, you can appeal to the committee and request an opportunity to present your concerns in person or in writing. **The number to contact for District Two is (800) 207-8236 extension 5630.**



WHAT POSITIVE IMPACTS WILL GOOD ACCESS MANAGEMENT HAVE ON MY BUSINESS?

As traffic flow is made more efficient, the roadway can handle more traffic and congestion levels decrease. This results in more motorists being exposed to your business. Also, as safety of a roadway improves, motorists are more likely to be positive about the surrounding area. Additionally, traffic accidents often result in motorists taking alternate routes to avoid congestion caused by the accident. Some of these diverted motorists could be potential customers.

WILL CUSTOMERS MAKE U-TURNS TO ACCESS BUSINESSES?

The answer to this question is an overwhelming yes. The most recent research on the safety of U-turns reveals that crashes causing injuries are reduced by more than 25% through encouraging right turns followed by U-turns, compared to direct left turns. Surveys of motorists have shown a vast majority have no problem making U-turns to access businesses. In fact, most felt access management improvements make roads safer and approve of the changes.



ARE TRUCKS CONSIDERED?

Yes, trucks are always taken into consideration. Many businesses depend on trucks for deliveries and other functions. We also realize many trucks are not typically able to make certain movements (such as U-turns). We strive to develop a plan that will accommodate truck access to businesses in a manner as convenient as possible. Sometimes this will require that trucks follow a slightly different route to arrive at the property.

Business Owner Opinions: 64% felt no inconvenience to trucks.
Truck Operators: 90% in south FL study felt access management improved safety.

WHAT DO YOUR CUSTOMERS THINK OF ACCESS MANAGEMENT?

A number of surveys have been done to solicit input from drivers regarding access management projects. Motorists were asked to provide their opinions regarding changes to several roadways that had undergone access improvements. The overwhelming majority of motorists stated that **they liked the changes, felt the roadway was safer because of the changes and that the selection of businesses they frequented was not affected by the changes.**

WHAT HAVE STUDIES SHOWN ABOUT BUSINESS IMPACTS OF ACCESS MANAGEMENT?

Business owners report that the actual impacts to their properties were much less than they anticipated.

- In Florida, studies in Central and South Florida show the majority of corridor business operators saw an increase or no change in their customer traffic.
- In Texas and Florida, studies have shown that business expectations of bad impacts were higher than what actually happened when these same business owners were questioned after construction.
- In Iowa, studies across the state showed 80% of the businesses reported sales at least as high as they were before the access management projects were completed.
- In Kansas, fifteen businesses that had claimed inverse condemnation lawsuits due to perceived access problems were studied to see if the impacts of access management had been as bad as the owners had expected. In all the cases except one, the businesses were still in operation or actually upgraded. The only case of failure was a gas station where the roadway changes required customers to go two miles out of their way.

MOBILITY AND ACCESS

Roads serve two primary purposes. One is **mobility** and the other is **access**. Mobility is the efficient movement of people and goods. Access is getting those people and goods to specific properties. A roadway designed to maximize mobility typically does so in part by managing access to adjacent properties. A good example is an interstate highway. While a motorist could expect to travel quite efficiently over a long distance using an interstate highway, the number of access points is restricted to only freeway interchanges every few miles. This type of roadway serves primarily an mobility function. At the other extreme, a local residential street would provide easy and plentiful access to all adjacent properties, but long distance travel on such a roadway would be impossible. This type of roadway serves primarily an access function. Most state roads serve a function somewhere between the interstate highway and the local road described above. **One of the most important responsibilities of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is to ensure the design of each state road properly balances access and mobility. Access Management is used to provide this very important balance.**



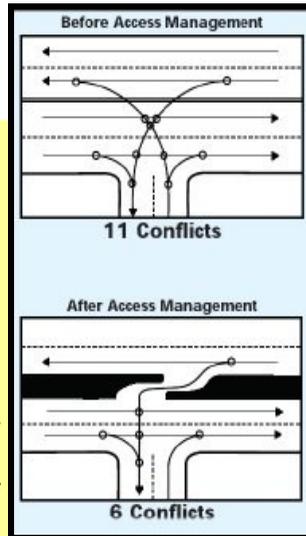
DOES FDOT JUST THINK THIS STUFF UP?

Many business and property owners have asked us this question. The answer is no. The standards developed by FDOT are based on research done around the world for the last 40 years. Much of this research involved studying actual locations, many in Florida, where different access management strategies have been used. The studies evaluated the impacts of different access management treatments on crashes, congestion and even business performance. The standards used by FDOT are thought to **provide the optimal balance between access and mobility**, and consider the characteristics of different types of roadways.

HOW DOES ACCESS MANAGEMENT IMPROVE SAFETY?

Conflict points are locations along a roadway where two vehicles' paths can legally cross. At a four way intersection there are as many as 36 conflict points. Each conflict point is a location where a crash can occur.

A basic principle of access management is to limit the number of conflict points along a roadway by limiting the number of driveways and median openings and restricting certain movements at some median openings. Drivers can be overwhelmed by conflict points in close proximity to one another, increasing the potential for crashes. Good access management practice strives to separate conflict points by providing a reasonable distance between driveways and between median openings.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF ACCESS MANAGEMENT IS NOT IMPLEMENTED?

Businesses can be hurt by congested, high collision roadways near their entrance. When safety and capacity deteriorate, one of the ways to fix the problem is to add lanes. Although a roadway may eventually need to be widened, good access management practices can delay the need to widen the road for several years.



In cases where roadways cannot be widened, good access management will help reduce congestion. Congestion results in safety problems and also discourages motorists from using the road.

DOES ACCESS MANAGEMENT KEEP CUSTOMERS AWAY?

No, access management does not impact the demand for goods and services. Studies have found that "destination" businesses (doctors, specialty retail stores, service-oriented businesses) are not affected by access management modifications. Interviews with both customers and business owners have shown that most people have no problem making a slightly longer trip, including U-turns, to access destination businesses. Although, pass-by businesses (convenience stores, gas stations, fast food restaurants) may be impacted more by access management modifications, studies have shown that even pass-by businesses are not negatively impacted as long as reasonable access is provided. **As traffic flow is made more efficient, the roadway can handle more traffic and congestion levels decrease. This results in more motorists being exposed to your business.**

HOW DID FLORIDA'S GROWTH AFFECT CUSTOMER TRAFFIC?

In Florida's past, the pinnacle of accessibility was the small corner business with driveways on both roads. As you drive down our highways you see the old corner gas stations and strip shopping centers.



These small corner lots are now hard to access due to growing traffic queues and high traffic volumes. Traffic volumes are growing so fast that there is no way to keep up with the demand. Even with wider roads we have seen:

- Longer queues of traffic
- Greater congestion
- Peak traffic hours spreading over much of the day
- More difficulty for customer to turn in and out of businesses (especially turning left out of unsignalized driveways)

WHAT DO YOUR CUSTOMERS WANT?

Increased congestion is causing customers to seek businesses with driveways unblocked by queues of traffic, easy access to neighboring businesses, access to signalized intersections and side streets and safe driving conditions.



A well-designed driveway enhances business

DO ACCESS MANAGEMENT PROJECTS HARM BUSINESSES?

This question is asked quite often. We recognize that most business owners have invested a significant amount of their time and savings to establish and grow their businesses. The last thing FDOT wants to do is to have a negative impact on a business. In fact, FDOT strives to provide the citizens of Florida with a safe and efficient state roadway system. Such a system is critical to the economic prosperity of our state.

In general, studies have found that access management modifications do not negatively impact businesses. Businesses succeed or fail due to many factors. Studies have found that businesses do not fail at a higher rate along roadways that undergo access management modifications than along all roadways in general.

In order to make the best access management decisions possible, FDOT relies upon business and property owners, as well as others in the community, to provide input to the process. Information such as the specific access requirements of each business, internal traffic circulation and parking, truck requirements, plans for expansion and any unusual circumstances are all very valuable to the engineers and planners who develop access management plans.