

Access Study

(Last update: June 2025)

An Access Study evaluates the access points of a proposed development for access management, sight lines, vehicle ingress and egress, and other considerations.

Required by Legislation

The Ontario *Planning Act*.

Who should prepare this study?

An Access Study should be prepared by a qualified Transportation Professional, including Professional Engineers and Registered Professional Planners. The study must be dated and signed by the Professional.

Why do we need this study?

An Access Study is required to:

- Demonstrate that the proposed development conforms to industry best practices for access management
- Confirm that the appropriate design vehicles can properly ingress and egress the access point(s) of a proposed development
- Confirm that driver and pedestrian sight lines at access points are adequate

How should this study be prepared?

An Access Study should at the minimum contain:

Introduction

- Address of the subject property
- General site location of the subject property
- Project Name (if applicable)
- Applicant and owner's contact information
- Author name, title, qualifications, company name and appropriate stamp
- Brief description of the proposed development, site plan, and site location.

Proposal Description and Context

- A description of the proposal, development statistics (such as number of units, site area, etc.), type of development proposed, height, parking areas, access points, location of amenity areas, proposed phasing.
- A description of the existing on-site conditions, as well as surrounding areas, roads, buildings, and parking areas.
- Concept/Site plan for the development including building location, parking, access, amenity areas, grading, natural features and any natural hazards, and proposed streets.

Investigation/Evaluation

Consideration shall be given for the following scope of work:

- Existing conditions, including property lines, driveways, adjacent access points, and lane configurations of adjacent roadways
- Site access opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists (e.g., convenient, and safe access to transit services)
- Vicinity and spacing of the proposed access points in relation to nearby accesses, including possible interference with other adjacent or opposing driveways
- Impacts of proposed accesses on the lot frontage of adjacent properties
- Queuing analysis to determine impact of the queues at the proposed access on the nearby accesses
- Identification of vehicle types expected to use the proposed accesses (e.g., passenger vehicles, fire trucks, waste collection trucks).
- Evaluation of vehicle maneuvers for ingress and egress at access points. Please refer to the evaluation methodology and information on vehicle types and dimensions outlined in the On-Site Circulation Study Terms of Reference.
- Conformance of access width and curb radii to the Richmond Hill Standards and Specifications Manual. A minimum curb radius of 9.0m is preferred at accesses where truck ingress/egress is expected.
- Identification of potential sight line constraints due to road grades, curvature, landscape, etc.
- Methodology of driver sight line assessment (e.g., TAC Geometric Design Guidelines for Canadian Roads, design speed as per the posted speed limit and the Richmond Hill Standards and Specification manual)
- Potential conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists
- Any requirements to restrict certain turning movements to address sight line restrictions or pedestrian/cyclist safety
- Opportunity to prohibit or restrict direct access to arterial roads where access to collector or local roads is available
- Collision history and safety analysis

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- Coordination with adjacent landowners with respect to access points (e.g., shared access, adequate spacing, etc.)

- Mitigation measures to address shortfalls, such as turning movement restrictions, traffic calming, etc.

Recommendations

- Summary and conclusions of the study and how the access points of the proposed development can be supported from a transportation perspective, as well as any special considerations or conditions that should be imposed
- Any recommendations, or conditions that should form part of a decision on the matter

Drawings and Supporting Information

- Concept maps and/or aerial imagery showing study area
- Access management plans or diagrams
- Vehicle maneuvering diagrams
- Sight line diagrams
- Field Measurements

What else should we know?

A Pre-Submission Meeting with City Planning staff is encouraged prior to submitting a development application. The scope of the Study should be discussed with City staff and/or other agencies as part of the pre-submission process which would generally take place prior to the submission of a *Planning Act* application.

Additional Terms

The Access Study may be consolidated as a component of a report containing the Transportation Mobility Plan and/or On-Site Circulation Study. In addition, vehicle maneuvering diagrams that are prepared for the Access Study may be consolidated with the diagrams prepared for the On-Site Circulation Study.

Other terms are to be identified by the City through the pre-submission process.

Study Submission Instructions

To be submitted in accordance with the [City's requirements for Development Planning Applications](#).

What other resources are there?

Richmond Hill [Development Application Resources](#)

Richmond Hill [Standards and Specifications Manual – Division C \(Transportation and Roadworks\)](#)

Richmond Hill [Standards and Specifications Manual – Division J \(Waste Management Design and Collection Standards for Development\)](#)

York Region [Construction Design Guidelines and Standards](#), including the [Access Guidelines for Regional Roads](#)

Transportation Association Canada's (TAC) Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads updated April 2020.

Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) – [Hire an RPP](#)

Professional Engineers of Ontario – [Why employ a professional engineer?](#)

About The Following Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference were developed as a joint effort with participation by representatives from all York Region municipalities and the Region. The Terms of Reference are in widespread use across the Region, with local requirements added as prescribed by each municipality.

If determined that this study is applicable, the study terms may vary depending on the nature of the proposal. Discussion and confirmation as to whether all criteria outlined within these Terms of Reference are appropriate for your development project, will also take place with you and in consultation with any relevant external agencies.

In addition to these Terms of Reference, municipal departments and/or external agencies may require analysis of specific technical components that should be addressed in the study. Confirmation of additional technical requirements, and a checklist identifying detailed standards to be met, in turn may be provided.

Notes:

If the proposed development is revised, the study/report shall reflect the revisions by an updated report or letter from the author indicating the changes and whether or not the recommendations and conclusions are the same. (Note: this is subject to the extent of the revisions).

A peer review may be required. The cost of the peer review will be borne by the applicant.

If the submitted study is incomplete, is authored by an unqualified individual or does not contain adequate analysis, the applications will be considered incomplete and returned to the applicant.