

WAC 468-52-040 Access control classification system and standards. This section provides an access control classification system consisting of five classes. The functional characteristics and the access control design standards for each class are described. The classes are arranged from the most restrictive, class one, to the least restrictive, class five. This access control classification system does not include highways or portions thereof that have been established as limited access highways in compliance with chapter 47.52 RCW. For state highways that are planned for the establishment of limited access control in accordance with the *Master Plan for Limited Access Highways*, an access control classification will be assigned to each highway segment to remain in effect until such time that the facility is established as a limited access facility.

On all access classes, property access shall be located and designed to minimize interference with transit facilities and/or high occupancy vehicle (HOV) facilities on state highways where such facilities exist or where such facilities are proposed in a state, regional, metropolitan, or local transportation plan. In such cases, if reasonable access is available from the general street system, primary property access shall be provided from the general street system rather than from the state highway.

(1) Class one.

(a) Functional characteristics:

These highways have the capacity for safe and efficient high speed and/or high volume traffic movements, providing for interstate, interregional, and intercity travel needs and some intracity travel needs. Service to abutting land is subordinate to providing service to major traffic movements. Highways in this class are typically distinguished by a highly controlled, limited number of public and private connections, restrictive medians with limited median openings on multilane facilities, and infrequent traffic signals.

(b) Access control design standards:

(i) It is the intent that the design of class one highways be generally capable of achieving a posted speed limit of fifty to sixty-five mph. Spacing of intersecting streets, roads, and highways shall be planned with a minimum spacing of one mile. One-half mile spacing may be permitted, but only when no reasonable alternative access exists.

(ii) Private direct access to the state highway shall not be permitted except when the property has no other reasonable access to the general street system. The following standards will be applied when direct access must be provided:

(A) The access connection shall continue until such time that other reasonable access to a highway with a less restrictive access control classification or access to the general street system becomes available and is permitted.

(B) The minimum distance to another public or private access connection shall be one thousand three hundred twenty feet. Nonconforming connection permits may be issued to provide access to parcels whose highway frontage, topography, or location would otherwise preclude issuance of a conforming connection permit; however, variance permits are not allowed. No more than one connection shall be provided to an individual parcel or to contiguous parcels under the same ownership.

(C) All private direct access shall be for right turns only on multilane facilities, unless special conditions warrant and are documented by a traffic analysis in the connection permit application,

signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW.

(D) No additional access connections to the state highway shall be provided for newly created parcels resulting from property divisions. All access for such parcels shall be provided by internal road networks. Access to the state highway will be at existing permitted connection locations or at revised connection locations, as conditions warrant.

(iii) A restrictive median shall be provided on multilane facilities to separate opposing traffic movements and to prevent unauthorized turning movements.

(2) Class two.

(a) Functional characteristics:

These highways have the capacity for medium to high speeds and medium to high volume traffic movements over medium and long distances in a safe and efficient manner, providing for interregional, intercity, and intracity travel needs. Direct access service to abutting land is subordinate to providing service to traffic movement. Highways in this class are typically distinguished by existing or planned restrictive medians, where multilane facilities are warranted, and minimum distances between public and private connections.

(b) Access control design standards:

(i) It is the intent that the design of class two highways be generally capable of achieving a posted speed limit of thirty-five to fifty mph in urbanized areas and forty-five to fifty-five mph in rural areas. Spacing of intersecting streets, roads, and highways shall be planned with a minimum spacing of one-half mile. Less than one-half mile intersection spacing may be permitted, but only when no reasonable alternative access exists. In urban areas and developing areas where higher volumes are present or growth that will require signalization is expected in the foreseeable future, it is imperative that the location of any public access be planned carefully to ensure adequate signal progression. Addition of all new connections, public or private, that may require signalization will require an engineering analysis signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW.

(ii) Private direct access to the state highway system shall be permitted only when the property has no other reasonable access to the general street system or if access to the general street system would cause traffic operational conditions or safety concerns unacceptable to the local governmental entity. When direct access must be provided, the following conditions shall apply:

(A) The access connection shall continue until such time that other reasonable access to a highway with a less restrictive access control classification or acceptable access to the general street system becomes available and is permitted.

(B) The minimum distance to another public or private access connection shall be six hundred sixty feet. Nonconforming connection permits may be issued to provide access to parcels whose highway frontage, topography, or location would otherwise preclude issuance of a conforming connection permit. No more than one connection shall be provided to an individual parcel or to contiguous parcels under the same ownership unless the highway frontage exceeds one thousand three hundred twenty feet and it can be shown that the additional access would not adversely affect the desired function of the state highway in accordance with the assigned access classification, and would not adversely affect the safety or operation of the state highway.

(C) Variance permits may be allowed if conditions warrant and are demonstrated to the satisfaction of the department by a traffic analysis, signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, who is registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW, which is included with the connection permit application.

(D) All private direct access shall be for right turns only on multilane facilities, unless special conditions warrant and are demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the department, by a traffic analysis, signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, who is registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW, included with the connection permit application and only if left turn channelization is provided.

(E) No additional access connections to the state highway shall be provided for newly created parcels resulting from property divisions. All access for such parcels shall be provided by internal road networks. Access to the state highway will be at existing permitted connection locations or at revised connection locations, as conditions warrant.

(iii) On multilane facilities a restrictive median shall be provided to separate opposing traffic movements and to prevent unauthorized turning movements; however, a nonrestrictive median or a two way left turn lane may be used when special conditions exist and mainline volumes are below 20,000 ADT.

(3) Class three.

(a) Functional characteristics:

These highways have the capacity for moderate travel speeds and moderate traffic volumes for medium and short travel distances providing for intercity, intracity, and intercommunity travel needs. There is a reasonable balance between direct access and mobility needs for highways in this class. This class is to be used primarily where the existing level of development of the adjoining land is less intensive than maximum buildout and where the probability of significant land use change and increased traffic demand is high. Highways in this class are typically distinguished by planned restrictive medians, where multilane facilities are warranted, and minimum distances between public and private connections. Two-way left-turn-lanes may be utilized where special conditions warrant and mainline traffic volumes are below 25,000 ADT. Development of properties with internal road networks and joint access connections are encouraged.

(b) Access control design standards:

(i) It is the intent that the design of class three highways be generally capable of achieving a posted speed limit of thirty to forty mph in urbanized areas and forty-five to fifty-five mph in rural areas. In rural areas, spacing of intersecting streets, roads, and highways shall be planned with a minimum spacing of one-half mile. Less than one-half mile intersection spacing may be permitted, but only when no reasonable alternative access exists. In urban areas and developing areas where higher volumes are present or growth that will require signalization is expected in the foreseeable future, it is imperative that the location of any public access be planned carefully to ensure adequate signal progression. Where feasible, major intersecting roadways that may ultimately require signalization shall be planned with a minimum of one-half mile spacing. Addition of all new connections, public or private, that may require signalization will require an engineering analysis signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW.

(ii) Private direct access:

(A) No more than one access shall be provided to an individual parcel or to contiguous parcels under the same ownership unless it can be shown that additional access points would not adversely affect the desired function of the state highway in accordance with the assigned access classification, and would not adversely affect the safety or operation, of the state highway.

(B) The minimum distance to another public or private access connection shall be three hundred thirty feet. Nonconforming connection permits may be issued to provide access to parcels whose highway frontage, topography, or location would otherwise preclude issuance of a conforming connection permit.

(C) Variance permits may be allowed if conditions warrant and are demonstrated to the satisfaction of the department by a traffic analysis, signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, who is registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW, which is included with the connection permit application.

(4) Class four.

(a) Functional characteristics:

These highways have the capacity for moderate travel speeds and moderate traffic volumes for medium and short travel distances providing for intercity, intracity, and intercommunity travel needs. There is a reasonable balance between direct access and mobility needs for highways in this class. This class is to be used primarily where the existing level of development of the adjoining land is more intensive and where the probability of major land use changes is less probable than on class three highway segments. Highways in this class are typically distinguished by existing or planned nonrestrictive medians. Restrictive medians may be used as operational conditions warrant to mitigate turning, weaving, and crossing conflicts. Minimum connection spacing standards should be applied if adjoining properties are redeveloped.

(b) Access control design standards:

(i) It is the intent that the design of class four highways be generally capable of achieving a posted speed limit of thirty to thirty-five mph in urbanized areas and thirty-five to forty-five mph in rural areas. In rural areas, spacing of intersecting streets, roads, and highways shall be planned with a minimum spacing of one-half mile. Less than one-half mile intersection spacing may be permitted, but only when no reasonable alternative access exists. In urban areas and developing areas where higher volumes are present or growth that will require signalization is expected in the foreseeable future, it is imperative that the location of any public access be planned carefully to ensure adequate signal progression. Where feasible, major intersecting roadways that may ultimately require signalization shall be planned with a minimum of one-half mile spacing. Addition of all new connections, public or private, that may require signalization will require an engineering analysis signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW.

(ii) Private direct access:

(A) No more than one access shall be provided to an individual parcel or to contiguous parcels under the same ownership unless it can be shown that additional access points would not adversely affect the desired function of the state highway in accordance with the assigned access classification, and would not adversely affect the safety or operation of the state highway.

(B) The minimum distance to another public or private access connection shall be two hundred fifty feet. Nonconforming connection per-

mits may be issued to provide access to parcels whose highway frontage, topography, or location would otherwise preclude issuance of a conforming connection permit.

(C) Variance permits may be allowed if conditions warrant and are demonstrated to the satisfaction of the department by a traffic analysis, signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, who is registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW, which is included with the connection permit application.

(5) Class five.

(a) Functional characteristics:

These highways have the capacity for moderate travel speeds and moderate traffic volumes for primarily short travel distances providing for intracity and intracommunity trips primarily for access to state highways of higher classification. Access needs may generally be higher than the need for through traffic mobility without compromising the public health, welfare, or safety. These highways will generally have nonrestrictive medians.

(b) Access control design standards:

(i) It is the intent that the design of class five highways be capable of achieving a posted speed limit of twenty-five to thirty-five mph. In rural areas, spacing of intersecting streets, roads, and highways shall be planned with a minimum spacing of one-quarter mile. Less than one-quarter mile spacing may be permitted where no reasonable alternative exists. In urban areas and developing areas where higher volumes are present or growth that will require signalization is expected in the foreseeable future, it is imperative that the location of any public access be planned carefully to ensure adequate signal progression. Where feasible, major intersecting roadways that may ultimately require signalization shall be planned with a minimum of one-quarter mile spacing. Addition of all new connections, public or private, that may require signalization will require an engineering analysis signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW.

(ii) Private direct access:

(A) No more than one access shall be provided to an individual parcel or to contiguous parcels under the same ownership unless it can be shown that additional access points would not adversely affect the desired function of the state highway in accordance with the assigned access classification, and would not adversely affect the safety or operation of the state highway.

(B) The minimum distance to another public or private access connection shall be one hundred twenty-five feet. Nonconforming connection permits may be issued to provide access to parcels whose highway frontage, topography, or location would otherwise preclude issuance of a conforming connection permit.

(C) Variance permits may be allowed if conditions warrant and are demonstrated to the satisfaction of the department by a traffic analysis, signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer, who is registered in accordance with chapter 18.43 RCW, which is included with the connection permit application.

(6) Corner clearance. Corner clearances for connections shall meet or exceed the minimum connection spacing requirements of the applicable access class where the highway segment has been assigned a classification. A single connection may be placed closer to the intersection, in compliance with the permit application process specified in chapter 468-51 WAC, and in accordance with the following criteria:

(a) If, due to property size, corner clearance standards of this chapter cannot be met, and where joint access meeting or exceeding the minimum corner clearance standards cannot be obtained, or is determined by the department to be not feasible because of conflicting land use or conflicting traffic volumes or operational characteristics, then the following minimum corner clearance criteria may be used:

CORNER CLEARANCE AT INTERSECTIONS		
With Restrictive Median		
Position	Access Allowed	Minimum (feet)
Approaching intersection	Right In/Right Out	115
Approaching intersection	Right In Only	75
Departing intersection	Right In/Right Out	230*
Departing intersection	Right Out Only	100
Without Restrictive Median		
Position	Access Allowed	Minimum (feet)
Approaching intersection	Full Access	230*
Approaching intersection	Right In Only	100
Departing intersection	Full Access	230*
Departing intersection	Right Out Only	100

* For Access Class 5 and for speeds less than thirty-five mph, one hundred twenty-five feet may be used.

(b) In cases where connections are permitted under the above criteria, the permit issued in compliance with chapter 468-51 WAC shall contain the following additional conditions:

(i) There shall be no more than one connection per property frontage on the state highway.

(ii) When joint or alternate access meeting or exceeding the minimum corner clearance standards becomes available, the permit holder shall close the permitted connection, unless the permit holder shows to the department's satisfaction that such closure is not feasible.

(iii) Variance permits are not allowed.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 47.50 RCW. WSR 99-06-035 (Order 188), § 468-52-040, filed 2/25/99, effective 3/28/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 47.01.101 and chapter 47.50 RCW. WSR 93-03-033 (Order 135), § 468-52-040, filed 1/13/93, effective 2/13/93.]