



BDOT Design Policy and Standards FOR SIDEWALKS, DRIVEWAYS, AND STREETSIDE LANDSCAPING



Introduction

The City of Birmingham Department of Transportation (BDOT) has adopted the following design standards for new developments. This is meant to be used as a guide to inform developers of the policies of BDOT and provide pertinent information for engineers and designers so. The following information is not a comprehensive list of requirements for design by the City of Birmingham and all other regulations. Additionally, this document will continue to be updated over time. Prior to plan development, it is recommended to read this document and speak to a BDOT representative to determine what will be required as well as allowed within the City of Birmingham.

Driveways

When a property undergoes substantial improvement or proposed changes to access are made, a Sidewalk & Driveway Permit must be obtained through BDOT. This section explains the policies for the construction and development of driveways off City of Birmingham maintained streets.

Existing Driveways

If a property is being developed or substantially improved, vehicular access is subject to change pending review by the City Traffic Engineer. In instances where access may be reasonably obtained through the alleyway, existing driveway entrances off the city-maintained street must be closed. The alley should become the vehicular access point for the property. This limits conflict points for motorists, pedestrians, and bicycles and promotes walkability and a seamless street face in an urban setting. Figures 1A and 1B are a hypothetical example of how an existing driveway would be required to be closed. Access to the property would be maintained off the alleyway, existing curb-cut and driveway onto the city street would be closed, and street trees would be added.



Figure 1A: Parking Lot Existing Conditions



Figure 1B: Parking Lot Proposed (Hypothetical redevelopment scenario)

New Construction

New construction of driveways includes any vehicular entrance that requires crossing City of Birmingham right-of-way. This includes but is not limited to entrances to parking decks/garages, parking lots, and drive-through lanes. In addition to review and approval by the City Traffic Engineer, a separate review and approval must be made by the City Engineer for aspects like constructability, durability, materials, and stormwater concerns. Please note that there is not a formal appeal process for denied driveway access.

Requirements

In instances where a new driveway may be necessary, the following minimum conditions are to be met regarding placement; however, this is subject to review by the City Traffic Engineer and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis:

- Developers are encouraged to limit the number of driveways as much as possible.
- Residential uses must be at minimum 40' from an intersection.
- Non-residential uses must be at minimum 70' from an intersection.
- A Sidewalk & Driveway Permit must be obtained and approved before any work is to begin.
- Driveway width may be up to 18' for two-way traffic.

Reference:

Title 4. Chapter 5. Article G. Sec. 4-5-91. – Permit-Required.

Title 0. Chapter 2. Sec. 10-2-1. – Same-Powers and duties Generally.

Sidewalks

If a property is being developed or substantially improved, sidewalks must be installed facing all City of Birmingham maintained streets. This policy will cover the entire city regardless of existing sidewalk infrastructure adjacent to the property being developed. Figures 2A and 2B below demonstrate an example of a proposed development in a suburban environment within the City of Birmingham where sidewalks and street trees would be required.

New Sidewalks

Sidewalk Design Criteria

- Subject to ADA requirements.
 - o Must have ADA compliant curb ramps at all intersections.
- Maximum 2% cross slope.
- 5' minimum width (may vary within certain City Districts and discretion given to City Traffic Engineer).
- Minimum distance between back of curb and sidewalk is 3 feet.
- Maximum distance between back of curb and sidewalk is 8 feet.
- If along a new construction street, sidewalks must be constructed along both sides of all local streets at the same times as the streets, curbs and gutters are installed.



Figure 2A: Existing Conditions

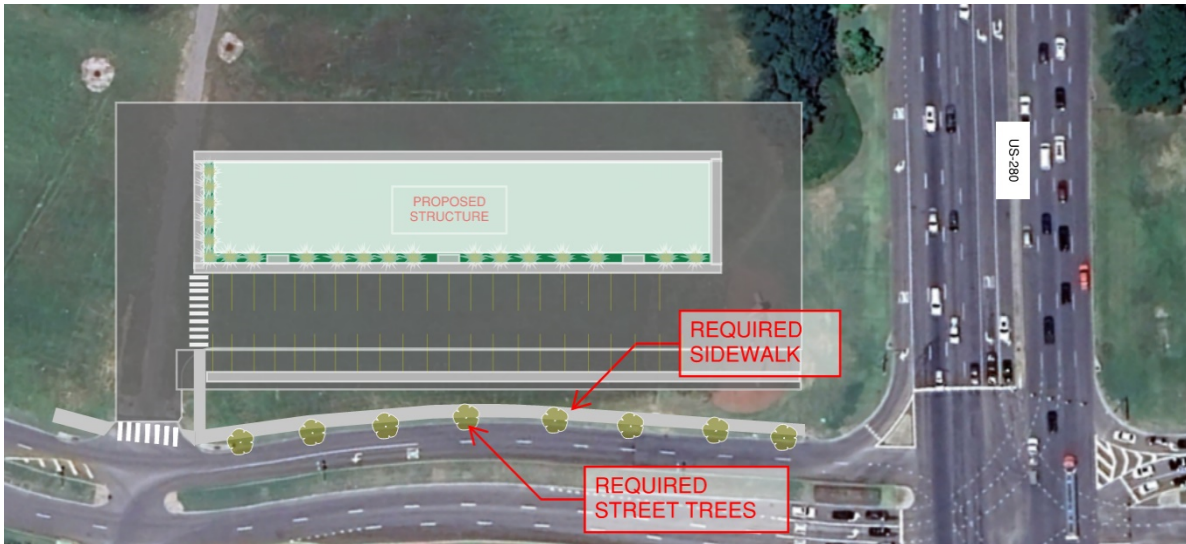


Figure 2B: Hypothetical Proposed Development with Required Sidewalk and Street Trees

Landscaping

The City of Birmingham Zoning Ordinance “Chapter 6: Landscape, Buffering, and Screening” outlines in depth what is required for landscaping of a property. The following section will give only the information pertaining to BDOT approval. This is not a comprehensive list of all landscaping requirements for this property. Figures 1B and 2B in the previous sections show an example of required street trees being added to the right-of-way.

Requirements

- A minimum of 1 street tree along public streets shall be planted for each 40 feet of perimeter, or portion thereof.
- In Mixed-Use High or Mixed-Use Downtown districts, a minimum of 1 street tree per 20 feet of street frontage is required.
- A list of approved trees can be found in the Zoning Ordinance
- Trees and other landscaping required in the perimeter landscape strip shall be maintained to assure unobstructed sight lines per the City Traffic Engineer.