

AN ACCESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE US 19 HIGHWAY CORRIDOR

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The recommendations contained herein represent the recommendations of the Center for Urban Transportation Research and are not necessarily the policies of the granting agencies

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INTRODUCTION

US Highway 19 is a major north-south highway of statewide importance that runs along the west coast of Florida. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has designated all of US 19 as part of the Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS)-the network of roadways essential to the state's economy, hurricane preparedness, and overall transportation mobility. With this designation, the Florida Department of Transportation has placed additional controls to accommodate both high-speed and high-volume traffic while providing access to abutting land.

Land use along the corridor ranges from strip commercial along segments in Pinellas and Pasco Counties to large expanses of agricultural and undeveloped land in central and northern Florida. Commercial development within the urban counties has largely occurred without adequate access management, and has resulted in numerous curb cuts, entry signs, and median openings that have adversely affected the safety, efficiency, and character of this important highway.



Figure 1: A farm along the US 19 corridor in Levy County.

US 19 also serves as the primary artery for commercial activity in some smaller cities and rural counties in west central Florida. The corridor remains largely rural in Levy County although development pressures are occurring, particularly along the 10-mile segment of US 19 that runs within and between the Cities of Chiefland and Fanning Springs. It is the desire of these communities to establish a proactive and mutually acceptable roadway access management plan for this segment of the corridor. The purpose of the effort is to support the development potential of the corridor, while avoiding a proliferation of curb cuts that would adversely impact the corridor and the character of the area.

The Center for Urban Transportation (CUTR), under a grant from Levy County and the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), and matching funds from the FDOT was retained to assist Levy County in developing a conceptual access management plan and intergovernmental agreement for the section of US 19 between Chiefland and Fanning Springs. This effort has included a review of current access management practices through interviews with local planning and engineering officials and a review of local comprehensive plans and land development regulations. Presentations and workshops were also conducted with area policy makers and staff to raise awareness of the importance of access management, review potential access management strategies for the corridor, and increase intergovernmental coordination among the agencies with an interest in the corridor. This report summarizes key findings of this effort.

BACKGROUND

US 19 is a 4-lane divided highway running the entire length of Levy County. The section under study by CUTR begins in the City of Chiefland in the south, crosses through unincorporated Levy County and ends in Fanning Springs to the north. The corridor not only provides access to abutting land uses in the area, but serves as a connection for thousands of motorists traveling between northern and southern Florida. In northern Levy County, the roadway is also a heavily traveled route for tourists visiting the region's recreational areas and natural springs.

In recent years, this area has seen an increase in the number of both residential and commercial developments abutting the corridor, including the construction of a major discount retail store in Chiefland that attracts traffic from surrounding counties.

A difficult problem on the corridor is the presence of antiquated plats containing numerous deep lots with only 50 feet of frontage. The combination of poorly designed plats and development potential makes the corridor ripe for future access problems if corridor access management policies are not adopted and implemented. In addition, discussions are underway as to the potential for Chiefland to enter an into agreement with Fanning Springs about extending utility service along the US 19 corridor. Should that occur, it would further reinforce development pressures on the corridor.

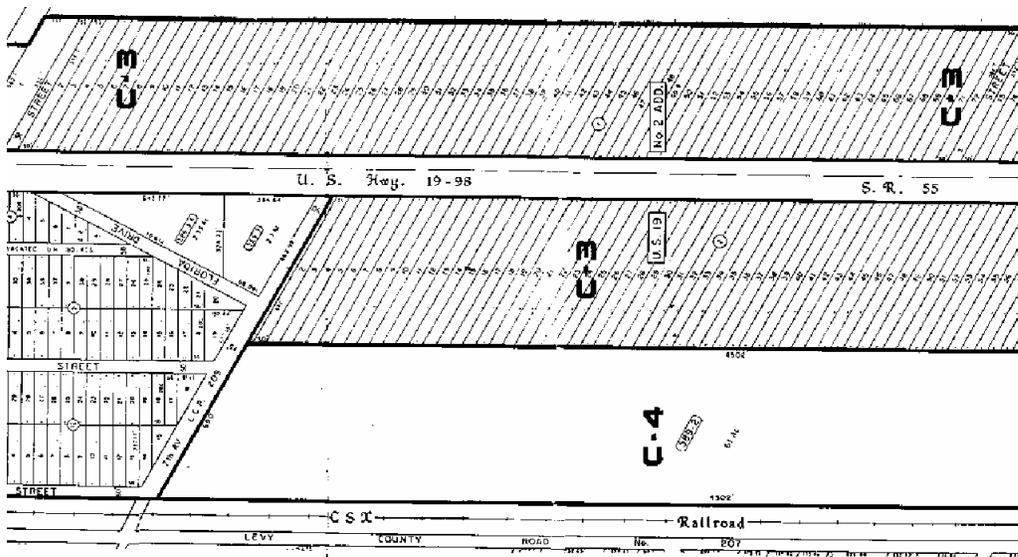


Figure 2: Narrow platted lots and commercial strip zoning will lead to serious access problems on US 19, without remedial actions.

STATEWIDE PLANS AND POLICIES AFFECTING US 19

Because the corridor is vital to the region's mobility and economy, many statewide plans and policies are aimed at improving the corridor's efficiency. As part of the FIHS, the state has applied higher access management standards to the roadway. Another plan that affects the US 19 corridor is the *US Highway 19 Corridor Action Plan* that was prepared in 1997. Each of these plans and policies is described below. Also included is a listing of the programmed improvements on US 19 between Chiefland and Fanning Springs and other improvements in the region that may impact this part of the US 19 corridor.

Access Management Requirements for US 19

The FDOT has a 7-tier classification system established in Chapter 14-97, Administrative Rules of the Department of Transportation, State Highway System Access Management Classification System and Standards (Rule 14-97) that is assigned to state highways. The classifications establish the access management standards for a segment of the state highway system relative to spacing standards for driveways, median openings, and signals.

US 19 is designated as an Access Class 3 between the Cities of Chiefland and Fanning Springs in Levy County. Driveway spacing for Class 3 roadways is 660 feet in areas with posted speeds greater than 45 mph, and 440 feet in areas with posted speeds less than or equal to 45 mph.

Access Class 1 is reserved for limited access freeways, whereas Access Class 7 is assigned to lower priority state highways in areas that are already highly urbanized. The standards for each classification are provided in Table 1.

All developments accessing the State Highway System must obtain a permit in accordance with Rule 14-96, Administrative Rules of the Department of Transportation, (Rule 14-96) which governs access permitting. The FDOT may stipulate conditions or additional requirements that must be met by the applicant/property owner before an access permit is issued.

US 19 is part of the FIHS – the system of limited access (freeways) and controlled access (at-grade arterials) facilities that allow for high-speed and high-volume traffic movement within the state. Because of their importance to regional mobility, a higher access classification of 2 or 3 is assigned to FIHS highways, such as US 19, that are not limited access freeways. This classification assigns more restrictive access spacing requirements to preserve the safety and efficiency of highways of statewide importance (Table 1).

Table 1: FDOT Access Classification System & Standards

Access Class	Medians*	Connection Spacing (feet)		Median Opening Spacing		Signal Spacing
		>45 mph**	≤45 mph**	Directional	Full	
2 (FIHS)	Restrictive w/ Service Roads	1320	660	1320	2640	2640
3 (FIHS)	Restrictive	660	440	1320	2640	2640
4	Non-Restrictive	660	440			2640
5	Restrictive	440	245	660	2640/1320	2640/1320
6	Non-Restrictive	440	245			1320
7	Both Median Types	125		330	660	1320

*: A "Restrictive" median physically prevents vehicle crossing. A "Non-Restrictive" median allows turns across any point.

** : Posted speed limit

Currently, the segment of US 19 between the Cities of Chiefland and Fanning Springs in Levy County is designated as an Access Class 3. However, several segments of US 19 within the Cities of Chiefland and Fanning Springs were designated as Class 5 or 6 facilities, due to existing development and subdivision patterns.

Given the need for careful management of land development and access on FIHS highways, state and local coordination is essential.

The FIHS program calls for roadway segments assigned a lower access classification to eventually be upgraded to a Class 2 or 3. Serious effort must be made to achieve the highest possible access classification along the entire corridor to preserve and enhance its viability as a major trade and tourist route. Although it is necessary to upgrade the access classification of those sections of US 19 in Chiefland and Fanning Springs, full and complete compliance with the standards of a Class 2 or 3 facility may not be possible. The FDOT is desirous of restricting access along US 19 in each city, but recognizes limitations to full implementation. The basic objective in already developed areas is to improve access to the maximum extent feasible and avoid creating additional access problems in the future.



Figure 4: Map of the FIHS. This map illustrates the proposed extension of the Suncoast Parkway and north-south highways of statewide importance, such as US 19 and US 27, which are not limited access freeways.

Given the need for careful management of land development and access on FIHS highways, state and local coordination is essential. The FIHS Plan emphasizes the need for FDOT to coordinate access management decisions with local governments and calls for formal agreements between FDOT and local governments that support the application of state access management standards to development in FIHS corridors.

US Highway 19 Corridor Action Plan (CAP)

In 1997, FDOT District Two prepared the *US Highway 19 (State Road 25) Corridor Action Plan (CAP)* for US 19 from Citrus County to the Florida-Georgia state line. The plan grew out of a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study covering the same study area that was started in 1988, but never completed. The plan objective was to identify any needed improvements and environmental concerns along the study corridor.

Although the CAP recommends several capacity improvement projects for US 19, no new projects were identified for the segment of US 19 between Chiefland and Fanning Springs. Instead, traffic projections noted that expected traffic volumes on that segment could not justify any major capacity improvements within the 20-year time frame of the study. The CAP does recommend that access management strategies be implemented in an effort to maximize the efficiency of the existing roadway.

Planned or Programmed Improvements

One project is currently programmed in the FDOT Fiscal Year 2000/2001-2004/2005 Adopted Work Program between Chiefland and Fanning Springs. This is the resurfacing of US 19 from the Chiefland High School to County Road 55A. Although no additional capacity will be added for through traffic movements, operational improvements will be made including several new left-turn lanes, several new right-turn lanes and a widened shoulder. Also, the median opening at NW 174th Street will be realigned to match the existing roadway opening. Construction is currently scheduled to start in March 2001.

Two other transportation projects currently under development may affect the US 19 corridor in the long-term. The first is the widening of US 27A, which connects Levy County to Interstate 75 in Marion County. US 27A will be widened from two lanes to four lanes between Chiefland and Williston. Construction has begun on several sections of the roadway and will begin between Chiefland and County Road 339A in December 2000. Traffic volumes for US 19 in the study area are projected to be 14,800 vehicles per day in the year 2005 and 16,400 in 2010 based on this project and on other regional changes such as the development of a WalMart store in Chiefland. This is an increase of approximately 2.4 percent per year over the next 10 years, a total of 24 percent.



Figure 5: Suncoast Parkway Corridor, including proposed extension into Citrus County.

Another regional project that may affect the US 19 corridor is the extension of the Suncoast Parkway, known as Suncoast Parkway II. The Suncoast Parkway II would start at the currently planned terminus of Suncoast Parkway I at US 98 in Hernando County and end at Red Level on US 19 in Citrus County. The extension of the Suncoast Parkway would substantially reduce the travel time between northern Florida and the Tampa Bay metropolitan area. The Suncoast Parkway extension may impact US 19 in

Levy County by bringing additional trips into the area. A PD&E study assessing the feasibility of the project is expected to be completed in 2003.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PRACTICE

The Cities of Fanning Springs and Chiefland, along with Levy County, have individual plans and policies that govern land development and access controls along the US 19 corridor. Although each of the communities have some access management policies relative to US 19, their respective land development regulations currently do not contain adequate measures to assure effective access management on the corridor. Table 2 summarizes the current practices as they relate to access management in each community. A detailed description follows.

Table 2: Current Access Management Practices

Technique	Levy County	City of Fanning Springs	City of Chiefland
Joint Access	YES	NO	NO
Driveway Design	PARTLY	--	PARTLY
Corridor Overlay	NO	NO	NO
PUD Zoning	YES	PARTLY	YES
Continuation of Streets	YES	YES	YES
Minor Subdivision Regulations	NO	YES	NO
Reverse Frontage	YES	YES	YES
Access Classification (State)	PARTLY*	YES	PARTLY*
Access Classification (Local)	PARTLY*	NO	PARTLY*
Driveway Spacing Standards	PARTLY*	NO	YES
Limits on Driveways	NO	YES	NO
Outparcel Regulations	NO	NO	NO
Flag Lot Standards	NO	NO	NO
Corner Clearance	NO	NO	NO
Minimum Lot Frontage**	YES	YES	PARTLY
Lot Width to Depth	YES	NO	NO
Retrofit Requirements	NO	NO	NO

*: The issue is addressed in the Comprehensive Plan, but not in the Land Development Regulations.

** : In Levy County, minimum lot frontages range between 100 and 300 feet for commercial uses. The minimum lot frontage for all commercial land uses in the City of Fanning Springs is 20 feet. There are no minimum lot frontages for commercial land uses in the City of Chiefland.

Levy County

The segment of US 19 that lies between the City of Fanning Springs in the north and the City of Chiefland to the south falls within unincorporated Levy County. Designated as a principal arterial in the Levy County Comprehensive Plan, existing land uses along the 4-

lane divided road include commercial, residential, and agricultural. The future land use map has designated land along this segment as Commercial and Low Density Residential.

Comprehensive Plan

The Levy County Comprehensive Plan was updated in 1999 and includes several policies for managing access to both county and state roadways. Policy 1.1 of the Transportation Element assigns access management classes to roadways based on functional class. The access management classes establish minimum spacing standards for “connections and access points of driveways to the state, federal and local highway network” (see Table 3). These standards are based on Rule 14-97 administered by the FDOT. Policy 1.1 further states that “direct connection to state and federal highways” is regulated by Rule 14-97. In the event a “conflict develops, the more restrictive standard shall apply.” Policy 2.4 directs the County to amend the Land Development Regulations to “establish minimum standards for curb cuts, setbacks, frontage roads, and access according to function classification of the roadway using Rules 14-96 and 14-97.” This project advances that objective.

Table 3: Minimum Connection Spacing Standards

Functional Class	Access Management Class	Minimum Connection Spacing (Street and Driveways)	
		Over 45 mph	Under 45 mph
Principal Arterials	2	1,320	660
Minor Arterials	4	660	440
Major Collectors	6	440	245
Minor Collectors	6	440	245
Local Street	7	125	125

Shared access is encouraged through the implementation of Policy 1.2. This policy states that the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) must “require shared (dual) access and cross-access agreements as a precondition to issuing development permits for the highway frontage of pre-platted subdivisions.” The County discourages commercial strip development along major highways and calls for “limiting community and regional level commercial development to areas and nodes designated for commercial land uses.” As outlined in the Future Land Use Element, the US 19 corridor is considered one of these “nodes.”

Additional minimum standards that relate to access management are addressed in Policy 2.4, which states that, “The Land Development Regulations shall establish minimum standards for curb cuts, setbacks, frontage roads, and access according to functional classification of the roadway using Rule 14-96 and 14-97, F.A.C. as a guideline.”

The Transportation Element also ensures that adequate right-of-way is preserved along corridors designated as part of the Florida Intrastate Highway System, which includes US 19. Development must “include an additional fifty feet on each side of the setback

centerline for the purpose of future right-of-way and frontage road needs.” Policy 4.3 goes on to state that adequate right-of-way along US 19 “shall be provided for by all development. As used here, ‘provided for’ means right-of-way reservation.”

Subdivision Regulations

Chapter 71, Article 3.25, Subdivision Regulations, Levy County Land Development Code defines a subdivision as:

- The division of a parcel of land into three (3) or more contiguous lots or parcels of land, any one of which is less than twenty (20) acres in size the purpose of which, whether immediate or future, is the transfer of ownership,
- Any division of land when the establishment of a new street is involved, or
- Any division of an existing lot of record provided that that the division conforms to the zoning ordinance and the lots created front on a paved street.

The County allows a development to “include a portion of the right-of-way of an adjoining federal, state, county or city maintained road or easement to obtain the necessary area to satisfy the minimum lot area requirements.” Limitations to this provision include the following:

- The right-of-way or easement cannot be greater than the fronting length of the tract being subdivided,
- The width cannot exceed 50 feet or go beyond the centerline of the right-of-way or easement, and
- The net area of each lot, tract, or parcel within the development must be at least 85% of the specified minimum lot area requirement.

For developments with lots greater than 5 acres in size, “interior road right-of-way or easements may also be used to obtain the necessary area to satisfy the minimum lot area requirement.”

When subdividing a tract of land, the County requires that all newly created lots conform to the design standards identified in Chapter 78, Levy County Zoning Regulations. The majority of land abutting US 19 is zoned as C-2 (Neighborhood Commercial) and C-3 (Moderately Intensive Commercial). The minimum lot area and frontages for these districts, as well as the other zoning districts within the county, are listed in Table 4. Chapter 71, Section 4.04, establishes lot width-to-depth ratios for all new lots. The “normal ratio” cannot exceed 1:2 1/2. For lots 10 acres in size or larger, the ratio may near 1:4.

Table 4: Minimum Lot Area and Width Requirements

Zoning Classification	Minimum Lot Area	Minimum Lot Frontage
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F/RR	Agricultural, Forestry	20 acres	300'
A/RR	Agriculture, Farming	10 acres	200'
RR-1	Single-family Residential	1 acre	150'
RR-2	Single-family Residential	1/2 acre	100'
RR-3C	Single-family Residential (Conventional)	Per Plat	
RR-3M	Single-Family Residential (Mobile)	Per Plat	
R	Multi-Family Residential	1/4 acre	75'
C-1	Commercial Offices	1/2 acre	100'
C-2	Neighborhood Commercial	1/2 acre	100'
C-3	Moderately Intensive Commercial	1 acre	100'
C-4	Highway Commercial	2 acres	200'
I	Industrial	1 acre	200'

Connectivity between subdivisions is also addressed in the County’s Subdivision Regulations. Unless the future extension of a street is clearly “impractical or undesirable”, right-of-way corridors should extend to the property line to allow for the future extension of a roadway. All subdivisions are also required to dedicate 50 feet on each side of all section lines “for the future needs of the Levy County Collector Roadway System.” Privately owned and maintained roads, built in accordance with the County’s LDRs, are only allowed in a Planned Unit Development (PUD). However, regulations prohibit private roads to connect to one another, either within or outside the proposed subdivision.

Access Management Regulations

In an effort to improve roadway efficiency and enhance safety, the County LDRs encourage the use of a variety of access management techniques when a subdivision abuts or contains an existing or proposed collector or other high service road. Developers may be required to construct “frontage roads, rear service alleys, reverse frontage lots or other such treatment, as required.” Specifically, Chapter 71, Section 4.07 states that “subdivisions contiguous to designated arterial roads must conform to those standards for controlled access and frontage roads as contained in the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Regulations.” If properties are situated along US 19, a front setback of 175 feet from the highway centerline is required for future traffic needs, including the possibility of frontage roads.

Levy County has established a funding mechanism to finance the construction of frontage roads through the creation of a “municipal service taxing units.” The County’s zoning regulations ensure that the added financial burden will not become “a hardship on owners of unimproved parcels.” When adopted the municipal service taxing units will:

- Only assess developed properties,
- Exempt property owners that have already constructed a frontage road, and

- Schedule “frontage road preliminary engineering, design, and construction to be completed after 50% of the highway frontage has been developed and before it reaches 75% developed.”

Section 79, Section 5.02, establishes future right-of-way width for roadways based on the road’s functional classification. These widths are listed in Table 5. The LDRs also point out that some state roads designated as principal arterials or part of the FIHS are deficient in ROW width. The County Commissioners have determined “all such roads are intended...to be provided with frontage roads.” Along these roads, no change in zoning is considered unless the owner dedicates any ROW deficiency to FDOT and a frontage road reservation or dedication is provided.

Table 5: Future Right-of-Way Widths

Road Class	Highway ROW	50 foot Frontage Roads (both sides)	Total
Principal Arterial	250	100	350
Minor Arterial	242	N/A	242
Collector	80	N/A	80
Local	60	N/A	60

As described in the Comprehensive Plan, the County seeks to limit community and regional level commercial development to nodes along major transportation routes, including US 19. Chapter 79, Section 3.05, Zoning Regulations, lists a number of criteria the County Commission must consider when a request for a rezoning is made to change a rural or residential land use to a commercial land use, specifically when the property abuts a principal arterial or intrastate system. The property must be located within areas expressly designated for such development and be part of a municipal services district, with rights-of-way and frontage road reservation or, outside such areas, shall be permitted only in Planned Unit Development (PUD). As part of a PUD, the proposed use can only gain access through a local or collector road and must be located on an interior local road at least one mile away from the “commercial node” on the higher order road.

General Comments:

1. The County’s access classification system in the comprehensive plan would be best assigned to County roadways only, and the FDOT classification system and standards should be adopted by reference for the state highway system. This would avoid potential inconsistencies between functional classification of roadways and access classification. This could be accomplished the next time the plan is updated.
2. Access management requirements do not address outparcels, corner clearance, redevelopment or retrofit situations, limits on driveways, driveway design, or joint and cross access.

3. Frontage road requirements are not recommended as they can result in conflicts and unfamiliar movements where the frontage road intersects with other roadways. A preferred approach is a combination of interparcel connections, side street access, local subdivision roads, and service roads. During interviews with County officials it was noted that the County has been preserving about 350 ft of right-of-way in the corridor, with about a 175 ft. setback from the centerline of the median on either side. Although fifty feet of that right-of-way was originally supposed to be a frontage road, that idea was dropped due to complexities of administration. In addition, there was no structural setback from the frontage road right-of-way making the frontage road concept infeasible.
4. Requirements for connection of subdivision roads are beneficial to overall mobility in the neighborhoods abutting US 19 and also help to reduce the need to use the highway for short local trips between residential areas. These requirements should be actively enforced.
5. The County should revise the current subdivision regulations in order to avoid situations that may lead to access management problems. Among the access related issues associated with the current regulations are the unregulated division (and subsequent redivision) of land into 10-acre lots and the exemption for family members, which is difficult to enforce as family members may simply sell the property after the lot has been recorded.
6. The County currently does not have adequate restrictions on flag lots. Flag lots are useful in some circumstances, such as providing access to interior lots as part of a planned subdivision. However, they are often used as a method of providing lots with access to a public road through private easements, thereby avoiding the cost of platting and providing a road. The County should adopt regulations to prevent the creation of flag lots and to regulate private access easements. In addition, the County should prohibit the platting of flag lots along US 19, with exceptions only for unique circumstances and through a variance or special exception process.

City of Fanning Springs

The City of Fanning Springs is located in northern Levy County. A 3-mile segment of US 19 runs through the entire City. Within city limits, the predominant land use along the corridor is commercial and low density residential. The posted speed limit varies between 30 and 65 miles per hour.

Comprehensive Plan

Current policies in the Comprehensive Plan address improving the efficiency of US 19 and applying access management techniques citywide. As stated in the Plan, the City requires the LDRs to include provisions to control access and protect future right-of-way corridors. These policies include the following:

Policy II.1.2.: The City’s LDRs shall include provisions to control the number and frequency of connections and access points of driveways and roads to arterial and collector roads.

Policy II.4.1: The City’s LDRs shall include provisions that require all structures along new or realigned collector or arterial roadways to provide additional setbacks for the future need of additional right-of-way.

Land Development and Subdivision Regulations

The Fanning Springs Land Development Regulations define a subdivision as the division of land into three or more lots or parcels, for the purpose whether immediate or future, of transfer of ownership or any division of land if the establishment of a new street is involved. The City’s definition excludes the following:

- A division of land into parcels of more than ten (10) acres not involving any change in street lines,
- The transfer of property by the property owner to his or her spouse or lineal descendants, or
- The transfer of property between tenants in common for the purpose of dissolving the tenancy in common among those tenants.

The LDRs further classify subdivisions into major and minor subdivisions. A minor subdivision involves the creation of three lots or less fronting on an existing road. To be classified as a minor subdivision, the process cannot involve the creation of a new street, the extension of a local governmental facility, or the creation of public improvements. Additionally, the remaining tract and/or adjacent properties cannot be adversely affected by the division. A major subdivision involves the creation of four (4) or more lots. Additionally, a land division requiring a new street, an extension of local governmental facilities, or the creation of public improvements, is also considered a major subdivision.

Lot dimensions must meet the minimum standards established within the land development regulations. Corner lots should be sufficiently wider and larger to permit additional yard area. Double frontage and reverse frontage are prohibited, however, the City can allow the creation of these lots when they provide a separation between residential uses and existing streets or to overcome specific disadvantages of topography and orientation. If the property adjacent to a proposed subdivision is undeveloped, the City can require that that the street ROW be extended to the property line to ensure connectivity.

For roadways that are part of the FIHS (US 19), Chapter 4.14, Fanning Springs Land Development Code, states that the number and location of curb breaks must be in accordance with Rules 14-96 and 14-97. For all other roadways, the City regulates the number and location of curb breaks relative to “the intensity or size of the property served and the amount of frontage which that property has on a given street.” All single property developments are allowed at least one “curb break.” Two “curb breaks” are permitted if the minimum distance between the two curb breaks exceeds 20 feet. Three

“curb breaks” are allowed if the minimum distance between adjacent curb breaks exceeds 100 feet. Generally, no more than three “curb breaks” are permitted for a single development. But, for properties exceeding 10 acres in area or containing more than 1,000 parking spaces, additional curb breaks may be permitted provided all other requirements of the Code are met and the minimum distance between adjacent curb breaks exceeds 300 feet.

Visioning Process

The City of Fanning Springs has undertaken a visioning process in which the City hopes to set a course for its future. The vision will be implemented by public policy in the comprehensive plan and land development regulations. Among the various items included in the vision is a provision for the management of access on US 19 to facilitate safety and efficiency and to enhance the scenic quality of the corridor.

General Comments:

1. The City should revise provisions for “curb breaks” to eliminate the tiered thresholds that allow property owners to have up to three curb breaks depending upon frontage. Numerous driveways are rarely necessary on a single frontage when access points are properly designed.
2. Access management requirements do not address outparcels, corner clearance, redevelopment or retrofit situations, limits on driveways, driveway design, or joint and cross access.
3. Fanning Springs currently does not have adequate restrictions on flag lots, which could lead to the creation of stacked flag lot “plats” in the future and closely spaced driveways or substandard private easements. The City should adopt regulations to prohibit the platting of flag lots along US 19, with exceptions only for unique circumstances and through a variance or special exception process.
4. Access management policies and requirements along the US 19 corridor will support implementation of the City’s vision.

City of Chiefland

The 4-mile segment of US 19 crossing the City of Chiefland is a 4-lane principal arterial, which the city defines as “a route providing service which is relatively continuous and of relatively high traffic volume, long average trip length, high operating speed and high mobility importance.” The land use designations along the corridor are generally highway-oriented commercial, community-oriented commercial and/or neighborhood-oriented commercial. However, “much of the land along US 19 is still underdeveloped.” A lengthy series of 50-foot wide lots abut much of the corridor through the City, many of which have been consolidated into 100-foot wide parcels.

Comprehensive Plan

Chiefland’s Comprehensive Plan was originally adopted in 1985 and last updated in 1989. The Plan notes that development along US 19 is desirable; however, access points

must be carefully planned “to preserve the integrity of the arterials as major thoroughfares.” The Traffic Circulation Element points out that during the development review process, special attention is given to access management concerns. The Plan describes several techniques that can be used to enhance safety while improving a highway’s capacity. The Plan suggests the use of frontage roads or internal streets to control the number of driveways accessing major roads.

Policy 1.1.a. addresses connection and access point spacing to the state, federal and local highway network. The spacing standards established by the Traffic Circulation Element are listed in Table 6.

**Table 6
Minimum Connection Spacing Standards**

Functional Class	Minimum Connection Spacing
Arterial	600 ft
Collector	300 ft
Local	100 ft

Subdivision Regulations

The Land Development Code defines a subdivision as any division or re-division of a lot, tract or parcel of land into two or more lots, building sites or other divisions for the purpose “whether immediate or future, or sale, legacy or building development, including all division of land involving the dedication, change or abandonment of a street, site, easement or other right-of-way for any public use or facility.” However, the City’s Subdivision Regulations do exclude the division of land into parcels greater than 5 acres where no street right-of-way dedication is involved. These types of land divisions must front an existing paved, public street and the lot frontage must meet all zoning provisions.

Divisions of a contiguous lot, tract, or parcel of land into two pieces, one or both of which would be smaller than 5 acres in area, may apply to the City Planning Commission for an exemption from the plat law of the City if all the following apply:

- The parent tract has not previously been subdivided,
- The two lots meet all zoning requirements and front on a paved, public street or road,
- The resulting lots do not interfere with long-range development plans as determined by the Planning Commission or the City Commission,
- Property that lies within 500 feet of the exterior perimeter of the parent tract would not be adversely affected by the division, and
- No section lines are touched by or are within fifty feet of either parcel.

Chapter 7, Article 3.03, City of Chiefland Subdivision Regulations, establishes minimum lot frontage guidelines for residential and non-residential lots. For lots within the boundaries of a residential zoning district, the lot must conform to the minimum dimension and area requirements of the zoning ordinance, as outlined in Table 7. Corner lots for residential uses must have an extra width of 10 feet to permit adequate building setback from side streets. Meanwhile, “depth and width of properties reserved or laid out for commercial use and industrial purposes shall be adequate to provide for the offstreet services and parking facilities required by the type of house and development contemplated.”

**Table 7
Minimum Lot Width**

Zoning District	Use	Minimum Lot Size	Minimum Lot Width
R-1 (Single Family)		10,000	100’
R-2 and R-2A	Single Family and Mobile Homes	6,000	50’
	Two-Family	7,000	75’
	Multi-Family	10,000	100’
A	Agricultural	1 acre	None
C-1	Commercial	None	None
C-2	Highway Commercial	None	None
I-1	Industrial	None	None
I-2	Industrial	None	None

The Code states that residential lots must be wide enough to provide two tiers of lots of minimum depth. Additional width is required when buffer strips are needed to separate residential development from traffic, railroad lines or other types of development. Double frontage and reverse frontage lots are prohibited except when they are needed to “separate residential development from traffic arteries... .” A 10-foot wide buffer must be set aside by reservation and no right of access to the higher order roadway is allowed.

Through provisions contained in the Subdivision Regulations, the City can require developers to apply a variety of access management techniques when a development abuts or contains an existing or proposed major street. These measures may include the following: marginal access streets, double frontage lots with screen planting contained in a non-access reservation along the rear property lines, or deep lots with area service drives.

General Comments

1. The City has policies in the local comprehensive plan that support access management, but does not have the basic requirements necessary to address

outparcels, corner clearance, redevelopment or retrofit situations, limits on driveways, driveway design, or joint and cross access.

2. The City's access spacing standards in the comprehensive plan should be assigned to City roadways only, and the FDOT classification system and standards should be adopted by reference for the state highway system. This will avoid potential inconsistencies between functional classification of roadways and access classification. This could be accomplished the next time the plan is updated.
3. The City should consider reducing the number of exemptions from the platting process, and instead institute a minor subdivision process for minor land division activity. This will help assure that land is divided in accordance with access management and other local requirements, without placing a hardship on property owners. Too many subdivision exemptions result in incremental land divisions that lead to irregular or poorly designed subdivisions over time. The resulting "subdivisions" may rely heavily on highway access and often result in inefficient use of land, easement disputes, and poor connectivity.
4. The City currently does not have adequate restrictions on flag lots, which could lead to the creation of stacked flag lot "plats" in the future and closely spaced driveways or substandard private easements. The City should adopt regulations to prohibit the platting of flag lots along US 19, with exceptions for specific circumstances as noted in the CUTR report *Model Land Development and Subdivision Regulations that Support Access Management*.
5. Frontage road requirements are not recommended as they can result in conflicts and unfamiliar movements where the frontage road intersects with other roadways. A preferred approach is a combination of interparcel connections, side street access, local subdivision roads, and service roads. The City's Plan suggests the use of frontage roads to control the number of driveways accessing major roads. As in the County, however, the City of Chiefland has found frontage roads to be administratively difficult and is not actively requiring them.

Access Management Workshop Comments

On October 5, 2000, a group of corridor stakeholders were brought together in a workshop environment to learn about access management and to discuss approaches to improve access management on the US 19 corridor between Chiefland and Fanning Springs. Among others, participants included staff and public officials from the Cities of Chiefland and Fanning Springs, Levy County, the FDOT's District 2 Office, and the Withlacoochee and North Central Florida Regional Planning Councils.

Each of the participants was asked to identify access management concerns on the US 19 corridor between Chiefland and Fanning Springs. Participants were then divided into four groups and asked to list potential strategies that could be used to manage access in this area. Many of the strategies involved coordinating between both local and state

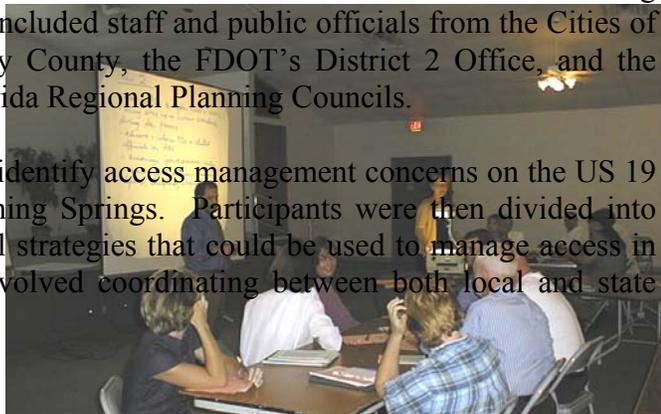


Figure 6: Participants discuss coordination strategies at the Access Management Workshop in Chiefland.

agencies, whether through a coordinating committee, a community redevelopment agency, or standardizing regulations within an overlay zone. Finally, individuals were asked to write down at least one strategy that would improve coordination in access management efforts among the agencies with jurisdiction along the corridor. The specific responses are summarized below.

Access Management Concerns Identified at the Workshop

- Lack of standardized development regulations between neighboring jurisdictions,
- Protection of the nature trail to the west of the US 19 corridor,
- Parking within the state right-of-way,
- Need for appropriate set backs from the state right-of-way,
- Acceptable development within the state right-of-way,
- Old plats containing narrow lots abutting the US 19 corridor, and
- Difficulty in maintaining agreements made with local governments due to turnover on the elected governing boards.

Suggested Access Management Strategies Identified at the Workshop

- Create a community redevelopment area to facilitate the reassembly of the small platted lots and the provision of additional off-street parking,
- Establish a special taxing and review district through an interlocal agreement to oversee development in the corridor and establish a funding stream to implement access management strategies,
- Amend the existing land development regulations to: 1) increase minimum lot widths, 2) increase setback requirements, 3) increase landscaping requirements, 4) require shared driveways for adjacent properties where applicable, and 5) strengthen the sign regulation along the corridor,
- Improve the existing raised medians and add additional left-turn lanes along the corridor,
- Develop new land development regulations to: 1) preserve the existing nature trail to the west of the US 19 corridor by maintaining the limited number of access points that currently exist, 2) preserve and improve the scenic character of the corridor in general, and 3) improve pedestrian facilities throughout the corridor,
- Consider revising existing zoning to encourage the location of offices and other “destination” uses off of the corridor and into other areas of Chiefland and Fanning Springs where office development is desired.
- Require overflow parking at the rear of properties and shared parking with adjacent properties along the US 19 corridor,
- Increase public involvement (business owners, property owners, etc.) on access issues along the corridor,

- Develop standard access management policies for each of the local governments (perhaps through an overlay district or joint planning district), but maintain flexibility with regard to implementation,
- Develop redevelopment regulations that require site improvements to meet access management standards.

Suggested Coordination Strategies Identified at the Workshop

- Establish a corridor coordination committee or corridor access management team, that includes the cities of Chiefland and Fanning Springs, Levy County and the FDOT, for the purpose of promoting coordination and intergovernmental dialogue on access management and other corridor management issues,
- Cooperatively develop a multi-jurisdictional access management plan containing agreed upon broad standards and principles,
- Establish a consensus building process, incorporating networking and public involvement activities, for setting access management standards and strategies,
- Promote the benefits of access management to the business community and property owners,
- Establish a joint monitoring process to monitor progress and revise strategies as needed,
- Increase coordination between the FDOT and the local governments on access permitting and development permitting,
- Involve the regional planning council as a coordinator of a corridor access management planning process.

Summary and Conclusions

Key findings of the assessment of current practice are as follows:

1. Portions of the corridor have been subdivided into long narrow lots that have the potential to create significant access problems on the corridor as they are developed. Commercial zoning of these properties has further exacerbated the problem and greatly increases the potential for strip commercial development with closely spaced driveways.
2. Because some of the frontage on US 19 has already been subdivided into narrow lots, preventing access problems will be challenging. However, improvements can be accomplished through a combination of policy and regulatory changes, intergovernmental coordination, and property owner cooperation. In addition, opportunities to address the problems have not yet been foreclosed, as many of the plats are not developed (e.g. Suwannee Heights). Some of the easements provided

for roads have been vacated, but others remain (e.g., “Alabama Street” easement) and could be constructed.

3. The review of local comprehensive plans and land development regulations indicates that each of the communities on the corridor has incorporated some policies relative to access management in their comprehensive plans, but current regulatory measures are inadequate to manage access along the US 19 corridor. This will, in time, reduce the safety and carrying capacity of the facility, as well as the aesthetic character of the overall corridor.
4. The presence of a parallel and continuous County roadway and intersecting local roads offers an opportunity for providing alternate access to corridor properties. Old Fanning Road is a paved roadway with 80 feet of ROW that runs parallel to US 19. One mile was unpaved but is programmed to be paved by the County. It will be important that any supporting road network be developed in a manner that minimizes disruption of the nature trail to the west of the US 19 corridor.
5. All of the communities are interested in economic development of the corridor, although individual jurisdictions have varying objectives. Chiefland was described as the retail hub for the area and the recent Walmart has created additional growth potential on the northern edge of the City along US 19. Chiefland hopes to expand its retail area on the corridor, and to revitalize southern portions of the corridor outside of the study area that are experiencing decline. Fanning Springs was described as a bedroom community and is seeking to create a city center while capitalizing on its recreational and environmental resources to position itself as an eco-tourism destination. The County hopes to attract additional light industry into the corridor that would take advantage of area natural resources and bring additional employment into the area.
6. There is interest in preserving and enhancing the aesthetic character of the corridor, as well as implementing gateway treatments to enhance the image of area communities. There is some interest in pursuing a scenic byway designation in the future, which would further support corridor management objectives.
7. The segment of US 19 under study is within the jurisdiction of three local governments: Levy County, the City of Chiefland, and the City of Fanning Springs. Staff from each community noted that a set of uniform standards would assist their efforts to promote access management from a corridor-wide perspective. Effective implementation of the plan will also require active coordination with the FDOT on access permitting in accordance with the plan. It was also the desire of officials from each of the three local governments that the broader community be actively engaged in the process of refining the access management plan for US 19 prior to adoption.

CONCEPTUAL ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Based upon the assessment of current practice and workshop results, several key issues have emerged that form the basis of a conceptual access management plan for the US 19 corridor. These are summarized below.

1. The City of Fanning Springs, City of Chiefland, and Levy County should cooperatively adopt FDOT access management requirements for US Highway 19 and reinforce these through broad policies and guidelines that support access management on US 19. Some suggested policies and guidelines are as follows:
 - Establish minimum corner clearance requirements for US 19 and crossroad intersections with US 19 that conform with FDOT corner clearance requirements.
 - Establish that new lots may not be created on US 19 unless they meet the access spacing standards.
 - Establish that existing lots unable to meet the access spacing standards for US 19 must obtain access from platted side streets, parallel streets, service roads, joint and cross access, or the provision of easements.
 - Allow temporary access where necessary until such time that alternative access can be obtained. Exceptions should not be granted unless the property owner provides for shared access by easement. Require properties to obtain side street access as an alternative to direct highway access where it is available.
 - Establish that lots in residential subdivisions must obtain access from internal subdivision streets, and shall not be permitted access to US 19.
 - Require properties under the same ownership or those consolidated for development to provide a unified access and circulation plan. Such properties and any outparcels should be required to obtain access from the unified access and circulation system.
 - Establish redevelopment or retrofit requirements for nonconforming access situations. Existing access is allowed to continue, but must be upgraded to the maximum extent feasible in accordance with the access management plan, when there is a change in use, expansion or reconstruction of the site.
 - Reduce reliance on US 19 for access by providing alternatives, including parallel roadways, interparcel connections, and side streets for local circulation.
 - Increase building setbacks outside municipal boundaries to preserve area for open space, landscaped buffers and/or trees, pedestrian ways, and on-site circulation systems along the highway. Increased setbacks help to preserve public safety, maintain development flexibility, and minimize property damage if the highway is widened in the future.
 - Update driveway and intersection design requirements to assure that they provide adequate geometrics for turning vehicles and do not result in traffic

conflicts at the entrance. These may be based upon the new requirements currently being prepared by the Florida Department of Transportation.

2. From this plan, the communities should collectively develop standard access management requirements as part of an overlay district for the corridor that can be adopted by each local jurisdiction and which are consistent with those of the Florida Department of Transportation. The City of Fanning Springs, City of Chiefland, Levy County, and the Florida Department of Transportation should solidify commitment to implementing the access management plan for the US 19 corridor through an intergovernmental agreement. A sample intergovernmental agreement is attached in Appendix A to assist in this process.
3. Establish a process for coordination of FDOT access permitting with local development permitting through a concurrent state/local review procedure. Each local government and the FDOT should coordinate when reviewing proposed plats and development applications along the US 19 corridor to prevent access problems before they are created and assure conformance with the US 19 access management plan. This process should be formally established through interlocal agreement.
4. Consider establishing a corridor management team made up of representatives of each local government, the FDOT, and other interested parties, such as the Suwannee River Water Management District, the Withalocoochee Regional Planning Council, and selected community leaders. The responsibilities of the team would be to assure continued coordination and commitment in the implementation of the access management plan. Other responsibilities could include scenic byways designation, economic development, or other areas of interest on the corridor.

Appendix A: Draft Intergovernmental Agreement

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
LEVY COUNTY, FLORIDA
THE CITY OF CHIEFLAND, FLORIDA
THE CITY OF FANNING SPRINGS, FLORIDA
AND
THE STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

This Agreement is entered into this ____ day of _____ 2001, by and between the City of Chiefland, Florida (hereinafter referred to as CHIEFLAND), the City of Fanning Springs, Florida (hereinafter referred to as FANNING SPRINGS), the Levy County, Florida (hereinafter referred to as the COUNTY), and the State of Florida Department of Transportation (hereinafter referred to as the DEPARTMENT).

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the Segment of US 19 between FANNING SPRINGS and CHIEFLAND in the COUNTY and including the portion within the City limits of CHIEFLAND and FANNING SPRINGS (hereinafter referred to as the SEGMENT) is part of the Florida Intrastate Highway System (hereinafter referred to as the FIHS), which is the statewide system of limited access and controlled access facilities for high-speed, high-volume traffic movement within the State of Florida that has been designated by the DEPARTMENT and adopted by the Legislature of the State of Florida as critical to statewide economic prosperity, mobility, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the COUNTY, CHIEFLAND, FANNING SPRINGS and the DEPARTMENT desire to reach a comprehensive and mutually acceptable roadway access management plan for the SEGMENT for the purpose of preserving public safety, highway level of service, and community character, while providing reasonable access to locally planned development; and

WHEREAS, regulation of vehicular access to US 19 is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare by reducing the potential for traffic accidents, maintaining the efficient flow of traffic, and assuring that access to property is properly designed and spaced in relation to the function of the highway and the state access management requirements;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual benefits to be derived from the participation in this agreement, the DEPARTMENT, the COUNTY, CHIEFLAND, and FANNING SPRINGS desire to enter into an agreement coordinating local land use planning and regulation with state access standards for the SEGMENT of US 19 as follows:

1. The COUNTY, CHIEFLAND, and FANNING SPRINGS agree to adopt and implement the protective planning and regulatory measures as outlined in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein, in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
2. Actions taken by the COUNTY, CHIEFLAND, FANNING SPRINGS, and the DEPARTMENT with regard to transportation improvements, land development and access permitting within the area addressed by Exhibit A shall not be inconsistent with this agreement.
3. This Agreement constitutes the complete and final expression of the COUNTY, CHIEFLAND, FANNING SPRINGS, and the DEPARTMENT with respect to subject matter hereof, and incorporates and includes all proper negotiations, correspondence, conversations, agreements, or commitments applicable to the matters contained herein as agreed to by the COUNTY, CHIEFLAND, FANNING SPRINGS, and the DEPARTMENT. Accordingly, it is agreed that no deviation from the terms of this agreement shall be predicated upon any prior representation or agreements whether oral or written.
4. This Agreement may not be amended except by subsequent written agreement of the parties subject to the agreement.
5. The laws of the State of Florida shall govern this Agreement. Any provisions hereof found to be unlawful or unenforceable shall be severable and shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.
6. By signing this Agreement, the parties acknowledge and represent to one another that all procedures necessary to validly contract and execute this Agreement have been performed and the persons signing for each of the parties have been duly authorized to do so.

City of Chiefland, Florida

ATTEST:

Mayor

City Clerk

Approved as to form

City Attorney

City of Fanning Springs, Florida

ATTEST:

Mayor

Approved as to form

City Attorney

County of Levy, Florida

City Clerk

ATTEST:

Mayor

Approved as to form

County Attorney

State of Florida
Department of Transportation

County Clerk

ATTEST:

District Secretary

Approved as to form

District Attorney

Chief Clerk