

Service Roads

Policy Statement

All service roads shall be planned, constructed, maintained, and operated in accordance with the guidelines contained within this policy.

Rationale

Service roads are a unique class of public roadway providing access to properties affected by control of access designation and other access restrictions. The use of service roads is limited and the intended function of service roads is often not well understood by the general public and adjacent land owners. A comprehensive policy is needed to ensure a better understanding and a more consistent management of service roads throughout the province.

Policy Objectives

- Define the use and function of service roads.
- Provide Departmental staff with a clearer understanding of requirements and standards related to the construction, maintenance, and operation of service roads.
- Ensure service roads are managed in a consistent and appropriate manner throughout the province.

Application

This policy applies to all Department staff involved in the construction, maintenance, and operation of all provincially owned service roads.

Accountability

The District Directors are responsible and accountable for the administration of this policy.

Monitoring

The Executive Director Maintenance & Operations will monitor this policy's implementation, performance, and effectiveness.

Directives

None

Guidelines

1 Service Road Status

Service roads are public highways by definition under Clause 11.1 of Chapter 371 of the Revised Statutes, 1989, of the Public Highways Act. All legislation governing the operation and use of public highways in Nova Scotia applies to service roads.

All service roads shall be assigned an Authority number, road name, and be included in the Department's road listings database and mapping.

2 Construction of Service Roads

Service roads are an alternative to be considered to provide access to properties impacted by control of access designation or other access restrictions. The decision to construct a service road shall consider the feasibility and cost effectiveness of all other alternatives, including: land purchase, transfer of land ownership, and acquisition of access rights.

2.1 Construction shall be in accordance with an approved Land Use Plan.

2.2 Service roads shall be constructed to the following standards:

Surface Type: Unpaved

Design Loading: 38,500 kg.

Finished Top Width: 6 metres

Side Slopes: 2:1

Back Slopes: 2:1 or flatter, depending on soil conditions

Maximum Grade: 12%

Any variance from this standard requires the approval of the Executive Director Highway Engineering & Construction.

2.3 The length of service roads should be kept to a minimum. Service roads are to be constructed on a public right-of-way, typically 20 metres in width outside the normal limits of the controlled access highway.

- 2.4 The location and design of service road intersections with other public roadways shall adhere to all TPW design, access management, and traffic control requirements for the class of roadway intersected, and shall not be located within 100 metres of an interchange ramp terminal.

3 Maintenance of Service Roads

Service roads, including structures and culverts, shall receive minimal maintenance as determined by the Area Manager to provide reasonable and safe access to abutting properties for the land uses served at the time of construction, and to manage and preserve the roadway in a cost efficient manner. Maintenance will typically be provided on an as required basis and consist of light grading, spot graveling, spot grading, and drainage improvements. Winter maintenance shall be provided on an as requested basis only, to allow for property access or as required to address drainage problems. Winter maintenance on service roads, if requested or required, shall take place after all other public roadways have been cleared.

Service roads receiving regular winter maintenance on or before January 1, 2006 to accommodate year round residential development shall be grandfathered and may continue to receive this level of maintenance with the approval of the Executive Director Maintenance & Operations. Winter maintenance shall only be provided after all other public roadways have been cleared.

4 Use and Operation of Service Roads

- 4.1 Public use of service roads shall not be restricted unless, in the opinion of the Area Manager, such restrictions are required to protect public health or safety. In situations where public use is restricted, access shall be maintained for adjacent property owners.
- 4.2 Service roads are intended to provide access for existing non-developed land uses only, typically related to forestry and agricultural activities. Service roads are not designed or intended to serve traffic from existing or future development. Access to service roads for the purpose of land development or subdivision of lands shall not be granted.

- 4.3 Upgrading of service roads to a subdivision standard or higher for the purpose of land development may be permitted at the discretion of the Executive Director Maintenance & Operations if it can be demonstrated that additional traffic will not negatively impact traffic operation on the controlled access highway. Factors taken into consideration include, but are not limited to, headlight visibility/glare, grades, abutting land uses, and projected traffic volumes. Service road upgrading, including improvements to structures and required land acquisition, shall be 100% funded by the developer or local Municipality. A service road shall not be upgraded until the local Municipality has agreed, in writing, that they will assume ownership and maintenance responsibility for the road including all structures.
- 4.4 The use of service roads for the purpose of installing, operating, and maintaining utilities, including power lines, pipelines, fibre optic lines, etc., may be considered at the discretion of the Area Manager. All legislation, regulations, and Departmental policies and procedures related to erection of structures and installation of utilities, pipelines, and fibre optic lines near or within the boundaries of a controlled access highway or any public highway shall apply. Additional service road maintenance or improvements, including structures and culverts, to facilitate the installation and/or operation of the utility, above and beyond that normally required for existing land access only, shall be the responsibility of the utility owner.
- 4.5 Regulatory, warning, and directional signage is typically not installed along service roads unless deemed necessary by the District Traffic Supervisor. One exception is stop signs which are to be installed at all service road intersections with other public roadways.
- 4.6 A road name sign shall be installed at the intersection of service roads and any public roadway. Road names shall be in accordance with TPW's service road naming convention.
- 4.7 Construction and operation of railway crossings shall be in compliance with the Railway industry standard currently in use which is the DRAFT RTD 10 Road/Railway Grade Crossings - Technical Standards and Inspection, Testing and Maintenance

Requirements, Oct. 2002 as well as the Notice of Railway Works Regulations, SOR/91 - 103 (GO E-02). The railway may charge for flagging for work within the railway right-of-way, whether or not someone is actually on site flagging. The guide for charges can be found in the Guide to Railway Charges for Crossing Maintenance and Construction, July 2005.

- 4.8 Off-highway vehicles such as all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles shall not use service roads except as permitted under the Motor Vehicle Act and the Off-highway Vehicles Act and Regulations.
- 4.9 All local road weight limits shall apply to service roads, including spring weight restrictions.
- 4.10 TPW's Procedure #PR5000 Driveway Entrances, Manual 23, Chapter 2, shall apply to all private accesses to a service road.

5 Notification

- 5.1 The most recent version of the Service Roads policy shall be posted on the Department's public internet site at all times.
- 5.2 At the time of service road construction, all adjacent landowners shall be provided with a copy of the Service Roads policy.
- 5.3 A copy of the Service Roads policy shall be attached to any permits issued for driveway access to service roads.
- 5.4 Signage shall be posted and maintained on service roads at all intersections with other public roadways indicating the following:
SERVICE ROAD
RESTRICTED USE

References

Public Highways Act
Railway Safety Act
TPW Manual 23, Chapter 2, Procedure #PR5000 Driveway Entrances

Division: Highway Programs
Section: General
Function: Operations (HO 2.11.11)
Policy Number: PO1022

Enquiries

Executive Director Maintenance & Operations
Executive Director Highway Engineering & Construction

Appendices

None

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