

Keeping Driveways Away from Corners

What is Corner Clearance?

Corner clearance is the minimum distance required between an intersection and an adjacent driveway along an arterial road or collector street (see figure below).

Why is Corner Clearance Important?

According to National Cooperative Highway Research Report 420, inadequate corner clearance results in traffic flow and safety problems, including:

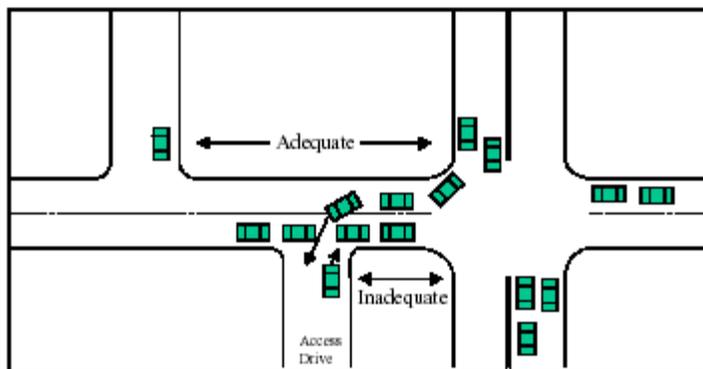
- Traffic blocked by vehicles waiting to enter driveways
- Right or left turns out of driveways being blocked
- Rear-end and broadside collisions caused by inadequate time for motorists to react to vehicles entering and exiting the driveway
- Driver confusion about where it is permissible to enter and exit the driveway.

What is a Reasonable Distance between an Intersection and the First Driveway Opening?

Corner clearance standards vary greatly from state to state and city to city. For instance, the standard in Colorado is 325 feet on arterials with 40 mile per hour speed limits; it is 50 feet in Virginia, which is about three car lengths. Most state and local standards range from 75 feet (about five car lengths) to 250 feet (about 16 car lengths). The 250-foot figure corresponds to the minimum distance required to stop a car traveling 35 miles per hour. Ideally, corner clearances on major roadways should be the same as driveway spacing requirements. When this cannot be achieved because of a lack of frontage, the upstream corner clearance should be longer than the longest expected queue at the adjacent intersection.

What Other Factors are Important to Corner Clearance?

If a corner has a large radius or if there is a dedicated right-turn lane at the corner, the first driveway downstream from the corner should be located farther away from the corner. This extra distance allows drivers to negotiate turns at a higher rate of speed and a greater distance to slow or stop. The Florida Department of Transportation and some cities and counties in Florida have set downstream corner clearance standards higher as a result.



Source: Center for Transportation Research and Education's "Access Management Toolkit"
<http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/research/access/toolkit/index.htm>