



# City of Boston Commissioner of Public Works

## Guidelines for the Issuance of a Curb Cut Permit

Effective February 1, 2013

A permit to cut the curb of any City of Boston street or alley, or to construct a driveway over any public sidewalk, may be granted at the discretion of the Commissioner of Public Works (“Commissioner”).

The Guidelines set forth below outline the concerns that typically inform the Commissioner’s exercise of discretion when acting on applications for curb cut permits. These guidelines **do not** provide any person with a right to receive a curb cut permit, and they do not obligate the Commissioner to grant a permit even if the proposed curb cut complies with the guidelines. The guidelines are purely advisory; they **do not** limit the Commissioner’s discretion in any way, and the Commissioner may amend them at any time.

### Guidelines.

1. In addition to the following guidelines, when exercising the discretion to allow a curb cut and connection to the public way, the Commissioner must first consider the impact that the proposed driveway will have on the safety and convenience of pedestrians and motor vehicles on the adjacent public ways, on the physical integrity of the adjacent public way, on traffic and parking on the adjacent public way, and the management of the adjacent public way.
2. The curb cut permit application must be accompanied by a plan in the format of, and addressing the design specifications set forth on, the illustration plan entitled “PWD Typical Residential/Commercial Driveway,” dated February 2013, which is attached to the Residential/Commercial Driveway application.
3. The plan submitted with the curb cut permit application must be signed and stamped by a MA registered civil engineer or land surveyor and depict at least the following:
  - a cross-sectional apron detail (as illustrated on PWD Typical Residential/Commercial Driveway, dated February 2013);
  - curb return radius (which should generally conform to what exists at similar driveways in the area);
  - sidewalk width;
  - roadway (curb-to-curb) width;
  - location and dimensions of proposed parking spaces to be accessed via the proposed curb cut;
  - on-site layout of building, structures, and other impediments to the movement of vehicles;
  - dimensions from proposed driveway to property lines;
  - dimensions from proposed driveway to existing driveways;
  - dimensions from proposed driveway to vertical obstructions within the street, sidewalk, or adjacent to the sidewalk (including, but not limited to, buildings, hydrants, utility poles, trees, walls, etc.)
4. Interior curb cut width (the dimension within the curb stones) of proposed driveway should be:
  - 12 feet standard – with a minimum of 10 feet and maximum of 14 feet when conditions dictate - for residential driveways serving one or two parking spaces.

- Maximum of 24 feet for driveways serving three or more parking spaces;
  - Driveways in excess of 24 feet require approval by the Public Improvement Commission.
5. The interior width (within the curbstones) of the proposed driveway from the street line to the interior line of the sidewalk should be at least 5 feet from all vertical obstructions including walls of buildings. If the proposed driveway is to be less than 5 feet from any existing vertical obstruction, applicant must either: (a) provide documentation of coordination with the appropriate company/agency/party for relocation at the applicant's expense; or (b) document conditions and mitigation measures that make the location functional to the satisfaction of the Commissioner.
  6. If the proposed driveway is to cross over any existing utility covering (including electric handholds, gas gates, etc.) applicant must provide documentation of coordination with the appropriate company/agency for relocation at the applicant's expense.
  7. Driveways should be a minimum of 10 feet wide on private property. If the proposed driveway is shared or requires encroachment onto a neighbor's property, the Book & Page for an easement permitting the configuration should be shown on the plans.
  8. Requirements for Curb Ramps with Flared Sides. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, if a curb ramp is located where pedestrians must walk across the ramp, or where it is not protected by handrails or guardrails, it shall have flared sides (Architectural Access Board, 521 CMR).
  9. Commercial or high-volume driveways should be one-hundred (100) feet from an unsignalized or signalized intersection.
  10. Residential Driveways should be at least twenty (20) feet from an unsignalized intersection and at least forty (40) feet from a signalized intersection.
  11. New driveways added at residential dwellings should accommodate at least two (2) vehicular spaces for every one (1) public on-street parking space that will be removed as a result of the new driveway.
  12. The application should not seek to create more than one curb cut for a single lot.



## City of Boston Public Works Department

### Residential/Commercial Curb Cut Application Requirements

In order to cut the curb of any public way owned or controlled by the City of Boston, or to connect a private driveway to a public way, a person must obtain a permit from the Commissioner of Public Works. This permit process is **separate** from any approvals granted by the Inspectional Services Department, the Building Commissioner, or the Zoning Board of Appeal. The receipt of a building permit, a use of premises permit, or any other permit from the Inspectional Services Department does not entitle any person or property owner to a permit to connect a driveway to a public way.

*Applicants must apply for a curb cut permit from the Commissioner of Public Works **BEFORE** applying to the Inspectional Services Department for any permit that includes construction of a driveway.*

All applicants for a commercial / residential driveway permit must:

1. Review the “Commissioner of Public Works Guidelines for the Issuance of a Curb Cut Permit, February 1, 2013,” attached to this application.
2. Complete the Public Works Department Residential/Commercial Curb Cut Application;
3. Attach to the application three sets of curb cut plans drafted in accordance with the attached illustration entitled “PWD Typical Residential/Commercial Driveway,” dated February 2013;
4. Attach to the application three photographs of the proposed driveway site;
5. If the proposed driveway or curb cut is not consistent with any of the guidelines set forth on the Commissioner of Public Works Guidelines for the Issuance of a Curb Cut Permit, February 1, 2012, attach a separate sheet identifying: (1) the manner in which the proposed driveway is not consistent with the Guidelines; and (2) reasons why the Commissioner should exercise her discretion to issue the requested permit.
6. Return completed application form and all associated documents to:  
  
Public Works Department Permitting Office  
One City Hall Square, Room 715  
Boston, MA 02201
7. If applicant is notified that application is incomplete or requires amendment, provide the requested alteration or information to the Department of Public Works.
8. If the application is approved, the Public Works Department Permitting Office will return an “approved” copy of the Curb Cut Application which the applicant can submit to the Inspectional Services Department as part of a complete application for a building or use of premises permit.
9. After the project is permitted by the Inspectional Services Department, the applicant’s driveway contractor can obtain the Curb Cut Permit associated with the approved Curb Cut Application by bringing a copy of the Use of Premises Permit to the Public Works Department Permitting Office.



# City of Boston Public Works Department

## Residential/Commercial Curb Cut Application

### APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### PROPOSED CURB CUT INFORMATION

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Neighborhood: \_\_\_\_\_  
Driveway Location: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Parking Spaces: \_\_\_\_\_ ISD/ZBA Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_

Land Use:	<input type="checkbox"/> Residential
	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial
"Comm" for 3+ Parking Spaces	

Building:	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
	<input type="checkbox"/> Existing

Curb Cut:	<input type="checkbox"/> New
	<input type="checkbox"/> Widen Existing
	<input type="checkbox"/> Relocate Existing

Width(s) of existing curb opening(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Width(s) of proposed curb opening(s): \_\_\_\_\_

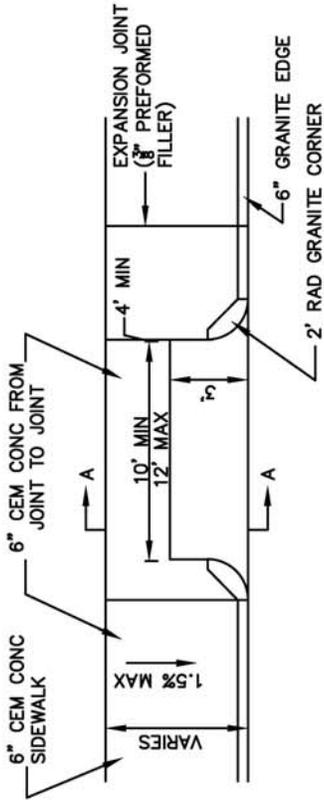
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

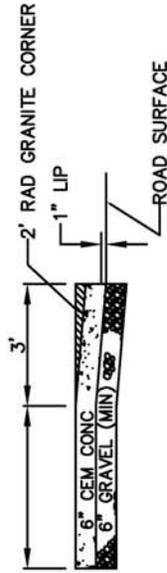
<b>Public Works – Engineering Division Recommendation:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Approve w/ Provisos <input type="checkbox"/> Deny Provisos/Notes: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____	
<b>Boston Transportation Department Recommendation:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Approve w/ Provisos <input type="checkbox"/> Deny Provisos/Notes: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____	
<b>Supplemental Recommendation:</b> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Approve w/ Provisos <input type="checkbox"/> Deny Provisos/Notes: _____ Signature: _____	<b>Supplemental Recommendation:</b> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Approve w/ Provisos <input type="checkbox"/> Deny Provisos/Notes: _____ Signature: _____
<b>Public Works – Commissioner</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Approve w/ Provisos <input type="checkbox"/> Deny Provisos/Notes: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____	

## CONDITIONS OF THE PERMIT

1. The permittee agrees to save and hold harmless the City of Boston from all liability arising from the construction associated with this permit.
2. This permit is non-transferable.
3. This permit is conditional and only becomes valid upon the issuance of a Use of Premises Permit by the City of Boston Inspectional Services Department ("ISD") for the same plan submitted with this permit. This permit is not valid if the plan associated with the Use of Premises Permit has been altered in any way from the plan submitted with this permit. Unless otherwise noted, this permit automatically expires 18 months from the date of the issuance unless extended in writing by the Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department. An extension may be granted after a request is made in writing and the appropriate fees are paid prior to the 30 days prior to the expiration date of the permit.
4. All work done under this permit shall comply with written requirements or directions which may be issued by the Commissioner of Public Works relating to the particular project. If any of the conditions of this permit are violated, this permit may be revoked by the Commissioner of Public Works.
5. The work, materials, plans and specifications shall be available at all times for inspection by duly authorized officials of the City of Boston.
6. Driveway apron(s) constructed under this permit are for the purpose of providing access to lots adjacent to the right of way. Maintenance shall be the responsibility of the property owner.
7. If the Commissioner of Public Works finds that the original plans, standards and specifications under which this permit is issued are inadequate or inappropriate for the particular project, he/she may require different or additional plans, standards and specifications and they shall thereafter, or upon a modification thereof, become a part and condition of this permit.
8. Prior to the issuance of any permit for the construction of a driveway, a permit from the City of Boston Parks & Recreation Department is required for the removal, and/or planting of any trees on or along a public way. The opening for the driveway must be at least five feet away from any tree, pole, street light, or other existing appurtenances. Contact (617) 635-4500 to be directed to the Parks Department.
9. The relocation and/or adjustment of any public or private utility shall be the responsibility of the permittee prior to any construction authorized by this permit.
10. Coordinate the relocation of any traffic control signs, parking meters or signalization devices with the Transportation Department. Contact (617) 635-4500 to be directed to the Transportation Department.
11. Construction materials and equipment must not be stored or parked on the public right of way, unless otherwise noted as a condition of this permit.
12. Prior to the release of this permit, complete repair (restoration of right of way) shall be made of any and all damages done to the existing improvements in the public right of way caused by construction operations on this site. All disturbed areas shall be fine graded and sodded.
13. Proper precautions must be taken to keep existing roadways free of mud, debris and other obstructions.
14. The proposed work shall be performed in accordance with the conditions of this permit, subject to the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Ordinances of the City of Boston, and all applicable Regulations, Standards, Specifications and Inspection and Control of the Commissioners of the Department of Public Works, Inspectional Services Department and Transportation Department.
15. Notify "Dig Safe" at 1-800-257-7777 prior to any excavation in the public right-of way. State law requires any person performing excavations on public or private property to call Dig Safe prior to any excavation: **1(888) DIG SAFE (344-7233)**

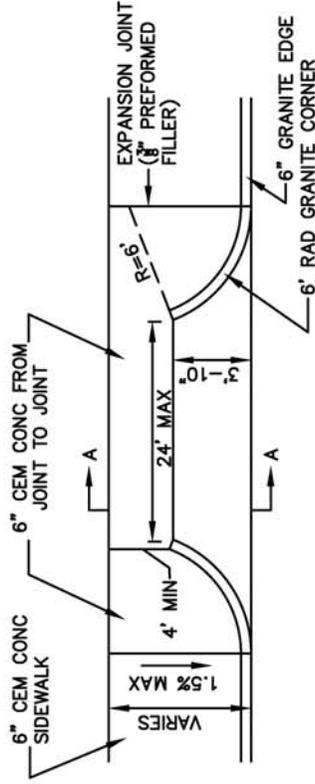


PLAN VIEW  
NOT TO SCALE

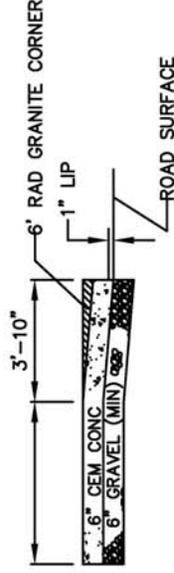


SECTION VIEW  
NOT TO SCALE

TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL DRIVEWAY

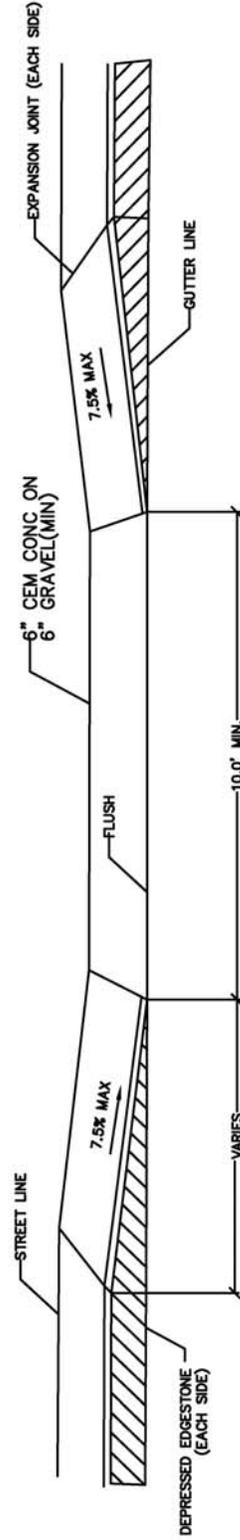


PLAN VIEW  
NOT TO SCALE



SECTION VIEW  
NOT TO SCALE

TYPICAL COMMERCIAL DRIVEWAY



DRIVEWAY ON SIDEWALKS LESS THAN 7'



Public Works Department  
Permit Office  
1 CITY HALL SQUARE, ROOM 715  
BOSTON, MA 02201  
(617) 635-4911

PWD TYPICAL  
RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL  
DRIVEWAY PLAN

UPDATED:  
FEB, 2013

SCALE: N.T.S.

DETAIL NO.  
D3