

**GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR STATE-OWNED RAIL PROPERTY:  
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PRIVATE CROSSINGS**

**June 19, 2017**

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**Note: The following guidance is intended for general planning purposes only. Allowable access can vary widely by specific location. Additional requirements may be necessary for permission. In some instances, private crossings ultimately may not be permissible, even when minimum requirements are met.**

**General Information:**

- A private crossing may be approved if it is necessary, feasible and can be made reasonably safe. Generally, private crossings will be allowed only when alternate access is not available and there is not another crossing within two hundred (200) feet.
- All private crossing construction and maintenance activities require approval by MDOT and the operating railroad.
- All private crossing construction and maintenance costs are the responsibility of the permittee, including all costs related to the crossing surface, surface approach, sight distances, warning devices and insurance. A maintenance agreement typically will be required by the operating railroad. The operating railroad will be responsible for the construction of a permitted crossing through the MDOT right-of-way, at the cost of the permittee. The permittee will coordinate the driveway construction with crossing construction.
- Any approval will be specific to the use outlined in the application and contingent on the permittee ensuring the minimum conditions specified by MDOT are maintained. A change in use (such as changing single-family access to an access for multiple homes) will require new approval.
- Approved crossings will be established with a permit.
- A deterioration of safety conditions may result in MDOT revoking permission.
- The private crossing may be temporarily closed to perform track maintenance, and without prior notification when emergency repairs are necessary. Temporary alternate access, if available, would be the responsibility of the permittee.
- MCL 462.307 prohibits new crossings on federally-designated high-speed rail corridors, which applies to the state-owned corridor between Dearborn and Kalamazoo.

**Design Information:**

- The permittee is responsible for providing MDOT plans that detail the proposed location of the crossing; driveway material and width; and a cross-section view of the driveway as it approaches the track. The operating railroad will design and construct the crossing through the MDOT right-of-way, in accordance with MDOT specifications and standards, at the cost of the permittee.

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- Sight distance in both directions from the proposed crossing down the railroad track and down the driveway should be appropriate for the speed of the train. Tree removal and/or active warning devices may be required to address restricted sight distance.
- The angle of the crossing should be as close to perpendicular to the railroad track as possible. Less than seventy (70)-degrees likely will require automatic warning devices.
- Minimum crossing surface width is based on use. Non-motorized crossings have a minimum width of fourteen (14) feet. Motorized residential-use crossings have a minimum width of seventeen (17) feet.
- The approach grades to the crossing must be appropriate for proposed use (no high-profile or “humped” crossings). (Note that with track maintenance, the track bed will likely be raised over time, which would require the approach elevation to be raised to match at the cost of the permittee.)
- Crossing surface material shall be appropriate for the particular location and proposed use. MDOT will determine minimum specifications by location.
- Railroad warning devices will be determined by MDOT. Minimum warning devices will include a stop signs and railroad crossbucks. MDOT may also require additional warning devices at a later date if conditions warrant. If required, any active warning devices, like flashing lights and gates, will be installed and maintained by the operating railroad, at the cost of the permittee.

**Related Resources:**

- Guidelines for Highway-Railroad Grade Crossings:  
[http://michigan.gov/documents/mdot/MDOT-RailSafetyBlueBook\\_332455\\_7.pdf](http://michigan.gov/documents/mdot/MDOT-RailSafetyBlueBook_332455_7.pdf)
- Michigan Manual of Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD):  
[http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/tands/Details\\_Web/mmutcdpart8\\_2011.pdf](http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/tands/Details_Web/mmutcdpart8_2011.pdf)
- Railroad Typical Plans (does not apply to Dearborn-Kalamazoo corridor):  
[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/2016\\_MDOT\\_RR\\_TYPICALS\\_528022\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/2016_MDOT_RR_TYPICALS_528022_7.pdf)