

FAQs

October 1, 2021

Curb Ramps – Temporary Pedestrian Accessible Routes, Design and Construction

A Temporary Pedestrian Accessible Route (TPAR) is required for all ODOT construction projects. ODOT initiated a task force to improve the delivery of permanent curb ramp projects. This FAQ address' some of the TPAR issues raised in the task force.

Q: Can multiple curb ramps at a single intersection be constructed at the same time?

A: The Oregon Standard Specifications for Construction includes provisions that allow multiple corners at an intersection to be constructed at the same time (00220.02(b)), if the work is shown on a traffic control plan:

“For intersection Work that impacts the accessibility of pedestrian routes through or around the work zone, limit impacts to one corner of an intersection at a time, unless otherwise shown.”

Developing a TPAR through a work zone where multiple curb ramps are closed at a single intersection requires coordinating which curb ramps to close at the intersection and which curb ramps to close at adjacent intersections. This level of coordination requires a TPAR traffic control plan. Multiple curb ramps may be constructed at an intersection if there is a TPAR immediately adjacent to the curb ramp and crosswalks accessing the curb ramp can be maintained. Each individual project may have conditions, including available TPAR detours, right of way easements, traffic detours, and available lanes closures, which may constrain the TPAR and the ability to construct multiple curb ramps.

Q: Are there any ODOT standard details for constructing multiple curb ramps at the same intersection?

A: ODOT is developing standard details for:

- Constructing multiple curb ramps at an intersection
- Routing the TPAR behind curb ramps.
- Routing the TPAR into traffic shoulder/lane.
- Routing the TPAR using mid-block pedestrian crossings.

These details will require an Engineer to determine whether or not they are applicable to any given project or curb ramp.

Q. Can the contractor and ODOT partner and gain ODOT review/approval of contractor proposed TPAR changes?

A. ODOT is willing to partner with contractors on a project by project basis to perform and/or change the work, including TPAR's, to gain contract efficiencies. Oregon Law (ORS 672) requires an Agency Professional Engineer to supervise and control sealed work, including sealing TPAR traffic control plans. The Oregon Standard Specification for Construction include enough flexibility in that if a Contractor proposes a modification to a contract and ODOT determines it is beneficial to Oregonians, then ODOT can choose to take ownership of the modification, including modifications to TPAR's. Contractors also have the option to submit their own sealed TPAR's for ODOT review and approval.

Q. Can pedestrians be transported through the work zone instead of providing a TPAR onsite?

A. Pedestrian Transport Vehicles (PTV) are currently an option in the Oregon Standard Specifications for Construction. PTVs are best used for segments of roadway with no alternate routes to move pedestrians through or around a work zone. PTVs are also a solution when constructing multiple corners, however, pedestrian behavior limits the effectiveness.

PTVs are not a viable solution when constructing multiple curb ramps at an urban intersection. Most pedestrians are not going to wait for a PTV to pick them up, especially if their destination is relatively close. To avoid a potentially dangerous situation such as jaywalking, an onsite TPAR is the most viable option on most curb ramp projects and must be functional and effective for people of all abilities.

Q. Can temporary easements on private property be used for TPAR's?

A. ODOT has a robust temporary easement acquisition process, but the process can be expensive and take a significant amount of time. A TPAR that requires temporary easements needs to be identified early in the design process to gain access to private property in a timely manner. For every location that already has a permanent ROW file open, consider acquiring a temporary easement to provide extra space behind the curb ramp for the project TPAR. The cost for ODOT to open any ROW file, whether permanent or temporary, has the same overhead cost to the agency. Project teams need to balance the project needs and constructability when determining whether or not to acquire temporary easements for the TPAR.

Q. Has ODOT considered shifting more curb ramp work to the daytime?

Balancing safety and efficiency is important on curb ramp projects. For example, closing lanes and accessing the curb ramp during daylight hours from the highway, or closing lanes on side streets and accessing the ramp from the side street are options for pouring curb ramps during the day. Constructing curb ramps during the day can result in better quality curb ramps and reduced costs, as most concrete

plants are only open during daylight hours. Other options to reduce costs of pouring curb ramps could include using a concrete mobile mixing truck or mixing the concrete onsite.

One consideration is when the work should be completed, whether the work is done in the summer or year-round, on weekdays or weekends, during the day or at night. Often, ODOT determines curb ramp construction based on when traffic volumes are low enough to allow lane closures. Traffic volumes can also be reduced by public information campaigns, detours, or alternate routes, resulting in maintaining a reasonable amount of delay for traffic while maintaining mobility. There may be small windows during the day where traffic volumes are low enough to allow curb ramp construction. During project development ODOT explores whether or not it is possible to allow curb ramp construction during daylight hours.