



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Utilities Accommodation Guide

November 2024

Utilities, Railroad and Agreements

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Introduction

This guide will assist utilities in applying for a utility accommodation (permit or franchise) from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) when proposing to install utility infrastructure within the highway right of way. The guide is organized into the following sections listed below and will take applicants through the accommodation application process, as well as other considerations that may be relevant depending on the installation proposal.

1. Pre-Application
2. Application Process
3. Utility Application Package
4. Restoration Plans and Provisions
5. Bridge and Structures
6. Limited Access Highways
7. Variances
8. Operation
9. Risk Management
10. Operation and Maintenance

Disclaimer

This guidance shall not be construed as replacement for the [Utilities Accommodation Policy](#), [RCW 47.44](#), [RCW 47.32](#), or [WAC 468-34](#) that pertain to the accommodation of utilities on the highway right of way and the onus is on the utility to ensure they are following the law, policies, standards and procedures required. This guide only focuses on highway accommodation and does not detail other laws and regulations required for a utility.

Pre-Application

Applicants must confirm they are applying to the correct jurisdiction prior to application. WSDOT has jurisdiction within the highway right of way, but if within managed access that is inside a city boundary then the city has permitting jurisdiction.

Confirm Jurisdiction

Confirmation of jurisdiction can be accomplished by using:

- [Locate Mileposts](#)
- [GeoPortal](#)
- [Access Control Map](#)

Application Process

This is an overview of the application process. The next sections will provide further direction on what is required and expected of utilities and their contractors.

Submission Requirements

A complete application submission package for utility installation includes:

- An application signed by the utility - [Form 224-696](#)
- General Provisions - [Form 224-696GP](#)
- A Utility Facility Description - [Form 224-697](#)
- Utility provided plans

This guide is focused on traditional utility installations and the proposals requiring a full application. Forms for other applications or situations include:

- Stormwater applications - [Form 224-693](#)
- US Government Agencies - [Form 224-699](#)
- Near side service connections from facilities under an accommodation (other conditions apply) - [Form 224-050](#)

Note: Page sizes for submittals must not exceed page size of 11" X 17" and must be legible at that size.

Application Fee and Charge Codes

WSDOT's Utilities Accommodation policy requires a signature by the utility on the Utility Accommodation Application. This signature authorizes the department to charge for all costs associated with processing the utility's application. There is also an application fee that will be determined based on the proposed installation's complexity and impact on the highway right of way.

Submission Process

The utility can submit the completed application by email once the application has all the required documentation. Each region has a dedicated email inbox to receive submittals.

Eastern Region

- ER-Utilities@wsdot.wa.gov (Adams, Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, and Whitman counties)

North Central Region

- wsdotncrufpappssubmit@wsdot.wa.gov (Chelan, Douglas, Grant, and Okanogan counties)

Northwest Region

- NWRUtilities@wsdot.wa.gov (Island, King, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties)

Olympic Region

- Olympicregionutilities@wsdot.wa.gov (Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Pierce, and Thurston counties)

South Central Region

- wsdotscutilpf@wsdot.wa.gov (Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Kittitas, Walla Walla, and Yakima counties)

Southwest Region

- SWUtilities@wsdot.wa.gov (Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Pacific, Skamania, and Wahkiakum counties)

Utility Application Package

Every application must include specific documents as part of the application package:

1. Application signed by the utility ([Form 224-696](#))
2. General Provisions ([Form 224-696GP](#))
3. Utility Facility Description ([Form 224-697](#))
4. Utility Provided Plans
 - Annotated right of way plans
 - Utility proposal plans (vicinity map, plan view, cross section, profiles, etc.)
 - Traffic control plans

Applications that propose bridge attachments or include variance to policy will require additional documentation.

Utilities must also ensure they have risk management instruments in place, such as surety and insurance.

The following sections will provide the forms and examples of documents required.

Utility Accommodation Application - [Form 224-696](#)

Fill out the application form and sign it prior to submission. The beneficial owner of the proposed utility installation must be the one who signs the application. See below for further explanation of each field on the form.

Note: Do not send the application fee with the submission as a WSDOT reviewer will determine the application fee based on the proposal.

Utility Accommodation Application (Permit or Franchise)

Utility Contact Information (Applicant)			
Utility Company 1		Utility Contact Name 2	
Email		Phone (Office/Cell/Voicemail)	
Location 3			
State Route	Milepost Begin	Milepost End	County
Installation		Submit the Following Documentation:	
Please Check One <input type="checkbox"/> Power 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer <input type="checkbox"/> Water <input type="checkbox"/> Telecommunication <input type="checkbox"/> Gas <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		Please Check All That Apply <input type="checkbox"/> Buried 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial <input type="checkbox"/> Surface Feature (Pole, ped, vault) <input type="checkbox"/> Attached to a bridge/structure	
		Utility Facility Description (UFD) Plan Sheets 6 For Additional Documents Applicable to your work, see Submitting a Utility Accommodation Application Webpage (Link)	
Describe Installation Type (Briefly explain) 7			
Anticipated Construction Start Date: 8		Project Duration: 9	
Billing Information* 10			
Contact Name			
Street			
City		State	Zip + 4
Phone (Office/Cell/Voicemail)		Email	
Statewide Vendor Number 11		Applicant Reference Work Order (optional) 12	
Utility Authorized Signatory 13			
Signature		Printed Name & Title/Owner	Date
<p>The Authorized Signature indicates the General Provisions, as provided, have been read and are agreed to by the Utility. The Utility understands, based on the proposed installation, applicable special provisions will be provided at issuance of your Permit or Franchise. 14</p> <p>* WSDOT has the authority to invoice the Utility for all work associated with the review, processing and inspection of the proposed installation. The applicant promises to pay any additional costs, in addition to the fees, incurred by WSDOT in accordance with WAC 468-34 and RCW 47.44.</p>			
Supplemental Contact Information of Authorized Agent if NOT the Utility 15			
Company Name		Contact Name	
Email		Phone (Office/Cell/Voicemail)	

Utility Contact Information

1. The utility company named must be the beneficial owner of the proposed infrastructure to be installed.
2. Write the representative for the utility that will be the point of contact directly with WSDOT and should have oversight of any contractors.

Location

3. Indicate the location of the proposed installation. Use [Locate Mileposts](#) to assist with confirming the location.
 - a. The State Route number (do not add 'SR' or 'State Route'), Milepost Begin (low), Milepost End (high), and County must be included.

Installation

4. Check the box of the utility type that best fits the proposal.
5. Check all boxes that apply whether the proposal includes underground, above ground, surface feature or bridge attachment. Please note there are additional requirements if proposing to attach infrastructure to a bridge.
6. Submit The Utility Facility Description ([Form 224-697](#)) and utility plan sheets at the same time as the application.
7. Provide a brief description of the proposed installation, include the infrastructure, method of installation proposed, and owners of other utility poles or conduit being utilized.
8. Provide the preferred or estimated start of construction (season or month is acceptable). Providing this estimate is not a guarantee that the permit or franchise will be approved prior to this date.
9. Provide the estimated duration for construction and roadway closure.

Billing Information

10. Provide a utility company contact responsible for processing WSDOT invoices related to the application. This section is related to WSDOT's charges to the utility and must not list a consultant or contractor hired by the utility.
11. List the applicable Statewide Vendor Number for billing purposes. Include the appropriate suffix if a utility has multiple numbers. The number provided must match the billing address. The [Statewide Vendor Number lookup](#) can be used to find the correct number.
12. Including a work order for the proposal will assist in communicating with the utility regarding the application.

Utility Authorized Signatory

13. A signature is required from the beneficial owner of the proposed utility installation (not the supplemental contact, see below) authorizing the application and agreeing to the General Provisions ([Form 224-696GP](#)).
14. The utility company acknowledges that WSDOT will send invoices for a reimbursable account established for the application. The invoice will include charges for the time to review the application by a regional utilities engineer, various specialty groups (e.g. maintenance, geotechnical, materials, etc.) required to review the application, and inspection during construction.

Supplemental Contact Information of Authorized Agent if NOT the Utility

15. If the utility chooses to have another party be authorized to apply on their behalf they must be listed as a contact, but this does not remove the responsibility of the utility as the beneficial owner and operator of the infrastructure. The utility must also be included in the application process and must be available for direct communication with WSDOT.

General Provisions for the Utility Accommodation Application - [Form 224-696GP](#)

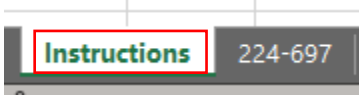
A copy of the General Provisions must be included in the application as by signing the application the utility is agreeing to the provisions. Please read and understand the obligations a utility has for installation infrastructure within the highway right of way.

Note: The approved accommodation will also contain Special Provisions, which are additional requirements that are specific to the utility's proposed installation. These provisions are separate from the General Provisions and not part of the application package. Please ensure to read and understand all Special Provision requirements.

Utility Facility Description - [Form 224-697](#)

The Utility Facility Description (UFD) portrays the proposed utility installations in relation to the highway right of way in a spreadsheet format. The UFD information must match plan sheets and not contradict any other information provided.

The excel spreadsheet contains a tab labeled as 'Instructions' that will assist completing the table in addition to this guide. All fields must be filled except for the greyed-out cells that are for WSDOT use.



Note: failure to complete the UFD fields will delay the application review.

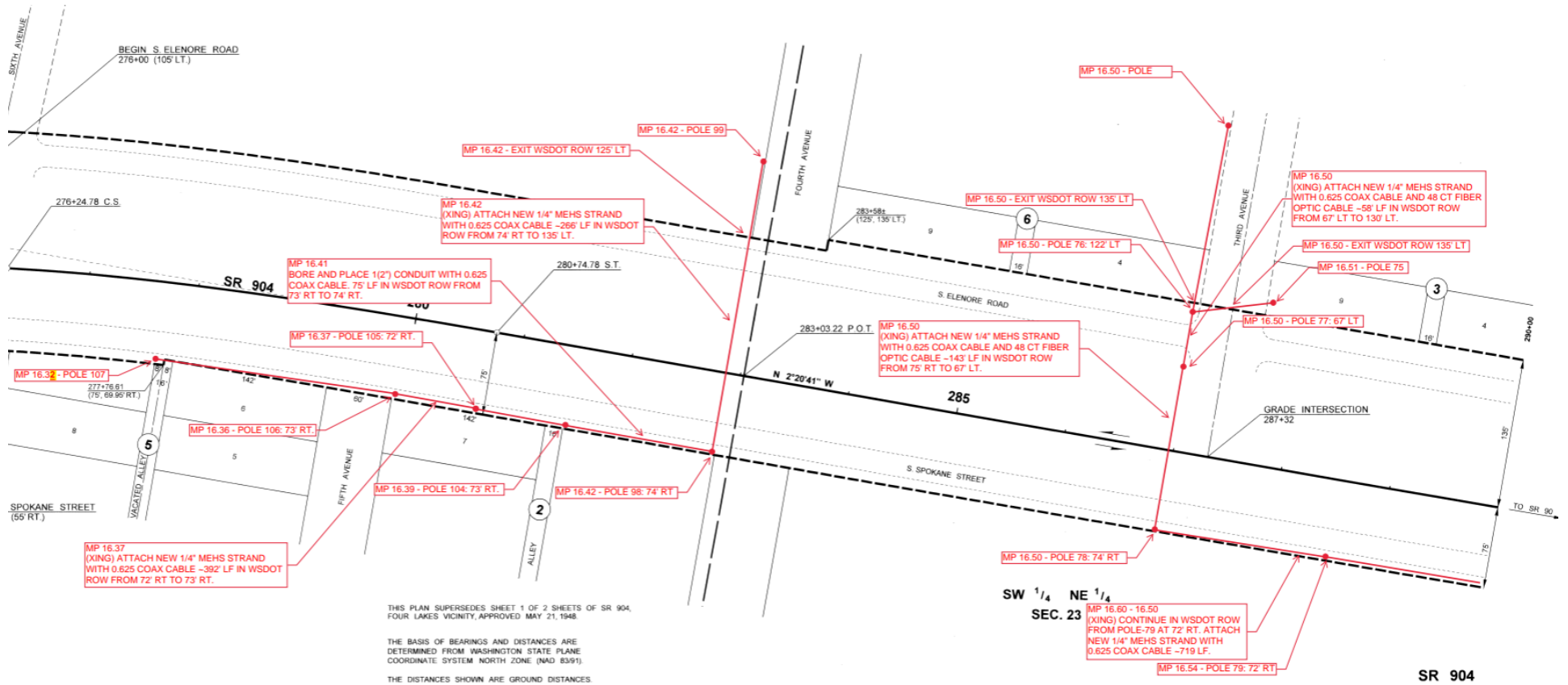
1. Use [Locate Mileposts](#) to confirm State Route and mileposts for the beginning (low milepost) and end (high milepost) of the proposed work. Ensure the mileposts match the application and any other documentation. Do not add 'SR' or 'MP' to these fields.
2. All grayed out areas of the form will be completed by WSDOT.
3. Describe an overview of the installation method, location, size and type of utility facility to be installed. Also add other utility owners of poles and conduits if being utilized.
4. List offsets from painted centerline. For crossings include both the right and left offset.
5. List offset from fog line. For crossings include both the right and left offset.
6. Indicate the depth or height of facility. If depth does not meet WSDOT standards the utility will be required to complete a variance.
7. Include the size and type of facility. Other notable features, such as vaults, pedestals, poles, anchors, etc. should be a separate row entry.
8. List the right of way width based on the right of way plans.
9. Indicate whether the facilities will be aerial (e.g. lines crossing a highway), buried (e.g. trenched conduit), bridge (e.g. attached to a WSDOT structure), or surface (e.g. pole, vault, manhole). A new line entry is required if there are multiple types within a proposal.
10. Add remarks and comments about the installation and other information not included elsewhere in the form. Indicate where facilities enter and exit on separate row entries.

WSDOT Right of Way Plan

Contact the appropriate regional utilities office for the latest right of way plans relevant to the application.

Mark the location of the proposed work area with mileposts on the right of way sheets and annotate it with proposed works and installation method. Make sure the mileposts and facilities match the other plan sheets and UFD.

Annotated WSDOT Right of Way Plan - Example



THIS PLAN SUPERSEDES SHEET 1 OF 2 SHEETS OF SR 904, FOUR LAKES VICINITY, APPROVED MAY 21, 1948.

THE BASIS OF BEARINGS AND DISTANCES ARE DETERMINED FROM WASHINGTON STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM NORTH ZONE (NAD 83/91).

THE DISTANCES SHOWN ARE GROUND DISTANCES.

SW 1/4 NE 1/4
SEC. 23

SR 904

Utility Provided Plans

The level of detail necessary for plan submittal depends on the circumstances of the proposed installation. The following guidelines should be used when considering proposed installation plan requirements.

Utility plans generally must include:

- Sufficient detail and to scale, and an accurate depiction of the roadway in relation to the installation
- Match the UFD
- Clearly identify pavement cuts, horizontal and vertical location, environmental issues, and other existing utilities
- Allow WSDOT inspectors to confidently determine whether a utility is installed in the manner and location approved by WSDOT.

WSDOT does not accept 'typical' plans as they do not reflect the roadway relative to the proposed utility installation that an application requires.

Plans that show insufficient detail may require additional information for WSDOT approval.

Utility Plan View

Utility plan views should include:

- WSDOT right of way boundary
- State route and mileposts (enter/exit and other significant work, such as poles, crossings, etc.)
- Site-specific road geometrics (i.e. centerline, lane and shoulder widths)
- Proposed facilities and method of installation (i.e. directional bore, pit locations and dimensions)
- Distance from any bridge columns and walls, or other WSDOT structures

Utility Profile and Cross Sections

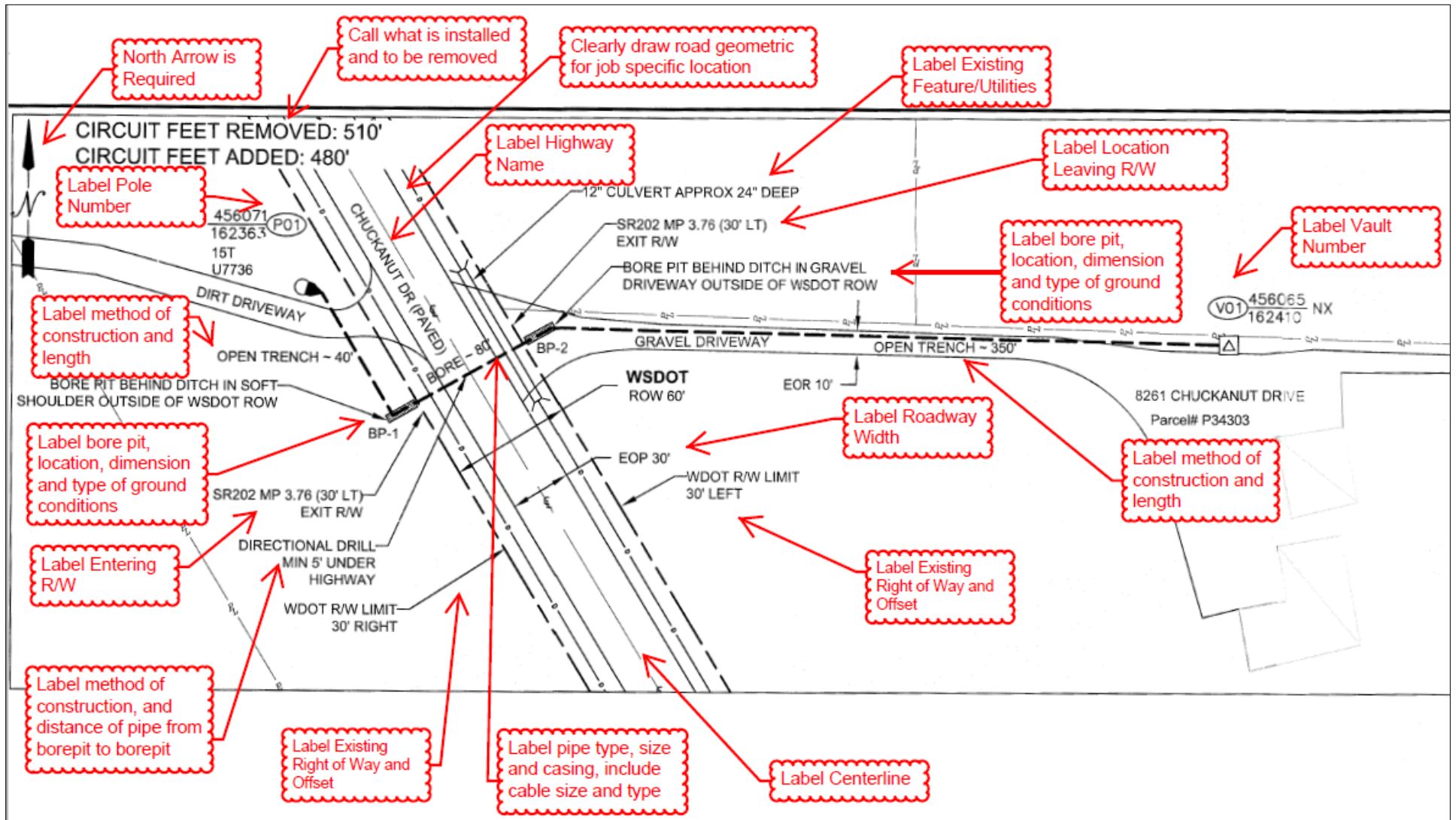
Utility profiles, cross sections or other detailed utility plans should include:

- WSDOT right of way boundary
- Site-specific road geometrics (i.e. centerline, lane and shoulder widths)
- Proposed facilities and method of installation (i.e. directional bore, pit locations and dimensions)
- Indication that facilities will meet depth requirements per the Utility Accommodation Policy under the roadway, ditches and structures
- Size and type of pipe or conduit
- Indication that aerial crossings meet height requirements per [WAC 468-34-290](#)

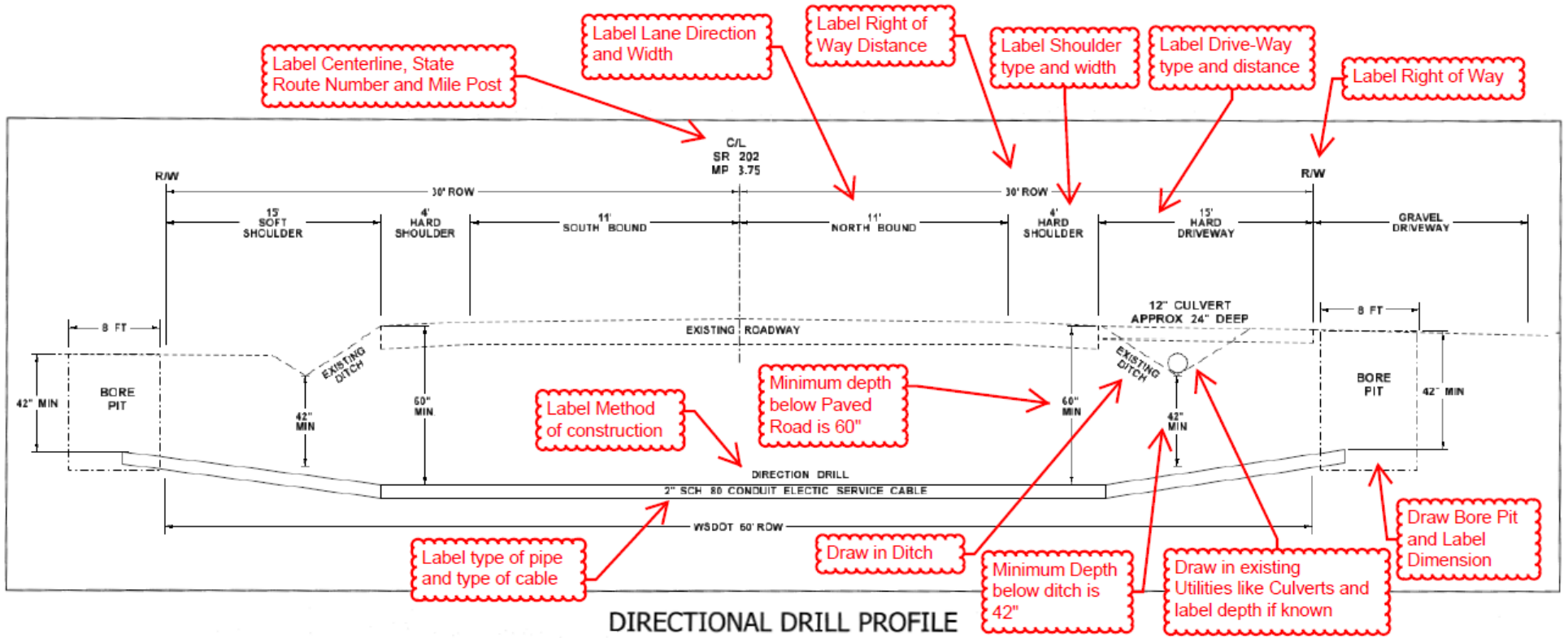
Annotated Photos

Annotated photos of the work location can be a useful tool to show your proposed facilities in relation to the current roadway. The annotation should include all major features of the proposal, including aerial, underground, vaults, bore pits, etc.

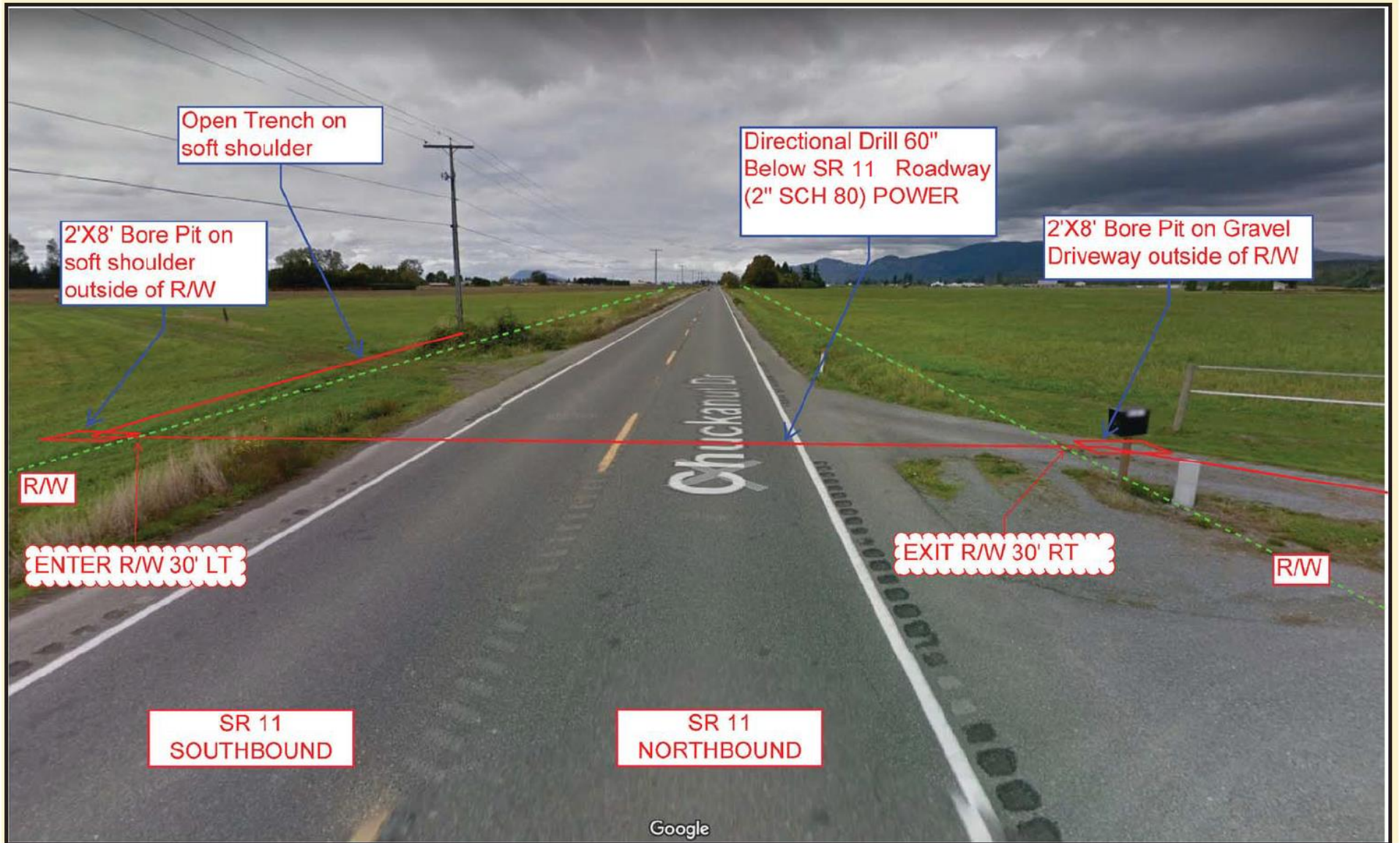
Utility Plan View - Example



Utility Profile View - Example



Annotated Photo - Example



Google

MP 3.75

Traffic Control Plans

Traffic Control Plans (TCP) are required if work will occur in roadway lane(s) and/or shoulder(s) or if work will occur outside of roadway, but within the Clear Zone ([WSDOT Design Manual](#)).

Utilities may use [typical TCP](#) as a starting point, but these plans are generic and not intended to satisfy all work zone conditions, and only serve as guides. Utilities can download plans in AutoCad or Microstation format on the webpage. Typical TCP must be modified with sound engineering judgment and familiarization with [work zone policy and guidance](#). Modify the typical TCP for the work location by labelling all highways, local streets, and roads shown. The utility may have to add more lanes to show the work zone in relation to the actual roadway geometrics. A modified typical TCP must still include the details and tables included in the typical TCP.

The utility may have to develop a site-specific TCP for unique roadway configurations or conditions. Utilities can confirm with the regional utilities office if there are questions regarding if a revised typical TCP is sufficient or if a site-specific TCP is required.

Note: Make sure to check the webpage for updated typicals for every TCP needed.

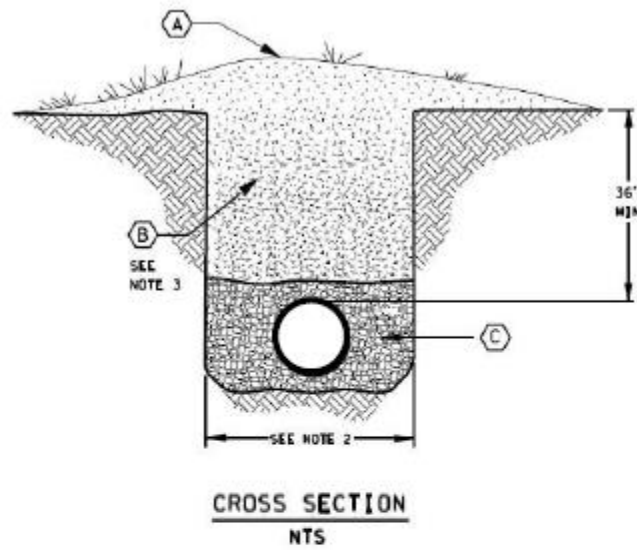
Restoration Plans and Provisions

Restoration of the roadway prism and right of way includes the landscape, shoulders, pavement, and subsurface. The right of way must be restored to 'as good or better' after the utility infrastructure is installed. WSDOT has specific typical drawings for the restoration of trenching or open cuts, if a variance is approved. The typical drawings may be revised or supplemented by Special Provisions. WSDOT will provide restoration plans as exhibits in an approved utility accommodation that the utility must follow. Reviewing the provisions and drawings for restoration direction is imperative to have appropriate means and materials on site to restore the highway right of way after installation of utility facilities.

Failure to restore WSDOT right of way properly will require corrective action.

Below are the typical restoration plans for reference.

Open Trench Restoration



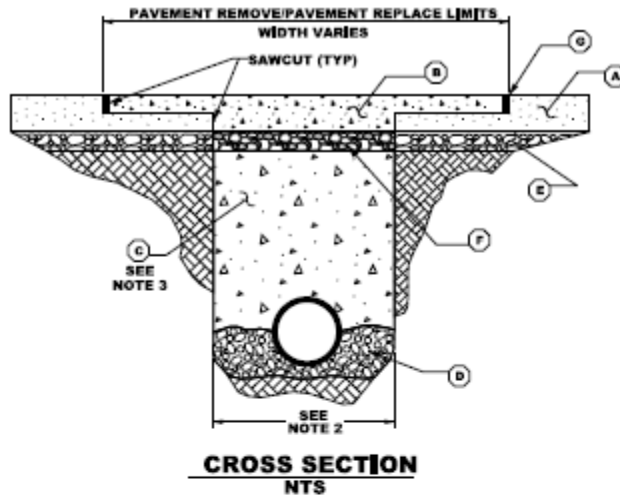
LEGEND

- (A) Surface treatment to restore existing to match adjacent (seeding, bark, etc.).
- (B) Native material or as directed by WSDOT.
- (C) Bedding material. Bedding material depth over and beneath pipe casing shall be half the diameter of pipe casing or 6 inches, whichever is less.

GENERAL NOTES

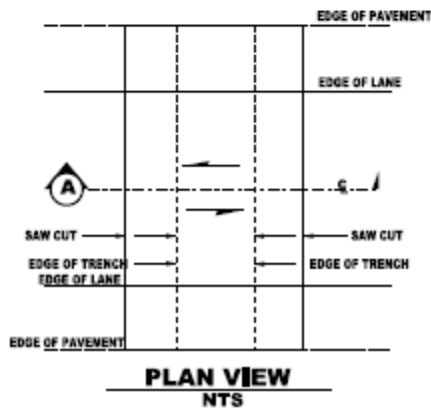
1. Trenching and pipe installation shall meet the requirements of WSDOT Standard Specification 7-08.
2. Maximum trench width shall be outside casing pipe width plus 1 foot either side of casing pipe.
3. Compaction shall be method C per Standard Specification Section 2-03.3 (14) C.
4. When connecting to an existing facility under the pavement, pavement restoration may, at the department's discretion, include the full lane width and encroached shoulder.
5. Casing pipes shall extend a minimum of six (6) feet beyond the toe of fill slopes, bottom of ditchline, or outside of curb.

Open Cut Restoration



LEGEND

- (A) EXISTING HMA (HOT MIX ASPHALT) OR PCCP (PORTLAND CEMENT CONCRETE PAVEMENT).
- (B) HMA CLASS $\frac{1}{2}$ INCH OR PCCP DEPTH AND MATERIAL SHALL MATCH EXISTING PAVEMENT, REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT LIMITS OF PAVEMENT TO BE DETERMINED AT THE TIME OF UTILITY PERMIT/FRANCHISE REVIEW.
- (C) APPROVED BACKFILL MATERIAL OR CDF (CONTROL DENSITY BACKFILL) OR AS SPECIFIED BY WSDOT.
- (D) BEDDING MATERIAL DEPTH BENEATH THE PIPE/CASING SHALL BE SIX (6) INCHES. ADDITIONAL PIPE BEDDING SHALL BE PLACED EQUAL TO HALF THE DIAMETER OF THE PIPE/CASING OR SIX (6) INCHES, WHICHEVER IS LESS.
- (E) EXISTING CRUSHED SURFACING BASE COURSE.
- (F) CRUSHED SURFACING BASE COURSE DEPTH SHALL MATCH DEPTH OF EXISTING CRUSHED SURFACING BASE COURSE.
- (G) HMA BUTT JOINT REQUIRES TACK, SEAL, AND SAND. FOR PCCP, REFER TO GENERAL NOTE 5.



GENERAL NOTES

1. TRENCHING AND PIPE INSTALLATION SHALL MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF WSDOT STANDARD SPECIFICATION 7-08.
2. MAXIMUM TRENCH WIDTH SHALL NOT EXCEED CASING/PIPE DIAMETER PLUS AN ADDITIONAL ONE (1) FOOT ON EITHER SIDE.
3. COMPACTION SHALL BE METHOD "C" PER STANDARD SPECIFICATION SECTION 2-03.3(14)C.
4. MINIMUM DEPTH SHALL BE SIXTY (60) INCHES FROM THE FINISHED SURFACE TO TOP OF CASING.
5. PCCP SHALL BE REPLACED TO THE NEXT PANEL JOINT IN EACH DIRECTION AS APPROVED BY WSDOT, ALL WORK SHALL BE AS SPECIFIED IN WSDOT STANDARD SPECIFICATION SECTION 5-01.3(4).
6. WHEN CONNECTING TO AN EXISTING FACILITY UNDER THE PAVEMENT, PAVEMENT RESTORATION MAY, AT THE DEPARTMENT'S DISCRETION, INCLUDE THE FULL LANE WIDTH AND ENCROACHED SHOULDER.
7. CASING PIPES SHALL EXTEND A MINIMUM OF SIX (6) FEET BEYOND THE TOE OF FILL SLOPES, BOTTOM OF DITCHLINE, OR OUTSIDE OF CURB.
8. TACK ASPHALT PER WSDOT STANDARD SPECIFICATION 5-4.3(5)A.

Landscape Restoration

In addition to restoration of the pavement, soft shoulder or other areas of the roadway prism, disturbed vegetation will also need to be restored as directed by WSDOT in the Special Provisions. Removal of trees and shrubs should be minimized as much as possible. For restoration requirements refer to the [Roadside Policy Manual](#).

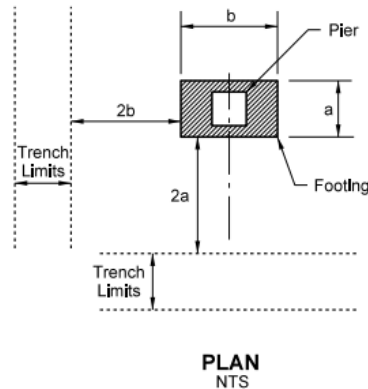
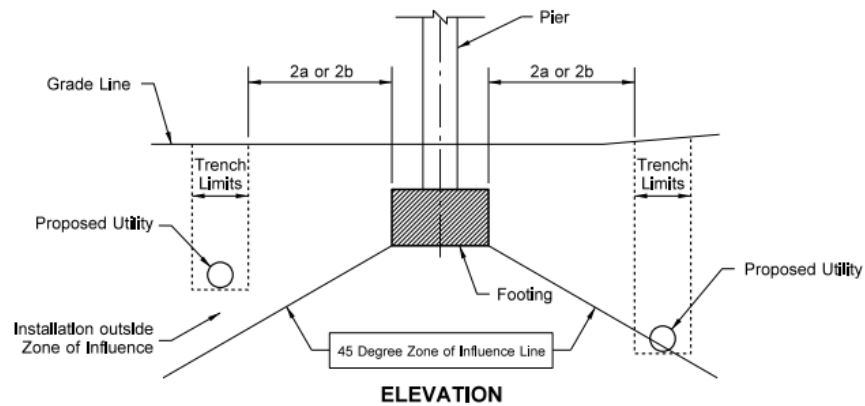
If removing significant vegetation and trees, the utility has to pay the fair market value of merchantable timber by entering into an agreement ([Form 224-083](#)). Please indicate to the applicable regional utilities office if proposing the removal of vegetation and/or trees.

Bridge and Structures

Utility installation proposals requesting bridge attachments require additional review and processing time. Bridge attachment plans shall meet all criteria of the WSDOT [Bridge Design Manual](#) and WSDOT [Standard Specifications](#). Utilities should review WSDOT [Form 224-047](#) for general notes and design criteria for utility installations on existing bridges.

Installation near a bridge also requires additional consideration to ensure a utility is not impacting the zone of influence (as shown in the below diagram) to ensure the bridge footings are not undermined due to the installation.

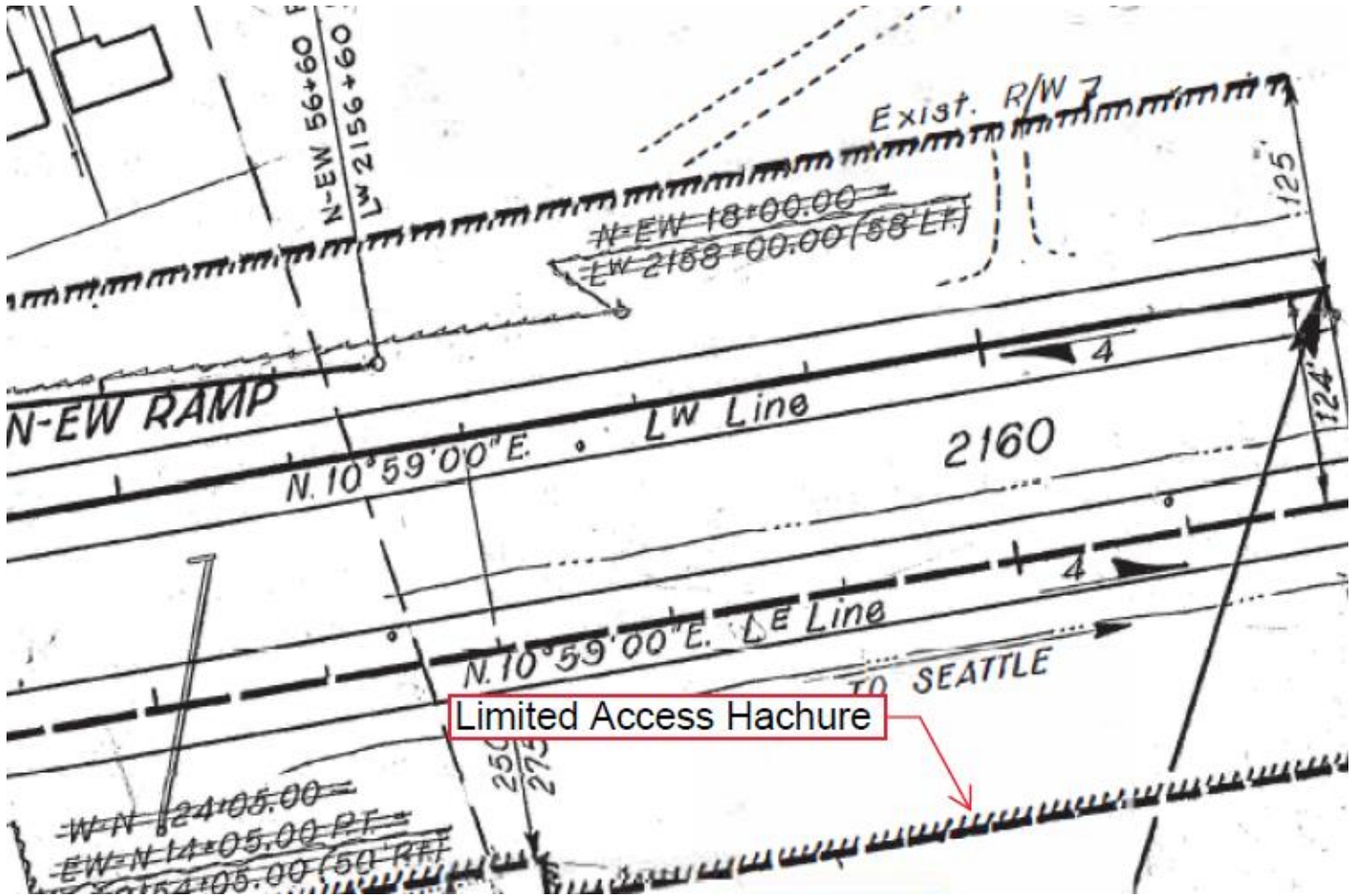
Note: Do not contact the WSDOT Bridge Office directly as all communication shall be via the regional utilities offices.



Limited Access Highways

Work that crosses over, under, or physically through WSDOT limited access controlled right of way will require WSDOT access approval. Access approval is also required for any TCP that proposes closure of roadway, lanes, ramps and/or shoulders within limited access right of way. Work or traffic control proposed on interstate mainline or ramps also require Federal Highway Administration approval, which WSDOT will facilitate.

Limited access can be identified by hachures on WSDOT right of way plans as shown below. WSDOT limited access can also be identified with WSDOT's [Access Control Map](#) or [Locate Mileposts](#). However, please note that around interchanges there will also be limited access for on and off ramps.



Variations

A variance is a proposed utility installation that is contrary to the WSDOT Utilities Accommodation Policy. Variations have the potential to negatively affect the continued operation of the highway. Variations must be justified by the utility and reviewed by WSDOT. Please note, variance requests increase application processing time and are not guaranteed for approval.

Types of Variations

Variations include, but not limited to:

- Open cut pavement
- Shallow depth installation
- Limited access encroachment
- Scenic classification
- Uncased crossing
- Control zone
- Trenching within roadway prism
- Bore pits located within limited access
- Non-fiber longitudinal utility installations within full control limited access

Variance Justification

The variance proposal must be reasonable and within the bounds of normal industry standards. There must be a valid reason the variance is necessary, and it should not place the convenience of the utility ahead of the needs or goals of WSDOT. Issues or circumstances cited as reasons for the variance must be able to be verified by documentation. The proposed variance must also be justifiable as the only available means of installation based on other alternatives considered.

Currently the follow justification forms are available:

- [Application for Combined Variance](#) - Open Cut, Open Trench or Shallow Depth
- [Limited Access Encroachment Variance Request Justification](#)
- [Control Zone Variance Request Justification](#)
- [Scenic Classification Variance Request Justification](#)

Operation and Maintenance

Utilities can provide a notification of maintenance activity for existing facilities under an approved accommodation. Approval of traffic control needed for maintenance activities will still be required. Contact the applicable regional utilities office for work related to maintenance for further direction and applicable regional forms. Utilities must receive approval by WSDOT prior to performing any work on the highway right of way.

Risk Management

A surety may be required by WSDOT to ensure proper construction and restoration of the highway. The surety must be provided to WSDOT before any construction work on the highway right of way is started. WSDOT also requires utilities to have a valid insurance prior to performing work on the highway right of way.

Sureties

Sureties provide WSDOT with a means of recovering costs in the event the utility does not meet its obligations contained in the General and Special Provisions of the utility accommodation. Valid surety instruments can be in the form of a bond, escrow agreement, or a government entity pool.

Bonds can be on an individual installation basis or as a blanket bond. WSDOT may require completing a blanket bond if a significant number of installations are likely or there will be multiple installations across WSDOT regions. Blanket bonds shall be a minimum of \$10,000. At the discretion of WSDOT, an individual bond may be required to supplement a blanket bond depending on the proposed utility work.

Surety documents include:

- Blanket Bond for Utility Accommodation Applications - [Form 224-012](#)
- Individual Bond for Utility Accommodation Applications - [Form 224-048](#)
- Escrow Agreement Utilities - [Form 224-096](#)

Insurance

Utilities must have sufficient insurance coverage when performing any work on the highway right of way. Coverage can also be through a risk pool or self-insured if the utility infrastructure is owned by a city or county. Utilities must provide proof upon request of sufficient coverage.

Sufficient coverage shall be as follows:

- Commercial General Liability covering the risks of bodily injury (including death), property damage, and personal injury, including coverage for contractual liability, with a limit of not less than \$3 million per occurrence and in the aggregate.
- Business Automobile Liability (owned, hired, or non-owned) covering the risks of bodily injury (including death) and property damage, including coverage for contractual liability, with a limit of not less than \$1 million per accident.
- Employers Liability covering the risks of Utility's employees' bodily injury by accident or disease, with limits of not less than \$1 million per accident for bodily injury by accident and \$1 million per employee for bodily injury by disease.

Transfer of Ownership

A utility that merges or accepts assets from another company must complete an Acceptance of Assignment (Transfer of Ownership) ([Form 224-051](#)), which ensures WSDOT has accurate records of utility infrastructure within the highway right of way.