

National Guidelines for Subdivision and Consolidation of Land in Belize

Lands and Surveys Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and the
Environment

May 2010

Table of Content

1. Overview.....	1
2. Introduction.....	2
2.1 Purpose.....	2
2.2 Definitions.....	2
3. The Guidelines.....	4
3.1 PART 1: The Planning and Subdivision Process.....	4
3.1.1 The Responsibility of the Land Subdivision and Utilization Authority.....	4
3.1.2 The Responsibility of the Department of Lands and Surveys.....	4
3.1.3 The Land Subdivision/Consolidation Application Process.....	4
3.1.4 Variations in Provisional and Final Approval process.....	6
3.2 PART 2: Design and Development Requirements.....	7
3.2.1 Subdivision design criteria.....	7
3.2.2 Development standards for subdivisions.....	7
3.2.3 Public open space contributions.....	10
3.2.4 Roads and other accesses.....	10
3.2.5 Access to Bodies of Water.....	12
3.2.6 Buffer Zones.....	12
3.2.7 Car parking.....	12
3.2.8 Utility Services.....	12
3.2.9 Survey plan criteria.....	13
3.2.10 Application Fees.....	13
4. Annexes.....	14

List of Tables

Table 1: Residential development standards.....	8
Table 2: Commercial development standards.....	8
Table 3: Industrial development standards.....	9
Table 4: Agricultural standards.....	9
Table 5: Institutional use and Community facilities.....	9
Table 6: Application fee structure.....	13

List of Annexes

Annex 1: Provisional Approval Application Form.....	15
Annex 2: Final Approval Application Form.....	18
Annex 3: Application Checklist.....	19
Annex 4: Density Areas.....	20
Annex 5: Permitted Land-Uses.....	21
Annex 6: Vehicle Parking/Unloading Standards.....	23
Annex 7: Design Specifications for Infrastructure Construction.....	24

1. Overview

GUIDELINES STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

These guidelines are presented in two (2) parts with additional Introduction and Annexes sections:

INTRODUCTION

The Introduction highlights the purpose of the guidelines and includes some definitions used in the guidelines.

PART 1

THE PLANNING AND SUBDIVISION PROCESS

This section briefly covers the planning and subdivision process with specific reference to the Land Utilization Act.

PART 2

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

This section covers general requirements for the design and development standards for subdivisions to the satisfaction of the Land Utilization Authority, the Ministry of Works and other relevant agencies.

ANNEXES

This section provides copies of the relevant forms, checklists, and other supplementary material to be used along with the guidelines.

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the development of these guidelines is to standardize the application process and requirements for subdivisions and land consolidation in Belize to ensure that best practices are followed. These guidelines are developed in response to observed trends in rapid urban expansion, tourism and other development, and the resulting demand to transfer/alienate smaller portions of property and consolidation of smaller properties to facilitate development. Under the existing laws (the Land Utilization Act, Chapter 188 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000), final subdivision approval is needed to make such land transactions legal. These guidelines will assist in improving transparency and equitability of the application process. It is designed to conform to a National Planning Framework for Belize. Upon completion, its content will be legislated as National Subdivision Regulations.

2.2 Definitions

The uses of terms within these guidelines are defined as follows:

Access	(i) Pathway – Provision that allows for adequate movement of pedestrians and cyclists to a parcel, open space or other public area, river, creek, sea, lagoon or other major water body. (ii) Road - Area dedicated for vehicular and non-vehicular use for the purpose of public access, including any forest road established under the Forest Act. (iii) Right-of-way – Provision of an easement for right of movement or passage.
The Act	The Land Utilization Act, Chapter 188 of the substantive laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000
Applicant	The land owner or assigned person (s) acting on the land owner’s behalf.
The Authority	The Land Subdivision and Utilization Authority established in Section 9(1) of The Act
Community facilities	Additional spaces set aside in large residential or commercial subdivisions for public purposes.
Conservation area	Areas including the 66 ft reserve and other reserves, canal buffers, hazard lands, water bodies, areas that are at flood risk, areas with ecological significance; does not include roads and road reserves
The Department	The Department of Lands and Surveys
Density	A measure of development within an area, measured in number of lots per acre, number of dwelling units per acre, or maximum site coverage
Dwelling unit	A living area consisting of contiguous rooms intended for convenient, long-term occupancy by one family and providing complete, independent facilities for living, eating, cooking, sleeping and sanitation
Hazard lands	Steep slopes and areas prone to: flood, fire, erosion, seismic activity, and land slides
Institution	Includes schools, community centers, public health clinics, libraries, embassies, police stations, and other public agencies
The Land Owner	The legal entity holding title to the land being subdivided and/or consolidated
Land title	A Land Certificate, Grant Fiat, Conveyance, First Certificate of Title, Transfer Certificate of Title, Deed of Gift, Deed of Assent or other form of title for private land. For undeclared areas, updated title documents for the remaining portion of previously subdivided lands.
Location plan	A map showing the location of the parcel being subdivided in relation to adjacent properties and other prominent landmarks (roads, water bodies etc.)
Restricted areas	Protected areas with development restrictions; critical habitats
The Minister	The Minister of Government responsible for land
The Ministry	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment
Open space	Area of land set aside for community recreation and other related uses (may include greenways and some conservation areas such as sanctuaries, preserve, and reserves. Open spaces do not include roads, buffers, water bodies (rivers, creeks, lagoons etc.), sinkholes, ancient monuments, or other areas not suitable for public use. They may include community facilities such as public parking

	lots, schools, cemeteries, churches, public sporting areas, youth centers, police stations, or health facilities, as required for large subdivisions (see Table 6)
Park	Area specifically dedicated for public parks and playgrounds (area is included in open space)
The subdivision design	The scaled drawing of the subdivision or consolidation submitted to The Authority for approval
Restrictive covenant	A clause in a deed or lease to real property that requires one party to perform, or refrain from performing, certain actions, or limits what the owner of the land or lessee can do with/within the property. Restrictive covenants allow surrounding property owners, who have similar covenants in their deeds, to enforce the terms of the covenants in a court of law. They are intended to enhance property values by controlling development.
Preserve	A green area set aside to be maintained in its natural state
Setback	The minimum distance measured from the front, side or back of a lot or natural feature within which certain development may be limited
Subdivide	To divide for the purpose of alienation of any land into smaller parcels and/or to consolidate smaller portions of land into larger parcels than which is owned or possessed.

3. The Guidelines

3.1 PART 1: The Planning and Subdivision Process

3.1.1 *The Responsibility of the Land Subdivision and Utilization Authority*

The Land Subdivision and Utilization Authority (The Authority) is the authority which makes recommendation (s) to the Hon. Minister responsible for land for subdivision and/or consolidation of land and the creation, removal and variation of easements. This Authority was established under the Land Utilization Act, Chapter 188 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000. This Authority is responsible for overall land use planning in the country of Belize.

The Authority meets on a monthly basis to review applications and is currently comprised of the following members:

- a) The Commissioner of Lands (Chairperson),
- b) The Chief Engineer or representative,
- c) The Chief Forest Officer or representative,
- d) The Chief Agricultural Officer or representative,
- e) The Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Lands (The Secretary),
- f) Two other persons appointed by the Minister of Lands, and
- g) The National Coordinator appointed under the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act.

3.1.2 *The Responsibility of the Department of Lands and Surveys*

The Department of Lands and Surveys through its Physical Planning Section (PPS) accepts and vets all applications for land subdivision/consolidation. Once applications are vetted, they are submitted to the Land Subdivision and Utilization Authority (The Authority) for recommendation. The PPS has the following responsibilities in reference to subdivision applications:

- a) Accept applications for land subdivision and reviews them to ensure completeness and adherence to subdivision design requirements,
- b) Open a file for each subdivision application; each file is assigned an application number and is recorded in an application and index book lodged in the office of the PPS,
- c) Forward applications to the Commissioner of Lands for subdivisions which fall under Sections 18(a) or 18(b) of The Act,
- d) Prepare an agenda for each monthly meeting where applications are to be reviewed,
- e) Process files according to the recommendations of The Authority after the monthly meeting, and
- f) Prepare correspondences to inform applicants of conditions for recommendation by The Authority and/or the approval/refusal of the subdivision application.

3.1.3 *The Land Subdivision/Consolidation Application Process*

Subdivision of land is obtained in two (2) main stages, namely: (1) **Provisional** approval and (2) **Final** approval.

Stage 1 – Provisional approval

Under the Provisional approval stage:

1. The applicant:
 - Submits his/her application with a sketch (drawn to scale) showing the proposed subdivision design (plus 7 copies), location plan, copy of land title, a certified copy of the land register for all lands within a declared area under the Land Registration Act, tax statement showing all taxes are paid, mortgage declaration by the land owner for all land in undeclared areas, and completed Provisional approval to subdivide application form (**Annex 1**), plus 6 copies. Additional documentation may be required such as company documents, input from the local authority, and environmental clearance.
 - Pays his/her application fee at the Land Revenue Section of The Ministry and provides a copy of the receipt to the Physical Planning Section (See Fee Structure in **Table 6**).
2. The Physical Planning Section (PPS):
 - Checks the application for completeness and adherence of the design to the guidelines and attaches a checklist of documents to the application (**Annex 3**).
 - Places the application in a file, and assigns a reference number.
 - Records the receipt of the application in the application and index books, and on the Application Management System (AMS).

3. The PPS:

- Makes a determination of the complexity of the subdivision application and proceeds to submit the following directly to the Commissioner of Lands for his/her approval:
 - All simple subdivisions (3 or less parcels);
 - Subdivisions where the resulting parcel (s) are to be combined to an adjacent land owner's (18a of The Act);
 - Subdivisions where the resulting parcels are to be transferred to the land owner's wife, husband, and/or children (18b of The Act).

Applications that do not meet the criteria set in Section 3 should proceed with Section 4 below.

4. The applicant:

- Contacts the PPS regarding a site inspection for all subdivisions in low-lying areas, other sensitive areas including the cayes, on the coastline, areas known to be hazardous, or large subdivisions (20 or more parcels, or areas above 10 acres).

5. The PPS:

- Places application on a submission list (the Agenda) for the next monthly meeting of The Authority and submits a copy to the Chairperson (the Commissioner of Lands).

6. The Secretary:

- Records the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Authority and submits these to the PPS.

7. The PPS:

- Forwards applications recommended by The Authority to the Hon. Minister for approval.

8. The PPS:

- Where an application is recommended with conditions, informs the applicant of the conditions by letter within one week of the meeting and provides an opportunity for the applicant to comply with the conditions stipulated by The Authority.

9. The PPS:

- Where an application is not recommended (Deferred) by The Authority and not approved by the Minister, so informs the applicant.

10. The Applicant:

- May either accept the decision, or amend his/her application for re-submission, or may present a case for just cause for re-consideration by The Authority. Applications deferred shall only be re-submitted a maximum of two (2) times for reconsideration.

11. The PPS:

- Applications approved by the Minister are issued a **Provisional approval** to subdivide letter and a copy of Section 13 of the Land Utilization Act – this Section stipulates the conditions that the applicant must comply with. This marks the end of Stage 1.

12. The applicant:

- Submits the Provisional approval letter to a licensed surveyor to carry out a subdivision survey within one (1) year of the date of approval according to the proposed subdivision plan that was approved. Once this survey is completed, the surveyor submits the survey plan to the Mapping Section, Lands and Surveys Department for Authentication within the one (1) year stipulated time. If the applicant fails to complete the survey with the above time period, he/she must re-apply for Provisional approval.

13. The applicant:

- Shall re- apply for Provisional approval to the Authority in the event of changes made in the subdivision design for a maximum of three (3) times.

Stage 2 – Final approval

Once an applicant has successfully completed stage 1, he/she may proceed with stage 2 of the subdivision process.

Under the Final approval stage:

1. The Applicant:

- Submits his/her application (**Annex 2**) plus 6 copies, within one (1) year from the date of Provisional approval, for Final approval to subdivide, along with a blue print copy of the authenticated survey plan (plus 6 regular copies), and a tax statement showing that all land taxes on the land are paid up-to-date.

2. The PPS:

- Vets the application for completeness and attaches a checklist of documents to the application (**Annex 3**). Applications that were approved under (3) in Stage 1 are submitted directly to the Commissioner of Lands for approval.

3. The PPS:
 - Puts all other applications that do not meet criteria (3) on the Agenda for the next meeting of The Authority and submits a copy to the Chairperson (the Commissioner of Lands).
4. The Secretary:
 - Records the minutes of the monthly meeting of The Authority and submits these to the PPS.
5. The PPS:
 - Forwards applications recommended by The Authority to the Hon. Minister for Final approval.
6. The PPS:
 - Where an application is recommended with conditions, informs the applicant by letter and provides an opportunity to comply with the conditions stipulated by The Authority.
7. The PPS:
 - Where an application is not recommended by The Authority and not approved by the Minister, the PPS so informs the applicant. The applicant may either accept the decision, or amend his/her application for re-submission, or may present a case for just cause for re-consideration by The Authority. Applications deferred shall only be re-submitted a maximum of two (2) times for reconsideration.
8. The PPS:
 - Issues a **Final approval** to subdivide letter for approved applications. This marks the end of stage 2.
9. The Applicant:
 - Once Final approval is issued, he/she may immediately take measures to alienate the subdivided/consolidated portions of land.

Note: It is the responsibility of the land owner to register, according to the Registered Lands Act, within 30 days after a transfer document is signed for the purpose of alienation of any or all of the resulting parcels. According to the Land Tax Act, the land owner (s) is also responsible for issuing a copy of the document showing any transfer of land to the Chief Valuer of the Valuation Section of The Ministry to ensure that the changes are reflected at the Land Revenue Section.

3.1.4 Variations in Provisional and Final Approval process

It is important to note that the stages of subdivision approval may be more complex depending on other considerations. Examples of more complex subdivisions include:

- Applications that require environmental clearance by the Department of the Environment; for example large scale housing developments or a subdivision on mainland involving more than 300 lots, housing developments of more than 50 houses in the cayes, subdivisions of land that require land reclamation/or land creation, etc., as per the EIA Regulations,
- Applications that require a certificate from a registered engineer from the Association of Professional Engineers of Belize (APEB); for example developments in disaster-risk areas, for which the APEB needs to confirm that the site area has sufficient buildable area for its intended purpose,
- Applications that require input from the Geology and Petroleum Department: for all subdivisions that require dredging/mining of minerals,
- Applications that require input from the Fisheries Department: for all subdivision projects adjacent to or within areas that may impact this sector significantly,
- Applications that require input from the Forest Department: for subdivisions that may require clearing of mangrove, littoral and other sensitive forested areas, or similar habitat,
- Subdivisions of land within registered areas where additional land certification processes must be completed before subdivision.

3.2 PART 2: Design and Development Requirements

The following are some of the basic guidelines that are used in vetting and recommending the design and construction standards for subdivisions/consolidations and subsequent development of land. These guidelines imposed on a subdivision approval also takes into consideration conditions of other permitting agencies and other conditions they consider necessary for the proper and orderly planning and development within the respective locality. It must be noted that these guidelines may be periodically reviewed and amended by The Authority and include planning permit conditions for the following:

1. Subdivision design criteria
2. Development standards for subdivisions
3. Public open space contributions
4. Roads and other accesses
5. Access to bodies of water
6. Buffer zones
7. Car parking
8. Utility services
9. Survey plan criteria

3.2.1 *Subdivision design criteria*

The design plan must:

1. Be drawn to scale using AutoCAD or other design software compatible with AutoCAD,
2. Be properly labeled with all words and numbers clearly visible (legible),
3. Show that resulting lots are provided with consecutive numbering (no numbers on green areas, open spaces, roads or buffers),
4. Show the dimensions of all parcels, roads, open spaces and buffers (length and width in feet or meters),
5. Show the size of each resulting parcel (in sq. ft or acreage),
6. Show all existing and proposed road accesses to each resulting parcel and the main road to the subdivision. These must be clearly labeled with road name (where applicable), road width, and labeled “existing road” or “proposed road”,
7. Show that road is designed to provide for adequate turning and to allow for the free flow of traffic,
8. Be stamped and signed by a registered land surveyor, planner, or a registered engineer or architect,
9. Be accompanied by a contour plan and have a slope no greater than 35%,
10. Be compatible with and show the contours of the land (particular considerations for road design and drainage, as per Ministry of Works (MoW) standards),
11. Show all existing buildings and other permanent structures on the land, the dimensions of each, and setback distances from the property boundary, adjacent buildings, and road access,
12. Show the 66ft reserve and the location, outline, and extent of water features such as the Caribbean Sea, the high water mark, rivers, lagoons, creeks (whether permanent or periodical), natural drainage areas, and/or swamps within or adjacent to the property,
13. Show location, outline of hills, caves, sinkholes, ancient monuments or ruins, and
14. Reflect and be compatible with adjacent subdivisions (e.g. road reserves connected to maintain its functionality).

3.2.2 *Development standards for subdivisions*

Lots/parcels should be generally rectangular in shape and should be designed based on the basic standards as per proposed use as shown in Tables 1 - 5. Refer to **Annex 4** for list of areas which fall under the categories of low, medium, and high density, as well as the criteria for designating such areas.

Table 1: Residential development standards

Subdivision criteria	Development standards		
	Low density (R1)	Medium density (R2)	High density (R3)
Density	4 lots per acre (0.25 acre; 10,890 sq. ft; 1,012 sq. m; 1,210 sq. yd.)	6 lots per acre (0.167 acre; 7,275 sq. ft; 676 sq. m; 808 sq. yd)	8 lots per acre (0.125 acre; 5,445 sq. ft; 506 sq. m; 605 sq. yd)
Permitted use	Single Family Residential Detached	Single and Multi-Family Residential	Single and Multi-Family Residential
Secondary use	Inst, Con, P	C1, Inst, Con, P	C1, Inst, Con, P, C2
Net density (dwelling units per acre)	8 du/acre	24 du/acre 120 guestbeds/acre	36 du/acre 180 guestbeds/acre
Width/length ratio	1:3	1:2	1:2
Minimum Setbacks:			
Front	8 feet	6 feet	4 feet
Side	8 feet	6 feet	4 feet
Back	15 feet	12 feet	10 feet
Max. site coverage (Percentage)	33%	50%	66%
Minimum Frontage	65 feet	50 feet	50 feet
Car Parking	1 per dwelling unit	1 per dwelling unit	1 per dwelling unit
Services	Water & Sewerage or Septic tank, electricity	Water & Sewerage or Septic Tank, electricity	Water & Sewerage or package treatment system, electricity

Inst = Institution P= Parks/Playground du = dwelling units
Cons = Conservation C1 = Commercial low density C2 = Commercial medium density

Table 2: Commercial development standards

Subdivision criteria	Development standards		
	Low density (C1)	Medium density (C2)	Central Business District (C3)
Lot size	4 lots per acre (0.25 acre (10,890 sq. ft; 1,012 sq. m; 1,210 sq. yd.)	0.5 acre (21,780 sq. ft; 2,023 sq. m; 2,420 sq. yd.)	1 acre
Permitted use (See Annex 5)	Convenience stores & small service shops	C1, other goods & services, offices	C2, entertainment plus all other commercial uses
Secondary use	None	R1, R2, R3, Inst, Con, P, C1	R1, R2, R3, Inst, Con, P, C1, C2
Maximum floor area	Less than 800 sq. feet	NA	NA
Width/length ratio	1:4	1:3	1:3
Minimum Building Setback:			
Front	4 feet	4 feet	15 feet
Side	4 feet	4 feet	15 feet
Back	10 feet	4 feet	15 feet
Max. site coverage (Percentage)	33%	60%	66%
Minimum frontage	65 feet	50 feet	50 feet
Vehicular Parking	See Annex 6	See Annex 6	See Annex 6
Waste Disposal (Services)	Water, sewerage or septic tank, and electricity	Water, sewerage or septic tank, and electricity	Water, sewerage or package treatment system, and electricity

R1 = Low density residential R2 = Medium density residential R3 = High density residential
Inst = Institutional Cons = Conservation P = Parks/Playgrounds

Table 3: Industrial development standards

Subdivision criteria	Development standards		
	Warehousing	Light Industry (LI)	Heavy Industry (HI)
Density			
Lot size	2 lots per acre (0.41 acre or 18,000 sq. ft; 1,672 sq. m; 2,000 sq. yd.)	4 lots per acre (0.25 acre; 10,890 sq. ft; 1,012 sq. m; 1,210 sq. yd.)	2 lots per acre (0.41 acre or 18,000 sq. ft; 1,672 sq. m; 2,000 sq. yd.)
Permitted use (See Annex 5)	Storage & packing Except for Dangerous goods	Small scale manufacturing, food, beverage, lumber, printing, boat repair	Large scale manufacturing, transformation, slaughtering, milling, processing
Secondary use	Cons, P	Cons, P	Cons, LI
Width/length ratio	1:4	1:3	1:3
Minimum Building Setback:			
Front	12 feet	12 feet	25 feet
Side	12 feet	12 feet	25 feet
Back	25 feet	15 feet	25 feet
Max. site coverage	66%	66%	40%
Minimum frontage	65 feet	50 feet	50 feet
Vehicular Parking	See Annex 6	See Annex 6	See Annex 6
Waste Disposal (Services)	Water, sewerage or septic tank, and electricity	Water, sewerage or septic tank, and electricity	Water, sewerage or package treatment system, and electricity

Cons = Conservation LI = Light Industry P = Parks/Playgrounds

Table 4: Agricultural standards

Subdivision criteria	Development standards		
	Low density	Medium density	High density
Density			
Minimum size	25 acres	6 – 24 acres	5 acres
Permitted use	Crop growing and harvesting	Crop growing and harvesting	Crop growing and harvesting
Secondary use	LI, Cons, P, R1, C1, Inst.	LI, Cons, P, R1, C1, Inst.	LI, Cons, P, R1, C1, Inst.
Width/length ratio	1:8	1:6	1:6
Services	Water, sewerage or septic tank, and electricity	Water, sewerage or septic tank, and electricity	Water, sewerage or package treatment system, and electricity

Inst = Institution P= Parks/Playground R1 = Residential low density
 Cons = Conservation LI = Light Industry C1 = Commercial low density

Table 5: Institutional use and Community facilities

Criteria	Development Standards
Permitted Use	Educational, Health, Religious, Community Center etc.
Secondary use	Con, P
Minimum lot size	See Table 6 for specifications on minimum requirements
Maximum site coverage	40 %
Building setback	
Front	25 feet
Side	12 feet
Back	15 feet
Minimum frontage	1/6 of perimeter of lot
Parking space per unit	See Annex 6
Services	Water, sewerage or septic tank, and electricity

3.2.3 Public open space contributions

An Open Space contribution is required for the following subdivisions. The land area must be suitable for use as parks, other recreational areas, institution, or community facilities such as public parking, social infrastructure, and other communal services.

Table 6: Open space contributions

Use of parcel	Size of subdivision	Minimum open space contribution	Recommended type of open spaces or Community facility
1. Residential (low to medium density areas: R1 and R2)	a) 20 - 99 parcels	10% of acreage or 1 lot per every 20 lots (whichever is greater)	Parks and playgrounds
	b) 100 or more parcels	As in (a) above plus: 1 community facility space for every 100 lots	Social infrastructure including – school, health care centre, community centre, cemetery, youth center, library, church, public transportation facility or police station
2. Residential (high density areas: R3)	a) 20 - 99 parcels	10% or 1 lot per every 20 lots (whichever is greater)	Parks and playgrounds
	b) 100 or more parcels	As in (b) above plus: 1 community facility space for every 100 lots	Social infrastructure including – public parking, school, health care centre, community centre, cemetery, youth center, library, church, public transportation facility or police station
3. Commercial (low density)	20 or more parcels	1 community facility for every 20 lots	Public parking lot or other community facility
4. Commercial (medium density)	10 or more parcels	1 community facility for every 20 lots	Public parking lot or other community facility
5. Commercial (high density)	10 or more parcels	1 community facility for every 10 lots	Public parking lot or other community facility

Note: Once an area has been designated as an open space, whether located within or outside a registered area, it shall only be developed and used for this purpose. An open space contribution may either be developed by the local authority (City Council, Town Board, Village Council) or the land owner/developer. Where an open space has been provided, a restrictive covenant is to be placed on that parcel in favor of the community.

3.2.4 Roads and other accesses

In both urban and rural areas all lots must be provided with adequate road access. In addition, all public areas (open spaces, reserves, buffers) within and beyond the subdivision should be provided with necessary and reasonable access. All roads must comply with the standards set by the Ministry of Works (MoW) and *must be sufficient to serve the intended land use* (Refer to **Annex 7** for design specifications). Other general guidelines are as follows:

1. All road junctions should be truncated (10ft minimum daylight cut) for visibility,
2. All **dead end** roads should be provided with a Hammerhead, cul-de-sac, “T” or other suitable turning area,
3. Except in special circumstances, access to a subdivision should be via at least a two-lane, minimum-standard, all-weather road,
4. All roads must be inspected and approved by the MoW prior to the issuance of Final approval to subdivide,
5. Proper drainage as approved by the MoW to allow all surface water to drain after heavy shower of rain.
6. Drains should follow the natural slope of the terrain and water should drain towards the public drainage system,

7. Drains should be constructed within the road reserve buffer, except where the terrain stipulates otherwise,
8. Most drains are excavated trenches (earth drains); however, drains with concrete linings are recommended for steep slopes, at junctions, culvert entrances and exits, and wherever the flow of water will cause erosion,
9. Culverts must be provided with concrete headwalls at in-lets and out-lets.

The basic guidelines for road service are as follows:

Table 7: Road service requirements

Type of road access	Minimum Dimensions	Road surfacing requirements (MoW standards)	Drainage, culverts, and other constructions (MoW standards)
Primary roads	100 feet (30m) wide - 30 ft running surface (15 m buffer zone) 16ft Utility corridor (for BTL, BEL, BWS lines)	Double surface dressing	Use Vee drain type for low volumes of water and these should have slopes up to 7:1, depth up to 3.0 ft and width up to 42.0 ft Use Trapezoidal drains for high volume of water and these should have slopes 1 ½ to 3:1, bottom width 2.0 – 4.0 feet, depth 1.0 – 3.0 ft and top width from 5.0 – 7.0 ft
Secondary road reserve	60 feet (18m) wide with 20 feet shoulders	Double surface dressing	Vee drain
Tertiary road reserve	40 feet (12m) wide (22ft or 6.7m running surface at the centre of road reserve)	Road reserve cleared to remove vegetation and shaped to form side drains If exposed material is firm, add 8in (200mm) compacted running surface material If not, requires fill material on exposed surface (compacted to 12 in (300mm) then add 8in running surface material In steep areas, paving is needed	9ft (2.7m) service and drainage area on both sides of running surface
Boulevards	60 – 80 ft wide 11- 22 ft running surface on each side 6 -10ft (2 -3 m) landscaped islands	Double surface dressing	Service and drain areas on both sides
Access roads to 6 or less residential lots	30 feet wide on mainland and 25 feet on the cayes	Vegetation cleared	
Alleys and walkways	Discouraged, except as access to reserves where 12 ft minimum. These may be considered if adequate parking lots are provided nearby or for managed developments		
Foot paths and bicycle paths	10 ft minimum		

3.2.5 *Access to Bodies of Water*

When a property that is proposed for subdivision is contiguous with a body of water, highway access to the water is required for upland property owners and/or the general public. Uses include recreation, watering for the population or livestock, and other public uses (including access for officials from regulatory agencies).

These bodies of water include:

- The Caribbean Sea,
- Any river,
- Any lagoon system,
- Any creek or major water course,
- Any other major water body or drainage area that The Authority considers suitable for public access,
- Reservoirs or ponds where the bed is owned by a private utility company and used to supply water for domestic or industrial purposes, wherein the surrounding land parcel is owned by an entity or individual other than said utility company.

General subdivision guidelines to ensure that access to water bodies is maintained include:

- A 66 feet reserve must be provided for each subdivision of a land parcel next to the sea, lagoon, river, creek and other major water bodies;
- An easement/road access must be provided for every 500 feet of frontage to major water bodies in urban areas where water front lots are less than one acre;
- An easement/road access must be provided for every 1000 feet of frontage to major water bodies in rural areas where waterfront parcels to be subdivided are equal to or greater than one acre;
- If an access exists in the vicinity of the subdivision, the required access points must be located at 1000 feet intervals. If there is no access, the Physical Planning Section and the applicant should mutually agree on a suitable location for one in the parcel of land being subdivided. Other accesses may then be located at 500 or 1000-foot intervals as per above.
- Access to a body of water must be provided and labeled as “road” on the subdivision plan, but it may not be required to be constructed prior to issuance of Final approval.

3.2.6 *Buffer Zones*

Buffers may be required as a way to protect the general public. The following buffers are commonly required:

1. Canals more than 75ft in length directly adjacent to or at the mouth of a major water body require a minimum 30 ft buffer to be placed between the water body and the property or road boundary for erosion control, safety, and maintenance,
2. Canals less than 75ft in length require a minimum of 10 ft buffer for erosion control, safety, and maintenance,
3. A 20 ft buffer between the property and the shoulder of the road for all subdivisions next to a main road (highway) to minimize accidents and obstruction of the traffic flow,
4. A buffer, in addition to the 66 ft reserve, may be designated for an area that is known to have high risk of flooding as a way to prevent loss of life and damage to property.

3.2.7 *Car parking*

Each parcel should have adequate car parking space that are “tied” to the units. Parking spaces should be provided for all public areas; these should be located near the front entrance or side for ease of accessibility. Visitor spaces are to remain in body corporate ownership to ensure they are used for visitor parking purposes. See **Annex 6** for more specifications.

3.2.8 *Utility Services*

Road service must be provided to each and every parcel resulting from a subdivision. In addition, for large residential and commercial developments (50 or more lots), provisions must be made for services such as potable water, electricity, and solid and liquid waste management (including sewerage).

Provisions for these services should be ensured prior to issuance of Final approval for the subdivision.

3.2.9 Survey plan criteria

The following are basic requirements for an authenticated survey plan (The plan):

1. The plan must be drawn to scale and properly labeled according to the subdivision design approved by The Authority at the Provisional approval stage, and
2. It should be registered within one (1) year of the date of Provisional approval by a licensed land surveyor.

3.2.10 Application Fees

Payment receipts should be provided along with Application forms for Provisional and Final approval. These fees should be paid at the Land Revenue Section of the Ministry, Belmopan.

Table 6: Application fee structure

<i>Parcel type</i>	<i>Basic Application fee per stage (Processing fee)(A)</i>	<i>Location (B)</i>	<i>Size of subdivision (C)</i>	<i>Application fee (A + B+C)</i>
Residential parcels	Provisional = \$50.00 Final = \$50.00	Mainland = \$25.00 Cayes = \$100.00	1- 3 = \$25.00 4- 20 parcels = \$50.00 20 or more parcels = \$100.00	\$100 - \$250.00
Commercial/ Industrial parcels /Mixed use	Provisional = \$50.00 Final= \$50	Mainland = \$100.00 Cayes = \$150.00	Less than 20 parcels = \$50.00 20 - 50 parcels = \$150 Over 50 parcels = \$250	\$200.00 - \$450.00
Agricultural parcels	Provisional = \$50.00 Final = \$50.00	\$100	Less than 10 parcels = \$50.00 10 or more parcels = \$100	\$200.00 - \$250.00

Note: The application fee covers the basic cost for processing of subdivision applications such as the processing fee, travel expenses for site inspections, and other incidental expenses.

References:

1. The National Lands Act, Chapter 191 of the substantive laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000
2. The Land Utilization Act, Chapter 188 of the substantive laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000
3. Ministry of Works, Manual of Standards & Q.C.
4. The Environmental Impact assessment (Amendment) Regulations, 2007
5. Carolyn Trench-Sandiford (Consultant), The Final Draft National Planning Bill, Land Management Project, June 2004
6. Final Draft National Planning Bill, Land Management Project, June 2004

4. Annexes

Annex 1: Provisional Approval Application Form**MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES****LAND UTILIZATION AUTHORITY****PROVISIONAL APPROVAL TO SUBDIVIDE LAND**

Note: All applications must be addressed to: -

**Chairman
Land Utilization Authority
Ministry of Natural Resources**

To avoid delay in the processing of this application, supply **ALL** the required information. Fill out all sections completely and supply clear and concise answers.

- (1) **NAME OF APPLICANT:** _____
Telephone No: _____ Fax No: _____
- (2) **ADDRESS OF APPLICANT:** _____
- (3) **NAME OF LAND OWNER:** _____
Telephone No: _____ Fax No: _____
- (4) **ADDRESS OF LAND OWNER:** _____
- (5) **NAME OF COMPANY OWNING LAND:** (if applicable) _____
- (a) Nationality _____
- (b) List of Directors: _____
- (c) Name of Major Shareholders and Shareholdings: _____
- (6) **LAND TAXES – HAVE ALL TAXES BEEN PAID?** Yes No
If yes attach Tax Statement showing zero balance.
- (7) **LOCATION OF LAND:** (please complete below as applicable).
- (a) Name of Property/Subdivision: _____
- (b) Lot No: _____
- (c) Parcel No: _____
- (d) Block No: _____
- (e) Land Registration Area: _____
- (f) Name and Number of Street: _____
- (g) Name of City/Town/Village: _____
- (h) Name of District: _____

Note: *Six (6) additional copies of application and seven proposed subdivision plan must be provided when application is submitted.*

(8) PROPERTY:

- (a) Total area of land to be subdivided _____
- (b) No. of lots proposed _____
- (c) Total area of open space _____
- (d) Lot size range from _____ to _____

Note: Recommended minimum lot sizes for residential purposes are 4,000 sq. ft. in urban areas and ¼ acre in rural areas. Agricultural lots are to be 5 acres minimum each.

(9) LAND USE – (place an X in the appropriate box)

- (a) Present use of land: Agricultural Residential Commercial
Industrial Ruinate Other (specify)

Provide details of Use: _____

- (b) Proposed use of land: Agricultural Residential Commercial
Industrial

Provide details of Proposed Use: _____

- (c) All lots or parcels resulting from the subdivision are to be numbered consecutively with no numbers on Open Space / Green Areas.
- (d) Number and use of buildings existing on the land. Show this on propose plan (drawn to scale and showing set back from property boundary and other structures).
- (e) Covenants which may be breached by proposed subdivision.

(10) AMENITIES AND UTILITIES:

A. Kindly indicate which or combinations of the following are intended to be used: -

POTABLE WATER	SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT	LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT
1.Existing Municipal System	1.Existing Municipal System	1.Existing Municipal System
2.Rudimentary System	2.Private Contractor	2.Individual Sewerage System
a) Individual Tanks/Vats b) Individual Wells c) Desalination Plant d) River e) Well f) Spring	a) Sanitary Landfill b) Incineration c) Barging to mainland for final disposal d) Composting e) Grinding f) Recycling g) Land Reclamation	a) Sewerage Pond/lagoon with final effluent disposal to _____ b) Individual septic tank/soakaway/leach field c) Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) toilet d) Compost Toilet e) Package plant with final effluent disposal to _____ f) Chemical toilet

Annex 2: Final Approval Application Form

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

LAND UTILIZATION AUTHORITY

1. Second Schedule

Form for Application for **FINAL APPROVAL** to subdivide under the Land Utilization Act 1993.

1. NAME OF APPLICANT: _____

2. ADDRESS OF APPLICANT: _____

Tel. No.: _____

3. NAME OF LAND OWNER: _____

4. ADDRESS OF LAND OWNER: _____

Tel. No.: _____

5. ADDRESS AND LOCATION OF LAND SUBJECT TO APPLICATION: _____

6. PLEASE SUBMIT COPIES OF THE FOLLOWING:

Documentary and certified evidence that all conditions attached by the Minister to *Provisional Approval* have been complied with.

Tax Statement showing zero balance.

An authenticated plan of all surveys of land covered by application.

Entry No: _____

Six (6) additional copies of both application and authenticated plan must be provided when application is submitted.

7. ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THE APPLICATION.

Signed _____

Date: _____

8. RECOMMENDED: Yes

No

Date: _____

Annex 3: Application Checklist

PROVISIONAL APPROVAL CHECKLIST	
<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Completed Application Form (all sections filled in noting those not applicable)</p> <p>2 Title Document (must relate to subject parcel) <input type="checkbox"/> grant fiat <input type="checkbox"/> conveyance <input type="checkbox"/> land certificate <input type="checkbox"/> other (state) _____</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Registry Form (to be signed and stamped by Registrar of Lands)</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> Mortgage Declaration (original signature, signed & stamped by Justice of the Peace other than the applicant or landowner)</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> Current Tax Receipt or Statement</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> Location Plan (showing parcel location within the surrounding community)</p>	<p>7 Subdivision Plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> adequate parcel size</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> adequate access and width of frontage</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> adequate ratio of parcel width:length</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> adequate road width (min. 40'-mainland, and 30'-islands, Placencia & similar locations)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> shows all relevant dimensions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> truncation at corners of roads & highway buffer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> parcels are numbered in consecutive order</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> adequate open space provision (where around ≥20 residential parcels approx. ≥5% of area in open space is required)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> adequate reserve along river, sea, lagoons, hydro-lines, etc.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> compliance with SDA plan for the area</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Input from other agencies (state) _____</p>
FINAL APPROVAL CHECKLIST	
<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Completed Application Form</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Current Tax Receipt</p>	<p>3 Authenticated Plan <input type="checkbox"/> complies with the Provisional Approval Where applicable note issues of non-compliance: _____</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> Road Inspection by Ministry of Works</p>
<p><i>*Note: Indicate "n/a" where appropriate.</i></p>	

Annex 4: Density Areas**Table showing density categories**

Category	Area
High Density Areas	Belize City, San Pedro Town, Belmopan City, San Ignacio Town, Santa Elena Town, Benque Viejo Town, Orange Walk Town, Corozal Town, Dangriga Town, and Punta Gorda Town
Medium Density Areas	Ladyville, Mile 8 ½ Subdivision, San Jose Palmar, Trial Farm, Roaring Creek Village, Spanish Lookout, Mango Creek/Independence, Placencia, Caye Caulker, Hopeville, and areas outside of town and city core areas
Low Density Areas	All other areas not listed as high density or medium density.

Note: Density categories are determined based on the following criteria: population density, availability of basic services (including electricity, water, and sewerage), and existence/quality of infrastructure such as streets and drainage. Areas listed in these categories are subject to change over time.

Annex 5: Permitted land-uses**Commercial (Includes but not limited to the following activities)****Low density (C1)**

Convenience shops
 Drug stores
 Grocery
 Ice-cream parlor
 Pastry shops
 Snack shops
 Personnel Services

Barber shops
 Beauty salons
 Boutiques

 Professional Offices

Accountants
 Appraisers
 Architects
 Attorneys
 Consultants
 Doctor's office
 Planners

Medium Density (C2)

Advertising
 Air freight
 Arts and crafts
 Auctioneer
 Auto rental (except heavy equipment)
 Bar/discotheque/Night club
 Beverage distributors
 Caterers and Bakery
 Cleaners and cleaning services
 Dealer (except heavy equipment)
 Detective Agency
 Dry goods
 Electrical and electronic equipment
 Engravers
 Funeral parlors and Mortuary
 General merchandise
 Hardware
 Hotels, Motels, Resorts, etc.
 Household appliances
 Jeweler
 Laundry
 Liquor store
 Machine shop
 Market (seafood, meat, produce)
 Media Houses (T.V; cable, radio)
 Office equipment and supplies
 Pest control
 Pet shops
 Photo studios
 Printery
 Restaurants
 Security agencies
 Sporting goods
 Stationary
 Supermarkets
 Tire shops
 Tour operators and Travel agencies
 Veterinarian

Financial Institutions
 Accounting Agencies
 Banks, Credit Unions
 Brokerage firms
 Insurance agencies
 Other Offices

Industrial (Includes but not limited to the following activities)**LI – Light Industrial
(less than 2,000 sq. ft.)**

Auto repair and body works
 Carpentry
 Computer assembly
 Craft shops
 Ice Factory
 Ironmongery
 Landscape contractors
 Lumber yards
 Packaging
 Sewing factory
 Shoe repair
 Upholstery
 Welder

**HI – Heavy Industrial
(all industrial)**

Agro-processing
 Battery manuf. and repair
 Boat builders
 Bottling works
 Cannery
 Chemical manufacture and storage
 Construction materials
 Dairy
 Dealer in heavy equipment
 Fertilizer
 Haulers
 Heavy equipment and storage
 Junkyards/Scrap yards
 Mining
 Other processing and manufacturing
 Pesticide
 Petroleum fuel storage
 Power plants
 Recycling plants
 Sanitation companies
 Sawmills
 Steelworks and other metals
 Trucking (depot)
 Wreckers

Annex 6: Vehicle Parking /Unloading Standards

Type of use	Number of parking space required
Residential use: R1, R2 and, R3	1.0 space for each dwelling unit
Commercial use: Motels, Hotels, Guest houses, & other visitor accommodation Retail and offices (includes shopping centers) Restaurants Dance halls, discos, clubs, bars, game rooms	1.0 space for each guest unit / 1.0 space for each three guest rooms 1.0 space for each 500 square feet of usable floor area 1.0 space for each 100 square feet of public dining room area 1.0 space for each 200 square feet of floor area
Industrial use: Warehousing, LI and HI	1.0 space for each building up to 1500 square feet plus for every other 1500 square feet thereafter
Community Facilities: Libraries, museums, Exhibition buildings Assembly halls, auditorium, Churches, court houses, Lecture halls, cinemas Hospitals Clinics	1.0 space for each 1000 square feet of floor area 1.0 space for each 20 seats 1.0 space for each 6000 square feet of floor area 2.0 spaces for each practitioner’s office

Vehicles loading or offloading requirements	
Type of Building	Number of Loading/off-loading bays required
Retail outlets, show rooms, Markets, hospitals	1.0 bay for each building up to 10,000 square feet plus for each 15,000 square feet of floor area thereafter
Warehousing, LI & HI	1.0 bay for each building up to 5,000 square feet plus one for each 10,000 square feet of floor area in excess of 5,000 square feet to a total of three; and 1.0 for each 50,000 square feet thereafter

Note: Consideration will be given to dual use where the times of operation alternate

Annex 7: Design Specifications for Infrastructure Construction (Ministry of Works)

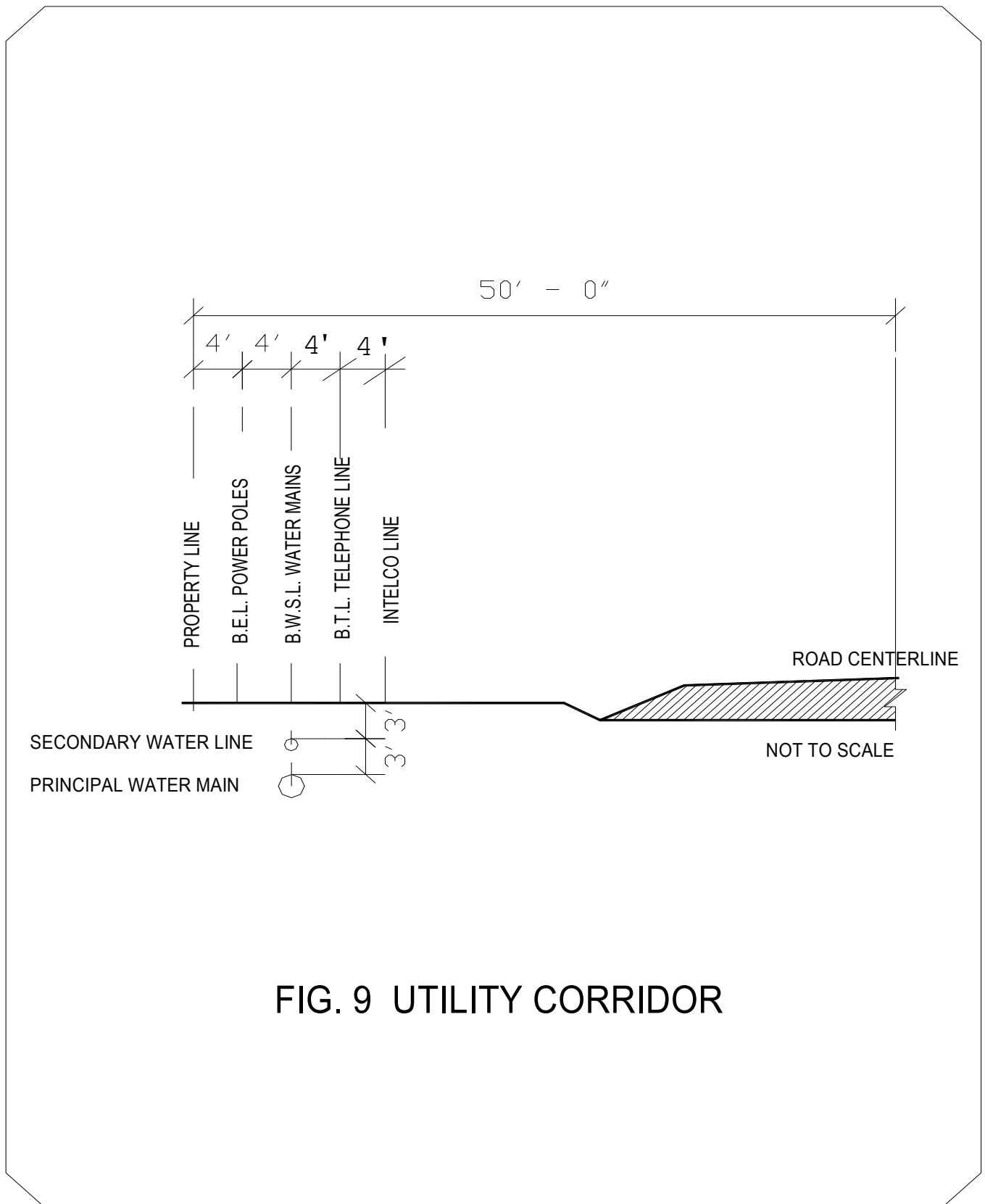


FIG. 9 UTILITY CORRIDOR

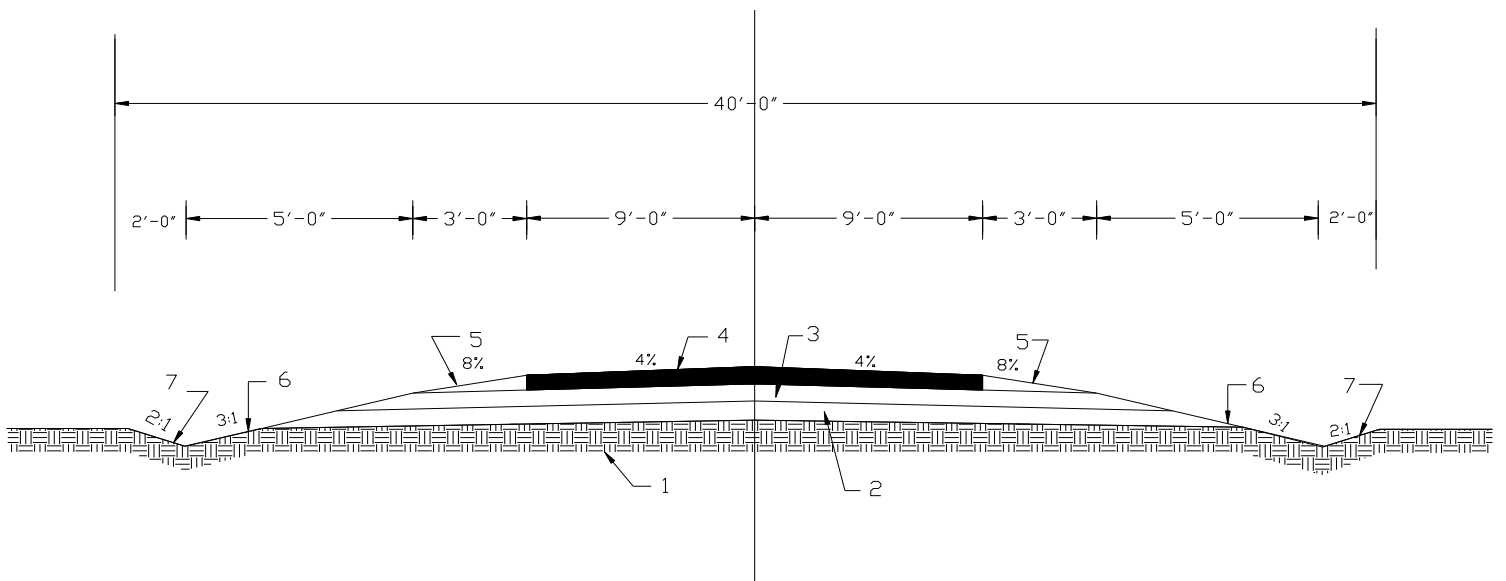


Fig. 10 TYPICAL 40 FEET CROSS SECTION OF ROADWAY.

LEGEND	
1.	FORMATION LEVEL
2.	SUB BASE
3.	BASE
4.	WEARING SURFACE
5.	SHOULDERS
6.	FORE SLOPE
7.	BACK SLOPE

NOTE: A 40 feet right of way is not appropriate if contemplation is being made to accommodate utility lines such as water, telephone and electrical power

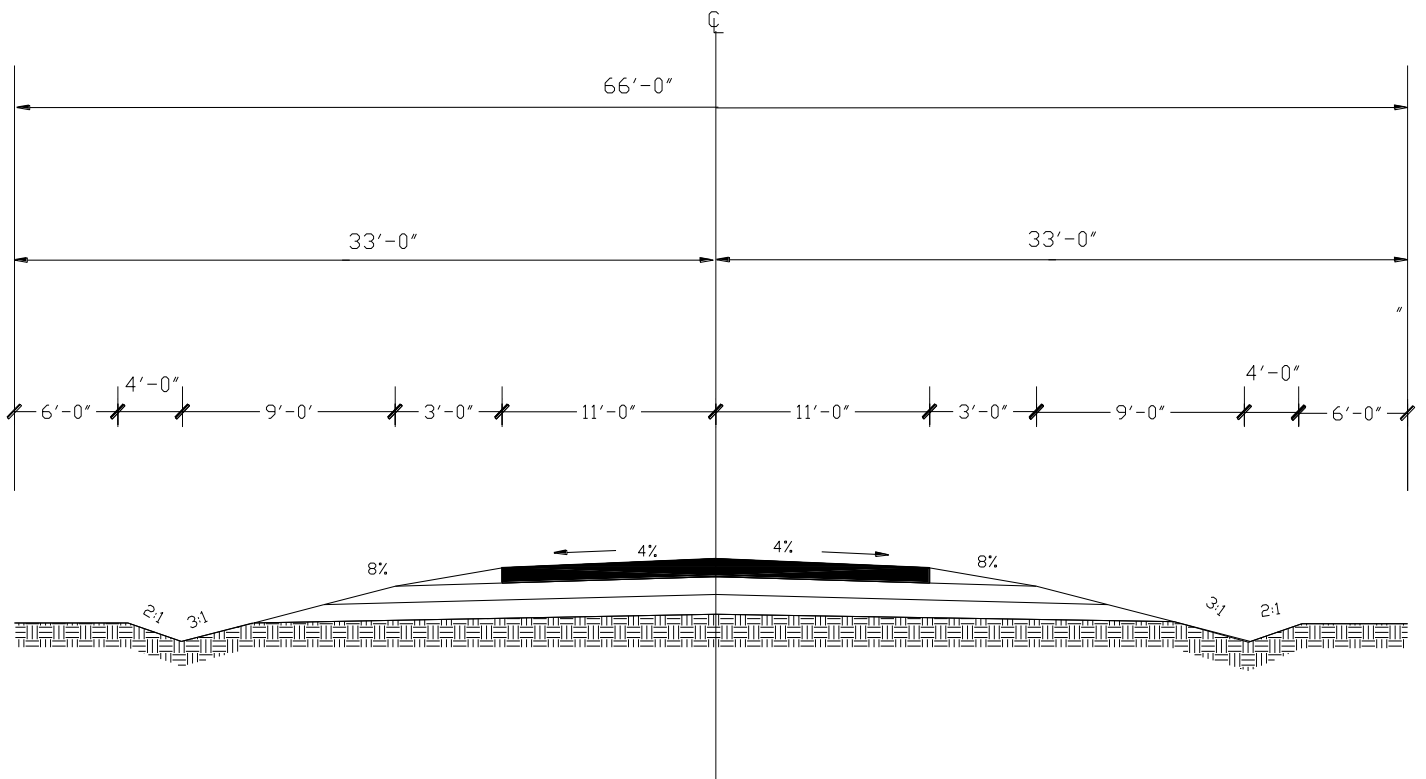


Fig. 11 TYPICAL CROSS SECTION OF 66 FEET RIGHT OF WAY

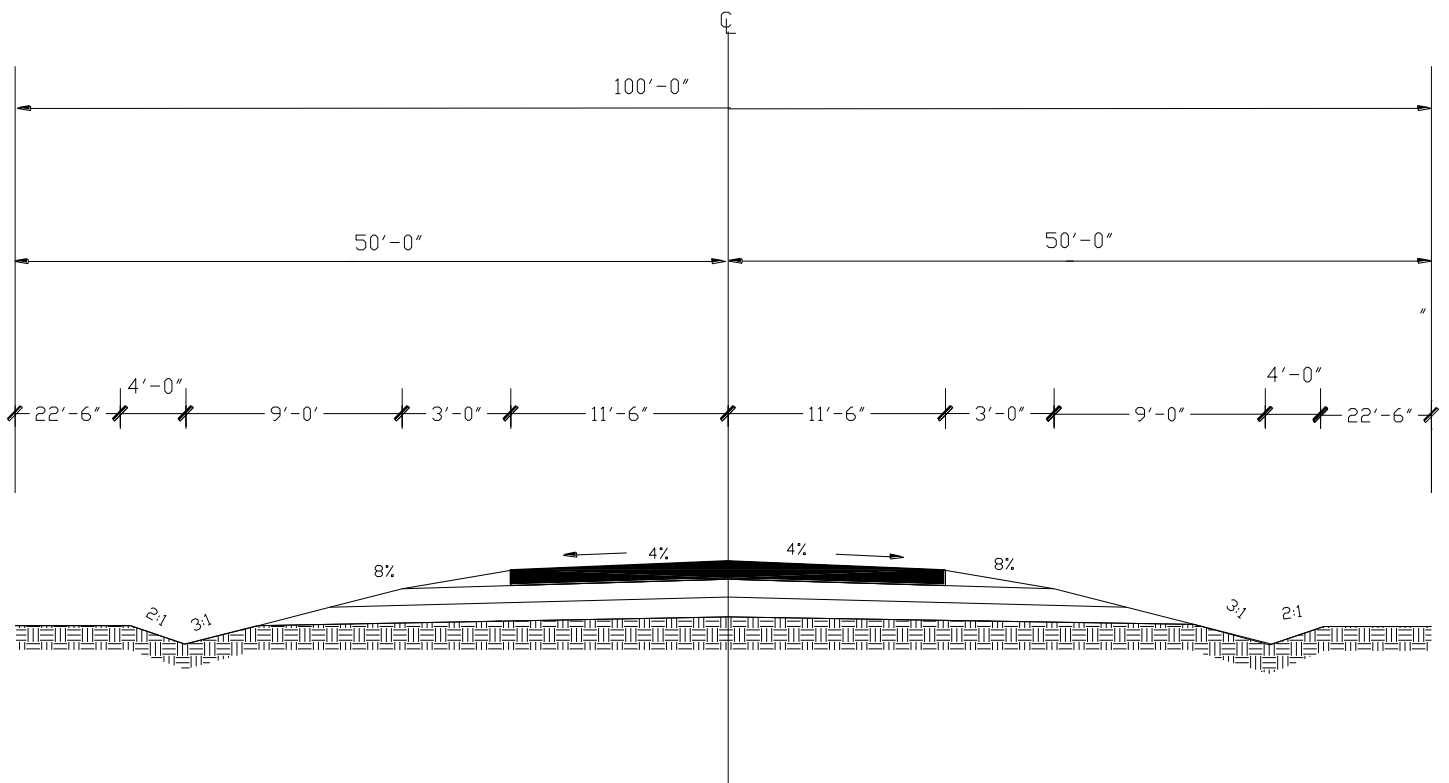


Fig. 12 TYPICAL CROSS SECTION OF 100 FEET RIGHT OF WAY

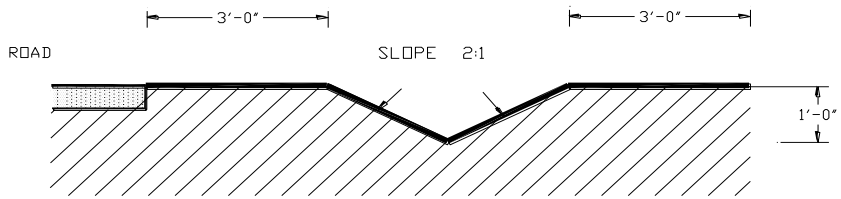


FIG. 13 TYPICAL SECTION OF " V " DRAIN

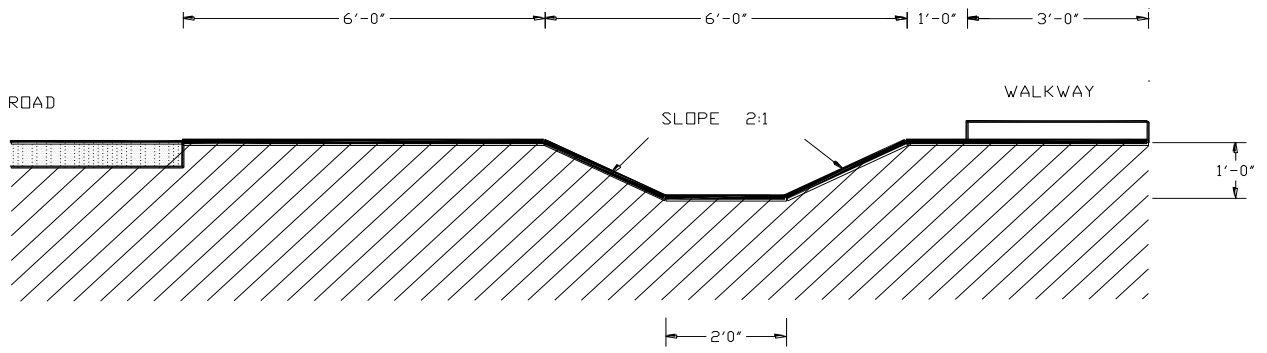
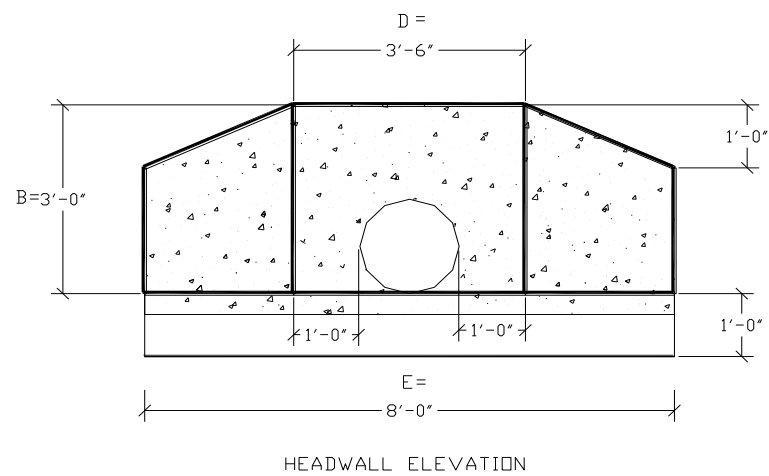
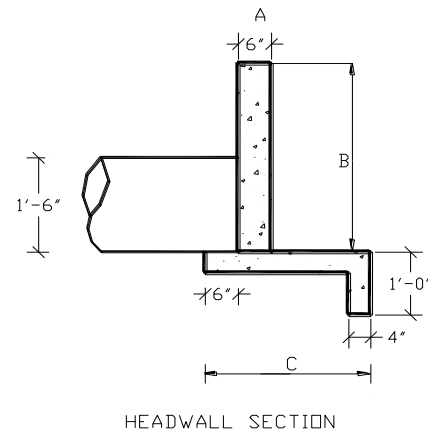
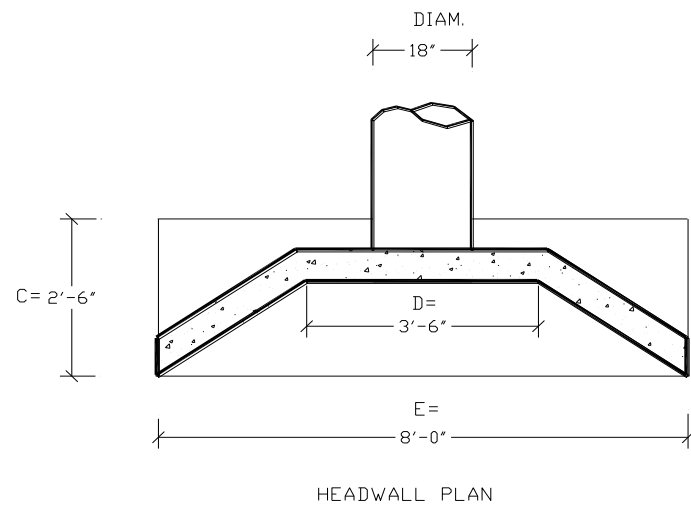


FIG. 13 A TYPICAL SECTION OF TRAPEZOIDAL DRAIN



DIA.	A	B	C	D	E
18"	6	2'-6"	2'-6"	3'-6"	8'-0"
24"	6	3'-0"	2'-6"	4'-0"	8'-6"
36	8	4'-0"	3'-0"	5'-0"	10'-4"
48"	10"	5'-0"	3'-6"	6'-0"	12'-2"

SIZE CHART

Fig. 14 TYPICAL CULVERT DETAILS