



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225  
Telephone (360) 778-7900 FAX (360) 778-7901

## **2015 Multimodal Transportation Concurrency Application Guidelines** *(Effective January 1, 2009)*

### **Introduction**

Bellingham's Multimodal Transportation Concurrency ordinance (BMC 13.70) is a legal requirement of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) (RCW 36.70A.070 (6) (b)). The intent of these legal requirements is to ensure that "adequate" transportation infrastructure is in place when new development is permitted or that financial commitments are in place to ensure that adequate infrastructure is constructed within three (3) years.

State law provides the framework requirements, but it is up to the Bellingham community to determine what "adequate" transportation infrastructure and level of service (LOS) is appropriate for Bellingham. The Bellingham Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element includes a strong policy emphasis on multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicle) infrastructure and the Land Use Element has a strong policy emphasis on infill development. Bellingham's Multimodal Transportation Concurrency ordinance (BMC 13.70) is a development regulation used to implement the policies of the Transportation and Land Use Elements and to maintain the City's adopted LOS of "Person Trips Available" in each Concurrency Service Area..

These guidelines are intended to give applicants a comprehensive view of Multimodal Transportation Concurrency requirements for the development review process. Because guidelines cannot cover all circumstances that can arise in preparing a traffic study, some applicants may be required to provide more detail than prescribed in these guidelines.

### **Pre-Application Requirement**

Transportation Concurrency evaluation is the first step in the development review process and involves the following steps, explained in further detail below:

- Step 1** – Pre-application Meeting/Conversation (Strongly Recommended)
- Step 2** – Application for Transportation Concurrency Evaluation
- Step 3** – Public Works Department Transportation Concurrency "Technically Complete" Review
- Step 4** – Public Works Department Transportation Concurrency Evaluation
- Step 5** – Transportation Concurrency Determination
- Step 6** – Final Certificate of Concurrency
- Step 7** – Development Application Denial or Withdrawal
- Step 8** – Expiration of Final Certificate of Concurrency

## Transportation Concurrency Application Overview

**Step 1. Pre-Application Meeting.** The applicant is strongly encouraged to have a pre-application meeting, or at least a telephone conversation, with the Public Works Transportation Planner to discuss the scope and timing of the project prior to submitting a transportation concurrency application in the Permit Center.

### Step 2 – Application for Transportation Concurrency Evaluation

Transportation Concurrency applications have two checks to ensure completeness before evaluation can be completed:

- 1.) Prior to accepting a Transportation Concurrency application for evaluation, Permit Center staff will conduct a “**counter complete**” review. This initial review ensures that all required information is contained within the application.
- 2.) If each item on the submittal requirements checklist (below) is included, then the application is approved as “counter complete” and forwarded to Public Works Transportation Planning staff for a “**technically complete**” review to ensure that all necessary transportation information is provided. If the application is not complete, staff will notify the applicant that the application is not complete and more information must be submitted before a Transportation Concurrency evaluation can occur.

All applicants for proposed new development must complete an application for a Transportation Concurrency Evaluation. The application must include the following:

- A short narrative description of the project
- Physical address of project and Assessor’s parcel number(s). If a City address has not been assigned, then an approximate location of the project site is required.
- Concurrency Service Area (CSA) number for project location (*Determined/confirmed during Pre-Application meeting/conversation*)
- Type of land use: Residential, Commercial, Mixed Use, Industrial, etc
- Number of Residential Units and/or Non-Residential gross square feet of floor space
- Project access/driveway location(s)
- Vicinity map showing the site location
- Anticipated completion/occupancy date
- Estimated weekday PM peak hour trip generation according to ITE Trip Generation Manual, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition (*Determined/confirmed during Pre-Application meeting/conversation*)
- Transportation Concurrency Evaluation application fee (*2009 Fee = \$10/pm peak trip*)

#### **Notes on Land Use and Person Trip Generation:**

- The most recent edition of *Trip Generation*, as published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), will be used by City staff for land use categories and vehicle trip generation rates. The fitted curve or average rates will be selected by City staff on the basis of which method’s data set best matches the proposed use.
- Any new development, or redevelopment, that may generate 50 or more new pm peak hour vehicle trips, as per the ITE Trip Generation manual, must conduct a complete traffic study, consistent with the requirements of Section 11, Bellingham Public Works Development

Guidelines and Improvement Standards, which are available on the City of Bellingham web site at (<http://www.cob.org/services/department/pw/index.aspx>)

- The applicant may request that PWD consider alternate data to the ITE rates noted above. If the proposed project does not fit the land use within *Trip Generation*, the applicant shall provide local vehicle trip generation data to PWD for review and approval. Local vehicle trip generation rates are acceptable as long as the methods for developing the data are in accordance with ITE methods and practices. The applicant must provide the City independent documentation that includes the following:
  1. Documentation to validate local vehicle trip generation study.
  2. Documentation of any other vehicle or person trip data appropriate for the proposed land development activity.
- Proposals to develop local trip generation estimates or to consider Traffic Demand Management (TDM) for a specific project will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Consistency in land use and person trip generation rates shall be maintained for Transportation Concurrency, Traffic Studies, SEPA, and TIF calculations.
- For redevelopment, the number of person trips generated by an existing land use will be credited and deducted from the number of person trips generated by the proposed land use.
- Vehicle trip rates in the Person Trip Calculator (PTC) will be adjusted to account for pass-by, diverted, and internal trips. Any additional vehicle trip adjustments will be considered by City staff on a case-by-case basis.

### **Step 3 - PWD Transportation Concurrency “Technically Complete” Review**

PWD Permit Center staff will review the Transportation Concurrency application for completeness and accuracy. If PWD Permit Center staff determine that the application appears to be complete, then PWD will proceed with a Transportation Concurrency Evaluation (step 4).

### **Step 4 - PWD Transportation Concurrency Evaluation**

The PWD Transportation Planner will enter the ITE land use category(ies) and unit(s) of measurement quantities into the Person Trip Calculator for the applicable Concurrency Service Area. The resulting Person Trips will be entered into the Concurrency Evaluation Tracking Tool (CETT). As described in the maintenance/annual report section (below), the CETT is a spreadsheet tool that includes existing arterial traffic volumes, transit route frequency and ridership volumes, and degree of completeness information for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

### **Step 5 – Transportation Concurrency Determination**

The PWD will review the results of the Transportation Concurrency Evaluation and will approve or deny the application, as follows:

- A. **Approval.** If there are Person Trips Available to serve the proposed development in the applicable Concurrency Service Area, then PWD will:
  - Issue a Temporary Certificate of Concurrency identifying the location and size/type of development and its expiration date one year from date of issuance.
  - Note the approval and expiration date in the Concurrency Evaluation Tracking Tool.
  - Proceed to Step 6.

- B. **Denial.** If there are not enough Person Trips Available to serve the proposed development in the applicable Concurrency Service Area, then PWD will not issue a Temporary Certificate of Concurrency for the project application.

If the Transportation Concurrency Evaluation is not approved, the applicant will receive written notification by the PWD of the following options:

- Accept the denial and the PWD will remove the project traffic from the Concurrency Evaluation Tracking Tool.
- Amend, resubmit the application, and have the evaluation conducted again within 90 days. The 90-day period to amend the transportation concurrency application shall begin no later than 14 days after notification of denial of the transportation concurrency evaluation. BMC 13.70.080.B.2 identifies options for amending the project and the transportation concurrency application.
- Appeal the denial of transportation concurrency pursuant to Section 13.70.140. If transportation concurrency is approved through the appeal, then proceed to Step 5. If transportation concurrency is denied, then the project can accept the denial or amend and resubmit the application as described above. If no action is taken within 14 days after denial of the appeal, the project will be considered withdrawn and the PWD will remove the project traffic from the Concurrency Evaluation Tracking Tool.
- Mitigation required to adequate “person trip capacity” to the applicable CSA (construction of pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities; funding for additional transit service or enhancements; construction of additional vehicle capacity), consistent with the Transportation Element of the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan.

### **Step 6 – Final Certificate of Concurrency**

Once a Temporary Certificate of Concurrency has been issued, the applicant has one (1) year to submit a complete application for a development permit to the Permit Center. If the development permit application is deemed complete, then the permit application will go through the City’s standard review process. The Permit Center will notify the PWD of the complete application and it will be noted on the CETT.

If the development permit is approved, then the Temporary Certificate will be recorded as a Final Certificate of Concurrency by the PWD.

The Final Certificate of Concurrency will be for the approved development. If the approved development is for less than that shown on the Temporary Certificate of Concurrency, then the values in the CETT will be updated to reflect the approved development.

The Final Certificate of Concurrency will have the same expiration date as the permit approval. The expiration date will be noted in the CETT.

If the approved development includes improvements to sidewalks, bicycle lanes, transit facilities and/or service, or arterial streets in the Concurrency Evaluation Tracking Tool, then the PWD will update the values for Person Trips Available by Concurrency Service Area in the next Transportation Report on Annual Concurrency (TRAC).

### **Step 7 – Development Application Denial or Withdrawal**

If a completed development permit application is voluntarily withdrawn or is denied, then the Temporary Certificate of Concurrency will be revoked. The PWD will remove the project

application from the CETT, thereby freeing up the reserved Person Trips Available in the Concurrency Service Area where the development is located.

### **Step 8 – Expiration of Final Certificate of Concurrency**

If a Final Certificate of Concurrency expires and all or a part of the approved development has not been constructed, reserved Person Trips Available for the remainder of the development shall be rescinded and restored to the Concurrency Service Area. The PWD will adjust the Concurrency Evaluation Tracking Tool to reflect the level of development that still has transportation concurrency approval.

## **City of Bellingham Web Site Resources**

The documents listed below are related to Transportation Concurrency Management and are available on the City of Bellingham web site at:

<http://www.cob.org/services/planning/transportation/index.aspx>

### **Multimodal Transportation Concurrency (BMC 13.70)**

### **Transportation Reports on Annual Concurrency (TRAC)**

### **Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element**

## **Public Works Transportation Planning Staff**

In addition to the transportation planning documents listed above, specific Public Works administrative staff are responsible for the implementation of the Transportation Concurrency Management Program and can be reached by telephone or by email between 8:00am and 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, as listed below.

<b>Chris Comeau, AICP, Transportation Planner</b>	<b>(360) 778-7946</b>	<b>ccomeau@cob.org</b>
<b>Brent Baldwin, AICP, Development Review Manager</b>	<b>(360) 778-7940</b>	<b>bbaldwin@cob.org</b>