# DPD Director's Rule 8-2012

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| City of Seattle<br>Department of Planning and Development | 1 of 7 | N/A |
| | **Publication:** 8/9/2012 | **Effective:** 9/28/2012 |
| **Subject:**<br>Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) Evaluations For Applications Exempt From SEPA Environmental Review | **Code and Section Reference:**<br>SMC 23.52.008 | |
| | **Type of Rule:**<br>Code Interpretation | |
| | **Ordinance Authority:**<br>SMC 3.06.040 | |
| **Index:**<br>City of Seattle Land Use Code/Technical Standards and Procedural Requirements | **Approved** | **Date** |
| | Diane M. Sugimura | 9.26.12 |
| | **Diane M. Sugimura, Director, DPD** | |

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## Purpose

Certain categories of residential or mixed-use development may be required to submit a transportation impact analysis (TIA), as set forth in Land Use Code Section 23.52.008. This analysis will be required according to the size of the development and its location within an Urban Center or an Urban Village.

The intent is to evaluate potential transportation system impacts and mitigation for projects where such analysis would not otherwise occur pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) - SMC 25.05.800.A.

When a TIA is required, applicants disclose information about a development's probable traffic trip generation and any impacts on streets and traffic. This helps DPD staff evaluate whether negative impacts on local streets and transportation facilities are likely and whether mitigation will be required to lessen or eliminate those impacts.

In practice, this can vary from provision of basic facts and calculations to a more detailed analysis, depending upon the total size and location of the proposed development. This Rule provides guidance for applicants to understand how much information should be provided, and how that should be prepared.

## Rule

Transportation impacts generally relate to the size of the development, the number of trips generated, and their effect on local streets. Project location and context may also contribute to the potential for impacts. Reference materials such as the "Trip Generation" manual from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) can be used to estimate the number of future traffic trips generated. Trip tables in Director's Rule 5-2009 indicate how to identify where that traffic would travel. Effects on transit operations, adequacy of transit, freight impacts, pedestrian and bicycling facilities and operations can also be requested.

For the development projects that fall within the size ranges shown in the table below, either a simple abbreviated "Level 1" transportation impact analysis or a more in-depth "Level 2" impact analysis is required. (See pages 4-6 of this rule). DPD's application intake procedures confirm whether appropriate transportation analysis information is included. If it is not, the application process may be delayed until such information is provided.

### *RECOMMENDED ACTIONS BY APPLICANT*

**STEP 1: Determine what level of analysis will be required**

| **Zones, within an Urban Center, or an Urban Village that contains a light rail Station Area Overlay District** | **"Level 1" Analysis Required for Residential or Mixed-Use Development**** | **"Level 2" Analysis Required for Residential or Mixed-Use Development**** |
|---|---|---|
| Any Lowrise, Midrise, Highrise, Neighborhood Commercial, General Commercial or Seattle Mixed zone | 51 to 100 dwelling units | 101 to 200 dwelling units |
| Any Downtown zone | 81 to 150 dwelling units | 151 to 250 dwelling units |
| In the zones listed above, if the residential unit count in mixed-use** development is less than the listed size ranges, but the non-residential use exceeds 12,000 square feet: | 12,001 – 20,000 sq. feet | 20,001 – 30,000 sq. feet* |

*If the non-residential use proposal falls within this size category, then a "Level 2" analysis will be required to examine the impacts of the entire proposal including the residential use.

** A proposal must have at least 50% of its gross floor area in residential use to meet the "mixed-use" definition in SMC 25.05.800.A.2.h, or it would require SEPA review and this rule would not apply.

NOTE:

- This Director's Rule only applies if a development proposal is not undergoing SEPA environmental review, or is undergoing "ECA-only" SEPA review in an affected Urban Center or Urban Village.[1] If a full SEPA review is otherwise already occurring, the full SEPA review will take precedence and cover the topic of transportation impacts, and there would be no need for this type of TIA study.
- This TIA study requirement is determined according to the total dwelling unit count in a "development" which means all buildings that will be built in a given proposal, NOT the unit count for any one structure within a multi-building development.
- A "live-work" development is considered a "non-residential" use; thus, any live-work units in a development do not need to be included in the count of dwelling units (they would be considered in the transportation study to the extent that they are non-residential uses that would generate traffic).
- This Director's Rule would not apply to a development that entirely consists of "live-work" spaces plus other commercial uses because it would not meet the definition in this Rule for "mixed-use" development.
- If existing buildings will remain on the property in addition to the proposed development, the square footage of non-residential space and residential units (if present) must be included in area and size calculations for comparison to the size ranges.

## STEP 2. Transportation Impact Analysis Exemption

DPD may be able to provide an exemption from this impact analysis if a proposal has no meaningful potential for substantial transportation or traffic impacts. This may occur if the proposal has characteristics that may limit its net new vehicle traffic generation, or if only non-congested roadways and intersections are nearby, or if the net increase in traffic would not be significant compared to traffic from existing development. Such exemption requests should be made by completing the 'Transportation Study Exemption Request Form' at the end of this Director's Rule and submitting this information to DPD prior to a scheduled intake appointment. DPD's transportation planner will evaluate such requests and inform the applicant of their conclusions on the exemption request.

## STEP 3: Work with a qualified expert to prepare a transportation impact study

DPD recommends that applicants work with a qualified expert such as a transportation consultant. As an alternative to using a qualified expert such as a consultant, an applicant may wish to prepare the transportation impact study information on their own. In either case, this does not prevent DPD from issuing a correction notice at a later date if subsequent review indicates a need for more transportation-related information.

The transportation analysis should be prepared using appropriate reference materials, such as the ITE's *Trip Generation* manual and trip origin-destination and distribution guidance in Director's Rule 5-2009, to provide appropriate information about the development's transportation trip generation and any impacts.

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[1] To fall in this category, this ECA-only SEPA review would be occurring for a development project in an Urban Center, or in an Urban Village that has a light rail station, that is in one of the size categories in the table, and is a residential project or a mixed-use project with at least half its floor area in residential use.

An applicant may also choose to present more than the minimum information in order to show a more complete estimate of transportation impacts. For example, the applicant's analysis may also estimate the number of trips that will be made by bus, bicycle or walking instead of using an automobile, which may change the overall potential for transportation impacts on local streets.

**Contents of "LEVEL 1" analysis**

For a "Level 1" analysis, the minimum information an applicant must provide is the following:

1. Number of additional daily vehicle trips generated by the development.

   *Use the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 8th Edition or successor edition.*

2. Number of additional "peak hour" vehicle trips generated by the development in the afternoon peak hours.

   *Use the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 8th Edition or successor edition*

3. The proposed access/egress routes, such as alleys and streets on which automobiles will enter and leave the site's parking garage or lot.

   *This should mention whether new curbcuts will be proposed or not.*

4. The applicant's estimate of what proportion of the development's traffic is likely to use which streets.

   *In some cases, traffic may be directed to primarily one street, while in other cases a driver may have two or more options to enter or leave an area.*

5. Identify whether the nearest intersections are controlled by stop signs, traffic lights, or other form of traffic control.

6. Describe existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the immediate site vicinity, using city master plan resources such as the bicycle map located at:

   - http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/bikemaps.htm

   and street maps located at:

   - http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/ped_sper_apa.htm

7. Are any pedestrian or bicycle facility improvements included in the proposal? If yes, please describe.

**Contents of "LEVEL 2" analysis**

A "Level 2" transportation impact analysis is required for larger sized development proposals. This is comparable to typical traffic studies prepared by transportation consultants for mid-sized or larger developments in Seattle neighborhoods.

Providing a complete TIA may help expedite the review timeline by allowing the planner to make conclusions more quickly and identify whether any mitigation is needed. The following information is required:

1. Identification of existing conditions, future baseline conditions, and number of additional daily vehicle trips generated by the development.
    a. *Information to describe the local streets, existing traffic volumes and turning movements, and traffic control devices on affected streets and intersections;*
    b. *Level of service information or alternate equivalent measures of traffic operation, delay, volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio for affected intersections and/or streets;*
    c. *Traffic safety information – accident/collision history, latest 3 years;*
    d. *Trip Generation: use the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 8th Edition (or successor), or alternate method;*
        i. *Calculate reductions from basic trip generation, for internal trips, pass-by trips, and mode choices (e.g., proportion likely to use modes other than single-occupant vehicle travel), at the applicant's discretion.*
        ii. *Calculate any other reductions justifiable due to the nature of the development or site.*
        iii. *Summarize the resulting trip calculations for residential and commercial uses*
2. Number of additional "peak hour" vehicle trips generated by the development in the afternoon peak hours.
    a. *Using comparable methods described under #1 above, calculate peak hour vehicle trip generation*
3. The proposed access/egress routes, such as alleys and streets on which automobiles will enter and leave the site's parking garage or lot.
    a. *This should mention whether new curbcuts will be proposed or not.*
4. The applicant's estimate of "trip distribution" and assignment – what proportion of the development's traffic is likely to use which streets.
    a. *Use methods described by DPD Director's Rule 5-2009, or equivalent alternative, to identify trip distribution and assignment to the surrounding roadway system.*
5. Identify the probable extent of traffic impacts on affected streets and intersections
    a. *Afternoon peak hour turning movement impacts on identified intersections, and interpretation of the potential magnitude of impact, including roadway level of*

*service, intersection level of service, and/or other methods of evaluating impacts on street and intersection operations.*

b. *Site access operations, including information such as peak hour volumes, delay and/or level of service, and relationship to freight operations if relevant.*

6. Summarize relationships and potential for impacts to transit service, non-motorized facilities in the site vicinity, and traffic safety, to the extent affected by the proposed development

   a. *Description of proposed bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and freight facilities and operations as provided for in existing multimodal plans. This should include whether there are gaps in pedestrian connections from the site to the nearest transit stop or gaps in continuity of bicycle facilities in the site vicinity.*

   b. *Describe whether the development would adversely affect sidewalks, bicycle lanes, transit facilities, and whether it would contribute traffic to a high accident location.*

   c. *Describe any planned improvements or reconstruction of sidewalks or streets adjacent to the development site.*

7. Evaluate transportation concurrency
   a. *Use methods described in DPD Director's Rule 5-2009.*

DPD will use the TIA to evaluate impacts and assist in identifying mitigation measures, which may include, but is not limited to, mitigation methods identified in SMC 23.52.008.B.

## STEP 4: Include the transportation information in application materials

An applicant is advised as part of a "pre-submittal" process to review this Rule and prepare the transportation analysis materials (or bring an approved transportation impact analysis exemption by DPD) that will allow for efficient intake and review of their development proposal. Providing the appropriate information upfront will help the planner and DPD's transportation planner to more quickly identify concerns about traffic and transportation from a development.

The transportation information is required to be prepared and submitted to DPD at the time of permit intake. If such information is not present, DPD may delay completing the application process until such time as the information is available. After the application is accepted, the permit review by DPD staff may generate a request for additional information, which will be detailed in a correction notice.

City of Seattle
**Department of Planning and Development (DPD)**
**Attn: DPD Public Resource Center**
**700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000**
**P.O. Box 34019**
**Seattle, WA 98124-4019**

**DPD Project Number**_____

# *TRANSPORTATION STUDY EXEMPTION REQUEST FORM*

***Minimum Fee $125***

*(Signed Statement of Financial Responsibility req'd to be submitted, along with $125 min fee)*

**Project Address:** _____
**Property Owner's Name:** _____
**Contact Name:** _____
**Contact Address:** _____
**Contact City/State/Zip:** _____
**Contact Phone Number/E-mail:** _____
**Financially Responsible Party:** _____

Description of *existing* permitted uses on site:
#Dwelling Units:_____ Will any dwelling unit have more than 4 bedrooms? Y/N
Non-residential square footage:_____
Other traffic generating uses not included above (explain & include square footage)

_____

_____

Description of *proposed* uses on site:
#Dwelling Units:_____ Will any dwelling unit have more than 4 bedrooms? Y/N
Non-residential square footage:_____
Other traffic generating uses not included above (explain & include square footage)

_____

_____

If parking exists on-site, location of curbcut(s) and amount of parking:

_____

_____

If parking proposed on-site, location of curbcut(s) and amount of parking proposed:

_____

_____

Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the exemption request (see Director's Rule 8-2012):

_____

_____

_____

___Exemption Granted
___"Level 1" Transportation Study req'd, see Director's Rules 8-2012 & 10-2012
___"Level 2" Transportation Study req'd, see Director's Rule 8-2012, 10-2012

Exemption Reviewed by: _____ Date:_____

**CERTIFICATION**

I CERTIFY that I am Custodian of the Records for the Seattle Department of Planning & Development and that I am the designated custodian of the records of that office; that this is a record kept by the Seattle Department of Planning & Development in the regular course of business of the Seattle Department of Planning & Development and that it is in the regular course of business of that Department that such records are maintained.

THAT this is a true and corect copy of a record maintained by the Seattle Department of Planning & Development pertaining to the property named.

Jill Vanverna

Custodian of the Records
City of Seattle
Dept. of Planning & Development

Date 9/28/12