

Local Governments Determination on Permits

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Washington State
Department of Transportation

RE: RCW 47.01.485 (2) – Report on local governments taking longer than 90 days to make a final determination on permits

The 2015 Legislature directed the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to track and report any permit application for a project, with an estimated cost of less than five hundred million dollars on a state highway, that took more than 90 days for local governments (cities, towns, code cities, and counties) to process following the submission of a complete application. RCW 47.01.485 (2) states:

“The department must report annually to the governor and the transportation committees of the house of representatives and the senate in compliance with RCW 43.01.036 regarding any permit application that takes longer than the number of days identified in subsection (1) of this section to process.”

WSDOT Response

The timeframe for this report is for permit application packages submitted between October 3, 2020 and October 2, 2021. Staffing adaptations due to COVID-19 contributed to some of the local government permit processing delays. Based on information from WSDOT’s regional offices, for the timeframe stated above, eight WSDOT permit submittals took local jurisdictions more than 90 days to process.

| Project name | Project cost (millions) | Local jurisdiction | Permit type | Calendar days to process permit | Why did it take over 90 days? |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------|--|---------------------------------|---|
| SR 525/ Mukilteo Multimodal Project | 187.3 | City of Mukilteo | Shoreline Conditional Use Amendment 1 - Retaining 390 ft ² of trestle Amendment 2 – Public Address system use. | 216 325 | Two shoreline permit amendments were submitted to Ecology separately and consecutively. There were delays due to city staffing shortages, COVID, and lengthy internal city review prior to Ecology submission. |
| SR 167/I-5 to SR 509 - New Expressway (Stage 1b) Project | 400 | City of Tacoma | Critical Areas | 207 | The city requested additional information after application was submitted and deemed complete. It is common for agencies to request additional information about large/complex WSDOT projects. There were delays due to city staffing shortages and COVID-19. |
| SR 167/I-5 to SR 509 - New Expressway (Stage 1b) Project | 400 | City of Fife | Shoreline Conditional Use and Critical Areas Permit | 205 | The permit required a hearing and the city requested additional information after application was submitted and deemed complete. It is common for agencies to request additional |

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| | | | | | information about large/complex WSDOT projects. There were delays due to city staffing/ coordination shortages and COVID-19. |
| SR 167/I-5 to SR 509 - New Expressway (Stage 1b) Project | 400 | City of Milton | Shoreline Conditional Use and Critical Areas Permit | 205 | The permit required a Hearing and the city requested additional information after application was submitted and deemed complete. It is common for agencies to request additional information about large/complex WSDOT projects. There were delays due to city staffing/ coordination shortages and COVID-19. |
| SR 167/I-5 to SR 509 - New Expressway (Stage 1b) Project | 400 | Pierce County | Shoreline Substantial Development | 205 | The county requested additional information after application was submitted and deemed complete. It is common for agencies to request additional information about large/complex WSDOT projects. There were county processing delays due to COVID-19. |
| I 405/SR 522 Vicinity to SR 527 Express Toll Lanes Improvement Project | 400 | City of Bothell | Shoreline Substantial Development | 199 | There were delays due to city staff workloads, processing time required for comment periods, notices, public hearing, and additional processing time for the reconsideration request on associated Shoreline Variance approval. |
| I 405/SR 522 Vicinity to SR 527 Express Toll Lanes Improvement Project | 400 | City of Bothell | Shoreline Variance | 199 | There were delays due to city staff workloads, processing time required for comment periods, notices, public hearing, and additional processing time for the reconsideration request. |

Should you have any questions, or need further information, please contact Ahmer Nizam, Environmental Services Office Director, at 360-705-7480, or ahmer.nizam@wsdot.wa.gov.