CITY OF SHORELINE

Memorandum

DATE: August 6, 2009

TO: Shoreline Planning Commission

FROM: Joseph W. Tovar, FAICP, Director, Planning & Development Services
Steven Szafran, AICP, Associate Planner

RE: Study Session on modifying Level of Service, Development Code Section 20.60.140

Introduction

An amendment to the Development Code is a mechanism by which the City may bring its land use and development regulations into conformity with the Comprehensive Plan or respond to changing conditions or needs of the City. This amendment will change the language of 20.60.140 to be consistent with the Transportation Master Plan that was adopted in June 2005.

Background

The GMA allows each local jurisdiction to choose a Level of Service (LOS) method and standards. Level of Service is a quantitative measure used to denote intersection operating conditions. It generally describes levels of traffic congestion at signalized and unsignalized intersections in an urban area. The level of service standard is one of the cornerstones of Shoreline's Transportation Element. Two of the most important criteria to be applied for selecting a LOS methodology are 1) whether it is easy for the public to understand and for the staff to administer and 2) whether it is technically/legally proven.

Prior to the adoption of the City's 2005 Transportation Master Plan, the City used an "areawide intersection averaging" method to determine the Level of Service. When the Master Plan was adopted, the City determined that a different standard was appropriate, concluding that the problem with the previous LOS approach of the area-wide intersection averaging method was that the public as well as the policy makers did not gain a clear understanding of the implications of averaged LOS findings. As the result, it would be difficult to establish effective policies to address the issue of transportation concurrency in the city. In the Plan, the City

adopted LOS E to best balance levels of congestion, the cost of added capacity and the need to minimize diversion of traffic onto neighborhood streets. Transportation Policy T13 states the LOS method and standard:

Adopt LOS E at the signalized intersections on the arterials within the City as the level of service standards for evaluating planning level concurrency and reviewing traffic impacts of developments, excluding the Highways of Statewide Significance (Aurora Avenue N and Ballinger Way NE). The level of service shall be calculated with the delay method described in the Transportation Research Board's Highway Capacity Manual 2000 or its updated versions.

When the City Council adopted the 2005 Comprehensive Plan update, the City failed to update Development Code Section 20.60.140 which refers to the volume to capacity ratio as the preferred methodology for calculating level of service. The Development Code change below will correct this oversight and make our Code consistent with the more recently adopted 2005 TMP update.

Proposal

This action will change Development Code Section 20.60.140. This section refers to the zonal averaging system which is inconsistent with the 2005 update of the Transportation Master Plan. Please see attachment 1 for revised language.

Next Steps

At your August 6 meeting, the Commission will discuss the proposal and decide whether the Commissioners are comfortable in bringing it to a hearing. If the Commission directs, staff will schedule the hearing on September 3, 2009. The Commission will then make a recommendation on the amendment and forward the recommendation to the City Council for action.

If you have questions about the proposed amendment or the schedule, please contact Steve Szafran at 206-801-2512 or sszafran@shorelinewa.gov

Attachment

1. Changes to 20.60.140 in legislative format

20.60.140 Adequate streets.

The intent of this subchapter is to ensure that public streets maintain an adequate Level of Service (LOS) as new development occurs. The level of service standard that the City has selected is a LOS E standard at signalized intersections on Arterial Streets ~~zonal average system, which is the basis for measuring concurrency. The City has been divided into five geographical areas, and LOS Standards are adopted for each zone. The zones are described in the following Table:~~

~~LOS Zone~~	~~Zone Name~~	~~Adopted LOS Standard~~
~~1~~	~~West of Aurora Corridor~~	~~D~~
~~2~~	~~Aurora Corridor to I-5~~	~~D~~
~~3~~	~~I-5 to East City Limits~~	~~D~~
~~4~~	~~Aurora Avenue Corridor~~	~~E~~
~~5~~	~~Annexation Area A~~	~~E~~

~~Note: A map of the LOS Zones is located in the Transportation Element of the Shoreline Comprehensive Plan.~~

A. Development Proposal Requirements. All new proposals for development that would generate 20 or more trips during the p.m. peak hour must submit a traffic study at the time of application. The estimate of the number of trips a development shall be consistent with the most recent edition of the Trip Generation Manual, published by the Institute of Traffic Engineers. The traffic study shall include at a minimum:

1. An analysis of origin/destination trip distribution proposed;

2. The identification of any intersection that would receive the addition of 20 or more trips during the p.m. peak hour; and

3. An analysis demonstrating how impacted intersections could accommodate the additional trips and maintain the ~~zonal~~ LOS standard.

B. Development Approval Conditions. A development proposal that will have a direct traffic impact on a roadway or intersection that exceeds the adopted LOS standard ~~for the zone~~ shall not be approved unless:

1. The applicant agrees to fund improvements needed to attain the LOS standard;

2. The applicant achieves the LOS Standard by phasing the project or using transportation demand management (TDM) techniques to reduce the number of peak hour trips generated by the project;

3. The roadway or intersection has already been improved to its ultimate roadway section and the applicant agrees to use TDM incentives and/or phase the development proposal as determined by the City of Shoreline. (Ord. 238 Ch. VI § 4(A), 2000).