

# **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, 2021 and October 2, 2022. Local Government staffing challenges contributed to some of the permit processing delays. Based on information from WSDOT’s regional offices, for the timeframe stated above, 9 WSDOT permit submittals took local jurisdictions more than 90 days to process. All ten belated local permits issued were within WSDOT’s Northwest Region.

Project name	Project cost (millions)	Local jurisdiction	Permit type	Calendar days to process permit	Why did it take over 90 days?
I-405 / Ripley Lane Stream Connection Project	Approx. \$10	King County	Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permit	305	County required a public notice for this permit. After WSDOT submitted the application, the County requested additional information before initiating the public notice. The County took five months to assign the permit to staff. After draft permit review, it took two months for WSDOT and the County to work out comments of concern.
SR 18 / widening project	\$190	King County	Clearing and Grading	96	County has a back log of permits due to COVID, retired staff, and trying to fill positions. Many of the staff are new there and are learning their new positions.
SR 18 / widening project	\$190	King County	Clearing and Grading	120+	Same as above.

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SR 9 / Marsh Rd to 2nd St Widening	\$110	Snohomish County	Shoreline Substantial Development	170	County requesting a Shoreline Conditional Use Application. Plus, the County awaiting Ecology concurrence by or before 1-22-23.
SR 9 / Marsh Rd to 2nd St Widening	\$110	Snohomish County	Shoreline Conditional Use	170	County requesting a shoreline Variance application. Plus, the County awaiting Ecology concurrence by or before 1-22-23.
SR 9 / Marsh Rd to 2nd St Widening	\$110	Snohomish County	Shoreline Variance	170	County awaiting Ecology concurrence within 30 days by or before 1-22-23
SR 9 / Marsh Rd to 2nd St Widening	\$110	Snohomish County	Floodplain Development	180+	County awaiting copies of all project permits before issuing their permit.
I-90/SR 18 Interchange and Widening	\$173	King County	Shoreline Substantial Development	180+	County has a back log of permits due to COVID, retired staff, and trying to fill positions. Many of the staff are new there and are learning their new positions.
I-90/SR 18 Interchange and Widening	\$173	King County	Shoreline Conditional Use	120+	Same as above.

Note: if the “Days to process permit” includes a “+” then the local jurisdiction has not issued the permit as of 2/1/2023.

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.