V. Procedures for Application in Central Business District and Metro Station Policy Areas

Except where noted, the technical definitions and procedures applied in CBDs and MSPAs will be consistent with those defined elsewhere in these guidelines. In reviewing CBD and MSPA applications, staff will use the following criteria.

A. Adequacy of Traffic Flows

1. Any intersection with a CLV of 1,800 or less will, in most cases, be considered acceptable with no further analysis required. However, staff may require queuing analysis if abnormally long queuing might be present even at intersections with a CLV below 1,800. Staff shall notify the applicant in writing as early in the review process as possible, and no later than written notification of a complete traffic study. The CLV will be calculated in accordance with the procedures defined in these Guidelines.

2. If the CLV is over 1,800, a queuing analysis shall be performed. Existing queues shall be measured by the applicant and total traffic (existing, background, and site) and planned roadway and circulation changes shall be taken into account. The generally accepted practice for evaluating queue lengths in CBDs and MSPAs is to observe the existing maximum queue during the peak hour and add background and site-generated traffic, assuming LATR lane distribution factors, a 25-foot average vehicle length, and a division of hourly approach volumes equally among the number of signal cycles in the peak hour. Alternative methods, such as simulation using software such as Synchro or CORSIM, may be acceptable if simulation parameters are agreed to by staff.

   The average queue length in the weekday peak hour should not extend more than 80 percent of the distance to an adjacent signalized intersection, provided the adjacent signalized intersections are greater than 300 feet apart. The 80 percent standard provides a margin of safety for peaking. If adjacent signalized intersections are closer together than 300 feet, the average queue length in the weekday peak hour should not extend more than 90 percent of the distance to the adjacent signalized intersection. The assumed signal timing analysis must be consistent with the crossing time required for pedestrians in paragraph B.2.b. of this section.

   If adequate conditions cannot be achieved and no mitigating measures are programmed that would result in an acceptable CLV, the transportation system in the CBD or MSPA may not be deemed adequate to support the development.

B. Site Access and Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety

In addition to the traffic flow analysis, applicants must demonstrate that the following guidelines are not violated by their site development.

1. Vehicle access points for parking and loading must be located so that they will not interfere with traffic flows on the adjacent streets or with access points to neighboring buildings or transit terminal areas. Access directly onto the major roads should be avoided, but if proposed it will be considered in the context of the application.

2. In addition to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Impact Statement (III.B.12), pedestrian and bicycle safety shall be assessed based on the following characteristics.

    a. Conflicts between pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles shall be minimized. Actions shall be taken to ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety on and adjacent to the site.

    b. The applicant must provide evidence from MCDOT that the pedestrian phase of the traffic signal cycle for each approach at the adjacent and critical intersections will provide at least enough time for pedestrians to completely cross the street walking at a speed of 3.5 feet per second. Where possible, enough time should be provided to completely cross while walking at 3.0 feet per second. An additional five seconds should be added to the minimum crossing time to reflect the delay caused by pedestrians stepping off the curb in competition with vehicles turning during the walk cycle.

        In MSPA cases where pedestrian crossing time criteria are not met, the applicant must inform MCDOT and request them to revise the signal timing.

These aspects must be documented in the traffic study submitted as part of the development application. In the analysis, all pedestrian and bicycle movements are assumed to be made at the street level.

C. Other Criteria

1. Total traffic is defined as the existing traffic, plus trips from approved but unbuilt development, plus the trips from the proposed development during the peak hour of the weekday morning and evening peak periods.

2. Critical intersections are those within the CBD or MSPA, defined by Transportation Planning staff, generally adjacent to the site, or allowing site traffic to enter an arterial or major road. In some cases, where site volumes are large, additional intersections within or contiguous to the CBD or MSPA may be identified by staff for inclusion in the traffic study.

3. Vehicles can be assigned to parking garages encountered on their trip into the CBD or MSPA. The capacity of parking garages must be accounted for based on guidance from the Transportation Planning staff and consultation with MCDOT.

4. Trip generation rates for background and site development traffic are contained in Appendices A, B, and C.

D. Information Provided by Staff

The following information will be provided to the applicant by Transportation Planning and MCDOT staffs for use in the traffic study.

1. Existing traffic counts at selected locations. (The applicant shall be required to update these data if the application is submitted more than one year after the data were initially gathered.)

2. Trip generation rates

3. Directional distributions (see Appendix D)

4. Parking garage capacity information and locations of future public parking garages

5. A listing of background developments.

E. Traffic Mitigation Agreement

Each applicant in a TMD must have a proposed TMAg (see p.20) outlining a participation plan for trip reduction measures and other strategies for participating in efforts to achieve the mode share goals for that area. This plan should be prepared in conjunction with the area's TMD, MCDOT, and Transportation Planning staff. The TMAg for TMD participation may be structured to incorporate any applicable PAMR requirements.

F. Participation in Transportation Improvements

The Planning Board may require that applicants participate in some capital program transportation improvements. Participation will be proportional to the development impact on the improvement and will be determined by Transportation Planning staff, MCDOT, and SHA. If the traffic study identifies roadway changes or other transportation-related activities required to mitigate the proposed development's on- or off-site impact, these changes will be the responsibility of the applicant as part of satisfying LATR procedures.