Q: Various figures imply that for any development there must be a simplified or detailed design report prepared. What happens if Ministry development approvals staff decide that a formal report is not required?

A: That is the prerogative of the staff. The intent of the manual is not to suggest that a report is always required. However, preparing even a simplified report adds rigour to the decision process, ensures that key factors have been accounted for, and provides a means of tracking decisions, so preparation of a report should always be a consideration.

Q: Why is there now a formal process for engineering sign-off on development work?

A: The Ministry’s Technical Circular T-06/09, Engineer of Record and Field Review Guidelines, was prepared to define the roles and responsibilities of the various Professional Engineers relating to construction on projects within Ministry rights-of-way. Land development projects usually require engineering (often involving more than one professional) so the Ministry requires quality assurance from, and co-ordination between, the professionals. See Appendix B.

Q: Can the Ministry commit to a specific time period for the review of development proposals or design reports? This could affect marketing strategy and the timing of municipal meetings.

A: This depends on Ministry staff numbers and workloads. However if the parties work together according to the revised process where everyone communicates and is on the same page from the start, the review times should be greatly expedited.

Q: The manual says that the study area might be expanded beyond the usual maximum of about 2 km if an “already congested or hazardous area” might be adversely affected by the development. How is such an area defined?

A: The determination of “significant deterioration in safety/capacity” has to be assessed on a case by case basis from studies, data, or local knowledge as appropriate. In the revised manual we have tried to quantify issues as much as we can, but it’s not always possible or practical.

Q: Landscaping plans may not be available at the stage of the traffic analysis.

A: Sightline areas can be provided to architects, landscapers or others to guide them as to where landscaping is suitable or not. Engineering criteria (safety) define where landscaping, signs, etc can be located, so the sightline info needs to be on approved plans.

Q: I understand that the ITE trip generation rates are to be used, replacing the old MoT rates. However, the MoT rate for “neighbourhood commercial” should be maintained as no similar rate is provided in ITE Manual. This land use is common for a subdivision development.

A: See the ITE Trip Generation Manual (8th edition) page 1497, 2nd paragraph. The regression equation is to be used. The problem with suggesting alternative rates (e.g. based on local surveys or made-in-BC data) is that the results are not statistically valid unless calculated according to ITE requirements (large sample size).