



## King County

### Department of Development and Environmental Services

900 Oakesdale Avenue Southwest  
Renton, WA 98057-5212

206-296-6600 TTY 206-296-7217

# PEER REVIEW PROGRAM

For alternate formats, call 206-296-6600.

## Purpose

King County DDES originally established an optional peer review program to address a growing backlog of applications. The goal was to get better plan submittals that more closely addressed development permit conditions and regulations through the use of a 'peer engineer' knowledgeable in King County's processing requirements. Under this program, if an applicant chose peer review, then plan submittals were expected to be complete and address all permit requirements that would be prioritized for approval.

In 2004, DDES established a Project Management Program required for all plan submittals. This program incorporates the benefits of the peer program by providing predictability and better coordination in identifying all plan approval requirements after the initial submittal. Since Project Management started, the agency has seen few, if any requests for peer review. However, an applicant may still choose peer review under the Project Management Program. The steps necessary and processing for peer review are outlined below.

## Director's Approval

The Director shall approve the use of the Peer Review Program if the Director finds in writing that:

1. The Department's present workload is substantially above normal
2. The Department has insufficient staff to review and approve development proposals and, in particular, engineering plans, in a timely manner and
3. Utilization of the Peer Review Program, as prescribed in these rules, is in the best interest of the residents of King County.

## Submittal Requirements and Request for Peer Review

The applicant may request that a peer engineer\* review engineering plans by submitting a request letter and one copy to DDES. The request letter shall identify the name, address, telephone number and professional license number of the proposed peer review engineer. The applicant shall submit to the Department as a package, the request letter (and copy) with any required fees and three copies of the following, as applicable to the particular application:

1. Engineering plans, including erosion control plans
2. Drainage analysis/calculations, *i.e.*, Technical Information Report (TIR)
3. Any structural plans for vaults, bridges, retaining walls or other similar structures
4. Preliminary approval of the plat or short plat, including all conditions for approval
5. Any supporting documents, including Surface Water Design Manual adjustments, road variances, soils reports, wetland studies, traffic analyses, government permits and other scientific or technical studies or reports as may be required by the Surface Water Design Manual or requested by DDES.

The submittal package will then be screened by DDES for completeness and appropriateness of the peer process. A letter will be sent to the applicant with a decision allowing or disallowing the process and any deficiencies of the submittal package that will need to be modified.

\* Note: Peer review engineer must be a professional engineer licensed in the State of Washington. In addition, simultaneous, reciprocal review may not occur, *i.e.*, two firms cannot review each other's plans at the same time.

## **Peer Review Procedure**

The peer review engineer, as a representative of King County and the public, shall use all documents submitted by the applicant and a review checklist provided by DDES to evaluate the engineering plans, unless otherwise authorized by the director. In addition, the peer review engineer shall evaluate the engineering plans according to the following, as applicable to the particular application:

1. King County approval of the preliminary plat or short plat, including all conditions of approval. Engineering plans shall be consistent with the preliminary plat or short plat map
2. SEPA mitigations
3. P-suffix conditions
4. Critical areas section of the King County Code Title 21A or its successor
5. Critical drainage basin standards
6. King County road standards
7. Surface Water Design Manual
8. Other County codes and rules, as appropriate
9. State permits and approvals, *i.e.*, hydraulic project approvals (HPAs) and Department of Transportation approvals
10. Bond quantity and retention/detention (R/D) forms.

## **Completion of Review and Peer Submittal**

When the peer review engineer has completed review of the engineering plans, the peer review engineer shall request a meeting with DDES and the design engineer to present a written summary of his or her review. The peer review engineer shall submit the following to DDES at the review meeting:

1. A brief written summary of how each condition of preliminary approval is achieved
2. A letter prepared and signed by the peer review engineer summarizing the review and including a final recommendation
3. All final documents including, but not limited to, easements, wetland plans, soils reports, other scientific or technical studies or reports, and the engineering review checklist
4. Three copies of the drainage calculations approved as signed by the peer review engineer using the approval block shown in this document
5. Three copies of the approved engineering print set.

All documents and drawings reviewed by the peer shall contain a signature block and statement, signed and dated, conforming to the following example. The standard size for a signature block is 4 1/2" W x 1 3/4" H.

<b>Peer Review Approval Block</b>		
To the best of my knowledge, this plan complies with the ordinances, codes, rules and regulations of King County.		
_____	_____	_____
Name		PE License & Expiration
_____	_____	_____
Date	Telephone	Firm

### **Plan Approval by DDES**

The Department shall evaluate at the review meeting whether all conditions of approval and major design elements appear to be fully satisfied. If all conditions and other requirements are not met, DDES shall not accept the engineering plans for final Department review and shall return the plans to the peer review engineer. If all conditions and other requirements are met, the Department shall accept the engineering plans for final Department review.

Upon completion of King County review, the Department shall notify the applicant and peer review engineer of plan approval with a request to submit the original Mylars approved as signed by the peer review engineer using the approval block in this document; or any required modifications. If modifications are required, a mutually agreeable resubmittal date shall be scheduled. Traffic, structural, geotechnical, wetlands, and other related permit review must also be finalized before plan approval.

Please note that under the original peer review program, plan submittals to DDES were prioritized for DDES staff review over other plan submittals. While DDES staff under the Project Management Program can no longer commit to a 10-day turnaround period for peer review submittals, it can be expected that a plan that is more complete will be processed for approval in a shorter time period.

**Check out the DDES Web site at [www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits)**