CITY OF SHORELINE

City of Shoreline
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ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER #EDG 000109-072209

ISSUE:

Current Shoreline Municipal Code does not directly address requests of permittees to fill or modify ditches and swales within the City right-of-way (ROW). Planning and Development Services (PADS) uses a determination made by Public Works as the basis for their ruling without a specific Municipal or Engineering Code as reference.

FINDINGS:

Prior to incorporation and in years past, ditches have been filled without permits, or some grading permits have been issued without an appreciation of the positive stormwater and environmental benefits provided by ditches and swales. As a result, this has led many residents to believe that ditches within the City right-of-way and adjacent to their property should be filled, or fail to understand the important water quality role that ditches and swales play for local and regional water bodies. These residents have generally made requests for filling ditches in order to increase their parking within the ROW.

Requests to fill ditches have been denied because of the City's need for storage of surface water within the ROW, and an increasing emphasis on water quality and the preservation of threatened or endangered species. Unlike enclosed pipes, ditches and vegetated swales store and filter storm water runoff while helping to increase infiltration back into the soil.

The City of Shoreline Engineering Development Guide Detail 205 outlines the components and layout of a roadside ditch. Further, PADS refers to and uses the Washington State Department of Transportation Design Manual to reference and provide information on design. In short, for roadways with grade of 10-percent or less can be designed and maintained as an open ditch.

CONCLUSIONS:

Ditches and swales within the City ROW are and integral part of the City's stormwater retention system. They should not be filled because of the stormwater storage and water quality enhancement benefits. There are at times, where in the interest of public safety, a ditch may have to be filled. However, requests that do not represent a public safety risk should be declined. Public safety risks will be determined by the Public Works Department.

DECISION:

The Engineering Development guide is amended to include the attached criteria effective immediately.

Director, Planning and Development Services	7/23/09 Date
Director, Public Works	7/23/09 Date

5.12 Ditches

Because ditches within City rights-of-way provide storage and enhance water quality, they can be filled only with approval from the Director. Decision to approve the infill of a ditch will be made based on the condition of the ditch and the public safety risks.

Ditches having 10% or flatter longitudinal slopes will remain open. Ditches having steeper than 10% longitudinal slope(s) may be filled following formal review of a complete application and appropriate plans. If ditch closure is approved, the following criteria apply:

A. A right-of-way use permit is required. The design must be prepared by a Washington State licensed professional engineer. The City will review all applications to verify compliance with the City's critical areas requirements.

B. The property owner is responsible for the cost of permit, engineering, materials, labor, and equipment required for the installation.

C. The preferred pipe material is perforated corrugated polyethylene pipe (smooth interior). Types of pipe other than those listed in the Table 22 may be approved based on site constraints. Perforated pipe is not recommended when the bottom elevation of the ditch line is below the finished floor elevation of nearby structures.

D. Minimum pipe diameter (interior) is 12 inches. Larger pipes may be required by existing conditions or proposed changes.

E. Join dissimilar materials directly underground using a coupler specifically designed for the two types of material used. If the coupler does not exist for the two particular materials, then a structure is required to make the material transition.

F. Install a catch basin: 1) at low points that drain to the ditch, 2) at locations where roof downspouts, footing drains or other surface water piping connects to the ditch, and 3) for maintenance purposes, when the pipe run is 100 feet or greater.

G. Once the pipe is installed and covered, the disturbed areas must be graded such that any runoff from the road and private property is directed to a catch basin or open ditch. Cover the graded area using compacted 5/8" minus crushed rock.