



STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: Steve Langdon, Planning Manager

PRESENTED BY: Same as above

HEARING DATE: May 31, 2017

APPLICATION NO.: PC 2017-1

RELATED CASES: None

APPLICANT: City of Longview – Steve Haubner, Stormwater Manager

REQUEST: Proposed municipal code amendments regarding stormwater management

BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

Low Impact Development (LID) is a stormwater and land use management strategy that strives to mimic pre-disturbance hydrologic processes of infiltration, filtration, storage, evaporation, and transpiration by emphasizing conservation, use of on-site natural features, site planning, and distributed stormwater management practices that are integrated into a project design.

Along with other jurisdictions in Western Washington, the City of Longview is required under its stormwater permit to review local development codes and standards to make stormwater LID the preferred and commonly-used approach to site development. The primary goal is to modify existing regulations or adopt new provisions to minimize impervious surface, loss of vegetation, and the generation of stormwater runoff. This effort requires Longview to incorporate stormwater LID principles and BMPs into Longview Municipal Code (LMC), development-related policies and procedures, and standard engineering plans and details.

Beginning in the fall of 2016, staff went through a process of reviewing LMC against a set of stormwater LID topic areas such as site planning, landscaping, impervious surfaces, clearing & grading, and parking. Each topic also included a suite of subtopics which addressed a particular

focus area related to a LID best management practice or approach. Conflicts and gaps with best practices as well as opportunities to implementing LID BMPs and approaches were identified for the relevant LMC code sections for each topic and subtopic area. A subsequent process reviewed the results of the code review effort. Finally, staff developed recommendations for revisions and additions to LMC, other development policies, and the City's standard engineering plans and details.

The proposed amendments to Longview Municipal Code, a product of this process, are attached as Exhibit A

SEPA DETERMINATION

A completed Environmental Checklist was filed with the City of Longview. The Checklist was circulated for agency review and comment on May 15, 2017. The comment period will close on May 29, 2017 [Application No. E 2017-3].

The SEPA documents are attached as Exhibit B.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2006

An objective and some policies from Chapter 7: Public Facilities, Utilities, and Services Element are given below:

Chapter 7: Public Facilities, Utilities, and Services Element

Storm Drainage

Objective PF-B.3 Respond to National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirements regarding stormwater detention and water quality requirements after the permit is issued. The permit is expected in 2007. *Note: The stormwater LID code review updates are required under the permit to be adopted and effective by June 30, 2017.*

Policy PF-B.3.5 Require developers to construct storm drainage improvements directly serving the development, including any necessary off-site improvements. Require that storm drainage improvements needed to serve new development are built prior to or simultaneous with such development. Ensure that stormwater facilities required of new development are designed and built for low-cost, long-term maintenance.

Policy PF-B.3.6 Require developers to consider aesthetics as well as functional requirements in designing surface water facilities. Encourage developers to include multiple-use surface water facilities in their developments. Consider recreational, habitat, educational, cultural, open space, and aesthetic opportunities.

Policy PF-B.3.8 Maintain and update as necessary City drainage and erosion control ordinances to reduce the volume of runoff and amounts of sediment and pollutants discharged from newly constructed developments.

Policy PF-B.3.8 Where feasible, retrofit existing roadways with facilities to enhance water quality and reduce peak flows as roadway improvement projects are completed.

STAFF DISCUSSION

As stated in the background section of this report, the City is required to review its development codes and standards to make stormwater management low impact development (LID) methods the preferred and commonly-used approach to development. Community Development and Public Works staff has reviewed the existing development-related codes and produced the recommendations. In many cases, the changes are minor and represent a codification of existing practices.

The proposed changes to “Chapter 12.50 Street and Development Standards” are oriented towards reducing the amount of impervious surfaces in street rights-of-way. It includes a provision to allow reduced pavement widths on residential collector streets and provides for design standards for planter strips intended to enhance stormwater infiltration and treatment along sidewalks and roadways.

Proposed changes to landscaping requirements help incorporate stormwater LID methods into the landscaping standards creating efficiencies in land management.

The most substantial change is bolstering the landscaping standards for most of the commercial districts that currently have few requirements. In *Chapter 19.46 Supplemental Commercial Zoning Standards* there are substantial landscaping requirements for Regional Commercial District but few standards for the General Commercial, Office/Commercial, Central Business and Neighborhood Commercial districts. Development in the General Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial districts is required to provide screening from an adjacent single-family home but this requirement could be met with a fence or a hedge. There are also some landscaping requirements for parking lots in commercial zones.

Under the proposal, the following would be required in the General Commercial, Office/Commercial, Central Business and Neighborhood Commercial districts: “A minimum of 5% of any site or one-half of the non-impervious area shall be landscaped.” Please note that this statement does not include the statement “...whichever is greater.” That means the lesser of the two choices would be requirement. It also means that a developer would never be required to provide more than 5 percent landscaping because if the non-impervious calculations resulted in a greater landscaped area they could default to the 5 percent standard. Below is a table showing various lot sizes and the size of landscaped area that would be needed to meet the 5% standard.

Lot size in square feet	Lot size in acres	Percent of lot size for landscaping	Area required to be landscaped in square feet
6,000	0.14	5%	300
24,000	0.55	5%	1,200
43,560	1.0	5%	2,178
108,900	2.5	5%	5,445
217,800	5.0	5%	10,890

STAFF FINDINGS

1. The proposal is needed to meet NPDES permit requirements and therefore is consistent with Comprehensive Plan Objective PF-B.3 provided above.
2. The proposal is consistent with the policies contained in Storm Drainage section of Chapter 7 Public Facilities, Utilities, and Services Element of the *City of Longview, Comprehensive Plan, 2006*. The proposal will help to reduce impervious areas in rights-of-way. It will allow efficiencies in land use by combining LID practices with landscaping requirements and it will increase the amount of landscaped areas in commercial zoning districts.

RECOMMENDATION

City staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council that the proposed code amendments as given in Exhibit A be adopted.

EXHIBITS

- A. Draft municipal code amendments
- B. SEPA Documentation

Staff Report Date: May 24, 2017