

Department of Community and Economic Development
Planning Division
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY/CODE INTERPRETATION

**ADMINISTRATIVE
POLICY/CODE**

INTERPRETATION #: CI-133

MUNICIPAL

CODE SECTIONS: RMC 4-4-070 Landscaping

REFERENCE: N/A

SUBJECT: Storm Drainage Facility Perimeter Landscaping

BACKGROUND: Ordinance #5749 established a requirement for the installation of perimeter landscaping around new storm drainage facilities in order to mitigate for the visual impact of these facilities on adjacent uses. More specifically, the General Landscape Requirements in RMC 4-4-070 requires the installation of a landscape strip with a minimum width of fifteen feet (15') around the entire storm drainage facility, unless otherwise determined through the site plan review or subdivision review process.

Storm drainage facilities constructed as part of new developments are required to be sited within a separate stormwater tract. While the code specifies the location of the perimeter landscaping in relation to the code-required safety fence, it does not explicitly require the landscaping to be located inside of the stormwater tract boundaries. This has resulted in development proposals that locate portions of the perimeter landscaping on single family lots in order to decrease the size of the stormwater tract and increase the developments lot yield.

DECISION: Amend RMC 4-4-070.G General Landscape Requirements to require storm drainage facility perimeter landscaping to be located entirely within the stormwater tract when associated with a subdivision.

JUSTIFICATION: The intent of the landscaping requirement is to ensure adequate visual screening is provided between the storm drainage facility and adjacent uses. Requiring the landscape strip to be located inside of the stormwater tract increases the likelihood of proper maintenance by the developer or homeowners association and protects adjacent property owners from incurring costs associated with maintaining the perimeter landscaping. In addition, Section 5.1.1.1 "Design Criteria" of the 2017 City of Renton Surface Water Design Manual requires perimeter landscaping to be located within any stormwater tract maintained by the city. Adding a similar standard to RMC 4-4-

070.G General Landscape Requirements will ensure consistency is maintained between the two sections of code.

**ADMINISTRATOR
APPROVAL:**

C. E. "Chip" Vincent

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2018

**APPEAL
PROCESS:**

To appeal this determination, a written appeal--accompanied by the required filing fee--must be filed with the City's Hearing Examiner (1055 South Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057, 425-430-6515) no more than 14 days from the date of this decision. Your submittal should explain the basis for the appeal. Section 4-8-110 of the Renton Municipal Code provides further information on the appeal process.

DISCLAIMER: Excerpts from the Renton Municipal Code shown below may not contain the most recently codified text. In such instances, code amendments implemented through this Administrative Code Interpretation shall be construed to affect the current code and past/future Administrative Code Interpretations not yet codified in the same manner as shown below. Should any conflicts result the Administrator shall determine the effective code.

**CODE
AMENDMENTS
NEEDED TO
IMPLEMENT
DETERMINATIONS:**

RMC 4-4-070.G General Landscaping Requirements

6. Storm Drainage Facility Landscaping:

- a. Trees Are Prohibited on Berms:** Trees are prohibited on any berm serving a drainage-related function; however, groundcover is required and subject to City review/approval.
- b. Additional Locations Where Trees and Shrubs Are Prohibited:**
 - i. Within the fenced area; and
 - ii. Within ten feet (10') of any manmade drainage structure (e.g., catch basins, ditches, pipes, vaults, etc.).
- c. Perimeter Landscaping Required:** A landscaping strip with a minimum fifteen feet (15') of width shall be located on the outside of the fence, unless otherwise determined through the site plan review or subdivision review process. The landscape strip shall be located entirely within the boundaries of the storm drainage facility tract when associated with a subdivision.
- d. Type of Plantings Required:** Plantings shall be consistent with the Surface Water Design Manual and this Section. Additionally, trees must be spaced as determined by the Department of Community and Economic Development.
- e. Conflicts:** In the event of a conflict between this Section and the Surface Water Design Manual, the landscaping provisions of this Section shall prevail. Refer to chapter 5 of the Surface Water Design Manual. (Ord. 5749, 1-12-2015)

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