



City of Medford

Planning Department

Working with the community to shape a vibrant and exceptional city

DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

The purpose of this pamphlet is to provide information on the development of floodplains and maintenance of drainage systems which flow into the creeks and rivers within these flood hazard areas.

FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The City of Medford has adopted, as part of the Medford Floodplain Ordinance, regulations on development in flood areas. The purpose of these regulations is to control the alteration of natural floodplains and stream channels; prevent or regulate the construction of flood barriers which will unnaturally divert flood waters or which may increase flood hazards in other areas; restrict or prohibit uses which may result in damaging increases in erosion or in flood heights or velocities; and to control filling, grading, dredging, and other development which may increase flood damages.

It is very important to contact the Medford Planning Department if any work is to be performed in flood hazard areas. This is necessary as the regulations are extensive, and development permits are required for construction or substantial improvements.

MAINTENANCE OF DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Medford has a storm drainage system which is composed of both open and closed segments. The open sections are drainage swales/ditches which are utilized to carry storm waters away from homes to drainage areas, such as creeks or rivers. The closed system is comprised of storm water inlets and piping which also carries the water from streets and developments to drainage areas.

Maintenance of these systems is very important. Debris in ditches and streams obstruct the flow of water which can cause overflow onto roads and into yards. Partial or complete filling in of these ditches can reduce the flood flow capacity, which will also result in overflow into roads or onto private property.

However, realizing that the ditch system may be a problem for some property owners, provisions are made for filling in ditches. If the property owner will contact the City of Medford Public Works Department at 541.774.2100, arrangements can be made, where appropriate, for city workers to install drain piping.

Maintenance of the drainage system is very important so that a high flood flow capacity can be realized. To aid in this, the City of Medford clears and performs other maintenance work on the system at least two times per year. Work is also performed on an emergency basis as needed.

Citizens are expected to perform routine maintenance on ditches located on right-of-ways in front of or to the rear of their properties. This includes the removal of high weeds, litter, or other items which may be considered a nuisance. Also, property shall be maintained so that water cannot become stagnant, and breeding areas are not provided for mosquitos.

A litter ordinance is also in effect which makes it unlawful to deposit litter in bodies of water "in a park or elsewhere". This includes lakes, rivers, and streams.

If you know of unapproved changes occurring to the drainage system, such as filling or rerouting of streams or ditches, or a nuisance situation which exists, please contact the City of Medford Planning Department at 541.774.2380.

Additional information on floods and related topics is available for review at Jackson County Library at 205 Central Ave in Medford, OR. Other pamphlets on floods in and related items can be obtained at the Medford Planning Department.

This flyer is an informational publication of the City of Medford Planning Department. Inquiries regarding this document should be directed to the Planning Department located at 200 South Ivy Street, Medford, OR 97501

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