

Low Impact Development Principles Project



For Council Consideration and Comment Low Impact Development Principles Project Draft Interest Statement and Project Principles July 6, 2015

Purpose

The interest statement and project principles are intended to guide staff and the City's commission's and boards as they explore and develop appropriate options and recommended amendments to Bellevue's development codes and standards to make low impact development (LID) the preferred and commonly used approach to site development in Bellevue.

Background

The 2013-2018 NPDES¹ Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit requires the City to review and revise its development-related codes and standards to incorporate LID principles. The intent of the revisions is to make LID the preferred and commonly used approach to site development. The permit defines LID principles as land use management strategies that emphasize conservation, use of on-site natural features, and site planning to minimize impervious surfaces, native vegetation loss, and stormwater runoff. LID principles are different from LID best management practices (BMPs), which are on-site stormwater control and treatment facilities such as rain gardens and permeable pavement. LID BMP requirements will be addressed in a different project. The LID principles are the focus of this project.

The review and revision process the City is undertaking must be similar to that described in *Integrating LID into Local Codes: A Guidebook for Local Governments* (Puget Sound Partnership 2012). Under the terms of the permit, this project must be completed by December 31, 2016. A report detailing how the project satisfies the permit conditions is due to Ecology in March of 2017.

Interest Statement

Bellevue has a long history of supporting low impact development principles in its development policies and regulations; from early (1987) sensitive or critical areas protection and long-standing significant tree and maximum impervious surface coverage regulations to the clustering and LID incentive regulations included in the recent (2009) Bel-Red Rezone. Bellevue supports the objective of maintaining the region's quality of life, including that of making low impact development the preferred and commonly used approach to site development.

¹ NPDES means National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. The NPDES Permit is a Federal Clean Water Act permit intended to protect water quality and fishable, swimmable uses of the nation's surface water resources.

Project Principles

The Project Principles are intended to ensure the community's visions and goals are achieved while developing a program that supports development and redevelopment and meets LID Principles. The following Council-approved Project Principles will guide the LID Principles Project:

Bellevue Appropriate. Proposed amendments to Bellevue's development codes and standards will be area and context sensitive. Attention will be paid to the differing levels of urban development, watershed conditions, impervious surface coverage, tree canopy coverage, and areas of direct discharge. Proposed amendments, where feasible, will provide flexibility, incentives, and innovation in achieving the goal of making LID the preferred and commonly used approach to site development in Bellevue.

Engage Stakeholders. Provide a public participation process that seeks and includes input from a wide range of stakeholders. The process will provide opportunities for interested stakeholders to learn about LID principles, participate in developing options, and provide meaningful and informed comments.

Maintain Bellevue's Compliance Record with its NDPES Stormwater Permit. The LID principles project shall be timely completed to ensure compliance with the requirement that the amendments are effective by December 31, 2016.

Build On Existing Information and Programs. The LID Principles Project will build on existing City information and programs to develop and evaluate options to make LID the preferred and commonly used approach to site development.

Recognize and Seek to Balance Competing Needs. The LID Principles Project will recognize and seek to balance competing laws applicable to development and redevelopment, by considering and developing effective, innovative, flexible, and/or area-specific options.

Council Approved Areas of Focus for the LID Principles Project.

The City Council directs staff to begin exploring, in accordance with the Project Principles listed above, the following six Areas of Focus:

1. Land Use Code
 - a. Evaluate use of LID principles (and BMPs) early in the site design process;
 - b. Reduce impervious surface coverage
 - c. Preserve and enhance tree canopy
 - d. Improve options for clustering development
2. Transportation Code and Design Standards
 - a. Reduce impervious surfaces in road rights-of-way
 - b. Enhance tree canopy in transportation facilities