

July 2017



# *In the Loop*

*The Newsletter of the Cowlitz Economic Development Council*

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## *Planning for Stormwater Management Becomes Essential as Requirements Become More Stringent*

*by Joelle Wilson*

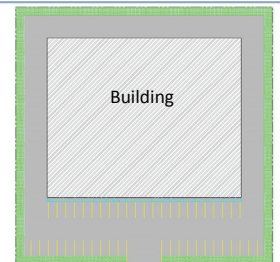
With ever increasing stormwater requirements hitting the news recently, noted locally as Cowlitz County Commissioners reluctantly voted to accept new State Department of Ecology Phase II regulations earlier this month, site developers will likely face a number of costly challenges as they move forward.

Carol Ruiz, Principal and Project Manager with Gibbs and Olson, said controlling stormwater runoff (any water from precipitation that runs off across the land instead of seeping into the ground) has become increasingly more stringent over the past few decades.

As development occurs, creating more hard surfaces, infiltration decreases and runoff increases. These regulations seek to prevent sediment and runoff from creating a strain on streams and waterways and potentially harming fish and wildlife. "Stormwater management is trying to get

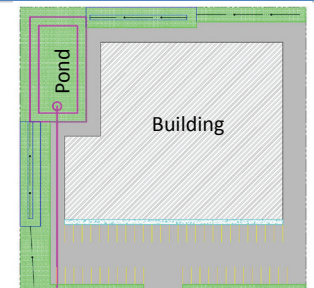
### Site | Pre-1992

- 2 acre site
- 41,000 SF building
- 41 parking spaces
- No treatment or detention



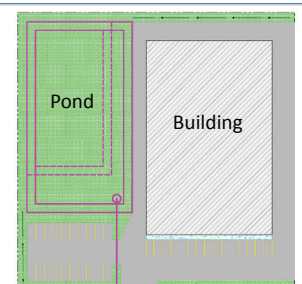
### Site | 1992

- 2 acre site
- 37,600 SF building
- 38 parking spaces
- 3,000 SF treatment area
- 6,265 SF detention area
- 9,400 CF storage volume



### Site | 2005 to Present

- 2 acre site
- 27,800 SF building
- 28 parking spaces
- Treatment still to be addressed
- 22,000 SF detention area
- 38,000 CF storage volume



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post development closer to a natural state,” Ruiz said.

Prior to 1992, not much was done other than collecting and conveying the runoff so it was out of the way, Ruiz said.

In 1992 regulations went into effect that required detention and treatment of stormwater runoff whenever a site had created 5,000 sq.ft. or more of new impervious or hard surface such as concrete, asphalt, gravel or roofs. Ponds and swales were typically used to meet these requirements, but Ecology felt the ponds were often undersized and would discharge at rates exceeding the design. In addition, they were unsightly land hogs, using valuable land for development.

In 2005, the goal of stormwater regulations became about getting runoff from a developed site closer to its pre-existing natural state. The new modeling criteria and design regulations resulted in storage ponds larger than designed under the 1992 regulations. As a result, a variety of methods were developed to address the requirements in areas with limited space, such as underground storage facilities. Emerging technologies were also developed to address water quality requirements to provide additional treatment options other than just swales, such as rain gardens and mechanical treatment devices. The underground storage and additional treatment options can help increase the usable surface for development, but can also be expensive.

## Implementing LID Requirements



In 2017, the new requirements call for onsite stormwater management on any site that creates 2,000 sq.ft. of new or replaced impervious surface, affecting most single family residential development. Onsite stormwater management is addressed with the implementation of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques, which must be applied to the site unless a particular LID method can be shown to be infeasible for the site.

Ruiz said review of the checklist for these requirements is complex and time consuming. It includes such things as downspout infiltration, porous pavement, rain gardens and bioretention facilities. These are landscaped areas that allow stormwater to pass through to filter and detain it onsite. To address the LID requirements or show infeasibility, geotechnical testing for infiltration will be required, Ruiz said.

Ruiz also noted the City of Longview has worked hard to prepare a one-page checklist for single family residential developments to make it simpler for the general public to address the LID requirements.



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The new stormwater regulations can be tough to understand about where, when and how to be in compliance. For example, portions of Cowlitz County are within a diking district which reduce or eliminate the detention requirements in many areas. There are also other elements that could reduce the implementation of LID methods for specific sites.

Ruiz said the key takeaways she sees from the changing requirements are:

- Treatment and detention is becoming more stringent.
- More site area is required to address stormwater management.
- Treatment can be challenging and expensive.
- Geotechnical testing for infiltration is required.
- Initial site stormwater requirements and cost are typically under estimated.
- Involving a civil engineer early in the process can help to identify potential challenges for addressing stormwater and options for site layout.

## ***Reserve a Table at SW Washington Jobs Fair***

**Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler is proud to announce that she will be hosting her 7th Annual Southwest Washington Jobs Fair in Vancouver on August 21 and would like to invite employers to participate.**

As in previous years, the participation in the Jobs Fair is at no cost to employers or attendees. If you are interested in participating, or know of another business that is hiring and would like to be a part of the Jobs Fair, please contact Pam Peiper in Jaime's Vancouver office at (360)695-6292.

If you would like to reserve a table, please be prepared with the information below. This information will be posted at [www.JHB.house.gov](http://www.JHB.house.gov) as well as distributed to job seekers as they come into the Jobs Fair.

1. Company name
2. Company website
3. Brief description (1-3 sentences about the company)
4. Positions you are looking to fill

### **Southwest Washington Jobs Fair**

**Date and Time: Monday, August 21 • 9:30am - Noon**

**Location: Warehouse '23, 100 Columbia Street #102, Vancouver, WA**

– You're Invited –

# SUMMER *Shindig*

Thursday, August 17, 2017

4:30 - 7:30 PM

 **RSVP**

**TELL US YOU'RE COMING!**

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