



Planning Commission

Amendments to the Municipal Code related to Low Impact Development (LID)

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Title

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Recommended Action

Information only, no action requested at this meeting.

Report

Issue:

Discussion of potential minor amendments to the Olympia Municipal Code (OMC). All amendments proposed intend to clarify or adjust language adopted in 2016 related to making Low Impact Development the common and preferred approach.

Staff Contact / Presenter:

Nicole Floyd, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development, 360.570.3768

Background and Analysis:

The LID code revision project began in February of 2014 as a State mandate and was completed in December of 2016 as a community supported effort to change the paradigm of development towards a more environmentally sensitive approach to stormwater management. The update included revisions to a vast number of City codes, standards, and manuals in order to make LID the preferred and commonly used approach to site development. The strategy emphasizes careful site planning and small-scale stormwater management practices that integrate into project designs.

Now, a year and a half after the LID update, staff have identified a few areas in need of additional modification. These proposed amendments maintain the intent of the 2016 update. These proposed amendments are based on daily practical application and intend to refine and clarify specific sections that have been challenging to implement. These modifications are not substantive; for the most part, they simply clarify the code. Two of the proposed modifications are more complex; they relate to how impervious surface and hard surface coverage is calculated within the residential zoning districts as follows:

- Relax hard surface limits by approximately 10% within the residential zones; and
- Convert the impervious and hard surface limit calculation to a percentage in the RLI zone, as is consistent with all other zoning designations.

Hard surfaces (pervious pavement etc.) are a preferred alternative to standard pavement and as such, the amendments in 2016 intended to incentivize their use. Unfortunately, the 2016 adopted code language was far more restrictive than the previous code and the incentives intended to be applied across all residential zones were not as clearly articulated as intended. These limits have had unforeseen impacts on residents intending to install new decks, patios, and pathways. The proposed revisions intend to provide better incentives to using pervious materials while maintaining the fundamental purpose of the Low Impact Development codes.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Surface coverage limits are of interest to all residential property owners.

Options:

Briefing only - no action.

Financial Impact:

N/A

Attachments:

Amendment Matrix