Storm Water

Reduce Pollutants in and Increase Quality of Local Water Ways

Target(s):

Require Stormwater "Best Management Practices" as basic standard, subject to exceptions, for all developments and construction activity requiring City planning, zoning, and building and safety review by 2012.

Stormwater management is an issue of great importance for the City of Lincoln. In the past, conventional wisdom for stormwater management held that water was a problem to solve rather than a valuable resource to conserve, with conventional stormwater engineering conveying stormwater away from our developed areas instead of beneficially storing and using the resource.

Several creeks converge in the vicinity of Lincoln, draining several hundred square miles of land area. One hundred floods have been recorded in Lincoln since 1900. These floods result in major inconveniences to the city, property damage, and, sometimes, loss of life. There are measures that emulate natural systems that can be taken to help reduce the impacts of rainfall and stormwater runoff in the City. These alternative best management practices (BMPs) include a variety of methods that are simple and practical in design, yet provide effective stormwater management as well as aesthetic enhancements for urban, suburban, and rural landscapes. Post-construction BMPs are implemented to prevent flooding, reduce erosion and sedimentation, increase base flows in streams, filter impurities in stormwater runoff to decrease pollutant levels, reduce algae blooms in water bodies, support riparian and aquatic habitats, promote biodiversity, provide open space and areas for outdoor recreation, promote sustainability and increase aesthetics. These BMPs maximize infiltration of rainfall and detention of runoff, and slow the volume and rates of water entering the system of streams draining Lincoln.

Mayor Beutler has appointed a "Clean Water Task Force" to formulate recommendations for post-construction BMPs for new development and redevelopment projects by August 2012. Examples of BMPs include: Bioretention Areas, Pervious Pavement, Wet Detention (Ponds and Lakes), Rain Barrels and Cisterns, Dry-Detention Basins, Rain Gardens, Filter Strips, Soil Management, Grassed Swales, Stormwater Treatment Trains, Green Roofs, Subsurface Storage, Infiltration Basins, Urban Forests, Infiltration Planters, Vegetated Bioswales, Infiltration Trenches, Wetlands, Natural/Native Vegetation.