

Comprehensive Policy Plan
"Utilities"

Policy Letter 509: Site Runoff

BACKGROUND:

The City of Fargo has two major land portions with respect to storm water drainage. The first area is that portion of the City close to the Red River. The second major portion of the City is that area of the City, and the extraterritorial area, generally west of University Drive on the north side and west of 25th Street South on the south side.

Storm water drainage from a neighborhood site is accomplished through a combination of storm sewer inlets, ditches, and holding ponds. The storm sewer inlets are placed in appropriate locations, both along the streets and in the backyards of low density residential areas. Also, a system of ditches follows the terrain in a way that moves storm water from the rear or side yards to a storm sewer inlet. And in some cases, holding ponds are designed to aid in the drainage system.

Not all land use development proposals properly address the control of storm water drainage as it relates to the adjacent land uses. Additionally, modifications or changes by builders or home owners to an existing drainage system may impact the neighborhood. The City recommends the rear yard grades, but not all builders develop the land to those elevation standards. Also, fencing or placement of obstacles in the drainage system can alter the flow of runoff and cause a negative impact on the adjacent land uses.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The City of Fargo should require that land use development and redevelopment proposals include a site runoff control plan which has been approved by the City Engineer prior to final plat approval by the City Commission. Site runoff controls should manage the runoff of each lot without causing a negative impact on the adjacent land uses or the character of the areas's drainage system.

CONCLUSION:

The provisions of a site runoff control plan should address the necessary requirements for new development and an equitable way to handle existing runoff situations. Building permits should be withheld on lots in a plat with inadequate runoff controls. Lots that were not developed to the City's recommended rear yard grade should be identified. Perhaps a fee could be established as part of a storm water utility. This fee could pay for runoff engineering or construction to correct existing runoff situations where site runoff controls are inadequate.