



# CITY COUNCIL MEETING STAFF REPORT

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
SUBMITTED BY: KATHI COOK  
DRAFTED BY: JILL BAZINET

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## **I. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: PH-16-18 – UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS/SMART STORMWATER CODE**

CITY COUNCIL: JANUARY 9, 2017

This item was heard at the December 1, 2016 Planning Commission meeting. There were no comments from the public for or against the request. After discussion, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the amendments to the Unified Development Code. City Council discussed the item at the December 12, 2016 Council Meeting and requested additional information on runoff reduction in open space, impacts on density, and the fee-in-lieu program. Examples of runoff reduction within each open space type were provided. An explanation of how these changes do not impact density was provided. The Alpharetta Stormwater Management Manual was updated to reflect changes to the fee-in-lieu program as requested. The program requires volume credits available in a previously constructed stormwater facility or one that is fully funded for construction at the time of permit. Banking of funds for future improvement projects has been removed.

## **II. RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt proposed amendments to the identified sections of the Unified Development Code, Alpharetta Stormwater Management Manual, and the Alpharetta Extent of Service Policy.

## **III. REPORT IN BRIEF:**

Alpharetta is experiencing revitalization in the Downtown area and new development throughout the City. The City hired Tetra Tech to review the existing stormwater policies and provide recommended code and ordinance updates to modernize our approach to stormwater management and encourage the use of innovative stormwater design. The result is a set of clear and effective policies and standards that the city, residents, businesses, and the development community can use to allow variety and advancement in managing stormwater runoff.

Tetra Tech's approach included a thorough code barrier review, formation of two input groups to develop new code language and policies, and a thirty-day online public input opportunity. The input groups, including city staff from various departments and community stakeholders, met multiple times to discuss the barriers, hypothesize solutions, and vet new code language. Most ordinance updates included expressly allowing infiltration and reuse stormwater management techniques. The bulk of the updates are found in UDC Articles II and III, Appendix A Articles 2 and 3, and the Alpharetta Stormwater Design Manual. Additional updates are located in the Extent of Service Policy.

The most significant updates include:

- A revision to current standards removing the water quality requirement when less than 1,000 square feet of new impervious area is added to a parcel.
- A new gradual tiered chart of requirements for water quality and quantity treatment.
- Provisions for stormwater incentives on redevelopment.
- Adoption of runoff reduction measures with allowances to revert back to traditional water quality measures should site constraints require it. Runoff reduction measures include bioretention ponds, bio swales, pervious pavement, stormwater street tree wells, and cisterns.
- Encouragement for developers to co-locate aesthetic stormwater management treatments in landscape islands and landscape strips.
- Provisions for fee-in-lieu programs for sites meeting certain criteria.

The proposed changes would allow more flexibility for developers, encourage use of smart stormwater techniques, and protect the City's natural resources. The updated language also clarifies the allowance of green infrastructure and low impact development design measures in accordance with recommendations from EPA and EPD.

**IV. ATTACHMENTS:**

- UDC Amendments – Strike Through and Underline Format