

## POLICY AND/OR PROCEDURE STATEMENT

### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY, GEORGIA

**POLICY SUBJECT:** Participation by Athens-Clarke County on Storm Drainage Facilities

**FUNCTIONAL AREA:** Public Works/Streets & Engineering

**POLICY/PROCEDURE NUMBER:** PW-002

#### POLICY STATEMENT:

This is true. There are a lot of drainage problems.

The development and use of land in and around the Athens-Clarke County area frequently involves **drainage problems**, both on private property and in the public right-of-way. Due to the repetitive nature of requests that are received on three specific issues, it is most important that a **firm policy** be adopted on each of these situations.

These three general situations are as follows:

Drainage **improvements**.  
What constitutes improvements has evolved.

1. A policy for a Standard Drainage contract for those situations when a landowner desires to seek the Government's help in **improving** a drainage system that crosses or adjoins his property.

Drainage **maintenance**.  
Permitting has become more stringent over time.

2. A policy for **maintenance** work that a citizen requests along a creek, stream or drainageway that crosses his property.

New driveway pipes for lots of record that are not in platted subdivisions

3. A policy with respect to the Government's participation toward the **placement of a driveway drainage pipe** that is needed for access to newly developed land.

#### STANDARD DRAINAGE CONTRACT:

Prior to detention standards, runoff from new development was not mitigated by best management practices. Most requests received now go back to situations created at the time of development.

This type of request usually occurs after private property is occupied and upstream properties are either partially or fully developed. Where further development occurs, the amount of storm water runoff increases and causes the drainageways to **erode** and be enlarged. Although this circumstance may occur on residential, commercial, and industrial properties, the vast majority of requests are received in single family residential situations. **The Standard Drainage Contract policy applies only to single family residential properties.** It also is limited to those situations where a portion of the storm runoff is being discharged from publicly-owned lands, such as road right-of-way.

Property owner bearing some cost is appropriate

because property owner benefits from the project. This type of cost-sharing policy does not seem to

currently have a role in other jurisdictions between authorizing and requiring.

Athens-Clarke County views the improvement of storm sewer systems on private property as an **enhancement to the land value**. This policy **authorizes** the Government work force to install the drainage improvements if the **property owner agrees to pay for the cost of materials**. The owner must also dedicate any required drainage easements and temporary construction easements as a condition of satisfying a Standard Drainage contract. The

total labor and equipment costs usually equal or exceed the cost of the materials. This policy is deemed to be an acceptable and consistent policy that is workable in practice and is consistent with the **type of policy practiced in many other cities and counties.**

This section has to do with private property owners who want a pipe or curb added in the right of way.

The portions of a storm system that cross the public road right-of-way are considered to be the full funding responsibility of the local government, including the cost of materials. If the owner desires to enclose a storm drainage system in front of property that lies within the public right-of-way and this improvement, in the opinion of the Public Works Director, is not primarily needed for vehicular safety reasons, it is the responsibility of the owner to pay for the cost of materials. If the owner desires to install a curb and gutter system in a public road adjacent to his property and the improvement has been authorized by the Public Works Director, the owner shall be responsible for the material costs of the road widening and the curb and gutter construction.

Funding has to be appropriated, and other work has to be accounted for. Approval is mentioned but criteria are not specified other than SFR, easements, and payment.

Does this infer that TPW maintains the project?

When a Storm Drainage Contract is approved, it is necessary to **schedule** the construction of these improvements in conjunction with the Public works Department's **overall work program** only after the owner or owners involved have dedicated the necessary **drainage easements to establish permanent maintenance rights.** The funding of the Government's portion of the cost of materials in the right-of-way must either already be budgeted, or be delayed for consideration at a future budget session.

#### MAINTENANCE OF DRAINAGEWAYS:

This seems to apply to perennial streams that are eroding. The streams may have been straightened at the time of development.

It is desirable for Athens-Clarke County to have a policy on the maintenance of drainage systems crossing private property. In most cases, these drainageways are constructed along side lot lines or rear lot lines where natural waterways were ultimately subdivided and incorporated in the layout.

Maintenance of streambank erosion on private property by ACCGov is limited.

Drainage easements are usually dedicated to the public for future maintenance purposes. The natural rights from the original waterway, sometimes in combination with the dedicated drainage easements, have usually given the Public Works Department the rights to cross these properties to perform essential maintenance. In reality, however, the Public Works Department **does not have a sufficient work force** or, in staff's opinion, **the responsibility** to undertake the maintenance of these drainage systems. It is essential, therefore that a policy be adopted that defines the **priorities** for maintenance of drainageways.

Safety and welfare of the **general public**. What follows is a good definition in terms of what this means for streambank stabilization. These constitute emergencies because they are **public** in nature.

In order to respond to those situations that are deemed to be potentially dangerous to the **safety and welfare of the general public**, the policy for maintaining drainageways shall include the cleaning out of any debris that threatens to block the drainage system at **any road crossing**. In certain other cases where the stream erosion factor is considered extreme and a potential

ACCGov will perform maintenance for debris, logjams, and streambank erosion that affect roads or public facilities. Otherwise, it should be maintained privately, but a SDC can be requested.

immediate threat to publicly owned properties and/or facilities, the Public Works Department shall assume the initiative for installing energy dissipaters, such as a riprap embankment. Otherwise, the property owners are expected to maintain their embankments along each drainageway, including such improvements as a utility service crossing that might be serving their dwelling, or to request assistance through the Standard Drainage Contract process. This policy is applicable to the maintenance of drainageways in residential, commercial, and industrial areas.

## DRIVEWAY PIPES:

Limited to single family residential lots that are not part of a subdivision.

The Athens-Clarke County policy on installing driveway pipes in developing areas shall be done on a limited basis. Participation shall be limited to single family residential development that is not a part of a subdivision and is not applicable to multi-family residential, commercial, or industrial development.

ACCGov sizes the pipe. Property owner purchases pipe from ACCGov, and ACCGov installs it.

When driveway pipe requests are received, the Engineering Section shall review the conditions to determine the size of the pipe that must be installed. This is done for all types of land uses where the driveway pipe is permitted. For single family residential areas where a curb and gutter system is not being installed, the owner is required to purchase the driveway pipe materials up to an 18" diameter pipe size. For pipe sizes exceeding that diameter, the owner shall pay for the material cost of an 18" pipe and the Government shall pay for the additional material cost. The Public Works Department shall install the driveway pipe from materials that are kept in stock after the owner has made payment to the Finance Department for his material costs. This practice shall be the policy for all driveway pipes that are needed for single family development. For multi-family residential, commercial, and industrial developments, the applicant shall go through the same procedure for the sizing of the pipe. Approval of formal plans may be required for installing driveways for these uses. In these situations, however the owner must put for the full material costs of the driveway improvements, and must also pay for the installation of these improvements.

Recommended: \_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Public Works

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Manager/Assistant Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by the commission of the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County on \_\_\_\_\_.