

# Vegetation Management Plan for City of Sioux Falls Storm Drainage Properties

Purpose: This initiative is designed to maintain the integrity of the City of Sioux Falls detention ponds and channel systems. Our mission is to protect the environment by providing appropriate storm water conveyance while promoting improved aesthetics for the drainage properties.

## Goals

The essential purpose of the Vegetation Management Plan is to provide adequate storm water conveyance while restoring the natural balance of vegetation that is an aesthetically pleasing landscape.

Creating the vision of these waterways compliments the neighborhoods throughout the city of Sioux Falls. This plan will improve the ecosystems as a sustainable natural habitat.

The City takes its responsibility to the environment seriously. We believe a well thought out Vegetation Management Plan will contribute to cleaner water and air by designing landscapes that introduce a better mix of plant species. The results are reductions in herbicide use and mowing frequency.

The City has created a Vegetation Management Plan for storm water properties to communicate with the neighborhoods throughout the city of Sioux Falls. The taxpayers have a right to know how their resources are being utilized. Communicating this through fliers, website information, and meetings is an important step in the success of this plan.

## Achieving the Goals

### **Operation Standards**

All storm water properties will fall into three categories based on the maintenance care needed.

### ***Category 1***

These are properties that have no noxious weed violations and they do not need revegetative efforts. These areas will be designated by the City's Drainage Engineer.





### **Operational Plan**

Mowing the maintenance bench approximately 10-12' off the property line every 7–10 days. Vegetation on the bench would not exceed the 8" ordinance height. If a sidewalk exists along a street frontage, the boulevard will be mowed plus 10-12' behind the sidewalk.

The main property will be left to grow naturally. If the vegetation growth comes in uneven or with diverse broadleaf growth, the property can be mowed twice per year, mid-July and mid-September, to encourage desired vegetation and allow for spraying operations.

### **Spraying Procedure**

No City staff will be authorized to discharge pesticides/herbicides to waters of the state (the only exception being Vector Control).

All reasonable efforts will be made for upland pesticide applications to maintain a buffer of 10 feet between the application and the water's edge. This will minimize the potential for runoff and/or incidental drift.

No City staff will apply pesticides where there are sustained winds above 10 mph unless the application has been determined an emergency by City management.

**Category 2**

These are properties that have been identified as having noxious weed issues.



**Operational Plan**

Mowing the maintenance bench approximately 10-12' off the property line every 7–10 days. Vegetation on the bench would not exceed the 8" ordinance height.

The area identified with noxious weeds will be the primary focus of control until the area is compliant with state and county noxious weed control boards. The operational task would include mowing and spraying. The area being treated will be addressed as quickly as possible to restore it to the Category 1 property maintenance plan.

**Category 3**



These are properties identified by the City Drainage Engineer to be renovated. The purpose of renovating is to improve the function of the channel/pond. A revegetation and operation maintenance plan will be determined at that time. These properties may take several years to get the desired vegetation established. After the City Drainage Engineer or the hired consultant has determined that the desired vegetation is present and thriving, the property will be returned to the Category 1 property maintenance plan.

**Exemption of Properties Associated with Storm Water Drainage  
From the Mowing Ordinance:**

Vegetation maintained in channels/ponds is designed to intercept and filtrate contaminated storm water. Water quality is improved through biofiltration where plants and soils capture and break down pollutants flowing from the adjacent surfaces.

Chapter 42, Article 2, of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Sioux Falls, allows for an exemption of the vegetation height within storm drainage properties. Vegetation height is allowed to exceed 8 inches to enhance the filtration properties of the storm water drainage system.