

River Plan / North Reach

Revised Vegetation Enhancement Standard—11/24/09

The Planning Commission's recommended vegetated area standard prescribes that property owners in the River Overlay zones plant or maintain 15% of their site with vegetation and includes incentives for planting the vegetation near the river. The standard also allows payment of a fee-in-lieu of planting or maintaining vegetation on-site based on a per permit cap of one percent of project value or \$200,000, which ever is less. Industrial stakeholders have expressed a "philosophical objection" to the standard because the standard presumes that heavy industrial sites in the North Reach should devote square footage to vegetation. Industrial stakeholders are not supportive of the standard.

During one of the stakeholder meetings lead by Mayor Adams, industrial stakeholders suggested that they would be more supportive of the vegetation standard if it prescribed spending 1% of project value on off-site vegetation enhancement with on-site vegetation planting as a second option for those who can or do want to plant vegetation on-site. BPS staff discussed the potential for implementing such a standard with staff in the City Attorney's office. The outcome of the staff discussion is a revision to the vegetated area standard that attempts to meet the stated desires of the industrial stakeholders as well as meeting the goals of the River Plan.

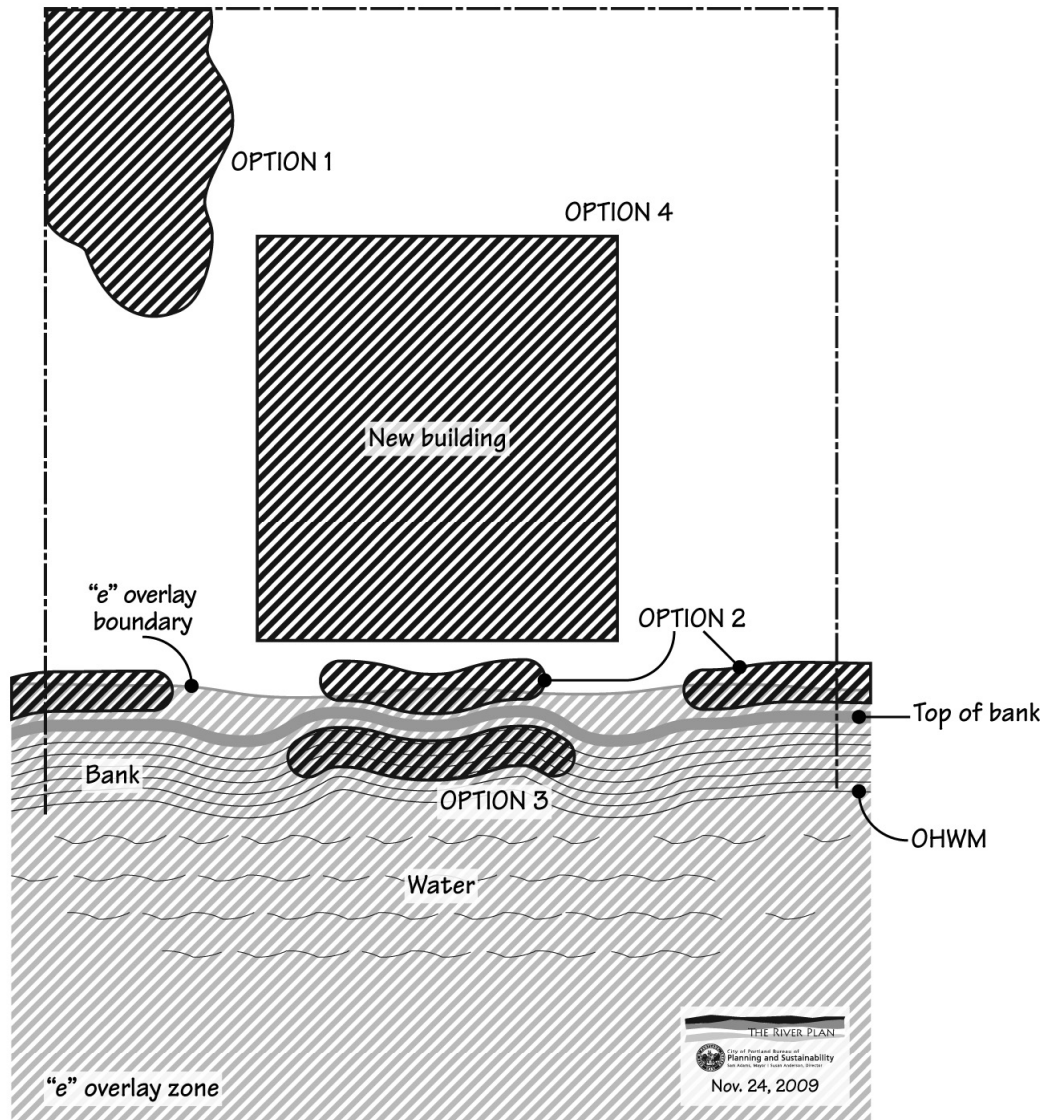
The revised standard will continue to apply to new development and exterior alterations that occur within the River Overlay zones. The standard will require that the applicant for development meet one of three options:

1. Spend an amount equal to one percent of project value, or \$200,000, which ever is less, on planting vegetation. The vegetation planting area must meet the planting area standards that are explained in the Planning Commission's report to City Council;
2. Spend an amount equal to one percent of project value or \$200,000, which ever is less, on an ecoroof. The ecoroof must meet Stormwater Management Manual guidelines; or
3. Make a payment to the City equal to one percent of project value, or \$200,000, which ever is less. The payment will be spent on planting vegetation on the City's river restoration sites.

In order for the standard to have an end point (i.e. a point at which the spending or paying of one percent of project value is no longer required), we have included two types of caps—an on-site vegetation cap and an off-site payment cap:

1. On-site vegetation. Once the applicant can show that 15% of their site is vegetated, the vegetation enhancement standard will be met. Vegetation planted on the riverbank will count at a ratio of 3:1; vegetation planted in or adjacent to the river environmental overlay zone will count at a ratio of 1.5:1; and vegetation on an ecoroof will count at a ratio of .5:1.
2. Off-site payment. Once the applicant can show that they have paid an amount equal to the cost for the City to plant vegetation in an area equal in size to 15% of their site, the vegetation standard will be met. The City estimates that it will cost \$6.70 per square foot to plant and maintain vegetation in the North Reach.

The attached drawing illustrates the various on-site planting areas ratios.



Vegetation Enhancement Standard

On-site planting ratios

1. Vegetation counts at 1:1 ratio
2. Vegetation in or adjacent to "e" zone counts at 1.5:1 ratio
3. Vegetation on riverbank counts at 3:1 ratio
4. Vegetation on an ecoroof counts at .5:1 ratio