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**CLARK COUNTY**  
WASHINGTON

# **EXCAVATION, FILL, AND STOCKPILE (GRADING) PERMIT APPLICATION PACKET**

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# GRADING AND DRAINAGE PERMIT (EXCAVATION, FILL, AND STOCKPILE) SUMMARY

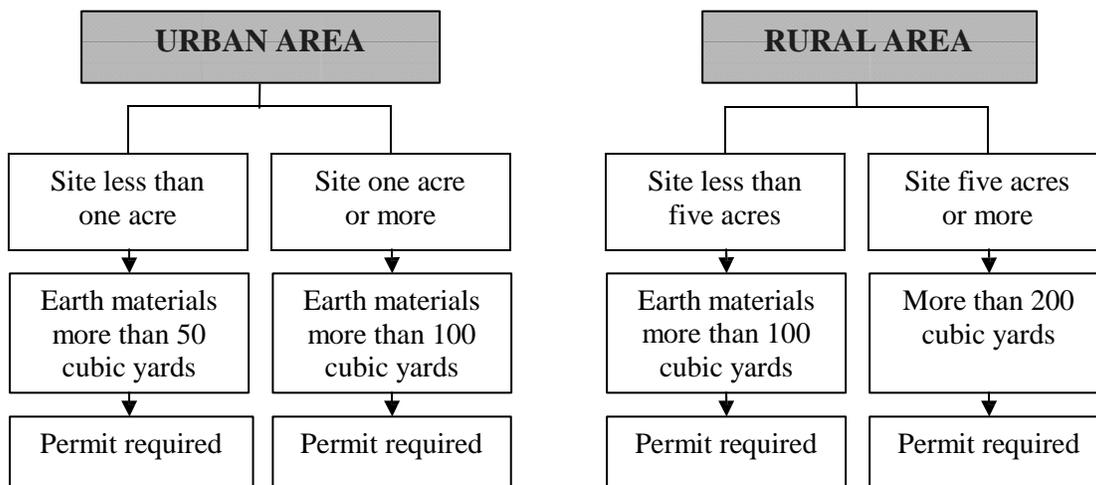
PUBLIC WORKS  
DEVELOPMENT ENGINEERING PROGRAM

The grading and drainage permit is a single, combined permit that reviews earthwork, erosion control, and drainage aspects of a proposed project. The county's plan review and construction inspection fees are based on both the volume of earthwork and the complexity of the erosion control and drainage review. This handout answers common questions about the permit.

## A. When is a grading and drainage permit required?

The answer to the following three questions typically determines if a county grading and drainage permit is required:

1. Is your property in urban or rural Clark County?
2. What is the size of your property?
3. How much earth material do you intend to move?



### Important Notes:

- (1) If a proposed project is below these volume thresholds, a grading and drainage permit may still be required due to erosion control and stormwater requirements. Questions "J" and "K" in this handout provide more information.
- (2) If a proposed project does not require a grading and drainage permit, but has critical lands (such as wetlands, habitat, shoreline, floodplains, or hazardous geological areas), other county permits may be required. Question "L" in this handout provides more information.

***B. How to determine if a site is considered in the urban or rural area.***

Properties within the county have a designated land use district zone. These land use zoning districts are broadly identified as rural or urban. The best place to search the zoning designation for a specific property is the county's web site under "Property Information Center."

Typical urban zones include: R1, R-12, R-18, R-22, R-30, and R-43

Typical rural zones include: R-5, R-10, R-20, RC-1, and RC-2.5

For other zoning designations, Clark County Code section 40.200.010 has a table that lists all of the zoning districts and if it is urban or rural.

***C. What materials are regulated?***

Grading and drainage permits are needed when the project moves "earth materials." Earth materials are naturally occurring substances, such as minerals, rocks, or soil. Earth materials can be a combination of these materials. Earth materials also include asphalt and concrete, such as placing crushed or recycled asphalt or concrete. For grading purposes, earth materials do not include 100% organic soil amendments, such as compost or bark, as long as there are no earth materials in the soil amendment mix.

***D. What does land-disturbing earthwork activity mean?***

"Land-disturbing activity" is any activity that results in movement of earth, a change in the existing soil cover, or a change in the existing soil topography. Land-disturbing activities include clearing, grading, filling, and excavation. This disturbance area is used in determining stormwater requirements and calculating inspection fees.

***E. How is the earthwork volume calculated?***

For permit and fee purposes, the permit volume equals the amount of on-site excavation (the "cut" volume) plus the amount of fill hauled to the site from an off-site source (the "borrow" volume).

***F. Must a Professional Civil Engineer or Geologist prepare the grading and drainage plan?***

Yes, if the grading volume is greater than 5,000 cubic yards.

***G. Are there special requirements for stockpiles?***

Possibly, depending on the purpose of the stockpile:

1. For temporary stockpiles used during the on-site construction activity of an approved permit, no additional permits are needed. The temporary stockpile is included in the project's earthwork volume.
2. For earth material stockpiles that temporarily store material from an off-site source and the material will not be used on the site, a grading permit is required. This type of project may also require land use permits such as temporary use and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) permits. These types of stockpiles are limited to 18 months.

### ***H. Are agricultural practices exempt from grading and drainage permits?***

Some agricultural practices are exempt, although they must not obstruct any drainage courses. Here are some examples:

1. Adding hog fuel or wood chips for mud control and livestock bedding.
2. Maintenance or repair of existing agricultural facilities.
3. Planting, including ground cover or organic mulch.
4. Soil preparation that is an ordinary farming practice, such as adding soil amendments.
5. Tilling when done according to ordinary farm practices.

### ***I. Is road and driveway maintenance exempt from grading and drainage permits?***

Some road and driveway maintenance practices are exempt. Here are some examples:

1. Pothole and square cut patching.
2. Overlaying existing asphalt or concrete pavement with asphalt or concrete without expanding the area of coverage.
3. Shoulder grading.
4. Reshaping and regrading of existing drainage systems without altering the drainage paths (for example, upstream drainage paths cannot be blocked and runoff to downstream properties cannot be increased or concentrated).
5. Resurfacing with in-kind material (such as gravel) without expanding the road prism.
6. Vegetation maintenance.

### ***J. Why is stormwater important for grading permits?***

The state regulates the county's stormwater program. The county is required to review and inspect all grading and drainage projects for potential stormwater impacts. Stormwater rules are complex. Generally, grading and drainage projects trigger one of the following three stormwater review categories:

1. Basic grading and erosion control (*Stormwater Manual* Minimum Requirement #2)
2. Basic grading, erosion control, and stormwater Minimum Requirements #1-5
3. Basic grading, erosion control, and stormwater Minimum Requirements #1-10

“Minimum requirements” (MR) mean the ten requirements referenced in the *Clark County Stormwater Manual*, as follows:

- MR #1: Preparation of stormwater site plans
- MR #2: Construction stormwater pollution prevention

- MR #3: Source control of pollution
- MR #4: Preservation of natural drainage systems and outfalls
- MR #5: On-site stormwater management
- MR #6: Runoff treatment
- MR #7: Flow control
- MR #8: Wetlands protection
- MR #9: Basin/watershed planning
- MR #10: Operation and maintenance

At the back of this handout are three pages from the *Clark County Stormwater Manual*. Figure 2-1 and 2-2 are important flow charts that identify which minimum requirements apply to proposed projects in the urban area. The third page, titled "Rural Properties", identifies the requirements for proposed projects in the rural area.

Both "land-disturbing activity" areas and impervious areas are key factors used to determine which minimum requirements apply. Although a project may not propose any stormwater pipes or detention ponds, a higher level of stormwater review may still be required due to the size of these areas.

See Chapter 2 of the *Clark County Stormwater Manual* for more information on minimum requirements and which level review applies to your project. The *Clark County Stormwater Manual* is available at:

[http://www.clark.wa.gov/environment/stormwater/management/documents/StormwaterManual\\_Nov2009.pdf](http://www.clark.wa.gov/environment/stormwater/management/documents/StormwaterManual_Nov2009.pdf)

***K. If the grading volume is below permit thresholds, is a Grading and Drainage permit application still needed?***

Sometimes. If a proposed project is under the earthwork thresholds that typically require a permit, but the proposed project triggers stormwater (drainage) code requirements, a Grading and Drainage permit is required.

***L. Are there other permits or reviews that may be required?***

Additional rules apply to projects involving special areas, such as wetlands, habitat areas, floodplains, shoreline, and hazardous geological areas. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) may also apply. Here are county contacts for the various special permits:

- Community Development (land use, shorelines) ~ (360) 397-2375
- Environmental Services (wetlands, habitat areas, SEPA) ~ (360) 397-2121
- Public Works (floodplains, hazardous geological areas) ~ (360) 397-6118 x4559

***M. What is the review process for a grading and drainage permit?***

1. Submit a completed Master Application Form, the items shown on the "Submittal Requirements" handout, and fees. The materials should be submitted to the county's Permit Services Center.
2. Development Engineering staff will contact you with questions or if additional information is needed.
3. Development Engineering staff will contact you by phone or email when your approved plans are ready.

***N. After the grading and drainage permit is issued, what is next?***

After approval of the grading permit, the county will inspect the construction.

1. For the inspection, submit a completed Master Application Form, the items shown on the "Submittal Requirements" handout, and fees. The materials should be submitted to the county's Permit Services Center.
2. Contact Public Works to schedule a preconstruction conference:  
Nikki Olsen, Senior Engineering Technician 360-397-6118 ext. 4982  
[Nicole.Olsen@clark.wa.gov](mailto:Nicole.Olsen@clark.wa.gov)
3. After the preconstruction conference, field work may begin.
4. Costs for inspection outside of normal working hours and for re-inspection are in addition to regular inspection services. These special inspections are charged on an hourly basis.

***O. How long are grading and drainage permits valid?***

1. Grading work must start within one year of the approved grading plan. Extensions to the plan approval are available at a reduced fee.
2. Once grading work starts, the fieldwork must be complete within one year from the preconstruction conference date. Extensions to the inspection process are available at a reduced fee.

***P. What if I want to revise my approved grading and drainage permit?***

Revisions to the approved grading plans, other than minor field changes approved by the county inspector, must be submitted to Development Engineering for review and approval. Submit an application for a "Post Plan Approval – Plan Revisions" review. The fee for this review is based on actual staff review time multiplied by standard hourly billing rates. Any plan revisions must be approved and fees paid before fieldwork on the changes begins.

Any grading not shown on the approved grading plans is not approved and shall not commence without prior approval.

***Q. Where can I get more information?***

The county code is the best source for detailed grading information, specifically Chapter 14.07 Grading, Excavation, Fill and Stockpile.

The county's stormwater and erosion control code is in Chapter 40.385.

County codes are available on the county's website at:

<http://www.codepublishing.com/wa/clarkcounty.html>

If you have any questions, please contact:

Public Works  
Development Engineering Program  
1300 Franklin Street  
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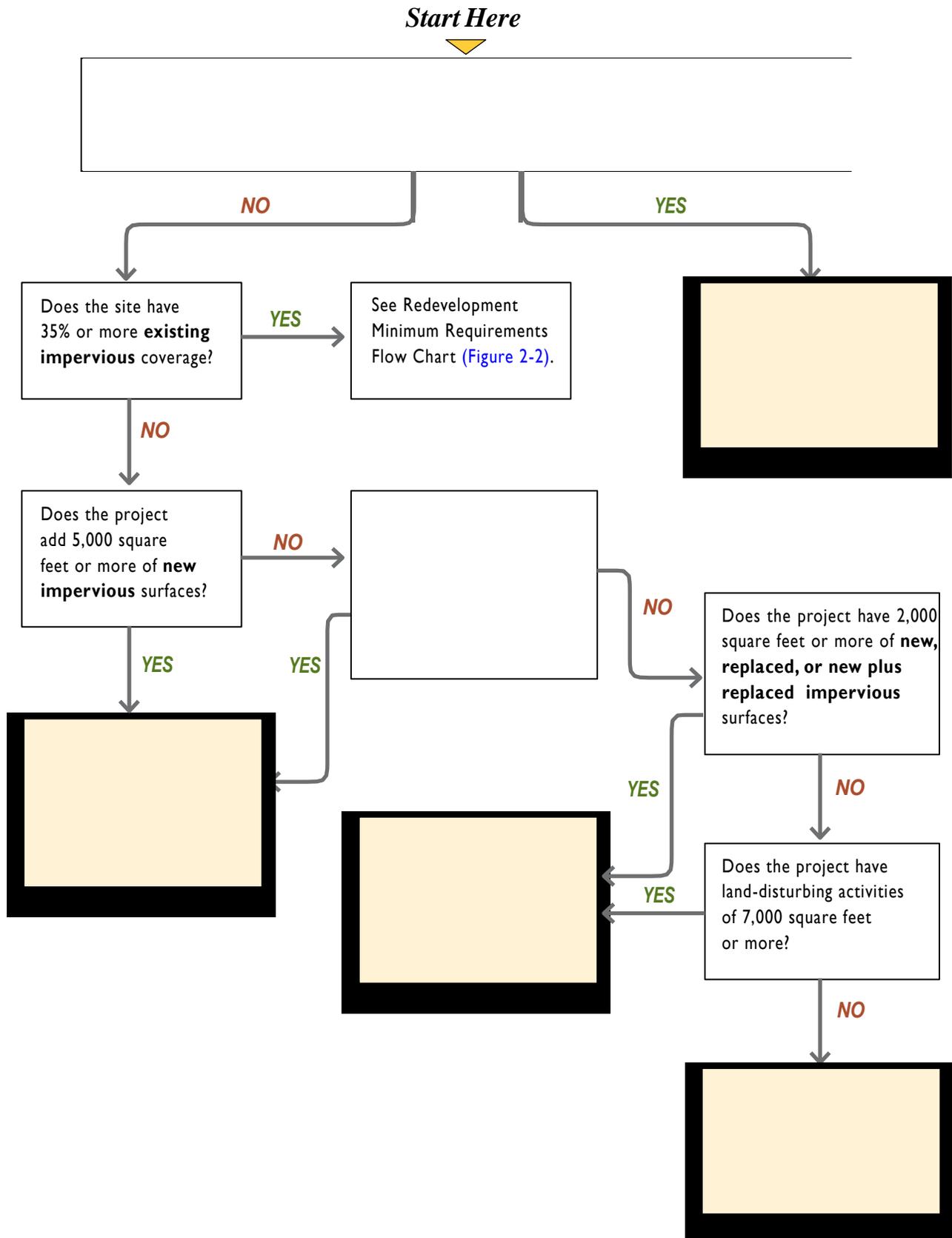
(360) 397-6118 ext. 4559

email: [devengineer@clark.wa.gov](mailto:devengineer@clark.wa.gov)

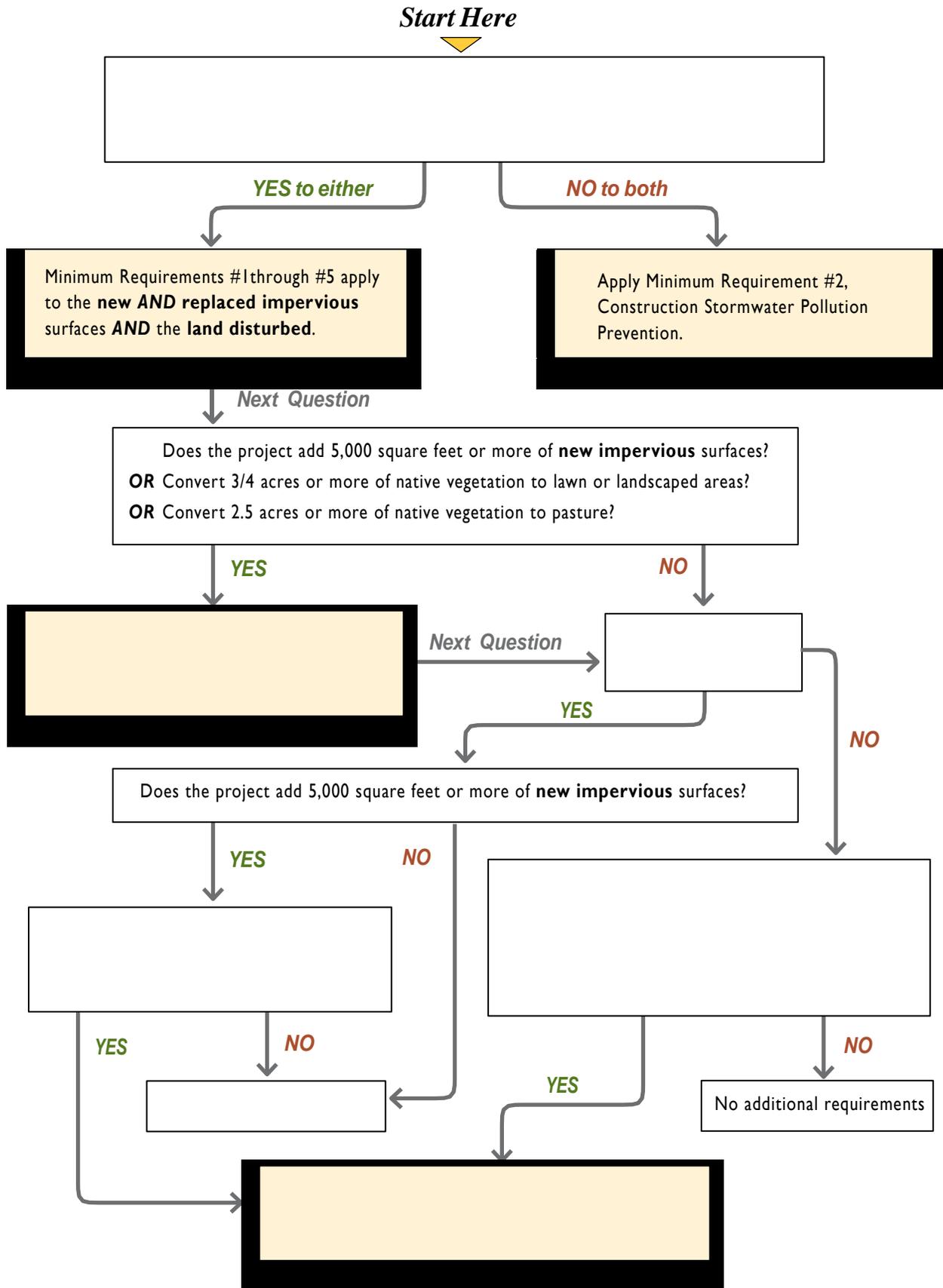
[www.clark.wa.gov/publicworks/engineering/index.html](http://www.clark.wa.gov/publicworks/engineering/index.html)

This handout is not a substitute for county code. For more detailed information, please refer to the Clark County Code (CCC) and the International Building Code.

■ FIGURE 2-1. Urban New Development Flow Chart



■ FIGURE 2-2. Urban Redevelopment Flow Chart



## Rural Properties

All rural new development and re-development shall comply with the following:

- a. Minimum Requirement #2 and [Section 40.385.030](#).
- b. New development and redevelopment that adds or replaces impervious area of greater than two thousand (2,000) square feet and less than five percent (5%) of a site, or is land disturbing activity greater than seven thousand (7,000) square feet are subject to the minimum requirements dependent on site-specific characteristics.
  - 1) Minimum requirements No. 1 through No. 5 shall apply if the project meets all of the following criteria:
    - (a) Is outside of habitat or wetland areas or their buffers; and,
    - (b) Does not generate runoff in channelized flow or discharge directly or indirectly to the county's storm sewer system; and,
    - (c) Is not located in, or discharge onto steep slope hazard areas or landslide hazard areas as designated in [Section 40.430.010](#).
  - 2) Projects not meeting all the criteria in [Section 40.385.020.A.5.b.\(1\)](#) shall be subject to minimum requirements No. 1 through No. 10.
- c. New development and redevelopment that adds impervious area of greater than two thousand (2,000) square feet and that is more than five percent (5%) of a site shall comply with minimum requirements No. 1 through No. 10 for the new impervious surface.
- d. An off-site analysis as described in the Stormwater Manual, unless exempted by [Section 40.385.010\(C\)\(4\)](#).
- e. The county may allow the Minimum Requirements to be met for an equivalent (flow and pollution characteristics) area within the same site. For public road projects, the equivalent area does not have to be within the same project limits but must drain to the same receiving water. For frontage improvements required within the public right-of-way, the equivalent area must be immediately adjacent to the site.