

Town of Buchanan Roadway Ditch Drainage and Right-of-Way Maintenance Guidelines

The following maintenance guidelines are intended to supplement ordinance requirements set forth in Chapter 504 Article V Drainage, Ditches and Watercourse Maintenance and should be used in conjunction with those requirements. The standards set forth are established to provide landowners and Town staff or designees guidance on maintenance, use and alterations to roadway ditches used for drainage and general management of Town owned road right-of-way (ROW) or easements.

1) **PURPOSE:** It is the purpose of these maintenance guidelines to:

- a) Clarify the system of handling roadway ditch, drainage and ROW issues;
- b) Maintain or improve drainage aesthetics and reducing potential health or safety issues;
- c) To provide consistency over time which anticipates staff, engineering and elected official turnover;
- d) To encourage use of Town resources and time in areas of greatest need;
- e) Protect Town investment in roadways and ROW;
- f) Provide public confidence in management of issues and use of taxpayer funded resolutions.

2) **PURPOSE OF ROADWAY DITCHES:** Town roadway ditches and ROW perform four primary functions:

- a) Serve to drain the road base and sub-grade of water.
- b) Serve to drain surrounding land uses of water.
- c) Carry collected water to a sufficient outfall.
- d) Assist in winter snow clearing by providing snow storage below the elevation of the road surface.

3) **LANDOWNER DITCH AND ROW MAINTENANCE:** The Town of Buchanan owns all Town roadway ditches and ROW areas. Landowners adjacent to roadway ditches and ROW are responsible for general maintenance within those areas. General maintenance includes, but is not limited to, mowing, weed removal, brush removal, improvements with no changes to existing grades, culvert replacement with no changes to existing grades and generally keeping the area clear of debris. Any weeds or debris within ditches or ROW shall not exceed a height of three feet as measured from the bottom of the ditch ground surface. Any culvert cleaning or maintenance under driveways is the responsibility of the landowner.

Landowner Maintenance Exemptions: The following are exempt from general maintenance activities such as those described in Section 3:

- a) Land directly adjacent to roadway ditch and ROW is actively in agricultural use.
- b) Depth or slope of ditch makes maintenance activities, particularly mowing, impossible.
- c) Bottom of ditch is consistently saturated or filled with water. This does not exempt the landowner from completing maintenance up to the saturated or wet area.

4) **TOWN DITCH AND ROW MAINTENANCE:**

Mowing: Mowing of roadway ditches and ROW may be completed at the discretion of the Town.

Culvert Cleaning: At the Town's discretion, cleaning or clearing of culverts may be completed as needed to remove blockages and improve stormwater flow. This cleaning shall primarily only be completed on culverts located under Town roads or other easements.

5) **ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES:** The following additional guidelines apply.

- Any ditch filling project or approved use of drain tile or piping shall be no closer than one foot to any driveway or roadway culvert.
- Ditch filling, use of ditch liners and use of rock in ditches will be allowed on a limited basis due to effects to water quality management in the Town.
- Any improvements or changes to ditches or Town ROW shall require a permit from the Town prior to the start of any work.

- 6) **LANDOWNER DRAINAGE CONCERN RESOLUTIONS:** Depending upon site circumstances, improvements may be desired or necessary to address a drainage concern. The following options may be approved by the Town for completion by a landowner at their expense. Selection of an approved option is at the Town's discretion and the following matrix is only a guide.

ROW Characteristics	Type of Improvement								Town Board Issue
	Regrading /Cleaning	Ditch Liners	Drain Tile/Piping	Sump Relocation	<i>Filling or Urbanization*</i>	Rip Rap/Rock	Erosion Matting	No Changes	
Width of Ditch									
- Less than 3'		X			X				
- 3' to 5'	X	X						X	
- 5' to 8'	X							X	
- Greater than 8'	X								
Depth of Ditch									
- Less than 2'	X	X		X				X	
- 2' to 3'	X	X	X					X	
- Greater than 3'	X		X		X				
Grade of Ditch									
- No grade		X		X	X				
- Minimal grade (0%-1%)	X	X	X	X				X	
- Adequate grade (>1%-6%)	X							X	
- Extreme grade (>6%)	X					X	X		
Surrounding Topography									
- Generally flat (0%-2%)	X	X		X	X				
- Generally rolling (>2%-6%)	X							X	
- Generally hilly (>6%)	X					X	X		
Wetness									
- Dry	X							X	
- Moderately wet	X			X				X	
- Extremely wet	X	X		X	X				
Health and safety issue					X				X

Town will also take into consideration alterations completed by neighbors. As needed, neighboring landowners will have reviews completed even if not requested.

****Requires Town Board Approval***