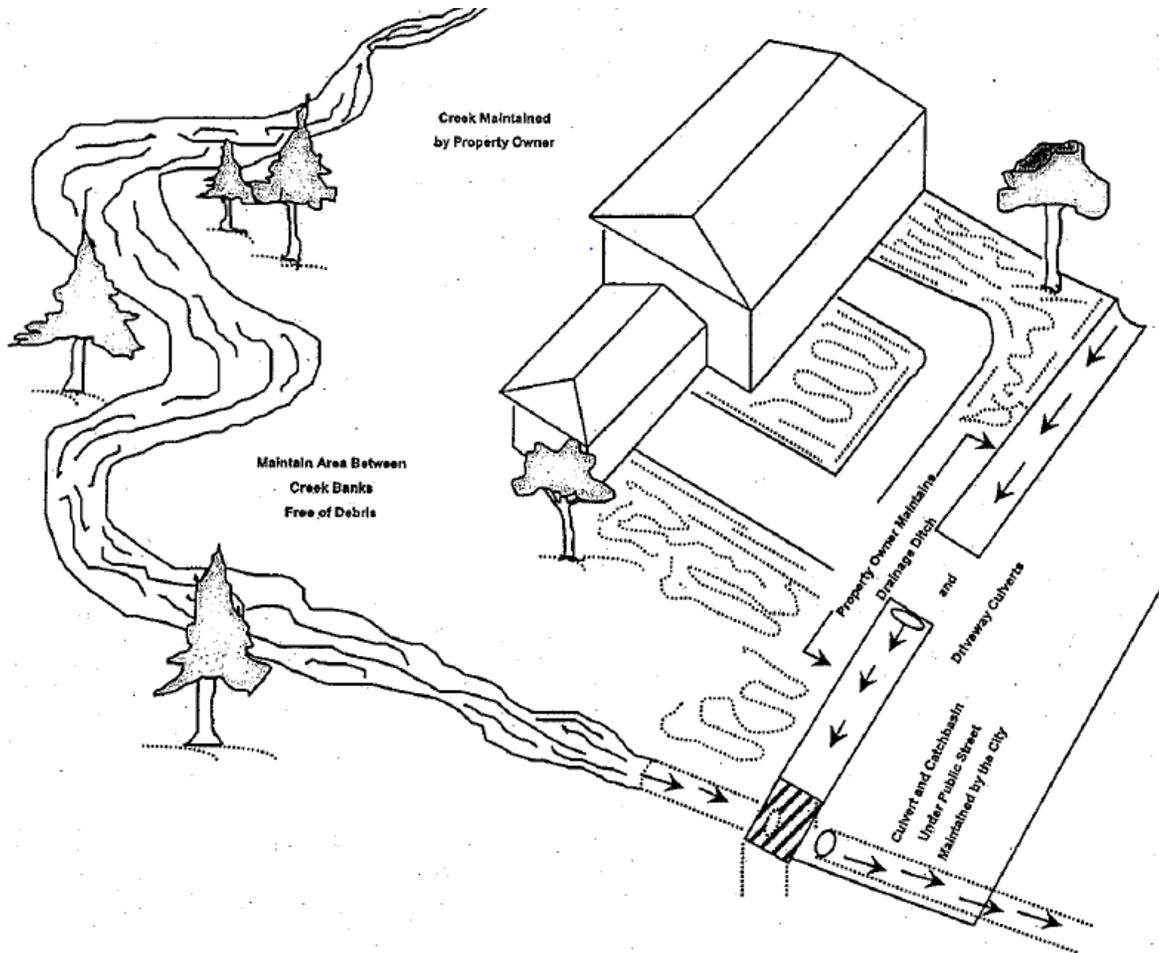


What can you do?

You can help prevent potential flooding by taking the following precautions: Especially before the first winter rain, check all drainage channels, driveway culverts and other drainage pipes, ditches, and swales on and around your property and remove any debris and sediment that could cause blockages.

The creeks and other drainage ways flowing through the City of Orinda are natural resources and valuable amenities to property owners. They are also, in most instances, the responsibility of the adjacent property owner to maintain. While the City crew performs routine maintenance of drainage facilities in the public roads, this does not include cleaning driveway culverts or ditches directly adjacent to them. The diagram below shows what is privately maintained and what the City maintains.

Cleaning and maintaining driveway culverts, v-ditches or other drainage facilities on private property is the responsibility of the property owner per the Orinda Municipal Code, Title 18, Chapter 18.03, Article 1, Section 18.03.040.



City of Orinda

Property Drainage Maintenance and Responsibilities

This pamphlet provides information for Orinda property owners about the maintenance responsibility of the property owners with drainage on their property.

Contact Us

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City Codes and City Policy Regarding Maintenance of Storm Drain Pipes

Storm drain pipes are often used in subdivisions/developments to create level building pads and allow access to the buildings. Such pipes were used to reroute or cross over original watercourses. City policy is that when a drainage facility (pipe, concrete ditch, etc.) benefits a private property, it shall be maintained by the respective property owner.

City has maintenance responsibility for storm drain pipes which carry water under public roadways from one side to the other, and in accepted easements -where the City Council (or its predecessor, the County Board of Supervisors) accepted an offer of dedication of a drainage easement. All other drainage facilities are the responsibility of the private property owner to maintain.

Offers of dedication are sometimes made with a subdivision map, but in most cases the City does not accept drainage easement dedications. In many cases, especially older subdivisions (prior to the 1960's), the subdivision maps do not show drainage easements.

Orinda Municipal Code 18.03.05 includes provisions that require a property owner to obtain a permit before doing work that would affect the flow of storm waters or existing drainage patterns. Per Orinda ordinance, permits are required for any work that would impair, impede, redirect or otherwise affect their existing flow of storm waters, or other waters.

Orinda Municipal Code 18.03.040 – Maintenance Responsibility

The City shall be responsible for all watercourses routinely maintained by the City as part of on-going operations. In all other cases, the property owner shall be responsible for watercourse maintenance.

A. Elective City Maintenance. The City may elect from time to time to mechanically clear privately owned watercourses where the malfunction of the watercourse could cause a hazard or where equipment is required which a private citizen may not have available. The City also may from time to time elect to make improvements to watercourses as necessary to protect life, health and property. Any such voluntary and isolated efforts by the City shall not be deemed to relieve the private property owner of continuing responsibility and liability for such watercourses under this chapter.

B. Private Watercourse Maintenance. In all cases other than watercourses routinely maintained by the City, the responsibility for maintenance and repair of watercourses, or portions of them, shall belong to the property owner on whose property the watercourse, or portion of a watercourse, is located.

Example showing division of maintenance responsibility for storm drain pipes in a residential subdivision

