



Valli Vue Estates Property Owners Association

www.vallivue.com

Dannielle Mellor, Managing Agent, 911 W 8th Ave, Anchorage, AK 99508

August 11, 2023

Dear Mayor Bronson, Assemblyman Johnson, and Assemblyman Sulte,

The Board of Directors for the Valli Vue Homeowners Association (HOA) is submitting this letter on behalf of the residents of the Valli Vue neighborhood to express deep concern over the project undertaken to rehabilitate our ditches, which began in the summer of 2022 and completed in June 2023. We are seeking extensive remediation. The Valli Vue neighborhood is centered along Main Tree Drive north of O'Malley Road and is home to 227 households. In lieu of Valli Vue households submitting individual comments and letters to the Anchorage Mayor and our Assembly representatives, the HOA has compiled this letter from the voices of all our concerned households. 137 households have signed this letter attesting their agreement with the below concerns and the request for remediation.

HOA understands that the Valli Vue LRSA Board directed the ditch rehabilitation work in coordination with the Municipality of Anchorage and paid for through Valli Vue household tax dollars. As communicated during HOA meetings by Mike Markie, a board member of the LRSA, the goal of the ditch rehabilitation project was to preserve our asphalt paving by improving drainage to reduce water saturation in the roadbed. To accomplish this, we understand that the LRSA instructed Northern Gravel to excavate the ditches to Muni standards, and the accumulated gravel between the ditch and the pavement edge would be removed. LRSA and Northern Gravel gave no consideration as to which ditches needed attention, and 100 percent of the Valli Vue ditches incurred extensive over-excavation of material, including the entirety of road shoulders.

The following are the concerns pertaining to the ditch rehabilitation project: 1) ditches currently pose a significant safety hazard to pedestrians and drivers due to the new replacement shoulders having little integrity, and extreme slopes from the road, 2) completed ditches are not in compliance with the Municipal guidance for rural streets and acceptable quality standards, 3) work was performed in violation of local, state, and federal environmental regulations to storm water management.

The significant safety hazard created by the ditch rehabilitation project began during the summer of 2022 when Northern Gravel overly excavated the ditches resulting in the complete removal of the shoulders along the roads. According to Maury Robinson, Manager of Public Works at the time, the excavator operator did not appear to be supervised, and the Muni inspector was over a week late to inspect the project's progress. By the time the inspector arrived, the excavation process had been completed. Complaints started pouring into Public Works and to the HOA when LRSA announced that work was completed for the 2022 year. They haphazardly sprayed the rocky soil with hydro seed, which failed to grow, and halted work for the year. Following a fall and winter of intense community protest, LRSA responded that Anchorage Gravel would fix the roads and ditches, and the shoulders, topsoil, and grass would be restored.

As the project is now concluded, the results to our roads and ditches have been appalling. Instead of preserving our pavement, the bulk of our shoulders were removed last fall,

and then replaced with narrow recycled asphalt pavement (RAP) shoulders after community outrage over the winter regarding the removal of shoulders. The installed RAP shoulders are significantly narrower than Muni standard, and have been crumbling away as the days go by, often spreading throughout the road surface, causing hazards. The RAP was also, in multiple areas, applied directly on top of the existing road asphalt, and does not add substance to what is being called “refurbished ditches”. The ditches, by width and depth, were severely over-excavated by the contractor, resulting in extreme slopes from the road that extend a significant distance from the road into homeowner’s properties, which in many cases are their front yards. Removing the established topsoil exposed the gravel and rocks below, perhaps leading to further erosion, not to mention an aesthetic blunder, as a homeowner can no longer maintain a green border with the road.

Valli Vue’s LRSA promised that in the spring of 2023, total rock removal, topsoil placement, and quality hydro seeding would occur. Yet only a partial application of hydro seed was applied on top of the rocky ditches. In many cases, the ditching project excavated nearly a foot from the depth of some lot’s front yards, and with LRSA choosing not to remove rocks, apply topsoil, or spray a meaningful amount of hydro seed, there is a significant degradation in the appearance of our community. Numerous visitors and realtors have observed this change and project that the property values of our lots have decreased in their opinions. As of the date of this letter, the full remediation of the ditches and shoulders remains incomplete, and the LRSA board has no further plans to correct these issues.



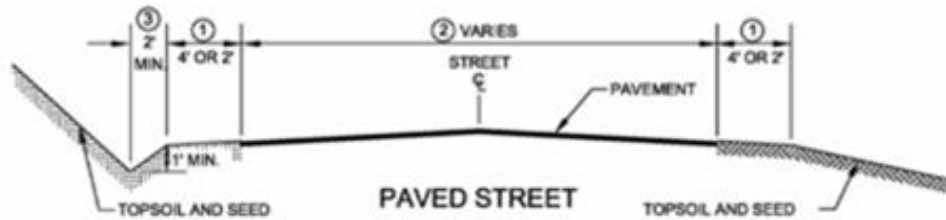
The ditches have become a driving hazard. Already, several cars have been ensnared in the overly deep, thin shoulder ditches. In some places, the deepened ditches may present a

rollover hazard to vehicles and school buses, and the RAP shoulders, which have been widely disintegrating over the roads, are a safety concern to cyclists and pedestrians. After the shoulders were removed, one of our older residents was hit by a car while walking on Main Tree Drive in the afternoon on September 21, 2022. This unnecessary accident was the result of the shoulders being too steep for pedestrians to walk off the road. The new RAP replacement shoulders still pose a safety concern, as they are far narrower than the Muni standard. This shoulder degradation coupled with the steep slope of the new ditches, have created safety hazards for pedestrians.

Our pavement is at risk. With minimal shoulders adjacent to the pavement edge, vehicles are beginning to break down the edge. In contrast, the extent of pavement degradation due to roadbed saturation (one of the stated goals of LRSA) appears negligible based on the absence of frost heaving or areas with excessive cracking, before or after this project.

The ditch configuration is now at odds with the Municipality's guidance for rural streets such as ours (see Figure 1). The guidance depicts a 2-foot shoulder approximately flush with the road surface followed by a ditch as shallow as 1 foot lined with topsoil and grass. In practice, a 1-foot shoulder seems typical (as seen on East 99th Ave, Homestead Trail, and Meridian Way/Zenith St), and our shoulders were about that wide before excavation. The depth of our pre-existing ditches was already close to the 1-foot minimum in most cases. A compelling case has not been made to justify the magnitude of the present project in contrast to a much smaller effort that would have conformed with the guidance. Given the safety problems with the current effort, restoring perceived original contours of nearly 50 years ago is nonsensical. The ditch project should have been based on the current guidance and only addressed areas that needed attention, not 100 percent of the ditches.

FIGURE 1-14 RURAL SECONDARY STREETS



NOTES:

- ① MINIMUM SHOULDER WIDTHS ARE 2 - 4 FEET FOR RESIDENTIAL STREETS AND 4 FEET FOR INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL STREETS.
- ② STREET WIDTHS VARY WITH TRAFFIC VOLUMES AS LISTED IN TABLES 1-4 AND 1-6.
- ③ MINIMUM DITCH DEPTH SHOULD ALLOW FOR 18-INCH DRIVEWAY CULVERT WITH 1-FOOT OF COVER.
- ④ SEE SECTION 1.3F FOR INFORMATION ON AVERAGE DAILY TRIPS.
- ⑤ PATHWAY REQUIREMENTS ARE DISCUSSED IN CHAPTER 4.

Figure 1. Municipality guidance for streets like those in Valli Vue

In a phone conversation with an HOA board member (David Ward), Maury Robinson named Prominence Pointe as another neighborhood whose ditches had been constructed by Northern Gravel. Visiting that neighborhood revealed what could have been done with our ditches. To preserve shoulder space, the roadside ditch banks are as steep as the hillside banks, and rock basins were installed around culverts that lay somewhat below the ditch bottom. They were armored with carefully placed rock where ditch banks were too steep to be self-supporting. Perhaps some of these measures can be employed to fix some of our aforementioned issues.

In addition to the structural and visual impacts identified, the contractor and the Municipality likely violated local, state, and federal environmental regulations in storm water management. All projects exceeding one acre of ground disturbance must obtain authorization under the Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) Construction General Permit (CGP). As part of this authorization, a Notice of Intent must be filed with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) as well as the preparation of a compliant Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. We understand that no authorization was obtained and that a proper SWPPP was not prepared. The Municipality also regulates storm water management through AMC Title 21 and during the construction of its own (public) projects through Section 20.02 of its Standard Specifications. This non-compliance results in a violation of the Clean Water Act, creating a liability for the Municipality, the HOA, and the affected homeowners. At a minimum, the

revegetation effort failed as the 70% reestablishment of grass did not occur and weed-free, Alaska-native seed does not appear to have been used.







The Valli Vue HOA and households ask you, as representatives of the Municipality and our neighborhood district, to help us restore our unsafe and unsustainable streets and ditches to the state which they were before, or better. A significant amount of our taxpayer resources were put into this project, all of which have contributed to a decline in our safety and property values. A more substantial amount of resources will need to be spent to make our roads and ditches whole again, and we will require your assistance to fund these changes and override Valli Vue LRSA's decision to consider the ditch rehabilitation project complete. The elements we seek your assistance in resolving include the following:

1. Restoration of 2-foot shoulders (or greater) using material other than RAP as soon as possible.
2. Reduction of ditch depth to no more than 1.5 feet before topsoil placement, where practical (e.g., away from culverts).
3. Final contouring and cleanup; to remove loose rocks, roots, culvert heaters, and smooth the transitions to adjacent landscaping.
4. Addition of a suitable thickness of topsoil and seeding with quality grass.

On behalf of all Valli Vue households, the HOA and below Valli Vue residents ask for your assistance in resolving the aforementioned issues. Please contact the Valli Vue HOA with additional questions or to arrange further discussions.

Respectfully,

DocuSigned by:
Scott Rees Scott Rees

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Valli Vue HOA Board President

DocuSigned by:
Peter Katsur Peter Katsur

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Valli Vue HOA Board Vice President

Valli Vue resident signatures following:

	Diane Sallee	Rec'd to return			
Jerry Brady		PSA		De Tyne	
Jody Brady		Karen Schudel		Dawn King	
Lisa L. Di...				Rea	
Tanna Stark			Rebecca Anderson	G. Egan	
Derek Gordon			Jennifer Jones	Bob B...all	
T. M. Hawk	E. S. ...			Colleen	
		Karen Schudel	Cheryl Peterson	T. Miller	
Star ...		Chris ...	A. Collins		
Beth Summers	A. N.			C. Pi	
		Gayle O. Brant	CC	M. H.	
La ...	Andie ...			R. Hauer	
Bob ...	B. N.	S. ...	Paul ...		
	T. ...	D. A. ...	Margaret ...	Dee ...	
K. ...	Mark ...	GS			
Q. ...	K. ...	S. A. ...			
Bob ...	Diane Sallee	O. ...		S. ...	
	M. ...				
D. ...			M. ...	D. ...	
	Theresa ...		H. ...		
I. ...	Ed ...	L. ...	T. ...		