



### **1.0 Terms and Definitions**

Ditches – a ditch is a depression or channel in the earth near a highway intended to allow storm-water runoff to flow away from the highway pavement. Ditches are usually parallel to the pavement and should not pond water. Grasses and weeds in the ditch help prevent erosion and treat the storm-water runoff in some instances. Properly designed and installed ditches help keep the water away from the roadway base and will extend the life of the pavement. Conversely, shallow ditches and standing water can produce soft shoulders and subgrade that weaken the pavement.

### **2.0 Maintenance**

Maintenance functions of ditches include:

- Keep the water course free of accumulations of dirt, debris, vegetation and other obstructions to ensure the flow of water.
- Repair erosion or install erosion control measures to maintain the function of the ditch.

A drive-by inspection is usually all that is needed to see if any ditch maintenance is needed.