CITY STORMWATER PROGRAM FUNDING

Proposed Future Plan

Focus Group Session

August 2025

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Welcome and Thank You!

FOCUS GROUP ROLE:

Your feedback will shape the Community Meetings in Fall 2025 and inform the stormwater program development to be presented to City Council late Fall 2025.

- **Tonight: Review, Discussion & Feedback**
- **Next Meeting: Present Focus Group Position Paper**

Please be open and candid – your comments will be recorded anonymously.

Record your thoughts, questions, and feedback as we go on the handout provided.

Agenda

Part 1:

Stormwater Program Overview

Part 2:

Stormwater Utility Concept

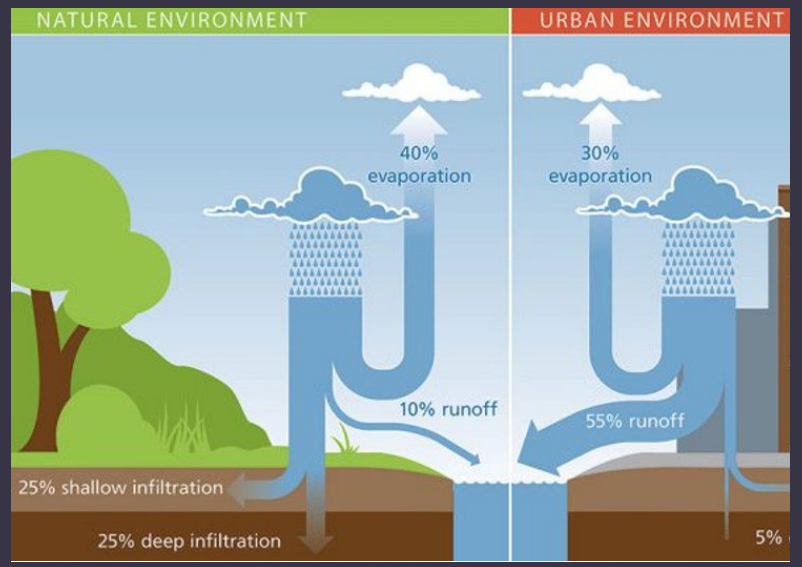
- Funding Strategy
- Level of Service Improvements
- Customer Considerations
- Messaging

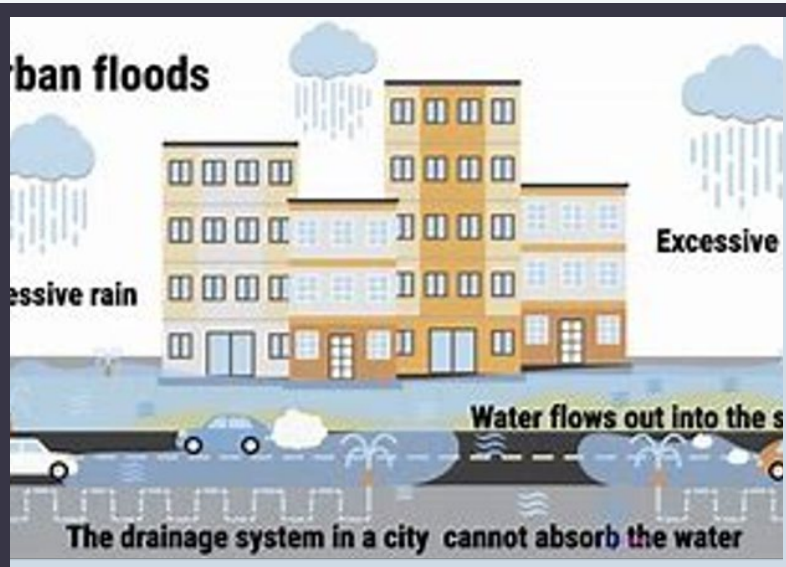
Why Are We Here? BECAUSE OF THIS!
We've heard you and we are listening...

STORMWATER 101

What Causes Flooding?

- Changes in Land Use
- Excessive Rainfall
- Coastal Flooding
- Riverine Flooding





Recent Flooding Events

Example: Rainfall for the first 11 days of August (8/1/25 – 8/11/25) for the Savannah area:

Downtown: 11.2 inches

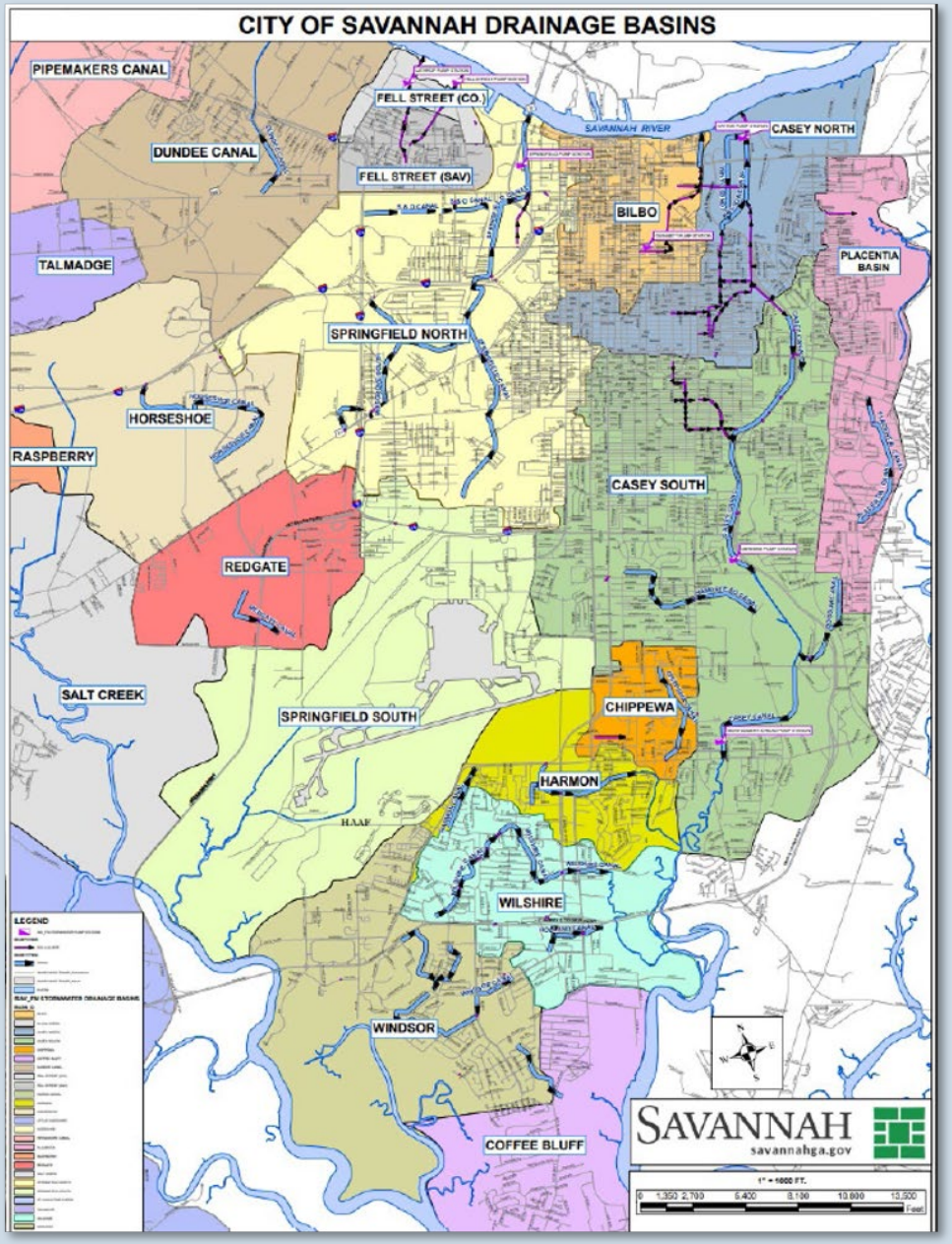
West Savannah: 10.7 inches

Wilmington Island: 13.4 inches

South Savannah: 16.5 inches

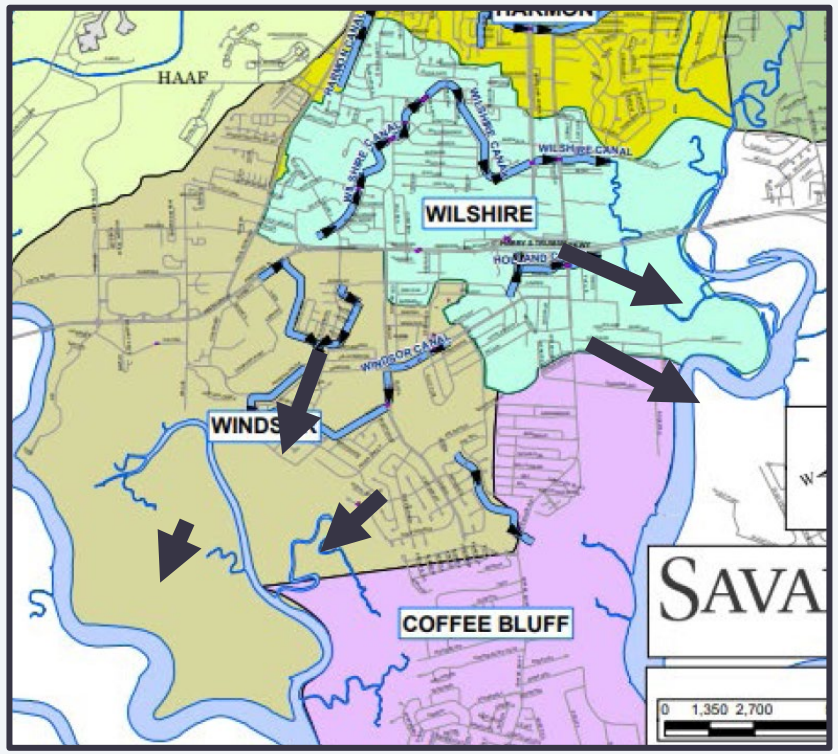
Southeast Savannah: 18.1 inches

Note: The average rainfall for all of August is typically 6 inches!



City Drainage Basins

- Defined by natural & manmade topography
- Some areas flow north to Savannah River
- Some areas flow south to Ogeechee River



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CITY STORMWATER PROGRAM'S ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES:

Why a dedicated funding source is needed

- Drainage System Operations, Maintenance, and Repair
- Federal and State Regulatory Permit Compliance
- Capital Improvement Program for Flood Control, Drainage, and Water Quality

City Stormwater Management Program

City Drainage System Data (2025)

- **416 miles** of pipe systems
- **147 miles** of ditches/canals
- **7** pump stations
- **6** stormwater detention ponds
- **31** tide gates
- **14,620** inlets
- **6,423** manholes

Drainage Capital Improvement Projects

Stormwater Pump Stations

12 Projects

Total Cost: $46.6 Million

(Funded at $16.25 Million)

Neighborhood Contruction Projects

13 Projects

Total Cost: $22.3 Million

(Funded at $4.01 Million)

Annual Pipe Repair Projects

3 Projects

Total Cost: $2 Million/Year

(90% Funded Annually)

Flood Study Modeling and Basin Studies

14 of 24 Basins Remain to be Modeled

Total Cost : $1.4 Million

(Funded at $150,000 Annually)

Large Drainage Basin Projects

25 Projects

Total Cost: $330 Million

(Funded at $135 Million)

Funding Need: $402 million

Funding Secured: $157 million

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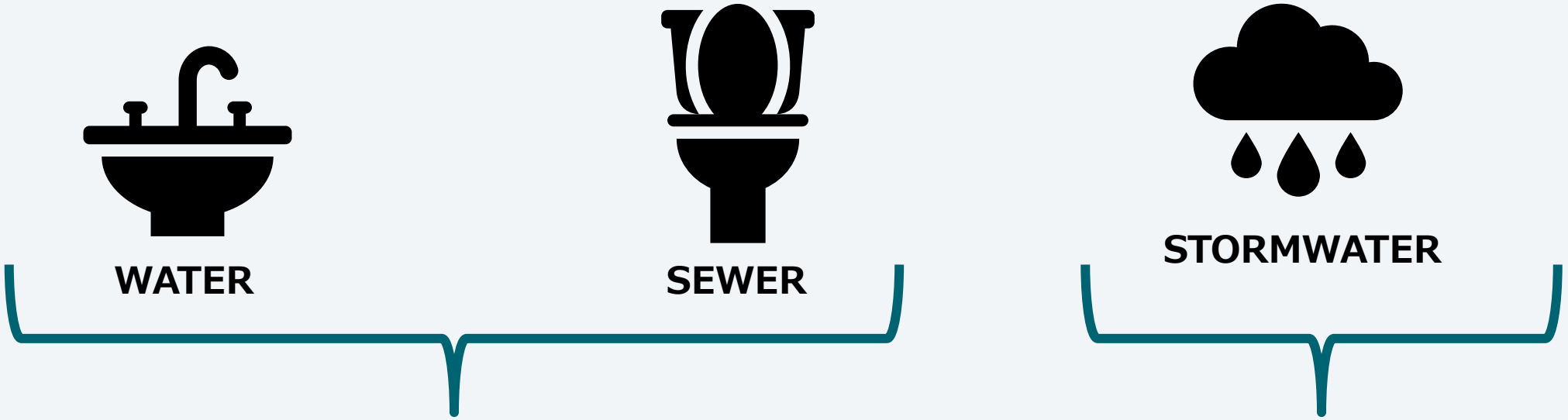
STORMWATER UTILITY CONCEPT OVERVIEW

Current City Utility Operation & Funding

City Operates Three “Pipe Systems”



Dedicated User Funding

No Dedicated Funding

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Stormwater Utility Overview

- A **user fee-based system** like other City utilities (water, sewer, sanitation)
- Revenues are **dedicated specifically to stormwater** management
- Customer user fee bill **based on amount of stormwater runoff** potential
- Applies to **ALL** developed properties

A more equitable approach to fund stormwater management services

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How would a stormwater fee work?

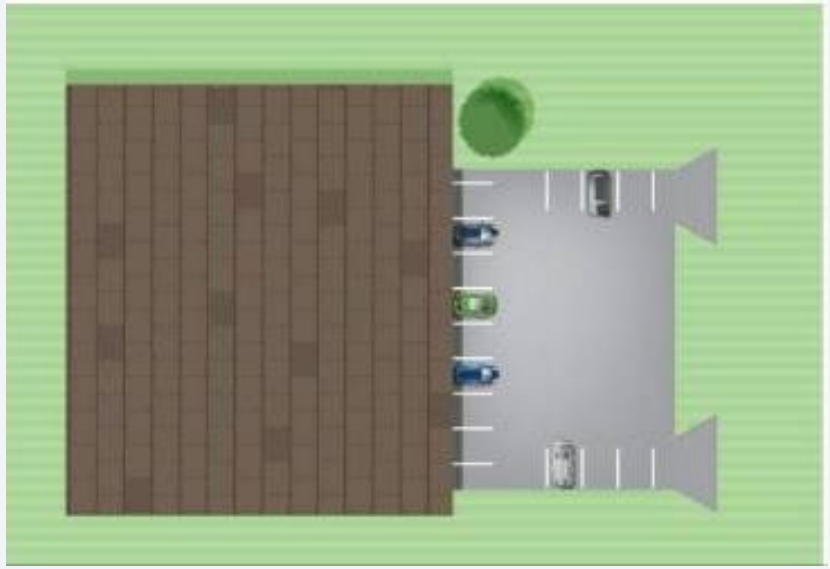
- Stormwater Utility customers would fund the stormwater system based on amount of runoff from their property and the services received
- Runoff characteristics are based on impervious cover on property
- Proposed user fee structured as multiples of single-family homes or “Equivalent Residential Units” (ERUs)

Residential Impervious Cover Data

Roof:	1,800 sq. ft.
Walkway:	200 sq. ft.
Driveway:	500 sq. ft.
Total:	**2,500 sq. ft. = 1 ERU**

How would a stormwater fee work?

- Non-residential stormwater utility customers with more impervious cover would pay more to fund the stormwater program



Non-residential Impervious Cover Data

Roof:	19,000 sq. ft.
Parking Lot:	6,000 sq. ft.
Total:	**25,000 sq. ft. = 10 ERUs**

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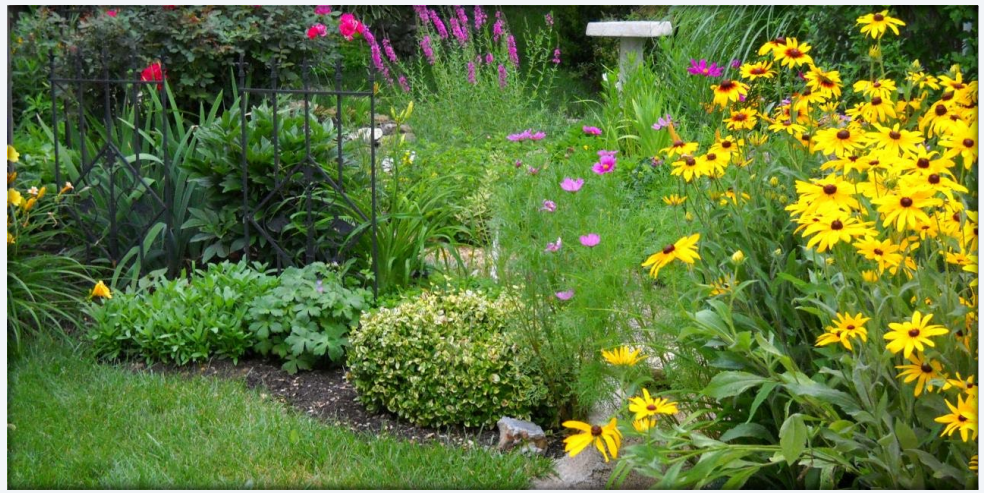
Stormwater Fee Credits

- Ongoing reduction in the user fee charged to an eligible customer that qualifies for available credits
- Credit is recognition that onsite/offsite stormwater related activity reduces the City's stormwater expenditures
- Credits encourage customers to more effectively manage and/or address their own stormwater impacts

Potential Stormwater User Fee Credits



Rain Gardens

Rain Barrels

Pervious Pavers

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Potential Stormwater User Fee Credits

Trees

Detention Ponds

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STORMWATER UTILITY: A MORE EQUITABLE APPROACH

Assessed Value Does Not Reflect Impact

Assessed Value = ~$450,000
Impervious Area = 3,250 Sq Ft

Assessed Value = ~$350,000
Impervious Area = 25,000 Sq Ft

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Stormwater Fee is More Equitable

Impervious Area = 3,250 Sq Ft
Stormwater Fee = $4.75

Impervious Area = 25,000 Sq Ft (10 ERUs)
Stormwater Fee = $47.50

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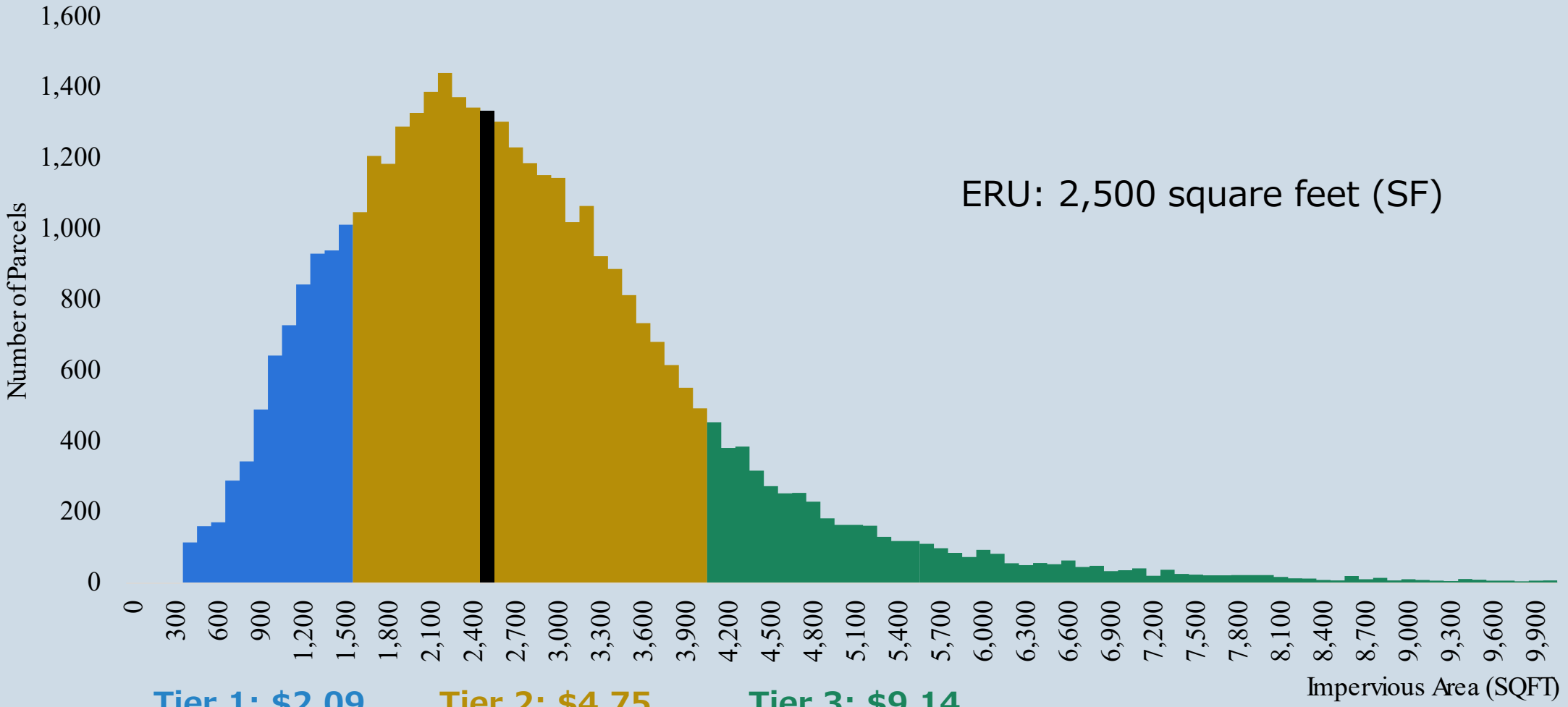
Stormwater User Fee Structure

Single-Family Residential (SFR) Parcels	Non-SFR Parcels
Tiered Structure • Single family homes placed in “buckets” or tiers based on impervious area • Uniform unit rate per square foot at median of each tier	**Measured Impervious Area as Multiples of ERUs**

Proposed 3 Tiers (Draft)



ERU: 2,500 square feet (SF)

Tier 1: $2.09
Min: 400 SF
Max: 1,500 SF

Tier 2: $4.75
Min: 1,501 SF
Max: 4,000 SF

Tier 3: $9.14
Min: 4,001 SF
Max: 10,000 SF

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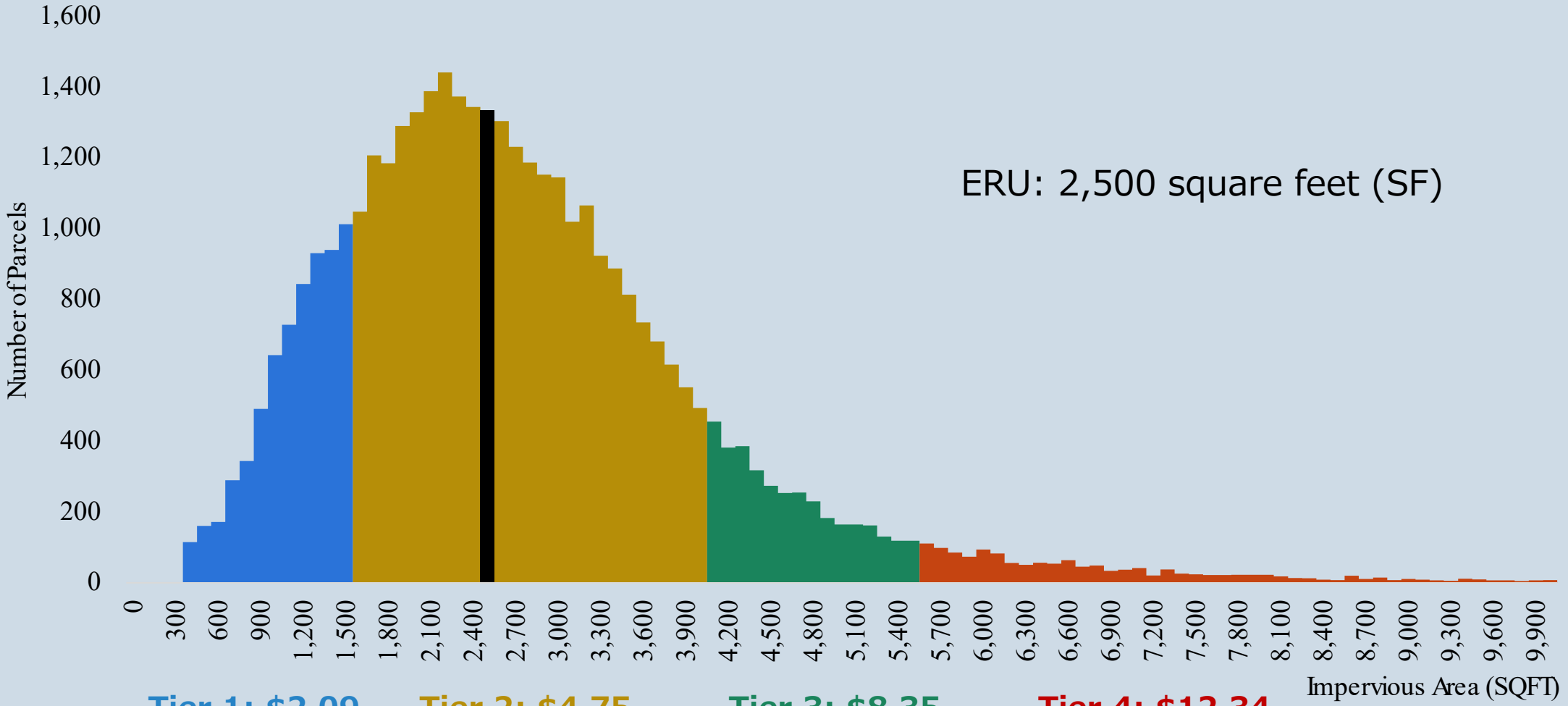
Proposed 4 Tiers (Draft)



ERU: 2,500 square feet (SF)

Tier 1: $2.09
Min: 400 SF
Max: 1,500 SF

Tier 2: $4.75
Min: 1,501 SF
Max: 4,000 SF

Tier 3: $8.35
Min: 4,001 SF
Max: 5,500 SF

Tier 4: $12.34
Min: 5,501 SF
Max: 10,000 SF

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SFR Tiers account for variations in impervious coverage / runoff potential

Tier 1 – Blue
Tier 2 – Gold
Tier 3 – Green
Tier 4 – Red

Proposed SFR Tier Fee Structure Options

Three SFR Tiers			Four SFR Tiers		
Tier	*Impervious Cover*	*Monthly Fee*	*Tier*	*Impervious Cover*	*Monthly Fee*
1	300 SF – 1,500 SF	$2.09	**1**	400 SF – 1,500 SF	$2.09
2	1,501 SF – 4,000 SF	$4.75	**2**	1,501 SF – 4,000 SF	$4.75
3	4,001 SF – 10,000 SF	$9.14	**3**	4,001 SF – 5,500 SF	$8.35
			4	5,501 SF – 10,000 SF	$12.34

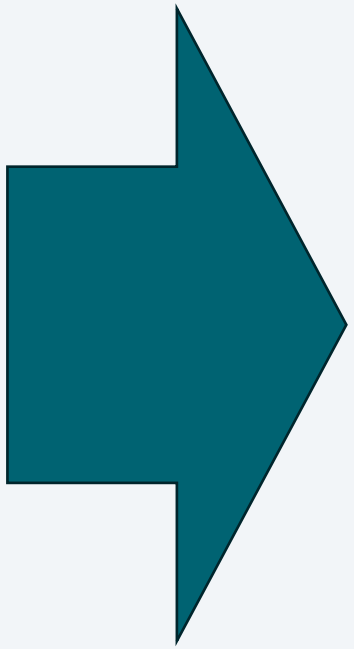
PROPOSED LEVEL OF SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

Service Delivery Enhancements

CURRENT APPROACH

General Fund via "Taxes"

- **Operations + Maintenance**
  - Response/complaint driven
  - Limited inspections
- **Capital Improvement Projects**
  - Critical projects only
  - Deferred maintenance
- **Funding**
  - Varies year-to-year
- **Planning**
  - Limited



PROPOSED APPROACH

Stormwater Utility via "User Fees"

- **Operations + Maintenance**
  - Proactive management
  - Full conditions assessment
- **Capital Improvement Projects**
  - Phased/prioritized implementation
  - Capital replacement schedule
- **Funding**
  - Dedicated & stable ***revenue*** stream
- **Planning**
  - Modeling and basin-wide planning

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Service Delivery Enhancements

EQUIPMENT

- Three additional vactor-jet trucks to clean catch-basins and pipes
- CCTV pipeline inspection vehicle
- Ditch mowing resources

PEOPLE

- Additional staff for maintenance, inspections, and operations
- Increased mowing and hand-clearing of ditches

CAPITAL PROJECTS

- Pump-station upgrades
- Rehab and replacement of old drainage systems
- Storm sewer rehab and replacement/upsizing to reduce flooding

Capital Improvement Projects

Stormwater Pump Projects

12 Projects

Total Cost: $46.6 Million

(Unfunded = $30 Million)

Neighborhood Construction Projects

13 Projects

Total Cost: $22.3 Million

(Unfunded = $18 Million)

Annual Pipe Repair Projects

3 Projects

Total Cost: $2 Million/Year

(90% Funded Annually)

Flood Study Modeling and Basin Studies

14 of 24 Basins Remain to be Modeled

Total Cost : $1.4 Million

(Minimal Annual Funding)

Large Drainage Basin Projects

25 Projects

Total Cost: $330 Million

(Unfunded = $195 Million)

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Capital Improvement Projects

PROPOSED FUTURE FUNDING SOURCES/PLAN

Utility Fees SPLOST	Utility Fees General Fund*	Utility Fees	Utility Fees	SPLOST Federal Grants
Stormwater Pump Station Projects	**Neighborhood Construction Projects**	**Annual Pipe Repair Projects**	**Flood Study Modeling and Basin Studies**	**Large Drainage Basin Construction Projects**
12 Projects	***13 Projects***	***3 Projects***	***10 of 24 Basins Modeled***	***25 Projects***
Total Cost: $46.6 Million *(Unfunded = $30 Million)*	Total Cost: $22.3 Million *(Unfunded = $18 Million)*	Total Cost: $2 Million/Year *(90% Funded Annually)*	Total Cost : $1.4 Million *(Minimal Annual Funding)*	Total Cost: $330 Million *(Unfunded = $195 Million)*

Current Stormwater Program Funding: 2025

Expenditures	Gross Amount	Funding Source
Personnel	$4,321,000	General Fund Taxes
O&M and Capital Improvements	$5,404,000	General Fund Taxes
Total	**$9,725,000**	

Future Stormwater Program Funding: 2026+

Expenditures	Gross Amount	Funding Source
Personnel	$4,320,000	General Fund Taxes
Operations & Maintenance	$4,000,921	***Stormwater Fee***
Staff Enhancements & New Equipment	$1,388,128	***Stormwater Fee***
Small-scale Capital Projects	$1,180,000	***Stormwater Fee***
Bond Funded Capital Construction - Annual Payment*	$1,500,000*	***Stormwater Fee***
Contribution to Reserves	$400,000	***Stormwater Fee***
Total	**$12,789,049**	

** Proposed $24 million in revenue bond funding for capital projects.*

Capital Project Prioritization Criteria

Stormwater Utility Revenues will be used to implement projects on the City's Drainage Capital Improvement Project (CIP) list.

❑ *Projects will be prioritized by city staff using criteria to include:*

- Structural flooding/damage
- Street flooding
- Ownership
- Ease of construction
- Ownership (within City ROW/easement)
- Road resurfacing timing
- Ease of construction
- Cost analysis
- Dependence on other projects

Stormwater Utility Summary

Calculate parcel impervious area and user fee

(More impervious surface = More stormwater runoff)

Calculate available credits

(Customers can apply for credits to reduce fee)

Customers billed bi-monthly

(billed with bi-monthly City Utility bill)

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Stormwater Utility Billing

Proposed Billing Plan (Pending City Council approval)

- The stormwater fee to be billed on the existing customer utility bills
  - *City of Savannah bills utility customers every other month*
- Separate bills for customers without existing utility services (water, sewer, sanitation)
- Stormwater bills will reflect credits through the application and approval process
- Stormwater bill will be a static fee (similar to Sanitation)
  - *City will periodically review and update bills based on new construction/improvements*
- All stormwater utility revenues will be deposited into a dedicated fund exclusively for stormwater management services (similar to Water & Sewer Reveues)
- First billing cycle effective July 2026 *(If approved by the City Council)*
  - *City Council consideration of Stormwater Utility Fee proposal anticipated late 2025*

MESSAGING

Key Messaging Points

- **Customer Fairness**

A stormwater utility fee is a more equitable service delivery approach.

Larger amount of stormwater runoff = Higher stormwater fee

- **Fee Consistency & Predictable/Stable Revenue**

Customers have a consistent utility bill and the City has revenue stability.

The Stormwater Utility revenues are consistent each year for budgeting.

- **Proactive Service Delivery**

Consistent annual revenue for the City Stormwater Program.

Implementation of proactive maintenance plans and capital projects.

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Discussion

Future Funding Strategy

- Stormwater Fee Concept
- SFR Tiers

Level of Service

- Proactive O&M (Staffing + Equipment)
- Drainage Project Construction (via Bond)

Messaging

- Fairness, Stability, Responsiveness
- Community Outreach Suggestions

Questions/Discussion

THANK YOU

Ron Feldner, PE

Chief of Water Resources

Zack Hoffman, PE

Director of Stormwater

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Stormwater Utilities in Georgia

- First stormwater utility in Georgia established in 1998 (Griffin, GA)
- Approximately 75 stormwater utilities across the state

City	Residential Rate/Month
Garden City	**$4.75**
Richmond Hill	**$4.75**
Brunswick	**$5.25**
Hinesville	**$5.86**
Augusta	**$6.42**
Statesboro	**$5.00**
Valdosta	**$3.50**

Garden City Stormwater Utility Rates

Customer Examples	Billing Units	Fee/Month*
Single Family Residential	1.0	$4.75
Small Professional Office	1.4	$6.65
Fast Food Restaurant	11.9	$56.53
Bank Branch	13.1	$62.23
Hotel	35.9	$170.25
Institutional Building	52.7	$250.33
Truck/Container Storage Yard	53.5	$254.13
Retail Shopping Center	66.9	$317.78
Apartment Complex	109.3	$519.18
Large Industrial Warehouse	344.4	$1,635.90

** Stormwater utility fee with a billing rate of $4.75 per month per each 3,000 square foot increment of impervious area -- and before eligible credits have been applied.*

Credit Program Considerations

Eligibility

- Who is eligible to receive credits?

Qualifying Activities

- What stormwater management BMPs qualify (basins, onsite storage, green infrastructure)
- Activities such as public education qualify?

Administration

- Credit manual
- Application
- Renewal Process

Level

- Define level of credit associated with each activity
- Determine maximum available credit

Credit programs typically evolve over time