



# Investing in a Better Stormwater System TOGETHER

*CURRENT STATUS & PROPOSED FUTURE  
PLAN*

*COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS*  
April 2025



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P  
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# WHY ARE WE HERE?

# Because Of This!





And This...





**And This...**





And This...





We ALL Experience It.

We Hear Your Stories.

We're Taking Action—For ALL of Us.

# Agenda

**Stormwater 101**

**Savannah Stormwater System**

**Recent Rainfall Events**

**Team Savannah Responsibilities**

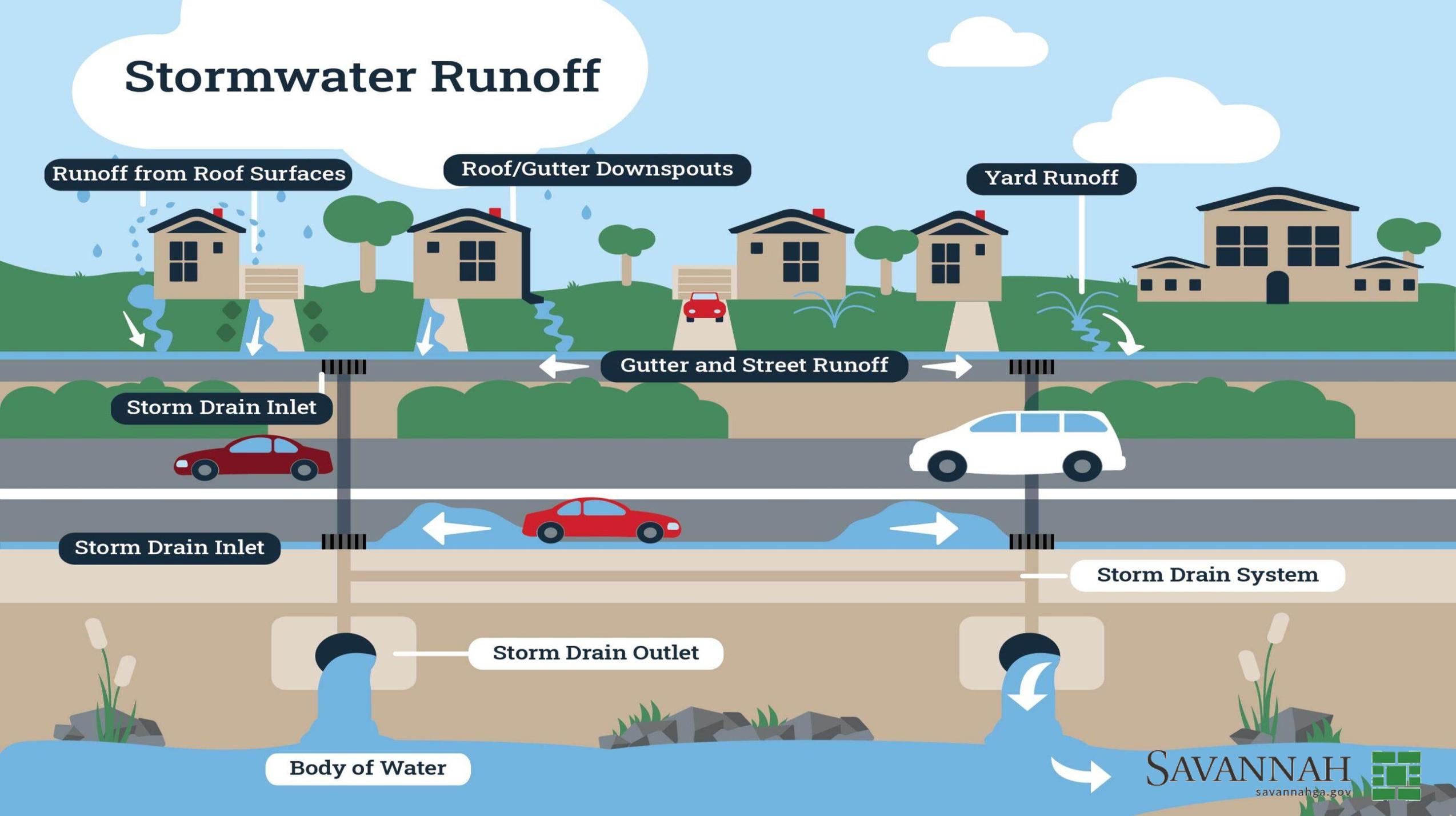
**Stormwater Utility Overview**

**Breakout Sessions**

# STORMWATER 101



# Stormwater Runoff



Runoff from Roof Surfaces

Roof/Gutter Downspouts

Yard Runoff

Gutter and Street Runoff

Storm Drain Inlet

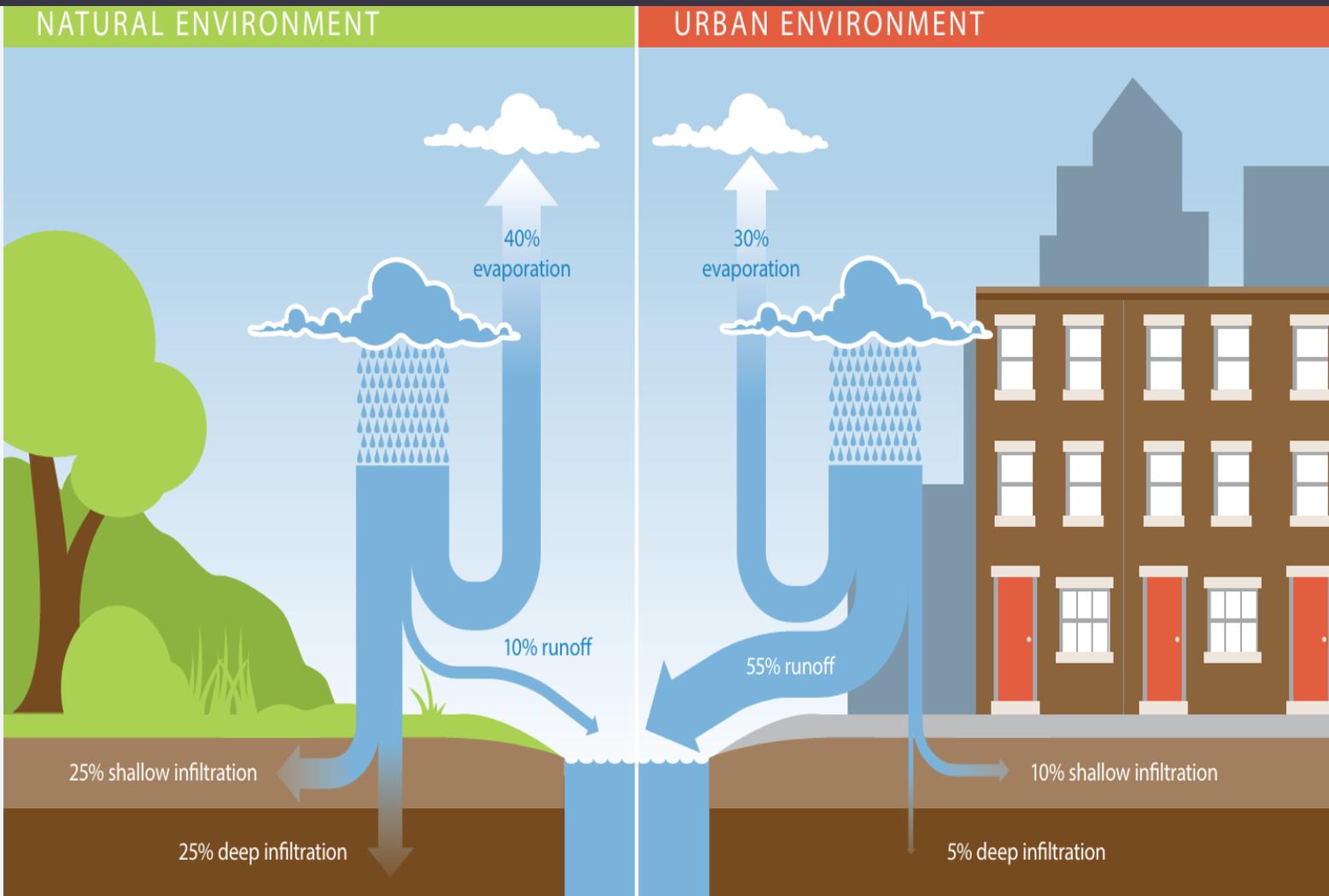
Storm Drain Inlet

Storm Drain System

Storm Drain Outlet

Body of Water

# Different Environments, Different Results

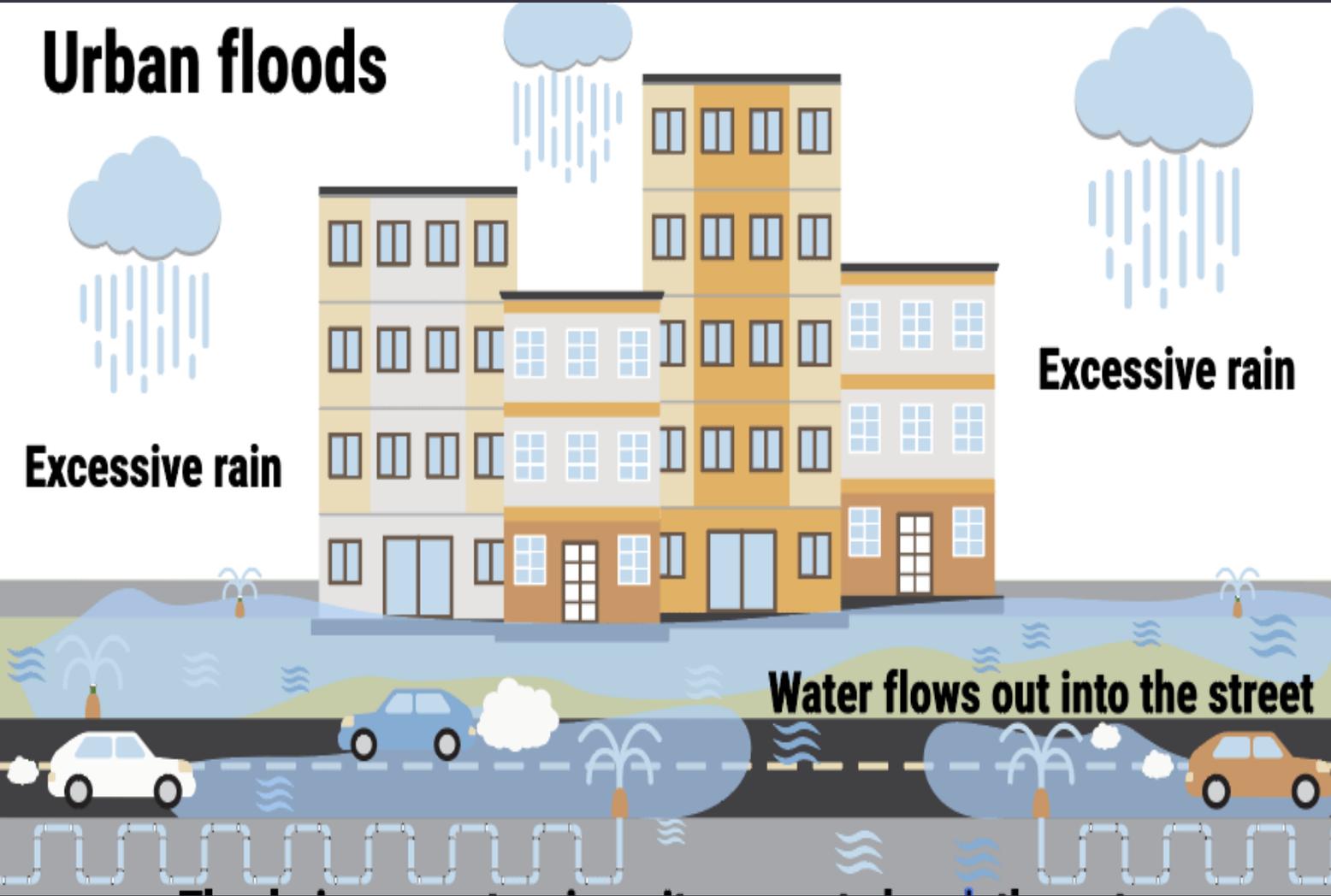


## CHANGES TO LAND USE

Natural Environment  
~10% runoff  
Built Environment  
~55% runoff

# What Causes Flooding?

## Urban floods



## URBAN FLOODING

High-intensity rainfall events occur rapidly and are often highly localized.

*Heavy rainfall overwhelms the storm drains in the streets then flows into the canals, rivers, etc.*



# What Causes Flooding?



## COASTAL FLOODING

Very high tides  
from lunar phases  
or storms

*Tidal waters flow back  
into storm drains near  
the ocean, marsh, and  
tidal rivers*

# What Causes Flooding?



## RIVERINE FLOODING

Heavy rainfall over an upstream river watershed

*River flow expands beyond its banks, fills the floodplains, and flows back into storm drains systems.*

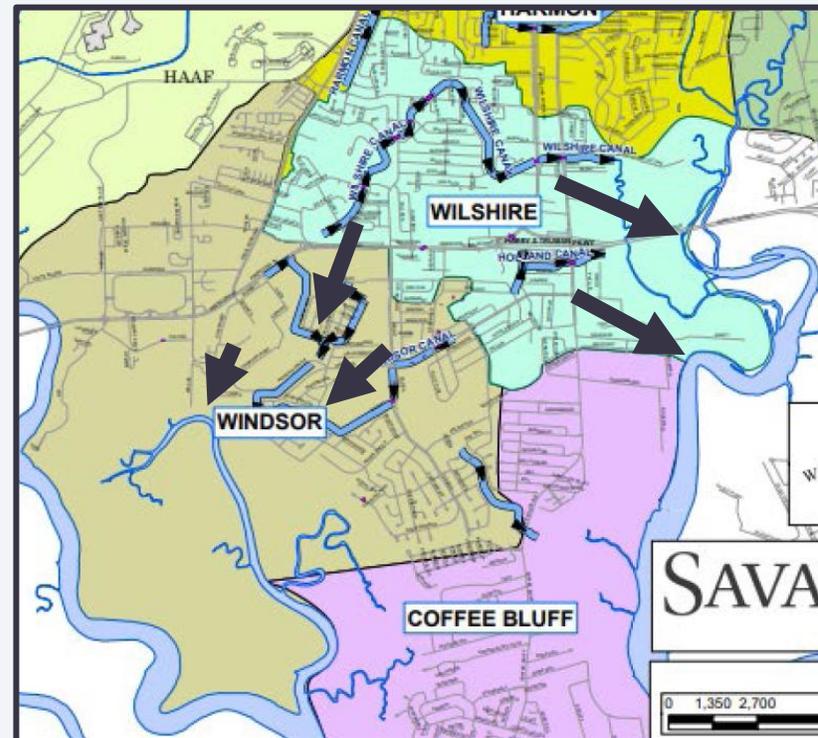
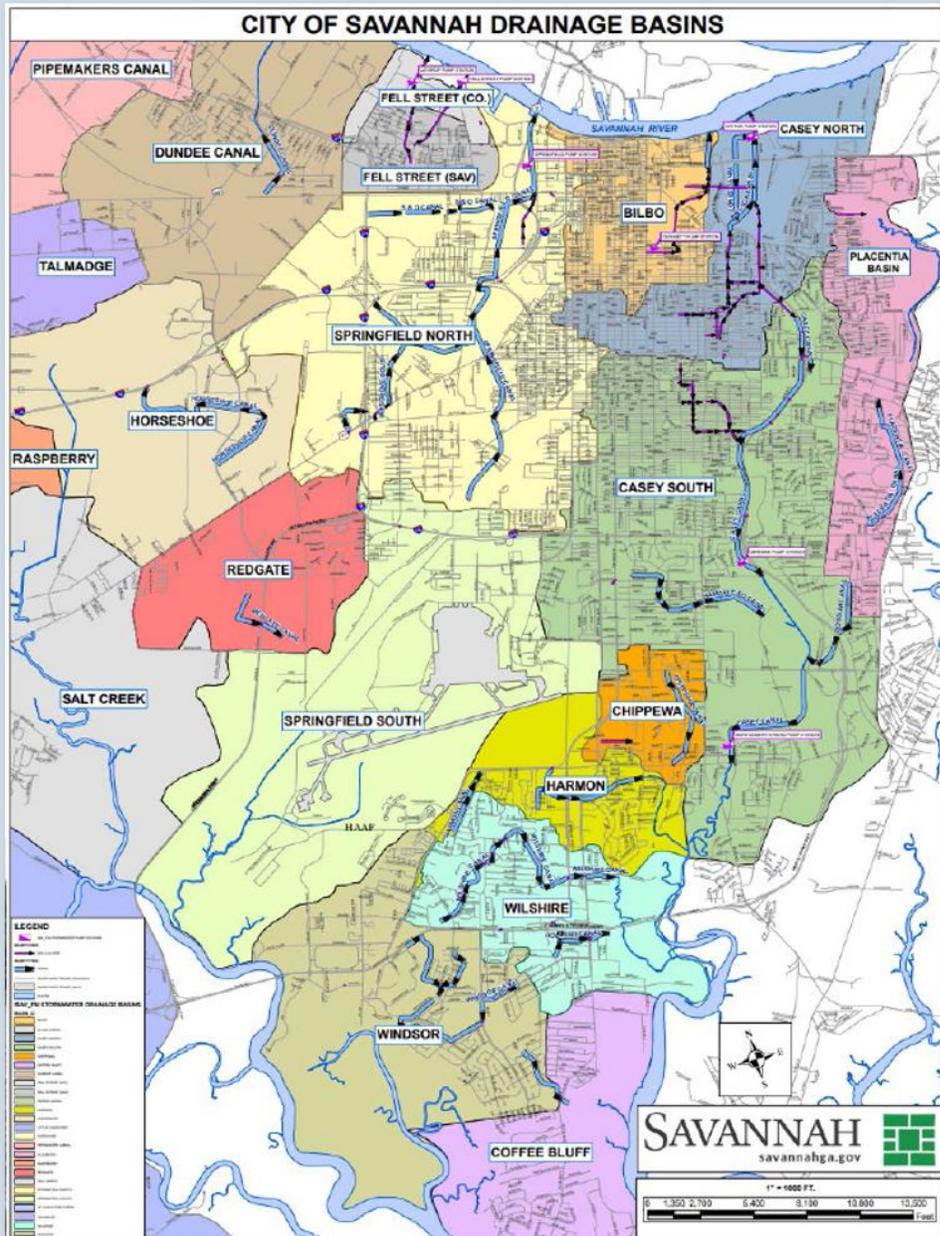


# SAVANNAH STORMWATER SYSTEM



# Drainage Basins

- Defined By Natural & Manmade Topography
- Some Areas Flow **North** to Savannah River
- Some Areas Flow **South** to Ogeechee River



# Savannah Drainage System



- **14,620** Inlets
- **6,423** Manholes
- **416 Miles** Of Pipe Systems
- **147 Miles** Of Ditches/Canals
- **31** Tide Gates
- **7** Pump Stations
- **6** Stormwater Detention Ponds

# System Challenges

- System Expansion
- System Age
- Climate Impacts
- Capacity Challenges





# RECENT RAINFALL EVENTS

# 2024 Urban Flooding Events



Tremont Park

## **Specific Events:**

- July 20<sup>th</sup> – 2.8 inches in 4 hours
- July 22<sup>nd</sup> – 3.6 inches in 3 hours
- Aug 20<sup>th</sup> – 3.1 inches in 1 hour

## **Result:**

- Urban Stormwater Flooding

## **Causes:**

- Rainfall Rate
- Undersized Infrastructure
- Drainage System Maintenance Needs
- Tide Cycles

# 2024 Tropical Storm Debby



Dunnoman Dr and Grayson Ave  
Bradley Pointe Subdivision

## *Rainfall Data:*

- 10 inches in 48 hours\*

## *Results:*

- Urban Flooding
- Riverine Flooding

## *Causes:*

- Heavy Rainfall in the Ogeechee River Watershed
- Canoochee River Flooding
- Development within the Floodplain

# TEAM SAVANNAH RESPONSIBILITIES



Adopt A Drain  
SAVANNAH  
[drainsav.org](http://drainsav.org)





Drainage System Operations, Maintenance, and Repair



Federal and State Regulatory Permit Compliance



Capital Improvement Program for Flood Control,  
Drainage, and Water Quality

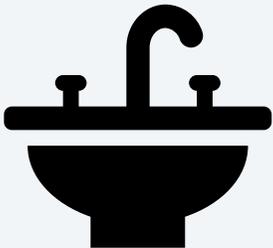
# Stormwater Management Program (SWMP)

# STORMWATER UTILITY OVERVIEW



# Current Utility Operation & Funding

City Operates Three “Pipe Systems”



WATER



SEWER



STORMWATER

Dedicated User Funding

No Dedicated Funding

# Where Does Current Funding Come From for Stormwater Management?

## Current Funding Sources

- General Fund Revenues (Municipal Taxes)
  - *Property taxes based on parcel value*
  - *Sales taxes based on the purchase amount*
- Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)
- Federal and State Grant Funding (Project Specific)
- Public-Private Partnerships (Development Agreements)

# 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**

Applies To **ALL** Developed Properties

A More Equitable Approach To Fund Stormwater Management Services

# Stormwater Utility Overview

Calculate Parcel  
Impervious Area  
And Customer Fee  
*(More Impervious  
Surface = More  
Stormwater Runoff)*



Calculate Available  
Credits\*  
*\*(Customers Can  
Apply For Credits To  
Reduce Fee)*



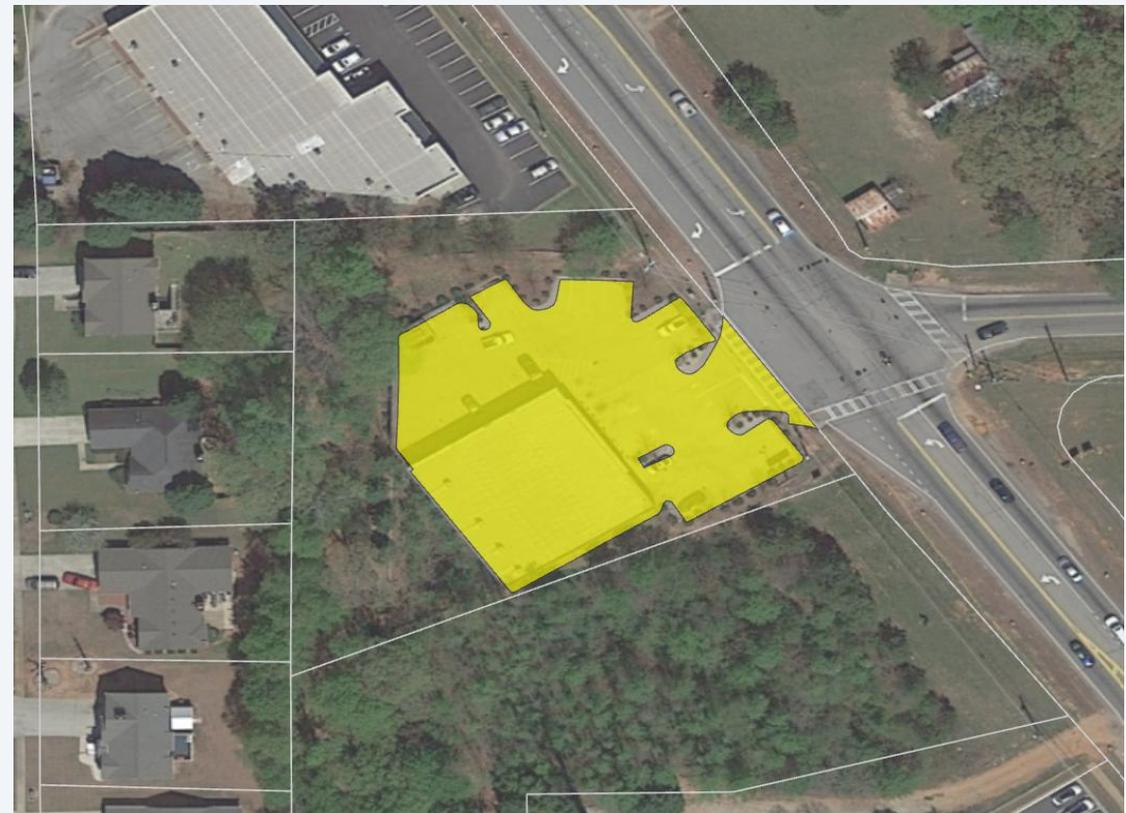
Customers Billed  
Bi-monthly  
*(Billed With Monthly  
City Utility Bill)*



# Billing Comparison

**Assessed Value = ~\$650,000**  
**Impervious Area = 7,500 Square Feet**

**Assessed Value = ~\$650,000**  
**Impervious Area = 24,000 Square Feet**



# 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
Macon	\$4.99

# 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.*

# Key Points

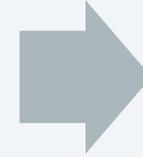
**1**

**A Fair &  
Equitable  
Approach For  
Funding**



**2**

**Reduce Your  
Fee Through  
Credits\***



**3**

**Dedicated  
Funding Source**

*\*See handout with typical customer credits being used in other Georgia municipalities*

# Next Steps

## **On-Going Community Engagement**

- Community Meetings – Round One – TONIGHT!
- Focus Group Nominated by Council
- Interactive Online Mapping
- Public Input Surveys
- Community Meetings – Round Two – Fall 2025

## **Technical Work and Analysis**

- Impervious Surface Analysis & Billing Rate Development
- Develop Credit Manual & Policies
- Customer Service Training

## **Recommendations to City Council**

- Based on Community Feedback – Anticipated Late 2025



# Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST 8)



SPLOST is a voter-approved penny in sales tax used to fund capital projects that Savannah residents have supported since **1985**

***WE NEED YOUR INPUT ON INVESTMENT PRIORITIES:***

**PARKS & RECREATION**  
PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, SPORTS & PATHS

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
HOUSING, LIGHTING, STREETSCAPES

**PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES & APPARATUS**  
POLICE, FIRE STATIONS, & VEHICLES

**STORMWATER/DRAINAGE PROJECTS**  
CANALS, TUNNELS, PUMP STATIONS

**TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION**  
ROADS, BRIDGES, SIDEWALKS, BIKE LANES

**MUNICIPAL INVESTMENTS**  
OPERATIONAL, CULTURAL, & ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES

**1**

## Funding

Current and Potential  
Future Funding Strategies

**3**

## Capital Projects & Operations

Current and Future  
Projects in the Works to  
Improve Drainage

**2**

## Flooding

What are the Hotspots in  
Your Neighborhood?

**4**

## Stormwater 101

Water Quality – and What  
*You* Can Do to Help  
Control Flooding

**City 311**

# Breakout Sessions

**Ron Feldner, PE**  
Chief of Water  
Resources



**Denise  
Grabowski, AICP**  
Symbioscity

