

Stormwater User Fee Primer

Augusta has real, growing, and unresolved stormwater problems. Currently 75% of Augusta's stormwater program is funded by SPLOST funds and subject to economic fluctuations and voter referendum. The Augusta Engineering Department's (AED's) stormwater management program maximizes limited funding and is effective in the short term; however, more stable funding is needed to address these growing challenges:

- **Flooding:** Nuisance flooding in downtown and inundation of sections of neighborhoods impact both residents and businesses and threaten public health.
- **Degraded Infrastructure:** Failures such as Patterson Bridge, Colony Park, and Mims Road are evidence that the system is aging and rehabilitation is needed.
- **Preserving Property Values:** AED receives approximately 3,300 stormwater request calls per year. Most of the callers request additional routine maintenance.
- **Maintaining Water Quality/ Ecology:** Supporting recreation such as fishing and swimming is important to the community and also tied to regulatory compliance.

AED has developed a plan to address these challenges. The plan is moderate, not extravagant, and strikes a proper balance between minimizing stormwater damage and the stormwater program cost. The future stormwater priorities include:

- **Manage Augusta's Stormwater Assets in a Sustainable Manner.** Collect and maintain the information needed to maximize the life cycle cost of stormwater infrastructure and avoid failure.
- **Protect Health, Safety, and Well Being of the Community.** Reduce the risk of flooding events that impact residents and businesses through infrastructure maintenance, addressing pipe capacity issues, and other mitigation strategies. Implement projects on the following page.
- **Support Realization of the Garden City.** Address customer concerns in a reasonable timeframe or avoid the need to call by maintaining a routine schedule for street sweeping, right-of-way maintenance, and fixing damaged trap lids.

A Stormwater Utility is a fair and equitable funding source. The proposed stormwater fee is based on the amount of impervious surface on each developed parcel. Impervious area generates runoff that is collected by the pipes and ditches that AED maintains. The greater the impervious area (or stormwater burden); the higher the assessed fee. The rates are described in terms of an ERU, or equivalent residential unit, which in Augusta equates to 2,200 square feet of impervious area. Rates will be assessed monthly on the water and sewer bill.

- Single Family Residential (SFR) properties will be grouped into 2 tiers based on impervious area. Most homes will fall in the lowest tier (1 ERU) but large homes with significant impervious area will be in a higher tier (2 ERU).
- Non-Single Family Residential (NSFR) properties will pay based on their measured impervious area relative to the ERU, rounded to the nearest ERU. For example, a property with 8,800 square feet of impervious area would pay a fee 4 times the amount of the average homeowner (4 ERU).
- Credits will be available for NSFR properties that voluntarily reduce their burden on the stormwater system, for example through maintenance of an onsite detention pond.
- All properties with more than 400 square feet of impervious area are considered developed and subject to the fee.
- The proposed fee is \$6.40 per month per ERU. This fee has been determined sufficient to address the growing, real, and unresolved problems over time – including the projects identified on the following page.

Planned Project Legend

1. Downtown Street and Drainage Improvements
2. East Augusta Roadway and Drainage Improvements (8 phases)
3. Hyde Park Street and Drainage Improvements and Wilkerson Gardens
4. Old Savannah Road and Street and Drainage Improvements
5. Forest Hill Drainage Improvements and Flood Reduction
6. Heirs Pond, Lake Aumond Dredging and Restoration
7. Walton Farms Subdivision Drainage
8. Rocky Creek Flood Hazard Mitigation
9. Milledgeville Road Widening (North Leg to Barton Chapel Road)
10. Dover-Lyman Street and Drainage Improvements
11. Dennis Road Widening and Drainage Improvements
12. National Hill Area Streets and Drainage Improvements
13. Old Waynesboro and Goshen Drainage

