



# The City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Office of the Public Works Department

STREET MAINTENANCE  
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING  
REFUSE/ RECYCLING  
RESOURCE RECOVERY  
CENTRAL STORES

## Memorandum

**To:** Honorable Members of City Council  
**From:** Jim Baker, Director of Public Works  
**CC:** Kurt Hodgen, City Manager; Anne Lewis, Assistant City Manager  
**Date:** February 9, 2015  
**Re:** **Stormwater Utility Program**

On October 11, 2014, a proposed Stormwater Utility Ordinance and Fee was presented to City Council. Since that time, staff and Stormwater Advisory Committee (SWAC) members have met with 15 community organizations, hosted two open house meetings, and received public comments regarding the proposed Stormwater Utility Program. On February 4, 2015, the SWAC voted in favor of the Stormwater Utility Ordinance and associated documents.

The Stormwater Utility Ordinance establishes a stormwater utility fee that is imposed on every parcel of real property in the city based on the amount of impervious area within the property, establishes a billing unit of five hundred (500) square feet of impervious area, and establishes a billing rate per billing unit of \$10.50 per year. All stormwater utility fees and other income from the fees shall be deposited into the stormwater fund, to be used exclusively to provide services and facilities related to the stormwater management program. The proposed effective date is July 1, 2015.

A system of credits for which property owners will receive a fee waiver for installing, operating, and maintaining approved stormwater best management practices is described in the “Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Manual for Residential” and “Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Manual for Non-Residential”.

The Projected Stormwater Program Budget is shown below in Table 1.

Table 1. Projected Stormwater Program Budget

|  | <b>FY14-15</b> | <b>FY15-16</b>  | <b>FY16-17</b>  | <b>FY17-18</b>  |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Projected Stormwater Utility Expenditures</b> | \$0            | \$ 1,814,605.00 | \$ 1,965,000.00 | \$ 1,942,000.00 |
| <b>Projected General Fund Expenditures</b>       | \$777,000      | \$ 535,000.00   | \$ 561,000.00   | \$ 585,000.00   |
| <b>Total Stormwater Program Fund</b>             | \$777,000      | \$ 2,349,605    | \$ 2,526,000.00 | \$ 2,527,000.00 |

The proposed program is equitable in that the fee is charged to all property owners based on the amount of impervious area on their property. The SWAC finds that properties with higher amounts of impervious area contribute to greater amounts of stormwater and pollutants to the storm sewer system and local waterways, and should carry a proportionate burden of the cost to manage such activities.

For general interest, Table 2 illustrates the Percent of Total Fee by Property Type.

Table 2. Percent of Total Fee by Property Type

| <b>Property Type</b> | <b>Total Billing Units<sup>1</sup></b> | <b>Percent of Total Fee</b> |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Residential          | 82,972                                 | 36%                         |
| Commercial           | 80,512                                 | 35%                         |
| Industrial           | 56,726                                 | 25%                         |
| Institutional        | 9,111                                  | 4%                          |
| Public               | 436                                    | 0%                          |
| <i>Total</i>         | <i>229,757</i>                         | <i>100%</i>                 |

<sup>1</sup>Billing Unit (BU) = 500 square feet of impervious area

In accordance with Virginia Code § 15.2-2114 the only properties within the city that are exempt from this program are James Madison University properties because they are a public entity that holds a permit to discharge from a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4), city-owned properties, and public roads and street right of way.

Attachments:

- Stormwater Utility – enabling state code
- Stormwater Utility Ordinance
- Stormwater Advisory Committee Bylaws amendment
- Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Manual for Residential
- Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Manual for Non-Residential
- Weeds, etc., on lots (“tall grass and weeds”) Ordinance amendment
- Summary of Public Outreach
- Summary of Public Comments and copies of public comments received