



Stormwater Utility Public Outreach Meetings – Round One

April 2025

The City of Savannah and the consultant team hosted the first round of community meetings in April 2025 to provide a high-level introduction to the stormwater program and stormwater utility funding concept. Each meeting began with a presentation about stormwater management, the City’s responsibilities, and an overview of how a stormwater utility and fee system works, including why a utility is a more equitable approach for funding the stormwater management program than traditional tax dollars. Following the presentation, attendees rotated to four breakout stations:

- *Funding*: In-depth discussion about current and potential future funding strategies, including additional details and Q&A about the proposed stormwater utility.
- *Capital Projects & Operations*: Current and future projects to improve stormwater drainage. City representatives presented maps of current and proposed projects for each area as well as photos and videos to provide more detail about maintenance and operations.
- *Flooding*: Information about the city’s monitoring and tracking tools, with opportunities for residents to identify flooding hotspots in their neighborhood. This station also included an interactive demonstration of how changes in the watershed (i.e. development) impacts drainage.
- *Stormwater 101*: Water quality and what residents can do to help reduce flooding. This station provided detailed information about the city’s MS4 permit responsibilities as well as educational resources the city frequently uses in schools and community events.

In addition to the four stations, City 311 was available to receive work order requests. The City’s SPLOST 8 team was also at each meeting to inform and encourage residents to complete a survey to gather feedback from residents in preparation for a proposed Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) tax referendum, expected to appear on the ballot in November. Each meeting closed with a short recap and “thank you” to the attendees, plus a drawing for a free rain barrel from the City of Savannah.

Stormwater Utility Community Meeting Summary			
District	Date	Location	Number of Attendees
1	Monday, 4/28/25	Coastal Georgia Center 305 Fahm Street	23
2	Wednesday, 4/23/25	Delaware Community Center 1815 Lincoln Street	7
3	Monday, 4/21/25	Pennsylvania Avenue Resource Center 425 Pennsylvania Avenue	16
4	Wednesday, 4/30/25	Jenkins High School 1800 E. DeRenne Avenue	11
5	Thursday, 4/24/25	Liberty City Community Center 1401 Mills B Lane Blvd	16
6	Tuesday, 4/22/25	Windsor Forest Community Center 308 Briarcliff Circle	16

All meeting attendees were asked to share their feedback through a comment card, which could be completed on paper during the meeting or online via a QR code. Thirty-six responses were received. Respondents were asked to respond to the following statements:

- *The City's stormwater management plan should be a high priority for repairs, maintenance, and operations to improve drainage throughout the City of Savannah.*
 - All respondents (100%) agree (92%) or somewhat agree (8%) with this statement.
- *After tonight's meeting, I have a better understanding of a stormwater utility.*
 - Ninety-five percent (95%) of respondents agree (78%) or somewhat agree (17%) with this statement.
- *A stormwater utility is a fair and equitable approach for generating revenue to fund stormwater management.*
 - Seventy-five percent (75%) of respondents agree (39%) or somewhat agree (36%) with this statement.

General Feedback

Most attendees understood the relationship between impervious surface and the fee amount. Learning more about the anticipated fee amount for residential properties, along with the use of tiers for residential parcels and the opportunity to earn credits, was helpful. People responded positively that residents will pay much less than large commercial or industrial properties and that all developed properties, regardless of tax status, would pay the stormwater fee. The attendees also understand that the final decision regarding implementation of a stormwater fee would be through a City Council action via ordinance adoption at a future meeting.

Frequently Asked Questions

- *How will the impervious area on each lot be calculated?*
 - The use of aerial imagery and AI produces a very accurate footprint of impervious areas, even with Savannah's dense tree canopy.
- *How will the Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) amount be calculated?*
 - The average stormwater fee for a residential property in Georgia is around \$5/month. The proposed rates will be shared at future meetings this fall. Funding recommendations will be provided to City Council, who will make the final decision on whether the utility move forward and the billing rate.
- *What improvements will I see?*
 - Through the implementation of a stormwater utility, the City will have a more consistent and predictable revenue stream to provide a higher level of service (more maintenance, pipe replacements, etc.). Improvements in the stormwater management program can also lead to an improved Community Rating System (CRS), which would lower flood insurance rates for property owners.
- *Will this money be used to replace undersized pipes?*
 - Funds will be used for operations, maintenance, and capital projects. Larger capital projects will continue to be funded through SPLOST, but the stormwater utility will provide much-needed supplemental funding for additional projects, such as replacements of undersized pipes, as well as maintenance.
- *Will the rate vary in differing areas of the city based on flooding?*
 - No. The rate is tied directly to the amount of stormwater runoff a property contributes to the city's drainage system. Revenue collected through the fee will be dedicated to the stormwater program and can be used anywhere in the city.

Summary prepared by Denise R. Grabowski, AICP, LEED AP, Symbioscity