

STORMWATER UTILITY UPDATE

Advisory Group Meeting, September 12th, 2023



Tighe & Bond

AGENDA



Today's Objective:

Convene the Advisory Group and obtain feedback on next steps for establishing a Stormwater Utility

- **Advisory Group Goals**
- **Ayer's Stormwater Program**
- **History & Past Efforts**
- **Why a Stormwater Utility?**
- **Local & Regional Comparison**
- **Impervious Area**
- **Work to Date**
- **Next Steps**
- **Discussion**

ADVISORY GROUP GOALS



Meet regularly with the technical team throughout the process of presenting the Stormwater Utility for adoption. Provide input and guidance related to:

- Technical and policy decisions affecting the stormwater utility and rate structure, and
- Outreach to decision makers, stakeholders, and the public.



AYER'S STORMWATER PROGRAM



- **Since 2003, Ayer's Stormwater Management Program has included:**
 - Public Education and Outreach
 - Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination (i.e., water quality testing of the drain to find pollution)
 - Local Oversight of Construction Sites
 - Local Permitting for New Development and Redevelopment to Control Stormwater Runoff
 - Good Housekeeping and Pollution Prevention in Municipal Operations (e.g., system inspection and maintenance, street sweeping, catch basin cleaning)
- **Learn more at our website:**
<https://www.ayer.ma.us/stormwater-department>



My Clean Water Act



AYER'S STORMWATER UTILITY HISTORY



- **2011**

- Town Meeting approves Stormwater Utility Enterprise Fund (Article 31), funding mechanism still needs to be developed

- **2014-2015**

- Stormwater Utility Committee develops funding mechanism, includes public meetings and input from stakeholders
- Proposed funding mechanism presented to Select Board, SB votes to fund stormwater through general fund, Town Meeting subsequently votes to eliminate the Fund

- **Why are we here?**

- 2019: DPW presents stormwater updates to Select Board, Board supports revisiting the stormwater utility
- 2020: Capital funds voted at Town Meeting for consultant support to revisit stormwater utility
- 2021-2022: Stormwater Asset Management Plan developed
- 2023: DPW contracts with Tighe and Bond to reevaluate stormwater utility

WHY A STORMWATER UTILITY?

Sustainable, Long-Term Funding to Meet Program Goals

- **Asset Management Plan**
 - Replacement value of Ayer's drainage system is over \$90 Million
- **Small MS4 General Permit**
 - Expect more stringent requirements in the new Permit, expected for public comment this year

Benefits of a Stormwater Fee

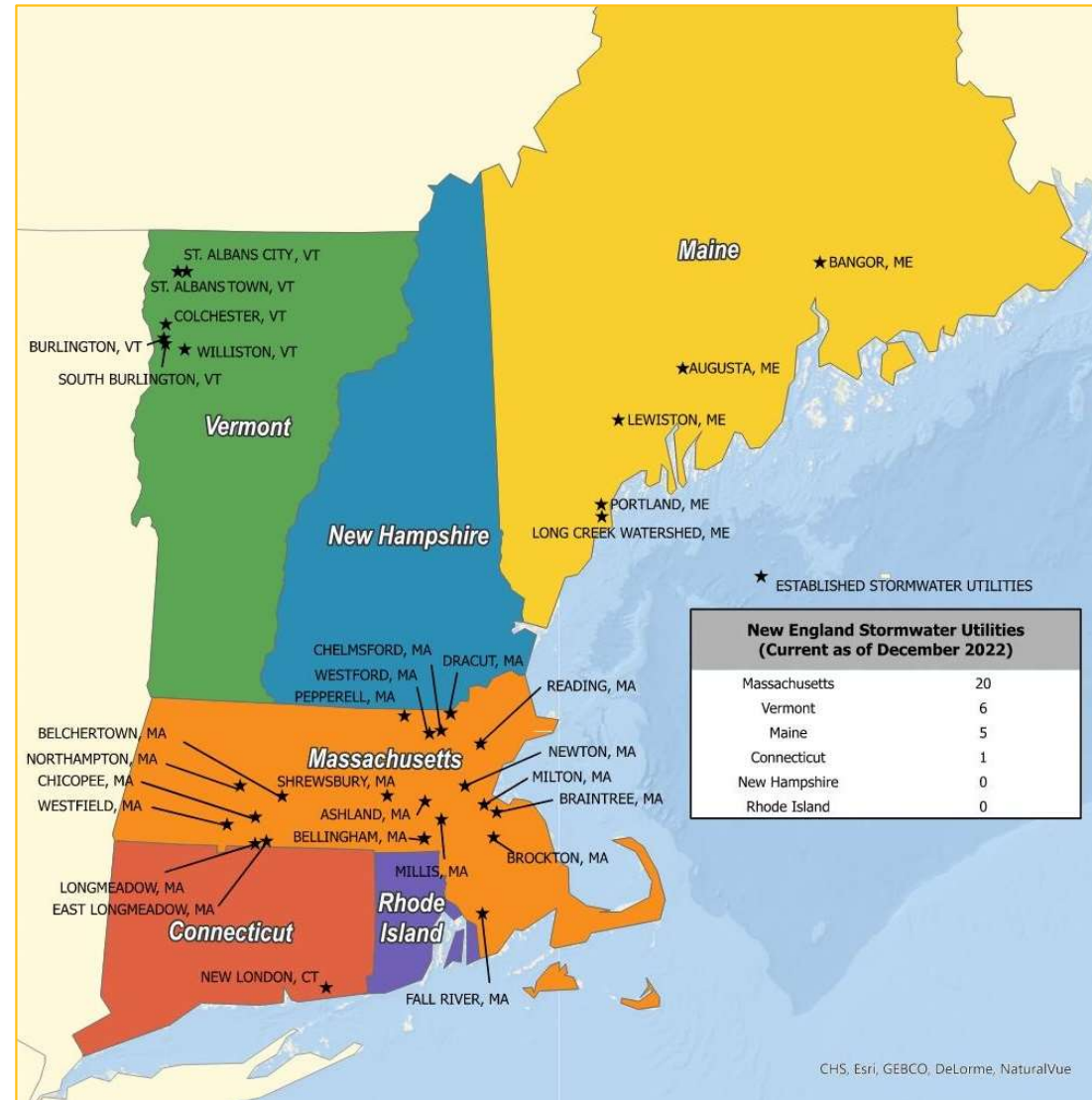
- **Stable:** Dedicated Revenue Source for Financial Sustainability
- **Equitable & Fair:** Based on Stormwater Impact vs. Property Value (Taxes). Includes tax-exempt properties.
- **Flexible:** Utility can pay for all aspects of the program
- **Credit Policy:** Ability to provide a financial incentive for stormwater improvements on private property



REGIONAL STORMWATER UTILITIES



- Not a New Concept: ~2,000 stormwater utilities in the U.S.
- 20+ in MA as of December 2022
- Must be a clear nexus among Program Cost of Service, User Fees, and Customer Benefits
- Impervious area is the most commonly used method to assess stormwater fees in the U.S.

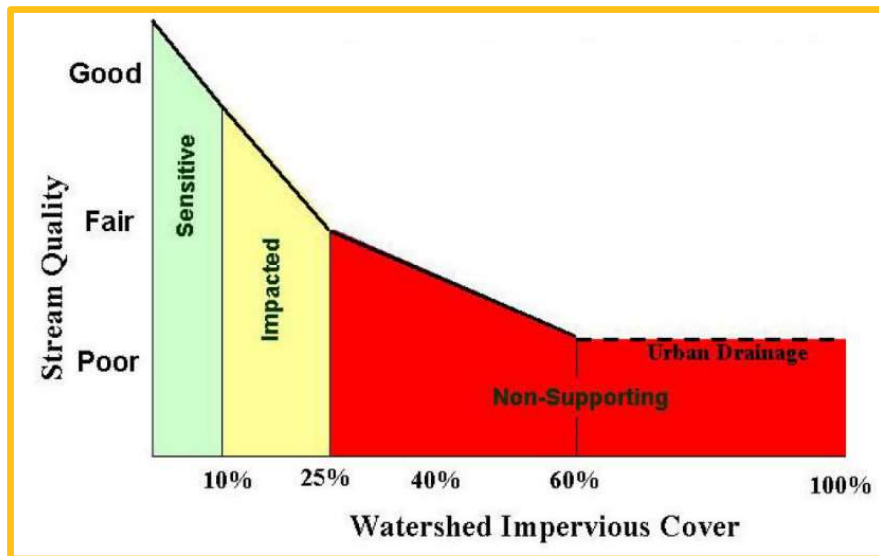


IMPERVIOUS AREA AS BASIS OF FEE

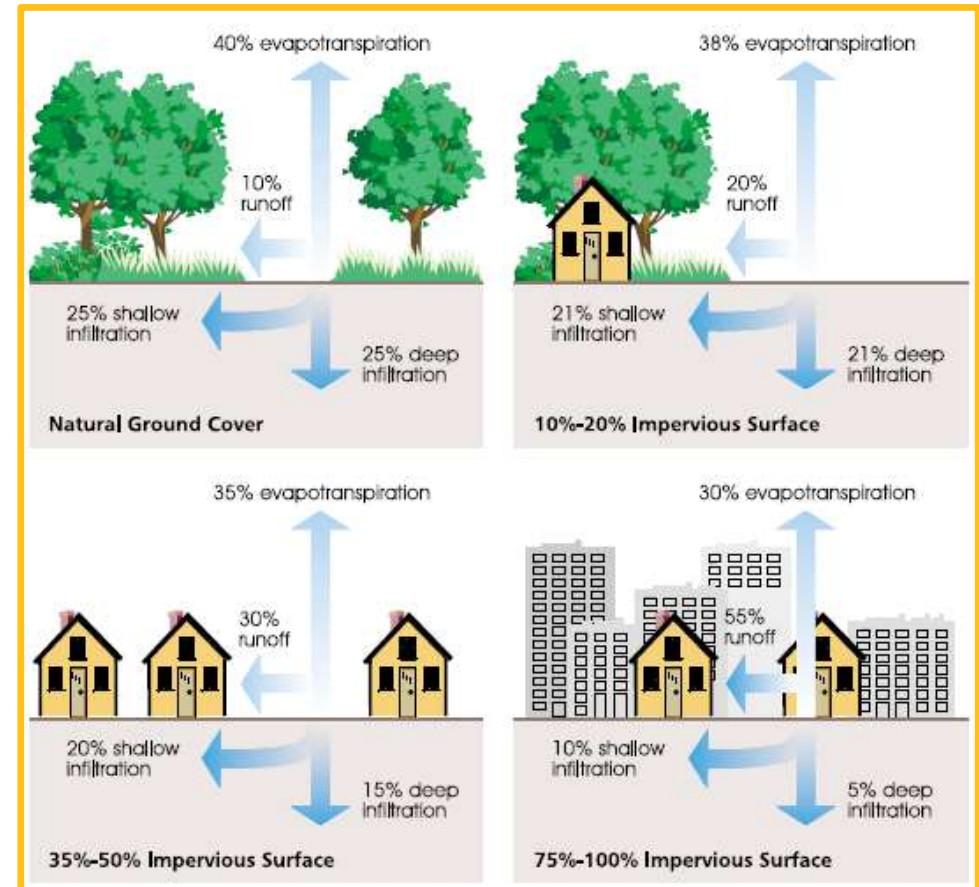


Impervious Surfaces

Impervious surface area is the most commonly used metric across the United States to charge for costs related to stormwater services. The more impervious area on a property, the more stormwater the property generates and the greater the demand for Town stormwater services.



Ayer's Impervious Area is about 17%



Center for Watershed Protection. 2003. [Impacts of Impervious Cover on Aquatic Systems: Watershed Protection Research Monograph](#). Center for Watershed Protection, Ellicott City, MD. Pages 1-158

WORK TO DATE IN AYER



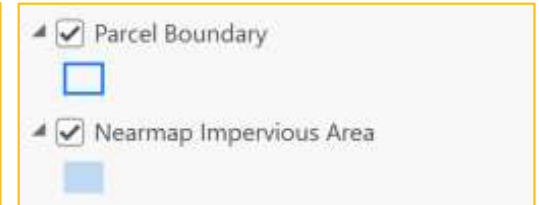
Example Properties: Single Family Residential (SFR)

- 1 ERU in Ayer is equivalent to 3,200 sq. ft of Impervious Area

Property: 2 Pheasant Circle

IA: 3,195 Square Feet

ERU = 1



WORK TO DATE IN AYER

Example Properties: Non-SFR



Property: 7 Faulkner Street – St. Andrews's Church
IA: 20,316 Square Feet
ERU = 7



Property: 1 Longview Circle – The Willows Condos
IA: 294,953 Square Feet
ERU = 93



EXAMPLE LOCAL STORMWATER FEE STRUCTURES



	<u>Newton</u>	<u>Bellingham</u>	<u>Milton</u>	<u>Westford</u>
<u>Date Adopted</u>	2006	2020	2016	2019
<u>ERU (Equivalent Residential Unit)</u>	N/A	3,025 ft ² IA	N/A	3,500 ft ² IA
<u>SFR Fee</u>	\$100/year Flat Fee	\$96/year Flat Fee for SFR & Condos.	\$40-\$520/year 4 Tiers	\$37.50-\$150/year 5 Tiers
<u>Other Residential</u>	\$100/year Flat fee for 2-4 Unit Res	\$192/year Flat fee 2-3 family	\$2.32 per 100 ft ² IA	\$75/ERU
<u>Large Res, Commercial, Industrial, Tax Exempt</u>	\$0.047 per ft ² IA Minimum \$150/year	\$96/ERU	\$2.32 per 100 ft ² IA	\$75/ERU

NEXT STEPS & TIMELINE PRESENTED TO THE SELECT BOARD



- ✓ **Convene an Advisory Group**
 - **Refine Budget Projections**
 - **Present Rate Structure Alternatives for Discussion**
 - **Town Counsel Guidance**
 - Bylaws, Regulations & Town Warrant
 - **Outreach Plan & Schedule**
 - Develop & distribute educational materials
 - Stakeholder Workshop
 - Additional Meetings with the Select Board
 - **Adoption: Annual Town Meeting Spring 2024**
 - **Develop Credit Policy & Abatements**

Questions & Discussion

- What are some benefits of adopting a stormwater utility from your perspective and that will resonate with residents and businesses? Gauge the community's reaction and willingness to revitalize a SW Utility
- What are your biggest concerns? Where do you see pitfalls along the way to adopting a stormwater enterprise fund and fee? Create a list of potential barriers and hurdles in establishing the Utility
- Share your thoughts on public outreach and communication messaging and frequency. Consider both the general public and local decisionmakers along the way to a Town Meeting vote. Identify potential opponents and allies and reasons for their position.

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HOMework



• Historic and Projected Stormwater Expenditures

Historic and Projected Stormwater Expenditures
Ayer, MA
Stormwater Funding Analysis

Stormwater Activity		Historic Expenditures					Projected Expenditures					Historic Expenditures	Projected Expenditures
Year		FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	Annual Average FY19-FY23	Annual Average FY24-FY28
Capital Budget													
Construction Projects													
	Stormwater Capital Projects	\$ 168,766	\$ 107,092	\$ 49,677	\$ 12,000	\$ 207,904	\$ 510,000	\$ 1,880,000	\$ 1,580,000	\$ 1,880,000	\$ 1,530,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 1,476,000
Engineering / Master Planning													
	CMRSWC services related to Stormwater collaborative			\$ 10,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 5,000
	MS4 Permit - Consulting Services	\$ -	\$ 16,816	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 20,000
	Stormwater Asset Management Plan	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,750	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 13,000
	Mobile 311 (Asset Management / Work-Order System)	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 5,000
Highway Vehicle Purchases													
	3500 Dump Truck	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 275,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,000
	3500 Dump Truck	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Sidewalk Tractor	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	BACKHOE Loader	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 225,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 45,000
	MT-7 Sidewalk Tractor	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	SMITH AIR COMP	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	RD 12A-90 ROLLER	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	938M Front Loader	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 230,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 46,000	\$ -
	Street Sweeper	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Staffing (% Time on Stormwater)													
	Conservation Agent (15%)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 12,000	\$ -	\$ 12,000
	Civil Engineer (25%)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 16,000
	Town Engineer (15%)	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 16,000
	Director of Public Works (5%)	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,000
	Highway Operations (20%)	\$ 63,000	\$ 65,000	\$ 68,000	\$ 66,000	\$ 66,000	\$ 69,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 72,000	\$ 73,000	\$ 74,000	\$ 66,000	\$ 72,000
Subtotal - Capital Budget		\$ 255,000	\$ 212,000	\$ 421,000	\$ 107,000	\$ 315,000	\$ 655,000	\$ 2,303,000	\$ 1,732,000	\$ 2,259,000	\$ 1,737,000	\$ 268,000	\$ 1,743,000
Operating Budget													
Drain Repairs by Highway Division/Private Contractor*		\$ 9,980	\$ 9,995	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 17,325	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 20,000
Catch Basin Cleaning by Private Contractor		\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 17,325	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 18,000
CCTV Clean & Inspection Drainage Pipes by Private Contractor		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000		
Stormwater Detention Basin Maintenance by Private Contractor		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,800	\$ -	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000		
Subtotal - Operating Budget		\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 41,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 64,000	\$ 74,000	\$ 89,000	\$ 94,000	\$ 94,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 38,000
Total Expenditures		\$ 285,000	\$ 242,000	\$ 456,000	\$ 148,000	\$ 355,000	\$ 719,000	\$ 2,377,000	\$ 1,821,000	\$ 2,353,000	\$ 1,831,000	\$ 298,000	\$ 1,781,000

*Historic expenditures are estimated.

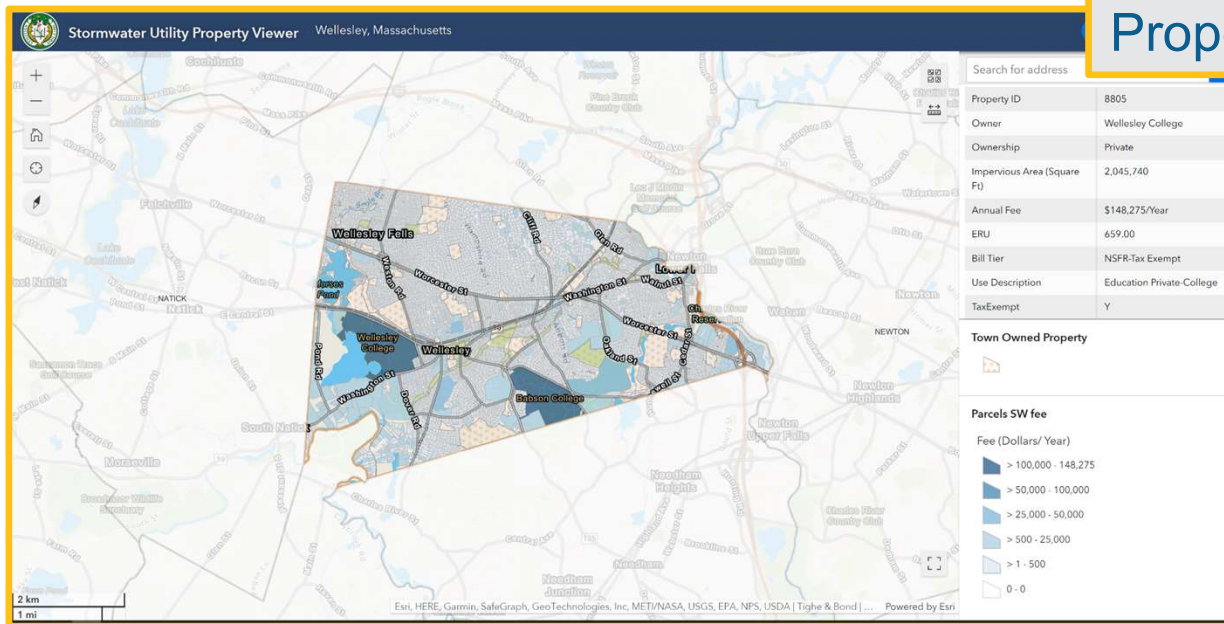
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



- **More MA Communities**

- [Lexington Stormwater Utility Enterprise Fund \(Proposed\)](#)
- [Wellesley Utility Enterprise Fund](#)
- [Chelmsford Stormwater Utility Program](#)

Wellesley Stormwater Utility Property Viewer GIS Webpage



Other Resources

- [MassDEP Summary of MA Stormwater Utilities](#)
- [The Impervious Problem – Video](#)
- [Western Kentucky University Stormwater Utility Survey 2022](#)
- [Think Blue Massachusetts](#)

WORK TO DATE IN AYER



- **Revenue Projections**

- Current Budget (5-year average) = \$355,000/yr
- Next Five Years: significant increase in Capital and Operating
 - Additional Work Needed to “Right Size” the program and revenue needs based on program goals

Historic and Projected Stormwater Expenditures
(Draft for Discussion)

