

Stormwater Program Study Results

WHAT DID THE RESOURCE & FUNDING STUDY DO?

- The study was commissioned by Borough Council to better understand the existing and future needs of the Borough regarding stormwater management. The Borough, much like many communities in the state, struggles to not only meet permit obligations, but to also maintain and operate an efficient and effective stormwater program. This includes taking care of the Borough's stormwater collection system, which is old, and beginning to show signs of failure. It also includes developing a strategy to meet ongoing permit obligations, as an MS4 (**Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System**) permitted community.
- The Borough wanted to focus on the current extent and shortcomings of their program, while discussing ways in which to improve it. As such, they engaged a consultant to help guide a stormwater advisory committee, consisting of non-council residents, business owners and local leaders. This group has been meeting almost monthly for the last year and discussing and providing "outside" views related to what they think the program should or shouldn't include. From this, the Borough has a much-improved understanding of what the costs will be to operate an effective proper stormwater management program.
- The study portion has concluded, and the recommendations have been presented to members of Council, who are now considering ways to improve how the stormwater program is managed and administered, including most notably, how it is funded.
- One option being considered currently is to establish a separate Stormwater Authority, which would provide a single, transparent entity to administer all matters related to the stormwater program. Like sewer and water authorities, it would collect revenue as a utility, have a standalone (separate) budget and would be run by appointed community members (as board members). Discussions and efforts to evaluate this option are ongoing, with various public hearings and meetings to be held in the future.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

- While the overall condition of existing stormwater infrastructure is unknown, the collection system has approximately 4 miles of metal pipe that is 30+ years old. The study identified additional maintenance needs such as camera (CCTV) inspection, and cleaning of storm sewers.
- The storm sewer system has approximately 1,600 (Borough owned) inlets, with a need to inspect, repair and/or replace aging infrastructure.
- There are ongoing and increasing Borough costs associated with operating an efficient and effective stormwater management program.
- Current funding of stormwater program needs comes from "general" tax revenue, largely using "reserve" funds. The study concluded that this approach is not sustainable and does not provide for an equitable distribution of costs (by tax payers).
- A stormwater utility fee is an option many communities are turning to, to generate revenue much like the sewer and water programs do. A utility fee uses impervious coverage as a basis for fee assessments.
- On-going mandates by PA DEP and the EPA will become stricter and more focused on demonstration of actual water quality improvements. The Borough must be proactive to avoid large penalties for non-compliance.

Common Questions/Answers

What is the Borough of Hanover doing to comply with PA DEP and EPA mandates to reduce pollutants?

- The Borough is engaged as part of York County's overall Chesapeake Bay Pollutant Reduction Plan (CBPRP) to reduce pollutants. This plan is a collective effort by approximately 50 municipalities to cost share in the on-going planning obligations. The plan can be read here:

http://ycpc.org/images/pdfs/Reports_and_Documents/York%20County%20Regional%20CBPRP%202018-2023.pdf

Isn't this fee just another tax?

- No. The fee being assessed is a utility fee, is permitted by state law and is much like a water or sewer utility fee. Some properties are exempt from taxes, yet all developed properties contribute stormwater runoff and should pay their respective portion. Furthermore, **the revenue from a utility fee can only be used for stormwater management related expenses.**

Is the Borough considering charging me for rain?

- No. As the Borough considers options to fund their stormwater program, residents and business are not going to be charged for rain. The Borough is however considering assessing a stormwater utility fee, which may be tied to the amount of impervious coverage on your property. The stormwater utility fee would generate funding for the stormwater management program to help reduce pollution from stormwater runoff that reaches our local waterways, maintain the current stormwater drainage system and address localized flooding concerns.

Why is dedicated stormwater funding needed?

- Use of "reserve" funding, from general tax revenue, is intended only for unforeseen needs. Stormwater costs are predictable and ongoing, requiring a consistent and transparent funding source.
- Funds are needed to properly assess community drainage, flooding, and stormwater problems.
- The Borough has obligations to maintain and/or replace existing aging infrastructure.
- Funds are needed to meet mandates placed on the Borough, through EPA and PA DEP administered permit programs.
- Comply with the perpetual permitting obligations, such as the EPA NPDES MS4 Permit and other stormwater requirements.

Why not just include the stormwater program costs in property taxes?

- Funding stormwater, using tax revenue, does not provide an equitable correlation between assessed values and the levels of service provided by the stormwater program (i.e., your property value isn't related to stormwater runoff).

How do I affect stormwater runoff?

- If you have a roof, driveway, parking lot, sidewalk or other impervious surface on your property you impact the amount and quality of stormwater that runs off the property. Also, household tasks such as car washing and use of fertilizer can impact stormwater quality. Everyone contributes and everyone should therefore play a proportional role in supporting its maintenance and upkeep.

More education & information will be provided in the future. Please contact the Borough of Hanover if you have questions.

Hasn't the Borough always had a stormwater system? Nothing has changed on my property so why will I be charged now when I haven't been in the past?

- Yes, the Borough always had a stormwater system. However, new and forthcoming federal regulations, as well as an aging infrastructure, require a comprehensive stormwater quality and management program. A stormwater utility fee enables the Borough to meet its responsibilities to manage the stormwater system more closely, identify illegal discharges, and provide public education and other regulatory requirements. It will also allow for increased inspection and maintenance of existing infrastructure with the ability to rehabilitate/replace infrastructure that's reached the end of its intended design life.

