CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

Does It Make Sense Study
"DIMS"

February 2011

FINAL REPORT

AMEC Earth & Environmental, Inc.
offices nationwide

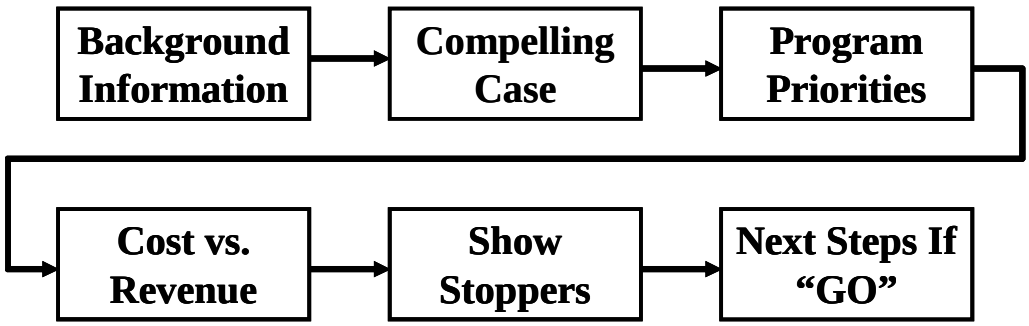
Overview

AMEC Earth & Environmental, Inc. (AMEC) representatives met with the City of Portland, Maine (City) staff to investigate the basic advisability of using a stormwater user fee mechanism to fund a program to enhance the local stormwater program to meet local program needs. Meetings were conducted via phone conferences and onsite in City Hall. A *Does It Make Sense* (DIMS) workshop was held on October 30, 2008, to familiarize City staff and regional stakeholders with the needs of a successful stormwater management program and potential funding options.

After the introductory portion of the workshop was complete, the local and regional stakeholders left the meeting, and the key City staff participated in a session to discuss the logistics and strategies of implementing a stormwater utility. Our goal was to come to essential agreement on the answer to the questions:

1. ***What are the key stormwater related problems, needs and issues that Portland faces?***
2. ***Does it make sense to initiate a user fee system to fund the stormwater program?***

The structure of the extended meeting followed the roadmap depicted below.



The remainder of the report follows this roadmap.

The invited full day meeting attendees included:

David Kane, PWD Treasurer
David Ladd, MeDEP MS4 Program Coordinator
John Anton, At-Large City Councilor
David Marshall, District 2 City Councilor
Joe Gray, City Manager
Pat Finnegan, Assistant City Manager
Mike Murray, Island/Neighborhood Administrator
Bob Leeman, Public Buildings Director
Ellen Sanborn, Director of Finance
Mary Costigan, Associate Corporation Counsel

Nicole Clegg, City Communications Director
Nelle Hanig, Business Development Representative
Penny Littell, Director of Planning & Development
Rick Blackburn, Assessor
Mike Bobinsky, Director of Public Services
Kathi Earley, DPS, Engineering Services Manager
Doug Roncarati, DPS, Associate Engineer
John Emerson, DPS, Wastewater Systems Coordinator
Betsy Beety, DPS, Principal Financial Officer
Andy Reese – AMEC
Charlene Johnston – AMEC

Background

What is stormwater?

Stormwater, also known as runoff or drainage, occurs when precipitation from rainfall or snow-melt flows over ground surfaces. Development creates impervious surfaces like roadways, sidewalks, parking lots, and building roof tops that impede the natural percolation of water into the ground. That runoff must go somewhere, so the City of Portland established a system of structures and pipes to collect and transport the runoff.

How is local stormwater management funded?

Municipalities and their subsidiary organizations employ a variety of "funding" methods, including service charges, several types of taxes, franchises and other fees, fines, and penalties. It is important to understand the three main ways of providing support to stormwater programs: resources, money and revenue:

- Resources include all the non-cash ways that a local stormwater program can be supported including: free resources available from the internet, shared costs with neighbors, transformation of current programs to better support stormwater needs, volunteer programs, etc. Resources are ***not*** free in that they often require significant staff time to find, coordinate, and manage.
- Money includes all one-time infusions of funds. This includes Federal and state grants, loans, penalties, bonds, special sales taxes, one-time development related fees and payments, penalties, etc. Money is often targeted to a specific need or program activity. It may, or may not, be sufficient to cover that program but its key characteristic is that it is ***one-time***.
- Revenue includes all ongoing flows of funds. For local governments this includes property and other ad valorem taxes, sales or gasoline taxes, franchise fees, user fees, etc. The key characteristic of this type of support is that it is ***ongoing***.

Each of these basic types of support has advantages and disadvantages and can be targeted toward different aspects of the stormwater program. The Stormwater Management Functions Table later in this report depicts the key elements of a typical stormwater program. As these elements are considered it is clear that the bulk of the cost of stormwater programs must be borne by revenue producing support sources not "resources" or "money". Since stormwater cannot compete effectively for general fund tax dollars, most local governments find that only legally dedicated revenue will last the test of time and competing priorities.

The various funding methods also have distinctive characteristics which separate them legally, technically, and in terms of public perceptions. Four major categories of municipal revenue generation methods are taxes, service charges, exactions, and assessments.

- Taxes are intended primarily as revenue generators, and with some exceptions (such as special local option sales or earmarked taxes), without any particular association with the activities or improvements that they fund. They can be used for the general purposes of local government. These include property tax, income tax, sales tax, etc.

- Service charges are not established simply to generate revenue, but must be tied to the objectives of a specific program to which they are associated. For example, water and sewer service charges are structured to cover the cost of those programs, not to simply generate revenue which is used for other purposes as well. Thus the total revenue generated must be tied to the cost of providing services and facilities and the amount each rate payer is charged must be related to the impact or "use" of the system (rational nexus).

- Exactions are related to the extension of an approval or privilege to use. Franchise fees for the privilege of using the right-of-way for cable and phone companies limited to a certain percentage of revenue by Federal or state laws are an exaction. Licenses, tap fees, impact fees, fees in lieu of detention, capital recovery charges of all kinds and the mandatory dedication of infrastructure during development are also exactions.

- Assessments are geographically or otherwise limited fees levied for improvements or activities of direct and special benefit to those who are being charged. The benefit must be direct – tied to a specific and measurable or estimable property improvement. And it must be special - a benefit which is not realized generally in the community or area.

A major source of funding for stormwater management is in the form of a user fee system under the auspices of a stormwater utility. This form of funding has several advantages over other competing forms of finance including its equitability, stability and adequacy. The user fee concept of a stormwater utility based funding method is fast growing. In the early 1970's there were only one or two true stormwater utilities in existence. By 2008 the number had grown to over 1,200. This number is expected to more than triple in the next decade as the financial impacts of stormwater quality legislation reach the many small municipalities.

A stormwater utility falls primarily under the second of these funding categories: a service charge. It is based on the premise that the urban drainage system is a public system, similar to a wastewater or water supply system. When a demand is placed on either of these two later systems the user pays. In the same way when a forested or grassy area is paved a greater flow of water is placed on the drainage system. This is the demand. The greater the demand (i.e. the more the parcel of land is paved), the greater the user fee should be.

The distinctions of the four revenue categories are very important. One of the critical issues which typically must be resolved if a utility service charge of any type is legally challenged is whether the service charge is clearly related to and incidental to the activities and improvements of the utility, or is in fact merely a means of creating revenue for all governmental purposes generally (a tax), or is a special assessment (which is supposed to reflect a direct and special benefit). Thus a stormwater utility must be based on a stormwater program and not simply a perceived financial need or willingness to pay.

A stormwater utility is seen as an umbrella under which individual communities address their own specific needs in a manner consistent with local problems, priorities and practices. It is understood in three ways: a means of generating revenue, a program concept, and potentially an organizational entity. A storm water utility may provide a vehicle for:

- consolidating or coordinating responsibilities that were previously dispersed among several departments and divisions

- generating funding that is adequate, stable, equitable and dedicated solely to the storm water function
- developing programs that are comprehensive, cohesive and consistent year-to-year

A stormwater utility is equitable because the cost is borne by the user on the basis of demand placed on the drainage system. It is stable because it is not as dependent on the vagaries of the annual budgetary process as are taxes. It is adequate because a typical storm water program can be financed with payments normally below the normal customer willingness to pay.

How do stormwater fees work?

The basic rate methodology defines the basis for the rate that users will be paying. The three main impacts on surface water of urban development are increases in peak flow, volume of discharge, and amount of pollution. All impacts can fit into these three basic categories. The variable most positively associated with each of these three major impacts is the conversion of pervious areas (forests and fields) to impervious areas (pavement, roof tops, and other hard surfaces).

Accommodating the runoff that occurs when pervious area that typically absorbs rainwater, is converted to impervious area requires Portland to invest in the public drainage system. Therefore, it is appropriate to use some measurement of impervious area or surrogate of impervious area in the rate methodologies. Most stormwater programs in the United States have taken this approach and a 2007 survey found that 74 percent of all stormwater programs responding used impervious area as a factor for rate calculation[1]. While impervious area does not directly account for all of the stormwater program costs, urbanization of land as reflected in intensity of development is, by far, the best measure of cost causation and provides a court-tested rational nexus for the fee amount on any property.

Impervious area is typically billed in units of an equivalent residential unit (ERU). We determine what a typical (median) residential property's impervious area is and bill all properties in numbers of ERUs. There is then a monthly (or quarterly) charge per ERU. Residences tend to be billed on a flat rate or several tiers.

The figure shows an example of the impervious coverage on a non-residential fast-food parcel in Portland. Impervious area includes such things as roof tops, sidewalks, parking areas, patios, tennis courts and gravel traveled ways – any man made surface that water cannot penetrate effectively and thus, must run off.

Example of Non-Residential Parcel Impervious Area.

There are, however, additional ways to configure the rate methodology to

[1] "Stormwater Utility Survey", Black and Veatch, Kansas City, 2007.

emphasize certain other impacts or recognize the benefits of certain kinds of development practices. Many of these considerations are handled with a stormwater crediting or secondary funding system, but some factors can also be handled in the makeup of the basic rate methodology itself. Two factors commonly considered are:

- Some communities charge for gross parcel area in addition to impervious area, reasoning that stormwater runs off all parcels and thus, all should pay.
- Some communities want to encourage green space and set up charges based on an intensity of development factor – so that the same amount of imperviousness would be charged less if it were located on a larger lot with more green space.

These latter two approaches are almost opposites of each other in how they treat open space. The 2007 Black & Veatch survey, which found that a majority (65%) of stormwater programs base charges on impervious area only, found that of the remaining stormwater programs:

- 9% charge based on gross area plus impervious area.
- 12% recognize the benefits of green space through an intensity of development factor.
- 14% use another basis for fees.

Compelling Case

What local government "sells" is service—services that local citizens feel they need. In most communities there are compelling reasons to improve stormwater programs (i.e. localized flooding issues, water quality violations, large backlog of capital needs). Improving stormwater services costs money, so the compelling reasons for each community to enhance services need to be determined and clearly communicated to convince stakeholders and citizens to spend more on the stormwater program.

Unlike other public works problems, such as wastewater or solid waste management, stormwater issues are rarely visible to the majority of the community. So it is incumbent on the organizations that manage stormwater to make these problems, issues, and opportunities known in an effective way. Experience has shown that in many cases, when the public is educated effectively, most citizens will acquiesce in allowing the organization to solve the problems, address the issues, and take advantage of the opportunities.

At the workshop, there was recognition of the reality that there are many "publics" in the community, and the messages will need to be tailor made to various groups and even to particular individuals. Key public sectors include: the Board, local political leaders, flooded individuals, business leaders, non-profits, schools, small business, environmental advocates, and the development community.

In discussions with the staff, a series of key problems, needs, and issues emerged that are either facing the City today or will face them in the near future. The group developed a top list of issues and messages that resonated with them. These messages were then voted on by the group; each participant was given 7 votes to select what they thought would be important to citizens and other stakeholders in the community. The outcome is summarized below in order of ranking done by the multi-voting (the number of votes cast for each compelling issue is in parenthesis).

1. Protect Water Quality and the Environment (24 votes) – There was an expressed desire to protect the valuable water resources on which the City relies. Many expressed that the physical setting and the desire to protect its natural beauty were primary reasons to institute a user fee, and the green design and a proactive stance were key to success.
2. Steward the System (22 votes) – There was a desire to catch up with long neglected maintenance and to provide adequate stewardship of the miles of channels, stream, pipes and thousands of appurtenant structures. There was a sense that the City was falling behind due to lack of proper investment in maintenance and that waiting would only increase costs.
3. Educate Citizens and Leaders (20 votes) – While many citizens and political leaders are generally aware of the key role clean water plays, there was a perceived need to provide much stronger education of citizens and to target the political leadership to bring them up to speed on the clean water issues and the need for a stable, adequate and equitable way to fund it.
4. Build the System (17 votes) – Paired with number 2 is the need to rebuild the parts of the system that are inadequate or failing and to do so in an environmentally sustainable manner taking full advantage of green designs and advances in understanding.

5. Equity and Efficiency (16 votes) – The group desired to shift costs in such a way that equity and fairness were maximized and that there was an efficient focus on stormwater needs. The idea of a user fee with crediting system to reward sound clean water behavior was compelling.
6. Meet Regulatory Mandates (11 votes) – Unfunded regulatory mandates are a growing concern. There is a desire to both meet the mandates, attempt to interpret them in a manner that best fits the Portland situation, and to do so in an effective and adequately funded manner.
7. Guide New Development (8 votes) – The group expressed a strong desire to do a better job in guiding new development and redevelopment to be less impacting than old development and to provide more field staff to support such efforts and to ferret out the problems caused by existing poor practices.
8. Enhance Economic Development (6 votes) – In recognition of the close ties between the environment and economic development, the group felt that all the 1-7 activities would contribute to enhanced economic development. However, there was also an expressed desire to recognize that activities could be targeted and decisions made which would more directly enhance and protect property values and demonstrate that Portland is an environmentally proactive place to live.

Program Priorities and Messages

Based on the compelling case discussion, the group discussed key program priorities and messages for the stormwater program.

- Priorities are the answer to the question: "the improved stormwater program will seek to accomplish, as a priority, the following things:"
- Messages would need to be developed to "sell" the idea of improving these priority services.

One underlying concern was that not many citizens have an understanding of the problems with the stormwater program and, thus, would need clear and convincing information effectively presented before they would willingly spend money to address them. The key additional priorities identified by the group were:

- Improve and repair our drainage system maintenance, for aesthetics and capacity
- Improve detection and elimination of illicit connection problems
- Develop watershed plans and models, to allow an ability to plan effectively
- Work to instill a sense of ownership/stewardship in the water resources of the community
- Provide opportunities for the development community to more efficiently use their land in new development and redevelopment
- Better coordinate the stormwater and CSO program to provide an efficient interface both programmatically and with the physical system
- Address overboard discharges on the peninsula

The key messages were framed in one or two words – these would provide the "flavor" of any stormwater program improvement campaign. They are:

- Water Quality
- Quality of Life
- Sustainability
- Fairness
- Stewardship
- The Bay
- Meet Mandates

These messages were thought to resonate with the staff, leaders and citizens and frame the foundations for why we are taking steps to improve the surface water program and to provide fair, adequate, and stable funding.

Cost vs. Revenue

Portland drainage systems

The City has a sewer system that predates the belief that storm sewers should be kept separate from sanitary wastewater; therefore, the City has an extensive system of pipes that carries a combination of wastewater and stormwater, commonly referred to as a combined sewer system. The downside of such a system is that stormwater runoff from development may eventually exceed the carrying capacity of the combined sewers, resulting in combined sewer overflows, which can impair water quality. The City is under a Consent Agreement to reduce combined sewer overflows. The City has a significant Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Abatement Program, but approximately 55% of the sewer system is still combined. The rest of the City system conveys stormwater separate from its wastewater; this system is known as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4).

The City is authorized to discharge stormwater from the MS4 to waters of the State under the General Permit for Discharge of Stormwater from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. The City has an updated Stormwater Program Management Plan (dated October 28, 2008), which describes how the City will reduce or eliminate polluted stormwater runoff to the maximum extent practicable from its MS4. The Plan must be substantially implemented by June 30, 2013.

The City has 17 distinct watersheds: eight receiving waters with four freshwater and four saltwater. At the time of the DIMS study there were four impaired urban streams, the Capisic Brook, Fall Brook, Long Creek and Nason's Brook. Although it was not included in the DIMS study or the initial draft report, it should be noted that a fifth "unnamed brook" on the 303d impaired waters list has since been identified as Dole Brook. The City has prioritized the Capisic Brook Watershed within their Stormwater Program Management Plan. A majority of the City's CSO abatement work is within the Capisic Brook Watershed.

Stormwater is not a stand alone service within the City; therefore, it is difficult to attribute how many employee hours are spent specifically on stormwater management issues. Most of the stormwater management is provided by the Public Works Department. The Public Works Department is divided into five service groups. Most of the stormwater services are delivered through two groups—Engineering Services and Operations.

Portland's existing stormwater program

An adequately funded stormwater management program is the foundation of a successfully operated and maintained stormwater system. There is a clear understanding by the staff that the City currently does not have the budget to fund an enhanced stormwater management program. Discussion was held with the City staff to explore current stormwater activities to estimate typical stormwater program expenditures. Obtaining accurate information on all of the city's stormwater activities was challenging, because many of the activities are not accounted for nor tracked in a manner that allows for financial or even functional segregation from other programs or activities. Since City stormwater services are currently performed through many different departments and funded through different budgets, the staff reviewed the *Stormwater Management Program Functions* table on the following page and made educated estimates of resources expended on applicable functions.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FUNCTIONS TABLE

1. Administration & Finance General Administration General Program Development Interlocal Coordination Billing Operations Customer Service Financial Management Capital Outlay Overhead Costs Cost Control Support Services Contracting Services **2. Public Involvement & Education** Public Awareness & Education Public Involvement Citizen's Group Facilitation PI&E Support to Other Programs Specific Technical Training/Certification **3. GIS and Technology Support** Geographic Information Systems Mapping Database Management Data Support Services Graphical Support General Technology Support Internet and Web Support Technology Transfer **4. Engineering & Planning** Design Criteria and Standards Structural and Non-Structural BMPs Field Data Collection Quantity Master Planning Multi-objective Holistic Planning Stream Restoration Habitat Conservation Plans Quality Master Planning Design, Field and Ops Engineering Hazard Mitigation Zoning Support Retrofitting Program Planning Support Green Site Design and Low Impact Approaches	**5. Operations & Maintenance** General Maintenance Management General Routine Maintenance General Remedial Maintenance Emergency Response Maintenance Infrastructure Management Public Assistance Complaints Response Street Maintenance Program Spill Response and Clean Up **6. Capital Construction** Major Capital Improvements Minor Capital Improvements Land, Easement, and Right-of-Way Retrofitting and Redevelopment Construction Management Public-Private Partnerships **7. Development Support Services** Code Development and Enforcement General Permit Administration Plans Review System Inspection & Regulation Zoning and Land Use Support Erosion Control Program Flood Insurance Program **8. Regulatory Compliance & Enforcement** Flood Insurance Program Multi-Objective Floodplain Management Monitoring and Sampling Program Stormwater NPDES: - Pest, Herb and Fertilizer - Used Oil & Toxic Materials - Program for Public Ed & Involvement - Municipal Housekeeping - Industrial Program for Stormwater - Litter and Floatables Programs - Commercial & Residential Program - Erosion Control - Illicit Connection & Illegal Dumping Groundwater Protection Endangered Species Compliance Drinking Water Protection Watershed TMDL Support Septic Program

The majority of the City's current stormwater program is administered by the Public Works Department. The Public Works Department provided reports and data to help identify the biggest costs facing the City's stormwater program. At this time, the biggest known stormwater costs pertain to the following:

- A significant CSO separation program receives most of the attention and funding.

- There has been little capital investment in the deteriorating pipe system. They know there are significant problems but the system has not been fully inventoried and quantified. Problems get magnified when timely maintenance is not performed.
    - Example: 100 feet of collapsed combined sewer repair cost was $50,000
- There are many clogged, trashed and polluted inlets and outlets
    - Understaffed for education & enforcement
- The City knows of 77 larger detention ponds/basins – 12 are city-owned – with few of them maintained.
- There are 231 culverts inventoried. Some culverts are known to be in poor condition but currently repaired only in a crisis mode.
- The City does not have a formal ditch/swale maintenance program.
- Regulatory mandates are growing including requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II stormwater permit and the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program
- The City regularly cleans catch basin sumps but remedial maintenance is falling behind, including:
    - 500 ± Casco traps missing or damaged
    - 100 ± Hydrobrakes need repair or replacement
- The City has an aging and inadequate equipment fleet.

Portland's future stormwater program

Detailed discussions were held concerning the types of improvements needed and estimates of staffing and cost increases. These are ballpark estimates but represent a consensus of the staff present. The *Stormwater Management Program Costs* Table below presents a summary of the major costs. In every category presented, current expenditures fall short of projected future needs.

Stormwater Management Program Costs Table

Function	Estimated Costs	
	Existing	Future
Operations & Maintenance	$ 350,000	$ 750,000
Capital Construction	$ 90,000	$ 1,000,000
Regulatory Compliance	$ 30,000	$ 120,000
Development Support	$ 60,000	$ 120,000
Engineering & Planning	$ 120,000	$ 180,000
Misc. Services	$ 10,000	$ 225,000
TOTALS	**$ 660,000**	**$ 2,395,000**

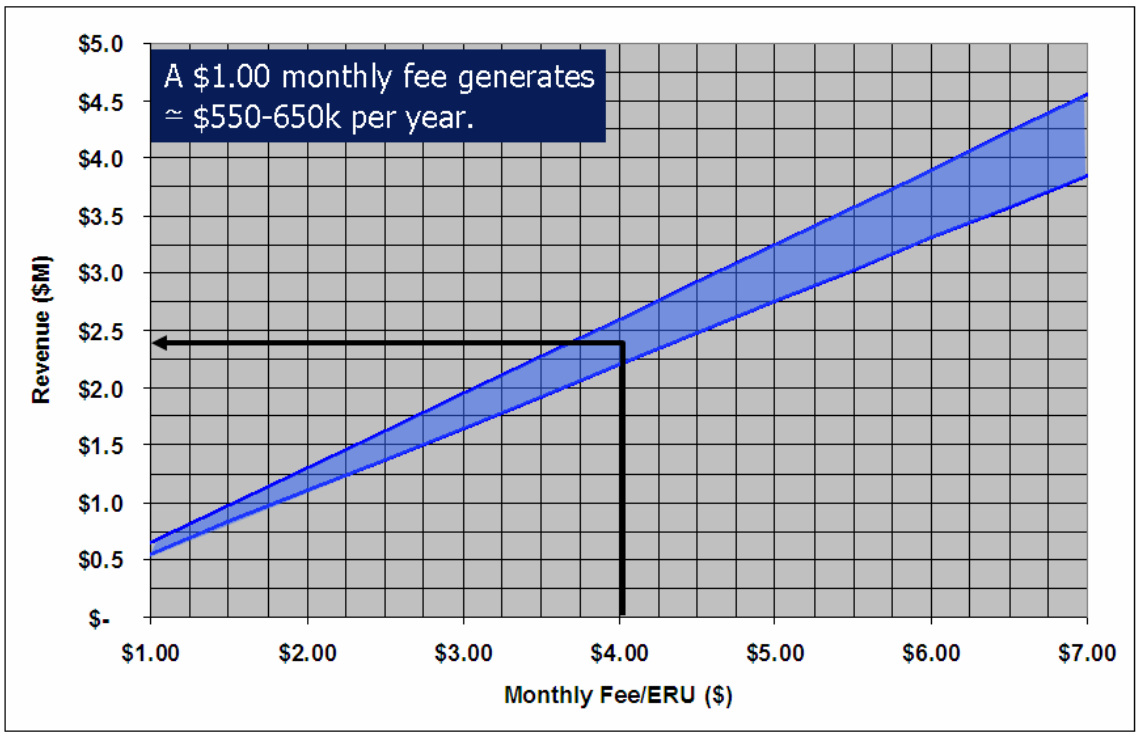
Recognizing the City cannot invest immediately in everything that is needed to operate an enhanced stormwater program, priorities need to be set. In order to determine priorities, there will be a need for master planning, mapping, and modeling in the first year. The $1,000,000 annually for future capital construction will not be sufficient to tackle the entire capital backlog in a timely way, but it could help the City to accelerate construction through bonding and/or to

leverage access to grants. The City has not been able to keep up with routine maintenance and the future operations and maintenance costs projected at $750,000 will provide a moderate ability to address the existing backlog of maintenance items. An important point to note is the advent of a successful stormwater management program raises expectations. People who in the past gave up on complaining about their stormwater problems will resurface when they see the program successes and they will then begin to call again. Other increases reflect staff additions to beef up and enhance current services in each area. The miscellaneous services category includes the future cost estimate of $125,000/year for stormwater user fee billing of approximately 22,000 accounts.

While national comparisons are difficult given the large CSO program, we believe this level of investment will place the City in the upper tier of a "moderate" program level.

Portland's revenue estimates

The following figure provides an estimate of the amount of revenue that could be generated with an impervious-based user fee. These numbers are based on using an Equivalent Residential Units (ERUs) rate structure. The ERU size was estimated at 3,200 square feet. We estimate that for every one dollar per ERU per month the City can generate between $550,000 and $650,000. These numbers are very preliminary. To generate the projected $2,400,000 required annually to fund all projected future stormwater needs, a charge in the range of $4.00 per month would be needed.



Show Stoppers/Hurdles

The group then identified the local issues and entities that, if not handled appropriately and proactively, can become “show stoppers” or “hurdles” that can slow or derail the transition to a more comprehensive stormwater management program with user fee funding. The hurdles were identified by asking the group “who will not like a stormwater user fee and why?” The hurdles identified by the group that will likely need to be cleared are:

- Economic times are getting harder. With recent sewer hike, we could look insensitive and expensive.
- Need to be sensitive to timing of election (November).
- Educate the business community. With proper education the Chamber of Commerce will be supportive. The local business motive is availability to necessary resources (land, labor, economic base).
- Sewer rate is very expensive. People will expect a shift in costs from the sewer rate if they are paying a stormwater user fee.
- Water bill may not be an easy alternative. Intensive negotiations will be necessary with PWD.
- Tax exempt properties: will have to pay a fee so they likely won’t be happy.
- We need better statistics to communicate our story.
- Media issue: Watch out for Lewiston/Auburn and the “rain tax” story line.
- Beware of the regulatory community’s feeling that this is a continued study situation rather than proactive movement, *What have you been doing all this time?*

A lot of discussion revolved around the fact that not enough is known about the extent and condition of the stormwater system. Several members of the group felt that a watershed plan needed to be completed to extrapolate the total cost needed for the City’s stormwater management program.

Next Steps

A vote was taken at the end of the workshop to determine how the staff felt about a stormwater user fee being developed for the City of Portland. Each participant was asked to vote for one of the following (the number of votes cast for each expression is in parenthesis):

1. It won't work. (0)
2. I still need convincing that this is the right approach. (1)
3. Let's move to the next step. (2)
4. Let's move cautiously toward implementation. (4)
5. I strongly support implementing a stormwater user fee right now. (0)

There was one person who felt they were between a 2 and 3. The member felt that if the City had more data, they would be more supportive of moving to the next step. The group was reminded that this is an evolutionary process. Until the funding is provided, it will be difficult to have all the information they want to have to make master planning decisions. The first step is to identify the needs and gaps in the existing program, so it is clear what still needs to be done.

Two other members voted between 3 and 4. They wanted the next steps to be a cautious move toward a stormwater user fee implementation project. The average for the group was a 3, *Let's move to the next step.* The group consensus was that a stormwater utility was a practical solution to the City's funding problems. They agreed that it was a concept worth further investigation.

An alternative option is to explore a wet weather rate adjustment. The City has a sewer fee that currently supports the combined sewer system. There could be a justification to develop a wet weather fee that would support the combined sewer system as well as the separate storm sewer system and to shift program funds to be supported on that fee basis. Similar to a stormwater user fee, this is a more equitable approach to billing property owners for their contribution to the system.

The staff then debated key components and key next steps. It was agreed that a briefing of the Board was necessary to gain permission to explore public support for a District stormwater initiative. The overall roadmap for the City to move forward was given as:

1. Gather more data on the stormwater system
2. Hire a Consultant to present to City Council in a workshop, regarding the City's stormwater needs and the next step to develop a Stormwater Management Business Plan (SMBP) for the City
3. Consultant prepares presentation for the City Council and City reviews and rehearses with Consultant
4. City organizes a workshop with City Council to request permission to develop a SMBP
5. At the workshop, the Consultant presents to the Council requesting an appointed Stormwater Advisory Committee to work with Consultant to develop a SMBP
6. If the Council gives permission, develop the scope and process for a Stormwater Management Business Plan
7. Six months later, the Stormwater Advisory Committee reports back to City Council
8. With positive results, the Council passes resolution authorizing implementation of a stormwater utility.

Conclusions

The group agreed that there is a compelling need to enhance City stormwater services. Avoiding the problem will defer maintenance, increase backlogs, and escalate costs.

A stormwater user fee could generate sufficient revenue to support an enhanced program. While hurdles have been identified, they appear manageable with appropriate education and outreach. The next step is to inform City Council of these preliminary findings and request their support in moving forward with a Stormwater Management Business Plan.