



Legislation Text

File #: 23-349, **Version:** 1

Approval of Residential Stormwater Assistance Program Design and Request to Set a Public Hearing for Modifications to the Stormwater Rate Structure

PURPOSE: To establish a new Stormwater Residential Assistance Program and schedule a public hearing on February 27, 2024, to discuss potential modifications to the stormwater rate structure for program funding.

DEPARTMENT: Public Works

CONTACT INFORMATION: Randy Dodd, Stormwater Utility Manager, 919-918-7341, rdodd@carrboronc.gov

COUNCIL DIRECTION:

Race/Equity Climate Comprehensive Plan Other

This program design has been created in response to direction provided 1) upon completion of the RainReady study in 2020, and 2) as part of the Carrboro Connects Green Stormwater Infrastructure goals and strategies, noting in particular Goal 4 (expanding green stormwater infrastructure to support watershed restoration and climate resilience), Strategy 4.1 (expanding resources to private property owners), action A (develop programming and financial assistance for income eligible households). It is also included in the 13 Council strategic priorities.

INFORMATION: Carrboro’s Stormwater Program has worked since 2019 to create the foundation for a new residential assistance program. Details are presented in the attached staff memo. Two important elements have been: close coordination with the Stormwater Advisory Commission, per direction provided at the completion of the RainReady study; and procuring contractual support from Michael Dupree who recently retired from running an assistance program in Durham. This collaboration has resulted in a new residential program design, as presented in Attachment C. The program design is founded on the recommendations from the Carrboro Connects and the RainReady study, an understanding of best practices from similar programs in several nearby jurisdictions, the results of a pilot project in early 2023 that involved 50 Carrboro residents, input from the Stormwater Advisory Commission, and Stormwater staff’s input on what is needed to administer the program and integrate it into the larger Stormwater Utility’s workload and responsibilities. A stormwater fee increase is recommended to support the program. A public hearing is required for changes to the rate structure. It is recommended that this occurs on February 27th to provide ample time for consideration of the outcome in the preparation of the FY 24/25 operating budget and implement any changes as part of the annual stormwater billing cycle implemented through property tax bills. Attachments to support the resolution and recommendation include the program design document, a staff memo, and the Stormwater Advisory Commission’s recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACT: The typical public hearing notice and advertising costs will apply. Approving a change to the rate structure as recommended will result in an across the board 10% increase in the fees paid by

nonexempt property owner and bring in about \$120k in new revenue per year to the Stormwater Enterprise Fund to support one new Stormwater position and cost share funding.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Council approve the draft program design and set a public hearing for February 27th, 2024 to receive input on draft amendments to the Stormwater Utility rate structure to fund the program.