



The City of San Diego

Staff Report

DATE ISSUED: 11/9/2021
TO: City Council
FROM: Stormwater Department
SUBJECT: Stormwater Funding Strategy Implementation Update

Primary Contact: Kris McFadden Phone: (619) 236-6595
Secondary Contact: Bethany Bezak Phone: (619) 527-3173

Council District(s): Citywide

OVERVIEW:

The *November 2021 Interim Stormwater Department Audit Recommendation #5 Funding Strategy Implementation Update* (the "November Interim Funding Strategy Implementation Update") provides updates on the state of stormwater midway through Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 and on select implementation actions identified in the *Stormwater Funding Strategy* (the "Funding Strategy")¹.

This November Interim Funding Strategy Implementation Update focuses on the following key themes:

- The mounting challenges facing the SWD, with a focus on the challenges that are continuing to grow at an alarming pace, impacting local water quality and the safety of San Diego's infrastructure.
- Stormwater funding needs continue to grow, reflecting the impacts of deferred capital investments, deferred maintenance, emergency failure costs, and increased costs for long-term compliance with water quality regulations
- Stormwater funding has failed to keep pace with needs even though the SWD continues to pursue funding and financing
- A dedicated stormwater funding source is necessary and is continuing to be assessed to meet stormwater program goals
- Public opinion research findings affirm that ongoing education is critical to improving residents' understanding of the stormwater system and SWD services and that additional funding is perceived to be needed for stormwater

¹ City of San Diego. 2021. *Stormwater Division Funding Strategy January 2021*. Stormwater Division. [Stormwater Funding Strategy Report.pdf \(sandiego.gov\)](#)

- Stormwater education and outreach has continued to ramp up as part of the Think Blue San Diego: Clean Water, Clean Beaches relaunch

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

This item is for information only.

DISCUSSION OF ITEM:

Background

The Stormwater Department (SWD) presented the Funding Strategy to City Council in February 2021 in response to Recommendation #5 of the June 2018 performance audit of the SWD by the Office of the City Auditor titled *The Storm Water Division Can Further Improve the Efficiency of Its Infrastructure Maintenance and Code Enforcement Efforts, but the City Ultimately Needs to Address Significant Storm Water Funding Shortages*² (the Audit). An interim update on Funding Strategy implementation was provided to Environment Committee in July 2021 (the "July Interim Funding Strategy Implementation Update")³. This November Interim Funding Strategy Implementation Update provides an update on the state of stormwater midway through FY2021 and an update on select implementation actions identified in the Funding Strategy.

Stormwater challenges are mounting at a rapid pace

The SWD is responsible for protecting local streams, rivers, bays, and beaches from pollution and for building, operating, and maintaining the City's vast, integrated stormwater system that includes pipes, drains, channels, green infrastructure (GI), levees and pumps. This system is comprised of many interconnected components that must function together seamlessly to provide critical services to San Diego residents and businesses. While much of the City's stormwater system is hidden underground, obscured from public view, this infrastructure system is essential to San Diegans' quality of life, health, and safety. The City's stormwater system provides multiple additional community benefits such as clean, green streets; improved mobility; walking and bike paths; green spaces; and stream and wetland revitalization. The SWD has been doing all it can with the limited funding sources currently in place, but it is simply not enough.

As stormwater needs continue to be underfunded, San Diego's natural resources will continue to be adversely impacted, local water quality will decline precipitously, and the safety of basic infrastructure will be further compromised. Underfunding stormwater has been, and will continue to be, a liability for the City. Between FY2015 and FY2021, the SWD paid out \$18.7 million (623 claims) for stormwater-related issues like damage to property and automobiles due to flooding, failing and broken infrastructure that led to adverse impacts to health/property, and cleanup costs. In addition, opportunities to invest in multi-benefit stormwater projects that can capture stormwater for use, improve water quality, and provide community benefits, especially in underserved communities, will continue to be missed.

Stormwater failures threaten public safety

Often hidden from sight, the stormwater system runs throughout the City, under streets, along homes and businesses, near critical infrastructure like hospitals, fire stations, and within public areas like parks, schools, libraries and recreations areas. Some components of the stormwater system, which includes pipes, channels, pumps stations, inlets, and levees, are over 100 years old. Like all infrastructure, the

² City of San Diego. 2018. *Performance Audit of the Storm Water Division*. Office of the City Auditor. https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/18-023_storm_water_division_0.pdf

³ City of San Diego. 2021. *Stormwater Department Interim Funding Strategy Implementation Update*. Stormwater Department. [Stormwater Funding Strategy Report - July 2021.pdf \(sandiego.gov\)](#)

system has aged and deteriorated. However, the stormwater system is also subject to the added wear and tear from extreme and violent rainfall events from climate change causing harmful flows, expansive urbanization generating increasing runoff, and historical underfunding resulting in deferred maintenance. These issues have turned from a moderate inflow of failures into a deluge of need. The impacts of these failures in San Diego communities are felt not only when it rains, but year-round as they can cause sinkholes, erosion along coastlines, and pollution backing up into streets and alleys.

The City currently has nearly 2,000 known infrastructure failures, with 32 failures considered emergencies due to their imminent risk to life or property. Emergencies are not predictable and require that a portion of the limited funding available to the SWD is diverted to address them, which has resulted in nearly 40% of current capital projects (e.g., water quality, green infrastructure and flood resilience projects) initiated by SWD to be put on hold. In the last three years (FY2019 – FY2021) emergencies have required nearly \$65 million to address, mostly funded through reallocation from other priority projects.

Example: Pump Stations in Mission Beach

Three pump stations in Mission Beach are among newly active failures that have been deemed dangerous for entry and/or operation due to unsafe conditions. These pump stations remove water from the densely-populated low-lying area during rainstorms and have the potential to impact over 162 acres of critical San Diego residential and commercial areas with flooding and polluted waters during the upcoming rainy season if not addressed.

Example: Pipe Failure Locations

In March 2020, the SWD was still deploying 26 by-pass pumps that were staffed 24 hours a day during Storm Patrol activities. By strategically prioritizing pipe repairs and replacements at those locations, the SWD was able to reduce the number of active by-pass locations to four by the end of FY2021 and as of October 2021 this was further reduced down to one. However, there are many more pipe locations that are at risk of failing and causing flooding each year. This was most recently observed on September 24, 2021, when a short but intense rainfall event resulted in over 30 stormwater hotline calls due to flooding and associated impacts. The bottom line is that the SWD needs to transition from being solely reactive to high-risk failures to proactive repair and rehabilitation to improve the stormwater system before dire consequences occur.

Pollution is threatening San Diegans' way of life

In San Diego, waterways are the arteries that connect the City and are central to local parks, hiking and biking trails, beaches and other recreational areas. San Diego is also home to expanses of native and preserved habitat areas that support diverse ecosystems, plants and animals. As water flows through streets, gutters and storm drains, it picks up toxins and trash and then goes directly, untreated, into local creeks and rivers and eventually into bays, lagoons and coastal waters. The pollution and trash picked up and transported by stormwater can be poisonous, even in small amounts, and is transported and deposited in the waterways that connect San Diego's inland areas, residential neighborhoods, urban centers, and coastal shores. Pollution can cause unsafe conditions for swimming, fishing and recreating in waters themselves, as well as cause degradation and deterioration of the many parks, preserves, trails, and coastlines that are used and visited by millions each year. Between 2000 and 2020, there were an average of 55 beach closures per year and 586 beach advisories per year due to poor water quality. Pollution and trash do not only impact humans – marine life and the diverse local ecosystems throughout San Diego are also at risk if water quality standards are not met.

Water quality in waterways is falling short of standards

The City's commitment to clean waterways has added an important dimension to the services provided by the San Diego stormwater system. The system was originally built to move stormwater and address flood risk. Increased and evolving clean water regulations have enormously expanded SWD responsibilities and attendant costs. Nearly all the City's rivers and streams are considered impaired under the federal Clean Water Act, and over 99% of the City drains to, and therefore contributes to, an impaired water body. The latest data being evaluated for 2022 are expected to add 101 new impairments in San Diego water bodies. The dramatic increase in regulatory requirements over time is reflected in the fact that the most significant cause of the increased and growing need for SWD funding is related to addressing water quality and providing clean water (approximately \$246 million dollars per year in need, or 73% of the total funding need). The City is committed to protecting water quality, addressing sources of contamination, and investing in keeping waters and neighborhoods clean and safe; however, with each year of limited funding, the City is falling further and further behind.

The City has three significant compliance deadlines coming up in the next 10 years, for which the City is not on track. The issue is not with innovative and efficient ideas, it is with the funding to execute. Failure to meet these standards may result in hefty fines and penalties levied by state and federal agencies that can range between \$10,000 and \$65,800 a day *per violation*. Additionally, third party lawsuits that hold the City liable for compliance violations are also a risk.

The cost of managing stormwater continues to increase

As stormwater needs and costs continue to accumulate and escalate, often at a higher rate to prevent catastrophic fallout from failure, the **average annual funding need of \$335 million per year** over the 20-year planning horizon of FY2022 to FY2041 is also impacted. The Funding Strategy, which was presented to City Council in February 2021, characterized the average annual stormwater funding need for the period of FY2021 to FY2040 as \$274 million dollars per year in 2020 dollars. Since the original Funding Strategy projection was developed, a number of factors have changed:

- Additional failures have occurred and unfunded needs have to be carried over from previous years, including the unfunded needs associated with diverting funding from planned projects to emergency failures
- Updated projections from 2020 dollars to 2022 dollars⁴
- Updated forecast period to extend 20 years through FY2041

SWD funding needs continue to be rolled over to subsequent years as funding continues to fall short, creating an extreme peak in need of critical infrastructure and clean water investments that are falling further behind.

Stormwater funding has not kept pace

Over the past six years stormwater funding in general has remained relatively constant, or decreased slightly, as the funding need and acceleration of failures and liabilities has increased. Figure 1 presents a summary of annual funding from FY2016 through FY2021 and the approved budget amount for FY2022. The primary source of funding has been the City General Fund, varying from a high of \$51 million in

⁴ City salaries updated to 2022 levels to increase O&M costs to reflect 2022 dollars. CIP costs escalated using actual Engineering News Record (ENR) Construction Cost Index (CCI) changes from July 2020 to July 2021 of 6.98% to escalate from the beginning of FY 2020 to FY 2021. CIP costs escalated from 2021 to 2022 dollars based on the long-term average ENR CCI of 3.0%.

FY2017 to a low of \$36 million in FY2021. The FY2021 low is partly due to Citywide budget cuts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. In FY2022, City General Fund contributions have largely rebounded to pre-pandemic levels; however, they have not increased to a sufficient level to meet SWD needs.

The SWD generates a limited amount of revenue through three sources: (1) revenue from an existing storm drain fee, (2) parking citations from the street sweeping program, and (3) fines from stormwater enforcement. While each of these funding sources has historically been allocated to the SWD, they are legally unrestricted and are subject to City discretion as part of the annual budget process. Other ancillary funding sources that have historically varied annually include grants, TransNet, transient occupancy tax (TOT), commercial paper, and other restricted funds (e.g., the Parking Meter District Fund). In FY2022, those other ancillary funding sources include \$1.0 million from TransNet, \$1.0 million from Development Impact Fees, \$5.98 million from a U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant, and approximately \$48.6 million from a Commercial Paper issuance to be repaid by the General Fund. The total SWD budget for FY2022 is \$114.8 million, of which approximately \$58.2 million is anticipated to continue into future years and are not one-time funding sources (e.g., commercial paper, DIF, EDA grant).

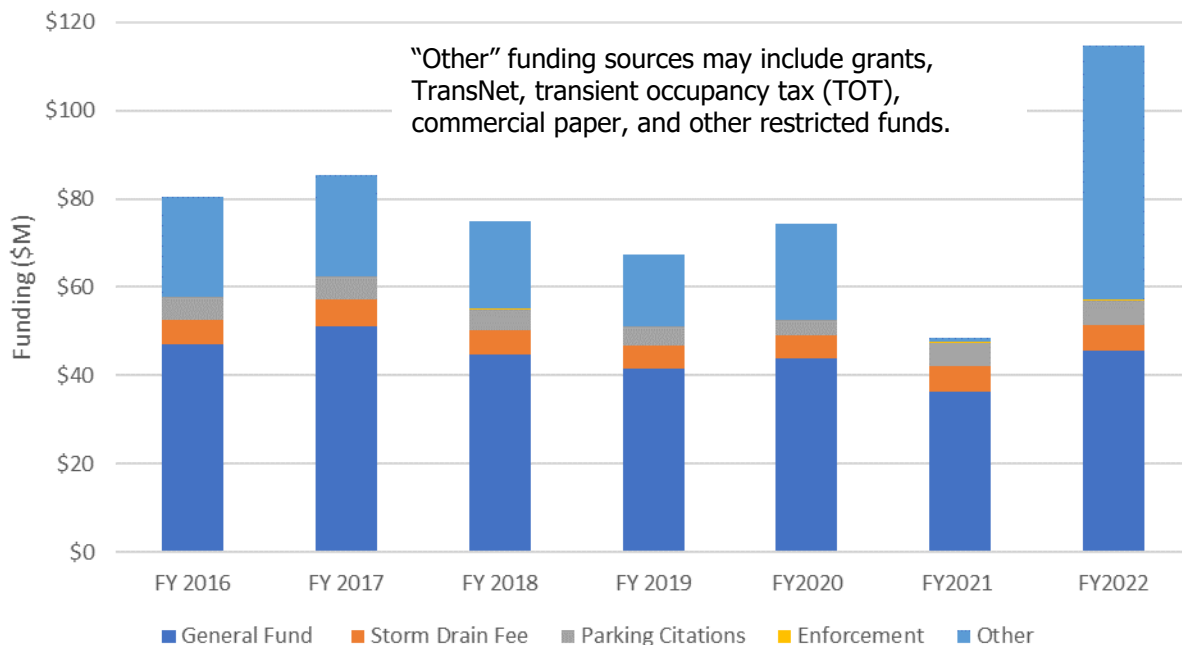


Figure 1. Historical and current FY2022 stormwater funding by funding source.

The stormwater funding gap continues to grow

The increase in stormwater funding needs coupled with funding levels that are insufficient to address the continually mounting backlog of deferred needs results in an ever-increasing stormwater funding gap.

Currently, the stormwater funding gap is approximately \$274 million dollars per year in 2022 dollars (Figure 2).

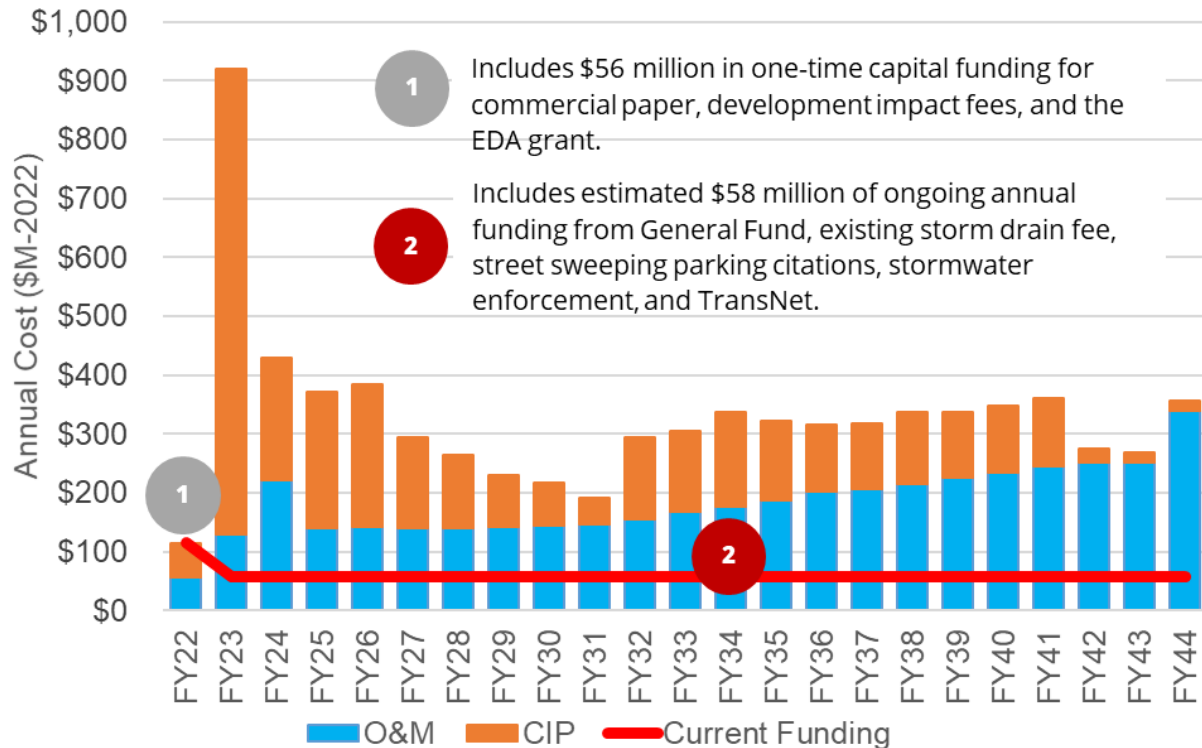


Figure 2. SWD funding needs and FY2022 funding in 2022 dollars.

The Stormwater Department has continued to pursue funding and financing opportunities

SWD has continued to assess funding and financing opportunities within the four broad implementation action categories identified in the Funding Strategy:

- I. Maximize and accelerate implementation of efficiencies;
- II. Increase investment in SWD program innovation;
- III. Maximize existing funding sources, grants, and loans; and
- IV. Pursue development of a long-term dedicated funding mechanism.

A comprehensive update for each of the implementation actions is included in Appendix C with progress to date and a lookahead through FY2023. Select funding implementation actions with notable progress in FY2022 include:

- Addition of an in-house pipe repair team;
- Advancement of stormwater harvesting and reuse assessment efforts and one project to CIP (Carroll Canyon Creek Dry Weather Flow Diversion project);
- Advancement of assessment of cost recovery options, including (1) revising the monetary penalties matrix for stormwater enforcement and fines, (2) developing a Stormwater Inspection and Reinspection Fee Program, and (3) assessing options to modify the street sweeping parking enforcement/fine program;
- Application for grants;
- Allocation of Statewide Budget appropriation of \$3.1 million by the Department of Parks and Recreation to treat stormwater runoff entering Chollas Creek;

- Continued negotiations for a Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan for high-risk pipe replacements, GI, revitalization and restoration of natural waterways, pump station upgrades, and rehabilitation of stormwater features for a loan amount of \$294 million, with the City matching 51% (or \$306 million);
- Application for CWSRF loans for South Mission Beach Storm Drain Improvements and Green Infrastructure project (\$27 million) and Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Restoration Project (\$27 million) in FY2020 and FY2019, respectively. Both projects were placed on the CWSRF Intended Use Plan. The South Mission Beach Storm Drain Improvements and Green Infrastructure project received City Council approval in an amount of \$27 million in FY2021. The SWD is planning to enter into a CWSRF loan pending City Council approval and successful negotiation of a loan agreement with the SWRCB for the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Restoration project (\$27 million).

For each of these potential funding and financing options, the SWD is actively coordinating with other City Departments (Engineering and Capital Projects, Department of Finance, Debt Management, among others) to be prepared to ramp up execution of the program, if and when the funding becomes available.

A long-term stormwater funding mechanism is needed

In alignment with both Recommendation #6 and Council Resolution R-2021-306, the SWD is evaluating the viability of a dedicated stormwater funding mechanism. The SWD has made progress on each of the five integrated elements necessary for a stormwater funding measure, which were identified through extensive benchmarking of stormwater ballot measures in the Funding Strategy.

Funding Measure Design

The SWD has continued assessment and refinement of a potential stormwater funding measure in close coordination with the Office of the City Attorney, Department of Finance, City Treasurer, Debt Management, Department of Information Technology, Department of Engineering & Capital Projects, Public Utilities Department, Mayor's Office, County Assessor's Office, and other stakeholder groups. A summary of stormwater funding measure considerations is presented in Appendix D.

Elements of a potential funding measure for consideration include:

- **Proposition 218 voter requirements shall be followed** to minimize the risk of a legal challenge, as reported in the July 2021 Funding Strategy Implementation Update and the City Attorney review of Senate Bill (SB) 231 and Assembly Bill (AB) 2403.⁵
- **Special parcel tax** could be the funding mechanism which would levy a tax on each applicable parcel and would be limited for use.
- **Impermeable area basis** could be applied, which uses a rate per square foot (SF) of impermeable area on a parcel or a subdivision of a parcel where there are stacked units (e.g., apartments and condominiums) (see additional discussion below in Funding Mechanism Scenarios section).⁶
- **Potential Funding Measure Program Goals**, which have been drafted in coordination with other City entities, community groups and stakeholders to reflect the vision for a stormwater system for all San Diegans' benefit in which (1) innovation and efficiency are the backbone of the approach to clean water and flood control; (2) infrastructure adapts to meet the needs of a

⁵ City of San Diego, Office of the City Attorney. 2021. *Legal Update to 2012 Memorandum of Law Titled "Proposition 218 Impacts to Storm Drain Fees"*.

⁶ Impermeable area is characterized as any solid surface where water cannot penetrate, causing it to run off (e.g., roofs, driveways, sidewalks, walkways, etc.).

growing population and changing climate to ensure people, homes, and businesses are safe from flooding; (3) stormwater is managed as a resource to promote equity, sustainability, and resilience; (4) water quality is a point of pride; and (5) the SWD protects, restores, and enhances waterways for local communities and wildlife for future generations.

A number of additional funding measure considerations could be included in a potential funding measure, including the following:

- **Tax rate structure**, which is the specific rate (e.g., cents per SF) that the tax could be levied.
- **Exemptions** to the special parcel tax that identifies ratepayers that may not receive a tax bill. Exemptions being considered include public parcels, ad valorem exempt parcels, and an exemption for low-income senior property owners.
- **Reductions or discounts** for ratepayers that could reduce the tax bill and account for variability in the ratepayer base, affordability, or equity (e.g., low-income areas).
- **Adjustments, incentives, credits, or rebates** could be included for ratepayers who participate in eligible stormwater-related programs (e.g., stormwater best management practices, rain barrels, etc.).
- **Eligible and ineligible expenditures** that could define what activities, program, and project revenues from a funding measure can and cannot be spent on, respectively. Expenditures could also include administration and collection of the funding measure, debt financing, workforce job training, and educational and outreach efforts, among others.
- **Debt and Issuance of Bonds** using the special tax revenue stream through voter approval is necessary to issue debt (bonds, loans) payable from and secured by the revenues associated with the funding measure to fund the stormwater capital program and core services.
- **Program governance (decision-making, oversight, and accountability)** may include elements like advisory and/or oversight committees, implementation plans, independent audits, annual budgets, and annual reporting.
- **Appeals Processes** could be designed to allow for correction of errors in the administration or levy of the tax.

The SWD will also continue to monitor and track other rate increases, ballot measures, and initiatives that may impact the same ratepayer base from an affordability and equity standpoint (e.g., the upcoming PUD Water and Sewer rate increases).

Funding Mechanism Scenarios

“Funding mechanism scenarios” refer to assessing different methods and considerations related to potential ratepayer impacts and revenue levels. At this time, the recommendation is to assess potential stormwater rates on an impermeable area basis, which uses a rate per square foot (SF) of impermeable area on a parcel or a subdivision of a parcel where there are stacked units (e.g., apartments and condominiums). Impermeable cover is the most common basis used for stormwater-related charges, with 87% of respondents of the 2021 Stormwater Utility Survey indicating that impermeable area is the basis for stormwater charges across the nation.⁷ It is often used because it charges ratepayers based on the relative contribution of stormwater runoff, or pollution carried by that runoff, generated from a parcel. Stakeholder feedback has indicated that a non-regressive and equitable approach be used, which is

⁷ Black & Veatch Management Consulting. 2021. *2021 Stormwater Utility Survey Report*. <https://www.bv.com/resources/2021-stormwater-survey-report>.

reflected in the recommendation to base rates on impermeable area and utilize exemptions and discounts for certain ratepayer classes.

A number of rate scenarios were developed and tested in public opinion research surveys in March 2021 and August 2021 and are presented in Table 1. For these scenarios, ratepayer impacts and associated annual revenue were estimated for illustrative purposes, noting that new and more precise impermeable area data are currently being collected and analyzed (estimated to be available in Q3 FY2022)⁸.

Table 1. Funding Mechanism Scenario Ranges for an Impermeable Area Special Parcel Tax

Impermeable Area Rates Tested in Surveys	Median Annual Single-Family Residential (SFR) Bill	Median Monthly Single-Family Residential (SFR) Bill	Estimated Annual Revenue Generated* (\$M)
\$0.04 per SF	\$128.00	\$10.67	\$74 M
\$0.045 per SF	\$144.00	\$12.00	\$83 M
\$0.05 per SF	\$160.00	\$13.33	\$93 M

* Estimated Revenue includes exemptions under consideration, including public parcels, ad valorem exempt parcels, and low-income senior property owners.

Public Opinion Research

Additional public opinion research, consisting of one survey conducted in August 2021, has been completed thus far in FY2022 to build off of the two surveys (December 2020 and March 2021) and focus groups (May 2021) that were conducted in FY2021. The August 2021 survey tested slightly revised sample ballot language for a potential stormwater funding measure and the importance of various stormwater-related priorities, including the capture of stormwater for local water supply, protection of water quality, preparation for future drought, maintenance of current infrastructure, and prevention of flooding, among others. Key findings from the public opinion research conducted to date include the following:

- **Ongoing general education and community engagement for stormwater is essential.** Stormwater issues and services are not well understood, but residents highly value the *outcomes* of SWD activities, especially clean water. Residents want additional information on the specific strategies and projects that could be funded and would contribute toward the proposed SWD funding program goals.
- There appears to be a strong sense of need for additional funding for stormwater, with high levels of importance placed on benefits provided.

Engagement, Outreach and Education

The SWD is committed to continuing and expanding education and outreach efforts about stormwater, and the impactful and essential outcomes that a funded stormwater program can provide. Building upon the City’s previous successes with the Think Blue brand that dates back 20 years, the SWD has renewed

⁸ Data includes multi-spectral, 4-band near infrared imagery and Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) remote sensing distance measurements that has been collected and is currently being processed and undergoing quality control.

and refreshed the brand of **Think Blue San Diego: *Clean Water, Clean Beaches*** to modernize the aesthetic of the brand's image and its core brand attributes. This brand refresh has included a new logo, tagline, visual brand, updated website and reengaging social media outlets that had fallen largely dormant.

The official Think Blue San Diego relaunch event was strategically planned and successfully held at four locations across San Diego for maximum reach and impact as part of California Coastal Cleanup Day on Sept. 18, 2021, and generated significant media interest. California Coastal Cleanup Day provided an opportunity to bring the community together and raise awareness about the importance of protecting our beaches and watersheds from pollution and how Think Blue plays an important role in those efforts. These events also helped reinforce the refreshed branding of Think Blue San Diego: *Clean Water, Clean Beaches*.

Moving forward, the Think Blue initiative aims to continue building and expanding education and public awareness related to stormwater issues. There will be a three-pronged approach for public engagement and outreach efforts focused on paid media, earned media and internal City communications – each with a different audience and different set of tailored messaging. These efforts include raising awareness of the Think Blue brand through messaging that educates the public about the importance of stormwater to San Diego's way of life; the nexus between clean stormwater, clean water and clean beaches; and how residents and community partners can assist with the stormwater challenges facing the City.

Continued Implementation

The SWD is committed to addressing the mounting challenges facing the City that continue to grow at an alarming pace, impacting local water quality and the safety of San Diego's infrastructure. The SWD will continue to assess opportunities to address the increasing funding gap for stormwater. Upcoming milestones include:

- Education, outreach, and stakeholder engagement—Ongoing
- Recommendation #6 response to Audit Committee—Q3 FY2022
- Newly collected impermeable cover data for Citywide use to be available —Q3 FY2022

City Strategic Plan Goal(s)/Objective(s):

Goal #1: Provide high quality public service

Objective #1: Promote a customer-focused culture that prizes accessible, consistent, and predictable delivery of services.

Objective #4: Ensure equipment and technology are in place so that employees can achieve high quality public service.

Goal #2: Work in partnership with all of our communities to achieve safe and livable neighborhoods.

Objective #1: Protect the lives, property, and the environment through timely and effective response in all communities.

Objective #3: Invest in infrastructure.

Objective #4: Faster services that improve quality of life.

Objective #5: Cultivate civic engagement and participation.

Goal #3: Create and sustain a resilient and economically prosperous City.

Objective #1: Create dynamic neighborhoods that incorporate mobility, connectivity, and sustainability.

Objective #2: Increase water independence.

Objective #3: Diversify and grow the local economy.

Objective #4: Prepare and respond to climate change.

Objective #5: Enhance San Diego's global standing.

Fiscal Considerations:

Not Applicable

Charter Section 225 Disclosure of Business Interests:

N/A; there is no contract associated with this action.

Environmental Impact:

Not Applicable

Climate Action Plan Implementation:

The City's stormwater system provides multiple additional community benefits including improved mobility, walking and bike paths supporting the Mobility and Land Use Strategy (Strategy 3) Year-round activities by the SWD help the Zero Waste Strategy (Strategy 4) through targeted source reduction and reducing waste and trash that reach the stormwater system.

Equal Opportunity Contracting Information (if applicable):

Not Applicable

Previous Council and/or Committee Actions:

In June 2018, City Council received the "Performance Audit of the City of San Diego's Stormwater Division", which included recommendations #1-9. In February 2021, the City Council received the SWD response to Recommendation #5 and approved a resolution to continue assessment of a stormwater funding mechanism. An interim update on Funding Strategy implementation was provided to Environment Committee in July 2021.

Key Stakeholders and Community Outreach Efforts:

The SWD, in coordination with the Communications Department and Mayor's Office, has successfully relaunched and rebranded Think Blue. The relaunch event took place in coordination with Coastal Cleanup Day on September 18, 2021. Through media and targeted upcoming events, the Think Blue initiative will continue to increase general public knowledge of the importance of stormwater operations to ensure clean water and clean beaches for all San Diegans.

Kris McFadden

Alia Khouri

Department Director

Deputy Chief Operating Officer