

Decatur Stormwater Master Plan - Public Meeting #2

Please share your thoughts about the stormwater topics we discussed tonight. Continue on the back if you need more space.

STATION 1: Public and Private Infrastructure

Tonight, we looked at an example of how stormwater is managed by infrastructure that is both publicly and privately owned in Decatur. The City conducts maintenance only on public stormwater infrastructure. Private property owners are responsible for stormwater infrastructure on their property.

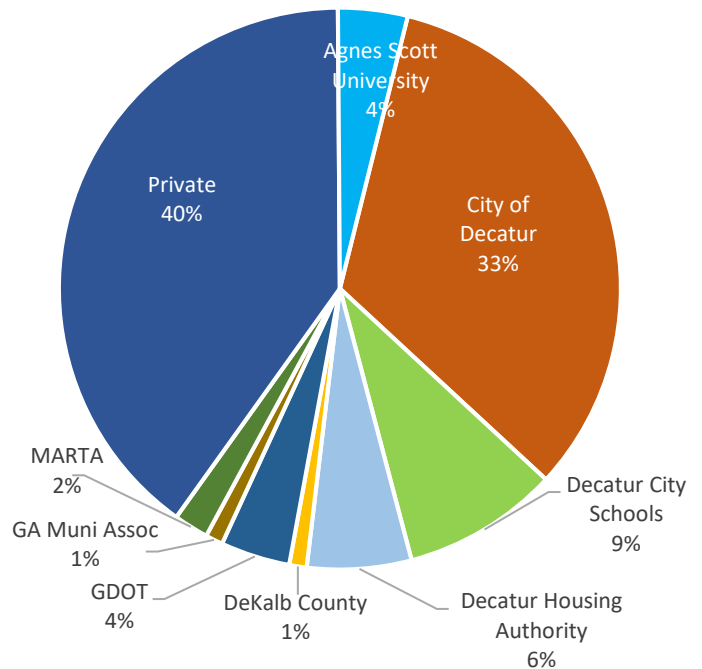
This arrangement is a common approach to stormwater management for local governments. However, when stormwater problems are caused by private infrastructure, they can be difficult to address due to costs, coordination, public awareness, and other factors. **What do you think about the advantages and disadvantages of the following possible alternative approaches? Who should pay for the maintenance and improvements in each case?**

- A) The City takes over maintenance and improvement of **all** stormwater infrastructure in the City. Costs might be borne by government funds (stormwater utility fund), private funds (charged to landowners), or a mix.

- B) The City conducts maintenance on private stormwater infrastructure for which it can easily obtain an easement with landowners. Costs might be borne by government funds (stormwater utility fund), private funds (charged to the landowner), or a mix.

- C) The City does not change its current policy and continues to maintain and improve only public infrastructure. Costs are borne by government funds (stormwater utility fund).

Stormwater System Ownership in Decatur



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Station 2: Paying for Stormwater Improvements

Before this evening, did you know how much you are currently charged for the City's Stormwater Utility Fee on your annual property tax statement?

Did you know what the fee is used for?

Currently all single-family homes pay the same Stormwater Utility Fee (\$100/year). Should homeowners be charged a scaled fee based impervious coverage?

Should homeowners be able to reduce their annual fee by implementing stormwater management practices on their property?

The updated Stormwater Master Plan will identify projects to improve the City's stormwater infrastructure. So far, **53** possible project areas have been identified as areas of concern.

The modeling of the stormwater system is not yet complete, and cost estimation for specific projects has not been done, but initial rough cost estimates indicate that over **\$38** million in capital expenses may be needed to address all concerns identified to date. To implement those projects over the next **20** years, the City will need to increase its current level of spending on stormwater infrastructure by almost **5** times.¹

The primary source of revenue for the City's stormwater program is the stormwater utility fees charged to property owners in the City (residential, commercial, institutional). Increasing capital spending will require commensurate increase in stormwater fees.²

To put these numbers into context, in a study by the American Society for Civil Engineers and based on the Clean Water Needs Survey of the Environmental Protection Agency, spending on stormwater improvements needs to be approximately \$84 per person per year across the nation to provide adequate infrastructure. For Decatur, that is about five times current stormwater infrastructure spending – consistent with initial rough cost estimates for improvements given above. Decatur is not alone; most communities in the U.S. are investing far below that level in stormwater infrastructure.

On the next page, please comment on your views on a range of options to pay for stormwater improvements in Decatur.

¹ This amount is not adjusted for inflation over the next 20 years. Also, the pie chart presented on the City's stormwater spending at tonight's meeting shows \$631,250 spent annually on stormwater projects over the past five years. However, this amount included spending from capital budget reserves that are now fully expended. The current annual stormwater program budget (supported by stormwater utility fees – residential and commercial) can support approximately \$400,000 of spending on infrastructure improvements each year.

² Capital spending is only a portion of the stormwater budget, but an increase in capital spending will require an increase in other program spending (perhaps not at the same rate) to pay for the administrative costs of implementing capital projects.

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Option	Projected Impact	Your Comments
Maintain the Current Level of Stormwater Capital Spending and Fees	Slow implementation of stormwater improvements	
Increase the Level of Stormwater Capital Spending with a commensurate increase in Stormwater Fees...		
...by 25%	Small increase in rate of implementation	
...by 100% (2x)	Moderate increase in rate of implementation	
...by 400% (5x)	Substantial increase in rate of implementation <i>Only this option can support implementation to address all identified areas of concern in 20 years.</i>	

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General Observations and Comments