



The City of San Diego Resiliency Advisory Board

FLOOD AND WATER QUALITY RESILIENCY: CURRENT CHALLENGES WITH FUNDING STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

JOHN W. BLISS, P.E.; SCI CONSULTING GROUP

THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2026

OUTREACH EXAMPLES

Take Our Survey Today

Complete the enclosed survey at www.inputlocal.com or by scanning the QR Code and enter the codes found on the front of your survey.
See the other side of this page for an explanation of what stormwater (or urban runoff) is, and how it impacts our community.

What is STORMWATER OR URBAN RUNOFF?

WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

Anything that goes down the storm drains flows directly into local waterways.

Common pollutants include:

- Automotive fluids/exhaust
- Sediment/dirt
- Illegal dumping
- Pesticides and fertilizers
- Cleaning products and detergents
- Animal waste
- Trash and litter
- Mercury, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), and copper

Stormwater pollution affects the health of plants, fish, other wildlife—and people too!

STORMWATER STATISTICS

Stormwater runoff accounts for about 30% of pollutants in our waters.

After just one inch of rain, an enormous amount of stormwater runs off into storm drains:

- 750 gallons from a typical single family home
- 27,000 gallons from a 1-acre parking lot

After a rain storm, between 5 and 10 different types of pesticides can be detected in local creeks.

Every year, 7 trillion tiny pieces of plastic flow into San Francisco Bay from stormwater. (That's about 1 million pieces each for every man, woman and child in the Bay Area!)

1 During rain storms, excess water runs off impervious surfaces (like asphalt, concrete and rooftops)...

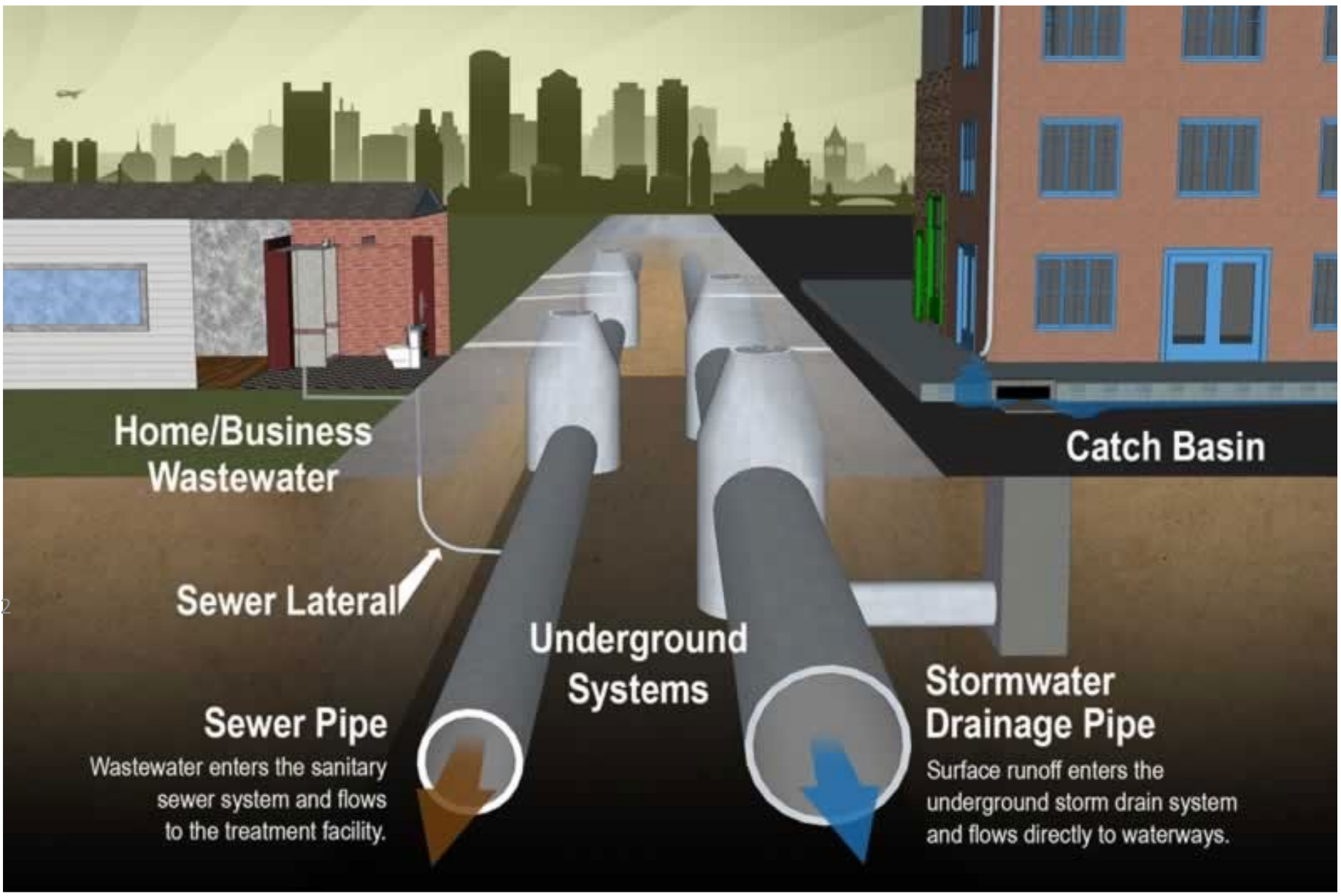
2 ...and flows into storm drains (aka Storm Sewer System)...

3 ...which lead directly to local creeks and rivers...

4 ...which ultimately flow into the San Francisco Bay and Pacific Ocean.

In the West Valley, stormwater runoff never goes to the Sanitary Sewer System. It flows untreated directly into local waterways.

West Valley Clean Water Authority
Campbell • Los Gatos • Monte Sereno • Saratoga



KEEPING IT REAL WITH JOHN W. BLISS...

1

Stormwater
management
is significantly
under -
funded!

2

Permit
requirements
are
significantly
increasing!

3

Stormwater
services are
not well -
appreciated
by the public!

4

California law
makes it
difficult to
increase
funding... &
Political
support is
soft

5

...but there is
hope!

Legal and Cultural Background

- How'd we get here?



"All we want is a little money..."

THERE WAS A TAXPAYER REVOLT...



You guess it -
Laws changed!

QUICK CALIFORNIA REVENUE LAW HISTORY

1978

Prop 13 passes
limiting property tax
increases

1996

Prop 218 establishes
new taxpayer
protections

2002

HJTA vs Salinas
requires balloting
for stormwater

20??

Stormwater
funding challenges
resolved

PROPOSITION 218

- Expands upon Prop 13 clarifying a $\frac{2}{3}$ threshold requirement for special taxes...and most new revenues requires balloting
- Creates a 2-step, 50% threshold, "property-related fee"

SALINAS DECISION'S CRITICAL EXEMPTION

-SEC 6 2(c) *"Voter Approval for New or Increased Fees and Charges . Except for fees or charges for sewer, water, and refuse collection services , no property related fee or charge shall be imposed or increased unless and until that fee or charge is submitted and approved by a majority vote of the property owners of the property subject to the fee."*

AGAIN, BIGGER, HJTA V. CITY OF SALINAS

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If you have to ballot, it makes
it much harder to get approved
...AND USUALLY AT A LOWER RATE...



FUNDING OPTIONS FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

REVENUE MECHANISMS

Commonly Used

General Fund
Existing Fees
Portion of Other Fees and/or Bond Measures
Federal and State Grants, etc.

New Development Projects

Developer Impact Fees
Community Facilities Districts/Benefit Assessments

Dedicated Local Revenue

Well... we need way more room for this one!
...on the next slide

STORMWATER FUNDING OPTIONS

Balloted Approaches

- Property Related Fee:
 - Property Owner – 50% Threshold
- Special Tax:
 - Registered Voter–66.7% Threshold

Non - Balloted Approaches

- Regulatory Fees (e.g. inspections, plan reviews)
- “Re-Alignment” (to water, sewer, trash)
- Grant Opportunities

PORTFOLIO APPROACH

Budget Item	Annual Amount
Street-Sweeping	\$500,000
Inspections	\$50,000
Plan Reviews	\$75,000
NPDES/Water Quality	\$1,000,000
Annual Maintenance	\$3,000,000
Capital Improvements Annualized	\$2,000,000



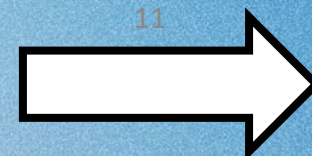
Re-align to Trash Fee



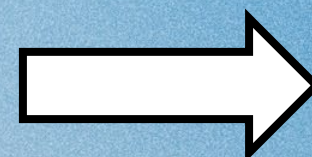
Implement Regulatory Fee



Implement Regulatory Fee



Prop Fee, Tax and/or General Fund



Prop Fee, Tax and/or General Fund



Bond Measure, Prop Fee, Tax, General Fund

RECENT STORMWATER FEE BALLOT MEASURES

Agency	Year	Rate	Type	Support
City of Manhattan Beach	2024	\$129	Prop Fee	52%
City of San Leandro	2024	\$50	Prop Fee	43%
City of San Mateo	2024	\$96	Prop Fee	51%
Reclamation District 1000	2023	\$27	Prop Fee	56%
City of Sacramento	2022	\$207	Prop Fee	52%
Vallejo Flood & Storm	2022	\$54	Prop Fee	32%
City of Davis	2021	\$157	Prop Fee	61%
City of San Bruno	2021	\$154	Prop Fee	36%
City of Alameda	2019	\$129	Prop Fee	57%
City of Cupertino	2019	\$56	Prop Fee	51%
City of Los Altos	2019	\$88	Prop Fee	44%
City of Berkeley	2018	\$96	Prop Fee	61%
Los Angeles County	2018	\$83	Tax	69%
Town of Moraga	2018	\$120	Prop Fee	48%
City of Palo Alto	2017	\$164	Prop Fee	64%
City of Culver City	2016	\$99	Tax	74%
Vallejo Flood & Storm	2015	\$23	Prop Fee	56%

Previous successes: Burlingame, Rancho Palos Verde, San Clemente, Santa Clarita, Santa Cruz, Santa Monica, Solano Beach

IMPLEMENTATION OF A BALLOTTED, PROPERTY-RELATED FEE

PROPERTY-RELATED FEE IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- ① Continue with high-quality services and associated outreach
- ② Identify costs and services (Master Plan?)
- ③ Advocate needs to Staff and Electeds
- ④ Create team (RFP, consultants)
- ⑤ Conduct community polling
 - Select funding mechanism, \$ rate, services, outreach approach and messaging
- ⑥ Begin Prop 218 Process
 - Draft and Approve Fee Study 14
 - Develop and mail ballot materials
- ⑦ Implement community outreach
- ⑧ Win
- ⑨ Continue with high-quality services and associated outreach!

COMMUNITY POLLING



CITY OF SAN MATEO
Clean Creeks and Flood Protection Initiative
Information Fact Sheet

Why Am I Receiving This Survey?

The City of San Mateo is considering proposing a funding measure to help pay for the critical needs in managing the stormwater facilities, and seeks input from local property owners on your priorities for stormwater activities. Please read the following information, then complete the enclosed survey and return it in the postage paid envelope as soon as possible. Your answers will help guide our efforts towards protecting the City and its residents from local flooding and protecting water quality.

Long-Term Financial Sustainability

The City's Stormwater Program is funded largely from the City's General Fund where it must compete with other community priorities such as public safety, roads, and parks. Due to this, and the limited nature of the General Fund, the Stormwater Program has been operating at a minimum level of service with few investments in critical projects aimed at reducing flood risks and performing proactive maintenance on Marina Lagoon.

Current operations are estimated at \$3.0 million per year. However, in order to sustainability fund the Stormwater Program and meet adequate levels of service an additional \$5.4 million is needed per year. This includes an additional \$0.6 million for additional operations and maintenance, \$1.9 million for Marina Lagoon dredging, and \$2.9 million for other important capital projects and programs.

To fund the Stormwater Program in sustainable manner, a separate, dedicated revenue stream is recommended that would no longer compete with other General Fund priorities and would be shared by property owners in a fairer way. It is estimated a monthly fee between \$10 and \$16 for the average home would fund this program.

Investing in Local Infrastructure

The City of San Mateo operates and maintains various stormwater facilities and performs activities necessary to prevent flooding, preserve surface water quality, enhance recreational activities, and ensure compliance with all legal requirements. Local facilities include: Marina Lagoon and other creeks and channels; pipes and pumping systems; and trash capture devices. Activities include: operations and maintenance; capital improvements and master planning; environmental compliance; and system management and administration.

Like most cities across the Nation, San Mateo viewed their storm drainage system as a simple conveyance for rain runoff. But over the past 30 years, environmental health and safety requirements have brought stormwater programs on par with other municipal utilities like water and sewer systems. And like those utilities, a dedicated and sustainable revenue stream is the most fair and reliable way to fund the City's investment into this critical infrastructure.

Funds from this local funding measure would be used to continue to protect our streets from local flooding, ensure clean water for enjoyment, restore and maintain Marina Lagoon, and protect this critical City feature for current and future generations.



Water levels in the south end of the Lagoon have decreased dramatically due to silt deposits, resulting in loss of navigable water depth for boating, loss of wildlife habitat, and decreased stormwater retention capacity greatly reducing the City's flood control capacity.

See Reverse Side for More Information

CITY OF SAN MATEO OFFICIAL SURVEY
Clean Creeks & Flood Protection Initiative



This survey has been mailed to a random sample of residents and business owners in the City of San Mateo to gather information and input. This information will help the City make decisions about funding for future stormwater management activities. Please complete and return this survey as soon as possible. You may take the survey online or mail the completed survey below in the postage-prepaid return envelope provided. Please return it by November 26, 2021.

Empty box for handwritten address or notes.

- Survey Instructions:
1) Read each question listed below.
2) Fill in the circle for your response. Please use a pen and completely fill in the circle.
3) Detach the bottom portion of this sheet containing your answers.
4) Place the bottom portion of this sheet in the return envelope and mail (no postage needed).

Detach Here Fill in Lower Portion, Detach at this Line, and Mail Back in Return Envelope Detach Here

To complete this survey online please do one of the following:
• visit www.inputlocal.com, enter: SURVEY NAME "SANMATEOSW", SURVEY CODE _____, or
• scan the QR CODE on the right with your phone and follow the instructions.



Residents and business owners within San Mateo may be asked to vote on a local ballot measure as follows. Please indicate your level of support.

1. In order to protect our streets and properties from local flooding, and ensure clean water for enjoyment of Marina Lagoon, San Francisco Bay and our local creeks and channels by:
• Maintaining, cleaning, repairing, rehabilitating and operating our stormwater infrastructure;
• Keeping trash and other pollutants from flowing into areas where it can interfere with recreation and harm habitat;
• Restoring Marina Lagoon to its original boating depth and managing vegetation growth and other water quality issues.
would you support a monthly fee on each property(ies) in the amount of _____?
Definitely YES Probably YES Probably NO Definitely NO

Now, please read the following statements regarding the proposed Clean Creeks and Flood Protection Initiative ballot measure. For each statement, please indicate whether they make you more or less likely to support the measure:

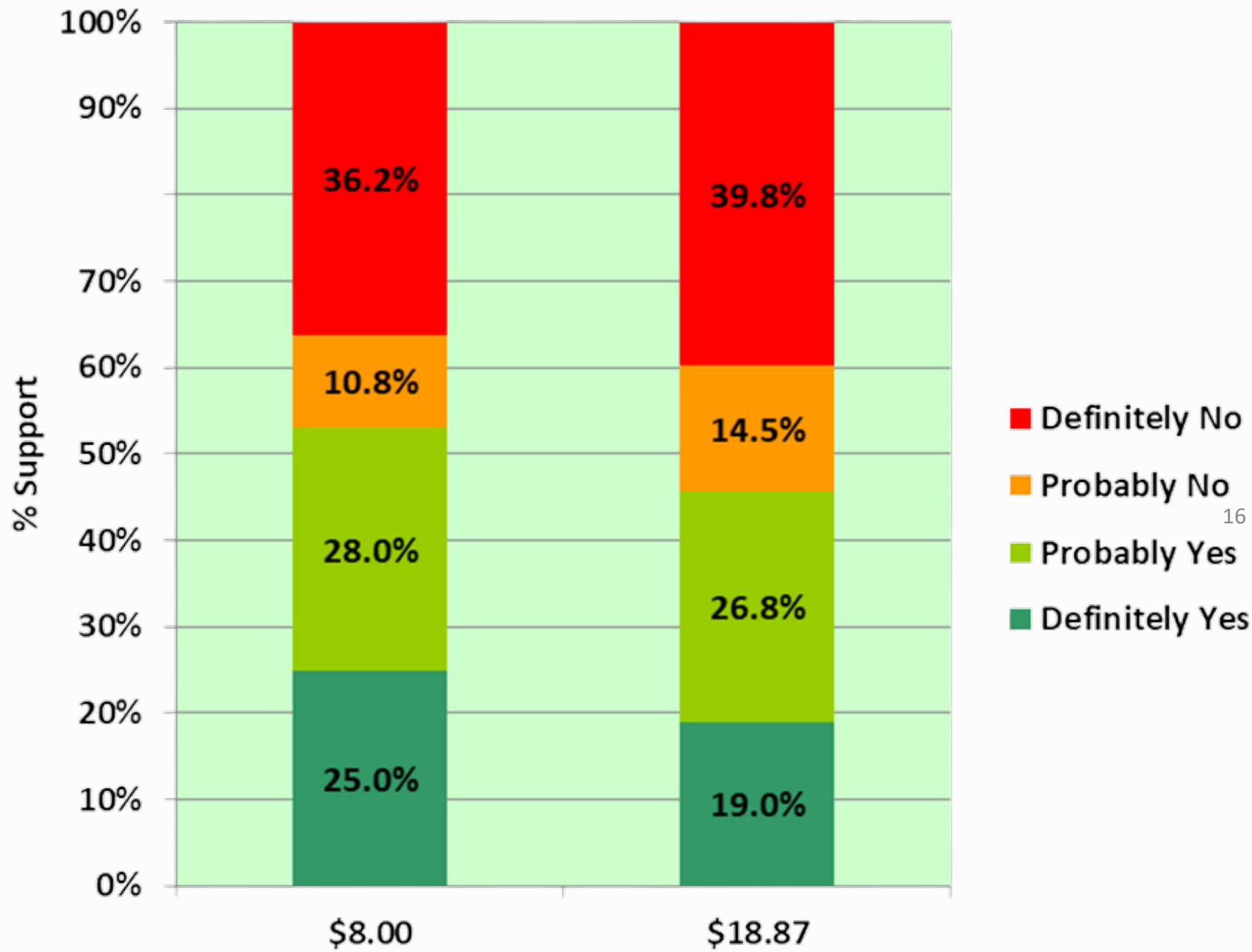
Table with 11 rows of statements and 5 columns of response options (Much More Likely, Somewhat More Likely, No Impact, Somewhat Less Likely, Much Less Likely).

Please use the space below to write any reasons why you support or oppose this proposed measure. Also, please describe which issues are most important to you:

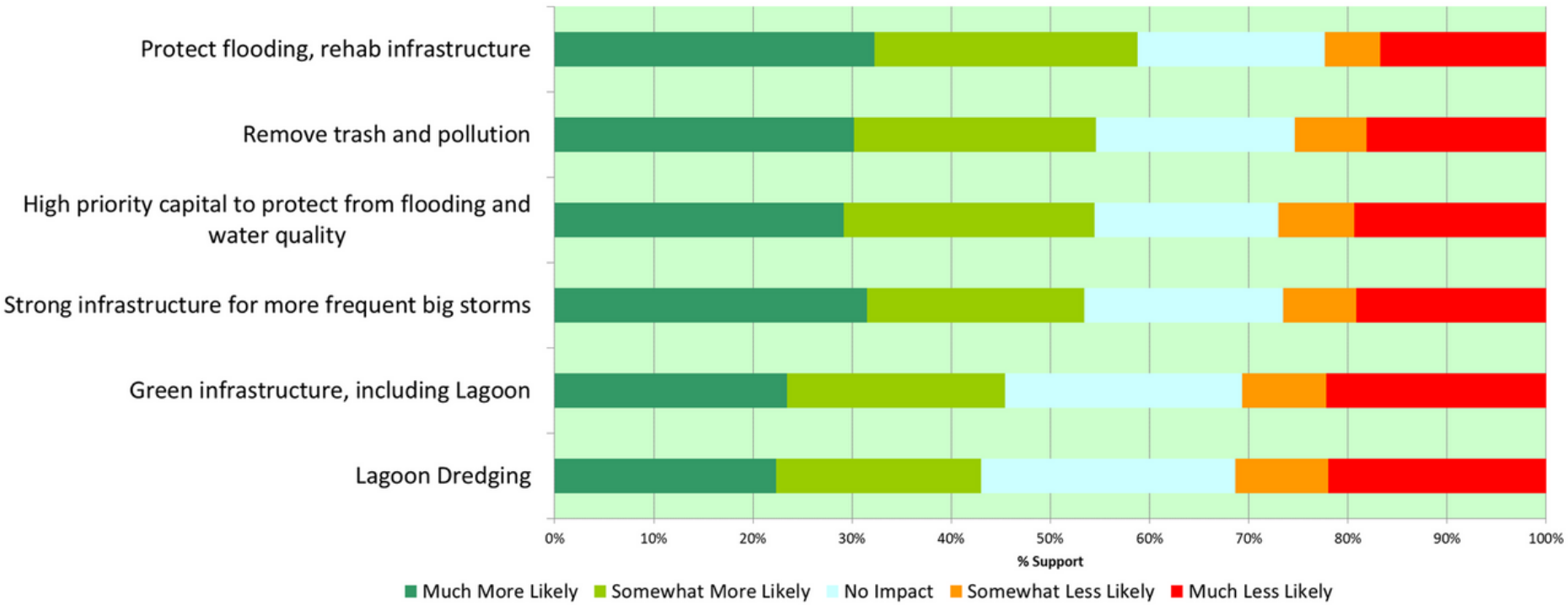
This survey is being conducted by an independent third party on behalf of the City. All information obtained through this process will remain confidential and only shared with the City in aggregate form.

FEE STUDY - APPORTION FEES

Detailed Overall Support by Proposed Rate

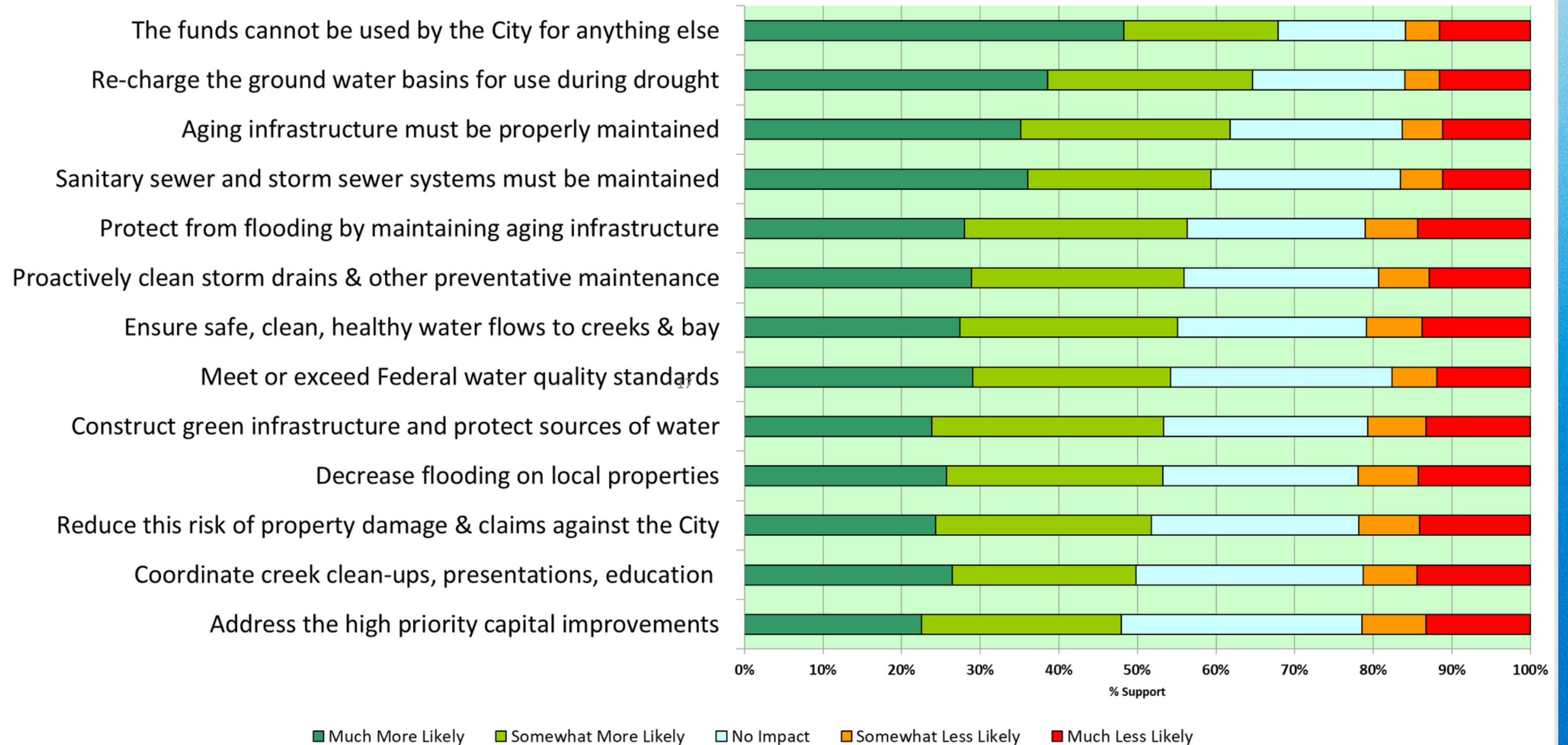


Detailed Support by Projects and Issues for All Respondents



MORE POLLING RESULTS

Detailed Support by Projects and Issues for All Respondents



MESSAGING FOR STORMWATER 101

Polling=Informed

Good (pre-2015) Water Quality focused

- “Protect sources of clean drinking water”
- “Protect endangered species”
- “Protect streams, creeks and the Bay”
- Simple, clean, direct

Great (post 2015) Flood control & Infrastructure-focused

- “Prevent local flooding”
- “Protect and restore infrastructure”
- “...while protecting species, streams, creeks and the Bay”
- Based upon engineering and financial rigor...detailed and rigorous
- “Steel”, “concrete”, “maintenance”, “storm drainage”



MAILED BALLOTING

Please Complete Your Ballot and Mail It Back Promptly

Method of Voting
To complete the enclosed ballot, mark the ball red ballpoint pen or "X". Each ballot will count as many votes as there are parcels listed on the ballot. Then sign the ballot, place it in the provided postage paid return envelope and mail or hand deliver it to:

Town Clerk's Office
Town of Moraga
329 Rheim Boulevard
Moraga, CA 94556

Only official ballots that are signed and marked with the property owner's name and address, and are received before 5:00 pm on Tuesday, May 15, 2018, will be counted.

The fee shall not be imposed if votes submitted in opposition of the fee exceed the votes submitted in favor of the fee. If a majority of votes submitted are in support, the fee may be levied beginning in fiscal year 2018-19 and continuing in future years, as authorized by the Town Council. It is to fund stormwater capital improvement projects, maintenance and operations and clean water and pollution control services.

If you lose your ballot, require a replacement ballot, or want to change your vote, call (925) 855-7626 for another ballot. See the enclosed ballot for additional instructions.

Public Information
Ballots will be obtained under the direction of the Town Clerk, at a location accessible to the public. The ballot will be available at 9:00 am on May 15, 2018 in the Public Information Room in the Town Hall at 329 Rheim Blvd. and between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm on the day of the ballot. The ballot is not expected to take more than one or two days. The ballot may be performed by technological methods including, but not limited to, paper and/or electronic methods (see enclosed ballot).

Additional Information
For additional information concerning the proposed fee, please contact: Edith Koval, Public Works Director, at (925) 855-7626 or by email at edith@moraga.ca.us or visit our website at www.moraga.ca.us/StormDrainFunding.

All Ballots Must Be Received Before 5:00 pm May 15, 2018 To Be Counted

Official Ballot Information Guide
Town of Moraga Stormwater Fee

Why Did You Receive This Ballot?
The Town of Moraga operates and maintains a storm drainage system comprised of an integrated system of storm drains, pipes, ditches, culverts, ditches and creeks. Much of the Town's storm drainage system is made up of pipes buried beneath our local streets, including some pipes that run under private properties. The state-of-the-art system has an expected life of approximately 50 years. The majority of the Town's storm drain pipes were installed approximately 50 years ago, and therefore, the system is approaching the end of its expected life. Moreover, some of the drainage system is undersized, and has inadequate capacity, which can result in local flooding.

What This Fee Would Provide
If approved by property owners, the proposed Storm Drainage fee will provide funding for:

- Capital Improvement Program - High Priority Projects
- Storm Drain Maintenance
- Storm Drain Operations

Moraga has experienced a number of catastrophic storm drainage system "failures" in the past several years which have disrupted the drainage system, caused traffic problems and negatively impacted the Town's financial situation. In 2014, the Town engaged engineering consultant of the Town's existing storm drainage infrastructure and capacity to develop a plan to address inadequacies. By resolution in 2015, the Town adopted the Moraga Storm Drain Master Plan ("SDMP") which recommended \$26 million in capital projects - with approximately \$9 million identified as high priority.

How Much is the Proposed Fee?
The total proposed fee for your property for fiscal year 2018-19 is printed on the Official Ballot enclosed with this notice and information guide. The annual fee for a single family home on a medium-sized lot (12,000 sq ft) is the most common fee, would be \$100.00. The total estimated revenue to be collected by the proposed Storm Drain Fee in fiscal year 2018-19 is \$10,000. The entire schedule of proposed Stormwater Fee rates is shown in the table below.

How the Fee is Determined
Moraga provides a service to all properties in the Town by collecting, conveying and managing all rainfall (e.g., stormwater) and urban runoff. The proposed Stormwater Fee is based on the quantity of water runoff generated by each parcel or category of parcel, which is proportional to the impervious surface (such as roof tops and pavement) found on the property or category of property. In some cases, storm drainage services are also provided by homeowners' associations, and a discount is provided in the Ordinance and the Stormwater Fee Report can be found on the Town's website at www.moraga.ca.us/StormCityFunding.

How Long will the Fee last?
There is no pre-determined date for this fee however, the Council must take action each year setting the rates for the following year.

Properties Subject to the Fee
All properties in the Town are subject to the fee except for parcels that do not include impervious surfaces (e.g. open space, agricultural, and undeveloped vacant).

Visit www.moraga.ca.us/StormDrainFunding For More Information

All Ballots Must Be Received Before 5:00 pm May 15, 2018 To Be Counted

Official Ballot Enclosed
FOR PROPERTY OWNERS IN THE TOWN OF MORAGA
FOR A PROPOSED STORMWATER FEE

Official Mail

Official Property Owner Ballot Enclosed
PLEASE OPEN IMMEDIATELY
MUST BE RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE MAY 15, 2018

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 901 FAIRFIELD CA
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

TOWN CLERK
TOWN OF MORAGA
329 RHEIM BLVD.
MORAGA, CA 94556

Official Property Owner Ballot
TOWN OF MORAGA STORMWATER FEE

To improve, upgrade and maintain the storm drain system to address:

- deteriorating pipes, infrastructure, and sinkholes which improve drainage,
- protect clean drinking water,
- reduce pollutants flowing into local creeks and the Bay, and
- prevent flooding that obstructs police and emergency access.

shall the Town of Moraga enact an annual stormwater fee in the amount listed on the other side of this ballot, with independent audits, citizens' oversight, and requiring all funds expended only on Moraga storm drains?

☐ YES, I approve the proposed annual stormwater fee.
☐ NO, I do not approve the proposed annual stormwater fee.

I hereby declare, under penalty of perjury, that I am the property owner or owner's authorized representative of the parcel(s) identified in this official ballot.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Signature of Resident Property Owner or Authorized Representative

Print Name: _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COMPLETION AND RETURN OF OFFICIAL BALLOTS
An explanation of who may complete the ballot on behalf of the recorded property owner and additional instructions are provided on the other side of this Official Property Owner Ballot. To be valid and properly completed, the ballot MUST be received by Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at 5:00 pm, at the Town Clerk's Office, 329 Rheim Boulevard, Moraga, CA 94556.
See www.moraga.ca.us/StormDrainFunding for more information.

1) Mail your ballot to the address shown on the enclosed return envelope so that it is received on or before May 15, 2018 by 5:00 pm.
2) Deliver it in person to the Town Clerk's Office at 329 Rheim Blvd., Moraga, CA 94556 by May 15, 2018 by 5:00 pm.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

20

For questions please contact me at

(707) 208-0940

john.bliss@sci-cg.com

OUTREACH EXAMPLES

What Service Improvements Will We See?

The most important service improvements will help us keep Austin Creek and other canals from clogging up with weeds and trash. Floodwaters can then move quickly out of the city to the Mare Island Strait.

We will also install trash removal devices and replace stormwater pipes that run under city streets.

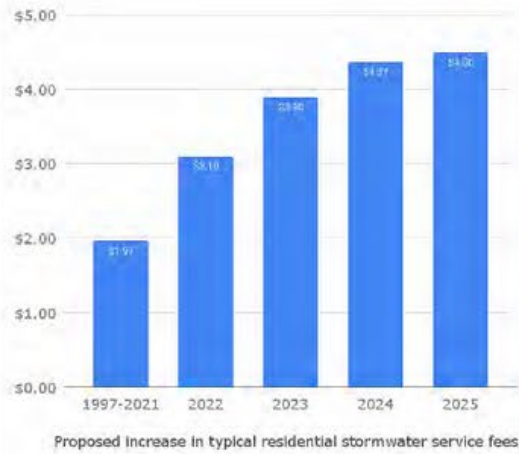


Residential Rates

If Vallejo property owners approve the proposed structure, the typical residential rate will gradually rise from \$1.97 per property per month to \$4.50 per month by 2027.

This service fee for typical residential properties has not increased since 1997. The proposed increase is necessary for the District to keep up with inflation, aging equipment, and new regulatory requirements.

As part of this proposal, financial assistance will be available to qualified low-income homeowners.



Business Rates

Broadly speaking, the business and commercial rate will rise by the same amount as residential rates. However, each business or commercial property pays a unique amount, depending on how much water drains from the site into the stormwater system.

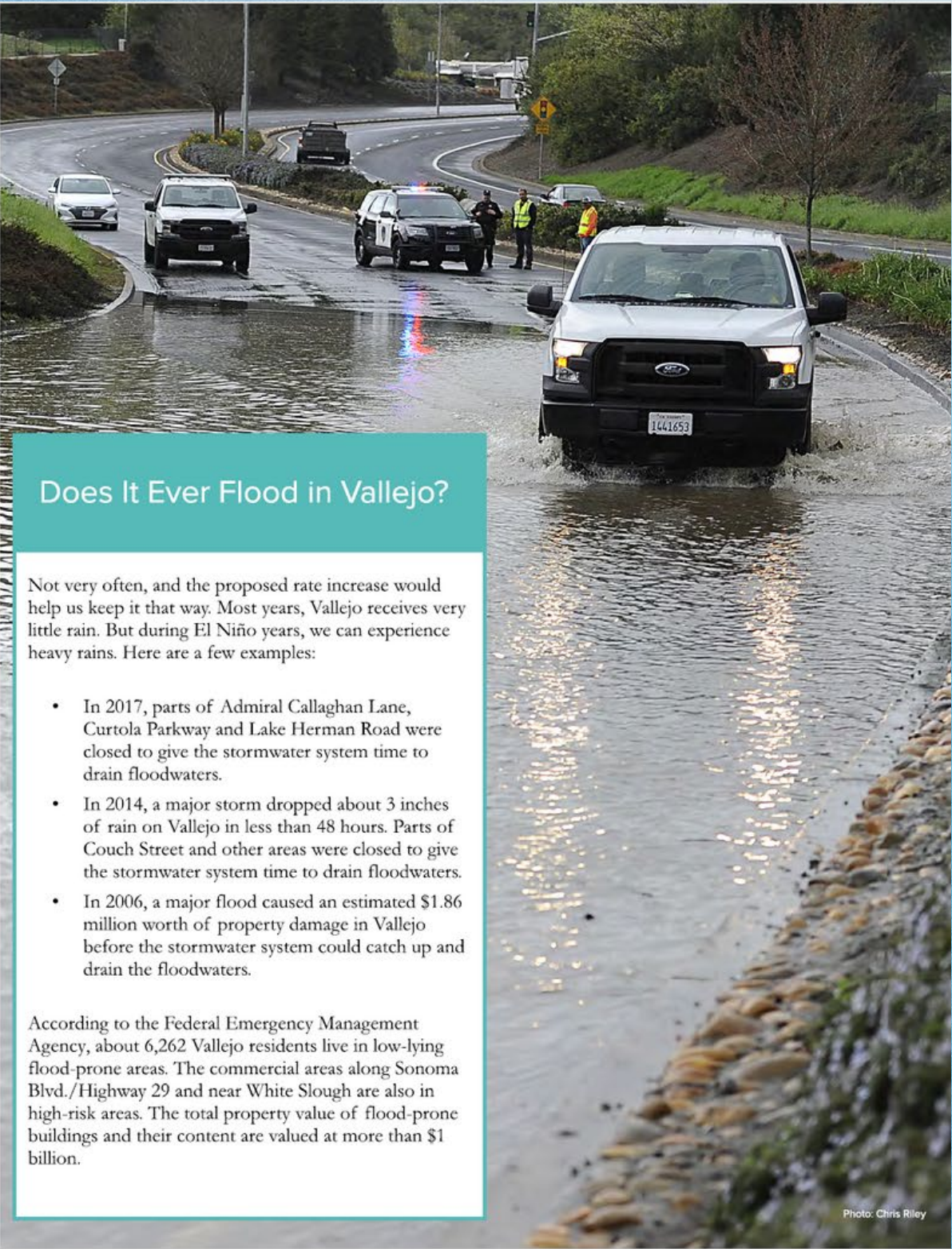
Example	Lot Size	Current Monthly Rate	Monthly Rate in 2027
A small business	8,000 square feet draining to the stormwater system	\$6.83	\$16.37
A medium-sized grocery store	23,000 square feet draining to the stormwater system	\$19.64	\$47.05
A big box store	400,000 square feet draining to the stormwater system	\$341.67	\$818.33

Does It Ever Flood in Vallejo?

Not very often, and the proposed rate increase would help us keep it that way. Most years, Vallejo receives very little rain. But during El Niño years, we can experience heavy rains. Here are a few examples:

- In 2017, parts of Admiral Callaghan Lane, Curtola Parkway and Lake Herman Road were closed to give the stormwater system time to drain floodwaters.
- In 2014, a major storm dropped about 3 inches of rain on Vallejo in less than 48 hours. Parts of Couch Street and other areas were closed to give the stormwater system time to drain floodwaters.
- In 2006, a major flood caused an estimated \$1.86 million worth of property damage in Vallejo before the stormwater system could catch up and drain the floodwaters.

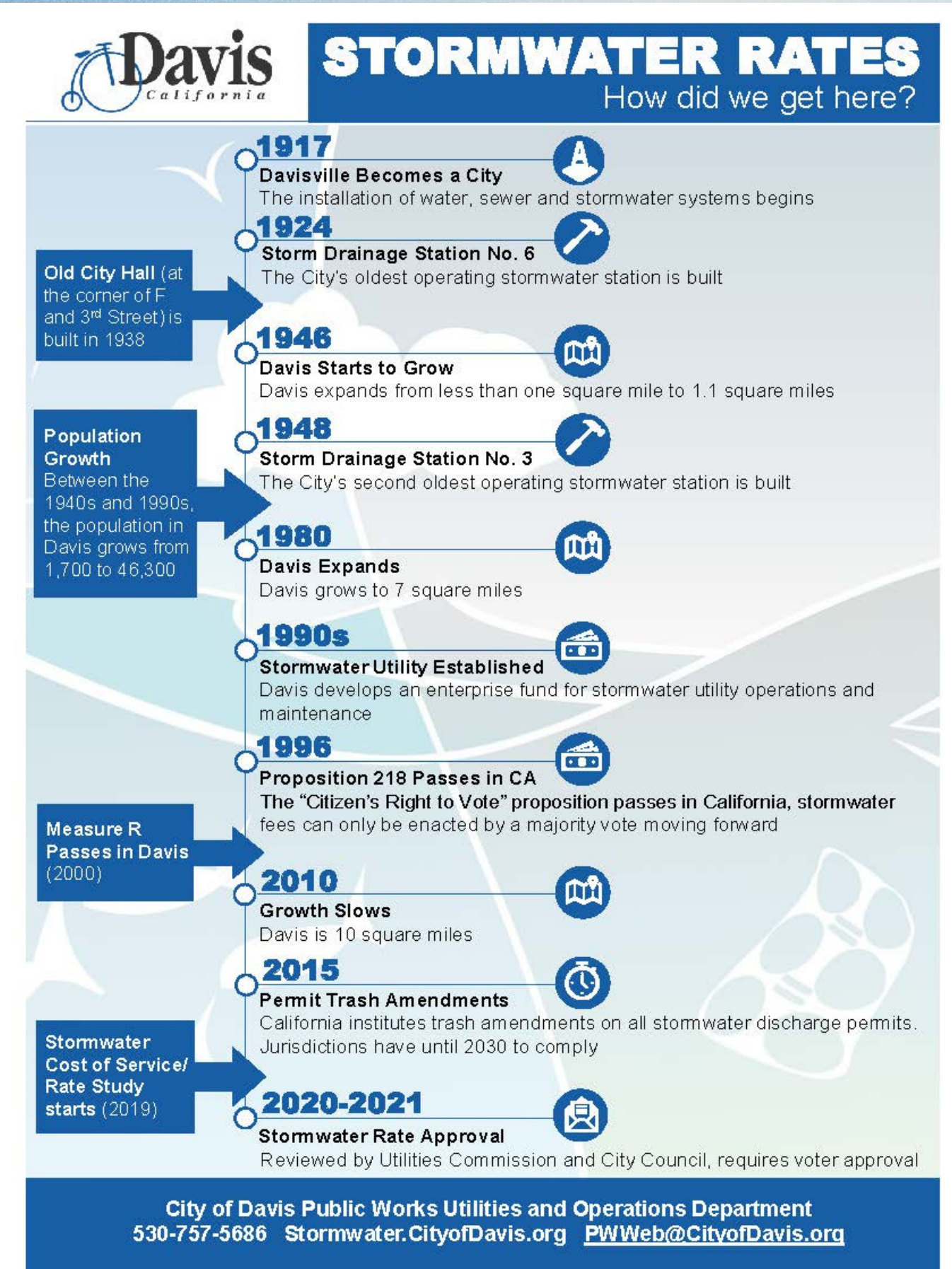
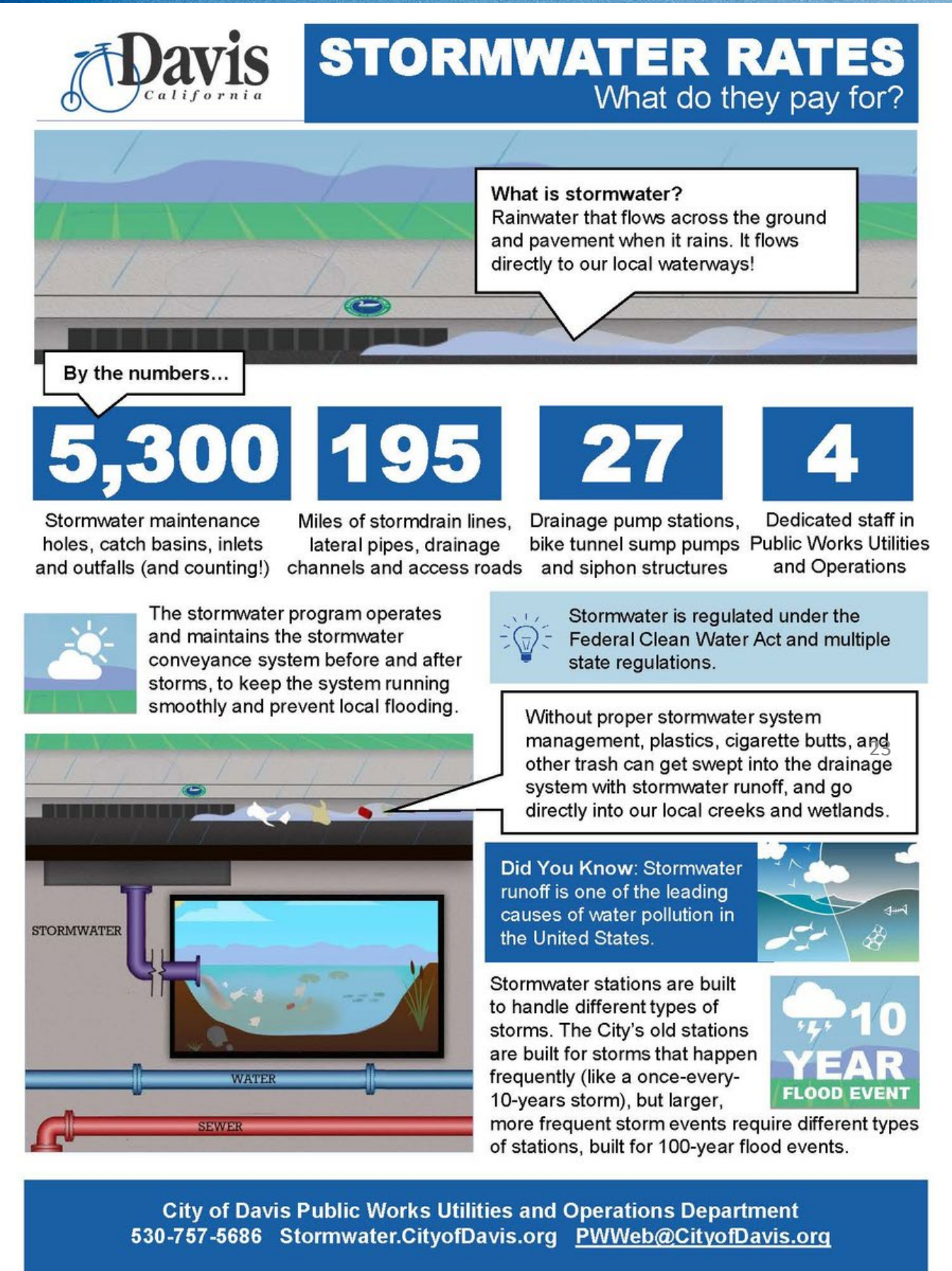
According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, about 6,262 Vallejo residents live in low-lying flood-prone areas. The commercial areas along Sonoma Blvd./Highway 29 and near White Slough are also in high-risk areas. The total property value of flood-prone buildings and their content are valued at more than \$1 billion.



OUTREACH EXAMPLES



OUTREACH EXAMPLES



OUTREACH EXAMPLES

