



# FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 STORMWATER ENTERPRISE FUND ANNUAL SNAPSHOT

August 15, 2024

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## **Background**

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-17, the Board of Commissioners adopted an ordinance establishing a Stormwater Enterprise Fund (SEF). The SEF is a utility that derives revenues from stormwater management fees. The intent of the utility is to address stormwater management needs within the Town of Swansboro's jurisdictional limits. These needs include construction, reconstruction, repair, enlargement, improvement, acquisition, maintenance, operation, administration, and use of the stormwater utility. This SEF Annual Snapshot is an opportunity for you to review the projects completed with SEF revenue, projects planned and the annual expenditures of the SEF.

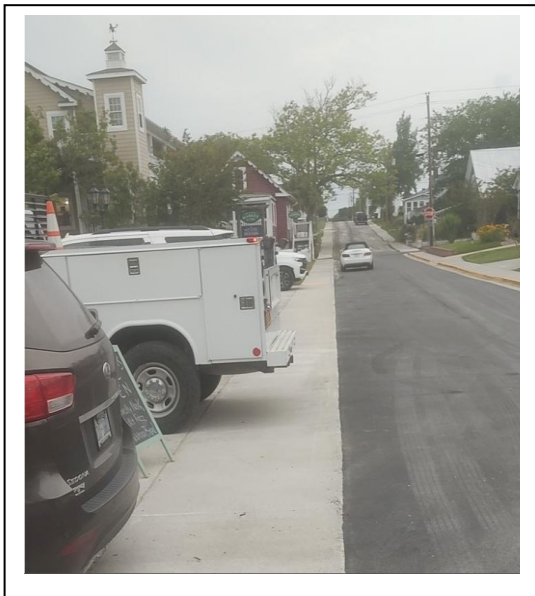
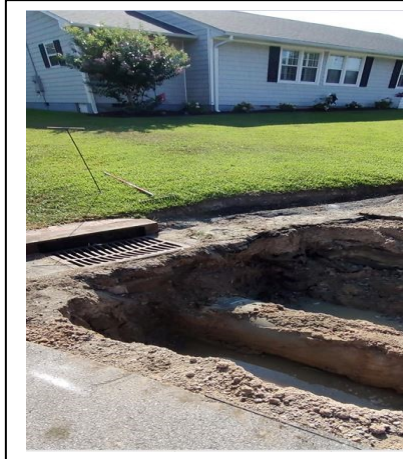
## **FY 2023-2024 Financial Results**

The FY 2023-2024 *budgeted* revenue and expenditures for the SEF was \$133,733. As of the Fourth Quarter Financial Status Report revenue collections totaled \$138,615; operating expenditures were \$84,817.

## **FY 2023-2024 Maintenance Efforts**

The Town of Swansboro now maintains an estimated 18.29 miles of storm drainage easements. The distance will substantially increase, due in part to a Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping and Assessment is being conducted by Withers-Ravenel. In FY 2023-2024, all known drainage easements received some level of maintenance by Public Works staff at least three times during the Fiscal Year. Those subdivisions include; Forest Brooke, Hall Creek North, Swansboro Acres, Swansboro Heights, Foster Creek, Deer Run, Park Place, River Reach, River Reach West, Oyster Bay, Pickets Bay, and The Villages. In total, 80 of the estimated 119 storm water easements for which the Town is responsible were maintained. Additionally, the remaining stormwater easements throughout the Town were inspected, cleared and graded as necessary, in a continuing effort to improve the flow of stormwater out of the easements and pipes. The goal is to move stormwater away from the subdivisions, roadways and structures that could be negatively affected due to flooding. As a matter of reference, we were only able to address 1.18 miles of drainage easements during fiscal year 2016-2017 before enacting the Stormwater Fee. The fee has allowed Town staff to increase their ability to handle these efforts. As stated in previous versions of this report, "At this present pace, this reduces the overall time to maintain all the Town's easements from 12.19 years to 2.20 years."

Site specific projects completed in FY 2023-2024 with SEF revenue include: replacing the underground stormwater pipe at the west end of Shore Drive, redesigning and improving the stormwater drains and catch basins on both ends of the underground stormwater pipe on Shore Drive.



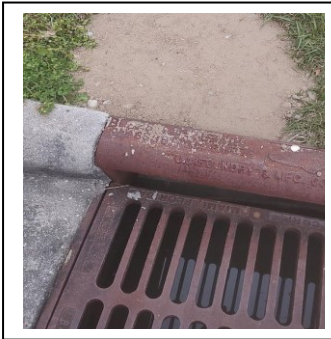
The repairing of a portion of Church Street that had deteriorated due to a previously unknown, underground storm water pipe that had been buried under an adjacent parking lot, 25 years prior, and had become compromised, causing serious erosion underneath the street and parking lot.







In FY 23/24, the Board of Commissioners accepted street & sidewalk maintenance in Charleston Park. Poor and nonfunctioning street drainage in several locations produced safety issues needing immediate remediation.



## Stormwater Grants/Loans

Since Swansboro adopted its Watershed Restoration Plan in 2017 (**Figure 1**), it has been able to work with the North Carolina Coastal Federation to secure funding grants from the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) 319 Grant Program administered by the NC Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to install stormwater retrofit projects to work toward plan implementation. Additionally, the Town of Swansboro was awarded a \$400,000 Planning Grant through the NCDEQ, Division of Water Infrastructure, Local Assistance for Stormwater Infrastructure Investment Program (LASII).



**Figure 1 – Swansboro Watershed Map**  
**Source: Swansboro Watershed Restoration Plan**

The scope of the Project includes conducting an assessment of all stormwater assets, develop a priority list of assets that require reconstruction, redesign, critical maintenance, corrective maintenance and routine maintenance, and finally an accurate and up to date map of all stormwater facilities maintained by the Town.

**Five-year Stormwater Plan/Status**

Specific Action	Project Status
Secure funds for retrofits in Swansboro Watersheds (Figure 1- previous page) and determine the volume that can be reduced with funds.	Installation of rain barrels on Town properties where applicable (installed at Public Safety and Public Works)
Review capital improvement projects that are planned for the next five years to consider the incorporation of stormwater reduction designs.	Multi-use paths/sidewalk construction. NCDCM Coastal Communities Program Grant – Sidewalk Priorities 1, 2, and 4 completed along NC24, Old Hammock Road and Hammocks Beach Road through assistance by the Town, NCDOT and the State (local legislators).
Prioritize retrofits for public town buildings that can serve as demonstration sites for stormwater retrofits.	Completed Retrofits at Town Hall Campus, Ward Shore and Walnut Street Retrofit completed.
Install stormwater reduction measures on the Town streets, rights-of-ways, buildings, parking lots and drainage systems and other public properties.	Ward Shore (portions of Water Street removed and replaced with pervious Eco-Raster Parking Spaces); Engineer/Design underway completed for Board/Elm Streets through NC RCCP Ph. 3 funding, installation of bioretention swales on town stormwater easements where applicable.
Pursue strategy with NCDOT to incorporate retrofits into highways. Pursue strategy with NCDOT that any new road upgrade or maintenance plans includes plans for reducing stormwater runoff.	Strategies underway and in discussion with DEQ on future planned sidewalks/multi-use paths particularly on Hammock Beach Road. The medians along the Highway 24 Corridor can be used as collection for stormwater through similar rain garden/vegetation practices – on NCDOT list as superstreet design
Evaluate existing stormwater systems on public properties for potential volume reduction enhancements and if feasible, retrofit them to achieve volume reduction.	Phase II Parking Lot @ Town Hall Campus completed.

## **EQUIPMENT PURCHASES**

In FY 2024-2025, the Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of a Non-CDL Vacuum truck that will provide the Public Works Department with the capability to camera, flush out and clear any underground stormwater pipe that the Town is responsible for maintaining. The equipment will be used for stormwater maintenance due to the number of stormwater easements that need to be re-profiled.

## **FY 2023-2024 Financial Outlook**

As previously mentioned, anticipated revenues for FY 2023-2024 close-out are \$138,615. The decrease in the original budgeted amount from the previous year’s report was due to bill adjustments.

## **FY 2024-2025 Maintenance Plan**

The maintenance plan for the coming year will include continued upkeep of the town’s drainage easements and complaint mitigation. The Town has partnered with NCDOT to maintain ditch and drainage infrastructure along DOT rights-of-way in town through a reimbursement contract. Not only does this assist in controlling stormwater but it provides a more aesthetically pleasing roadside. Town staff has also scheduled maintenance work in the following areas for FY 2024-2025:

- River Reach West Subdivision reconstruction of a stormwater easement.
- Prioritization of stormwater easement cleaning and maintenance to include:
  - Halls Branch 1.18 miles
  - Jones Funeral Home easement .13 miles
  - Deer Run to Main Street Extension under road pipes and marsh area.13 miles
  - River Reach West/Tasha Terrace easement .03 miles
- River Reach West stormwater easement cleaning and maintenance

## **Fee Structure/Comparison and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s)**

### **CURRENT STORMWATER FEE STRUCTURE WITH APPLICABLE CREDITS**

<b>Residential</b> <i>(Based on square foot size of the home)</i>		<b>Lump Sum Payment Credit</b>	<b>*Watershed Credit</b>
	\$5.00/month or \$60/annual	\$55/annual	\$50/annual
<b>Commercial Tier</b> <i>(Based on impervious surface area)</i>			
<b>Minimum Fee \$5.00/month or .01/SF, whichever is greater</b>		<b>Lump Sum Payment</b>	<b>*Approved BMP</b>
<i>Example 10,000 SF of impervious surface = \$8.33/month or \$100/annual</i>		<i>\$91.67/annual</i>	<i>\$83.34/annual</i>

*\*Subject to the Adopted Credit Manual for Stormwater Fees*

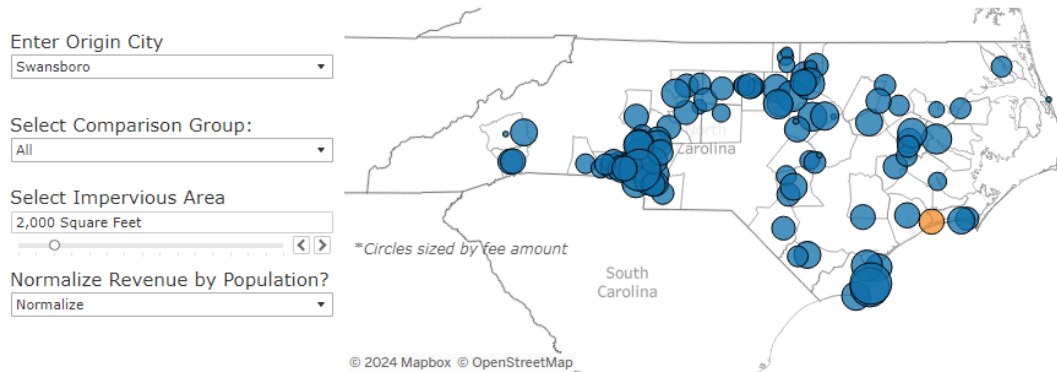
**FAQ's**

*Question: How does Swansboro's SEF fee compare to other communities in NC?*

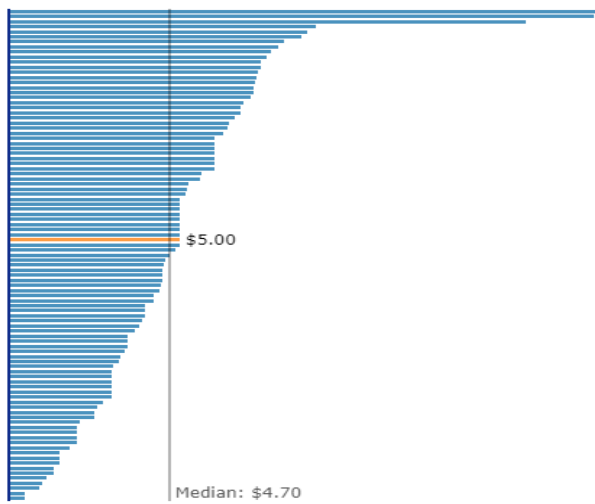
*Answer:*

Source: <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/efcatunc/viz/23-24NCResidentialStormwaterFeeDashboard/StormwaterDashboard>

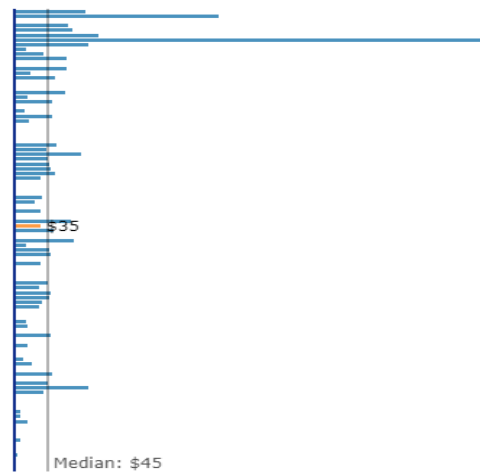
**2023-2024 NC Residential Stormwater  
 Utility Fee Dashboard**  
 Fees as of January 1, 2023



**Fees Across Comparison Group**



**Revenue Across Comparison Group**



Data Source: 2023 North Carolina Stormwater Fee Survey: Environmental Finance Center at the University of North Carolina School of Government



Utility / Fee Structure	Fee	2019 Utility Operating Revenue <sup>1</sup>	Median Household Income <sup>2</sup>	Estimated Service Population <sup>2</sup>	Total Number of Dwelling Units <sup>2</sup>
Swansboro	\$5.00	\$102,549	\$48,922	3,217	1,493
Median Comparison	\$4.50	\$486,484	\$51,545	13,908	5856

*Question: What are Stormwater Enterprise Fund fees used for?*

*Answer: Stormwater Enterprise Fund fees are dedicated exclusively to stormwater management activities throughout the entire Town.*

*Question: Who is responsible for neighborhood detention and retention pond maintenance?*

*Answers:*

- *The Homeowners Association or the developer is typically responsible for maintaining neighborhood detention and retention ponds.*
- *For unfinished subdivision ponds, the developer or the bank holding the lots is responsible.*

*Question: When will the easements in our neighborhood be cleared?*

*Answer: Easement clearing is based largely on the amount of flooding caused due to blockage, overgrowth, neglect or overall impact (i.e., Halls Branch is the largest and longest stormwater easement in town, approximately one mile). It is cleared on a yearly basis due to the number of properties affected if left unattended. If the easement is not causing flooding, clearing can be either complaint driven or due to its overall unsightliness.*

*Question: How are stormwater projects prioritized?*

*Answer: Stormwater projects are prioritized by what is most beneficial and cost effective to the town.*

*Question: Whom do you contact if stormwater/drainage is backing up on my property?*

*Answer: Immediately contact the Town of Swansboro at (910)326-4428 or email Public Works Director Gerald “Tank” Bates at [gbates@ci.swansboro.nc.us](mailto:gbates@ci.swansboro.nc.us)*



*Question: Whom do you contact about stormwater/drainage maintenance or questions regarding if a drainage easement is private or owned by the Town?*

*Answer: Contact the Town of Swansboro at (910)326-4428 or email Public Works Director Gerald “Tank” Bates at [gbates@ci.swansboro.nc.us](mailto:gbates@ci.swansboro.nc.us)*

## **Closing**

Staff continues to audit the stormwater utility by evaluating accounts and performing site visits. Remember you can help the Town’s efforts by removing debris from ditches or yards, maintaining drainage ditches on private property, maintaining or cleaning curbs/gutters, and cleaning or mowing roadside ditches adjacent to your property.

The Stormwater Ordinance allows customers to receive credits towards the utility bill. A goal of the Watershed Restoration Plan is to offer a discount to residential property owners who reduce the volume of runoff discharged from their home site.

In addition, a credit can be achieved by all property owners for payment of the annual fee in full. Commercial properties that have an approved best management practice (BMP) may qualify for an additional credit and additional credits for approved LID techniques.

*For all stormwater related information and to obtain a copy of the manual and application, please contact Sonia Johnson at [sjohnson@ci.swansboro.nc.us](mailto:sjohnson@ci.swansboro.nc.us) (910)326-4428*