INFORMAL REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

No. 23-0759

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To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

October 10, 2023



SUBJECT: FISCAL YEAR 24 STORMWATER UTILITY FEE INCREASE

In advance of the Stormwater Utility Fee increase coming before Council for final approval upcoming on October 31, 2023, which follows the initial positive reception during the FY 24 Budget deliberations, this report provides City Council with a summary of the adoption process and reminder of what the fee increase will fund. The memo below also shares the communication plan leading up to the new fee taking effect on January 1, 2024.

The original August 24, 2023 Budget Work Session presentation on the proposed fee increase is attached for reference. There was a subsequent Budget Response issued on September 7, BR-24-7, that addressed Council questions for *acceleration* of proposed flood mitigation improvements and the Stormwater fee credit policy.

What the Fee Increase will Fund

The 15% Stormwater Utility fee increase will be split roughly 50/50 between capital and maintenance needs and will bring in an estimated additional \$5.9M in FY24 and \$7.7M in FY25. The fee increase will provide the capacity to issue an estimated \$160M of debt in 4 tranches over 12 years, to address high priority capital flood mitigation improvements. The improvements funded by the fee increase will reduce flooding and emergency response, provide for more effective asset management, increase maintenance service levels reducing the need for costly capital projects, improve public safety and quality of life, and save the City and residents money.

Capital Flood Mitigation Improvements

Additional revenue from the fee increase will provide funding for Phase 1 of high priority flood mitigation improvements in the Upper Lebow, Linwood / W. 7th, and Berry / McCart areas.

Future funding will be needed to continue to implement phased flood mitigation improvements in these areas, and to accelerate project delivery. The 15% increase will construct the initial Phase 1 improvements by FY38 and leaves the remaining phases to complete the overall projects unfunded. The Sept. 7, 2023 Budget Response (No. 24-017) shows how flood mitigation improvements could be accelerated with additional Stormwater Utility fee increases in future fiscal years. Additionally, the Stormwater Program is evaluating grant opportunities and the potential creation of a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District in the Linwood / W. 7th area, which could also help advance flood mitigation improvements in a more timely fashion.

Project development for Upper Lebow and Linwood / W. 7th was initiated in June 2023. Project development for the Berry / McCart improvements will kick off in Fall 2023, after the review and evaluation of recently received Statements of Qualifications and contract negotiation.

Based on a combination of planning level estimated project costs, the necessary project development work efforts to identify feasible project phases, and the availability of estimated new revenue, the design and construction of Phase 1 improvements is expected to take place according to the estimated timeframes in the table below. Project components, design and construction phasing and cost estimates will be refined during project development.

ISSUED BY THE CITY MANAGER

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

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Proposed Capital Flood Mitigation Improvements	Est. Cost of Overall Project (in 2023 dollars)	Est. Begin Detailed Design	Est. Begin Construction	Est. Future Funding Needed	
Upper Lebow	\$75M	Phase 1a – FY25 Phase 1b – FY32	Phase 1a – FY26 Phase 1b – FY33	\$50M	
		Phase 1c – FY35	Phase 1c – FY36		
Linwood / West 7th* \$110M Phas Phas		Phase 1a – FY26 Phase 1b – FY35	Phase 1a – FY27 Phase 1b – FY37	\$41M	
Berry / McCart	\$40M	Phase 1a – FY29 Phase 1b – FY32	Phase 1a – FY30 Phase 1b – FY33	\$16M	

Note: Cost and funding values are 2023 dollars

More information about the improvements above can be found in the attached presentation. Specifically, Slide 36 shows the estimated delivery plan based on utility fee revenue projections, estimated debt sale interest rates, and project development to define capital components, design and construction phasing and cost estimates in more detail.

Maintenance Service Level Improvements

Additional revenue from the fee increase will be used to implement a 5-year plan to improve service levels. The maintenance funding would go towards our highest current needs to increasing our rate of pipe condition assessments and increasing pipe/structure repairs and channel maintenance. The 5-year plan to fund and implement these service levels will be through the below planned improvements.

- Culvert Inspection and Cleaning (FY24)
- Pre-condition Assessment Inspection and Cleaning (FY24)
- Additional Pipe Repair (FY27)
- Additional Channel Maintenance (FY27)
- Additional Condition Assessment (FY28)

More information about the improvements above can be found in the attached presentation. The benefits of improving the above maintenance service levels include: city-wide data collection, flood mitigation, and keeping infrastructure in good condition to reduce costly capital funding needs in the future

During implementation of the 5-year plan from this fee revenue, other maintenance backlog needs will continue to be evaluated. The importance of continued maintenance funding cannot be overstated, and the program will continue to prioritize addressing the backlog of needs for aged infrastructure, and the growing asset inventory from development growth.

Communications About Fee Increase

Information about the proposed fee increase was included in the sixteen FY24 budget public meetings in addition to City News stories. The Stormwater Program webpage also includes information about the fee

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increase, including a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document at: <u>https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/departments/tpw/stormwater</u>

Section 552.045 (c) and (d) of the Local Government Code requires publication of any intended revision to a municipality's schedule of drainage charges three times prior to a public hearing and adoption of rates with the first posting at least 30 days before a public hearing. Staff have published notification of an October 31, 2023 public hearing along with the proposed ordinance in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* on September 22, 2023, September 29, 2023 and October 6, 2023.

After the October 31, 2023 public hearing, letters will be mailed to the top twenty rate payers and independent school districts about the rate increase. These letters will include information about the Stormwater Utility Fee Credit policy and how to get more information on the program and opportunities to potentially reduce their fee.

Additionally, information about the fee increase will be included in the City Times insert included in water bills, mailed citywide in December, and also posted on the Water Department webpage, for communicating with their online only payment customers. City News and social media will also be utilized to communicate about the increase this fall, in addition to posting notifications at locations where water bills can be paid in-person. Notifications sent via the Community Engagement Office will include emails through govdelivery, notification posted citywide on Next Door, and emails to citywide Neighborhood Association leaders to disseminate to their member database. Other Community Engagement opportunities are to include distributing/posting FAQs at Library and Community Centers.

Information about the fee increase will be provided to the City Call Center, Water Billing representatives, and Stormwater Customer Service representatives so that questions about the increase can be quickly responded to.

Questions about this Informal Report can be directed to Jennifer Dyke, TPW Assistant Director of Stormwater Management at 817-392-2714.

David Cooke City Manager



Stormwater Flood Mitigation and Maintenance Needs

August 24, 2023 Council Budget Work Session

Jennifer Dyke- Assistant Director

Stephen Nichols- Stormwater Program Manager

Lane Zarate-Assistant Director

Transportation & Public Works, Stormwater Management





- Stormwater Program Background and Needs
- Proposed Stormwater Utility Fee Increase
 - Capital Flood Mitigation Improvements
 - Maintenance Service Level Improvements



Stormwater Program Background and Needs

Why was the Stormwater Utility Created?

2004 - Five fatalities due to flooded roadways and significant flooding to 300 homes and businesses
2006 - Utility created to provide dedicated funding to address stormwater needs



Westcliff June 2004

> Berry Street Urban Village June 2004





April 2004 - 3 fatalities E Butler St & McClure St



Working to Achieve Council's Strategic Vision

Strategic Vision Priorities



Stormwater Program Mission- To Protect People and Property from Harmful Stormwater Runoff

Primary Functions

- Maintain Infrastructure (pipes, channels, etc.)
- Mitigate Hazards (flooding and erosion)
- Warn about Hazards (flooding and erosion)
- **<u>Review Development</u>** (compliance with City standards)



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Stormwater Program- Highest Priority Needs

- Current Stormwater Utility Fee revenue is not sufficient for capital and maintenance needs
- Infrastructure condition is not all known
- Asset growth and responsibilities increase annually

Most Common Asset Types	Estimated Asset Class Health/Score	Current Citywide Est. Units	Total Estimated Cost to Address Critical Capital Needs	FY23-27 Paygo + Bond	Est. Annual Maintenance Needs	Annual Maintenance Funding Amount
Road culverts at channels/creeks	C minus: Mediocre to Poor	~4,000	Major: \$600M - \$1B Safety: \$40M - \$50M	\$36.63M	\$670,000	\$343,000
Storm Drain Pipes- condition & capacity	D: Poor. At risk.	~ 950 miles	>\$1B	\$36.06M	\$3.5M	\$1.4M
Channels	C: Mediocre. Requires attention	~ 230 miles	\$280M - \$480M	\$7.93M	\$6.4M	\$2.2M

Estimate are 2022 dollars

>\$1.9B to >\$2.5B

\$80.6M

\$10.6M

\$3.7M

What will it take to make our community safer from flooding?

Combination of:

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- Stormwater Utility Fee Increases
- Tax Increment Finance District Funding
- Partnerships
- Potential Grants (historically not easy to get for stormwater projects)
 - FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance
 - Texas State Flood Plan- Flood Infrastructure Fund
 - Safe Streets and Roads for All



Proposed FY24 Fee Increase



Benefits	
Reduce flooding and emergency response	\sim
More effective Asset Management	\sim
Increase maintenance service levels reducing the need for costly capital projects	\checkmark
Improve public safety & quality of life	\checkmark
Save the City & residents money	\checkmark

Proposed FY24 Stormwater Utility Fee Increase

- 15% fee increase split 50/50 between Capital and Maintenance
- Texas Stormwater Utility Fee benchmarking shows our current fee is just above the TX average, while a 15% increase would bring us just below Dallas while remaining less than Arlington and Austin
- Increased revenue with fee increase:

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- FY24 (9 months- New fee would take effect Jan. 2024) ~\$5.9m
- FY25 (full fiscal year) ~\$7.7m
- Provides capacity to issue ~\$160m debt in 4 tranches for capital flood mitigation improvements

Rate Payer Impact

all i ayu impau		Current	Monthly			
	Rate Payers	Monthly Payment \$5.75/billing unit/mth	Payment Increase \$6.61/billing unit/mth	Current Annual Payment	Annual Payment Increase	New Annual Payment With 15% Increase
	Average Single Family Homeowner	\$5.75	\$0.8625	\$69.00	\$10.35	\$79.35
	Sample Small Commercial (1 acre of impervious cover)	\$96.33	\$14.45	\$1,156.00	\$173.40	\$1,329.40
	Sample Medium Commercial (10 acre of impervious cover)	\$963.33	\$144.50	\$11,560.00	\$1,734.00	\$13,294.00
	Top 20 Rate-Payers					
1	City of Fort Worth	\$81,599	\$12,240	\$979,191	\$146,879	\$1,126,070
2	FWISD	\$58,517	\$8,778	\$702,202	\$105,330	\$807,532
3	Walmart	\$23,784	\$3,568	\$285,402	\$42,810	\$328,212
4	Keller ISD	\$22,736	\$3,410	\$272,832	\$40,925	\$313,757
5	Northwest ISD	\$19,646	\$2,947	\$235,756	\$35,363	\$271,119
6	Eagle Mountain Saginaw ISD	\$18,493	\$2,774	\$221,920	\$33,288	\$255,208
7	FEDEX	\$17,800	\$2,670	\$213,604	\$32,041	\$245,645
8	AT Industrial Owner 1 LLC	\$16,986	\$2,548	\$203,826	\$30,574	\$234,400
9	Bell Helicopter	\$14,349	\$2,152	\$172,193	\$25,829	\$198,022
10	TD Industries Inc.	\$13,513	\$2,027	\$162,151	\$24,323	\$186,474
11	Mercantile Partners	\$13,358	\$2,004	\$160,290	\$24,044	\$184,334
12	Crowley ISD	\$12,608	\$1,891	\$151,290	\$22,694	\$173,984
13	Tarrant County	\$11,335	\$1,700	\$136,025	\$20,404	\$156,429
14	Kroger	\$10,984	\$1,648	\$131,803	\$19,770	\$151,573
15	American Airlines	\$10,921	\$1,638	\$131,056	\$19,658	\$150,714
16	Alcon Labratories Inc	\$9,840	\$1,476	\$118,080	\$17,712	\$135,792
17	Alliance Towncenter Investors	\$9,529	\$1,429	\$114,345	\$17,152	\$131,497
18	All Storage	\$8,456	\$1,268	\$101,476	\$15,221	\$116,697
19	Fort Worth Federal Center	\$7,885	\$1,183	\$94,616	\$14,192	\$108,808
20	Dallas Fort Worth Auto Auction	\$7,873	\$1,181	\$94,477	\$14,172	\$108,649

Stormwater Fee credits available for non-residential & high occupancy residential property owners



2024 Rate Increase by 15 Percent

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Calculated Using 2022 Average Residential Transaction Rate

Affordability for Single Family Residential

Single family residents would pay < 0.4% / year as a percentage of median income with the 15% fee increase





Large Scale Flood Mitigation





Current Capital Program FY 24-28 Pay-Go Allocation



Total FY 24-28 Pay-Go Funding ~\$78.32M without the proposed FY24 Fee Increase

- Total Funding for design and construction ~\$58.95M (~\$12M/year)
- Total Funding for other categories and non-construction ~\$19.37M

⁽ Minor Office, Heavy Equipment, etc...) 17%

Current Revenue Bond Program

Capital Delivery Goals

Project Type	Critical Needs	6.5% Fee Increase Total Delivery (\$96M Debt & PayGo)	
Hazardous Road Overtopping Mitigation (Major & Safety Improvements)	`~ 100 Locations	38 Locations	
Pipe Rehabilitation	~ 80 Miles	60 Projects **	
Channel Restoration	~ 22 Miles Known	1.8 Miles	
Phase of Major Flood Mitigation (project development, design & construct)	??	3	
Major Flood Mitigation – Project Development Only	??	3 Projects	
FW Central City (FWCC)	NA	6 Projects ***	

2019 fee increase of 6.5% (Effective Jan 2020) provides for:

- \$96.25M Total Debt Issuance
- \$78.32M FY24-28 Capital Pay-go

\$53M debt issued in FY21

o Est. 2Q 2024 100% encumbered

\$43.25M debt issued in FY23 (6/23)

• Est. 1Q 2028 100% encumbered

** Reporting for these changed to # of projects vs. miles

*** Funded via Commercial Paper, Tarrant Regional Water District Reimbursable

Reported Flooding Aug. 21-22, 2022

52 flooded structures
22 high water rescues

- 237 flooded vehicles
 - 58 overtopped road locations
 - 36 fire/police response



Large Scale Flood Mitigation Needs

Goal: <u>Begin</u> to tackle large scale flooding problems in known problem areas

Initial Improvement Needs: ~\$225M Est. Target Need

Project	Estimated Cost of Overall Project	Est. Phase 1 Funding	Est. Future Funding	CD
Upper Lebow	\$75M	\$25M	\$50M	2
Linwood / W. 7th	\$110M	\$69M	\$41M	9
Berry / McCart	\$40M	\$24M	\$16M	9

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Notes:

- 1. All cost and funding values are 2023 dollars (\$)
- 2. Phase 1 funding and project delivery projections consider a 5% annual cost inflation and that revenues are collected, and contracts are awarded, between FY24 and FY37
- 3. Project components, design & construction phasing, and cost estimates to be refined during upcoming Project Development (currently based on high level planning)

Upper Lebow

Overall Project Benefits

- Improve 8 hazardous road crossings to 100yr level of service (flashers currently)
- Mitigates ~130 structures ~100yr flood risk
 - ~ 33 structures already purchased
 - Recreational opportunities potentially at detention basin*





Funded with Proposed FY24
Stormwater Utility Fee IncreaseRemaining PhasesPhase 1a in FY25
Phase 1b in FY32
Phase 1c in FY35\$50M



* Upper Lebow detention funded with FY23 Bond funds

Project components, design & construction phasing, and cost estimates to be refined during upcoming Project Development.

Linwood / W. 7th

Overall Project Benefits

- Mitigates 100yr flood risk for ~40 structures
- Partially mitigates flood risk for ~200 structures

Proposed Improvements

- ~ \$110M
- 2 major underground bypasses and outfalls
- ~(+\$155M)
- Optional Future Pump Station for Baileys Sump (not included in table)

Funded with Proposed FY24 Stormwater Utility Fee Increase Phase 1a in FY26 Phase 1b in FY35



Remaining Phases

\$41M (excludes pump station)

Project components, design & construction phasing, and cost estimates to be refined during upcoming Project Development.

Berry / McCart

Overall Project Benefits

- 5 year:
 - Reduces flood depth by 2.8 ft @ Berry St
 - Mitigates ~40 structures for 5yr flood risk
- 100 year:
 - Reduces flood depth by 3.4 ft @ Berry St
 - Mitigates ~ 50 structures for 100yr flood





Funded with Proposed	<u>Remaining</u>
FY24 Stormwater Utility Fee Increase	<u>Phases</u>
Phase 1a in FY29	
Phase 1b in FY32	\$16M

Project components, design & construction phasing, and cost estimates to be refined during upcoming Project Development. 20



* One Structure = 40 Structures

100 Year Flood Mitigation & Varied Flood Mitigation

Current Varied Flood Mitigation



* One Structure = 40 Structures

~440 structures benefited by three overall projects





Maintenance

Improves Asset Performance, Reducing Flood Risk City-Wide Reduces City Cost by Keeping the Good Assets Good Reduces Contracted Work, Frees up Capital Funds

Existing Maintenance Program

- Proactive Inlet/CCTV Programs ~ 30,000 Inlets
- Concrete Repairs ~ 1,000 miles

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- Channel / Ditches ~ 230 miles
- Vegetation / Mowing ~ 520 Acres
- Emergency Response ~ 12 Events



Total 2022 Expenditure = \$7,165,760

5 Year Plan with 15% Fee Increase

	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28
ESTIMATED REVENUE FROM 15% FEE INCREASE	\$5,970,586	\$7,691,576	\$7,960,782	\$8,239,409	\$8,527,788
MAINTENANCE FUNDING AVAILABLE (50%)	\$2,985,293	\$3,845,788	\$3,980,391	\$4,119,705	\$4,263,894
Channel Maintenance (CapEx)		\$2,204,800	\$682,560		
Channel Maintenance (O & M)				\$1,059,424	\$1,097,260
CCTV Inspection/Cleaning Team (CapEx)	\$1,070,000				
CCTV Inspection/Cleaning Team (O & M)	\$881,888	\$916,897	\$800,963	\$830,628	\$860,293
Additional CCTV Crew (CapEx)			\$486,000		
Additional CCTV Crew (O & M)					\$276,956
Proactive Culvert Program (CapEx)	\$460,000	\$52,000			
Proactive Culvert Program (O & M)	\$500,216	\$520,045	\$447,166	\$463,728	\$480,290
Pipe Rehab Repairs Additional Crew (CapEx)			\$1,190,160		
Pipe Rehab Repairs Additional Crew (O & M)				\$1,402,980	\$1,453,086
TOTAL FUNDING USED	\$2,912,104	\$3,693,742	\$3,606,849	\$3,756,760	\$4,167,887

Unused Maintenance Funds Can Roll-Over to Capital

The Remaining Roll-Over Amount Increases after First Five Years

Culvert Inspection and Clearing Team

Problem:

- Sediment Accumulation or Blockages, Result in Dangerous Roadway Overtoppings and Property Flooding.
- The City Has 4,000 Culverts City-wide, But We Only Inspect 200 a Year And Clean 360 a Year
- Developers Are Limited to Not Using Medium Size Culverts Because We Don't Have the Right Equipment to Clean them Safely.

FY24 Solution:

- Add a 5 Person Dedicated Team to Inspect and Clean Culverts.
- Purchase Needed Remote Controlled Equipment and Remove Developer Restrictions.

Fee Increase Funded Cost: \$960K

Benefits of Funding:

- Reduces Risk of Hazardous Roadway Overtopping.
- Will Allow For Proactive Culvert Inspection.
- Minimize Expensive and Time-Consuming Emergencies.
- Allow for Safe Maintenance of All Existing Culvert Sizes.
- Improve Economic Development By Reducing Developer Costs.
- Accelerates Removal of Sediment and Debris







1,400 Proposed Culverts Inspected/ Year





* One Inspection = 200 Inspections

Current Vs. Proposed Culvert Inspection & Cleaning

360 Current Culverts Cleaned / Year



500 Proposed Feet Cleaned / Year

* One Cleaning = 100 Cleanings

Pre-CCTV Pipe Inspection and Cleaning

Problem:

- The New In-house CCTV Program is Cost-effective and Reduces the Risk, But the Program's Limiting Factor is Inspecting and Cleaning in Advance of CCTV Operators.
- Unknown Pipe Blockages Results in Stopping and Re-mobilizing Multiples Times.

FY24 Solution: Add a 7 Person Dedicated Team to Inspect, Clean and Proactively Plan Ahead of CCTV Operators.

Fee Increase Funded Cost: \$2M

Benefits of Funding :

- Reduces Cost by 44% = \$558,360 Annually
- CCTV Assessments Support the Storm Drain Rehab.
- Reduce City Risk of Issues Like Sink-Hole Voids
- Improves CCTV Program Efficiency
- Increases our 10% Asset Condition Information.
- Accelerate Removal of Trash and Debris from Pipes







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* One Inspector = 52,800 Feet of Pre-Inspection

Pre-CCTV Pipe Inspection and Cleaning



Current Feet Cleaned / Year

15,840 Proposed Feet Cleaned / Year



* One Cleaner = 5,280 Feet of Pre-Cleaning

FY27 Additional Channel Maintenance

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Problem:

- Erosion and Sedimentation of Existing Channels Significantly Decreases the Channels Capacity to Carry Storm Water Runoff, Increasing the Potential for Flooding.
- City-wide We are Responsible for Maintaining Significantly More Channels Than Our One Existing Crew Can Maintain.
- Outsourcing Major Channel Restoration to Contractors Can Cost Conservatively 300% More

FY27 Solution: Add a 10 Person Channel Maintenance Crew

Fee Increase Funded Cost: \$4M

Benefits of Funding:

- Minimize Risk to Life and Property City-Wide
- Improve Cost Efficiency
 - In-house: Channel Maintenance Cost Per Mile: ~ \$106k
 - In-house: Channel Restoration Cost Per Mile: ~\$845k
 - Contractor: Channel Restoration Cost Per Mile: ~\$2.5M



Before





* One Channel Section = 5,280 Feet of Channel Maintenance

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FY27 Additional Pipe Repair Crew

Problem:

- The CCTV Program Will Identify Considerably More Repair Needs Across the City, Resulting in an Increased Backlog.
- Outsourcing Repairs to Contractors is 584% more expensive

FY27 Solution: Add a 2 Person Concrete Repair Crew and Equipment

Fee Increase Funded Cost: \$2.7M

Benefits of Funding :

- Minimize Risk to Life and Property City-wide
- Improve Cost Efficiency

Concrete Team Yearly Benefit – Point repairs

- Contractor Cost \$450k
- In-house Cost \$77k

Concrete Team Yearly Analysis

- 5 Years ~ \$1.8M*
- 25 Years ~ \$9.3M*

*numbers do not take into consideration of inflation

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FY28 Additional CCTV Crew

Problem:

- CCTV Pipe Condition Assessment is Necessary to Identify Pipe Condition Issues, But the City Only Knows the Condition of 10% of the Storm Drain lines.
- Currently 75% of our CCTV Storm Drain Assessments are Contracted, Because We Only Have One In-house CCTV Truck Purchased in 2022.
- The Contracted CCTV Costs 29% More Than the In-house CCTV and is Subject to the Contractor's Availability, Which Causes Delays for Emergency Sink-hole Investigations.

FY28 Solution: Add a 2 person CCTV Crew and CCTV Outfitted Truck

Fee Increase Funded Cost: \$789K

Benefits of Funding:

- Minimize Risk to Life and Property City-wide
- Improve Cost Efficiency
- Improve Responsiveness to Emergencies

* One Pipe Section = 13,200 Feet of Pipe

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Wrap Up

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Culvert

FY24 Proposed 15% Fee Increase **Estimated Delivery Plan***

*Overall delivery plan may be adjusted due to changes in utility fee revenue projections, debt sale interest rates, and Project Development to define capital project components, design and construction phasing, and cost estimates in more detail

Overview of Proposed Additional Benefits

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Protecting People and Property from Harmful Stormwater Runoff

