

City of Fort Worth, Texas

Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 09/16/25M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 25-0864

LOG NAME: 20SWM INCREASE FY26

SUBJECT

(ALL) Conduct a Public Hearing and Adopt an Ordinance Amending Chapter 12.5 "Environmental Protection and Compliance," Article III "Stormwater Protection," Division 4 "Municipal Drainage Utility System," Section 12.5-340 "Categories of Drainage Utility Rates" of the City Code, to Revise the Monthly Rates and Clarify the Low Occupancy Residential Property Billing Basis Tiers for the Municipal Drainage Utility System

(PUBLIC HEARING - a. Staff Available for Questions: Jennifer Dyke; b.Public Comment; c. Council Action: Close Public Hearing and Act on M&C)

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Conduct a public hearing; and
2. Adopt the attached ordinance amending Chapter 12.5 "Environmental Protection and Compliance," Article III "Stormwater Protection," Division 4 "Municipal Drainage Utility System," Section 12.5-340 "Categories of Drainage Utility Rates" of the Code of the City of Fort Worth (2015), as amended, to revise monthly rates and clarify the low occupancy residential property billing basis tiers for the Municipal Drainage Utility System.

DISCUSSION:

Due to the backlog of engineered channel restoration work and the need for reliable citywide maintenance performance, the Transportation and Public Works Department Stormwater Management Division is recommending a \$0.35 per Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) monthly rate increase for the stormwater utility as a part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Budget request. One ERU equals approximately 2,600 square feet of impervious surface. This 5% rate increase will support the delivery of channel restoration projects benefitting adjacent properties and infrastructure along drainage channels the City is responsible for maintaining. Projects will be prioritized based on risk. Additionally, this rate increase will enhance the stormwater utility's ability to replace its maintenance equipment and vehicles. Newer equipment will increase the utility's ability to efficiently perform channel restoration and maintenance, as well as other citywide drainage maintenance. Equipment improvements will provide additional benefits such as maintaining critical life safety emergency response and increasing employee safety to reduce risk of incidents.

In February 2025, Stormwater Management Division staff met with the Stormwater Management Program Stakeholder Group to update stakeholders on the stormwater program and to discuss and obtain feedback on a potential fee increase including the proposed purpose, benefits, and impacts of the potential increase on rate payers. The Stormwater Management Program Stakeholder Group is comprised of community members representing residential homeowners, civic groups, developers, and large rate payers.

The following table presents the proposed fees for the four tiers of low occupancy residential property, as well as the fees for high occupancy residential/non-residential property, which includes properties such as apartments and those with commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses. For low occupancy residential property, the total amount of impervious area on the property and corresponding billing tier is estimated based on building permits or the most recent appraisal district data. For high occupancy residential/non-residential property, the fees are calculated based on an actual measurement or an estimate of the impervious area on each property using resources such as building permits and aerial photography.

The tiers for the Low Occupancy Residential Property billing basis currently overlap. Tier 1 currently ends at 1,300 square feet. Tier 2 currently begins at 1,300 square feet. Tier 3 currently ends at 3,394 square feet. Tier 4 currently begins at 3,394 square feet. Clarifying the billing basis tiers as described in the table below will eliminate this overlap.

This provides a clearer distinction between the billing tiers and will not change the current billing tiers for any existing accounts.

Low Occupancy Residential Property (such as single family and duplex)				
Billing Tier	Billing Unit Equivalent Residential Units (ERU)	Billing Basis	Current Monthly Rate	Proposed Monthly Rate, Effective January 1, 2026

Additional Information Contact: Jennifer Dyke 2714