



Goodwyn Mills Cawood

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November 4, 2025

Jonathan Hulme, PE
County Engineer
Effingham County Board of Commissioners
804 South Laurel Street
Springfield, GA 31329

Re: Stormwater Utility Implementation

Dear Jonathan,

Thank you for providing Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC) the opportunity to assist Effingham County with the implementation of a Stormwater Utility User Fee. GMC has extensive experience with the assessment of stormwater program needs, development of stormwater capital programs and masterplans, and the implementation of stormwater utilities (SW utilities). Our team has implemented utilities for long list of Georgia jurisdictions including; Dahlonega, Milledgeville, Brunswick, Peachtree Corners, Cornelia, Richmond Hill, Senoia, Statesboro, Albany, Camilla, Duluth, Americus, and Garden City. We are also currently working on Stormwater Utilities for Thomasville, St Marys, Kingsland, Henry County, and Savannah.

The purpose of this letter is to present our scope of work to assist the County with all aspects related to the successful implementation of the Stormwater Utility. The tasks herein define our approach, which includes an assessment of the County's existing stormwater program, development of a county-wide impervious area GIS layer and Master Billing File, revenue projections, a strategy for Public Involvement and Outreach, a stormwater utility ordinance, and a report summarizing all findings.

We appreciate your confidence in GMC, and we look forward to successfully working on this project. Please contact the undersigned should you have any questions, or if you need additional information.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ed DiTommaso", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC)
Ed DiTommaso, AICP, GISP
Vice President, Environmental



Scope of Work

Task 1: Project Management

A Project Team that works well together will be paramount to the success of this project, which is why we propose the formation of a Project Team consisting of staff from Effingham County and GMC. GMC will assign a Project Manager to coordinate and manage the implementation of the tasks listed below and coordinate with County staff as necessary throughout the duration of the project.

In order to facilitate this level of cooperation, we propose monthly coordination meetings/conference calls for the duration of this project. In our experience, nothing compares to the level of coordination that comes from in-person meetings, but virtual meetings will also allow our team to stay connected and can be used as needed throughout the process. Our Project Manager will provide the County with routine updates that discuss the progress and get clarification as needed.

Once the notice to proceed is received, the GMC team will schedule a kickoff meeting with County staff to discuss the scope, review the roles of our Project Team, and to clearly define the schedule for the various tasks associated with this project. Ahead of the kickoff meeting, GMC will work with the County to obtain a copy of existing data and documents. We propose having the kickoff meeting shortly after receiving the notice to proceed but recommend allowing time to conduct an initial review of information before the meeting. This will allow our Team to gain a better understanding of the County's Stormwater Program needs, which will lead to a more productive kickoff meeting. Based on the results of the kickoff meeting, GMC will provide a meeting summary that includes an updated schedule, defined roles and responsibilities, and the timeframe for completing associated project tasks.

Task 2: SWMP Assessment and Future Plan Development

Existing Plan & Program Review: GMC will assess the County's existing Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) through a review of the following documentation:

- SW Masterplan Report and Stormwater Feasibility Report (2021)
- Stormwater Budget
- Geographical information system (GIS) information (ie. stormwater infrastructure, problem areas, existing impervious area layers, etc.)
- The County's NPDES Municipal Storm Sewer System (MS4) Phase I Permit, SWMP, and most recent Annual Report.
- Any other data provided by the County

Establish Future Desired Level Of Service: After a thorough review of this information, our Project Team will meet with the County to determine future program needs and goals as well as administrative and operational needs.

The GMC team will meet with County staff involved with SWMP implementation, as well as staff that handle day-to-day operations and maintenance of stormwater related items. The GMC team will use these meetings to develop an understanding of the current level of service (LOS) provided by the stormwater department as well as the desired future LOS. Our Project Team will then develop a detailed LOS recommendation that includes the current, interim and long-term LOS recommendations for consideration by the County staff.

Our team will review the County's budget to develop an accurate number that is truly representative of the cost to implement the County's SWMP at the current and future desired LOS, understanding that some of the SWMP services may not even be in the Stormwater cost center. We will use the financial information provided by the County and developed during other tasks to build a financial model that illustrates future revenue projections based on different rate scenarios.



Extent of Service Policy Development: Our team will also work with the County to develop a formal Extent of Service (EOS) policy for the future stormwater program. The purpose of this policy document is to clearly define the operational and maintenance responsibility for various elements of the drainage system and program as a whole. The EOS is important because it is not always clear where the public responsibility for maintenance ends and private responsibility begins. If not defined, that line of responsibility can become even more difficult to distinguish when a stormwater user fee is in place.

Capital Improvement Project/Plan Prioritization: Our team will review the County's list and map of current drainage CIPs, and work with the County to update the status of these projects. Our team will then work with the County to identify and map any additional known problem areas, flooding hot spots, and choke points in the system. We will review and map the County's work orders, service requests, and drainage related customer complaints to evaluate the geography of problem areas in the County. Lastly, our team will work with the County to develop project recommendations for newly identified flooding hot spot areas. All of the CIPs will be included in a stormwater project matrix that can be used to prioritize future stormwater projects relative to one another. The proposed matrix will prioritize projects using a weighted scale using variables such as ownership, cost, ease of construction, interconnection with other proposed projects, water quality benefits, community impact, etc. The metrics listed are examples that we have successfully used for other clients, but the categories and weights given to each variable will ultimately be defined based on the unique conditions in the County and on meetings with County staff.

Task 3: Impervious Surface GIS Database / Master Account File

GMC will develop an impervious area database layer for the County. This will include the impervious area for every developed parcel in the County. We assume that the County staff will assist GMC with obtaining parcel data, previous impervious area data, and other necessary GIS data from local sources such as the County GIS department. Parcels within the County will be categorized based on the following general land uses:

- Single Family Residential (SFR)
- Non Single Family Residential (NSFR)
- Undeveloped

These land use categories will be the basis for establishing the Stormwater Utility billing database. Since undeveloped parcels do not contain impervious area, they are not subject to the stormwater charge. All developed properties are subject to the charge. GMC will utilize the residential land use classification to calculate the Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU), which will become the basis for how stormwater fees are calculated for each parcel. The charge for NSFR properties will be based on a multiplier of the ERU. GMC will complete a thorough review of the SFR and NSFR parcels to ensure that each parcel is categorized properly. GMC will also perform field visits if necessary to ensure that the impervious area calculations are as accurate as possible.

It is our understanding that the County will utilize the tax bill as the mechanism for delivering the stormwater fee. GMC will compile all necessary data to develop a Master Account File for the purpose of charging the Stormwater Fee. GMC will coordinate with the Tax Assessor's department to develop the MAF structure in manner that allows for seamless integration into the billing software.

Task 4: Existing Rate Structure and Alternatives

GMC will use the information examined during previous tasks to run various billing scenarios. The purpose of this task is to determine the most equitable manner to collect stormwater fees from the different customer classes. GMC has experience implementing a number of different billing structures. The most common being a flat rate structure for all residential, with custom bills for non-residential customer classes. GMC also has experience developing a tiered billing scheme where residential customers are broken into different billing tiers based on their respective square



footage of impervious area. GMC has also implemented methodologies that assign all residential customers a unique bill based on incremental square footage (ie. \$1.50 per 1000 square feet of impervious area). Each of these alternatives have advantages and disadvantages. One method might be the easiest to maintain by County staff but may not be as equitable because small and large properties are paying the same amount. Another method might be very equitable in the manner impervious area is billed but might be very difficult to maintain. GMC will present different options to the County for consideration and will work with County staff to identify the most appropriate methodology for future stormwater billing.

GMC will also work with the County to develop an approach for updating and maintaining the Master Billing Account File. This will largely depend on the frequency of billing. For example, the approach and need for updates will be different if stormwater bills are issued annually versus semi-annually. GMC will also develop policies for how the County should handle unpaid stormwater fees as well as the challenges associated with collecting fees from tax-exempt properties.

Task 5: Public Education & Outreach Campaign

GMC will assist the County with the coordination of a public education and outreach campaign to inform County residents about the SW Utility user fee charge. Upon direction from the County, the Project Team will begin implementation of the public education campaign. A preliminary list of activities below summarizes the anticipated or recommended work effort to be performed as part of this task. The actual activities that will be implemented in the future will be dependent on direction provided by the County.

Recommend Outreach Items:

- Large/Key Customer Meetings
- Public Meetings/Open House Events
- Educational Brochure
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Document
- Website Information
- Top 10% Largest Customer Billing Notification Letters
- General mailing

Task 6: SW Utility Ordinance, Rate Adoption Resolution, Credit Manual

GMC will help the County Attorney develop the SW Utility Ordinance and Billing Rate Resolution to ensure consistency with the selected rate structure and methodology. The ordinance will be presented to the County Commission for adoption.

GMC will also work with County staff to prepare a SW Utility Credit Manual that is based on the criteria and procedures similar to other SW Utilities around the state of Georgia, and consistent with the County's development standards. The proposed credit manual will describe the specific criteria used to establish eligibility and to perform the calculations related to securing a user fee charge credit.

Task 7: Stormwater Utility Final Report

GMC will prepare a Final Report to serve as the official project record. The Final Report will include a summary of the various tasks and copies of all documents and data prepared throughout the process. The final report will also include the COS, LOS, the CIP matrix and project recommendations.

Task 8: Customer Service Training Program (Optional)

If necessary, GMC will develop a customer service program to help the County staff address customer questions and inquiries associated with the SW Utility user fee. GMC will develop a customer service manual outlining the relevant procedures and will provide advice to County staff implementing the customer service program. GMC will host a training session for County



Customer Service Personnel on the Customer Service Program and Procedures. Customer service training will occur prior to implementation of the Stormwater Utility User Fee. Once the County implements the Stormwater Program, GMC can provide customer service assistance on an hourly, as needed basis at the request of County staff.

Fee

GMC proposes to perform the scope of services included herein for the following proposed budget:

Project Management	\$1,970	Lump Sum
SWMP Assessment	\$23,700	Lump Sum
Impervious area Layer and MAF	\$57,800	Lump Sum
Rate Structure / Alternatives	\$14,570	Lump Sum
Public Education/Outreach	\$23,740	(Hourly NTE)
Ordinance/Resolution/Credit Manual	\$9,460	Lump Sum
Final Report	\$8,400	Lump Sum
Customer Service Training	\$9,740	Lump Sum
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		\$149,380

Authorization

GMC proposes implementing the scope of work outlined herein in accordance with the terms and conditions defined in Attachment A. As our authorization, please sign in the space provided below.

Effingham County

Jonathan Hulme, PE
County Engineer

Goodwyn Mills and Cawood

Ed DiTommaso
VP, Environmental

Effingham County Board of Commissioners

Signature: _____

Date: _____