

STORMWATER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

A new stormwater fee has been approved by Council, that will be implemented in late 2025 or early 2026. As part of this new fee, the City of Hamilton is developing a Stormwater Incentive Program for properties that implement on-site measures to reduce their impact on the stormwater system. From October 2023 to January 2024, the City of Hamilton invited residents and property owners to learn about and provide input on the draft Stormwater Incentive Program.

Engagement Objectives

- » Inform property owners about Hamilton's stormwater services and the change in how property owners will pay for those services.
- » Introduce and get feedback on the draft Stormwater Incentive Program.

Communication and Engagement Activities

 **City Website and Engage Hamilton**
5,000+ combined views,
100+ comments and questions received

 **Informational Video**
3-minute information video posted to
Youtube

 **Survey**
477 Residential responses, 35 Industrial,
Commercial, Institutional and Multi-
Residential responses, 279 Agricultural
responses

 **Social Media**
20 Posts, 44,000 Impressions, 64 Likes,
11 Comments, 34 Shares and 474
Clicks

 **Meetings and Presentations**
2 In-person public meetings,
2 Virtual public meetings,
4 Additional meetings with interested
community partners

 **Promotion**
Digital signs, media release, and
updates/ articles in the City News
Roundup, Community Well Newsletter
and Hamilton Water Newsletter

For more information: [Hamilton.ca/stormwaterfunding](https://hamilton.ca/stormwaterfunding)

WHAT WE HEARD

Directly from comments and questions, through survey responses, and from meeting participants



Importance of the City's stormwater management services

- Most urban residential respondents consider the City's stormwater management services to be either very important or important. Most rural residential and agricultural respondents consider stormwater services to not be important or only somewhat important.



Steps taken to implement on-site measures

- Most respondents have already taken steps to reduce the quantity or improve the quality of stormwater runoff on their property.
- Of the respondents who are not doing so already, most urban residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, and multi-residential respondents were willing to take steps to implement measures on their property. In contrast, less than half of rural residential and agricultural survey respondents were willing to do so.



Biggest barriers to on-site stormwater management

1. Cost
2. Lack of knowledge or understanding of on-site stormwater management practices
3. Lack of knowledge or understanding of available subsidized programs

Best ways to support on-site stormwater management

1. Reduce costs
2. Provide credits
3. Have online resources



Draft Stormwater Incentive Program

- There is interest in the credit or subsidy programs and respondents would like their current stormwater mitigation efforts to qualify for credits as soon as the fee begins.
- Urban residential respondents agree with subsidies instead of stormwater fee credits for residential property owners. Rural residential respondents preferred credits to subsidies.
- Most respondents believe industrial, commercial, institutional, and large multi-residential properties should be eligible for a credit.
- Most agriculture respondents believe the credit should be more than 50%.



Incentive program administration

- There is concern over the effort and cost for the City to administer an incentive program. Agricultural respondents expressed a reluctance to participate if it would require more paperwork to qualify for credits.
- Most agricultural, industrial, commercial, institutional, and large multi-residential respondents believe property owners should be required to re-apply for credits no less than every five years, with suggestions that applications should only be required once, every ten years or only during major renovations.



Concerns with the stormwater fee

Rural and agricultural respondents expressed frustration with the stormwater fee and believe they should be exempt. Harbourfront property owners also expressed concerns with the fee. These groups believe that they do not receive stormwater services and do not contribute to the City's stormwater system.

PROPOSED STORMWATER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Based on feedback during engagement, a unique “made in Hamilton” multi-stream incentive program has been proposed. Industrial, commercial, institutional, agricultural and multi-residential (with more than six units) property owners can qualify for one of the following streams:

- **Green Space Credit** - Up to a 97% credit on the stormwater fee for farms, parks, and similar properties without a direct connection to the City's stormwater system.
- **Hamilton Harbour Discharge Credit** - Up to a 90% credit on the stormwater fee for properties using private pipes to send stormwater directly to Lake Ontario.
- **On-site Stormwater Management Infrastructure Credit** - Up to a 50% credit for properties that reduce stormwater runoff quantity or improve its quality.

Single-family and multi-residential (with six or fewer units) property owners can qualify for the following:

- **Residential Stormwater Incentive Program** - Grants, subsidies and support for residential property owners to implement stormwater management measures at home.

NEXT STEPS

1. The revised Stormwater Incentive Program will be presented to Council in Spring 2024.
2. Awareness building and education about the stormwater fee and incentive program through 2024/ 2025.
3. Subject to Council approval, starting in 2025 – Stormwater Incentive Program details will be released and applications will be open prior to the stormwater fee implementation.