

Takoma Park Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Policy & Guidance Document

The Stormwater Management Utility Fee was instituted in 1996 to provide a dedicated revenue source for maintaining, operating and improving the City's stormwater management system. The Stormwater Utility Fee is the method for generating needed revenue and is levied based on the amount of impervious area on a property. Impervious areas include driveways, roof tops, parking lots and walkways which restrict water from infiltrating into the ground.

In March, 2021, the City Council authorized the implementation of a new fee structure for the stormwater utility fee based on a rate of \$25 per 500 square feet of the impervious area. The Ordinance adopting the new fee structure is available here – [Ordinance 2021-12](#).

The Montgomery County Parcel Database was used to determine the impervious area square footage for each property. The County GIS map showing impervious surfaces can be found here - [Montgomery Planning Map](#)

As part of the new rate structure, the City agreed to establish a credit program to enable property owners to reduce their fee by creating an incentive to implement stormwater management measures on private property. Such private initiatives can reduce the demand upon the public drainage system and improve water quality.

Application Process:

To obtain credit, the property owner must submit a Stormwater Credit Application and provide relevant supporting documentation which may include site plans, engineering reports, construction drawings or as-built documents and/or contractor certification.

Review Process:

Upon receipt of a completed application, the City will review the information provided and conduct a site visit. Application for credit must be received by April 30 to be incorporated into the next billing cycle which runs from July 1, to June 30. Properties with past due stormwater utility fees will not be eligible for a credit.

The City maintains the right to inspect the property at the time of credit application and at any time during the approved credit period to ensure the facility is being maintained and functioning as intended. Failure to allow inspection may result in the revocation of all or part of the credit. Credits can be revoked or reduced if it is determined by the City that the treatment measures are not performing to the design standard, not being maintained to function as designed, or are no longer meeting the purpose of the credit.

Notification of Approved Credit:

Applicant will be informed of the decision, via email, within 30 days of receipt of a completed application. Additionally, the property owner will be required to adhere to an approved maintenance plan for the facility that qualified for credit.

Appeal Process:

If a property owner is denied a credit or disagrees with the amount of the approved credit, the property owner may submit an appeal in writing within 30 days of receiving the notice of denial or approved credit. The written appeal should be sent to the Public Works Director at PublicWorks@takomaparkmd.gov. The appeal should include the property owners name and address, the basis of appeal, and supporting evidence to document the reasons for appeal.

Available Credits:

The maximum credit available is a 50% reduction of the original Stormwater Utility Fee. Property owners can apply for one or multiple eligible credit categories, however the maximum credit amount allowed will be capped at 50%. Credits will be calculated based on the amount of the impervious area that is treated by the qualifying stormwater control facility.

Credits shall apply to the next billing cycle and shall be valid for a period of 1 to 3 years, depending on the type of credit approved. Property owners who receive a credit can re-apply to continue the credit upon expiration through submitting a Credit Renewal Request. Proof of maintenance shall be required for those measures that need regular upkeep to maintain their efficiency.

The types of practices that are eligible to receive consideration for credit include the following:

Tree Planting – To qualify the tree must be planted within the prior billing cycle, nursery stock quality, 1½ inch in trunk diameter or greater and be an overstory tree in the medium or large category from the City’s approved species list. At least two trees must be planted to receive credit. The credit is \$5 per tree. The credit period is 1 year and is not renewable.

Rain Gardens – These facilities are planted shallow depressed areas that use water tolerant native plants and landscaping to soak up rainwater. Carefully placed, they allow run-off from impervious surfaces to be collected and slowly filter into the ground. The facility can be created by excavation and/or building a sloped soil berm to create an area where run-off can pond. The soil under the facility must be de-compacted at least 18 inches deep and amended with 2 inches of compost. Upon completion, the ponding depth should be 6 inches. The surface of the rain garden must be covered with 2 to 3 inches of mulch

and planted with hardy native species with deep root systems. To qualify, the facility must be at least 50 square feet and receive stormwater runoff from an impervious surface. The rain garden must be located at least 10 feet away and downhill from the foundation of any nearby homes. Credit will be based on the amount of impervious area treated by the facility and the facilities storage capacity. The credit period is 3 years. Owners can reapply for continuation of credit and must verify the facility is in good working order.

Bioretention Facilities – Similar to but larger than the rain garden and with a special soil media that is engineered for health plant growth and water holding/filtration. The facilities should have a minimum size of 100 square feet. Credit will be based on the size of the impervious area captured by the facility and the facilities storage capacity. Applicants must include the results of an infiltration or perc test, to verify that the subsoils are adequate to drain the facility. The credit period is 3 years. Owners can reapply for continuation of credit and must verify the facility is in good working order. For facilities that have an underdrain connected to an adjacent public stormwater structure, the amount of eligible credit may be reduced.

Bioswale - Typically, a swaled drainage course, with sloped sides and planted with vegetation or a surface course of river rock. The waters flow path is designed to maximize the time water spends in the swale which aids in the trapping of pollutants and silt and facilitates water infiltration into the soils below. These are typically placed near drainage sources such as down spouts. Eligible credit will be based on the length of the swale and the size of the surface area directed to the swale. The credit period is 3 years. Owners can reapply for continuation of credit and must verify the facility is in good working order

Dry Wells – A permanent structure installed below the ground that stores water in the void space of crushed stone or gravel, allowing water to slowly percolate into the surrounding subsoil. Water from an adjacent impervious surface is directed into the dry well via a pipe. Applicant must provide documentation of the size and location of the dry well and the square footage of impervious surfaces draining to the dry well. In order to be approved for credit, a dry well must have an observation well so that functionality can be inspected. Credit will be based on capacity of the drywell and size of impervious surface directed to it. Applicant must include the results of an infiltration or perc test to confirm that the soils are adequate to drain the dry well. For dry wells that have an overflow discharge to an adjacent public stormwater structure, the amount of eligible credit may be reduced.

Permeable Pavement – These include porous concrete, porous asphalt and interlocking concrete pavers. In order to be eligible, the permeable pavement must include an underlying stone aggregate reservoir layer below the surface pavement layer and a geotextile layer over the non-compacted soil subgrade. Maximum credit of 50% fee reduction for the size of the pavement area, if the

subsurface storage area is of sufficient capacity. For those facilities with less than 12 inches of stone reservoir, the amount of credit may be reduced accordingly.

Green Roof – A vegetated roof system that stores rainwater in a lightweight, engineered soil. The plants take up the stored water thereby reducing the amount of water that runs off the roof. Typically used on roofs with a gradual slope and sunny exposure. The roof structure required is more substantial than a regular roof. The elements of a green roof include a water proof membrane over the roof sheathing, a root barrier layer topped with engineered soil medium and planted with a variety of low growing, drought tolerant plants. Minimum soil thickness must be 4 inches to qualify for a credit. A layer of insulation can also be included beneath the water proof membrane. The green roof must replace an existing roof in the original foot print.

Required Documentation to be included with Application:

Along with the completed Stormwater Utility Fee Application, additional documentation will be necessary including the following:

- Sketch or site plan detailing the location of the facility and the area, including impervious surfaces, draining to the facility
- As-built or contractor drawings that show the size of the facility, including surface dimension and depth.
- Documentation detailing the types of materials included in the construction, their depth and the size and location of any underground piping that brings water to the facility as well as any underdrains that discharge filtered run-off.
- Infiltration or perc test results from location of facility (for bioretention and dry well facility)
- Documentation of the outlet control structures, if any, and the downstream discharge locations when facility capacity is exceeded.
- One or more photos of the facility itself, as well as the location in the yard, and any features directing run-off into the facility (downspouts, drainage swales- if visible).
- Signed maintenance agreement for the facility for which credit is requested

Transference of Credit:

Once a credit is approved it is noted by the property address, rather than the owner name. If a property changes ownership during the approval period of the credit, the credit remains with the property through the authorized time period.

Program Contact:

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