



## **Executive Summary**

### **Town of Emmitsburg, Stormwater Utility Feasibility Study**

**Prepared by the University of Maryland, Environmental Finance Center, April 2022**

The Town of Emmitsburg is currently mid-way through its first MS4 Permit cycle (10/31/18 - 10/30/23). To date, most of the Town's effort has been focused on meeting the MCM requirements, leaving the more costly impervious restoration requirements for the later portion of the permit cycle. Additionally, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has informed the Town that there are certain activities that will need to be increased (such as the frequency of street sweeping) for the next permit cycle. These changes will add additional costs to the Town's limited stormwater management budget. Realizing their inability to afford the costs associated with stormwater management without additional funds, the Town contracted with the University of Maryland, Environmental Finance Center (EFC) to conduct a Stormwater Utility Feasibility Study.

Over the period of six months (October 2021-March 2022), EFC conducted a comprehensive Stormwater Utility Feasibility Study for the Town. This study included reviewing and analyzing the Town's existing stormwater program and future needs, conducting a Level of Service Analysis, reviewing the Town's budget and annual reports for the past three years, and conducting four meetings with the Stormwater Utility Feasibility Advisory Committee (the Committee). As part of this process, EFC also reviewed the fee structures, credit systems, appeals processes, and ordinances from a variety of regional jurisdictions.

Information from the aforementioned activities was used to explore and propose potential stormwater fee rate structures. Based on feedback from the Committee, EFC focused on preparing funding scenarios that were structured as a tiered system that was based on the Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). Utilizing information from the annual reports, budgets, and Level of Service Analysis, EFC developed four detailed scenarios for the Committee's review. These scenarios included a bare-bones, \$20 annual fee per ERU, a \$26 per ERU per year fee to meet the Town's Impervious Restoration costs, a \$32 per ERU per year fee to meet the Town's current level of service needs, and a \$47 per ERU per year fee to meet the recommended level of service needs. In addition to preparing various cost scenarios, EFC also provided recommendations on a credit system structure and provided examples of appeals processes and ordinances that would serve as good guides for the Town.

EFC recommends the Town establish a stormwater fee with the following criteria:

- The fee should be billed quarterly as a separate line item on the existing water and sewer bill.
- The fee should be set at: \$47 annually for Tier 2 properties.
- The fee should be set at \$23.50 annually for Tier 1 properties.
- The annual fee for Tier 3 properties should be calculated using the actual impervious area for the parcel.
- A credit system for non-residential properties be established. This system should take into consideration the type of practice and associated reductions and should not exceed a 20% maximum credit.

The study findings and EFC's recommendations were presented to the Board of Commissioners at the Town Meeting on March 7, 2022.



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