

Implementing Stormwater Utilities in Two Southern New England States



Watershed Management &
Stormwater Specialty Conference

NEWEA
Mystic Marriott Hotel

Jim Riordan
Principal Scientist

October 16, 2014



www.essgroup.com

What are stormwater utilities, and how are they used?

Three phases of planning and implementation

Status of utilities in Rhode Island and Connecticut

Issues that Compel

What is this “stormwater utility district”?

- Dedicated revenue outside of general taxation.
- User fee, not a tax. (Who pays?)
- Sometimes regional in nature and may be watershed-based

Once funding becomes predictable, long-term planning can occur:

- Capital improvements
- Watershed management
- Technical assistance and demonstrations
- Flood control



What's a Stormwater Utility?

STORMWATER CHALLENGES



Flooding



Environmental
Non-compliance



Water Quality
Impacts

... AND THEIR TYPICAL FUNDING SOURCE



ADDING A STORMWATER UTILITY

General Fund



Human Services, Schools, Parks
Administration, Infrastructure, etc.

Stormwater Utility



Stormwater
Management

STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS



Flood Control



Environmental
Compliance



Improved Water
Quality

WHO PAYS?

General Fund



Residential



Commercial



Nonprofits (Churches,
Schools, etc.)

Stormwater Utility



Residential



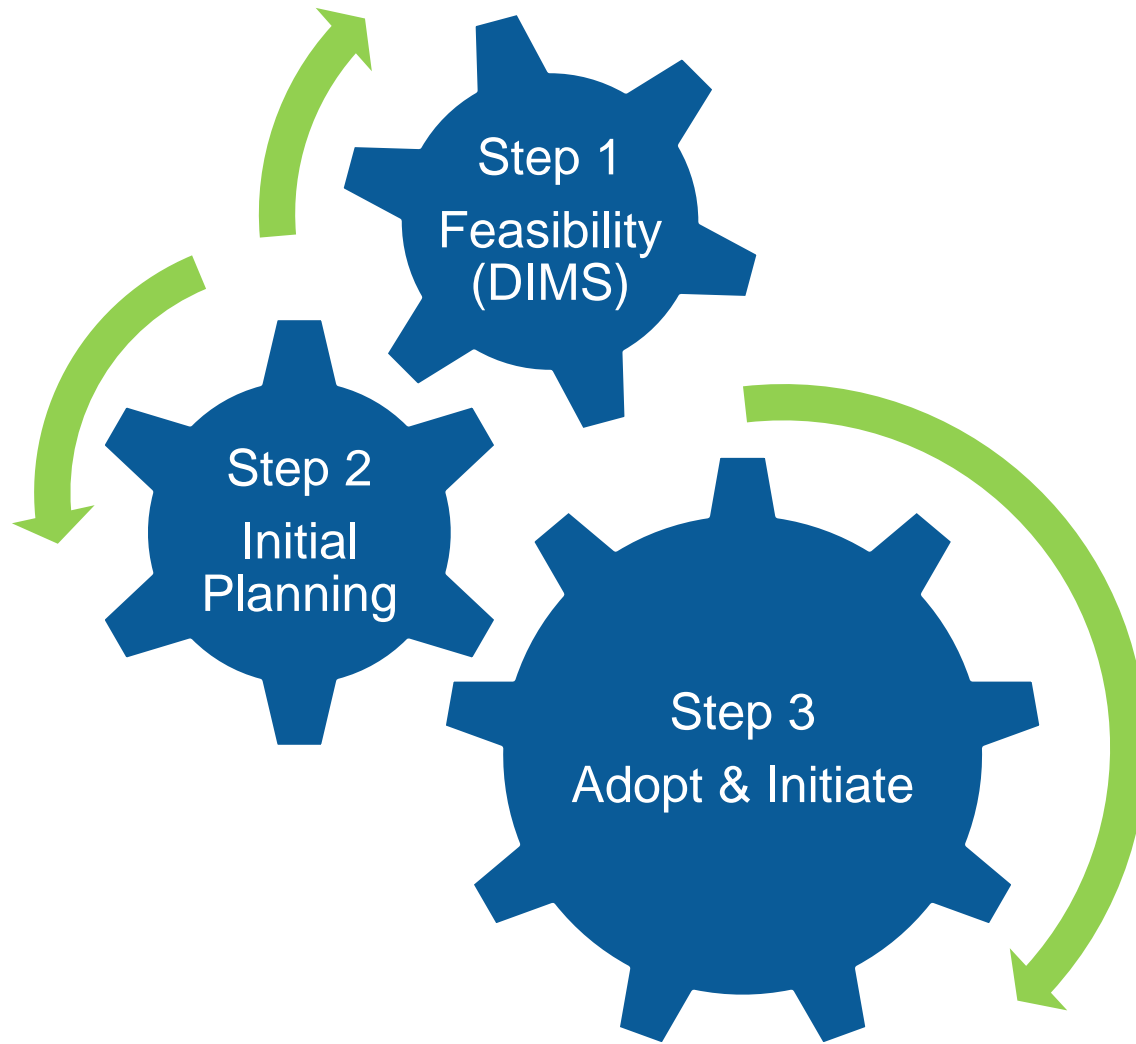
Commercial



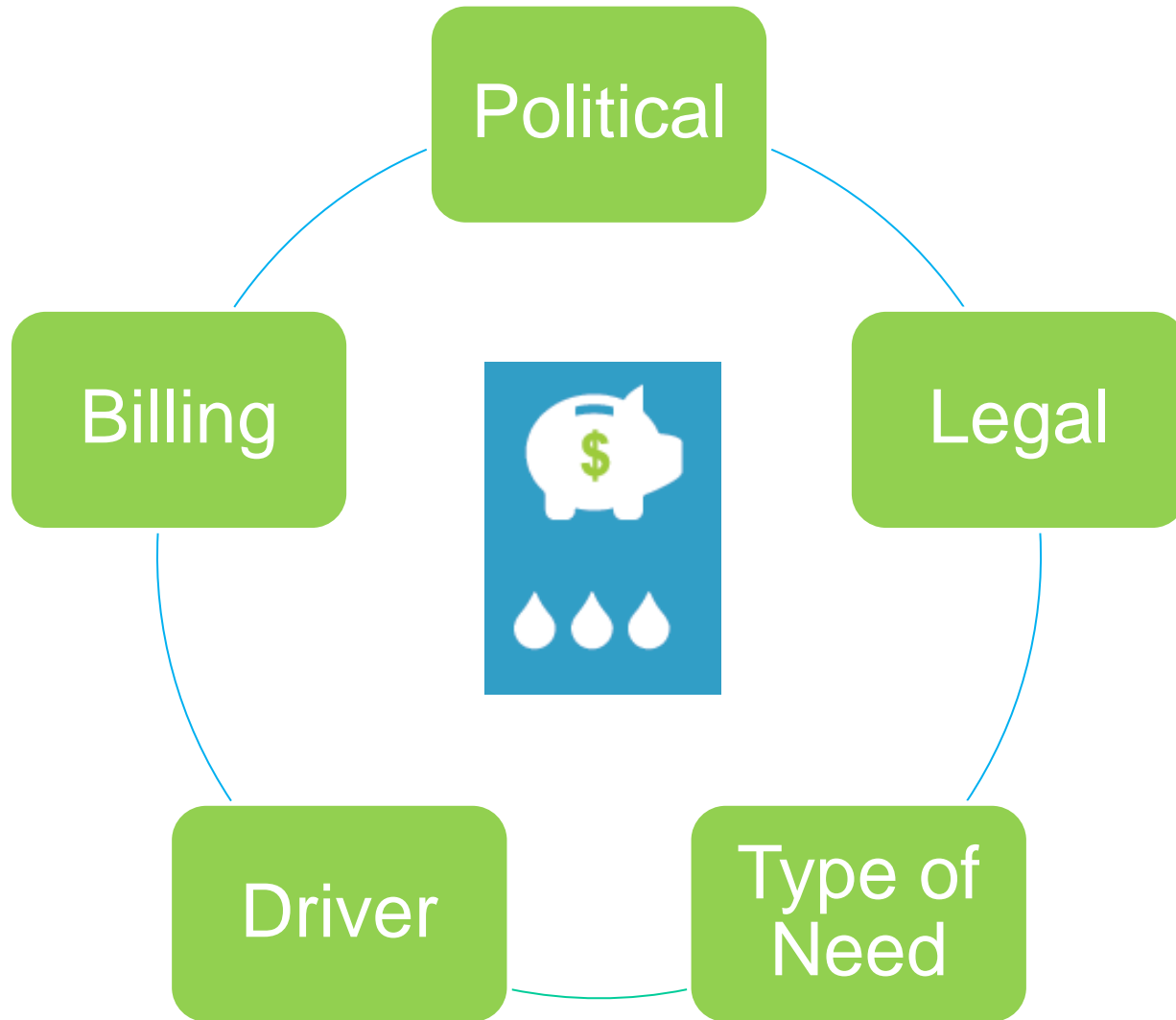
Nonprofits (Churches,
Schools, etc.)



Three Phases of Planning



“A rose by any other name...”



Initial Planning (Step 2)

Rate Setting

- Develop ERU
- Analysis of potential billing tiers and rates
- Select preferred approach

Capital Improvements

- Conceptual designs to ID infrastructure improvement
- ID financing alternatives
- Presentation for public outreach

Operational Costs

- Confirm Phase II requirements
- Confirm needs with DPW

Billing & Administration

- Analysis of alternatives: Property tax, new system
- Select and cost out preferred approach

Public Involvement Process

- Town council introduction
- Public meetings
- Set up a webpage

Initial Stormwater Utility Plan

- Refined alternatives with initial cost opinions
- Select preferred infrastructure financing alternative
- Confirmed operational costs
- Rate analysis
- Draft ordinance

Final Planning, Adopt, and Initiate (Step 3)

Rate Setting

- Incorporate public input
- Finalize rates

Capital Improvements

- Design and permit projects
- Implementation schedule
- Confirm financing approach
- Schedule future projects

Operational Costs

- Five year operations plan and budget
- Approach for annual updates

Billing & Administration

- Plan for billing
- Confirm administrative costs

Final Stormwater Utility Plan

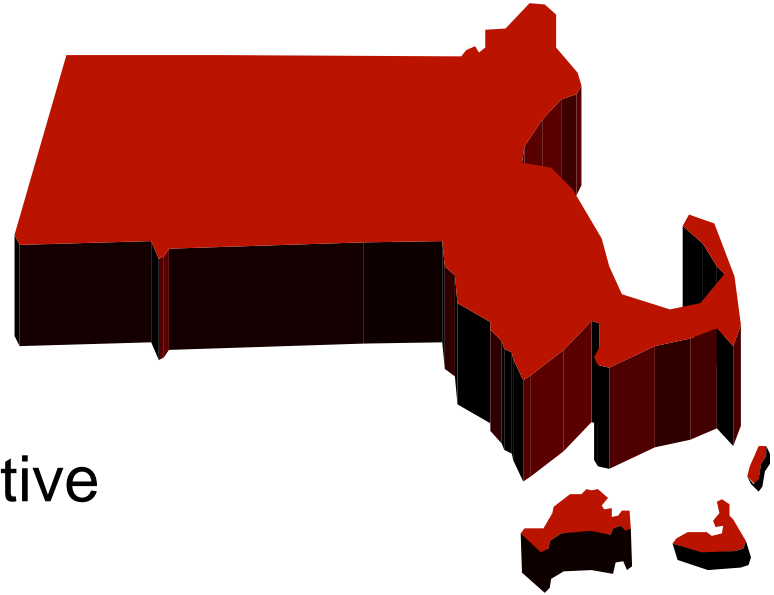
- Rate Study and Final Rates
- Capital Improvement Plan for Years 1 – 5
- Five Year Operational Plan
- Billing and Administrative Plan

Public Outreach Campaign

Adopt Ordinance

Status in Southern New England—Massachusetts

- Chicopee
- Newton
- Reading
- North Hampton
- Several regional collaborative



Massachusetts's Status

- MGL Chapter 83, Section 1 was amended in 2006 to include the ability to establish stormwater utilities

Status in Southern New England—Rhode Island

- Enabling legislation
- Step 1 = 11
- Step 2 = 9 Regional Utility & 3 Others

Rhode Island's Status

- Chapter 45-61 of the Rhode Island Stormwater Management and Utility District Act of 2002



Status in Southern New England—Connecticut

- No enabling legislation
- Studies conducted include New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Stonington, and Bridgeport

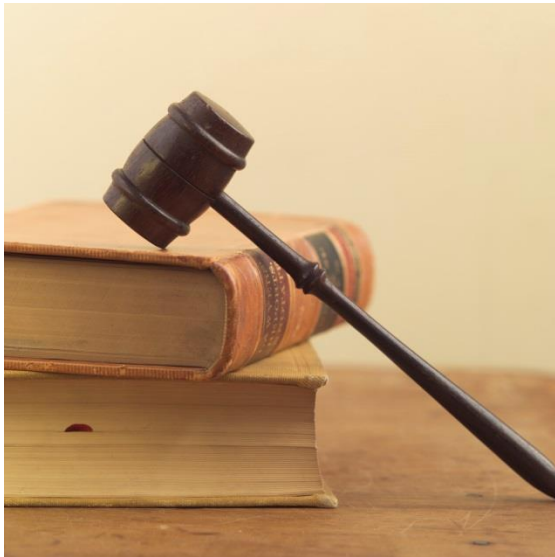


Connecticut's Enabling Status

- OLR's findings in 2004—No clear authority
- PA 7-154—Pilot Program (New Haven, Norwalk, New London)

Issues that Compel Utilities

Enforcement



Water Quality



Flooding



QUESTIONS?



Jim Riordan, LEED AP, AICP

jriordan@essgroup.com

401-330-1221