



# STRATEGIC STORMWATER UTILITY PLAN

## CITY OF SEGUIN, TEXAS

SEPTEMBER 2022

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## PURPOSE STATEMENT

This graphical summary is intended to provide a road map for the City of Seguin to implement the recommendations in the adopted Strategic Stormwater Utility Plan report. A more extensive report has been provided to the Mayor, City Council and City Staff that includes the full details of the process and analysis that were used to develop the recommended actions.

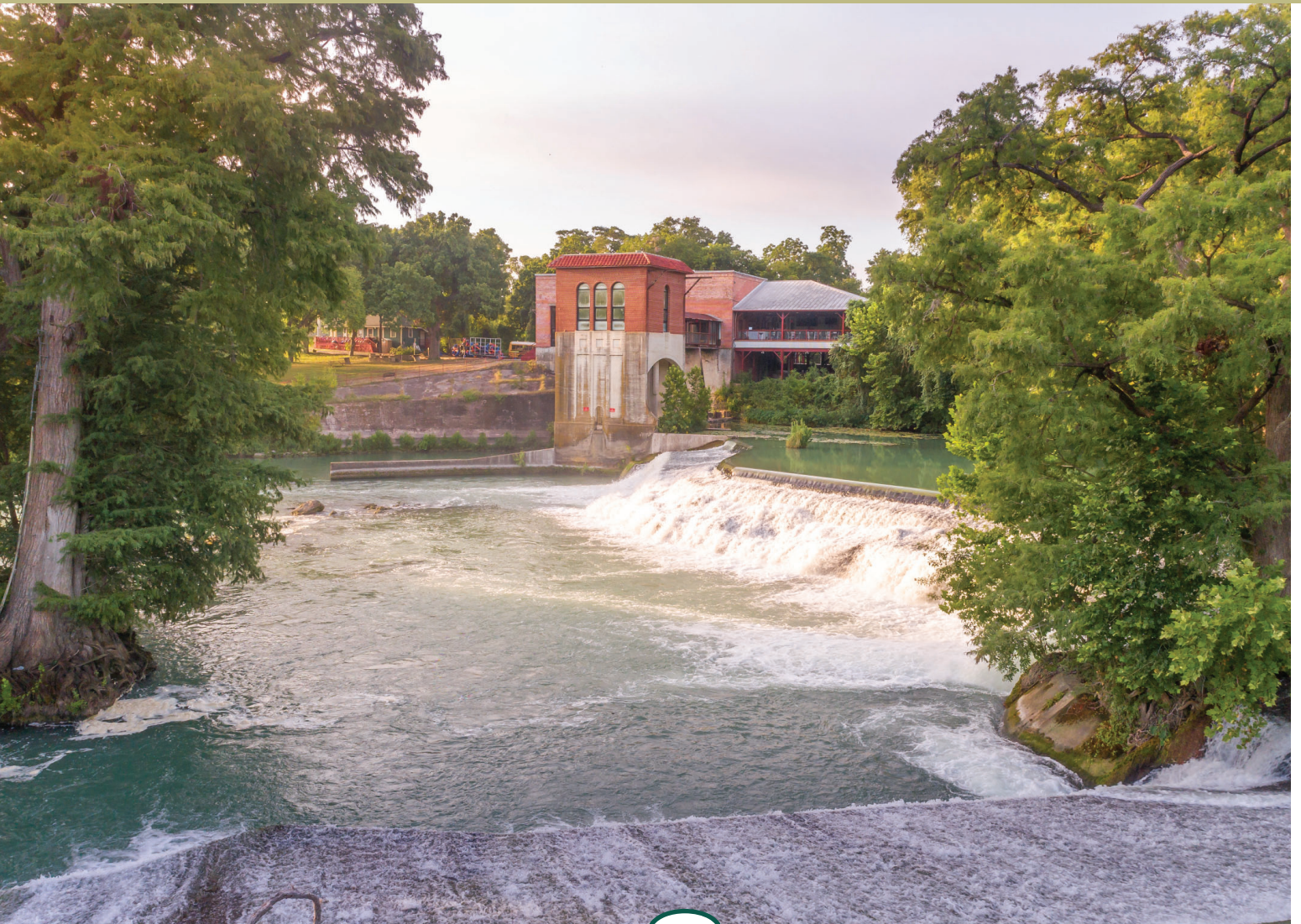
## GRAPHICAL SUMMARY

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## INTRODUCTION

The 2022 City of Seguin Strategic Stormwater Utility Plan (SSUP) is an effort to develop and establish a stormwater utility rate program exclusively for stormwater management. The SSUP development began in 2019 but was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic that did not allow public meetings for gathering community input. The Plan goals changed through the study period as the City was awarded HUD CDBG funding and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) monies became available to defray some of the initial costs of establishing the Stormwater Utility Rate (SWUR). As a result, the City is now able to move into the implementation phase with a delay in the implementation of the rate from 2022 to 2023, a head start on the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) priority projects and to advance strategic recommended actions from the SSUP. Through this effort, City staff have worked with Halff Associates, Inc. (Halff), consultant team to create a plan, prioritize efforts, develop recommendations, and provide a framework for public outreach and maintenance of stormwater data, assessments, and studies. The City of Seguin participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, conducts site inspections, reviews plans submitted for development, studies identified areas of concern, and constructs CIPs. The new Stormwater Utility Program will be responsible for customer billing assistance, street sweeping, inspection, inventory management, rehabilitation and repair of all municipal drainage facilities, and CIP management. The Stormwater Utility will be funded by the fees approved and adopted by the Mayor and City Council, as presented in this report, to support its operations.



## STRATEGIC STORMWATER UTILITY PLAN

### PROGRAM MISSION

“The City of Seguin will work cooperatively to provide the community with a safe and efficient drainage system and to provide our services in a respectful, courteous, and responsive manner.”

### PROGRAM HISTORY

Prior to the development of this SSUP, the City of Seguin operated and maintained drainage infrastructure under the umbrella of the Capital Projects & Engineering Department. This department evaluates street and drainage infrastructure facilities to formulate appropriate solutions when requests/complaints are made by the public. The City has seen a significant increase in drainage service requests/complaints within the past 5 years and the backlog of service requests is steadily increasing.

The City is looking to fund several high priority CIPs, purchase equipment for maintaining drainage infrastructure, and to establish required reserve funds. In May 2021 the City was awarded \$37.8M by the Texas General Land Office (GLO) CDBG Harvey Mitigation Grant for historic disaster mitigation projects. The CDBG funding is paying for the design and construction of four high priority CIPs that are discussed in Section 5.1. The CDBG funding the City received has allowed for the Stormwater Utility Rate to be implemented in 2023 rather 2022 as originally planned.

### PROGRAM GOALS

The following goals have been established by City leadership to guide the Stormwater Utility Program:



☒ **IMPROVED DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE**



☒ **PROACTIVE RESPONSE TO LOCALIZED FLOODING**



☒ **LARGE FLOOD REDUCTION BASED ON PRIORITY**

Strides have been made in achieving these objectives and these goals will continue to drive the Stormwater Utility Program into the future. An assessment of the progress to date along with identification of strategies to enhance the City's progress towards achieving these goals are included in this report.

## STORMWATER UTILITY PUBLIC OUTREACH PLAN

Public understanding and support for the SSUP was a critical component of this process. Input from the public helped establish needs, priorities, and desired level of service for the stormwater program. The City understood that without public support, it would be difficult to meet program goals established for the Stormwater Utility. City staff interactions with the public helped resolve misunderstandings and educated stakeholders regarding the program responsibilities, goals, and resources.

On May 17, 2021 City staff approved the Stormwater Utility Public Outreach plan that Halff, our consultant, prepared. The Public Outreach plan included a multifaceted approach, traditional and non-traditional methods, that were identified to engage citizens, neighborhood leaders, the business community, and partnering agencies. The Plan adopted public engagement goals to ensure that residents and impacted stakeholders were involved in each step of the process. The goals included:

- A. Create public awareness of the Stormwater program and Utility Rate and facilitate active collaborative participation.
- B. Increase awareness and dispel misconceptions about the proposed Stormwater Program and Utility Rate
- C. Engage and collect input from a wide range of stakeholders, including the local community, elected officials, city staff, local organizations, and local businesses.
- D. Create a positive message to present to the citizens of Seguin on the need for the Stormwater Program.
- E. Create a Stormwater Program with the help of City staff, Mayor & Council and the citizens of Seguin that will identify infrastructure projects to address flooding, increase development, drought conditions, recreational opportunities, and water quality projects.
- F. Create and maintain a transparent process throughout the engagement effort with timely and informative project updates
- G. Use public input and comments in the development of the Stormwater Program and Utility Rate Ordinance.



## PUBLIC OUTREACH STRATEGY

The public outreach plan was developed to provide a strategy for the City to capture citizen input, identify citizen issues, provide public information, increase public understanding, and track progress regarding stormwater public education. To ensure that we captured as much public input as possible we targeted audiences from City staff in multiple departments, City Committees, Mayor & Council to community stakeholders like various neighborhood associations, area businesses, Seguin ISD, Texas Lutheran University, and the Economic Development Center.

The plan included the following components:

### Traditional Methods:

- 1 Newspaper articles
- 2 Radio interviews
- 3 In person Public Meetings
- 4 Meetings with the Utility Committee
- 5 Presentations at Council meetings
- 6 Informational flyers (FAQs sheet)

### Non-Traditional Methods:

- 1 Facebook to Livestream public meetings
- 2 A dedicated webpage
- 3 Online Survey (English & Spanish)
- 4 A GIS Mapping tool of the City
- 5 Regular posts on the City's social media
- 6 Direct mail



## PUBLIC OUTREACH OBSERVATIONS

We conducted a total of two public meetings, two Utility Committee meetings, and three Council meetings in person. We had a total of 586 responses to the survey (580 online), 100s of comments that came through the City social media outlets, and 100s of emails that city staff responded to personally.

Through this extensive public outreach Halff was able to determine a few key observations:

### FINANCIAL OBSERVATION

The 71% of citizens were willing to pay up to \$3.00 for a Stormwater Utility Rate. A majority of citizens would be willing to pay a Stormwater Utility Rate than increase property taxes.

### DRAINAGE NEED OBSERVATION

The majority of citizens thought the City should fund drainage improvement projects. They also believe the Stormwater Utility Rate should only go to drainage improvement projects.

Once the initial public outreach campaign was completed in October 2021, Halff was able to make a few key recommendations to the City:

### RECOMMENDATIONS

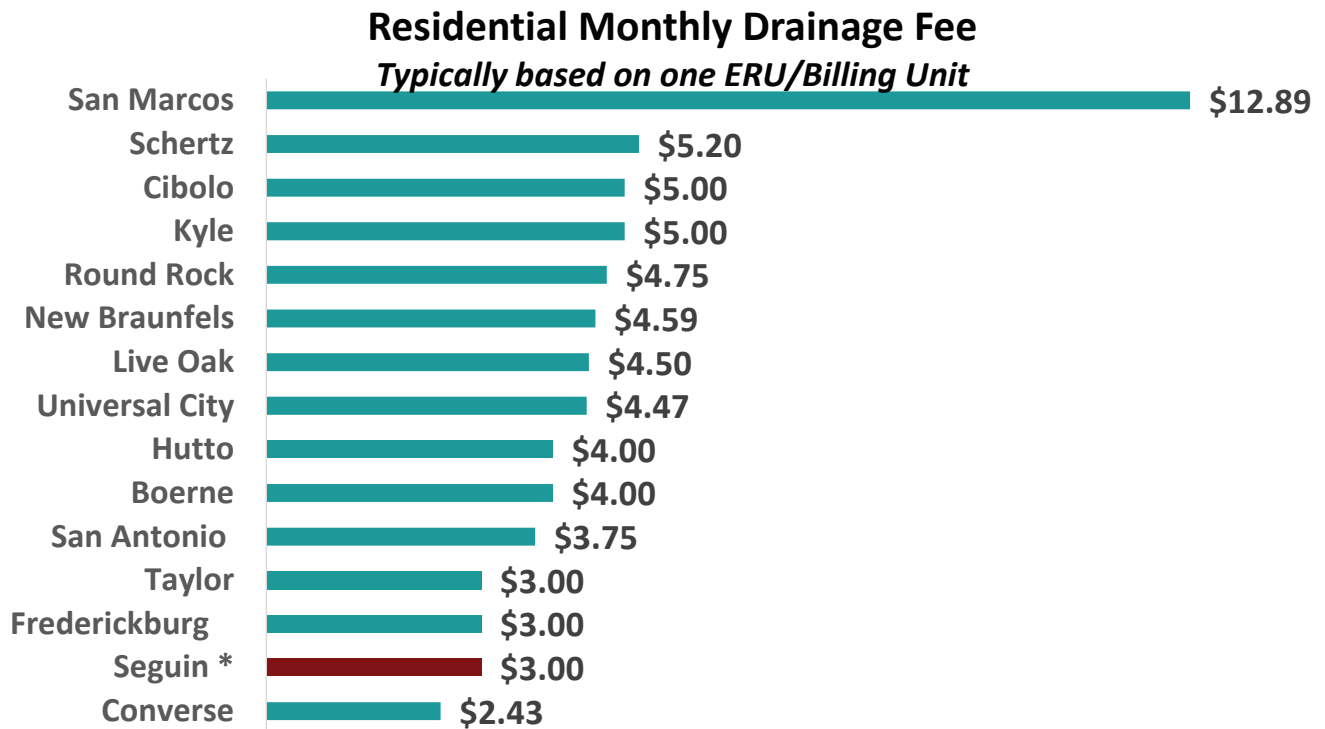
- Reduce the original suggested Stormwater Utility rate from a \$5.00 monthly fee to a \$3.00 monthly fee.
- The City approve the new rate in January 2022 but does not implement the fee until January 2023 to provide the citizens 1 year to plan appropriately.
- Continue Public Outreach for the implementation phase of the Stormwater Utility rate.



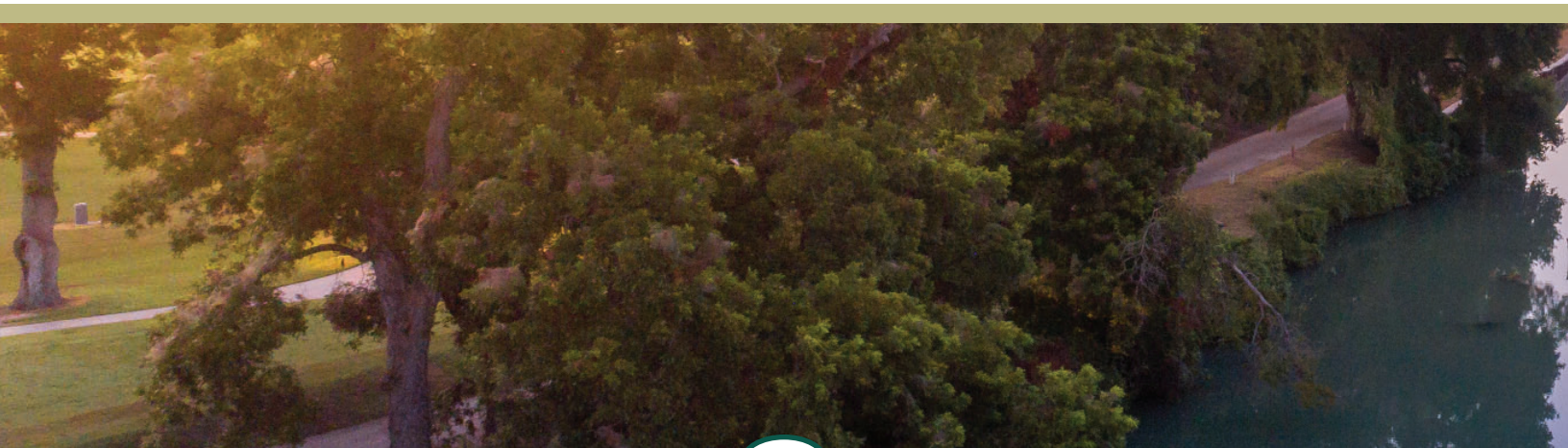
# STORMWATER UTILITY RATE FEE

## SIMILAR CITIES DRAINAGE UTILITY FEE

The Halff team surveyed other similar-sized cities across the region to find out what monthly fee is charged to an average residential lot.



\*Approved on December 21, 2021



### STORMWATER UTILITY RATE REASSESSMENT

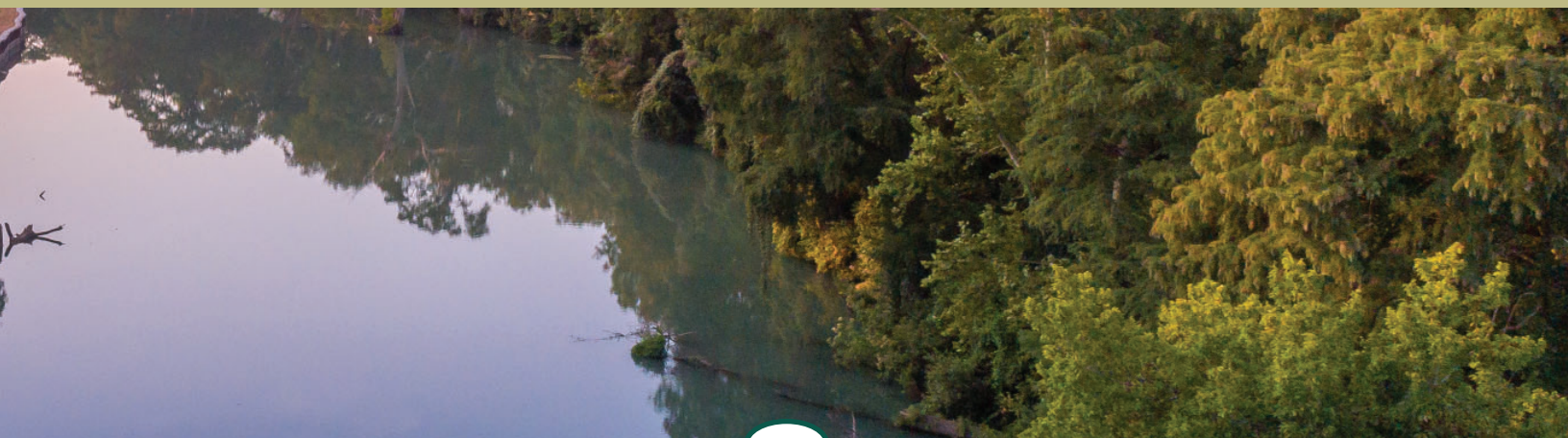
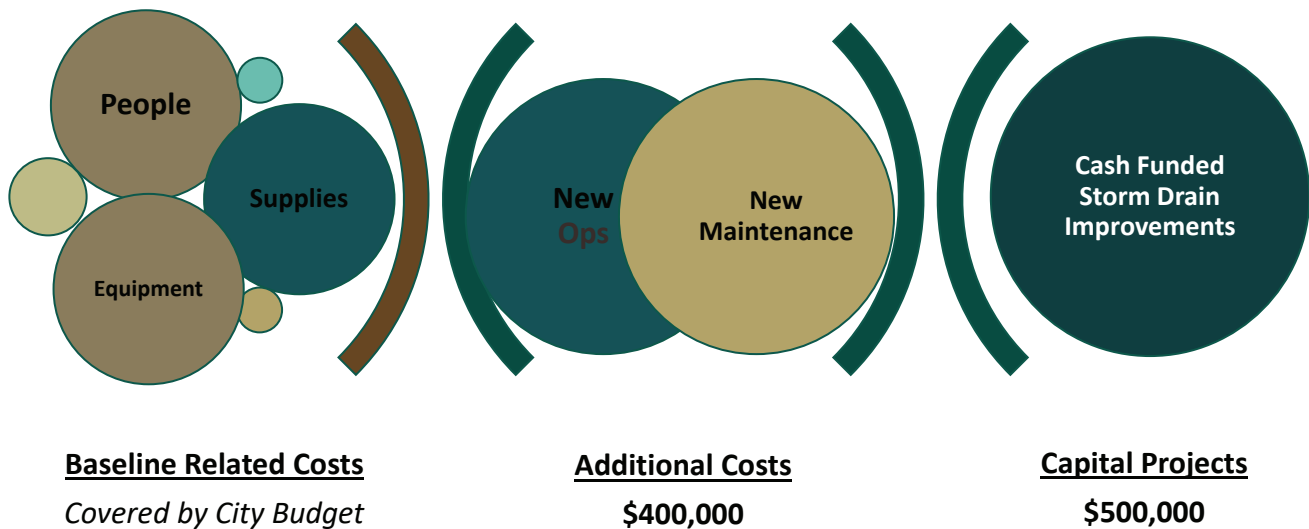
The City of Seguin evaluates utility rates on an annual basis to set funding levels that meet the program goals. As program goals change, new CIP projects are identified, and asset management needs are refined, the City will reassess the current fee to determine if the SUR should be increased or may be decreased while still meeting the desired level of service.

The “CIP Discussion Map” will be looked at in greater detail with the implementation of a City-Wide Drainage Master Plan study, which is one of four recommended projects for the beginning development of the Stormwater Utility Program.

- Assess need for increased infrastructure replacement, maintenance and CIP goals
- Determine benefits of pay-as-you-go vs debt funded CIP program
- Identify cost of MS4 permit program by 2024

### COMPONENTS OF COST OF SERVICE

Elements Projected Based on FY 2022



## OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

The City of Seguin has operated and maintained drainage infrastructure under the Capital Projects & Engineering Department and is expected to carry out implementation of the Stormwater Utility plan. This department has been responsible for the repair of drainage facilities with the assistance of the Public Works Street Department when needed.

In terms of maintenance, the Drainage Utility Department will be responsible for customer billing assistance, street sweeping, inspection, inventory management, cleaning, rehabilitation, and repair of municipal drainage facilities.

- Move towards proactive level of service that will anticipate and prioritize maintenance needs to reduce complaints, improve quality of service, and prolong infrastructure service life.
- Create georeferenced inventory and asset management database of existing drainage system and drainage complaints.



# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PROGRAM

A framework to prioritize drainage CIPs was developed for the 2022 SSUP. Halff and the City discussed known drainage issues that have been documented over the past few years. These drainage problem areas along with documented drainage complaints and past CIP projects were mapped out and presented at a public meeting on August 26th. A copy of this map is provided in Appendix C and labeled “CIP Discussion Map” along with a list of the CIP areas explored.

The “CIP Discussion Map” will be looked at in greater detail with the implementation of a City-Wide Drainage Master Plan study, which is one of four recommended projects for the beginning development of the Stormwater Utility Program.

## INITIAL LIST OF RECOMMENDED PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED BY STORMWATER UTILITY

- 1 Aerial imagery, LiDAR and Impervious Area Flight
- 2 Inventory and Asset Management
- 3 Storm Water Criteria Manual
- 4 Drainage Master Plan

## CIP PRIORITIZATION

Even with the CDBG projects, the drainage needs are expected to be greater than available funding and, as the City grows, additional projects are anticipated. The project team endeavored to develop an objective process to determine how best to prioritize future stormwater CIPs. The team identified several prioritization criteria that are considered industry standard.

**Table 5.1 CIP Evaluation Categories**

SAFETY	Structure Flooding
	Street Flooding
	Downstream Impacts
Economics = Project Cost, Funding	
Environmental impact	
Project Timing	
Social Impacts	
Constructability	
Stakeholder Impacts	



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