



# Environment Hamilton

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From The Spectator, July 23 2012

# Some of our background with stormwater...

- Run two separate petitions for Hamilton City Council calling for a fair stormwater fee system with years of tandem public education and outreach
- Attended many meetings across province about stormwater and green infrastructure issues in Ontario since 2017
- Completed STEP Stormwater Financing and User Fee Workshop in 2019 (along with City Staff)
- Ongoing work with other organizations such as Hamilton Naturalist Club, Green Venture, and Green Communities Canada on stormwater/green infrastructure issues and projects
- And more!

## Guiding Principles Recommended for the Evaluation of Stormwater Funding Models

Principle	Description of Intent
fair and equitable	Customer contributions are proportional to their impact on the system and the cost to run the system (i.e., user-pay). User fees are non-discriminatory amongst customers and sectors.
climate resilient & environmentally sustainable	Encourages customers to become more resilient to climate change through adoption of on-site controls to reduce run-off, while providing the City with funding needed to increase system-level stormwater resiliency and protect natural resources and waterbodies from the impacts of stormwater and the harmful pollutants it carries.
affordable and financially sustainable	Provides sustainable, predictable, and dedicated funding. Uses full cost pricing to meet entire stormwater revenue needs at the City's desired level of service. Allows for regular fee reviews to keep pace with changes in the cost-of-service delivery or desired service levels. Allows the City to address infrastructure deficiencies and unfunded liabilities. Considers the financial impact on various customer sectors and is comparable with other municipalities.
justifiable	Residents and businesses understand how much they contribute to stormwater management and for what the money is being used. Customers have been consulted and involved in the decision-making process, particularly those that will be most affected. Consistent with best practices and applicable laws in order to guarantee that the funding structure is justifiable and transparent if challenged
simple to understand and manage	Should be readily understood by staff, Council and customers. System is efficiently maintained by City's staff.

## PETITION FOR HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL:

Dear Mayor Horwath and City Council,

I am calling on you to address the rising costs and risk of stormwater management in the City of Hamilton as a result of the recognized climate emergency by implementing a new stormwater management fee system to address the increasing risks and rising costs of stormwater management in Hamilton. As it stands now, households pay for rising stormwater management costs primarily through water bills. Many property owners who contribute the most to stormwater runoff which strains our system, pollutes our environment, and degrades our infrastructure pay little or none of the costs of dealing with the problem by comparison because of the status quo. This approach to stormwater fees has resulted in an underfunded and inequitable system. Residents don't see how much we are paying and why.

Not only have experts such as the former Environmental Commissioner of Ontario made recommendations for new fee structures for stormwater to address the problems above, but other Ontario municipalities such as Mississauga, Kitchener, and many more have already successfully implemented new structures which Hamilton can learn from.

I urge the City of Hamilton to adopt a new fee structure for stormwater that enables:

1. Transparency - see what we're paying for
2. Equity - everyone pays their fair share
3. Sustainability - city can reliably fund and prepare for the future
4. Incentives - encourage people to do better, reward those who implement changes such as rain barrels and depaving
5. Stewardship - protecting environment and water quality

I urge you to support Environment Hamilton's call for the City of Hamilton to develop and implement a fair stormwater fee system that addresses the five core principles outlined above.

From: [www.environmenthamilton.org/stormwaterpetition](http://www.environmenthamilton.org/stormwaterpetition)

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## Some considerations...

- Encouragement of adoption of on-site controls should be financially worthwhile for property owners
- Pre-existing green infrastructure and form of property should be considered (as in, pre-existing best practices should be acknowledged and awarded/"grandfathered" in when new system is introduced)
- "On-site controls" should factor in and align with other city priorities such as increasing biodiversity, urban tree canopy, etc
- System should be designed to influence development designs before shovels hit the ground

Thank you!

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