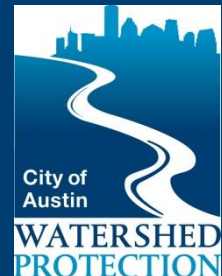


# City of Austin Proposed Drainage Charge Revision

City Council Public Hearing  
May 21, 2015



# Purpose

Adopt ordinance  
amendments to modify  
how the drainage charge  
is calculated

# Drainage Bill is Shown:

- In the “**Drainage Service**” section of each **City of Austin** utility bill.
- **Adjacent**  
**this logo:**



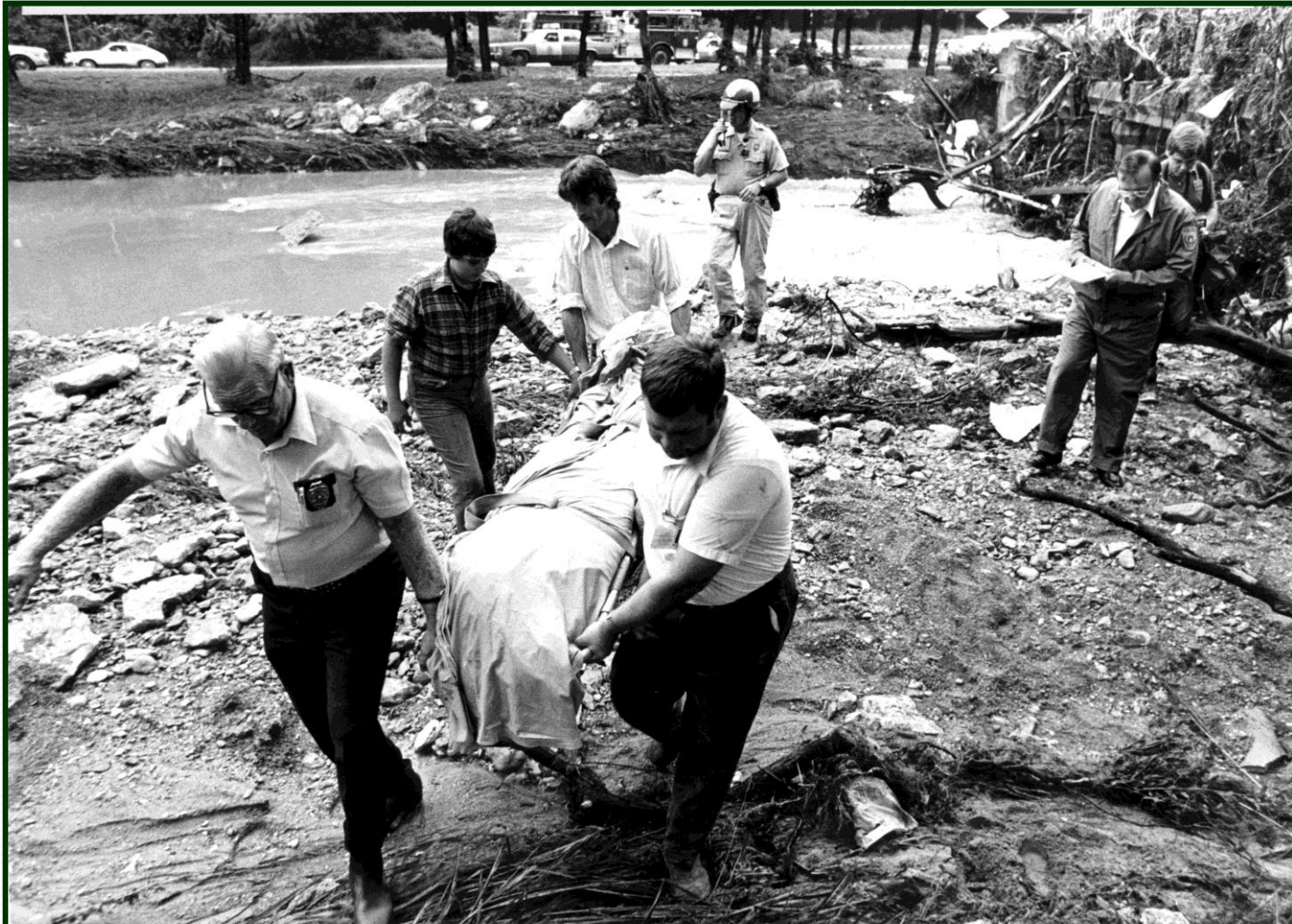
# 1981 Memorial Day Flood



PICA 29471, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library



# 1981 Memorial Day Flood



PICA 29466, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

# Municipal Drainage Utility

**Mission: protect lives, property and the environment by reducing the impacts of flooding, erosion, and water pollution**





# Municipal Drainage Utility

**Programs  
and  
projects  
that  
evaluate,  
mitigate  
and  
prevent  
drainage  
problems**

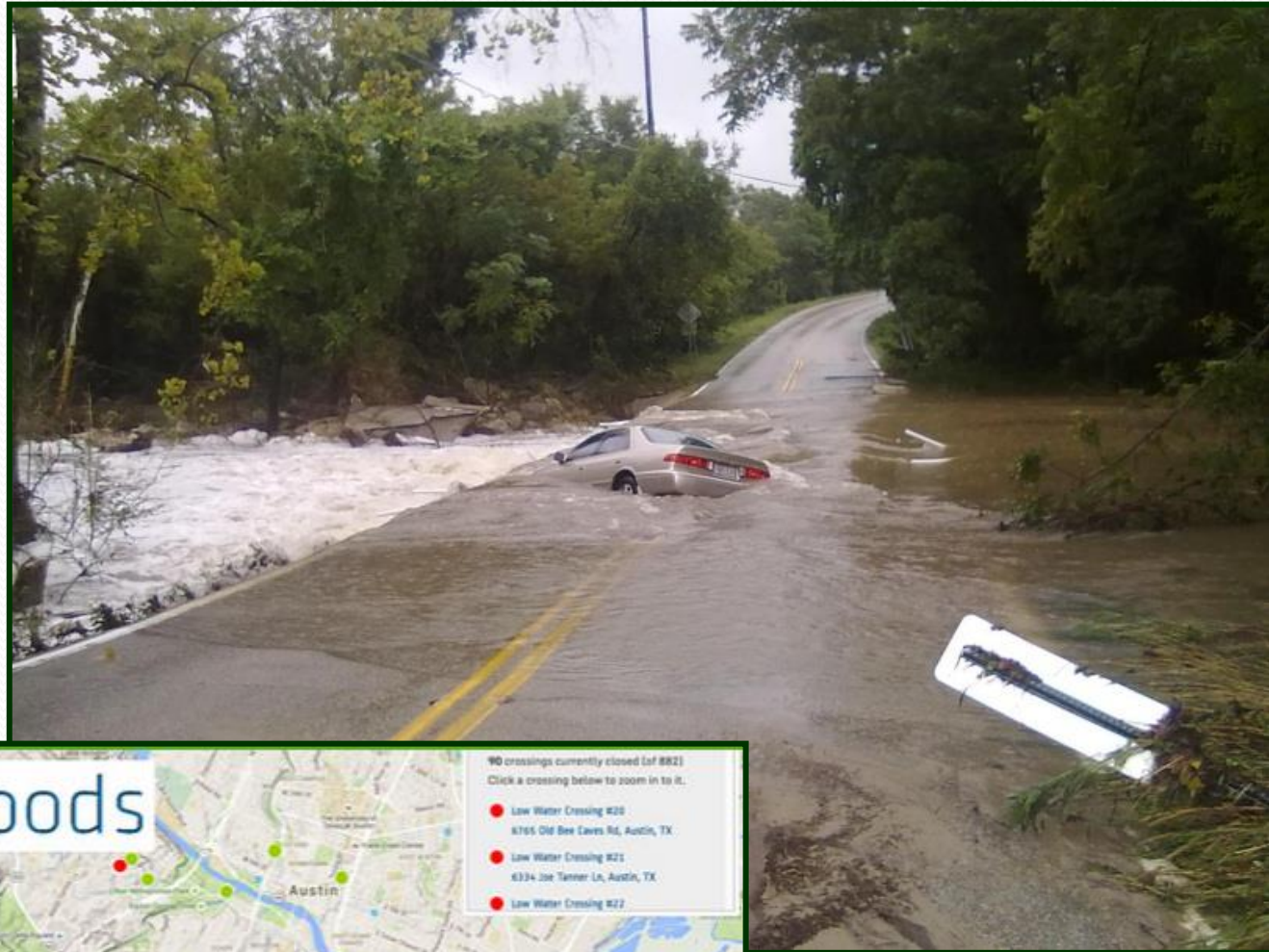


# Flood Monitoring & Warning Systems

Flood gauge  
network

Flooded road  
barricades

ATXfloods  
.com



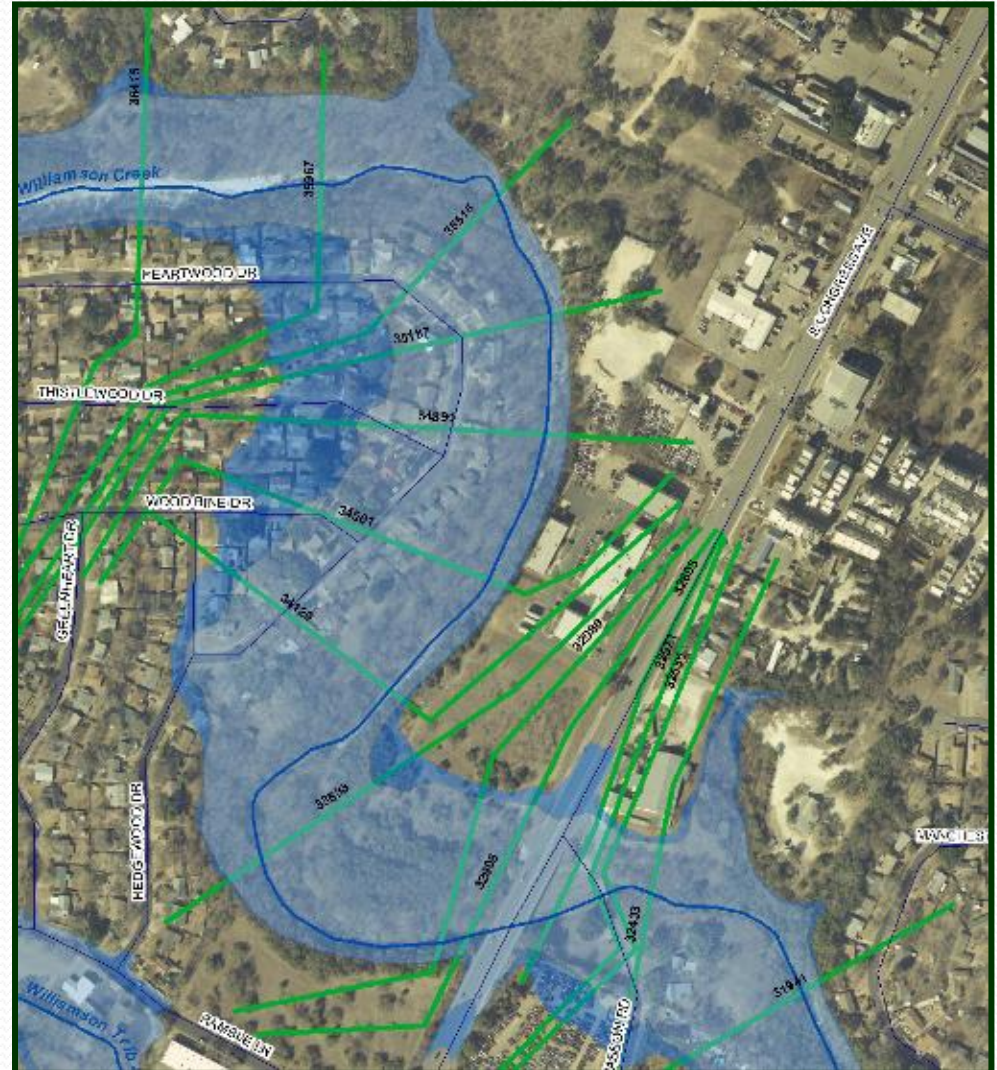


# Floodplain Hazard Mitigation

**Flood Mapping & Modeling**

**Development review**

**Regulatory design criteria**



# Flood Recovery

**Residential  
buyouts**

**National  
Flood  
Insurance  
Program**



Halloween Flood of 2013



# Storm Water Infrastructure

**Plan,  
design,  
construct,  
maintain,  
more than  
1,000 miles  
of storm  
drain pipes**





# Erosion Control and Bank Stabilization





# Stream Restoration



**About 400 miles  
of creeks**





# Commercial Pond Inspection

**More than  
6,400  
detention  
and water  
quality  
ponds**





# City Pond Maintenance

**Inspect  
and  
maintain  
1,100 City  
ponds and  
dams**



# 34,000 Inlets & Manholes

**Removed  
300 tons  
of debris  
per year**





# Lady Bird Lake



**Removed 121  
tons of debris  
per year**





# Water Quality Monitoring Program Spill Response & Discharge Permits



# Education and Outreach





# Current Drainage Charge

- Uses the Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) as a standard measure of impact
- Single Family and Multi-family, <6 stories, charged \$9.80/month (one ERU)
- Multi-family, 7 or more stories, charged \$4.90/month (one-half ERU)



# Current Drainage Charge

- Current fee (\$9.80) assumes a citywide average of 1,763 sq. ft. of impervious area per residence
- Non-residential charge is based on amount of impervious area on the property which is \$242.16 / acre / month
- Both of rates are ~ \$0.0056 / sq.ft.

# **Recent Court Challenge:**

## ***Poole v. City of Austin***

- Challenged method by which City calculates the drainage charge for multi-family properties
- Not a class action
- District Court found 2009 amendments to the drainage charge methodology invalid
- Appeal filed
  - Action on appeal stayed until October 22, 2015
  - Modifications in ordinance would moot appeal



# Drainage Charge Revisions:

- Charge will apply to real property, not to units on the property.
- Charge calculated the same way for all property; no distinction between land uses.
- Charge proportional to impact of each property on the City's drainage system.

# Impervious Area

Any surface that prevents the infiltration of rain water into the ground, including rooftops, driveways, parking areas, patios, concrete, and other surfaces

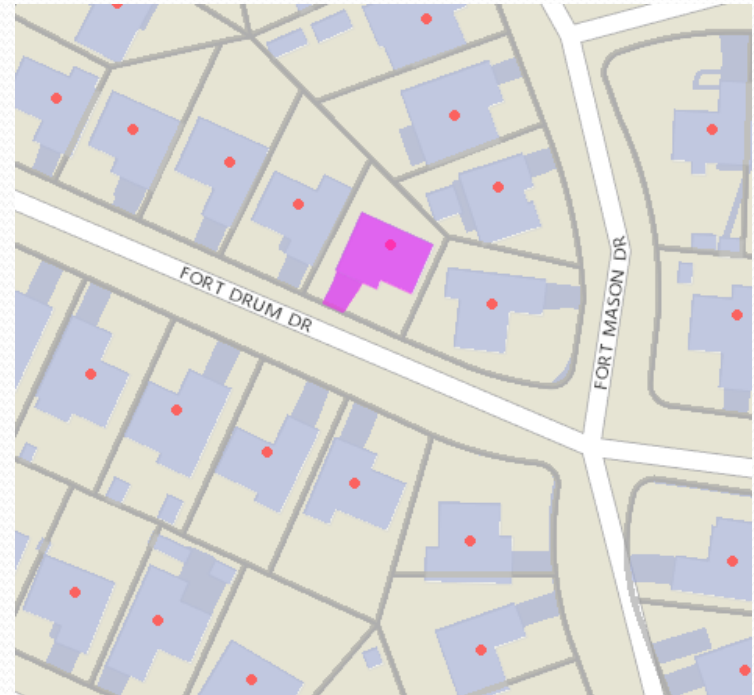


# Drainage Charge Benchmarking

- 2014 benchmarking survey – compared methods from many Cities
- Texas Examples
  - HOU Current – newly established 2012, by IA in sq.ft.
  - DAL Current - by residential lot size and assumptions of IA for commercial
  - DAL Proposed in 2015 – by measured IA using 1,000 sq.ft. increments
  - SAN Current – tiered by lot size and land use
  - SAN Proposed in 2014 – 3 tiered residential, by IA in sq.ft. for non-residential (including multi-family)

# Drainage Charge Development

- No tiers
- More equitable and reasonable for similar services
- Methodologies evaluated
  - 1) Impervious Area (IA) only
  - 2) **IA and %IA (selected)**
  - 3) IA, %IA, and parcel area
  - 4) Pervious and impervious area





# Methodology for Calculating the Drainage Charge

Two major hydrologic parameters determine the drainage charge:

- Amount of impervious area
- Percentage of impervious area

# Enhanced Data & Capabilities

Aerial photography, planimetric maps, & Geographic Information System (GIS), now provide ability to:

- Measure impervious area, lot size, and percentage of impervious area for individual lots
- Compute charge to specifics of each lot



# Proposed Method of Calculation

Monthly charge =  
monthly ***base rate*** x  
sq. ft. of ***impervious area*** x  
adjustment factor for ***percent  
impervious***

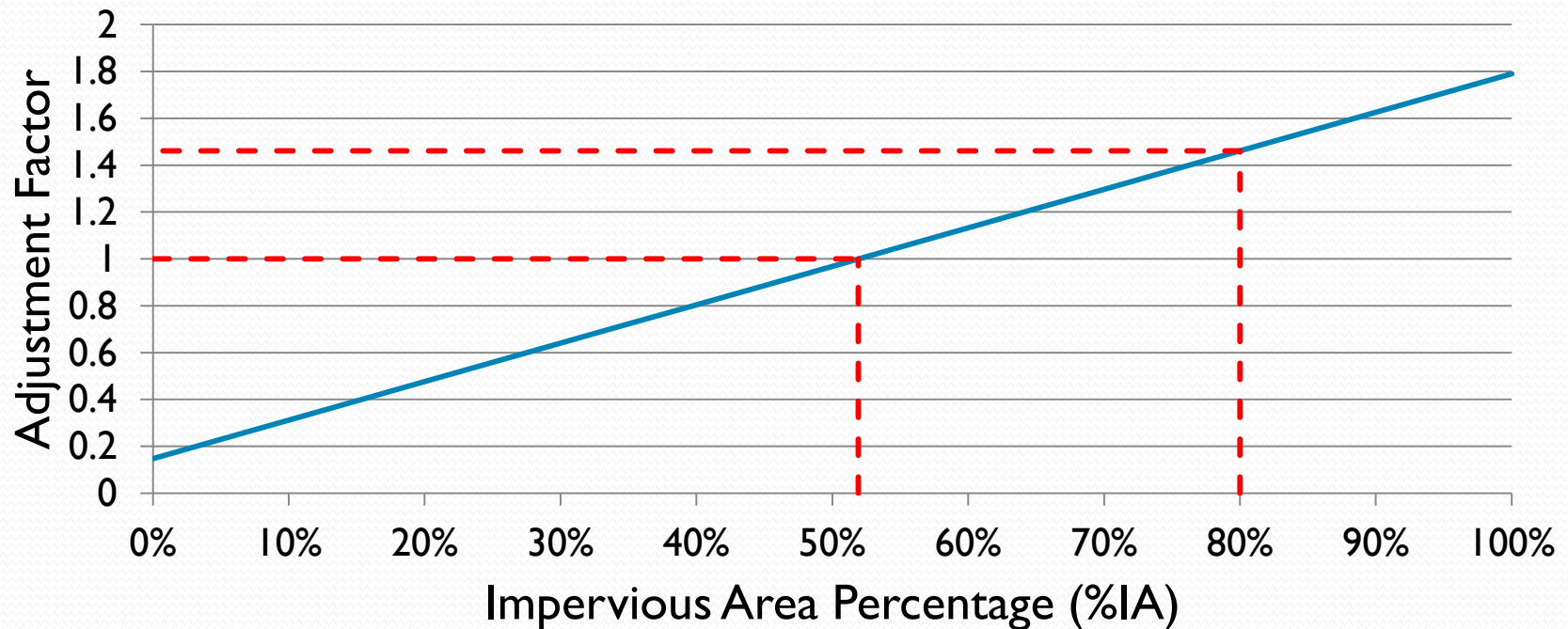
# The Base Rate

- Base Rate = Revenue requirements divided by total billable impervious area
- Comparable FY15 monthly base rate would be ~\$0.0045 per sq. ft. impervious area
- Proposed FY16 monthly base rate could be ~\$0.0050 per sq. ft. impervious area



# Proposed Adjustment Factor

- Citywide weighted average impervious cover per lot is 52.9% IA
- Adjustment Factor =  $1.6157 \times (\%IA) + 0.1453$
- A lot with 52.9% IA would have an Adjustment Factor = 1.0
- A lot with 80% IA would have an Adjustment Factor = 1.44



# Examples: Single Family (FY15 Rate)



## Medium Parcel Single Family

Parcel Area = 8,240 sq. ft.

IC Area = 2,935 sq. ft.

IC% = 36%

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.80

Potential Monthly Fee = \$9.60



## Small Parcel Single Family

Parcel Area = 2,979 sq. ft.

IC Area = 1,550 sq. ft.

IC% = 52%

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.80

Potential Monthly Fee = \$6.80



# Examples: Single Family

## Large Parcel – Large House Single Family

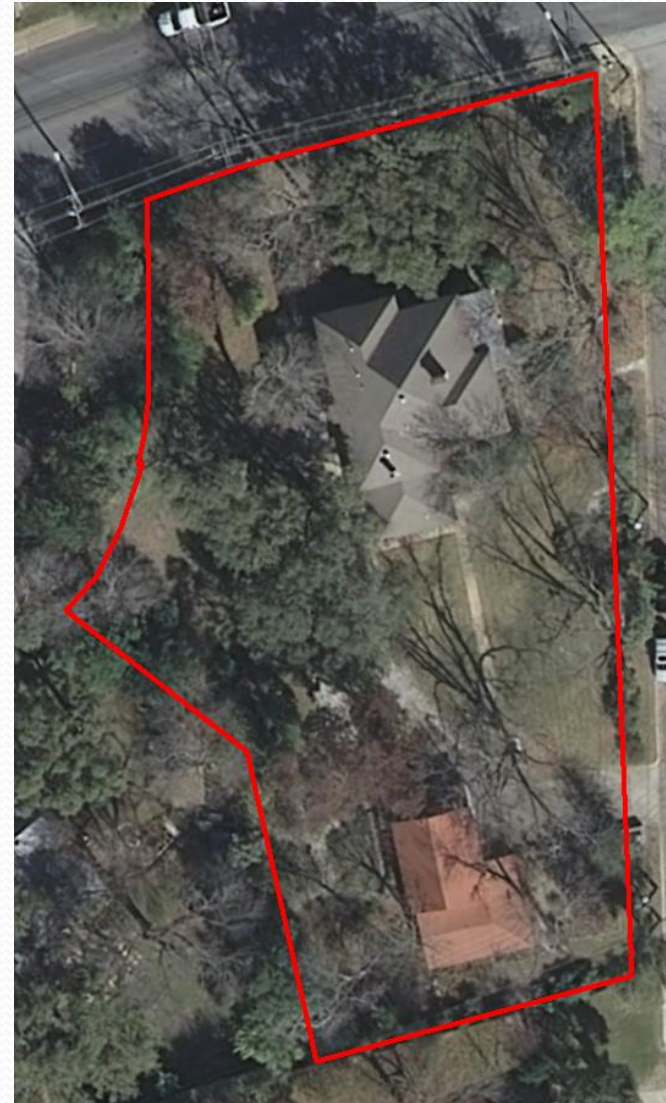
Parcel Area = 31,210 sq. ft.

IC Area = 7,824 sq. ft.

IC% = 25%

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.80

Potential Monthly Fee = \$19.50



# Multifamily Examples: Duplexes



## Low Density Duplex

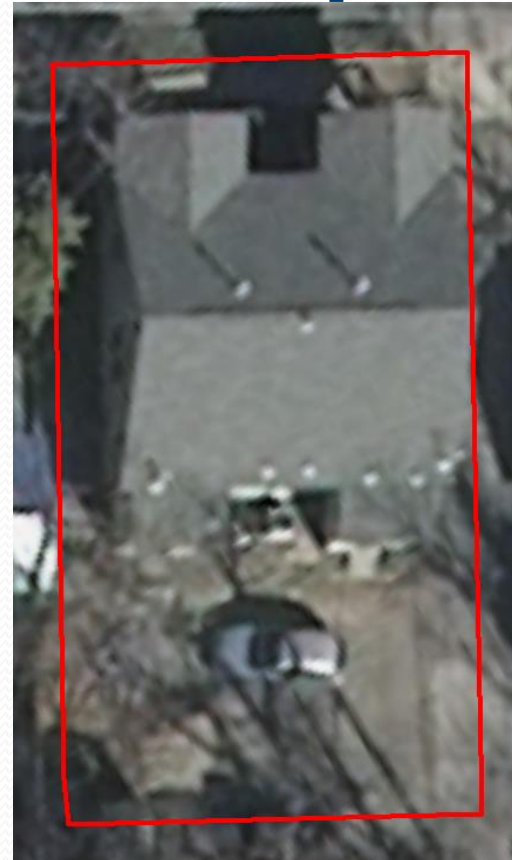
Parcel Area = 3,931 sq. ft.

IC Area = 1,525 sq. ft.

IC% = 39%

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.80/unit

Potential Monthly Fee = \$2.70/unit



## High Density Duplex

Parcel Area = 3,516 sq. ft.

IC Area = 2,864 sq. ft.

IC% = 82%

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.80/unit

Potential Monthly Fee = \$9.50/unit

# Examples: Townhomes



## High Density Townhome

Parcel Area = 2,878 sq. ft.

IC Area = 2,410 sq. ft.

IC% = 84%

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.80

Potential Monthly Fee = \$16.30



## High Density Townhome

Parcel Area = 2,030 sq. ft.

IC Area = 1,579 sq. ft.

IC% = 78%

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.80

Potential Monthly Fee = \$10.00



# Multifamily Examples: <7 story Apartments



## Medium Density Apartments 198 Units

Parcel Area = 356,953 sq. ft.

IC% = 48%

IC/unit = 868 sq. ft.

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.80/unit

Potential Monthly Fee = \$3.60/unit



## High Density Apartments 22 Units

Parcel Area = 19,796 sq. ft.

IC% = 77%

IC/unit = 900 sq. ft.

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.80/unit

Potential Monthly Fee = \$4.40/unit

# Multifamily Examples: High Rise Apartments



## Medium Density Apartments 183 Units

Parcel Area = 229,377 sq. ft.

IC% = 62%

IC/unit = 773 sq. ft.

Current Monthly Fee = \$4.90/unit

Potential Monthly Fee = \$4.00/unit



## High Density Apartments 220 Units

Parcel Area = 77,336 sq. ft.

IC% = 100%

IC/unit = 352 sq. ft.

Current Monthly Fee = \$4.90/unit

Potential Monthly Fee = \$2.80/unit



# Non-Residential Examples: Commercial



## Small Business - Commercial

Parcel Area = 3,264 sq. ft. (~ 0.04 ac)

IC Area = 1,679 sq. ft.

IC% = 50%

Current Monthly Fee = \$9.30

Potential Monthly Fee = \$7.20



## Small Business - Commercial

Parcel Area = 22,706 sq. ft. (~ 0.26 ac)

IC Area = 11,358 sq. ft.

IC% = 51%

Current Monthly Fee = \$63.10

Potential Monthly Fee = \$50.20



# Non-Residential Examples: Commercial



## Small Business - Commercial

Parcel Area = 5,218 sq. ft. (~ 0.12 ac)

IC Area = 4,401 sq. ft.

IC% = 84%

Current Monthly Fee = \$24.50

Potential Monthly Fee = \$30.00



## Small Business - Commercial

Parcel Area = 14,932 sq. ft. (~ 0.33 ac)

IC Area = 14,461 sq. ft.

IC% = 97%

Current Monthly Fee = \$80.40

Potential Monthly Fee = \$111.70

# Non-Residential Examples: Commercial



## Medium Size Commercial

Parcel Area = 372,199 sq. ft. (~8.5 ac)

IC Area = 344,628 sq. ft. (~7.9 ac)

IC% = 93%

Current Monthly Fee = \$1,916

Potential Monthly Fee = \$2,560



## Large Size Commercial

Parcel Area = 7,817,510 sq. ft. (~180 ac)

IC Area = 4,292,840 sq. ft. (~99 ac)

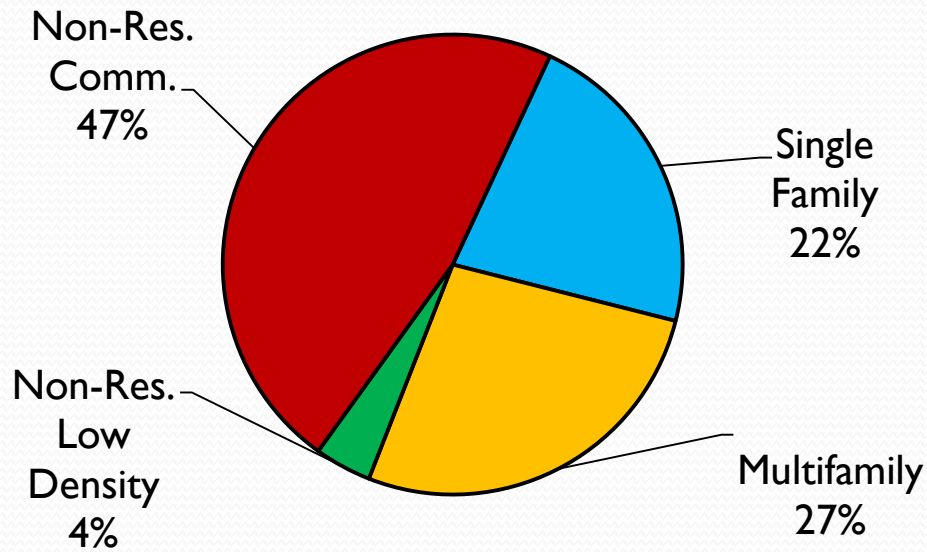
IC% = 55%

Current Monthly Fee = \$23,865

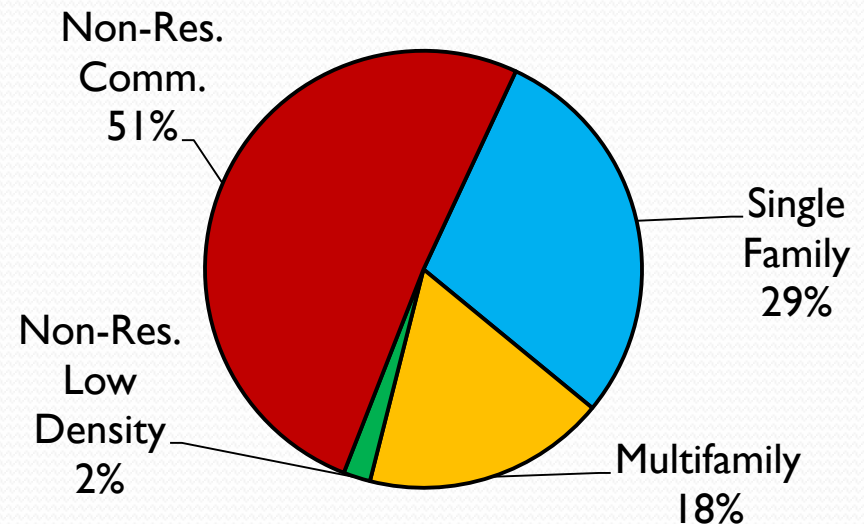
Potential Monthly Fee = \$20,000

# Current & Proposed Share of Charge by Land Use Category

**Current Share: ERU Method**



**Proposed Share: Amount & Pct. Impervious Area**

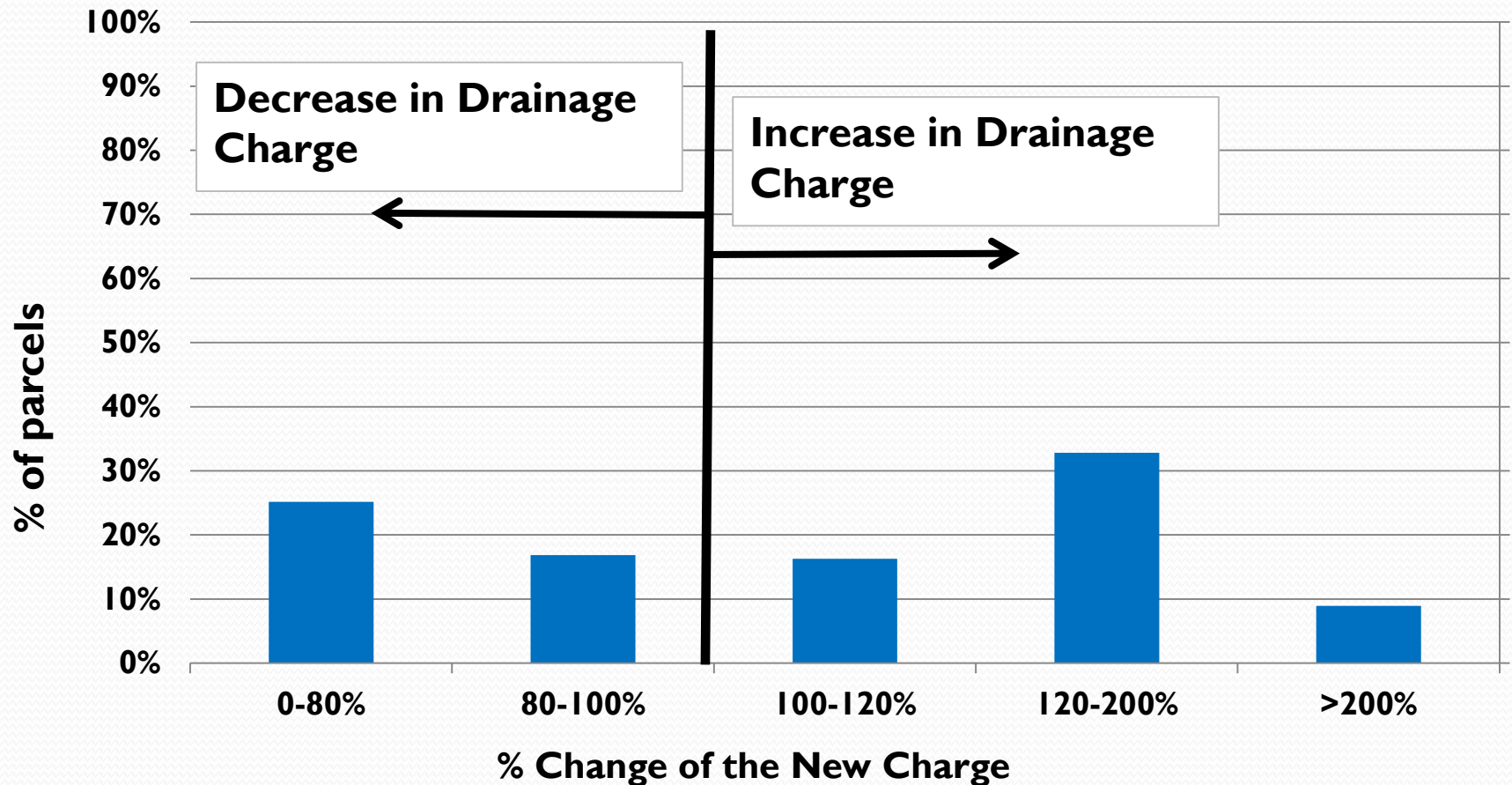




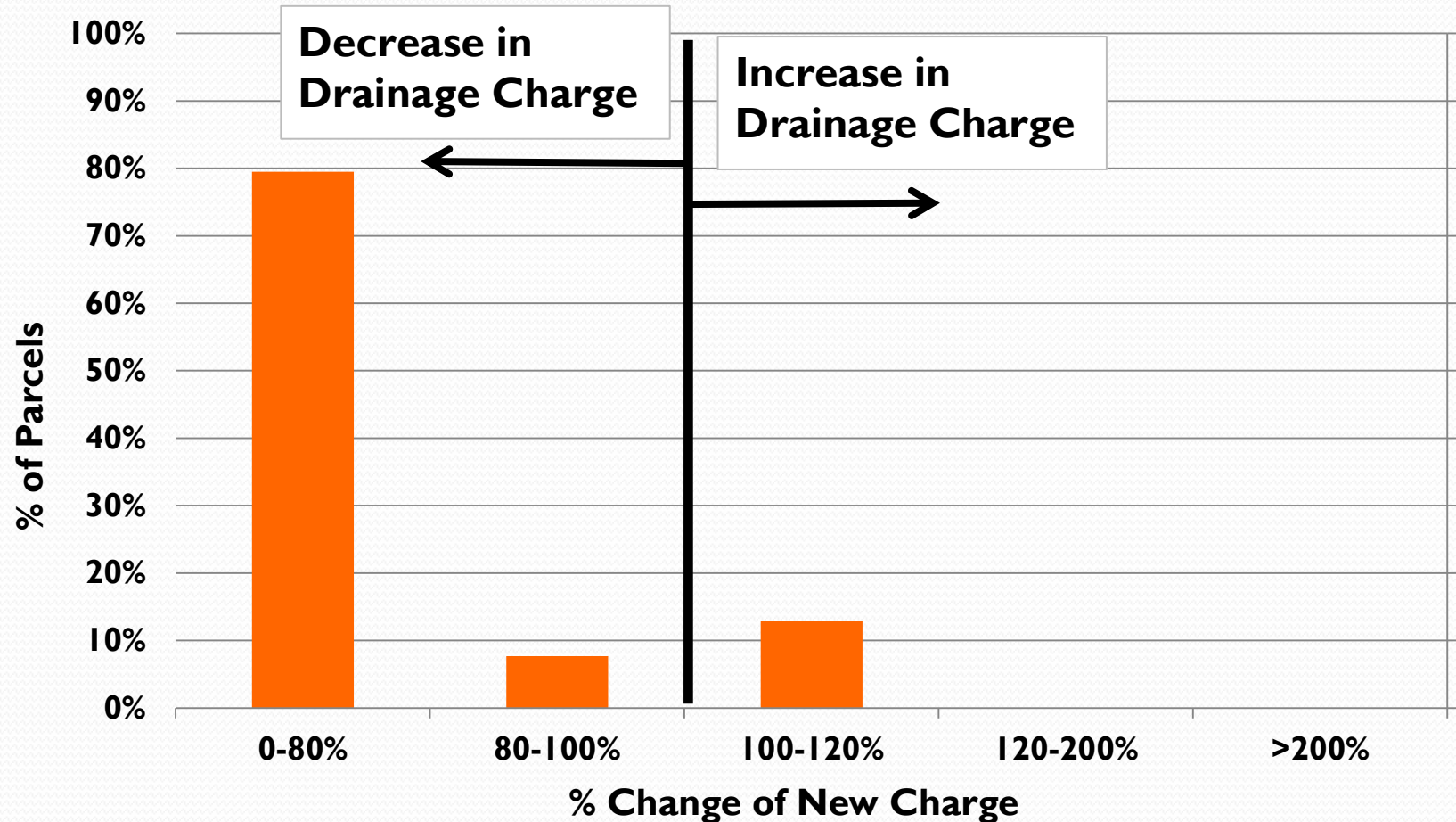
# Single Family Comparison by Parcel Impervious Area

Parcel Impervious Area (sq.ft.)	# of Parcels	% of Parcels	Current ERU Charge	Average Proposed Charge
0-2000	13,000	8%	\$9.80	\$4.80
2000-3000	60,000	38%	\$9.80	\$8.70
3000-4000	50,000	32%	\$9.80	\$12.70
>4000	34,000	22%	\$9.80	\$20.00
Total	157,000	100%	\$9.80	\$12.10

# Single Family Comparison

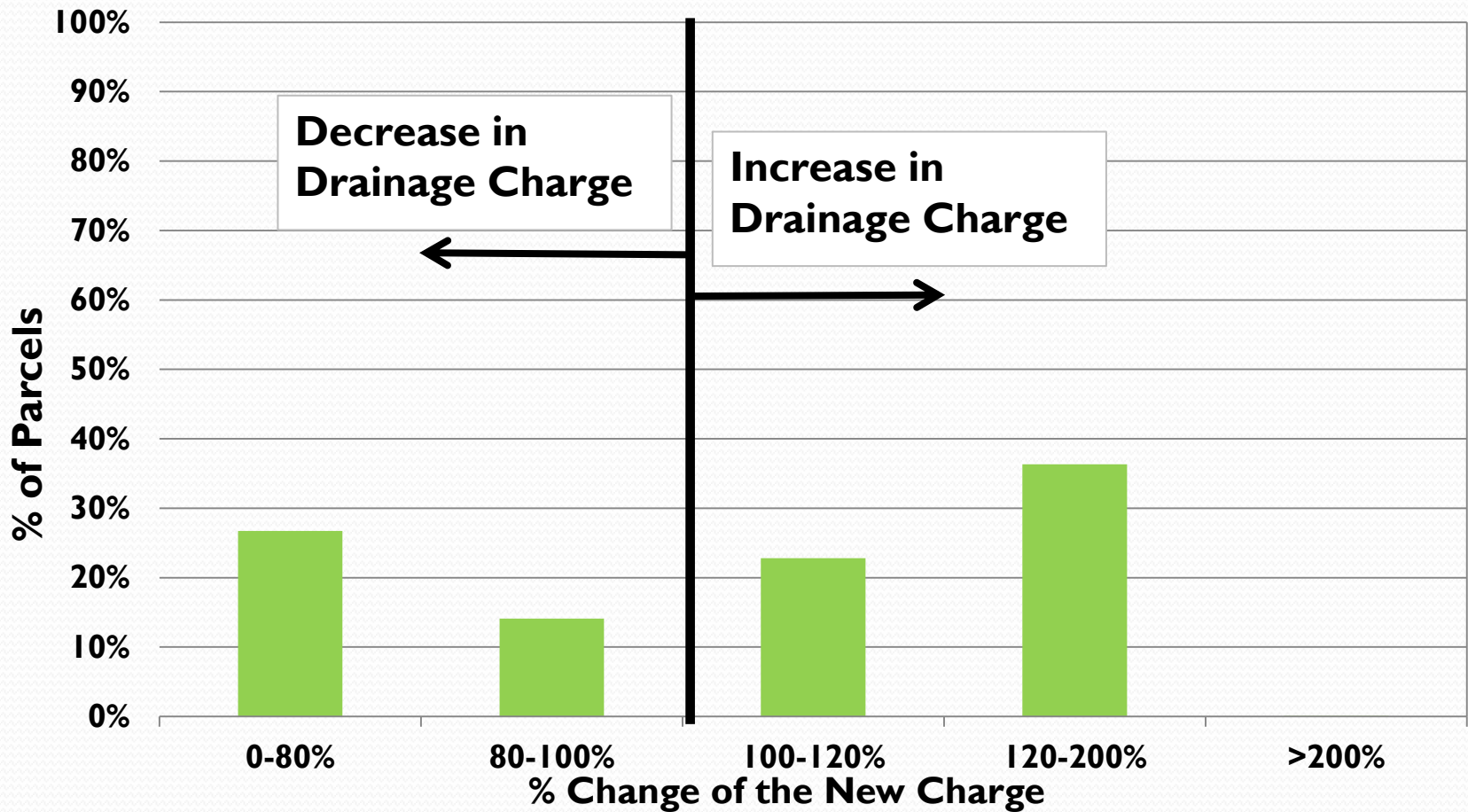


# Multi-Family Comparison





# Non-Residential Comparison



# Stakeholder Outreach

- Environmental Board briefing (Dec. 3, 2014)
- Stakeholder outreach (Dec – May, 2015)
- Neighborhood outreach (Dec. – May, 2015)
- Drainage Charge Revision Website (January 2015)
  - [www.austintexas.gov/drainagecharge](http://www.austintexas.gov/drainagecharge)
- Public meetings (February 2015)
- Council Public Utilities Committee (April 15, 2015)
- Pond Discount Letters (May 2015)
- City Council Public Hearing (May 21, 2015)

# Drainage Charge Revision Timeline

*April – May 2015*

Code Adoption  
Phase

15-2 Code Amendment  
**Effective Date Oct. 2015**

*June – Sept 2015*

Fee Adoption  
Phase

Fee Schedule as part of  
FY 16 Budget Approval +  
Emergency Rule  
**Effective Date Oct. 2015**

*Oct 2015 – April 2016*

Rule Adoption  
Phase

Administrative Rule  
Revisions (Q1 FY 2016)



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[FAQ](#)
[Education](#)
[Projects](#)
[Codes and Regulations](#)


## Watershed Protection Department

### DRAINAGE CHARGE REVISION

Austin is revising its stormwater drainage charge to make it more reasonable and equitable. The charge is assessed on utility bills and pays for solutions to flooding, erosion and water pollution.

### Estimate Your Revised Charge

Use the [Drainage Charge Estimator](#) to get an idea of what your drainage charge will be with the proposed revision. You will be able to find out the actual proposed charge in mid-summer.

### About the Revision

Currently the residential charge is a flat rate, and the commercial charge is based on the amount of impervious area. To ensure the new drainage charge is fair, it will:

- Be calculated the same way for all properties and eliminate the distinction between commercial, residential and high-rise residential properties.
- Be calculated for each property based on the amount and percentage of impervious area. Impervious area includes rooftops, patios, driveways, parking lots and other surfaces that do not absorb rainfall.
- Take into account the impact of each property on the City's stormwater drainage system. The drainage system includes more than 900 miles of creeks, channels, ditches, pipes, dams and stormwater ponds.

The new charge will be based on the amount and percentage of impervious area because both contribute to stormwater runoff and problems such as erosion, flooding and water pollution. To find out more, watch the video farther down the page.

### Impact of Charge Revision

### TOP CONTENT

- ★ [Grow Green](#)
- ★ [Floodplain Management and Regulations](#)
- ★ [Flood Safety & Preparedness](#)
- ★ [Watershed Ordinance History](#)
- ★ [Scoop the Poop](#)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

City Council Public Hearing - Drainage Charge Revision  
May. 21, 2015

### MORE EVENTS

### CONTACT INFO

Phone: 512-974-1328  
Email

## Drainage Charge Revision


[More Information](#)

# Estimator Tool

## DRAINAGE CHARGE ESTIMATOR

The Drainage Charge Estimator can provide a rough estimate of your future drainage charge. The actual proposed drainage charges for individual properties will be available when the base rate and the GIS data review are completed in late summer 2015. View our [frequently asked questions](#) for more information about how the charge will be calculated.

**Enter the amount of impervious area in square feet.**

(You can estimate by measuring buildings, driveways, garages, decks, walkways, etc. The City will use aerial photography and GIS as data sources. This information will be publicly available in late summer 2015.)

**Enter the size of the property in square feet.**

(You can estimate by measuring property boundaries or by getting information online from the [Travis Central Appraisal District](#), [Hays Central Appraisal District](#) or the [Williamson Central Appraisal District](#). The City will use the appraisal districts and GIS as data sources.)

**Percentage of Impervious Area:**

25%

**Adjustment Factor:**

0.54893

**Estimated Monthly Charge:**

\$8.23

**Disclaimer:** The monthly charge generated by this calculator is an estimate. The actual proposed charge may differ significantly. In general, the more accurate the information you entered into the calculator, the more accurate the estimate is likely to be.

# DRAINAGE CHARGE REVISION MAP

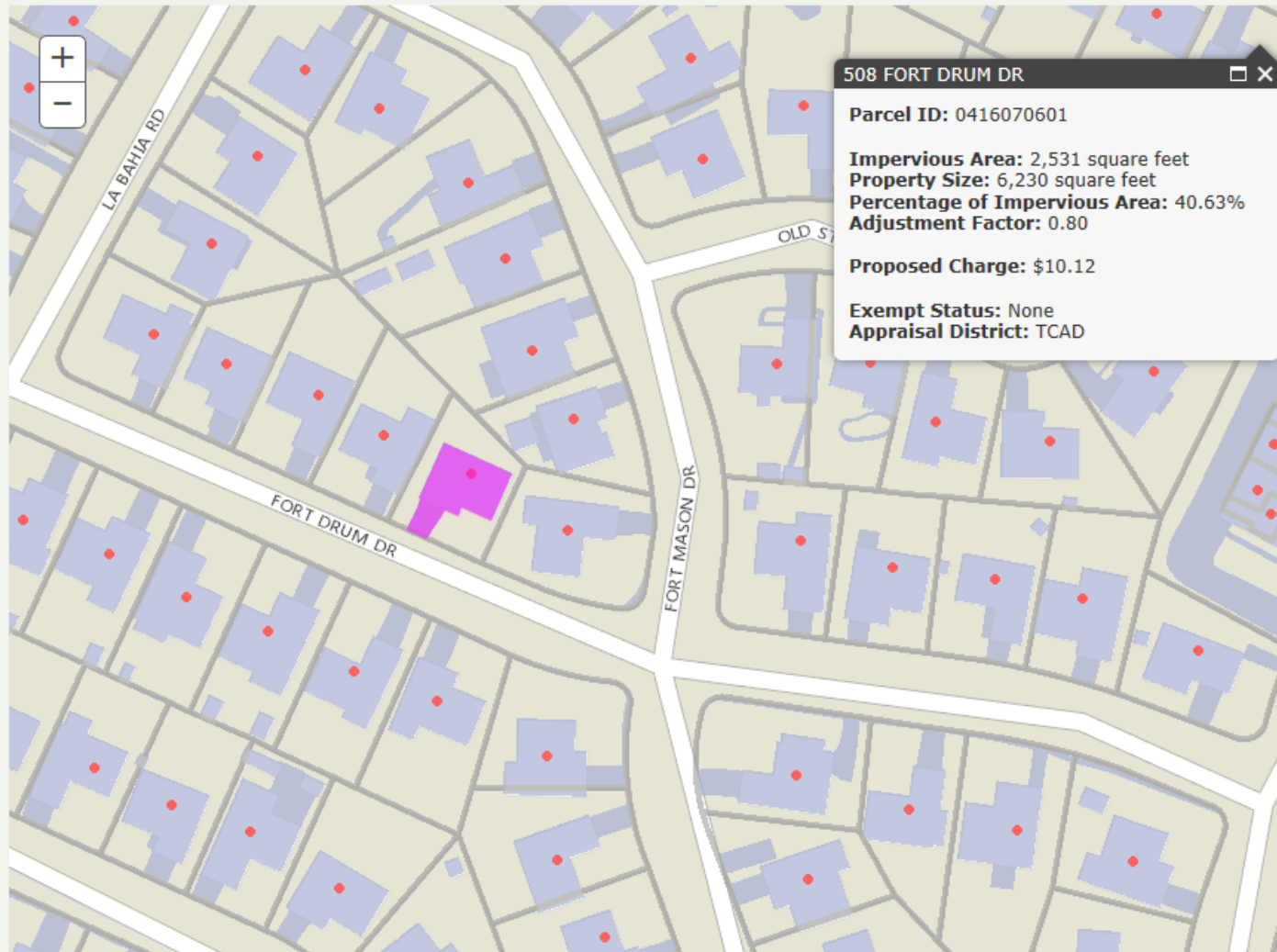


## To Use:

- Enter an address or select a property by clicking on the map.
- The impervious area on that property will be highlighted (derived from aerial photography flown in 2012).
- A window will pop up to display the impervious and total areas of this property.

## Disclaimer:

- This webmap is a work in progress and specific property information will not be available until the summer of 2015. For now, a sample area is provided for illustration purposes only. This webmap should be used as an example of how the site will work once it is fully populated with data.





# Reduced Charges

- Retain existing charge reduction based on need (Customer Assistance Program) – Residential Properties
- Eliminate the reduced charge (20% discount) for maintained ponds – Commercial Properties
  - Discount is not available to everyone
  - Everyone has to pay more to recover revenue lost from the discount

# Exemptions

- About 37% of the City's Impervious Area is currently exempt from the drainage charge
- No changes are proposed to exemptions
- State Code allows (but does not require) exemptions for:
  - State
  - County
  - Municipality
  - School Districts
  - Tax-Exempt Religious Organizations
- City currently exempts:
  - State
  - County
  - Independent School Districts and Public/Private Higher Education
  - Tax-Exempt Religious Organizations (with participation in housing for the homeless)
  - City ROW

# Next Steps

- Making data as accurate as possible
- Interfacing with the City's billing system
- Increasing public awareness
- Process for adjustments/appeals
- Adoption of Administrative Rules





**Questions / Comments?**