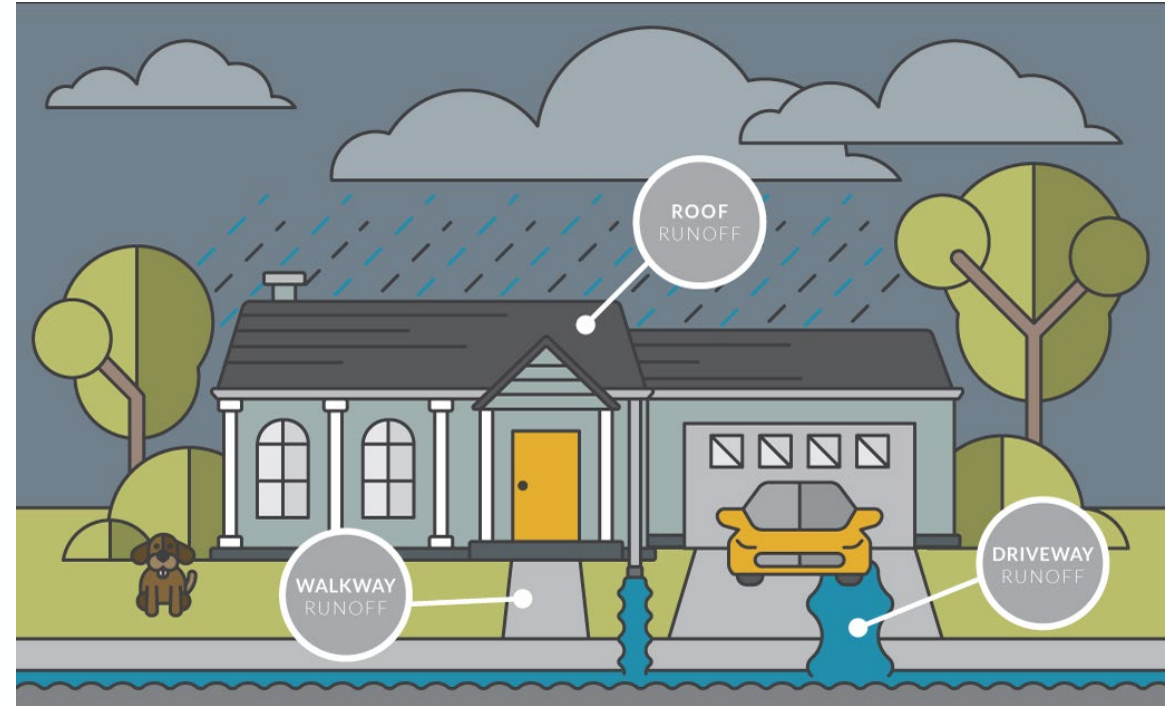




# Stormwater Utility Chamber of Commerce

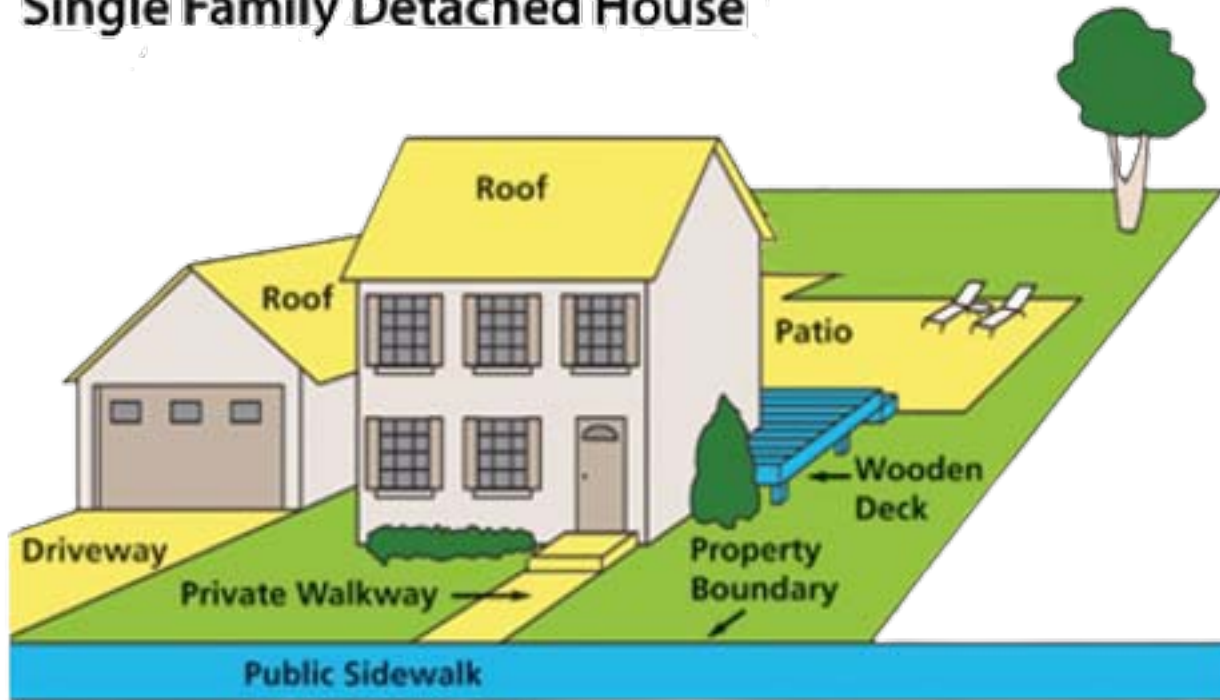
# What is a Stormwater Utility?

- The stormwater program is currently funded through the Sanitary District Tax, based on a property's assessed value. It is billed on your property tax assessment.
- A Stormwater Utility would be an **alternative** way to pay for the County's Stormwater Management Program, based on the amount of hard surfaces (impervious area (IA)) on a property.
- Like electric, gas, or water utility bills, the stormwater utility would charge properties a user fee based on its use of the County's stormwater system
- Impervious area is a better measure of a property's use of the stormwater system than assessed value



# What is an Impervious Area?

## Single Family Detached House



 Impervious area

- **Impervious Area (IA)** is the portion of a property that is covered with hard surfaces that don't let rain runoff soak into the ground.
- Examples include patios, roofs, driveways and walkways.
- Properties with more hard surfaces contribute more stormwater runoff to the system and would therefore pay a higher rate under a stormwater utility.



# How Did We Get Here?



Phase 1

Feasibility Study of a Stormwater Utility (Complete)

- [Interim Deliverable provided in May 2020](#)
  - Focused on policy considerations
  - [Final Report](#) provided November 2020
  - Report by Raftelis recommended moving to Utility User Fee model

Phase 2a

Feasibility Study and Rate Refinement (Complete)

- Recommend billing on Real Estate Tax Bill
- Proposed options for changes to the rate structure to ease burden on middle- and low-income housing
- Reviewed credit program options

Phase 2b

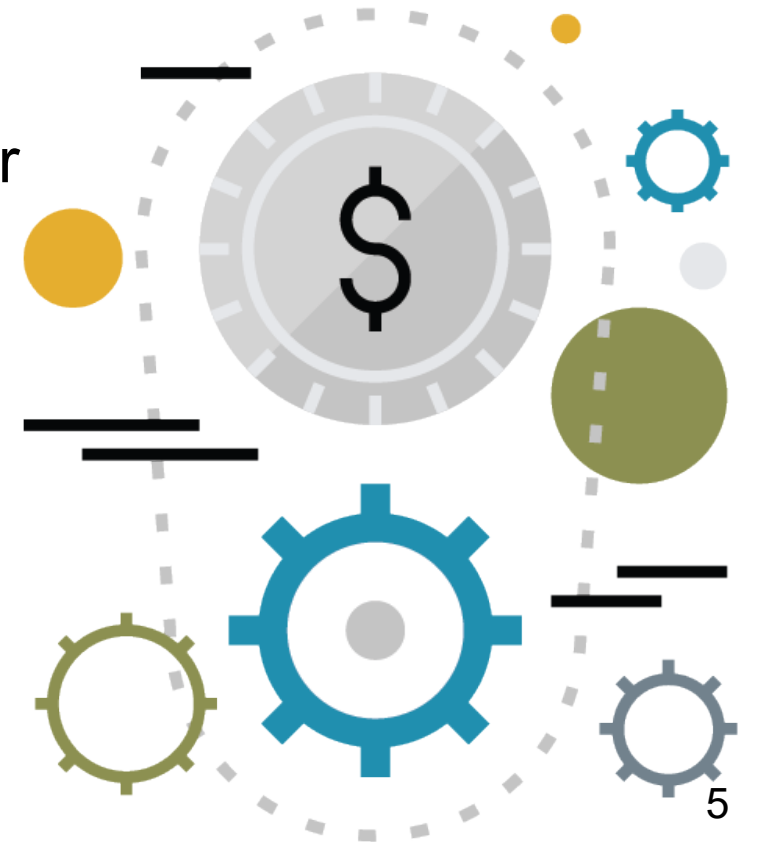
Engagement and Implementation (Underway)

- [Project Page:](#)  
[www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Sustainability-and-Environment/Stormwater/Stormwater-Utility-Feasibility-Study](http://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Sustainability-and-Environment/Stormwater/Stormwater-Utility-Feasibility-Study)

# What will the Stormwater Utility fund?

A Utility would fund the same Stormwater Programs funded by the Sanitary District now:

- Approximately 400 miles of aging storm sewer pipe
- Tens of thousands of culverts, inlets, outlets and other elements
- Water quality and regulatory programs
- Funding to ensure increased capacity
- Green infrastructure and restoration projects
- Flood plain management
- Education and training
- Stream water quality monitoring



# Plus it will fund...

- Operating costs to run the Utility, estimated at \$320k per year and 2.5 full time employees.
- A Credit Program, required under State Code, estimated to cost under \$200k, but will depend on credit program design.





# How Would This Utility Work?

- Impervious area is measured through GIS imagery is used to calculate the square footage of the impervious area.
- Properties would be charged based on a unit of measurement called an ERU or **Equivalent Residential Unit**– the median amount of impervious square footage specific to Arlington County.



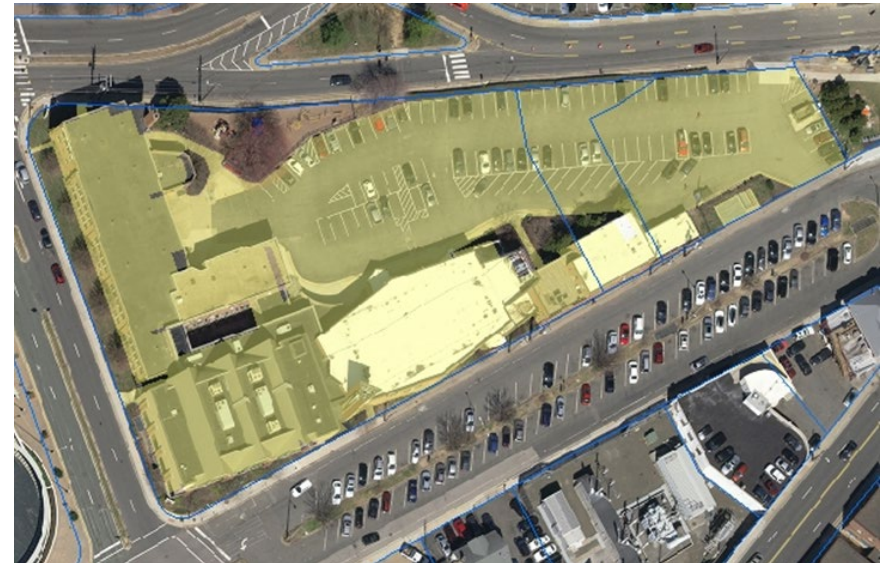
3,997 sq. ft.



1,465 sq. ft.



3,419 sq. ft.



88,198 sq. ft.

**1 ERU = 2,400 sq. ft Impervious Area (IA)**

# Why Implement a Stormwater Utility Fee?

- ✓ **Demand-Based Fees:** Utility fees are based on property's "contribution" to the stormwater system.
- ✓ **Fairer basis for funding** the stormwater management program
- ✓ **Includes currently tax-exempt properties (non-profits, places of worship, and eligible federal properties)** which contribute runoff, but don't currently contribute to stormwater funding
- ✓ **Aligns with industry trend** of funding stormwater management programs with a user fee

Rate structure is not designed to be an incentive program, but as a cost recovery mechanism based on runoff contributed by each parcel. This results in an equitable way to distribute costs of stormwater management.



# Arlington's Stormwater Utility Goals

Predictable & reliable  
funding streams

Fairer basis for cost  
recovery

Minimize  
administrative  
overhead

Simple to understand  
and maintain

Align with industry best  
practices

Legally sound

# Some Impacts

- ✓ **Shifts cost burden:**

  - Will pay more: single family residential, strip retail, and garden style properties

  - Will pay less: high rise commercial properties.

- ✓ **No-Longer exempt:** Non-profits, places of worship, and federal government

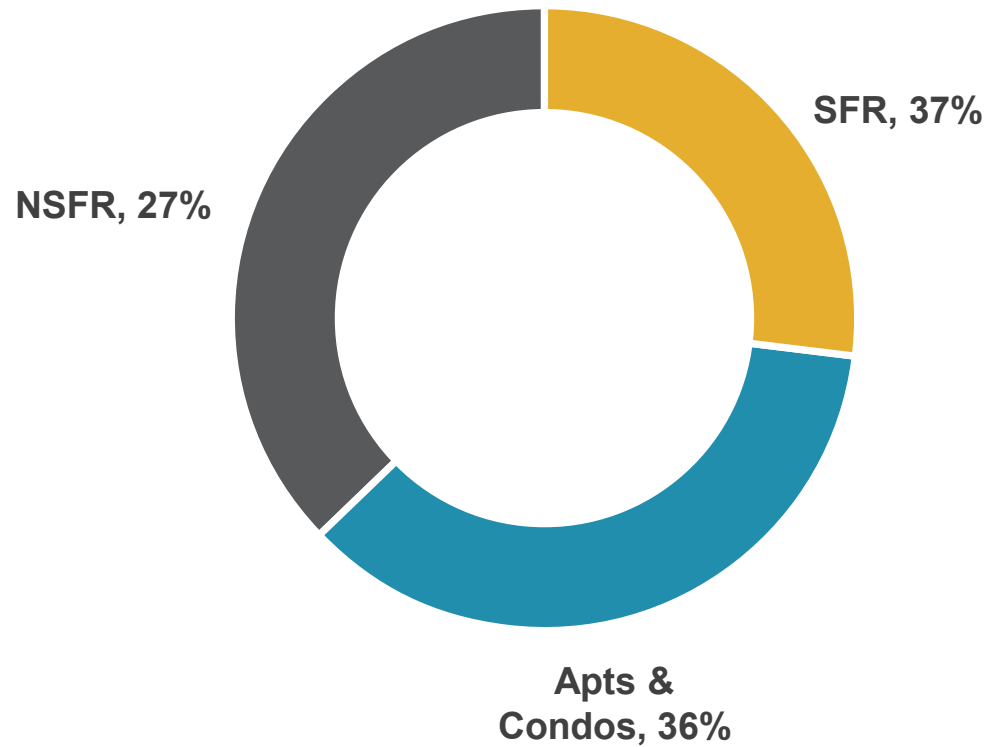
- ✓ **Exempted:** Properties that hold own MS4 permit

- ✓ **Credit program:** Required by State Code

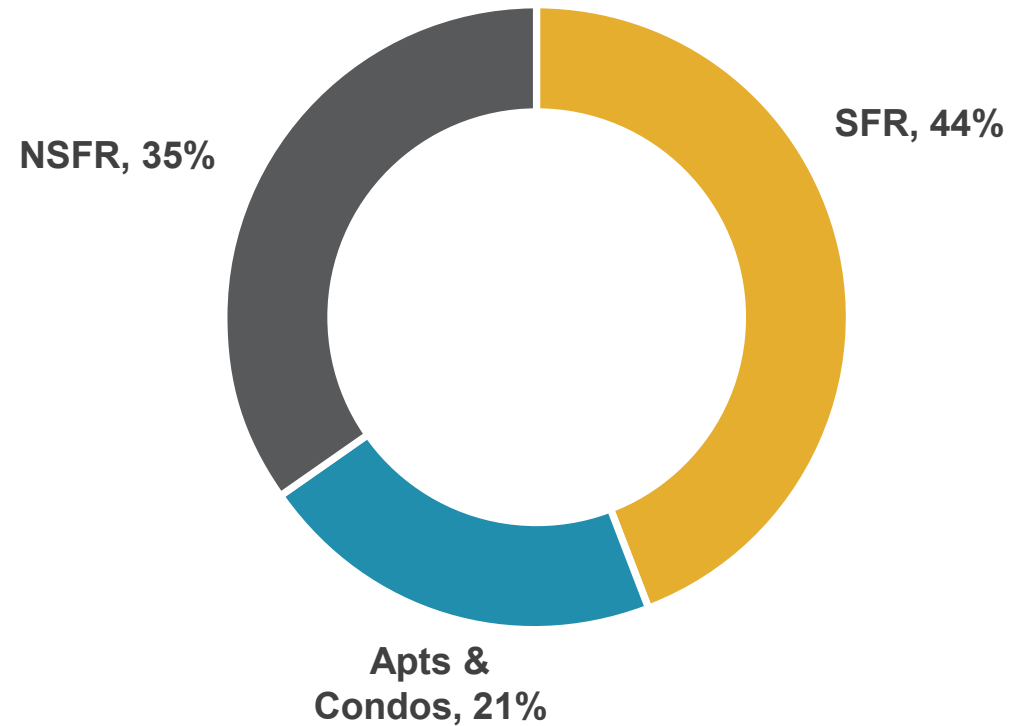
- ✓ **Adds costs:** Implementation and Ongoing Administrative

# Fairer Distribution of Cost

**Sanitary Tax –  
Allocation based on  
Assessed Values**



**Utility Fee –  
Allocation based on  
Impervious area (ERUs)**



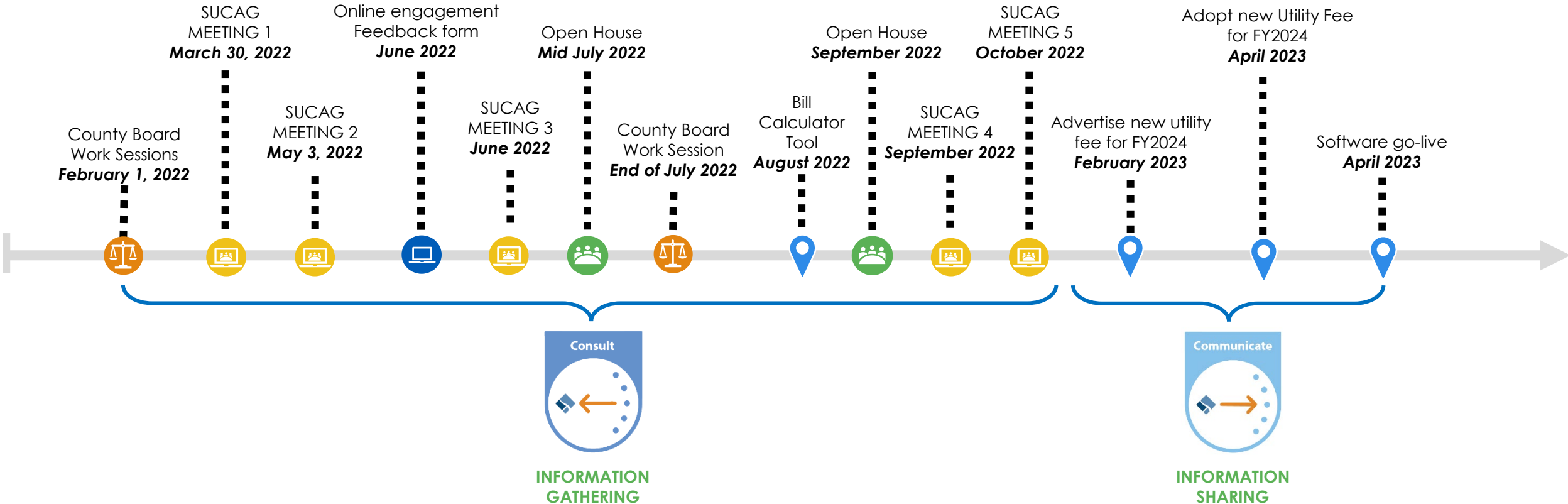



# Stormwater Utility Fee – Public Engagement Timeline


**Project Contact:**  
Aileen Winquist  
Awinquist@arlingtonva.us


**Project Funding:**  
\$1.2m

Stormwater Utility Community Advisory Group (SUCAG)



 **Online Feedback**  
(e.g. questionnaire, feedback form, etc.)

 **In-Person Engagement and Pop-Ups**  
(e.g. community meeting, roundtable, tabling, walking/bus tour, deliberative dialogue, etc.)

 **Virtual Meeting**  
(e.g., TEAMS, TEAMS live, Zoom, etc.)

 **County Board Engagement**  
(e.g. public hearing, Board work session, open door Monday, commission meeting etc.)

 **Key Milestone**

# Engagement & Communication Plan – Consult Level

Messaging based on research, public feedback and stakeholder group input

Meetings with Key Constituent Groups

- Non-Profits/ Tax-Exempt
- Large property owners
- HOAs/ Civic Associations
- Developers





# Questions

[www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Sustainability-and-Environment/Stormwater/Stormwater-Utility-Feasibility-Study](http://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Sustainability-and-Environment/Stormwater/Stormwater-Utility-Feasibility-Study)