

Public Works Commission Recommendations on Article 34

As a reminder, at last year's annual Town Meeting, the Town voted overwhelmingly to take affirmative action to create a Stormwater Enterprise Fund along with the adoption of an associated Bylaw (provided above). Granted in acknowledgment of the need to establish a stable and consistent funding source, this year's request is for the appropriation of funds for the much-needed maintenance and management of our aging drainage and stormwater infrastructure.

Concord's existing stormwater system includes over 171 culverts, 9 bridges over water, 3788 catch basins, 1640 manholes, and 62 Miles of pipes. The lack of investment in our stormwater system has become increasingly apparent. This issue has come to light partly due to identified failing infrastructure and partly due to increasing regulatory pressure requiring communities to assess these systems. Within the past few years, Concord has been subjected to two significant culvert failures, both requiring emergency response actions at an estimated cost exceeding \$ 1.5 million. These actions included repairing the Sawmill Brook culvert (under Monument Street) and the planned repair of the culvert under Baker Avenue (near the intersection of Macintosh Lane).

In keeping with last year's Town Meeting, the Public Works Commission (PWC) developed a budget and expects to approve the supporting fee structure required to begin tackling these much-anticipated stormwater needs. The fee structure, which will receive final vetting and action by the Public Works Commission after a public hearing on May 14, 2025, is designed to allow for the collection of approximately \$1M of revenue. Presently, stormwater management and maintenance expenses, both planned and emergency, are financed entirely by taxpayers. It is important to note that over 90% of Concord's current tax base is residential. The proposed stormwater utility will distribute related expenses to all property owners, including tax-exempt private institutions and public agencies. The proposed cost redistribution will reduce the residential contribution from 90% to approximately 60% of the needed expenditures.

All properties will benefit from a properly managed and maintained stormwater system. Storm events are increasing in both duration and intensity. Failure to be proactive in our management efforts puts the town at an increasingly tenuous financial risk, while increasing risks for public health and safety.

In support of Article 34, the Public Works Commission urges you to take a moment to visit our website at <https://concordma.gov/3404/Stormwater-Utility> to learn more about Concord's Proposed Stormwater Utility. This article is an important matter that merits your understanding and support.

