

Submission for item 15.2.3

[SRCFS.24.050 - 2024 Stormwater Management Financial Plan - \(CW Item 11.3\)](#)

November 13, 2024

I attended Committee of the Whole last week where the Stormwater Management Presentation was given. There are a number of challenges that are evident in implementing this plan and I would like to share my thoughts with you.

Funding (15.2.3 SRCFS.24.050 - 2024 Stormwater Management Financial Plan - (CW Item 11.3))

The devil is in the details and there aren't any here.

- Is the debt for 10 years?
- Is the debt being issued at a fixed or variable rate?
- Is the debt in the form of a mortgage where both principal and interest are being paid off?
- Is the full debt due on the due date?

Funding Concerns

Given the debt of 22 million for 10 years (if this is the case), the interest payments could be as high as 1 million + per year.

At the end of the loan (in whatever form it is), where is the 22 million to pay it off going to come from?

Historically looking at Provincial, Federal governments the debt is never paid off, it just keeps growing.

Alternatives

Consider:

- a) Money that can be taken from reserves.
- b) A surtax for Stormwater Management either on Water Bills or rolled into a tax increase.
- c) 'Best practices' elsewhere in the world, some of these could mitigate some of the cost, for example 'nature-based stormwater management in urban areas'
<https://julkaisu.hsy.fi/en/index/nature-based-solutions-helsinki-metropolitan-area.html>

Some Things That Need to be Done

- a) Educate the public on the need to manage stormwater: this would include the need to spend money and the need for all residents to do their part.
- b) Do not allow paving over or hard surfacing of front yards. The by-law indicates that a certain percentage of front yards must be of absorption materials. Paving and even interlocking over front lawns decreases the absorption of water. In serious storms, this extra water is therefore drained off into our sewers, it is not absorbed by lawn and garden surfaces.

Enforcing this by-law or penalizing those who pave over their front yard would encourage more environmentally sensitive practices and help with runoff.

- c) Allowing greater than the zoning by-law lot coverage also can be controlled to a greater extent. The sizes of building, the greater coverage of the lot, also increase runoff and put stress on our stormwater system.
- d) The Committee of Adjustment ignores flooding concerns, it should be instructed to consider these concerns
- e) Removal of leaves and debris from curbs and over sewer drains would help decrease flooding and increase runoff. More regular street sweeping is an obvious solution. On a personal note, my street is only cleaned about once per year, it is up to residents to clean their nearby catch basins, some do and some don't. Again, education is needed here.
- f) Mandate or encourage green roofs on all flat roofed buildings, encourage collection of rainwater, encourage all parking lots to be permeable.

I acknowledge that stormwater management is a necessary expense, however I would like to see a serious look at how the stormwater infrastructure is paid for without putting Richmond Hill into a debt that ends up costing more and possibly will not be paid off, burdening future residents.

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