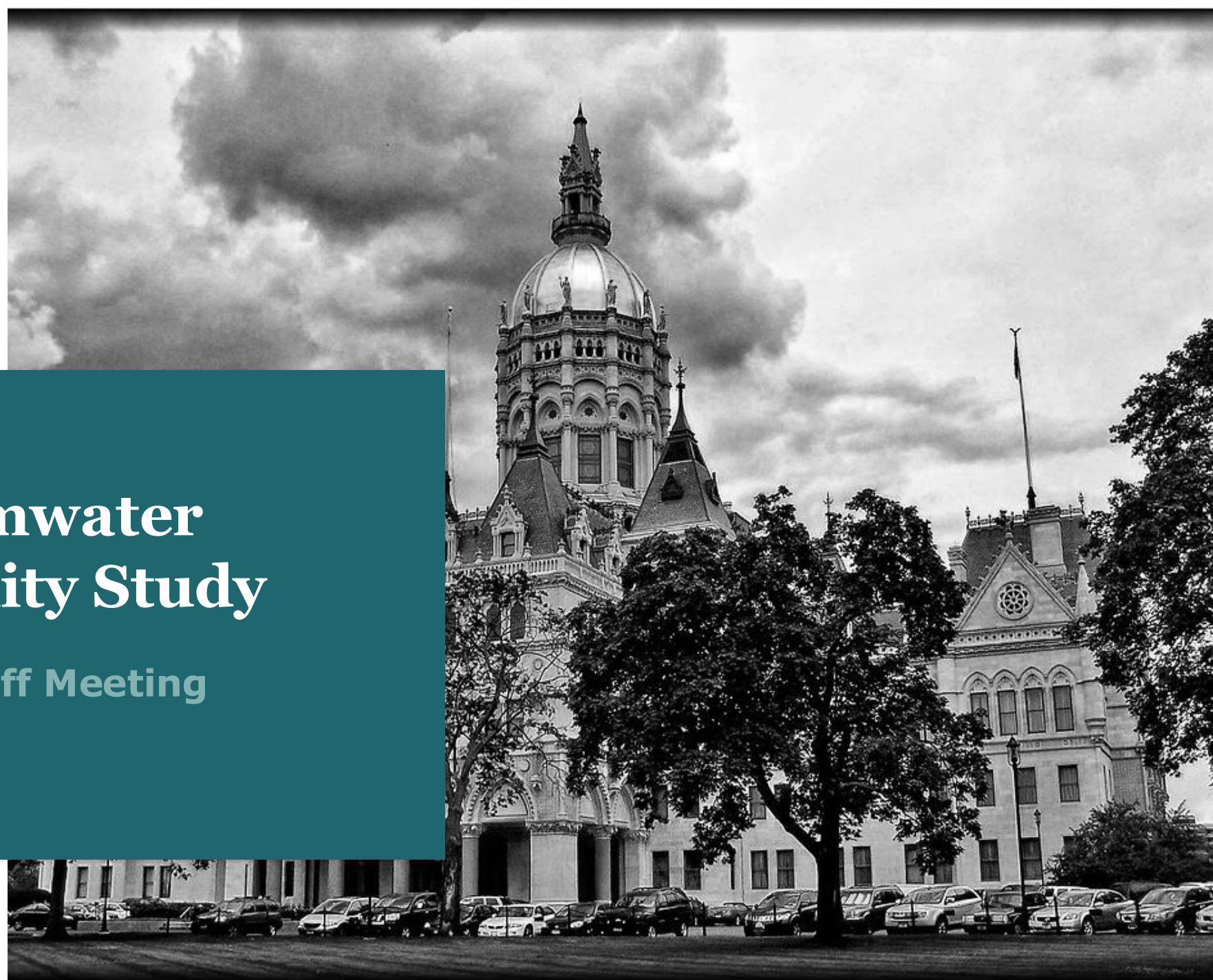




Regional Stormwater Utility Feasibility Study

Advisory Group Kickoff Meeting

March 18, 2025



Agenda

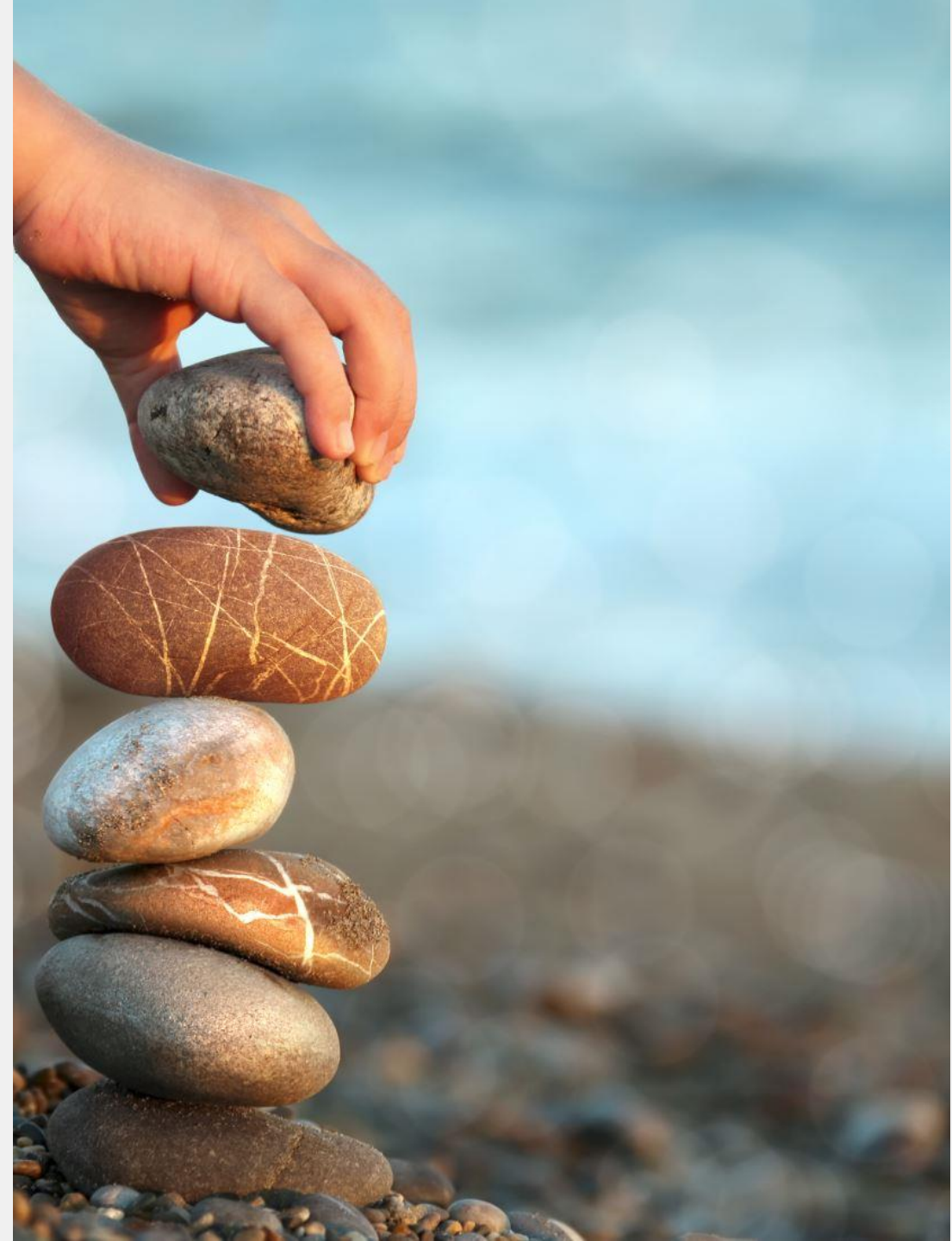
Welcome & Introductions

Laying the Groundwork

Stormwater Management

Regionalization

Public Engagement



Laying the Groundwork



Ground Rules



Be Respectful

Take space
Make space



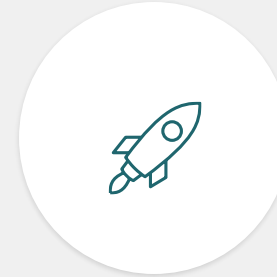
Honest Discussion

Speak openly



Keep an Open Mind

Consider new ideas



Be Creative

Think outside the box

Project Charter

GOALS

- Understand current stormwater program activities and costs for each of the 5 participating municipalities
- Estimate units of service and preliminary rates based on regional and municipal specific revenue requirements
- Identify opportunities and considerations for implementation of a regional stormwater utility
- Identify implementation needs
- Prepare a public outreach plan

Project Charter

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- To have a path forward
- Get additional information to bring back to town for further discussions
- Recommendation on implementation, structure and fees that could take effect almost immediately
- Full understanding of whether a stormwater utility would be a good fit for the Towns
- Finished report or product that demonstrates that a regional stormwater utility either clearly and definitively is, or clearly and definitively is not, feasible
- Advisory group engagement

Project Charter

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Understand models in place elsewhere in country – not reinvent the wheel
- Strive for as simple a process and system for implementation as possible (e.g. changes to IA can be cumbersome)
- Wrestle with MS4 and its impacts on the Authority – and assist Towns with MS4 responsibilities.

Project Charter

PARTICIPANTS

Our effort will require input from:

- Participating municipalities: Bloomfield, Hartford, Rocky Hill, West Hartford, New Britain
- Observing municipalities: East Hartford, Glastonbury, Windsor Locks
- Capitol Region Council of Governments
- Other collaborators: Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), River Alliance, Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP), Chatham Health District
- Raftelis, CDM Smith, RYP

Project Charter

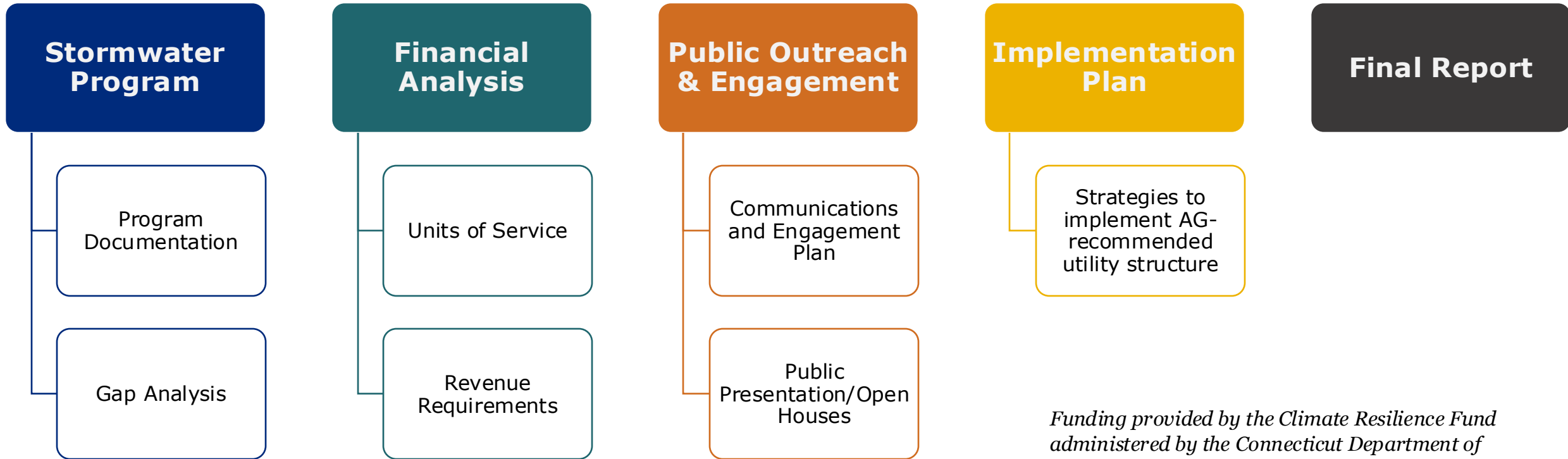
ROLE OF PARTICIPANTS

- Prepare for meetings by reviewing materials
- Attend meetings; engage in good faith
- Communicate to and from your jurisdiction

ROLE OF FACILITATOR/ PROJECT TEAM

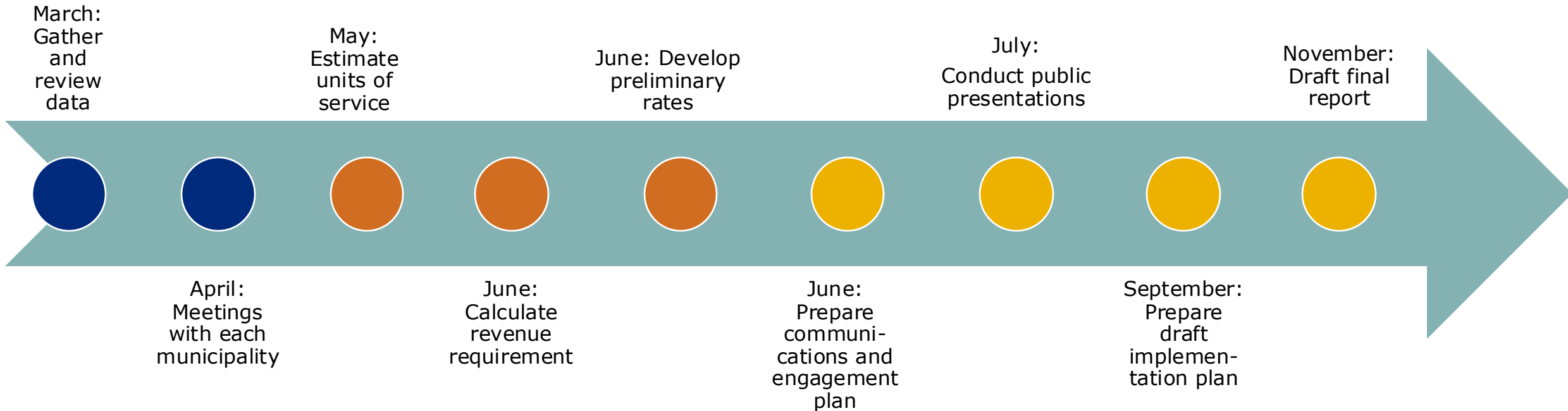
- Plan and facilitate meetings
- Create a welcome and congenial environment for information sharing
- Equip and empower participants
- Provide a framework for decision-making

Project Overview



Funding provided by the Climate Resilience Fund administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

Timeline



- Key**
- Program Evaluation
 - Financial Analysis
 - Communications

Advisory Group Meetings

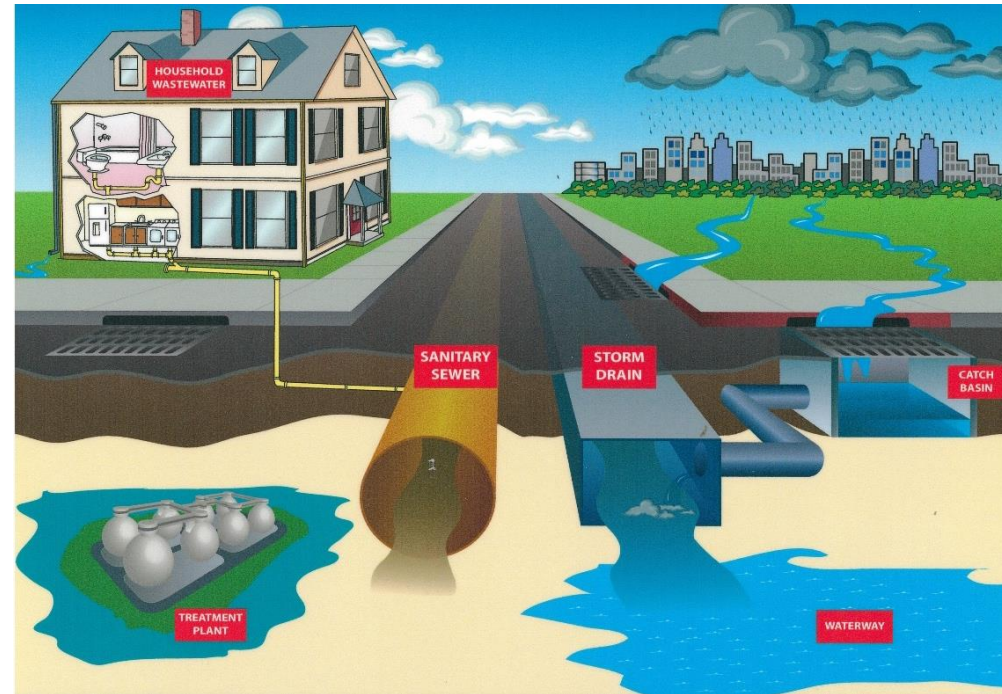
- Early May (Virtual)
 - › Stormwater Programs and Regionalization
- Late June (Virtual)
 - › Public Engagement, Administration
- Mid-August (Virtual)
 - › Financial Analysis
- Early October (Virtual)
 - › Administration, Flexible
- Late November (In Person)
 - › Public Engagement Findings, Implementation Plan
- Mid-January 2026 (Virtual)
 - › Report Feedback, Next Steps

Stormwater Management



What is a Stormwater Utility?

- Dedicated to stormwater services and compliance activities
- Supported by user fees
- User fee frequently established by ordinance
- Generally, distinct from water and sewer funds and general fund



Stormwater Utilities



A fair, equitable, and stable way to collect revenue



Sustainable funding strategy that promotes long-term financial planning



Mindful of need to increase revenues over time, minimize rate shocks, and account for future uncertainty regarding the regulations



Align the rate structure and credit program with goals of the stormwater program



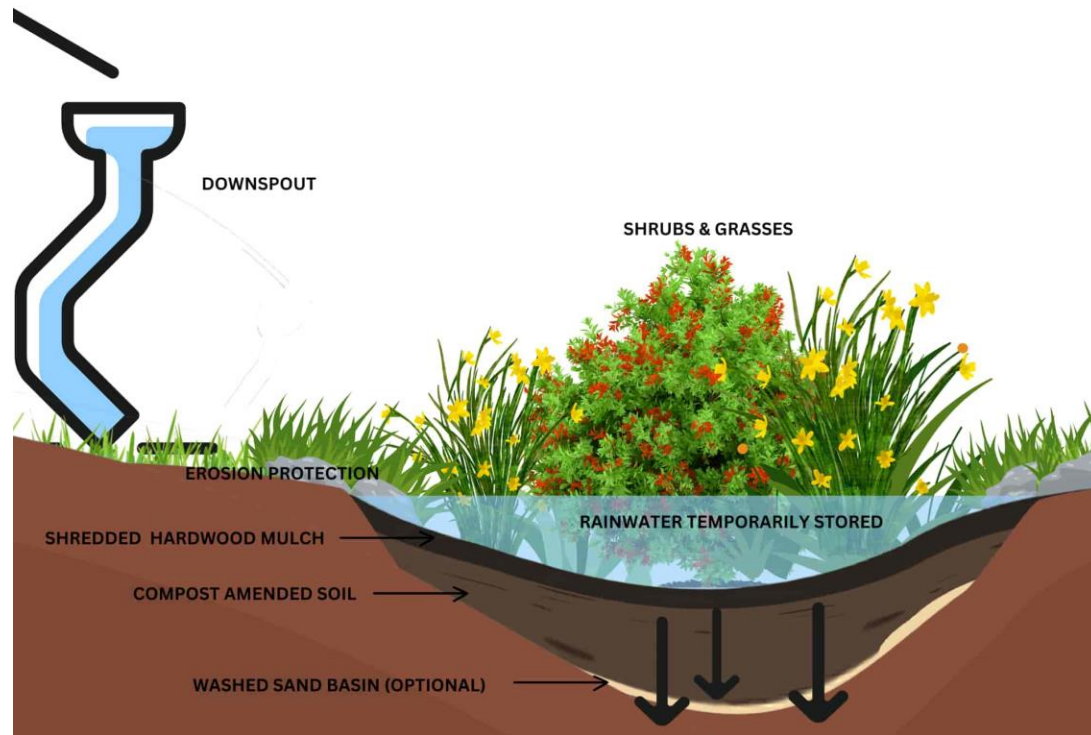
Increasingly common in Northeast and nationwide

Basis for Utility Fees

- Fees are most often based on property impervious area (IA).
- A property's IA closely correlates with how much stormwater runoff each property generates.
- Properties with more IA create more runoff and place more demand on stormwater system. They would therefore pay a higher fee under a stormwater utility.



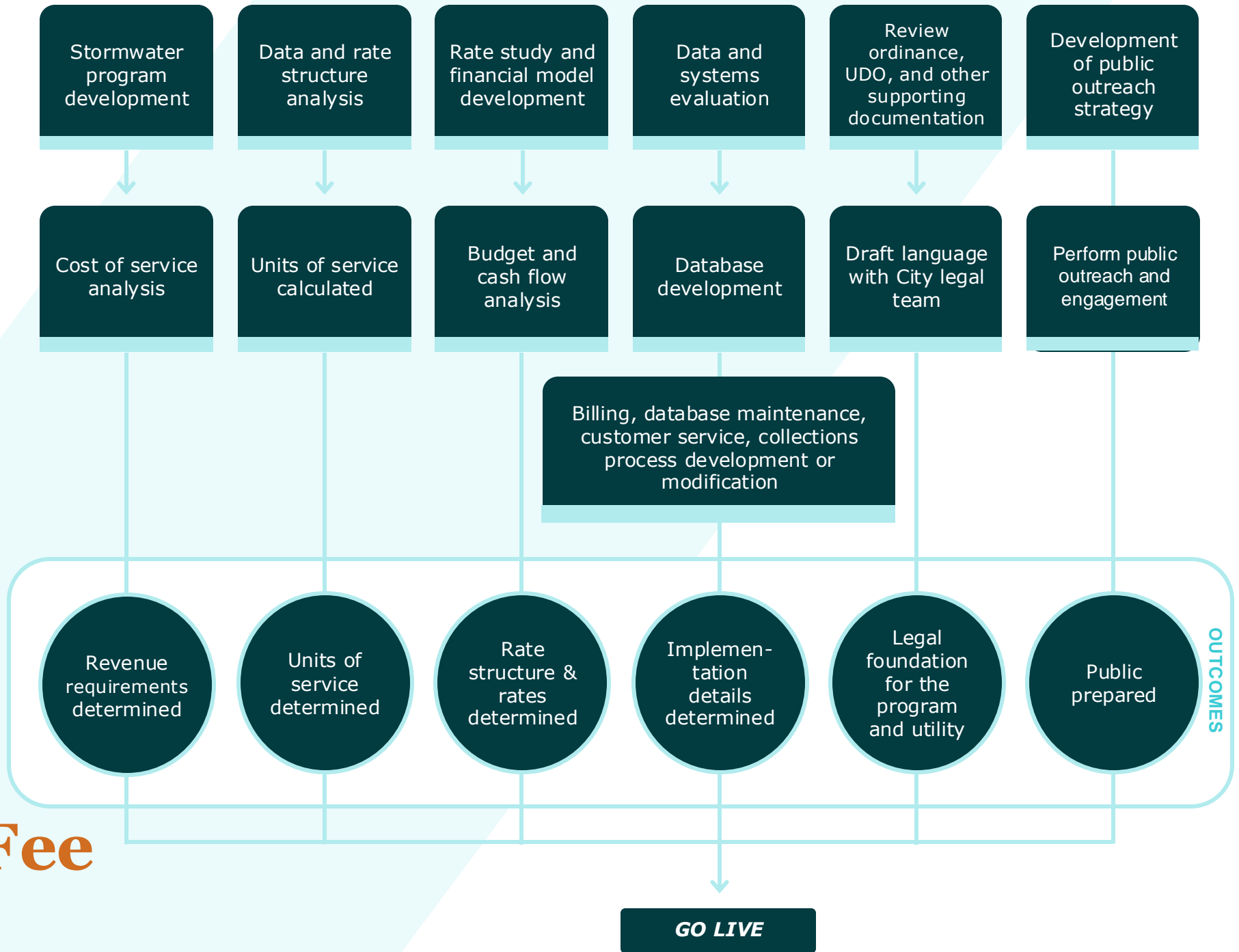
Not a Rain Tax!



<https://warelandscaping.com/resources/rain-garden/>

- Property values and *ad valorem* taxes aren't well correlated with stormwater runoff.
- Fees are more fair and equitable – **all who pave pay**, even tax-exempt parcels.
- Unlike taxes, fees can be reduced using credits for stormwater management practices implemented on the parcel.

KEY ELEMENTS TO Developing a Successful Stormwater Fee



Program Evaluation

Assessment Checklist

Utilize Online Documents:

- MS4 Annual Report
- Annual Budget
- CIP Documents

Send to participating municipalities for review and comments

SCCOG Stormwater Management District Feasibility Study
Self Assessment Checklist -

II. Stormwater System Management Organizational Structure

II	Question	Response
1	Provide an organizational chart that shows the overall personnel structure for collection system operations, including operation and maintenance staff.	33 people
2	How many staff members work on storm water system and % of work per staff member?	Need % on stormwater for each of the 33 staff OR a total cost for partial salaries for stormwater

III. MS4 – Six Minimum Control Measures

SCCOG Stormwater Management District Feasibility Study Stormwater System Program Self-Assessment Checklist

Municipality: _____ Date: _____

Staff Interviewed: _____

I. General Information – Stormwater System Description

I	Question	Response
1	Identify the number of people currently served by your stormwater system.	19,571
2	Provide information on stormwater assets, status of condition assessments and extent of mapping of assets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manholes • CB's • Outfalls • Interconnections • Culverts • Detention ponds • Channels • Storage facilities • Municipal BMP's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outfalls: 387 and counting - Interconnections: 10 - Detention Ponds: 40 (annual) - Pump Stations: none - Outfall mapping: 75% complete - Interconnection mapping: 25% complete - GIS mapping: 30% complete

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Program Evaluation

Gap analysis of MS4 Program
 Evaluation of costs for stormwater program

- Regulatory Compliance
- Capital Improvements (CIP)
- Operations & Maintenance
- Program Management

Identify deficiencies within the stormwater program

Provide existing and perceived gap for each participating municipality

Attachment 1 Stormwater MS4 Permit Compliance Summary Town of Stonington	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
	SMP	Done	SMP	Done	SMP	Done	SMP	Done	SMP	Done
MCM 1 - Public Education										
BMP 1-1 Implement Public Education and Outreach	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√
BMP 1-2 Address Education/Outreach for Pollutants of Concern	x	No	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√
MCM 2 - Public Participation										
BMP 2-1 Comply with Public Notice Requirements for the SMP	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√
BMP 2-2 Comply with Public Notice Requirements for Annual Reports	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√
BMP 2-3 Establish Water Quality Task Force	x	?	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√
MCM 3 - IDDE										
BMP 3-1 Develop Written IDDE Program	x	?	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√
BMP 3-2 Develop List and Maps of MS4 Stormwater Outfalls in Priority Areas	x	No	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√
BMP 3-3 Implement Citizen Reporting Program	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√
BMP 3-4 Establish Legal Authority to Prohibit Illicit Discharges	x	?	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	√

SCCOG Stormwater Management Feasibility Study Estimate of Stormwater Costs - Town of Stonington

10/12/2022

Salaries	Budgeted Value (22-23 Budget)	Percent Stormwater	Stormwater Budget Value
Administrative	\$453,986	20%	\$90,797
DPW Highway Maintenance	\$662,871	25%	\$165,718
Overhead & Benefits		40%	\$102,606
Stormwater Consultant	\$40,000	100%	\$40,000
MS4 Consultant	\$10,000	100%	\$10,000
Total			\$409,121

Materials/O&M	Budgeted Value (22-23 Budget)	Percent Stormwater	Stormwater Budget Value
Catch Basin Cleaning	\$50,000	100%	\$50,000
Equipment Repairs	\$225,000	10%	\$22,500
DPW Highway Equipment	\$210,000	25%	\$52,500
Highway Fuel	\$65,000	10%	\$6,500
Drainage Contractor Services	\$200,000	50%	\$100,000
Highway Materials	\$34,000	100%	\$34,000
Total			\$265,500

Stormwater CIP	Budgeted Value (22-23 Budget)	Percent Stormwater	Stormwater Budget Value
Annual Stormwater CIP Funding	\$100,000	100%	\$100,000
Total			\$100,000

Regionalization



Regional Utility/Service Delivery Models

Regional Authority

- Centralized legal entity
- Oversees stormwater management across multiple municipalities
- Stormwater fees go directly to regional utility
- Implement stormwater management program, MS4 compliance, infrastructure and asset management on a regional level

Regional Utility/Service Delivery Models

Inter-Local Agreements

- Decentralized governance via agreements between municipalities
- Opportunities for collaboration include administration and billing, service delivery, development standards, public education and outreach, and infrastructure
- Municipalities retain control over local stormwater management policies
- Relies on local governments for enforcements

Public Engagement



Opportunities for Stakeholder Engagement

May-July

- Check Town websites – parks and rec – for tabling opportunities
- Pop-up windows on websites during storm events
- Surveys – close ended with minimal open answers
- "Celebrate West Hartford" in June

Public Engagement Roadblocks and/or Issues of Concern

- Cost
- Managing the equal distribution of projects in each municipality relative to their financial obligations to the utility
- Politics
- Public perception
- Discussions in public hearing – biased participation toward 'against'
- Working with the media to help - news coverage typically focuses on opposition

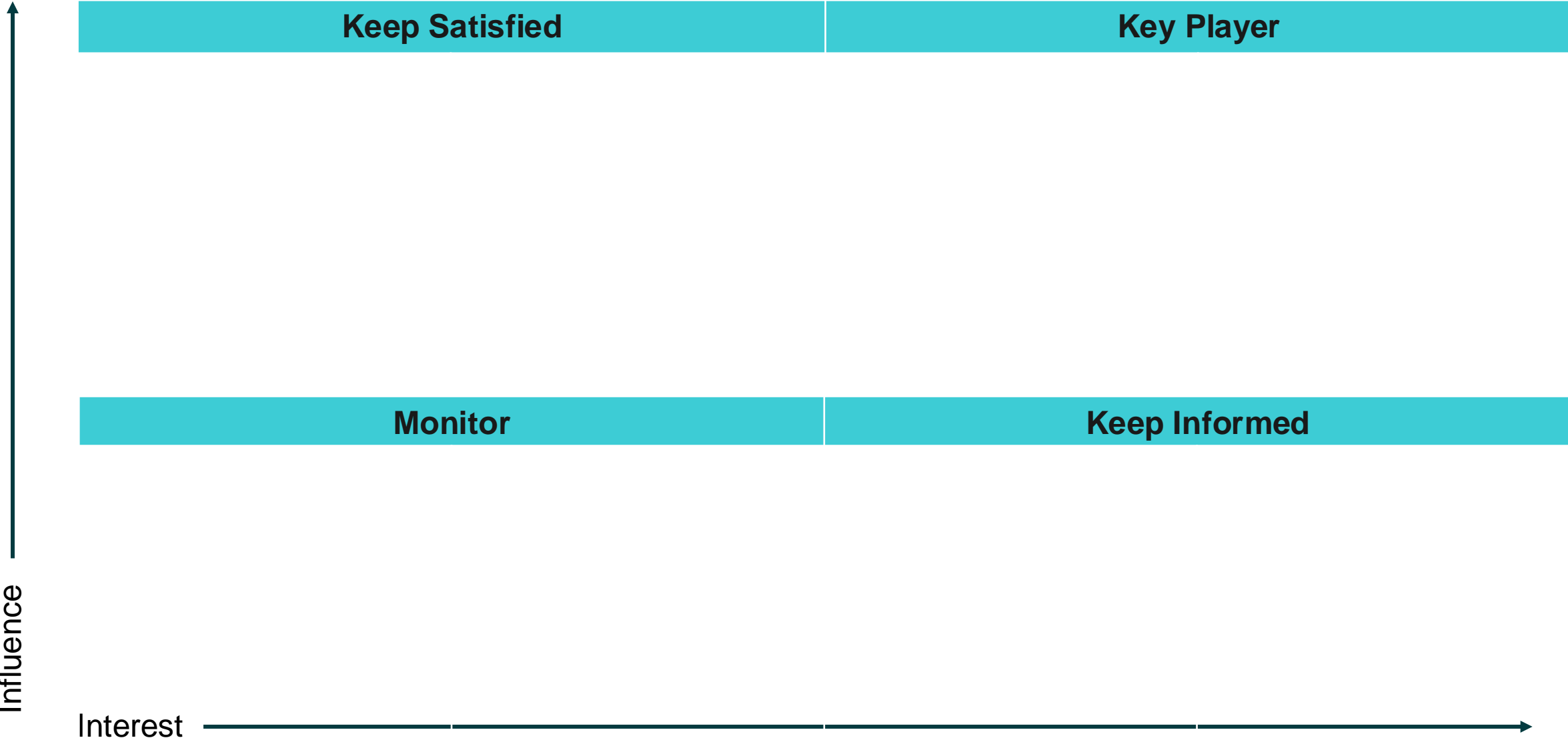
Public Engagement Communications and Engagement Success Factors

- Educate the public about how large public works infrastructure projects need to aggregate funding from multiple sources which may otherwise be out of reach for individual municipalities
- Engage in partnerships – municipalities partner with local nonprofit groups
 - › Groups can help to communicate with elected officials
- Buy-in around the fee model vs tax model – people connecting the “burden” of their property on their share of the cost/system – this means less flooding
- All communities feel there’s fairness in the outcome/equal benefits – equitable representation from each community in decisions/outcome
- Understanding of one’s own contribution to the flooding issues
- Be mindful of what’s past the feasibility study
- Buy-in from public officials

Public Engagement – Key Stakeholders

- Town Council
- Town Manager
- Public Works/Engineering/Planning
- Sustainability Committee, Open Space Conservation Commissions
- Land Use Commissions
- Concerned Taxpayers:
 - › Seniors
 - › Large businesses
 - › Non-profits
- Tax-exempt (Faith-based orgs, Hospitals, City-owned properties)
- Residents and politicians who have been impacted by the stormwater issues in the city
- Environmental groups
- DOT- some ambiguity in how to address
- Customers without water or sewer accounts (or both)
- Town Councils that may not like the idea of a utility – worried about more cost for people
- Concern about tough budget seasons or election years

Public Engagement – Key Stakeholders





Next Steps



**Program Review
Meetings**



Financial Analysis