



*"In the Spirit of Town Government"*

## AGENDA MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Commission President and Commissioners  
**From:** Michael J.D. Brown, Administrator  
**Date:** April 28, 2026  
**RE:** Stormwater ERU Charges

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**SUMMARY: April 22, 2025:** In the fall of 2023 during the budget process and spring of 2024, information was presented regarding who is and isn't paying into the Stormwater Utility but no further discussion or action was taken. The data was provided from a study Cedar Corporation performed in 2019 when this was first discussed as well as mapping from Outagamie County from 2023. The Utility currently only charges the stormwater equivalent runoff unit (ERU) to properties west of STH 55, leaving eligible parcels east of STH 55 not paying anything. The information below is presented for the Utility to review and have a discussion on whether or not it would like to consider requiring the remaining eligible parcels to pay the ERU.

*Meeting Minutes:*

[https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view\\_id=3&clip\\_id=790&doc\\_id=94626dee-269e-11f0-9f54-005056a89546](https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=790&doc_id=94626dee-269e-11f0-9f54-005056a89546)

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**May 20, 2025:** The Utility discussed this at its April 22, 2025 meeting and asked for it to be brought back to the May 20, 2025 meeting for further discussion. Some discussion points were if charges are implemented could they be less than the current rate and increased over time to reach the current rate; there was concern with commercial/industrial properties and maybe they could be charged a different rate.

*Meeting Minutes:*

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**June 24, 2025:** The Utility discussed this further at its May 20, 2025 meeting and asked staff to research the following and were discussed at the June 24, 2025 meeting:

1. How many residents are using the Yard Waste Transfer Site east of STH 55? In 2024 approximately 1% of households purchased stickers.
2. Would culverts on private roads be replaced by the Utility? The answer is no, the Town only replaces culverts on public roads. From a review of the County GIS there is only 1 private road east of STH 55 and 2 west of STH 55.

3. How would property owners be notified of any changes? Any changes that have been made could be included in a future newsletter.
4. When the Garners Creek Utility disbanded, who did Combined Locks and Harrison decide to charge? Both charge all properties that are developed both residential and commercial/industrial.
5. The Utility asked staff to prepare options to consider which are in the below table. The Utility seemed to be ok with the \$120/residential property, but were more concerned with charging the full ERU to commercial/industrial properties. Staff is looking for directions from the Utility in order to bring back a formal resolution for adoption.

East of STH 55		
Land Use	Options	Estimated Revenue
Residential 100% ERU	\$120	\$ 49,800.00
Commercial/Industrial	25% of ERU	\$ 33,298.80
Commercial/Industrial	50% of ERU	\$ 66,597.60
Commercial/Industrial	75% of ERU	\$ 99,896.40
Commercial/Industrial	100% of ERU	\$ 133,195.20
Commercial/Industrial	If less than 100% is selected it could always be increased slowly over time	

*Meeting Minutes:*

[https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view\\_id=3&clip\\_id=798&doc\\_id=6b94e3c7-51e0-11f0-b7f5-005056a89546](https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=798&doc_id=6b94e3c7-51e0-11f0-b7f5-005056a89546)

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**July 15, 2025:** At the June 24, 2025 meeting the Commission requested information on the Utilities Credit Policy. Links from the Town website are provided to access the documents and can be discussed further at the meeting.

Credit Policy:

<https://www.townofbuchanan.org/home/showpublisheddocument/112/637388914476430000>

Application:

<https://www.townofbuchanan.org/home/showpublisheddocument/110/637388914473770000>

*Meeting Minutes:*

[https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view\\_id=3&clip\\_id=801&doc\\_id=21fb03fa-6269-11f0-b7f5-005056a89546](https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=801&doc_id=21fb03fa-6269-11f0-b7f5-005056a89546)

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**August 19, 2025:** At the July 15, 2025 meeting the Commission proposed the following and asked staff it be incorporated into the public information document posted on the website and distributed through facebook (July 22, 2025) and the upcoming newsletter.

<https://www.townofbuchanan.org/home/showpublisheddocument/1821>

1. Increase the ERU from \$120 to \$150 per year for the entire Town.
2. Residential properties added to the ERU charge (east of STH 55) would be charged 50% of the ERU or \$75.
3. Non-residential properties added to the ERU charge (east of STH 55) would be charged 25% of the ERU which is based on total impervious surface calculation. This would increase over time but would allow property owners to implement on site stormwater facilities in order to apply for credits to the ERU.
4. Evaluates and update the ERU Credit Policy to incorporate residential subdivisions as well as consider water quality in addition to water quantity credits.

*Meeting Minutes:*

[https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view\\_id=3&clip\\_id=807&doc\\_id=74ba05c8-7ddb-11f0-a766-005056a89546](https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=807&doc_id=74ba05c8-7ddb-11f0-a766-005056a89546)

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**November 18, 2025:** At the August 19, 2025 meeting the Commission requested an article be put in the Town Newsletter explaining the topic that went out at the end of September. The Commission asked for this topic to be brought back for further discussion once the public had an opportunity to learn more about it. Staff will present further information at the meeting regarding the feedback received.  
<https://www.townofbuchanan.org/home/showpublisheddocument/1855/638942996585730000>.

*Meeting Minutes:*

[https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view\\_id=3&clip\\_id=818&doc\\_id=49cfd75b-c612-11f0-a7da-005056a89546](https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=818&doc_id=49cfd75b-c612-11f0-a7da-005056a89546)

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**April 28, 2026:** At the November 18, 2025 meeting the Utility voted to charge properties east of STH 55 at a reduced rate (50% for residential and 25% for non-residential based on the rates charged west of STH 55). Agricultural properties with impervious surface will be treated the same rate as single family residential as it is west of STH 55; the Village of Greenville and Harrison treat these types of properties the same way with a flat rate with no charge for agricultural properties without impervious surface. Based on that decision, staff worked with Cedar to evaluate all properties in Town to develop the attached lists for charges and corresponding map

<https://tbuchananwi.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=768d3e442fe94ba094378dd9805bda0b>

In addition to evaluating impervious surfaces for commercial/industrial properties east of STH 55, those west of STH 55 were reevaluated to verify totals were up to date with some property's calculations changing based on the review of the 2025 Outagamie County aerals. If property owners feel the calculations aren't correct, they can choose to hire a surveyor to have a survey prepared for staff and the

Town engineer to review and have totals updated. These types of changes are typically caught when properties make improvements during engineering and stormwater review.

There were 16 properties identified west of STH 55 that were not being charged originally but have been included now, and one east of STH 55 being charged that will continue to be charged as is.

The following table breaks down the proposed ERU fees based on the months of discussion over the past year.

2026 Equivalent Runoff Unit (ERU) Charges. 1 ERU = 3,623 sq. ft.					
West of STH 55			East of STH 55		
Land Use	ERU	Charge	Land Use	ERU	Charge
SFR - Single Family Residential	1/dwelling unit	\$ 120	SFR - Single Family Residential	1/dwelling unit	\$ 60
DUP - Duplex Residential	0.6/dwelling unit	\$ 72	DUP - Duplex Residential	0.6/dwelling unit	\$ 36
MF - Multi-Family Residential	0.4/dwelling unit	\$ 48	MF - Multi-Family Residential	0.4/dwelling unit	\$ 24
UND - Undeveloped Platted/CSM Lot	0.5/lot	\$ 60	UND - Undeveloped Platted/CSM Lot	0.5/lot	\$ 30
NR - Non-Residential	1 Non-Residential ERU = 3,623 sq. ft.	\$ 120	NR - Non-Residential	1 Non-Residential ERU = 3,623 sq. ft.	\$ 30
AGR - Agricultural	1/lot with impervious surface	\$ 120	AGR - Agricultural	1/lot with impervious surface	\$ 60

1 Non-Residential ERU = 3,623 sq. ft.  
1 Residential ERU = \$120  
1 Agricultural (with impervious surface) ERU = \$120

1 Non-Residential ERU = 3,623 sq. ft. (Charge 25% of west of STH 55)  
1 Residential ERU = \$60 (50% of west of STH 55)  
1 Agricultural (with impervious surface) ERU = \$60 (50% of west of STH 55)

**Meeting Minutes:**

[https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view\\_id=3&clip\\_id=833&doc\\_id=037373d9-4891-11f1-9b4d-005056a89546](https://buchanan.granicus.com/MinutesViewer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=833&doc_id=037373d9-4891-11f1-9b4d-005056a89546)

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**General Utility Data Previously Discussed:**

Currently the Stormwater Fund brings in approximately \$440,000 per year in stormwater fees. Based on the budget approximately \$260,000-\$290,000 is operational which leaves a conservative estimate of \$150,000 available for paying for stormwater related infrastructure as part of road projects every year. However, on average \$800,000 of road project costs are attributed to stormwater related infrastructure. While special assessments are used to help pay for stormwater infrastructure, the Town has put a cap on how much residential properties pay, which also limits paying for the infrastructure. This means the majority of stormwater related infrastructure are not be paid for by the Stormwater Fund. Additionally, with construction of new stormwater infrastructure additional operation and maintenance funding is required, specifically for new ponds on an annual basis.

Other projects, while not part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), include culvert replacement, ditching, ditch mowing, Streambank Erosion Control Program (recently extended to the entire community), Yard Waste Transfer Site operation (significantly subsidized by the Utility even with the sticker fee) are all services/projects the east side of town benefit from but are not paying for.

Staff time is also budgeted to the stormwater utility which includes responding to drainage and erosion control complaints, overseeing projects and stormwater education (as required by our DNR MS4 permit). As we know there are a lot of drainage issues all over town.

Another factor to consider with the stormwater fund is compliance with the Town’s MS4 permit and its TMDL Action Plan submitted to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The plan has stormwater projects identified in the future which will require funding to accomplish. This plan includes a large area that encompasses Buchanan, Combined Locks, Kimberly and Harrison as a whole; these larger projects are to be funded equally among the communities per an intergovernmental cooperation agreement when the Garners Creek Stormwater Utility was disbanded. While there is a reserve built up in the Stormwater Fund for future projects (approximately \$1.2 million), the Utility will need to continue to build reserves for these future projects that are not only Town related but also those projects identified for all communities to share in. For example, the Block Rd. pond project that is planned for in the next few years is estimated at \$800,000, once that is depleted, it will take time to rebuild the reserves. Additionally, the Utility hasn’t budgeted for reserves, they have just been able to build overtime through budget savings throughout the years.

In addition to MS4 projects, additional operations such as street sweeping isn’t meeting the monthly sweepings indicated by our permit, we currently only perform sweepings twice a year. This will need to be evaluated and increased moving forward with future budgets.

**Funding Options Previously Discussed:**

Attached is a table and a link to a map that shows the parcels that could be paying into the Utility but aren’t. By adding these additional parcels, it could generate approximately \$183,000 of revenue. Most of the parcels are residential and would pay the \$120 ERU fee; however, the commercial parcels pay based on the amount of impervious surface they have and there are some parcels that would be paying significantly higher amounts.

Another option to consider is increasing the ERU fee, the last time this was raised was in 2023 from \$96 to \$120, below is a table that shows some options.

ERU Fee	Estimated Revenue from Current Properties	Estimated Revenue from Proposed Properties	Total Estimated Revenue Current & Proposed Properties
\$120	\$440,515	\$182,995	\$623,306
\$150	\$552,240	\$228,744	\$780,984
\$175	\$644,280	\$266,868	\$911,148
\$200	\$736,320	\$304,992	\$1,041,312

Borrowing is always an option for future capital projects if needed, but that would ultimately be put back on the tax roll under the Stormwater Utility and would be spread out among the parcels that are already paying into it.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Staff recommends the Utility discuss this and if there are any questions or modifications needed to let staff and Cedar know at the meeting. If there are no further questions or modifications needed, a resolution is attached for official approval if the Utility is ready. Once approved the changes would be reflected in the 2027 budget and 2026 tax rolls. The Town attorney has reviewed this as well.

**POLICY/PLAN REFERENCE(S):** [Town of Buchanan Municipal Code Chapter 504 Article III Stormwater Management](#)

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Is there a fiscal impact? Yes

Is it currently budgeted or planned? No, but would be factored into the 2027 budget

Amount: Approximately \$84,432 revenue increase (\$18,885 West of STH 55 and \$65,547 East of STH 55)

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**Attachments:**

- 1. Resolution 2026-01**