

AGENDA
CITY OF FERNDALE – HUMBOLDT COUNTY CALIFORNIA – U.S.A.
DRAINAGE COMMITTEE MEETING

Location:	City Hall	Date:	August 4, 2022
	834 Main Street	Time:	2:30 pm
	Ferndale CA 95536	Posted:	August 1, 2022

This meeting is being held in accordance with the Brown Act as currently in effect under the State Emergency Services Act, the Governor’s Emergency Declaration related to COVID-19, and the Governor’s Executive Order N-29-20 issued on March 17, 2020 that allows attendance by members of the City Council, City staff, and the public by teleconference, videoconference, or both.

We are strongly recommending that public comment for this meeting be submitted prior to the meeting. Public comment should be submitted to finance@ci.ferndale.ca.us by 4pm on Wednesday, August 3, 2022, please be sure to put “Public Comment “in the subject line, and include the agenda item. All public comments received by this time will be read into the record (limit to 5 minutes) during the special meeting.

To provide public comment during the meeting, you will need to join the Zoom meeting.
 Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81558417217?pwd=e8bX8-ch1L51I42fkMvc5OE9aKwJed.1>

Meeting ID: 815 5841 7217

Passcode: 056591

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

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1. CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRMAN
2. ROLL CALL – PHILLIP OSTLER, TOM STEPHENS, JAMES BASS, JEFF FARLEY, BILL BECKER WAYNE AMBROSINI, AND MICHAEL SWEENEY
3. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –Minutes of the June 2, 2022 Meeting
5. PUBLIC COMMENT. *(This time is for persons who wish to address the Committee on any matter not on this agenda and over which the Committee has jurisdiction - Drainage. Items requiring action not listed on this agenda will be placed on the next regular agenda for consideration, unless a finding is made by at least 2/3rds of the Committee that the item came up after the agenda was posted and is of an urgent nature requiring immediate action.*
6. BUSINESS
 - A. Engineers Cost Report on Prop 218 for Drainage Fees
 - B. Planners Report on Drainage Fees Charged by other Cities
 - C. Update of Francis Creek Vegetation Removal
7. CORRESPONDENCE
8. COMMENTS
8. ADJOURN

**The next regular meeting of the Ferndale Drainage Committee will be on
 September 1, 2022**

MINUTES**CITY OF FERNDALE – HUMBOLDT COUNTY U.S.A.****DRAINAGE COMMITTEE MEETING****Action Minutes**

June 2nd, 2022

Chair Tom Stephens opened the meeting at 2:30pm. Those present were, Phil Ostler, Michael Sweeney, Jim Bass, Wayne Ambrosini, along with City Staff: City Manager Jay Parrish, City Engineer Brian Ontiveros, and Deputy City Clerk Lauren Boop.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Approval of the May 5th Meeting Minutes

Tom Stephens wanted updates on the Drainage fees and 218 process. It was determined that Brian would look into this. Minutes were then approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No Comment

BUSINESS:

A. DRAINAGE MASTER PLAN UPDATE:

Chair Tom Stephens opened the meeting and asked to cut to recommendations.

Michael Sweeney: Explained that the 218 process's main goal is to raise revenue to spend to remove barriers to building homes in a city. In Ferndale's case the drainage issues here make it difficult to expand housing. He explained the process and wants community input and an engineering report to get process started.

City Manager Parrish explained that the citizen vote on the 218 process can happen any time, it does not need to be tied with the county election process. We send out brochures and citizens vote for the measure, majority wins, then city council will vote to ratify the drainage fee increase.

Phil Ostler: Thinks we need a fee increase, possibly only in assessment fees not developer fees as that would not result in a significant amount of drainage revenue.

Chair Tom Stephens showed a chart of Francis Creek flooding trends and explained that due to the drought the creek has not breached half capacity. He said it is difficult to sell a fee increase to citizens when there have been no drainage issues in a drought period. He asked Jay when the best time to ask council to consider a Drainage Fee Increase.

City Manager Jay Parrish: Agreed that it is easier to submit a request for a fee increase if it is pouring rain, but reminded the committee that citizens are currently paying less than \$2 per month for what is arguably the biggest local issue that needs to be addressed. He said there is good cause to address issues as we would need to before any development can be done in many areas of Ferndale. He requested we give the engineer more time to gather data to make a strong case to the council.

Chair Tom Stephens: Removing the barriers to build more affordable housing will also result in more grant fund eligibility that may offset the fee increase.

Michael Sweeney: The drainage committee is charged with solving drainage issues in the city, we know we have many issues and should not wait to solve them. Responding to City Manager Jay Parrish who says we need to prioritize projects, it doesn't matter if we prioritize the projects if we can't afford to solve the worst issue.

Phil Ostler: Drainage fee increase could be sunsetted once major issues are addressed.

City Engineer Brian Ontiveros: Asked if there were questions, didn't need to summarize as committee has been discussing for months now. City Manager Parrish asked how much revenue was needed to address issues and which project gives us the biggest bang for our buck? City Engineer Ontiveros replied that he ordered them by priority, and the first 2 on the list are the most pressing. He Asked what the council paid for the 218 process for the sewer rate increase.

City Manager Parrish recalled the cost being around \$4000, but ended up being paid for by a grant which Engineer Paul Gregson secured. He explained that at this amount, which the City Engineer agreed was a reasonable estimate for his time to compile 218 information. It was agreed by the council to authorize City Engineer Ontiveros to begin compiling information for the 218 process including: researching drainage fees in comparable localities, and putting together a cost proposal for the report.

City Manager Jay Parrish said he would put the information gathered as an item at the next City Council Meeting to keep the council in the loop.

Action Taken: None

7. CORRESPONDENCE: None

8. COMMENTS: None

Chair Tom Stephens adjourned the meeting at 3:55 pm.

Meeting Date:	August 4, 2022	Agenda Item Number	
Agenda Item Title	Comparison of Drainage Assessment Fees		
Presented By:	City Planner		
Type of Item:	<input type="checkbox"/> Action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information
Action Required:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Action	<input type="checkbox"/> Voice Vote	<input type="checkbox"/> Roll Call Vote

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Comparison of Ferndale Drainage Fees to Other Cities in the Humboldt County Region

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Receive update and provide staff direction on follow-up actions.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Ferndale is located within the larger Eel River Floodplain and was developed along Francis Creek. The generally flat topography of the City coupled with influence from several creeks in the area and a high ground water table often leads to localized flooding within the City. As such, the City has developed a citywide stormwater drainage system to alleviate flooding and protect developed areas from potential flood damage.

Recently, the drainage system underwent a comprehensive assessment that included hydrologic modeling as part the Drainage Master Plan Update. This update also provided a list of projects that would repair and/or upgrade the existing drainage infrastructure to alleviate existing problem spots within the system. The total cost of all projects was estimated to be \$1,423,860. This City's current drainage assessment generates approximately \$19,500 which is inadequate to implement the recommended projects within a reasonable about of time. This has prompted a preliminary review of the current assessment and how it compares to other jurisdictions of similar size and/or within Humboldt County.

DISCUSSION:

The following discussion includes a summary of various jurisdictions that collect special assessments or development fees for stormwater/drainage infrastructure.

City of Ferndale

The City of Ferndale currently collects a special assessment of \$25 per year per parcel that is included as part of property owners' annual tax bill. This assessment was approved by voters in 1997 and does not have a current sunset date. The City also adopted a development fee ordinance that collects drainage impact fees based on development type and overall square footage of impervious surface. Development Drainage Fees are currently assessed at a rate of \$1,500 per new residence or building. The fee for additions to existing parcels which result in increased ground coverage or additional floor area in excess of 100 square feet is \$0.50 per square foot. New graveled roadways or parking areas in excess of 100 square feet are subject to a fee of \$0.35 per square foot. The total fee for any one addition or improvement is not to exceed \$500. Commercial and industrial developments on existing parcels are charged a fee of \$0.50 per square foot of impervious area created with a maximum fee of \$15,000 per acre. The fee for new parcels created which are zoned commercial or industrial are pro-rated at a rate of \$15,000 per acre.

Based on the above fees, a newly constructed 1,200 square foot single-family residence with a two-car garage (400 square feet) and a 600 square foot driveway would be assessed a \$1,500 development fee along with an annual assessment of \$25.

It should be noted that jurisdictions are not allowed to charge additional impact fees for ADUs less than 750 square feet in size. For larger ADUs, fees must be proportionate to the primary residence. This is meant to incentivize the development of these smaller units to help address the current statewide housing crisis. However, it does limit the City's ability to collect additional drainage fees.

City of Fortuna

The City of Fortuna collects a monthly user charge based on the type of use and size of the parcel. A residential parcel under 15,000 square feet is charged a monthly fee of \$0.55 (\$6.60 per year). Fortuna also collects a drainage fee before any filing of a parcel map, final map, or prior to the issuance of a building permit. Collected fees are put into the City's Drainage Facilities Fund. Subdivisions are charged a \$600 fee per vacant parcel created. Any building permit issued is charged a fee of \$0.32 per square foot of impervious surface created.

Based on the established fees for the City of Fortuna, a single-family residence as described under the City of Ferndale would be charged a drainage development fee of \$704 and an annual fee of \$6.60 which is less than the City of Ferndale.

City of Arcata

The City of Arcata collects a maintenance fee of \$12.00 per parcel plus \$0.0048 per square foot of impervious surface area regardless of use type or parcel size. Arcata also collects a standard drainage development fee of \$0.112 per square foot of new impervious surface before any development permit is issued.

Based on the established fees for the City of Arcata, a single-family residence as described under the City of Ferndale would be charged a drainage development fee of \$246.40 and an annual maintenance fee of \$22.56 which is less than the City of Ferndale.

Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District

The Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District serves the communities of Fairfield, Suisun City, Travis Air Force Base, and Cordelia in central Solano County. They assist with maintaining the regions storm drain facilities and as such, collect fees to help fund operations. Annual fees are charged based on land use type with improved residential properties (up to a four-plex) charged \$20.23 per lot or parcel. Development fees vary based on the presiding jurisdiction (city or county).

SUMMARY:

Based on the cities and districts included in this preliminary review of drainage fees, the City of Ferndale's current fees are higher than other cities and districts. This is likely due to the higher risk of flooding within the City and its location in the Eel River floodplain which has been noted for its severe flooding during prolonged high precipitation events. However, based on the City's current needs and limited funding, staff recommends pursuing a preliminary engineers report to determine the potential range of a special assessment that would help cover the costs of improvement projects listed in the Drainage Master Plan Update.