



LEVEL OF SERVICE - BACKGROUND AND PROCESS OF ANALYSIS

Addressing program gaps and system performance needs requires an analysis of the future levels of services that will build capabilities over time to meet the expectations for stormwater system performance that the Township has established. Changing a community's stormwater program to meet an established Level of Service (LOS) goal typically occurs over a period of several years and involves making strategic decisions across a series of stormwater functional areas and adding capabilities, as needed. To plan for this change, it is necessary to gather information about what is important to the community in order to move the program in a direction that has strong stakeholder support and reflects the needs of the Township.

The purpose of the following analysis is to guide the Township's decisions about which stormwater program elements are important and what level of service (and investment) is supported to meet community expectations. Under each service area provided in the Current Services Summary (reviewed at the September 27th meeting with the SAC) the current program of services and identified program gaps were provided.

Definitions

The concept of service level defines how the Township will build and provide its stormwater management program in the future. It generally describes how services will be administered, performed, and measured. The Township's service level philosophy is likely to change gradually over time as the program is refined and expanded to address system needs for oversight and capital investment for both water quantity and quality protection. In addition, physical system operation and maintenance standards will likely adjust as community needs and expectations are met.

The following general definitions delineate the major segments of the service level philosophy;

- **Service Area** addresses the geographical area where the Township accepts responsibility for and performs stormwater management services through its stormwater program, by providing regulatory control of engineering and development standards, capital improvements, asset management, and maintenance and operations. It defines the "outer geographic boundaries" of the program in actual application. It is noted that the service area may be different from the overall jurisdictional limits. While the Township always has its legal corporate boundaries, there is often a need for a system of accounting for separate responsibilities related to private system management.
- **Extent of Service** addresses the application of specific stormwater responsibilities and activities to the physical systems. It defines the "inner boundaries" of specific elements of the stormwater management program in a manner similar to the way Service Area defines the outer boundaries. The philosophy guides decisions related to the degree and types of systems the Township should regulate, improve, and maintain for stormwater management and conveyance.



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- **Level of Service** policy defines system performance capability objectives, the condition that should exist in each type of system. This includes the degree of effort/service that is desired for certain activities. They also dictate how system performance and conditions should be judged, measured, estimated, or otherwise validated, and how productivity “yardsticks” can be used to guide management decisions.

II. Service Area

The Township is responsible for management of stormwater, through regulation, planning, maintenance, and capital improvements, in the area delineated by its corporate boundary with the exception of responsibilities for stormwater projects in partnership with other regulated communities for MS4 permit compliance. In addition, the Township has invested in farmland with property rights that provide opportunities for implementation of stormwater projects.

III. Extent of Service

Overview

Considerable discussion regarding the extent of the physical system that should be under the management of the Township is needed to understand the delegation of roles and responsibilities. This discussion starts with the SAC and will include staff and leadership input to identify extent or limitations of responsibility on the following areas:

- ◆ Planning and regulatory authority: The Township’s legal limits and mandates over the entire drainage system, both publicly and privately owned.
- ◆ Clarification of the relationship between MS4 permittees who own properties within the Township boundaries such as PennDOT and Penn State University including issues of infrastructure management and water quality permit compliance, with identification of areas of partnership.
- ◆ Clarification of the relationship between two stakeholders, the Township and Private BMP Owners including issues of operation and management, defining high priority BMPs, and identifying orphaned facilities with identification of areas of partnership.
 - Should the Township consider phasing in the public maintenance of privately owned systems that are impacted by runoff from public properties?
 - Should the Township maintain an inventory of all private facilities and privately owned drainage system components, including those outside of the regulated urban area?
 - Should the Township consider partnering with private landowners for investment in drainage infrastructure to meet MS4 permit requirements and/or to optimize system performance?

Level of Service

Question: Should the Township invest in resources sufficient to move the current maintenance, operation, regulation, planning and capital improvements for the stormwater system to a proactive management strategy that anticipates challenges and has in place appropriate programs to provide for environmental protection and public safety? See the Matrix on Level of Service for additional information.



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Some specific areas for consideration for level of service include the following:

- ◆ A replacement schedule for infrastructure and that replacement standard should be set to meet build-out conditions in the watershed.
- ◆ Examination of the use of innovative or alternative solutions to stormwater management issues such as the use of Green Stormwater Infrastructure whenever possible.

The items identified on the attached Table are not in any priority order and may not be all inclusive. This document is meant as the first step in developing the key program elements needed; to get a sense of the level of service desired; and to create a base financial document which allows the cost of various options to be compared. Based upon the feedback first provided by Staff and then by the SAC, a multi-year program plan will be developed that reflects priorities and shows potential annual costs.