



Re-Elect Rich Alt

Southport Mayor

Continuing Southport's Path Forward

City Stormwater Projects

The following is a summary of the city's stormwater approach since December 2023.

The city has been plagued with stormwater issues for decades with little to no solutions in terms of grants, a dedicated budget line item for infrastructure, or bonds. As an example of what could have occurred, the Southport Fire Department was able to fund part of the cost of the new firehouse with a bond having an interest rate of just around 1%.

Stormwater in the city is a massive endeavor; several years ago, it was estimated to have a \$30 million price tag. With inflation, that may now be up to a \$40 million cost. As such, it will not be fixed overnight. To make inroads, it will take a focused business approach, with actions across a broad spectrum of options. The time for just talking is over, we must now engage in solutions.

The following is the multi-pronged approach the city has engaged in during the past 18 months.

- The Southport Public Works Department initiated an enhanced program to repair, replace, and/or clean out chronic stormwater drain chock points throughout the system using city staff.

- Starting August 4th, Public Works will begin the clearing of the storm ditches in the Fodale area
- The city hired a civil engineer as a project manager and subject matter expert on Stormwater, and other infrastructure projects. In just a year our civil engineer has written, and is now overseeing several grants, and has written draft stormwater policies that the Planning Board is currently reviewing regarding Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) text amendments. This same civil engineer is also the project lead for the renovation of the Old Courthouse into a multipurpose governmental facility.
- An engineering company was hired with expertise in mapping the stormwater flow throughout a large portion of the city. This requirement is needed to apply for grants at the Federal, State, or through third party organizations.
- An engineering study was conducted for the Fodale Avenue area to identify a plan to address this flood prone area, in and around Doshier Hospital, as well as the surrounding neighborhoods. These studies are required to obtain the necessary funding and they are well underway.
- A “Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities” (BRIC) grant has been applied for as a revenue source for the Fodale Avenue area project. The city has been informed that by October, the transfer of the Federal BRIC program, along with the corresponding dollars will be

disbursed by North Carolina as directed by the Federal Government (the civil engineer is the lead on this type of follow up.)

- A second BRIC-type grant application is being prepared by the city engineer to capture some of the \$750 million Federal unencumbered dollars from the September 16th 2024, PTS 8 event. Again, the Federal Government has shifted the disbursement through the state, which has lengthened the grant approval timeline. The application date is October 2025.
- The new bridge on Moore Street over Price's Creek will allow for a free flow of stormwater to the river, helping to reduce the flooding on the eastern side of Southport. From conceptual idea, to engineering study, to completion, took less than 10 months. When have you seen a major NCDOT project proceed at that pace?
- The proposed bridge on Moore Street over Bonnett's Creek will reduce the backlog of stormwater into the river and will aid the Fodale Avenue area stormwater project. The hydrology review to justify the bridge is currently being undertaken by NCDOT. This step often takes years to initiate, but through collaboration of the city manager, the mayor pro-tem, our local state legislators, and myself, working with the North Carolina Governor, has jump-started that review.

- Southport has received a \$70,000 “Resilient Coastal Communities Program” grant to conduct a risk and vulnerability assessment for stormwater.

Coaching, mentoring, and decades of project management helps build the team that can make things happen.

For any individual to take full credit for projects such as stormwater is disingenuous and laughable.

A mayor is a coach, mentor, business partner, consensus builder, and helps to keep the train on the tracks through meaningful dialog. Ensuring the completion of projects is a set of skills you want in your mayor.