

**State Water Infrastructure Authority
Stormwater Funding Committee
March 31, 2022 Meeting**

Agenda Item F – DRAFT Stormwater Planning Grant Priority Rating System Considerations

Division of Water Infrastructure Staff Report

Background

This staff report presents initial considerations for the Stormwater Planning (SW Planning) grant Priority Rating System.

As defined in North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(e)(2), a SW Planning grant is intended to help an eligible entity determine the best solutions for the entity's stormwater quality or quantity issue and to engineer and permit the solutions. The grant is available for:

- Research or investigative studies
- Alternatives analyses
- The preparation of engineering concept plans or engineering designs, and
- Similar activities

Similar to the water and wastewater AIA and MRF applications, the SW Planning application will require a detailed narrative describing the top 3 stormwater quality and/or quantity challenges faced by the applicant, and how the proposed study will help address the challenges.

Project Purpose Considerations

Suggest providing no points for Project Purpose (*this is the same as AIA and MRF grants*). Purposes could include:

- Stormwater Asset Inventory and Assessment
- Stormwater Rate or Fee Development
- Create and/or implement a Stormwater Utility
- Develop a:
 - Watershed plan
 - Stormwater management plan/program
 - Plan for the restoration of streams, wetlands, buffers or estuaries
 - Stormwater infrastructure operation and maintenance plan
 - Stormwater capital improvement plan (CIP)
- Develop engineering designs or conceptual plans
- Hydraulic modeling
- **Improve compliance with MS4 permit requirements**
- **In conjunction with another unit of local government, study challenges and benefits for the LGUs to collaborate on watershed and/or stormwater planning and management**

Category 1 – Project Benefit Considerations

Provide points for Project Benefits (*this is the same as AIA and MRF grants*). Benefits could include:

- Clear link between each challenge and the benefit of the study to address the challenge
- How the SW Planning study will be used to develop and prioritize future projects that address stormwater quality or quantity challenges
- Water Quality-Related: Study area is a subwatershed that is impaired as noted on the most recent version of the Integrated Report, or study will directly support protection of Sensitive Waters (HQW, ORW, Tr, SA, WS I, WS II, WS III, WS IV* and WS V*)
- Compliance-Related: Study will directly improve compliance with the entity's NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit or will help the entity prepare to comply with a future NPDES MS4 permit
- Planning for growth and new development would lose 2 benefit points (*same as AIA grants*)
- Study is carried out as a collaborative effort with other LGUs (*Include here if not a Project Purpose*)
- Improve the entity's ability to address the reduction of impacts from future natural events that may be a result of climate change

Category 2 – System Management Considerations (Similar to AIA grants)

Provide points for System Management (*this is the same as AIA and MRF grants*). System management considerations could include:

- Knowledge base of entity's stormwater management staff
- Status of implementing results of previous planning study or studies
- Study will create a stormwater asset inventory
- Study will create and/or implement a Stormwater Utility
- The entity has held public input sessions and provides documentation that residents to be impacted by the study support the study

Category 3 – Affordability Considerations

- Suggest providing no points for current monthly stormwater bill since not all entities may have a stormwater utility (*AIA and MRF grants provide points for water/sewer utility rates*)
- Provide points for Affordability based on LGU indicators
 - 3 out of 5 LGU indicators are worse than the state benchmark
 - 4 out of 5 LGU indicators are worse than the state benchmark
 - 5 out of 5 LGU indicators are worse than the state benchmark
- Provide points if 75 percent or more of the planning area is comprised of disadvantaged, underserved areas