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| Logo  Description automatically generated | **North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality** |  |
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| **Priority Rating System Guidance and Form for Division of Water Infrastructure**  **Stormwater Funding Program through the**  **Local Assistance for Stormwater Infrastructure Investments (LASII) Fund** |
|  | (Last updated: August 2, 2023) |

**Priority Rating System Guidance and Form**

This Guidance Document aids the applicant in understanding and implementing the Priority Rating Systems for the Local Assistance for Stormwater Infrastructure Investments (LASII) stormwater grants for stormwater construction projects, stormwater planning studies, and to develop and implement a new stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund.

There are two separate Priority Rating Systems at the end of this Guidance Document: one for Stormwater Construction Projects, and one for Stormwater Planning Studies which includes the development and implementation of a new stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund.

For wastewater, drinking water, or CDBG-I funding, please use the separate Guidance Documents appropriate for those programs. For wastewater or drinking water Asset Inventory and Assessment grants and wastewater or drinking water Merger/ Regionalization Feasibility grants, please use the separate Guidance Document appropriate for those programs.

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**LASII Funding Source Information and Eligibility Requirements**

LASII funds for stormwater projects can be used for stormwater quality and stormwater quantity projects. **Special eligibility requirements apply to funding from LASII.**

Per North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(a) Establishment of the Fund. – Funds appropriated in this act from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund to the Department of Environmental Quality (NC DEQ) for stormwater infrastructure shall be used by the Department to establish the Local Assistance for Stormwater Infrastructure Investments (LASII) Fund as a special fund in the Department. The Fund shall be used to provide grants to eligible entities for projects that will improve or create infrastructure for controlling stormwater quantity and quality.

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| * ***It is recommended that the applicant first determine whether it is eligible to be considered for LASII funds*, as required by Session Law 2021-180, for both stormwater construction grant funds and stormwater planning grant funds. *The LASII Fund Eligibility Form must be completed and submitted by the applicant to demonstrate eligibility.*** |

Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(d) defines an eligible entity as: a city[[1]](#footnote-2) or county that (i) documents in a form and manner as the Department may specify a stormwater quality or quantity issue and (ii) demonstrates that it would experience a significant hardship raising the revenue necessary to finance stormwater management activities within its jurisdiction based on income and unemployment data, population trends, and any other data determined relevant by the Department. A regional council of government created pursuant to Part 2 of Article 20 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes or a nonprofit entity is also an eligible entity under this section if the regional council of government or nonprofit entity partners with a city or county.[[2]](#footnote-3) **Required documentation is as follows:**

1. **Document a Stormwater Quality or Stormwater Quantity Issue** – Required by Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(d)(i)

Applicants seeking stormwater grant funding from the LASII funds are required to provide:

1. A narrative that describes the stormwater quality issue and/or stormwater quantity issue, based on historic or projected precipitation, and how the grant will be used to address the issue,
2. A map and/or a narrative that identifies the location of the stormwater quality and/or stormwater quantity issue, and
3. If available, photographs of the stormwater quality and/or stormwater quantity issue and identification of the amount of rainfall that caused the issue, based on the nearest reliable rain gauge, news articles about the issue, or other information that demonstrates the issue.

**AND**

1. **Demonstrate “Significant Hardship Raising the Revenue …”** – Required by Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(d)(ii)

The criteria that will be applied when making the determination of significant hardship raising the revenue necessary to finance stormwater management activities will vary by the type of stormwater grant application as follows.

1. **For applications for Stormwater Construction Grants and Stormwater Planning Grants** **(except applications to Develop and Implement a New Stormwater Utility)**

An applicant must demonstrate eligibility by meeting either of the two criteria below:

**Criterion 1:** At least one (1) of the five (5) five Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators for the applicant are worse than the state benchmarks shown Table 1 below.

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| **Table 1.** | | |
| **Local Government Unit Indicator** |  | **State Benchmarks for Fall 2023 Applications** |
| Population Change | **< =** | 3.13% |
| Poverty Rate | **> =** | 13.7% |
| Median Household Income | **< =** | $60,516 |
| Unemployment Rate | **> =** | 4.9% |
| Per Capita Appraised Value of Property | **< =** | $133,264 |

**OR**

**Criterion 2:** The City or County as a whole does not meet Criterion 1 but has stormwater projects that benefit disadvantaged areas within the City’s or County’s jurisdiction. To be eligible, 75 percent or more of the construction cost must be used to directly benefit disadvantaged areas.

Disadvantaged areas may be subsections or pockets of a City’s or County’s jurisdiction, rather than the entire City or County. For instance, disadvantaged areas may be census block groups that meet qualifying characteristics. The targeted project area will be determined a “disadvantaged area” based on factors that shall include:

* Median household income, poverty rates, per capita appraised property values of property, and/or unemployment rates of the targeted project area,
* Additional factors that may qualify the targeted project area as disadvantaged, such as but not limited to demographic, historical, cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic stressors, or cost-of-living stressors may also be considered.

Use of federal or state-generated maps to demonstrate that a targeted project area is disadvantaged is encouraged. For instance, using screenshots or printouts of NC DEQ’s [Community Mapping System](https://deq.nc.gov/outreach-education/environmental-justice/deq-north-carolina-community-mapping-system), labeling and identifying on the map the targeted project area overlapping “Potentially Underserved Block Groups” and/or “Tribal Boundaries” that appear on the online map as shaded areas (these are considered disadvantaged areas). Applicants may also use the [federal Justice40 Initiative maps](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/) to demonstrate that a targeted project area is disadvantaged.

For Criterion 2, the proposed project is not required to be located *within* a disadvantaged area, but the project *must result in* water quality improvements within the disadvantaged area and/or reduce water quantity impacts within the disadvantaged area. Over 75 percent of the project’s construction costs must be used to provide these benefits to the disadvantaged areas to qualify under Criterion 2.

To document that the direct beneficiaries of the project are disadvantaged, provide a narrative, with or without a map, describing the project location, areas in which project benefits are anticipated, and disadvantaged area(s).

* Example Map Documentation: Screenshots or printouts of NC DEQ’s [Community Mapping System](https://deq.nc.gov/outreach-education/environmental-justice/deq-north-carolina-community-mapping-system), federal Justice40 Initiative map, or similar federal or state-generated map, with project location and areas in which project benefits are anticipated overlayed on top of Potentially Underserved Block Groups and/or Tribal Boundaries. Attach screenshots of maps to the Certification Form.
* Narrative Documentation: Narrative must sufficiently describe disadvantaged factors of the areas where the project benefits will accrue, including median household income, poverty rates, per capita appraised property values of property, and/or unemployment rates of the targeted project area. Additional factors that may qualify the benefiting areas as disadvantaged, such as but not limited to demographic, historical, cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic stressors, or cost-of-living stressors.

1. **For applications to Develop and Implement a New Stormwater Utility**

If the city or county does not have a stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund and the project description in the application states that the application is to develop and implement a new stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund, the city or county will have met the requirement to demonstrate that there is a significant hardship in raising the revenue necessary to finance stormwater management activities within its jurisdiction. The grant amount for which a city or county will be eligible will be capped at different levels based on the number of LGU Indicators (from Criterion 1) that are worse than the state benchmarks.

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| * ***It is recommended that only if the applicant is able to demonstrate that it is eligible to be considered for LASII funds, per the completed LASII Fund Eligibility Certification Form, should the applicant proceed with using this Guidance Document to complete an application for stormwater funding through the LASII Fund.*** |

**LASII Funding Limits**

The FY2023-2024 Budget has not been passed so the funding for the following programs have not been determined:

* **Local Assistance for Stormwater Infrastructure Investment (LASII)**
* Viable Utility Reserve (VU)
* Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) and Merger Regionalization and Feasibility
* Drinking Water and Clean Water State Reserve Program (SRP)

Once the budget has been established, the Division will include the funding limits similar to what is outlined below:

1. **Stormwater Construction Grants**

Stormwater construction grants, except for the development and implementation of a new stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund, will be limited to \*$5 million per applicant per grant cycle. If two or more units of local government work together to improve stormwater quality and/or quantity control under one project, the total amount of the stormwater construction grant will be limited to \*$7.5 million per grant cycle. The documentation required to demonstrate this is listed under the Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System Line Item 2.C.

1. **Stormwater Planning Grants**

Stormwater planning grants will be limited to \*$400,000 per applicant per grant cycle. If the study is a collaborative effort with other local government units, the total amount of the stormwater planning grant will be limited to \*$500,000 per grant cycle. The documentation required to demonstrate this is listed under the Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System Line Item 1.D.

1. **Development and Implementation of New Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund Grants**

The grant amount for an eligible entity to develop and implement a new stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund will be limited to different amounts based on the number of Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators that are worse than the state benchmarks shown in Table 1 above, as follows:

* If an entity demonstrates that 0, 1, or 2 of its five LGU Indicators are worse than the state benchmark, the amount of grant funds that may be awarded for the development and implementation of a new stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund is limited to \*$400,000.
* If an entity demonstrates that 3, 4 or 5 of its five LGU Indicators are worse than the state benchmark, the amount of grant funds that may be awarded for the development and implementation of a new stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund is limited to \*$500,000.

**\***Subject to change

**Submittal Requirements**

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| 1. **Every application for LASII stormwater funding must contain:** 2. **Part B** – Stormwater Project Narrative Required for ALL Stormwater Applications, **AND** 3. **Either Part C** (Narrative and Documentation Required to Support Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System Points) **OR Part D** (Narrative and Documentation Required to Support Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System Points). 4. Request all the priority points for which the narrative demonstrates eligibility. The Division does not award unrequested priority points. 5. **The narrative must address every bullet item within a line item** to be a complete narrative for that line item. If every bullet item is not addressed, priority points will not be awarded for the associated line item. 6. All supporting documentation to determine priority points claimed must be submitted as part of the funding application and must be explicitly discussed in the narrative. The Division will not request additional information or documentation. The Division will determine priority points based solely on the information submitted. 7. Where the narrative references supporting documentation, the applicant must provide the file name and specific page number of the supporting documentation in which to find the information that supports the applicant’s claim for priority points for that line item. **If the file name and page number of the supporting documentation is not specifically identified within the narrative, priority points will not be awarded for the associated line item.** 8. Where the guidance requires summaries in the narrative, provide only specific, relevant information. 9. The Division reviews each application (even multiple applications from the same applicant) as a stand-alone application. The Division will not search other applications from the same applicant for missing information. Provide all relevant information in each application, even if it is submitted in a different application. 10. **Be sure the application includes all required or relevant information and signatures**. |

**PART A. ACTIVITIES THAT ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR STORMWATER CONSTRUCTION OR STORMWATER PLANNING FUNDING**

The following activities are **not eligible** uses of stormwater funds:

1. Land conservation including the purchase of land in fee simple or the purchase of easements for the purpose of permanently conserving the property, including farmland. Two state funding programs that provide funds for this type of work are the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Land and Water Fund, and the NC Department of Agriculture Farmland Preservation Trust Fund.
2. Low impact development
3. Creation or construction of greenways, parks, and open space
4. Repairing or improving transportation infrastructure as the primary project purpose or benefit
5. Constructing or repairing dams or other structures designed to retain waters within a stream channel
6. Constructing or repairing levees, flood walls, or sea walls
7. Removal of dams or levees
8. Removing stream debris other than that which is incidental to the project
9. Dredging
10. Activities that satisfy compensatory mitigation requirements under NCGS 143-214.11
11. The purchase or rental of vehicles such as cars, trucks, or vans
12. The purchase or rental of computers, laptops, tablets, and cell phones
13. Elevation of structures
14. Removal of structures inside or outside of the floodplain
15. Costs of stormwater infrastructure to serve or promote future growth and development
16. Preparation of a stormwater asset inventory without a stormwater asset assessment (if seeking funding to prepare a stormwater asset inventory, the scope of work must also include a condition assessment of the stormwater assets)
17. Costs to comply with existing stormwater ordinances or other ordinances of the jurisdiction
18. Costs associated with a NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit for program administration, annual reporting, regular operation and maintenance of the stormwater system, routine sampling, and staff salaries
19. Staff salaries, overhead or expenses
20. Costs for operation and/or maintenance of stormwater infrastructure
21. Costs for water quality monitoring

**Part B. Stormwater Project Narrative – Required for ALL Applications**

**The applicant must provide answers to each of the following items for Part B – Stormwater Project Narrative Required for ALL Applications. If each of the following items for Part B is not provided, the application is incomplete and ineligible for consideration.**

1. Is the stormwater quality and/or quantity issue caused by water that flows into the applicant’s community from upstream areas that are not within the applicant’s jurisdiction? If yes, estimate the acreage that is impacted by flow from upstream areas.
2. Is the stormwater quality and/or quantity issue caused by rain falling directly within the applicant’s jurisdiction and then running off (i.e., surface runoff)? If yes, estimate the area that is problematic (e.g., an area 5 blocks wide by 3 blocks long).
3. Provide a map or maps at a readable scale that clearly depict the location of the proposed stormwater project, and sufficient labels of geographical refences and landmarks such as roads, streams, river, political boundaries, etc. to identify the location of the project.
4. Do you have an established stormwater utility as of the date of this application? If so, when was the utility created?
5. Do you have a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit? If so, provide the permit number, the date the permit was issued, and a summary of any compliance issues.
6. Describe any public input sessions or notifications about the project that have been specifically focused on residents and/or businesses that may be most directly impacted by the project. **Do not address this Item as “Not Applicable”; if there have been no public input sessions or notifications about the project to impacted residents/businesses, the applicant must state that these activities have not occurred.**

**PART C. Narrative and Documentation Required to Support Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System Points**

**Stormwater Construction Project Application Submittal Requirements**

Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(e) provides for Construction grants from the LASSI fund as follows:

(1) Construction grants. – A construction grant is available for the development and implementation of a new stormwater utility or stormwater control measure (SCM), the rehabilitation of existing SCMs, the retrofitting of existing stormwater conveyances to provide SCMs for quantity and quality control purposes, or the installation of innovative technologies or nature-based solutions. The Department shall allow nature-based solutions where feasible and possible.

**If Part C – Narrative and Documentation Required to Support Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System Points is not provided, the application is incomplete and ineligible for consideration.**

**The Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System narrative along with supporting documentation as required by this Guidance Document must be submitted as part of the funding application, as follows:**

1. **A completed Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System score sheet form must be submitted with the funding application**. To claim points for a particular line item, mark “X” on the score sheet. For each category, provide the subtotal of points claimed on the score sheet.
2. **A narrative and supporting documentation that supports the points claimed in the Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System is a required part of the application.** The four categories below correspond to the categories in the Priority Rating System score sheet. **Address every line item. If a line item is not applicable, include the line item and place “Not Applicable” next to it.**

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| Category 1 | Project Purpose |
| Category 2 | Project Benefits |
| Category 3 | System Management |
| Category 4 | Affordability |

* The narrative must be consistent with information provided in the Division of Water Infrastructure Application for Funding and other supporting information.
* The narrative must be complete to provide for accurate scoring and concise enough that critical information is not lost in unnecessary text. Text should only provide information that supports the award of points in the Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System (i.e., do not describe other benefits that are not included in the Priority Rating System).
* **The narrative must address every bullet item within a Line Item** to be a complete narrative for that Line Item. If every bullet item is not addressed, priority points will not be awarded for the associated Line Item.
* If there are no applicable points in any given category, state that there are no applicable points under that category.
* Where the narrative references supporting documentation, the applicant must provide the file name and specific page number of the supporting documentation in which to find the information that supports the applicant’s claim for priority points for that line item. **If the file name and page number of the supporting documentation is not specifically identified within the narrative, priority points will not be awarded for the associated line item.**

1. **Maps are required for some line items as noted in the individual line items below.** The applicant may provide maps to clarify the narrative for line items for which maps are not required. Maps must include sufficient labels of geographical references and be at a readable scale. Include maps in the supporting documentation file.

**Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System Narrative Guidance**

**Category 1 – Project Purpose**

The project narrative must fully describe the proposed project and how each element supports the Project Purpose claimed on the Stormwater Construction Project Priority Rating System score sheet form. The claimed Project Purpose must be consistent with all information provided in the application.

An application can earn points in Category 1 for only one Project Purpose (Line Item 1.A, 1.B, 1.C, or 1.D). If a project will serve several purposes and if unsure how to classify the application, please contact the Division staff.

Although an application can earn points for only one Project Purpose, additional points for sub-categories (Line Item 1.B.1 and Line Item 1.B.2) may also be earned. An application cannot earn points for any other combination of Project Purposes.

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| **Notes:**   1. For Category 1 – Project Purpose, the maximum number of points that a project can earn is capped at 35 points. 2. Projects that do not receive Project Purpose points may still be eligible for funding. |

**Line Item 1.A** – More than 50 percent of the construction cost of the project will be used to create new stormwater control measures (SCMs), rehabilitate, or replace existing SCMs to control stormwater quality

15A NCAC 02H .1002 (49) defines a stormwater control measure as a permanent structural device that is designed, constructed, and maintained to remove pollutants from stormwater runoff by promoting settling or filtration; or to mimic the natural hydrologic cycle by promoting infiltration, evapotranspiration, post-filtration discharge, reuse of stormwater, or a combination thereof.

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| **Note:** To qualify for points in Line Item 1.A, the SCM must adhere to the [NC Stormwater Design Manual](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/energy-mineral-and-land-resources/stormwater/stormwater-program/stormwater-design-manual) Part C: Minimum Design Criteria and Recommendations for Stormwater Control Measures. SCMs include stormwater wetlands per the NC Stormwater Design Manual. |

An application can earn points in Line Item 1.A only if more than 50 percent of the construction cost of the project will be used to create new stormwater control measures (SCMs) or to improve, retrofit, repair, rehabilitate or replace existing SCM infrastructure to control stormwater quality, for only one of the following sub-categories (Line Item 1.A.1 or 1.A.2).

* ***Line Item 1.A.1*** – Proposed SCMs are Nature-Based Stormwater Solutions

*35 points*

Nature-based stormwater SCMs earn the maximum points under Category 1 – Project Purpose. The narrative must clearly demonstrate how the SCM meets the definition of a nature-based stormwater solution. The proposed SCMs must comply with NCGA Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(h) which defines nature-based solutions as sustainable planning, design, environmental management, and engineering practices that weave natural features or processes into the built environment to store, infiltrate, and treat water by enlisting natural features and processes in efforts to promote resilience, reduce flood risks, improve water quality, protect coastal property, restore and protect wetlands, stabilize shorelines, and add recreational space. The narrative must include:

* A statement that the project will adhere to the NC Stormwater Design Manual Part C: Minimum Design Criteria and Recommendations for Stormwater Control Measures,
* A list of the potential types of SCMs to be used and the key design considerations that support the feasibility of implementing each type of proposed SCM at the location for which it is proposed.
* A clear description of how each potential type of SCM meets the definition of a nature-based stormwater solution and how the SCM will store, infiltrate, and treat stormwater by enlisting natural features and processes,
* A map that shows the location of the proposed SCMs and the proposed inlet and outlet locations,
* If the proposed SCMs will receive runoff from future upstream growth and development, in addition to existing development, state the percentage of impervious area that will be tributary to the SCM for both future development (estimated) and existing development, and
* If the proposed SCMs will receive increased stormwater runoff from future increased storm intensity and/or future growth and development, demonstrate how the increased runoff will be managed so that:

1. The increased runoff will not cause new or increased flooding or exacerbate flood risks downstream of the proposed SCMs, and
2. How the increased runoff will not cause new or worsen or exacerbate water quality issues downstream of the proposed SCMs.

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| **Example for Line Item 1.A.1 (Nature-Based SCM)**  **Narrative that is NOT sufficient:** The proposed project will adhere to the NC Stormwater Design Manual Part C: Minimum Design Criteria and Recommendations for Stormwater Control Measures. The infiltration basin SCM will meet the NCGA Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(h) definition of a nature-based stormwater solution because it is a “depression that captures, stores and allows stormwater to infiltrate into the soils” per the NC Stormwater Design Manual Part C-1. “Infiltration System” of the Minimum Design Criteria and Recommendations for SCMs. A map showing the location of the proposed SCM with inlet and outlet locations is provided below. Growth in the watershed upstream of the proposed SCM is expected but the timeframe and extent of this development is undefined. **(This narrative is NOT sufficient because it does not include the key design considerations to support the feasibility of the SCM at the proposed location, and does not address the expected increased runoff from future upstream growth and development.)**  **Narrative that IS sufficient:** The proposed project will adhere to the NC Stormwater Design Manual Part C: Minimum Design Criteria and Recommendations for Stormwater Control Measures. There are two types of SCMs that are feasible for the proposed project – an infiltration basin or a bioretention cell.  An infiltration basin SCM will meet the NCGA Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(h) definition of a nature-based stormwater solution because it is defined as a “depression that captures, stores and allows stormwater to infiltrate into the soils” per the NC Stormwater Design Manual Part C-1 “Infiltration System” of the Minimum Design Criteria and Recommendations for SCMs. The key design considerations that support the feasibility of using an infiltration basin at the proposed project location include being able to install the basin such that the lowest point of the infiltration system will be at least three feet above the seasonal high water table (SHWT) [MDC 2] and the surface of the soil subgrade has a slope of less than two percent [MDC 3].  A bioretention cell will meet the NCGA definition of a nature-based stormwater solution because “it is designed to temporarily hold and filter stormwater” and “they use many different pollutant removal mechanisms, including infiltration, absorption, adsorption, evapotranspiration, microbial action, plant uptake, sedimentation, and filtration” per the NC Stormwater Design Manual Part C-2 “Bioretention Cell” of the Minimum Design Criteria and Recommendations for SCMs. The key design considerations that support the feasibility of using a bioretention cell at the proposed project location include being able to install the cell such that the lowest point of the bioretention cell will be at least three feet above the seasonal high water table (SHWT) [MDC 1] and the in-situ soil infiltration rate is approximately 3 inches per hour [MDC 4] and because this is the situation, an underdrain system will not be required.  A map showing the location of the infiltration basin SCM with inlet and outlet locations is provided in Figure 1 below. A map showing the location of the bioretention cell SCM with inlet and outlet locations is provided in Figure 2 below.  Growth in the watershed upstream of the proposed SCM is expected. The current percentage of impervious area that will drain to the SCM is 12 percent, and the future percentage of impervious area that will drain to the SCM is estimated to be 22 percent. The proposed SCM will be sized and designed for the expected increase in stormwater runoff due to the increased percent of impervious area that will drain to the SCM, and based on the design calculations, the increased runoff will not cause new or increased flooding or exacerbate flood risks downstream of the proposed SCM, and the increased runoff will not cause new or worsen or exacerbate water quality issues downstream of the proposed SCM. |

* ***OR Line Item 1.A.2*** – Proposed SCMs are Not Nature-Based Stormwater Solutions

*25 points*

If the proposed SCM is not a nature-based stormwater solution, the application will earn points under Line Item 1.A.2. The narrative must include:

* A statement that the project will adhere to the NC Stormwater Design Manual Part C: Minimum Design Criteria and Recommendations for Stormwater Control Measures,
* A list of the potential types of SCMs to be used and the key design considerations that support the feasibility of implementing each type of proposed SCM at the location for which it is proposed,
* A map that shows the location of the proposed SCMs and the proposed inlet and outlet locations,
* If the proposed SCMs will receive runoff from future upstream growth and development, in addition to existing development, state the percentage of impervious area that will be tributary to the SCM for both future development (estimated) and existing development, and
* If the proposed SCMs will receive increased stormwater runoff from future increased storm intensity and/or future growth and development, demonstrate how the increased runoff will be managed so that:

1. The increased runoff will not cause new or increased flooding or exacerbate flood risks downstream of the proposed SCMs, and
2. How the increased runoff will not cause new or worsen or exacerbate water quality issues downstream of the proposed SCMs.

**Line Item 1.B** – Restoration of streams, wetlands, buffers, or estuaries to control stormwater quality

*25 points*

An application can earn points in Line Item 1.B and additional points in the sub-categories in Line Item 1.B.1 and 1.B.2. A project that will restore a stream, wetland, buffer, or estuary from its existing substandard state to a more natural state to control stormwater quality, including vegetated buffers or soft bioengineered stream banks, qualifies for points under this line item. Stream daylighting that removes natural streams from artificial pipes and restores a more natural stream morphology is included. Activities that satisfy compensatory mitigation requirements under NCGS 143-214.11 are not eligible for funding. The narrative must include:

* A statement that the proposed project is not an activity to satisfy any compensatory mitigation requirements and that the applicant will not at any time seek compensatory mitigation credits for the work accomplished under the proposed project,
* A map that shows the location of the proposed streams, wetlands, buffers, or estuaries that will be restored, and
* Photographs that show the current condition of the proposed project location. Photos must be taken no longer than 3 months before the date of application with a date stamp on the photograph. All photographs must be date stamped.

Projects may also qualify for Line Items 1.B.1 and 1.B.2 for additional points.

* ***Line Item 1.B.1*** – Project includes restoration of a first order stream and includes stormwater infiltration SCMs

*Additional 2 points*

If the stream/wetland/buffer/estuary restoration project occurs along a first-order stream and includes stormwater infiltration SCMs, the project qualifies for two additional points. The narrative must include:

* Key design considerations that support the feasibility of implementing each type of proposed stormwater infiltration SCM at the location for which it is proposed, and
* A map that shows the location and name of the first-order stream (if named), the streams/wetlands/ buffers/estuaries that will be restored, and the locations of the stormwater infiltration SCMs.
* ***Line Item 1.B.2*** – Project includes establishment or restoration of riparian buffers to at least 30 feet on both sides of the stream

*Additional 2 points*

If the stream/wetland/buffer/estuary restoration project will restore the riparian buffer to at least 30 feet on both sides of the stream from its existing substandard state to a more natural state, and the applicant states in the narrative that the establishment or restoration of the buffer includes all the actions listed below, the project qualifies for two additional points:

* Establishment of a buffer where one does not exist or restoration of existing vegetation in a buffer meeting the following criteria:

1. Woody vegetation for Zone 1 (30 feet) of the buffer, and
2. Woody or herbaceous vegetation for Zone 2 (Zone 1 plus 20 feet) of the buffer.

* A minimum of 30 feet on each side of the stream must be protected. Note that the maximum buffer width that is eligible for funding is 50 feet on each side of the stream.
* The removal of all stormwater discharges through the buffer that are not associated with natural drainageways, if applicable.

**Line Item 1.C** – More than 50 percent of the construction cost of the project will be used to create, rehabilitate, or replace existing stormwater infrastructure to control stormwater quantity

*25 points*

An application can earn points in Line Item 1.C only if more than 50 percent of the construction cost of the project will be used to create or improve, retrofit, repair, rehabilitate or replace existing stormwater infrastructure to control stormwater quantity.

The repair or replacement of culverts may necessitate the associated repair or upgrade of roads. Funds may be used only for road repairs and upgrades that interact directly with an eligible stormwater infrastructure project[[3]](#footnote-4). Repairing or improving transportation infrastructure is not eligible as a primary project purpose.

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| **Note:** To qualify for Line Item 1.C points, **the applicant must demonstrate one of the following conditions**: (1) the project will reduce flow downstream; or (2) the project will not increase flow downstream; or (3) there will be no downstream impacts as a result of the project. **If the applicant cannot demonstrate one of the above conditions, points will not be awarded for this line item.** |

The narrative must include:

* **A demonstration of one of the following**:

1. The project will reduce flow downstream, or
2. The project will not increase flow downstream, or
3. There will be no downstream impacts as a result of the project, and

* A statement that the primary purpose of the proposed project is not to repair or improve transportation infrastructure, and
* A map that shows the location of the proposed stormwater infrastructure with sufficient labeled landmarks such as roads, streams, political boundaries, etc. to identify the location of the project.

**Line Item 1.D** – Rainwater harvesting and utilization

*25 points*

A rainwater harvesting project involves collecting rainwater from impervious surfaces such as parking lots and rooftops and utilizing the collected rainwater for non-potable purposes such as irrigation. The project may have multiple collection locations. The narrative must include:

* A map that shows the location of the project, the surface(s) and building(s) from which rainwater will be collected, and the location of the rainwater storage infrastructure,
* Describe the surfaces from which the rainwater will be collected,
* Describe how the rainwater will be collected and stored (e.g., collected via rooftop gutters and stored in an underground cistern),
* Describe how the harvested rainwater will be used,
* Document the ultimate fate of the harvested rainwater once it is used for the intended purpose,
* State the name of the entity responsible for ensuring that the rainwater will be used for the intended purpose.

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| **Note:** To qualify for points in Line Item 1.D, the harvested rainwater must be utilized and cannot be discharged into the waters of the state after use. |

**Category 2 – Project Benefits**

Applications earn Project Benefits points only when the applicant identifies a **direct connection** between the project and the expected benefit.

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| **Note:** For Category 2 – Project Benefits, the maximum number of points that a project can earn is capped at 30 points, even if the narrative documents Project Benefit Line Items that sum to more than 30 points. |

**Line Item 2.A** – Water quality improvement

An application can earn points in Line Item 2.A for only one of the following sub-categories (Line Item 2.A.1, 2.A.2, 2.A.3, 2.A.4, or 2.A.5):

* ***Line Item 2.A.1*** – Project directly benefits subwatersheds that are impaired

*15 points*

A project qualifies for points under this line item only when the applicant identifies a **direct connection** between the cause(s) of the impairment and how the proposed project will improve water quality by addressing the cause(s). The impaired subwatershed must be included in the most recent final version of the Integrated Report that is published on the [NC DEQ Division of Water Resources website](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/water-planning/modeling-assessment/water-quality-data-assessment). The narrative must include:

* River basin name, stream name, and the Assessment Unit,
* Identification of the impairment, a reference for the impairment, and how the proposed project will directly improve water quality by addressing the cause(s) of the impairment, and
* A map that:

1. Places an “X” on the specific project location and shows the highlighted impaired segment on the same map,
2. Includes arrows to depict the path of stormwater flow from the project location to the impaired segment,
3. Shows the boundaries of other watersheds that are downstream of the project location and drain into the same impaired segment; the purpose of showing these watersheds is to identify stormwater from downstream watersheds that will transport pollutants to the impaired segment and will reduce or eliminate potential water quality benefits of the proposed project, and
4. Has sufficient labeled landmarks such as roads, streams, political boundaries, etc. to identify the location of the project.

* ***OR Line Item 2.A.2*** – Project directly benefits specific classified waters

*10 points*

A project qualifies for points under this line item only when the applicant identifies a **direct connection** between what the proposed project will accomplish and the improvement of water quality in specific classified waters. The narrative must include:

* River basin name, stream name, the Assessment Unit, and the stream classification,
* Identify a direct connection between the proposed project and how it will improve water quality in the specific classified waters, and
* A map that:

1. Places an “X” on the specific project location and shows the highlighted specific classified waters on the same map,
2. Includes arrows to depict the path of stormwater flow from the project location to the specific classified waters,
3. Shows the boundaries of other watersheds that are downstream of the project location and drain into the same specific classified waters; the purpose of showing these watersheds is to identify stormwater from downstream watersheds that will transport pollutants to the specific classified waters and will reduce or eliminate potential water quality benefits of the proposed project, and
4. Has sufficient labeled landmarks such as roads, streams, political boundaries, etc. to identify the location of the project.

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| **Notes:**   1. Specific classified waters are identified as HQW, ORW, Tr, SA, UWL, PNA, AFSA, SAV, WS-I, WS-II, WS-III\*, and WS-IV\*. 2. \* To qualify for points related to the classifications of WS-III or WS-IV, the project area (s) must be covered by an approved Source Water Protection Plan. The narrative must include a letter from the NC DEQ Division of Water Resources Public Water Supply Section confirming that the study area(s) is covered by an approved Source Water Protection Plan. |

Additional resources for Line Items 2.A.1 and 2.A.2 are available as follows:

* ***Resource #1:*** The Integrated Report may be found at this website: <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/planning/modeling-assessment/water-quality-data-assessment/integrated-report-files>
* ***Resource #2:*** Basinwide Assessment Reports may also be helpful in describing the impairment issues and how the project will directly address the impairment; these reports may be found at <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/planning/basin-planning>. If used, please cite the report name, date, and page number.
* ***Resource #3:*** GIS layers are available at <http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/>. In addition, the DWR’s Planning Section has GIS layers for impaired streams at <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/planning/basin-planning/maps>. This stream layer includes the stream name and impairment category (whether impaired or not). See the figure below.
* ***Resource #4:***  To determine the watershed classification, the DWR Planning Section provides classification lists and GIS layers to locate and document the location of the specific classified waters and their respective classifications at <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/planning/basin-planning/maps>

Graphical user interface

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

* ***OR Line Item 2.A.3*** – Achieves at least 35% reduction in both Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus in Nutrient Sensitive Waters

*10 points*

A project qualifies for points under this line item if the project will improve water quality in nutrient sensitive waters. A project qualifies for points under this line item only if applicant demonstrates that the project will achieve at least 35% total nitrogen reduction and at least 35% total phosphorus reduction based on the [NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit](https://deq.nc.gov/media/11819/download) Document requirements for regulatory credits for SCM projects, or based on documentation developed by an independent entity for non-SCM projects. The narrative must include:

* River basin name, stream name, and the Assessment Unit,
* For a SCM project, a statement that the project will adhere to the NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit Document requirements for regulatory credits,
* For a non-SCM project, documentation developed by an independent entity that demonstrates that the proposed project will achieve the required TN and TP reduction,
* A statement of the percentage reductions that will be achieved,
* If implementing an item that the NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit Document lists for “possible” credits, include a letter from the NCDEQ Stormwater Program that indicates the criteria needed to make the credits “actual”, and
* If, due to existing site limitations only, SCMs are unable to meet the design requirements listed in the NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit Document, include a letter from the NCDEQ Stormwater Program that indicates a reasonable expected percentage pollutant reduction.
* ***OR Line Item 2.A.4*** – Achieves at least 35% reduction in both Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus in Non-Nutrient Sensitive Waters

*5 points*

A project qualifies for points under this line item if the project will improve water quality in non-nutrient sensitive waters. The proposed SCMs must achieve at least 35% total nitrogen reduction and at least 35% total phosphorus reduction based on the NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit Document requirements for regulatory credits for SCM projects, or based on documentation developed by an independent entity for non-SCM projects. The narrative must include:

* River basin name, stream name, and the Assessment Unit,
* For a SCM project, a statement that the project will adhere to the NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit Document requirements for regulatory credits,
* For a non-SCM project, documentation developed by an independent entity that demonstrates that the proposed project will achieve the required TN and TP reduction,
* A statement of the percentage reductions that will be achieved,
* If implementing an item that the NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit Document lists for “possible” credits, include a letter from the NCDEQ Stormwater Program that indicates the criteria needed to make the credits “actual”, and
* If, due to existing site limitations only, SCMs are unable to meet the design requirements listed in the NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit Document, include a letter from the NCDEQ Stormwater Program that indicates a reasonable expected percentage pollutant reduction.
* ***OR Line Item 2.A.5*** – Directly benefits a NC Natural Heritage Program natural area

*3 points*

A project qualifies for points under this line item only when the applicant identifies a **direct connection** between what the proposed project will accomplish and the improvement of water quality in a NC State Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) natural area that is rated as “General” or above. The narrative must include:

* Describe the stormwater quality issue(s) occurring in the NCNHP natural area that is rated as “General” or above as shown on the [NCNHP natural areas map](https://ncnhde.natureserve.org/content/map),
* Identify a direct connection between the proposed project and how it will improve water quality issue(s) in the NCNHP natural area,
* Screenshots/printouts of the [NCNHP natural area](https://ncnhde.natureserve.org/content/map) as displayed on the map found at the link, and
* On the screenshot/printout, identify the project location with sufficient labeled landmarks such as roads, streams, political boundaries, etc. to identify the location of the project.

**Line Item 2.B** – Flood reduction

An application can earn points in Line Item 2.B for only one of the following sub-categories (Line Item 2.B.1, 2.B.2, or 2.B.3).

The repair or replacement of culverts or other road-stream crossing infrastructure is eligible to the extent that the purpose of the project is to control stormwater quantity. The repair or replacement of culverts may necessitate the repair or upgrade of roads. Funds may be used only for road repairs and upgrades that interact directly with an eligible stormwater infrastructure project[[4]](#footnote-5). If the primary purpose of the proposed project is to repair or improve transportation infrastructure to reduce flooding, points will not be awarded for Line Item 2.B.

* ***Line Item 2.B.1*** – Increases public safety by improving the applicant’s ability to access and operate critical infrastructure during flood events including NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Evacuation Routes

*15 points*

The application can earn points in this sub-category if it will specifically help the applicant access and operate critical infrastructure during flood events. Examples of critical infrastructure include drinking water treatment plants, wastewater treatment plants, schools, hospitals, and emergency response facilities such as fire stations, that, if not able to be accessed, would present a threat to public safety. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of critical infrastructure. The application can earn points in this sub-category if there is a documented NCDOT-designated evacuation route that is closed or non-accessible during flooding events. The narrative must include:

* Describe the infrastructure and why the applicant considers it to qualify as critical infrastructure,
* Describe how the proposed project will directly improve the applicant’s ability to access and operate the critical infrastructure during flood events, and
* A map that shows the location and extent of flooding around the critical infrastructure and demonstrates that there is no access to the critical infrastructure by any other route during flooding, or
* A map that shows the location and extent of flooding of the NCDOT Evacuation Route that is closed or non-accessible during flooding events. The Evacuation Route must be as identified on the NC DOT website at this location: [NCDOT: Evacuation Routes](https://www.ncdot.gov/travel-maps/maps/Pages/evacuation-routes.aspx).
* ***OR Line Item 2.B.2*** – Reduces structural flooding in habitable structures or improves ability to access habitable structures during a flood event

*8 points*

Habitable structures are those that are in good repair and are fit to be occupied by humans. To earn points int this sub-category, the applicant must provide evidence that structural flooding occurs in a crawl space, finished basement, or finished first floor. Yard flooding does not quality for points under this line item. The narrative must include:

* A map that shows the location and extent of the flooding around each qualifying habitable structure,
* A statement of the nature of the flooding in the habitable structures as crawl space, finished basement or finished first floor,
* A statement of the total number of habitable structures in which structural flooding will be reduced by this project, and
* Describe how the proposed project will reduce structural flooding in habitable structures.
* ***OR Line Item 2.B.3*** – Reduces street flooding

*5 points*

To earn points in this sub-category, the applicant must provide evidence that street flooding occurs. The narrative must include:

* A map that shows the location and extent of the street flooding that will be addressed by this project, and
* Describe how the proposed project will reduce the street flooding.

**Line Item 2.C** – By working together, two or more units of local government improve stormwater quality and/or address stormwater quantity issues through collaborative efforts

*10 points*

Recognizing that stormwater issues often cross jurisdictional boundaries, two or more units of local government may agree to collaborate on a proposed project. To qualify for points under this line item, **the narrative must describe why the collaboration is necessary to accomplish the proposed project**.

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| **Notes:**   1. To be considered for a total grant limit of $7.5 million instead of $5 million, the documentation listed below must be provided with the application. 2. A resolution that only supports the proposed project does not meet the intent of this Line Item. |

The narrative must include:

* A resolution or board meeting minutes from each of the collaborating local government unit(s) that will participate in the collaborative effort. The resolution or board meeting minutes must include the following items to be complete documentation for this Line Item:
* Acknowledge that the applicant has applied for this construction funding,
* State specific activities that the unit of local government will undertake,
* State why the activities are necessary to accomplish the proposed project, and
* Commit the unit of local government to participate in the proposed project by performing the activities listed above collaboratively with the other unit(s) of local government.
* A map that shows the project location and the line of demarcation between the jurisdictions participating in the proposed project,
* Describe the goals and outcomes of the proposed collaborative stormwater project, and the expected benefit to one or more of the jurisdictions participating in the proposed project,
* Describe clearly why it is necessary for each unit of local government to participate in the proposed project in order to meet the goals of the proposed project,
* Describe any previous collaboration between or among the units of local government that will participate in the proposed project, the reasons for the previous collaboration(s), and the achievements and benefits of the collaboration(s) for all the entities that were involved, and
* Describe the status of any previous stormwater quality or quantity work directly related to the proposed project by any of the units of local government that will participate in the proposed project.

**Line Item 2.D** – Includes an innovative stormwater project to address stormwater quality or stormwater quantity

*5 points*

To qualify for points in Line Item 2.D, the applicant must specifically describe how the project will use new or different practices in stormwater quality or quantity or.

* For an innovative project to address stormwater quality, the narrative must include:
* Documentation that establishes the proposed project as a project described in the NC DEQ Stormwater Design Manual section entitled [*“Areas of Research Needed”*](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/energy-mineral-and-land-resources/stormwater/stormwater-program/stormwater-design-manual) OR a clear description of the new or different practices in stormwater quality management proposed to be used in the project and the reason that the practices should be considered innovative,
* Describe how the proposed project will advance new or different practices in stormwater quality management regionally or statewide, and
* Describe how the applicant will disseminate findings and results.
* For an innovative project to address stormwater quantity, the narrative must include:
* Describe the new or different practices in stormwater quantity management proposed to be used in the project and the reason that the practices should be considered innovative,
* Describe how the proposed project will advance new or different practices in stormwater quantity management regionally or statewide, and
* Describe how the applicant will disseminate findings and results.

**Line Item 2.E** – Includes a public education component such as signage describing the function of the stormwater quality or quantity infrastructure

*1 point*

To quality for points under this line item, the narrative must include a commitment to provide a public education feature such as signage that describes the function of the proposed project, to be located at the site of the project. The signage must acknowledge the source of the project funds as LASII funds and must include information to help educate the public about the stormwater quality and/or stormwater quantity issue that the proposed project will resolve.

**Category 3 – System Management**

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| **Note:** For Category 3 – System Management, the maximum number of points that a project can earn is capped at 10 points, even if the narrative documents System Management Line Items that sum to more than 10 points. |

**Line Item 3.A** – Local planning

An application can earn points in Line Item 3.A for only one of the following sub-categories (Line Item 3.A.1, 3.A.2, 3.A.3, or 3.A.4).

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| **Notes:**   1. A stormwater management plan or program that only meets the requirements of the applicant’s MS4 Permit or contains only the information that would be required by a MS4 Permit does not meet the requirements for points for Line Item 3.A. 2. For Line Items 3.A.1 and 3.A.2, the allowable types of stormwater-related Plans are: a local flood resiliency plan, watershed plan, stormwater management plan, stream restoration plan, or estuary restoration plan [the Plan]. 3. For Line Items 3.A.3 and 3.A.4, the Stormwater Management Program must include all stormwater infrastructure that is located within the applicant’s stormwater system. A Stormwater Management Program that includes only stormwater infrastructure located on property owned by the applicant does not meet the requirements for points for these Line Items. 4. If approved for funding, the applicant will receive a timeline by which it must submit the stormwater-related Plan or Stormwater Management Program prior to the completion of this project. |

* ***Line Item 3.A.1*** – Applicant has adopted or will adopt per Project Resolution a stormwater-related Plan by completion of this project, and the proposed project is or will be identified in the Plan

*5 points*

To qualify for points under this Line Item, the applicant must document that the adopted Plan does or will meet each of the following criteria:

1. The applicant has identified a specific issue and the solution to address the issue that is associated with flood resiliency, a watershed, stormwater management, stream restoration or estuary restoration,
2. The referenced Plan does or will describe the identified specific issue and the solution, and
3. The identified solution is or will be the construction project proposed in this application.

* For an applicant that has an adopted Plan, the narrative must include:
* A resolution or board meeting minutes which shows a motion to approve and adopt the local flood resiliency plan, watershed plan, stormwater management plan, stream restoration plan, or estuary restoration plan, OR an adopted ordinance on the applicant’s website that demonstrates that the Plan was approved through adoption of the ordinance,
* Demonstrate how the adopted Plan supports the need for the proposed project and
* Include the adopted Plan as a supporting document and state the page number(s) of the adopted Plan on which the proposed project is specifically identified and described.
* For an applicant that will adopt the Plan per Project Resolution, the applicant must:
* State **within** the required [Resolution by Governing Bodies for Funding](https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources) that it will adopt a local flood resiliency plan, watershed plan, stormwater management plan, stream restoration plan, or estuary restoration plan [specify which Plan] by completion of this project and that the proposed project will be identified in the Plan, and
* Describe how the Plan to be adopted will support the need for the proposed project.
* ***OR Line Item 3.A.2*** – Applicant will develop a stormwater-related Plan by completion of this project and the proposed project will be identified in the Plan

*2 points*

To qualify for points under this Line Item, the narrative must include:

* A statement that the applicant will develop one of the following Plans [specify which Plan]: local flood resiliency plan, watershed plan, stormwater management plan, stream restoration plan, or estuary restoration plan (Plan) by completion of this project and that the proposed project will be identified in the Plan, and
* Describe the status of the development of the Plan.
* ***OR Line Item 3.A.3*** – Applicant has adopted or will adopt per Project Resolution a Stormwater Management Program by completion of this project

*5 points*

To qualify for points under this line item, the applicant must document that its Stormwater Management Program does or will include the following components for all stormwater infrastructure that is located within the applicant’s stormwater system:

1. Dedicated stormwater management staff of at least 0.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) that is responsible for managing the Stormwater Program or an on-going contract with a consultant for at least 0.5 FTEs that is responsible for managing the applicant’s overall Stormwater Program (not managing individual projects),
2. An asset map that shows the location and type of stormwater infrastructure assets that are located within the applicant’s stormwater system including stormwater piping, stormwater inlets, stormwater control measures, stormwater pump stations, culverts, etc.,
3. An asset inventory that identifies and describes each stormwater infrastructure asset identified on the map (the inventory can either be shown on the map or can be a separate inventory document), and
4. An asset assessment with notes on condition of stormwater infrastructure identified on the map.

* For an applicant that has an adopted Stormwater Management Program, the narrative must include:
* A resolution or board meeting minutes which shows a motion to approve and adopt the Stormwater Management Program, OR an adopted ordinance on the applicant’s website that demonstrates that the Stormwater Management Program was approved through adoption of the ordinance,
* A statement of when the Stormwater Management Program began operation, and
* A link to information about the Stormwater Management Program on the applicant’s website.
* For an applicant that will adopt a Stormwater Management Program per Project Resolution, the applicant must:
* State **within** the required [Resolution by Governing Bodies for Funding](https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources) that it will adopt a Stormwater Management Program by completion of this project.
* ***OR Line Item 3.A.4*** –Applicant will develop a Stormwater Management Program(or Utility) by completion of this proposed project

*2 points*

To qualify for points under this line item, the applicant must document that its Stormwater Management Program will include all of the components required in Line Item 3.A.3 above. The narrative must include:

* A statement that the applicant will develop a Stormwater Management Program by completion of this project, and
* Documentation that the Stormwater Management Program will include all of the components that are required as listed above in Line Item 3.A.3.a through 3.A.3.d, and
* Describe the status of the development of the Program.

**Line Item 3.B** – Applicant has implemented an Operation and Maintenance Plan for its stormwater infrastructure system

*3 points*

To earn points under this line item, the applicant must have an Operation and Maintenance Plan for its entire system of stormwater infrastructure, and the Plan must be implemented and in active use as of the date of application. The narrative must include:

* Demonstrate that the Operation and Maintenance Plan addresses each of the following:

1. Inspection requirements for entire stormwater infrastructure system components,
2. Frequency of inspections with requirements for additional inspections following major storm events,
3. Timeline for scheduling and completing repairs that are needed to return stormwater infrastructure to its full function,
4. Describe the basic maintenance requirements and activities such as inlet/outlet cleaning, sediment and debris removal, weeding, mulching, trimming of shrubs and trees, and
5. Schedules for routine and emergency maintenance.

* Identification of the parties directly responsible for all stormwater system maintenance, including job titles for staff members and/or consultants or contractors,
* An estimate of annual expenditures for stormwater system infrastructure operation and maintenance, and
* A link to the Operation and Maintenance Plan on the applicant’s website.

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| **Notes:**   1. Submittal of the Operation and Maintenance plan is intended only for the purpose of determining if the applicant qualifies for points under Line Item 3.B, and in no way absolves the applicant of responsibility for regulatory compliance. 2. An Operation and Maintenance Plan that only meets the requirements of the applicant’s MS4 Permit or contains only the information that would be required by a MS4 Permit does not meet the requirements for points for this Line Item. 3. An Operation and Maintenance Plan that includes only stormwater infrastructure located on property owned by the applicant does not meet the requirements for points for this Line Item. |

**Line Item 3.C** – Applicant has a current Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that spans at least five (5) years and proposed project is identified in the CIP

*2 points*

To earn points under this line item, the applicant must have a Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) adopted within two (2) years of the application date, spanning at least five (5) years from the date of adoption, including cost estimates for projects scheduled in the first three (3) years, and that clearly identifies the project proposed for funding within the adopted plan. The narrative must include:

* A resolution or board meeting minutes which shows a motion to approve and adopt the Stormwater CIP within two (2) years of the application date, as follows:
  + A certified true and correct copy of draft meeting minutes is acceptable for meetings held within 45 days of the application deadline, OR an adopted ordinance on the applicant’s website that demonstrates that the CIP was approved through adoption of the ordinance, OR an adopted budget that is provided by a link to the official CIP on the applicant’s website,
  + If a Stormwater CIP has been amended, the resolution or meeting minutes provided must show that the entire Stormwater CIP, as revised, has been adopted.
* A statement of the years covered by the Stormwater CIP, which must extend at least five (5) years from the most recent adoption date,
* A description sufficient to show that the project described in the Stormwater CIP is unambiguously the same project seeking funding,
* The **officially adopted** Stormwater CIP priority list with a reasonable forecast of anticipated projects meeting the following requirements:

1. The proposed project must be highlighted on the priority list and the page number on which to locate the proposed project must be provided,
2. For the first three (3) years the priority list must contain projects and their costs by year,
3. After the first three (3) years, the priority list must contain both projects and their costs but does not need to specify the year or priority of those projects, and

* If the proposed project has moved significantly ahead of the projected date in the Stormwater CIP, explain why the project has been moved ahead of the other projects listed in the Stormwater CIP and the date on which the project was moved ahead of other projects.

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| **Notes:**   1. Submittal of the Stormwater CIP is intended only for the purpose of determining if the applicant qualifies for points under Line Item 3.C, and in no way absolves the applicant of responsibility for regulatory compliance. 2. To qualify for these points, the project proposed for funding must be identified in the adopted Stormwater CIP. 3. A certification or statement that a CIP was adopted is not sufficient documentation to earn points under this Line Item. 4. A listing of CIP projects within the narrative is not sufficient documentation to earn points under this Line Item. **The officially adopted CIP must be provided.** |

**Line Item 3.D** – Applicant has an adopted Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund or provides the Resolution to Develop and Implement a Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund with its application

*5 points*

* For an applicant that has an adopted Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund, the narrative must include:
* A resolution or board meeting minutes which shows a motion to approve and adopt the Stormwater Utility and establish a Stormwater Enterprise Fund, OR an adopted ordinance that is provided by a link to the Stormwater Utility and Stormwater Enterprise Fund on the applicant’s website, and demonstrates the Utility and Enterprise Fund were approved through adoption of the ordinance,
* A statement of when the Stormwater Utility and the Stormwater Enterprise Fund began operation and when the first stormwater fees were collected,
* An official record, such as pages from the most recent audit, of the amount of revenue collected in the Stormwater Enterprise Fund during the past 12 months, and
* An official record, such as pages from the most recent audit, of the amount of funds expended from the Stormwater Enterprise Fund in the past 12 months, and
* A link to information about the stormwater rates and fees on the applicant’s website or include the officially published stormwater rates and fees as a supporting document.
* For an applicant that provides the Resolution to Develop and Implement a Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund with its application, the applicant must:
* Submit an executed copy of the “[Resolution to Develop and Implement a New Stormwater Utility with Stormwater Enterprise Fund](https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources)” (contained within the Fall 2023 Resolutions by Governing Bodies document) with the Certification by Recording Officer,
* State that it understands that the above required resolution must be submitted in addition to the “[Fall 2023 Resolutions by Governing Bodies for Funding](https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources)” which is required for all applications, and
* Describe the status of the development of the stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund, the anticipated timeline for implementation of the stormwater utility with the stormwater enterprise fund, and an estimate of when the first stormwater fees will be collected.

**Line Item 3.E** – The type of project proposed has been identified through a local or regional planning process that included a vulnerability assessment for future conditions and long-term resiliency strategies

*3 points*

To qualify for points under this line item, the proposed project must have been identified through a local or regional resilience planning process for future conditions that included a vulnerability assessment and long-term strategies for addressing future flooding, sea level rise, or other environmental changes. The narrative must include:

* A resolution or board meeting minutes which shows a motion by the governing board of the applicant to approve and adopt the plan, OR an adopted ordinance on the applicant’s website that demonstrates that the plan was approved through adoption of the ordinance,
* Name of the local or regional resilience plan, the organization that produced the plan, and date that the plan was finalized,
* List of organizations and/or citizens that participated in the plan development,
* Timeframe addressed by the plan, which must extend at least five (5) years from the date that the plan was finalized,
* Link to the plan on that organization’s website, or submit the full plan with the following items identified by page number of the plan:
  + Pages of the local or regional resilience plan with the portions highlighted that demonstrate that the proposed project is the same type of project identified as needed in the plan,
  + Concise summary of the future conditions that were utilized to complete the vulnerability assessment with reference to the page(s) of the plan where described, and
  + Concise summary of the long-term strategies for addressing future flooding, sea level rise, or other environmental changes, with reference to the page(s) of the plan where described.

**Category 4 – Affordability**

Category 4 provides points related to affordability.

**Line Item 4.A** – Population

An application can earn points in Line Item 4.A for only one of the following sub-categories (Line Item 4.A.1 or 4.A.2):

* ***Line Item 4.A.1*** – The population of the applicant’s jurisdiction is less than 10,000

*3 points*

* ***OR Line Item 4.A.2*** – The population of the applicant’s jurisdiction is greater than or equal to 10,000 but less than 20,000

*2 points*

**Line Item 4.B** – Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators / Disadvantaged Areas

*4, 6, 8, 10 or 12 points*

An application can earn points in Line Item 4.B for only one of the following sub-categories (Line Item 4.B.1, 4.B.2, 4.B.3, 4.B.4, 4.B.5 or 4.B.6) based on either the LGU economic indicators or providing benefits to disadvantaged areas.

* ***Line Item 4.B.1*** – 1 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 4 points
* ***OR Line Item 4.B.2*** – 2 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 6 points
* ***OR Line Item 4.B.3*** – 3 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 8 points
* ***OR Line Item 4.B.***4 – 4 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 10 points
* ***OR Line Item 4.B.5*** – 5 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 12 points

The Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators that are used for Line Items 4.B.1 through 4.B.5 demonstrate whether an applicant is faring better or worse in terms of these indicators than the state median. The five LGU Indicators that are used for this determination are as follows:

1. Percent population change
2. Poverty rate
3. Median household income
4. Unemployment
5. Property valuation per capita

To assist in determining whether LGU indicators are better or worse than the state benchmarks, the Division has developed two tables (one for places and one for counties, both available on the [Division application webpage](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources#additional-resources)) to use to provide the information needed for Line Items 4.B.1 through 4.B.5. **These tables must be used to provide information for population change, poverty rate, median household income, and unemployment.**

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| **Note:** If the applicant is claiming points for Line Item 2.C (By working together, two or more units of local government improve stormwater quality and/or address stormwater quantity issues through collaborative efforts), use the LGU indicators for the most distressed of the municipalities or counties participating in the collaborative effort. |

To qualify for points under Line Items 4.B.1, 4.B.2, 4.B.3, 4.B.4 or 4.B.5, the narrative must include the following table with the information entered by the applicant in the last column:

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| **Local Government Unit Indicator** |  | **State Benchmarks for Fall 2023 Applications** | **Applicant to Enter Value of Local Government Unit Indicators [[5]](#footnote-6),[[6]](#footnote-7),[[7]](#footnote-8)** |
| 1. Population Change | **< =** | 3.13% |  |
| 1. Poverty Rate | **> =** | 13.7% |  |
| 1. Median Household Income | **< =** | $60,516 |  |
| 1. Unemployment Rate | **> =** | 4.9% |  |
| 1. Per Capita Appraised Value of Property | **< =** | $133,264 |  |

Some situations may occur in which alternate data may be utilized, as listed below:

1. *LGU Indicator No. 1 – Population Change*
2. Some situations may exist in which the applicant determines that the American Community Survey (ACS) data are not accurate. If this is the case, data from the NC Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) may be used in lieu of the ACS data.[[8]](#footnote-9) When OSBM data are used, provide as supporting documentation the reason for using the OSBM data and the data page with the applicant highlighted.
3. Some cases may exist in which a resident institution such as a prison, juvenile hall, or nursing home facility may open and impact the population during the five-year period that is evaluated for percent population change. If such a case exists, the institutional population may be deducted from the most recent population before the calculation for percent change in population is made. Provide supporting documentation that shows the facility name, the population of the institution, and the year the facility opened.

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| **Example for Line Item 4.B using Alternate Data for Percent Population Change**  In 2022, the Town of Klondike opened a juvenile detention facility that houses 400 residents. According to the ACS data, the Town in 2019 had a population of 16,500 residents but in 2022 had a population of 17,400 residents, which resulted in a population change of 5.45%, which put the Town at better than the state benchmark for this LGU indicator. However, not including the resident population of the detention facility resulted in a population change of 500 people (equaling a population change of 3.03%), which put the Town at worse than the state benchmark for this LGU Indicator. To receive credit, the Town provided supporting documentation that showed the detention facility resident population when the facility opened and that the facility opened in 2022. |

1. *LGU Indicator No. 5 – Per Capita Appraised Value of Property*

In many cases, utilize the total taxable property value reported in the most current audit for the LGU. Use the total taxable property value and divide it by the population of the LGU found on the Division’s data sheets referenced above to calculate property valuation per capita.

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| **Note:** If the applicant does not have an audit that is current and on file with the NC Department of State Treasurer Local Government Commission (LGC), then the applicant will not receive credit for the property valuation per capita LGU indicator. In its analysis, Division staff will count that particular parameter as better than the state benchmark. |

If the service area is outside of a municipality, then three options exist:

1. The county property valuation per capita figure may be used.
2. If the jurisdiction is in a defined area such as a Census Designated Place (CDP), the applicant may utilize tax maps to determine the total taxable property value within the defined area. That result would then be divided by the population in the CDP. As supporting documentation, provide a map that shows the boundaries of the CDP and the applicant’s jurisdiction. Additionally, provide a copy of the spreadsheet used to calculate the CDP’s total taxable property value and property valuation per capita. This may be supplied in the application as a scanned document.
3. For a jurisdiction that is not in a defined CDP, the applicant may utilize tax maps to determine the total taxable property value of the area. Estimate the population of the area by determining the total number of houses and using the persons per household figure for the applicant’s county. This information may be found in the [ACS data available online](https://data.census.gov/cedsci/). Locate the table under the topic of “Family and Living Arrangements”; Persons per Household is listed on the second row under that topic. Supply as part of the documentation a map showing the total number of houses in the jurisdiction, a spreadsheet of the total taxable property value calculation, the persons per household for the county from the ACS, and the calculation of the jurisdiction population as well as property valuation per capita.

* ***OR Line Item 4.B.6*** – 50 percent or more of the total project cost will benefit disadvantaged areas

*10 points*

To qualify for points under Line Item 4.B.6, the applicant must demonstrate that 50 percent or more of the project costs – as delineated in the Project Budget – will be used to directly benefit disadvantaged areas.

Disadvantaged areas are subsections or pockets of a City’s or County’s jurisdiction, not the entire City or County. For instance, disadvantaged areas may be census block groups that meet qualifying characteristics.

The targeted project area will be determined a “disadvantaged area” based on factors that shall include:

* Median household income, poverty rates, per capita appraised property values of property, and/or unemployment rates of the targeted project area.
* Additional factors such as but not limited to demographic, historical, cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic stressors, or cost-of-living stressors.

Use of federal or state-generated maps to demonstrate that a targeted project area is disadvantaged is encouraged. For instance, using screenshots or printouts of NC DEQ’s [Community Mapping System](https://deq.nc.gov/outreach-education/environmental-justice/deq-north-carolina-community-mapping-system), labeling and identifying on the map the targeted project area overlapping “Potentially Underserved Block Groups” and/or “Tribal Boundaries” that appear on the online map as shaded areas (these are considered disadvantaged areas). Applicants may also use the [federal Justice40 Initiative maps](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/) to demonstrate that a targeted project area is disadvantaged.

To document that the direct beneficiaries of the project are disadvantaged, the narrative must provide:

* A project map clearly identifying the disadvantaged area and the location of the proposed project,
* Written justification that the targeted project area is disadvantaged using the factors above. When available, targeted project area data (e.g., median household income in the targeted area’s census block group) should be compared to state benchmark values established in Line Item 4.B. Supporting documentation must include maps or other existing sources.

Use of NC DEQ’s Community Mapping System and other similar federal or state-generated maps is encouraged. For example, documentation can include:

* Screenshots or printouts of NC DEQ’s [Community Mapping System](https://deq.nc.gov/outreach-education/environmental-justice/deq-north-carolina-community-mapping-system) and identify on the map the targeted project area overlapping “Potentially Underserved Block Groups 2019” and/or “Tribal Boundaries” that appear on the online map as shaded areas (these are considered disadvantaged, underserved areas.
* Use of the Justice40 Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool: the [Justice40 Initiative – Environmental Justice – The White House](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/) evaluates burden threshold and the associated socioeconomic thresholds. Data provided in the Tool may provide additional factors to support a project area is disadvantaged.
* Describe the stormwater quality issue and/or the stormwater quantity issue that is occurring within the disadvantaged area, based on historic or projected precipitation (if not addressed **under Line Item 4.B.6**, points will not be awarded),
* Describe how the proposed project will directly improve the water quality issue within the disadvantaged area or how the proposed project will directly reduce the severity and frequency of flooding that occurs within the disadvantaged area, based on historic or projected precipitation (if not addressed **under Line Item 4.B.6**, points will not be awarded), and
* If the proposed project will address both stormwater quality and stormwater quantity issues, a separate narrative must be provided for each issue, and separate descriptions must be provided for each issue (if not addressed **under Line Item 4.B.6**, points will not be awarded).

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| **Notes:**   1. For Line Item 4.B.6, the proposed project is not required to be located *within* a disadvantaged area, but the project *must result in* water quality improvements within the disadvantaged area and/or reduce water quantity impacts within the disadvantaged area. 2. The Project Budget provided as part of the application must list costs for portions of the project that will benefit disadvantaged areas and these costs must be labeled and shown separately. If these costs are not labeled and shown separately, or do not demonstrate that 50 percent or more of the total project cost will be used to benefit disadvantaged areas, the applicant will not be awarded points for Line Item 4.B.6. |

**PART D. Narrative and Documentation Required to Support Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System Points**

**Stormwater Planning Study Application Submittal Requirements**

Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(e) provides for Planning grants from the Local Assistance for Stormwater Infrastructure Investments fund as follows: Planning grants. – A planning grant is available for research or investigative studies, alternatives analyses, the preparation of engineering concept plans or engineering designs, and similar activities 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 Department shall allow nature-based solutions where feasible and possible.

**If Part D – Narrative and Documentation Required to Support Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System Points is not provided, the application is incomplete and ineligible for consideration.**

**The Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System narrative along with supporting documentation as required by this Guidance Document must be submitted with the funding application.** **The narrative for a stormwater planning study must begin with:**

1. **A statement of the top three (3) stormwater-related challenges facing the applicant in the next five (5) years, and**
2. **A detailed description of the proposed planning study, the goals that the study is intended to meet, a concise scope of work for the proposed study, and the deliverables that are expected.**

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| **Note:** **If Items 1 and 2 listed above are not part of the Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System narrative, the application is incomplete and ineligible for consideration.** |

1. **A completed Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System score sheet must be submitted with the funding application**. To claim points for a particular line item, mark “X” on the score sheet.
2. **A narrative and supporting documentation that supports the points claimed in the Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System is a required part of the application**. The three categories below correspond to the categories in the Priority Rating System score sheet. The Planning Priority Rating System does not provide points for Project Purpose. **Address every line item. If a line item is not applicable, include the line item and place “Not Applicable” next to it.**

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| Category 1 | Project Benefits |
| Category 2 | System Management |
| Category 3 | Affordability |

* The narrative must be consistent with information provided in the Division of Water Infrastructure Application for Funding (DWI Application) and other supporting information.
* The narrative must be complete to provide for accurate scoring and concise enough that critical information is not lost in unnecessary text. Text should only provide information that supports the award of points in the Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System (i.e., do not describe other benefits that are not included in the Priority Rating System).
* **The narrative must address every bullet item within a Line Item** to be a complete narrative for that Line Item. If every bullet item is not addressed, priority points will not be awarded for the associated Line Item.
* If there are no applicable points in any given category, state that there are no applicable points under that category.
* Where the narrative references supporting documentation, the applicant must provide the file name and specific page number of the supporting documentation in which to find the information that supports the applicant’s claim for priority points for that line item. **If the file name and page number of the supporting documentation is not specifically identified within the narrative, priority points will not be awarded for the associated line item.**

1. **Maps are required for some line items as noted in the individual line items below.** The applicant may provide maps to clarify and support the narrative for line items for which maps are not required. Maps must include sufficient labels of geographical references and be at a readable scale. Include maps in the supporting documentation file.

**Examples of Eligible Uses for Stormwater Planning Studies**

The Stormwater Planning Priority Rating System does not provide points for Project Purpose. While not intended to be an exhaustive list, the following are examples of eligible uses of Stormwater Planning study funds:

1. Stormwater Asset Inventory **and** Asset Conditions Assessment: The scope of work requires a complete stormwater asset inventory **and** a complete stormwater asset condition assessment. **Preparing only an asset inventory, or only an asset condition assessment, or only stormwater asset mapping is not eligible for funding.**
2. Stormwater rate or fee development
3. Planning for a stormwater utility or the development and implementation of a stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund. Some of the activities that may be necessary are listed below:
4. Establish a citizen stakeholder group to ensure that potentially affected citizens participate in the development and implementation process. Citizen stakeholder groups often include residential property owners, businesses, non-profit institutions, developers, and environmental groups.
5. Engage the services of an outside entity or entities to guide elected officials and the citizen stakeholder group through the utility planning and development process.
6. Determine types of stormwater services to be provided including whether the stormwater utility will expend funds on privately owned property.
7. Determine the level of service (LOS) to be provided. The LOS to be provided is usually a measure of the system’s function, ability, and/or capacity with respect to a defined set of performance criteria; the criteria may be used as benchmarks to gage the performance of the applicant’s existing system.
8. Develop stormwater utility fees and/or rate structures.
9. Establish a project priority rating system to ensure that decisions about the use of the stormwater utility funds will be made in a transparent manner.
10. Determine staff positions that will be needed to implement all aspects of the stormwater utility and prepare job descriptions for these staff.
11. Prior to implementing the stormwater utility, create public education information materials, a website, or other methods of ensuring that the public is made aware of the development and implementation of the stormwater utility.
12. Develop ordinances to be adopted by the elected officials to create and implement the stormwater utility.
13. Establish stormwater billing system(s).
14. Develop a watershed plan
15. Develop a stormwater management plan or program. **A stormwater management plan or program that only meets the requirements of the applicant’s NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit or that will contain only the information that would be required by a MS4 Permit is not eligible for funding.**
16. Develop a plan for the restoration of streams, wetlands, buffers, or estuaries
17. Develop a stormwater infrastructure operation and maintenance plan
18. Develop a stormwater capital improvement plan (CIP) that identifies projects for at least five (5) years
19. Hydrologic **and** hydraulic modeling: The scope of work requires both hydrologic **and** hydraulic modeling. **Preparing only a hydrologic model or only a hydraulic model is not eligible for funding**.
20. In a collaborative effort with other units of local government, study challenges and benefits for the LGUs to collaborate on watershed and/or stormwater planning and management

**Stormwater Planning Study Priority Rating System Narrative Guidance**

**Category 1 – Project Benefits**

**Line Item 1.A** –Link between stormwater challenges and how the study will help address the challenges

*Range from 0 to 5 points*

A range from zero to five (0 to 5) points may be earned in Line Item 1.A. The number of points that will be awarded will depend on the degree to which the applicant links the identified stormwater challenges to how the proposed project will resolve one or more of the applicant’s top three (3) stormwater-related challenges. The narrative for Line Item 1.A must include the following:

* Describe how the proposed stormwater planning study will help address at least one of the top three challenges stated at the beginning of the narrative, including technical or operational challenges, organizational barriers, and financial limitations,
* If the applicant has participated in a previous stormwater study, describe how this study will differ from the previous study, and describe the previous study’s goals and recommendations, and
* If any of the top three (3) challenges are related to a specific location within the applicant’s jurisdiction, a map that shows these locations and the project location.

**Line Item 1.B** – How the study will be used to develop and prioritize future projects that address the challenges

*Range from 0 to 3 points*

A range from zero to three (0 to 3) points may be earned in Line Item 1.B. The number of points that will be awarded will depend on the degree to which the applicant documents how it will use the results of the proposed project to address one or more of the applicant’s top three stormwater-related challenges. The narrative for Line Item 1.B must include the following:

* Describe how the proposed study will result in the identification of solutions that, when implemented, will resolve one or more of the top three challenges stated at the beginning of the narrative,
* Describe how the applicant will use the results of the proposed study to develop and prioritize future stormwater projects,
* Describe the actions that the applicant has taken to explore potential funding sources for the implementation phase(s) or construction phase(s) that will result from this study and include a list of the potential sources of funding identified, and
* If potential sources of funding for the implementation phase(s) or construction phase(s) that will result from this study have not been identified, state how the applicant will determine the sources of funding.

**Line Item 1.C** – Study will investigate new procedures to implement, add to, or make improvements to at least one (1) of the six (6) Stormwater Minimum Control Measures

*2 points*

To qualify for points under this line item, the study must address at least one of the following six Minimum Control Measures (MCM) as defined in the NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit (information available at [NPDES MS4 Program | NC DEQ](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/energy-mineral-and-land-resources/stormwater/stormwater-program/npdes-ms4-program-2)):

1. Public Education and Outreach,
2. Public Involvement and Participation,
3. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination,
4. Construction Site Runoff Controls,
5. Post-Construction Site Runoff Controls, and
6. Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations.

The narrative must include:

* Statement identifying any or all of the six MCM(s) that the applicant has already implemented within its jurisdiction and the date of implementation,
* Statement of the MCM(s) that will be the subject of this study, and whether the study will address the implementation of MCM(s), the addition of new MCM(s) that have never been implemented, or improvements to existing MCM(s), and
* Statement of the anticipated results, such as new ordinances or regulatory mechanisms, illicit discharge reporting and tracing procedures, or development and enforcement procedures for post-construction site runoff controls, etc., and the anticipated date that that the MCM(s) will be implemented.

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| **Note:** The applicant is not required to hold a NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit to be eligible for points in Line Item 1.C. |

**Line Item 1.D** – Study is a collaborative effort with other local government units which is necessary in order to accomplish the goals of the study

*3 points*

Recognizing that stormwater issues often cross jurisdictional boundaries, two or more units of local government may agree to collaborate on a proposed study. **To qualify for points under this line item, the narrative must describe why the collaboration is necessary to accomplish the goals of the study.**

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| **Notes:**   1. To be considered for a total grant limit of $500,000 instead of $400,000, the documentation listed below must be provided with the application. 2. A resolution that only supports the proposed project does not meet the intent of this Line Item. |

The narrative must include:

* A resolution or board meeting minutes from each of the collaborating local government unit(s) that will participate in the collaborative effort. Each resolution or board meeting minutes must include the following items to be complete documentation for this Line Item:
* Acknowledge that the applicant has applied for this planning study funding,
* State specific activities that the unit of local government will undertake,
* State why the activities are necessary to accomplish the goals of the proposed planning study, and
* Commit the unit of local government to participate in the stormwater study by performing the activities listed above collaboratively with the other unit(s) of local government.
* A map that shows the project location and the line of demarcation between the jurisdictions participating in the proposed project,
* Describe the goals and outcomes of the proposed collaborative stormwater study, and the expected benefit to one or more of the jurisdictions participating in the proposed study,
* Describe clearly why it is necessary for each unit of local government to participate in the proposed study in order to meet the goals of the proposed study,
* Describe any previous collaboration between or among the units of local government that will participate in the proposed study, the reasons for the previous collaboration(s), and the achievements and benefits of the collaboration(s) for all the entities that were involved, and
* Describe the status of any previous stormwater quality or quantity work directly related to the proposed study by any of the units of local government that will participate in the proposed study.

**Line Item 1.E** – Study will evaluate potential projects that will benefit a subwatershed that is impaired, or specific classified waters, or Nutrient Sensitive Waters to achieve at least 35% reduction in both Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus, or a NC Natural Heritage Program natural area

*2 points*

The applicant must clearly state for which of the following four options it is seeking points:

* Option 1 – Project will benefit a subwatershed that is impaired, or
* Option 2 – Project will benefit specific classified waters, or
* Option 3 – Project will benefit Nutrient Sensitive Waters to achieve at least 35% reduction in both Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus, or
* Option 4 – Project will benefit a NC Natural Heritage Program natural area
* **Option 1.** Evaluate potential projects that will benefit a subwatershed that is impaired as noted on the most recent final version of the Integrated Report

A project qualifies for these points if the study will result in identifying methods that will directly improve water quality in an impaired subwatershed. The impaired subwatershed must be included in the most recent final version of the Integrated Report that is published on the [NC DEQ Division of Water Resources website](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/water-planning/modeling-assessment/water-quality-data-assessment). The narrative must include:

* River basin name, stream name, and the Assessment Unit,
* Identification of the impairment, a reference for the impairment, and how the project will result in a plan to improve water quality by addressing the cause(s) of the impairment, and
* A map that:

1. Places an “X” on the specific project location and shows the highlighted impaired segment on the same map,
2. Includes arrows to depict the path of stormwater flow from the project location to the impaired segment,
3. Shows the boundaries of other watersheds that are downstream of the project location and drain into the same specific classified waters; the purpose of showing these watersheds is to identify stormwater from downstream watersheds that will transport pollutants to the specific classified waters and will reduce or eliminate potential water quality benefits of the proposed project, and
4. Has sufficient labeled landmarks such as roads, streams, political boundaries, etc. to identify the location of the project.

* ***OR* Option 2.** Evaluate potential projects that will benefit specific classified waters

A project qualifies for these points if the study will result in identifying methods that will directly improve water quality in specific classified waters. The narrative must include:

* River basin name, stream name, the Assessment Unit, and the stream classification
* Describe how the project will result in a plan to improve water quality in the specific classified waters, and
* A map that:

1. Places an “X” on the specific project location and shows the highlighted specific classified waters on the same map,
2. Includes arrows to depict the path of stormwater flow from the project location to the impaired segment,
3. Shows the boundaries of other watersheds that are downstream of the project location and drain into the same specific classified waters; the purpose of showing these watersheds is to identify stormwater from downstream watersheds that will transport pollutants to the specific classified waters and will reduce or eliminate potential water quality benefits of the proposed project, and
4. Has sufficient labeled landmarks such as roads, streams, political boundaries, etc. to identify the location of the project.

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| **Notes:**   1. Specific classified waters are identified as HQW, ORW, Tr, SA, UWL, PNA, AFSA, SAV, WS-I, WS-II, WS-III\*, and WS-IV\*. 2. \* To qualify for points related to the classifications of WS-III or WS-IV, the study area(s) must be covered by an approved Source Water Protection Plan. The narrative must include a letter from the NC DEQ Division of Water Resources Public Water Supply Section confirming that the study area(s) is covered by an approved Source Water Protection Plan. |

* ***OR* Option 3.** Evaluate potential projects that will achieve at least 35% reduction in both Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus in Nutrient Sensitive Waters

A project qualifies for these points if the study will result in identifying methods that will achieve at least 35% TN reduction and at least 35% TP reduction in nutrient sensitive waters, based on the [NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit](https://deq.nc.gov/media/11819/download) Document requirements for regulatory credits. The narrative must include:

* River basin name, stream name, and the Assessment Unit,
* Describe how the project will result in a plan to achieve at least 35% TN reduction and at least 35% TP reduction in nutrient sensitive waters,
* A statement that the methods identified in the study will adhere to the NC Stormwater Control Measure Credit Document requirements for regulatory credits,
* A statement of the percentage reductions that will be achieved by the methods identified in the study, when the methods are implemented.
* ***OR* Option4.** Evaluate potential projects that will directly benefit a NC Natural Heritage Program natural area

A project qualifies for these points if the study will result in identifying solutions to stormwater quality and/or stormwater quantity issues in a NC Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) natural area that is rated as “General” or above. The narrative must include:

* + Describe the stormwater quality and/or stormwater quantity issue(s) occurring in the NCNHP natural area that is rated as “General” or above as shown on the [NCNHP natural areas map](https://ncnhde.natureserve.org/content/map),
  + Describe the types of projects that will be evaluated in the study and how those types of projects would improve water quality or reduce stormwater quantity issues in the NCNHP natural area,
  + Screenshots/printouts of the [NCNHP natural area](https://ncnhde.natureserve.org/content/map) as displayed on the map found at the link, and
  + On the screenshot/printout, identify the study location with labeled landmarks such as roads, streams, political boundaries, etc. to identify the location of the project.

Additional resources for Line Item 1.E are available as follows:

* ***Resource #1:*** The Integrated Report may be found at this website: <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/planning/modeling-assessment/water-quality-data-assessment/integrated-report-files>
* ***Resource #2:*** Basinwide Assessment Reports may also be helpful in describing the impairment issues and how the project will directly improve or address the impairment; these reports may be found at <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/planning/basin-planning>. If used, please cite the report name, date, and page number.
* ***Resource #3:*** GIS layers are available at <http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/>. In addition, the DWR’s Planning Section has GIS layers for impaired streams at <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/planning/basin-planning/maps>. This stream layer includes the stream name and impairment category (whether impaired or not). See the figure below.
* ***Resource #4:***  To determine the watershed classification, the DWR Planning Section provides classification lists and GIS layers to locate and document the location of the specific classified waters and their respective classifications at <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/planning/basin-planning/maps>

Graphical user interface

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Line Item 1.F** – Study will evaluate nature-based stormwater solutions to address the identified stormwater quality or stormwater quantity issue

*2 points*

The narrative must include:

* A list of the specific types of nature-based solutions that will be evaluated,
* The key design considerations that support the feasibility of implementing each type of proposed nature-based solution at the location for which it is proposed; this is required to demonstrate that the nature-based solutions are appropriate for the potential site, and
* Clearly demonstrate how the solutions to be evaluated meet the definition of a nature-based stormwater solution. NCGA Session Law 2021-180 Section 12.14.(h) defines nature-based solutions as “sustainable planning, design, environmental management, and engineering practices that weave natural features or processes into the built environment to store, infiltrate, and treat water by enlisting natural features and processes in efforts to promote resilience, reduce flood risks, improve water quality, protect coastal property, restore and protect wetlands, stabilize shorelines, and add recreational space.”

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| **Note:** If the narrative fails to clearly describe the specific types of nature-based stormwater solutions and clearly demonstrate how the solutions to be evaluated meet the definition of a nature-based stormwater solution, points under this line item will not be awarded. |

**Line Item 1.G** – Study will investigate the applicability of an innovative stormwater project to address stormwater quality or stormwater quantity

*2 points*

To qualify for points under Line Item 1.G, the applicant must specifically describe how the study will investigate new or different practices in stormwater quality or quantity management.

* For an innovative project to address stormwater quality, the narrative must include:
* Documentation that establishes the practices to be investigated align with the NC DEQ Stormwater Design Manual section entitled [*“Areas of Research Needed”*](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/energy-mineral-and-land-resources/stormwater/stormwater-program/stormwater-design-manual) OR a clear description of the new or different practices in stormwater quality management that will be investigated and the reason that the practices should be considered innovative,
* Describe how the proposed study will advance practices in stormwater quality management regionally or statewide, and
* Describe how the applicant will disseminate findings and results.
* For an innovative project to address stormwater quantity, the narrative must include:
* Describe the new or different practices in stormwater quantity management that will be investigated and the reason that the practices should be considered innovative,
* Describe how the proposed study will advance practices in stormwater quantity management regionally or statewide, and
* Describe how the applicant will disseminate findings and results.

**Line Item 1.H** – Study will evaluate potential projects that will address future flooding, sea level rise, or other environmental changes with the goal to decrease vulnerability to future conditions

*1 point*

To qualify for points under this line item, the proposed study must evaluate potential projects that will address flooding, sea level rise, or other environmental changes with the goal to decrease vulnerability to future conditions. The narrative must include:

* How the potential projects to be evaluated will address future flooding, sea level rise, or other environmental changes,
* How the potential projects to be evaluated will achieve decreasing vulnerability to future conditions,
* Timeframe that the study will address, and
* Concise summary of the future conditions that will be utilized in the study to complete the vulnerability assessment.

**Category 2 – System Management**

**Line Item 2.A** – At least one person working for or with the applicant is designated as responsible for stormwater management and provides at least 0.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) on stormwater management activities

*1 point*

To qualify for points under this line item, the applicant must document that at least 0.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) are actively spending their time on stormwater management activities. It is not necessary for the 0.5 FTEs to be directly employed by the applicant; the 0.5 FTEs can be a consultant under contract to the applicant. The narrative must include:

* Identify, by title, the 0.5 FTEs designated as responsible for stormwater management and that actively spends their time on stormwater management activities,
* Describe the person’s day-to-day stormwater management responsibilities and activities,
* Describe the person’s stormwater management qualifications and experience, and any training the person has received in stormwater management in the past three (3) years, and
* If a consultant is under contract to the applicant to provide the 0.5 FTEs, provide the contract between the consultant and the applicant; the contract must clearly identify the activities for which the person is responsible and the amount of time required by the contract to be dedicated to the applicant’s stormwater management activities.

**Line Item 2.B** – Status of implementing results of previous planning study or studies

*1 point*

To qualify for points under this line item, the applicant must describe a previous planning study or planning studies which it has undertaken, and the status of implementing the recommendations of the study or studies. The narrative must include:

* Describe the previous planning study or studies and the goals of the study or studies,
* The recommendations of the previous planning study or studies,
* The date of study completion, and
* The status of implementing the recommendations of the previous planning study or studies.

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| **Note:** The previous study does not have to be stormwater-related, but if previous stormwater studies have been undertaken, it would be appropriate to include them for this line item. |

**Line Item 2.C** – Level of applicant’s staff involvement in the development and implementation of this proposed planning study

*1 point*

To qualify for points under this line item, the applicant must document its staff members’ involvement in developing the ideas for this proposed planning study and the involvement of its staff in both the execution and implementation of this planning study. This line item must address the applicant’s staff members, not consultants under contract to the applicant. The narrative must include:

* Title and description of the role of each member of the applicant’s staff that was involved in developing the ideas for this proposed stormwater planning study,
* How the members of the applicant’s staff will be involved in the execution of the proposed planning study,
* How the members of the applicant’s staff will be involved in the implementation of the recommendations of the proposed planning study, and
* The role of these members of the applicant’s staff in future stormwater management activities.

**Line Item 2.D** – Stormwater Management Plan

An application can earn points in Line Item 2.D for only one of the following sub-categories (Line Item 2.D.1 or 2.D.2):

* ***Line Item 2.D.1*** – Applicant has adopted or will adopt per Project Resolution a stormwater management plan for the study area by completion of this project

*4 points*

To qualify for points under this Line Item, the applicant must document that the adopted stormwater management plan for the study area does or will meet each of the following criteria:

1. The applicant has identified a specific stormwater management issue within the study area and the solution to address the issue, and
2. The stormwater management plan does or will describe the identified specific issue and the solution.

* For an applicant that has an adopted stormwater management plan for the study area, the narrative must include:
* A resolution or board meeting minutes which shows a motion to approve and adopt the stormwater management plan for the study area, OR an adopted ordinance on the applicant’s website that demonstrates that the stormwater management plan for the study area was approved through adoption of the ordinance, and
* Include the adopted stormwater management plan as a supporting document and state the page number(s) of the adopted stormwater management plan on which the proposed project is specifically identified and described.
* For an applicant that will adopt a stormwater management plan per Project Resolution, the applicant must:
* State **within** the required [Resolution by Governing Bodies for Funding](https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources) that it will adopt a stormwater management plan for the study area by completion of this project,
* A statement that the stormwater management plan for the study area will identify a specific stormwater management issue within the study area that will be investigated and for which a solution will be identified, and
* Describe the status of the development of the stormwater management plan for the study area.
* ***OR Line Item 2.D.2*** – Applicant will develop a stormwater management plan for the study area by completion of this project

*1 point*

To qualify for points under this Line Item, the narrative must include:

* A statement that the applicant will develop a stormwater management plan for the study area by completion of this project, and
* A statement that the stormwater management plan for the study area will identify a specific stormwater management issue within the study area that will be investigated and for which a solution will be identified, and
* Describe the status of the development of the stormwater management plan for the study area.

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| **Notes:**   1. A stormwater management plan that only meets the requirements of the applicant’s NPDES MS4 Permit does not meet the requirements for points for these Line Items. 2. A stormwater management plan may include multiple study areas and it is adequate to address this Line Item only if it addresses the specific issue and solution for the study area(s). 3. If approved for funding, the applicant will receive a timeline by which it must submit the stormwater management plan for the study areas prior to the completion of this proposed planning study. |

**Line Item 2.E** – Applicant has an adopted Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund or provides the Resolution to Develop and Implement a Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund with its application

*5 points*

* For an applicant that has an adopted Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund, the narrative must include:
* A resolution or board meeting minutes which shows a motion to approve and adopt the Stormwater Utility and establish a Stormwater Enterprise Fund, OR an adopted ordinance that is provided by a link to the Stormwater Utility and Stormwater Enterprise Fund on the applicant’s website, and demonstrates the Utility and Enterprise Fund were approved through adoption of the ordinance,
* A statement of when the Stormwater Utility and the Stormwater Enterprise Fund began operation and when the first stormwater fees were collected,
* An official record, such as pages from the most recent audit, of the amount of revenue collected in the Stormwater Enterprise Fund during the past 12 months, and
* An official record, such as pages from the most recent audit, of the amount of funds expended from the Stormwater Enterprise Fund in the past 12 months, and
* A link to information about the stormwater rates and fees on the applicant’s website or include the officially published stormwater rates and fees as a supporting document.
* For an applicant that provides the Resolution to Develop and Implement a Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund with its application, the applicant must:
* Submit an executed copy of the “Resolution to Develop and Implement a New Stormwater Utility with Stormwater Enterprise Fund” with the Certification by Recording Officer,
* State that it understands that the above required resolution must be submitted in addition to the “Resolution by Governing Bodies for Funding” which is required for all applications, and
* Describe the status of the development of the stormwater utility with a stormwater enterprise fund, the anticipated timeline for implementation of the stormwater utility with the stormwater enterprise fund, and an estimate of when the first stormwater fees will be collected.

**Category 3 – Affordability**

Category 3 provides points related to affordability.

**Line Item 3.A** – Population

An application can earn points in Line Item 3.A for only one of the following sub-categories (Line Item 3.A.1 or 3.A.2):

* ***Line Item 3.A.1*** – The population of the applicant’s jurisdiction is less than 10,000

*2 points*

* ***OR Line Item 3.A.2*** – The population of the applicant’s jurisdiction is greater than or equal to 10,000 but less than 20,000

*1 point*

**Line Item 3.B** – Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators / Disadvantaged Areas

*2, 4, 6, 8, or 10 points*

An application can earn points in Line Item 3.B for only one of the following sub-categories (Line Item 3.B.1, 3.B.2, 3.B.3, 3.B.4, 3.B.5 or 3.B.6) based on either the LGU economic indicators or providing benefits to disadvantaged areas.

* ***Line Item 3.B.1*** – 1 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 2 points
* ***OR Line Item 3.B.2*** – 2 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 4 points
* ***OR Line Item 3.B.3*** – 3 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 6 points
* ***OR Line Item 3.B.***4 – 4 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 8 points
* ***OR Line Item 3.B.5*** – 5 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark: 10 points

The Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators that are used for Line Items 3.B.1 through 3.B.5 demonstrate whether an applicant is faring better or worse in terms of these indicators than the state median. The five LGU Indicators that are used for this determination are as follows:

1. Percent population change
2. Poverty rate
3. Median household income
4. Unemployment
5. Property valuation per capita

To assist in determining whether LGU indicators are better or worse than the state benchmarks, the Division has developed two tables (one for places and one for counties, both available on the [Division application webpage](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources#additional-resources)) to use to provide the information needed for Line Items 3.B.1 through 3.B.5. **These tables must be used to provide information for population change, poverty rate, median household income, and unemployment.**

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| **Note:** If the applicant is claiming points for Line Item 1.D (Study is a collaborative effort with other local government units which is necessary in order to accomplish the goals of the study) use the indicators for the most distressed of the municipalities or counties participating in the collaborative effort. |

To qualify for points under Line Item 3.B.1, 3.B.2, 3.B.3, 3.B.4 or 3.B.5, the narrative must include the following table with the information entered by the applicant in the last column:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Local Government Unit Indicator** |  | **State Benchmarks for Fall 2023 Applications** | **Applicant to Enter Value of Local Government Unit Indicators [[9]](#footnote-10),[[10]](#footnote-11),[[11]](#footnote-12)** |
| 1. Population Change | **< =** | 3.13% |  |
| 1. Poverty Rate | **> =** | 13.7% |  |
| 1. Median Household Income | **< =** | $60,516 |  |
| 1. Unemployment Rate | **> =** | 4.9% |  |
| 1. Per Capita Appraised Value of Property | **< =** | $133,264 |  |

Some situations may occur in which alternate data may be utilized, as listed below:

1. *LGU Indicator No. 1 – Population Change*
2. Some situations may exist in which the applicant determines that the American Community Survey (ACS) data are not accurate. If this is the case, data from the NC Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) may be used in lieu of the ACS data.[[12]](#footnote-13) When OSBM data are used, provide as supporting documentation the reason for using the OSBM data and the data page with the applicant highlighted.
3. Some cases may exist in which a resident institution such as a prison, juvenile hall, or nursing home facility may open and impact the population during the five-year period under consideration for percent population change. If such a case exists, then the institutional population may be deducted from the most recent population before the calculation for percent change in population is made. Provide supporting documentation that shows the facility name, the population of the institution, and the year the facility opened.

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| **Example for Line Item 3.B using Alternate Data for Percent Population Change**  In 2022, the Town of Klondike opened a juvenile detention facility that houses 400 residents. According to the ACS data, the Town in 2019 had a population of 16,500 residents but in 2022 had a population of 17,400 residents, which resulted in a population change of 5.45%, which put the Town at better than the state benchmark for this LGU indicator. However, not including the resident population of the detention facility resulted in a population change of 500 people (equaling a population change of 3.03%), which put the Town at worse than the state benchmark for this LGU Indicator. To receive credit, the Town provided supporting documentation that showed the detention facility resident population when the facility opened and that the facility opened in 2022. |

1. *LGU Indicator No. 5 – Per Capita Appraised Value of Property*

In many cases, utilize the total taxable property value reported in the most current audit for the LGU. Use the total taxable property value and divide it by the population of the LGU found on the Division’s data sheets referenced above to calculate property valuation per capita.

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| **Note:** If the applicant does not have an audit that is current and on file with the NC Department of State Treasurer Local Government Commission (LGC), then the applicant will not receive credit for the property valuation per capita LGU indicator. In its analysis, Division staff will count that particular parameter as better than the state benchmark. |

If the service area is outside of a municipality, then three options exist:

1. The county property valuation per capita figure may be used.
2. If the jurisdiction is in a defined area such as a Census Designated Place (CDP), the applicant may utilize tax maps to determine the total taxable property value within the defined area. That result would then be divided by the population in the CDP. As supporting documentation, provide a map that shows the boundaries of the CDP and the applicant’s jurisdiction. Additionally, provide a copy of the spreadsheet used to calculate the CDP’s total taxable property value and property valuation per capita. This may be supplied in the application as a scanned document.
3. For a jurisdiction that is not in a defined CDP, the applicant may utilize tax maps to determine the total taxable property value of the area. Estimate the population of the area by determining the total number of houses and using the persons per household figure for the applicant’s county. This information may be found in the [ACS data available online](https://data.census.gov/cedsci/). Locate the table under the topic of “Family and Living Arrangements”; Persons per Household is listed on the second row under that topic. Supply as part of the documentation a map showing the total number of houses in the jurisdiction, a spreadsheet of the total taxable property value calculation, the persons per household for the county from the ACS, and the calculation of the jurisdiction population as well as property valuation per capita.

* ***Or Line Item 3.B.6*** – Study benefits disadvantaged areas:

*8 points*

Line Item 3.B.6 is intended to provide points for studies that identify solutions that, when implemented, will result in direct benefits within the disadvantaged area. Disadvantaged areas are subsections or pockets of a City’s or County’s jurisdiction, not the entire City or County. For instance, disadvantaged areas may be census block groups that meet qualifying characteristics.

The targeted project area will be determined a “disadvantaged area” based on factors that shall include:

* Median household income, poverty rates, per capita appraised property values of property, and/or unemployment rates of the targeted project area.
* Additional factors such as but not limited to demographic, historical, cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic stressors, or cost-of-living stressors.

Use of federal or state-generated maps to demonstrate that a targeted project area is disadvantaged is encouraged. For instance, using screenshots or printouts of NC DEQ’s [Community Mapping System](https://deq.nc.gov/outreach-education/environmental-justice/deq-north-carolina-community-mapping-system), labeling and identifying on the map the targeted project area overlapping “Potentially Underserved Block Groups” and/or “Tribal Boundaries” that appear on the online map as shaded areas (these are considered disadvantaged areas). Applicants may also use the [federal Justice40 Initiative maps](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/) to demonstrate that a targeted project area is disadvantaged.

To document that the direct beneficiaries of the project are disadvantaged, the narrative must provide:

* A project map clearly identifying the disadvantaged area and the proposed study area,
* Written justification that the targeted project area is disadvantaged using the factors above. When available, targeted project area data (e.g., median household income in the targeted area’s census block group) should be compared to state benchmark values established in Line Item 3.B.1 through 3.B.5. Supporting documentation must include maps or other existing sources.

Use of NC DEQ’s Community Mapping System and other similar federal or state-generated maps is encouraged. For example, documentation can include:

* Screenshots or printouts of NC DEQ’s [Community Mapping System](https://deq.nc.gov/outreach-education/environmental-justice/deq-north-carolina-community-mapping-system) and identify on the map the targeted project area overlapping “Potentially Underserved Block Groups 2019” and/or “Tribal Boundaries” that appear on the online map as shaded areas (these are considered disadvantaged, underserved areas.
* Use of the Justice40 Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool: the [Justice40 Initiative – Environmental Justice – The White House](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/) evaluates burden threshold and the associated socioeconomic thresholds. Data provided in the Tool may provide additional factors to support a project area is disadvantaged.
* Describe the stormwater quality issue and/or the stormwater quantity issue that is occurring within the disadvantaged area, based on historic or projected precipitation (if not addressed **under Line Item 3.B.6**, points will not be awarded),
* Describe how the proposed project will directly improve the water quality issue within the disadvantaged area or how the proposed project will directly reduce the severity and frequency of flooding that occurs within the disadvantaged area, based on historic or projected precipitation (if not addressed **under Line Item 3.B.6**, points will not be awarded), and
* If the proposed project will address both stormwater quality and stormwater quantity issues, a separate narrative must be provided for each issue, and separate descriptions must be provided for each issue (if not addressed **under Line Item 3.B.6**, points will not be awarded).

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| **Note:** For Line Item 3.B.6, the proposed study area is not required to be located *within* a disadvantaged area, but the study must identify solutions that, when implemented, will result in direct~ water quality improvements within the disadvantaged area and/or reduce water quantity impacts within the disadvantaged area. |

| **Priority Rating System Score Sheet for Stormwater Construction Projects**  Funded with Local Assistance for Stormwater Infrastructure Investment (LASII) Grants | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Instructions for Applicant: For each line item, place an “X” to claim the points for that line item. Be sure that the required narrative includes justification for every line item claimed. At the end of each category, provide the total points claimed in the subtotal row for that category. Then add the subtotals from each category and enter the Total Points for All Categories in the last line. *Note that some categories have a maximum allowed points that may be less than the total of individual line items.*** | | | |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 1 – Project Purpose**  **Points will be awarded for only one Project Purpose: 1.A or 1.B or 1.C** | **Place “X” in this box if claimed** | **Points** |
| **1.A** | More than 50 percent of the construction cost of the project will be used to create new stormwater control measures (SCMs), rehabilitate, or replace existing SCMs to control stormwater quality |  |  |
| 1.A.1 | Proposed SCMs are nature-based solutions, **OR** |  | 35 |
| 1.A.2 | Proposed SCMs are not nature-based solutions |  | 25 |
| **1.B** | Restoration of streams, wetlands, buffers, or estuaries to control stormwater quality |  | 25 |
| 1.B.1 | Project includes restoration of a first order stream and includes stormwater infiltration SCMs |  | 2 (additional points) |
| 1.B.2 | Project includes establishment or restoration of riparian buffers to at least 30 feet on both sides of the stream |  | 2 (additional points) |
| **1.C** | More than 50 percent of the construction cost of the project will be used to create, rehabilitate, or replace existing stormwater infrastructure to control stormwater quantity |  | 25 |
| **1.D** | Rainwater harvesting and utilization |  | 25 |
| **Maximum points available for Category 1 – Project Purpose** | | | **35** |
| **Subtotal claimed by Applicant for Category 1 – Project Purpose** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 2 – Project Benefits** | **Place “X” in this box if claimed** | **Points** |
| **2.A** | Water Quality Improvement |  |  |
| 2.A.1 | Project directly benefits subwatersheds that are impaired, **OR** |  | 15 |
| 2.A.2 | Project directly benefits specific classified waters, **OR** |  | 10 |
| 2.A.3 | Achieves at least 35% reduction in both Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus in Nutrient Sensitive Waters, **OR** |  | 10 |
| 2.A.4 | Achieves at least 35% reduction in both Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus in Non-Nutrient Sensitive Waters, **OR** |  | 5 |
| 2.A.5 | Directly benefits a NC Natural Heritage Program natural area |  | 3 |
| **2.B** | Flood Reduction |  |  |
| 2.B.1 | Increases public safety by improving the applicant’s ability to access and operate critical infrastructure during flood events including NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Evacuation Routes, **OR** |  | 15 |
| 2.B.2 | Reduces structural flooding in habitable structures or improves ability to access habitable structures during a flood event, **OR** |  | 8 |
| 2.B.3 | Reduces street flooding |  | 5 |
| **2.C** | By working together, two or more units of local government improve stormwater quality and/or address stormwater quantity issues through collaborative efforts |  | 10 |
| **2.D** | Includes an innovative stormwater project to address stormwater quality or stormwater quantity |  | 5 |
| **2.E** | Includes a public education component such as signage describing the function of the stormwater quality or quantity infrastructure |  | 1 |
| **Maximum points available for Category 2 – Project Benefits** | | | **30** |
| **Subtotal claimed by Applicant for Category 2 – Project Benefits** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 3 – System Management** | **Place “X” in this box if claimed** | **Points** |
| **3.A** | Local Planning |  |  |
| 3.A.1 | Applicant has adopted or will adopt per Project Resolution a stormwater-related Plan by completion of this project, and the proposed project is or will be identified in the Plan, **OR** |  | 5 |
| 3.A.2 | Applicant will develop a stormwater-related Plan by completion of this project and the proposed project will be identified in the Plan, **OR** |  | 2 |
| 3.A.3 | Applicant has adopted or will adopt per Project Resolution a Stormwater Management Program by completion of this project, **OR**(or Utility) |  | 5 |
| 3.A.4 | Applicant will develop a Stormwater Management Program(or Utility) by completion of this proposed project (or Utility) |  | 2 |
| **3.B** | Applicant has implemented an Operation and Maintenance Plan for its stormwater infrastructure system |  | 3 |
| **3.C** | Applicant has a current Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that spans at least 5 years and proposed project is identified in the CIP |  | 2 |
| **3.D** | Applicant has an adopted Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund or provides the Resolution to Develop and Implement a Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund with its application |  | 5 |
| **3.E** | The type of project proposed has been identified through a local or regional planning process that included a vulnerability assessment for future conditions and long-term resiliency strategies |  | 3 |
| **Maximum points available for Category 3 – System Management** | | | **10** |
| **Subtotal claimed by Applicant for Category 3 – System Management** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 4 – Affordability** | **Place “X” in this box if claimed** | **Points** |
| **4.A** | Population |  |  |
| 4.A.1 | Population is less than 10,000, **OR** |  | 3 |
| 4.A.2 | Population is greater than or equal to 10,000 but less than 20,000 |  | 2 |
| **4.B** | Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators / Disadvantaged Areas |  |  |
| 4.B.1 | 1 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark, **OR** |  | 4 |
| 4.B.2 | 2 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark, **OR** |  | 6 |
| 4.B.3 | 3 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark, **OR** |  | 8 |
| 4.B.4 | 4 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark, **OR** |  | 10 |
| 4.B.5 | 5 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark, **OR** |  | 12 |
| 4.B.6 | 50 percent or more of the total project cost will benefit disadvantaged areas |  | 10 |
| **Maximum points available for Category 4 – Affordability** | | | **15** |
| **Subtotal claimed by Applicant for Category 4 – Affordability** | | |  |
| **Total Points Claimed by Applicant for All Categories for Stormwater Construction Project** | | |  |
| **Maximum Points Available for All Categories for Stormwater Construction Project** | | | **90** |

| **Priority Rating System Score Sheet for Stormwater Planning Study**  Funded with the Local Assistance for Stormwater Infrastructure Investment (LASII) Grants | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Instructions for Applicant: For each line item, place an “X” to claim the points for that line item. Be sure that the required narrative includes justification for every line item claimed. At the end of each category, provide the total points claimed in the subtotal row for that category. Then add the subtotals from each category and enter the Total Points for All Categories in the last line.** | | | |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 1 – Project Benefits** | **Place “X” in this box if claimed** | **Points** |
| **1.A** | Link between stormwater challenges and how the study will help address the challenges |  | Range from 0 – 5 |
| **1.B** | How the study will be used to develop and prioritize future projects that address the challenges |  | Range from 0 – 3 |
| **1.C** | Study will investigate new procedures to implement, add to, or make improvements to at least one (1) of the six (6) Stormwater Minimum Control Measures |  | 2 |
| **1.D** | Study is a collaborative effort with other local government units which is necessary in order to accomplish the goals of the study |  | 3 |
| **1.E** | Study will evaluate potential projects that will benefit a subwatershed that is impaired, or specific classified waters, or Nutrient Sensitive Waters to achieve Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus reduction, or a NC Natural Heritage Program natural area |  | 2 |
| **1.F** | Study will evaluate nature-based stormwater solutions to address the identified stormwater quality or stormwater quantity issue |  | 2 |
| **1.G** | Study will investigate the applicability of an innovative stormwater project to address stormwater quality or stormwater quantity |  | 2 |
| **1.H** | Study will evaluate potential projects that will address future flooding, sea level rise, or other environmental changes with the goal to decrease vulnerability to future conditions |  | 1 |
| **Subtotal claimed by Applicant for Category 1 – Project Benefits** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 2 – System Management** | **Place “X” in this box if claimed** | **Points** |
| **2.A** | At least one person working for or with the applicant is designated as responsible for stormwater management and provides at least 0.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) on stormwater management activities |  | 1 |
| **2.B** | Status of implementing results of previous planning study or studies |  | 1 |
| **2.C** | Level of applicant’s staff involvement in the development and implementation of this proposed planning study |  | 1 |
| **2.D** | Stormwater Management Plan |  |  |
| 2.D.1 | Applicant has adopted or will adopt per Project Resolution a stormwater management plan for the study area by completion of this project, **OR** |  | 4 |
| 2.D.2 | Applicant will develop a stormwater management plan for the study area by completion of this project |  | 1 |
| **2.E** | Applicant has an adopted Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund or provides the Resolution to Develop and Implement a Stormwater Utility with a Stormwater Enterprise Fund with its application |  | 5 |
| **Subtotal claimed by Applicant for Category 2 – System Management** | | |  |
| **Line Item #** | **Category 3 – Affordability** | **Place “X” in this box if claimed** | **Points** |
| **3.A** | Population |  |  |
| 3.A.1 | Population is less than 10,000, **OR** |  | 2 |
| 3.A.2 | Population is greater than or equal to 10,000 but less than 20,000 |  | 1 |
| **3.B** | Local Government Unit (LGU) Indicators / Disadvantaged Areas |  |  |
| 3.B.1 | 1 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark, **OR** |  | 2 |
| 3.B.2 | 2 out of 5 LGU indicators worse than state benchmark, **OR** |  | 4 |
| 3.B.3 | 3 out of 5 LGU indicators are worse than the state benchmark, **OR** |  | 6 |
| 3.B.4 | 4 out of 5 LGU indicators are worse than the state benchmark, **OR** |  | 8 |
| 3.B.5 | 5 out of 5 LGU indicators are worse than the state benchmark, **OR** |  | 10 |
| 3.B.6 | Study benefits disadvantaged areas |  | 8 |
| **Subtotal claimed by Applicant for Category 3 – Affordability** | | |  |
| **Total Points Claimed by Applicant for All Categories for Stormwater**  **Planning Study** | | |  |
| **Maximum Points Available for All Categories for Stormwater Planning Study** | | | **44** |

1. “City” means municipality and includes cities, towns, and villages. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Any city or county partnering with a regional council of government or nonprofit entity must itself be an eligible city or county. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. U.S. Treasury Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Final Rule [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. U.S. Treasury Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Final Rule [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. If the applicant is claiming points for Line Item 2.C, enter the LGU Indicator values for the most distressed of the municipalities or counties [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The LGU Indicator values that must be used for population change, poverty rate, median household income, and unemployment are available on the [Division application webpage](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources#additional-resources) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. To calculate LGU Indicator No. 5 – Property valuation per capita, utilize the total taxable property value reported in the most current audit for the LGU, and divide it by the population of the LGU found on the Division application webpage link above to calculate property valuation per capita [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. The website for the starting point for accessing OSBM data is <http://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures>. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. If the applicant is claiming points for Line Item 1.D, enter the LGU Indicator values for the most distressed of the municipalities or counties [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. The LGU Indicator values that must be used for population change, poverty rate, median household income, and unemployment are available on the [Division application webpage](https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-infrastructure/i-need-funding/application-forms-and-additional-resources#additional-resources) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. To calculate LGU Indicator No. 5 – Property valuation per capita, utilize the total taxable property value reported in the most current audit for the LGU, and divide it by the population of the LGU found on the Division application webpage link above to calculate property valuation per capita [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. The website for the starting point for accessing OSBM data is <http://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures>. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)