

State Water Infrastructure Authority

Meeting Date: July 14, 2021

Agenda Item O – Northampton County and Town of Jackson Sewer MRF Funding Application

Division of Water Infrastructure Staff Report

Background

Northampton County (County) unsuccessfully applied for CDBG-I funding in 2017 and 2020 for the Town of Jackson (Town) to provide sewer service to the Barrows Mill Road Community (Community) which consists of nine residential connections and one non-residential connection. Upon review of the 2020 CDBG-I application, the cost per residential connection was calculated to be \$222,222 which, if funded, would have been the highest of any project to receive CDBG-I funding. During the April 14, 2021 SWIA meeting, the Authority stated their concerns with the cost per connection also and wanted a more concerted look at the options, including utilizing planning grants, such as a Merger / Regionalization Feasibility grant (MRF) program. Therefore, Division staff advised the County to submit a MRF application to evaluate feasible CDBG-I-eligible alternatives for potential implementation of sewer improvements for the Community, including alternatives to regionalize service by partnering with existing permitted wastewater providers similar to other areas of the County.

Division staff advised the County to submit the application forms, resolution from the County, the Fund Transfer Certification, and a letter of support from Jackson. The application package was submitted on June 18, 2021 and requests \$50,000 in funding to perform the study. Consideration was given to the criteria in NCGS 130A-317(g), and the County has demonstrated that the Town reasonably meets the statutory criteria as a potential partner for the Community. If awarded, the explicit alternatives to be studied will be discussed and agreed upon with the County and Town prior to issuance of the MRF grant agreement.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the award of a \$50,000 MRF grant for the County to study alternative sewer service for the Barrows Mill Road community by merger/regionalization with either Northampton County or the Town of Jackson.