WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE ENGINEERING PLANNING GRANT (EPG) PROGRAM SUMMARY

FUNDING AVAILABLE: UP TO $3 MILLION

The New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) will offer grants to municipalities to help fund the initial planning of water quality capital projects meeting Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) eligibility requirements. Up to $3 million has been made available for this round of the Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Planning Grant (EPG) program.

Grants of up to $100,000[1] are available to municipalities to fund engineering and planning activities that result in an acceptable Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report or Preliminary Inflow and Infiltration (PII) Study for sanitary sewer systems.

Engineering services must be procured in accordance with federal qualifications-based requirements.

The goal of the EPG program is to encourage communities to advance water quality projects to the design stage, and ultimately construction, by funding the development of an engineering report. This allows the community to seek financing through the CWSRF program or funding from other sources.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Municipalities, as defined in the Definitions section of this document, with a median household income (MHI):

- Equal to or less than $90,000 according to the United States Census, 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimate[2] for municipalities located in Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) regions of Capital District, Southern Tier, North Country, Mohawk Valley, Central NY, Finger Lakes, or Western NY; or
- Equal to or less than $110,000 according to the United States Census, 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates for municipalities located in REDC regions of Long Island, New York City, and Mid-Hudson.

A municipality may have no more than two active EPG awards at one time. If a municipality has two active EPG awards, no more than one active EPG award may be associated with inflow/infiltration removal. An active EPG award means a project that has been awarded funding and awaiting an executed grant agreement or currently has an executed grant agreement with EFC. EPGs are considered closed once the engineering report has been accepted by EFC/DEC and final disbursement has been made.

[1] See “Grant Awards” section of this document for funding amounts.
[2] A summary of the United States Census, 2023 American Community Survey MHI data can be found on the EPG page on EFC’s website. See the link in the Additional Resources section below.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

EPG funding must be used on one of the two eligible activities described below:

1. Preliminary Inflow and Infiltration (PII) Study (Study):
    a. provide a high-level evaluation of the municipality's entire sewer collection system, with estimates of inflow and infiltration (I/I);
    b. collect and summarize data in the Study to evaluate correlations between rainfall, I/I flows, and sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) or combined sewer overflow (CSO) events in the collection system and/or at the wastewater treatment plant; and
    c. outline an approach for future Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Survey(s) (SSES), either completing the entire system at once or presenting a prioritized ranking of sewer system sub-areas will serve as the basis for future SSES evaluation. Each SSES will be eligible for funding through the EPG program and must result in a recommended capital project to address I/I that can be listed on the CWSRF Intended Use Plan.

2. Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report: A municipality must use EPG funding for the preparation of a Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report[3] for an eligible CWSRF project. This includes planning activities to determine the scope of water quality issues, evaluation of alternatives, and the recommendation of a capital improvement project. An environmental review for the recommended alternative is also an eligible activity. Design and construction costs are not eligible.

Funding priority will be given to municipalities whose planning activities are:

- Required by an executed United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrative Order, or NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Order on Consent (collectively referred to as Enforcement Instrument);
- Required by a DEC final or publicly-noticed draft State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit (e.g. nutrient removal, inflow and infiltration, disinfection);
- For upgrading or replacing an existing wastewater system;
- For constructing a wastewater treatment and/or collection system for an area with failing onsite septic systems; or
- Addressing a pollutant of concern in a watershed implementation plan (see Definitions section).

[3] See the "Definitions" section of this document for specific information on the required contents of the engineering report.

REPORT REQUIREMENTS

Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Reports must:

- Follow the DEC/EFC Engineering Report Outline that is effective at the time of report submission,
- Consider storm and flood resiliency (sea level rise, storm surge, potential for flooding impacts, or other extreme weather events)[4]
- Consider impacts on Potential Environmental Justice Area(s) (PEJA) and/or Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) (see section on PEJA and DAC).
- Consider green infrastructure, in combination with gray infrastructure or individually, for projects involving stormwater, including stormwater inflow to sewer systems. A justification must be provided if a green infrastructure component is not part of the recommended alternative.
- Include an overall plan and map associated with potential phasing of capital improvements for projects intended to address inflow and infiltration.

Additionally, at a minimum, a comprehensive analysis of the following alternatives must be included:

- No-action alternative;
- Green infrastructure;
- Repair or replacement versus new construction;
- Regional consolidation opportunities;
- Centralized versus decentralized (for new systems), or a combination thereof (small cluster or individual systems).

Any alternatives considered technically infeasible must be identified as such and the rationale discussed.

Smart Growth alternative(s) must be considered and documented in the Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report. For more information regarding Smart Growth see the Definitions section below.

Preliminary I/I Studies must:

- Evaluate the entire sewershed owned by the municipality. If the sewershed is owned by more than one municipality, the PII Study should start with the endpoint municipality and include applicable monitoring data for contributing users. Be prepared in accordance with sections 3.4 and 3.5 of EPA Handbook 625/6-91/030 “Sewer System Infrastructure Analysis and Rehabilitation” dated October 1991and WEF MOP FD-6, Existing Sewer Evaluation and Rehabilitation. The scope of the Study must include surveys of physical damage to the sewer system infrastructure, capacity limitations, effects of corrosion and sewer system deterioration, and identification of excessive I/I within the system.
- Provide a high-level evaluation of the entire sewershed owned by the municipality, dividing it into sub-areas where applicable for the system. Data collected in the Study should be used to correlate rainfall intensity and duration, sewer flows and Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) or

[4] Must be consistent with the New York State Flood Risk Management Guidance for Implementation of the Community Risk and Resiliency Act.

Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) events in the collection system or at the wastewater treatment plant. Identify inflow or infiltration based on this data. The Study must include applicable monitoring data for the flow contributions of any upstream municipalities.

- Document existing records reviewed including, but not limited to:
    - As-built sewer maps and municipal wastewater treatment plant and collection system records.
    - Existing geographical, geological, climatological, and topographical records.
    - Sewer system monitoring records such as treatment plant Discharge Monitoring Reports, lift station flow records, overflows, and bypasses.
    - Rainfall monitoring and depth to groundwater data.
    - Water use records, population, and user history.
    - Industrial user waste survey.
    - Input and observations from system operations staff.
- Include updated sewer collection system mapping including collection system inspections and preparation of GIS or CAD maps of the system.
- Include results of flow measurement and sampling for collection system sub-areas to provide flow data under dry and wet weather conditions
- Include monitoring data for sulfide and corrosion measurement, if appropriate
- Be documented in a final report that:
    - Estimates expected and actual baseline sanitary sewer flows based on population, water consumption, and/or wastewater flow records.
    - Analyzes estimated I/I rates on a peak and annual basis for each sub-area and the sewershed under both dry and wet weather conditions.
    - Compares I/I rates for each sub-area and the entire system against standard metrics such as gallons wet weather flow per capita (gpd/capita) or gallons per day per inch of diameter per mile of pipe (gpd/idm).
    - Ranks the sub-areas based on excessive I/I flow rates by priority.
    - Recommends subsequent SSES investigations and studies of priority areas or sub-areas that will result in proposed capital I/I correction projects.
    - Evaluates the need for additional PII Studies for upstream municipalities connected to the sewershed based on contributing I/I.
    - Defines costs, objectives, and timeframes for implementing all investigations necessary for a complete sewershed analysis.

Projects Affecting Water Quality in Potential Environmental Justice Areas and Disadvantaged Communities

An application to fund a report for a proposed capital improvement project that will positively impact water quality in a PEJA or DAC or will benefit the quality of drinking water serving a PEJA or DAC will receive additional consideration in the evaluation. Maps of PEJAs or DACs in New York State are available at the link provided in the Additional Resources section below.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

A municipality may not use EPG funding for planning activities related to a proposed capital project that is not a CWSRF eligible project, or for the preparation of or amendment to an existing Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report.

Ineligible activities include planning activities for a capital project that:

- Will not restore or protect a surface waterbody or groundwater.
- Is not for capital improvements to a publicly owned treatment works.[5]
- Is listed on the 2026 CWSRF Intended Use Plan Annual Project Priority List.
- Has an engineering report that was previously funded by an EPG.
- Does not identify a plan to address the entire collection system when I/I is identified as the primary need for the project.
- Has an engineering report completed and/or submitted to EFC.

GRANT AWARDS

Amount	Eligible Scope
Up to $50,000	Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report or a PII Study
Up to $100,000	SSES required by an executed Enforcement Instrument • fully executed Enforcement Instrument must be submitted with application • SSES may be identified through a PII Study or equivalent Study

LOCAL MATCH

All grants require a local match equal to 20 percent of the requested grant amount. The match may include cash and/or in-kind services[6]. Grants from other sources may not be used to satisfy the local match requirement. The applicant must identify the source of the match in the application.

GRANT PAYMENTS

Grants are disbursed in three payments based on the municipality's progress toward completion of an approvable Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report or PII Study. The municipality will receive the first disbursement in the amount of 25% of the total grant amount as an advance payment upon execution of the grant agreement with EFC. The second disbursement in the amount of 25% of the total grant amount will be made to the municipality when a Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report containing the minimum requirements for EFC funding, as referenced in the DEC/EFC Engineering Report Outline, or the final PII Study meeting Preliminary Inflow and Infiltration Study Outline has been submitted for review. Invoices and cost documentation are needed for this second

[5] In accordance with the laws, rules and regulations governing the CWSRF, projects defined in the federal Clean Water Act, Section 212 as treatment works must be publicly owned. See the "Definitions" section of this document for what is considered an eligible publicly owned treatment works activity.
[6] See the "Definitions" section of this document for specific information on what is considered in-kind services.

disbursement. The third and final disbursement will be made once the Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report or PII Study has been accepted as complete by EFC/DEC and the remaining invoices have been submitted.

LONG TERM PROGRAM GOALS

The State encourages each municipality to use their accepted Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report funded through the EPG program to seek funding through the CWSRF program or from other funding sources to pursue the recommendations provided in the Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications, including all required and supporting documents, will be evaluated based on the clarity and completeness of information provided to define the scope and articulate the need and benefits of the project. If there are discrepancies between any of the application materials, or required information is not provided, credit will not be assigned for the respective evaluation criteria.

EPG applications will be evaluated and ranked based on:

- The extent to which the project may address **environmental and water-quality issues,** including reduction of CSOs or SSOs, failing onsite septic systems, consistency with any enforcement requirements (if applicable), and direct benefits to the receiving waterbody.
- The extent to which the project directly benefits communities with demonstrated socioeconomic need, as reflected by **Median Household Income (MHI) and percentage of families below the poverty level** within the project area.
- The **applicant's experience and capacity** (technical and managerial) to successfully deliver the project.
- **Strong community and intergovernmental support**, demonstrated by documentation of public engagement, letters of support, and/or alignment with recommendations from an adopted local or regional plan.

MULTIPLE APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS

A municipality may submit only one application per project. Municipalities that submit multiple applications for separate projects must prioritize the projects in their applications. Municipalities are limited to one lifetime PII Study per sewershed and may have only one active PII Study or SSES at a time. A municipality may hold no more than two active EPG awards overall. An EPG award is considered active from when a project has been awarded funding through the completion and acceptance of the report and final payment has been made. EFC may prioritize and select the project that demonstrates the greatest potential to improve water quality.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS AFTER GRANT AWARD

Successful applicants must enter into a grant agreement with EFC to receive grant funds. The following items must be submitted to EFC prior to the execution of the grant agreement.

1. Detailed final budget and plan of finance, including all third-party funding agreements and satisfaction of the minimum 20 percent local match requirement.
2. Board resolution authorizing and obligating local match funds.
3. Board resolution designating an Authorized Representative for the municipality.
4. Fully executed engineering agreement.
5. EFC Certification for Architectural/Engineering Services Procurement. All A/E services must be procured in accordance with 40 U.S.C 1101.

Documentation required to enter into a grant agreement must be submitted within 6 months of the grant award or the grant funds may be reallocated.

DEFINITIONS

In-Kind Services: Services performed by capable and qualified employees of the municipality for technical and administrative force accounts that are directly related to, and in support of, the development of the engineering report and are deemed reasonable by EFC.

Municipality: Any county, city, town, village, district corporation, county or town improvement district, school district, Indian nation or tribe recognized by the state or the United States with a reservation wholly or partly within the boundaries of New York State, any public benefit corporation or public authority established pursuant to the laws of New York or any agency of New York State which is empowered to construct and operate an eligible project, or any two or more of the foregoing which are acting jointly in connection with an eligible project.

Planning: The orderly development of a project concept from the original statement of need or purpose through the evaluation of alternatives to a final recommendation on a course of action and measures to implement the selected alternative, including completion of the environmental review process.

Publicly Owned Treatment Works: Any devices and systems used in the storage, treatment, recycling, and reclamation of municipal sewage or industrial wastes of a liquid nature. It also includes sewers, pipes and other conveyances, if they convey wastewater to a publicly owned treatment plant.

Sewershed: A geographic area from which all the sewers flow to a single endpoint wastewater treatment facility.

Smart Growth: The State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act of 2010 is intended to augment the state's environmental policy by maximizing the social, economic, and environmental benefits of public infrastructure development while minimizing unnecessary environmental degradation, disinvestment in urban and suburban communities, and the loss of open space resulting from sprawl development.

Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Report: The document that determines the technical feasibility and estimated cost of a CWSRF eligible project. Engineering reports are prepared by a qualified professional engineer licensed to practice in New York State and must follow the DEC/EFC Engineering Report Outline. The DEC/EFC Engineering Report Outline can be downloaded from EFC's webpage. See the link in the Additional Resources section below.

Watershed Implementation Plan: An Estuary Management Plan, Action Plan, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), Nine Element Watershed Management Plan, or DEC Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) Action Plan. See the links in the Additional Resources section below.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

EFC/DEC Engineering Report Outline:
https://efc.ny.gov/engineering-report-outline-clean-water

Preliminary Inflow and Infiltration Study Outline
https://efc.ny.gov/preliminary-inflow-and-infiltration-study-outline-pdf

Summary of the United States Census, 2023 American Community Survey MHI data:
https://efc.ny.gov/american-community-survey-data

Architectural/Engineering Services Procurement Certification and Guidance:
https://efc.ny.gov/architecturalengineering-ae-services-procurement

DEC Info Locator: Waterbody Segment Assessment Factsheets, Potential Environmental Justice Areas, and Disadvantaged Communities:
https://dec.ny.gov/maps/interactive-maps/decinfo-locator

Clean Water Management Plans:
https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/water/water-quality/clean-water-plans

For more information, visit www.efc.ny.gov/epg