State Water Infrastructure Authority Meeting Date: February 9, 2022 Agenda Items E and F Funding Decisions for All Projects, Fall 2021 Application Round (Updated: February 8, 2022, changes in red)

Division of Water Infrastructure Staff Report

Background

This staff report presents background information for the Fall 2021 Application Round for drinking water and wastewater applications to be funded from the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs), the Drinking Water and Wastewater Reserves (State Reserves), the Community Development Block Grant-Infrastructure (CDBG-I), and the Viable Utility Reserve (VUR). This information includes a summary of available funds and qualifications for those funds, a summary of applications received, and the process staff used to apply funds in the funding scenario example presented to the State Water Infrastructure Authority (Authority).

Note: The Fall 2021 Application Round does not include consideration of funding appropriated by the General Assembly from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Fiscal Recovery Funds. The appropriations were made in November 2021, after the Fall 2021 application deadline and will be used in future funding rounds starting with the Spring 2022 Application Round.

Community Development Block Grant-Infrastructure Funds

In 2021, the State of North Carolina was allocated \$48,676,191 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) State funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In November 2021, the General Assembly appropriated \$5,000,000 for CDBG-I from the FY2021 funds. The appropriation was made after the Fall 2021 application deadline.

On September 30, 2021, the Division received 14 applications requesting funding from the CDBG-I grant program, in the total of \$21,245,137. The sum of funds requested in complete, eligible applications was \$17,245,137. Using the Priority Rating System approved by the Authority at its July 2015 meeting, Division staff reviewed and ranked each complete, eligible application.

In April 2021, the Authority approved three projects (Robbinsville, Benson, and Enfield) for funding from FY2021 appropriations, contingent upon availability of funds, to prepare projects for construction, a benchmark called Release of Funds. The construction grants for Robbinsville, Benson and Enfield total \$4,294,529. In July 2021, the Authority approved funding for Elizabeth City with FY2021 funds to correct a staff oversight during application review. The grant awarded to Elizabeth City is \$930,000. Thus, the total grants previously awarded from FY2021 funds to the four projects is \$5,224,549.

Given these awards total more than the final \$5 million appropriated for FY2021 by the General Assembly in November 2021, the overage will be covered by a recent de-obligated grant in the amount of \$224,274, providing \$5,224,274 in CDBG-I funds for the four projects. However, with the

de-obligated grant, Elizabeth City would only receive \$929,725 in CDBG funds, which is \$275 short of their initial request. Table 1 contains more information related to these funded projects.

Table 1. CDE	Table 1. CDBG-I 2020 Funding Applicants Receiving FY2021 Funds (Previously Awarded by the Authority)						
Applicant	County	Project Description	SWIA Award Date	FY2021 Grant Amount	FY2019 Grant Amount		
Benson	Johnston	Rehabilitated/replaced 20,242 LF of sewer lines.	4/14/2021	\$1,910,424.00			
Robbinsville	Graham	Replace approximately 3,200 linear feet of VCP sewer- will be replaced with PVC pipe, and 18 manholes.	4/14/2021	\$1,626,640.00			
Enfield	Halifax	Rehabilitate 3,600 LF of gravity sewer, 19 manholes, replace 49 sewer services, and appurtenances.	4/14/2021	\$757,485.00			
Elizabeth City	Pasquotank	Replace approx. 1,750 LF of water and 1,600 LF of sewer lines that provide service to 27 residences.	7/14/2021	\$705 <i>,</i> 451.00	\$224,274.00		
	Т	otal FY2021 Award		\$5,000,000.00			
	Total FY			\$224,274.00			
		Total		\$5,224,2	74.00		

Given that all FY2021 appropriated funds have been committed to projects, none of the September 30, 2021 funding applications for CDBG-I will be funded.

<u>State Revolving Funds</u>

Combined, approximately \$142,000,000 is available this round from the regular Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) and Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) programs. By federal requirement, DWSRF projects must be funded in priority order. The Authority may consider the additional information provided in the wastewater project applications for determining funding commitments for the CWSRF. Federal requirements also specify that at least 10 percent of the annual CWSRF capitalization grant shall be used for eligible Green Projects, and at least 15 percent of available DWSRF funding shall be used for providing loan assistance to small systems. Principal Forgiveness eligibility for SRF projects is as follows:

• Resolves non-viable utility: 100% principal forgiveness up to \$3,000,000

• Affordability Criteria: percentage (25%, 50%, 75%, or 100% principal forgiveness) based on Affordability Criteria up to \$500,000

A summary of the SRF-eligible applications is shown below in Table 2. Only those applications that are complete and eligible are summarized.

Table 2. Summary of Complete and Eligible Regular SRF Applications						
Program	No. of Complete, Eligible Applications*	Funds Requested	Approximate Funds Available			
Drinking Water	37	\$389,551,093	\$55,000,000			
Wastewater	30	\$366,583,124	\$87,000,000			
Total	67	\$754,134,217	\$142,000,000			

* Includes reconsiderations.

<u>State Reserve Funds</u>

There is approximately \$11,400,000 in State Reserve grant funding and approximately \$9,400,000 in State Reserve loan funding available. The State Reserve grant funds may be used for Merger / Regionalization Feasibility (MRF) grants, Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) grants, drinking water projects, and/or wastewater projects. The State Reserve loan funds are limited as follows:

- Up to \$9,048,494 for wastewater project loans
- Up to \$366,000 for drinking water project loans

State Reserve loans for drinking water and wastewater projects are limited to \$3,000,000 per LGU per year, or every three years for targeted interest rate projects. State Reserve grants for drinking water and wastewater projects are limited to \$3,000,000 per LGU every three years.

State Reserve grants for MRFs are limited to \$50,000 per LGU per system type every three years. Grants for AIAs are limited to \$150,000 per LGU per system type every three years.

Applications for water and wastewater construction projects eligible for the State Reserve are included in the project summary in Table 2 above. A summary of the State Reserve-eligible applications for MRF and AIA grants is shown below in Table 3. Only those applications that are complete and eligible are summarized.

Table 3. Summary of Complete and Eligible Applications for State Reserve Program (SRP)-funded MRFs and AIAs					
Program	No. of Complete, State Reserve Eligible Applications*	Funds Requested			
MRF	18	\$1,683,500			
AIA	124	\$18,330,123			

* Includes applications eligible for both State Reserve and VUR funds. Includes reconsiderations.

Viable Utility Reserve

There are approximately \$4,700,000 in unobligated funds from the original \$9 million one-time appropriation remaining in the VUR (not including the 2021 budget appropriations to be made available in future rounds). Staff recommend retaining approximately \$1.5 million of VUR funds for future emergency operating grants, as the 2021 budget appropriations to the VUR cannot be used for funding emergency operations. For the Fall 2021 funding round, the VUR may be used for MRF grants and AIA grants to local government units (LGUs) designated as distressed or other LGUs partnering with them. Fall 2021 VUR funds are not available for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects since the VUR Priority Rating System for construction projects was not finalized until after the application deadline.

Viable Utility Reserve grants for all construction and study projects combined are limited to \$15,000,000 per LGU. Where two or more LGUs are merging into a single utility, the total grant limit is \$30,000,000. There is no funding limit specific to MRF or AIA study grants beyond these total VUR funding limits. VUR grants must be approved by both the Authority and by the Local Government Commission (LGC).

A summary of the VUR-eligible applications for MRF or AIA grants is shown below in Table 4. Only those applications that are complete and eligible are summarized. AIA and MRF applications from local government units designated as distressed and their partners were eligible to apply for both State Reserve and VUR funding; most applications were considered for both funds.

Table 4. Summary of Complete and Eligible Applications for VUR-funded MRFs and AIAs				
Program	No. of Complete, VUR Eligible Applications*	Funds Requested		
MRF	8	\$1,183,500		
AIA	56	\$11,711,918		

* Include applications eligible for both SRP and VUR funds.

Agenda Items E and F – Example Funding Scenario for All Projects

In the example funding scenario, applications are shown as receiving funds as follows:

- Fully fund all complete and eligible MRF projects from LGUs designated as distressed with VUR funds, except as noted in Project-Specific Notes following Table 5, for a total of \$718,000 in VUR funding. (VUR awards require approval from both SWIA and the LGC)
- Fully fund all remaining complete and eligible MRF projects with State Reserve grant funds for a total of \$600,000 in State Reserve (SRP) funding.
- Fund AIA grant applications from local government units designated as distressed through VUR AIA Prioritization Subgroup 1 from the VUR, except as noted in Project-Specific Notes following Table 5, for a total of \$2,405,900 in VUR funding. (VUR awards require approval from both SWIA and the LGC.)
- Fund remaining AIA grant applications with State Reserve funds through the top-scoring applications with 19 or more priority points. These projects represent \$3,730,000 million in State Reserve funding.
- Remaining funds (a combination of SRFs and State Reserve) are used to offer the best available funding for drinking water and wastewater project applications using the appropriate Priority Rating System order (until funds are exhausted) in the following order:
 - Applied State Reserve grants to eligible projects.
 - Applied SRF principal forgiveness funds to eligible projects. Per the 2021 DWSRF Intended Use Plan, the principal forgiveness limit of \$500,000 may be exceeded up to the grant percentage determined by the Affordability Criteria if funds are available. Additional principal forgiveness above the limit was available in the example funding scenario.
 - Applied State Reserve loans to eligible projects.
 - Applied SRF loan funds to eligible projects.
 - Multiple projects were not recommended for funding because there were not sufficient grant or principal forgiveness funds available to meet the minimum grant percentage the applicant indicated was needed for the project to move forward.
 - Multiple projects did not qualify for the minimum amount of grant percentage the applicant indicated was needed for the project to move forward. See staff notes on spreadsheet.

This scenario utilizes the available funds and proposes to fund 75 projects for approximately \$164.4 million. Table 5 indicates the number of applications that would be funded and total funding amounts for the indicated funding source. This example is detailed in Tables F-1 through F-5 below.

Table 5. Example Funding Scenario Summary				
Funding Program	Applications Funded	Funding Amount		
MRF – VUR	6	\$718,000		
MRF – SRP	12	\$600,000		
AIA – VUR	8	\$2,405,900		
AIA – SRP	25	\$3,730,000		
DW – SRF and SRP	10*	\$55,625,017		
WW - SRF and SRP	15*	\$101,365,091		
Total	76	\$164,444,008		

* One drinking water project and two wastewater projects are recommended for funding from a combination of SRF and SRP funds.

Project-Specific Notes

MRF Applications for VUR funding

- The Lumber River Council of Government (LRCOG) submitted joint applications on behalf of Fairmont, Fair Bluff, Boardman, Cerro Gordo, Proctorville, and Rowland for both wastewater and water MRFs. For each MRF application, in addition to engineering costs specific to the project, project budgets include costs for duplicative tasks and subcontract tasks that could apply to both water and wastewater together. Staff recommend allowing LRCOG to combine the project scopes of both drinking water and wastewater MRFs and funding the combined project for \$383,000. Additional funds can be requested as needed in future rounds.
- Pollocksville Sewer and Water MRFs are recommended to be funded with SRP funds to help reserve VUR funds.

AIA Applications for VUR funding

- Pikeville received \$150,000 VUR-AIA funding for a wastewater AIA, and \$150,000 VUR-AIA funding for a drinking water AIA in August 2021. The applications for water and wastewater AIAs in the Fall 2021 round indicated no additional funds had been obtained. Staff recommend no additional funds at this time.
- The following projects are recommended to be funded with State Reserve funds to help reserve VUR funds.
 - Rockingham County wastewater AIA
 - Rowland drinking water AIA

DWSRF Applications

- The City of Sanford and Fuquay Varina are both requesting funding for the Sanford Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project. The total funding request on both applications represents the total funding needed for the project, not the individual unit's cost share.
- Town of Franklin, Phase II WTP Improvement previously funded in Spring 2021, and is not recommended for funding.
- Town of Fuquay-Varina is the last funded project after meeting the 15 percent small system funding requirements. Fuquay-Varina is recommended to be partially funded at \$10,000,000.

CWSRF Applications

- The Town of Wilkesboro, Wilkesboro Cub Creek WWTP Expansion project is eligible for Green Project Reserve funding; however, the project is also eligible for both an SRP grant and CWSRF principal forgiveness.
- Town of Eden, Contracts IIB and V Junction Pump Station Rehab & Smith River Replacement and Rehab and Siphon Replacement project, has \$7,158,892 in SRF funds from Fall 2020 (\$2,116,609 SRF Loan, \$5,042,373 ASADRA SRF loan). This application seeks an additional \$3,013,243 because of increased construction costs. The funding request on the application did not match the narrative or budget. Awards are based on the lower requested amounts described in the narrative.
- Cape Fear Public Utility Authority, Walnut Street Pump Station (PS9) Replacement project is eligible for Green Project Reserve.

Tables below identify the projects that would be funded under the example funding scenario described above. A full list of applications, including those that would not be funded under this scenario, are shown in the accompanying spreadsheets. Project numbers in the tables below reference project numbers in the accompanying spreadsheets.

	Table F-1. N	Nerger/Regionalization Feasibility (MRF) Grant Applic	cations – Example	Funding Scenario	1
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential SRP Grant Amount	Potential VUR Grant Amount
1	Elm City, Town of	Elm City VUR Organizational Structure	\$60,000		\$60,000
2	Elm City, Town of	Elm City VUR Wastewater Regionalization Study	\$125,000		\$125,000
3	LRCOG	Wastewater Merger and Regionalization Study (Fairmont, Fair Bluff, Boardman, Cerro Gordo, Proctorville, and Rowland)	\$383,000		\$383,000
4	LRCOG	Drinking Water Merger and Regionalization Study (Fairmont, Fair Bluff, Boardman, Cerro Gordo, and Rowland)	\$365,500		
5	Hertford, Town of	Hertford Wastewater MRF Study	\$75,000		\$75,000
6	Pollocksville, Town of	Sewer MRF	\$50,000	\$50,000	
7	Pollocksville, Town of	MRF Study - Water	\$50,000	\$50,000	
8	Hookerton, Town of	Hookerton VU MRF Study - Wastewater Regionalization	\$75,000		\$75,000
9	Nash County	Merger/Regionalization Study - Sewer	\$50,000	\$50,000	
10	North Wilkesboro, Town of	North Wilkesboro and Wilkesboro MRF - Water	\$50,000	\$50,000	
11	Laurinburg, City of	City of Laurinburg and Scotland County Water System Consolidation	\$50,000	\$50,000	
12	Shallotte, Town of	TOS/Brunswick County Regionalization	\$50,000	\$50,000	
13	Weldon, Town of	Weldon and RRSD Sewer MRF	\$50,000	\$50,000	

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	Table F-1. Merger/Regionalization Feasibility (MRF) Grant Applications – Example Funding Scenario						
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential SRP Grant Amount	Potential VUR Grant Amount		
14	Old Fort, Town of	Old Fort/Marion Water Sys MRF	\$50,000	\$50,000			
15	Weldon, Town of	Weldon and RRSD Water MRF	\$50,000	\$50,000			
16	Old Fort, Town of	Old Fort/Marion Wastewater Sys MRF	\$50,000	\$50,000			
17	Southport, City of	Brunswick County and Southpoint Merger Feasibility - Sewer	\$50,000	\$50,000			
18	Southport, City of	Brunswick County and Southpoint Merger Feasibility - Water	\$50,000	\$50,000			
		\$600,000	\$718,000				

	Table F-2. VUR Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) Grant Applications – Example Funding Scenario						
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential VUR Grant Amount			
1	Bath, Town of	Sewer AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000			
2	Bath, Town of	Water AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000			
5	Maysville, Town of	Town of Maysville Rate and CCTV Study	\$46,000	\$46,000			
6	Elm City, Town of	Elm City VUR AIA Wastewater Study	\$337,000	\$337,000			
8	LRCOG	Regional Drinking Water AIA Project (Fairmont, Fair Bluff, Boardman, Cerro Gordo, and Rowland)	\$456,000	\$456,000			

	Table F-2. VUR Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) Grant Applications – Example Funding Scenario						
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential VUR Grant Amount			
9	LRCOG	Regional Wastewater AIA (Fairmont, Fair Bluff, Boardman, Cerro Gordo, Proctorville, and Rowland)	\$874,500	\$874,500			
11	Greenevers, Town of	AIA Study - Water	\$131,000	\$131,000			
12	Greenevers, Town of	AIA Study - Sewer	\$261,400	\$261,400			
			\$2,405,900				

	Table F-3. SRP Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) Grant Applications – Example Funding Scenario						
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential Grant Amount			
1	Rockingham County	WW System AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000			
2	Mount Gilead, Town of	AIA Sewer	\$140,000	\$140,000			
3	Claremont, City of	Wastewater System Asset Inventory & Assessment - Phase 2	\$150,000	\$150,000			
4	Smithfield, Town of	Water AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000			
5	Jonesville, Town of	Water System Asset Inventory & Assessment	\$150,000	\$150,000			
6	Troy, Town of	Sewer Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000			
7	Warren County	Water AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000			
8	Mount Gilead, Town of	Water Sys AIA	\$140,000	\$140,000			

	Table F-3. SRP As	set Inventory and Assessment (AIA) Grant Applications – Example	Funding Scenario	
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential Grant Amount
9	Belmont, City of	Sewer Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
10	Bolton, Town of	Water Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
11	Robbins, Town of	Sewer AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
12	Rowland, Town of	Water Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
13	Oxford, City of	2022 City of Oxford Asset Inventory and Assessment Project for Sewer	\$150,000	\$150,000
14	Oxford, City of	2022 City of Oxford Asset Inventory and Assessment Project for Water	\$150,000	\$150,000
15	Rose Hill, Town of	Sewer AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
16	Walnut Cove, Town of	Water Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
17	Hertford, Town of	Water Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
18	Hertford, Town of	Wastewater sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
19	Scotland Neck, Town of	Sewer AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
20	Belhaven, Town of	Water Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
21	Belhaven, Town of	Sewer Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
22	Belmont, City of	Water Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
23	Bolton, Town of	WW Sys AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
24	Murfreesboro, Town of	Water System AIA	\$150,000	\$150,000
25	Lowell, City of	Water System Mapping, Inventory, and Assessment	\$150,000	\$150,000
		Totals for AIA Grants		\$3,730,000

	Table F-4. Drinking Water Project Applications – Example Funding Scenario						
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential SRP Grant Amount	Potential SRP Loan Amount	Potential SRF Principal Forgivenes s Amount	Potential SRF Loan Amount
1	Elizabeth City, City of	Raw Water Reservoir Rehabilitation (Supplement)	\$1,353,429			\$676,715	\$676,715
2	Davie County Public Utilities	Water Supply Improvements Project	\$9,125,427				\$9,125,427
3	Stovall, Town of	Water Tank, Water Main, and Associated Improvements (Reconsideration)	\$1,757,360	\$1,757,360			
4	Scotland Neck, Town of	Phase 2 Water Improvements	\$1,513,130			\$1,116,697	\$396,433
6	Pilot Mountain, Town of	Water System Improvements	\$683,000	\$341,500	\$341,500		
8	Sanford, City of	Sanford WTP Expansion	\$73,770,000			\$500 <i>,</i> 000	\$19,500,000
10	Fuquay-Varina, Town of	Sanford WTP Expansion	\$73,770,000				\$10,000,000 \$15,000,000
12	Siler City, Town of	Water Pressure Project in Homewood Acres Neighborhood	\$826,355			\$206,589	\$619,766
14	Lucama, Town of	2021 Water Line Replacement and Elevated Storage Tank	\$1,405,000			\$500,000	\$905,000
18	Town of Franklin	Phase II WTP Improvements	\$8,889,000				\$8,889,000

Table F-4. Drinking Water Project Applications – Example Funding Scenario									
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential SRP Grant Amount	Potential SRP Loan Amount	Potential SRF Principal Forgivenes s Amount	Potential SRF Loan Amount		
20	Junaluska Sanitary District	Oak Park Water Line Replacement	\$3,961,316				\$3,961,316		
Totals	Totals for Drinking Water Projects				\$341,500	\$3,000,000	\$50,184,657		

Table F-5. Wastewater Project Applications – Example Funding Scenario									
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential SRP Grant Amount	Potential SRP Loan Amount	Green Project Reserve (SRF Loan)	Potential SRF Principal Forgiveness Amount	Potential SRF Loan Amount	
1	Louisburg, Town of	Green Hill Pump Station Replacement / Relocation	\$1,034,996	\$517,498	\$517,498				
2	Pilot Mountain, Town of	Collection System Improvements	\$2,845,000	\$1,422,500	\$1,422,500				
3	Wilkesboro, Town of	Wilkesboro Cub Creek WWTP Expansion	\$60,000,000	\$3,000,000			\$500,000	\$29,500,000	
4	Pikeville, Town of	2022 Sanitary Sewer Improvements	\$500,000				\$500,000		
6	Eden, City of	Contracts IIB and V - Junction Pump Station Rehab & Smith River Replacement and	\$9,972,770				\$500,000	\$2,513,243	

Table F-5. Wastewater Project Applications – Example Funding Scenario								
Proj. No.	Applicant Name	Project Name	Amount of Funding Requested by Applicant	Potential SRP Grant Amount	Potential SRP Loan Amount	Green Project Reserve (SRF Loan)	Potential SRF Principal Forgiveness Amount	Potential SRF Loan Amount
		Rehab and Siphon Replacement						
7	Brevard, City of	North Brevard Sewer	\$2,287,367				\$500,000	\$1,787,367
8	Graham, City of	Graham WWTP Improvements Project	\$10,151,000				\$500,000	\$9,651,000
10	Manteo, Town of	UV Disinfection and Resiliency Upgrade	\$1,882,030					\$1,882,030
12	Cape Fear Public Utility Authority	Walnut Street Pump Station (PS9) Replacement	\$5,149,900			\$5,149,900		
13	Pembroke, Town of	Wastewater System Improvements	\$2,000,000		\$2,000,000			
15	Wallace, Town of	Wallace Gravity Sewer Rehabilitation - Phase 2	\$1,520,720		\$1,520,720			
17	Stantonsburg, Town of	Stantonsburg Sanitary Sewer Rehab Phase II	\$1,387,776		\$1,387,776			
18	Belmont, City of	Belmont Pump Station and Force Main	\$15,095,034					\$15,095,034
20	Orange Water and Sewer Authority	Secondary Clarifier No. 4 Improvements Project	\$2,200,000		\$2,200,000			
		Totals for Wa	stewater Projects	\$4,939,998	\$9,048,494	\$5,149,900	\$2,500,000	\$79,726,699

Other Funding Scenarios

Note that there are other funding scenarios which could be constructed, and staff can assist the Authority with other scenarios during the meeting.