



Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Hunter Hill
Executive Director

October 1, 2023

Re: 2024 Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Base and Supplemental Call for Projects

To Whom It May Concern:

The 2024 CWSRF Intended Use Plan (IUP) call for projects is now open. The CWSRF provides low-interest financing for publicly-owned wastewater and stormwater systems. Types of projects eligible for CWSRF funding include, but are not limited to, projects that:

- Maintain compliance with wastewater rules and regulations, and
- Improve water quality.

To be eligible for funding, submit a CWSRF pre-application via GEFA's website by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 31, 2024. Pre-applications received after this time will not be scored for principal forgiveness. A pre-application does not obligate you to apply or guarantee funding. The pre-application and additional guidance are available at gefa.georgia.gov/call-for-projects.

Please note the following:

- The architecture and engineering qualifications-based selection requirements are on page 4;
- The affordability criteria are on pages 6 and 7; and
- The new project scoring criteria are on pages 8 and 9.

Please contact the Water Resources Division at 404-584-1000 or waterresources@gefa.ga.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hunter Hill', is positioned above the printed name 'Hunter Hill'.

Enclosures



**Georgia Environmental Finance Authority
2024 Base CWSRF Call for Projects
Project Submission Guidelines and Program Requirements**

Deadline	Pre-application Website	Questions
5:00 p.m., January 31, 2024	gefa.georgia.gov/call-for-projects	404-584-1000

Who Can Apply for CWSRF Loans?

- Georgia cities
- Georgia counties
- Georgia water and sewer authorities
- Community Improvement Districts (CID)
- Any state or local authority created by the Georgia General Assembly

Minimum Criteria for Eligibility

- Only those counties and municipalities certified as Qualified Local Governments by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the water and sewer authorities within those certified governments may receive funding.
- Only applicants within counties that have current DCA-certified Service Delivery Agreements (HB 489) may receive funding and the proposed project must be consistent with the verified strategy.
- Applicants must be in compliance with state audit requirements. Compliance questions can be answered at audits.ga.gov.
- Applicants within the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD) must be certified by the director of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) as complying or making a good faith effort to comply with all MNGWPD plans and/or enforcement measures.
- Project must conform to applicant's regional water plan, once adopted.
- All applicants must adopt and enforce the state minimum standard plumbing code provisions outlined in O.C.G.A. Section 8-2-3 to be eligible to receive funding.

Eligible CWSRF Projects

- Construction, renovation, or expansion of a publicly-owned treatment works;
- Installation of sewer systems;
- Combined sewer overflow (CSO) projects;
- Construction, repair, or replacement of decentralized wastewater treatment systems that treat municipal wastewater or domestic sewage;
- Construction and rehabilitation of municipal storm sewer systems (MS4s);
- Purchase of street and storm sewer cleaning equipment;
- Landfill closure and landfill leachate collection and treatment;
- Projects to increase the security of publicly-owned treatment works; and
- Implementation of measures to manage, reduce, treat, reuse, recycle, or recapture stormwater.

CWSRF Water, Energy, or Nonpoint Source Projects

- Constructing, renovating, or expanding wastewater recycling and reuse facilities that replace potable sources with non-potable sources;
- Installing or retrofitting water efficient devices, such as plumbing fixtures and appliances;
- Implementing incentive programs to conserve water such as rebates for water efficient fixtures;
- Reducing energy consumption at publicly-owned treatment works, such as correction of infiltration/inflow problems, lighting upgrades, pump and motor replacement projects, and energy efficiency upgrades in the treatment process;
- Power producing projects via wind, solar, and biogas that directly serve the publicly-owned treatment works;
- Acquisition of buffer zones and/or wetlands;
- Streambank restoration projects;
- Purchasing land for land conservation purposes; and
- Eliminating faulty septic tanks.

Project Priority and Rank

Project ranking is based on factors including A/E procurement, readiness to proceed, compliance benefits, and project benefits. Projects will be listed in priority order on the CWSRF Fundable Priority List and incorporated into the IUP and submitted to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). GEFA will score all pre-applications and rank projects in descending order. It is important that applicants complete the pre-application in its entirety, including all supplemental attachments, to ensure the project is accurately scored.

Federal Requirements

Architectural/Engineering Qualification-Based Selection Process

Borrowers must comply with Section 602(b)14 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, which requires competitive procurement for architectural and engineering (A/E) services through a Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) procedure. This applies to contracts for program management, construction management, feasibility studies, preliminary engineering, design, engineering, surveying, mapping, or other engineering-related services.

To be eligible for financing from the 2024 Clean Water State Revolving Fund, all borrowers must comply with the following A/E selection requirement:

- If the anticipated project cost is less than \$1,000,000 and A/E services are less than \$100,000, a QBS procedure is not required.
- If the anticipated project cost is \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000 and A/E services are more than \$100,000, a **ONE-STEP procurement** is required for selecting an A/E firm. In a one-step procurement, the borrower selects a consultant based on the scoring methodology that has been published in a Request for Qualifications for A/E Services.
- If the anticipated project cost is more than \$3,000,000 and A/E services are more than \$100,000, a **TWO-STEP procurement** is required for selecting an A/E firm. In a two-step procurement, the borrower uses the scoring methodology published in its RFQ to narrow down the candidates to three to five “finalist” firms. Then, the borrower interviews the “finalist” firms to select the most qualified candidate.

Guidance and templates for a one-step and two-step QBS process can be found on the GEFA website at gefa.georgia.gov/architectural-and-engineering-services.

Davis-Bacon Wage Rate Requirement

The provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act apply to all “treatment works” projects financed in whole or in part from the CWSRF. These requirements apply to projects for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a treatment works. In all contracts in excess of \$2,000, the Borrower shall insert in full the document entitled “Supplemental General Conditions for Federally-Assisted State Revolving Fund.” This document is located on the GEFA website at gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents.

American Iron and Steel

The American Iron and Steel (AIS) requirements apply to all “treatment works” projects financed in whole or in part from the CWSRF. These requirements apply to projects for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a treatment works. In all contracts, the Borrower shall insert in full the document entitled “AIS Special Conditions.” This document is located on the GEFA website at gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents.

State Environmental Review Process

Projects funded by the CWSRF must undergo an environmental review via the EPA-approved State Environmental Review Process (SERP). This environmental review is conducted by EPD through either a Categorical Exclusion (CE) or Notice of No Significant Impact (NONS) process. This process addresses issues such as environmental impact, potential historical preservation issues, potential endangered species

concerns, and permit compliance. Borrowers should review the “Guidance Document for Project Requirements” document, which is located on the GEFA website at gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)

As a part of GEFA’s loan agreement, loan recipients are required to encourage the participation of minority- and women-owned businesses in all project subcontracts. The state’s CWSRF percentage goals through September 30, 2022, are four percent for Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and four percent for Women Business Enterprises (WBE). Borrowers should review the “Supplemental General Conditions for Federally-Assisted State Revolving Fund,” which are located on the GEFA website at gefa.georgia.gov/loan-documents.

Fiscal Sustainability Plans

Borrowers from the CWSRF that will repair, replace, or expand “treatment works” with CWSRF funds must certify that it has developed and implemented a fiscal sustainability plan that includes:

1. An inventory of critical assets that are a part of the treatment works;
2. An evaluation of the condition and performance of inventoried assets or asset groupings;
3. A certification that the recipient has evaluated and will be implementing water and energy conservation efforts as part of the plan; and
4. A plan for maintaining, repairing, and, as necessary, replacing the treatment works and a plan for funding such activities.
5. Loan agreements signed between GEFA, and the borrower will contain certification language pertaining to this Fiscal Sustainability requirement.

Build America Buy America (BABA)

Alongside the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), Congress passed BABA, which establishes strong and permanent domestic sourcing requirements across all federal financial assistance programs. BABA, which is a component of the Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA), requires federal agencies to ensure that “none of the funds made available for a Federal financial assistance program for infrastructure, including each deficient program, may be obligated for a project unless all of the iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States.”

**Georgia Environmental Finance Authority
2024 CWSRF Affordability Criteria**

GEFA's affordability criteria uses data on median household income (MHI), unemployment rate, percentage not in labor force, poverty rate, percentage on Social Security, percentage on Supplemental Security Income (SSI), percentage with cash public assistance, percentage with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), age dependency ratio, and population trend from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 American Community Survey. The applicant's data is categorized in percentiles. GEFA will use the affordability criteria to score communities for principal forgiveness. **Please note that the affordability percentiles may change based on updated census data.**

1. Median Household Income (MHI)

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (4 points)	50th Percentile (3 points)	75th Percentile (2 points)	100th Percentile (1 point)
MHI	\$34,679	\$45,093	\$59,178	\$59,179 and higher

2. Unemployment Percent

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Unemployment Percent	1.5%	2.9%	4.2%	4.3% and higher

3. Percentage Not in Labor Force

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Percentage Not in Labor Force	35.7%	43.5%	50.7%	50.8% and higher

4. Poverty Rate

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Poverty Rate	10.4%	18.8%	26.2%	26.3% and higher

5. Percentage on Social Security

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)

Percentage on Social Security	28.6%	35.9%	43.4%	43.5% and higher
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6. Percentage on SSI

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Percentage on SSI	3.0%	6.1%	9.7%	9.8% and higher

7. Percentage with Cash Public Assistance

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Percentage with Cash Public Assistance	0.0%	1.2%	2.4%	2.5% and higher

8. Percentage with SNAP

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Percentage with SNAP	9.2%	16.3%	23.5%	23.6% and higher

9. Age Dependency Ratio

State Percentiles	25th Percentile (1 point)	50th Percentile (2 points)	75th Percentile (3 points)	100th Percentile (4 points)
Age Dependency Ratio	57.2	67.3	78.3	78.4 and higher

10. Population Trend

The following categories will be used to determine scoring for change in population from 2011 to 2020.

- Positive growth or no growth (1 point)
- Between -0.01% to -1% (2 points)
- Between -1.01% and -2% (3 points)
- Greater than -2% (4 points)

**Georgia Environmental Finance Authority
2024 CWSRF Call for Projects
Project Scoring Criteria**

Projects will be rated in three categories to determine eligibility and selection for funding through the CWSRF Program.

CLEAN WATER SRF

Clean Water State Revolving Fund Scoring System (maximum 100 points)

1. Readiness to proceed (25 points)
2. Compliance benefit (50 points)
3. Project benefits (25 points)

CWSRF Scoring System – Detailed Breakdown

1. Readiness to Proceed (only one option can be selected)

- | | |
|---|--------|
| a. SERP issued (Categorical Exclusion or Notice of No Significant Impact determination published in a letter from EPD). | 15 pts |
| b. SERP approved (EPD published a final approval letter). | 25 pts |

2. Compliance Benefits (only one option can be selected)

- | | |
|---|--------|
| a. Project will support implementation of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plan (provide applicable TMDL, water body name, and water body ID). | 50 pts |
| b. Project is needed to FULLY ADDRESS deficiencies documented in an enforcement action, e.g., Notice of Violation or Consent Order (must provide copies to receive points). The NOV or CO must be within the last 3 years. | 50 pts |
| c. Project will extend sewer to address faulty septic systems. | 50 pts |
| d. Project will contribute to the de-listing of a stream segment currently listed as “not supporting” its designated use on the 303(d) list. (provide the specific stream segment ID) | 50 pts |

3. Project Benefits (select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--------|
| a. Project will provide a redundant power supply (e.g., generators with an automatic transfer switch or alternative energy sources) to prevent interruption of operations during an emergency. | 10 pts |
| b. Project will reduce combined sewer overflows or sanitary sewer flows. This may include correction to significant infiltration and inflow problems that have caused sewer backups or flooding issues. | 15 pts |

* GEFA reserves the right to verify any information submitted within the pre-application.

Please contact the Water Resources Division at 404-584-1000 or waterresources@gefa.ga.gov if you have any questions about the 2024 Clean Water State Revolving Fund Call for Projects.