



**Northeast Ohio
Regional Sewer District**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

2026 Member Community Infrastructure Program

April 3, 2025

1.0 SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

1.1 Application for Funding

Access to the 2026 Member Community Infrastructure Program (MCIP) application requires registration through the Watershed Funding Programs Application link:

[Watershed Funding Programs Application Access Request](#)

Applications will be accepted until the close of business (4:30 P.M.) on **Friday, May 30, 2025**.

When an application is successfully submitted, the applicant will receive an automated email confirmation. The District will not review incomplete applications. If an application is determined to be incomplete, the applicant will have three business days, from the date of email receipt notification, to submit the necessary information to complete the application.

1.2 Pre-Application Meetings

District staff will provide opportunities to meet with applicants to discuss potential projects prior to submission. It is strongly encouraged that applicants take advantage of these meetings, which will be scheduled in April - May 2025. Please contact the District's Funding Programs Administrator II, Linda Mayer via email mayerl@neorsd.org by close of business on April 25, 2024 to schedule a pre-application meeting.

1.3 MCIP Tutorial

The District has created an MCIP Tutorial that provides an overview of the program, what's new for the 2026 funding round, and detailed instructions about the web application and submittal of the Performance Verification Plan. The MCIP Tutorial can be accessed at the following link:

[MCIP Tutorial](#)

1.4 MCIP Contact

Pre-application meeting requests and any other questions should be directed to the Funding Programs Administrator II, **Linda Mayer** via email mayerl@neorsd.org.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Member Community Infrastructure Program (MCIP) is a funding program provided by the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (District) to assist member communities and eligible political subdivisions of the State of Ohio within the District's territory that own, operate, and maintain eligible publicly owned sewerage system infrastructure tributary to a District wastewater treatment plant. MCIP funding is used for cost-effective sewer infrastructure projects to address water quality and quantity issues associated with sewer infrastructure that adversely impact human health and the environment. The MCIP provides an equitable funding opportunity annually for sewer infrastructure repair and rehabilitation that will:

- Continue progress towards environmentally sustainable and healthy communities through protection and improvement of the region's water resources consistent with the vision of the District;
- Provide funding opportunities to Equity Investment Focus Areas based on the District's understanding of economic characteristics of ratepayer households within the District's wastewater service area that supports sewer infrastructure improvements;
- Support efforts to assist member communities' compliance with the District's Community Discharge Permit Program;
- Improve the function and condition of local sewer systems; and
- Identify and remove sources of inflow and infiltration (I/I) from the sewer system which preserves the hydraulic capacity of the local and District's sewer system and alleviates problems such as basement flooding.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE MCIP PROGRAM

3.1 Eligible Entities

The MCIP is open to District member communities and eligible political subdivisions within the District's territory that own, operate, and maintain eligible local sewer infrastructure. Member communities must be in compliance with the Water Quality Technical Support Program under the District's Title III Separate Sanitary Sewer Code to be eligible for MCIP funding. For additional information on Title III requirements contact Jeff Jowett, Community Discharge Permit Program Manager Jowettj@neorsd.org.

Note: Eligible public sewerage system infrastructure as used herein means local infrastructure that provides public sanitary sewage collection and conduction service tributary to a NEORSD wastewater treatment plant but does not include individual property or building service

laterals and pumps, plumbing fixtures, building drains and subdrains, building sewers, and building storm sewers that only service the property of the member community or eligible political subdivision.

3.2 Eligible Projects

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Projects that Mitigate Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSO) and Illicit Discharges:** Projects necessary to mitigate separate sanitary sewer overflows and illicit discharges.
- **Projects that Mitigate Public Infiltration & Inflow (I/I):** Projects within the public right-of-way or public sewer easement necessary to address I/I problems, including but not limited to, rehabilitation or separation of common trench pipes and manholes, removal of direct inflow connections, repair, or replacement of sanitary or storm sewers, and reduction of public sources of I/I.
- **Projects that Mitigate Private Infiltration & Inflow (I/I):** Projects necessary to address private sources of I/I. This includes any work outside the public right-of-way and public sewer easements that reduces groundwater/stormwater entering the sanitary sewer collection system.
- **Projects that Remove/Eliminate Failing Home Sewage Treatment Systems (HSTS):** Projects to construct new separate sanitary sewers to eliminate failing HSTSs.
- **Projects that Improve Local Sewer System Level of Service:** Projects that reduce local sewer flooding and backups in the local system that can be attributed to undersized or structurally deficient local sewers. Such projects include efforts to address basement flooding in separate and combined sewer systems, and to the extent practical, on-site stormwater management practices to mitigate the increase in downstream flows.
- **Projects that Manage Stormwater Flow to Improve Combined/Separate Sanitary Sewer Level of Service:** Projects that reduce volume, flow rate, or pollutant load of stormwater to a combined sewer, separate storm sewer, and/or directly to a receiving water body that improve the level of service of a combined or sanitary sewer.
- **Projects that Separate Over/Under Common Trench Sewers:** Complete separation of common trench over/under sewers, with new or rehabilitated infrastructure to separately transport storm and sanitary flows.

NOTE: MCIP funds cannot be used for any project that causes, accelerates, or contributes to water quality degradation or water quantity issues that increase flooding, streambank erosion, or is otherwise detrimental to human health within the District's service area.

3.3 Project Requirements

To be eligible for MCIP funding, projects must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Reduce water quantity issues and address water quality issues that impact human health, and the environment associated with combined or separate sanitary sewer infrastructure problems, as determined by the applicant or the District.
- Located in the District's sanitary sewer service area (<http://arcg.is/2bPxzEt>).
- Include a Project Match as described in Section 3.6.
- Meet all applicable District, federal, state, and local regulations.
- It cannot be the subject of a contract which transfers ownership of the project to a private entity.
- Design-only projects must be completed within 12 months of the MCIP Project Agreement start date of January 1, 2026.
- Construction-only projects must include professional engineer stamped design drawings at the time of application, and construction activity must be completed within 18 months of the MCIP Agreement start date of January 1, 2026.

3.4 Private I/I Remediation

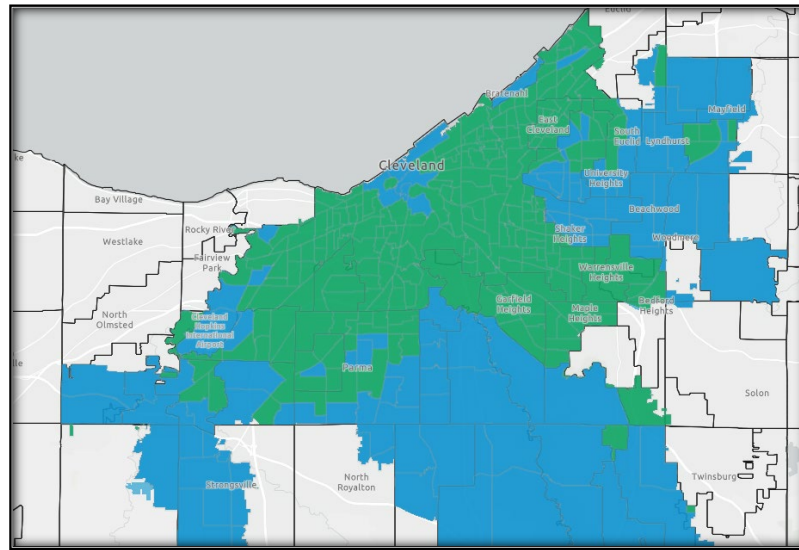
A new scoring category has been added in **Section 6.3** to allow for up to 10 points for projects involving Private I/I. Private I/I remediation includes any work outside the public right-of-way and public sewer easements that reduce groundwater/stormwater entering the sanitary or combined sewer collection system.

3.5 Equity Investment Focus Areas

The District has designated separate funding for the award of projects within Equity Investment Focus Areas (EIFA). For the purposes of this RFP, EIFA is defined as those areas within the District's sanitary sewer service area that are included in a census tract with high poverty levels. This criterion, the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), is based on 2021 Census Data regarding Median Household Income and Average Household Size.

A 25% match is required for projects within an Equity Investment Focus Area. A map delineating the EIFA can be viewed at the following link: <https://arcg.is/0e5v15> or in [Figure 1](#).

Figure 1: Equity Investment Focus Area (in green)



3.6 Project Match

Projects must include a minimum of 25% non-District matching funds dedicated to the project. All funds must be approved as eligible by the District for this requirement. Matching funds may include cash and/or in-kind sources. For example, costs associated with road rehabilitation in which MCIP funding is proposed for sanitary or combined sewer replacement or rehabilitation may be captured as non-District matching funds. Community Cost Share (CCS) may be used in accordance with CCS policy as community match. The following project costs may be captured to meet this requirement:

- Personnel: Fully-loaded labor costs for employees of the community related to the direct performance of engineering and design, construction services, project management, and performance verification on the project.
- Planning and design costs directly related to the project that were incurred prior to the submittal of a project application that had a material benefit to the application. These costs include, but are not limited to CCTV costs, manhole inspection costs, pre- construction performance verification activities (i.e. flow monitoring, water quality sampling), and engineering services such as surveying, design engineering, and cost estimating. Itemization and documented proof of these costs is required to be submitted with the application for consideration.

NOTE: Funds acquired from previous District awards cannot be used as match. Communities should contact the District's Funding Programs Administrator to assess if the funding source is eligible.

3.6.1 Project Match Waiver – Fiscal Status

For this RFP, the District waives the 25% match requirement for communities identified by the Office of the Auditor of the State of Ohio as being a local government in fiscal caution, fiscal watch, or fiscal emergency status (see <https://ohioauditor.gov/fiscal/local.html>).

4.0 TERMS OF GRANT FUNDING

There are two (2) mechanisms for funding under the MCIP: (a) MCIP Grant or (b) a Community Operating Lease. The District will determine the appropriate funding mechanism during the application review process. Applicants do not specify a funding preference. Following award, the District and the Grantee will enter into a Project Agreement.

All available MCIP funds will be provided by the District to Grantees for direct project costs, conditioned on the District's prior approval of the project and Grantee's compliance with this Policy and the executed Project Agreement. If the Grantee fails to maintain a project funded through the MCIP in accordance with the Project Agreement, it shall be liable for the full amount of MCIP funds paid for the project.

The MCIP is a direct disbursement grant, and payment will be made only on project-specific invoices as referenced in the approved project budget accrued on or after January 1, 2026. If the project for which you are applying is part of a larger construction project, the District will require individual, itemized, and verified invoices to support direct disbursement. Refer to the District's MCIP Process & Procedures document for additional information on direct disbursement [MCIP Process & Procedures](#).

Costs associated with services provided by third-parties towards the project, including technical services such as engineering and design, construction services, project management, performance verification, testing, and inspection, and/or other direct costs as approved by the District, are eligible for grant funding. Indirect cost allocations are not eligible for grant funding.

5.0 PROJECT PERFORMANCE VERIFICATION

The District requires project performance verification to demonstrate how the project is functioning. Verification activities and data collection may include reporting, pre-construction rainfall and flow monitoring, water quality sampling, and modeling or other type of evaluation, such as Rainfall Derived Inflow and Infiltration (RDII) determination depending on the type of project.

For projects that address I/I reduction or elimination, communities will only be

responsible for pre-construction flow monitoring (which can also be completed as part of design), as opposed to both pre- and post-construction. Performance Verification Guidelines on the type of pre and/or post construction monitoring, sampling and evaluation are provided at:

[Performance Verification Technical Guidance](#)

Applicants should review the guidelines and include their anticipated method(s) of data collection, project verification and the estimated associated costs in their application. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that no negative impacts will occur as a result of the proposed project through investigations, modeling, or other analysis.

6.0 APPLICATION EVALUATION

The District will review, and score proposed MCIP projects that meet eligibility requirements. Applications will be evaluated and ranked based on the following Application Scoring Criteria (Table 1).

Table 1. Application Scoring Criteria

Category	Maximum Points
Infrastructure Condition	25
Water Quality & Quantity Benefits	40
Private I/I Mitigation	10
Benefit to the District	15
Matching Funds	10
TOTAL	100

6.1 Infrastructure Condition (25%)

The current and actual condition of existing structure(s) using the condition descriptions defined in **Table 2**. Information that expands on the description should be provided with the application to assist with the scoring of this category. This may include but is not limited to condition assessments, identification of broken pipes, televised underground system inspection reports, age inventory reports and maintenance records, and any additional information that may impact the evaluation of the infrastructure condition. If available, condition assessments should be provided in accordance with NASSCO's Pipeline and Manhole Assessment and Certification Program (PACP and MACP). NASSCO condition assessment is recommended. Only provide a high-level summary spreadsheet

that details the sewer system's condition. If available, please provide photo or video proof of major defects with detailed documentation indicating defect(s).

Note: To validate condition rating, photo/video evidence or a structural PACP/MACP report must be submitted.

Due to deficiencies commonly experienced with Over/Under sewer configurations (deteriorating, leaky, contribute high I/I and are difficult to maintain), Over/Under systems will automatically be scored 25 points in the Infrastructure Condition category.

Table 2. Rating System for Structural Infrastructure Condition

Condition Rating	Description	Points
Failed	Complete reconstruction needed – existing infrastructure is failed, in the Over/Under configuration, and/or a PACP/MACP structural condition scores of 5.	25
Critical	Major reconstruction is needed to maintain integrity, and/or PACP/MACP structural condition scores between 4-5.	20
Poor	Partial reconstruction or extensive rehabilitation required to maintain integrity, and/or PACP/MACP structural condition scores between 3-4.	15
Fair	Major rehabilitation is needed to maintain integrity, and/or a PACP/MACP structural condition scores between 2-3.	10
Good	Routine maintenance and periodic repairs required to maintain integrity, and/or a PACP/MACP structural condition scores between 1-2.	5

For projects where the infrastructure condition is unknown, the infrastructure condition will be assessed and scored based on age and/or common trench configuration, using **Table 3**. Trench type can be verified through photo documentation, Local Sewer System Evaluation Study report(s), or as-built drawings detailing the configuration. Applications should include documentation verifying the age of infrastructure, as well as any additional

qualitative or historical information that can confirm the current condition.

Table 3. Rating System for Unknown Structural Infrastructure Condition

Condition Rating	Description	Points
Failed	50 years or older, and/or Over/Under	25
Critical	40-49 years and/or Over Under or Dividing Wall	20
Poor	30-39 years and/or common trench	15
Fair	20-29 years and/or common trench	10
New/Good	0-19 years	5

For projects proposing to remove/eliminate failing HSTSs, the infrastructure condition will be assessed using **Table 4**. Information that expands on the description should be provided with the application to assist with the scoring of this category.

Table 4. Rating System for Home Sewage Treatment System Projects

Age of HSTS	Points
20 years or older	25
19-16 years old	20
15-11 years old	15
10-7 years old	10
6 years old or less	5

NOTE: Projects proposing to remove/eliminate failing HSTSs must provide:

- Documentation that the area the community is targeting is part of an approved prescription of the Municipality's 208 Plan, or
- A feasibility study for removal has been completed, or
- A letter and/or agreement with the property owners or for the sanitary sewer assessment has been executed.

6.2 Water Quality & Quantity Impacts on Human Health and the Environment (40%)

Demonstrate the effects of the project on water quality and quantity. The water quality and quantity impacts will be assessed using **Table 5**. Responses should be formulated that provide clarity to the following questions:

- What is the frequency and/or magnitude of the problem?
- What is the direct human health or environmental impact?
- How many verified homes, businesses, or other occupied structures will see a benefit from this project?
- How will the proposed project eliminate or reduce the water quality/quantity impact?
- How will the proposed project mitigate the potential for unregulated release of sewage to the environment.

Information that verifies and quantifies the water quality and quantity issues should be provided with the application and appropriately referenced within the response (e.g., page or document reference). Examples of project type and corresponding, supporting evidence include but are not limited to the following:

6.2.1 HSTS /Illicit Discharge Elimination

- Findings & Orders or Public Nuisance issued (e.g. Board of Health, Ohio EPA)
- Sampling data supporting water quality deficiency issues (e.g. *E. Coli*, Pollutant Load)
- Regulatory agency mandates citing deficiencies
- Documentation of failing HSTS

6.2.2 Basement Flooding Elimination

- Documentation of reported flooding events such as:
 - Household surveys with addresses and details of flooding events
 - Call logs with flood event dates
 - Photos of the event
- Desktop or hydrologic/hydraulic modeling results (hydraulic grade line, projected basements at-risk)

6.2.3 Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO)/ Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) Elimination/Reduction/Control

- Monitoring results
- Modeling results (Overflow volume, number of activations, dates)
- Sampling data supporting water quality deficiency issues (e.g. *E. coli*, Pollutant Load)

6.2.4 I/I Reduction, Elimination

- Dye testing
- Smoke testing
- CCTV
- Peak flows identified from modeling or study (District Local Sewer System Evaluation Study (LSSES) or other study)

6.2.5 Common Trench Rehabilitation - Trench Type Verification

- Photographs
- Design plans
- CCTV
- Dye Testing
- Smoke Testing

6.2.6 Reduction of surcharge and providing relief capacity

- Peak flows identified from modeling or study (District Local Sewer System Evaluation Study (LSSES) or other study)

Table 5. Rating System for Water Quality/Quantity Impacts (40%)

Project Type		Description		Points Range		
Failed HSTS, Illicit Discharge	Removal of a continuous source of water quality impairment during wet and dry weather			10	15	20
			<10 units	11-49 units	>50 units	
Basement Flooding	Reducing intermittent and direct water quality impairments to human health and private property			10	15	20
			<10 basements	11-19 basements	>20 basements	
CSO/SSO	Removal of wet weather source of water quality impairment			6		10
			Unknown effect of project		Modeled quantity and/or multiple locations	
Inflow/Infiltration	Conserving capacity in the sanitary sewer system			1 - 5		
			Sliding scale depending on severity of I/I			
Common Trench	Work varying from minimum rehabilitation to full separation	1	3	5		
		Lining/Spot Repair	New Storm or Sanitary	Fully Separated		
Documentation						
Problem(s) is/are verified through documentation (see Sections 6.2.1-6.2.6 of RFP for examples)				1 - 10		

6.3 Project Includes Private I/I Remediation (10%)

Projects that address private sources of groundwater/stormwater entering the sanitary sewer collection system, including work outside the public right-of-way and public sewer easements, can earn up to 10 points. This includes investigation and field work (e.g. dye testing, smoke testing, CCTV, etc.) to identify sources of Private I/I, in addition to design and construction of Private I/I remediation.

The District will evaluate the estimated effectiveness of Private I/I proposed using **Table 6**. The District is available to coordinate with applicants about appropriate Private I/I work to capture full 10 points.

Table 6. Project Includes Private I/I Remediation (10%)

Project Status	Points
Investigation of Private I/I Sources	1 - 3
Design of Private I/I Remediation	4 - 6
Construction of Private I/I Remediation	7 - 10

6.4 Project Provides Significant Benefit to the District (15%)

Demonstrate the benefits of the Project to the District. Benefits include but are not limited to projects that assist in attaining compliance with a District community discharge permit, addresses private property flows to District collection system infrastructure, reduce infrastructure flooding/basement back-ups, expand water quality treatment benefit to new District customers, are recommended by a District study, and/or improve water quality in area waterways to compliment the District's ongoing programs, such as the Project Clean Lake Program, Local Sewer System Evaluation Studies, or Regional Stormwater Management Program.

6.5 Non-District Matching Funding (10%)

Points for non-District matching funds will be awarded in accordance with **Table 7**. Applications must provide documentation of funding sources.

Table 7. Non-District Project Match Scoring for non-EIFA Projects

% Match	Points
25	1
26-28	2
29-31	3
32-34	4
35-37	5
38-40	6
41-43	7
44-47	8
48-49	9
50-99	10

If the District waives the matching funds requirement for an applicant based on their fiscal status as discussed in **Section 3.6.1**, the application will be awarded one (1) point. Projects within EIFAs are required to provide only a 25% match and will be scored and

awarded independently from other projects outside of EIFAs. EIFA applications indicating greater than 25% match towards the project will not be granted additional points for Non-District Matching Funding.

NOTE: Applications for projects within EIFAs that choose to provide greater than the 25% minimum required matching funds will not receive additional points under the Non-District Matching Funding scoring category.

6.6 Design Complete (5 extra points)

Five (5) extra points will be added to the overall project score if the design is complete (professional engineer stamp) and ready for bidding at the time of application submission due date.

6.7 Intercommunity Projects (5 extra points)

Up to five (5) extra points will be added to the overall project score if the project assists in conserving sewer capacity, addressing water quality concerns at a specific outfall of a downstream community, or a downstream community is able to remove additional flows from an upstream community. The community should reference District Local Sewer System Evaluation Study findings or other data including certification from the benefiting community.

7.0 AWARD

After evaluation, District staff will make a recommendation to award MCIP grants based on available funding. Award announcements are anticipated in August 2025. The District is under no obligation to fund any MCIP Grant Program requests.