



EXPANDING FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES' ACCESS TO FEDERAL FUNDING

July 20, 2022
10am PT / 1pm ET



Music: www.bensound.com

WATERNOW ALLIANCE

Housekeeping & How to Ask Questions

Q&A

You ask: 13:05

How do I use these awesome tools?

Joshua Jones answered: 13:06

You are already using one of the most awesome tools. We'll discuss the rest right away.

Please input your question

☐ Send Anonymously Send



Today's Speakers



SHEYDA ESNAASHARI

Drinking Water Program
Director

River Network



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Director of Water Equity and
Climate Resilience

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WATERNOW ALLIANCE

Agenda

- About WaterNow
- State Revolving Funds: What are they and what's changing with the BIL?
- Hypothetical: Identifying Pathways for Innovative Water Infrastructure
- Audience Q&A



MEETING WATER CHALLENGES WITH EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTED INFRASTRUCTURE

August 17, 2022

10:00 am - 11:00 am

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Location: | Online Webinar

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LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Great water utility leaders aren't born;
they're developed.

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DUE SEPT. 15**



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WHO ARE WE?



A forum and network of local water leaders advancing sustainable, affordable, equitable and climate resilient water strategies

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SUSTAINABLE?

Providing safe, healthy, and affordable water services for people while preserving the integrity of water resources and the environment for future generations.



WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EQUITABLE?



Water equity means universal access to secure, affordable, safe, and healthy drinking water, and wastewater and stormwater management services. Equitable water infrastructure investment should support the long-term sustainability of our waterways, water systems, and utilities.



State Revolving Funds

Introduction, Opportunities and
Challenges



Why water infrastructure?



Historic underinvestment in BIPOC communities



Water is unaffordable for roughly $\frac{1}{3}$ of US families

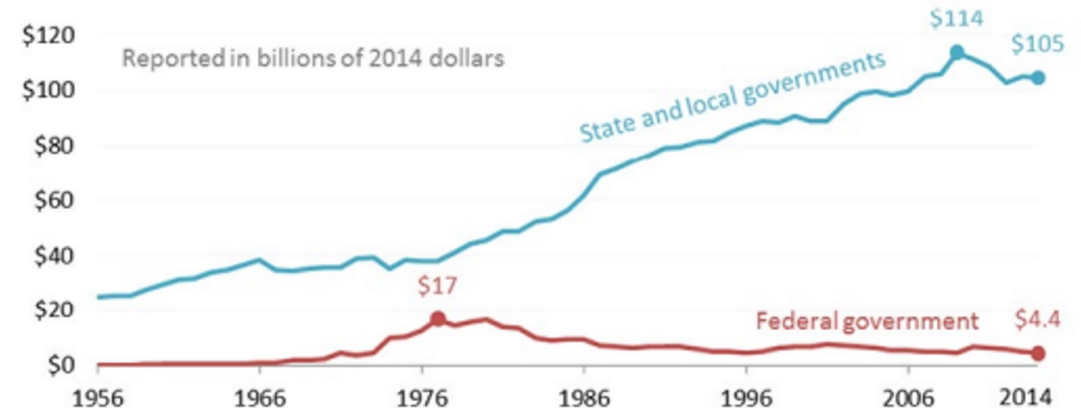


Why water infrastructure?

Water infrastructure investment is necessary for **water equity** – access, affordability, safety & resilience

State and local government spending on water and wastewater utilities continued to grow while federal spending declined since the 1980s

State and local governments spent 24 times as much as the federal government in 2014



Graphed by the Environmental Finance Center at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

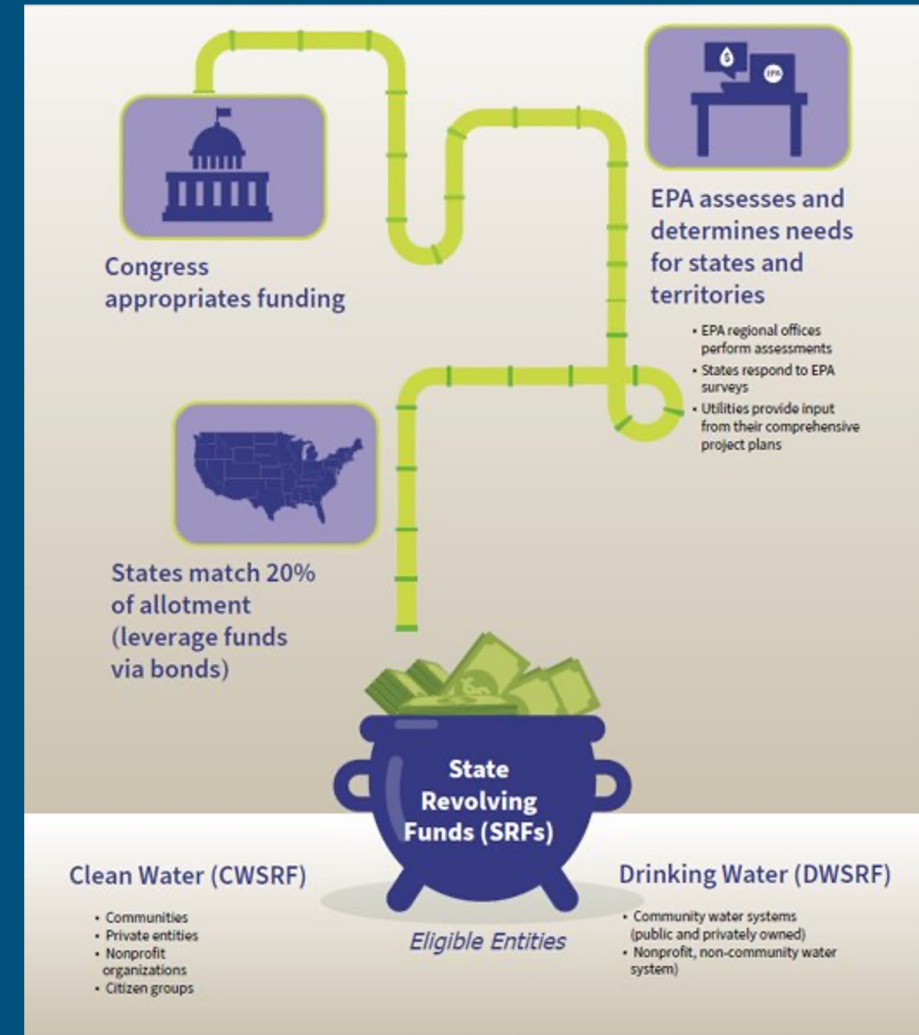
Source: Congressional Budget Office supplemental data for the *Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, 1956 to 2014* report (March 2015). Displays public spending on supply systems for distributing potable water as well as wastewater and sewage treatment systems and plants. Real spending is shown after adjusting nominal spending to their 2014 dollar equivalent using infrastructure-specific price indexes.

What is equitable investment in water infrastructure?

- Directed by the community toward public health and clean, safe, affordable, and accessible water;
- Supports low-income and communities of color most at-risk from environmental harms and historic lack of investment; and
- Supports the long-term sustainability of our waterways, water systems, and utilities.

State Revolving Funds (SRFs)

- Largest source of federal funding for water infrastructure
- \$\$\$ flow: Congress → US EPA → State and Tribal agencies → local communities



Eligible projects

Clean Water SRFs

Water infrastructure improvement projects to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act (CWA).

Ex:

- Wastewater system improvements
- Watershed protection projects
- Green infrastructure projects

Drinking Water SRF

Improvements in **drinking water systems** to ensure they meet Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) regulations.

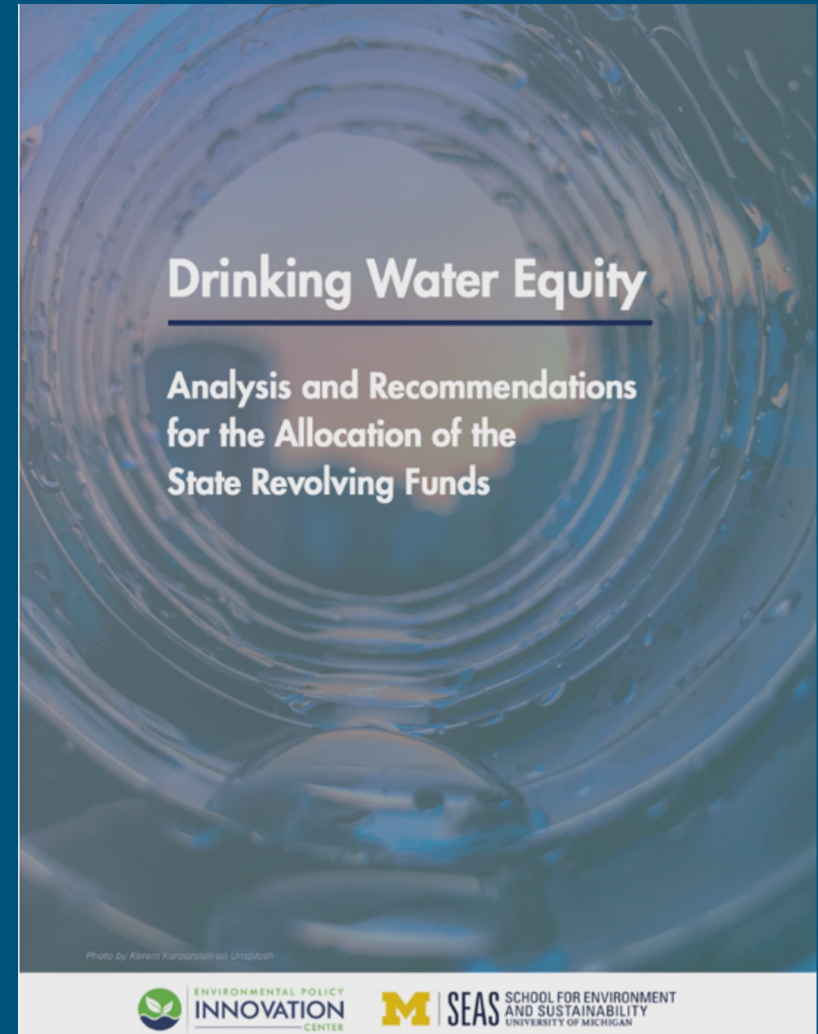
Ex:

- Improved drinking water treatment
- Water infrastructure/pipe replacement and installation
- Water storage

The Problem: SRFs have not reached communities in most need of support

Historic lack of investment in water infrastructure in communities most in need

- Small and rural communities
- Racially diverse communities (Black, Indigenous and POC)



Barriers to equitable distribution of SRFs



Limited financial capacity to access and pay back loans (states, communities);



Limited technical capacity to plan for projects and apply for SRFs (states, service providers);



Administrative barriers - e.g. definition of DAC; lack in transparency of Intended Use Plan review;

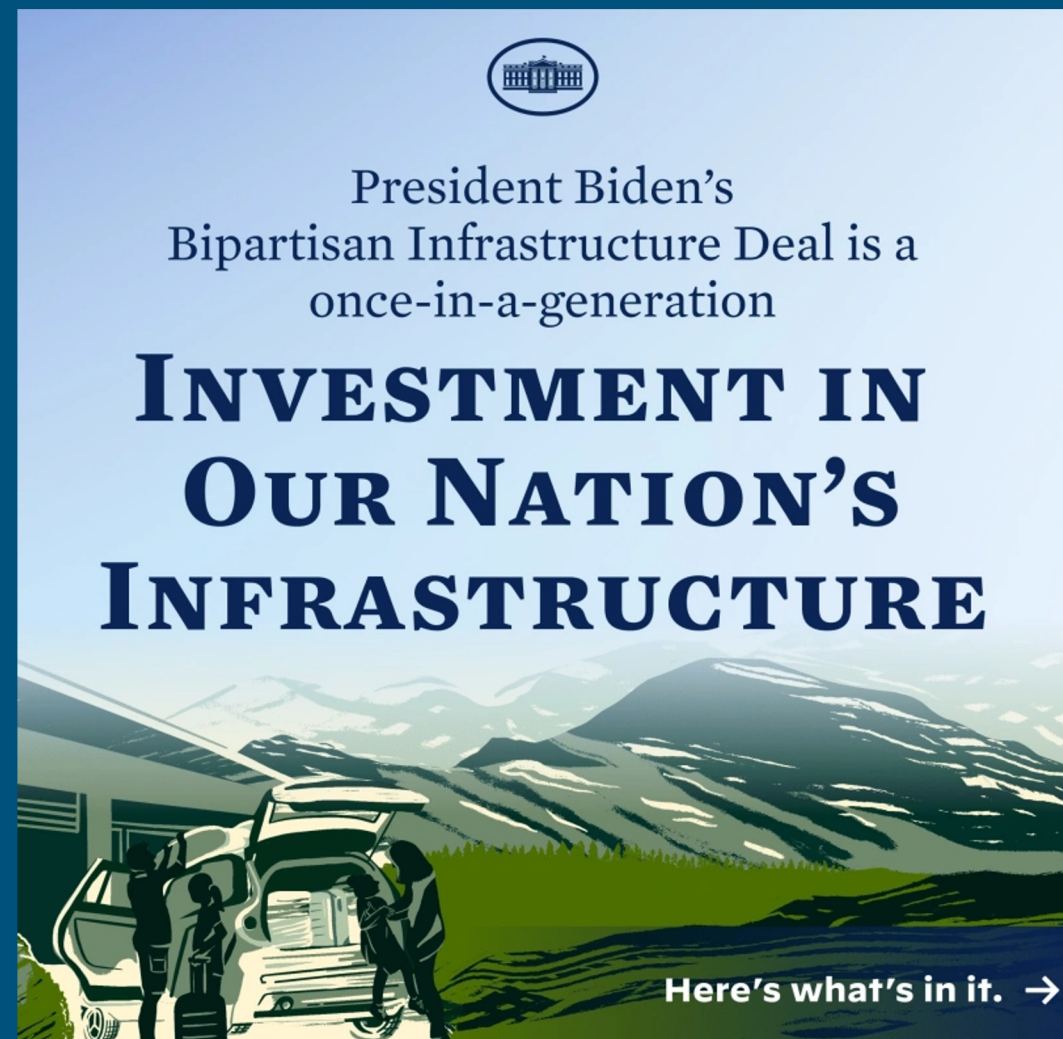


Lack of awareness and voice in process (communities).

Reducing barriers at the federal level

What's new? Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

- Passed, Nov. 2021: Allocates historic levels of funding **(\$43b)** to SRFs on top of annual base funding
- **5 years to spend** BIL funds (2022-2026)



Reducing financial barriers



- **\$43 b over 5 yrs on top** of regular SRF appropriations;
- State match reduced to **10% for first 2 years**;
- **49%** as **grants or forgivable loans** to DACs

Reducing administrative barriers



- **40% of benefits** to DACs (Justice40 Initiative)
- Guidance for states **revising their definitions** of DACs and affordability criteria to better target communities in need

Increasing technical capacity



- Technical assistance (TA) **set asides (2%)** for both CWSRF & DWSRF
- **\$68 million** for new Environmental Finance Centers (EFCs)
- Guidance on finding TA support

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN **BUILDING A BETTER AMERICA** **BUILD.GOV**

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Technical Assistance Guide
A list of federal resources to help communities deliver infrastructure projects.

May 18th, 2022

President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law unlocks billions of dollars in opportunity for states, territories, Tribes, and local governments to make a once-in-a-generation investment in our nation's infrastructure. Over 90% of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's historic funding will be deployed by non-federal partners. The Biden Administration has put together this technical assistance guide to help make it easier for communities across the country to navigate, access, and deploy infrastructure funding that will build a better America.

In the past, too many communities have lacked the resources to apply for and deliver transformative infrastructure opportunities. While there are many programs across the federal government dedicated to technical assistance, navigating the vast landscape of programs and resources can be challenging for communities. To ease this burden, the Biden Administration is committed to closing access gaps and making these opportunities transparent and available.

The Biden Administration has identified at least \$700 million in dedicated funding across more than 65 federal technical assistance programs, focused on helping communities apply for and deploy federal infrastructure funding. This guide will help communities navigate programs and resources that can help them deliver transformative infrastructure projects, using the historic funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Specifically, this guide provides a list of over 65 technical assistance resources and programs across the federal government to help communities deliver infrastructure projects. The guide is organized by types infrastructure investments such as transportation, clean energy and power, high-speed internet, water, resilience, and environmental remediation. The guide also highlights a number of "place-based" initiatives focused on specific communities and geographies as well as generally

EPA Announces Request for Applications for \$68M in Grant Funding to Support Environmental Finance Centers

Selected Grantees will Provide Technical Assistance to Communities Across America

April 19, 2022

Contact Information
EPA Press Office (epa@epa.gov)

WASHINGTON (April 19, 2022) – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a Request for Applications for \$68 million in federal funding through the Environmental Finance Center (EFC) Grant Program. EPA encourages non-profit organizations, universities, and other eligible entities to apply to receive funding as a designated EFC in an EPA Region or as a national EFC for EPA Headquarters. A major priority for this program over the next five years is to provide technical support to disadvantaged communities across the country. Selected technical assistance providers will help communities develop and submit project proposals, including State Revolving Fund (SRF) applications for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding. Additionally, the EFCs will support a range of projects focused on solid waste, clean air, toxic substances, drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater.

"Underserved communities across the country—rural, suburban, urban, small and large—struggle to access the water infrastructure investments they need," said **EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox**. "The EFCs will play an important role by helping bridge the gap between community needs and federal funding. This commitment of new technical assistance resources represents yet another step by EPA to fulfill the Biden Administration's commitment to help all communities benefit from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law."

EPA is seeking applications from organizations with a demonstrable history of providing effective, results-oriented technical assistance to disadvantaged communities of all sizes in rural, suburban, and urban settings. These entities will provide local governments, states, Tribes, and non-governmental organizations with technical assistance services, which may include: developing SRF and other funding applications for locally-driven projects, engineering and project management services, community outreach and engagement services, administering funds, capacity building, training, reports/studies, and tools to protect human health and the environment.

EPA is inviting applications for three types of Environmental Finance Centers:

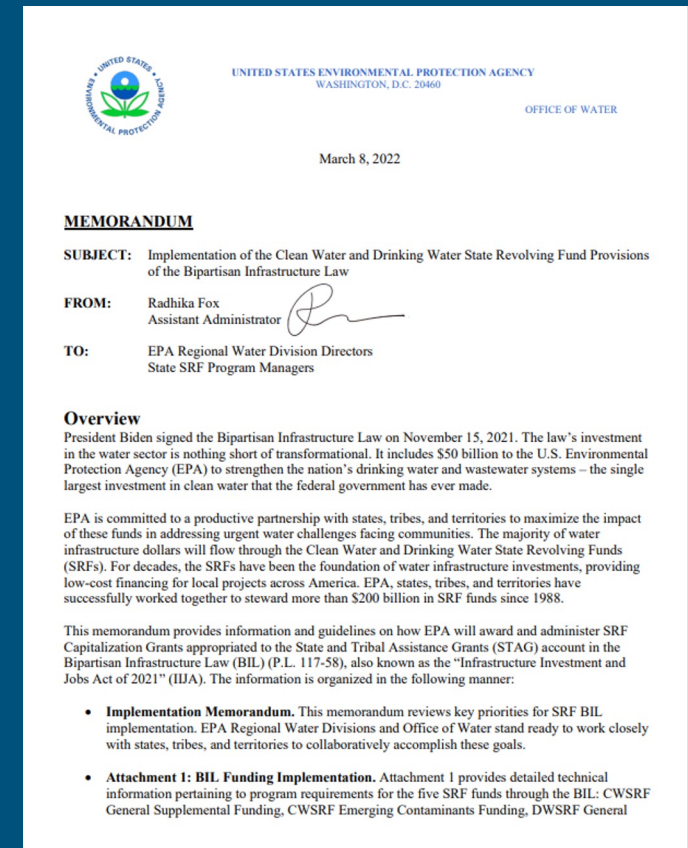
- Regionally-focused EFCs that will provide technical support to communities to obtain water infrastructure funding provided through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, with a priority on disadvantaged communities;
- Nationally focused EFCs to support the Regional EFCs and EPA Headquarters; and
- Regional Multi-Environmental Media EFCs that provide technical, managerial, and financial capacity building services to local, state, and Tribal governments, and non-governmental organizations to make improvements related to clean water, drinking water, solid waste, clean air, and toxic substances.

The EFC grant program request for applications is available on [Grants.gov](https://www.epa.gov/grants), under Funding Opportunity number EPA-IOW-OWM-22-01. Application packages must be submitted electronically no later than Friday, June 17, 2022, at 11:59 PM (EDT) to be considered for funding.

Increasing awareness and resources to support community engagement



- EPA is playing a **proactive role** in helping states and advocates navigate new provisions from BIL
- This is due to a **strong advocacy strategy**



Reducing barriers at the state level

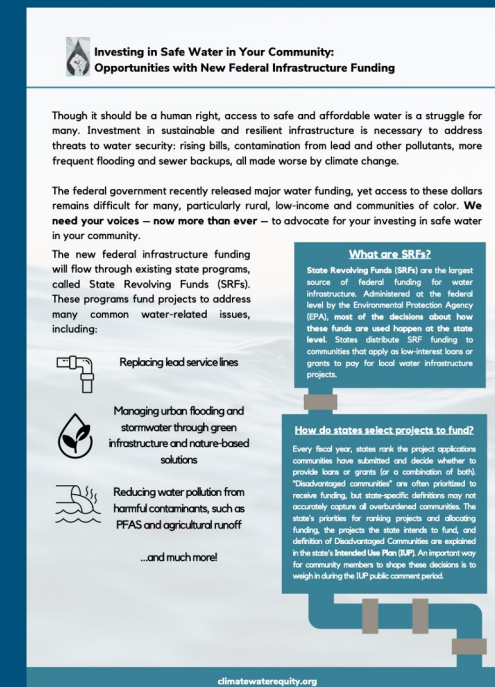
Ongoing challenges: Administrative barriers

- IUP review -> not a transparent process, technical, and time intensive
- Broader system challenges in how SRFs are distributed and prioritized (e.g...):
 - DAC definition and use of affordability criteria
 - Existence of caps to how much a community can receive in terms of grants versus loans;
 - up front matching requirement (even in the case of forgivable loans);

Our work

- PolicyLink's Civic Engagement for Equitable Infrastructure Project - DWSRF analyses of CA, MI, and OR
- SRF State Advocate Forum
- Developing primers and trainings

SRF State Advocate Forum



Reducing barriers at the local level

Opportunities for local leaders and utilities

- Raise awareness in the state about availability of BIL SRF funding.
- Increase community-level engagement in water infrastructure decision-making.
- Propose/plan “shovel-worthy” projects that will benefit underserved communities in your state (get them on the IUP!).

Additional Questions?

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Creating & advancing solutions to the world's most pressing water challenges

Established in 1987, the Pacific Institute creates and advances solutions to the world's most pressing water challenges.

Our vision is to create a world in which society, the economy, and the environment have the water they need to thrive now and in the future.



Defining A Multi-benefit Approach

The Multi-Benefit Framework for Decision Making

To advance consideration of co-benefits, the Pacific Institute collaborated with public and private sector partners to develop a framework to incorporate co-benefits into water investment decisions. By using this framework and incorporating multiple benefits, water managers can identify potential project partners and co-funding opportunities and modify project design to maximize the value of their investments.



Leveraging A Multi-benefit Approach

The Multi-benefit Framework

- Envision the project
- Identify benefits & trade-offs to consider
- Characterize key benefits & trade-offs
- Inform decision making

For reference: https://pacinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Incorporating-Multiple-Benefits-into-Water-Projects_Pacific-Institute-_June-2020.pdf



Weighty Issues: Prioritizing a Multi-benefit Approach

State:

California's Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program

Colorado Water Plan Grant

Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program

Federal:

Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Loans

WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency Grants

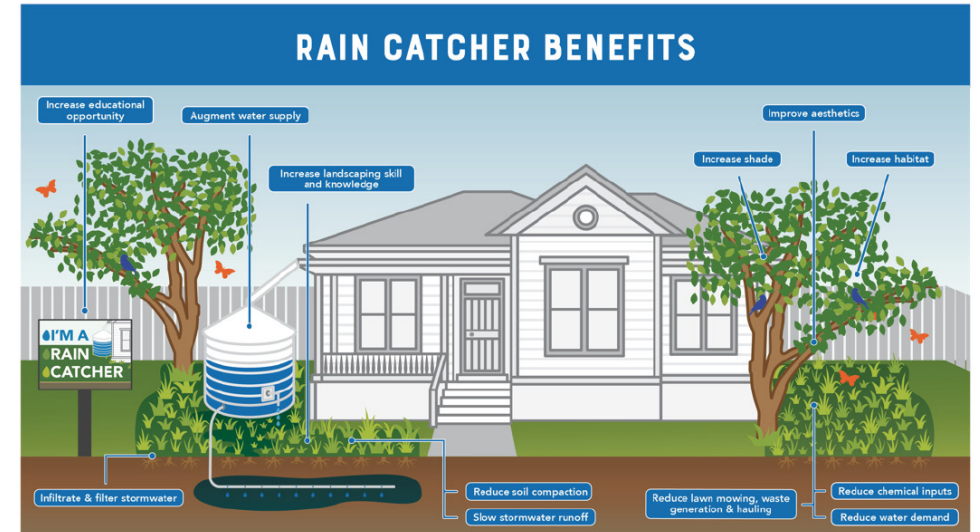
Case Study: Austin, TX

Scaling Green Stormwater Infrastructure Through Multiple Benefits in Austin, TX

The Rain Catcher Pilot Program (RCPP)

- Comprehensive effort to integrate and leverage the City's existing Green Stormwater Infrastructure programs and resources.
- RCPP incorporates existing Watershed Protection and Austin Water discounts, rebates, capital funding, and educational programs with the goal of increasing the prevalence of cisterns and rain gardens that achieve both stormwater management and water conservation objectives.

Figure S1. Benefits of Rainwater Capture on Residential Properties



Source: Watershed Protection Department and the Pacific Institute

Diringer, Sarah, Morgan Shimabuku, Heather Cooley, Madeline Gorchels, Jennifer Walker, and Sharlene Leurig. 2020. *Scaling Green Stormwater Infrastructure Through Multiple Benefits in Austin, Texas*. Oakland, Calif.: Pacific Institute.



Case Study: Westminster, CO

Affordable Housing High-Efficiency Water Fixture Upgrades

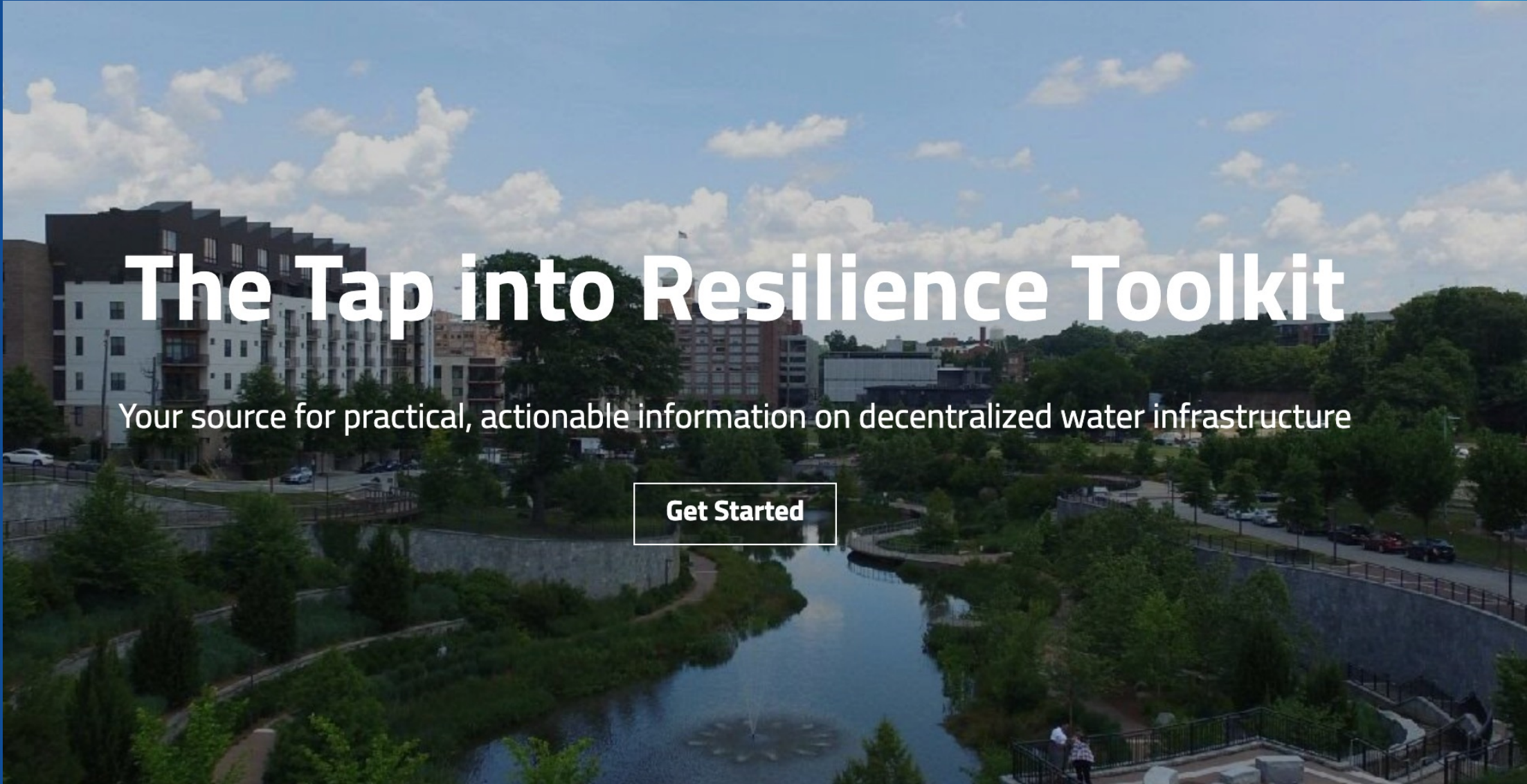
Key Drivers:

- Centering equity and affordability
- Securing a long-term water supply for all customers

Outcomes:

- A 48% reduction of indoor water use
- ~\$34,000 of reduced sewer bills for the 12-month billing period and ~\$31,000 of reduced water bills, totaling \$65,000 less on utility bills





The Tap into Resilience Toolkit

Your source for practical, actionable information on decentralized water infrastructure

[Get Started](#)



Water Equity and Climate Resilience for Frontline Communities

Find resources tailored to communities across the U.S. that face the first, and worst, impacts of water management challenges, including poor water quality and sanitation, flooding, and contamination and other impacts associated with stormwater runoff—all of which are exacerbated by climate change—in the **Frontline Communities** module.

Water Equitable & Affordable Water Infrastructure Investments



Welcome to the WaterNow



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There are 6 major sections:

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Through Partnerships, and

ArcGIS-based portal to ca

communities and others working to address locally

Water utilities serving frontline communities not only face water management challenges, but also encounter difficulties in accessing funding and financing mechanisms to invest in needed water infrastructure upgrades. Frontline communities' special challenges accessing the funding required to invest in vital water infrastructure range from **severely reduced federal financial support** for local water systems over the years, to **financially distressed rate bases** that cannot afford the cost of needed infrastructure, **declining populations** leading to a smaller number of customers within the utility service area, and/or **lack of internal capacity and expertise** to apply for the grant and support programs that are available. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified these already pressing issues as revenue losses hit urban areas hard.

Click through the sub-sections below to learn about available **federal and state grant and loan options for frontline communities** and how to **ensure inter-generational equity** when making water infrastructure investments.

Avoiding Water Shutoffs



tapin.waternow.org/toolkit/#frontline

LEVERAGING SRFs FOR INNOVATIVE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS

SRFs can fund green infrastructure, water use efficiency, and environmentally innovative projects

- Eligibility includes consumer incentive and direct installation programs
- Innovative solutions may include additional subsidization



Webinar: Leveraging SRFs

WaterNow's June 24, 2021, Leveraging State Revolving Funds for Innovative Water Infrastructure Investments webinar.

Read more



Water Finance Clearinghouse

EPA's Water Finance Clearinghouse is a central database of information on federal, state, and local drinking water, wastewater, and infrastructure needs.

Read more



EPA Municipal Ombudsman

EPA's Municipal Ombudsman provides a confidential, free, and impartial service to help resolve disputes between municipalities and the federal government.



State Revolving Fund Switchboard

Southwest Environmental Finance Center's repository of information for all 51 state revolving funds.

Read more



Environmental Finance Centers

Resources to help communities manage the costs of environmental financing and program management.

Read more



HUD Technical Assistance

Access technical assistance resources to learn how to leverage HUD funding for water infrastructure investments.

Read more



Privatization Issues: Decision-Maker Checklist

High-level framework to identify the type of public-private partnership best suited to a public water utility's needs, and best practices for evaluating service arrangements.

Read more

Frontline Communities



city to **borrow as needed to invest in either** lit ratings may make the cost of borrowing

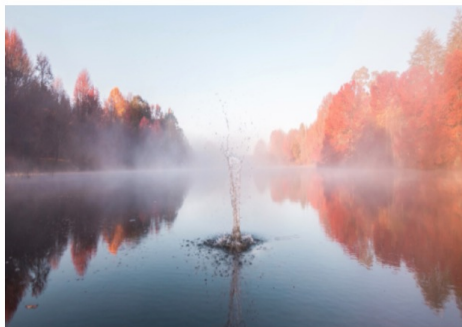
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Ensuring Inter-Generational Equity



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Final
November 15, 2021

Prepared for the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County

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WaterNow Alliance

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Municipal Finance Consultant
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A Water Leaders Guide to Financing Localized Solutions

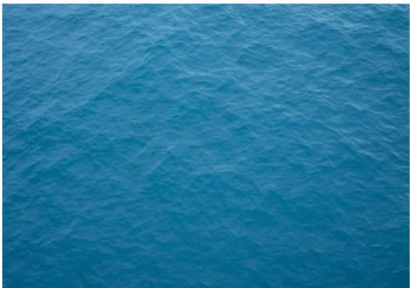
A water leader's guide to finance distributed infrastructure.

[Read more](#)

Funding & Financing

A primer providing a
understanding the di
funding and financing
for these functions n

[Read more](#)



Equitable Infrastructure Toolkit

River Network's Equitable Infrastructure Toolkit, a one-stop shop for guidance on identifying factors that affect water affordability, and an overview of water infrastructure funding and financing.

[Read more](#)



Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience

Learn more about California State Water Resources Control Board's Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience Program.

[Read more](#)



Accelerating Cost-Effective Green Stormwater Infrastructure

Dive into this report from UC Berkeley to learn lessons on cost and community effective and implementation of green stormwater infrastructure solutions.

[Read more](#)

What are my financing options?

The financing sections cover



Utility Costs & Revenue Sources

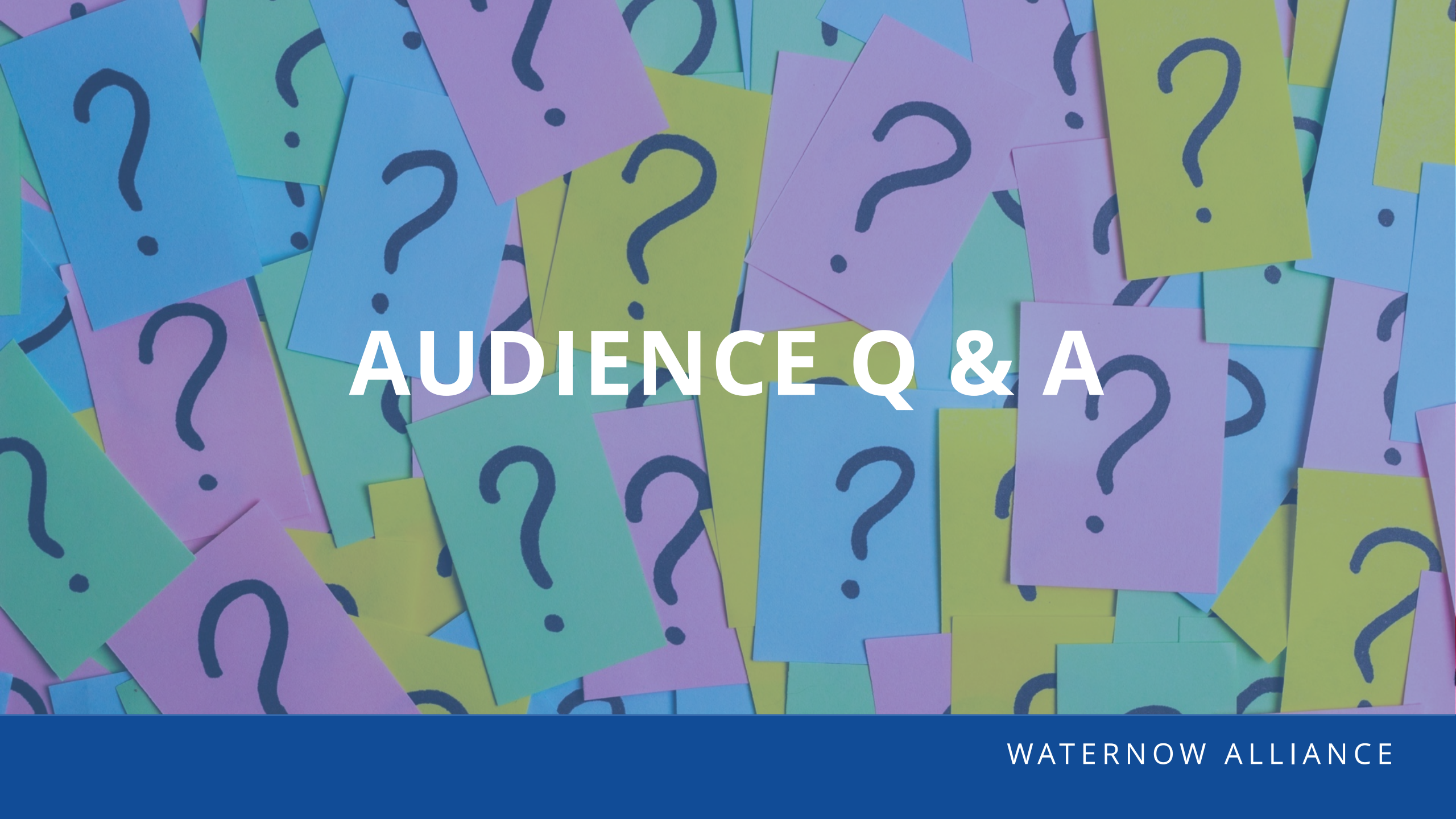


Debt Financing Localized Infrastructure



Accessing state, federal, and philanthropic funding

Materials are revealed as you move through the Toolkit by clicking on the sections below. Under each tab you'll find an overview of that topic, in-depth resources for download and further reading, explanatory videos, a searchable database, example ordinances and agreements, and much more. Sort the **All Resources** library by "TIR Toolkit" if you're looking for quick access to a specific resource.

The background of the slide is a dense, overlapping collage of rectangular sticky notes in various colors including light blue, teal, lavender, and lime green. Each sticky note features a large, dark blue question mark. The notes are scattered across the frame, creating a textured, layered effect.

AUDIENCE Q & A

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