



Integrated Planning in Action

Funding the Development of an Integrated Plan

EPA's Integrated Municipal Stormwater and Wastewater Planning Approach Framework helps municipalities meet clean water goals while prioritizing infrastructure investments with the greatest water quality improvements and community benefits. The Framework lays out a comprehensive, yet flexible planning process based on a set of overarching principles. EPA created a series of fact sheets—including this one—to inform municipalities interested in integrated planning.

Investing in integrated planning can lead to efficiencies.

Investing in a comprehensive integrated planning process can lead to long-term cost savings, multiple community benefits, and efficiencies in meeting a municipality's Clean Water Act obligations. If a municipality plans for wastewater, stormwater, and other infrastructure needs separately, inefficiencies and redundancies could cost more money in the long term. Integrated planning allows the municipality to create a single plan to address varied infrastructure needs while addressing the most critical water quality issues first.

The cost of developing an integrated plan varies.

The cost of developing an integrated plan depends on what a municipality already has done, such as recent asset management inventories, engineering designs, capital improvement plans, and master plans. Other factors such as the types of infrastructure, the incorporation of a financial analysis, and the modeling of data also affect the budget. Early in the process, municipalities should look across the work they are already doing to determine what can inform the integrated planning process and create a preliminary budget for the plan's development. The cost to develop a plan is typically less than 1 percent of the cost to implement the projects included in the plan.

Budget assumptions may not be precise at this stage, but considering the following will give municipalities a ballpark budget figure:

- **Timeframe.** The development of an integrated plan typically takes 18–36 months. A municipality's compliance schedule for related Clean Water Act deadlines can affect this schedule. Municipalities may also need to consider the



Rolla, Missouri

Rolla used \$100,000 in general funds to develop its \$94 million *Integrated Management Plan*. This equates to about 0.01 percent of the plan's total implementation cost.

Lawrence, Kansas

Lawrence's *Integrated 2012 Wastewater Utilities Plan* cost \$300,000 (in funds generated from utility fees) to develop over the three-year planning period. This equates to about 0.2 percent of the cost to implement the integrated plan.





Johnson County, Kansas

Johnson County's *Integrated Management Plan* cost \$1.3 million (in funds generated by utility fees) to develop: \$400,000 for the first phase and \$900,000 for the second phase. The plan development costs were about 0.6 percent of the total implementation cost.



Richmond, Virginia

Richmond's *Clean Water Plan* cost \$1.8 million (in funds generated by utility fees) to develop: \$1.3 million for watershed characterization, monitoring, assessments, and planning and \$500,000 for outreach over the three-year planning period. This equates to approximately 0.4 percent of the plan's total implementation cost.

number of municipal budget cycles required to complete the plan and outside funding availability (e.g., grant periods).

- **Existing data.** Using existing data will greatly influence the cost of developing an integrated plan. Municipalities should examine what high-quality, recent data, engineering designs, and plans can inform the integrated planning process. Having more directly applicable data can make planning less expensive—and municipalities will also find those data useful as they determine future infrastructure investments for climate change resiliency.
- **Staffing.** Integrated planning requires a variety of skills, from writing and facilitation to data collection, mapping, engineering, and modeling. Assessing whether these capabilities exist in-house (or if, instead, a municipality needs to develop partnerships or bring in consultants) is vital when determining costs.
- **Stakeholder engagement.** The integrated planning process requires stakeholder engagement at various stages, which can be folded into existing outreach efforts or a new outreach strategy. Decisions such as whether to use a third-party facilitator, how many events will be held, and how many (and which) stakeholders to engage will affect these costs.

Funding can come from a number of different sources.

Many municipalities use general funds from tax revenues, enterprise funds generated by utility fees, or municipal bonds to pay for infrastructure planning. However, outside sources may be necessary to fully fund expensive capital projects.

Many of the following sources of funding to develop a plan can be found at EPA's Clearinghouse for Environmental Finance: www.epa.gov/chef.

Programs tailored to serve the needs of small or underserved communities are indicated using the icon to the right.



Below are examples of funding sources for developing an integrated plan.

EPA loans:

- **Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF).** The CWSRF program is a federal-state partnership that provides communities low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. Planning activities likely to result in capital projects are eligible for CWSRF funding and the eligibilities guidance specifically lists integrated planning. Municipalities can contact their [state CWSRF coordinators](#) for more information or to apply.

- [Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act \(WIFIA\)](#). The WIFIA program provides long-term, low-cost supplemental loans for regionally and nationally significant projects, including to support planning activities for CWSRF-eligible projects.

EPA grants:

- [Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grants Program](#). This new program will provide funding for critical stormwater infrastructure projects and planning in communities including stormwater, green infrastructure, combined sewer overflows, and sanitary sewer overflows.

Other federal grants and loans:



- U.S. Department of Agriculture: [Water and Environmental Programs \(WEP\)](#). WEP provides funding for the construction of water and waste disposal systems in rural communities with populations of 10,000 or less. Funding opportunities include predevelopment planning grants and water and waste disposal loans and grants.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency: [Building Resilient Infrastructure Communities Program \(BRIC\)](#). BRIC uses grant funding to support states, local communities, tribes, and territories as they undertake hazard mitigation projects, reducing the risks they face from disasters and natural hazards. The program can fund hazard mitigation planning and planning-related activities.
- U.S. Department of the Treasury: [American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds](#). These funds provide a substantial infusion of resources to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery. They are available for making necessary investments to support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure.



- Economic Development Administration: [Fiscal Year 2020 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Program](#). The program provides investments in planning under the Administration's Public Works program to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities.

Other funding sources:

- States may also fund grants specifically for facility planning to encourage long-term infrastructure planning. For example, [Delaware's Wastewater Planning Grant](#) can help municipal wastewater utilities update wastewater facility plans, prepare preliminary engineering reports, or conduct planning studies.
- Philanthropic and nonprofit organizations, such as the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation, may also fund planning activities.

You can also reach out to EPA's Municipal Ombudsman to learn more about tailored technical assistance and funding options: <https://www.epa.gov/ocir/municipal-ombudsman>.