



**February 4, 2025**

**Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact**

**Columbus – Franklin County**

**Parsons Avenue Water Plant Control Room & Laboratory Renovation**

**Loan number: FS390274-0384**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a water treatment plant control room and laboratory upgrade and renovation project in Columbus which the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) intends to finance through its Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) below-market interest rate revolving loan program. The LER describes the project, costs, and expected environmental benefits. Making available this LER fulfills the Ohio EPA's environmental review and public notice requirements for this loan program.

Ohio EPA analyzes environmental effects of proposed projects as part of its program review and approval process. We have concluded that the proposed project should not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3745-150-05, this project meets the criteria for an LER rather than the more comprehensive Environmental Assessment. More information can be obtained by contacting the person named at the end of the attached LER.

Upon issuance of this Final Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) determination, award of funds may proceed without further environmental review or public comment unless new information shows that environmental conditions of the proposed project have changed significantly.

Sincerely,

*Steve Malone*, for

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief  
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

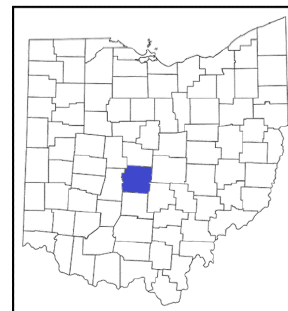
## LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

### **Project Identification**

Project: Parsons Avenue Water Plant Control Room & Laboratory Renovation

Applicant: City of Columbus  
910 Dublin Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Loan Number: FS390274-0384



**Figure 1. Franklin County**

### **Project Summary**

The City of Columbus in Franklin County has requested approximately \$2.9 million from the Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) for the renovation of the Parsons Avenue Water Plant (PAWP) control room and laboratory including upgrades to equipment. Construction will take place within the interior of the existing water treatment plant, thereby limiting potential impacts to environmental features.

### **History & Existing Conditions**

Columbus operates three large municipal water plants: Hap Cremean Water Plant (HCWP), Dublin Road Water Plant (DRWP), and Parsons Avenue Water Plant (PAWP). The three facilities are interconnected by the water distribution system, but each is unable to maintain water for the entire distribution system alone.

The PAWP is a ground water treatment plant with an approved capacity of 50 million gallons per day (MGD) and an annual average flow of 26 MGD. The PAWP provides water to approximately 200,000 customers across a service area generally consisting of the south portion of Franklin County including a mixture of residential, commercial, and light industrial users. The plant was originally constructed in 1981 and utilizes a system of wells to collect raw water from a high-quality aquifer. Recent improvements to the plant include replacement of clarifier mechanisms, a new recarbonation system, and electrical improvements to improve the resiliency and reliability of the plant.

The control room in the PAWP is the primary location where plant staff monitor and control the treatment process. The room houses operator workstations, computer hardware, networking equipment, and electrical equipment related to the plant's supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system. The laboratory room does not meet functional or ergonomic needs associated with current good design practices for control room layout and lighting and does not leverage the advantages of modern operator interface equipment and laboratory testing.

This project is necessary to improve space utilization, ergonomics, and to replace outdated control

room equipment and materials that are well beyond their useful life expectancy. The control room SCADA and instrumentation and control equipment are essential to the water treatment process with a limited number of operators on duty. The instrumentation and controls housed in and tests that are completed in these rooms are vital to the treatment and supply of safe drinking water to the Columbus and central Ohio area.

### **Project Description**

The project will reconfigure and renovate the control room and laboratory to meet functional and ergonomic needs and provide improved lighting. Alternatives evaluated for this project included type of raised flooring, drop ceiling, furniture, fire suppression system, electrical power distribution and uninterruptable power supply (UPS), and workstation layout.

The construction footprint for this project will remain within the confines of the existing water treatment plant facility, therefore minimizing effects on environmental resources. This project is not anticipated to impact any approved capacity values nor any changes to the water treatment process.

See Figure 2 below for a map of the project area.

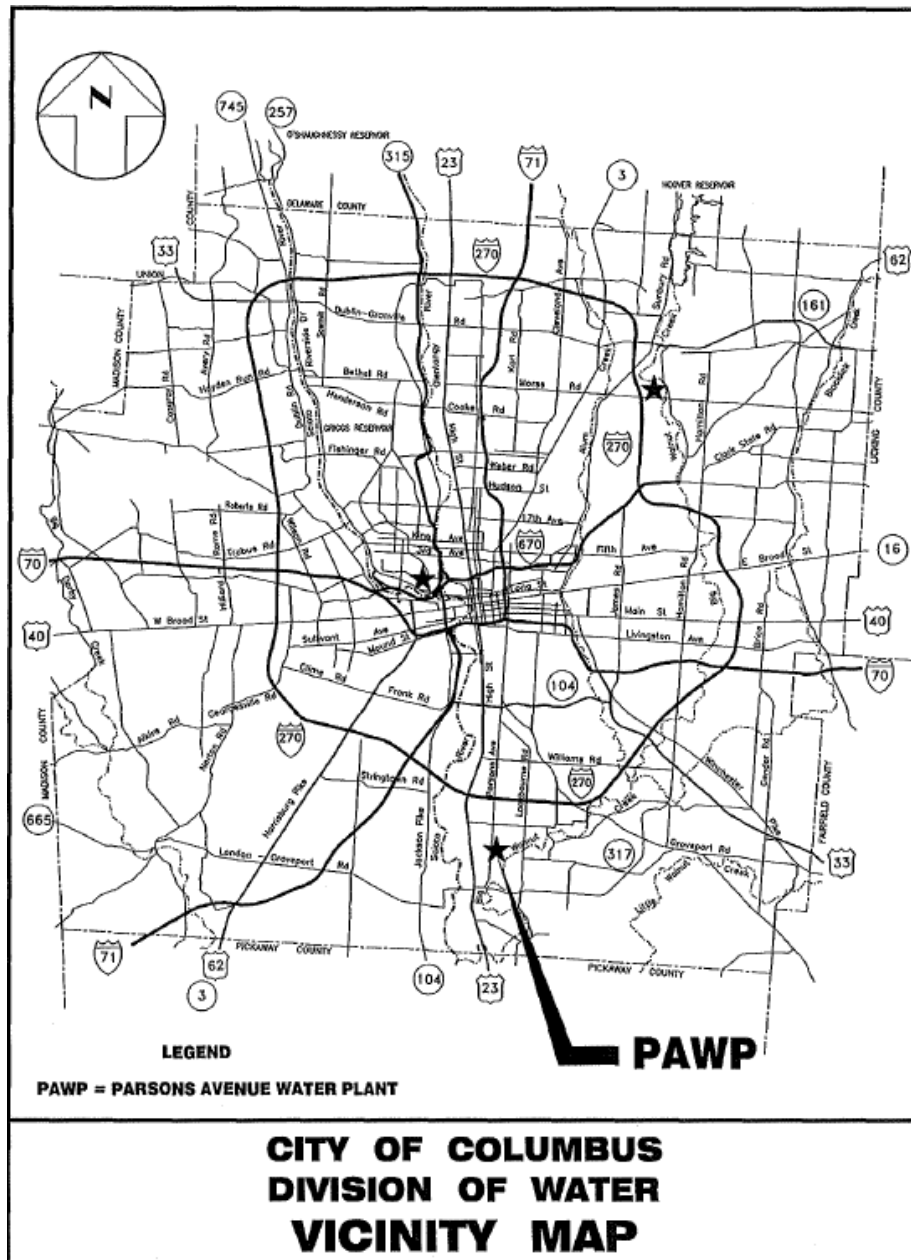


Figure 2. Location of Parsons Avenue Water Plant

**Implementation**

Columbus plans to borrow approximately \$2.9 million from the WSRLA over a 20-year loan period at the standard rate of 2.81%. When compared to the market rate of 4.06%, Columbus will save about \$447,000.

The current annual Columbus residential water bill is approximately \$583. Projected residential water bills with the implementation of this and other associated water projects are expected to increase to approximately \$618, or 1% of median household income (MHI) of Columbus, which is \$62,994. By using WSRLA financing for this project, Columbus has minimized the economic impact on customers.

The anticipated loan award will occur in February 2025. Construction is expected to be completed within 2026.

### **Public Participation**

This project is included in Columbus' capital improvement plan, which is accessible to the public. Design phase funding went through the city's legislation process, which provides public notice of the project and funding amounts. Future public participation is expected to be limited to legislation for the construction phase funding request since construction will occur entirely within the secure area of the PAWP and will not impact the general public.

Ohio EPA is unaware of any controversy about or opposition to this project. The Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact will be posted on City of Columbus and Ohio EPA Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance websites.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed project meets the criteria for a Limited Environmental Review (LER); namely, it is an action within an existing public water treatment system, which involves the functional replacement of and improvements to existing mechanical equipment. Furthermore, the project meets the other qualifying criteria for an LER; specifically, the proposed project:

**Has no significant environmental effect, no effect on high value environmental resources, and does not require extensive specific impact mitigation.**

Construction for the project is limited to the interior of the existing Parsons Avenue Water Plant and will have no environmental impacts.

**Is cost effective and not controversial.**

The proposed project is cost effective as upgrades will prevent future maintenance costs and resolve other possible issues in the future from outdated equipment. Ohio EPA is unaware of any specific opposition to or controversy about this project that will provide support to PAWP and allow for the distribution of safe, potable water to Columbus residents.

**Does not create a new, or relocate an existing discharge to surface or ground waters, and will not result in substantial increases in the volume of discharge or the loading of pollutants from an existing source or from new facilities to receiving waters; and will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the existing population.**

This project involves the renovation of the PAWP's control room and laboratory and does not otherwise alter Columbus' public water system (withdrawal, treatment, distribution, or usage of potable water).

Based upon Ohio EPA's review of the planning information and the materials presented in this Limited Environmental Review, we have concluded that there will be no significant adverse impacts from the proposed project as it relates to the environmental features discussed previously. This is because

these features do not exist in the project area, the features exist but will not be adversely affected, or the impacts will be temporary and mitigated.

This project will improve space utilization, ergonomics, and replace outdated control room equipment and materials that are well beyond their useful life expectancy. The instrumentation and controls housed in and tests that are completed in these rooms are essential to the water treatment process and will ensure the supply of safe drinking water to the Columbus and central Ohio area.

**Contact Information**

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