



September 3, 2024

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**City of Columbus – Franklin County
SWWTP Raw Sewage Pump Building Rehabilitation
Loan number: CS390274-0494**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a building rehabilitation project at Southerly Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWWTP) in Columbus which the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency intends to finance through its Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) below-market interest rate revolving loan program. The LER describes the project, its costs, and expected environmental benefits. Making available this LER fulfills 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 WPCLF program review and approval process. We have concluded that the proposed project should not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. This project's relatively narrow scope and lack of environmental impacts qualifies it for the LER rather than a more comprehensive Environmental Assessment. More information can be obtained by calling or writing the person named at the end of the attached LER.

Upon issuance of this 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Courtright".

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

Attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: SWWTP Raw Sewage Pump Building Rehabilitation

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

Loan Number: CS390274-0494

Project Summary

The City of Columbus in Franklin County has requested \$519,725 from the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for the rehabilitation of the Raw Sewage Pump Building at the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWWTP). Construction will take place within the confines of the existing plant and is not expected to cause adverse environmental impacts.

History & Existing Conditions

Southerly Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWWTP) is one of two large municipal wastewater treatment plants operated by the City of Columbus.

The existing Raw Sewage Pump Building is located in the northeast end of the SWWTP; it was decommissioned after the installation of the new raw sewage pumping station. The existing building was constructed around 1965 and consists of three levels. The building is in a state of disrepair due to long-term sewer gas exposure, leading to a failing brick façade, rusted lintels, and compromised doors and windows. These issues have not only weakened the building's structure but also allowed birds to infiltrate and nest, causing health hazards from accumulated animal waste.

Project Description

The project will focus on architectural, structural, electrical, and aesthetic improvements to SWWTP's Raw Sewage Pump Building. It will involve replacing the deteriorated brick façade, installing new storefront windows and doors, and conducting electrical upgrades to improve the building's lighting. The project also includes a thorough cleaning to remove any animal waste and nesting, ensuring the building is safe and sanitary for its conversion into a functional office space for plant staff.

The construction footprint for this project will remain within the confines of the existing wastewater treatment plant buildings, thereby minimizing effects on environmental resources. The contractor is responsible for best management practices to control erosion and sedimentation and minimize the creation of dust during construction.

Maps of the project location are provided in the exhibits below.

Implementation

Project Costs

Columbus plans to borrow \$519,725 from the WPCLF. During the 20-year loan period, Columbus will save \$80,674 by using WPCLF dollars at the standard rate of 2.72%, compared to the market rate of 3.97%. WPCLF interest rates are set monthly and may change for a later loan award.

Local Economy

The current Columbus residential sewer bill is approximately \$661 per year. Projected residential sewer bills with the implementation of this and other associated wastewater projects are expected to increase to approximately \$847 per year, or 1.4% of the median household income (MHI) of Columbus, which is \$58,575.

By using WPCLF financing for this project, Columbus has minimized the economic impact on customers.

Project Schedule

The anticipated loan award will occur in September 2024. Construction will start following the loan award and is expected to be completed by July 2025.

Public Participation

The City of Columbus' Public Utilities webpage details proposed Capital Improvement Projects within the Division of Sewerage & Drainage. Contact information is provided for any public questions or concerns.

Ohio EPA will make a copy of this document available to the public on its web page: <https://epa.ohio.gov/divisions-and-offices/environmental-financial-assistance/announcements> and will provide it upon request to interested parties. Information supporting this Limited Environmental Review (LER) is available from the project contact named below.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the criteria for a Limited Environmental Review (LER); namely, it is an action to improve an existing building. 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 previously disturbed footprint of the existing Southerly WWTP, which lacks important environmental features. Standard construction best management practices will be required to control dust, sediment runoff, noise, and maintain safety. Although construction will occur within the floodplain, no new structures will be installed above the existing grade and the contractor will commit to take all necessary precautions to protect project work and equipment against flooding occurrences.

Is cost effective and not controversial.

The proposed project is cost effective as it involves seeking rehabilitation to an existing structure that has deteriorated. The completion of this structure will provide a new functional space as opposed to constructing a new office building. DEFA is unaware of any specific opposition to or

controversy about this project.

Does not create a new, or relocate an existing discharge to surface or ground waters, 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.

The project will not increase wastewater discharges, nor provide capacity to serve a greater population. There will be no change in pollutant loading.

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 provide a refurbished office space for personnel at the SWWTP to utilize that is structurally sound and safe from hazardous material.

Contact Information

Kristin Parrish
Ohio EPA-DEFA
PO Box 1049
Columbus, OH 43216-1049

Email: kristin.parrish@epa.ohio.gov

Exhibit 1: Project location map



Exhibit 2: Project location map

