



April 2, 2024

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**City of Columbus – Franklin County
Inflow Redirection – Noble & 4th Street
Loan number: CS390274-0359**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a storm sewer construction project 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,

Steve Malone (for)

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

Attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: Inflow Redirection – Noble & 4th Street

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

Loan Number: CS390274-0359

Project Summary

The City of Columbus in Franklin County has requested \$2,498,824 from the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) to remove stormwater inflow from the combined sewer system and redirect it to a dedicated stormwater system to mitigate combined sewer overflow (CSO) discharges. This project will occur within existing roadways and city rights-of-way and no significant adverse environmental impacts are expected.

History & Existing Conditions

The City of Columbus owns, operates, and maintains a complex sewer system that includes both separated and combined sewers. The system generally drains from north to south where it is treated at one of the city's interconnected treatment plants, either the Jackson Pike Wastewater Treatment Plant (JPWWTP) or the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWWTP). After treatment, the wastewater is released to the Scioto River. The combined sewers deliver storm flows as well as sanitary sewage to be treated, which is costly for the city.

The proposed project area consists of East Noble Street between South 4th and South 5th streets in downtown Columbus. The area is currently served by a 24-inch combined sewer that conveys flows directly to Columbus' sanitary sewer system. The existing 24-inch combined sewer provides sanitary service to four buildings along East Noble Street and is a discharge collection point for several adjacent properties' on-site private storm drainage system as well as public roadway drainage areas.

Columbus, under a consent decree with Ohio EPA, is proposing that storm flows be redirected out of the combined sewer to the maximum extent practicable in various locations throughout the city. The East Noble and South 4th inflow redirection project will accomplish this reduction by separating sanitary and storm sewer flows to reduce flows to the WWTPs for treatment.

Project Description

The purpose of the project is to divert inflow to the combined sewer on Noble Street between South 4th Street and South 5th Street. A new 10-inch sanitary main will be installed and the existing 24-inch sewer will be relined and converted to storm sewer.

Project construction will occur within existing rights-of-way alongside roadways and existing utilities. The contractor will be responsible for dust control and control of erosion and

sedimentation during construction.

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

Implementation

Project Costs

Columbus plans to borrow \$2,498,824 from the WPCLF. During the 20-year loan period Columbus will save \$382,024 by using WPCLF dollars at the standard rate of 2.42%, compared to the market rate of 3.67%. Interest rates are set monthly and may change for a later loan award.

Local Economy

The current Columbus residential sewer bill is approximately \$647 per year. Projected residential sewer bills with the implementation of this project and other associated sewer projects are expected to increase to approximately \$866 per year, or around 1.6% of median household income (MHI) of Columbus, which is \$54,902.

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

Project Schedule

The anticipated loan award date is April 2024. Construction is expected to begin shortly after loan award and be completed by July 2025.

Public Participation

A public notice is posted on the City of Columbus' Public Utilities webpage detailing the proposed construction project as well as contact information for public questions and 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 within an existing public wastewater collection system, which involves functional replacement of the existing system. 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 sanitary sewer system within roadways and public rights-of-way containing existing utilities, which lack important environmental features. Standard construction best management practices during construction will be required to control dust, sediment runoff, noise, and maintain safety.

Is cost effective and not controversial.

The proposed project is cost effective as there is no alternative to mitigate CSOs to protect human

health. Ohio EPA 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 involves the construction of a dedicated stormwater system within the city's wastewater collection system. 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 the available planning information for this project and the materials presented within this LER, Ohio EPA concludes that the proposed project will not result in any significant adverse impacts to any environmental features. The project is expected to have no significant short-term or long-term adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment or on sensitive resources such as surface waters, coastal zones, riparian areas, floodplains, wetlands, state-designated scenic or recreational rivers, prime or unique agricultural lands, aquifer recharge zones, archaeologically or historically significant sites, or threatened or endangered species.

This project will improve the city's sanitary sewer collection system and protect human health.

Contact Information

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

Email: kristin.parrish@epa.ohio.gov

Exhibit 1: Project location map

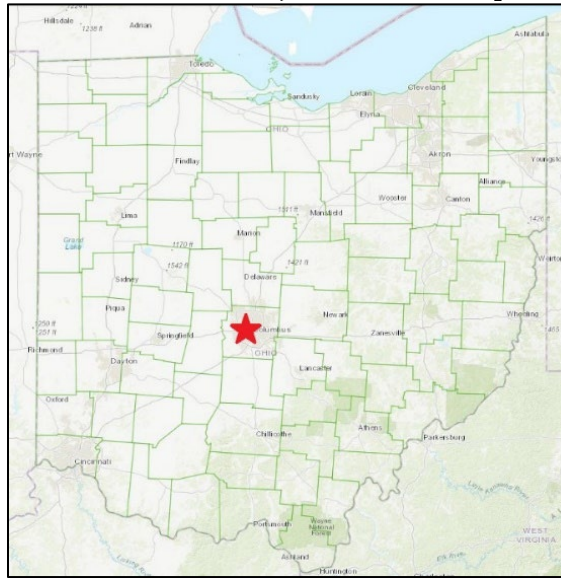


Exhibit 2: Project location map

