



Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor
Laurie A. Stevenson, Director

September 23, 2020

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**City of Columbus – Franklin County
Harrington Ct. Area WL Improvements
Loan number: FS390274-0307**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a waterline replacement project in Columbus which the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency intends to finance through its Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) 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 WSRLA 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,

Jonathan Bernstein

Jonathan Bernstein, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

Attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: Columbus – Harrington Ct. Area WL Improvements

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

Loan number: FS390274-0307

Project Summary

The City of Columbus in Franklin County has requested \$3,543,196 from the Ohio Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) for construction of replacement water mains in the Harrington Court area.

History and Existing Conditions

Columbus operates an extensive water treatment and distribution system that serves the city and most of Franklin County, delivering 50 billion gallons of water per year to its service area. Prior to treatment, water is sourced from reservoirs, wells, rivers, and creeks, including Big Walnut Creek. Existing water mains ranging from 48 to 57 years in age and from 2-inches to 12-inches in diameter are located around the East Dublin Granville Road and Karl Road area. The existing water mains are in need of replacement to reduce the regular maintenance due to deteriorated conditions. If not addressed, the flow and water quality of the existing mains will decrease. Water main breaks will continue and require more costly maintenance.

Project Description

This project involves constructing approximately 9,000 linear feet of 2-inch to 12-inch diameter replacement waterlines to replace the existing small-diameter and aging waterlines that have a high break frequency in the Harrington Court area. Water service lines within the area will be transferred to the new waterline and existing lines will be abandoned. The new waterline will have an estimated service life of 100 years and will improve water service, reduce water loss, and significantly reduce the regular maintenance required by the existing main. New fire hydrants and copper water taps will also be installed.

The construction footprint for this project will remain within the previously disturbed rights-of-way alongside the roadway and existing waterline, thereby minimizing effects on environmental resources. To protect endangered bat species, tree clearing will occur between October 1st and March 31st. The contractor is responsible for best management practices to control dust, erosion and sedimentation, and maintain local traffic during construction.

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

Implementation

Project Costs

Columbus plans to borrow \$3,543,196 from the WSRLA. During the 20-year loan period, Columbus will save approximately \$487,815 by using WSRLA dollars at the standard rate of 0.53%, compared to the market rate of 1.78%.

Local Economy

The median household income (MHI) of Columbus is \$44,774 and the current Columbus residential water bill is approximately \$488/year. Projected residential water bills with the implementation of this and other related projects are expected to increase to approximately \$542/year, which is approximately 1.2% of the MHI. This is equal to the state average of 1.2% and is considered affordable.

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

Project Schedule

The anticipated loan award will occur in October 2020. Construction is expected to commence shortly after the funds have been awarded and be completed in approximately 12 months.

Public Participation

A public notice was posted on the City of Columbus' Public Utilities webpage detailing the proposed construction project. Contact information was provided for any public questions or concerns. Prior to construction, the Neighborhood Liaisons will be contacted and informed of the project. Further community outreach may result through the Neighborhood Liaison Program. Notification letters will also be mailed out in advance to residents located near the project area. These letters will provide detailed information regarding the project and important contact numbers.

Reviews of the respective environmental resources were completed by Ohio EPA, Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance (DEFA). The review agency does not oppose the project.

Ohio EPA will make a copy of this document available to the public on its web page: <http://epa.ohio.gov/defa/ofa.aspx> (Under the "What's New" tab, scroll to "Documents Available for Review and Comment – WSRLA Documents for Review and Comment") 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 project type criteria for a Limited Environmental Review (LER); namely, it is an action 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.*

The project replaces waterlines within the previously disturbed rights-of-way alongside the roadway and existing waterline, therefore areas lacking important environmental features. No stream crossings or in-wetland work is scheduled to occur, and there will be no

construction within prime farmland or within the floodplain. If necessary, tree clearing is to occur within seasonal clearing dates to protect endangered bat species located in the area. The contractor is responsible for dust control, sedimentation and erosion control, and maintenance of traffic during construction.

- *Is cost-effective and not controversial.*

The proposed project is cost-effective, as the overall costs and benefits of replacement of the water mains outweigh the temporary advantages of rehabilitation. Taking no action would allow the flow and water quality of the existing main to decrease and continue to accumulate maintenance costs, which average \$5,000 per break. DEFA is unaware of any specific opposition to or controversy about this project that will improve the safety and efficiency of a continuous supply of potable water to customers.

- *Does not create a new, or relocate an existing, discharge to surface or ground waters; will not create a new source of water withdrawals from either surface or ground waters; will not significantly increase the amount of water withdrawn from an existing water source; 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 replacement of the existing waterline which services the area. It does not otherwise alter Columbus's public water system (withdrawal, treatment, distribution, or usage of potable water).

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 help to ensure the safety and efficiency of water distributed to the Columbus area.

Contact

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Exhibit 1: Project Location Map



Exhibit 2: Project Location Map

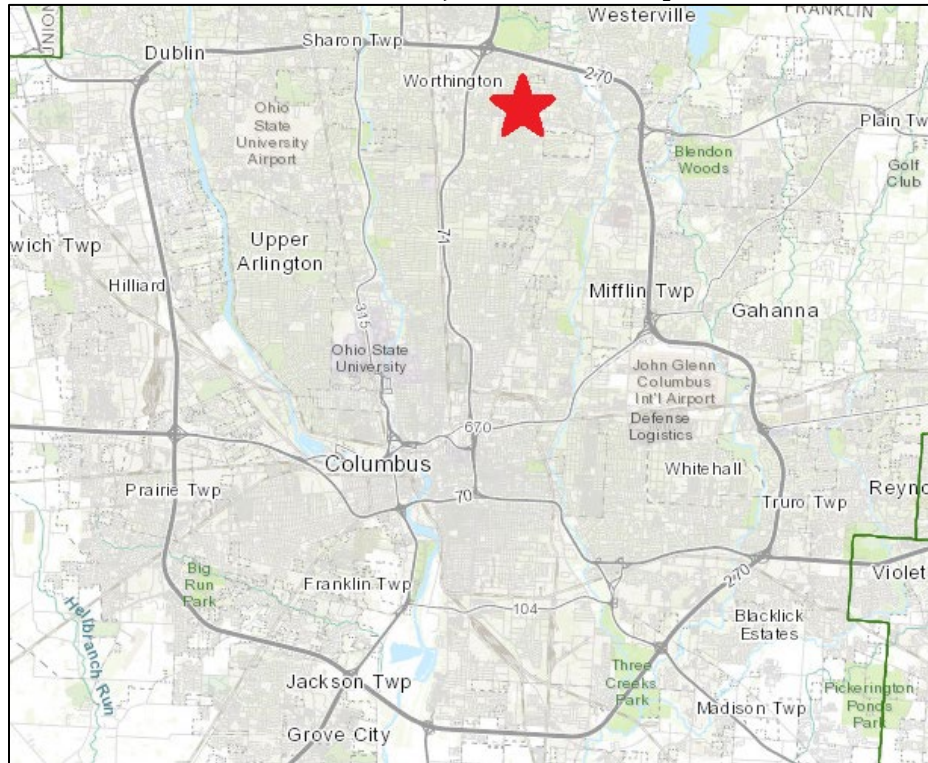


Exhibit 3: Project Location Map

