



**September 6, 2023**

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

**City of Columbus – Franklin County  
Surveillance Laboratory LC-MS/MS Equipment  
Loan number: CS390274-0448**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a laboratory equipment 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,

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: Surveillance Laboratory LC-MS/MS Equipment

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

Loan Number: CS390274-0448

### **Project Summary**

The City of Columbus in Franklin County has requested \$650,000 from the Ohio Water Pollution Control Fund (WPCLF) for the purchase of liquid chromatography with tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) equipment that will allow the Surveillance Laboratory to analyze wastewater samples for emerging contaminants. Construction will take place within the interior of the laboratory, therefore limiting potential impacts to environmental features.

This project is approved for principal forgiveness under the Emerging Contaminants category.

### **History & Existing Conditions**

The City of Columbus treats residential and industrial sanitary waste from homes and businesses located in the city and most surrounding suburbs. The underground system that conveys this wastewater is made up of 167 miles of combined sewer and 2,782 miles of separate sanitary sewer pipe that transports wastewater to one of two treatment plants: Jackson Pike or Southerly. An additional 2,537 miles of pipe make up the stormwater collection system. Jackson Pike and Southerly wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) treated an average of 188 million gallons per day in 2020. The clean, treated water is discharged into the Scioto River.

The sewer system Surveillance Laboratory, located at 1250 Fairwood Avenue, currently does not have a way to analyze wastewater samples for emerging contaminants that could negatively impact the treated discharge at both the Southerly and Jackson Pike WWTPs.

Due to considerable industrial growth in Columbus' collection system, this equipment is necessary to enable monitoring for emerging contaminants. Protecting the city's WWTPs prevents negative impacts to receiving waters and the community at large.

### **Project Description**

This project will provide funds for the purchase of a liquid chromatography with tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) unit for Columbus' wastewater system Surveillance Laboratory. This equipment will allow the lab to analyze wastewater samples for emerging contaminants, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and azole compounds.

This loan is for equipment purchase only. Any associated installation construction will remain within the confines of the Surveillance Laboratory facility, therefore minimizing effects on environmental resources. This project is not anticipated to impact any approved capacity values nor any changes to the wastewater treatment process.

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

### **Implementation**

#### *Project Costs*

Columbus plans to borrow \$650,000 from the WPCLF. This project is eligible for principal forgiveness under the Emerging Contaminants category.

#### *Local Economy*

The current annual Columbus residential sewer bill is approximately \$647. Projected annual residential sewer bills with the implementation of this and other associated sewer infrastructure projects are expected to increase to approximately \$820, or 1.5% of median household income (MHI) of Columbus, which is \$54,902. This annual bill is higher than the Ohio average of \$749.

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 2023 and the equipment is expected to be purchased soon after.

### **Public Participation**

A public notice is posted on the City of Columbus' Public Utilities webpage detailing the proposed construction project. 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 within an existing public wastewater 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:

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

This loan is for equipment purchase only and construction will be limited to the interior of the existing Surveillance Laboratory and will have no environmental impacts.

**It is cost effective and not controversial.**

The proposed project is cost effective as there is no feasible alternative to the necessary purchase of equipment. Ohio EPA is unaware of any specific opposition to or controversy about this project that will provide support to Columbus' wastewater treatment plants and prevent negative impacts to receiving waters.

**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.**

This loan is for equipment purchase only and will not impact the volume of discharge nor create a new discharge location.

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.

### **Contact Information**

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

Email: [kristin.parrish@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:kristin.parrish@epa.ohio.gov)

**Exhibit 1: Project location map**



**Exhibit 2: Project location map**

