



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

January 25, 2021

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**Village of Whitehouse - Lucas County
Wabash Cannonball Trail Interceptor Sewer
Loan number: CS390993-0002**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a wastewater treatment project in Lucas County 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,

Jonathan Bernstein

Jonathan Bernstein, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

Attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: Village of Whitehouse Wabash Cannonball Trail Interceptor Sewer

Applicant: Jordan Daugherty, Village Administrator
Village of Whitehouse
6925 Providence Street
P.O. Box 2476
Whitehouse, Ohio 43571

Loan Number: CS390993-0002

Project Summary

The Village of Whitehouse has requested financial assistance from the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for the Wabash Cannonball Trail Interceptor Sewer project. The work consists of the installation of approximately 6,700 linear feet (LF) of sanitary sewers and 800 LF of storm sewers, improvements to an existing wastewater pump station, and decommissioning of two aged wastewater pump stations and wastewater force main sewers. The project is designed to improve wastewater flows through the replacement of and improvements to aged wastewater conveyance structures. The estimated loan amount is \$2,486,185. The project is scheduled to begin construction in the first quarter of 2021 and be completed in seven months.

History & Existing Conditions

Whitehouse is located in southwestern Lucas County, south of Interstate-80 and west of U.S. 24. Whitehouse has approximately 5,300 sewer accounts served by 11,000 LF of 8- to 10-inch sanitary sewer. Whitehouse formerly maintained its own wastewater treatment plant, but this aged facility was decommissioned in 1988. Whitehouse's wastewater is now conveyed to the Lucas County Water Resource Recovery Facility wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) for treatment. Treated wastewater from this facility is discharged to the Maumee River.

This project affects three wastewater pump stations located in Whitehouse. The Field Avenue Pump Station (PS) collects wastewater flows in the central portion of Whitehouse. Flows from the Field Avenue PS are conveyed by two 8-inch diameter force main sewers to the Blue Grass Farms PS, where they combine with flows collected from the southern portion of Whitehouse. The Blue Grass Farms PS conveys these flows via a 12-inch diameter force main sewer to the Finzel Road PS, where they combine with flows collected from the eastern portion of Whitehouse. The Finzel Road PS conveys this wastewater via a 14-inch diameter force main to a gravity sewer within the Lucas County Sanitary Sewer System on Russel Road, southwest of Fallen Timbers Mall. This wastewater is conveyed by gravity to the Lucas County Water Resource Recovery Facility WWTP for treatment.

The Field Avenue PS, constructed in the late 1980s, primarily suffers from an undersized wet well, out of date pumps and mechanical components, and inundation related to infiltration and inflow (I/I)¹ during wet weather. Additionally, one of the 8-inch force mains has a flow restriction that hampers wastewater conveyance. The Blue Grass Farms PS, constructed in the mid-1990s, has outdated mechanical components, inundation issues related to I/I during wet weather, and corrosion issues. The Finzel Road PS was constructed in 1988, with pump equipment replaced and upgraded in 2017. The Finzel Road PS deficiencies are related to aged, non-pump related equipment, as well as severe corrosion and odors from hydrogen sulfide produced in the conveyed wastewater.

The population in Whitehouse has experienced slight increases in recent years. However, from 1970 to 2010, Lucas County as a whole has been consistently decreasing at a rate of approximately 1,075 persons per year or approximately 0.2 percent per year. With this negative growth rate, the population of Lucas County in the year 2030 would be 419,960.

Project Description

The Wabash Cannonball Trail Interceptor Sewer project (see figures 1 and 2) consists of the following:

- Open cut installation of 6,300 LF of 8- to 24-inch diameter sanitary sewers
- Directionally bored installation of 344 LF of 24-inch diameter sanitary sewers
- Installation of 788 LF of 8- to 36-inch diameter storm sewers
- Demolition of the Blue Grass Farms Pump Station
- Demolition of the Field Avenue Pump Station
- Rehabilitation of the Finzel Road Pump Station
- Abandonment of the existing force mains between Field Avenue, Blue Grass Farms, and Finzel Road pump stations
- Installation and removal of various manholes
- Miscellaneous site work and restoration activities

Implementation

The total estimated cost for the Wabash Cannonball Trail Interceptor Sewer project is \$2,486,185, all of which Whitehouse proposes to borrow from the WPCLF. The project service area qualifies for the Small Systems WPCLF below-market interest rate on 20-year construction loans, which for February is 0.22 percent (WPCLF loan interest rates are set monthly and the rate may change for a later loan award). Borrowing at 0.22 percent will save Whitehouse approximately \$395,000 over the life of the loan compared to the current market rate of 1.68 percent.

Debt for the project will be repaid with revenue generated by sewer rates and from Whitehouse's capital funds. The local median household income (MHI) is \$87,955. Under the sewer rates that are effective in 2021, and based on average monthly water usage, the average residential sewer bill is \$22.52 per month, or \$270.24 per year. This represents 0.31 percent of the MHI, which is considered affordable.

¹ Infiltration is the ground water that seeps into sanitary sewers through cracks, offset joints, and other flaws in the pipe. Inflow is surface runoff that enters sanitary sewers through directly connected downspouts, area drains, etc.

Public Participation

Whitehouse has discussed the project at village council meetings that were open to the public, additional project information will be posted in the local newspaper, and the LER will be posted on Whitehouse's website. Given the limited potential environmental and economic impact of the project, this is considered adequate public participation.

Conclusion

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

- *Will have no adverse environmental effect and will require no specific impact mitigation, as there are no known sensitive environmental resources within the proposed project area. The proposed project activities include demolition of two aged wastewater pump stations, improvements to a third pump station, and replacement of wastewater force main with gravity sewers in the areas of existing wastewater infrastructure. There will be no significant adverse effects as a result of project implementation, or the need for any additional mitigation measures beyond typical erosion control and construction best management practices.*
- *Will have no effect on high-value environmental resources, as construction will take place within the areas of existing wastewater pump stations and wastewater rights-of-way that contain existing wastewater conveyance structures where extensive excavation has previously taken place and where no high-value resources are present.*
- *Is cost-effective, as the proposed action improves wastewater conveyance within the existing collections system utilizing the most cost-effective alternative*
- *Is not a controversial action, as there is no known opposition to the proposed project, the cost of the project is not overly burdensome to ratepayers, and the project will be financed through the WPCLF, saving approximately \$410,000 in interest payments over conventional financing.*
- *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 loading of pollutants from an existing source or from new facilities to receiving waters, since the project only involves improvements to and replacement of aged infrastructure to improve wastewater conveyance and reduce I/I.*
- *Will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the existing population, since the project is not related to serving new growth or increasing capacity at the wastewater treatment facilities.*

In summary, the planning activities for the project have identified no potentially significant adverse impacts. 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 (surface water, ground water, air

quality, floodplains, wetlands, riparian areas, prime or unique agricultural lands, aquifer recharge zones, archaeologically or historically significant sites, federal or state-designated wild, scenic or recreational rivers, federal or state-designated wildlife areas, or threatened or endangered species). Typical construction impacts, such as noise, dust, and exhaust fumes, will be short-term and addressed through the use of standard construction best management practices.

The proposed project is a cost-effective way to address an aged wastewater conveyance system. Once implemented, the project will improve aged infrastructure, helping Whitehouse to reduce I/I, and improve conveyance of collected wastewater to the Lucas County Water Resource Recovery Facility WWTP. Also, by using WPCLF low-interest financing, Whitehouse has minimized the project cost.

Contact information

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Figure 1: General Project Area



Figure 2: Pump stations, in red, and proposed sewer, in green