



John R. Kasich, Governor
Mary Taylor, Lt. Governor
Craig W. Butler, Director

August 10, 2017
Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact
City of Columbus – Scottwood Road Water Line Improvements, CIP No. 690236-100076
Franklin County
WSRLA No. FS390274-0240

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a water supply project in your area 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 document.

Loan award will proceed without further environmental review or public comment unless new information shows that environmental conditions of the proposed project have changed significantly.

Sincerely,

for 

Jerry Rouch, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance
Office of Financial Assistance

JR/JS

attachment

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name: Columbus – Scottwood Road Water Line Improvements, CIP No. 690236-100076

WSRLA No.: FS390274-0240

Project Contact Tracie Davies, Director
Columbus Department of Public Utilities
910 Dublin Road
Columbus, OH 43215

B. HISTORY and EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City of Columbus, in Franklin County, owns and operates three water treatment plants and a water distribution system that provides potable drinking water to approximately 1.2 million people. The Scottwood Road project area (See Figures 1 and 2), includes existing water mains ranging from 55 to 63 years in age, and from 2-inches to 8-inches in diameter. These mains have a high breakage rate, which causes water quality issues, costly and inconvenient repairs, water loss and poor fire protection capacity. The City of Columbus has requested assistance from the Ohio Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) to finance needed improvements to ensure future reliability and effective operation. The WSRLA will pay for approximately \$3.6 million of this \$3.9 million project. Local funds will supply the remaining balance.

C. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Scottwood Road Area Water Line Improvements Project will be constructed as part of the Division of Water’s Replacement and Rehabilitation (R&R) Program. The water line project area is located within the Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge Planning Area, north of Interstate 70 and south of Astor Avenue, between South James Road and Courtright Road (See Figure 2). The project will remedy the deterioration and deficiencies of the water distribution system within the Scottwood Road area (see figures below) by replacing approximately 15,325 feet of existing water mains with new water mains. Additionally, new service lines, valves and fire hydrants will be installed, and existing water lines will be abandoned in place or removed.

All work will occur primarily beneath pavement or in existing rights-of-way within the City of Columbus, a developed area lacking important environmental features, and requires no new easements for construction.

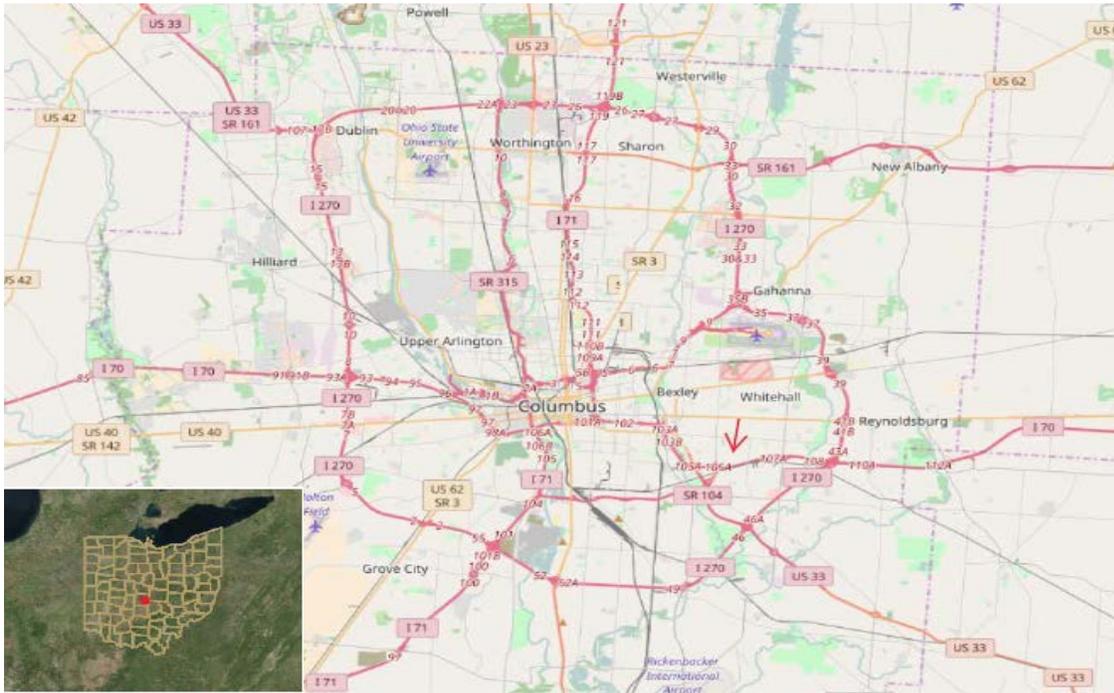


Figure 1. Project area



Figure 2. Site map

D. ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS

The City of Columbus will borrow approximately \$3.6 million from the WSRLA at the Standard interest rate (now 1.89%; the rate is set monthly and may change before loan award). During the 20-year loan period, the City of Columbus will save approximately \$900,000 by using WSRLA dollars at this rate, compared to the market rate of 3.14%.

E. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The anticipated loan award will occur in December 2017. Construction is expected to begin in Spring 2018, with the work being completed by mid-2019.

F. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

The City of Columbus Department of Public Utilities webpage has an information page dedicated to the Scottwood Road Area Waterline Improvements project. The project is included in the city's capital improvement plan, which is accessible to the public. Annual notices of water line rehabilitation and replacement projects are posted on the Division of Water's website.

Prior to construction, the Neighborhood Liaison 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 details of the project and contact information. Based on the limited environmental and economic impacts, this is considered an appropriate level of public participation.

Ohio EPA will make a copy of this document available to the public on its web page: <http://epa.ohio.gov/defa/ofa.aspx> ("WSRLA Documents for Review and Comment") and will provide it upon request to interested parties. Information supporting the LER is available from the project contact named below.

G. PLANNING INFORMATION

The proposed project was reviewed by the Ohio EPA Division of Drinking and Ground Waters and Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance. No review agency opposes the project.

H. CONCLUSION

The proposed water main improvements are a minor upgrading of an existing public water system that qualifies for an LER and meet the following additional LER criteria:

They have no significant environmental effect, no effect on high value environmental resources,

and do not require extensive specific impact mitigation. The project replaces water mains, valves and hydrants in previously-disturbed, developed areas experiencing numerous breaks or water pressure problems. All work will be in existing streets or rights-of-way, areas lacking important environmental features. The type of construction involved (i.e., constructing new water lines, abandoning/removing the existing lines, and restoring the work sites) is typical for such work and creates relatively few impacts. Standard construction best management practices will minimize noise, dust and storm water runoff, while appropriate traffic controls will help minimize traffic disruption during work in and along roads.

They are cost effective and not controversial. With a significant number of main breaks, unaccounted for water and potentially limited fire protection, the proposed water main improvements are clearly more cost effective than leaving the old and deteriorating system in place. A typical Columbus household's average annual water bill is approximately \$440 which is 0.98% of local median household income (MHI = \$44,744). These numbers compare favorably to the Ohio average water bill of \$592 and 1.2% of Ohio MHI. Water bills below 1.8% of MHI are generally considered affordable. Ohio EPA is unaware of controversy about or opposition to this project.

This project 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 routine replacement of water mains, valves and hydrants and does not otherwise alter Columbus's public water system (withdrawal, treatment, distribution or usage of potable water).

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 waters, coastal zones, floodplains, wetlands, state-designated scenic or recreational rivers, prime or unique agricultural lands, aquifer recharge zones, archaeologically or historically significant sites, threatened or endangered species, or state and federal wildlife areas). The Flood Plain Manager for the City of Columbus determined that the project will cross the existing floodplain, but will not affect flooding or flood elevations. The project will help Columbus to improve the overall reliability of its public drinking water system.

I. CONTACT PERSON

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