



**January 4, 2024**

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

**City of Columbus – Franklin County  
Inflow Redirection - Markison  
Loan number: CS390274-0456**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a stormwater inflow redirection 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: Inflow Redirection - Markison

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

Loan Number: CS390274-0456

### **Project Summary**

The City of Columbus in Franklin County has requested \$28,345,080 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**

During normal flow conditions, combined flow from the Markison sewer area is conveyed to the Jackson Pike Wastewater Treatment Plant through the South Side Interceptor and Olentangy Scioto Interceptor. Under extreme storm conditions, the Markison Avenue CSO Regulator controls the discharge of combined flow to the existing sanitary system by overflowing to the 72-inch storm sewer that ultimately discharges into the Scioto River at the Marion Road outfall. Columbus is under a consent order to mitigate CSO at the Markison CSO Regulator to a “typical year level of service.”

A study was completed to determine the amount of inflow redirection required in the project area required to meet the consent order goals. Data such as project area characteristics, complaint history in the area, soil conditions, conditions of the storm sewer system, elevations of existing storm piping as well as drainage structures, identification of utility conflicts, and a thorough evaluation of the regulator structure itself was utilized to develop feasible, constructible solutions to achieve the inflow redirection flow.

### **Project Description**

The purpose of this project is to reduce the number of anticipated CSO activations to zero at the Markison Avenue CSO Regulator and mitigate potential water-in-basement occurrences in the Markison basin up to the 10-year level of service.

This will involve constructing 17,500 linear feet of new dedicated storm sewer in the Markison project area and re-directing flows from the combined sewer that flows to the existing Markison regulator. A new regulator structure and sanitary diversion structure will convey dry weather flows to existing sanitary sewer to the south and wet weather flows to the existing storm sewer to the north. Improvements will also be made to the Markison Avenue CSO Regulator to increase capture, including removing the regulator sluiceway, increasing the size of the underflow pipe, raising the

overflow weir, and removing one weir just upstream of the regulator.

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. Tree clearing is expected to occur within seasonal timeframes to prevent impacts to endangered bat species.

The project area is generally bound by Smith Road on the south, 22<sup>nd</sup> Street on the west, Lockbourne Road on the east, and Whittier Street on the north. Maps of the project location are provided in the exhibits below.

## **Implementation**

### *Project Costs*

Columbus plans to borrow \$28,345,080 from the WPCLF. During the 20-year loan period Columbus will save \$4,478,674 by using WPCLF dollars at the standard rate of 3.08%, compared to the market rate of 4.33%. 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 will occur in January 2024. Construction is expected to begin shortly after loan award and be completed by July 2025.

## **Public Participation**

A virtual public meeting was held on September 26, 2023, to discuss the project, its goal, schedule, and upcoming notifications to residents of work near their property and any associated impacts. A copy of this meeting and presentation slides are available online. 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 CSO and water-in-basement events to improve the overall wastewater treatment system process. 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.

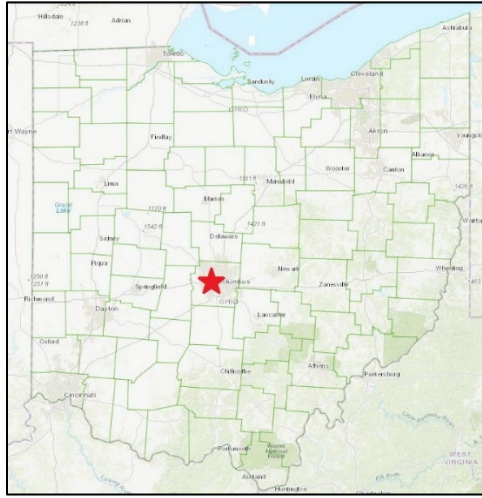
This project will eliminate a CSO overflow to improve the city's sanitary sewer collection system.

**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**  
650790-122181 Inflow Redirection Markison

