



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

November 6, 2018

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
TO ALL INTERESTED CITIZENS, ORGANIZATIONS,
AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

**VILLAGE OF WILLIAMSBURG
SR 133 SEWER EXPANSION PROJECT
CS390997-0007**

The purpose of this notice is to seek public input and comments on Ohio EPA's preliminary decision that a Supplemental Environmental Study is not required to implement the recommendations discussed in the attached Environmental Assessment of a general plan submitted by the entity mentioned above.

How were environmental issues considered?

The Water Pollution Control Loan Fund program requires the inclusion of environmental factors in the decision-making process. Ohio EPA has done this by incorporating a detailed analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed alternatives in its review and approval process. Environmental information was developed as part of the general plan, as well as through the general plan review process and during site inspections. The Agency's preliminary Environmental Assessment found that the project does not require the preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Study.

Why is a Supplemental Environmental Study not required?

Our environmental review concluded that significant environmental impacts will not result from the action. Any adverse impacts have either been eliminated by changes in the general plan or have been reduced by the implementation of the mitigative measures discussed in the attached Assessment.

How do I get more information?

A map depicting the location of the project is included as part of the Environmental Assessment. The Environmental Assessment presents additional information on the project, alternatives that were considered, impacts of the action and the basis for our decision. Further information can be obtained by calling or writing the contact person listed in the back of the Environmental Assessment.

How do I submit comments?

Any comments supporting or disagreeing with this preliminary decision should be submitted to me at the letterhead address. We will take no action on this general plan for 30 calendar days from the date of this notice in order to receive and consider any comments.

What happens next?

In the absence of substantive comments during this period, our preliminary decision will become final. The entity will then be eligible to receive loan assistance from this agency.

Please bring any information that you feel should be considered to our attention. We appreciate your interest in the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerry Rouch".

Jerry Rouch, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance

Attachment

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
for
Village of Williamsburg**

**SR 133 Sewer Expansion Project
Loan Number CS390997-0007**

**Applicant: Susan Ellerhorst, Village Administrator
Village of Williamsburg
107 West Main Street
Williamsburg, Ohio 45176**

Project Summary

The Village of Williamsburg, located in Clermont County, has applied to the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) to finance the State Route 133 Sewer Expansion Project. The proposed project includes approximately 2,000 linear feet (LF) of gravity sewer lines, a sewer lift station, 625 LF of force main, and connection to the village's existing wastewater collection and treatment system. The project is designed to correct unsanitary conditions related to marginally performing and failing household sewage treatment systems (HSTS) that are discharging untreated or partially treated wastewater to drainage ditches and streams that drain into Lake Harsha. The project will also provide an expansion of the wastewater collection system to accommodate expected residential and commercial growth. The project has a total estimated cost to the village of \$200,041. Construction is scheduled to begin in early 2019 and last for approximately three months.

Existing Conditions

The project area is primarily located along State Route 133 and consists of existing homes and businesses, and lots which are expected to be developed with residential and commercial properties. The project also includes construction of a gravity sewer line from Todds Run Foster Road to the existing Todds Run sewer lift station for eventual sewer tie-ins. Existing HSTS in the project areas include marginally performing and failing systems located in poorly drained soils. Due to these soil conditions, new or replacement HSTS are very difficult and costly to install and require large lot sizes. Both project areas experience discharges of untreated or partially treated wastewater to area surface waters. These discharges create the potential of human and environmental exposures to wastewater, as well as contamination of Lake Harsha. Lake Harsha is the source water for Clermont County's drinking water treatment plant, as well as a recreational area for swimming, boating and fishing. Lake Harsha has experienced periodic warnings and beach closures related to Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB). HAB can create algal toxins in surface waters and, potentially, in treated drinking water. Algae populations generally proliferate during the summer and fall, corresponding to warm water temperatures, and HAB are becoming increasingly prevalent. These seasonal issues in water quality have led to "Do Not Drink" advisories being issued in communities whose source water has become contaminated with algal toxins, as well as "Do Not Swim" advisories for the lake. Algal toxins are able to cause serious damage to the liver, as well as being irritants to the skin, eyes and throat. Agricultural runoff is generally the largest source of HAB-causing nutrients, but untreated or partially treated wastewater also contributes nutrients which aid in the production of HAB.

The project areas are also expected to undergo residential and commercial development in the coming years. In anticipation of projected growth, Williamsburg funded the WWTP Phase 3 Improvements Project in 2016 through a WPCLF loan to expand and renovate its wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). This project expanded capacity from 0.5 million gallons per day (MGD) to 1 MGD, with a maximum peak flow capacity of 2 MGD.

Alternatives

Alternative 1, a “no-action” alternative is not feasible, since it would not eliminate the inadequate or failing HSTS within the project area which discharge raw or partially treated sewage into waters of the state, and since this alternative would not address the planned growth within the project area.

Alternative 2, which would involve the replacement of failing HSTS, is not a feasible option due to small lot sizes for many of the properties and unsuitable local soil conditions, and since this alternative would not address planned growth.

Alternative 3 includes the installation of approximately 2,000 LF of gravity sewer lines, a sewer lift station, 625 LF of force main, and connection to the village’s existing wastewater collection and treatment system.

Selected Alternative

Alternative 3 was selected and includes approximately 1,895 LF of 8-inch gravity sewer pipe, 70 LF of 6-inch gravity sewer pipe, 625 LF of 4-inch sanitary force main sewer pipe, sanitary lift station, wet well, and 11 manholes. The gravity sewer will discharge into an existing sanitary manhole owned by Williamsburg. Wastewater from this project will be conveyed to Williamsburg’s WWTP, which consists of a continuous-flow biological nutrient removal system with a capacity of 1 MGD, and a maximum peak flow capacity of 2 MGD. The SR 133 Sewer Expansion Project is expected to contribute approximately 0.0022 MGD of wastewater flows based on current residents and businesses, and 0.0202 MGD of wastewater flows based on anticipated future growth, both of which will be well within the treatment capacity of the Williamsburg WWTP. When complete, this project will eliminate the environmental and public health issues related to the discharge of raw or partially treated wastewater into waters of the state and allow for planned growth in the village.

Implementation

The total estimated project cost, including design, is \$600,041, and borrowing that amount over 20 years at the current market rate of 3.44 percent would cost Williamsburg approximately \$834,000. However, Williamsburg is expected to receive a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in the amount of \$250,000, and a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the amount of \$150,000, leaving an estimated outstanding balance for the project of \$200,041. Williamsburg is eligible for a 20-year, 1.0-percent hardship loan from the WPCLF. Borrowing \$200,041 over 20 years at 1.0 percent, as opposed to the current market rate of 3.43 percent, would save Williamsburg approximately \$57,000. Overall, by receiving two grants, and utilizing 1-percent WPCLF financing, Williamsburg will save approximately \$613,000 as opposed to financing the entire project at the market rate.

Environmental Impacts

The project has the potential to adversely affect the following environmental attributes, but the impacts will be avoided or mitigated to acceptable levels, as described below.

Surface Water or Ground Water Resources: All properties in the project areas are connected to public drinking water. The majority of the SR 133 Sewer Expansion Project area will not have significant adverse long-term impacts on surface water resources as there will be no in-water work, no wetlands or scenic or recreational rivers are present in the project area, and no portion of the project will be constructed within the 100-year floodplain. The majority of excavation for the gravity sewers and sewer force main will be performed in a mixture of roadways, road rights-of-way, areas of existing utilities, and driveways; which have previously been extensively excavated. Excavation for the project's sewer lift station will take place in a previously-disturbed area adjacent to the roadway and driveways. A portion of the excavation for the gravity sewer and force main will include areas of mature trees, scrubby trees and brush, that will require clearing and grubbing. Clearing activities are limited to those areas necessary for construction and the movement of construction equipment. Minor, short-term impacts from construction could occur. In the event of severe storms, the project location could be prone to runoff and deposition, necessitating the use of construction mitigation best management practices, as outlined in the detail plans. The project also includes locations with directional drilling installation of sewer pipe. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which describes the measures that will be taken to prevent pollution caused

by runoff into surface waters, is required, as is a frac-out contingency plan for horizontal drilling, which describes how inadvertent escapes of drilling slurry to the surface (known as “frac-outs”) will be managed.

Dewatering of ground water to enable work below grade may be necessary. Engineering controls are part of the specifications to minimize the impacts of discharging pumped ground water to a river or stream.

The project contractor will obtain a Stormwater General Construction Permit and develop a SWPPP in accordance with the permit conditions, and will cover erosion and sediment controls, soil stabilization, dewatering, the prevention of pollution by fuels and other materials, and prohibited discharges that will be necessary to prevent water pollution. Additionally, the SWPPP will prohibit the placement of excess excavated material in wetlands, stream channels and floodplains; prohibit the deposition of material stockpiles, including temporary soil stockpiles, within the driplines of trees; and require measures to keep streets free of mud and soil. Provided the conditions in the General Construction Permit and SWPPP are followed, the project will have no long- or short-term adverse effect on surface waters and no significant adverse impacts to ground water is expected from construction of the project.

Terrestrial Habitat and Endangered Species: The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) indicates that the project is within the range of the endangered Indiana bat and threatened northern long-eared bat. Trees within the project area include mature trees, scrubby trees and brush. Other mature trees are located outside of the work area and would provide alternative habitat. Tree removal will only be permitted to occur October 1 - March 31 or in coordination with USFWS, and tree trimming and removal is limited to only those trees necessary for completion of the project (e.g., trees within the excavation location or within the path of heavy equipment, etc.). These tree clearing restrictions will further ensure that any potential impacts to Indiana bats or northern long-eared bats are avoided.

While the species of concern bald eagle is present in Clermont County, they are not believed to be present in the project area. This is due to the project area’s habitat (busy roadway, residential/maintained lots, commercial lots) not being conducive to the species as described on USFWS webpages. Therefore, we have determined that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the bald eagle.

While the endangered running buffalo clover is present within Clermont County, USFWS indicated that it is not believed to be present in the project area's township. Therefore, we have determined that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, running buffalo clover.

Several threatened and endangered aquatic species are present within Clermont County. However, due to the project not including any in-water work, and the project's requirement for a SWPPP and adherence to construction mitigation best management practices, we have determined that the project is not likely to affect these aquatic species.

Based on this, the project as designed will have no short- or long-term adverse impact on terrestrial habitat or endangered species.

Air Quality: Clermont County is in attainment of the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for four of six major air pollutants (all except ozone and sulfur dioxide). The proposed project is expected to have no direct or indirect effects for the following reasons: the air quality provisions in the detail plans and specifications will minimize all air quality impacts during construction through the use of emission control equipment and the use of fuels that produce lower emissions of particulates, oxides of nitrogen and oxides of sulfur. Also, due to the relatively small scale and brief duration of the project, increases in traffic and pollutants are expected to be relatively temporary and minor. Furthermore, the project actions are expected to be negligible compared to emissions produced by trucks and passenger vehicles on the busy routes of the project area.

Based on this, the project as designed will have no short- or long-term adverse impact on air quality.

Dust, Noise and Odors: These will be unavoidable but temporary effects of construction. Construction equipment noise and diesel odors will be controlled by the use of emissions equipment and mufflers. Dust will be suppressed as needed with water.

Operation of the sewer lift station will contribute minimal additional long-term dust, noise or odors, and are expected to be negligible compared to noise and odors produced by trucks and passenger vehicles on the busy routes of the project area.

Based on the above, the project will have no adverse impact on existing levels of noise, dust and odors.

Archaeological and Historical Resources: Excavation for the sanitary sewer, sewer lift station, and sewer force main will be performed primarily in roadways, road rights-of-way, areas of existing utilities, areas adjacent to homes, and driveways which have previously been extensively excavated.

Based on the project's alignment, and through review of State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) mapping data, Ohio EPA has concluded that the proposed project will have no effect on unrecorded archaeological sites or properties eligible to be or listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In the event of archaeological finds during construction, contractors and subcontractors are required under Ohio Revised Code Section 149.53 to notify the SHPO of any archaeological discoveries in the project area, and to cooperate with that entity and Ohio EPA in archaeological and historic surveys and salvage efforts when appropriate.

Safety and Traffic: The detail plans require the use of typical traffic management measures during temporary lane closures. The length of time that driveways will be closed within the right-of-way for pipe installation will be minimized. Residents will be notified of street and driveway closures. Access will be maintained at all times for emergency vehicles. The project will not result in permanent traffic re-routing. Based on this, the project will have no significant adverse short- or long-term impact on local traffic patterns.

Local Economy: The median household income (MHI) for the Village of Williamsburg is \$46,094. Homeowners in the project area currently have private HSTS, so they have not previously been charged for sewer service. The estimated annual sewer bill, based on average water usage in the village, is \$383. This represents 0.83% of the village's MHI, which is considered affordable.

Once the project is completed, existing residents and businesses will only be required to connect to the sanitary system if they have failing systems as determined by the Clermont Count General Health District. Residents connecting to the sanitary system will be required to utilize a licensed contractor to perform the connection, have the existing HSTS disconnected, and the septic tank crushed and filled. The estimated expense of installation of a sanitary sewer lateral and HSTS abandonment, if both actions are performed by single contractor as a single job, is \$1,500. Residents will be charged a tap fee of \$3,425, which includes an inspection by the Clermont County General Health District.

Public Participation

The village has contacted all homeowners adjacent to and directly affected by the project and held a meeting to discuss the proposed actions. To date, no significant issues have been identified. Lastly, a public notice announcing the future availability of this Environmental Assessment will be posted on the Village of Williamsburg and Ohio EPA – Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance websites. The public notice for the Environmental Assessment will be open for a 30-day public comment period. Thus, there have been adequate opportunities for information dissemination and public participation.

The following agencies reviewed this project's planning information:

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Conclusions

Based on the planning documentation, associated correspondence and public participation, we find that the construction and operation of the sanitary sewers, force main and sewer lift station in the project area will have no adverse long-term effect on farmland, surface water, ground water, floodplains, wetlands, aquatic or terrestrial habitat, endangered species, state or federal wildlife areas, state-designated scenic or recreational rivers, cultural properties, air quality or the local economy. It will have no long-term adverse effects with respect to noise, dust and odors. It will have long-term water quality benefits that will be associated with the replacement of poorly operating and failing household sewage treatment systems that discharge untreated or partially treated wastewater to drainage ditches and streams that drain into Lake Harsha. Elimination of these discharges will remove environmental and human exposures to this wastewater and reduce nutrients which aid in the production of HAB. This project's expansion of the wastewater collection system will also accommodate expected residential and commercial growth.

For further information, please contact:

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Figure 1: Project Location (in red)

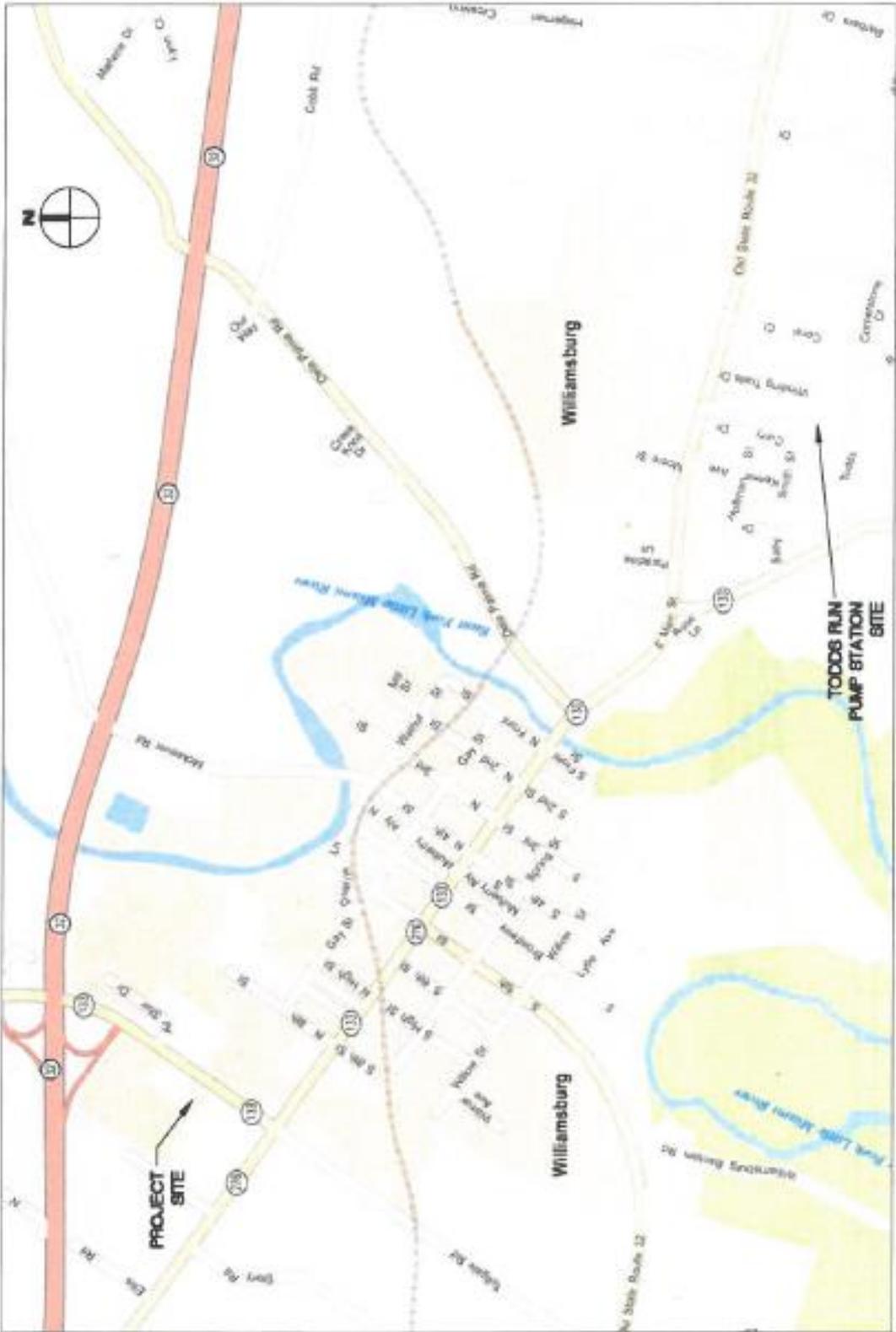


Figure 2: Project Locations