



March 6, 2025

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**City of Lancaster - Fairfield County
East Main Street Sewer Separation
Loan number: CS390504-0036**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a combined sewer separation project in Lancaster which the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) intends to finance through its Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) below-market interest rate revolving loan program. The LER describes the project, costs, and expected environmental benefits. Making available this LER fulfills the 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 program review and approval process. We have concluded that the proposed project should not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3745-150-05, this project meets the criteria for an LER rather than the more comprehensive Environmental Assessment. More information can be obtained by contacting the person named at the end of the attached LER.

Upon issuance of this Final 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,

Steve Malone , for

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: East Main Street Sewer Separation

Applicant: City of Lancaster
104 East Main Street
Lancaster, Ohio 43130

Loan Number: CS390504-0036



Figure 1. Fairfield County

Project Summary

The City of Lancaster in Fairfield County has requested approximately \$4 million from the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for a combined sewer separation project in an area on East Main Street. As construction will occur within the previously disturbed right-of-way alongside existing utilities, environmental impacts are not expected.

History & Existing Conditions

The original wastewater collection system that serves the central part of Lancaster is combined, meaning the sewers carry both sanitary sewage and stormwater. As the community has grown and expanded outward, separate sewers were constructed for the new areas of development but are routed through the combined system on the way to the Lawrence Street Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF). These trunk sewers often have combined sewer overflow (CSO) structures that relieve the collection system during wet weather events by discharging to the Hocking River. There are approximately 48,000 linear feet (LF) of combined sewers and over 900,000 LF of separate sewers in the Lancaster wastewater collection system with a service area of over 18 square miles. The city also maintains approximately 476,000 LF of storm sewers.

When Lancaster started to address their collection system issues in the mid-1990s, there were a total of 31 permitted CSOs. Since that time, all but 9 of the CSOs have been closed as a result of sewer separation and other improvements in system operation and maintenance. Lancaster completed a Phase II Long Term Control Plan (LTCP II) in August 2014 which outlines projects intended to reduce CSO events to 2 to 4 citywide during a typical year.

Project Description

The East Main Street Sewer Separation project was developed as part of the city's LTCP II with the specific goal of reducing CSO overflows at a structure within the area by separating the storm and sanitary sewers. To provide separation of stormwater, this project intends to connect existing curb inlets and catch basins into new storm sewers. The existing sewers will remain in place to convey

sanitary sewage to the WPCF. Project work will occur along a section of East Main Street, East Wheeling Street, North Cherry Street, and Angle Street.

Construction for this project will remain within the previously disturbed confines of the rights-of-way alongside existing utilities, thereby minimizing effects on environmental resources. The contractor is responsible for best management practices to control erosion and sedimentation, minimize the creation of dust during construction, and maintain local traffic during construction.

See Figure 2 below for a map of the project area.

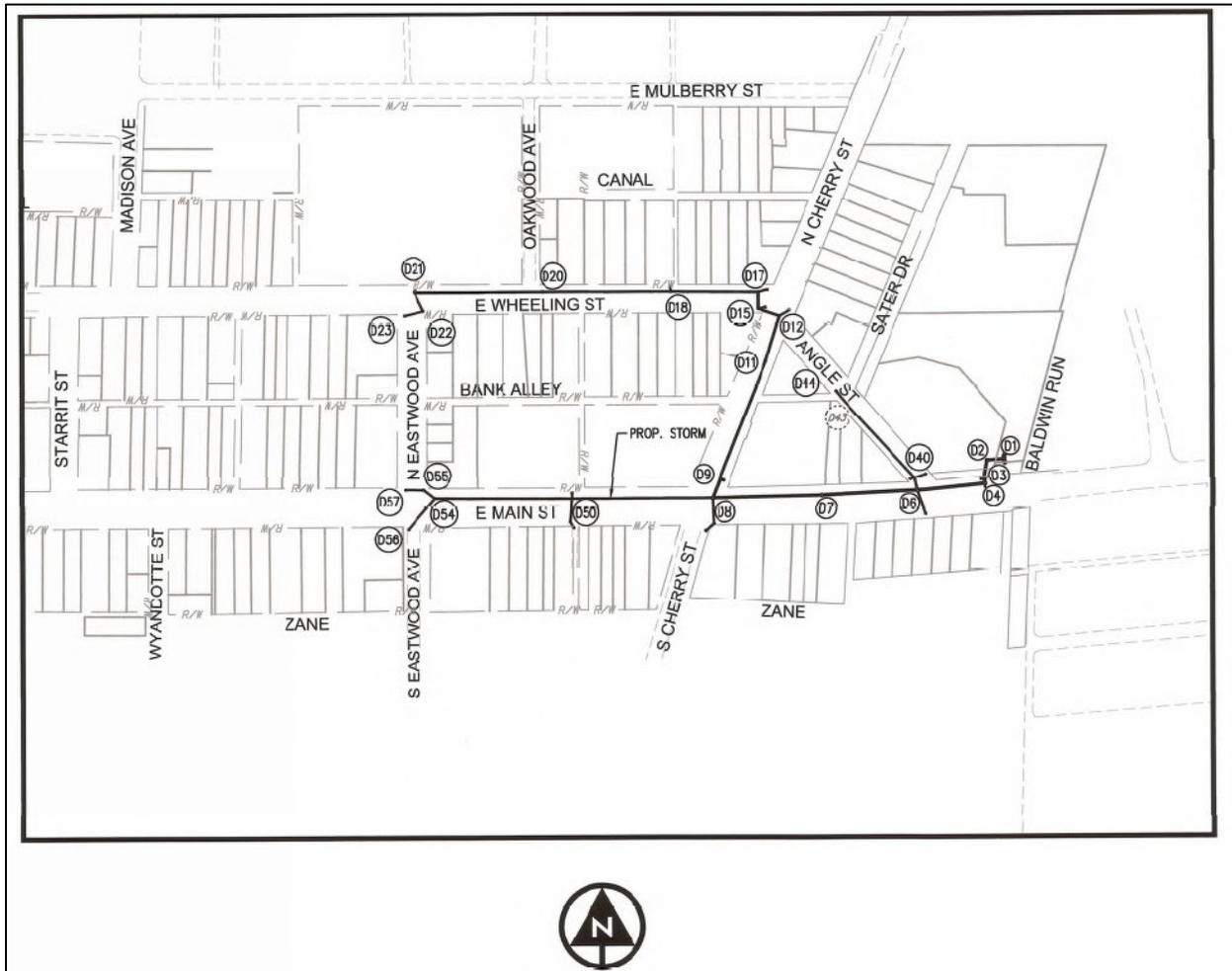


Figure 2. Project location

Implementation

Lancaster plans to borrow approximately \$4 million from the WPCF over a 10-year loan period at the standard rate of 3.01%. When compared to the market rate of 4.26%, Lancaster will save approximately \$300,000. WPCF interest rates are set monthly and may change for a later loan award.

The current annual Lancaster residential sewer bill is approximately \$499. Projected residential sewer bills with the implementation of this and other associated sewer projects are expected to increase to approximately \$579, or 1.1% of median household income (MHI) of Lancaster, which is \$52,716. By using WPCLF financing for this project, Lancaster has minimized the economic impact on customers.

The anticipated loan award will occur in March 2025. Construction is expected to be completed by November 2025.

Public Participation

Lancaster has completed extensive outreach for projects involved in the city's Long-Term Control Plan II. All information pertaining to this outreach is available at a webpage created by the City of Lancaster, at <http://www.ci.lancaster.oh.us/234/Combined-Sewer-Overflows-Project>. In addition to the website, the public will be updated through city council meetings and the Council Water/Water Pollution Committee. Minutes from both are available on the city website and council meetings are broadcast on both the internet and local cable.

Affected property owners will be notified via a letter from the city and the contractor will provide door hangers as construction moves through the neighborhoods to let affected residents know details about the project and that they could be experiencing various inconveniences such as noise, dust, or traffic disruptions. Lancaster will provide updates to the schools and the fairgrounds as needed, and the city's right-of-way permit process provides updates to emergency responders and other city departments.

Ohio EPA is unaware of any controversy about or opposition to this project. The Limited Environmental Review (LER) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) will be posted on the Ohio EPA Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance website. Additionally, the LER and FNSI have been provided to the City of Lancaster to be made available according to their public notification procedures.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the criteria for a Limited Environmental Review; namely, it is an action within an existing public wastewater collection 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.

This project is for the construction of new storm sewers for combined sewer separation within rights-of-way alongside existing utilities, which lack important environmental features. Standard construction best management practices will be required to control dust, sediment runoff, noise, disruption of local traffic, and maintain safety.

Is cost effective and not controversial.

The proposed project is cost effective as it is the only feasible alternative to improve upon existing infrastructure to allow for more efficient operation. This project will construct a separate storm sewer to eliminate existing CSOs and, as a result, the WPCF operation costs will decrease and treatment

efficiency should improve. There is no known opposition to the proposed project and the city has minimized financial impact to customers by obtaining a low interest loan through the WPCLF.

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; and will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the existing population.

The sewer improvements are designed to reduce wet weather combined flows to the WPCF and eliminate CSOs to the Hocking River. This project will not increase treatment capacity, extend sewers into areas unserved by sanitary sewers, or create or relocate a discharge.

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.

This project will help Lancaster improve water quality and protect public health by reducing CSOs to the Hocking River.

Contact Information

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