



June 2, 2025

**Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact
To All Interested Citizens, Organizations, and Government Agencies**

**Trumbull County
Smith Stewart Road Sanitary Sewer Improvements
Loan Number: CS390079-0062**

The attached Environmental Assessment (EA) is for a project eliminating failing household sewage treatment systems in Trumbull 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 EA describes the project, its costs, and expected environmental benefits. We would appreciate receiving any comments you may have on the project. Making available this EA and seeking your comments 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 program review and approval process. We have concluded that the proposed project should not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. More information can be obtained by contacting the person named at the end of the attached EA.

Any comments on our preliminary determination should be sent to the email address of the contact named at the end of the EA. We will not act on this project for 30 calendar days from the date of this notice. In the absence of substantive comments during this period, our preliminary decision will become final. After that, Trumbull County can then proceed with its application for the WPCLF loan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kathleen Courtright".

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance

Attachment

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Identification

Project: Smith Stewart Road Sanitary Improvements

Applicant: Trumbull County
160 High Street NW
Warren, Ohio 44481

Loan Number: CS390079-0062



Figure 1. Trumbull County

Project Summary

Trumbull County has requested approximately \$370,000 from the Ohio Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) for the Smith Stewart Road Sanitary Improvements project. The project involves eliminating failing household sewage treatment systems (HSTS) and constructing a central sanitary sewer collection system for 14 residential structures within the project area.

Due to the nature and location of construction, as well as proposed protection measures to be implemented, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated, as discussed in the conclusion.

History & Existing Conditions

The Trumbull County Sanitary Engineering Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of all publicly owned wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) and sanitary sewer collection systems located within the unincorporated areas of Trumbull County (Figure 1). The project area includes a portion of Smith Stewart Road and Strossmayer Drive located in Vienna Township that is not currently served by a central sanitary sewer collection system.

The Trumbull County General Health District conducted sampling within the project area in 2020. The sampling found extreme levels of fecal coliform due to failing off-lot HSTS, resulting in the declaration of a public health nuisance. Additionally, the soil types within the small lots in the area do not support wastewater leaching. The property owners within the project limits submitted petitions to the Board of Trumbull County Commissioners requesting sanitary sewer service. The primary need for the remediation of the existing conditions is to protect the health and safety of the property owners within the project area.

See Figure 2 for the proposed service area for this project.

Population and Flow Projections

The new central sewage collection system will convey flows to the City of Girard's WWTP. A total of 14 of the 15 benefitted properties are residential. There is one singing society assembly building within

the project area. Additionally, there are two vacant parcels within the boundaries of the project area that may be developed into additional residential dwellings in the future.

The design of the sanitary collection system involved estimating sewage flows for the existing and future potential connections in the project area. Each of the 14 single-family residential connections are assumed to generate an average daily flow of 400 gallons per day. Based on the seating capacity of the singing society building, the average flow should be less than 10,000 gallons per month. The average daily flow is calculated to be 6,400 gallons per day and a peak flow to be 26,432 gallons per day. The existing collection and treatment system at the City of Girard has adequate capacity to accept the proposed flows.

Alternatives

1. HSTS Replacements

The criteria used by the Trumbull County Board of Health for approval of HSTS include soil permeability, housing density and lot size. Recent data suggests that at least 90% of the existing septic systems would fail the current treatment requirements established by the Board of Health.

For this alternative, it was assumed that 90% of the existing septic systems would require replacement to fulfill the goal of the project. Of the 15 existing structures that are currently serviced by HSTS, the majority would require off-lot discharge into existing ditches and storm sewers which will eventually enter waters of the state. The majority of the new off-lot septic systems will require the following components at a minimum:

- A settling tank with adequate depth and volume to separate and hold primary solids.
- An aeration system to reduce the biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) of the waste stream.
- Properly sized alternative sand filters to reduce suspended solids.
- Disinfection utilizing a chlorination/dichlorination system.

2. Conventional Collection System & Regionalized Treatment

This alternative proposes the collection of sanitary flow from the project area by gravity sewer and connecting to Trumbull County's existing sanitary sewer collection system. This alternative includes 8-inch diameter gravity collector sewers, sanitary manholes to service the residential structures, and sanitary sewer laterals within the public right-of-way.

Selected Alternative

Alternative #2 was selected as the proposed alternative due to it being the most economical and environmentally conscious approach to satisfy the needs of the affected residents and Trumbull County. The project includes the construction of 1,896 LF of 8-inch PVC sanitary sewer pipe, seven precast concrete manholes, and 15 6-inch service laterals (totaling 413 LF) in the public right-of-way. The project area will begin at an existing manhole located along the east side of Youngstown Kingsville Road at the intersection with Smith Stewart Road and extend south along the north side of Smith Stewart Road approximately 1,095 LF to a proposed manhole. The project also begins at a new

manhole along the northern side of Smith Stewart Road at the intersection with Strossmayer Drive and extends south along the east side of Strossmayer approximately 800 LF to a proposed manhole. Homeowners are responsible for the removal of their HSTS.

Implementation

Trumbull County proposes to borrow \$373,510 from the Ohio WPCLF at the regionalization discount rate of 0%. During the 30-year loan period, Trumbull County will save approximately \$344,134 by using WPCLF dollars at this rate, compared to the current market rate of 4.91%. The total cost for this project is \$718,000. Trumbull County is eligible for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funds to supplement the rest of the project financing.

The debt associated with this construction project will be recovered from monthly sanitary sewer bills and an additional capital charge of \$35 a month for customers benefitted by this project. Trumbull County 2025 sewer rates will increase by \$0.25 in 2026. The 2025 average monthly residential sewer bill in Trumbull County will be \$40.14 (\$481.69 annually). This is 1% of the median household income for Trumbull County (MHI;50,258) and is less than the Ohio average annual sewer bill of \$489.95.

Construction will begin after loan award in July 2025 and is estimated to be completed by the end of 2025.

Public Participation

A public hearing for this project was held on January 23, 2025. The public comment extended from December 11, 2024, to January 31, 2025. All costs expected to be incurred by all property owners were disclosed in the public hearing notices mailed to each property owner. The results of the public hearing and public comment period indicated an approval rating of 100% based on the number of connections.

The project was also presented at the Trumbull County Commissioner's meetings. Meetings are open to the public and are held every Wednesday. The meetings are also livestreamed on Zoom through the county website. Commissioner meeting minutes and legislation can be found on the county's website.

Ohio EPA is unaware of any controversy about or opposition to this project. This Environmental Assessment (EA) and preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) will be posted on the Ohio EPA Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance website. Additionally, the EA and FNSI have been provided to Trumbull County to be made available according to their public notification procedures.

Environmental Impacts

The project has the potential to affect the following features, but the effects will be reduced or mitigated to acceptable levels as explained below.

Local Economy

By using favorable financing, Trumbull County has minimized the project cost and economic impact to county residents. Property owners connecting will incur charges consisting of a tap-in fee, a plumbing inspection fee, any necessary plumbing modifications as a result of the plumbing inspection, and the cost to extend the building lateral to the main sewer line located in the public right-of-way. The tap-in fee is a one-time charge of \$1,890 for a single-family residential home. The Trumbull County Health Department plumbing inspection and septic abandonment fees total \$125. The Board of Trumbull County Commissioners initiated a county-wide program using \$600,000 of ARPA funds to provide financial assistance to owner-occupied income-qualified households to pay 100% of the above costs except for the tap-in fee. Additionally, ARPA funds will pay the \$50 inspection fee but will not pay the remaining tap-in fee balance. The tap-in fee may be paid in full prior to project completion or financed over a 5-year period at 0% APR through a certification by the Trumbull County Auditor.

Noise, air quality, traffic, safety, and aesthetics

Only the construction phase of the project trenching under the roadway will involve heavy machinery that can emit temporary daytime noise. Some traffic interruptions may occur; however, most work will occur within the right-of-way. It will be the contractor's responsibility to implement construction best management practices to limit erosion, sediment, noise, dust, traffic disruptions, and like factors throughout the duration of the project. Disturbed surfaces will be restored upon construction completion.

Terrestrial Habitat, Fish and Wildlife, and Endangered Species

Trumbull County will only remove trees during the regular clearing dates of October 1st to March 31st to protect federally listed endangered and threatened bat species. Some tree removal may occur within the right-of-way when installing the force main.

Unaffected Resources

The following resources are not present and therefore will not be impacted by this project: Archaeological and Historical Resources, Coastal Zones, Prime Farmland, Floodplains, Groundwater Resources including Sole Source Aquifers and Source Water Assessment and Protection areas, Aquatic Habitat, Surface Water Resources, Recreational Land Use, Wetlands and Wild and Scenic Rivers. Additionally, there will be no change in current Energy Use as it pertains to public space, nor will there be any impacts to drinking water.

Conclusion

Based upon Ohio EPA's review of the planning information and the materials presented in this Environmental Assessment, 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. Completion of this sewer extension project will provide service to an unsewered area, also improving water quality for the current residents.

Contact information

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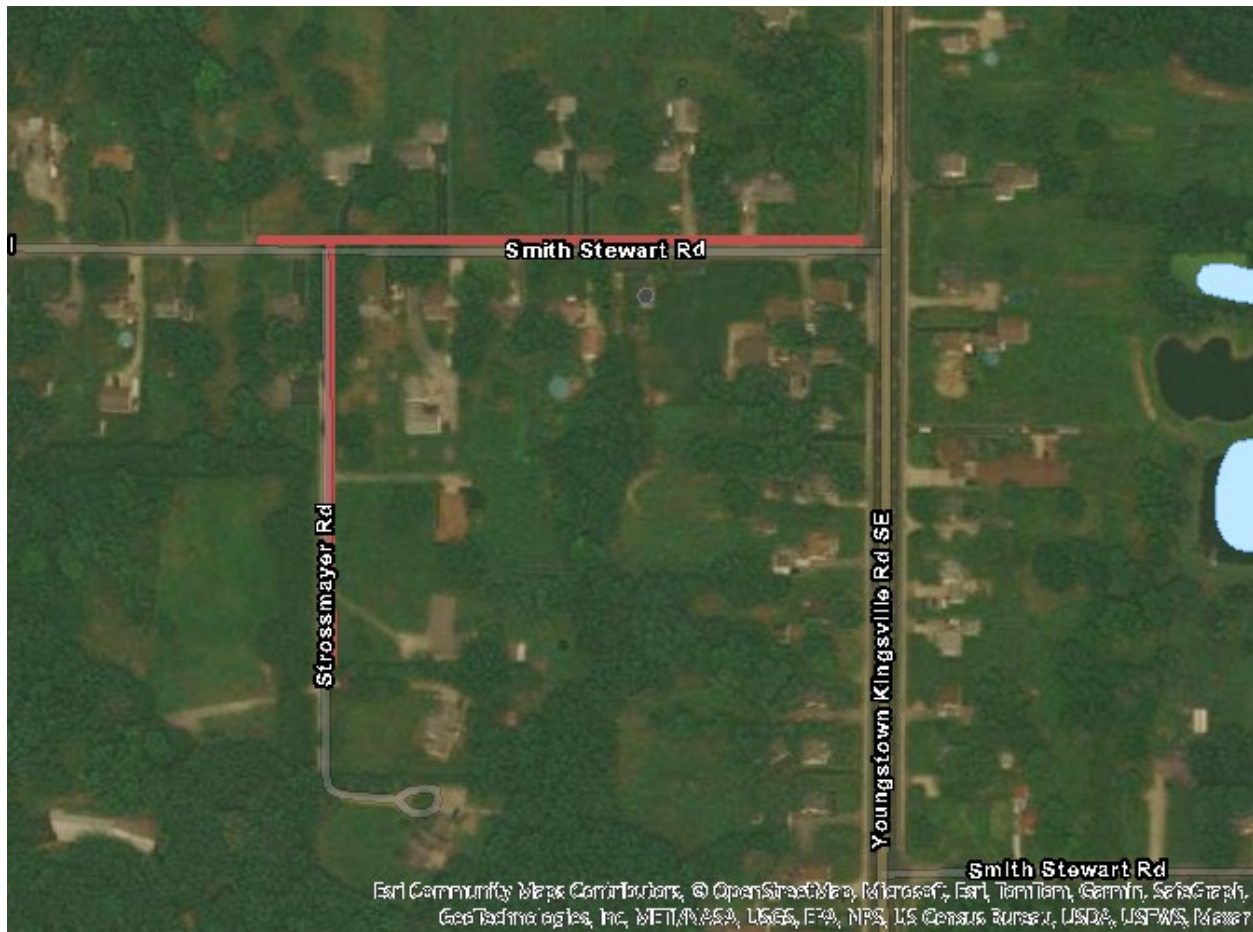


Figure 2. Proposed project area