



DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

TO: All Interested Citizens, Government Agencies and Public Groups

In accordance with the Nebraska Drinking Water State Revolving Fund environmental review process, which is based on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the proposed agency action below:

This information reviews the environmental impact likely from a project. This project is planned to be federally funded wholly or in part through your tax dollars; therefore, you are entitled to take part in its review. If you have concerns about the environmental impact of this project, please provide them at this time. The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) encourages public input in this decision-making process.

PROJECT NAME: Water Treatment Plant-Filter Replacements and Water Main Replacements
APPLICANT: City of West Point
COUNTY: Cuming
POPULATION: 3,340
DWSRF PROJECT NUMBER: D311646
TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT: \$2,765,000
PROPOSED DWSRF LOAN FORGIVENESS AMOUNT: \$553,000

The City of West Point has applied for funding, through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program jointly administered by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services-Division of Public Health (DHHS) and the NDEE, to replace their existing water treatment plant filters, and water mains at various locations in the City. The project will also include upgrades to the system controls, installation of variable frequency drives and pigging of other water mains.

According to the Priority Ranking System this project is considered to be a high priority and was included on the Planning List in the State Fiscal Year 2020 Intended Use Plan (IUP). The project can be funded in accordance with the IUP's listed bypass criteria, as the bypass date of October 1, 2019 has passed. Based on supporting documentation on file with the NDEE, this project was determined to be eligible for a 20-year loan at an interest rate of 1.5% on 80% of the estimated project costs (i.e., 20% will be forgiven), per the criteria listed in the IUP. In addition to principal and interest, an administrative fee of 0.5% of the loan balance will be assessed. The current residential water rate is \$14.97 per month, with an added consumption charge of \$1.38 for every 748 gallons of water used. The annual DWSRF Debt Service (including 10% coverage) is \$153,307. Based upon the 1,598 active service connections, residential water rates could potentially be raised \$7.99 per month to address the new debt service, with a typical residential rate being just over \$32

per month based on a 5,000 gallon per month household use. However, in the past year the City paid off over \$2,670,000 in water revenue debt; therefore, after project construction a final assessment of revenues and costs will be analyzed to determine any needed user charge adjustment.

The proposed project was reviewed for eligibility for a categorical exclusion from National Environmental Policy Act review specified in 40 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 6.204. The project meets all criteria described in the above reference and the Department has determined that this project is eligible for a categorical exclusion. Consequently, a preliminary decision has been made that a Finding of No Significant Impact will not be prepared. The project as proposed is primarily the replacement of existing infrastructure. Justification for categorical exclusion includes:

- The proposed action is not known or expected to have potentially significant environmental impacts on the quality of the human environment either individually or cumulatively over time;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect federally listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect national natural landmarks or any property with nationally significant historic, architectural, prehistoric archeological or cultural value, including but not limited to, property listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect environmentally important natural resource areas as wetlands, prime farmland, wild and scenic rivers, and significant fish or wildlife habitat;
- Based on a review of the available mapping, portions of the project lies within the 100-year flood plain, but those areas are where water mains have already been placed. Regardless, a permit will be obtained from the local floodplain administrator prior to proceeding with the project; and,
- The proposed action is not known or expected to have a significant effect on the pattern and type of land use (industrial, commercial, agricultural, recreational, residential) or growth and distribution of population including altering the character of existing residential areas, or may not be consistent with state or local government, or federally-recognized Indian tribe approved land use plans or federal land management plans.

The City has a permit to operate a public water system under the provisions of the Nebraska Safe Drinking Water Act and the Regulations Governing Public Water Supply Systems, Title 179. The proposed project is determined by DHHS to help the public water system maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act. The system last underwent a routine sanitary survey by DHHS in October of 2018, wherein several deficiencies were noted and addressed by the City in May of 2019. That completed survey is the first step of the Technical, Financial, and Managerial (TFM) program policy. West Point will still be required to undergo an Initial, and if necessary, a Final TFM Assessment by the DHHS, to ensure that their capabilities meet the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act. Also, their current Environmental Tracking Tool score is 0, well below the allowable 11 per issued U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidance.

The NDEE shall revoke the categorical exclusion and shall require a full environmental review if, subsequent to the granting of exclusion, the state determines that the proposed project no longer meets the requirements for a categorical exclusion due to changes in the proposed project; or new evidence reveals that serious local or environmental issues exist; or federal, state, local or tribal laws are being violated.

This action is taken on the basis of careful review of the application and other supporting data, which are on file in the office of the NDEE. These are available for public review upon request. Persons having a comment on this categorical exclusion determination are encouraged to submit such comments directly to Steve McNulty, DHHS at 402 471-1006 or email steve.mcnulty@nebraska.gov, or Burton Pflueger, Water Permits Division, NDEE at 402 471-1883 or email burton.pflueger@nebraska.gov.

Signed this 22nd day of January 2020.

Sincerely,



Jim Macy
Director

Attachments: Distribution List
 Map

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DISTRIBUTION LIST
CITY WEST POINT

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LOCAL NEWSPAPER (Public Information Only)
West Point News
134 East Grove Street
West Point, NE 68788

West Point, NE

Water Main Extension and Replacement Locations

Legend

Main



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