



CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM (CWSRF)

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FNSI)

TO: All Interested Citizens, Government Agencies, and Public Groups

In accordance with the Nebraska Clean Water State Revolving Fund environmental review process, which is based on the National Environmental Policy Act, 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 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 encourages public input in this decision-making process.

PROJECT NAME:	South Interceptor – East Phase Aurora, Nebraska
APPLICANT:	City of Aurora
COUNTY:	Hamilton, County
POPULATION:	4,479
CWSRF PROJECT NUMBER:	C318001
TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT:	\$1,835,000
POTENTIAL CWSRF LOAN AMOUNT:	\$1,835,000

The City of Aurora is located in east-central Nebraska, in Hamilton County. The 2010 census population of the community was 4,479. The City has applied for Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan to finance the project. The CWSRF program is administered by the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE). The project is included in the 2021 Intended Use Plan (IUP).

The Aurora Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) includes an oxidation ditch, clarifiers, and aerobic digesters. The WWTF discharges to Segment BB-20900 of Lincoln Creek, which is protected for Class B warm water aquatic life, Class A agricultural uses, and aesthetics. The WWTF is performing well and is in compliance with the assigned NPDES permit.

The City has had industrial development to the west and significant commercial development to the south. The City also expects further growth on the south side. The collection system is operating at capacity. In 2017 the City hired JEO Consulting group to design an interceptor sewer that could reroute the flows from the south and also pick up the industrial flows in the western part of the City. In order to provide service to existing flows and support further growth, a new main

is being designed to route flow around town with a more direct route to the WWTF. This is considered to be phase 1 or the south phase. Phase 1 portion of the project is primarily located in sec 03, T10n, R06w. The proposed phase 1 project will intercept flow from South Street at B Street and flows will be conveyed directly to the head works of the WWTF. Sewer elevations will be designed so a future phase 2 can intercept flow from the west side of the City and connect to the proposed collection system in phase 1.

The proposed project consists of constructing approximately 12,000 linear feet of 24-inch PVC sewer main. A 24-inch sewer main flowing half full at minimum slope is capable of transporting 1400 gallons per minute (gpm) or 2.0 million gallons per day (mgd). The current WWTF is capable of treating 4.0 mgd. The proposed 24-inch sewer has the capacity to serve current flows and future development.

The project is eligible for financing through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). The project is included in the 2021 Intended Use Plan (IUP) and has 79 priority points. The City of Aurora is eligible for a 20-year loan at an interest rate of 1.50%. In addition to principal and interest payments, an administrative fee of 0.50 percent of the loan balance will be assessed each year.

The City of Aurora operates a combined utility that consists of the sewer utility and the water utility. Revenues of the combined utility will be pledged to repay the loan. Resolution 18-02 passed on January 1, 2018 adopted annual sewer rates effective for 2018- 2022. The sewer rate in 2020 for residential customers in Aurora is \$14.00 for the first 1000 gallons plus \$3.15/1000 gallons per month. Based on these rates, the estimated sewer rate for residential customer who uses 5,000 gallons of potable water in the winter quarter is \$26.60. Sewer revenues will pay for the operation and maintenance of the sewer utility in addition to the estimated debt service due to the proposed project.

A number of Federal, State, and local agencies were asked to review the project. The Nebraska State Historic Society, indicated that the ground disturbing activities associated with the proposed project are unlikely to impact any prehistoric or historic cultural resources listed on the National Register or eligible for such a listing. The Corps of Engineers (COE) determined that there may be "waters of the U.S." located at the project site which would be subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The COE indicated that the need for a 404 permit would be determined once design of the proposed project is complete. The Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NeDNR) did not identify any regulated floodplains within the proposed project area. NeDNR records indicated that there are no appropriations appurtenant to the proposed project location. NeDNR indicated that there are no public water supply wells within the 1000 foot spacing and no other registered wells within the proposed project area. NeDNR also did not identify any active state or federal stream gauges within the proposed project area. The Tribal Historic Preservation Office determined that adverse impact is not expected on tribal artifacts. The State Fire Marshal Agency did not provide comments regarding the project. The Nebraska Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics indicated that they did not have any objections to the project. Temporary impacts that may be caused due to construction include noise,

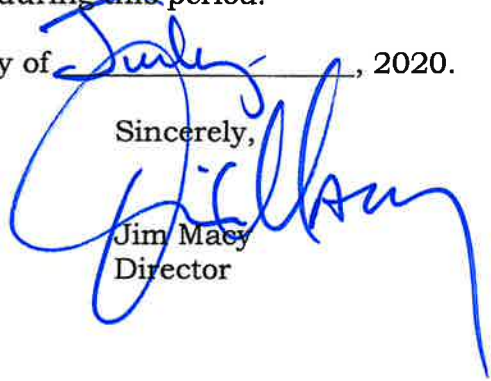
dust, a limited potential for soil erosion, and fuel and oil spills. No wastewater bypasses are expected during construction.

A public hearing to discuss the project was held on May 12, 2020. There was no opposition expressed at the public hearing.

The review did not indicate a significant negative environmental impact would result from the proposed action. No recorded historical or archaeological sites will be affected by construction. Impacts on streams and wetlands are not expected due to the project. The construction documents will specify storm water pollution controls. A storm water permit and a wastewater construction permit will be obtained from the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE). The sewer extension will benefit surface water quality by helping to assure that wastewater from the developments in the project area receive adequate treatment. The potential for ground water pollution in the area will be reduced with the project. No segment of the community's population will be impacted disproportionately by the project. The project will promote development in the area and therefore, will have an indirect impact on land use. The project will have a positive impact on the environment.

This action is taken on the basis of a careful review of the information provided by the consulting engineer and other supporting data, which are on file in the office of the NDEE. These are available for public review upon request. A copy of the environmental assessment is attached. The NDEE will not take any administrative action on the project for at least 30 calendar days from the date shown below. Persons disagreeing with the above environmental decision may submit comments to the NDEE during this period.

Signed this 20th day of July, 2020.

Sincerely,

Jim Macy
Director

JM/gmb

Attachments: Environmental Assessment
Distribution List
Map

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT

A. Project Identification:

Applicant: City of Aurora
Project No.: C318001
City: Aurora **County:** Hamilton **State:** NE
Total Project Amount: \$1,835,000
CWSRF Loan: \$1,835,000

B. Community Description:

Location: The City of Aurora is located in east-central Nebraska three miles north of Interstate 80. The City is expecting commercial growth on the south side in the near future. In order to provide service to existing flows and support further growth, a new main is being designed to route flow around town with a more direct route to the wastewater treatment facility (WWTF). This is considered to be phase 1 or the south phase. The sewer will be constructed along Highway 14, loop around the southeast part of town, and will extend all the way to the existing WWTF, which is located southeast of the City.

Population: The 2010 census population of the community was 4,479. The 2010 census population increased by about 6.00% over the 2000 population of 4,225.

Current Methods of Waste Treatment: The Aurora WWTF includes an oxidation ditch, clarifiers, and aerobic digesters. The system is performing well and has adequate capacity to treat the additional wastewater load that can be expected from the project site in the near term.

C. Project Description:

Purpose: The City has had industrial development to the west and significant commercial development to the south. The City also expects further growth on the south side. The existing collection system is operating at capacity. In order to provide service to existing flows and support further growth, a new main is being designed to route flow around town with a more direct route to the WWTF. This is considered to be phase 1 or the south phase. Phase 1 portion of the project is primarily located in sec 03, T10n, R06w. The proposed phase 1 project will intercept the flows from South Street at B Street and flows will be transported directly to the head works of the WWTF. Sewer elevations will be designed so a future phase 2 can intercept flow from the west side of the City and connect to the proposed collection system in phase 1.

Type: The proposed project consists of constructing approximately 12,000 linear feet of 24-inch PVC sewer main.

Design Factors: A 24-inch sewer main flowing half full at minimum slope is capable of transporting 1400 gallons per minute (gpm) or 2.0 million gallons per

day (mgd). The current WWTF capable of treating 4.0 mgd. The proposed 24-inch sewer has the capacity to serve current flows and future development.

Receiving Stream: The WWTF discharges to Segment BB-20900 of Lincoln Creek, which is protected for Class B warm water aquatic life, Class A agricultural uses, and aesthetics. The WWTF is performing well and is in compliance with the assigned NPDES permit.

D. Alternatives Considered:

Types: The 24-inch interceptor sewer was the only alternative considered for this project.

Reasons for Selection of Proposed Alternative: The proposed project will provide for growth on the south side of town and industrial growth on the west side of town. The project will also provide relief to the collection system in town that is operating at capacity. The proposed project will provide service to existing flows and will also support future growth. Also, the new main is being designed to route flow around town with a more direct route to the WWTF.

E. Environmental Impact Summary:

1. Primary:

a. Construction: A number of Federal, State, and local agencies were asked to review the project. The Nebraska State Historic Society, indicated that their records showed that the ground disturbing activities associated with the proposed extension of the sanitary sewer system in the City of Aurora are unlikely to impact any prehistoric cultural resources listed on the National Register or eligible for such a listing. Thus, a determination of no historic properties affected is appropriate for this undertaking and the project should continue as planned. The Corps of Engineers (COE) determined that there may be "waters of the U.S.," located at the project site, which would be subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The COE indicated that the need for a 404 permit would be determined once design of the proposed system was complete. No wastewater bypasses are expected during construction.

b. Environmental: The project will have a positive impact on the environment since the project will address possible sewer back-ups. The project will also provide a centralized collection system to new commercial and residential construction.

c. Financial: The City has applied for financial assistance for the project through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan program. The project is listed on the funding list of the FY2021 Intended Use Plan and is eligible for CWSRF financing. Aurora's median household income is \$63,053, has 79 priority and has an AWIN score of 1. Aurora is eligible to receive a term loan of \$1,835,000 as per criteria described in the 2021 Intended Use Plan. The City of Aurora operates a combined utility that consists of the sewer utility and the water utility. Revenues of the combined utility will be pledged to repay the loan. Resolution 18-

02, passed on January 9, 2018, adopted annual sewer rates that are effective for 2018- 2022. Aurora is eligible for a 20-year CWSRF loan at the current program interest rate of 1.5 percent. In addition to principal and interest payments, an administrative fee of 0.5 percent of the outstanding principal balance will be assessed each year. The average annual repayment on a term CWSRF loan of \$1,835,000 is \$111,471. Revenues generated by the sewer use fees will be used to repay the CWSRF loan.

The sewer rate in 2020 for residential customers in Aurora is \$14.00 for the first 1000 gallons plus \$3.15/1000 gallons per month. Based on these rates, the estimated sewer rate for residential customer who uses 5,000 gallons of potable water in the winter quarter is \$26.60/month/user. The sewer utility serves 1934 customers. The impact of the debt service due to the proposed project on the sewer utility customers is \$4.80/month/user.

2. Secondary:

a. Population Impacts: The sewer extension will facilitate population growth in the project area.

b. Land Use and Trends: The project will foster development and a change of land use in the area.

c. Environmental: The project will not impact the flood plain. Impacts on registered wells and wetlands are not expected. No significant increases in noise levels or odors are expected.

d. Environmental Justice: This project has been planned to ensure that no segment of the community's population suffers disproportionately from human health or environmental effects.

3. Mitigation Measures Necessary to Eliminate Adverse Environmental Effect: The construction documents will require the contractor to protect the site with storm water pollution controls and to satisfy requirements of the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

4. Irreversible and Irrecoverable Commitment of Resources: The resources committed to the project include the pipe, other construction materials, and the energy used in construction.

F. Measure Taken to Insure Environmental Soundness:

1. Public Involvement: A public hearing on the proposed project was held on May 12, 2020.

2. Public Opposition or Opinions: There was no opposition expressed at the hearing.

3. Coordination and Documentation with Other Agencies and Special Interest Groups:

Prepared by:

Federal: US Army Corps of Engineers

State: Nebraska Department of Environmental and Energy
Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
Nebraska State Historical Society
Nebraska Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics
Nebraska State Fire Marshal Agency
Tribal Historic Preservation Office

Local: Aurora City Council


Consulting Engineers: JEO Consulting Group

Public Groups: None

G. Positive Environmental Effects to be realized from the Proposed Project:

The interceptor sewer will benefit surface water quality by helping to ensure that wastewater from developments in the project area receive adequate treatment. The potential for ground water pollution in the area will be decreased with the project.

H. Reasons for concluding there will be No Significant Impacts: Review of the project information and agency comment letters indicate that the proposed project will result in positive environmental effects and benefits. No threatened or endangered species or recorded historical or archaeological sites will be affected by construction. Adverse impacts, if any, on wetlands will be mitigated. The construction documents will specify storm water pollution controls, and protection of nesting migratory birds. No segment of the community's population will be impacted disproportionately by the project.



Reviewing Engineer
Date: 7/15/20

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LOCAL NEWSPAPER
Aurora News Register
1320 K Street
Aurora NE 68818
(Public Information only, not for Public Notice)

