LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: Water Storage Tank Replacement and Booster Pump Station

Applicant: Village of Hopedale
422 Normal Street
Hopedale, Ohio 43976

Loan Number: FS390458-0008

Project Summary

The Village of Hopedale applied for financing from the Ohio Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) to fund the Water Storage Tank Replacement and Booster Pump Station project. This project is designed to ensure a continuous potable drinking water supply by replacing water storage and distribution structures that have reached the end of their useful life. The estimated loan amount for this project is $1,055,430, with construction scheduled to begin in summer of 2024 and last approximately 16 months.

History & Existing Conditions

The Village of Hopedale (see Figure 1), located in eastern Harrison County, owns and operates a drinking water distribution system that serves a population of 943. Hopedale receives its water through an interconnection with Jefferson County Water near the Harrison County/Jefferson County border. Jefferson County, in turn, receives its finished water from the City of Toronto Water Works.

Hopedale currently has 55,000-gallon and 115,000-gallon water storage tanks, both of which are beyond their useful life. The aged booster station is not adequate in either pumping capacity or total dynamic head for the village's needs, and has been determined to need replacement. Facility studies determined that the extensive repairs and upgrades required to improve the existing water storage tanks and booster station would not be cost effective.

Hopedale has a 150,000-gallons-per-day (GPD) contracted purchase allotment with Jefferson County Water, and a 170,000-GPD emergency allotment. Hopedale's average usage is 80,000 GPD. Hopedale projects the growth in its service areas to increase by approximately one percent in the 20-year planning period. At this level of growth, the Hopedale and Jefferson County systems can adequately meet the present and future needs of the village.

Project Description

The proposed Water Storage Tank Replacement and Booster Pump Station project (see Figure 2) will replace existing water storage and distribution structures that have reached the end of the useful lives, and include the following:

- 300,000-gallon concrete water storage tank, with chemical feed system, electrical service, controls, backup generator, and fencing

- 12-foot by 25-foot booster station, with pumps, electrical service, controls, backup generator, and fencing
- New valve vault, with electrical service, and controls
- Hydrants, valves, and restoration activities
- Demolition of old structures

Implementation

Hopedale expects to receive $2,600,080 from the Ohio Department of Development Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Program to help fund this project, leaving a balance and estimated loan amount for the project of $1,055,430. Hopedale qualifies for the small-community long-term WSRLA below-market interest rate on 20-year loans, which for May is 2.1% (WSRLA loan interest rates are set monthly, and the rate may change for a later loan award). Borrowing at 2.1% will save Hopedale approximately $225,000 over the life of the loan compared to the current market rate of 3.85%.

Debt for the project will be repaid from the village's maintenance account, which includes funding from water rates and fees. Water rates will not increase for the specific areas served by the improvements. Under the water rates that are effective in 2024 and based on a usage of 4,000 gallons of water per month, the average residential water bill is $46.25 per month (which includes two $5 service fees), or $555 per year, as compared to the state average of $476.93.

Public Participation

The project has been discussed extensively at village council meetings that were open to the public, project information will be present on Hopedale's website, and notification will be distributed through door hangers and/or as an insert with utility bills. Given the limited potential environmental impact of the project and the lack of a rate increase or property assessments, this is considered adequate public participation.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the criteria for a Limited Environmental Review (LER); namely, it is an action within an existing water distribution system, which involves the functional replacement of existing water storage and distribution equipment. Furthermore, the project meets the other qualifying criteria for an LER; specifically, the proposed project:

Will have no significant environmental effect and will require no specific impact mitigation, since sensitive resources such as floodplains, wetlands, riparian areas, prime or unique agricultural lands, aquifer recharge zones, archaeological or historically significant sites, or threatened or endangered species are not present in the project area, and as the project involves the construction of an elevated water tank, pump station, and valve vault in areas of extensive prior construction, demolition, and excavation, and utilities and road rights-of-way.

Will have no effect on high-value environmental resources, as the project area includes former construction areas with gravel, concrete, and street grass, where no high-value environmental resources are present.

Is cost effective, as replacement of these structures is more cost-effective option compared to repairs and improvements to structures that are beyond their useful life.

Is not a controversial action, as user rates will not be increased as a result of this project, adverse impacts to environmental resources are unlikely to occur, and Ohio EPA is unaware of any public opposition to the project.

Does not create a new, or relocate an existing discharge to surface or ground waters, does not create a new source of water withdrawals from either surface or ground waters, or significantly increase the amount of water withdrawn from an existing water source, or substantially increase the volume of discharge or loading of pollutants from an existing source or from new facilities to receiving waters, as no discharge points or pollutant loading will be part of the project. The project does not require the expansion of the City of Toronto's water treatment facilities beyond their current capacity or require the addition of a supplementary water supplier, so it will not require a change in water withdrawal.

Will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the existing population, as the project scope is limited to replacement of an existing elevated water tank, pump station, and valve vault. Little population change is anticipated during the 20-year planning period.

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. Furthermore, the replacement of the existing elevated water tank, pump station, and valve vault will help to ensure continuous potable drinking water supply to residents located in the project area at a reasonable cost.

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