STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

PHILLIP D. ROOS
DIRECTOR

April 5, 2024

TO: All Interested Citizens, Organizations, and Government Agencies

SUBJECT: FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
City of Caseville, Huron County
Force Main Replacement and Lift Station Improvements
Clean Water State Revolving Fund Project Number 5962-01

The purpose of this notice is to seek public input and comment on a preliminary decision by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required to implement recommendations discussed in the attached Environmental Assessment of a wastewater project plan submitted by the applicant mentioned above.

HOW WERE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CONSIDERED?

Part 53, Clean Water Assistance, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, being Sections 324.5301 to 324.5316 of the Michigan Compiled Laws Annotated, requires EGLE to evaluate all environmental implications of a proposed wastewater project. EGLE has done this by incorporating a detailed analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed alternatives in its review and approval process. A project plan containing information on environmental impacts was prepared by the municipality and reviewed by the State. EGLE has prepared the attached Environmental Assessment and found that the proposed project does not require the preparation of an EIS.

WHY IS AN EIS NOT REQUIRED?

Our environmental review concluded that no significant environmental impacts would result from the proposed action. Any adverse impacts have either been eliminated by changes in the project plan or will be reduced by the implementation of the mitigative measures discussed in the attached Environmental Assessment.

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

A map depicting the location of the proposed project is attached. This information is also available on our website at Michigan.gov/CWSRF under “Additional Links.” The Environmental Assessment presents additional information on the project, alternatives that were considered, impacts of the proposed action, and the basis for our decision. Further information can be obtained by calling or writing one of the contact people listed below.

HOW DO I SUBMIT COMMENTS?

Any comments supporting or disagreeing with this preliminary decision should be submitted to me at EGLE, Constitution Hall, P.O. Box 30457, Lansing, Michigan 48909-7957. We will not take any action on this project plan for 30 calendar days from the date of this notice in order to receive and consider any comments.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

In the absence of substantive comments during this period, our preliminary decision will become final. The applicant will then be eligible to receive loan assistance from this Agency to construct the proposed project.

Any information you feel should be considered by EGLE should be brought to our attention. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Matt Werle, the project manager, at 517-599-1644, by email at WerleM@Michigan.gov, or you may contact me. Your interest in this process and the environment is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dan Beauchamp

Dan Beauchamp, Section Manager
Water Infrastructure Funding and Financing Section
Finance Division
517-388-3380

Attachment

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY
Clean Water State Revolving Fund
City of Caseville, Huron County
Environmental Assessment
April 2024

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Applicant:	City of Caseville
Address:	6767 Main Street, P.O. Box 1049 Caseville, Michigan 48725
Authorized Representative:	Jamie Learman, Office Administrator/Clerk
Project Number:	5962-01

PROJECT SUMMARY

The City of Caseville (Caseville) is located within Huron County and is surrounded by the Saginaw Bay of Lake Huron to the west and Caseville Township. Caseville has a population of 652 people with the primary land use consisting of commercial or single-family residences. Caseville owns and operates its sanitary sewer collection system and wastewater stabilization lagoons.

Caseville is applying for a Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan administered by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) to finance the replacement and repair of the force main and lift stations that transport wastewater to the wastewater stabilization lagoons located in the eastern portion of Caseville Township. Approximately two miles of ductile iron 10-inch diameter force main will be replaced with 10-inch diameter polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe between Lift Station A and the wastewater storage lagoons. Replacement of this section of force main will address several breaks and deterioration the force main has experienced in the recent years. Work on Caseville's seven lift stations includes new submersible pumps, new controls, and control panels, upgraded supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system, and backup generators. These upgrades will improve the efficiency and technology of Caseville's lift stations reducing the number of lift station failures.

The total estimated project cost is $5,915,000. Caseville received a Substantial Public Health Risk Project (SPHRP) Grant from EGLE in the amount of $2,000,000 and will be seeking a CWSRF loan in the amount of $3,915,000 to finance the remaining project cost. The CWSRF loan will be paid back over either a 20 or 30-year period. As an overburdened community as determined by EGLE, Caseville is eligible to receive a lower interest rate through the CWSRF program.

Repayment of the project financing will come from an increase of user rates. Caseville's sanitary sewer system consists of 926 residential equivalent users (REU). Caseville anticipates a monthly increase of approximately $15.00 for each REU to cover the total project costs.

EXISTING SYSTEM AND PROJECT NEED

Construction of Caseville's sanitary sewer collection system, lift stations, and wastewater stabilization lagoons began in 1991. The collection system consists of 11 miles of gravity sewers and 3.5 miles of force main comprised of PVC and ductile iron pipe. Collection system pipes range in size from 4 to 12-inches in diameter. A total of six lift stations pump wastewater throughout Caseville to Main Lift Station A which pumps directly to the wastewater stabilization lagoons. The wastewater stabilization lagoons consist of two primary lagoons, one secondary lagoon, a flocculation lagoon, a chemical feed structure, and manhole. The existing wastewater stabilization lagoon system is designed to treat 27.5 million gallons per year of raw sewage.

In recent years, Caseville's force main has experienced at least eight failures resulting in excavation of the area and the installation of repair clamps on the force main to prevent further damage. These pipe breaks have resulted in untreated sewage leaching into groundwater and potentially reaching the surrounding water systems. In September 2022, Caseville received a compliance letter from EGLE regarding identified leaks in the force main and was advised to address the aging infrastructure before a "catastrophic" failure occurs.

Caseville has also experienced an increase in lift station failures due to aging components and technology. Failure of pumps and lift stations can lead to backups into residential homes and commercial businesses. These backups can cause financial damage as well as public health and safety concerns.

PROPOSED PROJECT

A. Alternatives Considered

No-action Alternative

With the no-action alternative, the existing force main would continue to deteriorate, and leaks would occur more frequently. This would result in additional releases of untreated sewage into the surrounding groundwater. The existing lift stations would also continue to age and deteriorate requiring an increase in operation and maintenance and system reliability issues. Therefore, the no-action alternative is not considered a feasible alternative for addressing the immediate needs of the sewer system.

Regionalization Alternative

Regionalization is not a feasible option for Caseville as the nearest regional treatment system capable of accepting Caseville's wastewater is Bad Axe, located approximately 22 miles southeast of Caseville. The Bad Axe Wastewater Treatment Plant is also approximately 160 feet higher in elevation than Caseville. Connecting to the Bad Axe system would require a significant length of new force main and multiple new pump stations; therefore, this alternative was not considered further.

Optimization of Existing System

Caseville's sanitary sewer collection system and wastewater stabilization lagoons meet the current system demand. Optimization of the current facilities will not solve the existing structural issues. Therefore, optimization is not considered viable or practical to address the identified system deficiencies.

Replace Existing Force Main

This alternative consists of replacing approximately two miles of the existing 10-inch diameter ductile iron force main with new 10-inch diameter PVC force main from Lift Station A to the wastewater stabilization lagoons. The new PVC force main would follow the same routes as the existing force main and be installed via a combination of directional drilling and open cut. This alternative would solve the current issues of breaks and deterioration that the existing force main faces.

Upgrade Existing Lift Stations

This alternative consists of upgrading several components at each of Caseville's seven lift stations. Upgrades at each lift station include new submersible pumps, new controls and control panels, SCADA, and backup generators. New pumps and backup generators will reduce down time in the sanitary sewer system decreasing the likelihood of wastewater backups. The installation of backup generators will also maintain wastewater flow during any loss of electricity at the lift station. These upgrades will reduce the number of failures at the lift stations caused by aging components and technology.

B. Selected Alternative and Estimated Cost

Based on the poor condition of Caseville's force main and lift stations, replacement of the force main and upgrades to the seven lift stations are the only feasible alternatives. The proposed project will take place at each of the seven lift station locations (Figure 1) and along the force main route from Main Lift Station A to the wastewater stabilization lagoons outlined in Figure 2.

The total estimated project cost is $5,915,000. Caseville has received $2,000,000 in the form of a SPHRP Grant to assist with the project cost. Caseville plans to finance the remaining $3,915,000 through a CWSRF loan.

POTENTIAL PROJECT IMPACTS

A. Water Quality Impacts

The proposed project does not have any anticipated impacts to state-regulated water resources or surface water, such as inland lakes, streams, or wetlands. EGLEs Water Resources Division (WRD) reviewed the proposed project and determined that a Part 301 Inland Lakes and Streams permit will be required for the force mainstream crossing located on Ash Street, which is needed prior to the start of construction. Portions of the force main replacement are located within Lake Huron and Pigeon River floodplain areas; however, there are no coastal zone or floodplain concerns according to EGLE WRD, as long as open cut construction and directional boring pits remain outside of the floodplain. There are no National Wild and Scenic Rivers in or near the project area. Replacement of the deteriorating force main will protect surface waters and groundwater by removing potential sources of contamination.

B. Construction Impacts

Project construction will take place in existing rights-of-way and current lift station locations which have previously been disturbed. Therefore, minimal disturbances to the surrounding landscape are anticipated. If any damage to the surrounding landscape does occur, impacted items will be restored to original conditions. Since construction will take place within rights-of-way and previously disturbed locations, no adverse impacts to

environmental, cultural, historical, or threatened and endangered species are expected as a result of this project.

Impacts of construction activities associated with this project are considered short-term disruptions that, for the most part, will not extend past the construction period. Short-term adverse impacts associated with construction include traffic delays, noise, dust, exhaust fumes, removal of groundcover, and increased erosion potential.

There is a possibility of encountering contaminated soil and/or groundwater during construction of the force main replacement. EGLE Remediation and Redevelopment Division provided Caseville with an appropriate set of guidelines if any potential contamination is discovered during construction.

C. Secondary Impacts

No significant secondary impacts are anticipated due to this project. Improvements to the sanitary sewer system are associated with the need to address deficiencies and increase reliability of the system.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Caseville held a public hearing at Caseville City Hall on April 19, 2023, to discuss the proposed project. The notice of public hearing was advertised on Caseville's website on April 3, 2023. The main topics of discussion at the hearing pertained to user costs and the proposed project. No written comments from the public were received before, during, or after the public hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, Caseville passed a resolution to adopt the project planning document and seek CWSRF financing to implement the selected alternative.

REASONS FOR CONCLUDING NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

The Caseville sanitary sewer force main replacement and lift station upgrade project will have no significant adverse direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on socioeconomic, cultural, or environmental factors. The proposed project will address deficiencies and increase reliability of Caseville's sanitary sewer collection system. The water quality benefits anticipated from the project are expected to outweigh the short-term adverse impacts. Therefore, a finding of no significant impact has been made.

Questions regarding this Environmental Assessment should be directed to:

Matt Werle, Project Manager
Water Infrastructure Funding and Financing Section
Finance Division
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
P.O. Box 30457
Lansing, Michigan 48909-4957
Telephone: 517-599-1644
Email: WerleM@Michigan.gov

Figure 1: Caseville Lift Station and Force Main Locations

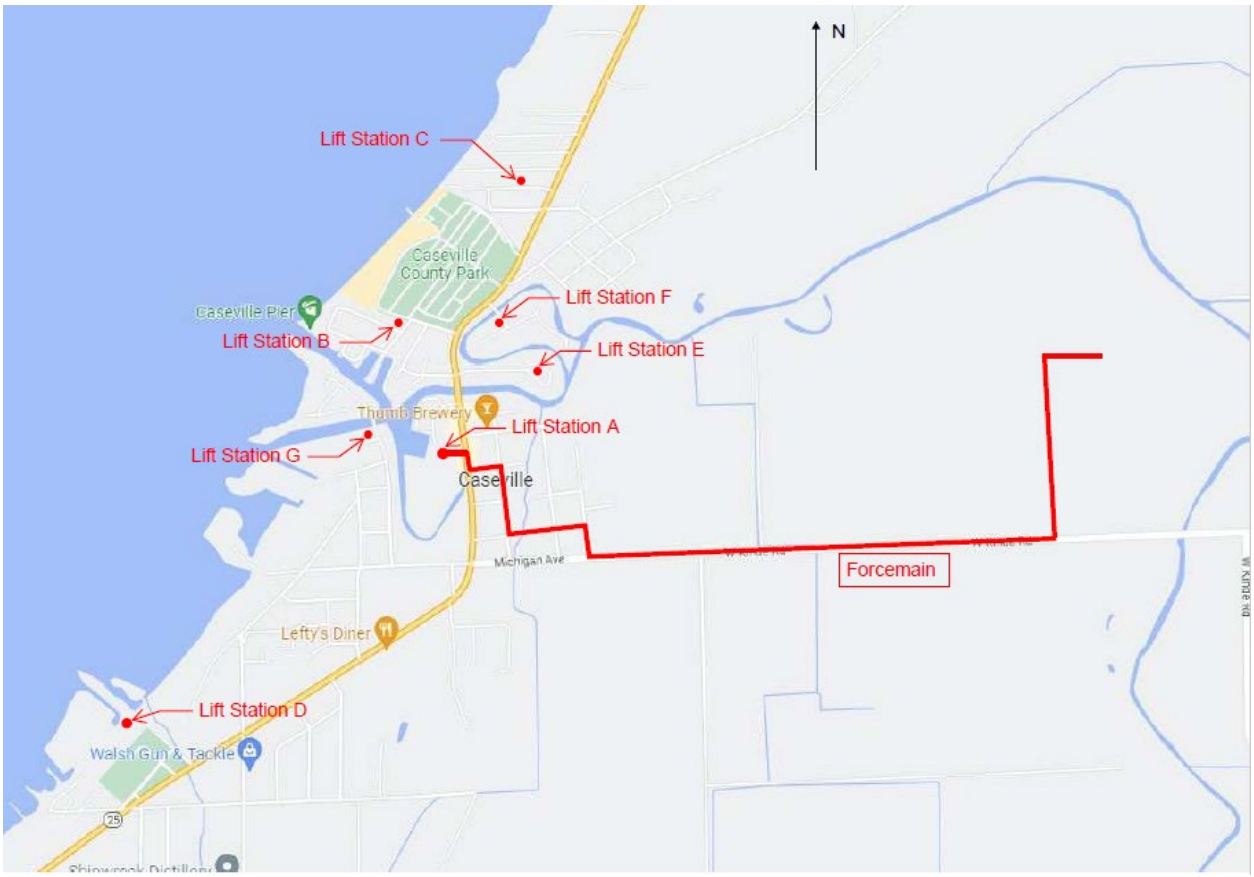

Figure 2: Caseville Force Main Location