



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

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



DANIEL EICHINGER
ACTING DIRECTOR

April 24, 2023

TO: All Interested Citizens, Organizations, and Government Agencies

SUBJECT: FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
City of Vassar, Tuscola County
Source (Wells) and Distribution (Water Main/Metering) Improvements
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Project Number 7655-01

The purpose of this memorandum is to seek public comment on a preliminary decision by the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required to implement recommendations presented in a wastewater project plan submitted by the above-referenced applicant.

The decision by EGLE is based on its review of the proposed project using an array of federal and state criteria regarding the environment and public health, including Part 54, Safe Drinking Water Assistance, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, being Sections 324.5401 to 324.5418 of the Michigan Compiled Laws Annotated. EGLE has determined that potential impacts to the natural and human environments either have been eliminated by changes in the project plan or will be mitigated with adherence to permit requirements. Minor construction impacts will be localized to the construction zones and will be temporary.

The attached Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) is EGLE's preliminary decision on its review of the proposed project. For additional information, you may request a copy of the Environmental Assessment, the detailed summary document upon which the FNSI is based.

Comments supporting or disagreeing with this preliminary decision should be submitted to me at EGLE, Finance Division, Water Infrastructure Funding and Financing Section, 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.

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 to construct the proposed project.

DWSRF Project Number 7655-01

April 24, 2023

Page 2

If you have any questions, please contact Jonathan M. Berman, State Revolving Fund Compliance Specialist, at 517-897-3634, by email at BermanJ@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
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
Finding of No Significant Impact
Source (Wells) and Distribution (Water Main/Metering) Improvements
City of Vassar, Tuscola County
April 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Applicant:	City of Vassar
Address:	287 E. Huron Avenue Vassar, Michigan 48768
Authorized Representative:	Andrew Niedzinski, City Manager
Project Number:	7655-01
Project Location:	Previously disturbed residential, commercial, and industrial areas and a public park in existing utility sites, public road rights-of-way, and city owned property.
Construction Period:	Fall 2023 – Spring 2025
Pre-Design Loan Estimate:	\$8,910,000

DESCRIPTION

The City of Vassar (Vassar) is applying for a low interest loan, Project Number 7655-01, from the state of Michigan's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). This DWSRF loan will finance an assortment of water system improvements, including two new well sites (TW8 and TW9), water main replacement and pipe upsizing, water main looping, and metering (see Figure 1). Project Number 7655-01 is eligible to receive up to \$6,682,500 in principal forgiveness through the DWSRF loan, representing 75 percent of the \$8,910,000 project cost estimate, due to qualifying for disadvantaged community status.

At a current age of over 80 years, Vassar's existing wells 1, 5, and 6 have exceeded their expected 50-year useful life. They will no longer be primary wells and must be replaced with new wells (TW-8 and TW-9). Well 6 will likely be abandoned soon due to total coliform being present in monthly samples and its pump requiring additional service while wells 1 and 5 will remain as backup until they must be abandoned. The two new well sites (TW8 and TW9) will improve source water quality and reliability while ensuring adequate capacity. The inactive well 7 will be properly abandoned in this project due to high chloride and iron levels. Located just south of the Cass River and north of North Street, the TW-8 and TW-9 new well site work includes drilling two new Type 1 wells, installing pumps, a new well house, chemical feed systems, the addition of phosphate feed at existing well houses, and all related work.

The distribution water main pipe identified for replacement ranges in size from less than 4- to 10-inches in diameter, is currently aged at between 55 to 75 years, made of asbestos cement, cast iron, or wood, and experiences periodic breaks. Nearly all the pipes to be replaced will also be upsized and to no greater than 8- or 12-inches in diameter while utilizing polyvinyl chloride (PVC) material. This work will improve distribution water quality, reliability, and capacity as well as advance efficiency via reduced costs to pump and treat water lost due to breaks.

The water main replacement includes all necessary appurtenances (i.e., valves, hydrants, etc.) and is summarized below by street, location, pipe diameter sizing, and estimated linear footage:

Street	Location	Pipe Diameter Size	Linear Feet
1. Spruce Street	Main Street to West Street	From 6- to 12-inch	900
2. Cass Avenue	Huron Ave to Chestnut Street	From 10- to 12-inch	2,500
3. Chestnut Street	Cass Avenue to Grant Street	From 4- to 8-inch	450
4. Bourn Street	Cass Avenue to Grant Street	From 4- to 8-inch	625
5. Maple Street	Cass Avenue to the north	From <4- to 8-inch	80
6. Division Street	Maple Street to the south	From 4- to 8-inch	255
7. Division Street	M-15 to the north	From <4- to 8-inch	335
8. Washington Street	Athletic Street to Oak Street	From 4- to 8-inch	420
9. Madison Street	Athletic Street to M-15	From 4- to 8-inch	1,055
10. Jefferson Street	Oak Street to M-15	From 4- to 8-inch	540
11. West Street	Athletic Street to Oak Street	From 4- to 8-inch	610
12. Oak Street	West Street / Adams Street / M-15	From 4- to 8-inch	1,705
13. Harrington Street	Oak Street to M-15	From 4- to 8-inch	320
14. Prospect Street	Saginaw Street to Spruce Street	From 4- to 8-inch	725
15. Spring Street	Main Street to the west	From 4- to 8-inch	240
16. Plumb Street	Water Street to Cherry Street	From <4- to 8-inch	275
17. Cherry Street	M-15 to Arch Street	From 4- to 8-inch	845
18. Beach Street	M-15 to the west	From 2- to 8-inch	405
19. Beach Street	M-15 to Birch Road	From 4- to 8-inch	1,400
20. Arch Street	Sheridan Street to Sherman Street	From 4- to 8-inch	755
21. Butler Street	M-15 to Sheridan Street	From 4- to 8-inch	825
22. Sheridan Street	Butler Street to Huron Avenue	From 4- to 8-inch	525
23. Andy Street	Huron Avenue to the north	From 4- to 8-inch	245
24. Main Street	Huron Avenue (at east to west)	Maintain 8-inch	220

Lead service lines are not expected to be encountered, but if discovered during construction they would be replaced in accordance with the revised Michigan Lead and Copper Rule within the Safe Drinking Water Act 399 of 1976.

To further improve water distribution system reliability and add redundancy in the northern portion of the system, an estimated 1,300 linear foot water main loop will be installed along Timber Ridge Drive to Division Street and Central Elementary School. The loop will connect two dead end mains and be built with pipe ranging in size from 8- to 12-inches diameter using both PVC and high-density polyethylene (HDPE) material.

Vassar currently meters commercial and industrial users, but not residential users. The metering improvements will result in residential users being metered to provide more complete water use data on the system to enable a more proactive approach to maintenance efforts. Existing meters will be retrofitted at the same time for compatibility. The metering work includes installing residential water meters with encoders, transmitters to new and existing meters, and collectors to provide complete coverage using a mesh network with compatible fixed base reading equipment. A computer with network management and reading system software will transfer usage data to the existing water billing software and equipment.

COSTS

Vassar's 2022 DWSRF project plan estimates user rates for the typical residential customer to increase by \$37.50 per month (or \$450 annually) to service the DWSRF loan debt associated with Project Number 7655-01. Note this estimated residential user rate increase for the purpose of DWSRF loan debt service alone was calculated without any principal forgiveness and as a result, it is likely to be less. Nevertheless, a complete representation of the estimated increase to residential user rates is still to be determined by Vassar's financial professional to ensure the utility is properly funded in the coming years and will consider raising ready to serve fees, commodity fees, or a combination of both.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

The project will have no significant adverse direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts upon any socioeconomic, cultural, or environmental factors. The source improvements will be in a Vassar owned public park while distribution work is mostly in developed residential areas with some commercial and industrial. The construction will all take place in previously disrupted areas on existing utility sites, public road rights-of-way, and Vassar owned property.

A joint permit application will be submitted to the EGLE Water Resources Division for Part 31 floodplain impacts due to working in the floodway for some water main replacement. The permit is expected to fall under general permit/minor project categories. Water main will be installed below ground with the existing ground restored back to existing elevations. No adverse impacts are anticipated since the work will not physically alter the floodplain or obstruct the floodway.

Except for EGLE permitting under Part 31 for floodplains, which is expected prior to the start of construction, all applicable EGLE reviews concerning potential adverse impacts to cross-cutter regulated resources have been completed. The potential for adverse impacts to the federally endangered Indiana bat and federally threatened Northern Long-eared bat will be mitigated by limiting any tree removal or cutting to between October 1 to March 1. Project locations consist of hard surfaced or grass areas that are frequently mowed and not suitable habitat for the federally threatened Eastern Massasauga rattlesnake and Eastern Prairie Fringed orchid. The state endangered Purple lilliput is not anticipated to be impacted since there will be no Cass River-related in-stream work or land clearing activities and it has not been observed in the area for over 90 years. The contract specifications will require controls to mitigate any potential for adverse impacts to the McKinley School, a historical site near the project which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Customers will be notified when work is scheduled in their area. Service will be maintained and will only be shut off in the short period of time while connections to house leads are changed from old water mains to the new water mains. The anticipated project impacts of traffic, noise, dust, and soil erosion will be properly mitigated by sound construction practices and adherence to permit requirements. Traffic control and access to homes and businesses will be ensured. Increased noise levels will be mitigated by limiting work to Vassar approved hours. Dust control will be provided during dry and dusty periods as necessary. Sedimentation control will be used to protect surrounding areas and storm water inlets from soil erosion and sediment.

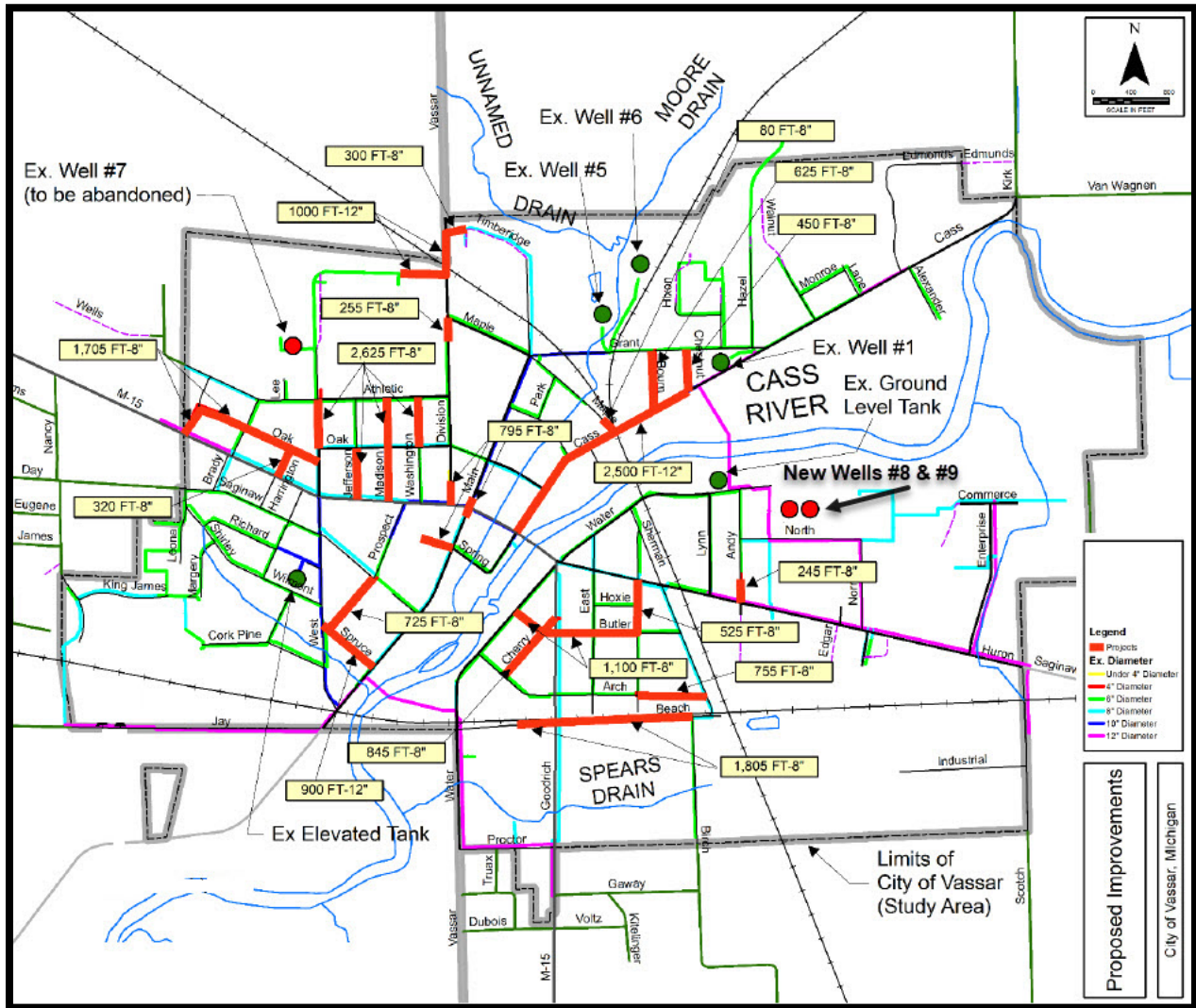
AVAILABILITY OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

EGLE prepared a separate document, an Environmental Assessment, which contains additional information about Vassar's source (wells) and distribution (water main/metering) improvements DWSRF Project Number 7655-01 and its impacts, to support this Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI). This detailed document is available upon request by contacting the Water Infrastructure Funding and Financing Section at 517-284-5433.

Questions regarding the FNSI should be directed to:

Jonathan M. Berman, State Revolving Fund Compliance Specialist
Water Infrastructure Funding and Financing Section
Finance Division
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
P.O. Box 30457
Lansing, Michigan 48909-4957
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Figure 1 – Location Map
Source (Wells) and Distribution (Water Main/Metering) Improvements
DWSRF Project Number 7655-01, City of Vassar



Note:
 New meters for residential users and existing meter retrofits for commercial and industrial users will take place throughout Vassar. Although specific locations and quantities are still in some stage of development, the current project estimate is 300 new meters and 120 meter retrofits.

FIGURE 1