June 30, 2022

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS:

As required by the rules of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), 31 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 371.41, an environmental review consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 United States Code § 4321 et seq., has been performed on the project below. This project is proposed to be funded through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Program, which is administered by the TWDB.

City of Pflugerville, Travis County, Texas
TWDB DWSRF Project No. 62919
Water Treatment Plant Expansion Design
Total Financing Amount: $24,000,000
(L1001499)

The City of Pflugerville (City) is proposing to use $24,000,000 in financing from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program to implement an expansion of the Pflugerville Water Treatment Plant (WTP) capacity from 17.7 to 30 million gallons per day (MGD) to meet current and projected needs. Project components include the following items:

- Expansion of existing lake intake pump station;
- Pretreatment train (rapid mix, flocculation basins, and plate settlers);
- Membrane filtration upgrade;
- Chlorine contact basin;
- Expansion of high service pump station;
- Chemical storage feed facility;
- Raw sludge thickeners and thickened sludge pump station;
- New backwash waste clarifier, and recycle flow pump station; and
- 24-inch water line to connect the elevated storage tank to the transmission line.
An environmental review of the proposed project consistent with NEPA has been completed following the guidelines provided in 31 TAC § 371.41. This environmental review is documented by the enclosed Environmental Assessment, which contains mitigative environmental conditions that will be applied to the project to avoid significant adverse environmental impacts on Waters of the United States, wetlands, floodplains, cultural or historical resources, threatened or endangered species, and protected migratory bird species.

Based on a detailed environmental review of the planning information, Environmental Information Document, and other documentation, the proposed project is environmentally sound with the following environmental conditions:

- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of threatened and endangered species; and
- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of cultural resources.

Therefore, it is recommended that a Finding of No Significant Impact be issued.

Documentation supporting this decision is on file in the office of the Regional Water Project Development, TWDB, and is available for public review upon request. Comments supporting or disagreeing with this preliminary environmental determination may be submitted to the Director, Regional Water Project Development, Texas Water Development Board, P.O. Box 13231, Austin, Texas 78711-3231. After evaluating the comments received, the Executive Administrator will make a final determination. However, no action regarding the provision of federal financial assistance for the project will be taken for at least thirty (30) calendar days after the release of this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Sincerely,

T. Clay Schultz

T. Clay Schultz, Ph.D., Director
Regional Water Project Development

Enclosure
REVIEW PROCESS

As described below, and consistent with 31 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 371.41 and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S. Code § 4321 et seq., the staff of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) reviewed the Environmental Information Document (EID) ¹ for the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Expansion Design project proposed by the City of Pflugerville (City). This project is financed through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Program, which is administered by the TWDB.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The City’s WTP treats water from Lake Pflugerville, which is a reservoir supplied by the Colorado River. Hydrilla and zebra mussel raw water infestations in Lake Pflugerville have inflicted damage on the City’s membrane equipment. In addition, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) issued an administrative order for several violations at the WTP in the past two years due to concentration time and cryptosporidium removal issues. The City also needs to increase capacity for a projected population increase of nearly 100,000 in the next 20 years.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City is proposing to implement an expansion of the Pflugerville WTP from 17.7 to 30 million gallons per day (MGD) to meet the current and projected water needs. Project components include the following items:

- Expansion of existing lake intake pump station;
- Pretreatment train (rapid mix, flocculation basins, and plate settlers);
- Membrane filtration upgrade;
- Chlorine contact basin;
- Expansion of high service pump station;
- Chemical storage feed facility;
- Raw sludge thickeners and thickened sludge pump station;
- New backwash waste clarifier, and recycle flow pump station.; and
- 24-inch water line to connect the elevated storage tank to the transmission line.

¹ City of Pflugerville (February 2022). Environmental Information Document (EID), Prepared by Ardurra.
PROJECT FUNDING

To address these issues, the City applied to the TWDB for financing through the DWSRF Program for construction, as well as to acquire land and easements. On April 11, 2022, the TWDB committed $24,000,000 for the proposed project, no planning funds were used to assess the potential environmental impact of the proposed project or to prepare an EID. Preparation of the EID involved consultation with state and federal regulatory agencies and additional public participation.

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

In addition to the Preferred Alternative, the City evaluated the No-Action Alternative. Each alternative was evaluated for its potential direct, secondary, and cumulative impacts on the existing environment.

No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative would have less impact than the Preferred Alternative; however, augmenting of the City’s water supply would not occur. The City of Pflugerville is a growing municipality in Texas. The population is projected to increase by 100,000 in the next 20 years. The City is seeking the required capacity and reliability of water infrastructure to meet the projected water demands. This can be accomplished by expanding the existing WTP.

The No-Action Alternative would not provide additional water capacity to meet the growing water demands and capacity requirements. This would negatively impact the quality of life for the residents of the City and would not address the City’s projected water needs.

Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative is described above under the Project Description. The purpose of the Preferred Alternative is to provide a more reliable and sustainable water source for the City, which the No-Action Alternative would not provide. The existing plant site has available space to accommodate proposed expansion and there would be no costs for purchasing additional land. Because this is an existing site, environmental impacts from the project will be minimal other than temporary disturbances related to ground disturbances during construction. The Preferred Alternative will provide additional capacity and reliable water supply to meet City’s increasing water demands and accommodate projected need.
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Consistent with the requirements of the federally funded DWSRF Program, the City defined the social and environmental contexts of the proposed project and assessed its potential impact. This information was presented in an EID made available to the community, regulatory agencies, and other interested parties.

Adverse effects on societal and natural resources fall under the authority of various agencies. These regulatory agencies and participating area residents had the opportunity to address potential issues concerning construction practices, possible adverse effects within the proposed project area, and the mitigative measures to be implemented during construction. The staff of the TWDB reviewed the EID, comments and other data and prepared the present EA.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Existing Conditions

The proposed project is located in the City of Pflugerville in Travis County, Texas. The majority of the current and recent past land use associated with the proposed project site has been undeveloped green space owned by the City of Pflugerville until the City constructed the WTP on the site in 2005. The expansion will take place within the existing WTP fence line. The site is bordered to the north by Weiss Lane and a vacant parcel. Farther to the north is Lake Pflugerville, to the east and west are vacant parcels and single-family homes, and to the south across Wolf Pack Drive is Weiss High School.

Geology and Soils

The proposed project is located within the Blackland Prairie Physiographic Province of Texas. Geologically, the proposed project is underlain by the Cretaceous-age Navarro and Taylor Groups (undivided), which consist of mostly silty calcareous clay with sandstone beds and concretionary masses, underlain by fine-grained quartz sand with concretions in discontinuous beds and marine mega fossils.

There are no faults or other pertinent geologic features mapped in the proposed project area. The proposed project is not located in a karst or pseudo-karst zone. No adverse environmental issues are expected as a result of the geologic setting.

Although the project footprint is located on some mapped soil units classified as Prime or Other Important Farmland, there will be no land use conversion. Soil will not be moved off site and will not be contaminated as a result of the proposed project.
Water Resources

The source of the City's water supply is from surface water (Lake Pflugerville), and groundwater (Edwards Aquifer). The surface water supply is not yet being used by the City, but it is in the City’s long-range plans for future use. There are no Environmental Protection Agency (EPA-designated) sole source aquifers in the proposed project area.

The proposed project does not involve significant impacts to water quality. Temporary impacts associated with the construction phase of the proposed project are possible. No new water wells are proposed, and none will be abandoned.

Topography and Floodplains

Elevation across the proposed project area ranges from approximately 625 to 650 feet above mean sea level. The topography of the proposed project area is generally flat. The project area drains toward the north into an unnamed tributary of Wilbarger Creek. The proposed project is not within a floodway or 100-year floodplain. The City and Travis County participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Wetlands, Streams, and Waters of the United States

The proposed project area is located within the Wilbarger Creek watershed and within the Brazos-Colorado River Basin. There are no streams on the proposed project site. The proposed project will not adversely impact waters of the United States, including wetlands.

Biological Elements

The proposed project area is located within the Texas Blackland Prairies Ecological Region. Databases of sensitive species maintained by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) were reviewed, to verify any state and/or federally listed threatened or endangered species that occur, or have historically occurred, in Travis County. No known occurrences of or potential habitat for federally listed candidate, threatened, or endangered species were present within or adjacent to the project area during the field visits conducted in April and March 2021 and on March 17, 2022. There was no designated critical habitat identified within the project area.

No state or national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, wild or scenic rivers, or natural areas or similar preserves are located within the proposed project area. Lake Pflugerville Park, which is owned by the City is 0.9 miles to the northeast. A recreational area known as Carmel Neighborhood Pavilion Pool is 1.2 miles to the southeast. No parks, protected land, and recreational areas will be impacted by the project.
The TPWD Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program reviewed the proposed project in accordance with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code (TPW Code), and provided a response dated April 14, 2022 (TPWD Project No. 46267). The TPWD made several recommendations and Ardurra Group, Inc. responded on behalf of the City regarding the commitment to the recommendations.

**Cultural Resources**

There are not any previously recorded significant or potentially significant sites within or adjacent to the proposed project footprint, according to Texas Historical Commission’s (THC) Archeological Sites Atlas. The proposed project is not within the protected area surrounding a historic cemetery, structure, or district.

In a letter to the THC, dated March 5, 2021, the Ardurra Group, Inc. stated that the project has no anticipated impacts to cultural or historic properties. The THC concurred with these results in a correspondence dated March 18, 2021. No direct impacts to cultural resources/historic properties are anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

**Hazardous Materials**

A search of federal, state, and tribal environmental and regulatory records sources was performed by Ardurra Group, Inc. for sites within the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM)-required search distances from the proposed project boundaries. The federal environmental and regulatory records disclosed no sites within applicable search distances of proposed project. State environmental and regulatory records sources disclosed no sites within appropriate ASTM search distances. There are no Superfund Sites from the EPA National Priorities List located on the proposed subject property or in areas associated with the proposed work for the water line.

**Social Implications and Environmental Justice**

The proposed project was evaluated for environmental justice (EJ) impacts using the Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN), a mapping tool designed by the EPA that allows users to create maps and generate reports on factors that may affect public and environmental health. Data include population, percentage of minority residents, and per capita income for comparison with data for the county and state.

The EJ analysis was performed in February 2021 for the proposed project area, within a 0.5-mile area around the project area. The results are listed below with data from the United States Census for the state and county included for comparison.
EJ analyses were performed for a 0.5-mile area around the proposed project area (including all project components together). The EJ analyses did not indicate any residents within 0.5 mile of the project as of its date in 2019. The City and county have similar levels of minority or low-income populations; therefore, these communities will not be disproportionately impacted in a negative way. People or businesses will not be relocated as a result of the project. An increase in the monthly service rates by $16.00 due to the proposed project is anticipated. – The estimated monthly bill for a typical resident is currently $40.10 and will increase to an estimate monthly total of $56.10 for residential service. No new land will be acquired for the proposed project. No eminent domain will be needed. People or businesses will not be relocated as a result of the project. The entire population of the rapidly growing area will be recipients of benefits derived from the proposed improvements. The project will not disproportionately impact minority or low-income populations in a negative way.

**Secondary and Cumulative Impacts**

Construction of the proposed project will serve anticipated population growth to occur within the service area of the WTP which would occur regardless of the proposed project. The City is a growing municipality. The population is expected to significantly increase in the next 20 years. The city is seeking to provide the required capacity and reliability of water infrastructure to meet the projected water demands. Population growth will occur regardless of the proposed project. The proposed project will not result in increased air emissions. Therefore, air quality would not be adversely impacted in the project vicinity after construction is complete.

**AGENCY COORDINATION AND MITIGATIVE MEASURES**

To ensure due consideration of the project’s potential impact, the City conducted a full EA, prepared an EID describing the results of that investigation, held an open meeting to familiarize the community with the project and solicit public comment, and coordinated with all required regulatory agencies and other interested parties to define and avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects. The City has provided assurance that mitigative measures will be implemented in a manner consistent with the requirements of state and federal regulatory agencies and rules of the TWDB. Cross-Cutter Compliance and Agency Coordination.
“Cross-Cutter” Compliance

The proposed project has been reviewed for potential impacts to the quality of the environment following the procedures provided in 31 Texas Administrative Code § 371.41, to ensure compliance with DWSRF program requirements and federal and state regulations, including the federal cross-cutting environmental authorities from the EPA listed below.

1. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, PL 91-190
3. Clean Air Act, 42 USC 7506(c)
4. Coastal Barrier Resources Act, 16 USC 3501 et seq.
5. Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, PL 92-583, as amended
7. Executive Order 11593, Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment
8. Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management
9. Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands
11. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, PL 85-624, as amended
13. Safe Drinking Water Act, § 1424(e), PL 92-523, as amended
14. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, PL 90-542, as amended
15. The Wilderness Act, 16 USC 1131, et seq.
16. Environmental Justice, Executive Order 12898
20. Clean Water Act, PL 92-500, as amended

Agency Coordination

This environmental review included coordination with various state and federal regulatory agencies, local authorities, and other stakeholders and interested parties regarding the proposed project’s potential impact. The City submitted notifications to and requests for input from all required parties. Some entities did not require a response. The respondents are listed below, and the results of coordination are summarized in the EID and reflected in the environmental conditions listed below.

- Texas Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer, Austin in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; Antiquities Code of Texas; and other applicable regulations (THC Tracking No. 202106000);
• United States Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch, Fort Worth District, in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act; and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (Project No. SWF-2021-00185);
• Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program, Austin in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended; Migratory Bird Treaty Act; Texas Parks and Wildlife Code; and other applicable regulations (TPWD Project No. 46267);
• United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin Ecological Services Field Office, in accordance with the Endangered Species Act and statutes affecting other federally protected species;
• United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service pursuant to the Farmland Protection Policy Act; and
• Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in accordance with 40 CFR Part 93 and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (TCEQ NEPA Request No 2021-216).

No response was required from the following entities:

• Bureau of Reclamation, Oklahoma-Texas Area Office;
• Bureau of Land Management;
• Local Floodplain Administrator pursuant to the NFIP; and
• Local government.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The proposed project is consistent with local, regional, and statewide planning. Coordination with the appropriate governmental agencies has been made and no adverse comments have been received.

Public participation conducted during facilities planning included a public meeting held on September 21, 2021, which was advertised in the Round Rock Leader, newspapers of general circulation in the service area. The notice was published on August 18, 2021, in the Pflugerville Pflag; August 19, 2021, in the Round Rock Leader. An updated meeting location was published on August 25, 2021, in the Pflugerville Pflag; August 26, 2021, in the Round Rock Leader; August 27, 2021, in the Austin American-Statesmen, and on the City's web page. The notices contained information regarding availability of planning documents, including the EID, for public review on the City's website for 30 days leading up to the public meeting.

The public meeting was held at September 21, 2021, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The meeting was initially planned to be held at the City Council Chamber, 100 East Main Street, Suite 500, Pflugerville, Texas, 78660. It was changed to the Pflugerville Library due to a conflict. A notice of meeting location change was provided at the Council Chamber. In addition, city staff was present at the Council Chamber to notify the location change.
A total of seven people attended the meeting. No concerns or adverse comments were voiced at the public meeting or received during the 30-day public review period.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

An environmental review of the proposed project consistent with NEPA has been completed following the guidelines provided in 31 TAC § 371.41. Mitigation measures were defined through the agency coordination process and public participation and are listed below as applicable environmental conditions. These conditions will pertain to the project throughout construction and beyond as warranted. Based on information provided by the City, the proposed WTP Expansion Design is considered environmentally sound with the following general and environmental conditions:

- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of threatened and endangered species; and
- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of cultural resources.

Therefore, it is recommended that a Finding of No Significant Impact be issued.