



July 29, 2025

Limited Environmental Review and Finding of No Significant Impact

**City of Huron – Erie County
New Elevated Water Storage Tank
Loan number: FS390465-0004**

The attached Limited Environmental Review (LER) is for a new elevated water storage tank project in the City of Huron, which the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) intends to finance through its Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) below-market interest rate revolving loan program. The LER describes the project, costs, and expected environmental benefits. Making available this LER fulfills Ohio EPA's environmental review and public notice requirements for this loan program.

Ohio EPA analyzes environmental effects of proposed projects as part of its program review and approval process. We have concluded that the proposed project should not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3745-150-05, this project meets the criteria for an LER rather than the more comprehensive Environmental Assessment. More information can be obtained by contacting the person named at the end of the attached LER.

Upon issuance of this final Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) determination, award of funds may proceed without further environmental review or public comment unless new information shows that environmental conditions of the proposed project have changed significantly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kathleen Courtright".

Kathleen Courtright, Assistant Chief
Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance

LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Project Identification

Project: New Elevated Water Storage Tank

Applicant: City of Huron
417 Main Street
Huron, Ohio 44839

Loan Number: FS390465-0004



Figure 1. Erie County

Project Summary

The City of Huron in Erie County (Figure 1) requested \$5,227,430 in funding from the Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) to construct a new 2.0-million-gallon elevated drinking water storage tank that will functionally replace an existing 500,000-gallon elevated water storage tank located in the same vicinity as the new tank.

History and Existing Conditions

The city of Huron owns, operates, and maintains its own water treatment plant and distribution system. The Huron Water Treatment Plant (WTP) draws water from Lake Erie to produce drinking water for 3,600 service connections in the city, as well as water sold to the Erie County Water and Sewer District. The Huron WTP is a traditional surface water treatment plant, utilizing coagulation, sedimentation, flocculation, and filtration. The plant has a rated capacity of 3.4 million gallons per day (MGD) and the ability to increase capacity to 5.0 MGD with additional sedimentation basins or tube settlers. The primary raw water intake is located in Lake Erie approximately 2,200 feet from the coast. A 36-inch diameter line brings water from the intake crib through a screen to a raw water wet well located on shore. Although the city has recently seen a decline in population, this decline is offset by the large volume of seasonal tourists that come to the region. The facility is expected to increase its water use incrementally over the next several years due to the potential to reach out to new customers in the area.

Lake Erie has experienced annual harmful algal bloom (HAB) events that can impact water treatment. The city needs additional storage to offset any potential disruptions should a HAB event occur that affects drinking water accessibility. The city proposes constructing a new 2.0 million gallon elevated drinking water storage tank to provide additional capacity as their water use demands continue to rise. Increased storage will also provide additional finished water storage to help reduce the risk of impacts due to HAB contamination allowing the city to slow treatment production in the event of an outbreak. This will also allow the city operational flexibility to meet fluctuations in demand and to adjust the plant treatment flow rate depending on raw water quality.

Project Description

This project proposes construction of a new 111-foot tall 2.0-million-gallon elevated drinking water storage tank with all the necessary piping, valves, electrical service, and connection to the existing water distribution system. See Figure 2 below for a map of the project area.

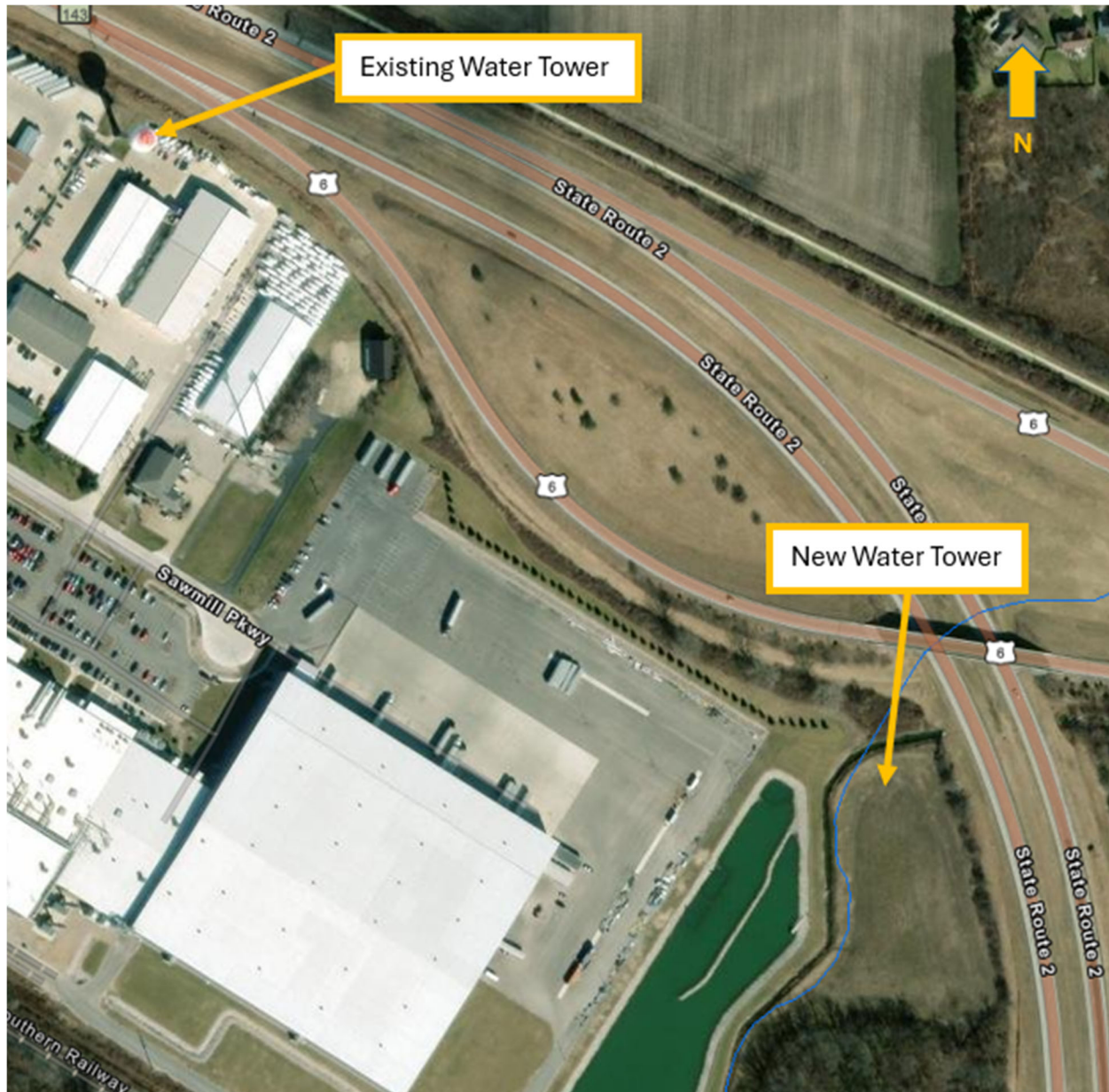


Figure 2. The approximate location of the new city of Huron elevated drinking water storage tank in proximity to the existing one.

Implementation

The estimated cost for this project is \$10,157,800. The city procured a \$5,000,000 Ohio Department of Development Water and Wastewater Infrastructure grant, which will offset some of the costs. The remaining funds are being provided to the city via the WSRLA.

Huron qualifies for two funding discounts: small-community and HAB. The debt associated with this construction project will be recovered from user charges. Annual 5.0% water rate increases were implemented in 2023 and will continue to increase through 2032 or until modified by a future ordinance. Effective January 1, 2025, the average annual water bill for Huron residents is approximately \$690. According to the 2018-2022 American Community Survey, Huron has a median household income (MHI) of \$63,525. The annual water bill is 1.1% of the MHI and is higher than the Ohio average annual water bill (\$481) that is 0.71% of MHI¹.

Construction is expected to start following loan award with an estimated completion date of October 1, 2027.

Public Participation

Ohio EPA is unaware of any controversy about or opposition to this project. The Limited Environmental Review (LER) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) will be posted on Ohio EPA's Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance website available at <https://epa.ohio.gov/divisions-and-offices/environmental-financial-assistance/reports-and-data/documents-available-for-review-and-comment>. Additionally, the LER and FNSI have been provided to the city of Huron to be made available according to their public notification procedures.

Conclusion

The proposed project meets the criteria for an LER in that it is an action within an existing public water distribution system, which involves the functional replacement of and improvements to existing infrastructure. Furthermore, the project meets the qualifying criteria for an LER. Specifically, the proposed project:

Will have no significant environmental effect and will require no specific impact mitigation. The new water tower is in the same vicinity as the existing one it will be replacing. The footprint of the new tower is relatively small and will be located in a field that is regularly mowed.

Temporary impacts to surface water and air quality typically associated with construction will be mitigated through the use of best management practices such as sediment controls (e.g., silt fence) and dust suppression. A concrete splash pad will be installed under the overflow outfall to prevent long-term erosion. There is one stream crossing that will consist of a culvert. The stream is primarily stormwater driven and a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be acquired.

¹ Ohio average annual water rate is based on data collected by The Ohio State University as part of the 2023 Ohio Sewer and Water Rate Survey.

Will have no effect on high-value environmental resources. There are no high-value environmental resources present in areas where construction activities will occur. There is a forested wetland south of the project site, but it is well-outside any areas of concern.

Is cost effective. The city of Huron determined that the only viable, cost-effective alternative to correcting existing issues of finished water storage and availability in the event of HAB or some other emergency that limits water availability was to replace the existing water tower with a new substantially larger one.

Is not a controversial action. Ohio EPA is not aware of any controversy. The city has discussed this project at their council meetings that are open to the public. The City of Huron has procured grant funding that will cover nearly half of the project costs. User rate increases implemented in 2023 will continue through 2032 to offset any need to raise rates specifically to pay for this project. The reduced interest rate loan provided through the WSRLA will further offset additional costs.

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. This project does not include the construction of new point source outfalls. The project will have no impact on water withdrawals. While the capacity of the new water tower is larger than the existing one, it will not significantly increase the amount of water withdrawn from the source, which is Lake Erie.

Will not provide capacity to serve a population substantially greater than the existing population. While the capacity of the new water tower is larger than the existing one, its primary function is to provide additional storage in the event of source water contamination due to HABs. It is not intended to serve a population greater than the existing one.

Based upon Ohio EPA's review of the planning information and the materials presented in this LER it is concluded that this project will have no significant adverse impacts as it relates to the previously discussed environmental features. 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.

This project, which involves the replacement of an elevated water storage tank, will improve system reliability and protect public health by providing much needed drinking water storage capacity in the event of an emergency that could threaten the City of Huron's water supply.

Contact Information

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