

ITEM #: 31
DATE: 03-12-24
DEPT: W&PC

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT DOCUMENT FOR NUTRIENT REDUCTION MODIFICATIONS PHASE I AT WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY

BACKGROUND:

The first phase of the Water Pollution Control Facility Nutrient Reduction Modifications project includes the construction of two activated sludge basins, aeration and process equipment for the new activated sludge system, an expansion of the existing solids contact splitter box, a new electrical building, new grit handling/screening equipment in the existing raw building, and the demolition of the existing administration building and construction of a new administration and maintenance building, and all necessary connections and appurtenances.

An Environmental Information Document (EID) has been prepared by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), which evaluated potential impacts caused by the construction of the project. **The conclusion of the EID is that the project will have "no adverse impact" on:**

- Any State parks, recreational areas, or open spaces;
- Wetlands;
- Any threatened, protected, or endangered species;
- The 100-year flood plain;
- Surface or groundwater quality or quantity; fish, shellfish, wildlife, or their natural habitats; and,
- Historic or culturally significant properties.

Staff has reviewed the EID and found no errors or omissions and agrees with the conclusions offered. The IDNR requires that the City hold a hearing where the public can offer comments on the EID, after which the Mayor would sign the EID, indicating that it is accurate to the best of his knowledge.

This hearing, while required as a condition of the State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan process, takes no action on the loan. A separate hearing will be held before the City enters into any financial agreements with the SRF loan program.

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

The availability of the EID was publicized in multiple ways. A formal Public Notice was published in the Ames Tribune on February 7, 2024. A copy of the notice was also posted in the lobby of City Hall and at the entrances of both the Water Pollution Control Facility and the Water Treatment Plant. Additionally, a layperson description was shared on the City's social media platforms. All of the outreach methods explained the availability of project documents and contact information for the City's project manager. As a part of the State's development of the EID, the following federal, state, and local agencies were asked to comment on the proposed project to better assess any potential impacts.

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- State Historical Society of Iowa (State Historical Preservation Office)
- Iowa DNR Conservation and Recreation Division
- Iowa DNR Flood Plain Management Section
- Citizen Band Potawatomi Indian Tribe
- Flandreau Santee Sioux
- Ho-Chunk Nation
- Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska
- Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
- Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas
- Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma
- Lower Sioux Indian Community Council
- Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
- Omaha Tribal Council
- Osage Tribal Council
- Otoe-Missouria Tribe
- Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma
- Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Ponca Tribe of Nebraska
- Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
- Prairie Island Indian Community
- Sac & Fox Nation of Mississippi in Iowa
- Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri
- Sac & Fox Nation of Oklahoma
- Santee Sioux Nation
- Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
- Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate
- Spirit Lake Tribal Council
- Three Affiliated Tribes Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nations
- Upper Sioux Tribe
- Winnebago Tribal Council
- Yankton Sioux Tribal Business and Claims Committee
- Ames Historic Preservation Commission

No adverse comments were received from any of these agencies or from the general public.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize Mayor Haila to sign the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Environmental Information Document on behalf of the City of Ames after completing the public hearing on March 12, 2024.
2. Do not approve the Environmental Information Document. Since the City's concurrence with the document is a required procedural step, this would jeopardize the City's ability to obtain financing or a construction loan. Ultimately, this would result in a violation of the facility's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Use of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) to finance the construction of the Nutrient Modifications Project Phase I has been identified as the most cost-effective financing vehicle for this project. A procedural step in securing the SRF loan is the development of an Environmental Information Document. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources prepared the required document following an extensive outreach to potentially interested parties and agencies. Additionally, the City advertised the availability of the document by placing a notice in the Ames Tribune, posting notices at City Hall, the Water Plant, and the Water Pollution Control Facility, and by promoting on the City's social media platforms.

Following the outreach efforts, no adverse feedback was received by either the City or the Iowa DNR. Staff concur with the findings and conclusions of the document. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Public Hearing Notice.pdf](#)

[Social Media posting.pdf](#)

[CS192110901_EID 3.1.2024 FINAL VERSION.pdf](#)