



State Revolving Fund Loan Programs

Drinking Water, Clean Water, Nonpoint Source

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

COLUMBUS CITY UTILITIES WESTSIDE INTERCEPTOR AND BIOSOLIDS SRF PROJECT WW 21 48 03 10

DATE: February 24, 2026

PUBLIC COMMENTS DUE BY: March 26, 2026

I. INTRODUCTION

The above entity has applied to the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Program for a loan to finance all or part of the Clean Water project described in the accompanying Environmental Assessment (EA). As part of facilities planning requirements, an environmental review has been completed which addresses the project's impacts on the natural and human environment. This review is summarized in the attached EA, which can also be viewed in color at <http://www.in.gov/ifa/srf/>.

II. PRELIMINARY FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

The SRF Clean Water Program has evaluated all pertinent environmental information regarding the proposed project and determined that an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary. Subject to responses received during the 30-day public comment period, and pursuant to Indiana Code 5-1.2-3, it is our preliminary finding that the construction and operation of the proposed facilities will result in no significant adverse environmental impact. In the absence of significant comments, the attached EA shall serve as the final environmental document.

III. COMMENTS

All interested parties may comment upon the EA/FONSI. Comments must be received at the address below by the target approval date above. Significant comments may prompt a reevaluation of the preliminary FONSI; if appropriate, a new FONSI will be issued for another 30-day public comment period. A final decision to proceed, or not to proceed, with the proposed project shall be effected by finalizing, or not finalizing, the FONSI as appropriate. Comments regarding this document should be sent within 30 days to:

State Revolving Fund
100 N. Senate Ave. IGCN 1275
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Publicnotices@ifa.in.gov

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

I. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name and Address: Westside Interceptor and Thermal Dryer
Columbus City Utilities
1111 McClure Road
Columbus, IN 47201

SRF Project Number: **WW 21 48 03 10**

Authorized Representative: Roger Kelso, Executive Director

II. PROJECT LOCATION

The Westside Interceptor project is located in Bartholomew County, Columbus Township, Columbus 24K USGS Quadrangle, Township 9N, Range 5E, and Sections 26 & 35; and Township 8N, Range 5E, and Section 2. See **Figures 1 and Sheet 14**.

III. PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

The SR 46 West Lift Station is at the end of its useful life and has insufficient capacity for current peak flows. Additionally, the associated force main that travels along SR 11 is in poor condition and was impacted by a recent highway project, resulting in significantly less flow and septic conditions along that section of force main.

CCU owns and operates a WWTP that provides treatment of municipal and industrial flows from the CCU collection system service area, in addition to treatment of hauled waste from areas outside of the service area in Bartholomew County and the surrounding counties. Solids are currently aerobically digested, dewatered, and hauled to either a landfill or to agricultural land for application. There is currently no dedicated long-term biosolids storage available, resulting in costly and time-consuming solids management. Due to increased influent loadings from a new industry and confirmation that PFAS is at times present in the biosolids, implementing an effective, long-term biosolids management approach that incorporates future regulatory considerations is a priority for CCU.

IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The SR 46 West Lift Station is at the end of its useful life and has insufficient capacity for current peak flows. Additionally, the associated force main that travels along SR 11 is in poor condition and was impacted by a recent highway project, resulting in significantly less flow and septic conditions along that section of force main.

The proposed project will eliminate the SR 46 West Lift Station, reconfigure the obsolete section of the SR 11 force main, and upgrade the Southside Lift Station to accommodate the new interceptor flows. This project will address current condition and capacity needs and ensure adequate sewer service to businesses along SR 11, while also accommodating future growth as outlined in the City's Utility Master Plan.

The Westside Interceptor Project includes the following:

SR 46 West Lift Station Replacement with Gravity Interceptor

- Demolition of the SR 46 West Lift Station and abandonment of the associated force main (SR 46 to SR 11 to the wastewater treatment plant).
- Installation of an interceptor sewer and appurtenances from the existing SR 46 West Lift Station to the existing Southside Lift Station, a total of approximately 14,000 LF ranging in size from 8- to 54-inch diameter.

SR 11 Force Main Reconfiguration

- Installation of a 3-inch, directionally drilled, force main and appurtenances from SR 11 to the proposed 42-inch interceptor sewer, a total of approximately 4,600 LF.
- Reconnection of 3 existing service lines and installation of 3 stubs for future services.

Southside Lift Station Upgrades

- Completion of lift station upgrades, including but not limited to a new wet well, meter vault, and pump replacements.
- Installation of a new force main to accommodate the lift station upgrades, a total of approximately 200 LF ranging in size from 16- to 24-inch diameter.
- Modifications to the existing site emergency generator, odor control, and site civil and electrical.

The proposed thermal drying project will significantly reduce both the volume of biosolids produced and the associated disposal costs. Implementing drying will also position the Utility to respond to future land application regulations in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Drying supports current and future approaches to management of PFAS and other emerging contaminants of concern and has the potential to reduce/convert PFAS concentrations in biosolids.

The Thermal Dryer Project includes the following:

- Construction of a new Dryer Building and modifications to the existing wet cake conveyance system to accommodate the proposed infrastructure.
- Installation of wet cake storage, dryer feed pump, thermal dryer and appurtenances, odor control, cooling and transfer conveyors, and dried solids storage.
- Associated site civil, utility and process piping, and electrical improvements.

V. ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS, AFFORDABILITY, AND FUNDING

The total cost of this project is estimated to be approximately \$55,500,000. Columbus City Utilities intends to finance the project with a loan from the Clean Water SRF Loan Program for a term and annual fixed interest rate to be determined at loan closing. Monthly user rates and charges may need to be analyzed to determine if adjustments are required for loan repayment.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF EVALUATED ALTERNATIVES

SR 46 West Lift Station – Four alternatives were considered for the SR 46 West Lift Station project. These consisted of a no action alternative, which is not practical, environmentally sound or economical. The three other alternatives considered were replacing the lift station in the same location and replacing force main, constructing a new lift station south of Garden City and new force main alignment, and eliminating the lift station. The chosen alternative is to eliminate the SR 46 West Lift Station and install a new interceptor sewer, which would follow the route of the existing water easement, as this was the least costly alternative that met the need.

SR 11 Force Main Reconfiguration: Four alternatives were considered for the SR 11 Force Main Reconfiguration project. These consisted of a no action alternative, which is not practical, environmentally sound or economical. The three other alternatives considered were installing a new, smaller force main to the WWTP, installing a new, smaller force main to the proposed westside interceptor, and installing a new, smaller force main to the proposed westside interceptor within the existing force main. The chosen alternative is to install a new, smaller force main to the proposed westside interceptor. This alternative would provide a shorter force main and require less easement acquisition, which meets the need of the project.

Southside Lift Station Upgrades: Four alternatives were considered for the Southside Lift Station project. These consisted of a no action alternative, which is not practical, environmentally sound or economical. The three other alternatives considered were connecting the new westside interceptor to the existing Southside Lift Station wet well and leaving existing pumps, connecting the new westside interceptor to the existing wet well and adding smaller pumps, and constructing a new wet well to the south of the existing lift station and replacing existing pumps. The last alternative, constructing a new wet all and replacing existing pumps, was chosen as it was the only identified feasible alternative.

Thermal Dryer: Three alternatives were considered for the Thermal Dryer project. These consisted of a no action alternative, which is not practical, environmentally sound or economical. The two other alternatives included a one-dryer and two-dryer layout. Both alternatives include new dryer building. The chosen alternative is the one-dryer layout as it meets the need for the project.

VII. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES

A. Direct Impacts of Construction and Operation

Disturbed/Undisturbed Land: The proposed project areas have been previously disturbed by previous construction activity or if undisturbed, subject to an archaeological investigation.

Structural Resources: Construction and operation of the project will not alter, demolish or remove historic properties. If any visual or audible impacts to historic properties occur, they will be temporary and will not alter the characteristics that qualify such properties for inclusion in or eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. The SRF's finding pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is: "*no historic properties affected.*"

Surface Waters (Figure 2): The project will not adversely affect outstanding state resource waters listed in 327 IAC 2-1.3-3(d), exceptional use streams listed in 327 IAC 2-1-11(b), Natural, Scenic and Recreational Rivers and Streams listed in 312 IAC 7-(2), or Salmonid Streams listed in (327 IAC 2-1.5-5(a)(3) or streams on the Outstanding River List for Indiana. The project is near Opossum Creek and East Fork White River. An Unnamed Tributary to East Fork White River will be crossed via open cut.

Wetlands (Figure 2): Wetlands may be impacted. The proposed project will avoid wetland locations wherever possible. Mitigation measures to lessen and compensate for wetland impacts cited in comment letters about the project from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be implemented.

Floodplain (Figure 2): The project will not include dredge or fill in the floodway without a permit from IDNR Division of Water. No change in grade will occur within the floodplain.

Groundwater: The project will not impact a drinking water supply or sole source aquifer.

Plants and Animals: The proposed project items will be implemented to minimize impact to non-endangered species and their habitat. Mitigation measures cited in comment letters from the Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be implemented.

Prime Farmland: The project will not convert prime farmland.

Air Quality: Construction activities may generate some noise, fumes and dust, but should not significantly affect air quality.

Open Space and Recreational Opportunities: The project will neither create nor destroy open space or recreational opportunities.

Lake Michigan Coastal Program: The project will not affect the Lake Michigan Coastal Zone.

National Natural Landmarks: Construction and operation of the proposed project will not affect National Natural Landmarks.

B. Indirect Impacts

Columbus City Utilities' PER states: *The City, through the authority of its council, planning commission, or other means, will ensure that future development, as well as future collection system or treatment works projects connecting to SRF-funded facilities will not adversely affect wetlands, wooded areas, steep slopes, archaeological/historical/structural resources, or other sensitive environmental resources. The City will require new development and treatment works projects to be constructed within the guidelines of the USFWS, IDNR, IDEM, and other environmental review authorities.*

C. Comments from Environmental Review Authorities

In correspondence dated February 9, 2026, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology stated:

Pursuant to Indiana Code 5-1.2-10, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 306108), and 36 C.F.R. Part 800, the Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer ("Indiana SHPO") is conducting an analysis of the materials dated January 22, 2026 and February 4, 2026 and received by the Indiana SHPO on January 22, 2026, for the above indicated project in Columbus, Columbus Township, Bartholomew County, Indiana.

Based on our analysis, it has been determined that no historic properties will be altered, demolished, or removed by the proposed project. In terms of archaeology, a review of our records indicates that portions of the proposed project areas (LS-4 and a portion of SR 11-3) have been previously surveyed for archaeological resources (Smith, 5/31/2022; AR-03-00464; Stillwell, 4/13/2021). While the Smith (5/31/2022) survey identified several archaeological resources, none were considered to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. However, eligibility criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places remains unevaluated for site 12-B-1370, located adjacent to a portion of the LS-4 proposed project area. No archaeological investigations appear necessary provided that all project activities remain within areas disturbed by previous construction or were previously surveyed for archaeological resources. If changes to the proposed project areas of potential effects are required then further consultation with our office will be needed.

Cemeteries must be avoided by all project activities. Please be aware of the requirements in Indiana Code (IC) 14-1-21-26.5 regarding ground disturbance within one hundred feet of a cemetery/burial ground. In addition, please be aware of the restrictions on utility construction in Indiana Code (IC) 23-14-44-1.

If any prehistoric or historic archaeological artifacts or human remains are uncovered during construction, demolition, or earthmoving activities, state law (Indiana Code 14-21-1-27 and 29) requires that the discovery must be reported to the Department of Natural Resources within two (2) business days. In that event, please call (317) 232-1646. Be advised that adherence to Indiana Code 14-21-1-27 and 29 does not obviate the need to adhere to applicable federal statutes and regulations, including but not limited to 36 C.F.R. 800.

In correspondence dated December 8, 2025, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service stated:

This responds to your email requesting U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service review of the proposed Westside Interceptor Sewer project in Columbus, Bartholomew County, Indiana. The project involves the installation of approximately 13,800 ft of gravity sewer, with pipe sizes ranging from 12-inch to 54-inch (known as the Westside Interceptor). The project also includes the installation of a new wet well at the current Southside Lift Station, and approximately 4,600 feet of small diameter force main that will connect to the new Westside Interceptor.

These comments have been prepared under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et. seq.) and are consistent with the intent of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Mitigation Policy.

There may be suitable roosting and foraging habitat for the federally endangered Indiana bat and gray bat present throughout the project site. The project would require the removal of approximately 0.12 acres of potentially suitable habitat. Also, the project proponent has agreed to implement best management practices to reduce sedimentation in the riparian area that gray bats could use for foraging. Based on a review of the information you provided and the project proponent's commitment to remove trees from October 1- March 31, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would not anticipate the proposed action to adversely affect the federally endangered Indiana bat and gray bat.

Additionally, the project will require impacts to an unnamed tributary to the East Fork of the White River, which may have indirect impacts to the federally threatened rabbitsfoot mussel. However, this tributary does not have suitable habitat for the rabbitsfoot and the project proponent has agreed to implement best management practices to reduce sedimentation in the riparian area, which will reduce indirect effects to the rabbitsfoot. Thus, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would not anticipate the proposed action to adversely affect the federally threatened rabbitsfoot.

In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (87 stat. 884 as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), it is the responsibility of the lead Federal agency to make an effects determination. Should new information arise pertaining to project plans or a revised species list be published, it will be necessary for the Federal agency to reinitiate consultation.

In correspondence dated February 20, 2026, the Department of Natural Resources Environmental Unit stated:

Project:

Westside Interceptor and Biosolids: demolition of the SR 46 West Lift Station, construction of a new wet well at the Southside Lift Station, and force main and gravity sewer installation; SRF #WW 21 48 03 00

County/Site Info: Bartholomew County

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources has reviewed the above referenced project per your request. Our agency offers the following comments for your information and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

If our agency has regulatory jurisdiction over the project, the recommendations contained in this letter may become requirements of any permit issued. If we do not have permitting authority, all recommendations are voluntary.

Regulatory Assessment:

This proposal may require the formal approval of our agency pursuant to the Flood Control Act (IC 14-28-1) for any proposal to construct, excavate, or fill in or on the floodway of a stream or other flowing waterbody which has a drainage area greater than one square mile. To determine if a permit will be required, the Indiana Floodplain Information Portal (INFIP) is a mapping application developed by the DNR, Division of Water to generate a Floodplain Analysis and Regulatory Assessment (FARA) that provides floodplain information. The portal is on the Division of Water's webpage at infip.dnr.in.gov.

Natural Heritage Database:

The Natural Heritage Program's data have been checked. The following have been documented within 0.5 miles of the project area:

Mussels

*Clubshell (Pleurobema clava), Clubshell, State endangered
Little Spectaclecase (Leaunio lienosus), State special concern
Rayed Bean (Villosa fabalis), State endangered
Rabbitsfoot (Theliderma cylindrica), State endangered
Round Hickorynut (Obovaria subrotunda), State endangered
Snuffbox (Epioblasma triquetra), State endangered*

The Division of Fish and Wildlife does not expect negative impacts to these species due to this project.

Fish and Wildlife Comments:

Avoid and minimize impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources to the greatest extent possible, and compensate for impacts. The following are recommendations that address potential impacts identified in the proposed project area:

Tree Removal Outside of a Floodway

We recommend a mitigation plan be developed for any unavoidable habitat impacts that will occur. The DNR's Habitat Mitigation Guidelines (and plant lists) can be found online at: <https://www.in.gov/nrc/files/IB-17.pdf>.

Impacts to non-wetland forest of one (1) acre or more in a rural or urban area should be mitigated at a minimum 2:1 ratio based on area of impact. Impacts to non-wetland forest

under one (1) acre but at least 0.10 acre in a rural or urban area should be mitigated at a minimum 1:1 ratio based on area of impact. Impacts under 0.10 acre in a rural area typically do not require mitigation or additional plantings beyond seeding and stabilizing disturbed areas, though there are exceptions for high quality habitat sites. Impacts under 0.10 acre in an urban area should be mitigated by replacing each mature tree removed (trees that are 10" diameter-at-breast height (dbh)) with two trees of 3-gallon stock or larger. Seeding and stabilizing disturbed areas is required regardless of the impact amount and location. The additional measures listed below should be implemented to avoid, minimize, or compensate for impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources:

- 1. Revegetate all bare and disturbed areas that are not currently mowed and maintained with a mixture of grasses (excluding all varieties of tall fescue) and legumes as soon as possible upon completion; turf-type grasses (including low-endophyte, friendly endophyte, and endophyte free tall fescue but excluding all other varieties of tall fescue) may be used in currently mowed areas only.*
- 2. Minimize and contain within the project limits all tree and brush clearing.*
- 3. Do not cut any trees suitable for Indiana Bat or Northern Long-eared Bat roosting (3 inches or greater diameter-at-breast height, living or dead, with loose hanging bark, or with cracks, crevices, or cavities) from April 1 through September 30.*
- 4. Appropriately designed measures for controlling erosion and sediment must be implemented to prevent sediment from entering the waterbody or leaving the construction site; maintain these measures until construction is complete and all disturbed areas are stabilized.*
- 5. If erosion control blankets are used, they shall be heavy-duty, biodegradable, and net free or use loose-woven/Leno-woven netting to minimize the entrapment and snaring of small-bodied wildlife such as snakes and turtles (follow manufacturer's recommendations for selection and installation); seed and apply mulch on all other disturbed areas.*

In correspondence dated April 1, 2021, and January 5, 2026, the Natural Resources Conservation Service stated:

April 1, 2021: The proposed project to proceed with sanitary sewer installations along with lift station upgrades in Columbus City, Bartholomew County, Indiana, as referred to in your letter received March 15, 2021, will not cause a prime conversion of farmland.

January 5, 2026: The proposed project is a biosolids thermal dryer system in a new building located on CCU's WWTP site in Bartholomew County, Indiana, as referred to in your letter received December 15, 2025, will not cause a conversion of prime farmland.

VIII. MITIGATION MEASURES

Columbus City Utilities' PER states:

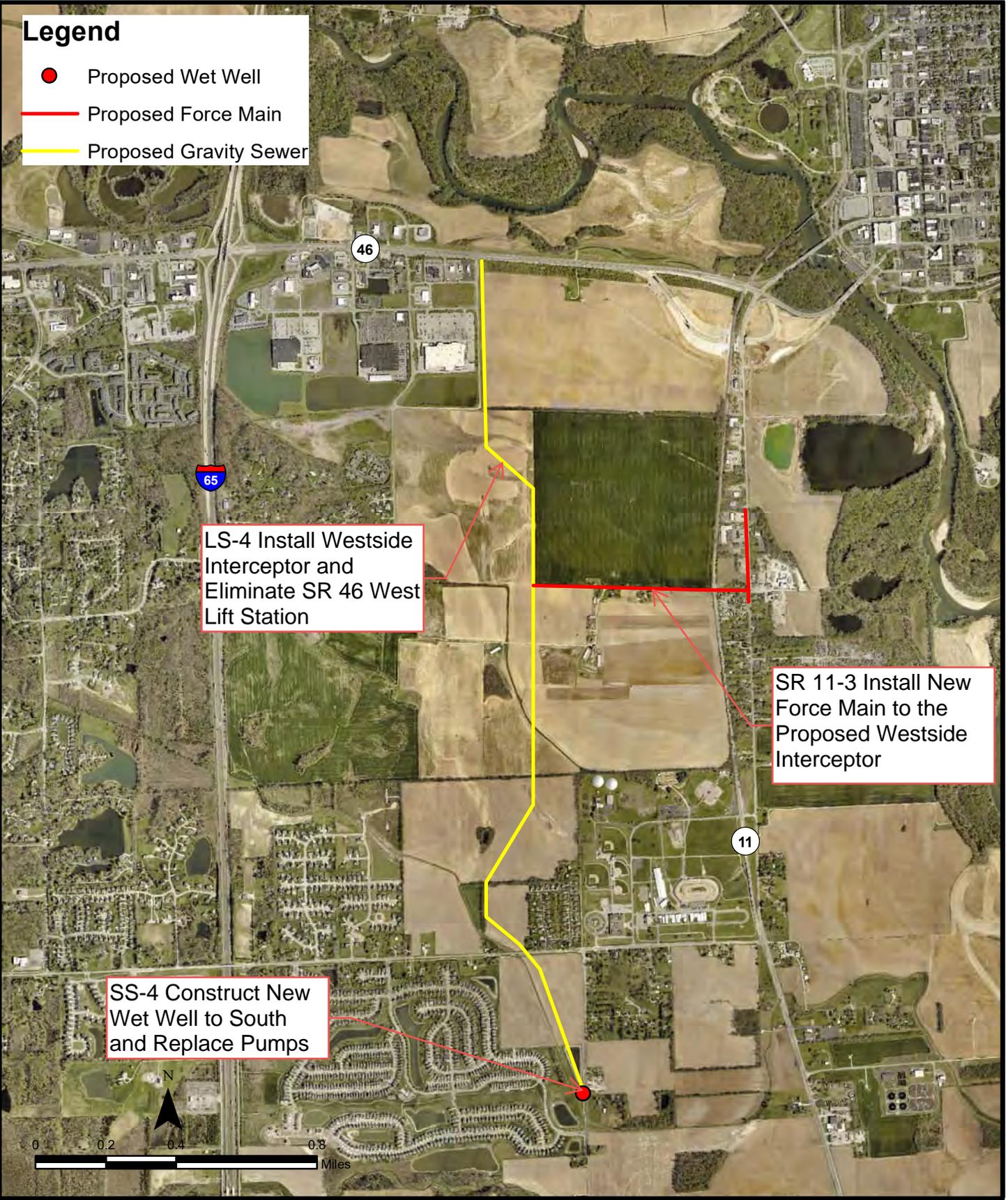
No long-term negative erosion, situation, air quality, or odor impacts are expected from this project. Short-term erosion and situation impacts will be controlled and monitored by the contractor during the installation and construction of the proposed improvements. The contractor will take care to install the proposed gravity sewer with minimal disturbance to scrub and shrub habitats and streams along the route.

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A properly noticed public hearing was held on January 5, 2026, at 3:00 pm at the Columbus City Utilities Office, 1111 McClure Rd, Columbus, IN 47201, to discuss the PER. No written comments were received during the 5-day comment period following the hearing.

Legend

- Proposed Wet Well
- Proposed Force Main
- Proposed Gravity Sewer



LS-4 Install Westside Interceptor and Eliminate SR 46 West Lift Station

SR 11-3 Install New Force Main to the Proposed Westside Interceptor

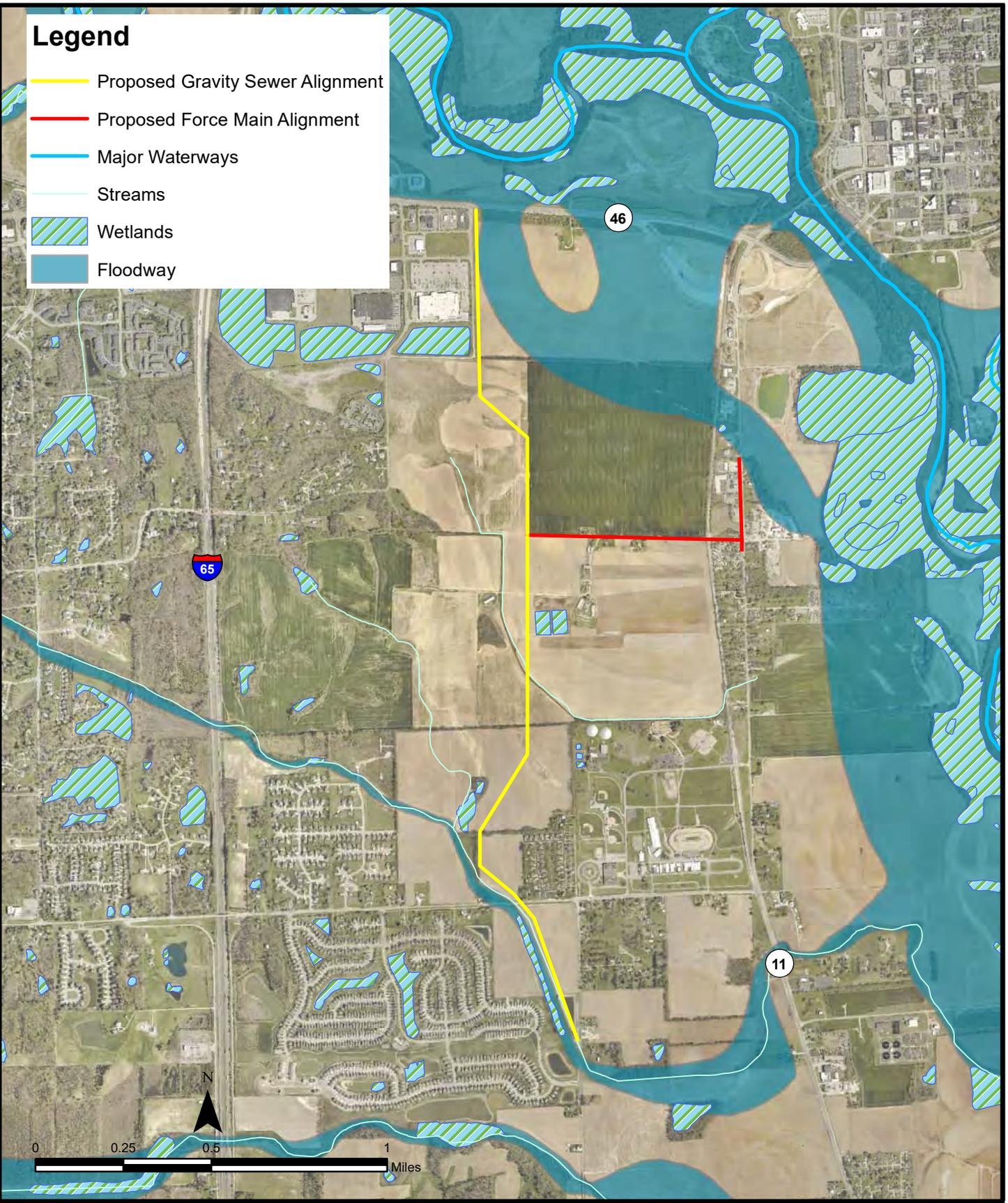
SS-4 Construct New Wet Well to South and Replace Pumps

**PROPOSED SELECTED ALTERNATIVES LAYOUT
LS-4, SR 11-3, SS-4**

**PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT WESTSIDE INTERCEPTOR
COLUMBUS CITY UTILITIES
COLUMBUS, INDIANA**



FIGURE 1



STREAMS, FLOOD BOUNDARIES, AND WETLAND AREAS
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT WESTSIDE INTERCEPTOR
COLUMBUS CITY UTILITIES
COLUMBUS, INDIANA



FIGURE 2

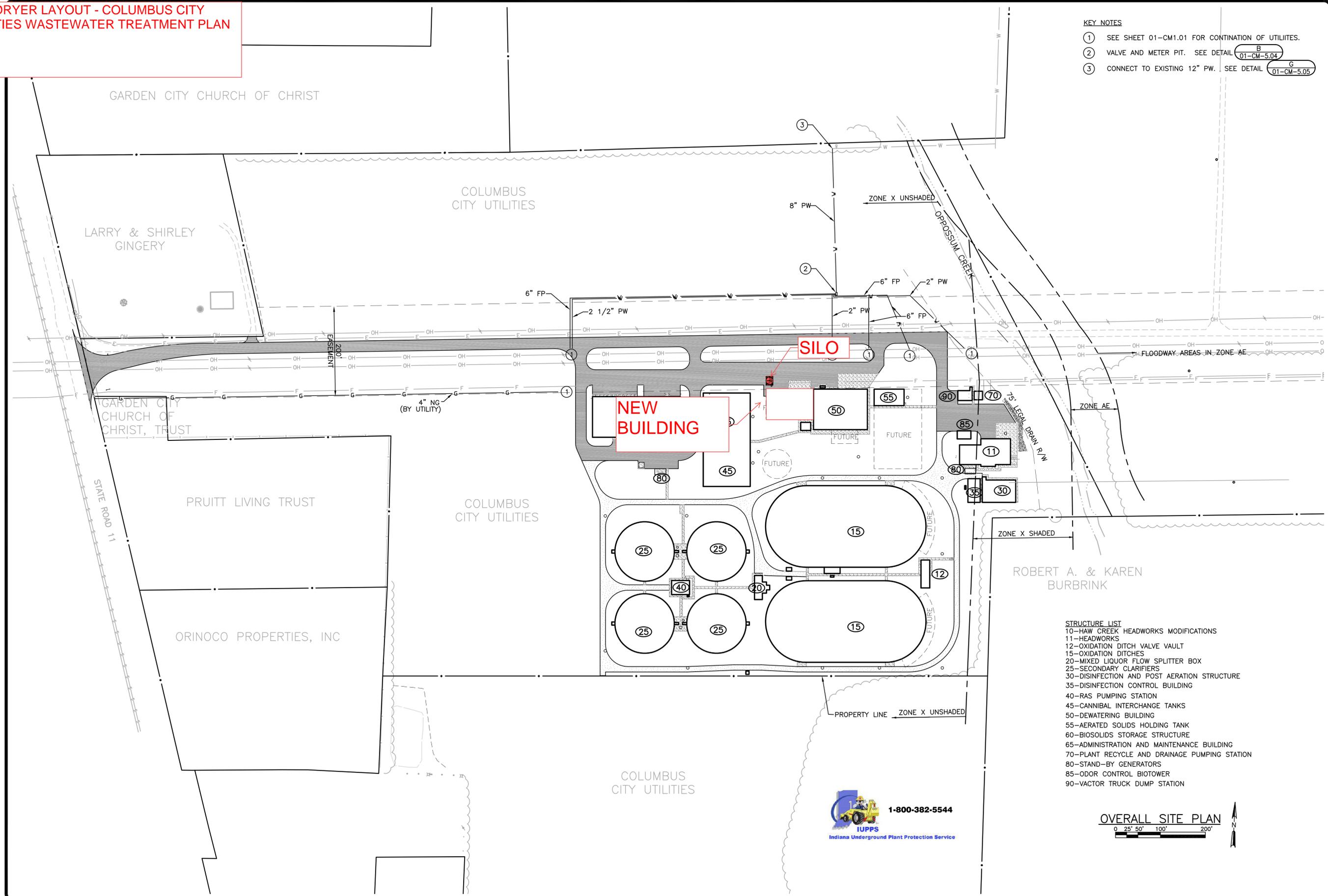
ONE DRYER LAYOUT - COLUMBUS CITY UTILITIES WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLAN

KEY NOTES

- ① SEE SHEET 01-CM1.01 FOR CONTINUATION OF UTILITIES.
- ② VALVE AND METER PIT. SEE DETAIL B
01-CM-5.04
- ③ CONNECT TO EXISTING 12" PW. SEE DETAIL G
01-CM-5.05



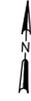
DATE:	
REVISIONS	
NO.	
DATE: JANUARY 2009	DES BY: SAI
	CHK BY: SAI
	RECORD DRAWING
BY:	DATE:
CONTRACTOR:	



- STRUCTURE LIST**
- 10-HAW CREEK HEADWORKS MODIFICATIONS
 - 11-HEADWORKS
 - 12-OXIDATION DITCH VALVE VAULT
 - 15-OXIDATION DITCHES
 - 20-MIXED LIQUOR FLOW SPLITTER BOX
 - 25-SECONDARY CLARIFIERS
 - 30-DISINFECTION AND POST AERATION STRUCTURE
 - 35-DISINFECTION CONTROL BUILDING
 - 40-RAS PUMPING STATION
 - 45-CANNIBAL INTERCHANGE TANKS
 - 50-DEWATERING BUILDING
 - 55-AERATED SOLIDS HOLDING TANK
 - 60-BIOSOLIDS STORAGE STRUCTURE
 - 65-ADMINISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE BUILDING
 - 70-PLANT RECYCLE AND DRAINAGE PUMPING STATION
 - 80-STAND-BY GENERATORS
 - 85-ODOR CONTROL BIOTOWER
 - 90-VECTOR TRUCK DUMP STATION



OVERALL SITE PLAN
 0 25' 50' 100' 200'



OVERALL SITE PLAN
 NEW WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT
 COLUMBUS CITY UTILITIES
 BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY, INDIANA



SHEET
14
 01-C1.01
 JOB NO. 4-021.061