

What is the Alternative Water Source Program?

The City of Joliet's existing groundwater source is being depleted and will no longer be able to meet the City's water demands by 2030. The Alternative Water Source Program (AWSP) consists of the planning, design and construction of a new water source for the City of Joliet by 2030. In January 2020 following a comprehensive, two phased study, the City Council selected Lake Michigan as the City's new water source. The program activities in 2020 are focused on the evaluation of two Lake Michigan Water Alternatives – purchasing treated Lake Michigan water from the City of Chicago or going straight to the lake and constructing a new intake and water treatment plant. The 2020 evaluation will further define the alternatives and cost estimates in order to allow the City Council to select one of the alternatives at the end of 2020.

Alternative Water Source Program Technical Highlights

As Joliet's AWSP project team continues to refine technical details of the two water source alternatives being considered, it is also identifying areas where risk and uncertainty have the potential to impact the options. In late May, members of the project team joined with representatives from the City to complete a PESTLE analysis of potential project risks. The PESTLE framework is structured to facilitate identification of key project issues and priorities in six categories: Political, Economic, Social, Technical, Legal/Legislative, and Environmental. The initial brainstorming portion of the workshop generated more than 300 issues for consideration. Small groups then worked in breakout sessions to review and consolidate these issues into 30 specific issue/risk statements. Following the workshop, participants were asked to revisit the statements and rank their top ten. Results from the PESTLE analysis will be discussed with City Council members at the upcoming City Council Workshop on June 23rd.

As work continues in 2020, the issues and risks identified through the PESTLE analysis and City Council discussions will be analyzed so that they are clearly defined for consideration by the City Council in its evaluation of Joliet's water source alternatives at the end of the year.

Educational Topic

As part of the Alternative Water Source Program (AWSP), various educational topics will be highlighted each month. Follow the links to find out more information on the Educational Topics this month:

- Lake Michigan Allocation Process [Click here](#)
- How to establish permitting requirements [Click here](#)

Copies of all Educational Topics for the Alternative Water Source Program can be found in the Information Center on the website at www.RethinkWaterJoliet.org.

Program Calendar

Recent and Upcoming Program Activities:

- May 13th – Meeting with City of Chicago
- May 22nd - Meeting with IDNR (Lake Michigan Allocation Pre-application)
- May 27th – Regional Planning Kick-off Meeting
- May 28th – Stakeholder Meeting
- June 2nd - Follow-up Technical Meeting with Hammond, IN
- June 4th - Meeting with IEPA and IDEM
- June 10th - Follow-up Technical Meeting with Chicago
- June 12th - Follow-up Financial Meeting with Chicago
- June 16th – Quarterly Update to Finance Committee Meeting
- June 17th - Meeting with Southland Water Agency
- June 23rd - City Council Workshop

While most of these meetings are project team meetings, the meetings highlighted in **gray** are public meetings. To attend these meetings, visit the [website](#) for more information.

Water Conservation

The City's current Water Conservation initiatives, which include the low flow toilet replacement rebate and the rain barrel subsidy program, were presented at the first Stakeholder Meeting in May. Since its inception, 8 residents have taken advantage of the low flow toilet rebate and 122 residents have received rain barrel subsidies, including 6 since the May Stakeholder Meeting.

The Water Conservation Subcommittee will meet the first Wednesday of every month at 3:30 pm beginning on July 1st in the Executive Conference Room – 2nd Floor, City Hall. Please check the City's website at www.joliet.gov to confirm meeting dates and times. These meetings are open to the public.

For more information on water conservation, contact Amy Wagner, at 815-724-4220 or awagner@joliet.gov.



Public Outreach

Public Outreach during 2020 will focus on providing opportunities for the public to attend and participate in public meetings for the Alternative Water Source Program (AWSP). The first of three Stakeholder Meetings was held virtually on May 28th. Approximately 60 people listened live to the presentation that included an update on the AWSP and 2020 evaluation as well as information on the City's Water Conservation Initiatives. A video of the May Stakeholder Meeting is available on the website at RethinkWaterJoliet.org. Additional Stakeholder Meetings will be held this year during July and October.

Three City Council Workshops will be held during 2020 (June, August & November), with the first workshop planned for June 23rd from 5 pm to 7 pm. The workshop will be televised live on Channel 6 as well as live-streamed on the City's website at Joliet.gov.

There will be a Public Forum held in December to present the results of the 2020 evaluation and give the public an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments ahead of the City Council's selection of an alternative at the end of 2020.

Regional Outreach Update

As noted in the last newsletter, the depletion of the City's existing water source, the deep groundwater aquifer is a regional problem. The City of Joliet recognizes that a regional solution could solve the regional problem. By combining efforts with other communities, the improvements can be more economical for Joliet and its residents. To kick-off the regional outreach efforts in 2020, a Regional Planning Kick-off Meeting was held on May 27th. Mayors, City Managers, Public Works Directors and Water Operators from neighboring communities were invited to attend the virtual meeting. A total of 60 people were in attendance, representing 15 neighboring communities.

Beginning this month, the City will be meeting individually with each neighboring community to discuss their interest in partnering with the City on the new water source.

In addition, the Southwest Water Planning Group (SWPG) is continuing to meet on the second Tuesday of each month to discuss regional water supply. This month's meeting included a presentation on water system governance.

Update on Existing Water System Initiatives

The City of Joliet will soon begin the process of refurbishing the Rock Run Water Tower, located at 1505 Olympic Boulevard. The 22-year old water tower requires some structural modifications and repainting to bring the structure up to current codes and regulations and aid in extending the life expectancy of the tower. The tower will be repainted with the theme of blue and red stars on a white background with the City logo. The work is scheduled to be performed between June - October 2020. Work will be performed concurrently on the interior and exterior of the tower in conjunction with a full containment system installed for dust control and to protect adjacent properties of particulate matter.

The existing coating to be removed contains no hazardous components. All paint and residue removed from the tank will be removed from the site and disposed per Illinois State Regulations. All of the work will be performed between the hours of 7 am and 7 pm, Monday through Saturday.

Funding Strategy Update

Refinement of the funding strategy from the Phase II Study is underway in 2020. The Funding Strategy from the Phase II Study consisted of federal (Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act or WIFIA) and state (State Revolving Fund or SRF) low interest loan programs as well as traditional bond financing. This funding strategy was used along with the conceptual cost estimates to determine the potential impact to water rates which were presented at the end of 2019. Quarterly updates will be presented at the Joliet Finance Committee Meetings, with the first update scheduled for June 16th.

In addition, the financial team which includes City Staff, AWSP project team members, and the City's financial consultants meets monthly (first Wednesday of each month) to review the funding strategy and its impact on water rates.

To learn more check us out at RethinkWaterJoliet.org



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Be sure to stay informed by reading our program newsletter which will be published on a monthly basis. Stay up-to-date with public meetings and to receive the monthly newsletter in your inbox by joining the mailing list at www.RethinkWaterJoliet.org.

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