



City of Joliet Alternative Water Source Program



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Alternative Water Source Program - Fall 2021 Update

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. In January 2021, Joliet's City Council made the decision to proceed with a program to bring treated Lake Michigan water purchased from the City of Chicago to Joliet to meet customer needs. Over the past several months, Joliet has made significant progress toward development of the Alternative Water Source Program (AWSP) - obtaining a Lake Michigan Water Allocation Permit and completing submittal of its first funding request through the USEPA's Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Program.

Joliet Lake Michigan Allocation Permit

On September 1, 2021, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources issued an order granting the City of Joliet a Lake Michigan Water Allocation permit. Receipt of the allocation permit is a major milestone in Joliet's progress toward implementation of a new Lake Michigan water supply by 2030. The permit allows Joliet to begin using Lake Michigan water as its source of supply in 2030 and establishes annual allocation amounts through 2050.

In granting the Allocation Permit, the IDNR concluded that 1) Illinois has sufficient capacity within its current Lake Michigan water diversion amount to support Joliet's requested future water needs, 2) Joliet meets the IDNR regulatory requirements for a Lake Michigan Water Allocation, 3) Joliet's projections of future water demands are acceptable and appropriate, and 4) Joliet is in compliance with the IDNR's regulatory water conservation/ efficiency requirements. IDNR noted that while Joliet does not currently meet the agency's 10% threshold for non-revenue water, it has submitted an acceptable plan for achieving compliance with this requirement by 2030.



WIFIA Loan Application Completed

Joliet received notification from the USEPA that its first application for low-interest loan funding was deemed "complete" on August 30, 2021. This initial application includes requests for WIFIA funding for Alternative Water Source Program development costs including design, permitting, and land acquisition, as well as costs for implementation of the City's Water Main Replacement Program through 2030. The Water Main Replacement Program is essential to Joliet's strategy for improving the overall efficiency of its water system and meeting the 10% limit for non-revenue water included in its Lake Michigan Allocation permit. At closing in early 2022, this WIFIA loan will provide Joliet with access to up to \$227 million of low-interest credit that can be repaid over a period of up to 35 years.

Program Calendar

Recent and Upcoming Program Activities:

- Sept 20th – Public Service Committee Update
- Sept 21st – Finance Committee Update
- Sept 23rd - Water Commission Formation TAG Workshop
- Sept 30th – Durkin Park Neighborhood Meeting (Chicago)
- Oct 18th – Public Service Committee Update
- Oct 20th - Public Stakeholder Meeting (virtual)
- Oct 28th - Water Commission Formation TAG Workshop

Meetings highlighted in gray are public meetings. For information on how to participate in these public meetings, visit the City's website by clicking [here](#).





Congressional Support for Joliet's Water Efforts

On Friday, July 9th Congressman Bill Foster (IL - 11th District) and Congresswoman Lauren Underwood (IL - 14th District) met with Mayor Bob O'Dekirk, Director of Public Utilities Allison Swisher, and Deputy Director of Field Operations Bill Baltz to get a first-hand update on the City's ongoing efforts to maintain and improve its water supply infrastructure. Representatives Foster and Underwood recently led a successful effort to include \$3.5 million of federal funding for Joliet's Water Main Replacement and Alternative Water Source Programs in the US House of Representatives' Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations package. The funds were included through the Community Project Funding initiative.

Regional Water Commission Formation Efforts Continue

Efforts to promote the formation of a regional commission that would lower the cost of Lake Michigan water for users in Joliet and partner communities are continuing through frequent meetings and workshops. In August and September, Joliet and the AWSP consultant team provided the Technical Advisory Group representing eleven other potential commission members with key costs for use in evaluation of their water supply options and participated in individual meetings to review the costs and address individual community questions. Concurrently, the Commission Formation Mayors and Managers Group has been working to establish key principles that will define the structure, governance, and operation of the commission. Potential partners are expected to make their decisions regarding participation in the commission over the next few months. Those decisions will establish the basis for sizing of AWSP infrastructure elements currently in preliminary design.



Summer 2021 Public Outreach Events

During the summer, members of the Alternative Water Source Program Team attended community events including the July 17th Will County MAPP Vaccination Drive, the August 7th Joliet Community Center Partnership Kidzfest, and the August 15th 815 Youth Day sponsored by the Joliet Unity Movement to promote awareness of the program and share important information related to the value of water with community members. Materials handed out at these events included two-page AWSP summaries prepared in both English and Spanish. The summaries can be viewed or downloaded from the RethinkWaterJoliet.org website using the links provided.

[English Program Summary](#)

[Spanish Program Summary](#)

Virtual Stakeholder Meeting – October 20, 2021

As part of an ongoing effort to keep stakeholders in Joliet and across the region informed about the progress of the Alternative Water Source Program, City representatives and members of the Alternative Water Source Program consultant team will host a virtual Stakeholder Meeting on Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 1:00 PM. The panel will provide updates on the City's Lake Michigan Allocation, Regional Water Commission formation efforts, WIFIA Funding, and the overall schedule for AWSP implementation, and answer questions from stakeholders. Registration is required to receive the link for this meeting.

To register, click [here](#) or use the QR code to the right



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