

# Water Affordability Coalition









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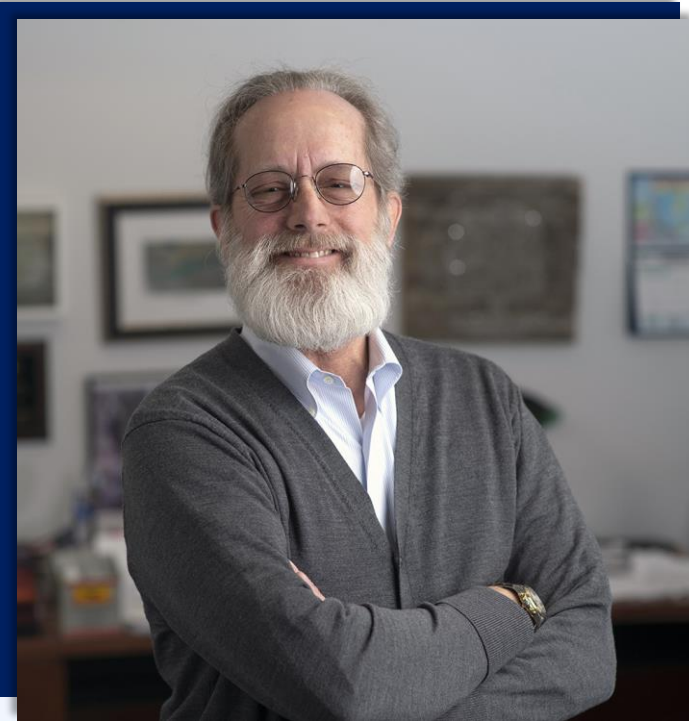
Affordability and Planning Grant Award

*August 26, 2021*



# Meeting Agenda

-  Introductions
-  Non-Government Organizations
-  Local, State, and Federal Assistance Programs
-  Polling Questions
-  Customer Survey
-  September Meeting Topics
-  Next Meeting
-  Adjourn



# Welcome Commissioner Nash



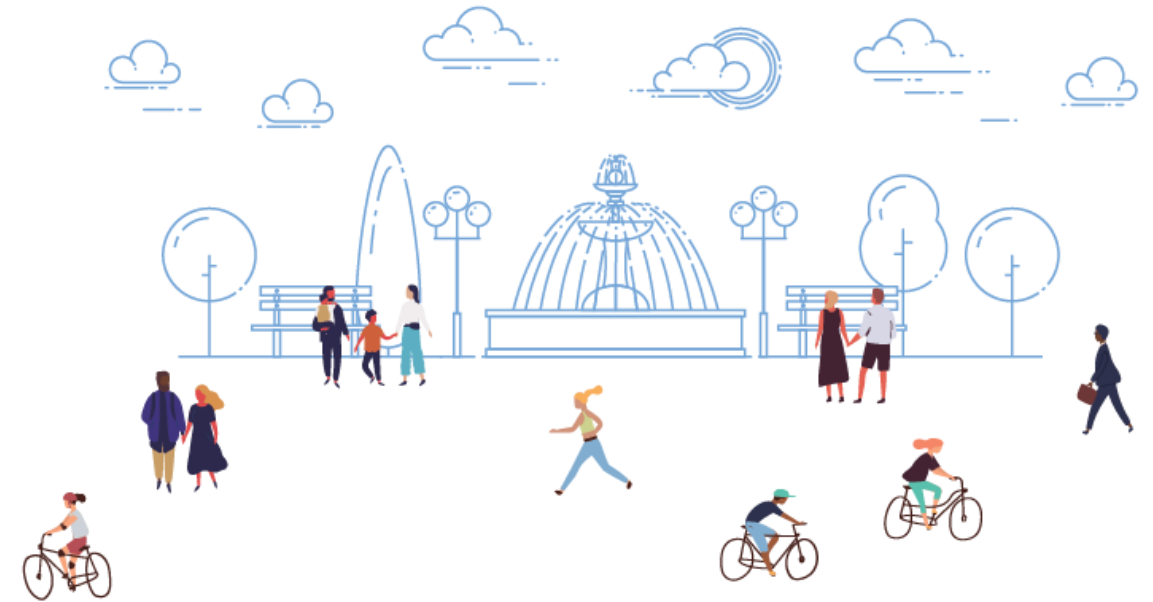
# Non-Government Organization Partnerships

We are working to seek partnerships to further the Water Affordability Program to:

- Assist in developing the framework and best practices for communicating with customers
- Review marketing materials and provide feedback
- Engage the communities through public outreach
- Help customers enroll in program

We have identified the following organizations to partner with

If we missed any or you have any recommendations, please share



# Local, State and National Organizations

## Local

- \* Area Agency on Aging 1-B
- \* Catholic Community Response Team
- \* Centro Multicultural La Familia
- \* Community Housing Network
- \* Farmington-Farmington Hills Neighborhood House
- \* Friends of Royal Oak Township (FOROT)
- \* Greater Pontiac Community Coalition
- \* Habitat Restore
- \* Health Emergency Lifeline Programs (H.E.L.P.)
- \* Here to Help Foundation (HELP)
- \* Jewish Family Service of Metro Detroit

## Local

- \* Lighthouse of Oakland County
- \* Love, Inc. of Oxford Township
- \* Oakland County Ministerial Fellowship
- \* Oakland County Vet Trust
- \* Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency (OLHSA)
- \* The Oakland Press
- \* Open Door Outreach Center
- \* Pontiac Landlord Commission
- \* Troy People Concerned

## State

- \* Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
- \* The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW)
- \* Michigan Welfare Rights Organization (MWRO)
- \* People's Water Board Coalition (PWBC)
- \* Sierra Club of Michigan

## National

- \* National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- \* Salvation Army
- \* Society of St. Vincent de Paul
- \* United Way

# Local Affordability Programs

## 1. Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency

- Provides one-time assistance with rent or utility payment to prevent eviction
- Assistance During COVID-19

## 2. Oakland County Rent, Mortgage, Utility Relief Program

- Provides a one-time grant to eligible Oakland County residents to pay up to three months of past-due rent, mortgage, and utility payments as a result of a:
  - Temporary job loss
  - Reduction in work hours or other income hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Up to a maximum of \$15,000 per household



# Local Affordability Programs

## 3. Community Housing Network

- 🌱 COVID-19 Emergency Relief Assistance – CERA
- 🌱 Provides one-time assistance with rent or utility payment to prevent eviction

## 4. Here to HELP Foundation

- 🌱 Provides limited emergency assistance
- 🌱 Up to \$500 for an electric, gas, or water bill after all other sources have been exhausted
- 🌱 Payments are made directly to the service provider
- 🌱 Assistance is only available for one utility bill and all other utility bills must be current

# Local Affordability Programs

## 5. Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency

- Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP) aids in paying past due water bills
- Eligible customers will receive a \$25 monthly bill credit with any arrearages frozen for 12 months
- Customers who successfully make their monthly payments for one year will receive an additional credit of up to \$700 applied toward their arrears

## 6. Lighthouse (Undesignated Temporary Financial Assistance for Low Income Individuals and Families)

- Provides emergency financial assistance for problems like utility shut offs and other basic human needs  
(funds may not always be available)



# State Affordability Programs

## 1. State Emergency Relief Assistance (Electric/Heating/Gas/Water Service Payments)

- Provides financial assistance to low-income households who meet eligibility requirements when heating, electric or water service has been or will be shut off
- Annual assistance is up to \$850 for electric, \$850 for gas, and \$175 for water

# Federal Affordability Programs

## 1. Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

-  Assist low-income people and families with their heating and cooling bills
-  Annual program



## 2. Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

-  Funding for low-income households with water and wastewater bills



# Zoom Poll



# Customer Survey



# For Discussion

1. View sample customer survey
  - 📱 On your cell phone, open camera app
  - 📱 Hover over the QR Code
  - 📱 Click to open survey link
2. Discuss customer survey distribution
3. Customer survey objectives
  - 📱 Understand household demographics
  - 📱 Relate household demographics trends to non-payment challenges
  - 📱 Identify qualifications for existing utility assistance programs that could potentially qualify residents for a new program
  - 📱 Find the best methods to communicate with residents



**QR Code**

# Customer Survey Questions

1. **How many people live in your household?**
  - a. One
  - b. Two
  - c. Three
  - d. Four or more
2. **Do you own (with a mortgage or debt-free) or rent your home?**
  - a. Own with mortgage
  - b. Own debt-free
  - c. Rent
  - d. Other
3. **How are members of your household related? Choose all that apply.**
  - a. Immediate family (i.e., spouses/partners, parents, (step)siblings)
  - b. Extended family (i.e., aunt, uncle, cousins, grandparents)
  - c. Intergenerational/adult caregivers
  - d. Non-related (i.e., friends, roommates)

# Customer Survey Questions

4. To best communicate with you, what is the native or preferred language of members of your household? Choose all that apply.
- a. American English
  - b. Spanish
  - c. French
  - d. Cantonese or Mandarin
  - e. Hmong/Vietnamese
  - f. African dialect
  - g. Portuguese
  - h. Other: \_\_\_\_\_ .



# Customer Survey Questions

5. What racial/ethnic background do members of your household identify with? Choose all that apply.
- a. Asian
  - b. Black/African American
  - c. Black-Caribbean
  - d. Black-Other
  - e. Indigenous peoples of North, Central, and South America
  - f. Latinx
  - g. Middle Eastern Descent
  - h. White/Caucasian American (non-Hispanic)
  - i. White (Hispanic)
  - j. Other

# Customer Survey Questions

**6. What age are the members of your household? Choose all that apply.**

- a. 0 – 4 years of age
- b. 5 – 17 years of age
- c. 18 – 24 years of age
- d. 25 – 39 years of age
- e. 40 – 64 years of age
- f. 65 – 80 years of age
- g. 81 years of age and above

**7. Have you ever qualified for any of the following public benefit programs? Choose all that apply.**

- a. Income (i.e., unemployment benefits)
- b. Domestic (i.e., child services, food vouchers)
- c. Household (i.e., utilities assistance, rent assistance)
- d. Social security, disability insurance (i.e., retirement, occupational, invalidity)

# Customer Survey Questions

8. Do you know about any programs for utilities? (i.e., Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP), Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP))
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Unsure
9. Have you participated in a program for a utility? (i.e., LIHEAP, gas, electricity, WRAP)
- a. Yes
  - b. No
10. If you have participated in a utility assistance program, how did you hear about the program? Please fill in the blank:
- a. \_\_\_\_\_.

# Customer Survey Questions

**11. Would you be interested in participating in a program if qualified?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**12. What is the best way for utilities to communicate with you?**

- a. Facebook
- b. Email
- c. Text messages
- d. Paper mail
- e. Billboards
- f. TV
- g. Face-to-face (i.e., town halls)
- h. Radio
- i. Utility bills
- j. Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

# Customer Survey Questions




## 13. Who do you prefer to receive information from?

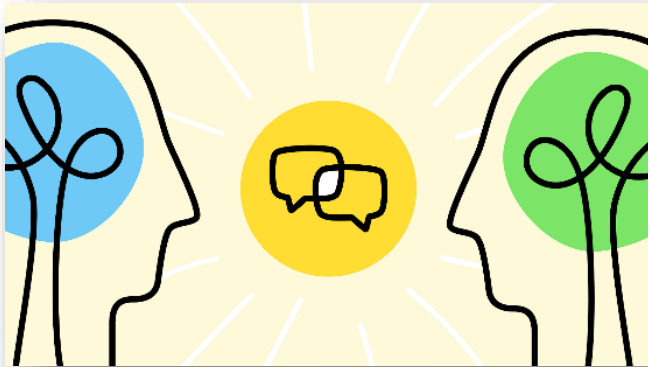
- a. Elected officials
- b. Utilities (i.e., Oakland County Water Resource Commissioner)
- c. Non-profit or non-government leaders
- d. Faith leaders
- e. Peers/family members
- f. Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

# Questions?



# September Meeting Topics

-  SharePoint Site
-  Customer Survey Results
-  Water Affordability Research Update





# Next Meeting


*September 23, 2021, at 11 a.m. EST*



# Thank you!

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