

# Water Affordability Coalition










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Affordability and Planning Grant Award

*September 23, 2021*



# Meeting Agenda

-  Introductions
-  Water Affordability Program Elements and Access
-  WRAP Program
-  Customer Outreach
-  Schedule
-  SharePoint Site
-  October Meeting Topics
-  Next Meeting
-  Adjourn

# Introductions

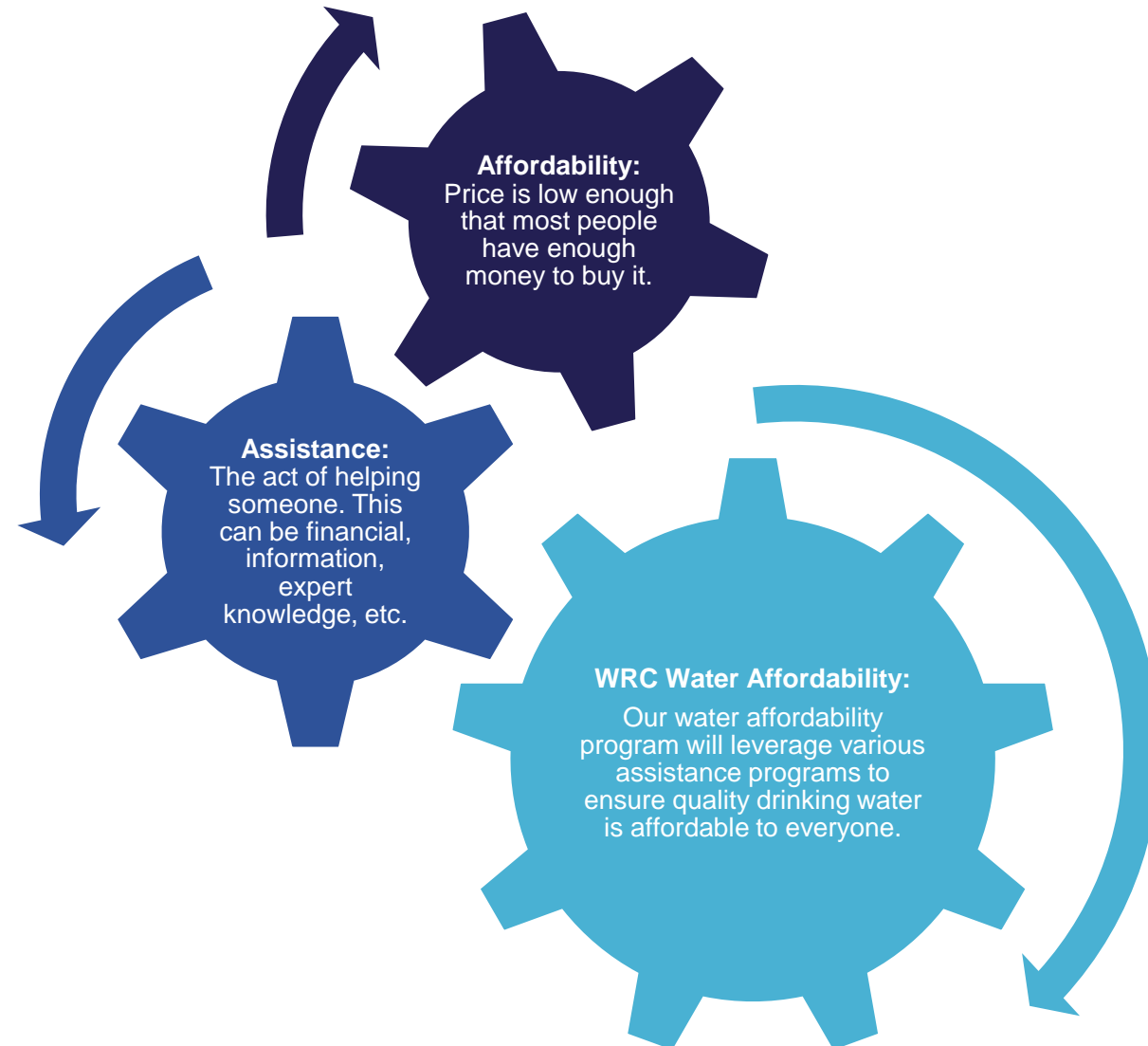


# Water Affordability Program Goal and Overview

Create and implement a water affordability program that ensures quality drinking water service for all customers in Pontiac and Royal Oak Township.



# Affordability vs. Assistance



# Water Affordability Program Elements



**Leak Detection and Repair**



**Bill Assistance**



**Rate Structure**



**Water Conservation Education**



**Outside Funding**

# Water Affordability Program Access



# What drives water rates?

## 1. Level of service

- 🌿 Quality drinking water for public health
- 🌿 Adequate pressures for every day use and fire protection
- 🌿 Minimize water main breaks and service disruptions

## 2. Rates must accomplish the desired level of service and capital improvements

- 🌿 Artificially low rates cannot support necessary levels of service



# How do you keep rates affordable?

- Securing grant funds and low-interest loans
- Setting rates with necessary capital improvements in mind
- Cost-effective project planning



# Water Residential Assistance Program

- Changes to the WRAP Program as of August 2021
- Up to \$1,500 in assistance per household (\$500 increase)
- Increased efficiency with OLHSA operating directly with Great Lakes Water Authority
  - Wayne/Metro is no longer the “go-between”
- OLHSA is performing more outreach and are ready to coordinate with communities
- New flyer to be sent out with WRC water and sewer bills and also listed on our website



# WRAP Program

- OLHSA is seeing challenges with enrollment
- Customers are not following up or returning calls to fulfill enrollment requirements

## *For Discussion:*

- *Why are customers not utilizing the program or completing enrollment?*
- *How can we encourage customers to apply for WRAP and complete the enrollment requirements?*

# Customer Outreach

**Customer survey has been put on a pause due to feedback received at the last meeting.**

- 🌱 Demographic information from the Census will be utilized and reviewed
- 🌱 The survey will be delayed until more research has been conducted

**We would like to organize a customer focus group instead.**

- 🌱 Objective is to gain feedback from vulnerable customers on draft affordability program
- 🌱 Focus group participants – water customers most in need of an affordability program
- 🌱 We may reach out to Coalition members occasionally for individual interviews to get deeper feedback

***For Discussion: Thoughts on a focus group and selecting participants?***

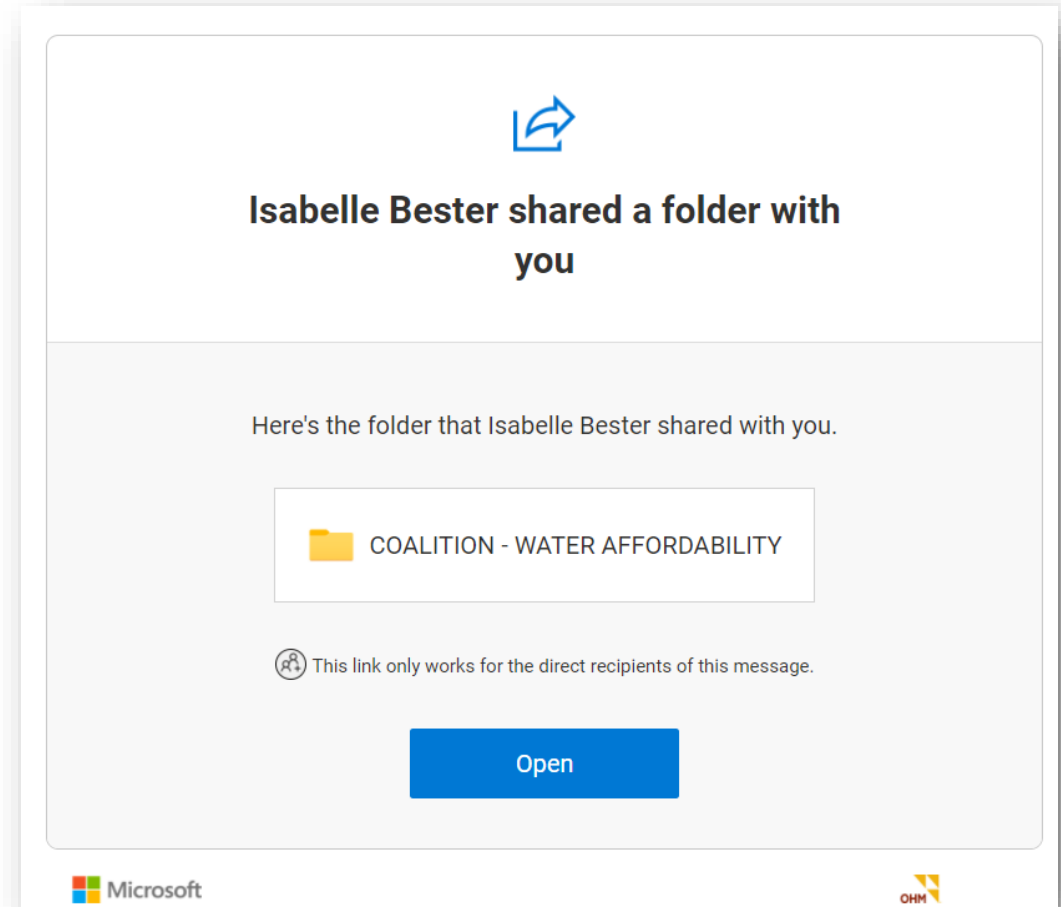
# Grant Schedule: May 19, 2021 – Sept 30, 2022

#	Description	2021			2022		
		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
1	<b>Coalition Stakeholder Meetings</b>						
2	<b>Identify Demographics and Reasons for Nonpayment of Water Bills</b>						
3	<b>Convene Customer Focus Group</b>						
4	<b>Research/Document &amp; Short-List Applicable Programs</b>						
	GD #1: Research Findings from Various Affordability Programs				Mar		
5	<b>Identify Legal Hurdles and Mitigation Efforts</b>						
	GD #2: Summary of Legal Hurdles and Mitigation Options				Mar		
6	<b>Identify &amp; Leverage Other Local, State &amp; Federal Programs</b>						
	GD #3: Document Partners/Programs Eval. & Suitability to Program				Mar		
7	<b>Convene NGOs Task Force for Customer Engagement &amp; Implementation</b>						
	GD #4: Public Outreach, Surveys, and Promotional Materials					May	
8	<b>Create the Framework for the Affordability Program</b>						
	GD #5: How-To Program Framework including Sample Application						Aug
9	<b>Evaluate Long-Term Financial Sustainability</b>						
	GD #6: Updated Water Rate Analysis for City of Pontiac and ROT						July
10	<b>Sharing of Lessons Learned</b>						
	GD #7: Presentation at MI AWWA Annual Conference						Sept

# SharePoint Access



- You will receive a link via email to access the SharePoint folder named “COALITION – WATER AFFORDABILITY”
- Check Spam and Junk folders if you do not see email in your primary inbox.
- The link will only work for you. A forwarded link will not allow someone else access.
- Click “Open” and you will be prompted to verify your email with a code.
- Bookmark folder in web browser for easy access in the future.
- Emails will be sent out in the coming week. If you do not receive an email by Oct 1, or prefer to have a different email used, please reach out:  
[isabelle.bester@ohm-advisors.com](mailto:isabelle.bester@ohm-advisors.com)



# SharePoint Contents

- Past meeting presentations and notes
- Calendar of important events
- Research materials
  - Case studies
  - NGOs
  - Local, State, and Federal programs
- FAQs
- [wrcgrant@oak.gov](mailto:wrcgrant@oak.gov)



# SharePoint Contents

- TIP: Files may appear distorted in the online version. Open files in the desktop app to view more clearly.
- You can also download and save copies of files to your computer.
- If you wish to share research or other materials on the site, please email it to [wrcgrant@oakgov.com](mailto:wrcgrant@oakgov.com) and we will post it to the SharePoint folder.
- FAQs received at this email will also be posted in the Q & A document.
- Please email [isabelle.bester@ohm-advisors.com](mailto:isabelle.bester@ohm-advisors.com) with questions about SharePoint.






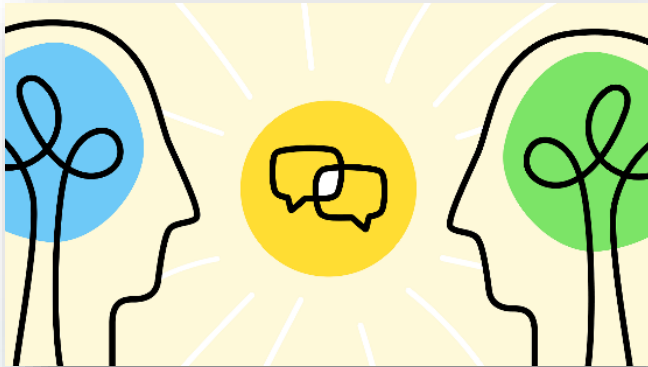


# SharePoint Demonstration



# October Meeting Topics

-  Customer Focus Group
-  Research Update
-  NGO Prioritization



# Next Meeting


*October 28, 2021, at 11 a.m. EST*



# Thank you!

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