



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## CONTACT

Hugh O'Hara, 815-557-1751  
hugh@sligogovsolutions.com

# PRESS RELEASE

## GPWC COMMUNITIES ADVANCE TOWARD ESTABLISHING NEW REGIONAL WATER UTILITY

*Commission aims to ensure sustainable, reliable water supply*

JOLIET, IL – Since the introduction of the Grand Prairie Water Commission (GPWC) just over one year ago, the Cities of Crest Hill and Joliet, and the Villages of Channahon, Minooka, Romeoville, and Shorewood have worked together to achieve key milestones on the path toward the formation of the new regional water utility and the establishment of a sustainable, reliable, high-quality water supply for their communities.

During the past six months, Joliet approved a 100-year agreement with the City of Chicago to define the terms under which the future water commission will be provided water, Channahon, Crest Hill, Minooka, and Romeoville completed the application and hearing process required for Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) approval of their Lake Michigan water allocations, and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) granted the proposed commission a new Public Water Supply ID Number.

“We have made tremendous progress in the last year and are thrilled to be advancing efforts to create the Grand Prairie Water Commission,” said Shorewood Mayor CC DeBold who chairs the leadership group working to form the commission. “Through this Commission, we will be able to tap into Lake Michigan and ensure sustainable, reliable and high quality drinking water for our communities for decades to come.”

With the City of Chicago agreement in place, and the remaining Lake Michigan allocation permits anticipated by early 2024, the six member communities are well-positioned to formally create the new Grand Prairie Water Commission in the first half of 2024. At the same time, the Commission's Alternative Water Source Program has hit critical targets to build the infrastructure needed to deliver the water.

The GPWC member communities have developed a Baseline Program Schedule and Budget that reflects the full scope of the improvements required to transfer water from the Chicago Connection to 14 delivery points throughout the southwest suburban region. The Baseline Program Schedule and Budget serve as the roadmap for delivery of all work and as the benchmark against which progress and costs will be reported.

The Baseline Program Schedule supports delivery of Lake Michigan water to GPWC customers by May 2030 and indicates the GPWC will break ground on its first construction project at the Chicago Connection in late summer of 2024. Engineering activities completed in recent months including design

reviews, field surveys and geotechnical investigations demonstrate that the Program is on track to meet critical schedule milestones.

The Baseline Program Budget of \$1.45 billion represents the total projected cost to the Commission for design, construction, management, legal, and support activities through completion in May 2030. The budget considers detailed projections of the current costs plus cost escalation to the anticipated time of construction.

Commission members have already secured \$72 million in federal low-interest loans and approximately \$7 million in federal and regional grant funds to fund development costs for the commission infrastructure. Applications for additional federal and state loan funds in excess of \$1 billion will be submitted later this year. All Program costs will be financed using a combination of low-interest state and federal loans, available grant funding, and revenue bonds.

As evidenced by the accomplishments completed to date, the Commission members are committed to meeting the Commission's mission of providing a sustainable, reliable and high-quality water supply for its communities by 2030 and beyond in order to support public health, safety, economic interests and quality of life.

*For the past several years communities in the region have been evaluating alternative water sources due to water quantity and water quality challenges with their existing water sources. Lake Michigan water purchased from the City of Chicago was selected as the most sustainable and reliable water source to meet water needs and support continued growth and development in the region. The six member municipalities of the Commission include Channahon, Crest Hill, Joliet, Minooka, Romeoville, and Shorewood. To learn more, please visit the Commission website at [www.GPWC-IL.org](http://www.GPWC-IL.org)*

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