



## Financial Services Audit Committee Communication

**Date:** May 22, 2026

**To:** Great Lakes Water Authority Audit Committee

**From:** Scott Garrigan, Financial Services Director

**Re:** Water Funding Task Force Update as of May 15, 2026

**Background:** The Water Funding Task Force (WFTF) was formed in January 2026 with the goal of addressing long-term water infrastructure needs facing our state to adequately mitigate economic, environmental, and social risks without adversely impacting affordability. The deliverables are research and analysis that supports companion funding and policy recommendations.

The task force is composed of various GLWA staff, industry experts, and consultants.

**Analysis:** Current actions items include the following.

- Three Member Partner focus groups, to better understand financial and infrastructure pressures were convened, one each on May 4<sup>th</sup>, May 5<sup>th</sup>, and May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026. In total, twenty individuals from fifteen different Member Partners attended. Participants included city managers, public works directors, finance professionals, and others, representing Member Partners within Oakland, Macomb, Wayne, and Washtenaw Counties. Lead service line replacement costs is a common theme that has surfaced in the focus groups. The group participants discussed the challenges related to how resources are allocated related to these costs.
- Nine peer utility sessions representing utilities across the United States have been held as of May 15<sup>th</sup>. Meetings are still being scheduled, but the expectation is that most of the interviews will be concluded by the end of May.
- The Water and Wastewater CFO Forum was held in Detroit on May 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 2026. At the forum, Nicolette Bateson (GLWA), Maggie Pallone (Public Sector Consultants), and I led a session titled “Water Funding Task Force: Addressing the Crisis Underneath Us”. This was an important milestone for the task force because it highlighted the challenges of securing sustainable funding for the water sector. The audience included over 30 water/wastewater utility CFOs from across the country who answered twelve polling questions to garner further national research data.

- The next step is to synthesize our research to identify the key themes and challenges. These insights will guide the development of initial drafts for our funding and policy proposals.

**Proposed Action:** Receive and file this report.