



Water & Sewerage
Department



DWSD Town Hall with Councilman Scott Benson

August 31, 2021

Town Hall Agenda

6:00 – 7:30 P.M.

- **Welcome by Councilman Scott Benson**
- **DWSD Presentation**
- **Q&A**



**Water & Sewerage
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DWSD Presentation

DWSD Update for District Three

- Overview of the DWSD and GLWA Organizations
- Water and Sewer Rates
- Customer Affordability Programs
- Long-Term Affordability
- Pipe Responsibility
- Water and Sewer Systems Maintenance and Upgrades
- Sewer System

What is DWSD?

- The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) is a City of Detroit enterprise department meaning it collects revenue to pay for the services it provides
 - At least 85% of DWSD's costs are fixed
 - Maintains the local water distribution system and sewer collection system
 - DWSD's primary source of revenue is water, sewerage and drainage bill payments
- The Board of Water Commissioners is a public body that reviews/approves rates, contracts, annual budget, and policies
 - The Commissioners must be Detroit residents and all seven are appointed by the Mayor
 - City Council approves contracts over \$5 Million
- Mayor Duggan appoints the Director, who oversees the day-to-day operations, which is confirmed by the Board of Water Commissioners
 - The Director is Gary Brown, appointed in January 2016
 - The Deputy Director & Chief Engineer is Palencia Mobley, P.E., appointed in January 2016

What is GLWA?

- The Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) was created during the bankruptcy and approved by a federal judge to lease and operate the regional system for 40 years
 - GLWA operates the water treatment plants, the wet weather treatment facilities, the Water Resource Recovery Facility (sewage treatment), the sewage interceptors, the pumping stations, and the transmission pipes for both water and sewer
 - Wholesale rates to municipalities for water, sewer and/or drainage/stormwater treatment
- The GLWA Board is a public body that reviews/approves rates, contracts, annual budget, and policies
 - Two board members are appointed by the Detroit Mayor, one by Wayne County, one by Oakland County, one by Macomb County and the sixth member by the Governor
- The GLWA Board recruits and hires a CEO who oversees the day-to-day operations
 - Currently the Interim CEO is Suzanne Coffey, while the GLWA Board recruits a permanent replacement to Sue McCormick

Water and Sewer Rates

- No General Fund dollars (tax revenue) support Detroit's water and sewer systems
 - Services supported through the **water, sewerage and drainage rates**
 - Revenue support for affordability plans are from **outside resources (i.e., CARES Act)**
 - **Mostly fixed costs** driven by infrastructure requirements

OLD DWSD before GLWA

Operating Both Detroit and Regional System

437%

Total rate increase the
20 years prior to the
bifurcation with GLWA

9%

Average annual rate
increase in that timeframe

NEW DWSD as of January 2016

Serving Only Detroit

3%

Average rate increase since
the bifurcation with GLWA

2.97%

Rate increase for FY2021

*\$2.32 increase per month
for a residential household
of three with average usage*





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Water Affordability

Customer Affordability Programs

- 10/30/50 Plan available to all DWSD customers
- Water Residential Affordability Program (WRAP)
 - Eligible households at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (i.e., \$52,400 for a family of four)
 - Plumbing repairs average of \$1,500, per household
 - Tenants are now eligible for minor home plumbing repairs
 - Annual monthly bill credit and arrearage credit is \$1,000
 - Two-year program for most households – seniors, Veterans and persons living with disabilities receive \$25 monthly bill credit indefinitely
 - Households have a **monthly bill reduction of 19%, on average, resulting from the minor home plumbing repairs**
 - **More than 20,000 households** have benefited since March 2016
 - **Annual GLWA allocation of \$6.5M**, of which nearly \$3M earmarked for Detroit



The flyer for the Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP) features a blue water drop logo on the left and the GLWA logo on the right. The text is organized into sections: 'PROGRAM BENEFITS' and 'WRAP PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATIONS'. The benefits list include assistance up to \$1,000 per household, a \$25 monthly bill credit, home water audits, and training classes. The qualifications list includes income requirements, proof of residency, and current bill payment. At the bottom, there is a call to action with the phone number 313.386.WRAP (9727) and the website www.waynemetrol.org/WRAP. Logos for Wayne Metropolitan, Macomb Community Action, and the Community Action Resource Center (CARD) are also present.

COMMUNITY ACTION ALLIANCE
WRAP
Water Residential Assistance Program

GLWA
Great Lakes Water Authority
WRAP funding is made possible by the Great Lakes Water Authority

PROGRAM BENEFITS

- Assistance up to \$1,000 per household.
- \$25 monthly bill credit and help with arrears. First arrearage payment of up to \$350 made at initial enrollment.
- Home water audit & minor plumbing repairs **average of \$1,500** for residents above 120% of average usage.
- Water saving kits and consumer training classes.
- Supportive WRAP-Around Services.
- Continuous enrollment for eligible households.

WRAP PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATIONS

- Have income at or below 200% of poverty threshold
- Provide proof of residency and income
- Provide renter's proof of responsibility for water on lease
- Stay current on monthly bill payment
- City of Detroit residents must install a new automatic meter reading device or allow DWSD to install a new meter

CALL: 313.386.WRAP (9727)
or visit www.waynemetrol.org/WRAP

Wayne Metropolitan | Macomb Community Action | CARD

Long-Term Affordability Dependent on State and Federal Funding

- Self-subsidized, Income-based rates not viable in Detroit – 30% of customers would have to bear costs for 70% of residents at 200% or below federal poverty level
 - State and federal legislation/funding necessary to support reducing water bills for low-income residents

Detroit	Philadelphia	Baltimore	Chicago
Total Population (U.S. Census)			
680,000	1,600,000	620,000	8,800,000
Percentage of Households At or Below <u>200%</u> of Federal Poverty Level			
73%	58%	53%	15%
Percentage of Households At or Below the Federal Poverty Level			
46%	34%	29%	9%

Detroit cannot be compared to other cities that have lower poverty rate, larger customer base to share cost, or have unacceptable rate hikes

- CARES Act provided \$15M to pay down arrearages and \$7M for major plumbing repairs
- Federal government pilot Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) – \$36.3M for Michigan
 - Detroit anticipates receiving close to 50% of state allocation
 - Will pay down arrearages up to \$1,000 for eligible customers



DWSD still lobbying for a permanent Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program!



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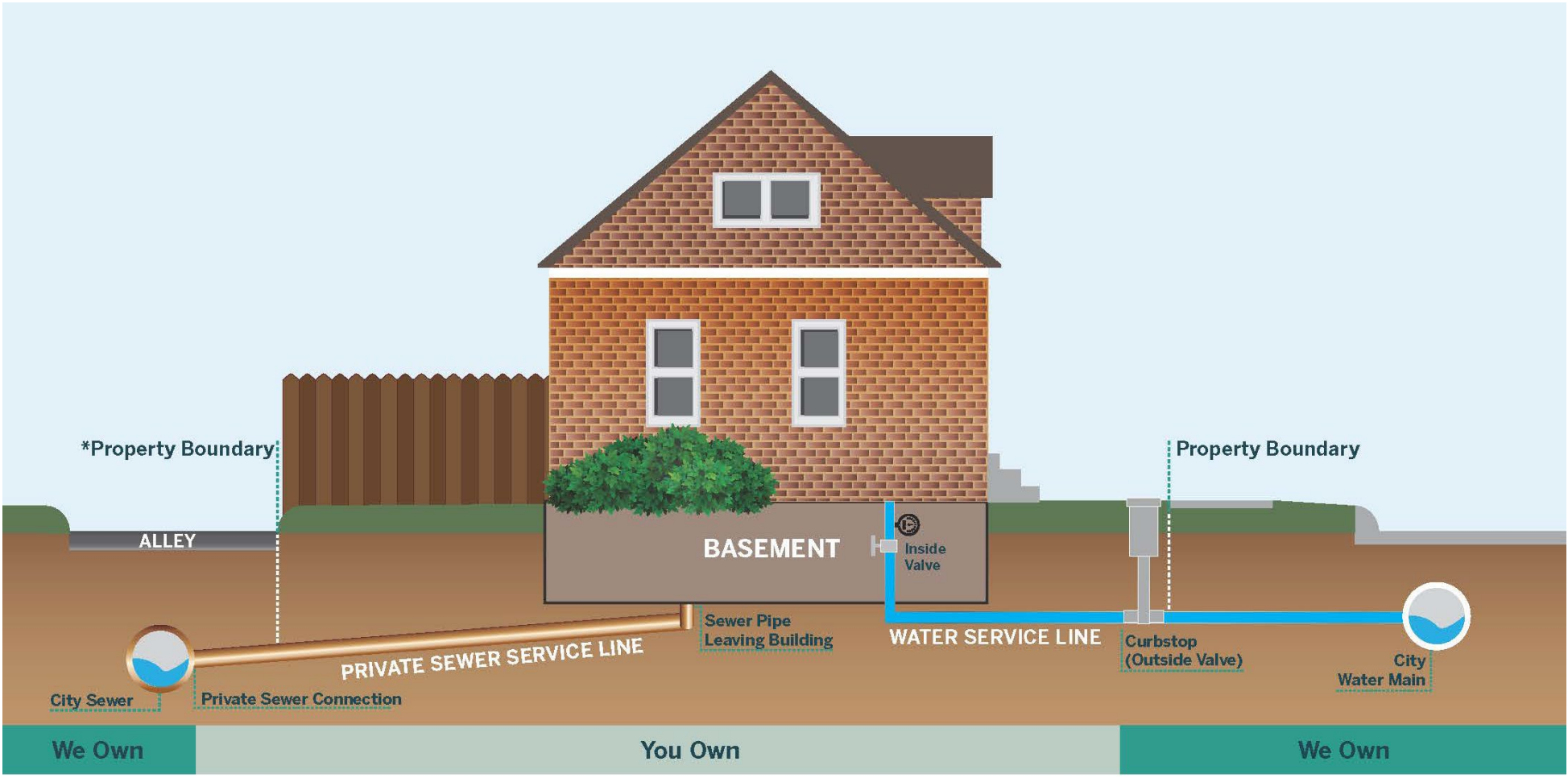
Water and Sewer Systems: Maintenance and Upgrades

Water Quality Report

- The 2020 report shows Detroit's drinking water continues to meet or exceed state and federal regulations
- Lead testing results are 9 parts per billion, well below state regulation of 15 ppb
- View report at detroitmi.gov/2020waterqualityreport



Pipe Responsibility

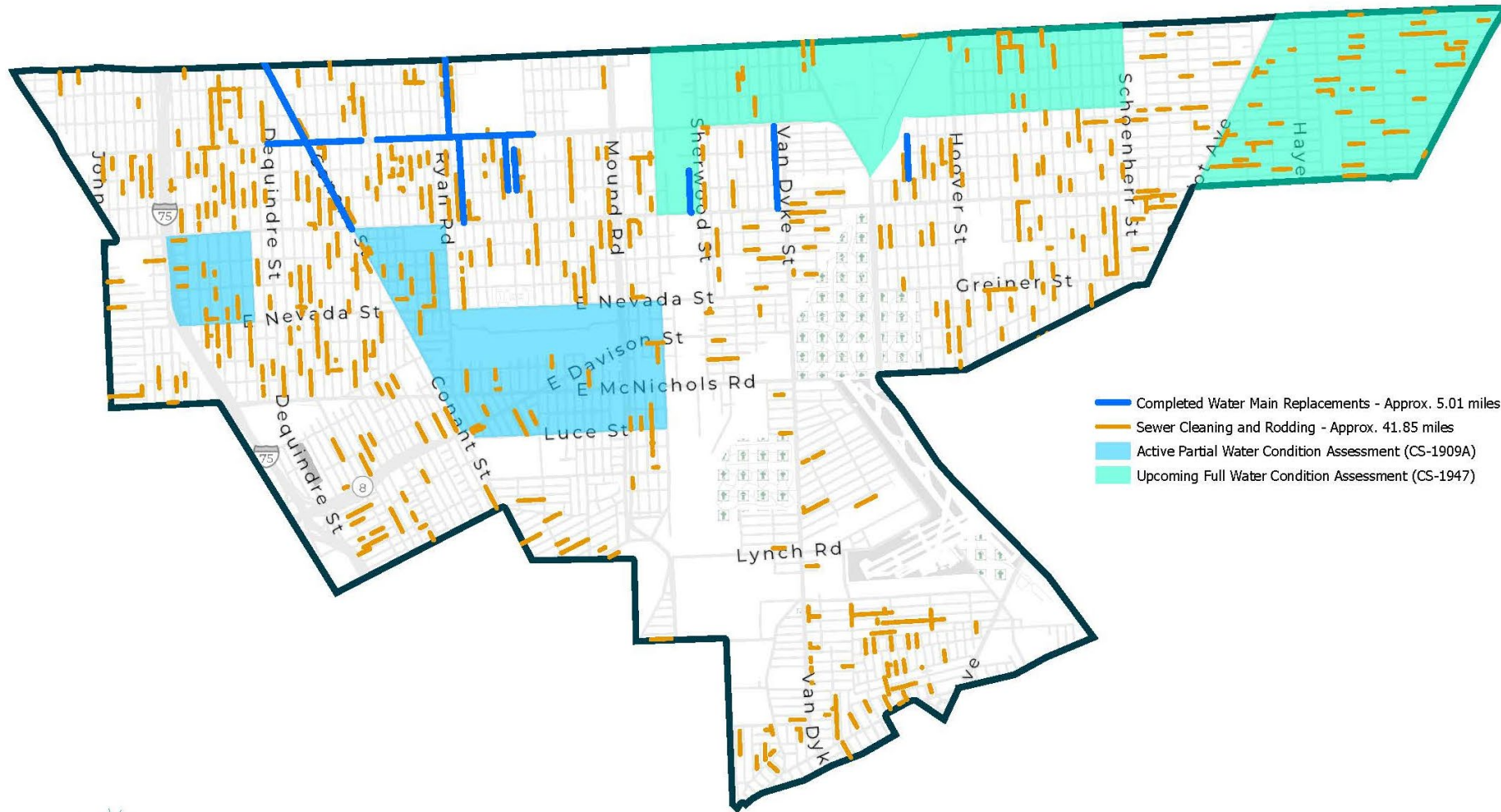


DWSD Capital Improvement Program Update

- DWSD has invested **\$200M** in capital improvement projects since 2019
 - Water main, hydrant and lead service line replacement
 - Sewer lining and replacement
 - Green Stormwater Infrastructure installations
- **Condition assessments** and other data are used to determine necessary upgrades
- DWSD and our contractors have:
 - Replaced **66 miles** of water main and more than **1,155 lead service lines**
 - Replaced or lined **50 miles** of sewer collection piping
 - Installed **11 bioretention gardens**
- DWSD crews also performing **preventative maintenance tasks**



DWSD Maintenance and Capital Construction in District Three in 2016-2021



Updated August 2021

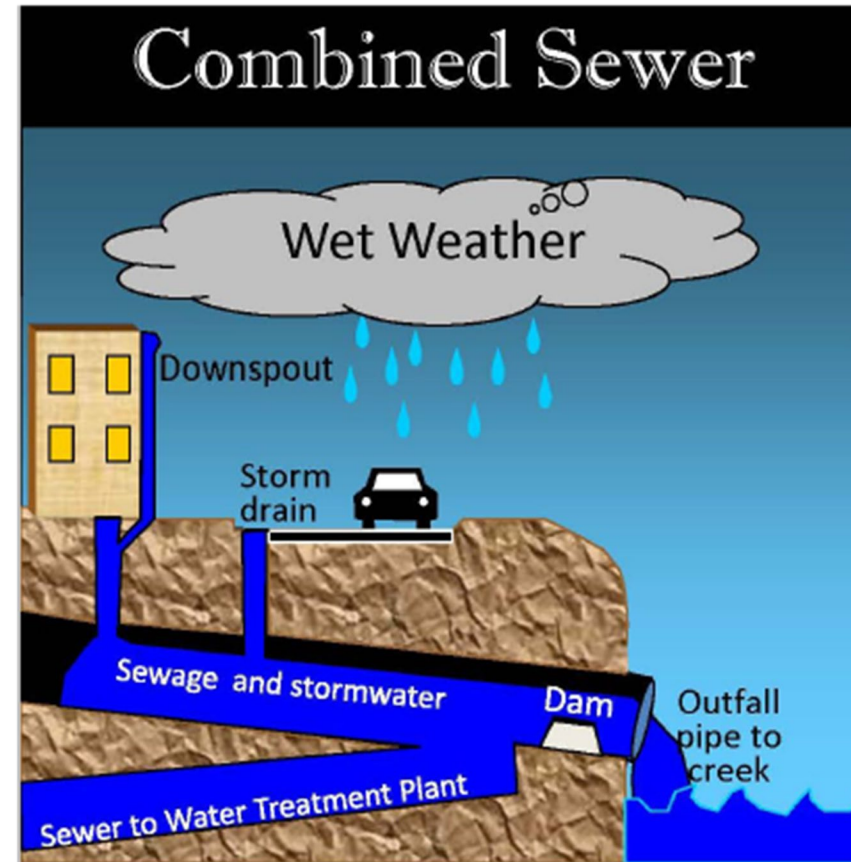
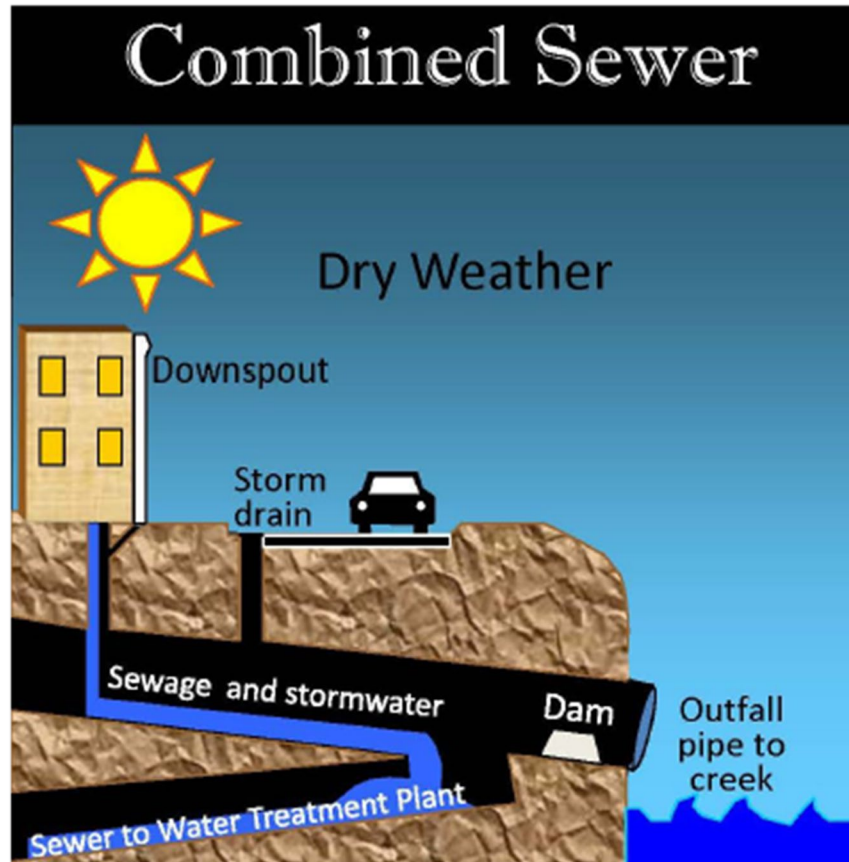


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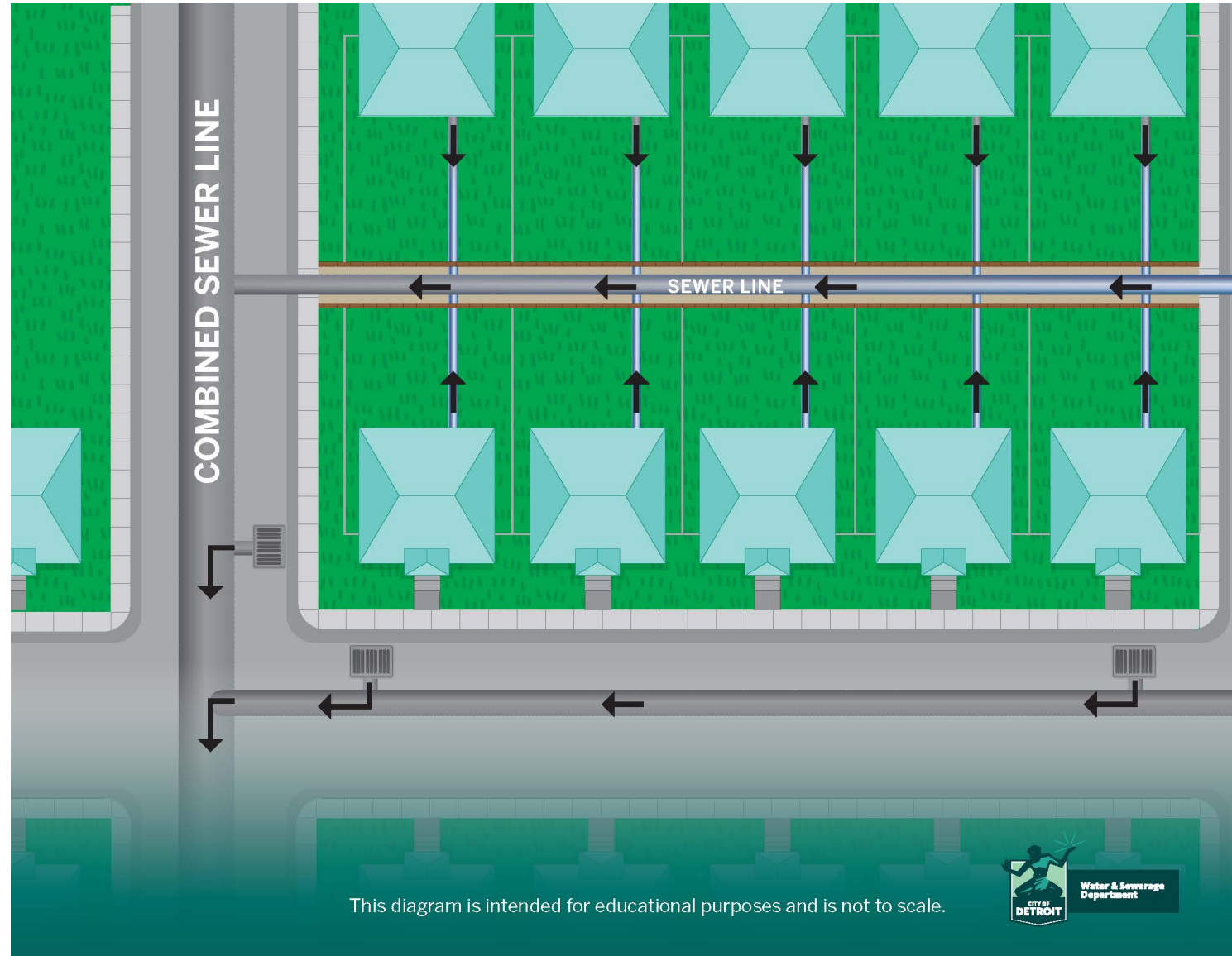
Detroit's Combined Sewer System

Detroit has a Combined Sewer System

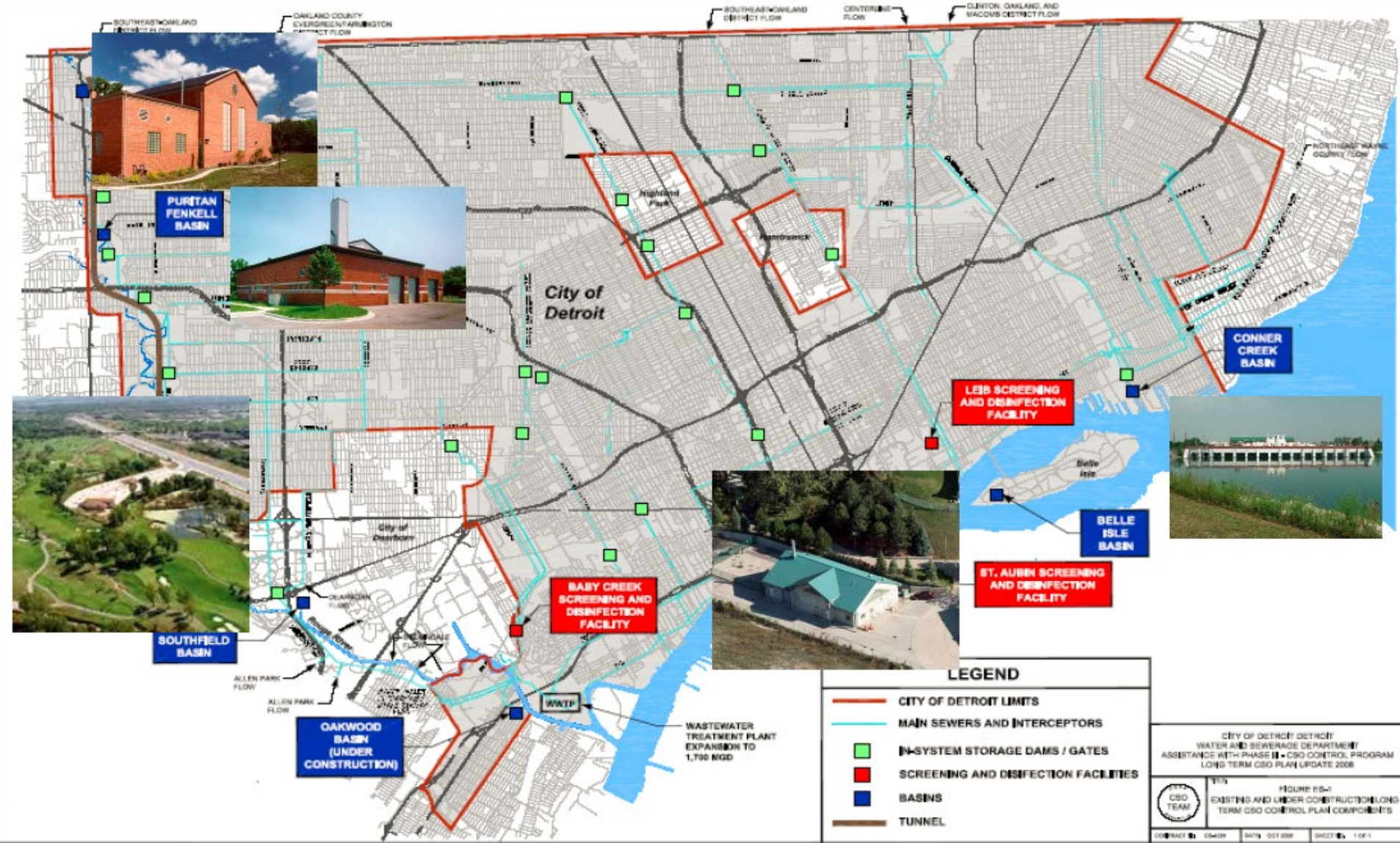
Wet Weather Conditions Exceed Capacity of Sewer Systems



How Combined Sewer Flows from Neighborhoods



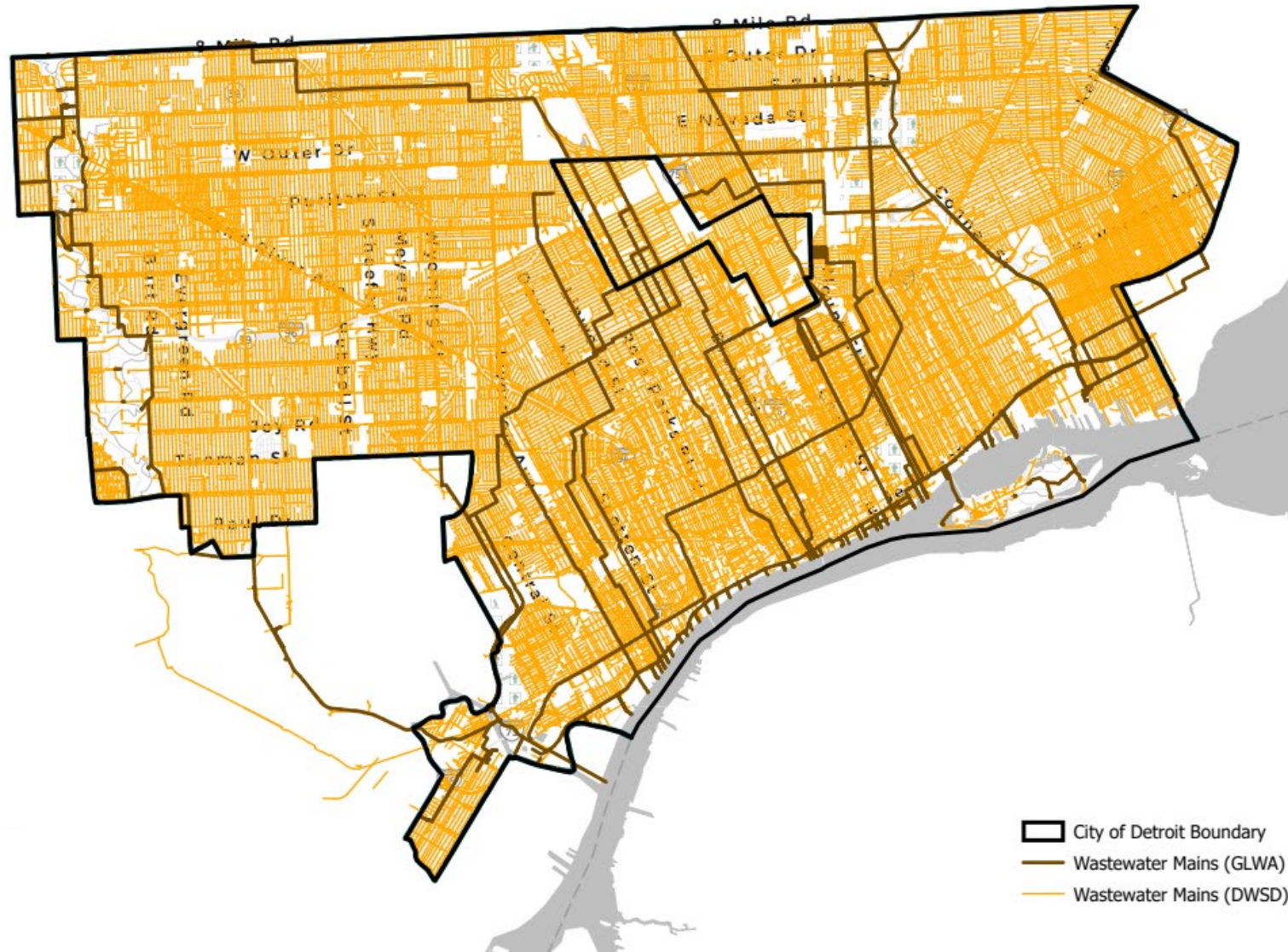
\$1.5B Invested in Wet Weather Treatment Facilities Along Both Rivers



Nine Retention Basins Manage 170 MG of Combined Sewerage during Wet Weather Events



3,000 Miles of Sewer Pipes Built Over a Century



Sewer System Maintenance

- Inspected and cleaned **30,963 catch basins** in the last four years
- Cleaned **575 miles of city sewer collection pipe** since 2018
- Lined and rehabilitated another **50 miles of sewer** in past three years



More needs to be done: By DWSD, GLWA, and MDOT

- Since 2015, DWSD has installed **12 Green Stormwater Infrastructure** projects that manage **61 million gallons annually**
- Later this year, DWSD to start **construction on a new 95 million gallon stormwater management system** in the Far West neighborhood at Rouge Park
- **GLWA 5-Year capital plan invests \$750 million in regional sewer system improvement**
- **MDOT** already working with the City of Detroit on **freeway stormwater diversion plans**
- All entities will have to **re-evaluate infrastructure based on 21st Century climate realities**
 - Hopeful the new **federal infrastructure bill, the American Jobs Plan, will strongly boost that effort**



Resident Responsibility: Disconnect Downspouts and Keep Debris from Catch Basins

- Make sure there is **no debris in your basement drains**
- **Clean your gutters regularly** if you can safely do so – get help if needed from family or neighbors
 - Move any items that are blocking the exits of your downspouts
 - **Remove the downspouts from the underground storm pipes and redirect them onto your lawn** at least three feet away from the house
- **Keeping catch basins (storm drains) on your block clear of debris is a shared responsibility**
 - If you see a catch basin covered in trash, please remove the trash and debris
 - Clean debris and leaves from in front of your property to reduce catch basins from clogging



Connected Downspout



Disconnected Downspout

Maintain Your Sewer Service Line

- **Inspect your sewer service line and drains,** including but not limited to snaking your sewer line all the way to the city sewer collection pipe connection, and placing a camera in your line to determine if there are any defects that you need to repair
 - Your sewer line should be snaked **at least once per year**
 - Refer to the DWSD checklist, “Do you have a sewer backup; Looking to hire a plumber?” at www.detroitmi.gov/DWSD



DO YOU HAVE SEWER BACKUPS? LOOKING TO HIRE A PLUMBER?

BEFORE YOU HIRE, ASK THESE 4 QUESTIONS:

- 1 ARE YOU LICENSED AND INSURED?**
Making sure your plumber is licensed and insured certifies they are qualified to perform and complete the work. Do not hire unlicensed or uninsured plumbers. In the event something goes wrong, you may be responsible and may need to hire a new contractor to make the proper repairs.
- 2 DO YOU HAVE A SPECIALTY?**
Some plumbers specialize in certain work. Make sure your plumber specializes in drain and sewer line cleaning. Also, they should have the ability to snake your pipe at least 75-feet, can place a camera in the pipe, and have a hydrojet option. You may need these additional measures depending on the severity.
- 3 DO YOU HAVE REFERENCES?**
Most plumbers should be able to provide references upon request if you don't already have a recommendation from a trusted source.
- 4 HOW FAR DO YOU PLAN TO SNAKE?**
DWSD encourages residents to snake their sewer service line annually, especially if you have large trees surrounding your home. Tree roots can cause damage to the pipe underground. Your plumber should identify the distance between your drain or cleanout and the city sewer collection pipe. Again, most houses are at least 75-feet from the city sewer pipe.

Example images that might be seen when using a camera while snaking a sewer line.



detroitmi.gov/DWSD

313-267-8000

detroitmi.gov/DWSD

313-267-8000

How to Contact DWSD

WHO TO CALL:

Customer Care assistance

313•267•8000



Download the free *Improve Detroit* app through SeeClickFix for reporting concerns or complaints.



**Water & Sewerage
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Questions?



Detroit Water & Sewerage Department

Email: dwsd-publicaffairs@detroitmi.gov

For more information visit: www.detroitmi.gov/dwsd

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