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Annual Impact Report

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# Letter from Anne

As we reflect on this year, I am filled with immense gratitude for the collective dedication and passion that drives Elevate forward.

We have experienced remarkable growth and transformation, and your contributions have been key to navigating our work with grace and purpose. Together, we are not only adapting to change to improve climate solutions, but we are thriving.

We are turning each new chapter into an opportunity for progress and impact. Thank you for being an integral part of our journey.

Your energy and resiliency help us shape a more sustainable future, and I look forward to what we will accomplish together in 2025.



# Impact Statement

By 2025, we will have improved the lives of over 1.3 million people by making their homes healthier and more efficient. This year:



**We created nearly 2,000 jobs**



**Put more than \$129 million back into frontline communities**



**All while saving 322,008 metric tons of carbon**

## Theory of Change

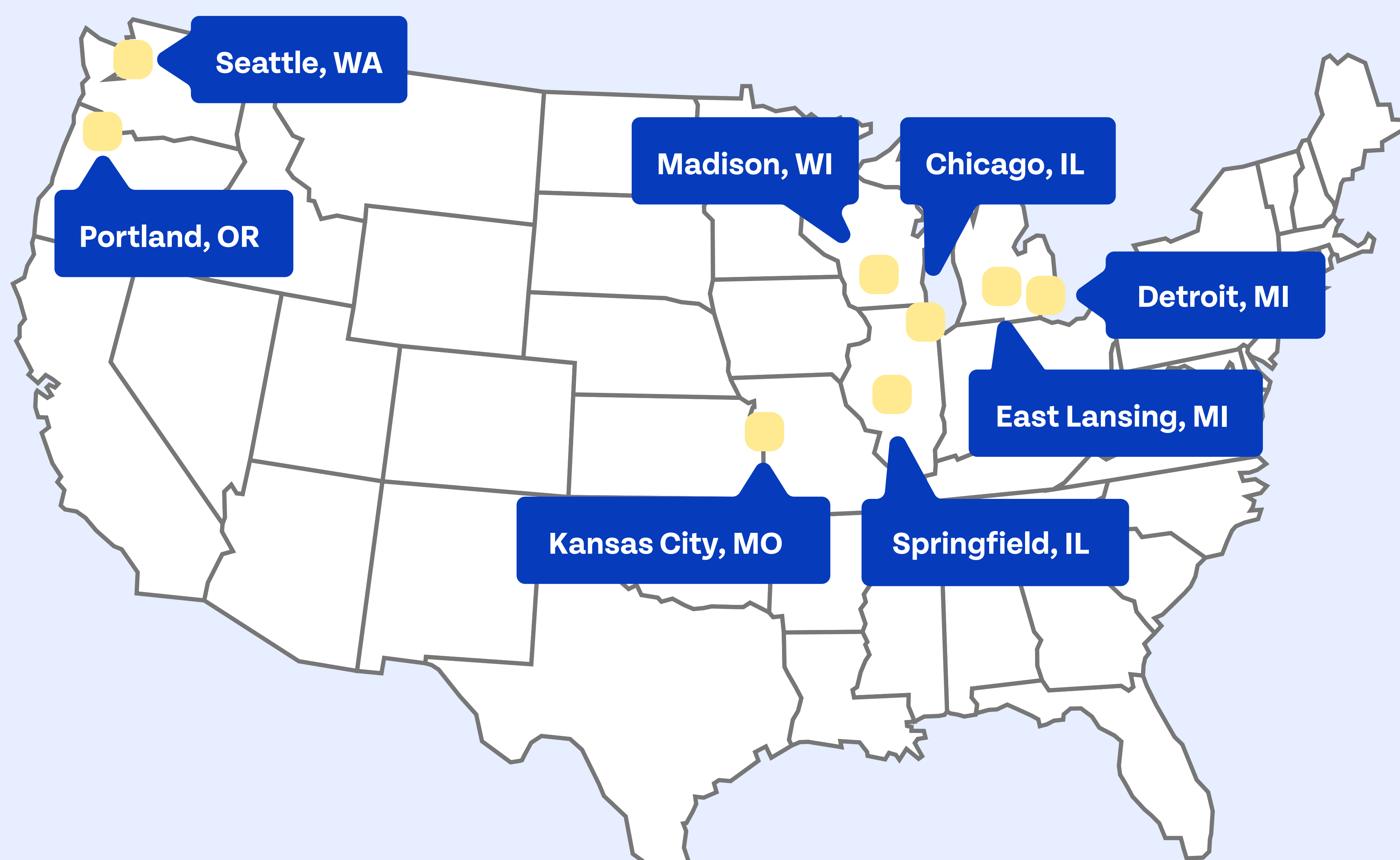
The 2024-2026 Strategic Plan was shaped through collaborative input from our Board, Elevate staff, partners, and community stakeholders.

By conducting interviews, hosting internal team discussions, and listening to our team members, we gathered valuable feedback to guide our mission. We strive to create healthier, affordable, and equitable climate solutions, remaining committed to partnering with frontline communities to amplify their experiences. Guided by insights from these strong relationships, we will focus on channeling resources to existing local organizations, and building sustainable capacity and competence in historically disinvested communities.

This approach informs all aspects of our work—from supporting community-led climate equity plans and collaborating with Tribal Nations on energy and housing programs, to preserving affordable housing and increasing access to capital within the energy ecosystem. We are driving efforts to expand building decarbonization, enhance solar power access, and establish community resilience hubs, ensuring an inclusive path toward a sustainable future. We will continue to do this work as we look forward to 2025.



# Where We Work



## Michigan

We've expanded our resilience hub network from the lower east side of Detroit to all of Wayne County and continue to build toward a connected ecosystem of community-serving nonprofits and local governments to provide emergency assistance to community members during extreme weather events and power outages.

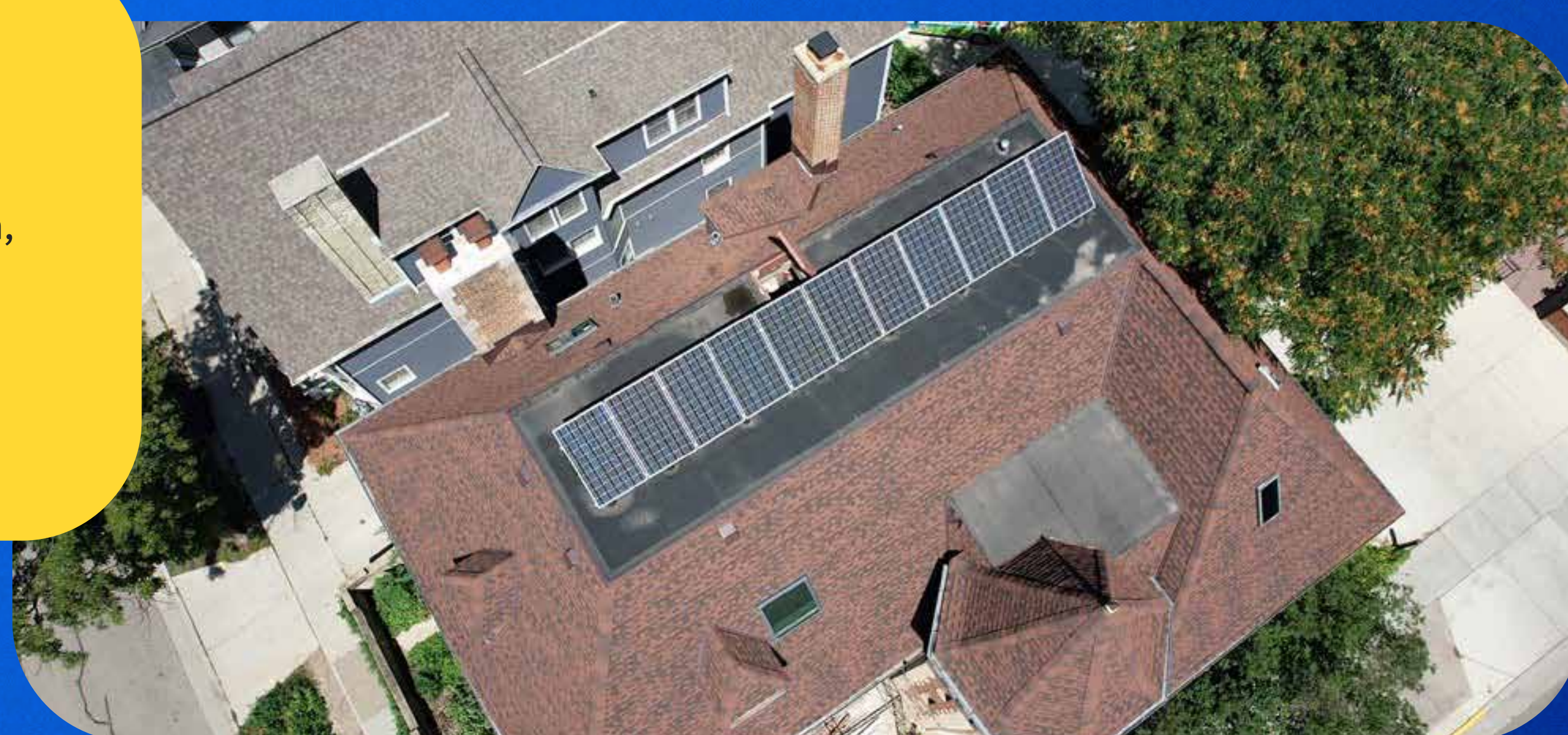
We completed our second cohort of our **Clean Energy Contractor Accelerator in Metro Detroit** and will launch a third cohort in 2025. Moreover, the Justice40 Team launched a **Michigan Justice40** program in partnership with the Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition. This program provides support to 25 nonprofit organizations to advance their missions and serve their communities.

In more nationwide news, the **Community Consulting team** worked with over 110 communities in 2024, providing assistance in data analysis, community engagement, program design, funding strategy, grant writing, and providing webinars and workshops.

This team helped communities successfully apply for over 80 grants and \$2 billion in funding -- and has currently been awarded over \$316 million.

## Wisconsin

**Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH)** is a critical housing resource in our communities. In partnership with local municipalities and the non-profit organization, Sustain Dane, Elevate provided complimentary efficiency assessments and step-by-step navigation of implementation of efficiency measures.



The program is for renter-occupied buildings with rents affordable to residents at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI). Between January 1 - November 19, 2024, the Efficiency Navigator Program implemented upgrades in 92 units of low to moderate-income housing in the Cities of Madison and Middleton in Dane County, Wisconsin. Upgraded measures included a combination of energy efficiency, health & safety, ventilation, electrification, and solar. The total project utility cost savings from these upgrades is \$12,800. Estimated annual carbon emission reductions are 51,000 kg/year which is the equivalent of avoiding 134,000 vehicle miles traveled per year.

Many rural families experience a disproportionately high energy burden while trying to navigate a rapidly evolving employment landscape. The historic opportunities presented by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) investments in Justice40 communities present an equally historic opportunity to address the most pressing challenges facing these communities. We are working with a network of partners in Wisconsin to support EJ Navigator, rural and tribal communities in the development of projects and proposals for state and federal grant programs. Our strategy is rooted in listening to communities and identifying needs, and to date we've supported 16 proposals for over \$427 million.

**Multi-family affordable housing decarbonization:** We provide tailored services to multi-family and nonprofit property owners, managers, and developers to meet their property and portfolio performance and sustainability goals. We use a comprehensive approach to assess a property's current performance and implement solutions to reduce energy and water use, electrify systems, install renewables, improve building health and resilience, and lower operating costs.

By working with agencies like the **Wisconsin Housing Preservation Corporation (WHPC)** and Commonwealth Development, we evaluate portfolios for electrification and renewable energy opportunities and support them with grant writing to fund implementation.

In 2024, we fully led a portfolio-wide planning grant focusing on the study of Wisconsin's utility rate structures and related impacts to solar battery storage for affordable housing properties. The study resulted in the creation of 15 case studies -- for 15 properties within WHPC's portfolio.

In addition to the portfolio-level planning efforts, this year we led technical analysis, project management, and construction management for five affordable housing multi-family housing properties. The installation of rooftop solar panels and battery storage was completed at Villa West (Phase I) in addition to rooftop solar at two other properties -- River Grove and Southridge. Rooftop and ground-mounted solar and battery installation are in progress at Lakeview Apartments and Tanglewood Apartments. Additionally, cold climate air source heat pumps and heat pump water heaters installations are currently in progress at Lakeview and Southridge. A utility benchmarking planning grant and two solar and battery projects (Villa West Phase II and East Terrace Apartments) are in the post-grant award closing phase and will begin construction in 2025.

**Common Wealth Development (CWD)** is a nonprofit community development organization operating 27 affordable housing properties in Madison, WI. With the vast majority of CWD residents earning less than 80% of the AMI, and many CWD properties receiving funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), it is important to preserve the quality of CWD's housing stock and reduce energy burden to CWD. In July 2023, CWD was awarded a comprehensive energy planning grant from the Public Service Commission (PSC) of Wisconsin, in partnership with Elevate and Sustain Dane.

We provided technical assistance to develop a portfolio decarbonization plan for CWD. The plan analyzed portfolio-wide utility, property characteristics, and financial data to develop a phased approach for decarbonizing CWD's housing stock over time. Property-level decarbonization assessments were conducted at seven priority properties in the portfolio. The decarbonization plan was disseminated to residents in June 2024 at an outdoor community event and will enable CWD to apply for funding opportunities for decarbonization implementation in the future.

We also partnered with Slipstream, Illume and Environmental Equity Solutions Consulting to convene stakeholders from environmental justice (EJ) organizations in Wisconsin to discuss approaches to bring an equity lens to Wisconsin's inaugural Clean Energy Plan (CEP). The group discussed strategies to develop programs ensuring that the economic, health, environmental, and security benefits of the state's clean energy initiatives accrue to communities disproportionately impacted by climate change and the creation of a statewide program that delivers clean energy to the homes and businesses that need it most.

# Washington

We designed an Efficiency Guide Program to provide complete wrap-around decarbonization services for small to medium-sized unsubsidized affordable rentals, also known as naturally occurring affordable housing in Pierce County, Washington. The program braids two separate state funding sources, Community Energy Efficiency Program funds administered by Washington State University and a Department of Commerce Home Energy and Appliance Rebate grant, to pay for retrofits that reduce energy burden and carbon emissions, improving comfort, resiliency, and preserve housing affordability.



We also partnered with the City of Tacoma to identify six community spaces that could serve as resiliency hubs in the event of extreme weather or other emergency events and prepared solar and storage designs for each. We are working with the Tacoma Housing Authority to evaluate its entire portfolio of affordable housing properties and identify candidates for emergency shelter-in-place sites. As part of the assessment, we are conducting building audits and critical needs assessments. Ultimately, we will provide Tacoma Housing Authority with actionable solar and storage designs for up to two separate properties.

The Decarbonization Affordable Housing Now (DAHN) coalition, organized by the Housing Development Consortium, seeks to build the affordable housing community's capacity to plan at the portfolio and building levels for retrofits in existing multi-family building portfolios to meet local and statewide building performance standard requirements.

# Oregon

The Oregon Multifamily Energy Program (OR-MEP) from Oregon Housing & Community Services (OHCS) supports the energy-efficient design of new and existing affordable multi-family rental properties.

Through our partnerships, we conduct outreach and provide full-service technical assistance to unsubsidized low-cost apartment owners. In addition to these efforts, we are a part of an interdisciplinary team, working to address technical challenges specific to decarbonizing the existing residential housing stock in rural areas through the Building America Retrofit Solutions. Our demonstration projects are focused on small unsubsidized apartment buildings in Eastern Oregon.

Through the Contractor Development Pathway, we are helping BIPOC-owned, women-owned, and rural trade allies grow their businesses and access energy-efficiency projects in existing commercial and multifamily buildings.



# Illinois

In Illinois, we supported the retrofits of over 2,300 multi-family buildings with over 62,000 units, distributing \$31 million in incentives to improve energy efficiency and comfort and reduce utility bills. Through Illinois Solar for All, over \$26 million in incentives were provided for 86 solar installations that were completed in 2024.

In partnership with other organizations, we developed the new Building Energy Resource Hub, a one-stop shop for larger building owners to learn about decarbonization options.



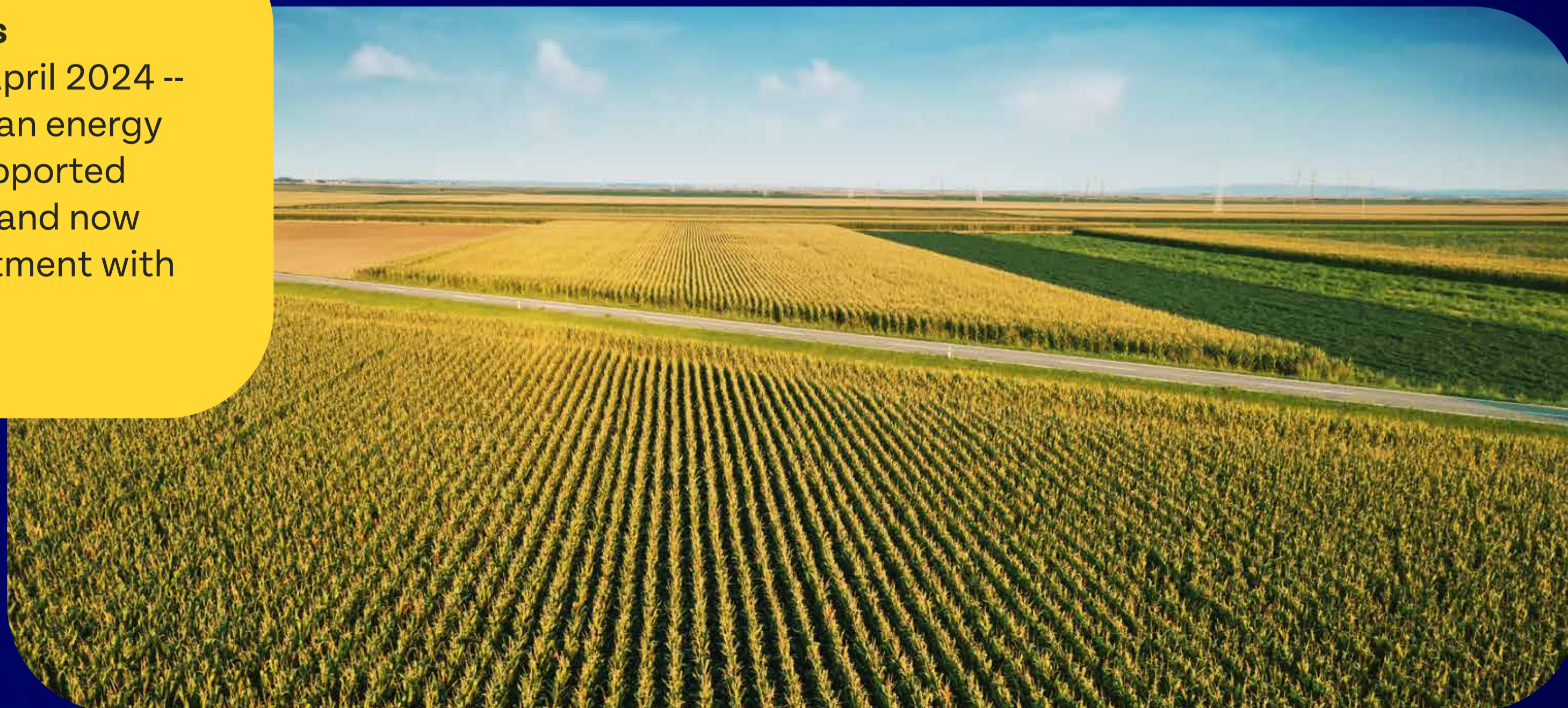
With our work with Smart Grid, we supported more than 48,000 participants on ComEd Hourly Pricing, who saved an average of 31% percent in 2024.

We know that everyone should have access to clean water, especially our most vulnerable populations – our children. So, we replaced lead service lines for over 100 childcare facilities in Suburban Cook County, replaced fixtures, and provided filters to 60 childcare facilities in Chicago.

Regarding fostering healthy housing, we also conducted comprehensive healthy homes, energy efficiency, and water conservation assessments at nearly 150 homes and completed 50 home upgrades in Suburban Cook County. Additionally, we completed healthy home upgrades in 49 homes in Peoria, Illinois, and lead paint abatement in 85 homes in the Chicagoland area. We also completed a Best Practices Guide on Electrification for the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA).

# Nationwide

The recipients of the **Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund** were announced in April 2024 -- a \$27 billion federal investment in clean energy and building decarbonization. We supported many of the recipients' applications, and now we are working to connect this investment with projects that advance our mission.



We are also supporting Tribal housing authorities in Wisconsin and Michigan with grant writing, housing portfolio analysis, and decarbonization demonstration projects. This year, we completed portfolio reviews across multiple units of Tribal housing and have helped raise \$16 million in state and federal funding for decarbonization upgrades.

Our work continues to impact communities nationwide, as seen by the Justice40 Accelerator. Cohort III secured an additional \$10 million in federal, state, and philanthropic grants, bringing the total to \$50 million across all three cohorts. We are awaiting the finalized results for the EPA Community Change Grants, where we supported 18 applications totaling over \$360 million. Additionally, we continued to build our technical assistance bench with 142 direct connections to technical assistance providers to strengthen organizational capacity. In addition to our work building climate solutions, we are proud to celebrate local policies countrywide that will help create healthier communities.

# Our Work in the Policy World

Illinois announced grant awards for new clean energy workforce programs established under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA). We played a key role in advocating for these programs, and it's exciting to see them finally taking off.



The state also adopted its **Stretch Energy Code** becoming effective January 1, 2025. This will allow interested localities to use an energy code with higher energy efficiency than the statewide base code, providing an important tool for cities and towns to achieve their own climate and energy goals.

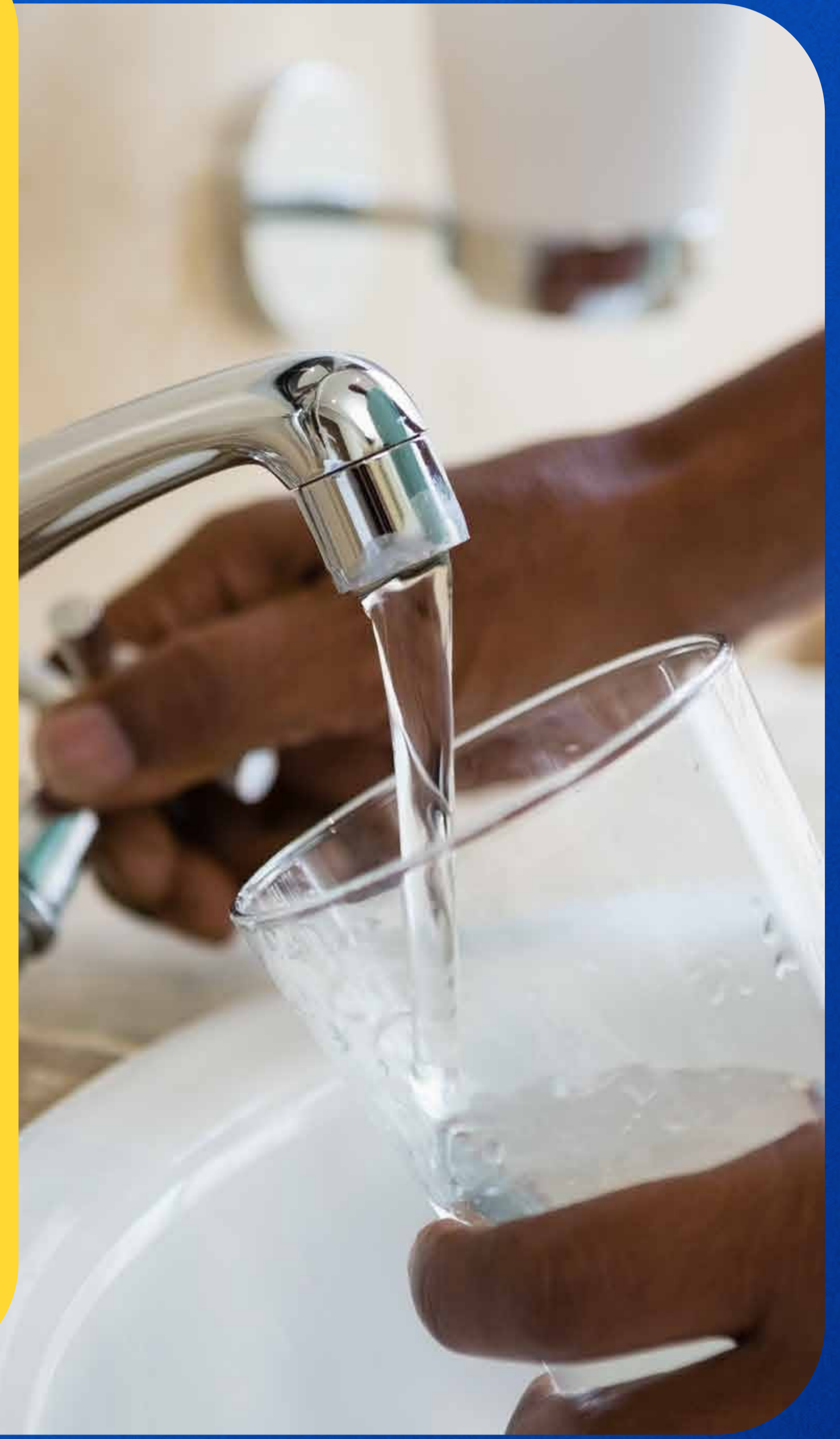
Our Water Team launched a groundbreaking \$11.5 million water affordability program in partnership with the Cook County Bureau of Economic Development.

And in addition to direct water bill relief and technical assistance for residents and municipalities in suburban Cook County, we launched the Advisory Committee on Water Affordability (ACWA), bringing local water leaders, national experts on water affordability, and community stakeholders to develop program and policy recommendations at the county and state levels to advance water affordability for all Illinoisans.

We conducted an analysis and mobilized partners to weigh in on the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Lead and Copper Rule Revisions, which strengthen protections against lead in water and require communities to remove toxic lead service lines (LSLs) from their drinking water systems within ten years, with extensions for a few communities.

We worked collaboratively to align state and national partners, and mobilize most Chicago City Council members to make formal public comments calling on the U.S. EPA to set higher standards and reign in Chicago's replacement timeline to no more than 20 years, as opposed to 40 years, which was under the EPA's original proposal.

The final federal rule, released on October 2024, aligns significantly with our overall point and changes the extension calculation to give Chicago no more than 22 years to replace LSLs, significantly accelerating the city's timeline to achieve a lead-free drinking water system.



In Michigan, with a collaborative effort with our partners, we successfully advocated for the passage of Michigan House Bill 5028, which prevents Homeowners Associations from banning the installation of rooftop solar systems, EV chargers, heat pumps, and other energy and water efficiency retrofits.

Through our work and our coalition's advocacy, Michigan's Governor signed a Fiscal Year 2025 budget that includes:



**\$156 million Solar For All** passed through from the Inflation Reduction Act



**\$5 million for renewable and electrification development grants**



**\$5 million for pre-weatherization**



**\$5.8 million for additional Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) staff to implement new clean energy laws**



**\$5 million for Michigan Saves (the State's green bank)**

In 2023, Michigan adopted a groundbreaking package of climate and clean energy laws. Since then, we've brought our policy expertise and technical experience to the table, submitting written testimony, connecting with decision-makers, and providing education for coalitions and impacted stakeholders.

Our efforts as seen as we focused on pushing the MPSC to implement these laws equitably and efficiently. We worked closely with the Michigan Energy Innovation Business Council to submit numerous comments to the Commission.

As a result, we were able to convince them to make several important decisions. First, solar energy credits can now be used to cover all parts of a customer's bill. Additionally, solar projects larger than 20 kW no longer need an extra meter to measure energy generation. Finally, the Commission decided that utilities can no longer "double-dip" by counting the same spending twice for workforce development. These changes will help make solar energy more affordable and fairer for everyone.

# Year in Action

We celebrated our second Summit, Elevate's Building Equity Summit: Beyond Access – Removing Barriers to Shared Prosperity, hosted at the Rubenstein Forum, University of Chicago, where we shared our work, our commitment, and our passions for climate equity.

We counted on the presence of Elevate staff, partners, funders, and Chicago's city leaders, totaling up to 240 people.



We participated in three press conferences in 2024 to engage with the media and amplify our work and successes. With the Democratic National Convention taking place in Chicago in August, we partnered with the Illinois Environmental Council and hosted a press conference highlighting the impact of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and showcasing our electrification work. Elected officials, national climate advocates, and journalists got to see our impact firsthand when they toured a recently electrified single-family home in North Lawndale and listened to the homeowner who shared how the retrofits improved her life.



In September, we partnered with ComEd and Bickerdike to highlight our shared efforts to electrify 450 buildings across Chicago. We were joined by the City of Chicago's Chief Sustainability Officer Angela Tovar, where we gathered in the courtyard of a recently electrified affordable housing complex, connecting with reporters and we toured one of the units.

On a different occasion, we joined Senator Dick Durbin (D-Illinois) for a press conference announcing new resources to reduce childhood lead poisoning in water across the Chicagoland area.

These events are not all. We collaborated with the media to publish more than 20 stories featuring our work on a variety of projects. This collection of stories further cements our reputation as an industry leader who mitigates the impacts of climate change while prioritizing frontline communities. To read all the stories Elevate has been featured in, visit our Press Room.





# Thank You

Thank you for learning more about Elevate and our 2024 impact!

View our financials and a list of our funders and board of directors below.

Please subscribe to our YouTube channel, sign up for our newsletters, and join us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Bluesky, and X (formerly known as Twitter) to learn more and stay on top of relevant news in 2025.



# Board of Directors

Scott Bernstein  
John Cleveland  
Susan Estes  
Anne Evens  
Denise Fairchild  
Kimberly Lewis  
Carlos Martín

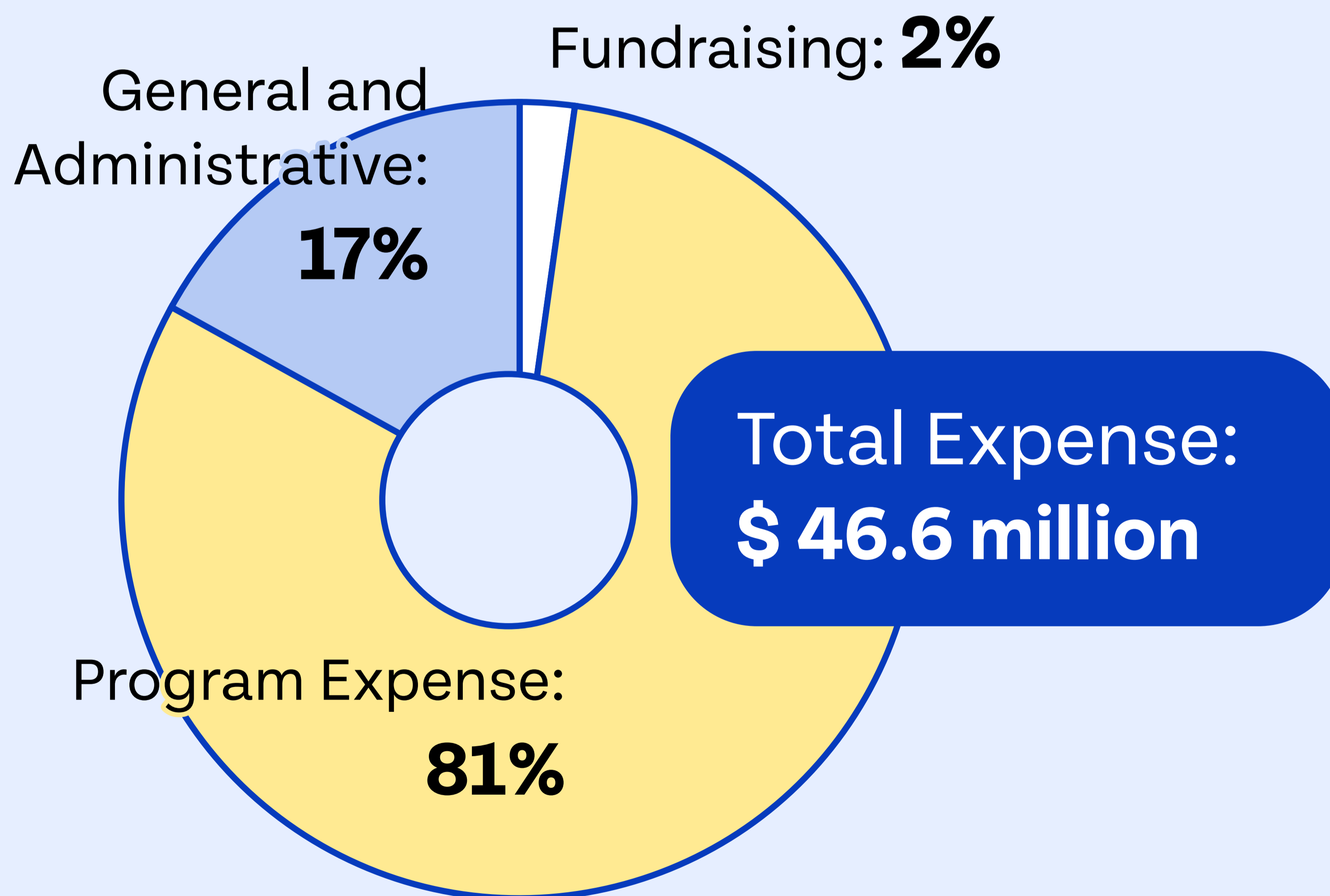
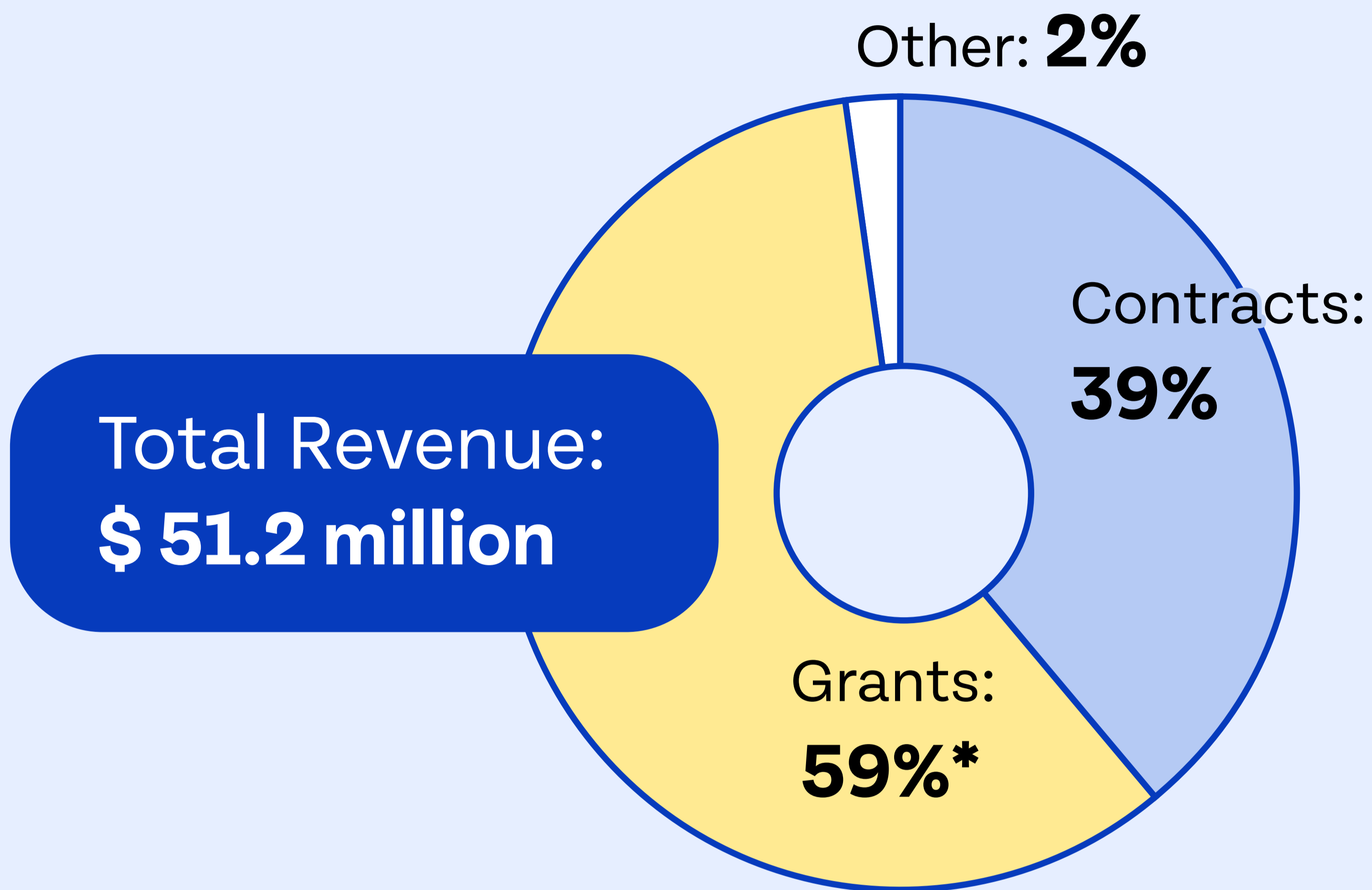
Margaret O'Dell  
Chinwe Onyeagoro  
David Shryock  
Jennifer Tescher  
Leah Turnbull  
Robert Weissbourd

# Funders

American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy  
BuildUS  
CENTENE  
Center for Energy and Environment  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation  
Chicago Housing Authority  
City of Ann Arbor  
City of Chicago  
City of Detroit  
City of Eau Claire  
City of Elgin  
City of Evanston (IL)  
City of Grand Rapids  
City of Madison  
City of Middleton, Wisconsin  
City of Minneapolis (MN)  
City of Tacoma  
CLEARresult  
Climate Imperative  
Climate United  
Commonwealth Edison Company (ComEd)  
Cook County  
Crankstart  
CREDMADE  
Crown Family Philanthropies  
CVS Health  
DigDeep  
Dr. Scholl Foundation  
DTE Energy  
Energy Trust of Oregon  
Five Lakes Energy  
Franklin Energy Services, LLC  
Freedom Together Foundation  
General Motors  
Google

Great Lakes Lead Elimination Network  
Housing Partnership Network  
Illinois Department of Public Health  
Illinois Housing Development Authority  
Illinois Power Agency (IPA)  
Institute for Market Transformation  
Invest in Our Future  
Kresge Foundation  
McDougal Family Foundation  
McKnight Foundation  
Michaels Energy  
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy  
Minnesota Department of Commerce  
Division of Energy Resources  
National Renewable Energy Laboratory  
National Resource Defense Council  
New Ecology Inc  
New Venture Fund  
Polk Bros. Foundation  
Pritzker Foundation  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
Rush University Medical Center  
Sally Mead Hands Foundation  
Skyline Foundation  
Slipstream  
The Builders Initiative  
The Joyce Foundation  
TRC Companies Inc. (TRC)  
U.S. Department of Energy  
VEIC  
Washington State Department of Commerce  
Washington State University  
Water Foundation  
Wisconsin Housing Preservation Corporation

# 2023 Financials



\*Grants includes \$10.5m in donor restricted funds.