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# CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – May 3, 2019  
Metropolitan Planning Council  
140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60603

## Attendees

John Mick II, Baxter & Woodman, Inc.  
Ashley Hodges, Calumet Collaborative (Mill. Reserve)  
Drew Williams-Clark, Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Melissa Custic, Chicago Region Trees Initiative/ The Morton Arboretum  
Trinity Pierce, Chicago Region Trees Initiative/ The Morton Arboretum  
Thomas Burke, Christopher Burke Engineering  
Kate Evasic, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
Selcuk Dundar, City of Izmir (Turkish municipality), MWRD Intern  
Kimberly Nowicki, Cook County  
Jack Eskin, Delta Institute  
Mary Beth Falsey, DuPage County  
Jennifer Hintze, DuPage County  
Mary Mitros, DuPage County  
Eric Otto, Forest Preserves of Cook County  
Chelsey Grassfield, Friends of the Chicago River  
Matt Bardol, Geosyntec  
Karoline Qasem, Geosyntec  
Katie DeMuro, Greenleaf Advisors  
Patrick Lach, Hey and Associates  
Vidya Balasubramanyam, IDNR/Prairie Research Institute  
Jeff Edstrom, Illinois Coastal Program  
Lissa Domoracki, Metro Strategies  
Saki Handa, Mott MacDonald  
Sarah Cardona, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Danielle Gallet, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Liz Granger, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Justin Keller, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Balint Liberman, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Adam Slade, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Imani Clayton, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District  
John Fox, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District  
Tony Fuller, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District  
Moriah Gelder, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District  
Justin Hart, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District  
John Watson, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District  
Christian Sorensen, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District  
Mollie Dowling, OAI Chicago Southland  
Katherine Moore Powell, The Field Museum  
Emily Okallau, The Morton Arboretum  
Dean Massey, University of Illinois at Chicago  
Casey Sebetto, University of Illinois at Chicago  
Moira Zellner, University of Illinois at Chicago



## Member Updates

Melissa Custic from the Chicago Region Trees Initiative announced that they have a new stewardship and outreach coordinator, Trinity Pierce. For anyone interested in talking to communities about trees, Trinity can help! Melissa also announced that the Chicago Region Trees Initiative will be hosting a guided tour of the new "Gateway to Tree Science" exhibit at The Morton Arboretum on Friday, June 7 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The guided tour will depart from the Morton Arboretum Visitor Center, with a shuttle leaving promptly at 9:00 AM. (If you will be late, email [mcustic@mortonarb.org](mailto:mcustic@mortonarb.org).) Among other things, the exhibit teaches how to choose the best trees for stormwater management. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Sarah Cardona from MPC shared that the next CSC meeting on June 7 will be our annual Service Day Field Trip (no meeting at MPC!). We will help with maintenance of rain gardens at the Space to Grow Morton School of Excellence (431 N Troy, Chicago) followed by an optional group lunch at Inspiration Kitchen (3504 W Lake, Chicago). To register, please sign up on [MPC's Eventbrite page](#) as well as fill out the [CPS Volunteer Registration Form](#). Maximum participants: 30 people.

Kate Evasic from CMAP said the Future Leaders in Planning (FLIP) program is now accepting applications for Summer 2019. FLIP is a one-week leadership development program geared towards high school students to learn about planning and northeastern Illinois communities. The deadline to apply is May 20. Applicants must live in northeast Illinois and have a desire to learn more about planning. More information is available [here](#).

Chelsey Grassfield from Friends of the Chicago River reminded us that Chicago River Day is coming soon! This annual volunteer event will take place on May 11 from 9:00 AM to noon, rain or shine. Choose from over 60 sites at [chicagoriver.org](http://chicagoriver.org), or join CMAP at Bubbly Creek or MPC at Beaubien Woods. Registration is required.

Kimberly Nowicki from Cook County Homeland Security and Emergency Management discussed her office's efforts to update Cook County's Hazard Mitigation Plan for the county. Since 2014, they have successfully engaged with a good portion of municipalities but are trying to reach all 135 communities. In your conversations with municipal representatives, they ask that you encourage them to speak with Kim and her team; inclusion in the county's plan is a prerequisite to being eligible for FEMA funding. Contact Kim with any questions at [Kimberly.Nowicki@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Nowicki@cookcountyil.gov).

Moira Zellner from UIC announced that she and several others from the team of agencies working with the Village of Robbins on the MWRD flood mitigation project were selected to present at the APA-IL State Conference taking place in Evanston on September 25-27. This collaboration between a Calumet-region municipality, MWRD, CMAP, RTA, UIC, OAI and others is the kind of great collaboration that the CSC hopes to foster and highlight lessons learned for replication.

Imani Clayton from MWRD reminded us about the MWRD open houses taking place May 18 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM in celebration their 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Tours are available at their Calumet, O'Brien, and Stickney water reclamation plants. More information is available [here](#).

Eric Otto from the Forest Preserves of Cook County announced two job openings. First, the Forest Preserve District of Will County has an opening for landscape architect operating out of the Sugar Creek Administration Center in Joliet. The deadline to apply May 24, and more information is available [here](#). Second, the Forest Preserves of Cook County will soon be seeking a natural

resources-based civil engineer. Eric asks people to consider potential candidates, and keep a lookout for the upcoming job posting.

Mollie Dowling from OAI Chicago Southland said the National Green Infrastructure Certification Program (NGICP) took place last week at the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant. Several CSC members attended, including Emily Okallau from The Morton Arboretum. The weeklong training, administered by [WEE](#), covered many different aspects of green infrastructure (GI), including engineering (the why and the how) and the place of GI alongside traditional grey infrastructure. The training also covered how to install GI, working with communities, and order of installation, and it included a field day of MWRD and Space to Grow projects. John Watson from MWRD said it was the second time the training was offered in Illinois, and they hope to bring it back again soon.

John Watson from MWRD also introduced two new people: a visiting environmental engineer from Turkey, and Moriah Gelder, who recently joined MWRD to work on GI projects with John. There will also be a public Call for Green Infrastructure Projects coming soon, so start gathering ideas.

## **Presentations**

*Theme: advancing the CSC's Goal 3: Increase municipal capacity and reduce fragmentation across Calumet government actors*

### **Designing and implementing a green infrastructure plan for the UIC campus**

Moira Zellner, Associate Professor, Dept. of Urban Planning & Policy; Research Associate Professor, Inst. For Environmental Science & Policy; Director, Urban Data Visualization Lab, University of Illinois at Chicago

Dean Massey, Research Specialist, Institute for Environmental Science & Policy, University of Illinois at Chicago

Moira and Dean presented on their next iteration of a L-GrID Model they have been developing. This approach looks at the neighborhood level, assessing the spatial relationships of green infrastructure and where investments will have the greatest impact. In their model, they can look at how much water flows into sewers, into streams (outflow), or infiltrates into green infrastructure. They found that in smaller storms (5-year), 10% of neighborhood needs to be covered with green infrastructure to prevent any flows to downstream communities. For the 100-year storm, approximately 30% of a neighborhood would need to be covered with green infrastructure to see protection. Next, they looked at spatial placement to see what would produce a bigger impact: random placement of green infrastructure, adjacent to roads, clustered upstream, clustered downstream, etc. The team found that clustered upstream and downstream and away from roads is worse than dispersed green infrastructure. They are starting to find some common patterns which could inform ordinances. The UIC team applied their model on the UIC campus, also serving to validate the model. By first identifying problem flooding areas, they then ran different scenarios, but also importantly, involved people from the UIC community to rank their priorities, tradeoffs, spatial constraints, etc. This approach is not just about arriving at a perfect solution, but fostering compromise through negotiation among stakeholders to arrive at a solution that everyone can live with. The group discussed the importance of this kind of participatory planning in stormwater management projects, and how this kind of approach should be required in RFP processes.

## **Public Grant Funding: Plans, Projects and More in DuPage County**

Mary Beth Falsey, Water Quality Supervisor, DuPage County Stormwater Management

Jennifer Hintze, Project Engineer, DuPage County Stormwater Management

Mary Mitros, Communication Supervisor, DuPage County Stormwater Management

The CSC was excited to welcome friends from DuPage County Stormwater Management for a peer-to-peer learning exchange and best practices in applying for public funding sources to support stormwater projects from planning all the way to construction. The team cited the following federal and state grants they typically pursue: FEMA, EPA, HUD, NOAA, IDNR, as well as partnerships with USACE and USGS. They pursue grants for a range of activities from planning to floodplain mapping to flood-prone property buyouts. Additionally, their watershed plans include shovel ready projects which make it easy to apply for grants when they become available.

One grant program they have successfully leveraged that is [also now available to 4 watersheds in Cook County, including the Cal-Sag Channel and Little Calumet River watersheds](#) is IEPA's Section 319 grant program. IEPA provides competitive grants for projects to prevent or address stormwater-related water quality issues. In other words, this is funding for stormwater projects that help control waterway pollution from stormwater runoff from streets and parking lots. In DuPage County, they have received Section 319 grants for watershed plan development for impaired waterways, as well as restoring St. Joseph Creek with regrading streambanks, channel stabilization with riffle cobble enhancement, and native plants. As a new source of funding for similar types of *non-pipe* based solutions in the Calumet region, it was helpful to hear firsthand the tips from DuPage County on preparing a winning grant application: match the agency's specific requirements or focus points; re-use narratives with specific layouts and language of grant applications, and of course, pay attention to detail. Cook County communities can point to updated [Detailed Watershed Plans](#) on MWRD's website and [consider applying by August 1 to Section 319](#) for funding. If CSC members are working with communities, please let them know that this funding source is now available.

Visit the [CSC website](#) to review the full presentation materials.

## **Service Day Field Trip – Friday, June 7 – in lieu of regular meeting**

Sarah Cardona announced that in lieu of a regular meeting next month, the CSC is getting outside and going to the Morton School of Excellence, a Space to Grow site in Humboldt Park, to do some service alongside students! You must register to participate in the Service Day Field Trip at this [Eventbrite page](#), as well as complete a [CPS Volunteer Registration Form](#). Because we are volunteering at a school while still in session, we all **must be a registered volunteer** to participate. You will not be allowed to show-up to volunteer; all participants must pre-register.

Please also let MPC know if you plan to stay for the optional group lunch at Inspiration Kitchen (a 15-minute walk away). Please bring cash/credit card to purchase your lunch.

[Space to Grow](#) is a unique partnership, including active CSC member agencies, partnering to solve urban flooding by transforming Chicago Public School schoolyards in green schoolyards that mitigate stormwater via detention and/or green infrastructure improvements onsite.

Enjoy giving back to the community while inspiring the next generation of stormwater practitioners!

**\*\*\*\*\*No Regular Meeting on June 7\*\*\*\*\***

Service Day Field Trip

For CSC members who sign up [here](#)

Friday, June 7, 2019

9:45 AM to 12:00 PM

Morton School of Excellence

For more information contact:

Sarah Cardona  
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[scardona@metroplanning.org](mailto:scardona@metroplanning.org)