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# CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – March 6, 2020  
Metropolitan Planning Council  
140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60603



## Attendees

Anna-Lisa Castle, Alliance for the Great Lakes  
Angela Larsen, Alliance for the Great Lakes  
Anthonia Ogudipe, Alliance for the Great Lakes  
Emily Grimm, Baxter & Woodman, Inc.  
Serrater Chapman, Calumet Collaborative  
Tess Conway, Calumet Collaborative  
Graig Neville, CERA  
Peter Haas, Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Drew Williams-Clark, Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Anna Wolf, Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Emily Okallau, Chicago Region Trees Initiative/The Morton Arboretum  
Thomas Burke, Christopher Burke Engineering  
Alice Chen, Cook County  
Eric Otto, Forest Preserves of Cook County  
Matt Bardol, Geosyntec  
Patrick Lach, Hey and Associates  
Vidya Balasubramanyam, IDNR Coastal Management Program  
Lisa Krause, IDNR Coastal Management Program  
Kira Baltutis, Metro Strategies, Inc.  
Josh Ellis, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Justin Keller, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Adam Slade, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Ryan Wilson, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Dean Alonistiotis, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago  
Justin Hart, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago  
Kena Sims, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago  
Saki Handa, Mott MacDonald  
Bob Newport, OAI  
Ted Haffner, Openlands  
Bill Wood, SmithGroup  
Jen Jenkins, The Nature Conservancy  
Karen Kreis, Village of Midlothian

## Member Updates

Ted Haffner from Openlands reminded everyone to apply for the ComEd Green Region grant by March 13. Through a partnership with ComEd, Openlands awards grants of up to \$10,000 to support projects related to open space protection and improvement, in particular parks, natural areas, and recreation resources. The 2020 grant cycle will continue its special focus on pollinator conservation to support native butterflies, bees and other pollinator species. [More information is available here.](#)

Ted also mentioned the Chicago Community Climate Partnership's new [Earth Day 50 calendar](#), developed to share the many events and activities planned around the Chicago region to recognize the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day. If your organization is hosting an event that you would like to share, [follow this link](#) and click on "contact us". Be sure to include the following information: Event name, Lead organization(s), Date, time, location (including address), Description (100 words or less), Link for more information, Contact email and/or phone number, Photo (to be considered as a "featured event").

Serrater Chapman said the Calumet Collaborative is also collecting and sharing Calumet-region Earth Day 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events. They sent out a survey to gauge interest and determine next steps.

Trustee Karen Kreis said she will be presenting about Midlothian's stormwater management capital plan at the IAFSM Annual Conference in Tinley Park. She thanks the entire CSC for your support!

Emily Okallau from the Chicago Region Trees Initiative/The Morton Arboretum said CRTI is partnering with the Illinois Arborist Association to offer Urban Forestry Basic Training, which provides training for non-forestry but tree-aligned professionals. [Click here for dates and more information](#).

Anna Wolf said the Center for Neighborhood Technology just released [Linking Community Benefits to Green Infrastructure](#), a reboot of their 2010 [Value of Green Infrastructure](#) report. The updated report highlights the quantifiable ways that green stormwater infrastructure provides broad benefits to communities.

Drew Williams-Clark from the Center for Neighborhood Technology said, after their webinar with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and the Chaddick Institute, they will be hosting a Happy Hour beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10.

Josh Ellis said that MPC is hiring for a contract position to work on at least four water-related technical assistance projects and outreach related to StormStore. [Check out the position description](#).

## **Presentations**

### ***Work Group Update: T+M Work Group 1-day green infrastructure training***

Emily Okallau, Chicago Region Trees Initiative/The Morton Arboretum

The Training & Maintenance Work Group has been working on a one-day green infrastructure training workshop based on the longer NGICP training which some members attended last year. Why training? Green infrastructure needs to be maintained, just like any other infrastructure, yet it is often constructed with grant funding that does not provide for ongoing maintenance. These can end up as wasted investments. Simultaneously, the green industry has job openings but lacks staff with the specialized skills needed to maintain native landscaping. OAI is leading this work in support of programs which help individuals overcome barriers to entering the workforce. The inaugural one-day training will be held March 10 from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. at South Suburban College. Topics include stormwater basics, soils, plant types, maintenance, safety and more.

## **Extended Member Update: Stormwater Credit Trading in Cook County – Lower Des Plaines + Little Calumet Pilots**

Jen Jenkins, The Nature Conservancy  
Ryan Wilson, Metropolitan Planning Council

MWRD is updating its Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO) to better enable trading of stormwater volume from one site to another. Their Board of Commissioners will vote in March 2020 and, if passed, will mark a major inflection point for stormwater credit trading in our region. Stormwater credit trading is a market-based approach for better siting of stormwater capacity in which both public and private developers can participate. Although MWRD began updating the WMO in 2007 with significant updates passed in 2014 and 2019, limiting factors constrained offsite trades. The update currently under review will reduce some of those restrictions, but, even if enabled, there is no marketplace or standard contract.

MPC and TNC will be working through those challenges and supporting pilot trades in the Little Calumet (of Illinois) and Lower Des Plaines watersheds to allow MWRD to see how the market could function and that, ideally, it does not impact flooding in downstream communities, expands development opportunities, and increases equity in distribution of flood mitigation projects. Jen and Ryan requested that CSC members help them to identify potential sites. These need to be pre-permit projects in the early planning stage. Additionally, they will be reconstituting the StormStore Advisory Committee and determining how best to spread the word that this pilot is taking place.

## **Member-led Activity Update: Urban Flooding Baseline**

Drew Williams-Clark, Center for Neighborhood Technology

CNT's Urban Flooding Baseline project came out of the [CSC's 3-year Work plan](#) (Foundational Activity 2, p. 11). The outcome will be a mapping tool to help inform strategic planning, target pilots, build stormwater management capacity with municipalities, and engage residents in planning green infrastructure projects. However, they recognize that there are a multitude of tools currently available, and they want to make sure that what they build will be used. They will be working closely with CSC members and other stakeholders to identify who will use the tool, how they will use it, and what problems it will help them overcome. They are excited to get to work on this priority initiative of the CSC and will be looking to CSC members to help advise. Stakeholder meetings will be held every three months in addition to regular touchpoints with the broader CSC. Let Drew know if you want to be more involved.

During the second half of the day's meeting, CNT facilitated discussions around the project scope, specifically, the target geography, the timeframe of baseline (e.g., flood occurrences between 2010-2020), and who would use an urban flooding baseline.

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

## **Next Meeting**

Friday, April 3, 2020  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Metropolitan Planning Council  
140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago

**For more information contact:**  
Metropolitan Planning Council

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