
CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – March 6, 2015

Metropolitan Planning Council

140 S. Dearborn St., Suite 1400, Chicago



Attendees

Anna Wolf, Alliance for the Great Lakes
Christina Negri, Argonne National Laboratory
Jeff Edstrom, Cardno
Hal Sprague, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Burrell Poe, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Mason Throneburg, CH2M HILL
Jason Navota, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Nora Beck, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Benet Haller, City of Chicago Department of Planning & Development
Barbara Maloof, Cook County Bureau of Economic Development
Jane Hornstein, Cook County Department of Planning & Development
Dominic Tocci, Cook County Department of Planning & Development
Alex Simmons, Cook County Land Bank Authority
John Quail, Friends of the Chicago River
Maddie Mahan, Friends of the Chicago River
Mary Ellen Guest, Historic Chicago Bungalow Association
Emily Baily Burns, Historic Chicago Bungalow Association
Lisa Cotner, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Amy Walkenbach, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Margaret Schneemann, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant
Danielle Gallet, Metropolitan Planning Council
Peter Skosey, Metropolitan Planning Council
Kelsey Pudlock, Metropolitan Planning Council
John Watson, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Tiffany Ingram, Natural Resources Defense Council
Stacy Meyers, Openlands
Andrew Szwak, Openlands
Katrina Phillips, Sierra Club, Illinois Chapter
Genny Boesen, South Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium
Moirra Zellner, University of Illinois Chicago
Mary Pat Mattson, University of Illinois
Sarah Coulter, Village of Park Forest



Member Updates

The Illinois Coastal Management Program (ICMP) is in the process of developing the **2016-2020 Section 309 Assessment and Strategy** (Section 309 document). This assessment is conducted every 5 years in order to identify problems and opportunities in the coastal zone. Successful completion of the Section 309 document will make ICMP eligible to receive additional funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to accomplish strategies identified in the document. Strategies include wetlands enhancement and gaining a better understanding of groundwater movement in the Calumet region. The draft Section 309 document is now available for public review and comment. ICMP is asking members of the Collaborative, as stakeholders in the coastal zone, to provide feedback on the draft document. Comments will be accepted from March 2, 2015 until April 3, 2015. **The draft Section 309 document and a feedback form are available on their website:**

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/cmp/Pages/Section309.aspx>. Please contact [Ania Ruszaj](#) with any questions.

The Metropolitan Planning Council is working with WEFTEC to develop a session on 30 Sept 2015 for the WEFTEC's 88th Annual Technical Exhibition & Conference. There will be a technical session in the morning followed by a tour within the Calumet region for those who register. There will be four stops that will allow participants to explore urban flooding projects in Blue Island, Midlothian and a Chicago public school as well as viewing a Wetprofit home in Chicago. MPC is also in conversation with US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a soil mapping of the region. The objective is to close a major gap in the region's available data. Currently the two organizations are negotiating the project including funding for the data's development.

Freshwater Future is seeking project grant applications with a deadline of 31 March 2015. [Freshwater Future's Project Grants Program provides grant awards ranging from \\$500 to \\$3,500 \(USD\) to be used for specific project expenses.](#) These awards are to be used for grassroots project expenses that promote water resource protection and restoration by influencing community and/or individual behavior or opinions, corporate conduct, and/or public policies; and to strengthen the role of individuals and community groups working locally to protect and restore shorelines, inland lakes, rivers, and wetlands in the Great Lakes Basin.

Priority Funding Areas

The following program areas direct Freshwater Future's grant making for the Spring and Fall Project 2015 funding cycles. Projects to protect aquatic habitats in the following strategic program areas will be considered:

- Projects to protect and restore wetlands that will result in ongoing or positive permanent change in the habitat;
- On-the-ground restoration activities that include an action component to create permanent change (a small amount of funding for this area);
- Advocating for low-impact solutions to community storm water issues;
- Participation in land use planning and zoning;
- Participation in watershed planning;
- Watch-dogging and participating in the development, implementation, and enforcement of local, state, provincial, and federal aquatic habitat protection regulations;
- Non-partisan voter education, voter registration, and candidate forums;
- Advocating for naturally functioning river and coastal ecosystems;
- Reducing polluted runoff;
- Launching special initiatives or creating unique opportunities to strengthen citizen involvement in aquatic habitat protection and restoration;

- Communicating how local wetlands, lakes and rivers are interconnected in the Great Lakes Basin.

Types of Activities Freshwater Future Does Not Fund:

- Governmental functions (including governmental entities such as units of government, governmental agencies and conservation districts)
- Lobbying activities (activities that attempt to influence specific pieces of legislation)
- Projects that have already been completed
- Consulting activities for organization capacity building or strategy development services.

These services are available from Freshwater Future staff through our Insight Grants. Freshwater Future strongly encourages you to discuss potential projects and ask questions before applying [by contacting Melanie Welch](#).

How to Apply

Applicants must be a current organizational member of Freshwater Future; a grassroots initiative; a 501(c)(3), Canadian charity, or have a fiscal sponsor with either a 501(c)(3) or is a Canadian charity; and carry out a project that impacts the Great Lakes watershed. If you are still not sure you qualify, [Click here](#) to determine your eligibility.

You must use the current year's application, available for download on the members-only section of our site. The application cover page and application contains complete instructions for submitting a proposal, including all required materials needed.

Submitting Your Application

Applications must be received electronically by midnight on the due date. Please send your application via e-mail in a Word attachment to grants@freshwaterfuture.org. Supporting documents may be sent via email or first class mail. Please do not fax your application.

More information can be found at <http://freshwaterfuture.org/grants/project-grant-program/>

A Methodology for Assessing Co-Benefits Potential of MWRD Land Holdings

Stacy Meyers, Openlands & John Quail, Friends of the Chicago River

Stacy Meyers, Openlands, and John Quail, Friends of the Chicago River presented a methodology and tool for accessing the land holdings of MWRD around the Chicago River. The objective of this project is to look at revitalizing Chicago's waterways, and simultaneously provide educational opportunities throughout the region. One example of this is a site specific project implemented in the Kickapoo Woods that provided habitat enhancement with a stormwater focus. With the help of grant money, they were able to create a canoe launch and improve the surrounding wetland area. A second example is Openlands' "Space to Grow" program. In partnership with Chicago Public Schools, Grissom Elementary's outdoor space will be turned into a dynamic water management system that will capture a significant amount of stormwater and nearly 100% of pollutants from the runoff on site. The tool elucidates opportunities to partner and work with MWRD—particularly identifying where lease requests (whether they are for recreational and open space, green infrastructure, and/or habitat restoration) can be made. It provides a deeper understanding (both visually and spatially) of a parcel's potential impact on stormwater, recreation or habitat. At the scale of the Collaborative, the tool presents "cross-boundary opportunities to enhance recreation, conservation and stormwater management in the Calumet region."

Data was pulled from a variety of sources (e.g. Green Infrastructure Vision 2.0 and the North Conservation Water Plan), and then classified into three categories—stormwater management, conservation and recreation. A complete list of the data can be found on the seventh slide of Meyers and Quail’s presentation. Stormwater values identify areas of concern, opportunity and potential partnerships. A few of the datasets in this value category include high risk flood zones, permeable soils and induced stormwater infiltration, Chicago Boulevards, City of Chicago’s inventory of potential vacant land, community and school gardens, as well as data from the Illinois Coast Management Program. Conservation values identify biodiversity and land management conservation opportunities. Such datasets include important bird areas and state listed species, national wetlands inventory, Calumet Open Space Reserve management units, biologically significant streams, forest preserves of Cook County and Chicago nature areas directory. Recreation values identify parcels that can serve as anchors or hubs for green infrastructure such as community parks and schools. A few of the datasets included within this category include Forest Preserve areas and activities, water trails and boat access, public schools, community park space, wildlife viewing, existing and proposed bicycle trails and CMAP land use inventory. Openlands and Friends of the Chicago River see these grouped values as living datasets, and ultimately would like them to be updated in real time.

Currently all datasets are layered on top of the assessor's data of MWRD’s land holdings. Instead of making subjective decisions and analysis, each value is represented as either a 0 or 1. When layers are overlaid on the map, parcels will take on a different shade of blue. The lightest hue of blue indicates one value associated with that particular parcel; however, if the blue is a more saturated, higher intensity color, there is an addition of the 1 values (in other words there are more values assigned to the parcel). Some values represent indicators, which can help users make more focused and detailed searches. As a result of this tool, there is an MWRD parcel that is ready to be leased right now. The parcel is located in Northbrook where they are trying to identify areas that had the potential to host passive and active recreation alongside green infrastructure. Another great example of how this tool can be useful to outside organizations is the Forest Preserves efforts to increase the preserves in 2015.

The biggest takeaway for the Collaborative is that the tool can shed light on opportunities—identifying where members might be able to best connect within and outside his or her affiliated communities. As of now, the tool uses proprietary data that can’t be given out to the public, however it is highly probable to be able to give it out to large agencies if it address the mission of the Collaborative. Nevertheless, given that the methodology/tool is not yet public, Openlands and Friends of the Chicago River are welcoming feedback so they can better foster opportunities within and across the Collaborative and Millennium Reserve.

One member stated that if there is a substantial amount of data that is sharable, it would fit within the data sharing goals of the Collaborative. Meyers will be looking into getting more information on what can or cannot be shared with the public. Benet Haller, City of Chicago, commented that the methodology is not entirely subjective—choices were made through the process. In response, Quail agreed and said it was not subjective in that the foundation of the project was based on Openlands mission. In the end, Bennett suggested that it would be good to be able to distort and weigh values differently. Another member asked if there is any data on when current leases will be up. Meyers said MWRD does not have that kind of data yet. They are still in the process of transferring much of their data into GIS. Mason Throneburg asked if scores were evaluated based purely on overlap or proximity. Meyers clarified that different datasets had different scopes—any of the blue links associated with each parcel defines the scope which is relatively tight around the district’s parcel.

Members from the City of Chicago and Cook County asked if there is any talk about expanding this beyond MWRD's parcels. Quail recalled that the tool transpired from one particular project—so in short, yes. It could be done as it is based on common parcel data and structurally easy to replicate in GIS. There are a few initiatives about expanding the use of data. Quail and Meyers will provide the Collaborative with the link soon. John Watson, MWRD, asked if it would be possible to sort out the publically available data. Meyers informed the group that was not their initial intent, but since it is public, they are willing to supply the Collaborative with links to the open datasets that were used in the tool. One participant asked if there are any other outcomes of developing the tool. In response, Meyers announced that the data and tool was recently given to MWRD. They are looking to use it to inform land use policy updates. Quail emphasized that oftentimes many of the recommendations and decisions made by MWRD are based off of old policy. One example of a land use decision that could have benefited from this tool was the Calumet firing range. The area where it was located happened to be a high conservation bird area. The tool would have been able to raise red flags about the significance of the conservation area before a decision was made.

Discussion: Applicability of this Methodology to Other Initiatives

Modelling and Data Sharing:

How might this approach be replicated when thinking about designing models for land use evaluation related to urban flooding? How might a similar methodology be useful in analyzing data or communicating findings? Other ideas or thoughts?

- With Mason Throneburg, CH2M HILL, as the moderator, the group focused on how to apply similar methodologies. They identified that it could be used to identify the greatest area (combined parcels of land) with the most infill properties. They also acknowledged that it could be used for assessing greatest risks. In the long-term, the group stated that it would be great if data could become more robust through crowdsourcing and high scans of the areas being reviewed.

CMAP's LTA program:

How might a similar methodology be useful within CMAP's LTA program? How could this approach be helpful in evaluating the co-benefits of land use decisions within individual LTA projects? Other ideas or thoughts?

- With Jason Navota, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, as the moderator, the group saw this tool as a great educational tool that they can use to teach the public, identify co-benefits, and encourage people to become more engaged in their community. Navota mentioned that CMAP is finalizing their stormwater management program, and recognized that the tool could be used at the local level for identifying areas that could use a more in depth analysis. Also, if it can identify a hub, or 'catalytic area'—it could spur additional connections that create or develop larger benefits.

National Disaster Resilience Competition:

How might a similar methodology or approach be valuable within the NDRC applications? How could this approach be helpful in evaluating resilient approaches to land use decisions within the region? Other ideas or thoughts?

- With Dominic Tocci, Cook County Department of Planning & Development, as the moderator, the group sees the tool as a means for increasing community engagement, given that the tool lends itself well to identifying partners. From the perspective of an applicant, it shows links across different jurisdictions, and could also be used to inform project prioritization. The group suggested to add community engagement as a layer to

illustrate where there will be support, where there are gaps, and therefore, where to focus engagement efforts.

RainReady:

How might a similar methodology be used within RainReady Community's planning analysis? How might this type of approach be useful in analyzing data or communicating findings to the community's RainReady is working with? Other ideas or thoughts?

- With Burrell Poe, Center for Neighborhood Technology, as the moderator, the group focused on how solutions/problem is bigger than where the water (in the case of flooding) stops; therefore, it will be essential to show people the bigger geographic scope or scale of the issue. In turn, the group also stated that we need good data to better engage communities, especially at the scale of the policy work—it would be great to use more precise data to better visualize the problem and support new policy.

Summary of Cook County's HUD National Disaster Resilience Competition Application

Dominic Tocci and Jane Hornstein, Cook County Department of Planning & Development

According to Jane Hornstein, Cook County Department of Planning & Development, the County's application for the HUD National Disaster Resilience Competition is an amalgamation of sustainability and homeland security. Hornstein stated that the proposal is for \$1 billion of the \$15 billion federal disaster relief funds. She also noted that originally Cook County and other Illinois eligible entities were applying collectively; however, HUD had recently informed them that everyone needs to apply separately. There has been an agreement among all eligible applicants that each proposal will maintain a regional focus because in the end we all still need to think about how to work together and become more resilient as a collective region.

The County stated that they are proposing a toolbox incorporating tools and methods at the hyper local level (e.g. back sewer values) and at the larger policy level (e.g. revolving loan funds, or ordinances allowing grasses to grow greater than six inches). The toolbox is about increasing the region's capacity—at the physical, individual [social], and government scale—so it will be crucial to build on existing and future workforce efforts. At the physical scale, the toolbox will help with green infrastructure investments (i.e. the physical transformation of the land). At the individual scale it will include services such as RainReady, and making sure that all benefits are viewed as co-benefits that address social vulnerabilities. At the governmental scale, the County is focusing on five areas that have lower capacity and local government staff with the intent to build shared capacities and mechanisms between the county and municipalities so that they boost capacity at the local municipal level. The five focus areas include Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale, Blue Island and Robbins.

The first phase of the application is presenting the conceptual framework. The framework explains what changes will be made in operation and management of government departments that take on infrastructure projects, and how the toolbox will be built by learning from work implemented. Overall the first phase is very broad. If invited into Phase II, it will get more specific. There will potentially be design competitions to conceptualize and implement projects. By the end of Phase II, there will need to be design and engineering plans, and projects will need to be implemented (money will need to be spent) by September 2019.

One participant asked if the County primarily envisions flood control projects. The response was not necessarily. Flood control is part of the problem, but the social and economic vulnerabilities may be

bigger issues in areas where flooding is present. For example, in addition to rubberized foundation walls, a wiser route would be to create jobs and a market that is affordable; or urban agriculture might be more compelling because it can help beautify a landscape and generate jobs. Tocci emphasized that they want to think beyond the immediate problem; funds are going to be given to those who have projects that address both (the immediate problem and large context of the issue). One participant asked what differentiates us [northeastern Illinois] from New Orleans. Hornstein's response was that "we bridge the divide." She explained that a large majority of food is transported throughout the U.S. comes through Chicago, making the region a national transportation hub. Therefore, the argument is that a resilient Chicago makes for a more resilient nation. Within this argument, the County will be working with the local communities, but as a whole, the work will have a larger effect on the region. Another participant asked why should Chicago be kept at a national hub, and how is it connected to the focus communities where work will occur? Hornstein and Tocci replied that Blue Island has five rail lines that run through it, but admitted that the hub may not resonate as strongly in other focus communities. Nevertheless, the focus communities or pilot areas can be seen as instigators of change throughout the region over time. Articulating the proposal at the regional scale will also force the County to address how to leverage cultural change.

Cook County's application is open for public comment until March 24, 2015, and can be found [here](#).

Work Group Update: Design Guidelines

The following page provides a detailed update from Vanessa Roanhorse, Delta Institute, on the progress its Calumet Stormwater Collaborative working group, Green Infrastructure Design Templates, has made to-date.

Adjourn

Danielle Gallet, Metropolitan Planning Council, reminded the Collaborative to note the time and location of next month's meeting. The meeting will be held at **Blue Island City Hall Annex (2434 Vermont Street) and will start at 10:20am** to accommodate travel to Blue Island via the Metra train. Gallet also reminded the Collaborative that the Midwest Regional Climate Center offered the group free mapping services, so members should begin to think about what types of maps would be useful to the group. Brainstorming for a winning map will be included during the next meeting on Friday, April 3rd.

Next Meeting

Friday, April 3, 10:20am to 12:20pm

Blue Island City Hall Annex

2434 Vermont St., Blue Island

For more information contact:

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MEMORANDUM

To: Calumet Stormwater Collaborative
From: Vanessa Roanhorse, Senior Manager
Subject: Delta Institute: Green Infrastructure Design Templates Update
Date: Wednesday, March 11, 2015

We are pleased to announce that we have identified an engineering/architectural firm, [Guidon Design](http://www.guidondesign.com) (www.guidondesign.com). Guidon Design is a firm from Indianapolis who has developed and implementing large-scale green infrastructure projects in Indianapolis. In particular, Guidon is 1/3 of the way through implementation of a city-wide CSO abatement plan that incorporates major construction components like a large storage tunnels beneath the City (much like Chicago) along with design GI to improve overall environmental and water quality through the reduction of storm water runoff. For more info on the project, please check out this weblink. (<http://www.guidondesign.com/project/green-infrastructure-cso33/>)

Guidon Design “strives to design solutions that reduce operating costs and energy use, are cost effective, easily implemented, and technically sound.” We expect that they will bring this ethic and experience to assist us in developing the GI templates. Now that we have identified the firm, we will be kicking off the work planning process this month and will be seeking input from you and the municipal leaders we have been working with in the Illinois Coastal Zone. Below is a rough sketch of the timeline, we will update with more details over the coming weeks.

Project kickoff with Guidon Design March 13, 2015 (Delta & Guidon only)

Input Opportunity	Timeline	Location
CSC Working Group input on the 3-5 design and applications	2-3 weeks from kickoff	Delta Institute Offices – 35 E. Wacker Drive, Ste. 1200
CSC Working Group review of additional toolkit materials	3 weeks from 1st Working Group input meeting	Delta Institute Offices – 35 E. Wacker Drive, Ste. 1200
CSC Working Group outreach opportunities	3 weeks from 2nd Working Group input meeting	TBD

Your input is invaluable but space is limited, so if you are not already part of the current CSC working group regarding GI design templates, please email us. Matt will send out invitations throughout the process. We look forward to connecting with you. Email Matt Harrison at mharrison@delta-institute.org and he will add you to our list.