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# CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – July 8, 2016

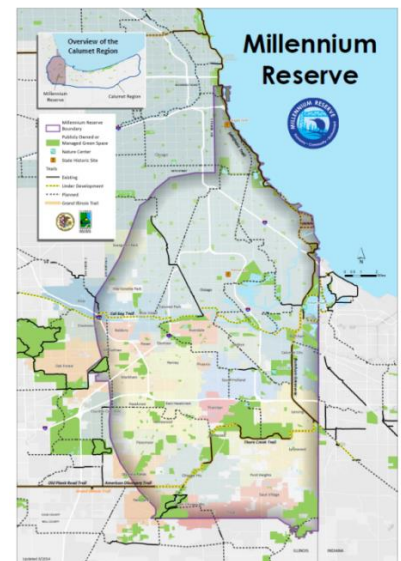
Metropolitan Planning Council

140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60603



## Attendees

Kevin Peralta, Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Curtis Witek, Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Anna Wolf, Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Anjolie Cheema, CH2M HILL  
Nora Beck, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
Kate Evasic, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
Jason Navota, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
Byron Tsang, Chicago Park District  
Thomas Burke, Christopher Burke Engineering  
Monica Giermek, Christopher Burke Engineering  
Aaron Koch, City of Chicago – Office of the Mayor  
Graig Neville, EDI  
Katie Snyder, EDI  
Ryan Wilson, Elevate Energy  
Ramont Bell, Faith in Place  
Eric Otto, Forest Preserves of Cook County  
Jordan Lillybridge, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant  
Margaret Scheemann, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant  
Annie Turek, Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Jeff Edstrom, Independent consultant  
Elizabeth Cisar, Joyce Foundation  
Mark Wagstaff, M3 Engineering Group  
Sarah Cardona, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Jennifer Cunningham, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Andy Donakowski, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Josh Ellis, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Danielle Gallet, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Elizabeth O'Brien, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Kelsey Pudlock, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Jack Chan, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago  
John Watson, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago  
Sarah Coulter, Millennium Reserve  
Melissa Custic, The Morton Arboretum  
Caroline Oswald, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
John Legge, The Nature Conservancy



Mollie Dowling, OAI Chicago Southland  
Ted Haffner, Openlands  
Andrew Szwak, Openlands  
Erin Maloney, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Carolina Chantrill, UILABS-City Digital  
Moira Zellner, University of Illinois at Chicago  
Karen Kreis, Village of Midlothian

## Member Update

Melissa Custic from The Morton Arboretum reminded collaborative members that CNT's RainReady program will be leading a series of workshops throughout the summer on ways to make communities resilient to flooding. Please click the following link for a list of upcoming workshops: <http://rainready.org/SouthSuburbs>.

Kate Evasic from Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning announced that the Data and Modelling work group will be distributing a survey questionnaire to better understand the tools that are used by existing and new members, everyone's data needs, and interest in exploring monitoring tools in 2016.

Margaret Scheemann from Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant announced that the Training and Maintenance work group will also be sharing a survey with collaborative members soon to solicit feedback on their needs and interests related to the needs assessment work.

Byron Tsang from the Chicago Park District announced that there was a ribbon cutting for the Burnham Nature Trail and five encompassing gathering spaces. These public spaces were designed by local artists and community-based organizations and reflect the cultural heritage and ecology surrounding the trail.

Monica Giermek from Christopher Burke Engineering announced that the Illinois Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) will be having a [centennial celebration with a three-hour boat tour](#) on the Chicago River on August 12 from 5:30 – 8:30pm. Tickets are \$50 and will include food and drinks as well as presentations from guest speakers.

Josh Ellis from the Metropolitan Planning Council announced that he was asked by Indiana federal, state and local government agencies to give a presentation on the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative. Indiana is interested in creating a comparable stormwater collaborative for the Indiana-side of the Calumet region. Given Millennium Reserve exploration of expanding into Indiana, it could make sense to have two collaboratives active within each state.

Ellis also announced that the Calumet River, for the first time, will be hosting a [dragon boat race](#). The race is a part of the Chicago Southland Dragon Boast Festival. MPC and Robinson Engineering will be entering a team in the race. All collaborative members are welcome to enter a team to compete in the race. You can register a team at [www.panamdragonboat.com](http://www.panamdragonboat.com).

A final upcoming water-related event mentioned by Sarah Coulter from Millennium Reserve, is a guided kayaking trip at Ping Tom Park with Openlands on Friday, July 15, from 4:00 – 7:00pm. The event is a part of their 'Explore Your Lakes and Rivers Series.'

## **Extended Member Update: City of Chicago's Resiliency Efforts**

Aaron Koch, previously at the City of Chicago's Department of Water Management, now serves as the Chief Resilience Officer within the Mayor's Office under the Rockefeller Foundation's '100 Resilient Cities' program—a concept seeking to help 100 cities become more resilient. He presented on this program—which funds his position as Chief Resilience Officer—and his charge is to develop a resilience strategy for the city. Resilience under this context encompasses a multitude of social, economic, and environmental challenges, and looks at both the vulnerabilities and risks to the city.

Koch, in partnership with the Mayor's Office, will be creating a resilience strategy document over the next nine months. It will build on the City's existing initiatives and address three major factors: 1) urbanization, 2) climate change, and 3) globalization. Koch explained that there will be a broad stakeholder engagement process, and an analysis of current existing plans and actions. Many cities have developed a strategy already, so Chicago has the opportunity to learn from others, and tap an existing network of CROs and services to help develop their strategy.

Koch explained that his role is to be a planner, coordinator, convener, and facilitator. As his team moves forward, they will be looking for ways to connect with organizations (and the issues collaborative members have been working on for years) while also thinking about resilience in a broader context. He also clarified there are key differences between the Chief Sustainability Officer and the Chief Resilience Officer—the Sustainability Officer is focused on initiatives that are underway and/or are ongoing (e.g. parks, water, energy, etc.) and the Chief Resilience Officer is evaluating and preparing the city for shocks and stresses (e.g. flooding, terrorism, earthquakes, hurricanes, etc.). Nevertheless, they work together to plan and create their respective documents. Koch is looking forward to leading the development of a resilience strategy we can all be proud of.

If collaborative members are interested in becoming more involved with the development of the City's Resilient Strategy, please contact Aaron Koch directly.

## **Presentation + Discussion: Center for Neighborhood Technology's RainReady Community initiatives**

Curtis Witek from CNT gave a presentation on CNT's RainReady Community initiatives, specifically focusing on their planning process within the Calumet region. He gave a brief overview of the RainReady program emphasizing that RainReady Community is one of three programs in the 'end-to-end' service package that provides residents and communities with green and grey stormwater management solutions.

CNT's first RainReady Community project was the creation of *RainReady Midlothian* – a comprehensive community engagement document that identifies problems and solutions for on-the-ground implementation within the Village of Midlothian. The planning process is based on the idea that if you foster a dialogue between residents and local stakeholders, you can help channel frustrations into a more productive dialogue that can lead to community-driven recommendations.

CNT recently received a Community Development Block Grant for Disaster Recovery funds that have allowed them to replicate this process in six additional communities within the region—Robbins, Blue Island, Calumet Park, Riverdale, Dolton, and Calumet City. CNT has partnered with

the U.S. Army Corps., South Suburban Mayors and Managers, and Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning to help them with these efforts.

CNT's planning process includes three phases: 1) Risk and opportunity assessment, 2) Solution mapping, and 3) Plan and implementation support. Currently, they are approaching the end of Phase one and are heading into Phase two. They are using CMAP's watershed analysis approach, hosting workshops, and looking to advance priority projects over the next couple of months.

To view the PowerPoint presentation, please click on the link provided in the [July meeting materials](#).

### **Presentation: Chi-Cal Rivers Fund Overview**

A large portion of the Calumet region is eligible to receive funding from the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund, and many collaborative members have proposed projects to the Fund in past funding cycles. In preparation of the 2016 Chi-Cal Rivers Fund opportunity, two representatives from some of the funders of the Chi-Cal Rivers grants—Caroline Oswald from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Elizabeth Cisar from the Joyce Foundation—gave a brief overview of the program, the application process, and advice on what makes a proposal successful.

The purpose of the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund is to “restore the health, vitality, and accessibility of the waterways in the Chicago and Calumet region.” The Fund seeks to fund projects that 1) Reduce stormwater runoff with green stormwater infrastructure, 2) Enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and 3) improve public-use opportunities.

Oswald and Cisar explained that projects tend to be more competitive during the application process if the proposal articulates the following:

- Applicant(s) have the capacity and experience commensurate with the scale and request of the projects
- Projects align with and demonstrate connection to ongoing efforts in the region
- Projects are located near or are otherwise beneficial to the major waterways (provide explanation in the application)
- Projects are shovel-ready
- Over 70% of the funding is budgeted for the project (rather than administrative costs)
- Projects afford long-term benefits

The two funders advised to spend the majority of time on narrative because this is where applicants really have the opportunity to articulate the project the most. They also mentioned that projects which: 1) address more than one funding category, and 2) provide 1:1 matches are more competitive.

To view the PowerPoint presentation, please click on the link provided in the [July meeting materials](#).

## Meeting Wrap-up and Final Remarks

For the remainder of the meeting, the collaborative members broke up into small groups to discuss intended and/or potential application proposal ideas that members are applying to the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund. The small group discussions helped the respective applicants develop stronger proposals for this year's funding cycle.

## Next Meeting

Friday, August 5, 10:00am – 12:00pm

Metropolitan Planning Council

140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago

**For more information contact:**

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