



# Metropolitan Planning Council

August 8, 2013

RE: Metropolitan Planning Council Statement in Support of Proposed Watershed Management Ordinance

Dear Dr. O'Connor,

The Metropolitan Planning Council supports the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's proposed Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO) and strongly encourages its adoption by the District's Board of Commissioners. We commend District leadership and staff for conducting a long and thorough consensus-building process that included stakeholders from the local government, real estate development, engineering and environmental communities.

The proposed WMO balances the need for real estate investment in Cook County – particularly infill development – with the need for stormwater management improvements that will help our region deal with increased flooding and other stormwater-related challenges. Once adopted, the WMO will provide flexibility in how new real estate development in suburban Cook County can meet performance goals for stormwater management. For the first time, developers will receive full credit for any stormwater managed through the use of green infrastructure, and in some instances developers will be able to provide temporary storage in detention ponds or cisterns at an offsite location in the same sub-watershed. Options like these give developers, architects, planners and engineers new tools to make development more feasible, profitable and good for our region and communities.

At the same time, we need to modernize how we build to adapt to changing precipitation patterns, increasingly frequent mega-storms and the growing burdens of stormwater management and flood control. This ordinance will help ensure that new development will not exacerbate these problems by allowing for more on-site water management, slowing runoff to sewers and waterways, letting stormwater soak into the ground where possible and relieving stress on local and regional infrastructure systems.

The District and the Metropolitan Planning Council both work at the intersection of development and environmental sustainability, and that is where this ordinance lies. It is flexible, progressive, comprehensive and as importantly, the result of substantial consensus-building efforts. We commend District staff for leading this process and now encourage the Board of Commissioners to adopt the proposed WMO. As always, we stand ready to assist the District in this and other endeavors to manage our full range of man-made and natural assets, integrate stormwater management into broader community and regional development efforts and fulfill the complementary missions of both of our organizations.

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