

NORTHWEST MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE

1600 East Golf Road, Suite 0700
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016
(847) 296-9200 • Fax (847) 296-9207
www.nwmc-cog.org



*A Regional Association of Illinois
Municipalities and Townships
Representing a Population of Over One Million*

MEMBERS

- Antioch
- Arlington Heights
- Bannockburn
- Barrington
- Bartlett
- Buffalo Grove
- Deer Park
- Deerfield
- Des Plaines
- Elk Grove Village
- Evanston
- Fox Lake
- Glencoe
- Glenview
- Grayslake
- Hanover Park
- Highland Park
- Hoffman Estates
- Kenilworth
- Lake Bluff
- Lake Forest
- Lake Zurich
- Libertyville
- Lincolnshire
- Lincolnwood
- Morton Grove
- Mount Prospect
- Niles
- Northbrook
- Northfield
- Northfield Township
- Palatine
- Park Ridge
- Prospect Heights
- Rolling Meadows
- Schaumburg
- Skokie
- Streamwood
- Vernon Hills
- West Dundee
- Wheeling
- Wilmette
- Winnetka

- President*
Dan Shapiro
Deerfield

- Vice-President*
Tom Dailly
Schaumburg

- Secretary*
Rodney Craig
Hanover Park

- Treasurer*
Anne Marie Gaura
Lincolnwood

- Executive Director*
Mark L. Fowler

North Branch of the Chicago River Watershed Planning Council

AGENDA

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

10:00 a.m.

Via Zoom Video Conference

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88390605324>

Meeting ID: 883 9060 5324

Passcode: 349951

- I. Call to Order**

- II. Roll Call**

- III. March 4, 2025, Meeting Notes (Attachment A)**

- IV. Capital Improvements Update**
Matthew Aldritch will provide an update on projects in the watershed.

- V. Watershed Management Ordinance Update**
Constance Mihalache will give an update on the Watershed Management Ordinance.

- VI. Other Business**

- VII. Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the North Branch Chicago River Watershed Planning Council will be held Tuesday, September 2 via video conference unless otherwise noted.

- VIII. Adjournment**

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

NORTH BRANCH OF THE CHICAGO RIVER
WATERSHED PLANNING COUNCIL

* * * * *

Held on Tuesday, March 4, 2025,
commencing at the hour of 10:00 o'clock, a.m., via
Zoom.

PRESENT:

NORTHWEST MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE:

Eric Czarnota
Mark Fowler

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT

Clare Adams
Mark Castillo
Joe Kratzer
Herman Lopez
Fabio Monteiro
Lolita Thompson
Annie Wright

ALSO PRESENT:

Nakia Gibson, USMC
Michael Korman
Ogar Somo
Chris Tomich, Morton Grove
Mark Toll, Northfield Township, Daniel Creaney Co.
Hayley Frank
Christopher Welch
Yifan He
B Vallesky
Robyn Flakne, Village of Glenview
Tim O'Brien, Niles
Joe Kenney, Village of Glenview
Thera A. Novotny
Jorge Cruz, Wilmette
Lake County Stormwater Commission
Svetlana Taylor
Joanne So Young Dill
Carlos Guevara
Aram Beladi

1 MR. CZARNOTA: I'll go ahead and call the
2 North Branch Watershed Planning Council to order.

3 I'll go through the list and call
4 the community members that are part of the Watershed
5 Planning Council.

6 When I call your name, if you could
7 put your name and then the municipality or
8 organization that you represent in the chat, so we
9 capture that for the minutes.

10 So the members are: Chicago,
11 Deerfield, Elmwood Park, Evanston, Glencoe, Glenview,
12 Golf, Harwood Heights, Kenilworth, Lincolnwood,
13 Morton Grove, Niles, Norridge, Northbrook,
14 Northfield, Oak Park, Park Ridge, Skokie, Wilmette,
15 Winnetka, Unincorporated Cook County, Evanston
16 Township, Maine Township, New Trier Township, Niles
17 Township, Northfield Township, Norwood Park Township
18 and Oak Park Township.

19 And then item number 3 on the agenda
20 is the December 3, 2024 meeting notes. If anyone has
21 any questions, feel free to reach out to me, and I
22 will get an answer for you.

23 I'll now move on to item number 4,
24 which is the Capital Improvements updates. That will

1 be provided by Herman Lopez.

2 So take it away, Herman.

3 MR. LOPEZ: Sounds good. Thank you, Eric.

4 Well, good morning everyone.

5 Welcome to the capital improvement updates for the
6 MWRD projects within the Watershed.

7 My name is Herman Lopez, and I'm a
8 Civil Engineer within the Stormwater Group.

9 So within the Watershed, the MWRD
10 has been engaged in 34 stormwater infrastructure
11 projects. Three of those projects were regional
12 projects, that all have been completed; nine local
13 partnership projects, have also been completed; 14
14 green infrastructure projects, have all been
15 completed; and we have one currently ongoing; five
16 Space-To-Grow projects, have all been completed; and
17 two flood-prone property acquisitions have also been
18 completed.

19 Collectively, these projects benefit
20 over 5,700 structures and create over 13.4 acre feet
21 of stormwater storage, which is an estimate of 4.4
22 million gallons of stormwater.

23 These projects, for the most part,
24 result from our Stormwater Partnership Program or

1 have resulted from our Stormwater Partnership
2 Programs for the most part. These partnerships aim
3 to help communities manage stormwater and improve
4 their resiliency to flooding. Currently, we have
5 work -- We work based on four different programs,
6 tailored to the different characteristics of the
7 Municipal Stormwater Management programs. The first
8 one here, on your left upper corner, is the
9 Stormwater Partnership Program which funds the
10 construction of traditional stormwater infrastructure
11 to help manage runoff and reduce flooding. This
12 includes projects, for example, with detention
13 basins, storm sewer upgrades and treatment channel
14 improvements. The Green Infrastructure Partnership
15 Program or GIPP, as you will see in future slides,
16 funds the construction of green alleys, rain gardens,
17 permeable pavement and other type of permeable
18 surfaces that manage rain water. The Voluntary
19 Flood-Prone Property Acquisition Program aims to
20 provide funding to help municipalities acquire
21 properties that are located within the floodplain.
22 And lastly, communities that need technical
23 assistance to study and design solutions for
24 stormwater issues locally can apply for our

1 conceptual project partnerships.

2 The applications are currently
3 closed. We're planning on reopening the application
4 periods in late spring 2025.

5 To learn more about our Stormwater
6 Partnership programs, please visit our partnership
7 homepage at mwrld.org/stormwater/partnerships.

8 We have made available information
9 on this website, and we encourage all municipalities
10 to access and review this information.

11 We have several prerecorded webinars
12 that go through what information and documentation is
13 needed to apply, as well as recent updates to each of
14 the program requirements. We have project highlight
15 videos and interviews of past partners where they
16 share how their partnership has benefited their
17 communities and how MWRD has helped them build the
18 specific projects.

19 And if you have any questions,
20 please reach out to stormwater@mwrld.org.

21 When it comes to updates to the
22 Green Infrastructure Partnership Program or GIPP, as
23 I mentioned, the pre-application forms were received
24 from September through December 31, 2024. Full

1 applications from qualified pre-applicants will be
2 received -- started to be received in January, and it
3 will go through this week, March 7, 2025. New pre-
4 applications will be received later this year for
5 projects that -- that will be constructed in 2027.
6 Projects must manage stormwater using green
7 infrastructure locally and the pre-applications are
8 mandatory for this program. Applicants must have a
9 pre-application form on file by the deadline in order
10 to apply.

11 If you have any questions, please
12 visit mwrld.org/stormwater/gipp for more information.

13 I will proceed with the updates for
14 our latest projects. This project here is 18-IGA-24.
15 The Village of Winnetka is constructing multiple
16 wetland and underground stormwater storage sites near
17 the Skokie River. This project will provide relief
18 to an estimated over 3,000 residential structures
19 along with numerous businesses and institutional
20 facilities. And the project has reached substantial
21 completion in late 2024 and final completion is
22 scheduled for the spring 2025.

23 23-IGA-32, the Village of Glencoe
24 replaced storm sewers along Green Bay Road, Euclid

1 Avenue and Woodland Avenue near Woodland Park to
2 improve the flow of stormwater and ensure proper
3 conveyance. Construction began in June 2024 and was
4 substantially completed in October of 2024. Final
5 punch-list items are to be completed this spring in
6 2025.

7 I will proceed with green
8 infrastructure projects. Evanston 21-IGA-06, the
9 City of Evanston reconstructed parking lanes along
10 several blocks of Main Street from Maple Avenue to
11 Hinman Avenue using permeable pavers. The project
12 will reduce the current load to the combined sewer
13 system and alleviate flooding within the project
14 area. Construction was completed in the fall of
15 2024.

16 23-IGA-21 Village of Niles finalized
17 the construction of one green alley that provides
18 approximately 8,900 gallons of stormwater capacity.
19 Construction was completed in December of 2024.

20 23-IGA-24, the Village of Skokie
21 completed in November 2024 the construction of three
22 permeable alleys at different locations within the
23 village. These structure provide over 150,000
24 gallons of stormwater retention capacity.

1 Construction was completed in November 2024.

2 Lastly, we have the 24-IGA-11
3 Village of Glenview completed in November 2024 the
4 construction of permeable alleys providing 28,000
5 gallons of stormwater retention capacity near Lincoln
6 Street and Glenview Road. The construction was
7 completed in November 2024.

8 As mentioned, if there are any
9 questions about our Stormwater Management Programs,
10 call for projects, current capital improvement
11 projects that we have ongoing or any other stormwater
12 inquiry, please contact us at stormwater.mwrld.org if
13 you have any questions.

14 And with that, we finalize the
15 portion -- this portion of the presentation.

16 MR. CZARNOTA: Thanks, Herman.

17 It anyone doesn't have any
18 questions, we can go ahead and move on to item number
19 5, which will be Fabio will be giving an update on
20 the work of the Small Streams Maintenance Program.

21 MR. MONTEIRO: Good morning. So my name is
22 Fabio Monteiro, I'm an MWRD Associate Civil Engineer
23 for the Small Streams Maintenance Program.

24 For this Watershed Planning Council

1 meeting I would like to present you with what we do
2 and how you can be part of it, and I will also
3 quickly present two other programs, the Rain Barrel
4 and Restore the Canopy Programs.

5 So Cook County has little elevation
6 change throughout, therefore, its streams tend to
7 move slowly and are naturally prone to flooding.
8 Minor blockages can build up quickly in heavy rains
9 restricting flow and increasing the potential for
10 urban flooding, so the streams must be maintained.

11 In 2006, our Small Streams
12 Maintenance Program or SSMP was developed to remove
13 blockages and debris from the waterways in Cook
14 County to help with drainage and relief of flooding.
15 Thousands of yards of debris are removed each year.
16 Outside of our primary mission, we also prevent
17 future blockages by removing dead trees and unhealthy
18 trees which can fall into the streams. We remove
19 harmful invasive species such as Buckthorn and
20 Honeysuckle which can choke out native plants and
21 leave the ground vulnerable to erosion.

22 Also, on a limited basis, we provide
23 beaver trapping and erosion control. I would like to
24 mention that at this time, we are not capable of

1 doing any dredging.

2 And here are some pictures of before
3 and after of SSMP work when removing stream
4 blockages. Those are North Branch of the Chicago
5 River, Cook County Forest Preserve in Morton Grove
6 and Des Plaines River at Dundee Road in Wheeling.

7 So listed here in the table are the
8 debris amounts removed in each watershed for 2024.
9 The 2024 expenditure for our program was \$1,780,000
10 at an average cost per cubic yard of debris removed
11 of \$146.

12 The SSMP is continuing in 2025 with
13 some goals such as standardizing procedures,
14 identifying critical stream areas, improving methods,
15 scheduling critical inspections and increasing the
16 public awareness of MWRD presence and execution of
17 the program. Our work is dependent on natural --
18 calls and inspections.

19 Here in the picture you can see the
20 blue dots are the ones -- the work done in North
21 Branch Chicago River Watershed in 2024. This is a
22 picture of before and after the work in 2024 on the
23 Skokie River in Northfield. You can see on the
24 picture on the left how much flooding the area gets,

1 and it's pretty critical to relieve remove the
2 blockages.

3 Here is another example, this is --
4 This is a hotspot for us, and River -- The Chicago
5 River at Foster Avenue Bridge in Chicago.

6 Some of the equipment that we use to
7 remove blockages and debris: multi-terrain Skid
8 Steer, mini Skid Steer, boxer, chipper and other
9 additional resources, such as chainsaws. And we also
10 have for this -- for 2025, we have a Gradall
11 excavator. So depending on the stream-water level
12 and the location of the blockage, the type of the
13 blockage, usually it's wooden material, for example,
14 a dead tree, we would assess case by case whether we
15 secure the dead tree on the riverbank or chip it. If
16 we chip it, we look to work together with the
17 municipalities for disposal of the wood chips. The
18 multi-terrain Skid Steer is capable to pick up
19 material, winch and brush cut. The mini Skid Steer
20 has the same capabilities, but it's used for
21 sensitive and limited area access.

22 So you can help us by reporting on
23 the MWRD website or calling or e-mailing and also by
24 not leaving yard waste near streams, not littering

1 and properly disposing of trash. If you live on a
2 stream, consider landscaping with native plants and
3 removing invasive plants such as Buckthorn.

4 There are two ways to report the
5 blockages through MWRD's website or by contacting
6 Arturo Hernandez or me by phone or e-mail. The
7 quicker path is to MWRD's website, mwrdd.org contact
8 us and report blockages and debris and streams.

9 I will show you on the next slide
10 how it looks, but most importantly, please just
11 notify us immediately if you see an issue.

12 So this is how reporting through our
13 website looks. After entering mwrdd.org home page,
14 scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on
15 contact us, then find report blockage and debris in
16 streams. The SSMP form will pop up. It's a very
17 quick form. Just enter your information and most
18 importantly the location of the blockage.

19 For more information, visit our
20 website through the path, mwrdd.org stormwater
21 management stream maintenance.

22 For questions you can call -- about
23 our program, you can call Arturo Hernandez at the
24 number shown.

1 The Rain Barrel Program: MWRD is
2 continuing with the Rain Barrel Program in 2025 by
3 offering Cook County residents discounted pricing
4 while supplies last. The rain barrels can capture
5 rainwater from your roof and save it for later use.
6 Rain barrels can help prevent basement backups,
7 street flooding and sewer overflows by keeping rain
8 water out of the sewer system.

9 The price for 2025 is \$21.50, and it
10 has a senior discount. Delivery is included. Limit
11 two barrels per household. We're taking -- We're
12 still taking orders, but delivery will be resumed in
13 April 2025.

14 For more questions you can reach
15 Public Affairs.

16 The next program is the Restore the
17 Canopy Program. MWRD provides native trees saplings
18 through our Restore the Canopy Plant a Tree Program.
19 The native trees can help reduce flooding by soaking
20 up rainwater.

21 Since our tree program began in
22 2016, we have distributed more than a hundred
23 thousand free native trees. The free trees are
24 available for pick up every Wednesday from April

1 through October from 9:00 a.m. to noon at MWRD Water
2 Reclamation Plants.

3 For orders of 50 or more saplings,
4 you would have to complete a form online. Deliveries
5 are available but not to individual homes.

6 Also note that saplings can grow up
7 to 50 to 80 feet tall.

8 Questions, reach out to Public
9 Affairs. Thank you.

10 MR. CZARNOTA: Thank you, Fabio.

11 Does anyone have any questions?

12 (No response.)

13 MR. CZARNOTA:: All right. Hearing none, we
14 can move on to item number 6, which is other
15 business.

16 Does anyone have any other business
17 to raise at this time?

18 MR. CRUZ: This is Jorge from Wilmette.

19 I don't have any new business, but I
20 just had a quick question. I'm not sure if this is
21 the time to ask.

22 MR. CZARNOTA: Go ahead.

23 MR. CRUZ: I'm just asking for a copy of the
24 minutes or the attendees from the previous minutes --

1 meetings.

2 MR. CZARNOTA: Yeah, I can send that over to
3 you. It's actually -- It will usually be in our
4 agenda packet in the minutes. We have a court
5 reporter, so on the first page of the minutes, we
6 have a list of all of the attendees. But I can send
7 a copy of that to you after the meeting as well.

8 MR. CRUZ: All right. That would be good.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. CZARNOTA: Of course.

11 And I will note that MWRD and us are
12 putting together a survey that we'll be sending out
13 at some point in the near future with just some
14 questions regarding the Water Planning Councils, in
15 general, and how we would like to operate this kind
16 of Committee going forward, including kind of topics
17 specifically that you might want to see, and you
18 know, if we want to continue meeting virtually or if
19 we would like to move to a hybrid schedule or an in-
20 person schedule. So that survey should be getting
21 sent out at some point here, in the near future.

22 All right. Not hearing any other
23 business, we will move on to item number 7 then, the
24 next meeting for the North Branch of the Chicago

1 River Watershed Planning Council will be held on
2 Tuesday, June 3rd, via video conference unless
3 otherwise noted.

4 And with that, we can go ahead and
5 adjourn the meeting, unless there is anything else
6 anyone else would like to bring up.

7 (No response.)

8 MR. CZARNOTA: Thanks everybody.

9 (The meeting concluded
10 at 10:24 a.m.)

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS.
2 COUNTY OF COOK)
3

4 I, DEBORAH R. SANTI, Certified Shorthand
5 Reporter for the State of Illinois, do hereby certify
6 that on the 4th day of March, 2025, the North Branch
7 of the Chicago River Watershed Planning Council
8 Meeting was taken before me, reported
9 stenographically, and was thereafter reduced to
10 typewriting.

11 The said hearing was taken via
12 videoconference by Zoom.

13 I further certify that the
14 foregoing is an accurate record of the hearing at the
15 time and place hereinabove referred to.

16 Witness my official signature
17 and seal as Notary Public, in and for the County of
18 Cook, State of Illinois, on the 4th day of March,
19 2025.

20 

21 DEBORAH R. SANTI, CSR

22 CSR # 084-004107

23
24