



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Have green infrastructure in mind? Apply for MWRD support

Applications now available for MWRD assistance to help manage stormwater

What if you could use nature to help solve flooding, preserve local jobs and create habitat? And even better, what if your community could get funding to achieve all of these benefits? Then apply for MWRD support. Applications are now available for MWRD assistance to help manage stormwater. Apply at <https://mwr.org/services/green-infrastructure>.

Now through Labor Day, municipalities and public agencies throughout Cook County are urged to apply for funding assistance from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) to support local green infrastructure projects that mitigate flooding, protect area water quality and enhance public spaces.

Green infrastructure uses natural processes such as infiltration, evaporation, and transpiration in managing stormwater to prevent or reduce the flow of water from entering sewer systems. While conventional “gray” infrastructure enlists pipes and temporary storage to manage stormwater, green infrastructure solutions, like rain gardens and permeable pavement, can store water before it slowly soaks into the underlying soil. Over the last five years, the MWRD has selected more than 80 projects. For more information, including program guidelines, partnership responsibilities and eligibility requirements, visit mwr.org/GI-app. Applications are due by Sept. 5.

“We are excited to offer this annual program and hear from many prospective partners on how we can work together to invest in green infrastructure, improve our communities and build resiliently in anticipation of changing weather patterns,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “The MWRD encourages local municipalities and public agencies to apply today.”



The Chicago Park District's Rutherford Sayre Park, located in the Montclare and Galewood neighborhoods, is one of dozens of local community spaces that recently benefited from the MWRD's Green Infrastructure Program. Your community can, too.

The MWRD has completed more than 60 successful green infrastructure projects throughout Cook County since 2015, with more than 30 in progress. In total, once complete, these projects will retain more than 14.5 million gallons of stormwater volume per rain event.

The MWRD ranks green infrastructure applications on many different criteria such as design retention capacity, which identifies the amount of stormwater storage capacity. The MWRD also encourages projects that capture off-site stormwater runoff from adjacent impermeable areas, utilizing the new green infrastructure installation to let water infiltrate back into the ground rather than send it to water reclamation facilities, where it is expensive – and often needless – to treat.

Other criteria include cost-effectiveness, propensity of nearby flooding (including frequency and severity), the area draining into the green infrastructure (*continued*)

Have green infrastructure in mind? Apply for MWRD support, *cont.*



Permeable parking lots, alleys, and intersections have been popular green infrastructure amenities the MWRD has invested in after hearing from local sponsors, such as the Forest Preserves of Cook County at Schuth's Grove near Riverside (left) and the Chicago Park District's La Villita Park in the Little Village neighborhood. Cook County municipalities and public agencies are encouraged to apply for a new round of assistance in 2022.

project and number of benefitting flood-prone structures within that drainage area. On average, the MWRD typically funds about 50 percent of project costs, but has ranged from 10-90 percent of total green infrastructure-related construction costs depending on the project's stormwater benefits and other factors.

"Green infrastructure isn't just a win-win. It's more like a win x 100 because of all the benefits it provides to communities," said MWRD Commissioner Cam Davis, who also serves as the chair of the Board of Commissioners' Stormwater Committee. "MWRD wants to provide funding to as many neighborhoods as possible so we can keep communities geeking out on green infrastructure."

As part of the MWRD's Green Infrastructure Partnership Opportunity Program, applicants must have an

ownership or easement interest over the project site and agree to maintain and operate the completed project. Eligible public entities include municipalities, townships, county agencies, park districts, and other local government organizations.

The MWRD has implemented a wide variety of green infrastructure programs, including a low-cost rain barrel distribution program while also giving away free tree saplings. The MWRD collaborated with partners to transform Chicago schoolyards into vibrant places to learn and play atop attractive and permeable surfaces and is looking into expanding a similar program into suburban Cook County.

For more information, contact Holly Sauter at SauterH@mwrdd.org or GIApps@mwrdd.org.

Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. Learn more at mwrdd.org.