



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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MWRD funds 16 local green infrastructure projects to enhance public spaces

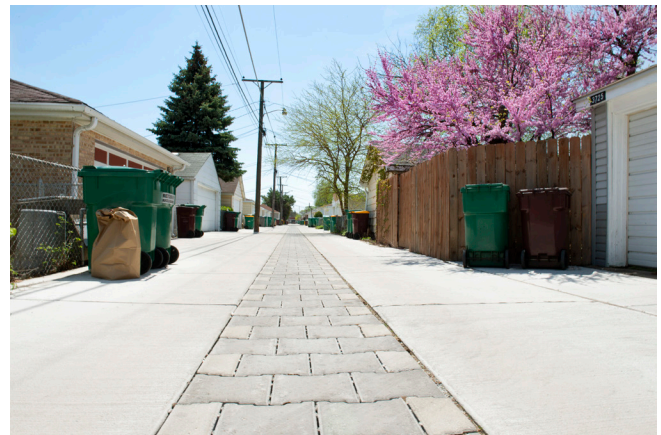
The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) has selected 16 green infrastructure projects to provide support and funding across Cook County in 2021 to help mitigate flooding, protect area water quality, and improve public spaces.

Following a call for submissions this summer and detailed review process, the MWRD has selected projects represented by 14 different municipalities and two projects with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to receive funds to help implement different green infrastructure solutions. These projects include permeable streets, intersections, parking lots and alleys that offer an innovative way to soak up more water and prevent it from overwhelming local sewers, basements, waterways and streets throughout Cook County. Combined, these 16 projects will mitigate flooding for 1,673 structures and provide the capacity to retain 1.58 million gallons of water per rain event.

“We thank all of the local governments and community partners for submitting applications, introducing their plans and sharing in our mission to protect our water environment,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “It is encouraging to see these plans moving forward despite difficult times in a pandemic. By making these investments now, we are building a more resilient future.”

MWRD engineers evaluated 32 proposals, ranking the eligible projects based on factors such as the total retention gallons and cost per gallon, number of benefiting structures and cost per structure, median income of the community, project visibility and outreach, flooding prevalence, maintenance capability, and separate or combined sewer area that caters to both sanitary and stormwater. Applicants whose projects were not selected are still eligible to apply for future consideration under MWRD’s Green Infrastructure Program.

Green infrastructure mimics the natural environment by capturing water and allowing it to infiltrate into the ground before it enters the traditional conveyance



A green alley in Berwyn, funded by the MWRD, collects precipitation where it falls by detaining and partially infiltrating runoff to prevent it from overwhelming sewers and flooding communities. The MWRD will contribute additional funds to expand green alleys in Berwyn, among other community projects in 2021.

system. This helps to reduce the amount of water flowing through the gray infrastructure of pipes that can be overwhelmed by intense rain events. These projects can also reduce wet weather flows to combined sewer systems, reduce combined sewer overflows to local waterways, and protect water quality in these vital waterways. Green infrastructure also reduces runoff volumes and improves water quality in separate sewer service areas. In addition, green infrastructure can make public spaces more attractive and provide social benefits that enhance the livability of communities.

“We are excited to partner on these 16 selected projects to promote green infrastructure practices and sustainable solutions across Cook County,” said MWRD Commissioner Kimberly Du Buclet. “The more runoff we can collect, the less water flooding our communities and polluting our waterways. Project by project, green infrastructure becomes increasingly effective for each community as well as on a large scale.”

The MWRD intends to provide partial funding towards the construction of the selected green *(continued)*

MWRD funds 16 local green infrastructure projects, *cont.*

infrastructure installations on public property. The MWRD Board of Commissioners on December 3 authorized negotiations for intergovernmental agreements (IGA) with project partners to define funding and other project requirements. Project partners will be expected to provide long-term operation and maintenance of the installed green infrastructure practices. The IGAs will also require that the goals of the MWRD's Minority-owned Business Enterprises, Women-owned Business

Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises and Veteran-owned Business Enterprises be met for the MWRD-funded portion of the project. Once the partners agree in principle, MWRD staff will seek authority from the MWRD Board of Commissioners to enter into the individual IGAs.

For a complete list and description of the MWRD's selected green infrastructure projects, see below:

Organization	Project/description	Structures benefitting	Design Retention Capacity (gallons)
Village of Bellwood	West Bellwood Parkway Bioretention Project	466	25,548
City of Berwyn	Berwyn Green Alleys Program	114	242,003
City of Burbank	City Hall Parking Lot Paving Improvements	162	40,998
Town of Cicero	Parking Lot and Alley Paving Improvements	204	56,408
Village of Elmwood Park	Elmwood Park Stormwater Treatment Train	158	18,419
City of Evanston	Main Street Improvements Project	38	156,964
Village of Flossmoor	Berry Lane Stormwater Improvements	93	67,152
Village of Forest Park	Forest Park Permeable Paver Parking Lot Project	158	40,291
Forest Preserve District of Cook County	Brookfield Zoo North Parking Lot Green Infrastructure Renovation	8	115,446
Forest Preserve District of Cook County	Possum Hollow Woods Green Infrastructure Parking Lot Retrofit	1	162,921
Village of Franklin Park	Pacific Avenue Industrial Corridor Green Infrastructure	24	77,976
Village of Hazel Crest	Hazel Crest Proper Green Infrastructure Alley Improvements	19	79,288
Village of Kenilworth	Kenilworth Green Streets, Phase II	58	161,909
Village of La Grange Park	Reconstruct Intersection with Permeable Pavers	24	78,753
Village of Summit	Green Infrastructure Alley Program	61	57,734
Village of Westchester	2021 Green Alley Reconstruction Project	85	198,845

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