



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Surface protection: Partnership with La Grange Park introduces green intersections



(L to R): MWRD Principal Civil Engineer Holly Sauter, La Grange Park Village Manager Julia A. Cedillo, Public Works Director Rick Radde, MWRD President Kari K. Steele, Village President Dr. James Discipio, Village Trustee Jamie Zaura, Village Trustee Michael Sheehan, Village Engineer Mark Volk, Copenhagen Construction Superintendent Ana Austin and Assistant Village Manager Maggie Jarr.

Green intersections are surfacing in La Grange Park thanks to a new green infrastructure partnership with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) seeking to protect the community from flooding and improve area water quality.

MWRD President Kari K. Steele joined Village of La Grange Park President Dr. James Discipio and village leaders on Oct. 26 to unveil three new permeable intersections along Monroe Avenue in La Grange Park. The ribbon cutting emphasized a new spirit of intergovernmental collaboration to address stormwater management and mitigate flooding through innovative green infrastructure practices.

“We commend Village President Dr. Jim Discipio, village trustees and staff for their investment and commit-

ment to green infrastructure,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “We also thank La Grange Park residents who have supported this construction, endured flooding, and have shown a willingness to embrace a new and innovative concept to manage stormwater. Through this partnership, we are protecting our water environment and our homes and streets from flooding.”

To construct the three green intersections, crews excavated to a depth of between 3 and 3.5 feet, installing a geotechnical fabric, adding a specially graded stone base, and installing interlocking brick pavers that allow water to infiltrate between the bricks and enter the stone below. Between the three intersections the partners have carved out more than 90,000 gallons of stormwater storage capacity each time it *(continued)*

Partnership with La Grange Park introduces green intersections, *cont.*



Before and After: A new permeable intersection at Monroe Avenue and Sherwood Road is one of three green permeable intersections the Village of La Grange Park has converted thanks to MWRD support and funding.

rains, while protecting 24 nearby homes from flooding. Without these systems in place, 90,000 gallons of water would be invading the community.

The project came to fruition through the MWRD's Green Infrastructure Program. Following an annual call for projects in 2020, the village applied and the MWRD responded by agreeing to fund more than \$241,000 toward the completion of the project.

The three intersections reduce stormwater flows to local sewer systems and prevent combined sewer overflows; address local flooding and drainage concerns; utilize natural systems to manage stormwater; enhance public areas; increase La Grange Park's "green space;" and educate and engage directly with the community using and benefiting from the new intersections. Because the pavers absorb more stormwater runoff, less runoff can overwhelm sewers and waterways. As a result, the project is also improving area water quality.

Green infrastructure is a stormwater management tool that captures water and allows it to infiltrate into the ground before it enters the traditional conveyance sys-

tem. These engineered installations store, infiltrate, and evaporate stormwater to mimic the natural water cycle. By using natural or biological modes of controlling stormwater, green infrastructure can store water that slowly soaks into the underlying soil. This reduces the amount of water flowing through gray infrastructure and collection systems that are often overwhelmed by increasingly intense rain events experienced throughout the region.

"By complementing green infrastructure with gray infrastructure, we stand a better chance to manage the intense rainstorms we are experiencing all over Cook County," said MWRD Commissioner Chakena D. Perry. "The new green intersections in La Grange Park demonstrate a blueprint for success while thinking outside-the-box in our approach to absorb more stormwater."

The MWRD has now completed more than 80 successful green infrastructure projects throughout Cook County since 2015, with 21 more in progress. In total, once complete, these projects will retain more than 16.5 million gallons of stormwater volume per rain event.

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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.