

RESILIENT BY NATURE (RXN) COLLABORATION PLATFORM FEASIBILITY STUDY

Final Report

Prepared by: Foresight Design Initiative
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background: 3

Focus: 3

Purpose: 3

Method: 4

STEERING COMMITTEE

MODEL INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIONS RESEARCH

INTERVIEWS

Findings: 5

BARRIERS TO GI (IN CITY AGENCIES)

DRIVERS OF GI (IN CITY AGENCIES)

BARRIERS TO INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

PREREQUISITES FOR INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

PREREQUISITES FOR GI-FOCUSED INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

DRIVERS OF GI AND INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION IN OTHER CITIES

Next Steps: 8

CONTEXT

FUNCTIONS

ACTIONS

Conclusion: 12

Appendix: 13

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

INTERVIEW LIST

MODEL INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIONS RESEARCH

BACKGROUND

In 2022, the Resilient by Nature project (RxN) began convening its grantees and other stakeholders within the Chicago region's nature-based solutions (NBS) ecosystem, around topics of mutual interest. The aim was greater collaboration and alignment within the sector that is working to create a region that employs nature at meaningful scale for multiple benefits. Through these gatherings, it became evident that a significant portion of Chicago's NBS advocates are focused on the pursuit of green infrastructure (GI), particularly as it relates to mitigating stormwater flooding (i.e. green *STORMWATER* infrastructure (GSI)). These practitioners held many shared values—such as centering equity and working toward a holistic definition of green infrastructure that incorporates multiple social and economic benefits, in addition to stormwater management—and shared many concerns about the Chicago's region's slow, patchwork and smaller-scale adoption of green infrastructure. But they do not necessarily represent an aligned sector in the sense of working toward shared goals or metrics. Though this work was gaining momentum, barriers to the pursuit of green infrastructure at a meaningful scale had challenged advocates for more than a decade. In particular, a lack of coordination and collaboration between key City and regional agencies such as the Department of Water Management (DWM), Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD), Department of Development and Planning (DPD), Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), and others, was frequently highlighted by stakeholders as one of the most salient barriers.

At the same time, Chicago's GI advocates were inspired by progressive efforts, such as those by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewer District, and innovative models for interagency collaboration, such as the Joint Benefits Authority (JBA) approach pursued by the World Resources Institute. (Some of these inspiring examples were presented to the Chicago region through a webinar series hosted by RxN). While Chicago's GI-focused nonprofits had the desire to pursue a collaborative model of some form, there was some sense that entrenched features of Chicago's political culture and structures, and infrastructure, might present unique challenges to both interagency collaboration, and implementing GI at meaningful scale. Before pursuing any strategy to either accelerate GI, and/or establish a mechanism for interagency collaboration, RxN wanted to better understand the barriers, particularly those that reside within the policies, practices, and internal cultures of City agencies that are not generally accessible to nonprofit advocates—and at the same time, to identify opportunities to inflect these systems. This feasibility study is an effort to potentially pursue these strategies.

FOCUS

This project was undertaken with the following foci:

1. *IDENTIFY BARRIERS*: Better understand the specific barriers to both interagency collaboration, and to more aggressive and holistic pursuit of GI in Chicago.
2. *IDENTIFY DRIVERS*: What forces or unexplored opportunities might motivate interagency collaboration and/or greater prioritization of GI?
3. *DESIGN FOR POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS*: Based upon the above information, consider how Chicago might best design for these variables in an approach to addressing the barriers to both interagency collaboration, and implementing GI at a meaningful scale.

PURPOSE

This feasibility study is grounded in RxN's broader effort to expand the role of nature in Chicago's neighborhoods to improve health and quality of life, foster biodiversity, provide economic opportunities, and build resilience to the impacts of climate change. Addressing the barriers to GI implementation, one of many potential NBS strategies, and to interagency collaboration, has implications not only for other NBS efforts, but other municipal sustainability issues as well, whether focused on building energy efficiency,

waste reduction or pollution mitigation. Chicago Region Trees Initiative (CRTI) is already seeing initial results from collaborative efforts, developed over time, with City agencies to protect, develop and restore neighborhood tree canopies. Likewise, the Space to Grow program, an effort involving Chicago's Public Schools (CPS), Department of Water Management (DWM) and Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD), and two nonprofit organizations, Openlands and the Healthy Schools Campaign, has undertaken "green" transformations of more than 30 schoolyards in the City since 2014. These two efforts emphasize the potential value of aligned goals and coordinated efforts, and can serve as models not just for a more robust GI-focused undertaking, but other collaborative environmental and social justice-focused initiatives.

METHOD

Steering Committee

To support the Feasibility Study, a 10-member Steering Committee was convened, composed of representative entities with a vested interest in green infrastructure, primarily from the nonprofit sector. They provided oversight, perspective, connections and experience, and the power of collective wisdom. Alignment amongst organizations advocating for NBS, that could include developing common objectives and coordinating "asks" directed toward decision-makers, has emerged as a potential priority for future attention. (See Next Steps). Two virtual Steering Committee meetings were held during the study to inform, review, and guide the process and its outputs. Members also provided detailed feedback on both the introductory Project Brief, which described the project's focus and method, and a summary of findings. (For a full list of Steering Committee members, see Appendix).

Model Interagency Collaborations Research

The effort included researching relevant interagency collaborations nationally, including many focused on water, as well as other topics, in order to identify transferable insights and approaches. Thirteen examples were examined, with particular attention given to the factors that drove entities to a shared table, helping to overcome entrenched barriers to collaboration, along with key metrics for success. (See Appendix for Model Interagency Collaborations table). These examples will serve as a valuable resource and input when designing Chicago's own next steps.

Interviews

To gain as broad and informed perspective as possible, 19 stakeholders were interviewed with significant experience working with or within key municipal agencies. The meetings were kept conversational, with questions tailored to each person, although focused on several key themes:

1. *PAST EFFORTS*—What impeded previous efforts to expand the use of green infrastructure (e.g. implementation of the City's 2014 green infrastructure Plan)?
2. *CURRENT CHALLENGES*—What barriers exist to more regularly incorporating green infrastructure into infrastructure designs?
3. *COLLABORATION FEASIBILITY*—What would motivate participation in a cross-agency collaboration focused on green infrastructure?
4. *ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES*—If establishing a formal collaborative table of some sort seems unreasonable at this time, what other approaches might be employed?

A primary focus was to identify tangible barriers to both GI and interagency collaboration that are internal to agencies, and not often known to advocates from the nonprofit sector. These barriers might be aspects of agencies' ingrained internal culture and priorities, formal and informal policies and practices, or the region's engineered infrastructure, amongst other challenges. Given this focus, the questions prioritized directness—prior research and experience had shown that City agencies are most responsive to specific asks, and less so to those with more conceptual focuses. For this reason, these interviews did not propose an ambiguous collaborative table structure and solicit feedback, but posed more specific questions related to GI implementation, and interagency collaboration. Interview subjects were approached with collegiality, through the profession of a desire to provide support (toward desirable benefits) rather than make demands, and to understand their perspective. Finally, a notable portion of the interview list was composed

with an eye toward those who might be in a position to most comfortably or candidly share, and/or with whom members of the RxN team held an established trust from which to begin the conversation (See Appendix for full list of interview subjects).

FINDINGS

This research revealed barriers to both the prioritization of GI, and to interagency collaboration. Although some of these are interrelated, classifying them by whether they relate most directly to GI implementation, or to interagency collaboration, provides the greatest clarity when considering their implications.

Barriers to GI (in City Agencies)

1. *LEADERSHIP*—Past and current green infrastructure initiatives have progressed with the support of senior leaders, with examples including Mayor Richard M. Daley, former DWM Deputy Commissioner for Sustainability Aaron Koch, and former MWRD Commissioner Debra Shore. Not yet considered “business-as-usual,” green infrastructure design, implementation, and maintenance requires relevant champions to advocate for and coordinate their usage.
2. *LACK OF POINT PERSON*—The City has for several years lacked an appropriately senior and empowered staff member, designated office, and/or clear, integrated chain of command to oversee and pursue green infrastructure issues and implementation. As with Leadership, past precedent has shown that within Chicago, such a function is essential to sustaining GI and other NBS-related priorities.
3. *MAINTENANCE/LONG-TERM OWNERSHIP*—Although advocates were aware of challenges associated with the maintenance of GI installations, this emerged as an even more significant barrier than anticipated. Addressing maintenance issues—which has components that relate to interagency coordination, capital planning, and workforce development—is a firm prerequisite for any further significant action by City agencies toward GI. Several existing GI installations have been poorly maintained and are no longer adequately functioning. Understandably, the City is reluctant to include green infrastructure in future designs until this issue can be adequately addressed.
4. *MEANINGFUL DATA*—A lack of specific measurement mechanisms and resulting data that monitors performance, sets benchmarks and desired metrics, helps quantify achieved benefits, or that identifies areas of greatest need, can impede consideration and implementation.
5. *BENEFITS ACCOUNTING*—While tools have been developed for conducting cost-benefit analysis on Green Infrastructure, its multiple benefits can nonetheless be challenging to monetize in a standard, tangible and meaningful way, preventing them from being more aggressively pursued. The City has also not adopted a standard framework for cost-benefit analysis, and different agencies have different priorities with regard to GI’s potential benefits.
6. *URGENCY*—Green infrastructure can be seen as an add-on, or “nice-to-have”, rather than an essential component of an infrastructure project. Lacking financial incentive, policy statute, political motivation, or disaster response, inflecting an ingrained status quo can be challenging.
7. *PERCEIVED LACK OF PUBLIC DEMAND*—Green infrastructure and its benefits can be seen as poorly understood, not desired, and/or not highly prioritized by residents. Though public support exists for integrating nature into communities, there is not coordinated public support focused on “functional” nature.
8. *LACK OF ACCESS*—Historically, neither community residents, nor those in nature-based professions, have been included in the decision-making process. Securing access to spheres of influence, with

equal footing with engineers, and being at the front end of the planning and decision-making process rather than an afterthought, or last stage approval, would be a significant step forward. Additionally, lack of alignment and divergent agendas amongst nonprofits approaching City agencies with demands can create frustration for agency staff, and make it difficult for them to address concerns.

Drivers of GI (in City Agencies)

Four factors were identified by interview subjects as having the greatest potential to spur more vigorous pursuit of GI by City Agencies:

1. *LEADERSHIP*—Agencies are often driven by specific leaders committed to achieving potential benefits (e.g. climate, heat island, biodiversity, health, etc.) and/or leveraging new or existing funding. These individuals occupy key positions, senior enough to effect change and are willing and able to commit the necessary political capital and diplomatic efforts to achieve results. Lacking such capacity, “new” strategies, such as GI, are difficult to pursue.
2. *REGULATORY*—Agencies can be compelled to pursue green infrastructure by some regulatory agreement, such as an EPA consent decree, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, the Notice of Intent for a Storm Water Permit for Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4 NOI), or public health-related regulation. These mechanisms must also be sufficiently ambitious for their impact to be meaningful. For instance, the consent decree under which MWRD is currently operating requires 10 million gallons of Green Infrastructure Design Retention Capacity within 15 years of the approval date of the Consent Decree. The District accomplished this requirement in 2020.
3. *PLAN OR POLICY*—Agencies pursue green infrastructure because it is stipulated in a plan or mandated by public policy (We Will Chicago, Healthy Chicago 2025, MWRD Climate Action Plan etc). The variable and inconsistent implementation and enforcement of plans, vis-a-vis statute policies, was raised by several stakeholders, though several still named plans as useful tools.
4. *FINANCIAL OR EXPEDITIOUS*—Agencies are encouraged to pursue green infrastructure because of potential financial benefits (e.g. StormStore, expedited/green permitting process, etc.) and/or because of the opportunity to leverage the current potential influx of federal investment into cities for nature-based solutions (via ARPA, IRA, BIL and the White House’s Invest in Nature initiative).

While not all these factors lie within the control or influence of external advocates, the influential and evolving nature of all four should always be considered in the design of any approach whose aims include accelerating GI toward meaningful scale.

Barriers to Interagency Collaboration

1. *LEADERSHIP*—Just as past and current GI and NBS initiatives progressed only with the support of senior leaders, in legacy political structures in which cross-agency collaboration is neither incentivized nor the norm, efforts require the support or some directive from senior agency leadership to gain momentum. If an issue is not incorporated into an agency’s performance indicators, it is most often not meaningfully pursued. Additionally, as several efforts have demonstrated (e.g. CRTI and Space to Grow), sometimes interagency collaboration is more effectively coordinated by an external partner.
2. *BENEFITS ACCOUNTING AND DATA*—Agencies may hold different internal priorities, desire different data, and be interested in achieving different benefits from one another (e.g. public health vs. stormwater mitigation), causing misunderstanding and inertia. Data hoarded by a single agency can also create an environment of distrust and defer progress.

3. *PROCUREMENT*—Collaboration across agencies can involve conflicts between procurement policies and work rules that often need to be resolved prior to a project being implemented, which is sometimes a very lengthy process. One notable, fully-funded project was, until recently, held up from implementation for several years while legal representatives from the respective agencies worked to resolve such differences.
4. *LEGAL INERTIA*—Negotiating and structuring intergovernmental agreements between agencies, particularly on a project-by-project basis, can be time consuming, particularly if differences need to be resolved that involve particular work rules, procurement practices, or other codified processes as the preceding example highlights.
5. *RELUCTANCE TO COLLABORATE, OR POOR COLLABORATION*—Collaborating or coordinating agencies can allow potentially minor differences; differences of perspective, goals or internal objectives; the desire to retain power and control; or a general distrust, to either directly impede or passively resist achieving greater impact through joining efforts with others.

Prerequisites for Interagency Collaboration

Based upon feedback from interview subjects, the following components should be prioritized in the design of any interagency collaboration in Chicago, regardless of topic, in order to overcome barriers, and ensure meaningful participation, action, and impact.

1. *COMMITTED LEADERSHIP & TOP-DOWN MANDATE*—Supported by the finding regarding the notable influence of senior leadership in both GI/NBS efforts and interagency collaborations, investment in interagency collaboration by relevant leaders (e.g. mayor, commissioners, agency leads) is essential to overcoming stasis, empowering teams to think creatively about overcoming obstacles, and ensuring that collaborative goals and actions are taken seriously and prioritized in individuals' workflows.
2. *VISION/COMMON CAUSE*—An interagency collaboration's focus needs to be viewed by participating agencies as a viable and effective solution to a shared problem or challenge, and a collaboration around it as a strategy for maximizing benefits and minimizing costs and potential risk exposure. For instance, within a GI-focused interagency collaboration, there must be shared buy-in that GI is an effective strategy for solving shared challenges such as stormwater management, neighborhood health, etc.
3. *A SPECIFIC ASK*—Agencies tend to respond best to tangible approaches to issues, rather than conceptual frameworks or amorphous plans. For instance, specific asks for GI collaboration might include: 1) To help develop a shared mechanism for maintenance funding/staffing, 2) To prioritize the acceleration of specific, community-based GI projects, in the process identifying and removing implementation hurdles across agencies that affect future GI implementation (for e.g., conflicting procurement policies); and/or 3) To come together around a shared agenda for pursuing NBS-relevant federal funding.
4. *COMMON DATA*—In keeping with the finding regarding data-related barriers to collaboration, ensure that all agencies have access to common data, measures of success, and/or have identified key data gaps that can be addressed collectively.
5. *NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT*—Transparency with and engagement of communities is essential to building the necessary understanding and trust to advance potential interagency projects.

Prerequisites for GI-Focused Interagency Collaboration

The following three additional prerequisites are specific to any GI-focused interagency collaboration in Chicago:

1. *PLAN AND FUNDING FOR MAINTENANCE*—Without addressing the entrenched maintenance barriers, key agencies will be reluctant to pursue a green infrastructure-focused collaboration that has not already addressed this challenge, or made its resolution a central and urgent focus.
2. *ENGINEERING-BASED CONVERSATION(S)*—Several of the most key agencies and implementers for GI, such as DWM, MWRD, and private sector GI contractors, are infused with an engineering-focused culture that employs and relies on the language of that discipline. Decision-makers are often most responsive to those who understand and speak their language, and are able to appreciate the technical intricacies of the infrastructure systems they oversee. This is not to say that any effort needs to be limited to this, just knowledgeable and inclusive of it.
3. *ENGAGING CAPITAL-BASED DEPARTMENTS*—Departments that don't oversee capital budgets could have a different focus and level of resources than those that do. The presence and meaningful participation of the latter in interagency collaboration will be essential for addressing key GI-related barriers such as maintenance and long-term ownership.

Drivers of GI and Interagency Collaboration in Other Cities

Findings from the Model Interagency Collaboratives research confirmed many of the drivers identified by interview subjects in Chicago. The examples examined from other cities reinforced that outside the Chicago region, as within it, both significant public sector action on GI, as well as interagency collaboration, are often driven by one of five factors: a precipitating crisis (i.e. flooding), policy, regulation, funding, or visionary leadership. In the findings, leadership appears less significant an influence than in Chicago, but this is likely due to a limitation of the research. Unlike in Chicago, City agency staff were not interviewed, and trusted relationships not leveraged toward the end of better understanding how priorities are determined inside city agencies. Leadership-related drivers of change are not generally named, addressed or emphasized in the materials consulted for this research, such as public-facing city agency websites and reports.

These barriers to both GI and interagency collaboration, drivers of GI, and prerequisites for successful interagency collaboration, should all be incorporated into the design of any next steps toward either the acceleration of GI, and/or improved interagency collaboration.

NEXT STEPS

Context

RxN FRAMEWORK

When developing its initial strategy for catalyzing NBS in the Chicago region, RxN identified four key areas of focus. Since RxN's launch in 2021, the Walder Foundation has funded several **Catalytic Projects**, and significantly contributed to the development of **Critical Data** and Knowledge needed to scale NBS. It has also pursued, though by no means fully achieved, **Collaboration and Convening** among NBS-focused entities. The insights and ideas for next steps generated by this feasibility study offer the opportunity for RxN to deepen its commitment and expand its efforts to convene and collaborate, while beginning to achieve and address the largely unrealized fourth focus area of **Education and Leadership**. Based upon this feasibility study's findings, leadership that is visionary in its commitments to NBS, open to innovation and collaboration, and, optimally, dedicated to meaningful community engagement, is a prerequisite for meaningful change.

INFLUENCE

Next steps must be further contextualized within RxN and the private philanthropy's sphere of influence and appropriate role/function within the system. While operating with privileged perspective, resources, networks, and access, there are also a limited set of available levers. These include operating and project grants to nonprofit organizations, program design and implementation, convening capacity, and potentially, coalitional policy influence. Direct influence on decision-makers in City agencies is limited, as is philanthropy's resources for adequately funding direct GI installation and maintenance.

POLITICAL TRANSITION

The City is currently in the midst of a mayoral transition. When this feasibility study was launched prior to the election, there was some hope that this might provide a rare, time-delimited opportunity to inflect a new administration's priorities. The creation of a GI and NBS agenda for the mayoral transition remains a potential next step. That said, unresolved uncertainties regarding agencies' future leadership and priorities under the Johnson administration, combined with the current urgent, interlocking crises facing the city and which, in some cases, the new administration has already prioritized (e.g. public safety and police violence, mental health, immigrant and refugee needs, lead service line replacement, and the policy effort to eliminate environmental justice "sacrifice zones") have created the sense that the optimal time for approaching City decision-makers with an "ask" for GI-related interagency collaboration may be some months into the future, when long-term Agency leadership will also be clearer. Within this evolving political climate, attention should be given to timeliness, determining what can be done now versus what would best be pursued when conditions change later.

Functions

While the political context evolves, Chicago's NBS and green infrastructure-focused ecosystem—including nonprofit advocates—can begin to further develop the following capacities to best take advantage of future opportunities to accelerate GI and/or interagency collaboration. These functions will be critical for the pursuit of any of the potential Next Steps (below), and are informed by the barriers, drivers, and prerequisites for collaboration discovered during the feasibility study.

1. *LEADERSHIP*—This effort will require the identification and cultivation of not just relevant City agencies and nonprofit organizations, but a trust-infused network of individuals who possess or develop the requisite skills and relationships to speak to the languages, priorities and cultures of multiple agencies and communities, fully appreciate and address the identified barriers that are internal to City agencies, and establish the necessary prerequisites for successful interagency collaboration.
2. *COMMUNICATION*—Platforms and processes must be established to enable communication between relevant agencies and organizations, with an emphasis on communication that supports greater coordination. For instance, this research found that individuals holding sustainability-focused positions across City agencies have not been convened in some time, despite a professed desire to coordinate efforts. The implementation of coordination-focused communication platforms and protocols, in both City government and amongst nonprofits, can address some of the simpler issues of interagency coordination, and within the nonprofit sector, foster greater alignment amongst NBS and GI advocates. Improved communication can also lay the groundwork for more sustained/formalized interagency collaboration to be successful in the future.
3. *COORDINATION*—Diverse efforts need to be identified, promoted, and aligned to maximize their efficiency and impact; multiple stakeholders need to generate, share and employ common data within a rubric of mutually-agreed upon goals.
4. *INNOVATION AND PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGY*—Agencies and organizations will need to develop the willingness and ability to continuously innovate to confront and address barriers, rather than responding to them by reverting to comfortable or status quo practices. This includes remaining attentive to the broader context, including the evolving political and opportunity climate.

Actions

Within the context of RxN's broader mission, focused on delivering the multiple benefits of NBS at meaningful scale, and the opportunities and limitations of private philanthropy, this report presents the following potential next steps. These opportunities were either suggested and/or explicitly stated by the experienced stakeholders who informed this research. They are not intended to be mutually exclusive, nor fully described, but indicate directions that could be pursued considering the above information. Each, of course, entails both challenges and potential rewards. To varying degrees, these actions must all also incorporate capacity in the four functions of leadership, communication, coordination, and innovation strategy, in order to have the greatest potential for meaningful impact.

ACTIONS TO INCORPORATE INTO ALL APPROACHES

These first two actions are core implementation principles, to be operationalized across the lifespan of all other actions, by all implementers (government, nonprofits, philanthropy, etc.).

1. *PRIORITIZE EQUITY AND RESILIENCE*—Acknowledge that neighborhood flooding, basement backups, water meters and lead service lines are burdens that can heavily impact communities of color. These legacy water challenges require a broader, more holistic perspective that views green infrastructure in the larger context of an integrated approach to water management (for instance, the "One Water" approach supported by many NBS and GI advocates), as part of strategic neighborhood investment strategies, which means green infrastructure is considered and planned along with other critical infrastructure investments (e.g. water mains, commercial corridors, transit stops).
2. *LEVERAGE EXISTING EFFORTS*—Explore strategies to utilize and build upon existing efforts around which agencies are already engaged in some form of coordination/collaboration. Examples include the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative, Greater Chicago Watershed Alliance, the maintenance working group convened by Healthy Schools Campaign, CURRENT's Blue Economy-focused working group, the Office of Underground Coordination, and others.

IMMEDIATE OR NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

1. *ADDRESS MAINTENANCE*—Determine the most promising strategies, and pursue pilot projects that would create more robust resources or new models for maintaining green infrastructure. Consider leveraging the experience and work of Healthy Schools Campaign's green infrastructure maintenance working group.
IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY—Maintenance responsibility will be held by the relevant municipal or regional (i.e. MWRD) agency, or landowner, and potentially by subsequent private sector contractors. Entities outside of government—including nonprofits, philanthropy, and the private sector—could potentially play a role in helping strategize how best to fulfill maintenance needs, including developing and advocating for new approaches.
2. *ALIGN NONPROFITS*—Continue to foster communication, trust, and alignment among relevant and engaged organizations and enterprises, focusing on key issues, and encouraging clarity of roles and better coordination, if not collaboration, on high-priority initiatives. While alignment among nonprofits may not be a prerequisite for interagency collaboration, it may increase the sector's efficacy in influencing city agencies toward greater pursuit of GI and NBS, both within and outside the context of interagency collaboration.
IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY—Leadership toward greater alignment of the GI-focused nonprofit sector can come from different sectors, each of which carry different capacities and limitations. Foundations hold unparalleled convening power, and a unique, ecosystem-level view of the sectors they support that can be an asset in creating shared agendas. At the same time, funder-grantee power dynamics can create reluctance on the part of nonprofits to share their visions, concerns, and plans with complete candor. There are also some individual nonprofits who understand it as their role to build trust with colleagues in

their sector, overcoming perceived competition and potential distrust with their peers. Their staff have led durable collaborations with authenticity. In some cases, these “bottom up” collaborations have proven especially durable and impactful.

3. *SUPPORT A LEADERSHIP COHORT*—Develop an NBS or GI-focused leadership cohort and/or “fellows” program, with a focus on coordination and collaboration within the sector and developing the perspective, skills and capacities necessary to maneuver City agencies, and/or foster greater collaboration, in the pursuit of GI and/or NBS at meaningful scale.
IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY—This is most likely to be an initiative led by philanthropy, but could potentially be initiated and/or managed by an entity in the nonprofit sector who holds broad trust.
4. *LEVERAGE MAYORAL TRANSITION*—Use the Mayoral Transition as an inflection point for presenting a clear and specific ask for the Johnson Administration to prioritize green infrastructure, informed by an aligned nonprofit/advocacy sector, and potentially framed within the context of the Administration’s key priorities, including Environmental Justice.
IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY—Alignment of nonprofits is a necessary precursor for this action, and so initial implementation responsibility would be the same or similar as the above item. Following this, any effort to inflect the Mayoral Transition should attempt to work in concert with those closest to the process, particularly environmental justice entities.
5. *LEVERAGING FEDERAL FUNDING*—A forthcoming convergence of cross-issue federal funding opportunities could help drive agencies to a shared table, recognizing that collaborative funding proposals are often the most competitive, and within certain funding priorities, the only proposals considered viable. Building an effort toward formalized interagency collaboration around federal funding opportunities may expedite this action’s urgency, depending upon the timelines for given funding opportunities.
IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY—Leadership in convening these players is most likely to come from outside City government—either philanthropy, or a nonprofit that holds the trust of City agencies, as outside instigation may be necessary to transcend status quo operations. That said, an enterprising City official could initiate this focus, and will likely be better situated to invite their colleagues into a shared, interagency process.

LONGER-TERM ACTIONS

1. *CREATE THE COLLABORATIVE MECHANISM*—Constructively engage the next mayoral administration and green infrastructure champions in key areas (e.g. Mayor’s office, key agencies, City Council) and pursue an interagency collaborative table or mechanism, whether intergovernmental agreement-based, a Joint Benefits Authority, and/or “One Water” approach, that would define common goals, undertake projects, remove barriers, pursue relevant policy change, and address maintenance issues. To ground and focus the effort, the mechanism may consider an immediate focus on *COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS*—Identify 2-3 meaningful, community-based GI initiatives requiring cross-departmental involvement, and scaffold collaboration with the intention of identifying and addressing entrenched barriers, and codifying and institutionalizing the partnership upon completion. The pursuit of federal funding opportunities could also serve as a tangible focus that drives agencies to participate.
IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY—The findings from this feasibility study have shown that an instigator who sits outside City government—whether in philanthropy or the nonprofit sector—is often needed to help foster relationships across siloed City agencies, and overcome status quo operations. This facilitator will be most effective if they incorporate the prerequisites identified in this report. Long-term, while an outside entity, or new hybrid agency (e.g. Joint Benefits Authority, Municipal Authority, public-private partnership, etc.) may serve as an ongoing platform, City agencies must “own” this work, and feel

responsible for sustaining and implementing it.

2. *FINANCIALLY INCENTIVIZE*—This action is specifically focused on accelerating GI, rather than interagency collaboration. Develop a robust and far-reaching market-based approach to green infrastructure that would catalyze significant private investment and implementation. This could involve selling and purchasing stormwater credits (i.e. see StormStore), or creating a system by which dynamic, onsite stormwater management is monetized (i.e. see: Opti RTC).

IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY—This is most likely to be pursued outside government by a nonprofit or foundation, focused on better creating the appropriate policy shift and program design, potentially in collaboration with a private sector entity or entities.

CONCLUSION

Amidst complexity, there are several opportunities to inflect Chicago toward the implementation of GI and its multiple benefits at more meaningful scales, and to address the barriers to interagency implementation that have stymied progress on both GI and other NBS. This effort is grounded in the broader mission to catalyze NBS and its multiple benefits for health, equity, climate resilience, and biodiversity.

This feasibility study has surfaced and deepened understanding of critical barriers to both GI and interagency coordination within the City of Chicago government, helping to identify key drivers of GI, and prerequisites for successful interagency coordination. Informed by these findings, a set of four key functions have been surfaced in which RxN and the broader community of GI (and in some cases, NBS) stakeholders may invest, and nine overarching, immediate/near-term, and longer-term next steps that RxN may support, remaining watchful of Chicago's evolving political context, and emerging opportunities. These actions further enable RxN to deepen its pursuit of convening and collaboration, and education and leadership

APPENDIX

CONTENTS

Steering Committee: 14

Steering Committee Meeting Notes: 15

Interview List: 23

Model Interagency Collaborations Research: 24

Steering Committee

Lisa Beyer, *WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE*

Margaret Frisbie, *FRIENDS OF THE CHICAGO RIVER*

Alaina Harkness, *CURRENT*

Meg Kelly, *HEALTHY SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN*

Angela Larsen, *ALLIANCE FOR THE GREAT LAKES*

Claire Marcy, *HEALTHY SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN*

Jen McGraw, *CENTER FOR NEIGHBORHOOD TECHNOLOGY*

Brenda Santoyo, *LITTLE VILLAGE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ORGANIZATION*

Lydia Scott, *CHICAGO REGION TREES INITIATIVE*

Ryan Wilson, *METROPOLITAN PLANNING COUNCIL*

RxN FEASIBILITY STUDY SC MEETING #1 (February 9, 2023)

Attendees

PRESENT:

Lisa Beyer, World Resources Institute; Margaret Frisbie, Friends of the Chicago River/Greater Chicago Watershed Alliance; Meg Kelly, Healthy Schools Campaign; Angela Larsen, Alliance for the Great Lakes; Claire Marcy, Healthy Schools Campaign; Jen McGraw, Center for Neighborhood Technology; Peter Nicholson, Foresight Design Initiative; Brenda Santoyo, Little Village Environmental Justice Organization; Casey Sebetto, Walder Foundation; Jack Westwood, Walder Foundation; Ryan Wilson, Metropolitan Planning Council.

ABSENT:

Alaina Harkness, CURRENT; Lydia Scott, Chicago Regional Trees Initiative.

AGENDA

1. Steering Committee Parameters
2. Introductions
3. Meeting Purpose
4. Overall Project Purpose
5. Feasibility Study Purpose
6. Next Steps

NOTES:

1. The items being shared with the Steering Committee are prototypes for input, discussion and further development;
2. Further feedback can be provided in the **Google Doc**:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/18uxVe27jn7a51Lq80w4qzAY_pAgbBrxTgk0mAeDz2eM/edit?usp=sharing

Steering Committee Parameters

1. "Go Blank," don't assume a particular outcome;
2. Work toward a common cause (rather than pursue individual agendas, including the foundation and Foresight!);
3. Understand the system: barriers (visible/hidden), power, opportunities, leverage points;
4. Acknowledge that this understanding will be incomplete until implementation is pursued

NOTES:

1. Go blank: We temporarily set aside our preconceptions about what form a collaboration platform might take, and enter with a fresh mind. These preconceptions and existing models are still important, and will come into play further down the road.
2. Not assuming an outcome acknowledges power dynamics—what gets implemented is ultimately decided by City/regional agencies;
3. Prioritizing a common cause over individual agendas includes the Foundation's agenda: e.g., though NBS is RxN's funding focus, a "One Water" strategy that includes topics outside this scope could be pursued if deemed the best course of action.
4. Understand the system: In Chicago, there are always hidden barriers (personalities, ingrained ways of working, accountabilities, etc.)
5. Implementation pursued: "The truth is in the doing."

Introductions

WHAT'S YOUR INTEREST IN SEEING BETTER INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION?

1. Nobody is maintaining green infrastructure, and city agencies are not talking to each other;
2. Entrenched parochialism and lack of coordination in Chicago hits historically underinvested communities hardest;
3. Interested in seeing better planning, accountability, and getting people to work together in a way that supports and benefits communities;
4. To be able to do things better, cheaper, smarter, faster with the goal of serving community needs;
5. What can seem bizarre in City Agency behavior from the outside is often driven by job descriptions and funding requirements on the inside.
6. Creating decision-making tools to better bridge community needs and agency focuses when the two are not aligned (CNT is currently undertaking this work)—"The era of a bunch of different map layers that one staff person looks at is over."
7. Bridging gaps between sectors, and shifting toward ecosystem approaches;
8. To see green infrastructure treated like infrastructure;
9. For Green Infrastructure to be equitable, with investments focused in historically disinvested communities, and aligned with community needs;
10. We won't reach climate resilience goals without working together;
11. To coordinate capital planning for water infrastructure more effectively and efficiently, including lead service replacement as well as green infrastructure;
12. To ensure Green Infrastructure investments build up historically disinvested communities' resilience to climate change;
13. To build on existing cross-jurisdictional efforts (Chicago Watershed Alliance, Lake County Stormwater Management Commission);
14. To solve structural and systemic challenges we've heard from GI practitioners/the field;
15. Ensuring that investments made in NBS will be effective long-term;
16. To effectively scale NBS, to solve problems on the ground in communities.

Purpose-Steering Committee & Meeting

1. *STEERING COMMITTEE*—to provide oversight, perspective, connections and experience, and the power of collective wisdom. To develop deeper understanding, engagement and alignment around potential outcomes.
2. *THIS MEETING*—establish clarity of purpose and alignment around intent and process of feasibility study.

NOTES:

1. Beyond the Steering Committee, we also want to keep the broader community of GI stakeholders abreast, and solicit their feedback;
2. *QUESTION*: What is our geographic footprint?
 - a. "Chicagoish" — most focused on Chicago, with the potential to address close suburbs where there is already good work and a need;
 - b. Some agencies' footprint is broader than the City (MWRD, Forest Preserves of Cook Co, etc.);
 - c. Adding MWRD into conversations can make them more complicated, because of the grey areas in their jurisdiction;
 - d. There is a lot of need and good work being done in the south suburbs;
 - e. How we set the geographic scope may lead to different solutions: many suburbs have constrained staff capacity, and need support from external actors.

Purpose-Overall

1. *INPUTS*: participation and investment in a well-structured and facilitated process that meets each agency's internal objectives while simultaneously maximizing the scale of and impact of these efforts. The contribution of time and funds in order to achieve something more than what would be possible through an individual effort.
2. *OUTPUTS*: close, efficient and effective coordination of relevant agencies and nonprofits involved in implementing nature-based solutions, including green (stormwater) infrastructure, including collaborative budgeting, site selection, design, installation and maintenance.
3. *OUTCOMES*: increased implementation and scale of multi-benefit, nature-based solutions, particularly in neighborhoods that have expressed a desire for and are most in need of such assets. This effort could also produce better and more inclusive equitable community engagement; the development, sharing and leveraging of key data; and streamlined and potentially less expensive installation and maintenance.
4. *IMPACTS*: healthier, more (climate) resilient and vibrant neighborhoods through realizing the multiple benefits of nature-based solutions, including cleaner air, reduced heat island, flooding mitigation, increased property values, enhanced health outcomes, and greater biodiversity, among others.

NOTES:

1. The "neighborhood scale" language is appreciated;
2. This seems like a good starting place, and looking forward to honing on specifics.

Purpose-Feasibility Study

1. *FEASIBILITY*—To ascertain the likelihood of creating a platform for cross agency and organization collaboration;
2. *RATIONALE*—To better understand the barriers and motivations for entities to more closely collaborate with one another;
3. *STRATEGY*—If such a platform appears feasible, to develop an approach for initiating it, including potential goals/priorities and specific next steps;
4. *INFORM*—To share synthesized conclusions about the feasibility of such an undertaking and its potential structure and process with interested others.

NOTES:

1. We have a lot of great work to build on for communicating the benefits—but specifically in Chicago, what are the barriers?
2. Attitude of some agencies: singular, insulated, not forthright;
3. How can we attach to their motivations and priorities, and help solve their issues?
4. With the election coming up, how can we interject this priority during a moment of opportunity that only comes up every four years?
5. If this seems feasible, where do we begin?
6. One mental model we have surfaced, and temporarily set aside: Instead of beginning with the platform, start with projects, scaffold collaboration, then back engineer the Table;
7. Item number 2 (Better understanding barriers and motivations) is the most critical—we need to understand what agencies care about, and what they see as the impediments to them moving forward in this direction;

Proposed Study Process

1. Review potential (primary source) subjects and key questions (list to be provided)
 - a. DWM (Commissioner Cheng, Pete Mulvaney (Jacobs Engineering))
 - b. MWRD (Brian Perkovich, Executive Director, Joe Kratzer, Managing Civil Engineer, Commissioners Davis, Buclet, Steele)
 - c. CDOT (Commissioner Biagi, Sean Weidel, Assistant Commissioner)
 - d. DPD (Commissioner Cox, Kathy Dickhut, Deputy Commissioner)
 - e. CDPH (Commissioner Arwady, Raed Mansour, Director of Innovation)
 - f. CURRENT/Space to Grow
2. Review initial (secondary source) research around potential models and best practices for interagency collaborations
3. Identify any alternative strategies...Plan B or C or?

NOTES:

1. Add an item 0.5—Understand what collaborative efforts are already going on, and are underway:
 - a. Friends of the Chicago River past interviews—Lake County Stormwater Management, Forest Preserves, MWRD, etc—agencies were asked, What are the opportunities, what are the risks?
 - b. Watershed Alliance - potential to use existing forum;
 - c. Office of Underground Coordination (OUC)—an example of agencies coordinating in a specific way—can more strategy be inflected into these implementation-oriented spaces?
 - d. MWRD - Examples of interagency coordination and agreements with Park District and Forest Preserves.
2. Should any agencies be added to interview list (esp Park District, Forest Preserves)?
 - a. Look across at all City departments and sister agencies (and how they interact with each other) to make sure we are not missing anything;
 - b. Chicago Park District and Forest Preserves have examples of interagency coordination with MWRD—it could be of value to hear from their side of this relationship;
 - c. Include City Services (includes Streets and Sanitation);
 - d. Include Office of Environmental Sustainability and Equity.
3. Focusing on City of Chicago coordination (including in conversation with agencies whose purview is wider) would clarify and focus questions, and avoid the risk of starting out too broad or conceptual for the insights to be of value;
4. At MWRD, consider favoring staff over commissioners for first round interviews; commissioners are not allowed to speak with staff, and there are implementation barriers on both sides;
5. At MWRD, start with Joe—a wealth of information;
6. Apply a land control and ownership lens to our inquiry, including potentially privately-owned land;
7. If we choose to begin with a focus on specific “stuck” projects—current potential examples include the Garfield Park Community Council’s Eco-Orchard project, and Claretian Associate’s effort at 92nd St and Ewing—we should consider as a potential alternative strategy (Plan B or Plan C), that a focus on supporting these “stuck” projects could also occur without an interagency Collaboration platform.
8. Questions to think about when speaking to agencies:
 - a. Where is the best place for a collaboration platform to live?
 - b. How can it be funded?
9. In SF, they found it helpful to distinguish between: 1) Agencies that perform planning purposes, vs. implementation and operation of infrastructure, vs. governance and admin—the breakdown between these three creates challenges.

POTENTIAL MODELS & BEST PRACTICES

PURPOSE—Identify transferable insights and approaches from cities that have undertaken interagency collaborations.

QUESTIONS:

1. What incentivized agencies to come to the table? How did they overcome status quo approaches and barriers to collaboration?
2. What key variables (e.g. purpose/goals, financing approaches, decision-making structures, legal or policy platforms, etc.) are common across interagency collaborations, that Chicago should consider in our effort?
3. What contextual factors (e.g. political environment, agency structures, local ecology, etc.) differentiate cities from each other, and merit attention during Chicago's process?

POTENTIAL MODELS:

Joint Powers Authorities (mostly CA)

- San Francisquito Creek JPA
- Youth Ventures JPA

"One Water" Collaborations

- Vancouver
- Denver
- Atlanta
- Milwaukee

Other Water Collaborations

- One Shoreline, San Mateo County
- Negley Run Watershed Task Force, Pittsburgh
- Prince George Center Cleanwater Partnership, MD
- Office of Waterfront and Civic Projects, Seattle

Other Platforms/Structures

- Municipal Authority (structure), PA
- School Parks (joint use sites), Austin
- Smart Growth Subcabinet (MD)

NOTES:

1. Additions to the list:
 - a. Bethesda, MD interagency collaboration;
 - b. SF Bay regulatory committee from joint bond for restoration;
 - c. MPC's research on implementation of comprehensive planning may have relevant examples; Ryan will share with team for their input.

What Haven't We Talked About?

1. Is our timing built around the Mayoral election too hurried?
 - a. We aim to get this priority/intention interjected while this opportunity is available, not necessarily have every element fleshed out);
 - b. Transition teams are a powerful inflection point.
2. Longterm, infrastructure and workforce need to be addressed as well: What is the pathway for inclusion of NBS into agencies, starting from entry level into more established positions?

RxN FEASIBILITY STUDY SC MEETING #2 (April 24, 2023)

1. *REMINDER OF OUR PURPOSE:*
 - a. Identify concrete barriers to collaboration across departmental siloes in City government;
 - b. Coalesce the practitioner community around a shared understanding/vision for accelerating GI;
 - c. Identify tangible next steps.

2. *GI DEFINITION:*

There is significant support amongst the group for doubling down on a definition of Green Infrastructure that prioritizes additional benefits (beyond stormwater mitigation):

 - a. This is resonating more across City departments;
 - b. This is also related to why the JBA model moved from a GI focus to "climate resilient infrastructure";
 - c. Focusing on the direct connection to public health will also resonate more with the Johnson administration and their priorities.

3. *DWM INSIGHTS:*
 - a. DWM has more appetite to do something different than we'd expected, but nobody pushing them;
 - b. They are cautious about doing something, and doing it wrong;
 - c. They are concerned about community engagement;
 - d. There is no reconciling force between DWM and other agencies—DPD, CDOT, etc. The need is for management, coordination and diplomacy.

4. *MAINTENANCE:*
 - a. Nearly every person we spoke with brought up the maintenance barrier unsolicited;
 - b. "Everyone wants someone else to do it, but want it done";
 - c. Maintenance may be as much about how spaces are designed and managed as how they are maintained;
 - d. The Maintenance Working Group convened by Healthy Schools Campaign continues to get good attendance despite being voluntary—these agencies have very few opportunities to collaborate or connect on a regular basis, and seem to appreciate the space. A survey is being circulated to participants to help develop the progress report, and set their next set of priorities;
 - e. One option is to seek federal workforce development dollars for a coordinated maintenance program pilot—OAI and Greencorps are in on conversations;
 - f. Sometimes when agencies are trying to coordinate across projects for maintenance, for e.g. with Streets and San, their contracts are only structured for "mow and blow" type work—the type of maintenance included in contracts is not the type that is needed;
 - g. Space to Grow based their O & M Guide for potential contractors on the City's—from that, they've learned that currently, the trained workforce does not exist to adequately maintain installations at scale.

5. *FEDERAL FUNDING AS A DRIVER/FOCUS FOR CONVENING:*
 - a. One thing that can bring agencies to a table, and keep them together, is pursuing federal funding;
 - b. The federal funding opportunities on the horizon that could support this work include a convergence of one-point-in-time and ongoing opportunities at the convergence of (resilient) infrastructure, job training, transportation, public health (CDC funding for infrastructure), and others—across many different agencies;
 - c. GI is a cross-issue topic—make sure to think outside just the standard GI funding lanes;

- d. We are only competitive for these funds if we speak with a unified, progressive voice, clear strategy, and aligned partners, with the capacity to meet multiple goals (it provides an inherent motivation for the effort to go beyond a single agency);
 - e. CMAP is currently looking at how best to position the region for some of these funds;
 - f. Innovate IL is an effort composed of State and City leadership and ecosystem partners working to collectively pursue federal funding.
6. *ALIGNING/COORDINATING WITH EJ COMMUNITY'S POLICY AGENDA:*
- a. The Water Justice Coalition is preparing recommendations for the Mayoral transition;
 - b. A big emphasis for EJ organizers at present is "cumulative impacts," which include the disproportionate impact of urban flooding in BIPOC and EJ communities. Strategic investments in neighborhoods should prioritize neighborhoods that are overburdened, and take a holistic approach to infrastructure work that addresses the multiple interrelated issues facing the communities in their entirety;
 - c. One of the Coalition's recommendations for the transition team is to allocate funding to DWM for a community engagement team (focused on lead service line replacement enrollment), with the aim of fostering relationship between DWM and organizations that already hold trust within their communities;
 - i. DWM has some history of having attempted this in the past, with inadequate follow-up, by which some folks might still be burned;
 - d. They see this work being led by someone from DWM who serves as a bridge between the community groups and DWM, but it will need to be someone who has experience working with communities and building out those partnerships.
7. *COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:*
- a. Beginning with Community Engagement can help drive efforts to shift City processes: The City is so big, bureaucratic and siloed, changes take a lot of time, and sometimes working from residents up is an effective way to make things happen. Example: The Equitable Trees Initiative's process has been focused on getting community groups to a shared table, and coalesced around the concept, getting baseline information communicated to a broad range of partners who help distribute it more widely. The Tree Ambassadors are a stipended group who with neighbors and the Bureau of Forestry to identify where trees can be planted—it is driven by neighbor talking to neighbor;
 - b. Community engagement should be considered as a GI career path, in our workforce discussions;
 - c. There are two ways that Agency-led community engagement can go—either it becomes public relations, or it rests with someone who is truly trying to figure out how to make things happen collaboratively ("say yes").
8. *NEXT STEPS:*
- a. Seek federal funding, establish the table, pursue policy changes (including regulatory, contractual/procurement processes, potential stormwater fee, etc.)
 - b. Form some kind of collaborative table focused on:
 - i. Federal funding
 - ii. Accelerating/resolving the maintenance issue
 - iii. Moving policy
 - iv. Coordinating the workforce component
 - v. Pursuing community engagement
 - c. Consider creating centralized list of desired policy changes;
 - d. Consider beginning with a "constellation approach" for the short term that works across existing tables, moving toward the establishment of a more long-term table as the optimal goal;

- e. Create Google Doc inventory of existing tables the involve participation from relevant agencies (potentially incorporate into an update of the RxN master list of GI efforts), including who participates, when they meet, and their goals;
 - f. Clarify our "North Star" - Consider a One Water approach as the framing;
 - g. Consider "bottom up" strategies that engage communities from the outset, potentially prioritizing some specific disproportionately affected communities.
9. *ARE THERE EXISTING TABLES THAT THIS COULD BE A PART OF?*
- a. Existing collaborative tables include:
 - i. Greater Chicago Watershed Alliance
 - ii. Chicago Wilderness
 - iii. GI Maintenance Working Group
 - iv. Current's Blue Economy Working Group

INTERVIEW LIST

Meetings were held with:

1. **Alaina Harkness**, *CURRENT*
2. **David Leopold**, *MICROSOFT (FORMERLY CDOT & CITY TECH)*
3. **Lisa Beyer**, *WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE (WRI) /SF JOINT BENEFITS AUTHORITY (JBA) PROJECT*
4. **Adam Flickienger & Chelsey Grassfield**, *FRIENDS OF THE CHICAGO RIVER/GREATER CHICAGO WATERSHED ALLIANCE (GCWA)*
5. **Meg Kelly**, *HEALTHY SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN*
6. **Angela Larsen**, *ALLIANCE FOR THE GREAT LAKES (AGL)*
7. **Drew Williams-Clark**, *METROPOLITAN PLANNING COUNCIL (MPC)*
8. **Elizabeth Cisar**, *JOYCE FOUNDATION*
9. **Sean Wiedel**, *CHICAGO DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION*
10. **Joe Kratzer**, *METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT (MWRD)*
(NOTE: not directly interviewed; notes from earlier meeting w/AGL and GCWA)
11. **Michael Berkshire**, (formerly Chicago Dept of Planning & Development)
12. **Emily Simonson**, *US WATER ALLIANCE*
13. **Raed Mansour**, *CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH*
14. **Commissioner Cheng & Brendan Schreiber**, *DEPT OF WATER MANAGEMENT*
15. **Brad Roback**, *COORDINATOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, (ALSO SUSTAINABILITY), BUREAU OF CITYWIDE SYSTEMS & HISTORIC PRESERVATION, CHICAGO DEPT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT*
16. **Pete Mulvaney**, *JACOBS ENGINEERING, (CURRENTLY/FORMERLY DWM)*

MODEL INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION RESEARCH

Model Name	Focus	Geography	Participating Agencies	Structure	Drivers	Metrics
One Water Vancouver	To ensure communities and ecosystems thrive into the future, One Water looks at the full water cycle in all its forms: drinking water, wastewater, rainwater, surface water, and groundwater. Vancouver is collaborating across departments to make water-related decisions that benefit the community, economy, and the environment.	City of Vancouver	not shared or n/a (One Water = plan, not platform)	not shared or n/a (One Water = plan, not platform)	Policy On November 5, 2019, City Council unanimously approved an ambitious green rainwater infrastructure and urban rainwater management initiative called the Rain City Strategy. The strategy and its action plans reimagine how Vancouver can manage rainwater, representing a significant opportunity to take bold strides toward becoming a water-sensitive city.	90% capture and clean minimum Capture and clean from a minimum of the first 48 mL of rainwater/day
One Water Denver	Breaks down the historical silos between drinking water, wastewater, stormwater and other water uses to cooperatively manage the entire water cycle. Through enhanced collaboration and predictable land use and development policies, Denver's One Water Plan promotes healthy watersheds in an equitable, economically, and environmentally beneficial manner.	Denver Metro	City and County of Denver Denver Water Mile High Flood District Metro Water Recovery Greenway Foundation Colorado Water Conservation Board NOTE: Not a combined sewer system—stormwater, water delivery and sewer district all fully separate agencies)	not shared or n/a (One Water = plan, not platform)	Not shared	none shared
One Water Atlanta	Atlanta has emerged as a leader in green infrastructure through its commitment to incorporate best practices into stormwater management and implementing green infrastructure requirements for redevelopments and new projects throughout the City.	City of Atlanta	Multiple City departments NPOs Private development	not shared or n/a (One Water = plan, not platform)	Flooding Policy Stormwater Ordinance of 2013, brought about by precipitating crisis. One of the most far-reaching post-development stormwater management ordinances in the nation. In 2016, more than 70 percent of Atlanta voters approved the reauthorization of the Municipal Option Sales Tax (MOST) to ensure the continued operation and efficiency of the City's water and sewer infrastructure. Up to 10 percent, or \$12.5 million, of MOST revenue annually will fund stormwater projects, allowing for improved water quality, better flood management, the creation of public amenities and compliance with clean water laws.	Decrease stormwater runoff by 225 million gallons annually * *one inch storm = 640 million gallons
One Water Milwaukee	Milwaukee is equally fortunate to have many organizations and agencies in the region working together to protect this vital resource—Our Water. Over 15 organizations with a long history of partnering to protect waterways and Lake Michigan have now come together to create Milwaukee's One Water - Our Water Initiative. The One Water approach, developed by the US Water Alliance, envisions managing all water in an integrated, inclusive, and sustainable manner to secure a bright, prosperous future for our children, our communities, and our country.* The approach is built on the belief that all water—drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, grey water, and more—must be managed holistically and sustainably. Doing so builds strong economies, vibrant communities, and healthy environments. The Milwaukee team built on the US Water Alliance approach and developed an initiative that celebrates the ways residents interact with this amazing resource that is right outside their door.	Milwaukee Region	American Rivers Clean Wisconsin City of Milwaukee - ECO Fresh Coast Guardians Fund for Lake Michigan Groundwork Milwaukee Harbor District Mequon Nature Preserve Milwaukee Area Technical College Milwaukee Riverkeeper Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Milwaukee Water Commons Milwaukee Water Works Plastic Free MKE Refo Sixteenth Street Community Health Center Southeastern Watershed Trust University of Wisconsin - School of Freshwater Sciences Veolia Water Milwaukee Village of Shorewood The Water Council WaterMarks	Held by Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewer District (MMSD)	None shared	None shared

MODEL INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION RESEARCH

Model Name		Focus	Geography	Participating Agencies	Structure	Drivers	Metrics
Municipal Authority (structure)	A municipal authority is a form of special-purpose governmental unit in Pennsylvania. The municipal authority is an alternate vehicle for accomplishing public purposes without the direct action of counties, municipalities and school districts. These purposes commonly include the acquisition, financing, construction and operation of projects such as water supply and sewer systems, airports, transit systems, parking garages, flood control systems, parks, and similar facilities. An authority may fix and collect rentals or other charges and may issue revenue bonds. A board appointed by the establishing government or governments governs each authority. A municipal authority may be said to be an independent corporate agent of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, exercising governmental, as well as private corporate power, in assisting the Commonwealth in meeting the needs of its citizens. Most, but not all, municipal authorities operate under Pennsylvania's Municipality Authorities Act.	State of Pennsylvania	n/a	n/a	Municipal Authority (see focus)	Common reasons for establishing municipal authorities include financing a project without tapping the general taxing or borrowing power of a municipality, facilitating the cooperative involvement of several municipalities in a project, and distancing the operation of a project from the political considerations inherent in direct municipal operation.	n/a
School Parks	In Austin, TX, a School Park, often known as a Joint-Use Site, is an outdoor space next to a school that is available to the public during non-school hours through an interlocal agreement between City of Austin (COA) and Austin Independent School District (AISD).	City of Austin, TX	City of Austin Austin Independent School District		Intergovernmental Agreement	Policy Earliest agreement dates to 1960, driven by separation of AISD and COA Updated from 2018 to 2022. The current version addresses inefficiencies in the operations and maintenance of the sites, defines clear roles and responsibilities, and creates a streamlined and transparent process for community-activated improvements moving forward.	n/a
Smart Growth Subcabinet	The Subcabinet helps implement Smart Growth Policy, recommending to the Governor changes in State law, regulations, and procedures needed to support the Policy (Chapter 759, Acts of 1997). Since 2003, the Subcabinet also oversees the Priority Places Strategy (Executive Order 01.01.2003.33). Further, the Subcabinet works to create, enhance, support, and revitalize sustainable communities across Maryland (Chapter 487, Acts of 2010). Under the Subcabinet, the Smart Growth Coordinating Committee helps administer programs, projects, and activities in Priority Funding Areas and targeted communities in those areas. In Maryland, areas where local and State governments want to encourage development and growth and which meet certain criteria for water and sewage systems, population density, and land use capabilities may qualify as Priority Funding Areas. Such places include existing municipalities; land within the Washington, DC Beltway (I-495) and the Baltimore Beltway (I-695); and areas already designated as enterprise zones, neighborhood revitalization areas, heritage areas, or industrial land.	State of Maryland: Under the Smart Growth Subcabinet, the Smart Growth Coordinating Committee helps administer programs, projects, and activities in Priority Funding Areas and targeted communities in those areas. In Maryland, areas where local and State governments want to encourage development and growth and which meet certain criteria for water and sewage systems, population density, and land use capabilities may qualify as Priority Funding Areas. Such places include existing municipalities; land within the Washington, DC Beltway (I-495) and the Baltimore Beltway (I-695); and areas already designated as enterprise zones, neighborhood revitalization areas, heritage areas, or industrial land.	State Departments of: Agriculture Budget and Management Commerce Environment General Services Health Housing & Community Development Neighborhood Revitalization Labor Natural Resources Transportation Higher Education		Appointed Cabinet in state of MD government	Policy Established by Governor, reformed by statute.	n/a

MODEL INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION RESEARCH						
Model Name	Focus	Geography	Participating Agencies	Structure	Drivers	Metrics
One Shoreline, San Mateo County	<p>San Mateo County Flood & Sea Level Rise Resiliency District OneShoreline works across jurisdictional bounds to build solutions to the climate change impacts of sea level rise, flooding, and coastal erosion. By working at a regional scale, they facilitate the sharing of expertise, advance aligned and equitable benefits across communities, and provide a unified voice to secure state, federal, and private funds.</p> <p>1) Coordinates the planning and implementation of projects across jurisdictional lines, which enables uniform levels of protection and the sharing of technical information and resources</p> <p>2) Creates a broad and unified vision and voice for obtaining funding and regulatory permits.</p> <p>OneShoreline is engaged in various types of projects: projects resulting from MOU's involving cities and San Mateo County, new projects with these types of entities that are being developed right now, and long-standing efforts related to the flood zones established by the County that are now the responsibility of the District.</p>	San Mateo County	Startup funding from the County and 20 incorporated cities within it	Independent Agency	<p>Flooding Policy</p> <p>In 2015, the County's Civil Grand Jury issued a Report, "Flooding Ahead: Planning for Sea Level Rise," that posed the question: "What actions can the County of San Mateo, and the 20 cities and two relevant local special agencies within the county, take now to plan for sea level rise?" It answered this question by recommending "that a single organization undertake SLR planning on a countywide basis."</p> <p>In 2018, regional experts and policy-makers to discuss San Mateo County water management challenges and opportunities. There, Congresswoman Jackie Speier identified the need for a countywide agency to address the challenges of flooding, sea level rise and coastal erosion.</p> <p>After analyzing various potential approaches to the agency, the Water Coordination Committee recommended that new State legislation expand the mission, geographic reach, and governing Board of the 1959 San Mateo County Flood Control District. This legislation, Assembly Bill 825 (Mullin), was signed into law in September 2019, and on January 1, 2020, the San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District was born.</p>	None shared
Negley Run Watershed Taskforce	<p>The Negley Run Watershed Task Force is an interdisciplinary collaboration to engage community, creatives, and professionals in urban ecosystem regeneration. With the City and related agencies, the Task Force will support innovative rainwater stewardship and conveyance strategies. The Task Force's approach will introduce habitat, (bio)diversity, ecological function, and stormwater stewardship into municipal, agency, and private development plans and programs that may otherwise lack a holistic systems perspective to watershed conservation and management, and CSO and flood control.</p>	East side, Pittsburgh, Negley Run Watershed	<p>ALCOSAN</p> <p>Allegheny Conference on Community Development</p> <p>Allegheny Land Trust</p> <p>Allegheny Watershed Alliance</p> <p>Army Corps of Engineers</p> <p>Church & Dwight</p> <p>Civil & Environmental Consultants</p> <p>Dept. of City Planning</p> <p>eDesign Dynamics</p> <p>ETHOS Collaborative</p> <p>EvolveEA</p> <p>Grounded Strategies</p> <p>HELP Initiative Pittsburgh</p> <p>Highland Park Community Council</p> <p>Homewood Children's Village</p> <p>Kingsley Association</p> <p>Landforce Pittsburgh</p> <p>Larimer Consensus Group</p> <p>Larimer Green Team</p> <p>Lincoln Lemington Community Consensus Group</p> <p>ms Consultants</p> <p>Nine Mile Run Watershed Association</p> <p>North Point Breeze Development Corp.</p> <p>Operation Better Block</p> <p>PashekMTR</p> <p>Penn State Center</p> <p>Pennsylvania Dept. of Transportation</p> <p>Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy</p> <p>Pittsburgh UNITED</p> <p>Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority</p> <p>RAND Corporation</p> <p>Sierra Club</p> <p>Three Rivers Wet Weather Urban Redevelopment Authority</p> <p>Waide Trim</p>	Held by Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (we believe)	<p>Agency Leadership</p> <p>Initiated by Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy</p>	none shared

MODEL INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION RESEARCH			
Model Name	Focus	Geography	Participating Agencies
		Structure	Drivers
		Metrics	
Prince George Cleanwater Partnership	Under a partnership approach, Corviss and Prince George's County have entered into a 30-year partnership to improve the stormwater infrastructure and make a commitment to impact the local economy through "local" targeted disadvantaged subcontractor development and utilization. Through their Community Outreach, Contractor Development, and Compliance Programs, they have proactively created procurement opportunities for target class contractors, subcontractors, consultants, and suppliers, and helped bolster economic development while growing local small businesses. These efforts are designed to increase the participation of target class businesses which include local, small, minority, and women owned business enterprises more specifically designated as Prince George's County business enterprises.	Prince George County, MD	Prince George County & Corviss Risk for financing, permits, organization, design, construction and maintenance all shifted to private sector partner while County holds greatest risk and responsibility in program implementation.
Office of Waterfront and Civic Projects	The Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects is responsible for coordinating the City of Seattle's waterfront improvement efforts, including project management, design, construction, and financial management. The Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects is charged with administering the overall program and ensuring that it is managed efficiently and delivers on the Concept Design and Framework Plan for the Central Waterfront.	City of Seattle central waterfront	The projects that make up the Central Waterfront program are included in SDOT's budget and in the budgets of two other City departments (Seattle Parks and Recreation and Finance and Administrative Services). In addition, there are funds budgeted in CIP projects for Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and Seattle City Light (SCL) for utility relocations related to the Central Waterfront program. The Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects is leading construction activities for these relocations, which in SDOT's budget are combined in a reimbursable project (MO-TR-R043). The Office of Arts and Culture also has funding from the Waterfront program's 1% for Arts contribution.
San Francisco Creek JBA	Leads projects that mitigate the risk of flooding along the San Francisco Creek and the Bay; integrates habitat protection and restoration and community recreational opportunities into its flood mitigation projects. The JPA provides coordination, planning, implementation and on-going monitoring of projects.	San Francisco Creek & the Bay	East Palo Alto Palo Alto Menlo Park San Mateo County Flooding and Sea Level Resiliency District Santa Clara Valley Water District
Youth Ventures JPA	The Youth Ventures Joint Powers Authority (JPA) advocates for children, youth and families in the City of Oakland with a special emphasis on populations experiencing great disparities. This body combines and coordinates efforts by securing and leveraging resources and decision making powers to improve outcomes for broadly challenged families, children and youth.	City of Oakland	City of Oakland County of Alameda Oakland Unified School District First 5 Alameda County Alameda County Office of Education Peralta Community College District
			Community Based Public Private Partnership (CBP3) The Office is a unit of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), although its director reports directly to the Mayor. The Central Waterfront Improvement Fund is a single fund from which multiple departments draw funding resources. The fund tracks the interfund loan and philanthropic funds as well as other revenues. The fund supports certain costs associated with the design and construction of the waterfront improvement program and related costs for City administration, including the Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects. Appropriations made from the Central Waterfront Improvement Fund are for these purposes. Joint Powers Authority
			Regulatory In 2014, Prince Georges County was faced with an enormous regulatory challenge in the management of its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and its Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit that needed an innovative solution. Traditional project delivery methodologies and procurement could have been utilized; however, given the magnitude of the challenge of retrofitting 2,000 impervious acres with Green Infrastructure, with the flexibility to potentially grow to 15,000 acres of untreated impervious area by 2025, and an estimated cost of \$100 million, an alternative solution was sought. The County's elected political leaders including the County Executive; Legislative Branch; and sponsoring agencies—Department of the Environment and Department of Central Services collaborated for the development of an alternative solution. Policy The Concept Design and Framework Plan for the Central Waterfront as adopted by the City in Resolution 31399.
			Flooding After a serious flooding event in 1998, the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) was formed in 1999 to lead projects that mitigate the risk of flooding along the San Francisco Creek and the Bay. Funder (initially) The JPA collaboration was sparked in 1998 in Oakland, California as one of only five sites across the country selected to participate in the national Urban Health Initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The ten-year initiative sought to make system-wide changes to sustain improvements in the overall health of children living in urban areas. In Oakland, this collaboration took shape in the form of Safe Passages and its work focused on alleviating the effects of violence on children and youth from birth to early adulthood. Towards the end of the investment in the Urban Health Initiative by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in 2004, Safe Passages began to investigate organizational structures that would sustain the decade of gains achieved by the intergovernmental collaborative.
			1. 2,000 acres in 3 years 2. 30-40% savings 3. Increased awareness of the benefits of the program 4. County resident man-hour/job participation at least 51% during the peak construction season (May 1 – September 30)