

Stormwater Management Program

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



**Metropolitan Water
Reclamation District
of Greater Chicago**

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MISSION

The mission of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago Stormwater Management Program is to protect the safety of Cook County’s residents, minimize flooding damage and improve water quality by coordinating, planning, implementing, financing, and operating regional stormwater management projects and to develop and enforce reasonable rules with respect to watershed development.

COVER Construction to stabilize and improve the banks along nine areas (reaches) of Addison Creek, including this Westchester stretch (Reach 7) pictured here, April 29, 2026, which is expected to be completed in 2026. The Addison Creek Reservoir and Addison Creek Channel Improvements are designed to work together to protect six communities along Addison Creek from overbank flooding.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

For years, stormwater management in Cook County was a patchwork of efforts by local, regional, state and federal agencies. The Illinois General Assembly enacted Public Act 93-1049 in November of 2004, allowing for the creation of a comprehensive stormwater management program in Cook County under the supervision of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD).

The Act required the MWRD to develop the Cook County Stormwater Management Plan, which provides the framework for the stormwater management program, including its mission, goals and program elements. The MWRD Board of Commissioners (Board) adopted the plan in February 2007. Adoption of the plan and the implementation of the MWRD's countywide stormwater management program allow Cook County the means to address a range of stormwater management issues through proper watershed regulations and watershed planning.

Under this plan, the MWRD established Watershed Planning Councils and completed Detailed Watershed Plans for all six major watersheds in Cook County, initiated a Stormwater Management Capital Improvement Program, introduced a Small Streams Maintenance Program, and adopted and implemented the Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO). The six major watersheds are Calumet-Saganashkee Channel (Cal-Sag Channel), Little Calumet River (Little Calumet), Lower Des Plaines River (Lower Des Plaines), North Branch of the Chicago River (North Branch), Poplar Creek and Upper Salt Creek.

The program expanded significantly in 2014. The Cook County Stormwater Management Plan was amended in July 2014 to be consistent with Public Act 98-0652, which granted the MWRD authority to facilitate the acquisition of flood-prone properties and to plan, implement and finance local stormwater management projects. The MWRD entered a consent decree with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in January 2014, establishing the Green Infrastructure Program. Additionally, the Infiltration/Inflow Control Program was incorporated into the WMO in 2014.

Through a variety of engineered solutions, both green and gray, and flood-prone property acquisitions, the MWRD's Stormwater Management Program addresses both regional and local flooding problems throughout Cook County. The MWRD has made significant investments in developing approximately 300 capital stormwater projects since it assumed the authority for stormwater management in 2004. These projects, which range in both size and scope, provide flood protection for thousands of homes, businesses and critical infrastructure.

For more information visit mwrld.org/stormwater.

BELOW A worker prepares the ground for the next steps in the construction of underground stormwater storage basins, May 7, 2026, near the intersection of Le Moyne Street and Luna Avenue on Chicago's West Side. The MWRD and Chicago Department of Water Management are funding and developing sites on the West Side to collect and store more stormwater underground, attempting to keep it off streets and out of basements.



2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

As the MWRD continued to advance its mission and goals to alleviate the impact of flooding and erosion, its Stormwater Management Program remains aligned with the organization-wide strategic plan released in June 2022 (mwrld.org/strategic-plan). Under this strategic plan, goals and objectives have been established to ensure our strategy to mitigate flooding across Cook County is executed through a proactive and equitable approach for stormwater management, including implementation of gray and green infrastructure, enforcement of the WMO and acquisition of flood-prone property.

Following the two presidential disaster orders issued in 2023 and another in 2024 after intense storms and rainfall caused significant flooding of homes, businesses and streets, the MWRD has continued to work with affected communities to document flood impacts and identify needed stormwater improvements.

In 2025, projects under construction in partnership with municipalities included large-scale flood control and streambank stabilization projects; green infrastructure (GI) projects in numerous communities; and new stormwater storage and conveyance systems throughout Cook County. Further details concerning these projects and other stormwater management activities are provided in this annual report.

2025 accomplishments for the Stormwater Management Program include the following:

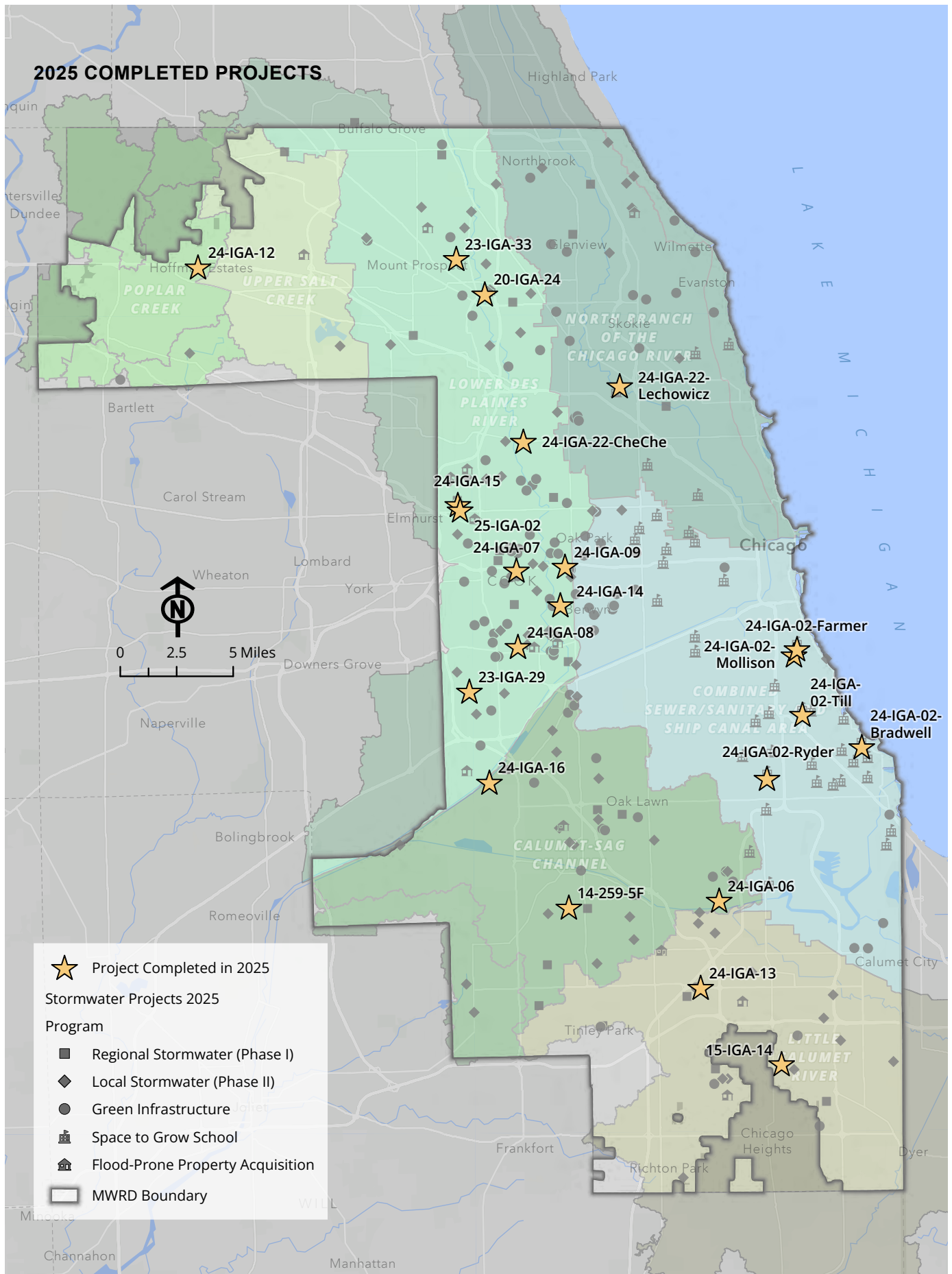
- Advanced construction of channel improvements along Addison Creek in the communities of Northlake, Melrose Park, Stone Park, Bellwood, Westchester and Broadview;
- Achieved final completion of the Diversion Channel on Midlothian Creek (Phase I) and substantial completion of the Flood Control Project on Midlothian Creek (Phase II) in Robbins to reduce flood impacts affecting 140 acres and 92 structures;
- Completed 16 Green Infrastructure Partnership Program projects, including five Space to Grow green schoolyard projects at Chicago Public Schools (CPS), which can capture millions of gallons of stormwater runoff that could otherwise overwhelm local sewers during heavy storm events;
- Amended the WMO to clarify and streamline requirements and to extend the pilot study on offsite stormwater detention and volume control;
- Collaborated with the Army Corps of Engineers to update hydrologic and hydraulic modeling using the latest rainfall data in a portion of the Little Calumet River Watershed. The results of this effort will provide insights into the approach for updating hydrologic and hydraulic modeling in other watersheds across the MWRD's service area;
- Updated the MWRD's Stormwater Partnership Program application process to make it more accessible for all municipalities in Cook County. All of the MWRD's stormwater partnership programs are offered on an annual basis. The inclusion of a pre-application step provides applicants feedback and guidance early in the application process, with webinars and other online resources providing additional support. Additionally, communication was enhanced through monthly email reminders, presentations at the Watershed Planning Council meetings, and an improved application tracking system;
- Began a feasibility study for a major new reservoir system in southeast Cook County, in partnership with the Forest Preserves of Cook County (Forest Preserves). The proposed multi-benefit project aims to reduce community flood risks by providing up to 530 million gallons of stormwater storage and create new ecological habitats and recreational opportunities;
- Entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Chicago Department of Water Management to help construct two projects on the West Side of the city to add storage capacity in the combined sewer system, reducing the chances of future basement backups.

BELOW *An egret stands on the edge of a stormwater pond at Robbins Heritage Park and Midlothian Restoration Project, Aug. 27, 2025. The MWRD is working with the Village of Robbins to help reduce flooding and restore Midlothian Creek, and as a result, the project is inviting new wildlife and creating recreational and economic development opportunities that strengthen and revitalize the community.*



BELOW Water flows over riffles in the middle of Midlothian Creek, Oct. 21, 2025, in Robbins, Ill., aerating the water to support a healthy aquatic ecosystem. The riffles and newly restored banks are part of the Robbins Heritage Park and Midlothian Creek Restoration Project, which was designed to help address overbank flooding and provide access to natural areas for residents.





2025 COMPLETED PROJECTS

Flood Control in the vicinity of 131st Street and Cypress Lane in Palos Heights

Contract: 14-259-5F

Watershed: Cal-Sag Channel

Location: Palos Heights

This project will involve the demolition of a property at 13040 South Cypress Lane and the installation of a swale at this location, along with the installation of a new downstream storm sewer and an outfall to Navajo Creek.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$1,081,810

MWRD Contribution: \$1,176,062

Status: Contract closeout

Construction of a Levee along Thorn Creek at Arquilla Park in Glenwood

Contract: 15-IGA-14

Watershed: Little Calumet

Location: Glenwood

This project includes a new levee at Arquilla Park to protect residential structures from overbank flooding. The Village of Glenwood is responsible for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of this project.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$6,559,651

MWRD Contribution: \$3,870,000

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Acquisition of Flood-Prone Properties Des Plaines Phase IV

Contract: 20-IGA-24

Watershed: Lower Des Plaines

Location: Des Plaines

This project is a cost sharing agreement with the City of Des Plaines where seven flood-prone homes near the Des Plaines River were acquired.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,364,036

MWRD Contribution: \$2,364,036

Status: Closed

Springdale Drainage Improvements in Western Springs

Contract: 23-IGA-29

Watershed: Lower Des Plaines

Location: Western Springs

This project is expected to mitigate flooding in the project area, benefiting approximately 20 homes and two local roads by providing adequate drainage to depressional areas of the neighborhood and detention for excess stormwater runoff. The Village will construct a supplemental storm sewer system and storage basin. The Village will be responsible for operations and maintenance of the project.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$5,593,983

MWRD Contribution: \$985,779

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Craig Manor Drainage System Improvements

Contract: 23-IGA-33

Watershed: Lower Des Plaines

Location: Des Plaines

This project will construct drainage system improvements including a new 2.5 acre-feet underground detention facility, relief sewers to convey flow into the detention facility and outlet storm sewers.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$3,804,055

MWRD Contribution: \$1,000,000

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Infrastructure at Bradwell Elementary School in Chicago (Space to Grow)

Contract: 24-IGA-02-Bradwell

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Chicago, CPS

Design and construction of playground at Bradwell Elementary School in Chicago using green infrastructure in partnership with the Chicago Department of Water Management and CPS, with CPS being responsible for operations and maintenance.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$3,924,573

MWRD Contribution: \$1,744,547

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Infrastructure at Farmer Elementary School in Chicago (Space to Grow)

Contract: 24-IGA-02-Farmer

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Chicago, CPS

Design and construction of playground at Farmer Elementary School in Chicago using green infrastructure in partnership with the Chicago Department of Water Management and Chicago Public Schools, with Chicago Public Schools being responsible for operations and maintenance.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,965,000

MWRD Contribution: —

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Infrastructure at Mollison Elementary School in Chicago (Space to Grow)

Contract: 24-IGA-02-Mollison

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Chicago, CPS

Design and construction of playground at Mollison Elementary School in Chicago using green infrastructure in partnership with the Chicago Department of Water Management and CPS, with CPS being responsible for operations and maintenance.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,558,443

MWRD Contribution: \$1,127,618

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Infrastructure at Ryder Elementary School in Chicago (Space to Grow)

Contract: 24-IGA-02-Ryder

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Chicago, CPS

Design and construction of playground at Ryder Elementary School in Chicago using green infrastructure in partnership with the Chicago Department of Water Management and CPS, with CPS being responsible for operations and maintenance.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,460,150

MWRD Contribution: \$1,107,068

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Infrastructure at Till Elementary School in Chicago (Space to Grow)

Contract: 24-IGA-02-Till

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Chicago, CPS

Design and construction of playground at Till Elementary School in Chicago using green infrastructure in partnership with the Chicago Department of Water Management and CPS, with CPS being responsible for operations and maintenance.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,935,040

MWRD Contribution: \$1,320,768

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Public Library Green Roof in Blue Island

Contract: 24-IGA-06

Watershed: Cal-Sag Channel

Location: Blue Island

Installation of a green roof on the existing Blue Island Public Library, with the public library being responsible for operations and maintenance.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$560,315

MWRD Contribution: \$265,839

Status: Closed

17th and Lexington Public Parking Lot Improvements in Broadview

Contract: 24-IGA-07

Watershed: Lower Des Plaines

Location: Broadview

Replacement of an existing parking lot with permeable pavers, with the Village of Broadview being responsible for operations and maintenance.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$450,710

MWRD Contribution: \$255,692

Status: Closed

Green Parking Lot Improvements in Brookfield

Contract: 24-IGA-08
Watershed: Lower Des Plaines
Location: Brookfield
Replacement of an impervious parking lot with permeable pavers and installation of a rain garden at Brookfield water tower and Maple North Park in Brookfield, with the Village of Brookfield being responsible for operations and maintenance.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$351,430
MWRD Contribution: \$185,877
Status: Closed

Green Alley Project 2 in Forest Park

Contract: 24-IGA-09
Watershed: Lower Des Plaines
Location: Forest Park
Replacement of an impervious alley with permeable pavers, with the Village of Forest Park being responsible for operations and maintenance.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$581,906
MWRD Contribution: \$303,810
Status: Closed

Village Hall Green Parking Lot in Hoffman Estates

Contract: 24-IGA-12
Watershed: Poplar Creek
Location: Hoffman Estates
Installation of bioswales and replacement of impervious parking spaces with permeable pavers at the Village Hall parking lot, with the Village of Hoffman Estates being responsible for operations and maintenance.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$1,951,853
MWRD Contribution: \$435,682
Status: Closed

Green Alley Program in Markham

Contract: 24-IGA-13
Watershed: Little Calumet River
Location: Markham
Conversion of existing impervious alleys to permeable pavers, with the City of Markham being responsible for operations and maintenance.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$607,697
MWRD Contribution: \$460,800
Status: Closed

Green Alley Project in North Riverside

Contract: 24-IGA-14
Watershed: Lower Des Plaines
Location: North Riverside
Conversion of existing impervious alleys with permeable pavers, with the Village of North Riverside being responsible for operations and maintenance.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$909,139
MWRD Contribution: \$637,433
Status: Closed

Public Library Permeable Parking Lot in Northlake

Contract: 24-IGA-15
Watershed: Lower Des Plaines
Location: Northlake
Replacement of an impervious parking lot with permeable pavers at Northlake Public Library, with the Public Library District being responsible for operations and maintenance.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$568,508
MWRD Contribution: \$342,800
Status: Closed

Town Center Green Infrastructure Improvements in Willow Springs

Contract: 24-IGA-16
Watershed: Cal-Sag Channel
Location: Willow Springs
Replacement of impervious streets with permeable pavers, with the Village of Willow Springs being responsible for operations and maintenance.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,238,479
MWRD Contribution: \$951,788
Status: Closed

Green Infrastructure at Che Che Pin Qua Woods in Chicago (FPDCC)

Contract: 24-IGA-22-CheChe
Watershed: Lower Des Plaines
Location: Forest Preserves
This multi-year agreement, in partnership with the Forest Preserves, will design and construct green infrastructure and ecosystem restoration projects at various Forest Preserves locations. Forest Preserves will be responsible for operation and maintenance of the new installations.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$177,232
MWRD Contribution: \$31,588
Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Infrastructure at Thaddeus S. Lechowicz Woods in Chicago (FPDCC)

Contract: 24-IGA-22-Lechowicz
Watershed: North Branch
Location: Forest Preserves
This multi-year agreement, in partnership with the Forest Preserves, will design and construct green infrastructure and ecosystem restoration projects at various Forest Preserves locations. Forest Preserves will be responsible for operation and maintenance of the new installations.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$97,848
MWRD Contribution: \$48,924
Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Wilke Parkway and East Drive Stormwater Storage in Northlake

Contract: 25-IGA-02
Watershed: Lower Des Plaines
Location: Northlake
Construction of two stormwater detention basins within the City of Northlake to alleviate localized flooding in the area.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$345,120
MWRD Contribution: \$171,366
Status: Closed

OPPOSITE TOP A bird's eye view shows the nearly completed Glenwood Levee along Thorn Creek in Glenwood, Ill., July 15, 2025. The MWRD and the Village of Glenwood collaborated on the project to protect residents from flooding, create sustainable infrastructure to manage stormwater and enhance neighborhood connectivity. The project included 1,000 feet of storm sewer and other utility improvements.

BOTTOM MWRD Board of Commissioners join Glenwood, Ill., leaders in cutting the ribbon to mark the completion of the Glenwood Levee at George Arquilla Park, Aug. 25, 2025. The levee will mitigate flooding for 29 homes and other community structures impacted by overbank flooding along Thorn Creek.



PHASE I – REGION-WIDE STREAMBANK AND FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS

The map displays the following project locations:

- Ongoing Projects (Orange Squares):**
 - 12-056-5F (North Branch of the Chicago River)
 - 11-187-3F (Lower Des Plaines River)
 - 13-199-3F (Lower Des Plaines River)
 - 19-IGA-22 (Calumet-Sag Channel)
 - 24-IGA-20 (Little Calumet River)
- Completed Projects (Black Squares):** Numerous locations throughout the county, including Buffalo Grove, Northbrook, Glenview, Wilmette, Evanston, Skokie, Mount Prospect, Hoffman Estates, Carol Stream, Wheaton, Lombard, York, Downers Grove, Elmhurst, Oak Park, Berwyn, Naperville, Bartlett, Bolingbrook, Romeoville, Oak Lawn, Tinley Park, Frankfort, Richton Park, Chicago Heights, Dyer, Manhattan, Channahon, and Moline.

Legend:

- Ongoing Project
- Completed Project
- MWRD Boundary

Scale: 0, 2.5, 5 Miles

Orientation: North arrow pointing up.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM PHASE 1 OVERVIEW

One of the initial goals of the Stormwater Management Program was to develop Detailed Watershed Plans (DWP) for each of Cook County's six watersheds. The DWPs identify and prioritize regional stormwater projects based on a benefit to cost ratio. Projects are identified into two categories;

- 1.) Streambank stabilization projects, which address critical active streambank erosion threatening public safety, structures and/or infrastructure.
- 2.) Flood control projects address regional overbank flooding through traditional measures such as stormwater detention reservoirs, levees and conveyance improvements.

The MWRD Board has approved over 30 regional projects moving forward to design and construction.

STREAMBANK STABILIZATION PROJECTS

The following is a detailed list of ongoing streambank stabilization projects. Locations of both ongoing and completed streambank stabilization projects can be found on page 8.

Streambank Stabilization Along Tinley Creek

Contract: 19-IGA-22 **Watershed:** Cal-Sag Channel **Location:** Orland Park, IL

Cost-sharing agreement with the Village of Orland Park. The project will stabilize approximately 2,800 linear feet of Tinley Creek between 151st Street and Oriole Court and 2,200 linear feet between 86th Avenue and 159th Street using geolifts, live stake vegetation and gentler slopes.

Estimated Construction Cost: \$3,800,000 **MWRD Contribution:** \$3,800,000 **Status:** Cost Sharing Agreement

FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS

The following is a detailed list of ongoing flood control projects. Locations of both ongoing and completed flood control projects can be found on page 8.

Addison Creek Channel Improvements

Contract: 11-187-3F

Watershed: Lower Des Plaines

Location: Northlake, Melrose Park, Stone Park, Bellwood, Westchester, Broadview

Conveyance improvements along Addison Creek in Bellwood, Broadview, Melrose Park, Northlake, Stone Park and Westchester through various types of channel improvements, such as widening, gabions, sheet piles, riprap and stream clearing.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$86,936,759

MWRD Contribution: \$71,353,642

Status: Construction

Flood Control Project on Prairie Creek

Contract: 12-056-5F

Watershed: Lower Des Plaines

Location: Park Ridge, Maine Twp
Flood storage and conveyance improvements along Prairie Creek through channel modifications, detention expansion, diversion sewer construction, and streambank stabilization. American Rescue Plan Act funding provided to the MWRD by Cook County will be used to cover a portion of the costs associated with this project.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$32,560,531

MWRD Contribution: \$32,560,531

Status: Negotiation / Evaluation

Lyons and McCook Levee Improvements

Contract: 13-199-3F

Watershed: Lower Des Plaines

Location: Forest View, USACE

Levee improvements to prevent overtopping of the Lyons and McCook Levees along the Des Plaines River during significant flood events, complementing work performed by the Army Corps of Engineers to perform repairs on these levees. The Army Corps of Engineers completed repairs to both levees with exceptions at the railroad and utility crossings south of 47th Street due to guidelines for federally sponsored work. American Rescue Plan Act funding provided to the MWRD by Cook County will be used to cover a portion of the costs associated with this project.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,852,466

MWRD Contribution: \$3,003,066

Status: Design

Multi-Benefit Flood Control Project in Southeast Cook County

Contract: 24-IGA-20

Watershed: Little Calumet

Location: Forest Preserves

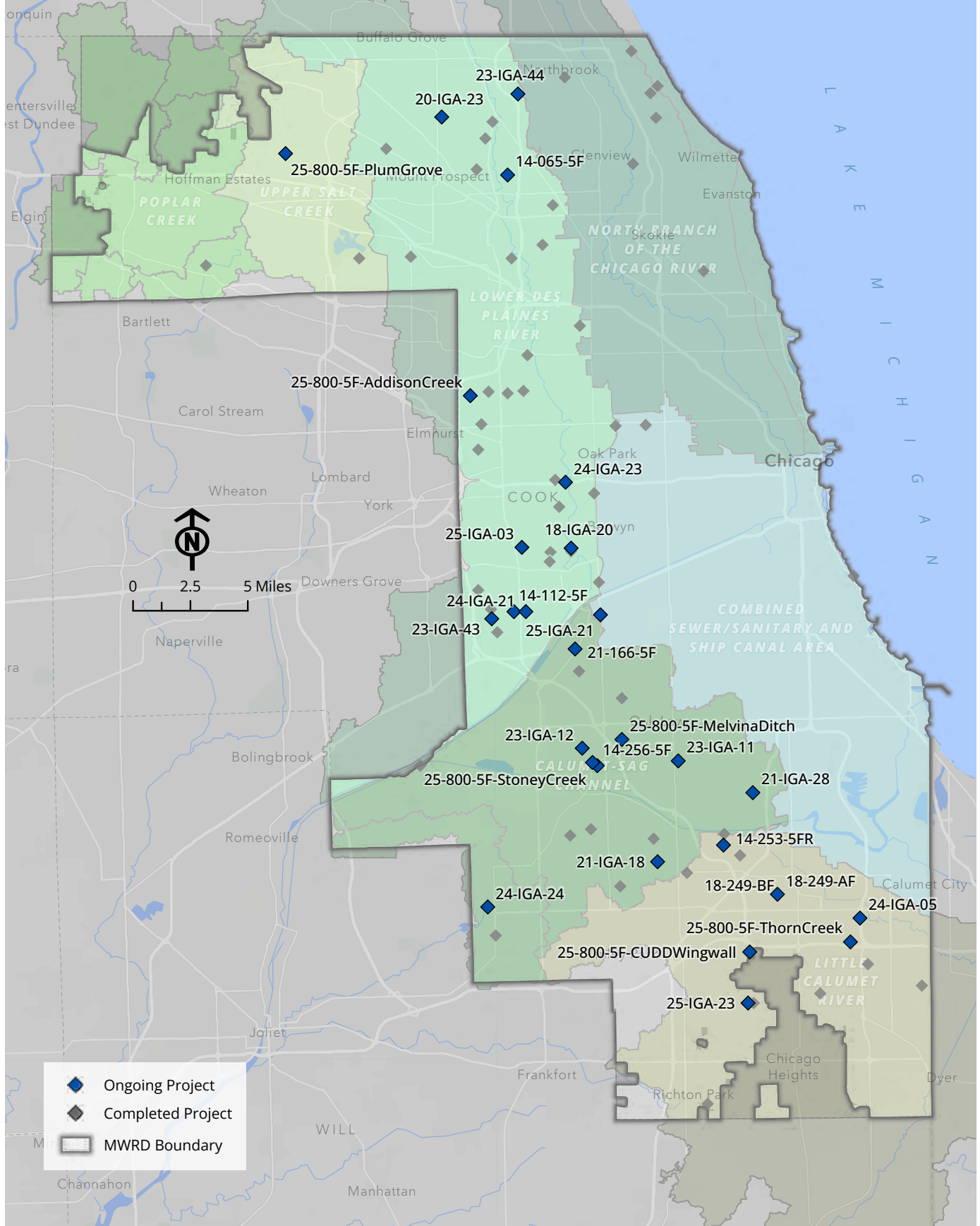
Feasibility study for floodwater storage near the confluence of Deer Creek and Third Creek, to reduce flood damage and provide increased flood protection for communities along Deer Creek, Thorn Creek and the Little Calumet River. This is a partnership project with the Forest Preserves.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD

MWRD Contribution: TBD

Status: Planning

PHASE II – LOCALIZED STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS



PHASE II – LOCALIZED STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

In 2014, the Illinois State Legislature expanded the authorities of the MWRD's stormwater management legislation to address local drainage and flooding problems and to acquire flood-prone property from property owners on a voluntary basis. These legislative changes form the basis of the MWRD's Phase II Stormwater Management Program. The MWRD also performs stormwater planning to address flooding by identifying potential projects within publicly- and privately-owned property.

LOCAL STORMWATER PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

The MWRD initiated the Stormwater Partnership Program and Conceptual Projects Program to directly support municipalities with stormwater management. These programs assist municipalities throughout Cook County in identifying, funding, and building projects that address localized flooding and drainage concerns. These projects utilize a variety of traditional engineered solutions such as localized detention, upsizing critical storm sewers and culverts, pumping stations, and establishing drainage way, alongside green infrastructure (GI). Since 2013, 93 projects have been either completed or are ongoing.

The Conceptual Projects Program, now known as the Technical Assistance Program, provides technical assistance to municipalities that have identified flooding or other stormwater-related issues, but no engineering analysis has been performed. MWRD assistance is provided through a preliminary engineering study to identify solutions to the stormwater related issues.

The Stormwater Partnership Program reimburses construction costs for stormwater projects with an established scope and design. Projects are prioritized on their ability to reduce localized flooding and the number of structures benefitted by the project amongst other criteria. As funding allows, the MWRD and partner agency enter into an IGA to partner on the project with long term maintenance responsibilities assigned to the partnering agency. Design and/or construction of each installation is monitored by the MWRD. After completion, the MWRD and the partners inspect the project installations, ensuring maintenance is in line with the project's operation and maintenance plan. The partnering agency is responsible for long term maintenance. For more information, visit mwrdd.org/swta.

LOCALIZED FLOODING PROJECTS (PHASE II)

The following is a detailed list of ongoing localized flooding projects. Locations of both ongoing and completed localized flooding projects can be found on page 10.

Flood Control Project on Central Road from Des Plaines River to Glenwood Lane

Contract: 14-065-5F

Watershed: Lower Des Plaines

Location: Northfield Twp, IDOT

Replacement of existing storm sewers to upsize capacity and construction of a new stormwater storage area.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost:
\$60,150,000

MWRD Contribution: \$29,000,000

Status: Design

Flood Control Project on Midlothian Creek in Robbins

Contract: 14-253-5FR

Watershed: Little Calumet

Location: Robbins

Channel improvements along Midlothian Creek in Robbins (including connection to the diversion channel completed in Phase I), new stormwater detention storage, and construction of rain gardens and vegetated swales in adjacent residential area.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost:
\$20,640,887

MWRD Contribution: \$20,640,887

Status: Construction

Flood Control Project in the Worth Woods Subdivision in Worth

Contract: 14-256-5F

Watershed: Cal-Sag Channel

Location: Worth

Drainage improvements in the Worth Woods Subdivision, outletting into Lucas Berg Pit with a high-water overflow drain through a storm sewer to the Calumet-Sag Channel.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost:
\$4,308,946

MWRD Contribution: \$4,308,946

Status: Design

Central Park Stormwater Detention Basin and Separate Storm Sewer Improvements in Harvey

Contract: 18-249-AF

Watershed: Little Calumet

Location: Harvey

Stormwater detention basin at the future Central Park in Harvey, along with sewer separation to convey stormwater to the proposed basin and allow discharge into the Wood Street storm sewer system that outlets to the Cal-Sag Channel and low-flow discharge into the combined sewer system. American Rescue Plan Act funding provided to the District by Cook County will be used to cover a portion of the costs associated with this project.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost:
\$13,913,793

MWRD Contribution: \$11,803,633

Status: Design

Demolition for Central Park Stormwater Detention Basin and Separate Storm Sewer Improvements in Harvey

Contract: 18-249-BF

Watershed: Little Calumet

Location: Harvey

Demolition of 16 residential homes for construction of the Central Park Stormwater Detention Basin and Separate Storm Sewer Improvements in Harvey.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost:
\$940,118

MWRD Contribution: \$940,118

Status: Design

Groveland Avenue Levee Improvements in Riverside

Contract: 18-IGA-20

Watershed: Cal-Sag Channel

Location: Riverside

Improvements to the Groveland Avenue levee on the Des Plaines River in the Village of Riverside. The Village entered into a Project Partnership Agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers as its local sponsor. The MWRD will provide the Village with a portion the non-federal share of the design and construction costs.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost:
\$16,508,000

MWRD Contribution: \$4,907,014

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Flood Control Project on Willow Road at McDonald Creek Tributary A in Prospect Heights**Contract:** 20-IGA-23**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** CCDOTH, Prospect Heights
Improvements at Willow Road and McDonald Creek Tributary A through raising of the road and installation of culverts. Phase I of this project is completed along Owen Court and related compensatory storage areas.**Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost:** \$2,628,183**MWRD Contribution:** \$1,800,000**Status:** Negotiation / Evaluation

71st Street Ditch Regional Flood Mitigation in the Vicinity of Bedford Park**Contract:** 21-166-5F**Watershed:** Cal-Sag Channel**Location:** Summit, Bedford Park, Justice, Bridgeview

Multi-jurisdictional project to provide flood relief in the vicinity of Harlem Avenue, Archer Avenue, and the 71st Street Ditch, including: 1) New Outfall Sewer to CSSC at 67th Street Extended; 2) Archer Viaduct Sewer and detention pond; 3) Roberts Road Relief Sewer; 4) Summit Detention Pond – to attenuate flows from the Harlem Avenue storm sewer being installed by and upsized by MWRD (under 25-IGA-21).

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$40,120,000**MWRD Contribution:** \$44,467,847**Status:** Design

Flood Control Project on Calumet-Sag Tributary C in Bremen Township, Midlothian, and Crestwood**Contract:** 21-IGA-18**Watershed:** Cal-Sag Channel**Location:** Midlothian, Crestwood
Channel reconstruction, widening, culvert upsizing, and stabilization improvements along Tributary C, replacement of the existing culvert at 143rd Street and Linder Avenue, and stormwater detention along Tributary C.**Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost:** \$5,897,043**MWRD Contribution:** \$5,904,000**Status:** Negotiation / Evaluation

Flood Control Project for the Washington Street Area in Blue Island**Contract:** 21-IGA-28**Watershed:** Cal-Sag Channel**Location:** Blue Island
Proposed sewer improvements and stormwater detention to address flooding associated with overland flow and basement backups.**Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost:** \$5,700,000**MWRD Contribution:** \$5,700,000**Status:** Negotiation / Evaluation

Stormwater Storage at Community High School District 218 Administration Sports Field and Storm Sewer Improvements in Oak Lawn**Contract:** 23-IGA-11**Watershed:** Cal-Sag Channel**Location:** Oak Lawn

Storm sewer improvements and stormwater detention at the Community High School District 218's ball fields to alleviate flooding in the Village of Oak Lawn.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$14,966,055**MWRD Contribution:** \$6,500,000**Status:** Cost Sharing Agreement

Roberts Road Drainage Improvements in Palos Hills**Contract:** 23-IGA-12**Watershed:** Cal-Sag Channel**Location:** Palos Hills

Installation of box culverts along 101st Street and 78th Avenue and storm sewer along 103rd Street with a new outfall to the Lucas Diversion Ditch.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$11,600,000**MWRD Contribution:** \$3,500,000**Status:** Negotiation / Evaluation

Lyons Township Acquisition of Flood-Prone Properties and Construction of Stormwater Storage**Contract:** 23-IGA-43**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** Lyons Twp

Acquisition of flood-prone property and construction of stormwater storage in Lyons Township. American Rescue Plan Act funding provided to the MWRD by Cook County will be used to cover all costs associated with this project.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$1,070,771**MWRD Contribution:** —**Status:** Cost Sharing Agreement

Citation Lake Stormwater Improvements in Northfield Township**Contract:** 23-IGA-44**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** Northfield Twp

Stormwater detention improvements through the installation of storage vaults under roadways and new storm sewers to improve conveyance. American Rescue Plan Act funding provided to the MWRD by Cook County will be used to cover a portion of the costs associated with this project.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,948,746**MWRD Contribution:** \$2,948,746**Status:** Cost Sharing Agreement

Thorn Ditch Flood Mitigation Project in South Holland**Contract:** 24-IGA-05**Watershed:** Little Calumet**Location:** South Holland

Replacement of existing culverts along Thorn Ditch and stormwater detention storage at local parks in South Holland. American Rescue Plan Act funding provided to the MWRD by Cook County will be used to cover a portion of the costs associated with this project.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$8,325,000**MWRD Contribution:** \$5,860,000**Status:** Cost Sharing Agreement

IDOT 55th Street Relief Sewer - West Phase II**Contract:** 24-IGA-21**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** IDOT

Construction of a 60-inch relief sewer on 55th Street, between LaGrange Road and East Avenue in Countryside.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$1,621,500**MWRD Contribution:** \$1,621,500**Status:** Cost Sharing Agreement

I-290 Frontage Road Sewer and Outfall in Maywood**Contract:** 24-IGA-23**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** IDOT

Construction of a new large diameter trunk storm sewer along the I-290 Frontage Road in Maywood with a dedicated outfall to the Lower Des Plaines River in partnership with the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$15,320,000**MWRD Contribution:** \$5,707,000**Status:** Negotiation / Evaluation

157th Street and Spring Creek Flood Mitigation in Orland Township**Contract:** 24-IGA-24**Watershed:** Cal-Sag Channel**Location:** Orland Twp Road Dist

Engineering design for improvements to raise 157th Street out of the floodplain and provide compensatory storage in Orland Township. American Rescue Plan Act funding provided to the MWRD by Cook County will be used to cover all costs associated with this project.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$0**MWRD Contribution:** —**Status:** Cost Sharing Agreement

Riparian Area Improvements at Multiple Locations in Cook County**Contract:** 25-800-5F-ThornCreek**Watershed:** Little Calumet**Location:** South Holland

Preliminary and final engineering for streambank stabilization to address erosion issues along Thorn Creek near 173rd Street in South Holland.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD**MWRD Contribution:** TBD**Status:** Design

Riparian Area Improvements at Multiple Locations in Cook County

Contract: 25-800-5F-StoneyCreek
Watershed: Cal-Sag Channel
Location: Palos Hills
Preliminary and final engineering for streambank stabilization to address erosion issues near MWRD's pump station located in Palos Hills off of 76th Avenue north of Southwest Highway (IL 7).
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD
MWRD Contribution: TBD
Status: Design

Riparian Area Improvements at Multiple Locations in Cook County

Contract: 25-800-5F-MelvinaDitch
Watershed: Cal-Sag Channel
Location: Chicago Ridge
Preliminary and final engineering for streambank stabilization to address a failing dual CMP culvert and associated erosion issues along Melvina Ditch in Chicago Ridge north of Southwest highway and west of Ridgeland Ave.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD
MWRD Contribution: TBD
Status: Design

Riparian Area Improvements at Multiple Locations in Cook County

Contract: 25-800-5F-PlumGrove
Watershed: Upper Salt Creek
Location: TBD
Preliminary and final engineering for stabilization and associated repairs to the existing dam embankment at the Plum Grove Reservoir in Palatine.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD
MWRD Contribution: TBD
Status: Design

Riparian Area Improvements at Multiple Locations in Cook County

Contract: 25-800-5F-AddisonCreek
Watershed: Lower Des Plaines
Location: Northlake
Preliminary and final engineering for streambank stabilization to address erosion issues south of the Northlake Reservoir outfall near the West Leyden High School bleachers in Northlake. This work will be completed by the MWRD Maintenance and Operations Department or their contractors.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD
MWRD Contribution: TBD
Status: Design

Riparian Area Improvements at Multiple Locations in Cook County

Contract: 25-800-5F-CUDDWingwall
Watershed: Little Calumet
Location: TBD
Final drawings and associated specifications for the MWRD Maintenance and Operations Department to construct the wingwalls located on either side of Palmer Boulevard that have broken off and need to be replaced.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD
MWRD Contribution: TBD
Status: Design

Central Area Sewer Separation Project in La Grange Park

Contract: 25-IGA-03
Watershed: Lower Des Plaines
Location: La Grange Park
New storm sewers, underground detention, pump station and force main to outlet to Salt Creek, and installation of green infrastructure to reduce peak

stormwater flow to the drainage system in La Grange Park.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$12,091,885
MWRD Contribution: \$4,000,000
Status: Negotiation / Evaluation

Upsizing of IDOT Storm Sewer Under Harlem Ave from 63rd St to Archer Ave in Summit and Chicago

Contract: 25-IGA-21
Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area
Location: Upsizing of a proposed IDOT storm sewer from 54" to 72". MWRD will fund the incremental cost between the original proposed storm sewer size and the larger proposed storm sewer size.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$1,880,000
MWRD Contribution: \$1,880,000
Status: Under Development

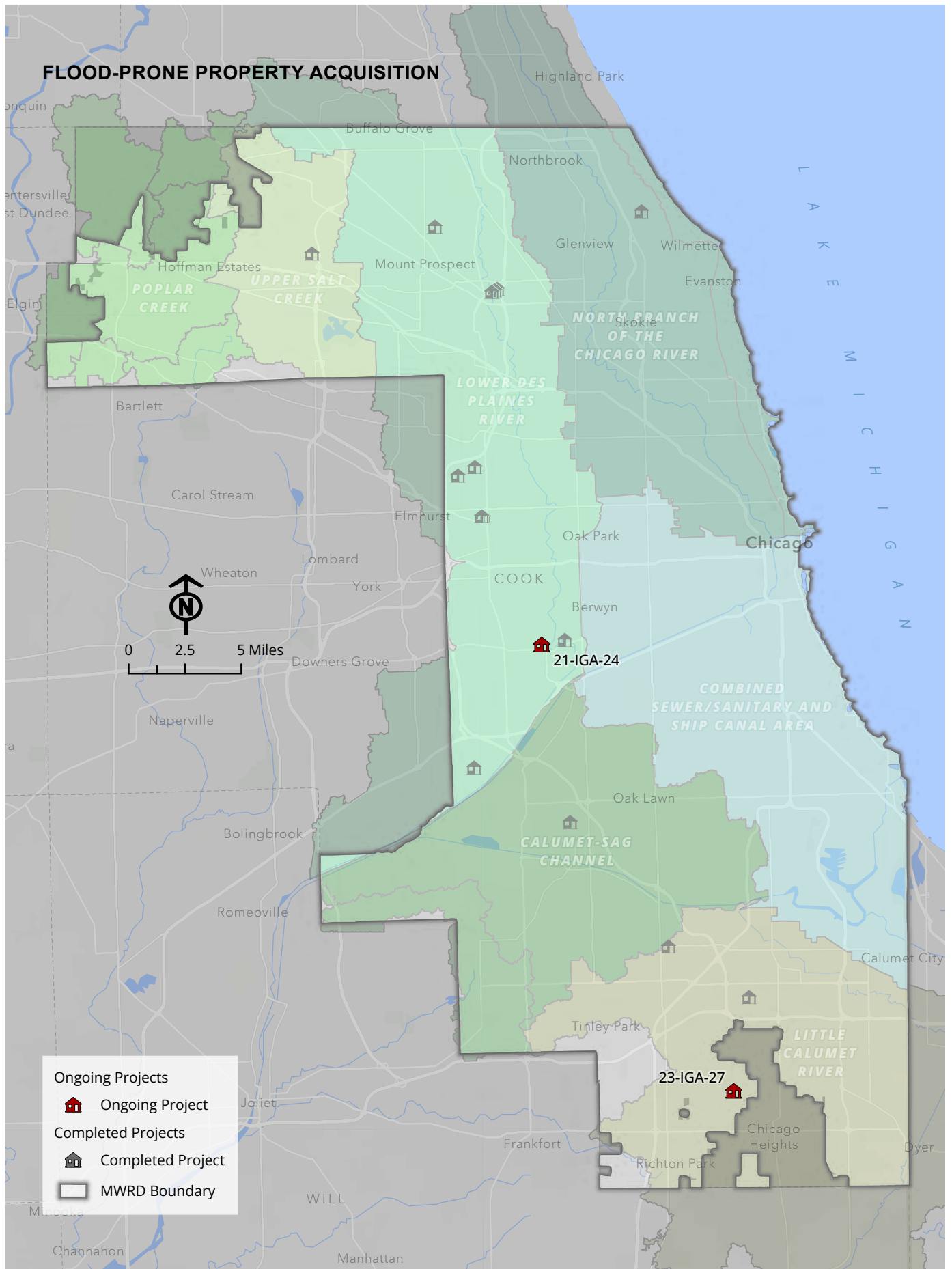
Flossmoor Road Viaduct Storm Sewer Improvements in Flossmoor

Contract: 25-IGA-23
Watershed: Little Calumet
Location: Flossmoor
New storm sewers and inlets along Flossmoor Road and Sterling Avenue to connect to the existing storm sewer to convey flow to a detention basin adjacent to the Heather Hill Elementary School.
Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$3,270,000
MWRD Contribution: \$1,000,000
Status: Negotiation / Evaluation



ABOVE MWRD Stormwater Engineering team and their counterparts from the Forest Preserves of Cook County discuss recreational elements and spoil pile placement, Dec. 17, 2025, at a conference room in the MWRD's Main Office Building Annex in Chicago. The meeting is part of a feasibility study for the Deer Creek-Third Creek Project, a collaborative initiative to provide flood relief, restore the local ecology and create new outdoor recreational opportunities for south suburban residents.

FLOOD-PRONE PROPERTY ACQUISITION



VOLUNTARY FLOOD-PRONE PROPERTY ACQUISITION

On August 7, 2014, the MWRD Board adopted a policy on the selection and prioritization of projects for acquiring voluntary flood-prone property. This program is comprised of three distinct components:

- **Local Sponsor Assistance Program:** The MWRD's top priority will be to facilitate the Illinois Emergency Management Agency's federally funded program by assisting Local Sponsor communities in providing their share of the cost for property acquisition.
- **MWRD Initiated Program:** In communities where the MWRD Board approved capital projects from the MWRD's Detailed Watershed Plans, should the cost of a property acquisition alternative be less than the capital project while providing equivalent benefits, the acquisition alternative will be pursued.
- **Local Government Application Program:** The MWRD will consider applications directly from local governments requesting property acquisition of specific flood-prone structures.

Since 2017, the MWRD solicited applications from municipalities and townships for assistance with the acquisition of flood-prone structures located throughout Cook County. The MWRD has entered into IGAs with several municipalities and the Cook County Land Bank Authority and has acquired 122 flood-prone properties at the end of 2025. Upon acquisition, the structures are removed and deed restrictions are placed on the acquired properties, requiring them to remain as open spaces in perpetuity. For more information, visit mwrdd.org/fppa.

VOLUNTARY FLOOD-PRONE PROPERTY ACQUISITION PROJECTS

The following is a detailed list of ongoing flood-prone property acquisition projects. Locations of both ongoing and completed flood-prone property acquisition projects can be found on page 14.

Acquisition of Flood-Prone Properties in Lyons

Contract: 21-IGA-24

Watershed: Lower Des Plaines

Location: Lyons

Acquisition and demolition of up to 26 homes in the floodway and floodplain along Salt Creek in the Village of Lyons.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$5,500,000

MWRD Contribution: \$5,500,000

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Acquisition of Flood-Prone Property in Flossmoor

Contract: 23-IGA-27

Watershed: Little Calumet

Location: Flossmoor

Acquisition of flood-prone property in the Village of Flossmoor.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$349,720

MWRD Contribution: \$115,000

Status: IGA executed



ABOVE A demolition crew removes a home that repeatedly flooded and creates a passive space. Through the MWRD's Voluntary Flood Prone Property Acquisition Program, the MWRD helps local governments pay for the voluntary acquisition of flood-prone property in Cook County.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure (GI) focuses on engineered systems that capture and manage precipitation where it falls rather than traveling through conventional stormwater systems. By addressing the increase of impervious area due to land development, GI can reduce combined sewer discharges, localized flooding and stormwater impacts in an area. GI includes natural systems which use vegetation, such as bioswales and rain gardens, to manage rainfall. GI also includes manufactured solutions such as rain barrels, permeable pavement and rainwater harvesting. Established in 2014, the Green Infrastructure Partnership Program seeks to increase the acceptance and investment of GI throughout Cook County through numerous partnerships.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The MWRD introduced the Green Infrastructure Partnership Program to scale its investment into GI. The program seeks to partner with local communities and public agencies throughout Cook County to fund and build GI projects. These projects vary in size and scope and can include roadside bioswales and rain gardens, green roofs, permeable pavement alleys, green streetscapes and eco-orchards.

The program is available to government organizations within the MWRD's corporate boundaries. Projects are prioritized on their ability to capture and store water (measured as design retention capacity), flood risk, and structures benefitted by the GI amongst other criteria. The MWRD and a partnering agency execute an IGA to facilitate the project, with long term maintenance responsibilities assigned to the partnering agency. Design and construction of each installation are monitored by the MWRD to optimize benefits. After completion, the MWRD inspects the installation, ensuring maintenance is in line with the project's operation and maintenance plan. For more information, visit mwrdd.org/gipp.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM PROJECTS

In 2017 through 2024, 117 projects were selected. The projects that have since completed construction have provided a total of 10.2 million gallons of design retention capacity (DRC).

In 2025, an additional 15 projects were selected from the round of applicants that were reviewed in late 2024 to early 2025. These will provide a combined estimated DRC of 1,426,136 gallons once constructed in 2026. Also in 2025, the MWRD opened the latest round of Green Infrastructure Partnership Program applications, and eight new projects were selected in summer 2026.

The following is a list of GI ongoing projects scheduled for construction in 2026. For completed projects, refer to page 5. Locations of both ongoing and completed GI projects can be found on page 16.

Suburban Green Schoolyard Pilot Project 1 in Burnham

Contract: 24-279-5F

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Burnham SD 154-5

Green infrastructure and other site amenities to transform Burnham Elementary School's schoolyard into a vibrant and sustainable space.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,124,799

MWRD Contribution: \$1,800,000

Status: Construction

Green Infrastructure at Moos Elementary School in Chicago (Space to Grow)

Contract: 24-IGA-02

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Chicago, CPS

Design and construction of playground at Moos Elementary School in Chicago using GI in partnership with the Chicago Department of Water Management and CPS.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD

MWRD Contribution: TBD

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Infrastructure at Earhart Elementary School in Chicago (Space to Grow)

Contract: 24-IGA-02

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Chicago, CPS

Design and construction of playground at Earhart Elementary School in Chicago using GI in partnership with the Chicago Department of Water Management and CPS.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD

MWRD Contribution: TBD

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Infrastructure at Addams Elementary School in Chicago (Space to Grow)

Contract: 24-IGA-02

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Chicago, CPS

Design and construction of playground at Addams Elementary School in Chicago using GI in partnership with the Chicago Department of Water Management and CPS.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD

MWRD Contribution: TBD

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Infrastructure at Washington High School in Chicago (Space to Grow)

Contract: 24-IGA-02

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Chicago, CPS

Design and construction of playground at Washington High School in Chicago using green infrastructure in partnership with the Chicago Department of Water Management and CPS.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: TBD

MWRD Contribution: TBD

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

34th Street Rehabilitation Project in Berwyn

Contract: 25-IGA-05

Watershed: Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area

Location: Berwyn

Replacement of existing impervious roadways with permeable paver parking lanes in the City of Berwyn.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$7,777,148

MWRD Contribution: \$383,500

Status: Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Alley Paving in Cicero**Contract:** 25-IGA-07**Watershed:** Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area**Location:** Cicero

Conversion of three impervious alleys with permeable pavers in the Town of Cicero.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$792,168**MWRD Contribution:** \$486,000**Status:** Negotiation / Evaluation

5th Avenue Cutoff Park in Countryside**Contract:** 25-IGA-08**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** Countryside

Installation of two rain gardens and construction of one permeable parking lot using permeable pavers in the City of Countryside.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$809,378**MWRD Contribution:** \$70,500**Status:** Cost Sharing Agreement

Green Alley Project 3 in Forest Park**Contract:** 25-IGA-09**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** Forest Park

Conversion of an impervious alley with permeable pavers in the Village of Forest Park.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$666,640**MWRD Contribution:** \$336,700**Status:** IGA executed

Village Hall Green Parking Lot Improvements in Glenview**Contract:** 25-IGA-10**Watershed:** North Branch**Location:** Glenview

Replacement of the impervious parking lot at the Village Hall with permeable pavers in the Village of Glenview.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$1,440,866**MWRD Contribution:** \$499,000**Status:** IGA executed

North Village Hall Green Parking Lot in La Grange Park**Contract:** 25-IGA-11**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** La Grange Park

Replacement of the existing impervious Village Hall parking lot with permeable pavers in the Village of La Grange Park.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$235,070**MWRD Contribution:** \$79,800**Status:** IGA executed

School District 103 Green Infrastructure Project in Lyons**Contract:** 25-IGA-12**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** Lyons SD 103

Installation of a permeable paver parking lot, with School District 103 of Lyons being responsible for operations and maintenance.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$975,000**MWRD Contribution:** \$386,100**Status:** Negotiation / Evaluation

Green Alley Program 2 in Markham**Contract:** 25-IGA-13**Watershed:** Little Calumet**Location:** Markham

Conversion of two impervious alleys with permeable pavers in the City of Markham.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$444,623**MWRD Contribution:** \$391,500**Status:** IGA executed

Green Infrastructure Alley Improvements 3 in Maywood**Contract:** 25-IGA-14**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** Maywood

Conversion of two impervious alleys with permeable pavers in the Village of Maywood.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$862,520**MWRD Contribution:** \$440,000**Status:** IGA executed

Green Alleys Project in Oak Park**Contract:** 25-IGA-15**Watershed:** Combined Sewer/Sanitary and Ship Canal Area**Location:** Oak Park

Conversion of four impervious alleys with permeable pavers in the Village of Oak Park.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$2,392,459**MWRD Contribution:** \$450,000**Status:** IGA executed

Village Hall Permeable Parking Lot in River Forest**Contract:** 25-IGA-16**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** River Forest

Replacement of the existing impervious Village Hall parking lot with permeable pavers in the Village of River Forest.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$430,060**MWRD Contribution:** \$160,000**Status:** IGA executed

Village Hall Green Parking Lot in River Grove**Contract:** 25-IGA-17**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** River Grove

Replacement of the existing impervious Village Hall parking lot with permeable pavers in the Village of River Grove.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$985,105**MWRD Contribution:** \$568,400**Status:** IGA executed

Green Alley Reconstruction Project 3 in Westchester**Contract:** 25-IGA-18**Watershed:** Lower Des Plaines**Location:** Westchester

Conversion of three impervious alleys with permeable pavers in the Village of Westchester.

Estimated Construction/Acquisition Cost: \$1,091,763**MWRD Contribution:** \$392,700**Status:** IGA executed



ABOVE Members of the MWRD Board of Commissioners join Space to Grow partners at Ryder Math & Science Specialty School in Chicago's Auburn-Gresham neighborhood, Nov. 4, 2025, for a ribbon-cutting ceremony, celebrating the completion of the green schoolyard. Ryder is one of the five Space to Grow schoolyards completed in 2025 at Chicago Public Schools, and its schoolyard is designed to detain 260,129 gallons of stormwater, reducing neighborhood flooding and basement backups.

SPACE TO GROW

Space to Grow is an innovative public-private partnership with a mission of transforming Chicago schoolyards into vibrant green spaces for physical activity, outdoor learning and play. As centers of school and community life, Space to Grow schoolyards typically feature expanded and safer playground equipment, track and field areas, multi-purpose courts, turf fields, outdoor classrooms and vegetable gardens. The schoolyards also incorporate many GI design elements to reduce water pollution and neighborhood flooding. These features include permeable play surfaces, native plantings and rain gardens.

The program is co-managed by the Healthy Schools Campaign and Openlands with capital funding, leadership and expertise from the MWRD, CPS and the City of Chicago Department of Water Management. The MWRD also provides technical support for GI elements to ensure that the new schoolyards provide optimal stormwater capture benefits.

Space to Grow schools are prioritized based on flood risk, site suitability and socioeconomic factors. Numerous community meetings were held to describe project details and benefits. The MWRD and CPS executed an IGA to facilitate the projects whereby long-term maintenance responsibilities are assigned to CPS. The MWRD maintains the right to inspect the GI to ensure it is being properly maintained in accordance with the operations and maintenance plan developed for each school.

Starting in 2014 through 2025, the MWRD invested over \$23.5 million into 41 schools providing 8.7 million gallons of design retention capacity. A new IGA was executed in 2024 to facilitate another three years of schools within the program. The first two schools under this agreement were substantially complete in late 2024, and five more were completed in 2025. The current IGA between the MWRD and CPS will facilitate the Space to Grow projects through 2026. Under the agreement, long term maintenance responsibilities are assigned to CPS. The MWRD has perpetual rights to inspect the GI to ensure it is being properly maintained in accordance with the O&M Manual developed for each school. The MWRD reviews and provides comments on the construction drawings and GI storage calculations at various intervals during design. During construction, the MWRD frequently visits the sites to gain knowledge on the installation of GI, while monitoring progress.

SUBURBAN GREEN SCHOOLYARD PILOT PROGRAM

In 2020, the MWRD conducted a feasibility study for a GI program for suburban Cook County schools similar to the Space to Grow Program. Subsequently, the MWRD performed pilot project selection process and recommended the following pilot locations: 1) the Burnham School District 154.5's Elementary School; 2) the Des Plaines School District 62's Forest Elementary and Algonquin Middle Schools' shared campus; 3) the Morton High School District 201's Morton East High School in Cicero; 4) the Summit School District 104's Graves Elementary and Heritage Middle Schools' shared campus. In 2023, Des Plaines School District 62 declined further participation in the pilot program and the MWRD invited Leyden High School District 212's Leyden East High School to participate.

The current status of the pilot projects is as follows:

Burnham School District 154.5's Elementary School	IGA between the MWRD and Burnham School District executed February 2025	Final design was completed and construction contract advertised in April 2025	Construction began fall 2025 and to be completed in 2026.
Summit School District 104's Graves Elementary and Heritage Middle Schools (shared campus)	98% design ongoing	Targeting final design completion in mid 2026 for construction to begin in 2027	
Morton High School District 201's Morton East High School in Cicero	60% design complete	Targeting final design completion in late 2026 for construction to begin summer 2027	Preliminary conversations have begun with Town of Cicero to incorporate additional stormwater storage onsite
Leyden High School District 212's Leyden East High School in Franklin Park	30% design ongoing	Targeting construction to begin summer 2028	

To support advancing the pilot program and potential expansion, the MWRD has actively pursued multiple funding avenues, including federal and state grants, philanthropic partners and municipal cost-share opportunities.

BELOW Construction continues at Burnham Elementary in south suburban Burnham, Ill., as part of the MWRD's suburban green schoolyard pilot program, July 20, 2026.



STORMWATER MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

CAPITAL PROJECT MAINTENANCE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS

Regular upkeep and maintenance are necessary for the new installations to function properly and provide the expected stormwater benefit. For that reason, routine maintenance is required as dictated by an operation and maintenance plan developed for each project.

Agencies that receive financial assistance from the MWRD enter into an IGA, which includes an operation and maintenance plan defining the partner agencies' responsibilities for inspection, operation and maintenance of the project. The MWRD reviews inspection reports generated to assess the operation of the final project and to ensure proper maintenance is being performed. The MWRD may also conduct their own inspections of the project on an as-needed basis.

SMALL STREAMS MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Through the management of the Small Streams Maintenance Program, the MWRD's Maintenance & Operations Department works to reduce flooding in urbanized areas. Cook County has little elevation change; therefore, its streams tend to move slowly and are naturally prone to flooding. Many developed areas were originally uninhabited muddy marshes with meandering streams that often overtopped their banks. The streams that flow through the neighborhoods of Cook County are more than just a scenic part of the landscape or a habitat for wildlife. They serve the vital function of draining stormwater and preventing flooding. Minor blockages can build up quickly in heavy rains, restricting flow and creating a potential for urban flooding. In order to function properly, the streams must be maintained.

The Small Streams Maintenance Program was established in 2006. The program follows the MWRD's stormwater management mission to relieve flooding in urbanized areas through immediate and relatively simple remedies. The program's top priorities are to maintain creeks, streams and waterways by removing blockages, obstructions and debris. The program also prevents future blockages by removing dead and unhealthy trees, which can fall into streams. Maintenance crews also remove harmful invasive species, such as buckthorn and honeysuckle, which can choke out native plants and leave the ground vulnerable to erosion.

The MWRD and contractor crews removed approximately 6,830 cubic yards of debris in 2025. In addition, 1,452 cubic yards of river and canal debris was removed by the MWRD's debris and skimmer boat crews along the Chicago Area Waterways. In 2025, the MWRD continued to utilize a two-year stream maintenance contract, paying a total of \$1,717,768 to contractors to provide stream maintenance. Listed in the table below are the debris amounts removed in each watershed for the past two years.

BELOW A crew member from the MWRD's Small Streams Maintenance Program works to remove a blockage, Oct. 1, 2025, in Watersmeet Woods where the Skokie River and the North Branch of the Chicago River converge.



TOTAL DEBRIS REMOVED BY WATERSHED (CUBIC YARD)

Watershed	2025*	2024
Little Calumet River	2,182	4,682
Calumet-Sag Channel	1,278	1,801
Lower Des Plaines River	1,808	3,709
North Branch Chicago River	891	1,255
Upper Salt Creek	566	329
Poplar Creek	105	385
Total	6,830	12,161

*Volume reporting methodology changed starting in 2025 from gross debris volume to net chipped wood volume.

The 2025 expenditure for the Small Streams Maintenance Program was \$1,717,768, with an average cost per cubic yard of debris removed of \$251.50.

The Small Streams Maintenance Program will continue in 2026 and is anticipating removal of approximately 8,000 cubic yards of debris. Major goals include standardizing procedures, identifying critical stream areas, scheduling critical inspections, and continuing to introduce MWRD's small stream crews to local governments to increase the public's awareness of MWRD's presence and execution of the program.

Citizens are encouraged to report waterway blockages and request removal of debris from small creeks or waterways in Cook County by visiting mwrld.org > What We Do > Stormwater Management

gispub.mwrld.org/ssmp

You can also report a waterway blockage by contacting Arturo Hernandez by email at hernandeza@mwrld.org or call 708-588-3171.

STORMWATER PLANNING

In 2025, the MWRD has focused on advancing the development of the "Volumetric Approach" to stormwater planning, a significant evolution from the traditional, study-by-study planning method. This change was prompted by the realization that the traditional planning approach could take decades to cover the entirety of the county and can also quickly become outdated due to factors like changing climate and development patterns. The new data-driven strategy leverages the idea of volume control, one of the core principles of the WMO, and applies it on a countywide scale to more quickly identify flood-prone areas and develop projects to reduce flood risks.

A key activity in 2025 was the continued development of a Geographic Information System (GIS) database and an associated web-based planning platform known as Stormwater Central. The purpose of this platform is to provide MWRD staff and our partners easy access to mapping data, allowing a more accurate determination of flood problem areas, pinpointing opportunities for mitigation projects, and prioritizing projects for implementation. This work also includes a publicly accessible web portal, the Stormwater Project and Data Explorer, that allows the general public to view information on all our stormwater projects and track our progress on the implementation of the volumetric approach by watershed. A soft launch of the public portal took place at the end of 2025, ahead of its official launch anticipated in the summer of 2026. For more information, visit geohub.mwrld.org/pages/stormwater-central.

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE

The MWRD began requiring stormwater detention in 1972 under the Sewer Permit Ordinance for development projects greater than five acres. In 2007, the MWRD began work on a new stormwater management regulatory ordinance known as the WMO. Numerous public hearings were held on the WMO in order to receive public input. The MWRD Board subsequently approved the WMO, which became effective on May 1, 2014. The WMO is a comprehensive regulatory ordinance drafted with the assistance of an advisory committee consisting of regulatory agencies, municipalities, and non-governmental organizations.



ABOVE An aerial view shows an area of Harvey, Ill., May 20, 2026, where the MWRD plans to construct the Harvey Central Park Stormwater Detention Basin project. Harvey has a history of flooding and the MWRD began collaboration with the city in 2018 to identify potential solutions. The project is currently under design, and construction is anticipated to begin in 2026.

The WMO aims to protect public health, safety and welfare, and Cook County homes and businesses from flood damage by managing and mitigating the effects of development and redevelopment on stormwater drainage. It provides uniform minimum stormwater management regulations for Cook County that are consistent with the region. The WMO replaced the MWRD's Sewer Permit Ordinance with more comprehensive permit requirements. Components regulated under the WMO include drainage and detention, volume control, floodplain management, isolated wetland protection, riparian environment protection, soil erosion and sediment control. The MWRD has included a GI component in the ordinance which requires the capture of 1-inch of runoff from impervious surfaces for parcels greater than one-half acre in size when a WMO permit is required.

The WMO was amended by the MWRD Board on July 10, 2014, to incorporate the Infiltration/Inflow Control Program (Article 8). It was amended again on May 16, 2019, to include watershed specific release rates. The WMO was also amended on May 7, 2020, to allow the regional stormwater detention and volume control trading program pilot study in the Lower Des Plaines and Little Calumet watershed planning areas to commence. References to current rainfall data were also updated. The most recent amendment to the WMO was adopted on January 9, 2025. This amendment added new regulatory requirements and clarifying existing requirements. This amendment also includes minor clarifications to both the volume control and detention requirements for stormwater management.

MWRD has developed the Technical Guidance Manual (TGM), which serves as a technical reference to the WMO, and updates the TGM as needed. The WMO webpage, mwrdd.org/wmo, contains more information on both the WMO and the TGM.

GIS/GPS ASSISTANCE

In 2017, the MWRD purchased six Global Positioning System (GPS) units to provide sewer system owners with resources to begin mapping their sewer systems in a GIS or to improve their existing sewer system maps. In return, sewer system owners provide the MWRD with their sanitary, storm and combined sewer data. To obtain GPS equipment and related software at no cost, sewer system owners must enter into an IGA with the MWRD. Since 2017, ten municipalities have entered into an IGA with the MWRD to utilize the GPS units. Three new GPS units were since purchased to replace the outdated units purchased in 2017. To date, one municipality has requested to use the new GPS units. The municipality is currently using the unit for a period of 12 months. Sewer system owners that wish to be added to the list for the next available GPS unit should submit a letter of intent to the MWRD's Director of Engineering. A template IGA and modifiable letter of intent can be found at the following link: mwrdd.org/gis-assistance.

INFILTRATION / INFLOW CONTROL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

MWRD's Infiltration/Inflow Control Program provides a framework for asset management of separate sewer systems to meet the following goals:

- Maintain infrastructure to prevent sanitary sewer overflows and basement backups due to sewer surcharging and other adverse sewer system conditions.
- Comply with the MWRD's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- Minimize extraneous flows transported to the MWRD's facilities due to defective system components or illegal connections.

The Infiltration/Inflow Control Program is implemented due to special conditions imposed within the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits issued by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) for the MWRD's Water Reclamation Plants. In addition to adopting a Capacity, Management, Operation and Maintenance Program for the conveyance and treatment facilities, the MWRD is required to take action to reduce excessive infiltration/inflow within the local sanitary sewer systems. The Infiltration/Inflow Control Program Annual Summary Report that is provided to the IEPA each year can be found at mwrdd.org/IICP-ASR10.

All satellite entities (sewer system owners) within the MWRD's separate sewer area that discharge directly or indirectly into the MWRD's facilities are required to identify and address infiltration and inflow sources within the public and private sewer systems. This will be accomplished by the individual satellite entities performing ongoing inspections and conducting maintenance and rehabilitation work on the sewer system. All satellite entities must annually report work completed to meet the goals of the Infiltration/Inflow Control Program to the MWRD.

INFILTRATION / INFLOW CONTROL PROGRAM SATELLITE ENTITIES

Alsip	Hickory Hills	Orland Park
Aqua Illinois	Hillside	Palatine
Arlington Heights	Hinsdale	Palos Heights
Bartlett	Hodgkins	Palos Hills
Bedford Park	Hoffman Estates	Palos Park
Bellwood	Homewood	Park Ridge
Berkeley	Illinois American Water	Plum Grove Estates SD*
Bridgeview	Indian Head Park	Plum Grove Woodlands SD*
Broadview	Inverness	Prospect Heights
Brookfield	Justice	Richton Park
Buffalo Grove	Kenilworth	River Grove
Burr Ridge	Kimberly Heights SD*	Riverdale
Calumet City	La Grange	Robbins
Chicago Ridge	La Grange Highlands SD*	Rolling Meadows
Country Club Hills	La Grange Park	Roselle
Countryside	Lansing	Rosemont
Crestwood	Lemont	Sauk Village
Deer Park	Leyden Township	Schaumburg
Des Plaines	Lynwood	Schiller Park
Dolton	Markham	South Barrington
East Hazel Crest	Matteson	South Holland
Elk Grove Township	McCook	South Lyons Township SD*
Elgin	Melrose Park	South Palos Township SD*
Elk Grove Village	Merrionette Park	South Stickney SD*
Evergreen Park	Midlothian	Stone Park
Flagg Creek WRD**	Mission Brook SD*	Streamwood
Flossmoor	Morton Grove	Thornton
Ford Heights	Mount Prospect	Tinley Park
Forest River SD*	Niles	Westchester
Franklin Park	Norridge	Western Springs
Garden Homes SD*	Northbrook	Wheeling
Glenbrook SD*	Northfield	Willow Springs
Glencoe	Northfield Township	Wilmette
Glenview	Northfield Woods SD*	Winnetka
Glenwood	Northlake	Woodley Road SD*
Hanover Park	Oak Forest	Worth
Harvey	Oak Lawn	
Harwood Heights	Oak Meadow SD*	*Sanitary District
Hazel Crest	Olympia Fields	**Water Reclamation District

PARTNERSHIPS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

JOINT FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY FOR STREAM GAGING STATION IN COOK COUNTY

The MWRD entered into a Joint Funding Agreement with the United States Geological Survey beginning in 2006 and has since renewed the agreement annually to fund the continued maintenance and operation of various stream gages and rain gages within Cook County. Under the 2024-2025 agreement, the MWRD is funding the following eight stream gages:

- Salt Creek at Rolling Meadows
- Salt Creek near Elk Grove Village
- Salt Creek at Western Springs
- Des Plaines River at Lyons
- North Branch of the Chicago River at Deerfield
- Deer Creek near Chicago Heights
- Calumet Union Drainage Ditch at Markham
- Natalie Creek at Midlothian

The MWRD is also funding one rain gage located on Salt Creek near Rolling Meadows and one rain gage located at Calumet Union DR Canal near Markham. The data from the streamflow gaging stations

BELOW Municipal leaders join the MWRD, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association, Nov. 5, 2025, for a Government to Government Workshop at the Hazel Crest Ballroom in Hazel Crest, Ill. The workshop was convened with mayors, trustees and other municipal representatives to address flooding and strengthen intergovernmental coordination across local, county and state agencies.



has proven useful for the MWRD with calibration of the hydrologic and hydraulic models in the Detailed Watershed Plan development, and the MWRD will continue to use data from these stations in ongoing and future planning and design of stormwater improvements. Real time data from the stream gages are available on the United States Geological Survey's website at waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis. Precipitation data is available at cm.water.usgs.gov/data/precip/il/.

Cook County Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Cook County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) is the use of long-term and short-term policies, programs, projects and other activities to alleviate the death, injury and property damage that can result from a disaster. Cook County, MWRD, and a coalition of planning partners prepared the Cook County Multi Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to identify the risks posed by hazards and find ways to reduce their impacts. The plan reduces risk for those who live in, work in and visit the county. MWRD continues to work closely with Cook County and our other planning partners to mitigate flooding through projects identified in our annual report. MWRD is actively partnering with Cook County in ensuring the HMP is updated regularly.

Watershed Planning Councils

The Watershed Planning Councils were formed in 2005 to serve as advisory bodies to the MWRD for its Stormwater Management Program. Municipalities and townships are represented in the councils by their chief elected officials or designees. Unincorporated areas are represented by the Cook County Board President or her or his designee. Councils meet at least quarterly for the watersheds of the North Branch of the Chicago River, the Lower Des Plaines River, the Cal-Sag Channel, the Little Calumet River, Poplar Creek and Upper Salt Creek. Watershed Planning Council meetings serve as a mechanism for representatives of municipalities and townships to be updated on MWRD's stormwater management program as well as to communicate the public's concerns to MWRD.

The following Councils of Government are responsible for coordination of the WPCs:

- Northwest Municipal Conference
- West Central Municipal Conference
- South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
- Southwest Conference of Mayors

The MWRD negotiated agreements with each of the Councils of Government to provide administrative assistance related to coordination of the Watershed Planning Councils; the current agreement was renewed for 2024 through 2028. The Councils of Government assist the MWRD by arranging meeting schedules, drafting and distributing meeting agendas, distributing information from the MWRD to council members, assembling contact information for council representatives, and forwarding information about stormwater management concerns from the council members to the MWRD.

Visit mwrld.org/wpc-calendar to view the current Watershed Planning Council meeting schedule.

Public Affairs

In 2025, the MWRD staff provided information about the MWRD and the Stormwater Management Program at various events for communities throughout the region and at various virtual technical conferences. The MWRD attends all Watershed Planning Council meetings to provide updates on watershed planning efforts, changes to the WMO and stream maintenance activities. These meetings are open to the public and provide an opportunity for concerns of the public to be communicated to the MWRD. The Space to Grow projects in partnership with CPS and City of Chicago Department of Water Management also have a large public affairs component, including community meetings to recommend design elements, community planting days and ribbon cutting ceremonies, where the value of GI is demonstrated.

The MWRD staff will continue to participate in community outreach events in 2026 virtually and in person. A list of stormwater management press releases issued in 2025 can be found on mwrld.org/news.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

As we work to manage stormwater across the county, the MWRD cannot do it alone.

You can help reduce stormwater runoff and improve the quality of our waterways. Click on the links below to learn more. A full list of MWRD's current publications can be found on mwrdd.org/publications.

Understanding Your Sewer: Follow the flush and the stormwater to the sewers and places it will go.

Flood Response Resource Guide: What to do, where to find help and how we all play a role in managing stormwater.

Green Infrastructure Community Guide: Stormwater strategies for resilient neighborhoods.

How You Can Help Reduce Flooding and Protect Water Quality: Learn how you can help in your backyard.

Rain Barrels: Discounted rain barrels are available to Cook County residents while supplies last.

Restore the Canopy: MWRD gives away free native tree saplings. Find out where.

Go Easy on the Salt: Too much road salt can harm our environment. What can you do?

Green Neighbor Guide: Get a PDF guide on how you can stop sending stormwater to the sewers.

Disposal of medical products: How to keep medicines out of the waterways.

Report a waterway blockage: See something? Say something. It's easy to report.



2025 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMITTED EXPENDITURES

Services in-house	\$ 13,182,893
Preliminary Engineering	\$ 524,995
Final Engineering and Post Award	\$ 2,759,272
Services: consultants (subtotal)	\$ 3,284,267
Small Streams Maintenance Program	\$ 2,233,408
Small Streams Maintenance Program waste disposal	\$ 174,420
Court Reporting Services	\$ 8,676
Contractual Services NOC	\$ 159,182
Land Acquisition and Appraisals	\$ 1,292,831
Waterways Facilities Structures (Construction)	\$ 43,591,127
Army Corps of Engineers Services	\$ —
Permit Review	\$ 517,943
IGAs	\$ 17,165,956
Payments for Easements	\$ —
Miscellaneous Contractual Services	\$ 36,819
Contractual Services (subtotal)	\$ 65,180,362
Materials, Equipment, & Supplies	\$ 288,153
Administrative Expenses (subtotal)	\$ 288,153
Total 2025 Committed Expenditures	\$ 81,935,675

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**Metropolitan Water
Reclamation District
of Greater Chicago**

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Established in 1889, the MWRD is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.
