



# **River Ecology & Governance Task Force**

December 5, 2023 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

# Agenda

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Revised Task Force Goals and Work Plan 2024 - 2025
- III. Working Groups 2023 Outcomes: System Plans and Development Review
- IV. Government-led River Focused Projects 2024
- V. Update: Sustainable Development Policy
- VI. Upcoming Meetings + Adjourn

# Task Force Objectives

Transforming Chicago's unique waterway system into a **thriving and ecologically integrated natural asset**, capable of accommodating the needs of people, requires **coordinated planning**, investment and management

Aspire to, and realize no later than 2040, inland waterways in Chicago that are **inviting, productive and living**, that **support wildlife in-stream and on their banks**, and that **contribute to our city's resiliency**

# **Task Force Goals and Objectives Refinement**



# Short-Term Goals: 2021 - 2022

1. Create principles for a system-wide and neighborhood focused approach to Chicago's waterways
  - a. Adoption of principles by government partners participating on Steering Committee
2. Review current policies and create recommendations to strengthen them

## Short-Term Goals: 2021 - 2022

3. Inform near-term planning opportunities to advance collective priorities
  - a. We Will Chicago
  - b. CDOT Access Study
  - c. USACE PAS Restoration Framework Plan
  - d. Industrial Corridor Modernization Process
4. Develop criteria to prioritize projects for identified funding opportunities
5. Standardize process for reviewing riverfront development projects

# Proposed Short-Term Goals 2024 - 2025

- **Goal #1:** Review current policies and create recommendations to strengthen them
- **Goal #2:** Inform near-term planning opportunities to advance collective priorities
- **Goal #3:** Develop criteria to prioritize projects for identified funding opportunities
- **Goal #4:** Ensure process for development reviews is followed and continues to improve new riverfront developments

# Goal #1: Review current policies and create recommendations to strengthen them

*For which policies should the Task Force review and develop joint recommendations?*

- Reduce pollutants that affect the river
- Plan Updates
- Plan Implementation (Community, Citywide)
- USACE Navigable Channel Recommendations
- Chicago Cumulative Impacts Assessment and Environmental Justice Action Plans
- Green Infrastructure and Stormwater Policy
- Design Guidelines
- Funding (aligning opportunities with investment and resources)
- Improving access to river edge
- Zoning and use restrictions along the river
- Implement stormwater/water quality educational signage around Chicago's waterways
- Wildlife Protection

## **Goal #2: Inform near-term planning opportunities to advance collective priorities**

Key projects that partners are working on that could benefit from input and feedback from the Task Force:

- CDOT: River Edge Access Study
- DPD: Calumet Design Guidelines and Land Use Update
- Others?



# Goal #3: Develop criteria to prioritize projects for identified funding opportunities

- Discussed as part of the September Task Force Meeting
- Key Takeaways from Discussion
  - Catalog the different types of funding opportunities that are available and providing that information to members.
  - Understand how government partners prioritize projects for funding. That includes whether they use certain criteria or metrics to identify projects or if it is related to project readiness.
  - Understand the types of projects members are involved in that are being funded by specific sources as well as their overall project trajectories and next steps to identify ways to coordinate, especially for narrowly focused funding sources.

# Goal #3: Develop criteria to prioritize projects for identified funding opportunities

## Potential Topics for Exploration

- Is there project readiness criteria for different government partners?
- How is it determined what projects are prioritized?
- Are there opportunities to improve capital planning and investments across agencies and departments?
  - What are some barriers to coordination?
- Best practices in other places?
- What are the funding opportunities that are available?
- How do you connect components of projects and link them together with other funding opportunities?

# Goal #3: Develop criteria to prioritize projects for identified funding opportunities

## Case Studies and Examples that could help address topics:

- Review opportunity sites identified in the Waterways Restoration Framework Plan study to determine if they are moving forward and their overall priority status as well as project readiness
- Review examples of projects that have moved forward, like the Wild Mile, to understand and document flow of process
- Review prioritization tool examples developed by other working groups and understand how well they work with aligning funding
- Review examples of best practices from other cities/regions

# **Goal #4: Ensure process for development reviews is followed and continues to improve new riverfront developments**

- Provide development teams with information developed in System Plans Working Group meetings
- Formally roll out guidelines for development review working group process
- Track how feedback has informed changes to riverfront development and create a checklist to ensure process is followed

# Short-Term Goals 2024 – 2025 Work Plan Summary

## **Goal #1: Review current policies and create recommendations to strengthen them**

*Based on Menti polling, the group will prioritize policies to research, review, and then develop recommendations for changes that can be implemented.*

## **Goal #2: Inform near-term planning opportunities to advance collective priorities**

*At quarterly Task Force meetings and working group meetings, members will provide feedback and input on two key planning initiatives: the CDOT River Edge Access Study and DPD's Calumet Design Guidelines and Land Use Update.*



# Short-Term Goals 2024 – 2025 Work Plan Summary

## **Goal #3: Develop criteria to prioritize projects for identified funding opportunities**

*Work through topics via case studies and examples to better understand and provide implementable recommendations on how projects can align around funding opportunities to advance.*

## **Goal #4: Ensure process for development reviews is followed and continues to improve new riverfront developments**

*Incorporate 2023 work into the development reviews and create a way to track outcomes and as well as a process-oriented checklist.*

**Working Group 2023**  
**Outcomes: System Plans and**  
**Development Review**

## **SYSTEMS PLANS WORKING GROUP, 2023 WORK PLAN GOALS:**

1. Compile river segment specific and current opportunities, constraints, and issues
2. Collect more resources and information to share with developers

## **THE DISCUSSION FRAMEWORK:**

*If a project was proposed within this stretch of the river, what would you want the involved developers, property owners, designers, stakeholders, and/or agencies to know that isn't documented in existing City plans and policies?*

# WORK PLAN – 2023

**April Workshop:** Upper North Branch, North Shore Channel, North Branch (north of Fullerton)

**July Workshop:** North Branch (south of Fullerton), Main Branch, South Branch

**October Workshop:** Bubbly Creek and Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal

(Note Calumet River area already covered in 2022 workshops)



# THANKS TO THE CONTRIBUTORS!

- Adam Flickinger, Friends of the Chicago River
- Alaina Harkness, Current Water
- Alex Perez, Active Transportation Alliance
- Amy Heldman, Friends of the Chicago River
- Andrew Vesselinovitch, Ross Barney Architects
- Angela Larsen, Alliance for the Great Lakes
- Austin Happel, Shedd Aquarium
- Bradley Roback, City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development
- Carson Poole, North River Commission
- Christina Harris, Metropolitan Planning Council
- Dean Alonistiotis, (fmr. MWRD)
- Eladio Montenegro, McKinley Park Development Council
- Emma Quiroa, AECOM
- Grace Chan McKibben, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community
- Jack Paul Rocha, UIC Great Cities Institute
- Jaclyn Wegner, Shedd Aquarium
- James Burns, South Branch PAC
- Jamie Osborne, CDOT
- Janhavi M, Living Habitats
- Jesse Hartman, Living Habitats
- John Watson, Forest Preserve District of Cook County
- Jordan Bailly, fmr. Metropolitan Planning Council
- Judy Pollock, Chicago Bird Alliance
- Justin Vick, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
- Kalindi Parikh, Current
- Kara Riggio, fmr. OAI
- Kate Eakin, McKinley Park Development Council
- Keith Privett, CDOT
- Lauren Umek, Chicago Park District
- Lindsey Frey, CDOT (Sam Schwartz)
- Maggie Cooper, Shedd Aquarium
- Matt Freer, Chicago Park District
- Matthew Santagata, fmr. Openlands
- Michelle Inouye, AECOM
- Nick Wesley, Urban Rivers
- Oscar Sanchez, SETF
- Paula Acevedo, El Paseo Trail Advisory
- Phil Nicodemus, Urban Rivers
- Rachel Gaunce, Metropolitan Planning Council
- Rob Reuland, Site
- Rowan Obach, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
- Seth Magle, Lincoln Park Zoo
- Sevin Yildiz, UIC Urban Planning and Policy
- Sharon Waller, River Park Advisory Council
- Tim Gustafson, fmr. Epstein
- Tom Minarik, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District

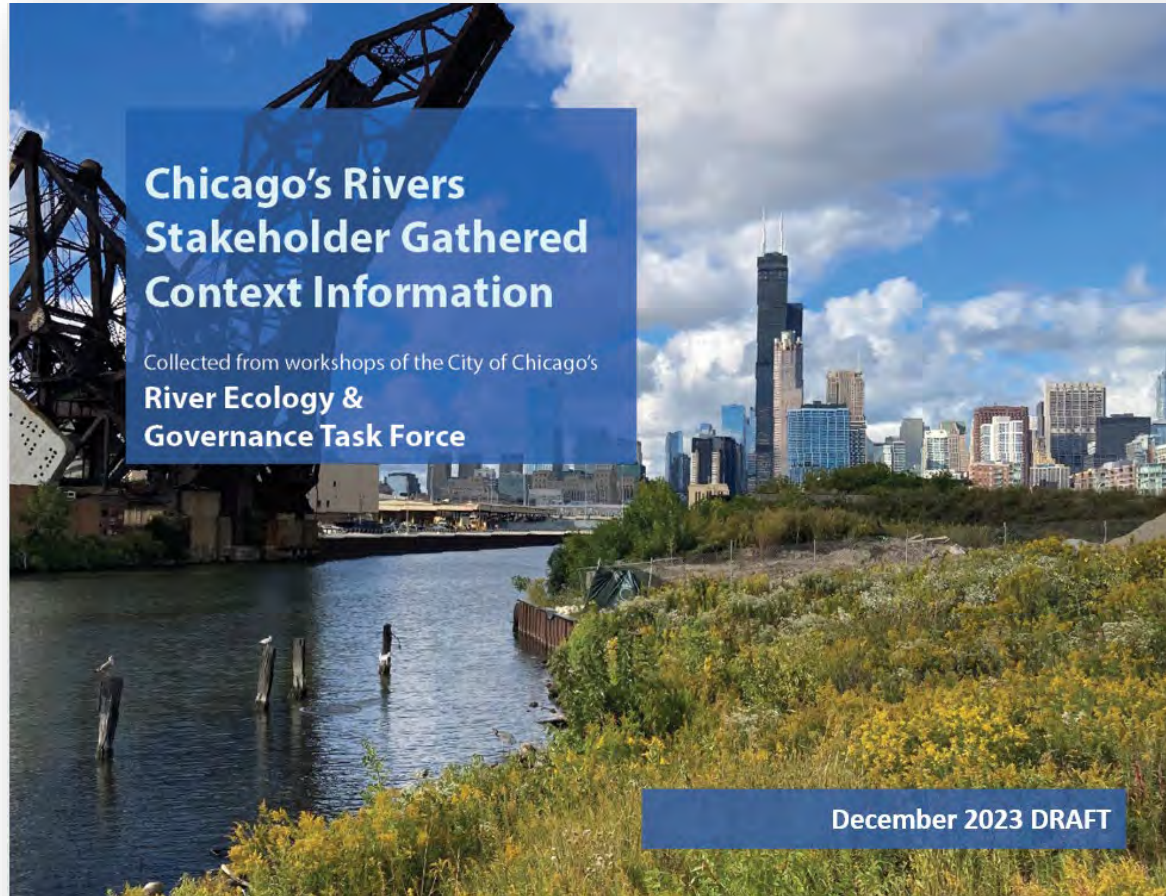


# WHAT WE LEARNED/GAINED

1. A compiled list of river resource documents and plans – this is frequently requested!
2. Locations where people currently informally use or want to use the river edges
3. Compiled, river system wide, notes about where we have concerns about river edges and/or see opportunities for improvements
4. The existing gaps in data that is needed to better understand future opportunities for access, trail connections, and in-stream habitat improvements.

# NEXT STEPS

We will share the document draft with the Task Force for additional inputs and edits



## Purpose and Process

The desire to collect the data outlined in this document was established in annual work plan discussions of the Systems Plans Working Group, which is a sub-group of the full River Ecology and Governance Task Force. The Systems Plans Working Group focuses on exploring innovative approaches to river corridor planning and development through research, data collection, and community engagement activities. Over the course of six months, workshops were held with Task Force members and other river stakeholders to collect the contextual qualitative data outlined in this document. The overall goal of the process is to better document issues, ideas, and opportunities that are relevant to river edge projects.

The primary question that the group wanted to answer with this process is:

*If a project was proposed within this stretch of the river, what would you want the involved developers, property owners, designers, stakeholders, and/or agencies to know that isn't documented in existing City plans and polices?*

The outcomes of these workshops are documented in the following maps and summary notes organized by river reaches within the City of Chicago municipal boundary.

11/28/2023

Chicago's Rivers Stakeholder Gathered Context Information | REGTF Systems Plans Working Group

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## Links and Resources

### River Relevant Community Plans By Geography:

#### North Branch:

- Lakeview Roscoe Village Master Plan (2023)
- Avondale Neighborhood Plan (2023)
- Wild Mile: Framework Vision (2019)
- Upper North Branch River Audit (2019 - Friends of the Chicago River, North River Commission, Active Transportation Alliance)
- North Branch Framework Plan (2017)

#### Main Stem:

- Chicago Riverwalk Main Branch Framework Plan (2009)

#### South Branch:

- South Branch Community Engagement Outcomes (2022 - REGTF)
- McKinley Park Neighborhood Plan (2021)
- Bridgeport and Canaryville Priorities Plan (2019)
- South Branch Parks Framework Plan (2018)
- Pilsen and Little Village Action Plan (2017)
- South Branch Parks Access Study (In Progress – Chicago Department of Transportation)

#### Calumet River System:

- Hegewisch Neighborhood Plan (2023)
- Little Calumet River Conservation Action Plan (2022)
- Calumet River Communities Planning Framework (2019)
- Calumet Connect Databook (2021)

### River System Wide Resources:

- [Chicago River Design Guidelines](#)
- [Calumet Design Guidelines](#)
- [Our Great Rivers Vision Plan](#)
- [Friends of the Chicago River - Developer Resource Guide](#)
- [Bird Friendly Design Chicago](#)
- [Active Transportation Alliance - Chicago River Trail Action Plan](#)
- [Forest Preserves of Cook County - Natural and Cultural Resources Master Plan](#)
- [US Army Corps of Engineers - Chicago Waterways Restoration Framework Master Plan](#)

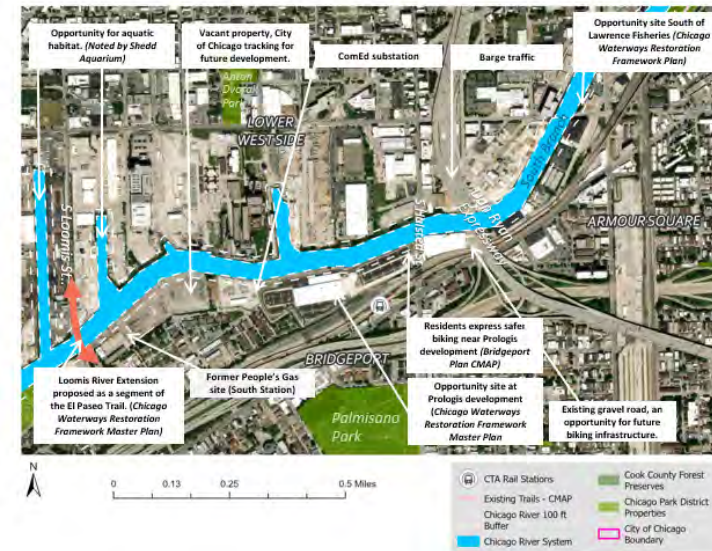
### River System Maps and Databases:

- Calumet River Coordination Map (2022 - REGTF)
- Explore the Chicago-Calumet River Data Map (Friends of the Chicago River)
- Habitat Connectivity Action Plan (2021, Friends of the Chicago River)
- Natural Solutions Tool (Greater Chicago Watershed Alliance, Friends of the Chicago River, Trust for Public Land)
- The Hub (Chicago Wilderness Alliance)
- Our Great Rivers Projects Map (Metropolitan Planning Council)

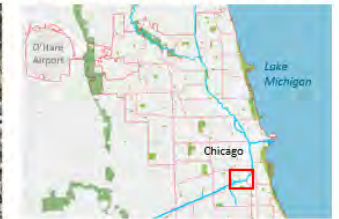
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### South Branch, South of Ping Tom Park



#### River Segment Notes:

- The planned development, Prologis, Development located at 2430 South Halsted Street includes a landscaped riverwalk, a multi-use path, native plantings, and aquatic habitat. *Noted in the Chicago Waterways Restoration Framework Master Plan.*
- The intersection at Halsted Street and Archer Avenue is concerning to cyclists in the area.
- There are a lot of People's Gas sites with remediation concerns in this river area to be aware of.

11/28/2023

Chicago's Rivers Stakeholder Gathered Context Information | REGTF Systems Plans Working Group

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## **Development Review Working Group, 2023 Work Plan Goals 2023**

1. Provide feedback on all new riverfront development proposals along the Chicago and Calumet river systems
2. Develop materials to be provided to development teams in advance of review meetings that with information on expectations for presentations and the overall feedback and review process.



## Outcomes and Next Steps

1. Two development reviews were hosted in 2023:

- April 4: Calumet River Fleeting
- October 3: 700 W Chicago – Halsted Landing

Development team presentation and working group feedback is available on DPD's webpage.

2. Draft preparation materials explaining the process and development team expectations were provided in advance of the October 3 development review. These materials will be provided to all development teams moving forward as part of the process.



# Additional 2023 Task Force Outcomes

- One-pager on the Task Force and its accomplishments provided to new Mayoral Administration
- US Army Corps released the Waterways Restoration Framework Plan with highlighted opportunity sites and acknowledged contribution of the River Ecology and Governance Task Force
- Completion of selection of priority sites across the system documented as a StoryMap
- Collective letter of support for advancing a feasibility study for the Chicago Area Waterways system
- Input letter sent to Ald. Ramirez-Rosa about DePaul College Prep / Gordon Tech site outlining comments the Task Force formerly provided about future development
- Completion of the South Branch Parks Access Study
- Kick-off of River Edge Access Study with Task Force input

# **Government-led River Focused Projects 2024**

# 2024 Projects

- Calumet Design Guidelines and Land Use Update  
*Luke Mich, Department of Planning and Development*
- Chicago River Edge Access Study  
*Michelle Inouye, AECOM*

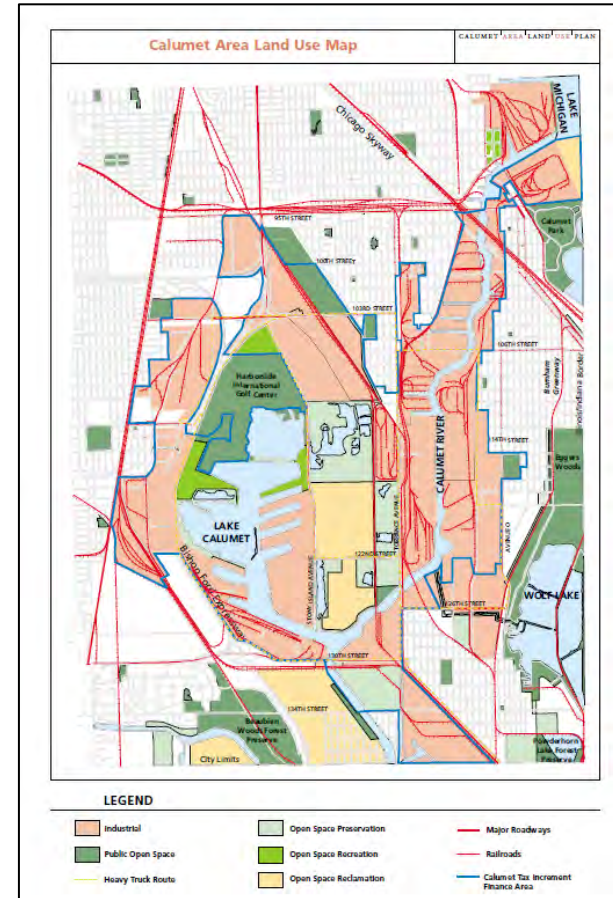
A photograph of a modern building with solar panels and a wind turbine in the background, with a pond in the foreground. The building is a long, low-profile structure with a series of colorful awnings over the windows. The solar panels are mounted on a structure in front of the building. The wind turbine is a large, white, three-bladed turbine. The pond in the foreground is surrounded by tall grasses and reflects the building and the sky. The sky is a clear, deep blue.

# Calumet Area Land Use Plan and Calumet Design Guidelines Update

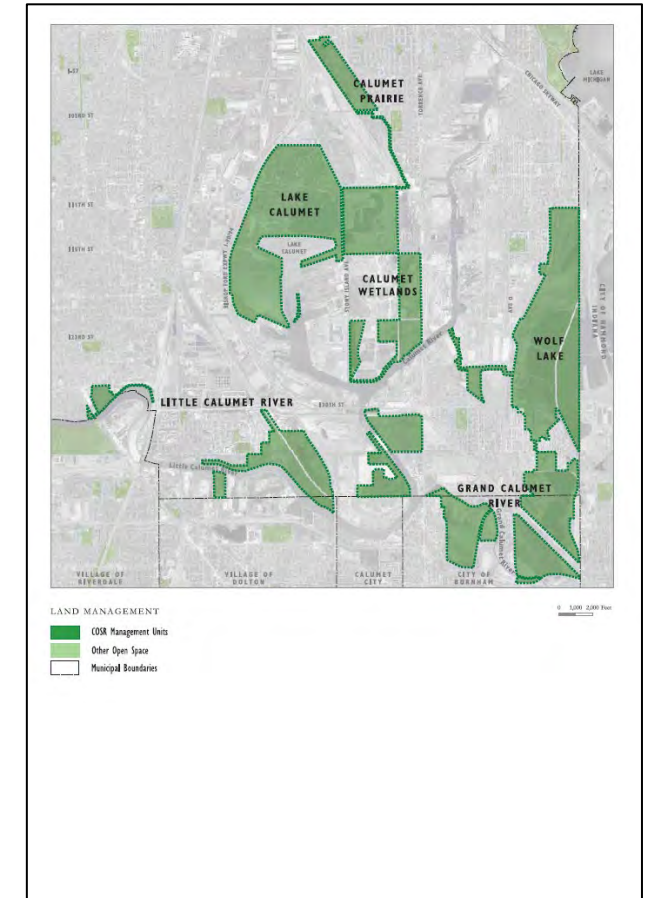


# Planning Context

- The Calumet Area Land Use Plan (adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission 2002) is intended to create a landscape on the where industry and open space harmoniously coexist.
- The Calumet Open Space Reserve Plan (adopted 2005) is a guide to the protection of 3,900 acres of natural habitat in the Calumet area. The plan highlights local wildlife and important natural resources while providing guidelines for the acquisition by public agencies and strategies for their continued evolution.



**Calumet Area Land Use Plan**

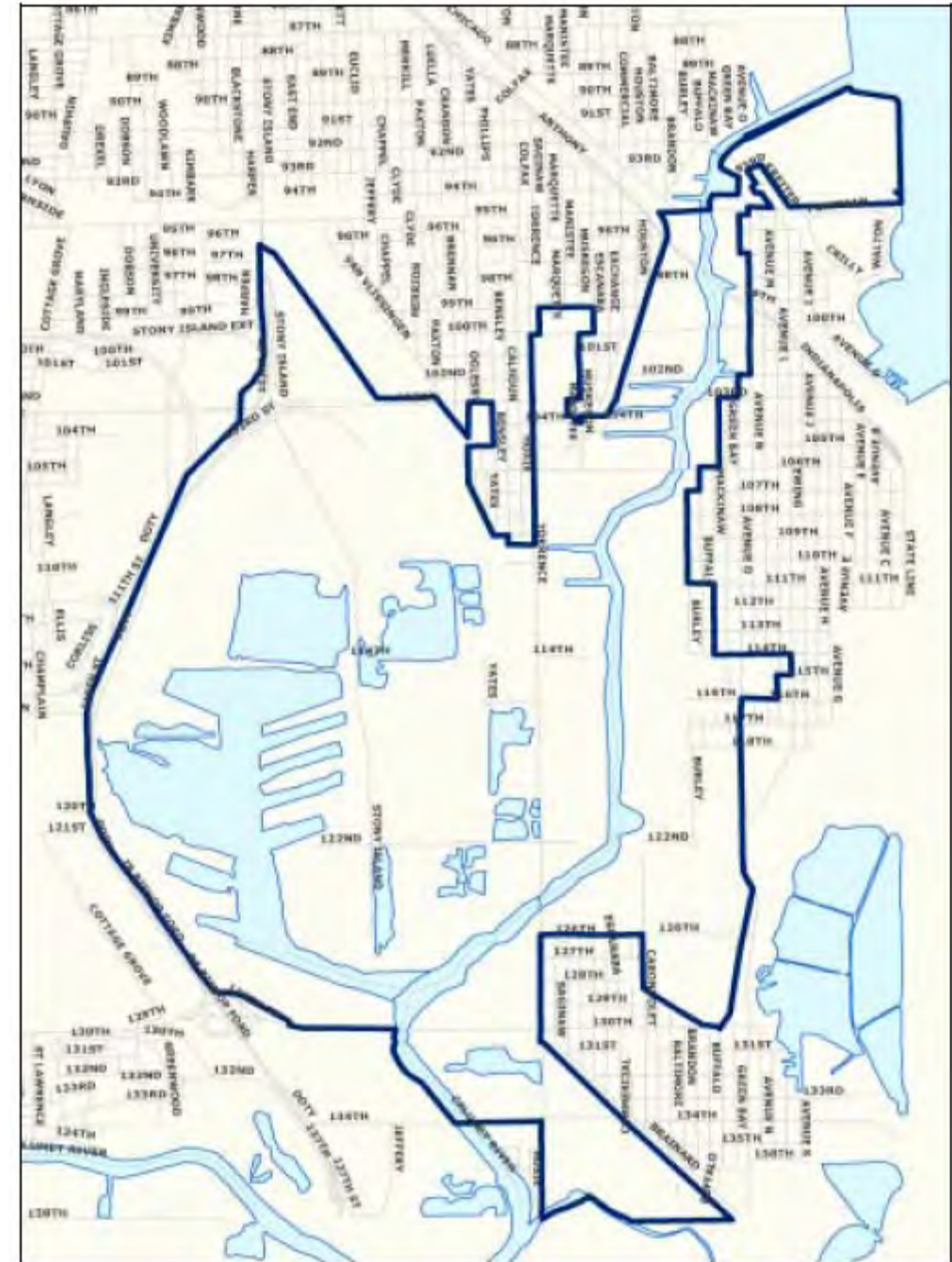


**Calumet Open Space Reserve Plan**

# Current Guidelines

## Overview

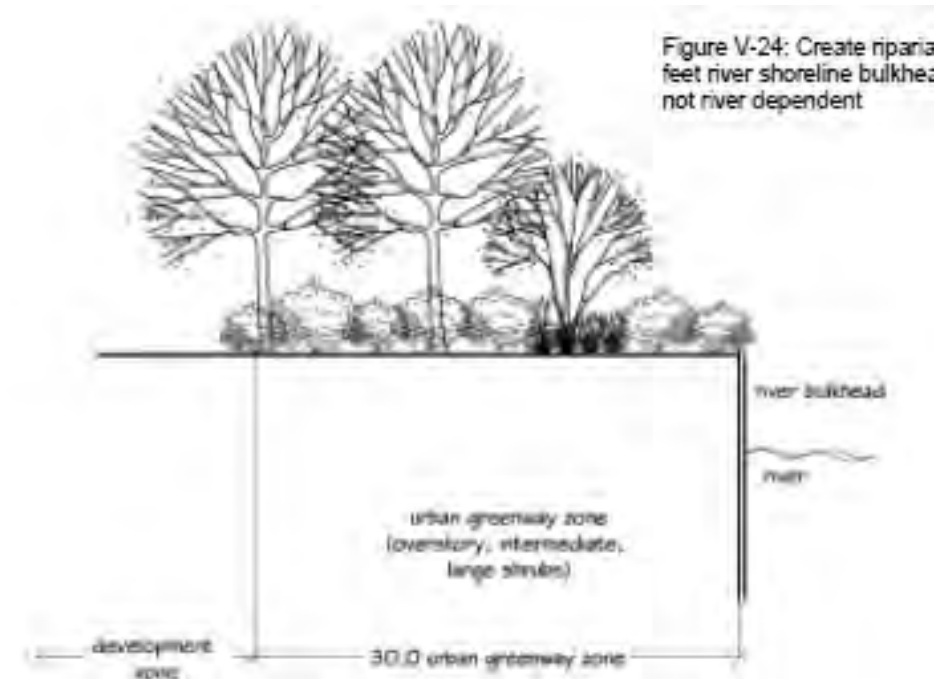
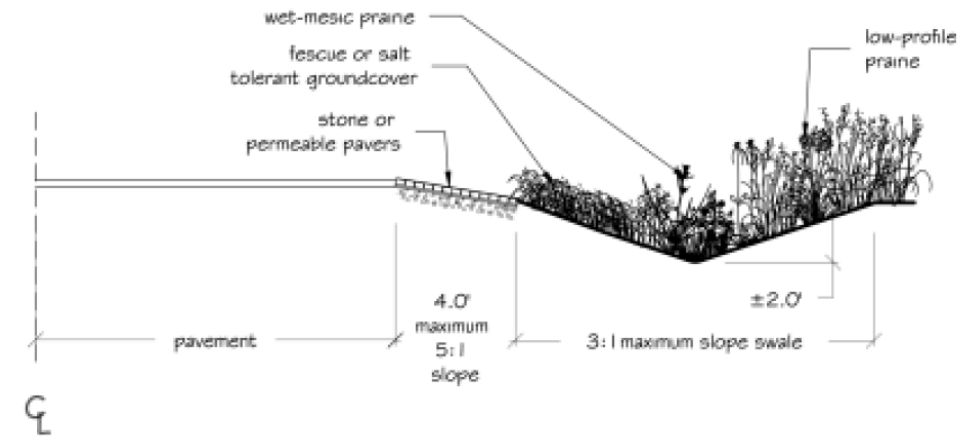
- Current Calumet Design Guidelines adopted by Chicago Plan Commission in 2004
- Reflects the Calumet Open Space Reserve Plan (2005) and Calumet Land Use Plan (2002)
- Applicable to all new construction of any building or vehicular use area on sites larger than 4 acres and all new planned developments within the Lake Calumet Landscape Area



# Current Guidelines

## Thematic Topics

- Soils, Planting, and Landscaping (including planting specifications)
- Stormwater Management (Swales, Permeable Pavers, Retention Basins, Wetlands, Filter Strips and Level Spreaders, Green Roofs)
- Lake and River Shorelines
- Perimeter Yards and Fences
- Roadways / Rights of Way
- Vehicular Use Areas (Driveways, Parking Lots, Loading, Storage, and Trash)
- The Guidelines **DO NOT** control use, density or other items regulated by the municipal code



# Why Update?



**Respond to feedback**



**Improve the mitigation of threats to environmental and public health**



**Establish preferred future land uses based on market trends and community input**



**Incorporate new technologies and best practices to promote sustainability and resiliency**



**Ensure industrial and other intensive uses are “good neighbors”**



# Calumet Design Guidelines Update

## Draft Scope Outline

### Ongoing Engagement

#### Phase I: Discovery & Gathering

Existing Conditions and Concerns  
Prior Plans and Research Review  
Best Practices Research

#### Phase II: Land Use Framework

Manufacturing Trends  
Business and Community Preferences  
Preferred Future Land Use

#### Phase III: Draft Guidelines

Site Design  
Stormwater Management  
Landscaping  
Sustainable Technology

#### Phase IV: Documentation & Implementation

Final recommendations to be presented to Chicago Plan Commission for adoption

# Engagement

- DPD, supported by our consultant team (TBD), will lead a suite of engagement strategies (e.g. interviews, focus groups, surveys, public meetings, website, etc.)
- DPD will also coordinate with the Dept. of Public Health (CDPH), Dept. of Transportation (CDOT), the Office of Climate and Environmental Engineering (OCEE), and other agencies and departments as needed
- DPD intends to establish an Advisory Committee and thematic Working Groups, built collaboratively with:
  - The Calumet Area Industrial Commission (CAIC), the Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI) delegate agency, as well as CAIC's industrial business council and other stakeholders
  - The civic and environmental partnership consisting of the Alliance for the Great Lakes, Friends of the Chicago River, the Southeast Environmental Task Force, the Metropolitan Planning Council, and the Calumet Collaborative





A blue-tinted photograph of a modern building with large windows on the left. A sidewalk runs along the building, with a black street lamp. A young tree stands in the middle ground. To the right is a canal or river with a concrete bank. In the background, more buildings and trees are visible under a cloudy sky.

**Questions?**

# Chicago Rivers Edge Access Study

REGTF Quarterly Meeting

12.05.2023

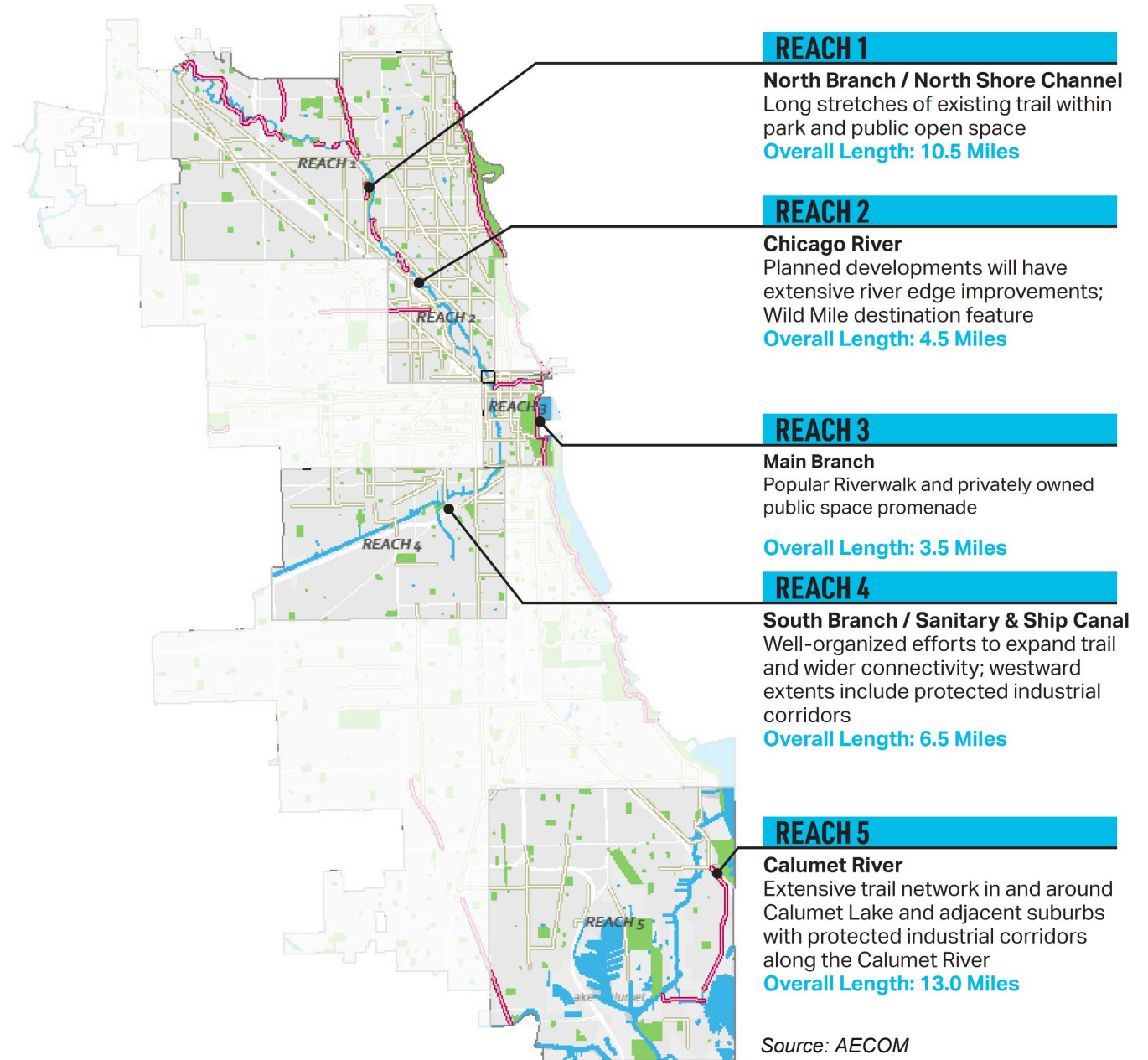




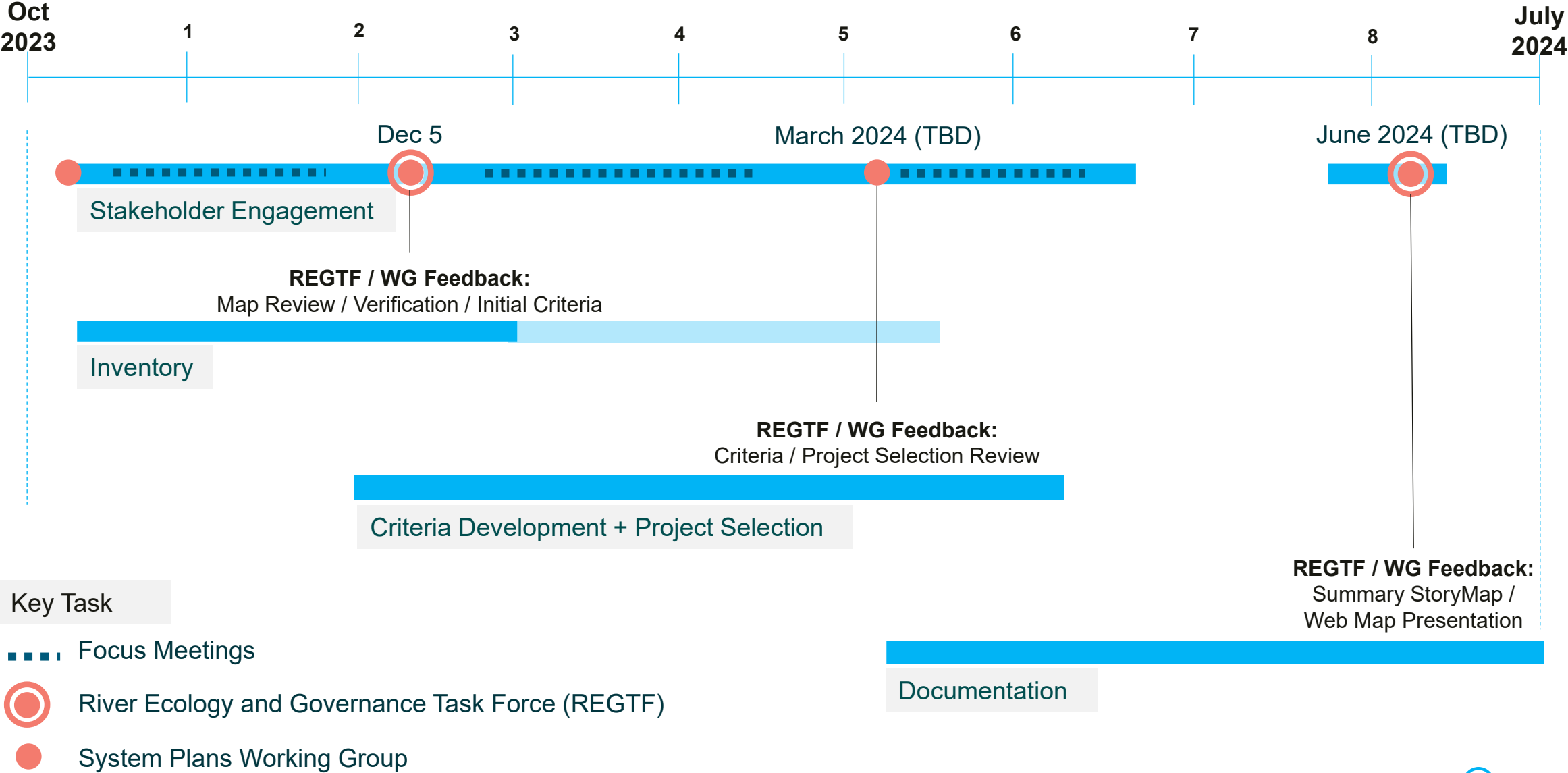
# Project Study Area + Objectives

## Study Objectives:

- Identify opportunities to improve and expand continuous riverfront access for pedestrians, cyclists, and wildlife
- Compile datasets to develop a tool that will help City staff assess river-edge project opportunities
- Using selection criteria, identify those actions that would be best led by the public-sector
- Summarize and classify City-led project opportunities that may be good candidates for federal funding assistance



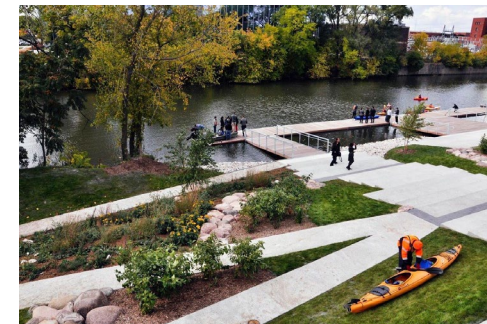
# Timeline + REGTF and System Plans Working Group Engagement





# Guiding Principles

- The Chicago Riverwalk is a valuable asset to the City and its residents
- The Riverwalk is a beneficial link in developing the transportation network, expanding passive and active recreation, building natural habitat and enriching urban experiences
- Properties adjacent to the river largely determine the type of Riverwalk development
- Public riverfront access should be available to all communities
- Engagement of all potential users and owners of riverfront property is key in riverfront development





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## Project Goals

- **Engagement:** Coordinate with the REGTF and other stakeholders for the purpose of data collection and analysis to gather site specific information and history that expands strategic actions
- **Data Collection:** Assemble an inventory of river edge, trail, access conditions, and select community characteristics to highlight gaps and project opportunities
- **Analysis:** View potential project opportunities through relevant lenses for evaluation
- **Classification:** Organize project opportunities around a set of filtered criteria (e.g. cost, level of need, complexity of execution, etc.)
- **Project Initiation:** Generate a digital tool to guide decision making for development opportunities

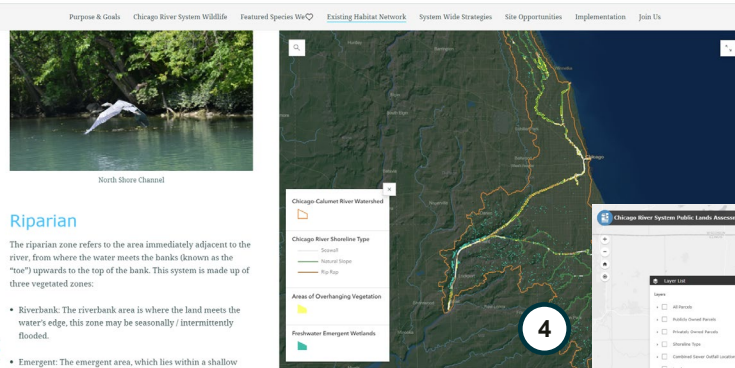
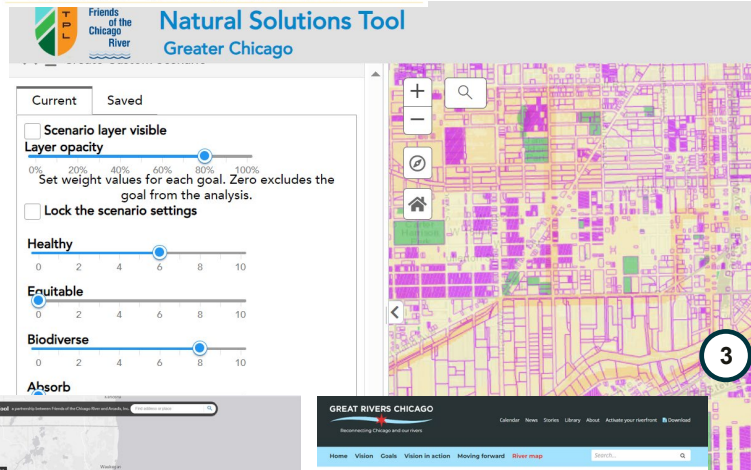
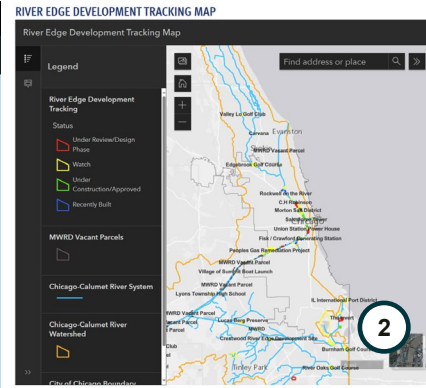
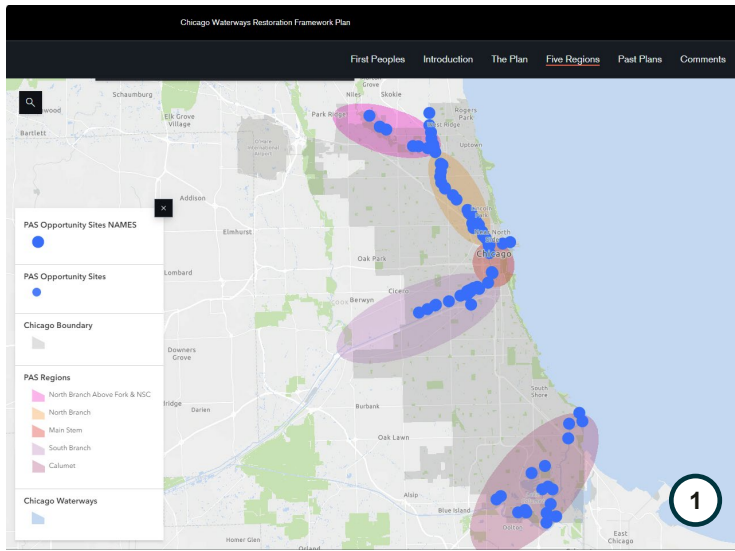




# Relevant Plans and Mapping / Tools

## Initial Steps

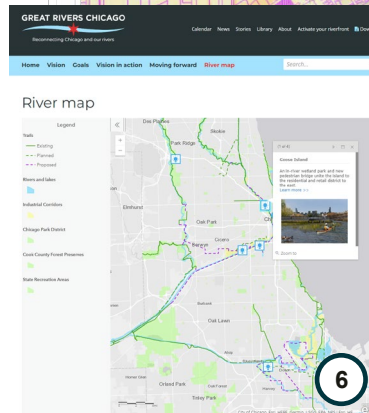
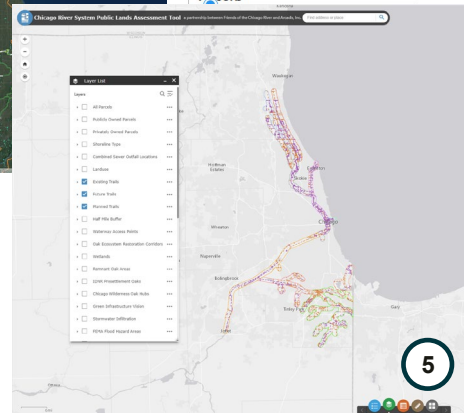
- Reviewed the relevant plans and tools focused on the River edge
- Met with Systems Plan Working Group and subset focus group to introduce the project, learn about recent activities and gain understanding of various sources
- Requested data and received background files from REGTF



### Riparian

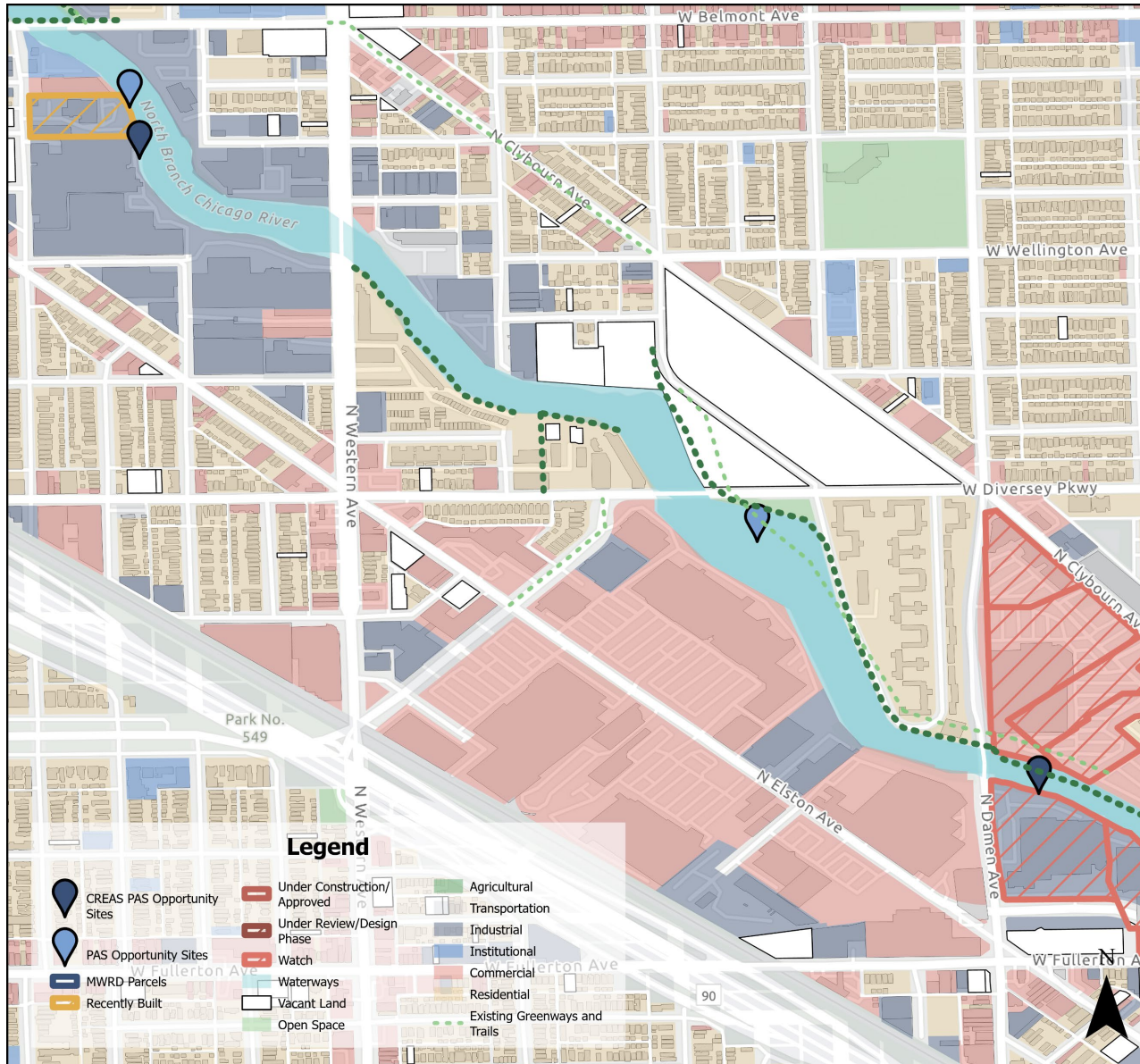
The riparian zone refers to the area immediately adjacent to the river, from where the water meets the banks (known as the "toe") upwards to the top of the bank. This system is made up of three vegetated zones:

- Riverbank: The riverbank area is where the land meets the water's edge, this zone may be seasonally/intermittently flooded.
- Emergent: The emergent area, which lies within a shallow



1. Chicago Waterways Restoration Framework Plan (2023) – USACE, DPD, et al
2. Chicago River Edge Development Tracking Map (2022) – Friends of the Chicago River
3. Natural Solutions Tool (2020) – Trust for Public Lands, FOCR
4. Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Action Plan (2020) – FOCR
5. Public Lands Assessment Tool (2019) – FOCR, Arcadis
6. River Map (2019) – Chicago Great Rivers

# Preliminary Framework



## Dataset Overlay:

- Focus on potential projects at the River's edge and adjacent parcels
- Overlay GIS feature layers that eliminate areas with riverwalk / highlight trail gaps, capture existing conditions and planned projects, identify initial opportunity areas

# Criteria Development

Category	Criteria	Description	Key Assumption	Metrics	Scoring (quant)	Highest Score	Scale	Calculation	Data Source	Data Provider	Notes
Existing River Edge Condition	Existing Shoreline Type	Shoreline type along different segments of the Chicago River	Natural Shoreline may be easier to construct but costs may be high if more robust protection is required	Riverbank Survey Type of Riverbank		3	Cluster	Geoprocessing	DPD (Public Land Assessment Tool has "shoreline type" (Online GIS))		supercedes PL Assessment Tool's "shoreline type" with detailed information, this may end up being a reference guide in final screening
Existing Access Barrier	Active Barge Users	Areas where rivers edge acts as a barge access point for existing industrial uses?	Parcels that have active barge usage are less likely to accommodate public access and riverwalk / trail expansion	Yes or No		1			DPD		Open Question: How does this overlay with "Businesses with active river use"?
Existing Access Barrier	Navigability	REFERENCE ONLY	-	-							Pending GIS data collection - may be utilized as reference when refining at the final parcel / localized area scale
Parcel Suitability	Businesses with Active River Use	Businesses that use the river in some capacity	Parcels with businesses with active river use are less likely able to accommodate public access and riverwalk / trail expansion	Yes or No		1	Parcel				
Parcel Suitability	Public / Private	Parcels owned by public or private entity. Public entities include: MWRD, City Owned, CPD and CDOT properties	Parcels that are in public hands can more easily accommodate riverwalk / trail expansion & new construction	Public or Private		1	Parcel		Public Land Assessment Tool (Online GIS)		
Parcel Suitability	Susceptibility to Change	This analysis demonstrates a parcel's susceptibility to change based on market forces, which examines the following three factors:  Building age - buildings constructed before 1970 are over 50 years old and typically need major upgrades and maintenance that can be cost prohibitive, often making redevelopment the most feasible option for a property.  Lot coverage - parcels that cover 20% or less of the parcel have a large amount of land that can still be developed for a "higher and better" land use, positioning the parcel for redevelopment.  Land value to improvement value - parcels with a ratio less than 20% are more likely to redevelop because the "improvement" or structures that sit on the land is valued far below the value of the land itself.	Parcels that are more susceptible to change are more likely to accommodate public access and riverwalk/trail expansion	GIS analysis from tax assessor data		3	Parcel	GIS	City building footprints & Cook County Tax Assessor Data		This analysis for PPP potential future projects
Parcel Suitability	Vacant Property	Identifies currently vacant properties along the river edge.	Vacant properties have a lower barrier for purchase by the city and conversion into trail network supporting space.	Yes or No		1	Parcel	GIS	Existing Land Use data		
Network Connectivity	Existing Riverwalk	Areas where there is existing riverwalk	Parcels that have existing riverwalk are not evaluated, meeting primary goal. (City data as "riverwalk" and Public Assessment Tool "existing trail" will both be utilized)	Yes or No		1	Cluster		Chicago Data Portal - City of Chicago		
Network Connectivity	Distance to Bike Routes	Areas where there are existing bike routes	Parcels that are further away from existing bike routes are in greater need of riverwalk / trail connectivity	mile radius		1	Cluster		Chicago Data Portal		
Network Connectivity	Distance to River Access Points	Points where there is public access (dock / slip) to River	Parcels furthest from a dock / slip are in greater need of access	mile radius		2	Cluster		Public Land Assessment Tool (Online GIS)		
Network Connectivity	Distance to Transit Access	Parcels with proximity to different public transportation systems. Follows 1/4 mi watershed and 1/2 mi watershed for 5 - 10 minute walk.	Points where there is not easy access to public transportation add an extra layer of disconnect and would benefit more from a riverwalk / trail expansion & new construction	mile radius		2	Cluster		Chicago Data Portal		
Network Connectivity	Distance to Parks, Green Corridors, Open Space	Parcels with different parks, green corridors, and open space	Parcels without access to parks, green corridors, and open space can benefit with riverwalk / trail and open space expansion	mile radius		1	Cluster				
Network Connectivity	Wildlife Connectivity Corridor Opportunities	Parcels that have been identified as a wildlife connectivity corridor	Parcels that aren't already identified as Wildlife Connectivity Corridor Opportunities are more desirable for river walk development.	Yes or No		1	Parcel		Friends of the Chicago River		
Community Equity/Need	Social Vulnerability Index	A parcel comparison of the negative effects on communities caused by external stresses on human health Open Question: Is there an alternate City standard?	Parcels with a higher SVI render greater benefits from riverwalk / trail expansion. Communities that receive an index score above 0.5 are more vulnerable than communities that score below.	Number of points scored		5	Parcel		CDC		Census Tract level data
Community Equity/Need	EJ Screening	A parcel comparison of environmental and socioeconomic indicators Open Question: Is there an alternate City standard?	Areas with a higher percentile suggests a greater need for riverwalk / trail expansion. Open Question: Are there minimum requirements for funding that translates into scoring?	Percentile Ranked		1	Parcel		USEPA		Census Tract level data
Community Equity/Need	Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool	A census tract comparison of burden and disadvantaged communities.	Census tracts with a higher burden and experience more disadvantage suggests a greater need for riverwalk / trail expansion. Open Question: Are there minimum requirements for funding that translates into scoring?	Percentile Ranked		1	Parcel		Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool		Census Tract level data
Planned Projects	Planned, or Future Trails	Areas where there is existing, planned, or future trails	Parcels that have existing trails are not evaluated; parcels adjacent to planned and future trails have a path for riverwalk / trail expansion.	Type of Trail		2	Cluster		Public Land Assessment Tool (Online GIS - Juilli_FoCR)		
Planned Projects	PAS Sites	A list of 82 river-specific projects compiled by REGTF	Projects that align with 82 vetted opportunities are reinforced by for riverwalk / trail expansion evaluation	Yes or No		2	Cluster		(Online GIS)		
Planned Projects	Capital Improvement Program	Parcels that are part of the CDOT (and other City / CPD) CIP's	Parcels that are part or in the vicinity of CIP projects can leverage riverwalk / trail expansion & coordinate construction	Yes or No		1	Cluster				
Planned Projects	Community Plans	Parcels that have existing community plans relating to the river	Community plans can be supported by new river connections or trail development	Yes or No		1	Cluster		Varies		
Planned Projects	Planned Developments after 2015	Areas that have Planned Developments in progress or completed after 2015	Parcels that have current or recent Planned Developments should be in compliance with required corridor design guidelines' 30' setback/trail development.  Open Question: Can we identify these lines as first round elimination, if not already captured as existing riverwalk?	Yes or No			Parcel				
Planned Projects	Development Parcels	Parcels along the rivers edge that are, will, or potentially will experience development	Parcels that are "recently built/under construction" should be in compliance with required corridor design guidelines' 30' setback/trail development, "under review" likely to comply, and "watch" as high potential for development	Type of Development			Parcel		River Edge Development Tracking Map (Online GIS)		need to confirm these categories were determined

## Initial Screening Areas:

- Existing River Edge Conditions / Access Barriers
- Parcel Suitability
- Network Connectivity
- Community Equity / Need
- Planned Projects

## Comment

- As we go through each category, consider other criteria or organizational framework to apply

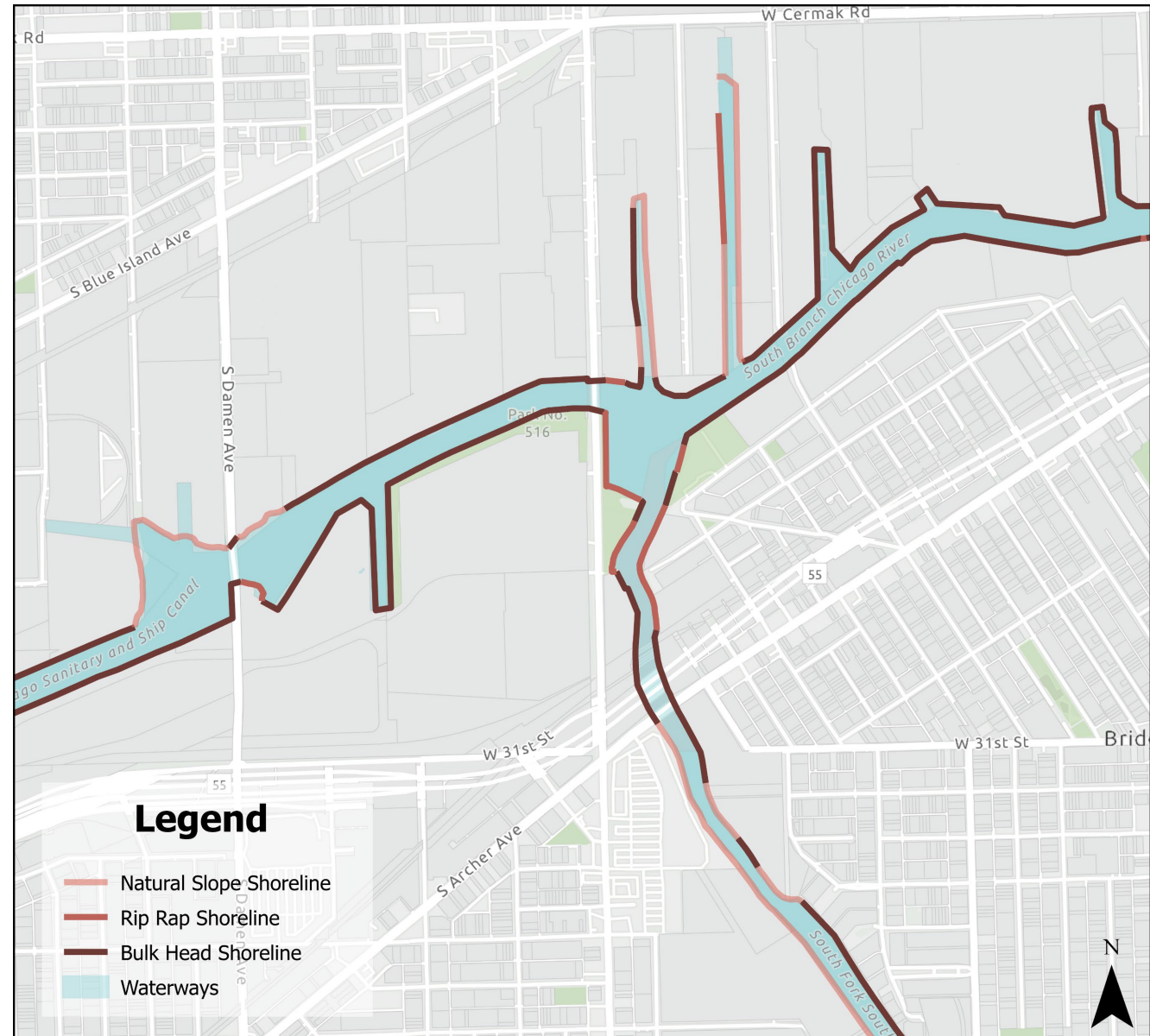


# Criteria Development – Existing River Edge Conditions / Access Barriers

- Existing shoreline type
- Active barge users

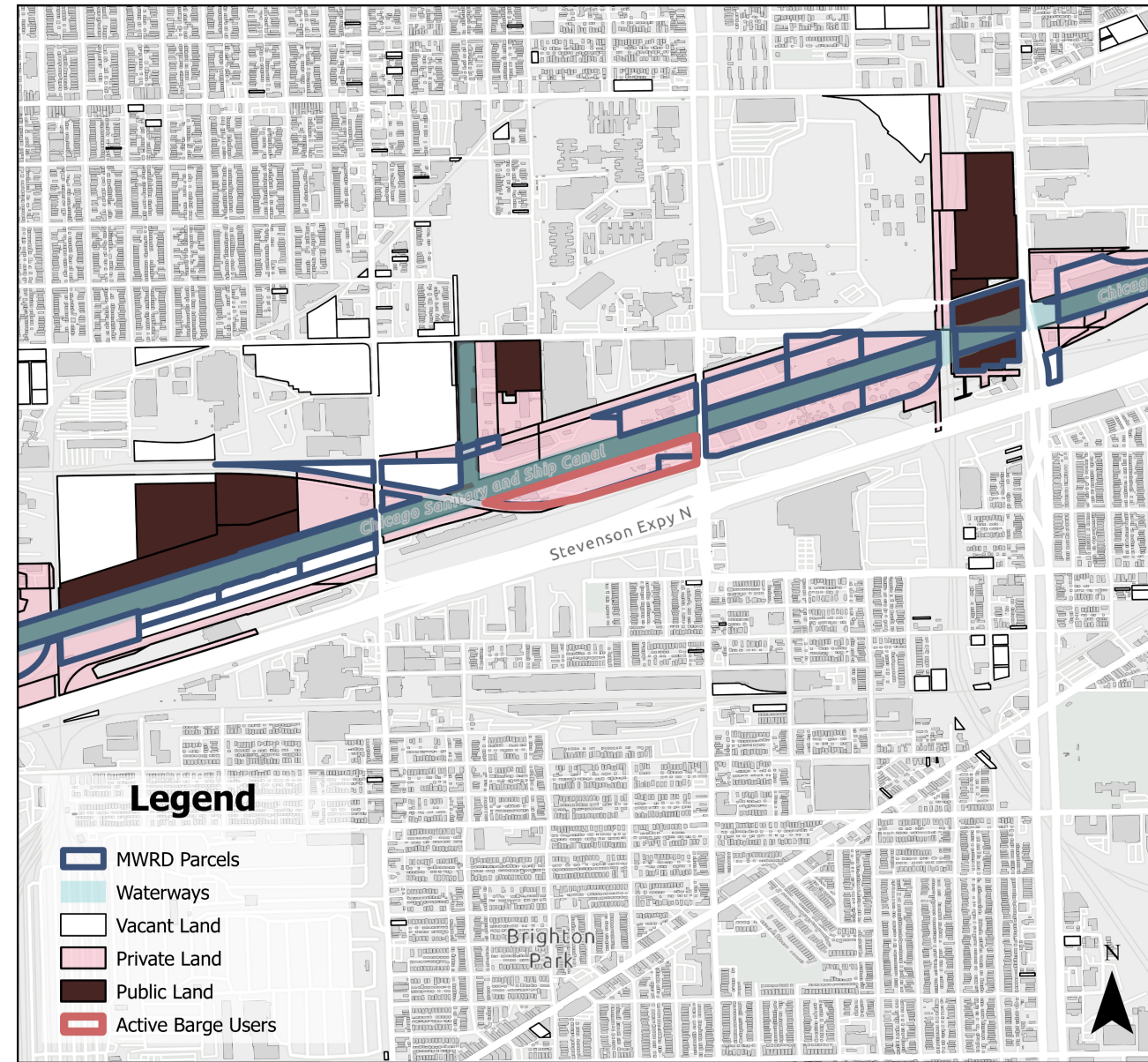
## Questions

- If there is a presence of a barge, should that eliminate Riverwalk eligibility?
- How should we assess or weight the edge conditions?



# Criteria Development – Parcel Suitability

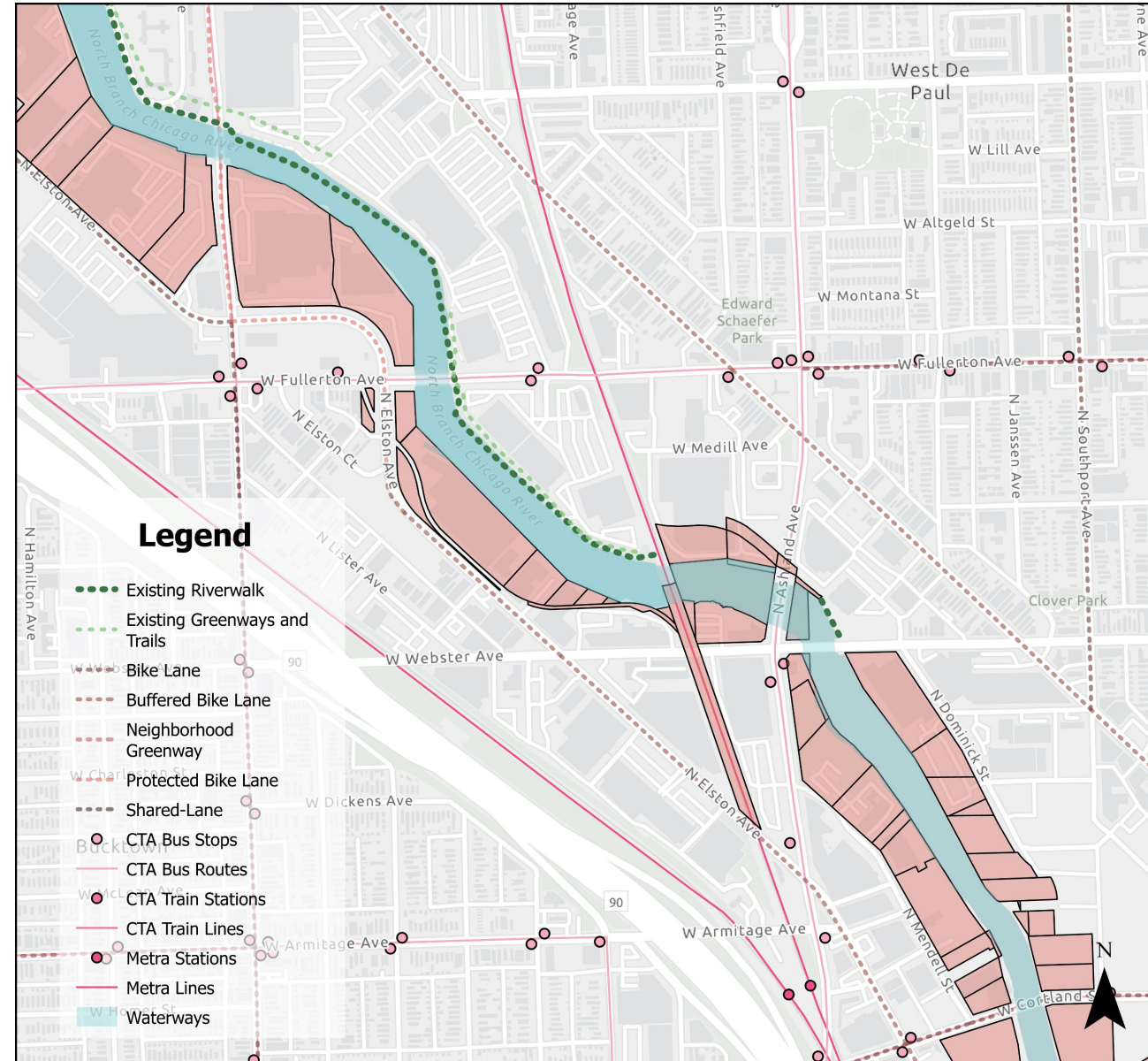
- Public (City, CPD, MWRD) vs private ownership
- Susceptibility to change analysis
- Vacant property





# Criteria Development – Network Connectivity

- Existing riverwalk / trail
- Distance to bike routes
- Distance to river access parcels
- Distance to transit access
- Distance to parks, green corridors, open space
- Gaps in wildlife corridors

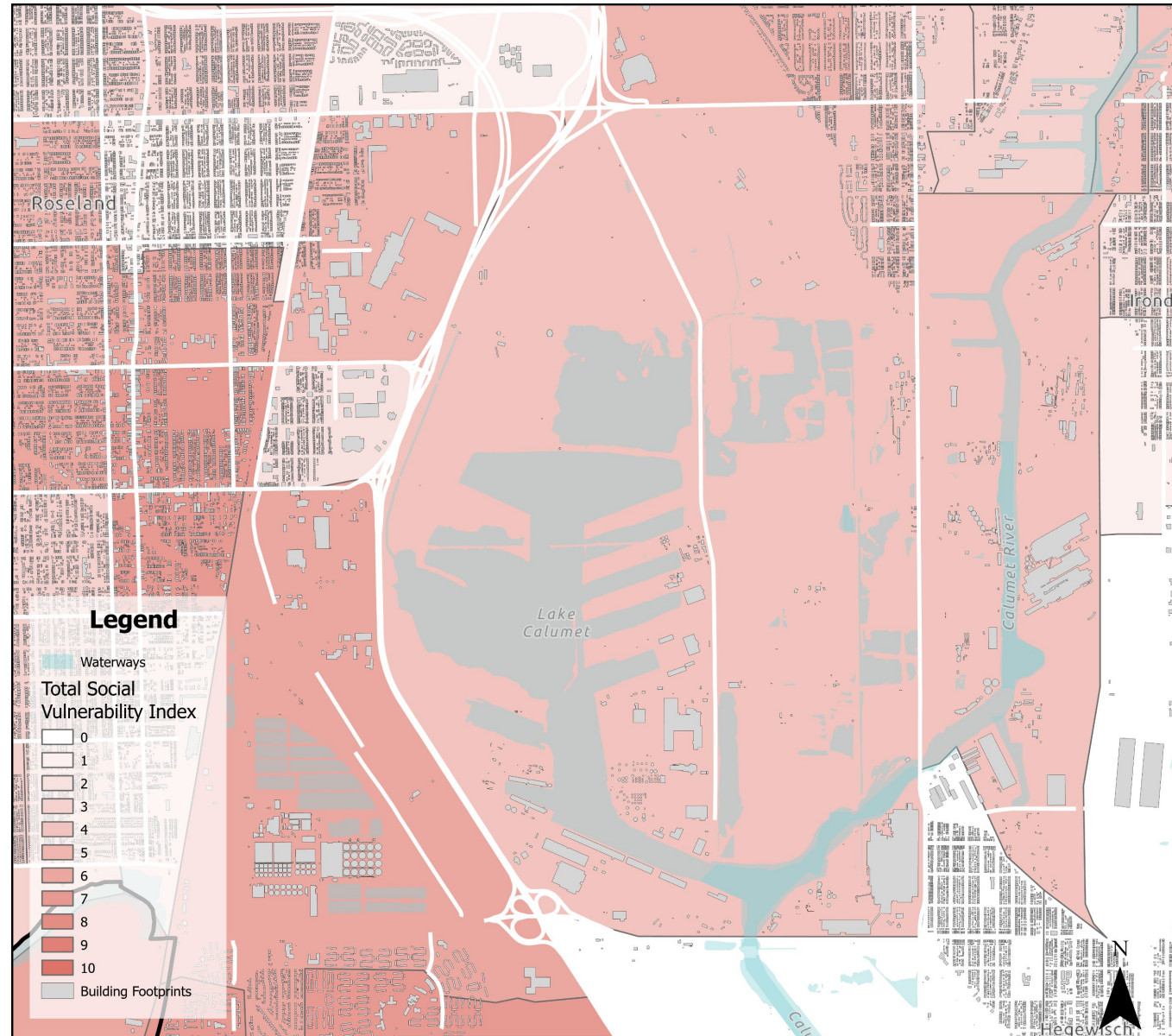


# Criteria Development – Community Equity / Need

- Climate & Economic Justice Screening tool
- Environmental Justice Screening
- Social Vulnerability Index

## Comments

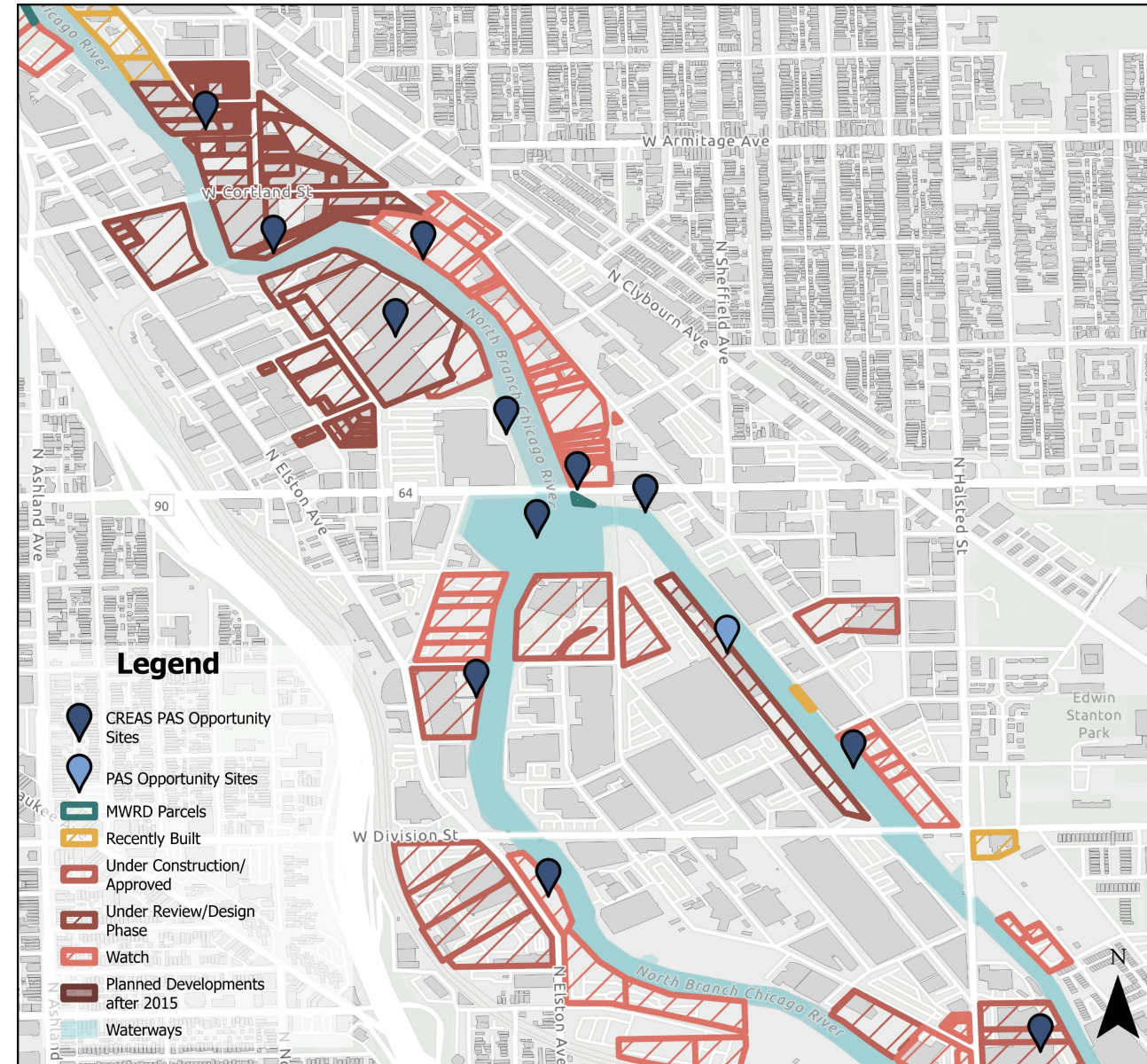
- List above outlines potential sources, but will be refined to avoid overlap





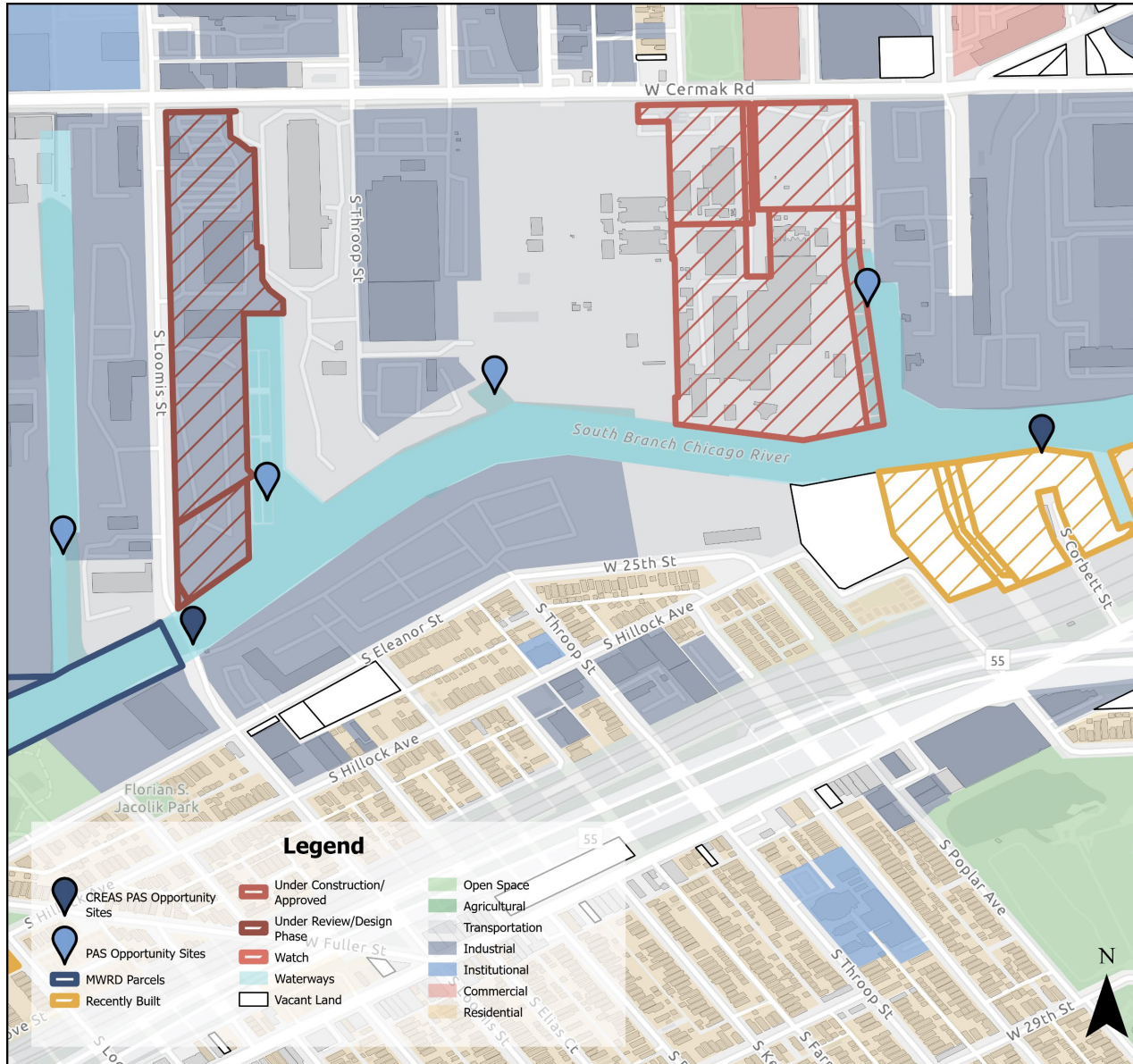
# Criteria Development – Planned Projects

- Planned or future trails
- PAS sites
- Planned Developments (after 2015)
- Capital Improvement Program
- Community Plans





# Next Steps



- Finalize existing conditions mapping and screening criteria to complete evaluation of parcels
- Develop project criteria / categorize project types that support study objectives
- Vet criteria and projects with Systems Plan Working Group
- Conduct field work to validate key existing conditions / project development areas
- Revise project “classification” types based off of feedback
- Present final StoryMap report to REGTF in Summer 2023

# Discussion and Questions

REGTF Quarterly Meeting

12.05.2023



# **Update: Sustainable Development Policy and Other Projects**





# Chicago Sustainable Development Policy Update

Draft Work Product – December 2023

# Sustainable Development Policy Update Overview

## What is the Sustainable Development Policy?

- Requires projects receiving public funding or needing special approvals to incorporate sustainable design elements
- Point-based system in which projects select from a menu of strategies across a series of thematic categories, including third-party building certifications (e.g. LEED)

## What is changing?

- Requires specific strategies (Bird Protection, Energy, Public Health and Community Benefits)
- Requires specific strategies for Air Quality Ordinance Projects
- Removes or modifies strategies that are redundant with Code requirements or are obsolete
- Focus on higher-tier building certifications and adds zero-energy/carbon options
- Adds new strategies to foster innovation and flexibility

# Potential Updates Impacting the River's Edge

## **MODIFIED STRATEGY: Naturalized River Edges (10 points)** *Previously "4.2 Natural Landscapes"*

To earn the 10 points projects must restore or replicate a naturalized edge along at least 25% of the shoreline or no less than 50 feet, whichever is greater.

Compliance: Landscape and site plans detailing how the criteria have been met. Project must demonstrate the ability to comply with the US Army Corps of Engineers and other agency permitting requirements.

## **ADDED STRATEGY: Exceed River Setback (5 points)**

To earn 5 points, the project must exceed the required setback by 25% or more as required by the Chicago Zoning Ordinance and as described in the Chicago River Design Guidelines or Calumet Design Guidelines (depending on project location). A majority (>50%) of the additional setback area should include landscaping, habitat, and permeable surfaces used to help manage stormwater on site.

Compliance: Landscape and site plans detailing how the criteria have been met.

# Potential Updates Impacting the River's Edge

## **ADDED STRATEGY: Aquatic Habitat (10 points)**

A project can earn 10 points by manipulating the existing shoreline to provide innovative space for submerged, floating, and emergent habitat while not infringing on the Federal navigable channel. The project must include at least 25% of the shoreline or 50 feet, whichever is greater.

Compliance: Landscape and site plans detailing how the criteria have been met. Project must demonstrate the ability to comply with the US Army Corps of Engineers and other agency permitting requirements.

## **ADDED STRATEGY: Non-toxic Pavement Sealants (5 points)**

A project can earn 5 points if the property owner or manager commits to not utilize coal tar-based sealants, or any pavement sealant products that contain > 0.1% Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) by weight or 1,000 parts per million (ppm).

Compliance: Signed letter from owner committing to compliance from owner with narrative of how compliance will be achieved.

# Revised Project Timeline



*\*Note: Implementation Grace Period for projects already in process is TBD*



# Project Updates

- Dept. of Transportation
  - CDOT's South Branch Parks Access Study has been completed. The Study establishes an understanding of technical feasibility that can be used as a foundation to support potential projects and grant funding applications in the future.
- Forest Preserve District of Cook County
  - Ongoing restoration work at LaBagh Woods, Forest Glen Woods, Bunker Hill, Whistler and Beaubien Woods much of it adjacent to the Chicago and Little Calumet Rivers. Much of this work conducted by volunteers and/or Conservation Corps.
  - Green infrastructure efforts have been underway at Beaubien Woods Boat Launch where the parking lot was shrunk, and a rain garden was installed.
  - A trail realignment at Caldwell Woods also included the installation of a rain garden.
  - Work at Powderhorn Lake includes restoration and the design and construction of a water control and fish passage system to reduce flooding in the area, improve water quality, and provide stormwater detention.
  - Will be doing pavement shrinking and asphalt to gravel surface conversions at Ted Lechowicz in 2024.

# Project Updates

- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
  - Water quality data for telemetry sites is located on a public facing webpage: <https://gispub.mwrdd.org/awqa/>
  - Illinois Department of Natural Resources requested data for their Coastal Management Program. Applications are accepted for the [IDNR Coastal Management Program](#) until December 15.
- Park District
  - Restoration and maintenance work for Legion, Ronan, and Kiwanis parks will start in late 2023 early 2024.
  - Work is continuing at Park 571 – including a community supported nature play space. More work to come in 2024 – high river levels washed out plants and seed, with a need to rethink the species there.

# **2024 Meeting Dates + Adjourn**

# **Proposed 2024 Task Force Meeting Dates**

## **Mark your calendars!**

- March 12: 3 pm to 4:30 pm
- June 11: 3 pm to 4:30 pm
- September 17: 3 pm to 4:30 pm
- December 3: 3 pm to 4:30 pm