



River Ecology and Governance Task Force Summary | June 8, 2021

The meeting began at 3:00PM via a Zoom conference call.

MPC and DPD staff introduced an agenda that was shared prior to meeting kickoff. The main intent of the meeting was to reflect on the task force goals and objectives, propose a revised structure for the task force and come to a shared understanding of the River System.

What follows is a high-level summary of the task force outcomes:

I. Outcomes from June 8 meeting:

Group agreed to move forward with the proposed restructuring of the Task Force and working Groups. Consensus vote was taken via Zoom with members noting if they support moving forward with the proposed structure.

Not everyone who attended the meeting voted: approximately 40 people attended the meeting with 24 voting. DPD and MPC abstained from voting, which accounts for some of the additional participants.

Do you support moving forward with the proposed structure?	Votes
Yes, I support the proposed structure.	10
Yes, but I have some questions/concerns.	14
No, I do not support the proposed structure.	0
Not voting	3

This indicates that there are questions that remain unanswered, which was clear through the major takeaways in the small group conversations.

Discussion on Proposed Structure Key Takeaways

- Add Army Corps to Steering Committee as well as Mayor's Sustainability Office
- Ensure that workshops and working groups do not become siloed / indicate how information flows back and forth between them and how membership can participate in both workshops and working groups
- Need to provide avenues to talk directly about funding for projects
- Consider changing name of "workshops" to "listening sessions"
- Delineate responsibility for producing work products coming out of workshops – and that the "work" that is happening within them is being captured and action is being taken

- A vision / structure for the workshops needs to be created: what do they look like; what are the goals for each one. Should be super clear with goals, given potential opportunities for federal funding.
- Be clear on final deliverables for each of the workshops at the outset and the goals for each of the workshops in terms of “how” and “what” they are informing. Where is the “input” going and “how” is it being used.
- Understand how what is being produced out of the Task Force integrates with other plans and vision the City has (like Climate Plans, DPD priorities, etc.)
- Discussions also need to allow for stewardship, maintenance, and ownership for how Chicagoans interact with these spaces
- Created system-wide principles need to be adopted by responsible parties and government agencies
- Guiding principles, as a way to define the work, need to be created
- Create a comprehensive flow chart for people to have on hand to understand how the group is structured – put flow chart on website
- Determine decision-making model for updating priorities, projects on a timely (annual, biannual) basis
- Consider workshops for larger development projects like the 78 and Lincoln Yards. How does this overlap with the meetings hosted by the neighborhood councils?

Cultivating Shared Understanding of River System Key Takeaways

- Share updates from members before the meeting, maybe via a newsletter, review key updates as part of the Task Force meeting
- Define what is enough progress on any one project to make it update worthy at the meeting, create some parameters
- Create a guiding structure for updates
- Presentations / updates could be based on topic areas or geography (various opinions about both)

II. Revisions to Proposed 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
- 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) Process standardization for reviewing riverfront development projects

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm