



River Ecology & Governance Task Force

September 13, 2022 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Agenda

- I. Task Force Goals
- II. Case Study Presentation: Cougle Foods Development
- III. Reflections on Case Studies and Development Reviews
- IV. Working Group Updates
- V. Planning and Project Updates
- VI. Upcoming Meeting Dates + 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**

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

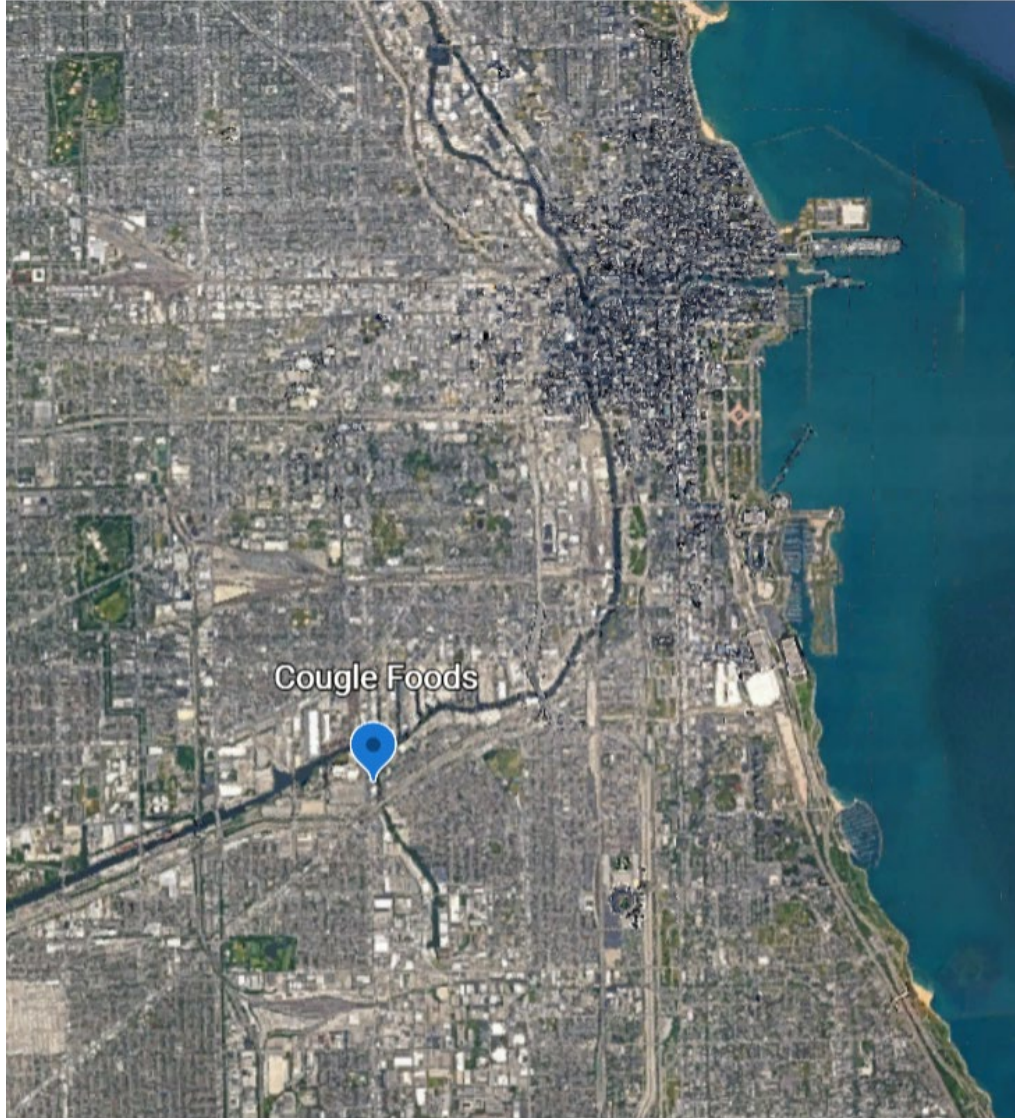
3. Inform near-term planning opportunities to advance collective priorities
 - a. We Will Chicago
 - b. CDOT Access Study
 - c. USACE PAS Restoration Framework Plan
 - d. Industrial Corridor Modernization Process
4. Develop criteria to prioritize projects for identified funding opportunities
5. Standardize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

Case Study Presentation

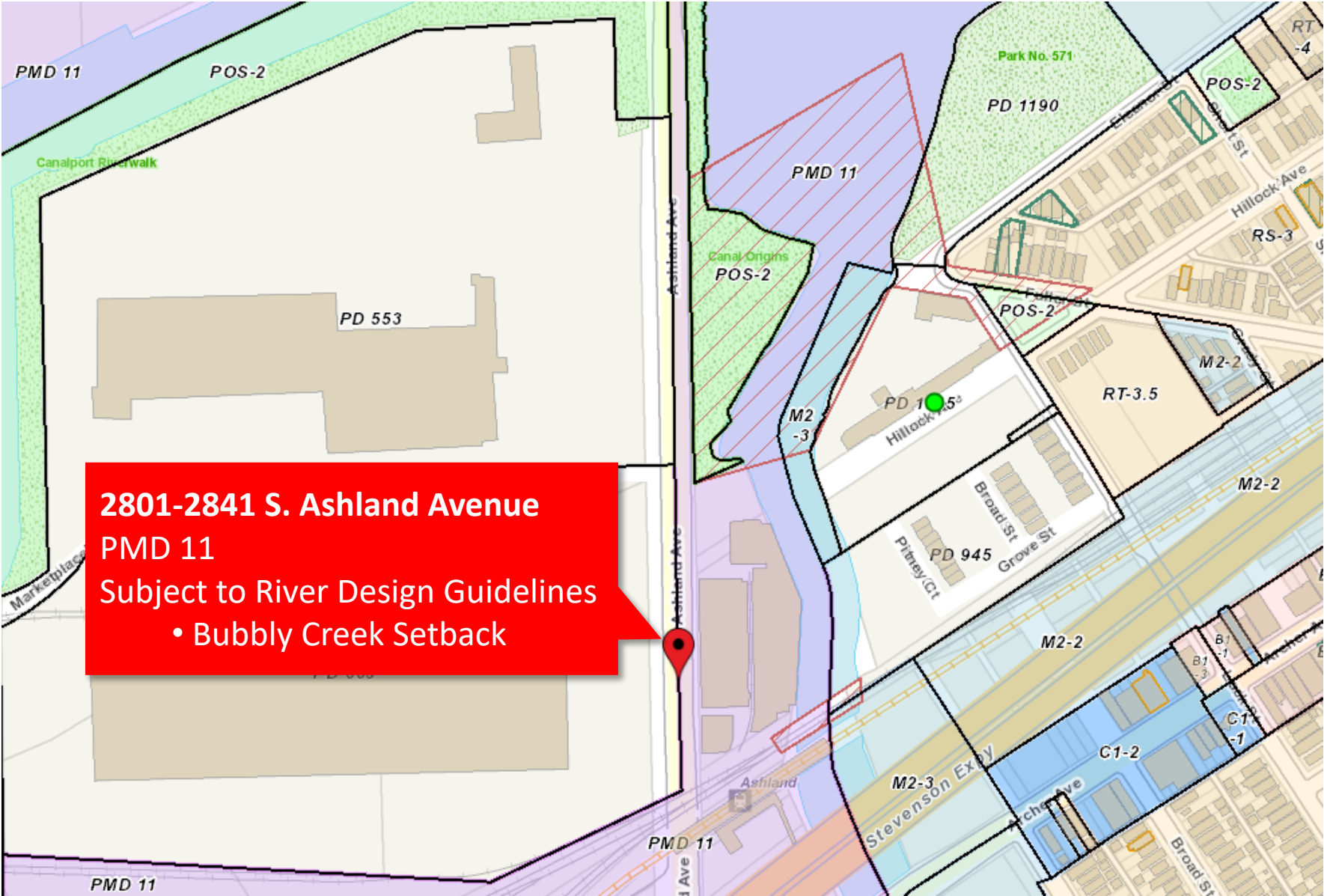


COUGALE FOODS

Cougle Foods Location



Previous Zoning Context



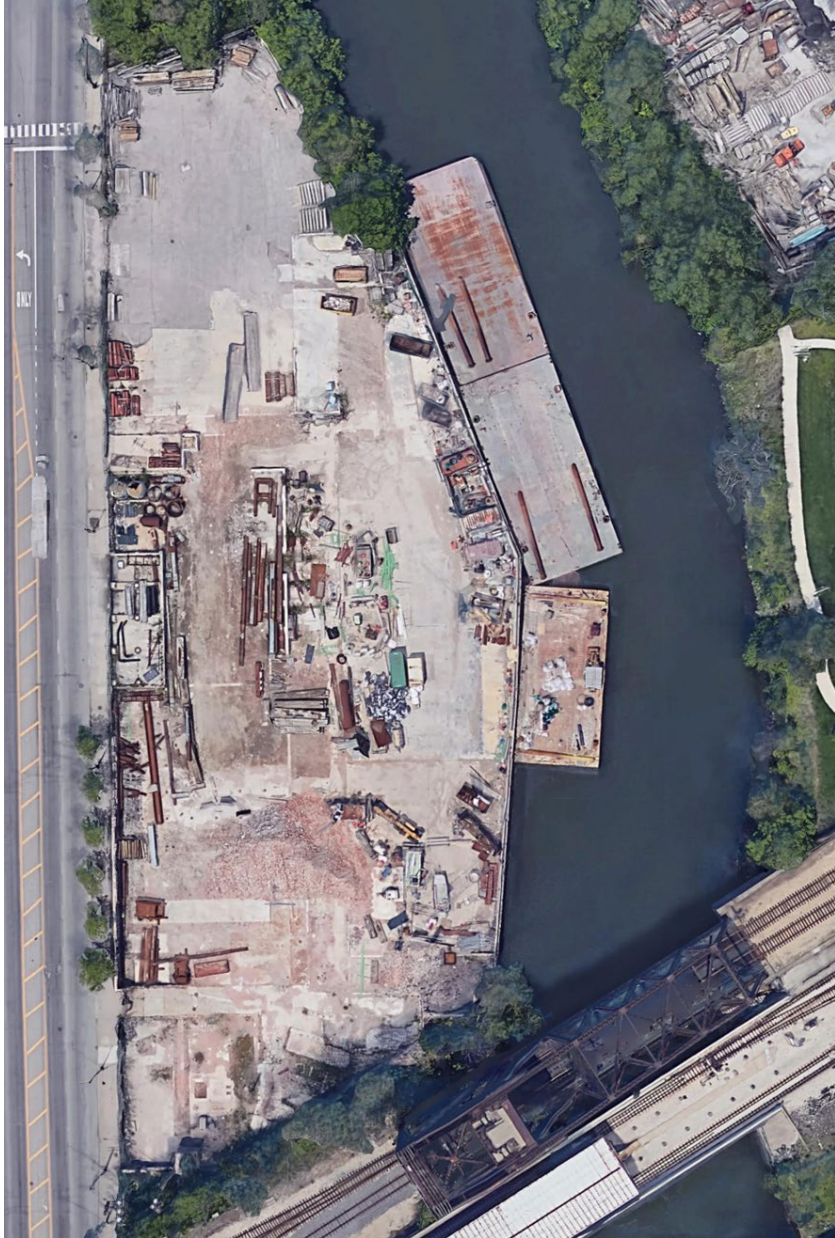
Site Plan and Renderings



Site Plan and Renderings



Completed Site



Site Images



Image courtesy of Adam Flickinger

Site Images



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Site Images



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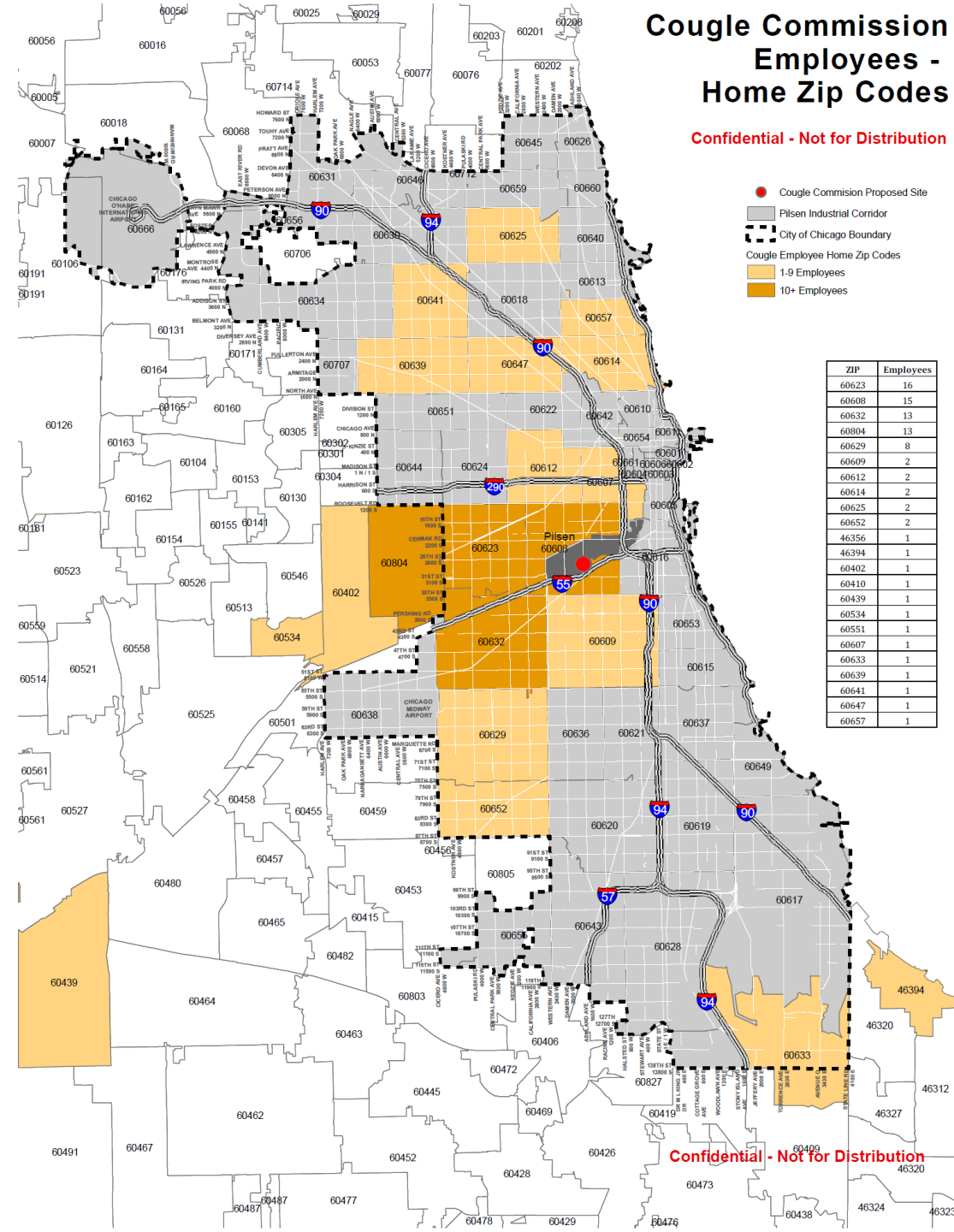
Site Images



Image courtesy of Adam Flickinger

Workforce Impacts

- Transit-accessible location
- ≈ 70 Employees
- 70% reside in the Pilsen, Little Village, Brighton Park, Archer Heights



Project Collaborators

Core Team

- Cougle Foods
- Owner's Representative
- United Insulated Structures
- Watermark Engineering
- Dept. of Planning & Development (DPD)

Government Stakeholders

- US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Ill. Dept. of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- Chicago Dept. of Transportation (CDOT)
- Ill. Environmental Protection Agency
- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD)
- City Council and Committee
- Chicago Plan Commission
- Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

Major Project Milestones

2014 - 2019: Planning & Property

Acquisition

- Fulton Market Innovation District Plan
- Kinzie Industrial Corridor Framework Plan
- City-provided list of sites
- Previously owned by Sherwin Williams Paint Company
- Current use as truck parking and repair

2019: Rezoning + PD Process

- Aldermanic meeting to discuss proposal
- Zoning change from PMD-11 to Waterway Planned Development 1466 in September 2019
- Community Meeting – November 2019
- Compliance with the Sustainable Development Policy
- Passed Plan Commission in December 2019

2020: Project Construction

- Broke ground in early June 2020
- Removal of foundations / buried tank
- Reconstruction of the riverwall
- Completed February 2021

Project Highlights

- **Project Goals**

- Maintain business within the City of Chicago
 - Move from Kinzie Industrial Corridor to the Pilsen Industrial Corridor
- Local employment
 - Projected for 70 jobs

- **Project Successes**

- 60' Riverfront setback per Chicago River Design Guidelines
- 40% green space of area coverage
- Contamination but able to regrade and use soil on site to minimize haul off
- Compliance with the Sustainable Development Policy
- Two entrances for the Riverwalk, connects to public sidewalk

- **Project Challenges**

- Contentious community/stakeholder process
- Required removal of building foundations
- Extensive repair of the riverwall
- Unanticipated signage requirements and cost – first project required to comply with signage and wayfinding guidelines

Planning and zoning regulations, processes, permits (local, state, federal)

Entity	Description
Department of Planning and Development	Requirements for rezoning to Waterway Planned Development and then shepherding the Planned Development process
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Permitting around restored riverwall
Illinois Department of Resources	Permit process
Chicago Dept. of Transportation	Harbor permit, traffic study, and a special stoplight
Illinois EPA	Compliance with site remediation/clean-up procedures
MWRD	Approval for design of retention ponds

Community / Stakeholder Engagement

- Required as part of Planned Development process prior to Plan Commission hearing
- Plan was presented to Science and Design group of the River Ecology and Governance Task Force in October 2019
- Project team met with South Branch Parks Advisory Council – shared South Branch Framework Plan
- Aldermen Sigcho-Lopez and Thompson co-hosted a community meeting held at Eleanor Boathouse at Park 571 in November 2019
 - Meeting was about making tweaks to the plan
 - Opposition from residents and meeting participants
- Proposed development was not in alignment with plans from other groups around ETOD and riverfront visions

Reflections on Case Studies & Development Reviews

Development Reviews & Case Studies

Development Reviews

- Lincoln Yards – G1 and B1
- Lakeshore Recycling
- 3633 N California
- Waste Management Hooker Street
- Halsted Pointe
- 2800-3000 E. 106th St
- Costco
- Chicago Casino

Case Studies

- Wild Mile
- South Bank
- Coughle Foods

Major Themes

- Interpretation and Application of Design Guidelines
- Community Engagement and Incorporation of Input
- River Edge Transitions

Development Reviews & Case Studies

Interpretation and Application of Design Guidelines (Nature, Recreation, Connectivity)

- **Development Reviews:** Comments highlighted the need for incorporation of nature more comprehensively. Many noted the need for more considerations of a naturalized edge, diverse and layered planting structures along with enhanced stormwater management and instream treatments, and bird-friendly building design.
- **Case Studies:** Emphasized planting and connectivity but light on active recreation and non-educational programming. Trails were a dominant feature with varied and layered planting.

Discussion Questions

- Do these projects strike the right balance of Nature, Recreation and Connectivity? Is one emphasized over the other? What are the results and are there ways to improve this? Are there limitations to the guidelines regarding long-term operations and programming? Are there regulations that stifle innovative use of the river edge?

Development Reviews & Case Studies

Community Engagement and Incorporation of Input

- **Development Reviews:** Unclear how much community engagement has occurred prior to the review or how it has impacted project design. For a couple of the projects, there was substantial community/resident pushback on the projects that the Task Force learned about after the review.
- **Case Studies:** Community engagement process varies per project type. Substantial community engagement for the Wild Mile with a dedicated community partner and other stakeholders. Much more limited engagement for Southbank with only impacted residents consulted. Similar to Cougle Foods with only one community meeting after pushback from the Task Force.

Discussion Questions

- Are there ways that the community input process could be more robust in the Planned Development process? How can the Task Force ensure it has a better understanding of the community input that has been received prior to the review? Should the Task Force review comments emphasize the need for broader community input?

Development Reviews & Case Studies

River Edge Transitions

- **Development Reviews:** Questions around how design guidelines for recreation and public access should be incorporated into projects with and near industrial land uses, particularly along the Calumet but also the South Branch. There is a desire to allow for new uses in the future but that needs to be balanced with current public health and community risks.
- **Case Studies:** Southbank was a former railyards that transitioned to a residential community based on changing land uses in the downtown. Cogle Foods had an enhanced setback based on its location by Bubbly Creek.

Discussion Questions

- Should there be different requirements and application of the guidelines based on land use? Do the Design Guideline character zones allow for this differentiation or does there need to be a more nuanced approach? When/Where should public access be required in river edge setbacks? How should different land uses (especially industrial) consider future river edge setback public access?

Working Group Updates

Development Review Working Group

Working group now has a website for materials and summaries.

[River Ecology and Governance Task Force / Development Review Working Group](#)

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Development Review Working Group

The River Ecology and Governance Task Force Development Review Working Group reviews new development projects that are located within 100 feet of the Chicago river system. The projects are typically part of proposed Planned Developments (PDs) that require review by Plan Commission and City Council. Consisting of River Ecology and Governance Task Force members, the group reviews the projects for alignment with the Chicago River Design Guidelines (2019) and Calumet Design Guidelines (2004), which prioritize amenities that enhance habitat, recreation, open space and trails for wildlife and people.

Purpose

The Development Review Working Group seeks to:

- Incorporate principles to align with project reviews.
- Create and follow a process and structure to review projects.
- Provide consensus and standardized input and feedback based on the Chicago River Design Guidelines.

Although the Working Group strongly encourages and supports community engagement for all riverfront development projects, it is not the responsibility of the Working Group to lead that effort.

Meetings

The Working Group meets monthly. As needed, select representatives from DPD, the Metropolitan Planning Council, aldermanic offices, development team representatives and community members are requested to participate.

DPD introduces each proposal and the development team delivers a presentation. The Working Group asks questions to clarify information. The development team then leaves the meeting, and the Working Group discusses the project and creates written comments using the Chicago River Design Guidelines Development Review Form and Calumet Design Guidelines Review Form.

Following the meeting, an MPC representative summarizes verbal and written documentation that is finalized for the development team, which is encouraged to incorporate the feedback into its project.

2022 Meeting Schedule

March 1	June 14 2800-3000 E. 106th St. Summary Presentation	September 6
April 5		October 4
May 3	July 12	November 1
	August 2	December 13

2021 Meeting Schedule

March 30	July 20	September 7
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Systems Plans Working Group Update: REGTF Hosted Community Dialogues / Site Visits

- **Two site focus areas selected by the Working Group:**
 - Calumet area marshes connectivity
 - South Branch / Bubbly Creek opportunity sites (3000 S Pitney Ct and Damen Silos)
- **July – August due diligence meetings with local stakeholders:**
 - Existing project leaders (non-profits, Park District, Active Trans, CDOT consultant team, Shedd Aquarium, NPS, etc)
 - Aldermanic leadership (10th and 11th Wards)
 - Local special interest groups (ex. Calumet Area Industrial Commission)
- **Based on feedback moving forward with three events:**
 - Jointly hosted open house style South Branch event (2 days to participate: Oct 1st, 10am-2pm at Eleanor St Boathouse and Oct 6th 5:30-7:30pm at Chicago Maritime Museum)
 - Calumet area meeting will be coordination focused to connect teams working on many aligned existing projects, share knowledge, and align community engagement (virtual and date TBD)

Planning and Project Updates

Planning & Project Updates

- Industrial Corridor Modernization Planning (South and Southwest)
 - ULI conducting a Technical Assistance Panel
- We Will Chicago
 - Draft framework released in mid-July
 - Planning Task Force activity in October
- Sustainable Development Policy
 - Focus groups occurred in June/July
 - Meeting in early November to review
- North Branch Park and Preserve
 - Project kick-off

Planning & Project Updates

- PAS Restoration Framework Plan
 - U.S. Army Corps is making final edits
 - Anticipate finalization in December/January
- Gateway project at Caldwell Woods
 - Focus group studies
- CDOT Access Studies
 - South Branch Parks
 - River Access

2022 Meeting Dates + Adjourn

Task Force Meeting Dates

- December 6: 3 pm to 4:30 pm

Upcoming Working Group Meetings

- System Plans
 - October 1: Open House on South Branch, 10 am – 2 pm
 - October 6: Open House on South Branch, 5:30 – 7:30 pm
- Development Reviews
 - October 4: 6 pm to 7:30 pm
 - November 1: 6 pm to 7:30 pm
 - December 13: 6 pm to 7:30 pm