



# River Ecology & Governance Task Force

June 8, 2021 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

# Agenda

- I. Welcome and Introduction
- II. Task Force Goals and Objectives
- III. Proposed Revised Task Force Structure
  - I. Small Group Break-Out
- IV. Shared Understanding of River System
- V. Project Status, Updates and Support Needed
- VI. Adjourn

# **Welcome & Introduction**

# **Task Force Goals and Objectives**

# 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

1. Initiate a coordinating structure
2. Identify new opportunities to invest and involve communities in the river
3. Develop a long-term structure for stewardship and maintenance and identify fundraising opportunities

# Proposed Short-Term Goals: 2021 - 2022

1. Create principles for a system-wide and neighborhood focused approach to Chicago's waterways
2. Inform near-term planning opportunities to advance collective priorities
3. Develop criteria to prioritize projects for identified funding opportunities

# Task Force Goals and Objectives

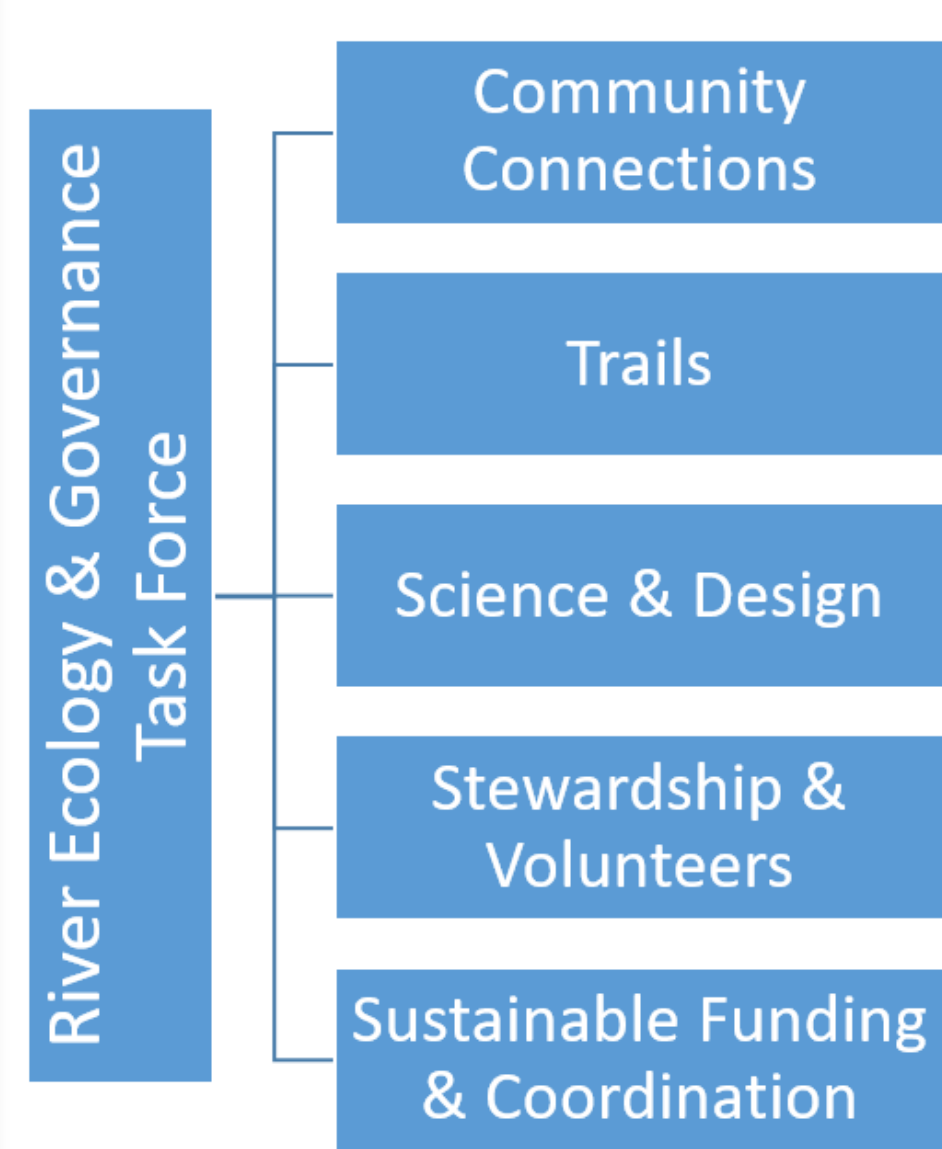
## Questions

- Does the update to the short-term goals align with what the Task Force can achieve in 2021-2022?
- Are there additional updates needed?



# **Proposed Revised Task Force Structure**

# Original Working Group Structure



# Why a revised Task Force structure?

What we heard from survey results and in conversations:

- Concerns about the commitment to continue convening the Task Force
- Room for change in the current working group structure to increase:
  - How members feel their perspective is valued
  - How well Task Force members work together

# Proposed Task Force Steering Committee

Comprised of the following

- Government agencies:
  - Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development
  - Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
  - Forest Preserves of Cook County
  - Chicago Park District
  - Chicago Dept. of Public Health
  - Chicago Dept. of Transportation
- Non-government Task Force members

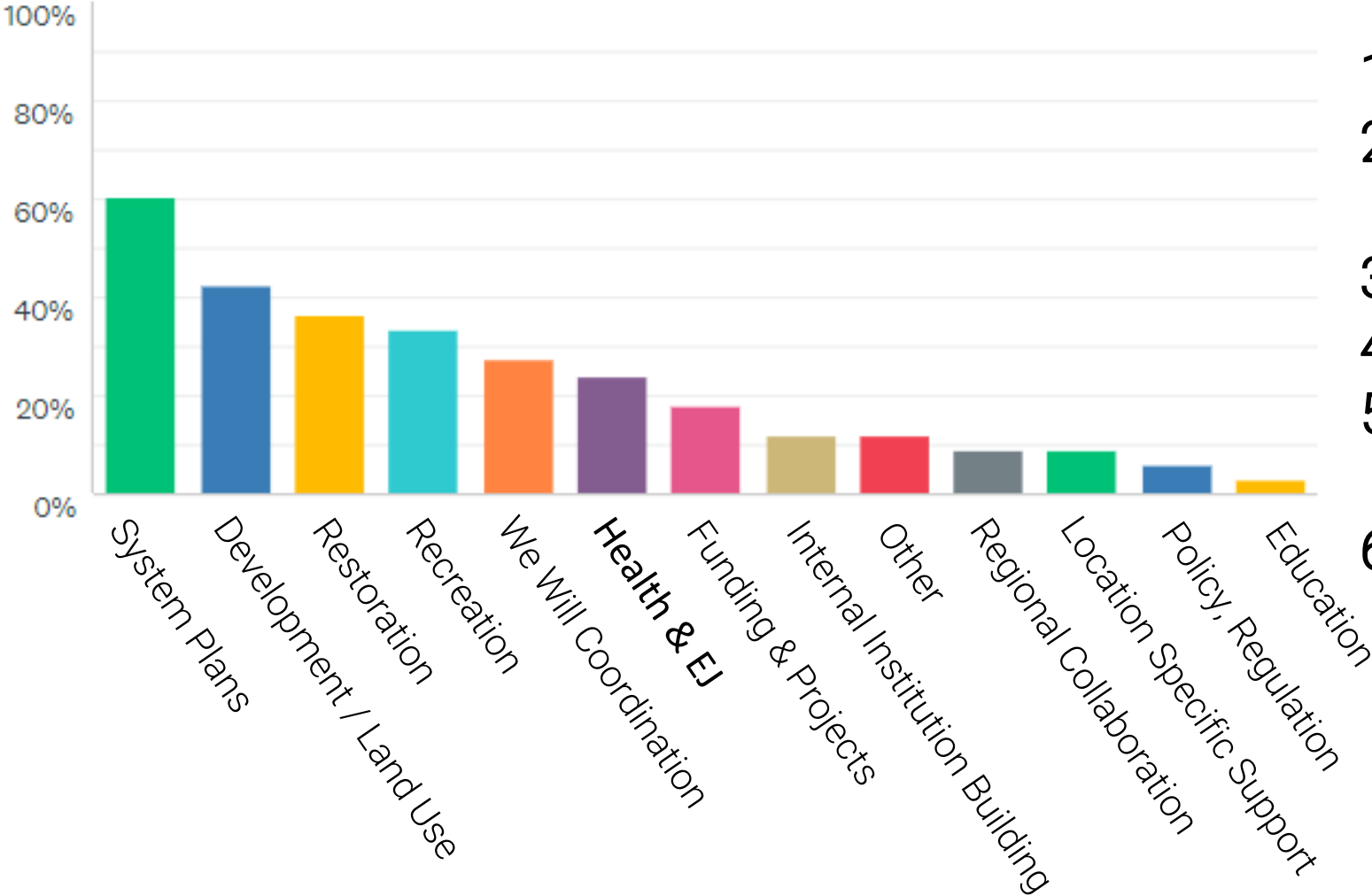
# Proposed Task Force Steering Committee

## Member responsibilities:

- Develop agendas for broader Task Force meetings
- Participate in Task Force meetings
- Participate in working structures
- Coordinate and collaborate on projects and share information led by your organization with other Task Force members

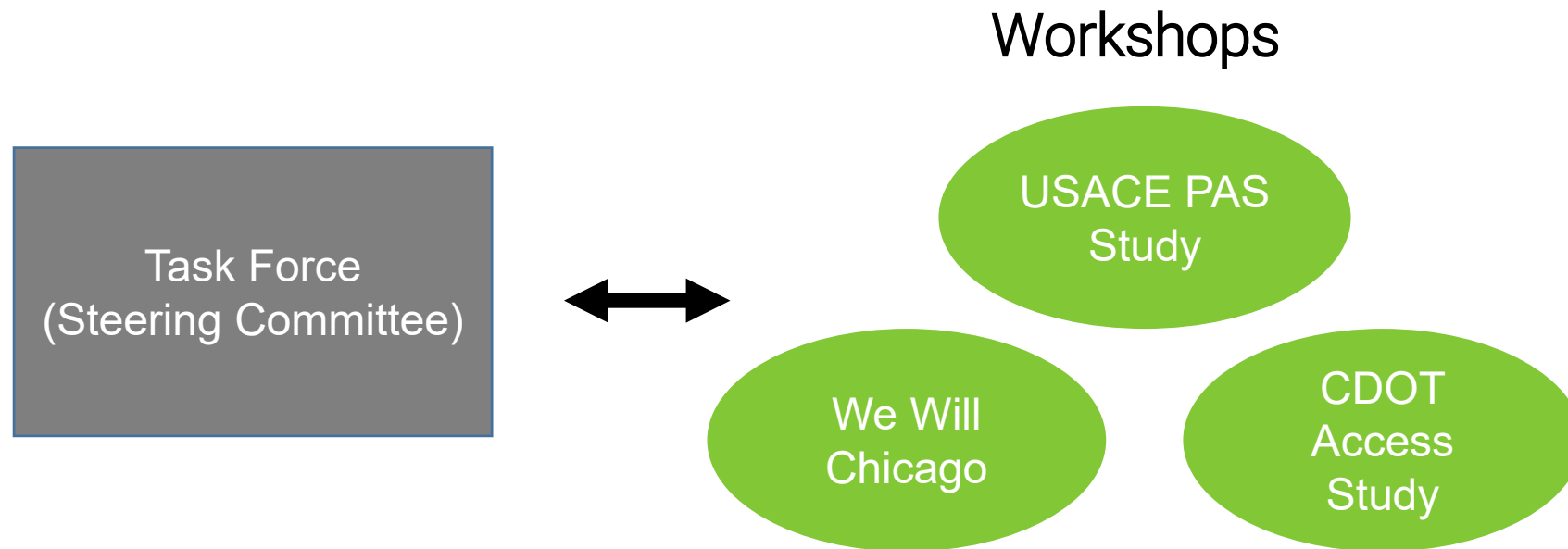
# Survey Responses

## What would you like the Task Force to prioritize for 2021?



1. System Plans & the River
2. Riverfront Development / Land Use
3. River Restoration
4. Recreation
5. Coordination with We Will Chicago
6. Human Health and Environmental Justice

# Potential Working Structure for 2021 - 2022



# Near-term Opportunities

## USACE PAS Restoration Framework Plan

- Opportunities Identification Workshop
- Project Prioritization Workshop

## We Will Chicago

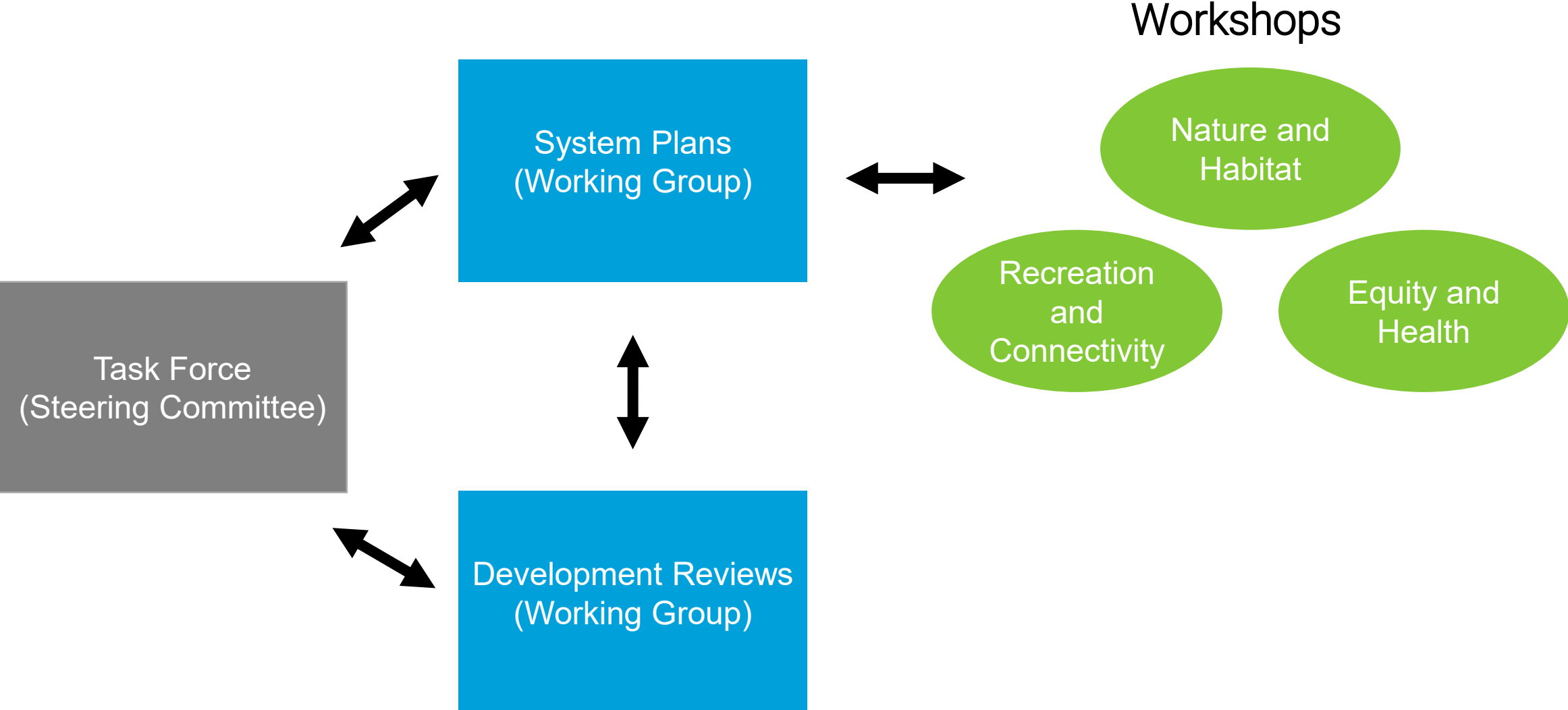
- Workshop to inform Pillar Research Teams

## CDOT Access Study

- Advisory Support



# Potential Working Structure for 2021 - 2022



# System Plans Working Group

## Proposed Charge

- Create principles to guide land use, development, habitat, and access along the rivers and riverfronts
- Identify and develop policies and research to encourage and promote a holistic approach to river and riverfront development
- Implement a framework to ground-truth the principles, so that a system-wide approach is tied to local, neighborhood priorities

# System Plans Working Group

## Next Steps

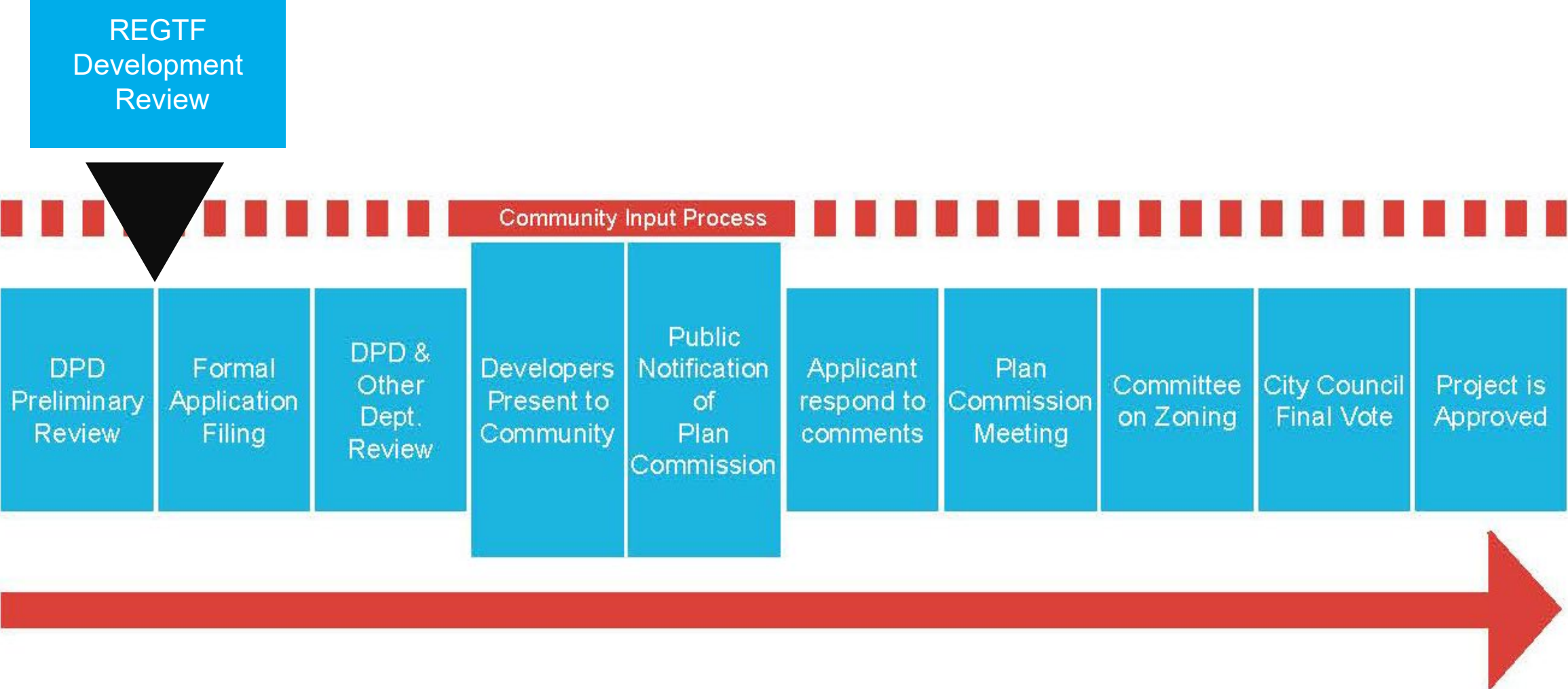
- Determine co-chairs / advising team for working group
  - Agendas, structure to report back, etc.
- Plan a workshop series to develop and align around principles that can be shared system-wide, with considerations for local needs
  - Define challenges so that group planning proposes solutions that can lead to implementation
  - Determine appropriate geographic scale (i.e. reaches, neighborhood, block level, etc.)
  - Create principles related to nature, habitat, recreation, connectivity, equity, and health

# Proposed Development Review Working Group

## Working Group Charge

- Incorporate principles to align with project reviews
- Create process and structures to review projects
- Provide consensus and standardized input and feedback to developers on riverfront projects

# Development Review Group Process



# Working Structures Process

- Working Groups and workshops would be managed by Co-chairs / Advisory Team
  - Set agenda
  - Schedule meetings
  - Document meetings
  - Guide/facilitate conversations
  - Coordinate as part of the Steering Committee to set broader Task Force agenda and share information
- Call for volunteers to Co-Chair / Advisory Team

# Small Group Discussions

## Questions

- What do you think of the proposed structure? Workshops?
- Is there something critical being left out?
- What will be some challenges with this approach?

# **Shared Understanding of the River System**



# Discussion

## Questions

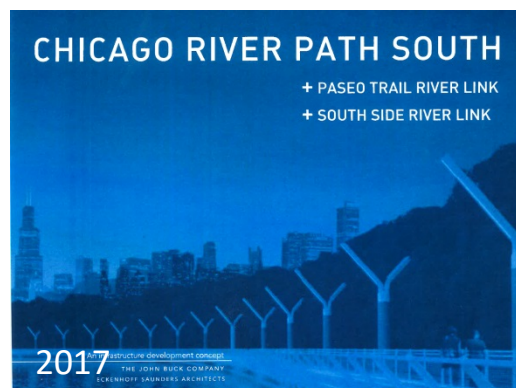
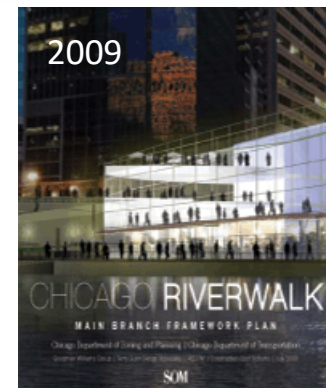
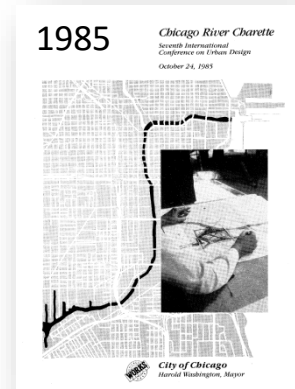
- How do we want to share our work with one another?
- Do we want to divide by reaches, neighborhoods or focus on organizations or topic areas?

# Task Force Mapping from 2019

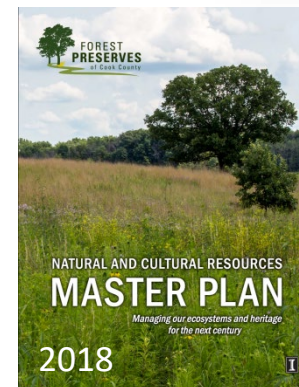
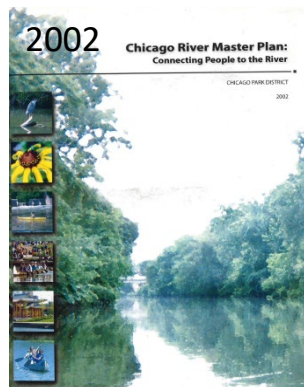
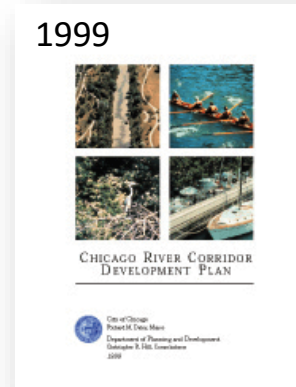
Mayoral fellows catalogued groups and projects operating adjacent to the river system

- [MyMaps](#) supported by Google
- [Story Map Journal](#)

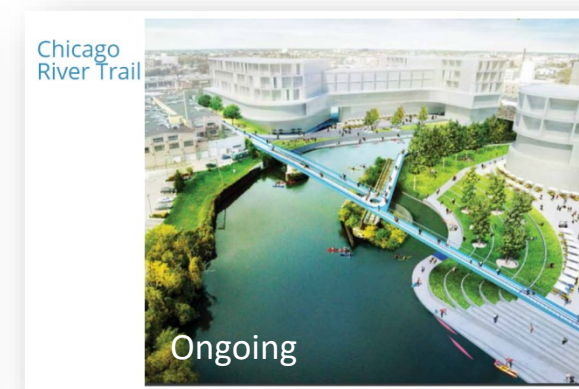
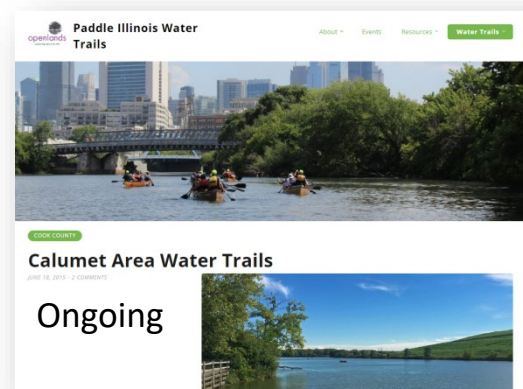
# Plans for specific River Reaches



# River System Plans

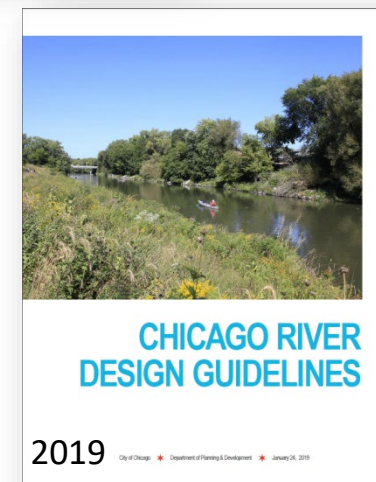
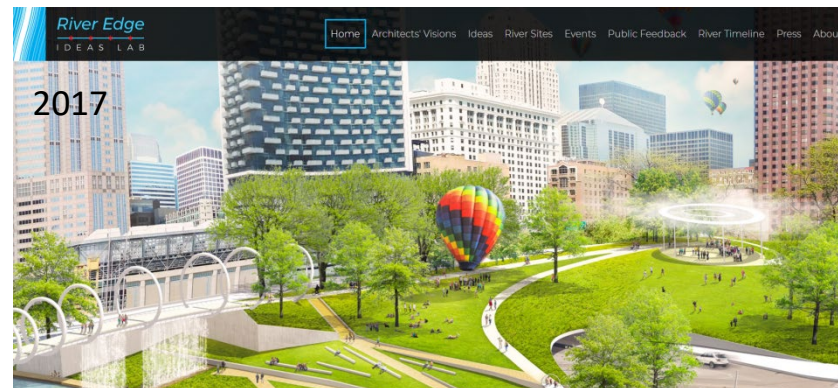
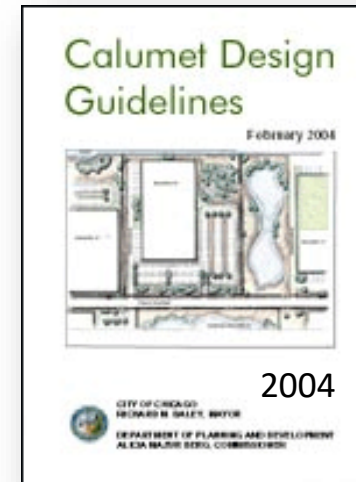
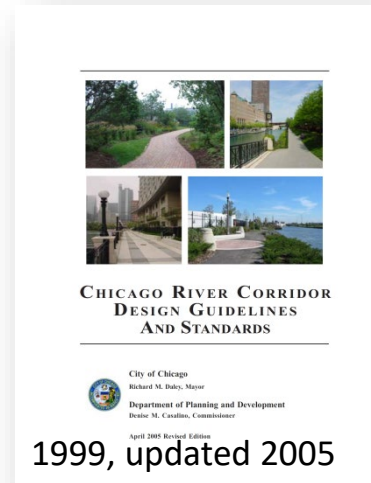
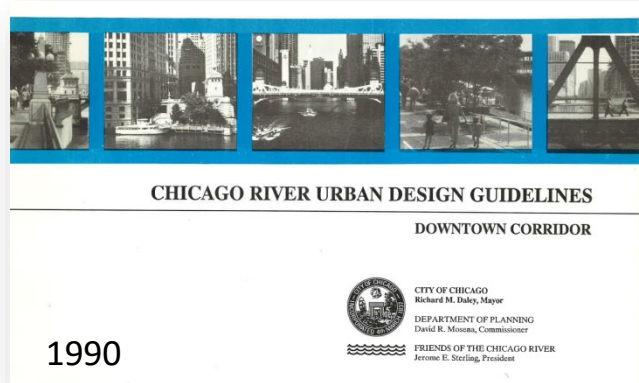


Our Great Rivers: Chicago's Next Frontier





# River Guidelines



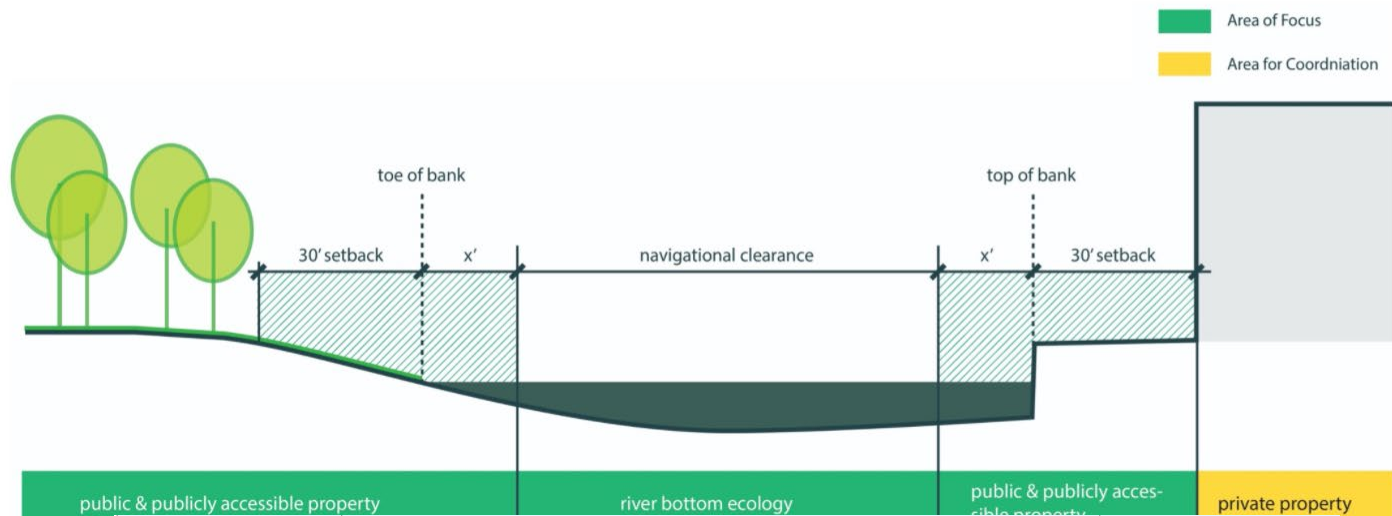
# River Ecology and Governance Task Force



## River Ecology and Governance Task Force

The River Ecology and Governance Task Force is charged with coordinating between government agencies, civic and nonprofit organizations, private developers and local communities to achieve common goals for the betterment of Chicago's rivers. Its purview comprises every riverfront within the city limits, including the Chicago River, the North Shore Channel, the Sanitary and Ship Canal, and the Calumet, Little Calumet and Des Plaines rivers.

The task force aims to transform Chicago's waterway system into a thriving and ecologically integrated natural asset, capable of accommodating the needs of people and wildlife through coordinated planning, investment, management, stewardship and programming.



Date	Meeting	Materials
March 9, 2021	River Ecology And Governance Task Force	Agenda Presentation Meeting summary
Dec. 17, 2020	River Ecology And Governance Task Force	Agenda Presentation Meeting summary
June 26, 2019	River Ecology And Governance Task Force	Agenda Meeting Presentation FOCR presentation Meeting summary

- Epstein Global
- Field Museum
- Forest Preserves of Cook County
- Friends of the Chicago River
- Horner Park Advisory Council
- Illinois DNR
- Illinois Environmental Council
- Illinois International Port District
- Institute of Enviro. Sustainability - Loyola
- Lincoln Park Zoo
- Little Village Environmental Justice Org.
- Living Habitats
- Metropolitan Planning Council
- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
- National Park Service
- Near North Unity Program
- NeighborSpace
- North River Commission
- Northeastern Illinois University
- Openlands
- Riverside Neighbors, Waters Elementary
- Ross Barney Architects
- Shedd Aquarium
- Sierra Club
- SITE Design
- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP
- South Branch Park Advisory Council
- Studio Gang Architects
- Terrv Guen Design Architects

Jan, Feb,  
March

- REGTF March 9
- ACOE & Local government meetings
- River Project Reviews, scheduled by DPD as submitted by applicants

April, May,  
June

- System Plan Working Group May 25
- REGTF June 8
- ACOE & Local government meetings
- River Project Reviews June 22

July, August,  
September

- REGTF September 14
- Workshop – System Plan – Principles
- REGTF PAS Workshop – Opportunities, projects, priorities
- River Project Reviews, scheduled by DPD as submitted by applicants
- DPD website landing page and story map
- Workshop – CDOT Access Study

October,  
November,  
December

- REGTF December 7
- ACOE, Local government and REGTF PAS reviews and completed
- River Project Reviews, scheduled by DPD as submitted by applicants
- DPD website land page and story map reviews and completed
- Workshop – We Will Chicago

# **Project Status, Updates and Support Needed**